



# DARK INHERITANCE

A MODERN D20 CAMPAIGN SETTING

REQUIRES THE USE OF THE D20 MODERN(TM) ROLEPLAYING GAME, PUBLISHED BY WIZARDS OF THE COAST, INC.

SAM WITT, WIL UPCHURCH, CHAD JUSTICE, AARON ROSENBERG, JASON OLSAN, AND GARETH HANRAHAN

*Man Gasso*  
©

**d20**  
system





**DARK INHERITANCE**

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UND WICHTIGSTE HINDEL JA  
 BEI DIE BEIENIG BREITENGEN  
 NACHT  
 DIE DICH WIE HUNDERT JA  
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 BEI DER BEIENIG SEIN.  
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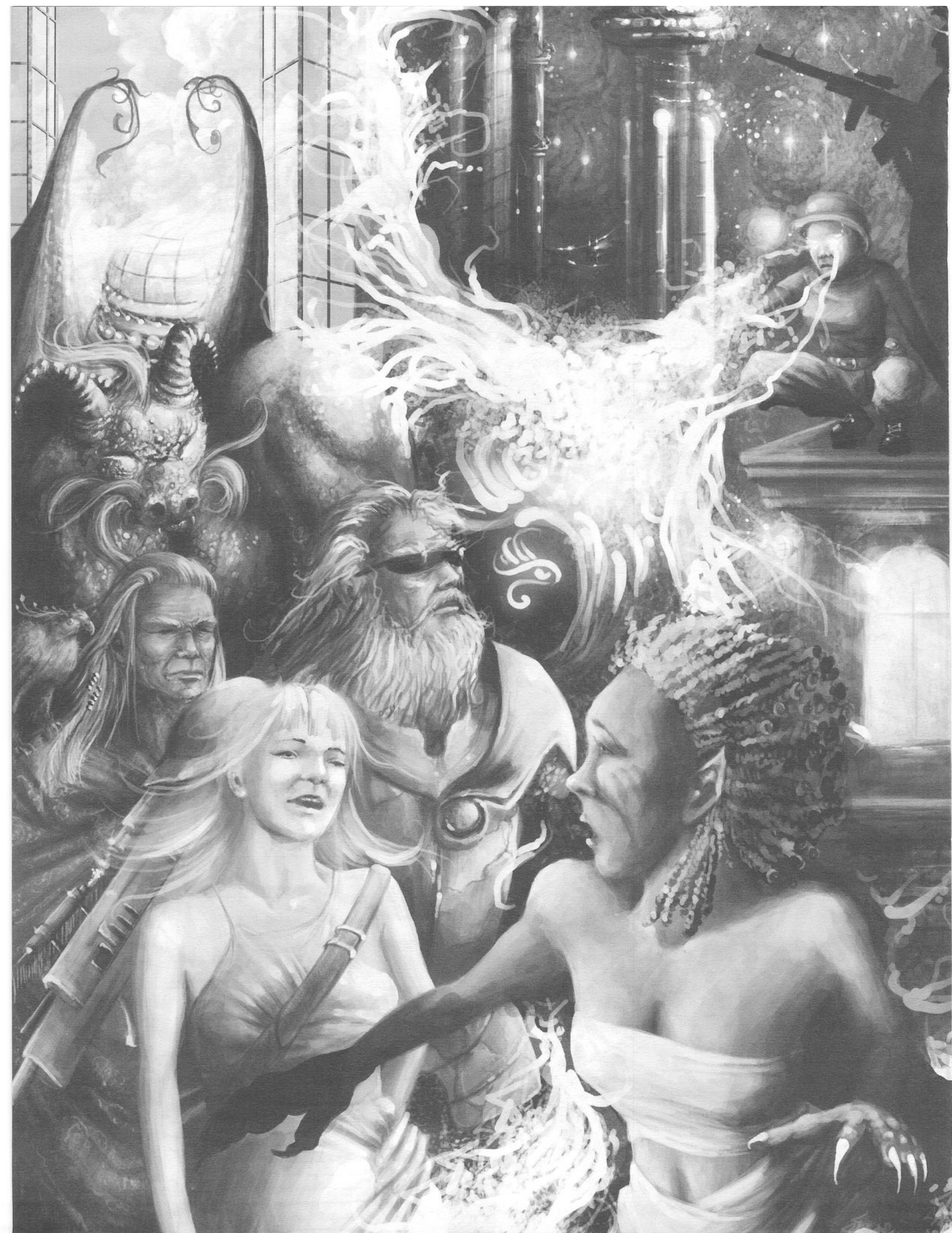
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# DESTINY'S OVERTURE

introduction

*Beneath the Heavenly City shall be the door to Hell.  
Solomon's seal, beneath the Rock of Sacrifice,  
For six ages of mortal man shall it hold.  
As it is written, so shall it be.*

*Before the dawn they arise,  
Blood of thy blood, scions of thy line,  
All the duty and thunder that flesh is heir to.  
These words are for them, and those that come after.*

*They shall not shy from their destiny, nor fear it,  
But shall walk, clear-eyed and faithful,  
Into faith's eternal crucible  
Before the dawn.*

*The world turns  
On the one axis of virtue.  
They shall have the faith of destiny.  
In their light is the way made bright.*

**2216, Feb. 8th, 2003**

"Any problems getting that sword through airport security?"  
"None - it's been warded against detecting. Have the other members of the Order arrived?" asked Reginald Coventry. He swung the heavy bag onto his shoulder and followed his companion through the ranks of parked cars.

"The gang's all here. The circle is complete, and we're almost ready for tomorrow morning," replied the young woman who called herself Nimue. She paused by her car for a moment, produced a small compass, and took a reading. She smiled. "Right on schedule. Look." She held the compass out. The needle was pointing due south, into the heart of Jerusalem.  
"As it is written," he murmured.

**0622, Feb. 22nd, 2003**

The helicopter came in low over the outer defensive perimeter. The airport below was a fortress, ringed with gun emplacements and trenches. A few civilian airlines sat on the verge, showing signs of neglect. The hangars and taxiways by the terminal were crowded with military transports, and the thunder of an approaching C2 shook the air.

The helicopter hovered for a moment over the airport. An anti-aircraft gun swivelled around to aim at it.

"This is Papa Tango, carrying a Department-7 science team. They're scheduled for a four-hour mission in the old city. We request permission to pass the inner line."

Sarah Tours listened intently for the reply, but could not make out the words over the noise of the rotors. The pilot of the helicopter glanced back at her.

"We've got a green light. ETA for the old city, fifteen minutes. After that, you've got two hours before pickup."

"Thank you." She sat back next to Seth Philby. She watched his practised hands run over his rifle, his body armor, his small arsenal of weaponry. "We're going in for four hours, not starting a war."

He stared back at her. "Have you been in Jerusalem since the Rip?"  
"No...but I thought the Israeli army had cleared the city."

Seth shook his head. "They tried to wipe them all out, but hostiles keep showing up out of nowhere. The perimeter's intact, but that's about it. It gets a bit safer once you go through the Rip, but the area surrounding it is still hellish. And that's where we're going. If we get spotted, we're fucked, so keep your head down and do exactly what I say."

He slid a knife into his boot. Sarah suppressed a smile. He looked for all the world like someone trying to do a bad Vin Diesel impersonation - but the expression on his face was deadly serious. "We're almost over the city," he observed. "Switch on your recorder."

Sarah pressed on the power stud on her shoulder-mounted

camcorder, then unclipped and put on the headset. "Project Titan PJÉ mission three, agent Sarah Tours reporting. We're currently approaching Jerusalem." She leaned over, pressing the camera against the Plexiglas window, and looked out at the city as it flitted by. "Oh- my God."

**2302, Feb. 8th, 2003**

"The plan," said Nimue, "is get up early tomorrow, save the world, then have breakfast in that café over there - unless you can think of another five impossible things to do." The pair walked past rows of anonymous houses. "This whole area was built on top of one of the Order's old sanctuaries. They had a hell of a time keeping it a secret in the 60s." She pointed at one house across the road, seemingly identical to its neighbours. "That's our place."

Coventry followed her into the house. The threshold was carved with protective runes, and he felt a thrill wash over him as he crossed it. Inside, the hallway was a tangle of computer cables and talismans. He closed the heavy front door firmly behind him and locked it. He relaxed for a moment, and then shrugged off his long overcoat. Beneath, he wore a purple shirt marked with odd-seeming symbols; they were magical, but most people seeing them wouldn't realize that, of course. He knelt for a moment and touched the floor, acknowledging the long service of the hidden fortress. Then he rose and followed Nimue downstairs.

At the bottom of the stairs, he opened a door sealed with the great symbol of the Promethean Order, and then he stepped into a vast underground chapel.

They were waiting. He recognised two of them by sight - Nimue perched on a stone shelf, her fingers dancing over the laptop, and Tender Robinson, of the Wild Things. Robinson's hulking form was on the far side of the fire that lit the room and his shape was mercifully obscured by the flames. Coventry suppressed a shudder of distaste.

The other two he knew only by reputation as the best of their kin. He bowed to them. "It is an honour to finally make your acquaintance. I am Reginald Coventry, of the line of Kings."

A man stepped forward into the light, which danced on his leathery face and in his dark eyes. He wore a necklace of black feathers, and the shadow on the wall behind him was that of a great bird in flight. In a gravelly voice, he said, "I am Nathan Two-Roads, of the Storm Crows."

Beside him stood a tall African woman. Her unusually accented words were lyrical, beguiling, yet somehow threatening. "I am Afrikete. The Wild Bloods sent me as their champion for this."

"God, I hate these stupid introductions," muttered Nimue, "where everyone so portentously announces where they come from."

Nathan frowned. "Tradition is important, now more than ever. All of us are here, now, because of what we must do tomorrow. The world has changed for us, but not for them. For them, only

a moment has passed. They are still strong in their anger and their hate.

Nimue turned the laptop around for the others to see. "The convergence point is confirmed. Temple Mount. You were right about the Seal, Nathan."

"That's where they're coming through," said Reginald. He spoke again, softly, swearing an oath upon his sword.

"We will not allow them to escape."

### 0638, Feb. 22nd 2003

The helicopter flew over the twisted ruins. Sarah stared in mute horror, the microphone recording nothing more than the sound of the rotors and her terrified breathing. Here, a tower ripped in two. There, a row of houses impaled on a huge iron gate. Two cities, Jerusalem and some alien metropolis, thrown together in urban agony, hellishly lit by tortured tears in the sky. Shapes moved in the shadows, and a thousand hungry eyes gleamed as the helicopter passed overhead. Hot winds buffeted the craft as it descended towards a landing site, a half-cleared plaza surrounded by ruined buildings.

Seth took the safety off his gun. "Head for that rubble here. Go." Sarah dropped out of the helicopter, which hovered a dozen feet about the ground, rolled, then ran to cover. Seth leaped after her, his eyes scanning for any sign of danger. The streets seemed empty of hostiles, but every burnt-out car or twisted building could contain something from the wrong side of the Rip.

Sarah had fumblingly drawn her gun. "Anything?"

"No...shit." Seth pointed at part of the wall behind which they'd taken cover. A pillar of greenish stone stood by the wall, and a human arm protruded from the stone. Ghostly streaks and veins of red ran through the green stone from where the arm emerged. "Some poor bastard got entombed here." Seth poked the discoloured part of the pillar with a knife, and it began to bleed. The blood was mixed with little pieces of grit. It splattered on the broken shards of a coffee cup.

"I hate this place," he muttered. "Go on, do your thing. I want out of here ASAP."

Sarah nodded shakily. She clasped her hands together, then closed her eyes and exhaled slowly. A chill wind blew through the ruins, carrying a sound that could have been thunder and could have been the beating of terrible dark wings. Sarah shivered as the birds descended on her from some spectral realm, or rose up from within her blood. For a moment, she was between two worlds. She opened her eyes

A man yawned and walked through her. 24-hour news on the television, and the smell of freshly brewed coffee filling the house. The house around her was intact. Outside, it was dark, but the sky in the east had the slightest pink hint of the coming dawn. Sarah peered at the television screen. "0625 according to a news channel. February 9th. The birthright seems to be working."

Seth's voice came from behind her. "Can you move forward?"

"I don't know... let me try." She concentrated. The images on the TV screen accelerated to a blur, the world was a video in fast-forward. The man vanished from the room, returned fully dressed a moment later. The kettle screeched as it boiled again. He leaned against the wall for a moment, watching the sports results.

A bright flash. All the windows exploded inwards. The TV screen went black. Then, for a moment, there was silence, broken only by the lonely call of a bird in flight.

The world changed. Eerie, unreal shapes floated through the air for an instant, and then, with a thunderclap, the shapes became real. Sarah screamed and threw herself backward as the green pillar materialised in the room. The man did not have time to scream.

Seth helped her up. "You're not there. Come back out of it."

She shook her head. "No. There's something... else. Come on."

### 0632, Feb. 9th

Dawn was breaking over Temple Mount. "This is the place," said Nimue with certainty. "It matches both the old prophecies and the magnetic anomalies I picked up."

"You're certain?" asked Coventry.

"Behold, I have descended into the darkness of the past to bring back the light of knowledge. I am antique wisdom in the body of fresh youth, Merlin's lover and betrayer and heir. I'm both smart and cute. Why else do you think I am Nimue?" She giggled nervously.

"You like to fuck geriatrics?" said Tender.

"You wish."

"Silence, all of you!" commanded Coventry. "Nathan, is this the place?"

They stood on an ancient tower high above the city. Nathan Two-Roads walked in a great circle around the rooftop. Birds circled overhead. He stopped, stared down at one house for a moment, then turned back to the other Prometheans. "Yes, this should be the place."

Coventry drew his sword and concealed it behind him. "Nimue, begin." She sat cross-legged on the roof and began to incant a spell.

Afrikete came up silently behind Nathan. "You sounded uncertain. I thought the Storm Crows had been predicting this since Atlantis." "All this was prophesied, and the prophecies have never failed us, yes. But until they come true, what are prophecies but words in the dust?"

"Do you foresee a problem?"

"No, I foresee- nothing... But all this was fated. We cannot turn back."

### 0640, Feb. 22nd

"Five of them," said Sarah. "Titans. Powerful ones." Seth

watched her as she stared out up at the mount, looking back in time. "They were here. Just before the Rip. They're doing something, some sort of ritual."

"Another Project Team? But we didn't have anyone in place before the Rip!"

#### 0640, Feb. 9th

"Ok... we're about to affirm the Seal," said Nimue. "This will probably cause a few ripples in the binding, so be prepared for some, er, demon leakage."

Coventry nodded. "They will be material for only a few seconds as they adjust to our world, so strike them as hard as you can." As Nimue's voice rose and fell, all the Prometheans felt a tugging in their souls, her spell drawing up their essences. Her face began to shine, brighter in their eyes than the rising sun. Phantom black birds perched on Nathan's shoulder and whispered wisdom into his ear. A kingly crown of thorns drew blood from Coventry's forehead.

Afrikete hissed a warning. "They're coming through - there!" The air above them rippled for a moment, then folded back on itself like burning paper. Something hurled itself through the rent in space, a shape that was humanoid but not, that somehow oozed wrongness, a ghastly conglomeration of insect parts and teeth and mucus. As it came through the rent, it changed, alternating between solidity and the literal stuff of nightmare as the energies of the rift played over it. Tender leapt forward, his hands sprouting bright claws. The insect-thing lashed out at him, but he was faster. His claws plunged deep, spilling vile ichor across the rooftop. He lifted the horror and pushed it back through the widening rift.

"Shut the fucking thing!" he shouted, as slimy tendrils wrapped around his hands and sought purchase in his veins. More holes began to open in the air. Coventry barked orders. "Nathan, guard Nimue. Afrikete, hold those two off." He leapt forward with his sword, which was suddenly wreathed in flame, and drove the blade into the torso of an emerging demon. For a moment, nightmares threatened to fill the plaza. Then, like the ringing of a silver bell, Nimue spoke the final words of the spell. As the light of dawn struck the rents in the air, they vanished. Like nightmares driven away by the passing of the night, they were gone.

Reginald Coventry raised his sword in salute. Behind him, Nimue cheered, and even Tender cracked a misshapen grin.

#### 0707, Feb. 22nd

Seth vaulted over the wall and fired another burst. The bullets thudded wetly into something in the darkness, which squealed and spat a jet of acid back at him. He dodged and fired again, trusting his finely honed instincts to guide his aim. The mon-

ster lurched out into the half-light, bleeding from a dozen wounds. Sarah put another three rounds into its side, and another burst from Seth's rifle finished the beast.

The echoes of the firefight faded. The ruined city seemed to pause for a moment, and then the shadows came alive with hidden movement.

"We've got to get out of here!" urged Seth.

"No." Sarah began to walk up the ruin of the Via Dolorosa, looking towards the shattered ruins of an old tower. "They didn't."

#### 0715, Feb. 9th

"Uh oh." Nimue frowned at her computer. "This is screwy."

"We just held shut the gates of the daemon prison. 'Screwy' is not an option."

"Well, the fields should have returned to normal, but now they're even more distorted. It's gone too far the other way - the gates are..." she paused, "um... being pushed inwards by something?" She looked up at the other Prometheans, and for the first time since they all met, her eyes were full of fear. "Something's wrong."

"This cannot be," said Coventry, "our victory was prophesied." Tender scowled. "How screwed are we?"

"Just- just give me a second to think," said Nimue. "There's a Seal, buried underground. The ritual was supposed to reinforce it, renew it with our essences."

"I thought... We were too far away," said Nathan slowly. His voice was distant. "We needed to be right on top of it."

Coventry nodded. "Bloody hell. We are too far from the ground. Downstairs, and hurry. Keep out of sight - we don't have the darkness to cloak us now. Afrikete, lead the way," he ordered. The five Prometheans hurried east, walking into the bright dawn that seemed to mock their efforts. The city around them was waking, all sense of magic and ritual vanished as the night gave way.

Deep beneath the earth, in a chamber unopened and undetected for centuries, lay a magical seal, one of many devices that held back the Daemonhost. It was still as bright and unblemished as when it had first been forged.

Coventry felt the holy city touch him. This place was the focus of so much order, so much civilization, and so much bloodshed. All three twined together in his veins, calling out for his aid. Nimue's mind raced as she frantically calculated how the ritual could be used to hold the gate shut. Fear of what might happen and joy at her own skill combined, and she skated the edges of possibility, searching for the one chance that would bring them through, the one thread of fate that must exist, the thread that they'd been promised.

Tender flexed his claws. He scented enemies on the air, and his blood boiled with battle-lust. They were there, pressing at the skin of the world. He howled a warning to them - cross over, and you'll wish you stayed in Hell.

Afrikete glanced around, in a flash marking every possible point of cover and every escape route.

Nathan looked back, and then forward.

#### 0722, Feb. 22nd

"He's looking straight at me. Oh, God. He sees me." Sarah gasped. "He's... I know him. And...oh..."

A flurry of wings startled Seth. He raised his rifle, then paused. A large crow flapped through the air above them, the only bird in a dark and desolate sky. It circled once, and alighted on the slope a little distance away. Seth clambered over the bizarre ruins and shone his torch at the crow.

"It's sitting on some sort of... burnt-out equipment. A big cable, some sort of transmitter. Really heavy-duty stuff. What the hell is that doing here?"

Sarah fell to her knees, and stared back.

#### 0735, Feb. 9th

"I've got it!" said Nimue, "I know how to stop it!"

"Places!" barked Coventry. Once again, the four arranged themselves around Nimue. She began to chant, but it was much too late. Her words were lost in a sudden electric hum that rose from all around them.

Beneath them, the seal buckled and tore.

#### 0736, Feb 22nd

For a moment, Sarah was there, with them, as the world wheeled around them. Everything was in perfect balance, suspended between then and now - and with a sudden jolt, it all broke, falling away, hurled into confusion.

#### 0736, Feb. 9th

"Here they come," said Tender grimly.

Nathan whispered to no one in particular, "Remember."

Nothing more needed to be said.

The world shattered around them.

Reality peeled back like burnt flesh, revealing a bizarre other-world that rushed toward Jerusalem. With a terrible lurch, the two cities collided and merged in a hideous union of stone and flesh. Matter was forced into wrongness, into twisted shapes and agonised forms. Even as the land suffered, the sky burned. It peeled back from the horizons, opening the way to a terrible place between, an abyss between the worlds that boiled and churned with horrors. The air was suddenly black with monsters streaming from their shattered prison. The daemons revelled in

their freedom, laughing, shrieking, calling to one another as they cascaded down from the Temple Mount and out across the world. In the weeks to come, the world would look at the horror, armies would muster on the borders, nations would come to the brink of war - and they would step back, realising in their hearts that nothing human could bring such ruin.

By some, it was referred to as the Last Act of God.

Tender winced as he wiped the blood from his intact eye, using a hand that was shattered beyond repair. Three corpses lay nearby. He staggered to his feet, ignoring the pain that blasted through his mangled form. He had survived. Somehow, against the odds, he had survived, and he would make them pay. He howled his challenge again.

A vast form, dark and terrible, materialised in the sky above him. Clear of the rift, it was immaterial, invulnerable to his claws. It was hopeless.

Tender looked at the daemon and spoke in a broken voice. "It wasn't supposed to happen like this."

"No," agreed the daemon, "it wasn't." Claws lashed out, tearing at Tender's soul, and then the Temple Mount was empty of life.

#### 0825, Feb 22nd

The helicopter hovered in the sky above the Temple Mount. Seth buckled Sarah into the harness and signalled for the pilot to winch her aboard. She grabbed onto his arm, desperately trying to cram the revelation into words.

"It wasn't their fault."

The helicopter began to rise out of what had become of Jerusalem.

## INTRODUCTION

Mythic Dreams Studios is excited to present Dark Inheritance, a modern mythic horror setting for use with the d20 System. This book is the first in a line of products that explore a world of terrifying action, where the genetic inheritors of the gods and monsters of legend battle against ancient horrors and explore a mystical world hidden behind long-forgotten gates. In this book, you will find the core rules and setting for Dark Inheritance. You will find new advanced classes, feats, rules for relics, an entirely new character type, seven organizations, and much more. Dark Inheritance is like the graphically violent action movie you've always enjoyed. It draws from such inspirations as Hard Boiled, Replacement Killers, Pitch Black, and Hellboy. It is not a stagnant world with plotlines that are never resolved or GM characters that never change. The world of Dark Inheritance evolves and grows over time, just like our own world. The setting information detailed herein is only the first action-packed scene in a larger movie - a movie that you and your players control. When you play Dark Inheritance and report back to us through the official Dark Inheritance website

([www.mythicdreams.com/darkinheritance](http://www.mythicdreams.com/darkinheritance)), you and your gaming group – the ways you overcome challenges or even the ways you fail miserably – can help establish the future direction of the setting. Fear the future, for no one and nothing is truly safe. The assumed start date in a Dark Inheritance game is March 20, 2003, less than two months after the occurrence of the Rip, a terrifying and world-shaking disaster that has transformed Jerusalem into an urban horror. From this point onwards, each supplement will move forward in time, updating the setting for the time that has passed since the previous release.

All of us at Mythic Dreams Studios believe strongly in the interactivity of roleplaying, which is why we've decided to make Dark Inheritance a worldwide multiplayer experience. The more you tell us how you play Dark Inheritance, the better we can be at creating the games you want to play. However, as not everyone is interested in this level of interactivity (or has time for it), we have filled the book with plot hooks and plenty of material useable by both Game Masters (*GMs*) and players alike. In this book, we have included all the major organizations, legacies, classes, and antagonists. Future sourcebooks will present all new material and expand the universe of Dark Inheritance – with your input, in the direction you want it to take.

And always remember the first rule of roleplaying: This game is for you and your players' enjoyment, so if there is something you want to change, change it. It is your game.

### **This Is Not A Complete Game**

Despite its size, Dark Inheritance is not a complete game. It is a new and complete setting that uses the rules presented in Wizards of the Coast's *d20 Modern Roleplaying Game*. Dark Inheritance does not include its own systematic rules for character creation or advancement, nor does it include the combat and arcane FX systems. Instead, it presents new options, advanced classes, feats, and even a new character type – the titan, the genetic inheritor of the powers of gods and monsters of myth. You will need a copy of the *d20 Modern Roleplaying Game* to play Dark Inheritance.

## **WHAT IS DARK INHERITANCE?**

The world of Dark Inheritance is a terrifying alternate version of our present Earth, in which the genetic descendants of both gods and monsters of myth battle against invading demonic entities and otherworldly horrors, and explore a newly revealed and mystical Otherworld. In this threatened Earth, loyalty and allegiance are the only bulwarks against chaos and destruction – but whom do you trust when the enemy might possess any intelligent being?

### **Action and Horror**

Dark Inheritance is a world in which heroism can easily lead to death, and the action is bloody, tinged with enigmatic terror. Think of your favorite John Woo film, gritty and ultra-violent, with hugely elaborate and breathtaking action scenes, and couple it with the best suspense thriller. Now, add a healthy dose of dangerous supernatural elements, and you have an enthralling Dark Inheritance campaign.

This is a world where the fear of what may be crawling in the shadows becomes real and each day brings startling new revelations. Greed and necessity will take the characters to perilous prehistoric ruins in the Gobi Desert, the treacherous and bloody hallways of international mega-corporations, and the fantastic but dangerous Otherworld. In Dark Inheritance, Promethean Order warrior-mystics fight Eight Heavenly Dragon triad gangsters in the dark alleys of Cairo, each side trying to recover a gilt dagger, a relic that was stolen from the Louvre. Project Titan operatives raid a TransGenX lab conducting illegal gene research in an attempt to harness the power of the Godgene, and there they run afoul of a misshapen failure of the now-murdered scientists.

Only resourcefulness, courage, and cunning will see you safely through.

### **Exploration and Upeaval**

Long ago, extradimensional gates connected Earth and the Otherworld. In fact, an entire city, the capitol of the Daemonhost's empire, actually existed on both worlds simultaneously. But the destruction of that empire barred the doors between the two worlds and ripped the grand city from its nexus, forcing it to exist solely in the Otherworld. Now the long forgotten gates are unbarred, and the unexplained disaster in Jerusalem, dubbed "the Rip" by the media, has created a juxtaposed metropolis, one that draws the eyes of the world to watch in mute horror. But neither world was prepared for this explosive change. Fear and conflict herald the world that will be.

The Earth stands upon the brink of a decades'-long despair. The instability and fear instigated by the Rip grow with each day and every new broadcast. Rumor and hearsay become the only means, for most, of gaining information, as governments strain their power to control the proliferation of frightening attacks by unknown creatures. New York City police have barricaded Central Park after more than forty people have gone missing therein. And the Coast Guard is still investigating the sinking of the Emerald Star, Caribbean Carousel's flagship, 35 miles west of the Bahamas; a news blackout on the story is still in effect.

But this is also a time of tremendous opportunity. While untrusting nations threaten each other in never-ending rounds of negotiation and diplomacy, the superpowers race to be the first to claim new lands on an unexplored world. New resources, medicines, and even magic are rumored to exist in the Otherworld. The draw to be the first to bring back tangible proof of eldritch technology and marketable product is too great to ignore. Will the 21st century be a time of chaos, hunger, and fear, or will humankind tame the wild and harness these new powers that confront the world?

## Enigmas and Secrets

The past, as we all know, holds countless secrets, and some of these are best left undisturbed. Many of these mysteries are barely remembered, and only hints of the echoes of the truth are left today in mythology or folklore. A whole age of man has been lost to the scouring winds of time, and the existence of another world and the ethereal force of magic were swept into dust - or purposefully hidden. The few relics of this ancient time lie unmarked in museum basements or as mere curiosities in collections throughout the world, their origins and purposes unknown.

Most researchers had given up ever understanding these riddles of history, these paradoxes and anomalies, until now, since the terrible events in Jerusalem. Once, those who studied and disclosed such esoteric mysteries were derided as occultists, conspiracy theorists, and eccentrics, but the Rip changed everything. Valid study into what were previously considered anomalies and historical inconsistencies, even into the paranormal and supernatural, are now encouraged, although it has become even more difficult to separate the cranks and conmen from true students of the arcane. The discovery of the Otherworld and the Godgenes has transformed the face of science. In a brief, terrifying apotheosis, our understanding of the nature of the universe was undeniably changed.

Physicists at Berkley and MIT race to be the first to prove the relationships between ethereal energies and quantum mechanics, excitedly looking toward this new dimension as a possible solution to the Grand Unification Theory. Previously untapped sources of energy, innovative methods of manufacturing, and new tools to pry the secrets of the cosmos from its tightly clenched fist are now becoming realities. By looking back to the past, many of the puzzles of the present can now be solved.

Archaeology has once again come into vogue. New ruins and whole new sections of ancient sites that were thought to have been fully explored have now been uncovered. Something - some force, it seems - was keeping scientists from discovering hidden chambers, passages, and ruins, but that force or compulsion has now withdrawn. However, the majority of these new discoveries are also proving to be dangerous places, in which unusual and unnatural creatures stalk and hunt. Rumors of inhuman beings moving silently through the wreckage of the past are being leaked to the media. Unexplained deaths, attacks, and robberies are also on the rise. And the world's markets, both mainstream and underground, struggle to meet an irrepressible demand for artifacts and relics unearthed from these sites.

Genetics is possibly the clearest link to the distant past. Although its very existence remains a tightly controlled secret, the gestalt Godgene is a prize few governments or corporations would not kill to obtain, understand, and manipulate. The raw power inherent to those who possess a complete set of these

primeval strands of DNA makes the Godgenes perhaps the single most important piece of knowledge in the entire contemporary world.

## Titans: Inheritors of Gods and Monsters

The player characters (**PCs**) in Dark Inheritance are the descendents of the gods and monsters who once walked the Earth. Within their genetic codes are hidden the secrets and talents of the ancients and a lost destiny. Although empowered with the very might of deities, these lost children of the progenitors are ill-prepared to battle the vile Daemonhost who have escaped their abyssal prison and to confront the threats that invade our world from the mysterious Otherworld.

### A Failed Destiny

The gods and monsters of legend, the progenitors, were destined to prevent the escape of the primeval souls that were banished to the Abyss an age ago, but they failed. Now the battle against the ancient enemies of the progenitors is hidden in plain sight. Dangerous energies and terrible creatures appear from the Otherworld through invisible tears in the interplanar fabric, focusing the public's attention on the obvious threat but leaving the Daemonhost free to further their nefarious plans.

## GLOSSARY

**Abyss:** A dark place of great evil, somehow connected to yet separate from our own world. The Abyss is the place in which the Host was imprisoned by the progenitors in an earlier age.

**Allegiance:** A term used by modern organizations and titans to describe an organization that knows of the existence of inheritors. Many Allegiances have members who are titans. Some are more secretive than others, and antagonistic cooperation between them is the order of the day.

**Ascendancy:** The empire of the Host, destroyed by the progenitors in the Lost Age.

**Birthright:** The name given to the powers of inheritors.

**Child of Might:** One of the first several generations of children born to the progenitors and their descendants during the Lost Age. Inheritors of remarkable power.

**Daemon:** An ancient term that applies to any outsider. Most are servants or allies of the Daemonhost and escaped into our world during the Rip.

**Daemonhost:** The spectral remains of the once preeminent Host. The progenitors bound the souls of the Host to the Abyss and that foul plane twisted their souls. They are a great evil that was released into the world during the event called the Rip.

**Demon:** An ancient word with many meanings, “demon” was first used by the media to describe those Otherworld life-forms that are demonstrably hostile to humans just a short time after the Rip. Its usage in this context has now become commonplace.

**Godgene:** The gestalt metagenes that manifest in people known as titans or inheritors. It is a type of master coding gene that does not follow the known rules of genetics. Godgenes are capable of “overlapping” genes on adjacent chromosomes, forming an “ubergene” and thus granting supernatural powers and attributes.

**Host:** Those beings imprisoned by the progenitors and bound into the Abyss. Often used interchangeably, and thus inaccurately, with Daemonhost.

**Inheritor:** An older term for a titan. It is used primarily by the Promethean Order and Fugo A Watu (see Chapter Two: Allegiances).

**Legacy:** A titan lineage. There are five known legacies that survive today: Crimson Lords, Hidden Suns, Storm Crows, Void Phoenixes, and Wild Bloods.

**Legendary Transformation:** The process of transformation that inheritors may undergo as they tap into the birthrights of their lineage. While these changes tie the titan even more closely to the power of his legacy, they also make him less human and – at least presumably – more like his unearthly ancestors.

**Lost Age:** A time before the last ice age and the rise of the ancient civilizations of Egypt and Sumer, when the Ascendancy ruled the world. Many of humankind’s myths arise from this time, and only occasional relics, long ignored by scientists, hint at its reality.

**Otherworld:** The common word for the plane or planet that is connected to earth through many unseen fissures. During the Lost Age, gates created by the Host connected the Otherworld and Earth. Little is known about this world.

**Progenitors:** The beings who, ages ago, destroyed the Ascendancy and locked the spirits of the Host in an Abyssal prison. They are the genetic ancestors of the titans.

**Rip (the Rip):** The unexplained disaster that merged Jerusalem with an otherworldly ruined city on February 10, 2003. It is also the term used to describe the 1-mile radius around what was once Jerusalem that allows unimpeded travel between Earth and the Otherworld.

**Titan:** The modern term for the descendents of the progenitors; also called inheritors, they are people born with a fully developed Godgene, who thus express the genetic traits of a legacy. The word “titan,” used in this context, was originally coined by Department-7 experts.

## What this Book Contains

This book is intended for use by both GMs and players. The contents are as follows:

### Introduction

This is what you are reading now. It quickly sketches out the themes and moods of Dark Inheritance and provides you with a short glossary.

### Chapter One: The Ways of the World

This first chapter describes in detail the setting of Dark Inheritance. It reveals secrets of history that have been lost or hidden from common people and explores the current world after the Rip.

### Chapter Two: Allegiances

This chapter details seven major organizations, cults, and societies that play a formative or definitive role in the world of Dark Inheritance. All of these groups employ or recruit Titans. Genre inspirations and hints for roleplaying characters from each group are also found here.

### Chapter Three: New Character Options

A plethora of new material is presented in this chapter, everything from new occupations, feats, and advanced classes to the new inheritor character type, legacy feats, and five titan legacies.

### Chapter Four: Birthrights

This chapter contains all the basic rules for birthrights, the powers of the titans. Included are three birthright trees for each legacy and descriptions of each birthright.

### Chapter Five: Magic

Not only does this chapter contain new spells and describe what magic is and how magic works in Dark Inheritance, but it also details complete rules for relics. Relics are collections of mystical items that bestow power upon all those bound to them. The powers they grant depend upon the levels of the characters bound to the relics.

### Chapter Six: Equipment

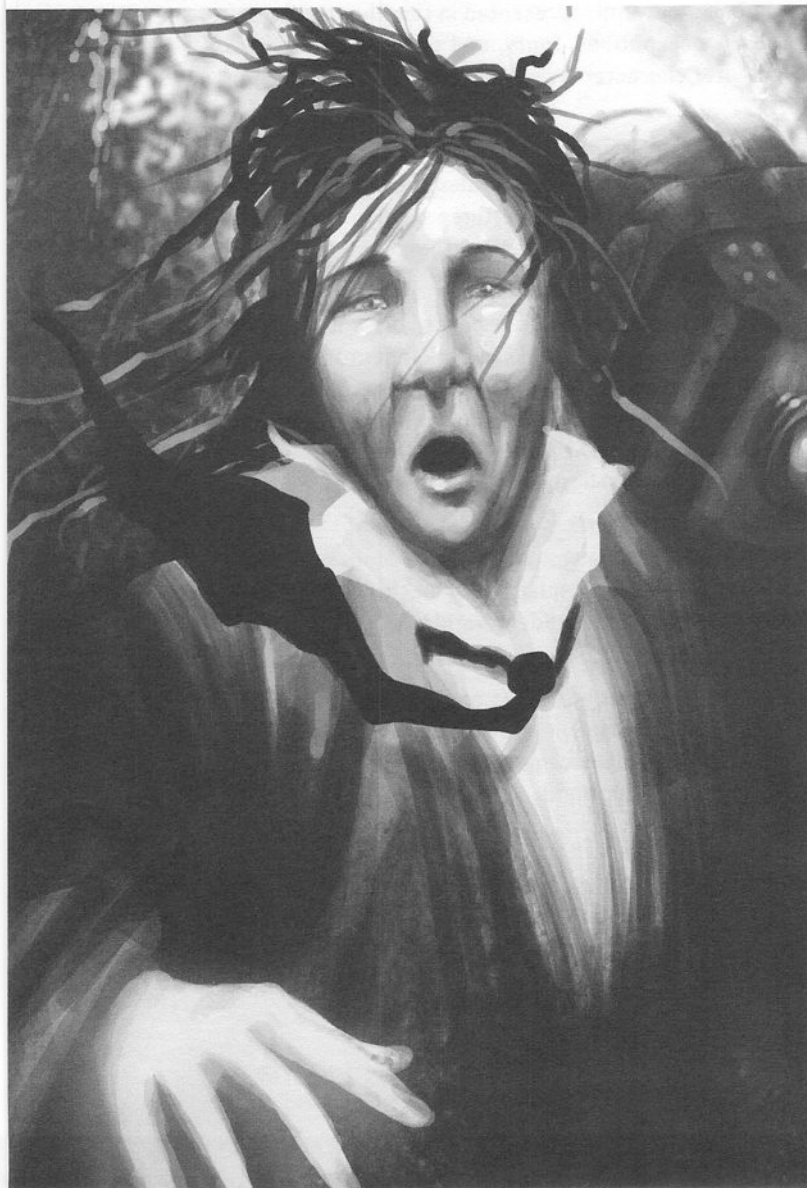
This chapter gives you more standard gear to equip your character. It also provides a large selection of magic items suitable to a fantasy game set in the modern world.

### Chapter Seven: Terrors

This chapter is more than just a list of monsters: It provides detailed rules for creating cults as well as details about the Daemonhost and their abyssal powers. It also contains new, deadly beasts of the Otherworld.



# THE WAYS OF THE WORLD



History isn't a lie, nor is it wrong – it's just not complete, rather like an ancient sacrificial clay bowl, bloodstained and dirty, that's been reassembled from a hundred broken shards. The past, just like the bowl, has bits and pieces that have been lost. Some moments were smothered out of fear, hate, and envy. Death and calamity took a share of what remained. And some of these fragments were purposefully hidden, for "Knowledge is Power" has been an axiom since long before the existence of man.

Even though, individually, these lost pieces of history and knowledge were mostly secondary, if not trivial, the detritus of loss has built up over thousands of years. As the quantity of missing fragments grew, whole sections of history became difficult if not impossible to reconstruct. And when too many fragments of history were lost, its entire shape changed. The reconstructed vessel of history today has been patched in many places, and indeed grows ever larger, but it bears little

resemblance to the bowl it once was.

Yet there are some people and groups who still hold on to small pieces missing from the greater whole, secrets and bits of knowledge that have been passed down in isolated lineages and societies through millennia. What follow in this chapter are details of just some of those lost shards, fragments of the past that were misplaced or hidden from most, but which have been found again or were never lost to others.

## **Titans: Inheritors of a Mythic Lineage**

There is a secret buried deep inside every one of us, a secret passed down from mother to daughter, father to son. A tiny secret, one that has only now been discovered by the scientific tools of our age. It is a secret held in our very genes: a unique "metagene" that is something more than human. It is a gene past down through many thousands of years, from a time before the Age of Ice, when gods, monsters, and heroes walked the earth. It is a vestige of those creatures that man calls divine, infernal, monstrous, and spirit. Most people only have a trace, a fragment of this gene. There is nothing strange or different about them, nothing you can perceive. These people are your neighbors, your friends, and your coworkers. They make up the vast majority of humanity. But there remains a very small minority of people on Earth who have more of these Godgenes than other folk. These rare few exhibit the traits of

their ancient forbearers, their supernatural abilities, their strengths, and their weaknesses. They are the inheritors, the descendants of gods and monsters - what those who know of them today call the titans.

Titans have the ability to manifest what they refer to as "birthrights," supernatural abilities inherited from their distant progenitors. Birthrights may give the inheritor unparalleled charisma, uncanny skill, control of the weather, amazing luck, the healing touch, command over others' emotions, and much more, depending upon the inheritor's precise lineage. Titans call upon these abilities by unconsciously manipulating the energies of the Ethereal Plane, the very same energies that sorcerers, witches, and mystics command. But they do so in a vastly different way. Instead of harnessing the eldritch power by using magical tools, arcane gesture, and ritual, titans channel the power directly through their physical forms. They are always connected to the ethereal energies. While channeling such energy would most certainly kill any human, the Godgene within titans protects them from the ravages of mystical energy.

The power to manifest birthrights is not without its costs, however. Titans are still essentially human, and manifesting the powers of their ancestors causes great strain on their minds and bodies. As titans increase in might, they are threatened by a slow transformation, a transformation into beings of immense power - but beings that have little in common with humanity. They become susceptible to the weaknesses and vulnerabilities hinted at in myth and are driven more and more by the passions and desires of their inhuman predecessors. Inheritors must therefore balance the use of their potent birthrights carefully, using them when needed but not to the point of exhaustion.

It has been mentioned that titans are a rare breed, but it is worth noting that until the very recent past they were far rarer, nearly unique. Only in the last one hundred years or so have the circumstances become ripe for the reappearance of the titans. The Godgene is a gestalt gene, a combination of several independent and seemingly unrelated strands of DNA that most scientists had dismissed as "junk DNA." Yet these genes, when they appear on several adjacent chromosomes, can, under the right circumstances, overlap and form a single gestalt gene, called a Godgene. These gene segments are apparently tied to specific ethnic backgrounds, but no one ethnicity normally carries an entire set of gestalt Godgenes. Without a complete Godgene, a person will never show signs of his or her deific heritage. Many people carry a tiny portion of these unique DNA strands, but few have all the necessary pieces to manifest a titanic legacy. Over the last one hundred years, though, the world's population has become more ethnically mixed. This trend has become even more pronounced within the last few decades. It is more common for children to be born to parents of different ethnicity, at most only distantly related and often completely unrelated. Such diversity provides a perfect set of

circumstances for the reintegration of a complete Godgene. As a result, the number of people who display legacy traits has increased. However, many potential inheritors - those with a full Godgene sequence - never call upon the power they are capable of manifesting. And although the members of the eugenics cult Fugo a Watu (see Chapter Two: Allegiances) are averse to admitting it, there are numerous people alive today who will never discover their deific or monstrous heritage. They may never know that, buried inside each cell, they harbor the power of gods. These lost children of the progenitors will never know what it is like to summon a storm, to let the beast within them run wild, or to touch the first, primal act of creation.

While members of each legacy have certain traits in common, each titan is a distinct individual. Beyond a common ancestry and the broad predispositions of each legacy, every titan is a unique expression of human potential. The circumstances surrounding the first manifestation of titan traits, however, do have some general commonalities. The legacy of gods and monsters, though diluted by countless generations, expresses itself within special people, people that Storm Crow seers once described as those "having a deep destiny." The circumstances that cause people to transform from latent titans to fully expressed inheritors are usually traumatic and always life-altering. In almost every case, some potentially fatal or emotionally traumatizing event triggers an involuntary response within the latent. The person acts without conscious thought, using her inherent abilities to save herself, or perhaps others, from danger. It is never an obvious, pyrotechnic display of power; rather the person expresses the inborn natural traits of his deific or monstrous lineage and overcomes the trial through the use of her newly found gifts. Those watching the event may not even realize that something supernatural has just occurred. For those latents who have no knowledge of inheritors - that is, the majority of them - this event may be the moment after which everything in their life changes. For such people, nothing is ever the same again. On the other hand, some uninformed or skeptical latents may simply rationalize away their suspicions or concerns, and in time come to forget the whole matter.

Many Allegiances (see Chapter Two: Allegiances) are always looking for these newly manifested titans, even hoping to discover the person as they first manifest. Even though the number of titans has increased over the last century, those who express the traits in the Godgenes are rare. Titans are powerful individuals, having coded within their genetics the ability to manipulate the very fabric of the universe. In addition to their value as test subjects, they make excellent operatives, desirable companions, and powerful allies. Some Allegiances also see quiescent titans as potential dangers, as there is always the risk that something may jar him or her out of dormancy and into a fully operative titanic legacy. Without proper guidance, such individuals can become dangers to themselves and others. Besides uncontrollably manifesting

birthrights, these men and women quickly degenerate into archetypal expressions of their lineages – without assistance and understanding, they often transform into powerful beings driven only by their own passions and obsessive desires.

This in no way means that titans who remain unattached to Allegiances are destined to become incomprehensible terrors or maddened demigods. A sizeable minority of inheritors remain undiscovered for months or years, and they learn through experience how risky manifesting birthrights can be. In fact, most of the Allegiances described in Chapter Two were created by such individuals, who learned from their mistakes and survived to pass on their knowledge to others. It is only those who use their power recklessly that degenerate into terrifying apparitions of the ancient progenitors.

### Legacies

Inheritors are separated into lineages called legacies. These genetic groupings share common traits, birthrights, and weaknesses. Although there are some who believe that once there were more legacies, today only five are known to exist.

#### Crimson Lords

These inheritors are the aristocracy of the titans, although most titans would argue that such a title is entirely self-proclaimed. Most Crimson Lords are urbane, cultured people fascinated with the pleasures of civilization – some would say far too fascinated, for their debauched hedonism is legendary among the titans. The world simply holds too many pleasures and experiences for most Crimson Lords to ignore.

But the world is currently falling apart, and most Crimson Lords realize that, if they do not act, they will be left with only the cooling husk of a world as their kingdom. Of course, most members of the other legacies tend to resent the Crimson Lords' assumed rulership, and the Lords thus find it increasingly difficult to step into the leadership roles they historically have filled among titans. Right of blood is not enough proof for the children of the modern age. Loyalty must be earned and leadership must be proven before the others will follow their banner. Crimson Lords are, by nature, masters of emotion, fertility, and carnal wisdom. Their legacy embodies all the qualities most often promulgated by the media and modern culture: they are as a rule fashionable, elegant, arrogant, and more than a little narcissistic. But these titans can also be loving, caring, and loyal. They easily create and maintain bonds of friendship even amidst distrust and fear. Within them, one could argue, lies hope.

#### Hidden Suns

Hidden Suns are equal parts scholar of forbidden lore, miraculous healer, unseen infiltrator, and brilliant investigator. They delve into the secrets of the underworld, shedding the light of knowledge into the darkness of the soul. They are the underworld sun as well as the noon day solar disc. They are the provinces of death, life, healing, fire, light, shadow, and the occult.

It is commonly believed that those born to this legacy wrap themselves in death, manipulating the very energies of entropy and the shadowy darkness that envelops the underworld of myth. Those who fear or mistrust them claim they are children of the Abyss, friends of demons and the Daemonhost. But nothing could be further from the truth. Like the Sun, the Hidden Suns pass through the living lands as well as the lands of the dead. They are talented healers as well as necromancers. They are a paradox: brilliant shadows who display the glory and might of the Sun through their very darkness.

Hidden Sun scholars claim that the greatest necromancers and sorcerers of Egypt and Mesoamerica were Hidden Suns, who preserved the dead and the ancient mysteries of magic for the day when they would be needed again. The terrors released by the Rip and the revelation of the Otherworld now bring the old ways and workings back into the light. Today, the Suns' occult secrets are necessary for the survival of the world – and although the other legacies may not trust them implicitly, they work with them out of necessity.

#### Storm Crows

Those born of the Storm Crow Legacy are fierce warriors and doom-eyed seers. They have been bloody warlords, silent assassins, calm seers, and turbulent mystics. The song of conflict sings in their blood: Storm Crows love all forms of contest, whether in physical conflict, in debate, or in sport.

Of all the legacies, the Storm Crows have historically been those most in tune with destiny. Even many who were not mystics or shamans had the gift of prophecy. It is said that a dozen Storm Crows once arrived at the site of a battle three months before the armies had gathered. But today the Storm Crow prophets cry only doom, which they see descending with the force of a hurricane. Even the most clear-sighted of this legacy can no longer see the horizon of the future, but only the storm that currently threatens to envelop the world. Yet those of the Storm Crow Legacy are well prepared for the war they see coming.

War is this legacy's birthright, and they excel at it like no other. Wielding the power of thunder and manipulating the twisting strands of fate, Storm Crows can rule entire battlefields. Like the storm gods of legend, they stand amid the tempest unharmed, raining down destruction upon their enemies.

#### Void Phoenixes

From the void came all existence. From the swirling chaos of the proto-universe, existence arose again in splendor. These are the children of Tiamat, of the self-consuming worm of the world's end, the essential chaos of creation and destruction. Primal, cruel, unconcerned, the earliest and most powerful Void Phoenixes are said to have shaped the world. But now all that the Phoenixes see is the wrongness of a world in decay – a failure. Among titans as a whole, Void Phoenixes are generally thought of as dangerous, nihilistic juggernauts who watch and wait for the proper time to act.

Phoenixes often sow disorder, commonly using terror to manipulate or cow those who stand in the way of their goals. Smart Phoenixes are careful when they release the anger that seethes and writhes within them, for when it is unleashed destruction inevitably follows. But like the phoenix for which the legacy is named, new life often springs from their acts of unquenchable fury.

Titans of the Void Phoenix Legacy have the most difficult time retaining their humanity. While the Hidden Suns have power over death and the Storm Crows hold dominion over war and conflict, the Void Phoenixes hold mastery over destruction itself. The raw energy of creation, the originative chaos that fills them is a force nigh unto impossible to resist, capable of reshaping their bodies, minds, and souls into misshapen horrors. They often must hide their true physical forms from others.

Many Void Phoenixes are enigmas of power and intent that even Hidden Suns cannot unravel.

### Wild Bloods

The Wild Bloods feel the primal urge that lies deep within every human, but rather than denying its influence, they embrace the inner beast and let it run wild. The greatest hunters the world has ever known were born of this legacy; likewise, legends persist to this day of great beasts that once stalked man as prey. They are masters of the hunt who have the power to change and manipulate their physical form - skinwalkers, shapechangers, and brothers to beasts.

Members of the other legacies traditionally ignore the Wild Bloods, considering them little better than animals that should be kept on a leash and perhaps used to hound the enemy. They do not see the cunning nor the wisdom gained from the Wild Bloods' long study of nature and its ways. But the scions of this legacy have now also embraced the "new wilderness" as well, with its canyons of steel and rivers of traffic. Many Wild Bloods harbor a desire to root out and kill the corruption that plagues civilization. Some Wild Blood investigators track down serial killers and murderous cultists; Wild Blood environmental terrorists sabotage greedy and polluting corporations; and Wild Blood crime lords create new urban packs and tribes.

The story of civilization extends further down into the deep waters of the past than most history books claim. Lost cities, races, tribes, and ruined wonders terrified and awed people in ages that are no longer remembered. Hints and remnants from these forgotten times exist, but they are often not recognized or are ignored as aberrations by legitimate scientific inquirers. Regardless of the lack of proof, these cultures did indeed exist.

### The Lost Age

Although not the first, the greatest and most successful of these is still burned into the fabric of our mythology. Kefiu, Thule, and Atlantis are merely a few of the pseudonyms given

to the nearly lost memory of an ancient culture. The lips of the knowledgeable of our age call the inhabitants of that civilization the Host and their empire the Ascendancy, although neither are names those inhabitants themselves would have recognized.

Even the wisest of the wise living today remember little of this empire; an inherent fear, an intuitive dread has persisted down through the ages, a warning from the progenitors themselves. The empire of the Host was one greater than the dynasties of Egypt or Rome, or even of the young but powerful democracies of the modern age. Paley reflected rays of illumination shed only a glimmer of light upon the imposing culture of the Ascendancy, which not only escaped the bounds of gravity and atmosphere, but which crossed the veil between the planes themselves and fashioned relics of wonder that await discovery even today. Only the tiniest of traces, which remain unknown to the vast majority of people today, survived the empire's cataclysmic fall to prove such a world-spanning culture even existed.

The time of the Host occurred well before the recorded histories of Sumer and Egypt. The Ascendancy dominated the world before creeping ice ground the past back into the earth. The Host built cities of marvels, more beautiful than the hanging gardens of Babylon and more imposing than the metropolises of New York, Hong Kong, or Tokyo. From their mightiest city marched armies that rivaled the international legions of today. No city-state or dominion could stand against the glory of their terrible might, for the Host excelled at both magic and science. They forged those two disciplines into an impenetrable alloy that has remained unmatched since their fall.

The people of the Host soon grew accustomed to their lives of comfort and were free to pursue the mysteries of nature and the enigmas of magic, but slowly, over generations, they abandoned the pursuit of enlightenment for the never-ending pursuit for pleasure. Like the Romans, the citizens of the Host were given all the wonders their empire could offer, while those human people conquered by the Ascendancy were mere slaves and peasants. Long lives of leisure were the privilege of every citizen, enjoyed at the expense of the lives of thousands. Citizens never went hungry, nor did they have a desire that could not be satiated. The Host grew decadent. Their only driving goal became the slaking of base desires and emotions, and with a veritable multitude of slaves and vassal states, such a debauched lifestyle was easily sustainable.

A form of cultural inertia allowed even this debauched and depraved empire to grow, though more slowly than before. Even during this late, stagnant age, the Ascendancy continued to delve into the secrets of the universe and the metaphysical planes that exist beyond the perceptions of modern science. A few bright minds found the hunt for knowledge more satisfying than the hunt for physical gratification. These brilliant beings used every means at their disposal to unlock the powers of creation. Experiments, often of a particularly cruel nature,

were conducted on slaves and criminals; verifiable and repeatable results were the primary objectives these eldritch scientists struggled to attain, regardless of the pain and suffering caused in their subjects. And the atrocities they committed against their servitors did generate amazing results.

The para-scientific tools the eldritch scientists wielded were every bit as advanced and intricate as any purely scientific tool of today: from terrible engines of destruction to devices that expanded a wielder's eldritch strength. Calculating and heartless, they wrenched power from the very fabric of the cosmos, with little heed to the consequences. Harnessing the power of the sun, they pierced the curtain of space itself.

And with the might gathered from their mastery of the arcane, they crafted a temporary passage between Earth and a new world.

### Relics and Artifacts

Although few today know of the Lost Age, artifacts from that time still remain in the world. They are rare and invaluable items to those who know how to use them properly. Some are very simple magical devices, but others are potent relics. Such eldritch relics can appear as simple but elegant jewelry, weapons, cut gems, common looking items, or even unrecognizable objects. Some have illegible markings or intangible malevolent auras from which the wise or the sensitive recoil in fear. The most powerful are not single objects like normal archaeological artifacts, but instead collections of powerful trinkets and devices. Relics of the Lost Age are generally relegated to museum basements, venerated in ancient Hindu temples, hidden still within tombs, and reduced to mere curios and conversation pieces in art collectors' homes. A substantial majority of relics are not recognized for what they truly are: masterpieces of magical engineering.

Relics can be found all over the globe, sometimes unattended by nearby structures or other artifacts, or as aberrant objects that do not fit into the archaeological record that surrounds them. Those that are discovered far from any modern or ancient habitation are found in desolate areas, where an unusual green glass is also common, such as Mongolia, the Sahara, the Andes, and India. When discovered as a part of an archaeological expedition or tomb raid, relics are true anomalies. Items of power and relics that are discovered at traditional dig sites are obviously unattached to the people who once lived there. Their design and even their methods of manufacture would be impossible for any known ancient culture to create. Archaeologists usually record such relics as anomalous artifacts collected elsewhere in antiquity and enshrined by the local population or as modern hoaxes by locals or young and mischievous students – or they hush the matter up altogether to protect their precious professional reputations.

For more on relics in *Dark Inheritance*, see Chapter Five: Magic.

### The Otherworld

Although the cost to reach across the barrier of space or dimension was immense, the discovery of the Otherworld brought even greater strength to the Host, for the Otherworld was found to be closer to the Ethereal Plane, the realm where magic itself is created. Not only did this mean that magic was easier to craft there, but also that the new world's strong connection to the Ethereal Plane somehow affected the geologic development of the planet. The eldritch scientists of the Host found metals, gems, and crystals never before seen on Earth. Lengthy experimentation revealed a powerful bond between the Ethereal Plane and these otherworldly materials. Arcane foci and items crafted using these new materials proved more powerful, capable of manipulating magic with greater precision than those crafted from earthly substances. Using devices made from these new materials, they opened more passages to the Otherworld, ones that required less energy to create and maintain.

The Otherworld, however, was not devoid of life. The planet was at least as large as earth and just as ecologically diverse. Prairie expanses, vast forests, and shallow fertile seas dominated the planet. Flora and fauna thrived in these locales and flourished even in the deserts, tundra, and tall young mountains. These creatures were of course different than the animals of earth, often altered by their long exposure to the energies of the Ethereal Plane. Evolutionary adaptations gave Otherworld creatures such traits as a sensitivity to magic instead of heightened smell, life-draining attacks rather than claws, freezing breath in lieu of poison, and actual invisibility instead of camouflage.

### Where History Meets Legend

Today, legends and folklore are filled with stories and adventures that take place in another world, a place of magic and danger. These tales are the broken fragments of a greater whole, the small shards of memory of a second world. The fables of peasants who stumbled into Faerie while lost in the woods and the legends of heroes who battled strange unearthly beasts both originate from the single fact that there are hidden tears in the universe that still connect our world with the Otherworld. At times since the Ascendancy, infrequent and sporadic fluctuation within the Ethereal Plane has briefly reopened an undetectable passage between the worlds. The results are tales of fantasy, which are in actuality the half-true accounts of the unfortunate people who fell through the long forgotten passages created by the Host and were lucky enough to return, or of Otherworldly beasts or beings who accidentally passed over to Earth.

In addition to the profusion of animal and plant species, a number of independent sapient races lived on the planet. Although only two appeared to be distantly related, offshoots of a common evolutionary path, all the races were separated by distance, belief, and tradition. None were as developed technologically or mystically as the Host, and city after city and realm after realm fell before the unstoppable armies of the Ascendancy. New slaves and resources from the Otherworld reenergized the destabilizing Ascendancy.

However, the eldritch scientists of the Host soon performed an even greater wonder. Within the Host's capital city, they designed an enormous device built from mystically crafted alloys of metals extracted from the Otherworld. No one is certain how the Host accomplished this feat, but through some advanced application of science and magic they bent a passage to the Otherworld back upon itself. The result was astounding. The city became collocated with the Otherworld - it existed on both Earth and the Otherworld simultaneously, a permanent bridge, as it were, between the two worlds. Trade caravans and armies no longer needed to wait for days to pass between the worlds. Although fissures elsewhere were still opened and closed as needed, the capital of the empire had instant access to both globes. The Ascendancy reached the pinnacle of achievement and power during a time when the majority of its citizens could not be bothered to raise their lazy, opium-filled heads from their silk pillows.

### Of Gods and Monsters

An old saying among the Fugo a Watu runs thusly: "It is a terrible thing to know the mind of a god." In the deep past there were gods and monsters, beings of primordial strength who were worshipped by men and given sacrifices of devotion and blood. The deities and demons of human mythology are mere reflections of the true creatures that the Promethean Order and Fugo a Watu call the progenitors. If legend is to be believed, the progenitors were of varied form, each distinct to itself. They were more similar in thought to each other, however, than they were to man. Although their physical bodies were vastly different than our own, they were able to procreate with us. The children of such unions were demigods, generally human in form, but filled with vitality and tremendous power. The great deeds and terrible atrocities committed by these nascent godlings scarred our collective memory nearly as much as their parents did. Though they were not the equals of their parents, their power far outstripped the titans of today.

It is unclear when the progenitors of the titans arrived, or even why. Some speculate that the progenitors

became interested in mankind when the Host bridged the worlds. Others claim that these beings known to later generations as gods and monsters were already here, remnants of an even earlier age. More modern minds, positing a wilder theory, declare the progenitors to have been extraterrestrials. Regardless of their origin, though, their motives were their own, indiscernible even to the magically mighty ancients. The only point of agreement between all those who profess the truth is that these ancient beings of great power, these progenitors, were infuriated by the Ascendancy, but none can truly claim to know why.

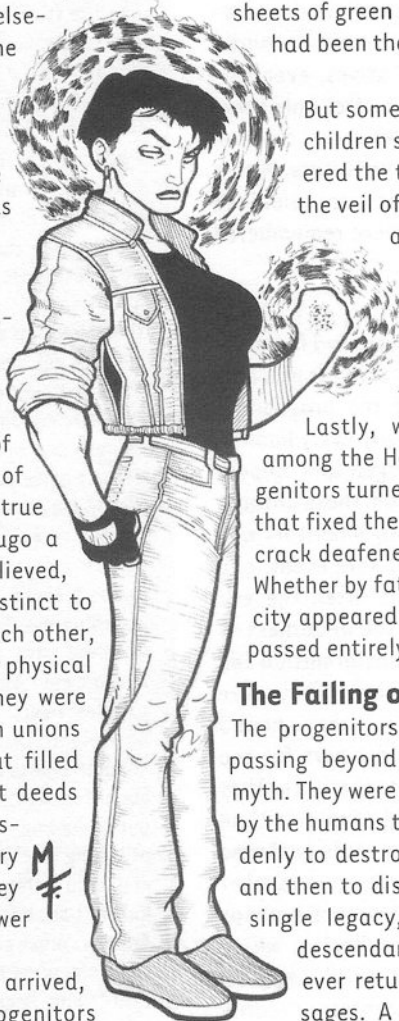
Whatever the reason for their anger, they and their children threw themselves against the might of the Ascendancy. Streaks of fire fell from the sky; cities were reduced to ash. Streams of pale, ghostly water stole the breath from those that still lived. These gods wielded power of such great force that the Host first staggered and then fell. In the last moments before their defeat, the once preeminent force on two worlds retaliated with the death engines created by their malign genius. Brilliant rays of indigo and violet decimated the enemies of the Host; whole expanses of desert were fused into sheets of green glass, leaving few traces of the armies that had been there only moments before.

But some of the progenitors and even a few of their children survived the onslaught. Together, they gathered the torn spirits of the Host. They ripped through the veil of creation into desolate, terrible realms long abandoned. There they threw the spiritual remains of the fallen Host, and they closed the tear with a great seal forged of adamant, bronze, and orichalcum. What sacrifice they made to open a doorway to the Abyss itself is best left unanswered.

Lastly, wielding shards of power that remained among the Host's own weapons of destruction, the progenitors turned the fading energies upon the great fissure that fixed the Host's capital to both worlds. A thunderous crack deafened all who heard the collapsing passageway. Whether by fate or by design it is not known, but the great city appeared to slip down into a sea as its physical ruins passed entirely into the Otherworld.

### The Failing of the Blood

The progenitors left soon after these cataclysmic events, passing beyond knowledge and memory into legend and myth. They were remembered as gods, demons, and monsters by the humans they abandoned, beings that had arisen suddenly to destroy the race of demons who had ruled them, and then to disappear just as suddenly. They left behind a single legacy, hidden deeply within the DNA of their descendants. Where they went or even if they would ever return remains an enigma even to the greatest sages. A few children of the progenitors may have



known where their parents went – some may have even left with them – but not one recorded or passed on the secrets about the progenitors' origins or destination.

The Earth they left behind was torn and bloodied. Civilization quickly fell into barbarism, and within a thousand years a new ice age would grind the few remains of the Host into dust. Scattered pockets of humans eked out an existence in the cooling climate. Whole populations migrated as the once fertile lands turned into desert or scrub. It was a turning of an age, but few cared. Survival was the only priority.

The many children of the progenitors, though powerful in their own right, were diminished reflections of their parents. Although each could easily wade through an army or seduce troops into her own service, such imperialism was pointless in the world the progenitors left for them. These so-called Children of Might were scattered across the globe, concerned only with the difficulties of survival on a quickly cooling planet. The young deities turned their attention and their power inwards, towards their own disparate peoples.

The progenitors' grand-children in turn wielded less mystical power than their parents, and subsequent generations were barely able to manifest any deific qualities at all. In desperation, families, clans, and tribes attempted to retain the purity of their divine lineages by marrying close relatives, even siblings. At first this tactic seemed to work, but after only three generations the blood failed completely. No more children exhibited any of the qualities of their mighty ancestors. Within a span of seven generations, only distant memories remained of pure-bred Children of Might, and these were remembered only through unstable oral tradition.

### The Remembered Past

The turning of the age thus seemed like the bitter end for those who held the legacy of the progenitors, but actually it was only the beginning. The distant descendants of the progenitors were spread throughout all of humanity – nearly every human, within two dozen or so generations of the progenitors' departure, had a tiny fragment of DNA that came from these unfathomable beings. It was a dark time for the few inheritors who showed any power, though; manifesting was a rare event, and when it did happen, conflict or tragedy was often the end result. Those of the Wild Blood Legacy fled to the wilderness as soon as the first afflictions of legendary transformation fell upon them, as did the horrible Void Phoenixes. They were clearly marked as monsters and hunted down if they showed their faces. The Storm Crows were for the most part far too individualistic to share any power with other inheritors. They would rather rule a tribe or a marauding band of raiders than join forces with other inheritors. The Crimson Lords gathered together at times, but they have always been fewer in number than the rest of the lineages. The Hidden Suns were perhaps the only legacy to maintain a semblance of cohesion, where they manifested, through most of the ancient world. Learning and knowledge were their domains, and thus centers of learn-

### Concerning Relics and Geological Anomalies

An unsent letter addressed to Emily Chester from Peter Boyd dated July 3rd, 2002 – eleven days before the Jiang expedition was reported missing.

Dear Emily,

The Gobi is amazing. I cannot believe the colours that bathe the scrub and the sand-covered hills at dawn and dusk. The crystal clear sky is so very different from the drab gray that hangs overhead at Oxford. The only "luxuries" I miss are warm soft beds and long hot showers.

I believe I found one of those anomalies you so love: we were removing some dirt near where we had uncovered the nest of an oviraptor (a bird-like dinosaur), and I ran into more of that strange green glass. The stuff is not too uncommon in the Gobi and locals even make some pretty jewelry that they sell to Chinese and Western tourists from it. I was tossing the chunks of glass over my shoulder when I thought I saw something dark inside one of them. In fact, I almost threw it over my shoulder before it registered that this particular chunk of glass looked different than the rest. Every other piece I've seen is nearly clear, with at most a hazy wisp of impurities. They're nearly 98% pure silicate. Geologists and astronomers are still arguing how the stuff was made. Anyway, I looked at the chunk of glass and sure enough, deep inside was a small, round, black ball. It almost looked like its surface was carved with lines or something, but it was difficult to see, as the glass really warped the image of what was inside.

I was more curious than excited, and took it over to Professor Jiang. He dismissed it in that soft but unquestionable way he does. "It is only a rock, Peter. You have a good eye, now turn that eye to the nest and don't waste time hunting through worthless glass." I decided to keep it anyway. It didn't look like a rock to me.

That night I used one of the halogen torches and a magnifying glass to get a better look. I can say with certainty that it wasn't a rock. No rock has perfectly parallel lines that run around its entire circumference or a small band of what looks like early Chinese characters. Excited, I showed it to Wendy and Si. They weren't quite as certain as I was, but they agreed that it didn't look like a rock. I think I could have looked at it all night, but Si started complaining about the light, having to get up before dawn the next day, so I put it in my bag and went to sleep.

I didn't sleep very well – kept dreaming about something watching me. You know, like how you said you felt when you watched that episode of X-Files alone, the one with the mutant man who could squeeze through ceiling ducts and ate peoples' livers.

So tonight I brought a chisel and hammer back to the tent to crack the glass open. But when I went to get it out again, it was gone. I looked everywhere. I know someone must have taken it out of my bag. I was so angry that I accused both Wendy and Si of taking it. They denied it, of course, but I was so mad that I ended up yelling at them. Now that I've cooled down some I feel kind of bad. I'm sure Wendy and Si think I'm a complete wanker. Anyway, must go now. Early day tomorrow, and I can't afford to be sleepless two nights in a row.

Your friend-Peter

ing became meeting places for them. But war, pestilence, and famine eventually destroyed even the strongholds they built. In fact, as knowledge of legacy ancestry was all too rare, many titans simply never learned the truth of their ancestry. Some thought that they were "blessed" or "cursed," that they were monsters, or perhaps that they were possessed by demons. Others guessed correctly, of course, or understood that they were simply "different," but their misconceptions and their fears and doubts drove them apart.

There was one group, though, that carried the legacy forward and held onto at least a greater portion of the truth, holding onto a substantial part of knowledge from the Lost Age. The Fugo a Watu (see Chapter Two: Allegiances) formed from a cult whose members were obsessed with tracing their lineage back to the progenitors. Only a few of their number displayed signs of their noble heritage, but they tracked down and invited or captured those they felt could be bred to create new inheritors. Secretly, the cult infiltrated the various peoples and sects of the ancient world. They watched for any sign of a people (or even of individuals) who had inherited the power of the gods... and their patience was rewarded. To the north of the cult's main temple, a great civilization flourished: Egypt, a great culture whose rulers and artisans were enamored with metropolitan life and with death, a crossroads for many peoples, and an environment, as they would discover, that was ideal for the appearance of inheritors.

By carefully watching the children and extended families of known inheritors, such as many of the ruling families of Egypt, the Fugo a Watu slowly built an enormous family tree that is still used by the cult today. They had already deduced the multiethnic nature of titan inheritance and even theorized the existence of DNA a thousand or more years before Christ.

The Fugo a Watu were not the only group searching out titans. Certain cults, religions, secret orders, and kings had uncovered fragments of the truth. These men and women, if they were not inheritors themselves (and sometimes even if they were), hunted down those who exhibited any sign of supernatural influence and either propitiated them, attempted to gain their power as their own, or murdered them in fear. Legends of wild men, bestial shapechangers, and demonic monsters did not help the plight of the rare inheritor. If he was lucky, an inheritor would be venerated as a god and cared for and protected. If he was discovered by the Fugo a Watu, he was invited, forcibly if necessary, into the cult's folds. The unlucky were killed or bound out of fear, or perhaps used as sacrifices for pointless spells and powerless rituals. The few truly unfortunate titans were discovered by the daemon cults and sacrificed in true rituals of power to the demonic entities that once had been the Host (see Chapter Seven: Terrors).

Most of the other ancient groups who knew anything of inheritors have long since disappeared into the river of time or were ground under the heel of fanaticism or progress. New Allegiances arose to take their places in some cases, and

although many of these have since faded away as well, some still remain today. The Brotherhood of the Iron Rose and the Promethean Order are two such organizations, as is the Eight Heavenly Dragons, which formed in East Asia during the Ch'ing. But only in the last hundred years has any kind of cohesiveness developed within the legacies as more and more titans have been born and various Allegiances have gathered the scattered evidence of the lost past.

### **Discovery of the Godgene**

The discovery of DNA and subsequently the Godgene was the single most important turning point for inheritors. In early 1950s a member of the Promethean Order leaked the existence of DNA to the scientific world. As the mythical Prometheus who brought fire to man, the order brought knowledge. They hoped that the revelation of DNA and the inherent similarities of all mankind would eradicate racism, which would increase the number of children born to people of different ethnicities, increasing the chance of an inheritor child. Their secondary goal was to prepare the world for the culmination of destiny when the inheritors would prevent the Daemonhost from escaping their prison in the Abyss.

They were certain that geneticists would quickly uncover the genes that marked an individual as a descendant of the gods but a decade passed and no such discovery was made. The order was perplexed. The modern world had all the tools necessary to extract the information. To their surprise, even the order's own scientists, secretly involved in many genetic projects world wide, were unable to track down the gestalt gene. What they did not know was that the discovery had been made in 1990 but hidden behind an elaborate conspiracy.

### **Department-7 in Dark Inheritance**

Department-7 is the original U.S. government's black-book department assigned to investigating the unsettling rumors of supernatural beings and phenomena. These beings have generally turned out to be titans. After recovering from the shocking knowledge that such creatures did indeed exist, the department went to great effort to capture and study a few. (After all, they aren't really human, are they?) A complete study ensued, including inhumane testing and vivisection of the captured subjects. Test results proved that although the creatures, which they originally dubbed titans, could exhibit supernatural abilities, they were for the most part human. Department-7 determined that recruiting these people would greatly benefit the country. The project was expanded, and the first orders were given to the specific project that oversees all field operations involving titans. Thus began "Project Titan," which is detailed further in Chapter Two: Allegiances.

Project Titan discovered the Godgene, as they called it, and covered it up. They did not want the knowledge of these pow-

erful people exploited by the enemies of the United States. Keeping the secret of the titans' existence, as they came to call inheritors, was the projects single most important goal and they proved that they were willing to do anything to keep the knowledge hidden. They altered findings and blackmailed scientists. They understood that they could not keep the secret of the titans forever but they could delay the revelation for at least a few decades. The vehicle for this plan was the Human Genome Project. The Human Genome Project was the project's most successful endeavor.

Project Titan knew that the best way to keep the secret of the Godgene was to provide geneticists with a complete map of the human genome, minus the gestalt gene. Project Titan pressured for the creation of the National Human Genome Research Institute, which leads the Human Genome Project for the National Institutes of Health. Genetic research is expensive and mapping the entire human genome was not something most countries or biotechnology companies could easily afford. By freely giving away the data and findings of the research, the project was nearly guaranteed to prevent other companies, universities, or countries from mapping the human genome themselves, thereby keeping the Godgene secret.

The institute was established in 1989 and became the focus for the media and scientific community. By 1997 nearly 2% of the human genome had been mapped and had set up a process where new discoveries were deposited into public databases within 24 hours. In June of 2000, the International Human Genome Sequencing Consortium (IHGSC) announced that it

had a "working draft" of the human genome. In the winter of 2001, the IHGSC published the 90% complete draft.

Cracks in the conspiracy have always been dealt with in a most efficient manner. Murder, database purges, laboratory accidents, and political pressure are all used with brutal effectiveness. This plan would have probably delayed the revelation of the titans for another few decades but the unforeseen disaster in Jerusalem altered everyone's modus operandi.

## THE RIP

It has been called the Cataclysm, the Tear, the Event, the Sundering, the Transformation, and the Day the World Cracked. But the name most people use, the one generally accepted by news agencies and history books, is the Rip.

February 10, 2003, began as an ordinary day. It was a Monday, and in Jerusalem it was business as usual. The Israeli government was in session, and meetings of various committees and subcommittees were scheduled for the morning and afternoon. Throughout the city, people were waking up and preparing for work or school or other activities. The temperature was a pleasant 85 degrees Fahrenheit, and the sun rose at 6:28.

And then the world tore apart.

A state of emergency was declared immediately, and the entire city was locked down. Military teams were sent in to rescue as many government leaders as possible, but were soon forced to retreat. The city was still in a state of flux, and any movement became extremely dangerous - buildings were toppling everywhere, spars and beams appeared from nowhere to impale the unwary, blocks of stone falling from great heights even over what had previously been open plazas, and streets were choked not only with fleeing inhabitants but also with rubble. Dust filled the air, and no one could see more than a few inches in front of them - helicopters flew overhead, but the images they transmitted were impossible to read. It was as if the entire city had disappeared in a giant cloud of dust and smoke.

The Israeli government demanded to know who had done this, and blame was already being assigned to various terrorist agencies. The Israeli military readied itself for war, and in an emergency session the U.N. stated that this was a crime of the worst sort, attacking a city that was so important to so many different people. The ruling council agreed unanimously to lend full support to Israel to find out what had happened and to punish those responsible. U.N. Peacekeeping forces were readied and shipped to Israel, even as the Red Cross and other humanitarian agencies prepared to send disaster relief missions to the ruined city.

For the first few days, everyone concentrated on rescue efforts. Military teams were sent in (Israeli, U.N., and U.S. forces - America had sent several platoons as soon as they'd heard the news, and placed the soldiers under Israeli control for the duration of the emergency) as well as civilian (prima-



rily Red Cross - the Israelis checked and cleared each team before allowing them past the barricades). Because no one was sure what exactly had happened, everyone assumed the worst - all teams wore full haz-mat gear, and any survivors were immediately quarantined and subjected to a barrage of medical testing. The military guarded the perimeter of the city, and no one was allowed within half a mile without proper clearance. The media, showing surprising restraint and consideration, did not push, and contented itself with discussing

\*LIVE BROADCAST FROM JERUSALEM MORNING NEWS, 6:30 AM, FEBRUARY 10, 2003\*

“... MORE ON THAT STORY IN A MOMENT, BUT FIRST LET’S HAVE A LOOK AT THE WEATHER. ISAAC?”

“THANKS, REVA. TODAY’S GOING TO BE PLEASANT, HIGHS IN THE MID-90S AND CLEAR, A PERFECT DAY TO . . .”

[A loud groaning sound, as if rocks are sliding against one another. Isaac glances around, uncertain.]

“WHAT THE DEVIL IS THAT?”

“HANG ON, ISAAC. FOLKS, SOMETHING IS HAPPENING HERE - WE’RE TRYING TO FIND OUT WHAT. FOR THOSE OF YOU WATCHING, YOU MAY HAVE JUST SEEN A BRIGHT FLASH ON MY LEFT SIDE - THAT WAS NOT IN THE STUDIO, BUT OUTSIDE THE WINDOW. WE’RE TAKING A LOOK, AND, YES, IT APPEARS SOMETHING’S HAPPENED OUT THERE, I CAN SEE CRACKS IN THE SIDEWALK AS IF FROM AN EARTHQUAKE, PEOPLE RUNNING AND SCREAMING, AND- DEAR GOD, WHAT IS THAT!?”

[Cameras have shifted to follow Reva to the window, and are panning down. Seen through the glass is a scene of utter chaos. People are everywhere down below, panicking, and dark shapes leap among them. Occasionally a scream is heard and a person falls, engulfed by these dark shapes. Those unfortunates do not stand back up, even after the darkness has leapt away. Then the groaning is heard again, louder this time.]

“WE- WE’VE GOT SOMETHING GOING ON IN THE BUILDING, I THINK - I DON’T KNOW. EVERYTHING’S GONE CRAZY. WHAT’S HAPPENING TO THE WALLS? ISAAC, BOB, ANYONE, PLEASE- WHAT’S HAPPENING TO THE WALLS?”

[The camera pans around, focusing on the wall where Reva is pointing with a shaking hand. The studio is all modern and new, with curving walls painted in soft hues. This wall, however, is dark stone, sharp-edged and carved with fantastic borders. It’s as if another building has somehow intruded itself into the studio. The wall seems to grow upward even as the camera settles on it, developing an arched ceiling high above - rather like a ship slicing through a wave, as the wall’s edge intrudes into the room. Beneath it, the floor is heavy paving stones, thick with dust.]

“I... I DON’T KNOW IF ANYONE IS SEEING THIS, BUT THE ROOM ITSELF IS CHANGING! THERE’S DUST EVERYWHERE, BUT IT’S DEFINITELY DIFFERENT - DARKER, HEAVIER, AND IT FEELS MUCH OLDER. WAIT, THERE’S SOMEONE OVER THERE, I THINK. BOB, CASSIE, IS THAT YOU? ARE YOU OKAY? WE’RE OVER HERE, BY THE WINDOW. HELLO?”

[The camera picks up a brief glimpse of someone - or something - moving around in the shadows. Then it leaps forward toward the camera, a dark blur of flesh or perhaps fur, and Reva screams. The camera falls, its lens shattering, and the transmission stops.]

what might have happened and what might result from the incident afterward.

One immediate concern was war. Israel was angry and hurt, and looking for someone to punish. The United States had provided additional military aid, and its men were ready to attack anyone the Israelis selected. Even the U.N. Peacekeepers, supposedly sent in to maintain the peace and prevent armed conflict, were spoiling for a fight. The Cataclysm could well have been the start of World War III.

Fortunately, Israel’s need for revenge was balanced by its desire to make sure the right people were punished. Hardliners pushed for Israel to attack all of its hereditary enemies, saying that they were all poised to attack Israel and that the only way out of the situation was to hit first and hit hard. But the Israeli leaders - those who had survived - were not convinced. Peace proponents pointed out that committing the military to war now, while the nation was already weakened, could be disastrous, and that a military defeat would finish Israel off once and for all. Few of the religiously fervent Shas leaders had survived, and the more secular Shinui found themselves the largest remaining force, stronger than either the aggressive Likud or the conservative Labor party. They counseled patience, and a focus on recovery: “Find out who did this,”

they said, “and the rest of the world will aid us in taking our revenge. We will gain their respect by showing that we are not attacking without proof, and that we care more for our

people than for conquest.” The rest of the leaders listened and agreed to hold off on any attacks for now.

Meanwhile, the scientific world was also in an uproar. Geologists, chemists, biologists, and even physicists were invited to examine the ruined city and propose theories as to what had happened.





Demolitions and chemical warfare experts were already on the scene, and an enormous scientific summit spontaneously convened in the area of the safety zone the military had set aside for these consultants. Of course, each person had their own theory, and some were crazier than others.

Unbeknownst to the general public, the titans were also frantic. The Promethean Order had known for some time that Jerusalem would be the site of a major event, and they had even warned some of the other Allegiances. Now every Allegiance is wondering what really happened, whether any titans were involved, and what it means to them in particular. Those among the Promethean Order and others who knew of the Order's prophecy also had a sinking feeling that the Rip might prove a more apt name than the news agencies realized.

## The Way the World Is

Some changes take ages to occur - or else they just keep moving along, like evolution or the drift of the continents. Even within a human lifespan, many finite changes take place that we do not realize until months or perhaps years after they have occurred. We may not like these changes, but at least we have had time to become acquainted with them and possibly to

grow accustomed to them. Other changes happen in an instant, dramatic and sometimes catastrophic. These radical changes turn the world upside down, and we spend the rest of our lives dealing with the results of the sudden new direction our lives have taken. The Rip was such a change, but a change for the entire world.

The Rip was a calamity of such magnitude that the world stood stunned for days, even weeks, before the initial shock began to wear off. As reports trickled and then poured in, as rumors spread wildly across the internet and the sensationalistic media, it became abundantly clear that the world was not exactly how we always thought it was.

### Jerusalem

When the Rip occurred, many people's first thought was that it must have been a bomb (although a very powerful one, or else a series of bombs). Jerusalem was a bone of contention between Jews, Muslims, and Christians, after all, and violence was common between all three religions. But no one had ever dared to attack the city itself as a whole - they had always targeted their foes directly, to avoid damaging the sacred city. But the cataclysm shook the ancient buildings to their very foundations, and left no doubt that it was the city at large being attacked this time, rather than any one group or loca-

**Transcript of Instant Messaging (IM) conversation between  
Drs. Lorna Thomas and Ted Stern, February 17, 2003**

Ted: Can you believe these people? Don't know why they let some in here.

Lorna: I know. What was Babbage going on about? Volcanic activity? Preposterous - everyone knows this area = seismically stable.

Ted: Agreed. And Smythe? That Brit's clearly insane. Did he really suggest alien intervention as serious possibility?

Lorna: Yes. And Strom actually considered it. Aliens! Little green men flew down and blew up Jerusalem!

I think this entire summit = farce. Martins runs it like his own private show - who put him in charge? He's not even tenured!

Ted: Don't say that near him. :)

Lorna: I know. See him bite Sarah's head off today? Because she dared to question his data? I'm with her - his device clearly doesn't work.

Ted: I missed that - was over dealing with Schmidt and his plan to tunnel beneath the city. Managed to block that, fortunately - I can just see the entire city, whatever's left of it, collapsing on our heads. What was Martins on about?

Lorna: That ultrasound thingie of his. He's got transmitters and receivers all around the city, and it's supposed to give back an accurate 3D map, like a topographical chart.

Ted: Makes sense, actually.

Lorna: In principle, sure. But the picture he compiled doesn't. It shows towers at least 200 feet tall in some places...

Ted: What?! Jerusalem never had structures that high!

Lorna: That was Sarah's point. The buildings on his map don't match the actual city. Martins claimed they were older ruins thrust up from beneath, but there's no evidence to support that. Esp. since the map shows intact spires, not shattered ones.

Ted: He's a crackpot, if you ask me.

Lorna: Tell me about it.

Ted: Well, what do you think happened? Still going with conventional explosives?

Lorna: Until something disproves it, yes. It meets all the criteria.

Ted: Fair enough.

Lorna: And you? Still think it's all chemical?

Ted: No, definitely a physical component there. Might still be some chem attacks, though.

Lorna: Let's compare notes over breakfast - maybe our two theories will fit together.

Ted: Sounds good. G'night.

Lorna: Night.

tion within.

The incredibly thick dust cloud made it difficult to see what had actually occurred, and the panic that ensued did not help - people fled for their lives, grabbing their loved ones and whatever prized possessions they could carry. The streets were jammed with bodies, bikes, and cars, and many people were trampled by the frenzied crowds. The Israeli military mobilized shortly after the first tremor hit, but they had their hands full getting the fleeing occupants to safety. News crews arrived on the scene shortly thereafter, but could see very little through the dust clouds, especially from behind the hastily erected

military barricades. Scientists were also dispatched, and provided the first positive news: their instruments showed no sign of radiation. Whatever had happened, it was not a nuclear or atomic attack.

Disaster teams were sent in to analyze the situation, while search-and-rescue units hunted for trapped and injured citizens. The news agencies were still kept beyond city limits, but the dust had finally begun to clear and aerial photographs were obtained. The images, however, left many wondering if the dust was still causing interference. The photographs showed a city, certainly, but not the one people had left behind.

[TRANSCRIPT OF LIVE COMMENTARY FROM ARI SCHNEIDER, ISRAELI CORRESPONDENT FOR CNN, FEBRUARY 11, 2003 - TRANSLATED INTO ENGLISH]

"We're now receiving- yes, these are the first actual photographs of the city since the attack, taken by one of our helicopter crews, and we're looking at- What the hell is that?

[A moment of silence, with muttered curses in Hebrew]

I'm sorry, Bill. Hang on a second. What we're seeing now can't possibly be right. This isn't Jerusalem.

No, wait. That's definitely the Temple on the Mount. And there's the Wailing Wall. But what is that thing through them...? It looks like a tower and another wall, but there shouldn't be a tower there - that's a plaza. I was there just a few days ago.

[Short pause, heavy breathing]

But now there's a tower, looks like granite maybe, some dark stone. It looks old, too. Could the attack have forced old ruins to the surface? That doesn't make much sense, does it?

Sorry, Bill, I'm a bit shaken here. The photos are clear, no fuzziness about them, but what we're seeing doesn't make any sense. Some of the buildings look completely intact, but others are rubble, and still others are- gone... or- merged. Not destroyed, just either completely gone, replaced by completely different structures, or melded with structures I don't at all recognize. There's a bridge running across where the parliament building was. And it's got a lake under it, where there shouldn't be any water. The bridge looks intact, too, and it looks old like the tower - more Indian than Arabic in style, I'd say, all hard edges and sharp protrusions-

I really don't know what's going on here, Bill, but I have the feeling this city will never be the same."

Despite the initial radioactivity and hazardous materials test results, the Israeli government was not convinced. It erected a containment zone around the entire city, and entrance was restricted to scientists, military, and rescue units alone. Additional tests verified, however, that the city was not irradiated or contaminated. Nor were the destroyed buildings consistent with earthquake damage - most of the ruins seemed to be caused either by the sudden appearance of another structure within the first one's confines or to be ruins of much older buildings than the ones that had stood there before the incident occurred. New (yet apparently ancient) buildings had appeared out of nowhere and mixed in with the familiar ones - the ground beneath them was unbroken, dispelling any notion that they had been thrust up from an older layer beneath the surface, and, more concerning, the materials used in their construction were not any stone, metal, or wood known to humankind. Many of these new buildings were in a state of collapse from extreme age, while others were still sound and could be considered livable, despite the lack of plumbing or wiring. Scientists, though puzzled by the ramifications, finally posited a consistent theory: The damage to the city had been caused entirely by the sudden appearance of these unfamiliar structures. Taken on their own, these structures encompassed an area nearly as large as Jerusalem itself, and showed signs of organization and civic planning. There were parks and avenues and streets. Thus, they were part of a separate city, which had somehow been "merged" with Jerusalem. But the materials involved in this foreign city's construction, and the fact that its building styles did not match anything in recorded history, indicated something extraordinary - the city was not from this world. Carbon-dating supported this conclusion, as even the youngest of the ancient ruins were found to be well over 15,000 years old.

### Containment

Today, Jerusalem is still off-limits to the general public. The restrictions have relaxed somewhat, as more military, scientific, and recovery personnel have entered, but proper authorization is still required. Those allowed in are also monitored closely to prevent information from leaking out without approval. Even so, news agencies have been granted interviews with key personnel, and have been allowed to take a few well-circulated aerial photographs - since it is impossible to prevent them from finding out that the city has been altered, the military has chosen to control the information instead by allowing access to certain details and by crafting careful, formulaic answers to reporters' questions.

The reclamation process is now getting under way. Some Muslims, Jews, and Christians have actually set aside their differences in order to plan the restoration of many of the city's

[REPORT BY DR. SERGEI DUCHOSE, HEAD OF THE JERUSALEM DISASTER INVESTIGATION PROJECT, TO THE GOVERNMENT OF ISRAEL AND THE U.N., FEBRUARY 14, 2003]

Ladies and Gentlemen:

Although our tests are far from over, I can now state certain details without fear of contradiction.

First and foremost, the city's environment is safe to re-enter. That is, there are no traces of excess radiation or of chemical or biological contaminants, the ground is stable, and enough dust has settled that the air is now breathable without difficulty.

Second, the heart of the incident was apparently the merging of Jerusalem with this other city, whose name and original location are for the time being likely to remain unknown.

Third, the other city is comprised of materials and building styles unmatched by anything in our history. This information has been carefully kept from the media, and I would suggest that we maintain this level of secrecy to prevent undue paranoia or hysteria from the general public.

Fourth, all of these buildings predate any known civilization.

Thus, while I cannot yet prove this with any certainty, it is the belief of both myself and my colleagues that the city did not originate here on Earth. The theory of parallel worlds has been espoused for many years, and this occurrence lends to that theory a certain credence. Parallel worlds would explain everything about the city itself, as well as the fact that in many places the buildings are actually merged with our own - walls are melded seamlessly together and cannot be separated into their original components. The two cities are now quite literally juxtaposed, occupying a single space and overlapping at many points.

This raises an additional concern, however. We do not know why the city suddenly appeared as it did, and thus have no way of guarding against additional appearances of this nature. We also do not know where it was before, or what else might inhabit that world. But since the merged city is still accessible from the rest of our world, it is reasonable to assume that it may also be accessed from the other city's world as well. If this is the case, we have an unparalleled opportunity here. The city provides us with a passageway into another world, and could provide a literal treasure of materials and information with which to expand our knowledge of the universe.

There is also a potentially great danger, however. If the city does provide a passage to this "otherworld," and this passage is also accessible from the other side, we may face incursions from beings of that world. Already, security details have reported strange sightings, fleeting glimpses of improbable-looking beings. These may in fact be denizens of this Otherworld.

We must increase our security around the city until such time as we know exactly what may come through from the other side. Thus, although the city itself is now livable again, I do not consider it safe to bring the citizens back to their homes, and I would urge you to continue the quarantine, with additional security provisions in place, until we can be sure that no other dangers exist.

Thank you.

historic sites. These projects are being considered very carefully, to avoid damaging other structures or risking the stability of the surrounding area. Of course, the information these groups have about the current state of the city is limited.

Further, not everyone wants to restore the old city. Some see

The capital of Israel has been moved to Tel Aviv. Fortunately, that city was already the nation's cultural and business center, as well as its military headquarters, so it proved a simple matter for Israel to centralize power there once again. There have been two unexpected benefits of this move. First, some

the cataclysm as a divine statement, the direct work of God; they believe that the city was changed for a reason and should be allowed to stay as it has now become. The precise message of that divine statement varies from group to group, however, some claiming that it is a mark of favor ("He has created a new city that more accurately reflects the mind of the Divine" or "that unlocks new mysteries for us to explore, so that we may know Him in all His wonder and glory"), while others feel it is a mark of disfavor, - God has defaced the Holy of Holies to show His displeasure. Meanwhile, the PLO and the Mossad, in a move that has shocked the world, have actually formed a temporary alliance. The two agencies have united for one purpose only, however: to find out exactly what caused the cataclysm, and who, if anyone, is responsible. Both agencies believe that something must have triggered the event, and they are looking into every possibility. Many groups have already spoken out to denounce the events and to establish their innocence in the matter - even terrorist cells who have engineered the deaths of thousands have stated publicly that they were not involved in the cataclysm and would never endanger the Holy City in that way. This has helped to maintain an uneasy peace in the area. No one knows who was responsible for the incident, and thus far no nation or organization has been willing to place blame on another. Everyone is waiting impatiently to learn who was behind the occurrence, and so far the magnitude of what has happened has caused everyone to hesitate before causing additional conflict.

Richard,

I must assume you have heard of the recent events. I am at a loss. How could this have happened? An entire city, - and not just any city, but one of the most important in the world - apparently gone or at least severely damaged. We had a team filming outside of Jerusalem: why were we not there? Did anyone have any warning? Surely an event like this involved some titans, and I find it both shocking and disturbing that our society was taken by surprise. I begin to wonder whether the message from that Storm Crow, Nathan, was not in fact correct. I realize we agreed to dismiss it at the time, but now I have misgivings. What if he was right? If the time of the prophecy really was fast week, and the place was Jerusalem, it would have been the pivotal moment in our existence as titans. And we missed it. I cannot help but wonder whether our presence could have made some difference.

What's more, it leaves me to ponder the outcome even more. If it was the time of prophecy, what happened? Was anyone other than the Promethean Order there to guard this seal? Did the Order win? If so, the damage to the city was simply collateral, and must be accepted as the price of maintaining this world's safety. But what if the titans lost? What if the seal was broken and the Host freed, as Nathan warned, all because we were not there to lend our support? What if, by our inaction, we have caused the end of the world?

Forgive me for my melodrama, but these thoughts weigh heavily upon me. I feel that we should send members of the Society to Jerusalem immediately, to assess the situation. In particular, we should look for any sign of titan involvement, for any hint that this seal does indeed exist and, if so, that it is in that place.

Please contact me immediately, so that we may discuss the matter, and bring our plans to the Society at the next meeting.

Yours,

Emmanuel

nations have always treated Tel Aviv as the capital (it was the original capital of the nation), so that now there is no discrepancy. Second, relocating the government to Tel Aviv helped placate the many Muslims who had always felt that Jerusalem was too holy to be a political seat. Many Muslims are still upset, however, because they have extremely limited access to their holy city; despite the dangers, many have flocked to Jerusalem and demand that they be granted entry.

### The Rest of the World

The world stopped, aghast, when reports started coming in from Israel at 04:31 GMT on February 10, 2003. None of the observers knew what had happened, and neither, it seemed, did their governments. News reports were vague, and the first fleeting images beamed around the globe seemed impossible. The event was quickly dubbed the Rip after eye-witness accounts described the way the sky had seemed to peel back, tear, and then explode. Such first-hand accounts became increasingly difficult to obtain, however, as governments clamped down on information. It was nearly impossible to control the release of information, though. This was the biggest story and most dramatic event since the September 11th attack in New York, and it happened at a time when the world was looking towards the Middle East anyway.

The U.S. had been assembling troops and sending fleets toward the Mid-East since late November of 2002. As well, U.N. peacekeepers were present in the area, in addition to U.S. forces already in the region. However, the Rip halted any possible international aggression, and the close proximity of the U.S. military and U.N. peacekeepers was in fact a blessing: emergency rations, highly trained personnel, blood supplies, and medical equipment were available mere hours after the disaster.

In the few days after the Rip, governments were in a state of alarm. Many suspected that the attack had been an American act of war. World leaders took as many precautions as possible to prevent any terrorist retaliation, but it soon became apparent through investigations of Jerusalem that there was no culprit - and that there was no way to prevent what had happened to Jerusalem from happening again, perhaps to another major world center.

Finding out the cause of the Rip has become the highest priority for numerous intelligence agencies and is of course a matter of particular importance to Israel.

Wall Street, the London Stock Exchange, the Tokyo Stock Exchange, and many other exchanges closed for the entire week following the disaster, as the world stared at the smoking, twisted ruins of Jerusalem, attempting to ascertain what exactly had happened. When the markets were reopened, they did so to record lows, and a number of foreign markets closed again within hours of reopening. The financial worries of post-9/11,

## \*\*\*WORLD FINANCIAL MARKETS CLOSED\*\*\* AFTER JERUSALEM ATTACK

BY EMILY PATTERSON  
STAFF REPORTER

02/10/2003 12:25 AM EST

UPDATED 02/10/2003 04:15 AM EST

TRADING WAS HALTED TODAY IN THE TOKYO STOCK EXCHANGE, THE STOCK EXCHANGE OF HONG KONG, AND THE SINGAPORE INTERNATIONAL MONETARY EXCHANGE LTD. AFTER MULTIPLE EXPLOSIONS ROCKED THE CITY OF JERUSALEM. U.S. AND FOREIGN MARKETS, INCLUDING THE NEW YORK STOCK EXCHANGE, THE NASDAQ, THE LONDON STOCK EXCHANGE, AND THE PARIS STOCK EXCHANGE WILL NOT BE OPEN TODAY FOR TRADING. IT IS UNCLEAR WHEN THESE MARKETS WILL REOPEN.

DUST FROM WHAT MAY BE THE WORLD'S MOST DEVASTATING TERRORIST ATTACK COVERS THE CITY OF JERUSALEM AND THE SURROUNDING AREA. THE CAUSE OF THE EXPLOSIONS REMAINS UNKNOWN AND FEAR OF POSSIBLE FALLOUT HAS SENT THE CITIZENS OF THE NEIGHBORING NATIONS OF JORDAN, SYRIA, AND LEBANON SCRAMBLING. NUMEROUS KNOWN TERRORIST ORGANIZATIONS, INCLUDING HAMAS, THE PALESTINE ISLAMIC JIHAD, AND THE AL-AQSA BRIGADE, HAVE ALL CONDEMNED THE ATTACK AND DENIED ANY RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE DESTRUCTION OF THE CITY. MOST NATIONS ARE EVACUATING LANDMARKS, AND CITIES WORLDWIDE ARE AT A HEIGHTENED STATE OF ALERT. ALL TOKYO AND HONG KONG SKYSCRAPERS HAVE BEEN EVACUATED. IN THE U.S., ALL TRAFFIC INTO AND OUT OF WASHINGTON D.C. HAS BEEN HALTED, EXCEPT FOR MILITARY PURPOSES. THE PRESIDENT HAS GROUND-ED ALL CIVILIAN AIR TRAFFIC AND WILL SPEAK TO THE NATION AT A PRESS CONFERENCE SCHEDULED FOR 5:00 AM EST.

estimated 33% around the end of Q1 2003. Fear and greed drive world markets, and fear had indeed taken control.

When the world started up again it seemed as though everyone was trying to hold onto something stable. The Rip's occurrence only two days before the Islamic festival of Eid al-Adha, the Feast of Sacrifice, had a tremendous impact on Muslims everywhere. The festival commemorates Ibrahim's (Abraham's) willingness to obey God and sacrifice his only child. The fact that that very event took place in what became Jerusalem, on the hill that became the Temple Mount, only accentuated the disaster in the minds of Islamic people. There is no unified agreement among Muslims (or those of other faiths) regarding the meaning of the Rip and its connection to Eid al-Adha, but many feel that destruction of the city was a symbolic sacrifice, a demonstration of God's anger at his people's unwillingness to make their own sacrifice. The nature of the sacrifice that must be made is, of course, a huge point of contention. While one group cries out to make peace with Israel - the other children of Abraham - others say that the destruction was a demonstration of Allah's displeasure towards those who would not cleanse the holy city of the Israelis.



which had been slowly changing to reserved optimism, plummeted back into a state of near-blind panic. Consumer confidence hit all-time lows, and estimated world unemployment or underemployment rates rose almost 3 percentage points to an

Across the globe, attendance at religious events has skyrocketed since the Rip. The Pope addressed a record-sized congregation at the beginning of Lent. Unprecedented numbers are expected to make a pilgrimage to Rome in April for Easter. Moreover, organized religion is not the only form of spirituality to receive a boost from the Rip. Doom prophets and televangelists have come out of the woodwork. Cults are popular, as people not drawn to more traditional religions try to find some emotional and spiritual stability in an insecure world. Little solid scientific information had been released to the media in the few weeks after the Rip. News agencies have brought in scientists uninvolved in the rescue effort and investigation of the disaster, but their opinions are for the most part entirely speculative. Smuggled pictures are rare, but those early few flashed briefly on television, newspapers, and the web show a city unlike the Jerusalem the world remembers. The Israeli and U.S. governments, along with the U.N., promise to release their findings once the site has been thoroughly investigated and analyzed. But people want to know what happened now, not in a few months or perhaps years. For the few weeks immediately following the disaster, terror swept the planet. Recently, that fear has begun rising again, based upon rumors of strange creatures prowling through the devastation. Still, the world is slowly recovering; people are dazed, angry, and very frightened, but they are also extremely curious - even if only so that they might have a clearer picture of whatever might be coming after them.

### **Incursions: Fear of the Unknown**

Nearly a week after the Rip devastated Jerusalem, local



authorities around the world began receiving strange calls about wild animal attacks and monstrous creature sightings. At first these calls were ignored, treated as pranks, or thought to just be people suffering from hallucinations and panic, a sort of mass hysteria due to the events in Israel. In the U.S., police continued to treat such calls as mundane incidents even after a now famous video of an attack in Australia was splashed across the news.

The tape was created by a group of four Canadian and Australian hikers camping in Kakadu National Park in Australia's Northern Territory on February 16th, less than a week after the Rip. The quality of the video is poor due to lighting, and the events they recorded left the camera itself destroyed, although a good portion of the tape was salvaged. After hearing a crashing noise in the lush rainforest, hiker Jim Stevens turned his camera toward the sound just in time to catch what appears to be a large crocodile rage out of the forest into the campsite. Besides the large snapping jaws, little detail of the beast can be seen, but - impossible as it sounds - the hikers say that the crocodile had leathery wings and hand-like claws. The four fled immediately and apparently were not pursued, but, during the flight Jim dropped his video camera. Experts confirmed that the tape did not appear to have been doctored in any way.

What makes the video more remarkable, though, is the fact that less than 24 hours after the footage was shot a couple camping only a few miles away from the encounter was discovered missing. Their bodies have never been found, but their campsite was destroyed and blood and torn clothes were found in the collapsed and shredded tent. No sign of tracks around the campsite beyond the tent itself could be discovered by investigators, though some sort of clawed beast apparently attacked the campers in their tent. Even some skeptics have begun to believe that the "winged crocodile" was responsible, and that the hikers' video footage was no mere hoax.

It was not until over forty people went missing in New York City's Central Park that law enforcement in the United States started to take the bizarre reports seriously. The initial missing persons reports were treated as normal, until no less than fifteen mauled and dismembered bodies were found on March 3rd. The NYPD still refuses to release details of the investigation, or to say in which part of the park the bodies were discovered. Police have now barricaded off Central Park entirely, including also a placement of heavily armed officers - a fearful cost of personnel - in case whatever was doing the killing may try to leave the park now that people will not venture into easy reach. Such incidents are becoming so common that the media is only covering the most sensational of them.

It is generally considered impossible that the creatures seen all over the world could have come through from the Rip in Jerusalem. There simply has not been enough time, many argue, for anything to have spread out across the world that

quickly. The most widely accepted theory is that there are either smaller juxtaposed regions, like Jerusalem, that have yet to be discovered, or else there are other "rips" through which the creatures wander into our world. While it is certain that Otherworld creatures are not responsible for every vicious attack in every town, enough of these desperate cries to police and rescue services cannot be explained that most people lock themselves in at night and more people every day are buying guns to protect themselves.

### **The Jerusalem Report**

It is within this information-starved and fearful international environment that the International Geographical Society (IGS) released its recent March issue, to the utter amazement of readers the world over. Although the issue was nearly two weeks late to the shelves, its contents ensured an immediate demand, and every single copy sold within days (the Society has promised to reprint the issue). The issue is entitled *The Jerusalem Report*, and it deals entirely with the Rip and the after effects of the catastrophe. Fortunately for the IGS, they foresaw the impact of their report and invested in many new servers to handle the increased traffic to their website. The Society reports that they are getting over 25 million hits a day, and new subscriptions have more than quadrupled.

Inside the issue are pictures, scientific analysis, and the first-hand accounts of an IGS explorer team who were documenting a dig just outside the city when the calamity took place. Instead of fleeing to safety, the team ran into the city. The pictures they took record the events of the disaster only minutes after it occurred. Unimaginable images of fear, heroism, and terror are splashed across the page. Hypotheses regarding what might have caused the Rip, some of them shockingly accurate, are explored in detail, and a new fold-out map is included that shows how the city looks today. The most shocking revelation, however, is only briefly related in this issue. On the way out of the city, the team ended up elsewhere. Rather than the dust-covered and devastated suburbs, the team apparently found themselves in another world. Above them shone two suns, and the geography and flora were unlike that which surrounds the city of Jerusalem.

### **The Otherworld**

The last amazing picture in the March issue of the *Journal of the International Geographical Society* blew the lid off the biggest secret the world's governments were keeping from the public: another world truly exists, and it is easy to travel between Earth and this "Otherworld" (as the issue called it - although it was certainly not the first to do so). The mysterious and ancient ruined city did not just materialize into our world, but a small part of our world literally merged with another, leaving a permanent point of connection between the two. Whenever anyone tries to leave Jerusalem, he or she might indeed end up exiting that city but ending up in the Otherworld.

While at first such intra-global travel was accidental, such as that of the IGS team, pathways exiting to the Otherworld were

[Text from the front cover of the *Journal of the International Geographical Society*, Vol. 11, Issue 3, March 2003]

## **SPECIAL ISSUE!**

### **The Jerusalem Report**

What really happened to the holiest city in the world? Several theories explored

Who was responsible? Middle East experts offer their opinions

Exclusive new photographs revealing the enormity of the change that has occurred

Scientific analyses of the new buildings leads to some startling discoveries

How Israel is handling the problem

How the rest of the world is dealing with the incident

Bizarre sightings within the city  
Plans for the future: Will Jerusalem be restored?

Actual photographs of an Otherworld captured by an IGS explorer team trapped in the Rip

***Next Issue: The Otherworld and Pioneer Base***

soon marked by troops venturing into the city, and free movement between our world and the Otherworld is now a simple matter to accomplish. However, this remains a well-concealed secret; travel beyond Jerusalem is tightly controlled by the Israeli military, supported by U.S. and U.N. troops.

Although it took almost a month for the revelation concerning juxtaposed worlds to be exposed, it still came as a great shock to most. Not one popular theory had even come close to guessing the reality of the situation, and only a few of those involved in the rescue effort or privy to military reports knew or suspected the awful truth. Once safe roadways out of the city were marked, only those with the proper clearance and orders were allowed onto the paths that led to the Otherworld. The Israeli, U.N., and U.S. military were very unhappy that the IGS released its information so carelessly. Further, they were not pleased to have to admit that they had been deliberately hiding the existence of the Otherworld from not only the public but from other nations as well. Initially they refused to allow the IGS any access to Jerusalem and the Otherworld, as it requested, but public outcry and pressure from nations that had been denied knowledge of the nature of the Rip compelled them to make a deal with the explorer society. The IGS would be given access to the Otherworld, with armed escort, and, in return, U.S. and Israeli intelligence would be given full access to any and all expeditions into the Otherworld. Unbeknownst to the IGS teams, however, most of the U.S. military presence involves people attached to Department-7 and its secretive Project Titan (see Chapter Two:

### \*\*\*Alien Artifacts Discovered in Jerusalem Ruins\*\*\*

By Brian Torchia  
The Associated Press  
March 11, 2003

JERUSALEM, ISRAEL - SCIENTISTS INVOLVED IN THE INVESTIGATION OF THE RIP TODAY ANNOUNCED A STARTLING DISCOVERY. METAL ARTIFACTS OF ALIEN ORIGIN WERE DISCOVERED YESTERDAY IN THE RUINS THAT DEVASTATED THE CITY A MONTH AGO. EIGHT CYLINDRICAL BARS OF A REDDISH GOLD METAL, ENGRAVED WITH UNRECOGNIZABLE SYMBOLS, WERE FOUND BY A SEARCH-AND-RESCUE TEAM IN REKHAYAA, SOUTH OF DOWNTOWN JERUSALEM. ARCHAEOLOGISTS ARE CALLING IT "THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DISCOVERY OF THE CENTURY."

DR. JAMES HEDGE GROVE OF OXFORD UNIVERSITY SAID, "THE CULTURE RESPONSIBLE DOES NOT APPEAR TO HAVE EITHER DEVELOPED REPRESENTATIONAL ARTWORK, OR HAS REFRAINED FROM CREATING IT FOR SOME CULTURAL REASON. WE ARE THRILLED TO FIND EVIDENCE, BEYOND THE ARCHITECTURE, THAT CAN BE STUDIED AND THAT WILL ENABLE US TO UNDERSTAND THE BEINGS WHO ONCE INHABITED THE CITY."

ARCHAEOLOGISTS AND ANTHROPOLOGISTS ALIKE ARE HOPING THE SYMBOLS MIGHT BE EVIDENCE OF A WRITTEN LANGUAGE. THE SYMBOLS ENGRAVED ON THE METAL BARS ARE UNLIKE ANY ANCIENT OR CURRENT WRITTEN LANGUAGE. "IT IS NOT YET CONFIRMED THAT THE SYMBOLS ARE ANYTHING OTHER THAN DECORATION, BUT AS THE SYMBOLS ON EACH BAR ARE ORDERED DIFFERENTLY, WITH ONLY SOME IDENTICAL COMBINATIONS, IT LOOKS VERY PROMISING," SAID DR. HANATHA ZAHAVI. SHE CAUTIONS, HOWEVER, "EVEN IF IT IS A FORM OF WRITTEN COMMUNICATION, IT COULD BE DECADES BEFORE WE HAVE ANY IDEA WHAT THEY MIGHT MEAN."

THE ALIEN ARTIFACTS ARE BEING ANALYZED TO DETERMINE THE COMPOSITION OF THE METAL AND THEIR POSSIBLE PURPOSE. SAMPLES OF THE METAL HAVE BEEN RUSHED TO FOUR METALLURGICAL LABS ACROSS THE WORLD FOR ANALYSIS. ONE OF THE LABORATORIES IS AT WHITE SANDS MISSILE RANGE, A U.S. BASE RESPONSIBLE FOR PROVIDING NON-DESTRUCTIVE TESTING OF ARMY MATERIAL AND EQUIPMENT. RESULTS ARE EXPECTED IN SEVERAL WEEKS.

Allegiances). Of course, also unbeknownst the Project Titan agents, many of the reporters sent by the IGS are also secretly associated with Professor Janet Neaves' "Carthage Club" (see "International Geographic Society" in Chapter Two), seeking esoteric metaphysical knowledge in light of the obviously paranormal nature of the Rip. In any case, with the mixed blessing of the military, the IGS quickly marshaled funds and set up Pioneer Base, a permanent research facility just outside of Jerusalem - in the Otherworld.

What has been revealed to the public so far is that the Otherworld is a place both surprisingly similar to and yet very different from Earth. The pull of gravity is exactly the same, the atmosphere is nearly identical, the animals - those studied so far, anyway - are carbon-based, and DNA is the method life there uses to replicate itself. It is a place apparently bound by the same physical laws as our own world. But there are distinct differences and mysteries that scientists can only barely grasp or, just as often, which confound them completely. Why, for instance, do the spores of the "sickleberry tree" float, even though they weigh up to 100 kilograms each? How do the deadly "giant paralyzing whipspiders" freeze their prey without the use of any webs or poison? What causes the crystal deposits in the Davis Caves to glow and shimmer? Investigators have many questions, while answers are few.

Possibly the Otherworld's most striking feature is its smaller, secondary, deep orange sun. This tiny adjunct to the more normal-seeming yellow sun circles its larger counterpart approximately every 28 days on a very elliptical path. Due to the small sun's eccentric orbit, it reportedly seems like an orange "eye" that moves across the surface of the larger sun, appearing to

bulge outward from the larger sun, never really separating from it, before disappearing to hide behind the larger body. Calculations by astrophysicists speculate that the smaller sun stands apart from the larger only a few times every millennium, as the slightly elliptical orbit of the Otherworld brings it perpendicular to the smaller sun at the same time that the small sun is furthest from its governing body.

The effects of the twin suns and the slight eccentricity of the Otherworld's orbit produce effects very strange to an observer from our world. At the longitude just outside of Jerusalem (i.e., just inside the Otherworld), the viewer sees the suns rise straight upward, gradually increasing in apparent size as they move slowly toward the zenith. At the apex, the yellow sun stops briefly, reverses course, and then - most strangely - stops again briefly before the two suns resume their path back down directly toward the horizon, decreasing in apparent size all the while. It is theorized that observers at other points on the planet see different but equally bizarre motions.

Although the ruins confirm that the Otherworld was once inhabited, no sign of recent habitation has been discovered. It may be that the beings who built the city died out long ago, but no one will know for certain until we further explore the new world. However, such exploration has been progressing slowly for a number of reasons. The primary reason is actually the disaster itself. The world is only just recovering from the Rip. Rescue operations and containment were more important than sending well-armed teams into the Otherworld. Secondly, the numbers of hostile creatures living in the Otherworld have made exploration dangerous. Any search team must be thoroughly prepared for hostile encounters with the strange and deadly local wildlife. The terrain is very rocky and sparsely forested, with a conifer-like plant similar to a pine tree mak-

ing land vehicle travel almost impossible. Food and water must be carried along with the team, as few of the plants have been studied for their potential nutritional value and it is not known how many might be poisonous to humans.

Aerial exploration by military aircraft has not yet been attempted, but experts project that it might prove too dangerous as well. The skies of the Otherworld, at least near the ruins, are the realm of great flying beasts that appear to be a terrifying blend of crocodile and pterodactyl, which take lethal action against any invasion of their territory. Remote exploration by robots and small remote-control flying drones with cameras and sensors has been more successful than live expeditions. This remote aerial exploration has revealed that the rocky, nearly barren terrain extends for at least several hundred miles. Unfortunately, the drones do not get far before some beast or other flying animal takes offense to the intrusion into its territory. Civilian scientists believe that the U.S. is planning on launching satellites into the Otherworld's orbit, but no one knows what difficulties might be encountered from the unusual gravity of the two suns. Such a step is logical for extensive study of the planet.

### The Return of the Host

The gravest threat facing the world today is the one no one can see.

Fleshless specters run rampant, beyond the sight or senses of most people. These demons escaped during the Rip when the barriers between the worlds collapsed.

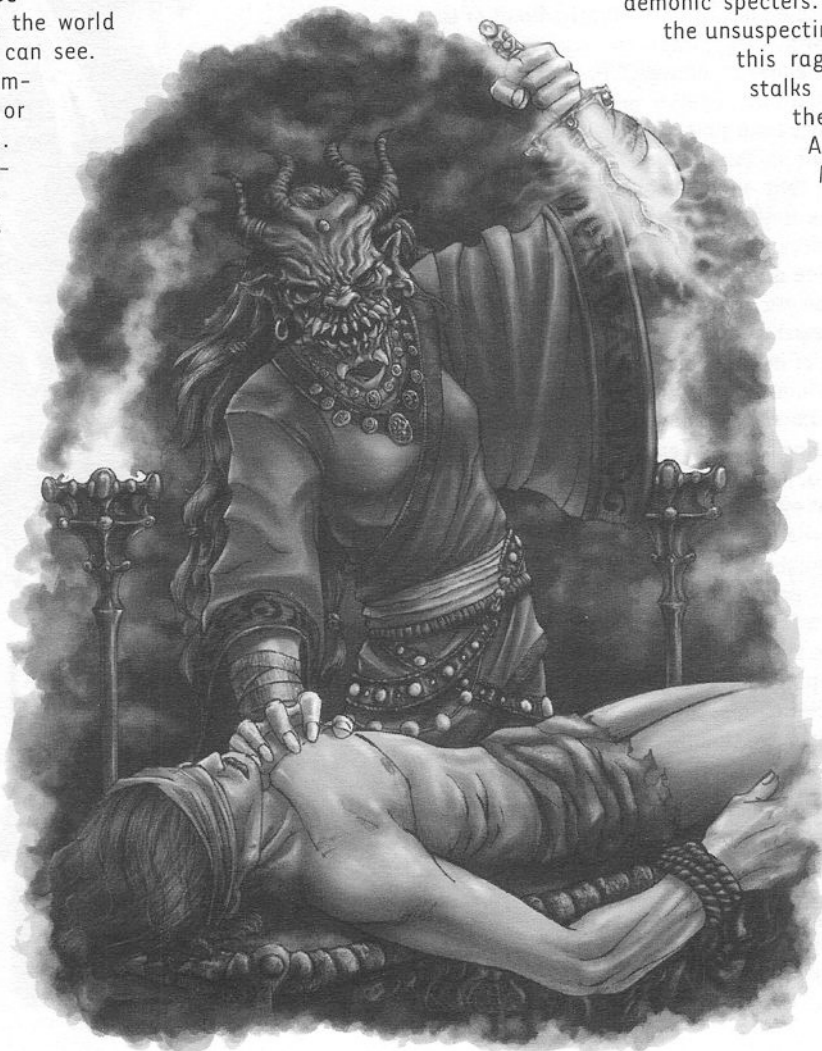
The Daemonhost never suspected, never dared hope that their long confinement would end. All routes leaving the Abyss were cut off by the progenitors, but the Rip momentarily removed not just the barriers in the vicinity of Jerusalem, but all those between the planes of existence. In that moment, the Daemonhost and many of their abyssal servants, instantly sensing the absence of the barriers, fled their ancient prison. Most of the Host and the demons that serve them have escaped. The single event the seers said was guaranteed by destiny not to occur has indeed come to

pass. Now those same seers fear the fast-approaching darkness of a future in which destiny has failed. In a single instant, a single failure, the fate of both worlds was forever altered. Destiny has been derailed, and no one knows what the future now holds in store for us.

Worse, even the seers and prophets of previous ages would not know this old enemy made new. Although the enemies of the progenitors are once again loosed upon the world, today they are vastly different from the princes of the worlds that they once were, however powerful their sorcery might have been. The Host has spent thousands upon thousands of years within the Abyss, a plane that can easily corrupt and twist even the virtuous - but what the realm can do to the already corrupt is truly terrible. Ever so slowly, the perverted nature of that realm twisted the banished souls of the Host into a reflection of its own corruption, so that they are now more like the formless messengers of despair and bearers of entropy that lore calls demons. Trapped since thousands of years before the rise of Egypt and Sumer, the Host is now the Daemonhost, princes of demons and demigods of corruption and perversion. Now they have a more insidious form. Instead of flesh and blood,

these long dead rulers of Earth are potent demonic specters. Moving silently among the unsuspecting throngs of humanity, this raging, primordial enemy stalks human prey and plots the rise of a new Ascendancy.

Most titans are not remotely aware of the menace they face. The prophecies regarding the event have been handed down among only the Fugo a Watu and the Promethean Order. The latter group has traditionally seen itself as the perfect tool for destiny, certain that its illustrious inheritors would step in and save the world, but something went terribly wrong and the result was catastrophic. No word from the Order's top agents escaped the distorted wreckage of Jerusalem, no survivor of the Rip was left to relate what he or she saw, for the Daemonhost murdered or possessed



any who beheld them. They spread across the world like a plague of undetectable locusts. Insidious, they now draw together those who can hear their foul whispers. They bring great power to individuals that are useful - and they ask only for complete obedience in return.

### The Rise of Daemon Cults

Long ago, all over the world, secret societies and orders were created by those who opposed the Children of Might, the scions of the progenitors. Some cults formed around charismatic and fearsome people who themselves showed signs of a potent daemonic heritage. Using the fading fragments of arcane lore, they would call upon the powers of the Abyss, the realm of daemons and the once human Host. The cults murdered, blackmailed, and corrupted the innocent in exchange for temporal power, using the investments granted by their inhuman and cruel patrons to unknowingly further their convoluted plot to escape the bleak wilderness of the Abyss.

As inheritors were a rare breed in those times, conflict between them and the daemon cults were infrequent but bloody when they did occur. Slowly, the daemon cults were destroyed or driven underground, their scrolls and tablets lost, burned, or broken. As time passed, the knowledge of how to hear the whispers of the daemonic Host were all but lost. The Brotherhood of the Iron Rose (see Chapter Two: Allegiances), for instance, fought tirelessly against the "enemies of heaven." Drawing upon the vast resources of the Catholic Church and liberally taking advantage of the indemnity from sin granted by the Pope Leo X, nearly every daemon cult in Europe and the Americas was destroyed. The very few that survived did so in silence and secrecy, biding their time until their vigilance lapsed or their daemonic masters broke free from their black prison.

The illumination of science and the war on superstition in the 19th century ushered in an era of calm. The daemon cults were then few. Those that did exist were mostly in backwater nations and fed off the suffering of imperialism and war. But even lost knowledge can be found in musty tombs and forgotten caves. No matter how hard the churches, temples, or inheritors struggled to end the vile practice of the daemon cult, like Heracles battling the ancient Hydra, its numerous heads eventually grew back. No one guessed that even the rulers of nations may fall to the temptation of such vile and destructive power. The Third Reich and the Khmer Rouge are the most notable examples, but there have been others - and some remain active even now. Such governments took the idea of human sacrifice in exchange for daemonic investments to unprecedented levels.

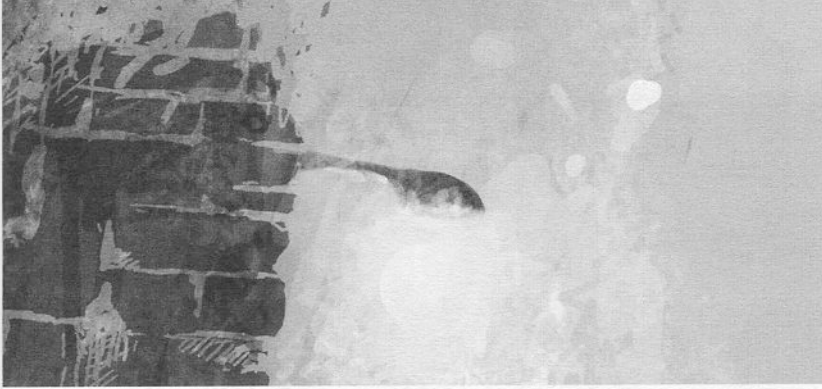
Today, daemon-worshipping cults are more insidious and covert than those of ancient times. The cults cannot hide as easily in the guise of legitimate temples such as those of Set, Kali, and Loki. Instead, they hide in the open. Some are fraternities and brotherhoods; others are "new age" groups or small independent churches. They rarely hold large, elaborate ceremonies (and generally, if they do, the rites are greatly altered and bastardized), and most have never made a human sacrifice. Rather than grasping as much power as they can in a short time, they take only a little at a time and grow in small, measured increments. But even the cults were not prepared for the sudden release of their long-awaited masters.



The background is a dark, grainy, and textured surface, possibly a wall or concrete. It features faint, large-scale graffiti that includes the words "KEEP OFF" in a bold, blocky font. There are also various abstract scribbles and lines in a lighter shade, some resembling stylized faces or symbols. The overall tone is somber and gritty.

# ALLEGIANCES

chapter two



Formal Allegiances in Dark Inheritance (not to be confused with the d20 Modern Roleplaying Game( "allegiances"), give the GM a structure upon which to build campaigns, a starting point for exploration and danger. They are also a useful way to focus the style of game you want to play. Each of the following

# ALLEGIANCES



Allegiances alters the style of a Dark Inheritance campaign and gives you choices as to what the mood and themes are going to be. Do you want a black ops game, complete with conspiracies and some bug-hunting fun? Try out a campaign using Project Titan. A group reminiscent of Hellboy(, with plenty of mystery and discovery? - Give the International Geographical Society game a go. You can even wade through the cesspool of organized crime with an Eight Heavenly Dragons game, sending two-fisted gun action on a collision course with modern fantasy horror.

However, while Allegiances give you a choice between different styles of play, they all exist within the same world. Global travel, international commerce, and politics necessitate in-game conflict and, at times, unwilling (or unwitting) cooperation. In our real world, the day when institutions could simply ignore events taking place thousands of miles away is truly gone. An uprising in Africa or an epidemic in Japan can have long-reaching impacts. For this reason, and for others more specific to each Allegiance, characters in Dark Inheritance are often sent to keep an eye on distant events. For instance, the Promethean Order sends members all over the world to acquire relics and lore that they hope can be used to stop the Daemonhost, while the Fugo a Watu hunts for any artifact with a connection to the fabled progenitors.

It is not uncommon for operatives and members of these organizations to cross paths, as all are interested in looking for information about inheritors and about the past that is not recorded in any history text book. The discovery of a ruin or the rumor of an Otherworld fissure sends people scrambling to be the first on the scene. Competition between Allegiances, or even among factions within Allegiances, can be fierce, even when one does not know who its competitor is. When knowledge is power, secrecy becomes a vital weapon, if not a way of life.

Not every character in the group needs to be a part of the same Allegiance. Chance, infiltration, and common goals can forge an alliance between any of the various factions in your game. Your characters are individuals with their own goals and motivations, their own agendas. Such intra-party combinations may require more forethought and planning to work effectively, but campaigns involving multiple Allegiances can be more

exciting and might ultimately reveal more of the secrets behind Dark Inheritance than those in which all the PCs are members of a single Allegiance.

The Dark Inheritance setting still uses the new allegiance system found in the d20 Modern Roleplaying Game (see Chapter One: Characters in that book). Any of the following organizations can be chosen as allegiances for your character. Just because you work for or are a member of an Allegiance, however, does not force you to choose it as an allegiance. Many people work for companies and institutions toward which they feel little if any personal attachment.

### **Allegiance Descriptions**

The following pages provide detailed information concerning each Allegiance: their strengths and weaknesses, their histories, goals, and methods.

Each Allegiance description includes the following information:

#### **History**

This section explains how, why, and when the Allegiance was founded, what it has done since its inception, and how it fits into the larger contemporary world.

#### **Goals and Methods**

This section describes any goals that the Allegiance in question might be working towards, and the means they are willing to enact to obtain those goals. It also includes general notes regarding the Allegiance's operations, perhaps detailing such activities on a daily, weekly, or even annual basis.

#### **Organization**

This section describes the Allegiance's structure and location, and also offers suggestions as to how the player characters might fit into it. It includes any disparate factions within the Allegiance and the organization's internal politics.

#### **Current Plotlines**

Provided for each Allegiance are three to five major and/or minor plot hooks. Some of these hooks will be expanded upon in future supplements while others are left for the GM to use as she sees fit.

#### **Genre**

As mentioned above, each Allegiance has a suggested style of play, a distinct genre within modern fantasy horror that allows you to tailor your campaign the way you want. By reading this

section, you can get a quick feel for what it will be like to play a character that is a part of the Allegiance in question.

### **Inspirations**

To adequately demonstrate the genre, every Allegiance has a list of source materials, movies, TV shows, books, and music to help you get the most out of every organization. This section is very useful for players who are unsure what type of character they wish to play. They can quickly make a decision simply by looking through the list of inspirations.

## **Brotherhood of the Iron Rose**

We are the rock and the protector. We shield God's servants on Earth, that they might perform His will. As the flower nurtures and protects the soil whence it sprang, so too do we protect the Church, petals strong as iron from our devotion to the cause.

The only completely religious-based Allegiance, the Brotherhood of the Iron Rose is an entirely Catholic unit which exists to protect the Church, Christianity, and the world from evil. Its members are priest-knights, scholars, spies, and politicians, all dedicated to fighting the forces of evil in all their incarnations, but also devoted to providing for the needs of the faithful.

### **History**

When Martin Luther defied the Catholic Church in 1517 and Christianity's greatest schism occurred, Pope Leo X feared that the incident could ignite a new holy war and that the Church itself could fall to the hands of its detractors. To prevent this, he created a special secret brotherhood which he called the Iron Rose. Selected from among the more combative monks and knights who served the Church, the members of the Brotherhood were chosen for their loyalty, their discretion, their piety, and their physical and martial prowess. The Pope signed a decree, The Purity of the Rose, which grants all members full dispensation, in perpetuity, for any sins they might commit in the course of their duties. This document thus allows the Brotherhood to lie, steal, and even kill in order to defend the Church. Those Church historians who know of the Brotherhood generally credit it with having prevented the fall of the Church during the great schism, and with checking Luther's power (and that of Protestantism in the years following the split), holding it to acceptable levels.

The Purity of the Rose is still kept within the Black Chamber, the

### *Brotherhood of the Iron Rose*

*We are the rock and the protector. We shield God's servants on Earth, that they might perform His will. As the flower nurtures and protects the soil whence it sprang, so too do we protect the Church, petals strong as iron from our devotion to the cause.*

*- Opening verse of the Brotherhood's "Morning Prayer"*

Brotherhood's main headquarters beneath the Vatican. This is actually a series of underground rooms deep within the catacombs of Rome, through which passages the Brotherhood has access not only to the city above but also to the Vatican itself. In the course of its duties over the past several centuries, the Brotherhood discovered that some humans have powers that can only be described as miraculous - or perhaps blasphemous, depending on one's convictions. These people are, according to the conventions of the Brotherhood, the children or descendants of pagan deities, who are thus condemned to Hell by their very nature. Membership in the Brotherhood, however, abrogates even this sin, and thus offers the only chance for these poor souls to enter Heaven after their work on Earth is done. Thus, the Brotherhood actively recruits titans - referred to by many names within the Brotherhood, depending on the speaker's faction - into their organization. They prefer to find these people at a young age, in order to shape their religious views and world outlook more fully.

### Goals and Methods

At its core, the Brotherhood still believes it is doing God's work, regardless that they use any means at their disposal. Its first duty is to defend the Roman Catholic Church, not only from physical threats but also from incriminations and other less tangible dangers, external or internal. To this end, the

Brotherhood has shifted from an emphasis on weapons alone: its membership now contains not only lawyers, doctors, and scientists but also courtesans (prostitutes), crime lords, and politicians, all of whom work to help protect the sanctity and reputation of the Church. Serious criminal actions performed by priests are allowed but often investigated by the Brotherhood, and covered up if possible, although the culprit is always punished. Attempts to buy up Church properties are thwarted - through legal means if possible, but the Brotherhood will resort to extortion or outright violence when necessary. Materials or situations which could cast the Church in a poor light are examined, debunked if possible, and marginalized or obscured otherwise. The Brotherhood has no say in the actual administration or operation of the Church, and does not desire one: its purpose is to keep the Church intact and respected so that its priests can handle the actual religious affairs.

Over the years, the mission of the order has also expanded. It now considers itself the first line of defense for all loyal Catholics, and for the world in general, against the actual forces of Darkness. Many of the order believe, quite rightly, that demons and devils truly exist, and they have dedicated their lives to defending against such creatures. Still, not all attacks are demonic in origin, nor are they even violent and overt in nature. Many members feel that AIDS and other modern illness-



es are instruments of the Devil, designed both to thin the herd of humanity and to create dissent and disharmony and fear, and the Brotherhood has several doctors and scientists who are working on possible cures for such ailments. Others believe that the true danger lies in the current lack of decent education in many countries, and the Brotherhood includes educators who work to raise standards in schools throughout the world. Still others feel that the Devil is behind the recent depletion of natural resources, intending to create Hell on Earth by stripping the planet of her beauty and her strength. These members are ecologists and botanists and biologists who strive to protect the planet from the ill-conceived abuses of its inhabitants.

Technically, the Brotherhood can use any method to achieve its goals - The Purity of the Rose ensures that they are always already pardoned for any and all sins, and the Laws of Man are insignificant when compared to the Laws of God. In reality, of course, most members do their best to live pure and noble lives and to obey both divine and temporal laws whenever possible. A brother may kill someone who poses a threat, but he will do his best to try nonlethal methods first (or at least will first consider whether they might work in a given situation). Some members of the Brotherhood are more old-fashioned than others, and these tend to prefer direct action, whether that means outright violence, heated discussion, or forthright leadership in a neighborhood protest against a new factory. Others are more modern, performing most of their duties through computers, phones, faxes, and the Internet.

Many of the brothers spend their time monitoring activities around the world, noting anything that may require the intervention of the order. Several are stationed within the Vatican, and keep a direct eye on the Church there, while at least one member is placed within every major diocese around the world. Others monitor news, current events, and various periodicals, or frequent colleges, political centers, and anywhere else they might discover current threats. Once a situation is discovered, it is immediately reported back to the Inner Council. In the case of an immediate threat, the brother(s) on hand may choose to respond right away, and then to report both the situation and its outcome. If a matter is merely gestating, or if it is of a larger scale, the Inner Council considers it and then issues a recommendation to the brothers nearest to the scene. Brothers are trusted to handle matters in their own fashion, and so these recommendations are usually vague, saying things like "do not allow this news to reach the world" or "prevent this individual from purchasing those lands." Brothers are evaluated on their performance, and often receive critiques from the Inner Council to help them perform their duties more effectively and more appropriately.

### **Organization**

The Brotherhood of the Iron Rose contains almost three thousand members today. Its headquarters are still the Black Chamber, the section of the Roman Catacombs set aside for their use when the order was first founded.

### **The Brotherhood's Hierarchy**

The Brotherhood of the Iron Rose is divided into five ranks: lay brothers, brothers, senior brothers, reverend brothers, and the Brothers of the Inner Council, who hold a rank roughly equal to that of a bishop within the larger Church.

Lay brothers are not ordained priests, but believe in the sanctity of the Church and in the mission of the Brotherhood. These members cannot perform religious services of any sort, and are rarely entrusted with missions of their own. Many lay brothers are professionals in some established field, such as law, medicine, history, information technology, or biology, and help the order by pursuing matters from within that field. Others have less reputable occupations. Lay brothers are rarely expected to put themselves in physical danger, and usually keep their connection with the order a secret; each lay brother is assigned to a specific brother or senior brother and receives instructions from that individual. When not participating in one of the Brotherhood's tasks, lay brothers may pursue their own interests and further their own careers, provided they remain loyal to the Church and to the order. Each lay brother wears a small silver cross, with a rose design inscribed in the back.

Brothers have been ordained and thus can perform religious services, give communion, and hear confessions. These men have devoted their lives to the Brotherhood and consider the order their life-calling. They spend the majority of their time furthering the goals of the Brotherhood. This is not to say that brothers cannot have other interests, or that they work constantly, but most have no career beyond the priesthood and the order. Brothers also wear a silver cross with the rose mark, but they also have a tattoo on their left shoulder, showing a deep red rose twined around a cross.

Senior brothers have been promoted by virtue of experience and excellence in the field, and most are now in charge of several brothers and deal with the lay brothers in their area as well. These members generally lead missions; senior brothers are also responsible for notifying the Inner Council when an incident occurs, and for filing the report after the matter has ended. Senior brothers each wear a ring of gold, set with a single large stone etched in the design of a rose (the color and type of gem varies from person to person).

Reverend brothers are members who have attained seniority within the Brotherhood. These men have been part of the Brotherhood for many years, and all have distinguished themselves for their devotion, their wisdom, and their effectiveness in organization and leadership. Reverend brothers are in charge of the various hostels, monasteries, manor houses, and apartment buildings the Brotherhood owns - any place where a large number of brothers gather and live is overseen by at least one reverend brother. The men in charge of the various rooms in the Black Chamber are also reverend brothers. These members do not go on missions themselves, however, and do not handle such matters - they simply maintain the order's residences and rooms

so that the senior brothers are free to deal with situations as they occur. Reverend brothers wear rings similar to those of the senior brothers, except that their rings are generally etched with the design of the rose wrapped around the cross.

#### **The Black Chamber**

The Black Chamber contains several rooms, including the Archives, the Prayer Hall, the Refectory, the Dormitory, Monument Hall, the Armory, and the Council Chamber. Although the various rooms are very old, the Brotherhood has had all of the latest amenities installed, including heating, air-quality control units, electricity, and even some surveillance and security technology (although, since most of the Brotherhood here know each other well and the location itself is a high-priority secret, they have not yet felt it necessary to move to the most advanced security technology. The various rooms within the Chamber are generally accessible with manual number-pad codes or, in some cases, card-keys which are made available to all members.)

#### **The Archives**

This area is the Brotherhood's library, a large room filled with books, scrolls, and charts. All of the materials the order has collected are contained here and carefully organized on heavy wooden shelves by year (the year the order encountered the problem in question, rather than the year the document was created). Small alcoves along the sides of the room provide study nooks, where a brother may take a book or scroll to study in silence. Each alcove contains a desk, a chair, a lamp, and a curtain that can be drawn for privacy. A larger alcove at the front of the room contains a fairly recent addition to the Archives: a desktop computer, complete with scanner and printer. The brothers in charge of the Archives have been methodically scanning in every document in the Archives, beginning with the oldest, and are building an electronic database of their materials so that brothers can research from anywhere in the world. The files are backed up, both on the desktop computer and on CDs, and a backup system copies the files each night onto a secondary system located in a small rented room in Rome itself.

#### **The Prayer Hall**

The Prayer Hall is a long, narrow hall with a high vaulted ceiling, and it is here that the brothers gather for their morning and evening prayers. The room is simply furnished, with heavy wooden pews in two rows and a low dais at the front, complete with a simple altar. A heavy wooden cross hangs on the front wall. The room does not contain confessionals; thanks to The Purity of the Rose, brothers do not have to take confession (although some still choose to do so, and some brothers offer that service for each other). The senior brother present officiates at prayers and offers communion. A side door to the left of the altar leads to the small sacristy, which contains the priests' vestments and reliquary.

#### **Refectory**

The Refectory is a long room with several long wooden tables running down it, long benches on either side of them. All of the

brothers, regardless of age and seniority, eat here together, sharing simple but well-made food. Although the brothers are allowed to drink, only non-alcoholic beverages are served at their meals.

#### **Dormitory**

The Dormitory is another long room, this one wider than either the Refectory or the Prayer Hall. It is broken into small areas for each brother, and each area contains a simple bed, a trunk, a stool, and a nightstand. Woven screens separate each area, and the brothers often decorate their "bedrooms" with tapestries, quilts, and pictures.

#### **Monument Hall**

Monument Hall contains trophies from various campaigns the Brotherhood has waged, and souvenirs from missions - newspaper articles, photographs, medals, weapons, etc. Relics holy to the Church are not kept here. The room has glass cases along both side walls, and the displays grow older as one moves toward the front of the room. At the very front, in a glass case of its own, is The Purity of the Rose itself in a permanently sealed case. Most of the cases can be opened, although they are locked; the brother in charge of the hall is also in charge of the keys.

#### **The Armory**

The Armory walls are lined with wooden racks, upon which hang a variety of weapons used by the Brotherhood. Swords, maces, clubs, axes, knives, and other ancient weapons hang here still, generally relegated to the role of decoration, as members tend to favor the many pistols, rifles, and other modern weapons that cover the majority of the racks throughout the room. These weapons are readily available for use by all brothers (but not for lay brothers, without special permission), and can be taken at any time, though brothers are expected to return the weapons in good condition. Brothers not stationed in the Black Chamber usually have their own weapons, or have access to a similar cache in their immediate area.

#### **Council Chamber**

The Council Chamber is a small circular room in which the Inner Council meets to discuss events and to decide on policy and courses of action. The room is plain, as are all the rooms in the Black Chamber, but its walls are covered with thick tapestries that insulate the ancient room somewhat, and a thick carpet covers the floor as well. A heavy circular wooden table sits in the center of the room, with comfortable chairs placed around it for the council members. A wooden cabinet and an old iron-bound chest stand along the wall. The cabinet contains various documents that the council feels should not be readily accessible to the brothers (though it is said that the Chief Archivist has copies of them for safekeeping). The chest contains deeds to properties that have been granted to the Brotherhood over the years, by the Church, in recognition of the order's valiant service.

Many brothers live outside of Rome, in other countries and on other continents. In places where the Brotherhood owns land,

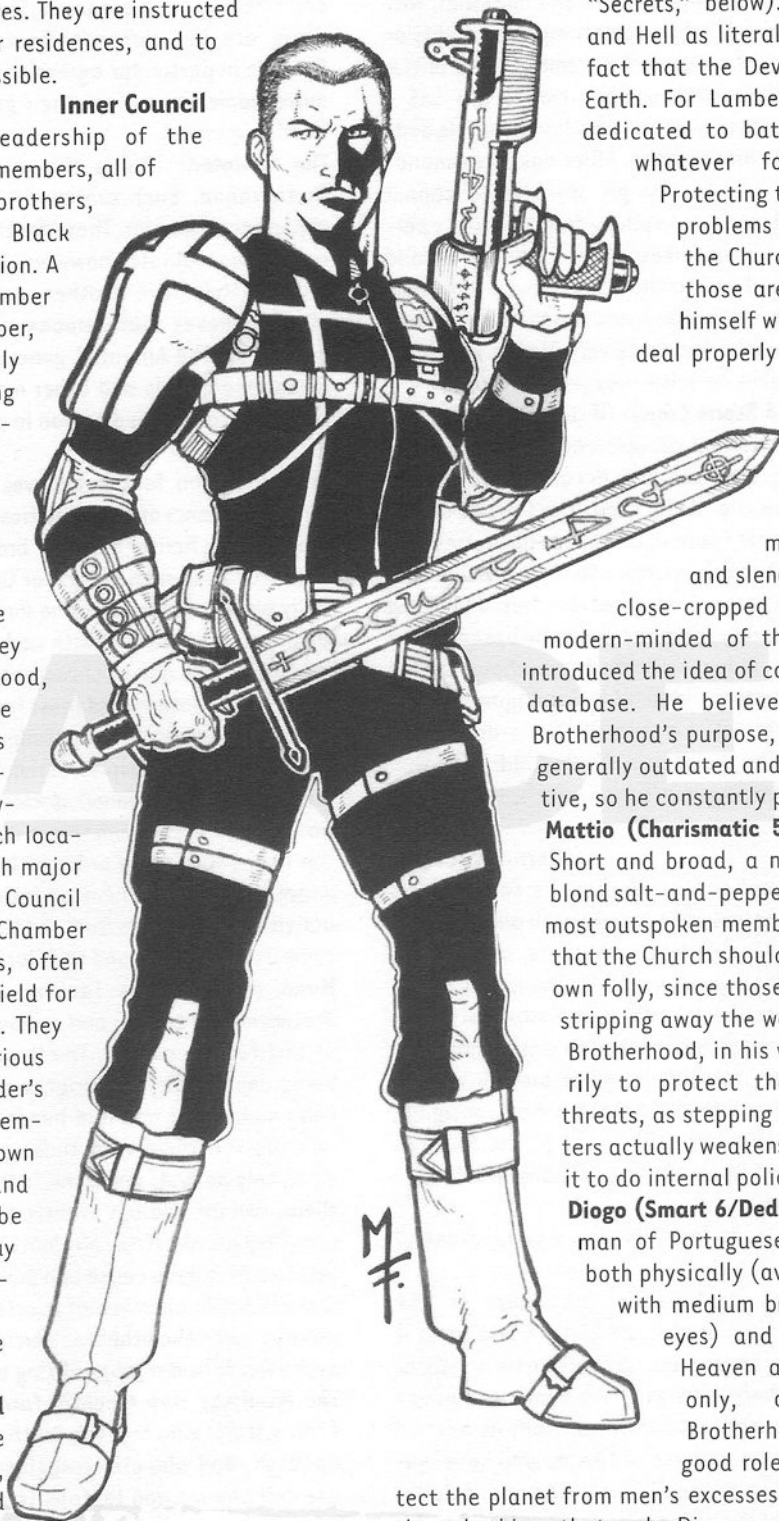
these brothers live on that property, usually in manors or apartment buildings which resemble a monastery on the inside and which mirror the Black Chamber in its simplicity. Other brothers own or rent properties themselves. They are instructed not to draw attention to their residences, and to avoid ostentation whenever possible.

### Inner Council

The Inner Council is the leadership of the Brotherhood. It consists of six members, all of whom have been reverend brothers, whether based out of the Black Chamber or in some other location. A Brother of the Inner Council member must live in the Black Chamber, and a new member is only appointed when an existing member dies or becomes incapable of participating in council activities. (Old and infirm members are sent to one of the Brotherhood's residences in southern Italy, to live out the rest of their days there.) The Council handles all of the key decisions for the Brotherhood, occasionally directed by the Pope himself - how to spend its money, where to locate its residences and brothers, what reverend brother to assign to each location, and how to deal with each major situation that arises. The Inner Council meets every day in the Council Chamber to discuss the day's business, often bringing in brothers from the field for various reports or information. They make recommendations to various senior brothers and plan the order's long-term strategies. Each member of the Council has his own viewpoints and opinions, and since decisions must be approved by a majority, the day is often spent in debate on various topics.

The current members of the Inner Council are as follows:

**Lamberto (Tough 3/Dedicated 4/Soldier 3 Hidden Sun):** The oldest member of the Council, Lamberto is a slight, stooped figure with a ring of white hair, sharp features, and piercing



gray eyes. Once one of the Church's most deadly operatives, he has been reduced to a rather feeble old man - although he has more than one surprise up his sleeve (see "Secrets," below). He believes in Heaven and Hell as literal truths, and accepts the fact that the Devil's minions are here on Earth. For Lamberto, the Brotherhood is dedicated to battling those minions, in whatever form they may take.

Protecting the Church from mundane problems is purely secondary, since the Church has others to aid it in those areas, but only people like himself within the Brotherhood can deal properly with direct supernatural attacks.

### Rafaele (Smart 3/Dedicated 3/Techie 2):

The most recent member of the Council, middle-aged Rafaele is tall and slender, with dark curls and a close-cropped goatee. He is the most modern-minded of the Council, the one who introduced the idea of copying the archives onto a database. He believes very strongly in the Brotherhood's purpose, but feels its methods are generally outdated and thus not optimally effective, so he constantly pushes for reforms.

### Mattio (Charismatic 5/Crusading Advocate 5):

Short and broad, a northern Italian with dark blond salt-and-pepper hair, Mattio is one of the most outspoken members of the order. He feels that the Church should not be protected from its own folly, since those only make it stronger by stripping away the weak and incompetent. The Brotherhood, in his view, should strive primarily to protect the Church from external threats, as stepping in to handle internal matters actually weakens the Church by not forcing it to do internal policing.

### Diogo (Smart 6/Dedicated 3):

Diogo, a gentle man of Portuguese descent, is unassuming both physically (average in height and build, with medium brown hair and mild brown eyes) and politically. He considers Heaven and Hell to be metaphors only, and feels that the Brotherhood's task is to provide good role models and to help protect the planet from men's excesses. Environmental issues are the only things that make Diogo passionate - he believes that God gave this planet to men (he is something of a chauvinist)

protect the planet from men's excesses. Environmental issues are the only things that make Diogo passionate - he believes that God gave this planet to men (he is something of a chauvinist)

for safekeeping, and that people are failing in this task by letting the Earth be drained of its resources for mere comfort and wealth.

**Elliott (Strong 3/Soldier 4/Spec Ops 2):** Tall and muscular, with iron-gray hair and green eyes, Elliott is something of an oddity on the Council – an Englishman who was once a member of the British Armed Forces, part of their elite combat troop, the SAS – although none of his colleagues questions his loyalty or his dedication to the Church or the Brotherhood. Elliott has a commanding presence which even his surprisingly shrill voice cannot reduce. He still tends to approach everything from a military perspective: “Who Dares Wins,” he still likes to say. For him, the world is black and white, good and evil (although he does not believe literally in angels or demons or the like), and anything evil should be struck down quickly, cleanly, and decisively. He has very little patience, and he always takes criticism very personally.

**Simon (Fast 3/Dedicated 6 Storm Crow):** Of average height but very fit, Simon looks like a former professional athlete, poised and powerful, but his sad grey eyes and dark curls would be better suited to a poet. Simon is a Storm Crow, the first acknowledged titan to sit on the Inner Council, and takes his duties very seriously. He is very devout, but has little use for excessive ceremony, preferring instead personal meditation. Simon believes that the Church has lost its way, and has been corrupted by the lures of wealth and power. In his view, the Brotherhood should no longer stand by the Church but instead by its original principles and by the basic tenets of the religion. The order should now be focused on protecting the people, God’s children, rather than on propping up a tottering institution which, he secretly believes, deserves to fall.

#### Internal Factions

The Brotherhood may appear to outsiders to be focused and united, but in reality it is far less cohesive. As with any group its size, it contains people with different viewpoints, and several factions have formed within the order itself. Though not officially recognized, these factions have their own informal structures and organization, and often control an entire house or building (particularly if the presiding reverend brother is sympathetic to their goals). They often have some mark, insignia, or phrase to show their solidarity, and many of the factions actively lobby Council members to make decisions which align with their own personal goals.

The current factions are as follows, in descending order of membership:

**The Sisterhood:** Although technically the order is the Brotherhood of the Iron Rose, for the last thirty years or so it has included women who have been given honorary status equivalent to that of “brothers” (women have been the equivalent of lay brothers for far longer than that, partially as a result of the Brotherhood’s adoption and use of titans, who have historically been women as often as men). The Sisterhood includes all of the female members of the order, who constantly lobby for equal representation on the Inner Council. Yet the Brotherhood

is still largely a fraternal order (Brother Diogo in particular has opposed women’s membership at every turn), and all of the full brothers are men, since becoming a brother technically requires one’s having been ordained. That does not mean, however, that some are not sympathetic to the women’s demands, and Rafaele in particular agrees that the leadership should include more women to reflect their growing numbers in the brotherhood in general.

**The Anointed:** This is the premiere combat unit within the Brotherhood. Each brother in the Anointed is a trained and experienced warrior. These brothers tend to look up to Lamberto rather than Elliott, however, because in addition to martial prowess they have another common trait: each Anointed genuinely believes that demons exist here on Earth and must be destroyed. The Anointed generally fight with archaic weapons, disdaining pistols and other modernities, and prefer to attack with the cross of dedication in one hand and the sword of faith in the other.

**God’s Own:** This faction believes – quite rightly – that titans are the descendants of pagan deities and that their powers come from their unholy heritage. These brothers are willing to accept the notion of using such beings for the good of the Brotherhood, partially because, thanks to The Purity of the Rose, they are already forgiven for consorting with such creatures. They do not consider the titans to be honest Christians, however, since they are unclean by their very nature, and most feel that such beings should not be allowed any status or responsibility within the order. Not surprisingly, God’s Own despise Simon and constantly mutter that his presence on the Council is close to blasphemy, although they would never speak such things out loud. They are careful to treat the titans within the order with respect, but will not engage in conversation with them or include them in non-work-related activities – to a God’s Own, the titans are merely dangerous tools, to be used carefully and then locked away again.

**Hand of God:** This faction is comprised entirely of the Brotherhood’s titans, and many of the Sisterhood are members of this faction as well. The Hand of God believe that, far from being unholy, their Birthrights are signs of God’s favor, that He has reached out and laid hands upon them (hence their name) and blessed them with these gifts. The Hand of God are all extremely devout, given the fact that God’s favor is manifest in them, and are zealous in their efforts to put these gifts to good use. They are the first to volunteer for difficult missions, and the last to surrender a cause or a mission. The Hand of God and God’s Own are bitter enemies, of course, and many constantly look for ways to make the other faction look foolish, although few would ever even consider jeopardizing a mission for this purpose.

**The Wireless:** This recently formed faction contains brothers (and sisters) who feel the Brotherhood desperately needs to be updated, and who are struggling to force it to modernize. They use cell phones and laptops to communicate, surf the Web for information, and prefer guns to swords (but they like tranquilizer darts more than either). Rafaele is the leader of this fac-

tion, and has placed senior brothers who are also members in important positions throughout the order, where they can work to install DSL lines in the manor houses and can order the brothers under them to all carry pagers and cell phones and PDAs. The Wireless tend to be treated rather dismissively by the Anointed (who refer to them as the Wireless Monks or, more peremptorily, the Wireless Wonders); the Wireless in turn tend to view that group as amusing but antiquated fools whose methods that should have died out with the abacus.

**The Faithful:** This is one of the most extreme factions within the Brotherhood. Fortunately, the membership is small and does not have much influence, although both Mattio and Simon have agreed with them from time to time. The Faithful feel that the Church has lost its way, that its leadership can no longer be trusted. They do not believe that the institution should be tossed aside altogether, however. Instead, they think that the Brotherhood should take control of the Church directly, replace the Pope and the Archbishops with the Inner Council, and force the Church back to the true path dictated by God.

#### **Characters in the Brotherhood of the Iron Rose**

As circles of brothers are assigned as needed, in all likelihood the PCs have been assigned to work together on a specific project. One of the Inner Council members may be the force behind this project, or perhaps the Inner Council as a whole has placed the PCs together for an important task. It is also likely that the PCs belong to rival factions within the order and, for reasons unrevealed to them, have been assigned to work together. This is by far a more political-style game than one where the PCs have common goals. A Brotherhood game also provides the GM with a wonderful opportunity to combine normal human characters with titan characters: the Brotherhood rarely creates a circle composed entirely of titans.

#### **Current Plotlines**

The Brotherhood of the Iron Rose is always active throughout the world, locating, monitoring, and “dealing with” anyone it perceives as a threat to the Church and its teachings. Some of the order’s current missions include those listed below:

##### **The Jerusalem Project**

After the Vatican, Jerusalem is the holiest city in Catholicism. And someone has desecrated it by causing this unholy merging between the ancient city and an otherworldly ruin. Clearly, whoever did this must be found and punished. If possible, the city should be returned to its proper form.

##### **Jerusalem Gate**

Strange creatures have been appearing in the Golden City, presumably from wherever the alien necropolis was originally located. Scientists and the military don’t know what to make of these things, but the Brotherhood knows: they’re demons sent from Hell to invade our world. The entrances to the city must be guarded, and these monsters must be dealt with before they can wreak any more havoc.

##### **Brotherly Love**

Recently, several Catholic priests have been accused of sexual misconduct. The Brotherhood thinks these charges could be trumped up, fabricated by servants of evil to cast doubt upon the Church and sully its reputation. If that is the case, the minions must be found, their falsehoods exposed, and their existence ended. But if the allegations are true, the priests must be punished for their crimes, and the order should make sure nothing like this is occurring elsewhere.

##### **Hellish Medicine**

Children have been dying in alarming numbers recently in Los Angeles (or some other metropolis). The papers blame the deaths on drugs, but the Brotherhood thinks there’s more to it. The drugs must be particularly virulent to kill so quickly, and only children are being targeted. This is the work of devils, either Hell’s own or the more human kind, but either way, the culprits must be found and stopped and their evil drugs destroyed before another precious life is lost.

##### **Splinter Group**

A country church in Spain claims that it has found a piece of the True Cross. This splinter is said to have miraculous powers, and people are flocking to the church to witness its miracles. If the splinter is genuine, it must be a relic of the highest order, and could help restore people’s faith. But if it is false, it (or some other force) may be corrupting the congregation somehow, and could in time taint the entire religion with its presence. Clearly the order will need to investigate thoroughly.

##### **Foreign Terror**

Rumors say that Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon is creating a small secret army of religious fanatics that he can send against the Christian nations of the world. The Brotherhood is the Church’s religious warrior cult, so it falls to them to find out if these stories are true and, if they are, to deal with this army before it can threaten anyone else.

#### **Secrets**

Of course, even the Brotherhood is not free of controversy and dissimulation. It has several secrets of its own, many of which are hidden even from its own junior members. Some of those secrets are listed below:

- The original Purity of the Rose document was lost a century ago – the document in the display case is a copy, created by the Chief Archivist long ago, and the case is sealed to prevent anyone from ever finding out.
- The Inner Council owns several properties around the world, and not all of them are moral. It controls several brothels and drug dens, and uses the money to finance its own missions. Of course, technically, the Brotherhood is pardoned from any and all sins, but what about the people it is paying to commit sins?
- In fact, Simon is not actually the first titan to sit on the Council, nor is he the only one there now. Lamberto is a titan as well, a Hidden Sun, but he has kept his powers concealed because he knew that exposure would prevent him from being elected to the Council back then.

•The Sisterhood is considering splitting off into its own order. The faction's leader, a "senior brother" named Catherine deGamond, has actually spoken to the Pope about the matter, and has requested that the faction be granted its own Purity of the Rose. The Pope is still considering the matter.

•The Brotherhood has another secret faction, known only as the Blood-Pricked. They are highly trained assassins who always number only seven and who do not all know each others' identities; they are sent by their chief when someone has to be eliminated quietly. Not even all of the Brothers of the Inner Council know of this faction. Lamberto is its current chief, being a former Blood-Pricked himself. (Diogo knows of them, and of Lamberto's position among them, but is not privy to their activities.) They identify themselves by wearing roses on their lapels (a fairly common practice among the brothers, actually), and by pricking their thumbs on the thorns before shaking hands.

#### Enemies

The Brotherhood also has its share of enemies, and not all of them are outside the Catholic faith. Fortunately, most people do not know the Brotherhood exists, and so they have no target to attack in retaliation. But some do know of the order, and of their involvement in Church affairs. Some of the Brotherhood's more prominent adversaries include the following, in no particular order:

**Archbishop Carlino (Dedicated 3/Investigator 4):** A member of the Pope's personal advisory council, Carlino knows a little too much about the Brotherhood. A greedy, grasping man with little real faith, Carlino fears the brothers because they are outside of his control and because they could some day expose his lust for power, which might prevent him from becoming the next Pope. He does his best to undermine the Brotherhood and to avert at every turn any discussions of their accomplishments.

**Bishop Preston (Charismatic 4/Personality 4):** Once in line for an archbishop's seat, Preston was removed from consideration after the Brotherhood exposed his involvement in several unsavory activities. Though allowed to retain his title and seat, Preston blames the brothers of the Iron Rose for what happened, and would happily destroy them if he could. He goes out of his way to cause trouble for the brothers in his diocese, and to feed them deliberate misinformation in the hopes that they will be the ones to fail and look incompetent.

**The Assassin's Guild:** The first assassins were Muslims who killed Crusaders in their sleep, and that ancient order has continued to this day, although the organization's true name remains unknown. Its members are all devout Muslims, and they target anyone they feel is a threat to their religion; thus, they are the Brotherhood's counterpart among the nation of Islam, except that they use only one method for dealing with people - murder. The Guild knows of the Brotherhood's existence, but not who they are exactly or where their houses are located. They are constantly searching for any news of the order, however, and would attack any brothers on sight.

**Gypsy Fair:** Rome has many gypsies, many of them honest and



hardworking folk. But many are swindlers and thieves, and these refer to themselves collectively as the Gypsy Fair. They rob tourists blind, both by picking pockets and by charging outlandish prices for substandard goods and services. The Brotherhood is based in Rome as well, and has had frequent run-ins with the Gypsy Fair. Because of this, the Fair has known of and has declared war on the Brotherhood of the Iron Rose, and does everything it can to harm the brothers whenever possible. Unfortunately for the Brotherhood, the Fair also knows that its headquarters is within the Catacombs, and they have begun launching attacks on the entrances. How they discovered the entrances is still being investigated. Brothers are forced to fight their way out of the tunnels amidst a barrage of rotten fruit, stones, bricks, and even, on one occasion, arrows.

#### Genre

The Brotherhood of the Iron Rose is solidly in the "soldier of God" genre. Many of these men and women genuinely believe that God exists and that they have been called by Him to a higher purpose. They are dedicated to the Church, to their order, and to stamping out evil in the world. For some, that means taking machine guns and mowing down drug dealers. For others, it involves investigating and capturing a murderer before he can strike again. For still others, it may be about restoring a neighborhood's pride in itself, deposing the corrupt local politicians, and helping the community become a cleaner, safer, friendlier place. But every member of the Brotherhood shares one thing: the belief that God

is real, that He would never abandon His people, and that the Brotherhood is doing God's work by protecting His Church and His Children. Think of any movie or book or show where a character has such strong faith, and where that faith gives him or her the strength to oppose evil, and you have the right feel for this Allegiance. Some of them have supernatural powers, but many of the brothers are normal men and women who have only their courage, their skills, and their devotion.

#### Inspirations

The following all serve as inspiration material for a campaign formed around the Brotherhood of the Iron Rose.

#### Film:

Brotherhood of the Wolf (Le Pacte des Loups); The Exorcist; Stigmata; The First Power; Seven; The Prophecy; The Mission; Bram Stoker's Dracula; The Name of the Rose; Ladyhawke; End of Days; The Golden Child; Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade; The Master Killer.

#### TV:

Miracles; Millennium

#### Books:

*The Fraternity of the Stone*, by David Morrell

*The Nightworld series*, by F. Paul Wilson

## Eight Heavenly Dragons

*The Eight Heavenly Dragons have little concern for China or its people-until they get them on the boats to America.*

*- Johnny Chow, ex-member in his testimony*

*before the United States Congress*

The Eight Heavenly Dragons is a triad, a Chinese crime syndicate, which operates out of Hong Kong and New York City. This powerful criminal organization is actually the synthesis of two different groups - the old Four Skies triad and the Fists of Righteous Harmony. The latter is a group of monks trained in mysticism and martial arts, whose nationalistic beliefs drove them into a partnership with criminals after they led a failed rebellion against foreign influence and the emperor who would allow such an influence to spread. Today, the Eight Heavenly Dragons is the preeminent triad both in China and around the world, with their hands in prostitution, gambling, money-laundering, opium-smuggling, and, most recently, kidnapping and child slavery - in pursuit of young titans who can be bent to their will or that of the highest bidder.

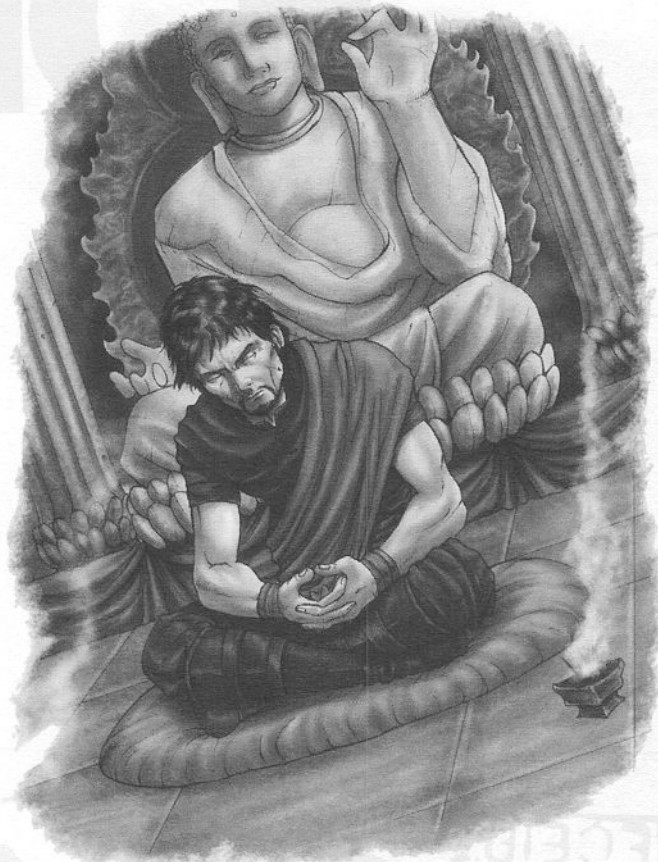
#### History

The history of the Eight Heavenly Dragons goes back to the waning years of the Ch'ing Dynasty in China, around the turn of the last century. The influence of foreigners was increasing within China's borders, and a strong reactionary nationalistic undercurrent was building among both citizens and government. This foreign influence reached its peak in the period between 1898 and 1900, as the open-minded emperor Kuang Hsu attempted many liberal reforms that would have transformed the government of

China into a constitutional monarchy, thus "modernizing" both the educational system and the economy. These reforms were opposed, often violently, by a group loyal to the Manchu officials who still permeated every level of the Chinese government.

This governmental dispute led to a general frustration and anger at foreign influence throughout China, culminating in the fanatically anti-foreign uprising known as the Boxer Rebellion. The Boxers were actually a group of martial artists known as the Fists of Righteous Harmony, whose nickname came from the strange martial arts that they practiced. The Fists were initially outraged at both the ruling government and the foreigners who were carving up their country like vultures picking over a carcass, but soon word came from within the Forbidden City that the Ch'ing Dynasty wanted to help the monks, secretly, throw the foreign invaders from Chinese soil. It was only then that the Boxers gained the courage and momentum to wander the countryside, assaulting foreign missionaries, diplomats, and Christian Chinese converts alike. The Boxer Uprising was put down in the latter part of 1900 by a combined force of troops sent by the various nations with interest in China. Because of the Ch'ing empress's implicit acceptance of this attack, the stage was set for the downfall of the last of China's great dynasties.

Within this new age of expansion outside China's borders came both the opportunity and economic incentive for the nation's



long-established criminal underworld to expand its operations outside of Asia into the broader world. During the 19th century, the Ch'ing Dynasty had started to crack down on the triads working within China as part of its commitment to modernizing its society. The triads were a particularly harmful link to China's past, it was felt, and the government wanted their activities quelled. Unfortunately for China, the increasing spheres of influence within China by foreign economic powers also meant that the triads had a new outlet for their activities. The opium trade that had flourished within Asia could now reach outside its borders, and before long the triads had established contacts in Europe and the United States.

The ceding of the island of Hong Kong to Great Britain after the Treaty of Nanjing in 1842 had a tremendous impact on the future of the triads both within China and beyond its borders. The British governors of the island believed the triads (so named for the triangular shape of the Chinese symbol meaning "secret society") were simply another cultural institution of the Chinese, and did not understand their ties to organized crime. Many of the most powerful triads at this time moved their operations from the mainland - in part to escape the persecution of their government and also to take advantage of a world of new opportunities.

The Four Skies was



one

such triad, moving its operations to Hong Kong shortly after the British took over its administration. They were one of the pre-eminent opium-smuggling triads in China before the Opium War, and in the aftermath they had successfully parlayed their money and contacts into a host of other illegal activities. One of the most lucrative of these was a quasi-legal immigration operation that helped Chinese emigrants eventually land in the United States, where Four Skies representatives would literally sell them to the various labor companies who were building the railroads and cities rapidly springing up in the American West. While the illegal immigration business grew abroad, prostitution and gambling in Hong Kong itself became more lucrative by the day. British and other foreign travelers and businessmen needed some form of entertainment, and the triad made a fortune selling them "exotic pleasures" at outrageous prices. Meanwhile, the Four Skies also made contacts within the British business community and government that would prove very useful as they began to slowly rebuild their opium trade. Shipping, storage, and distribution channels opened to the triad as they continued to influence their new friends with the sins of the Orient.

Meanwhile, a new phenomenon was springing up in various places throughout the Chinese countryside. New legends of spirit folk and masters of martial arts even greater than the Xiaolin began to spread. Great men were commanding powers taken straight from Chinese mythology and using them to achieve even greater deeds. The rebel leader Hong Xiuquan, who actually proclaimed himself the son of God, was said to have the ability to sway large crowds of people to his cause with only a few words. His nearly successful rebellion in the middle of the 19th century sparked many to question the authority of the Ch'ing dynasty, but even more importantly it gave some credence to the rumors that mysterious men of great power were walking the lands.

The triad knew that, as civil unrest grew, such legends would become more common among the poor and uneducated country people, but these rumors were sometimes spread by otherwise educated and trustworthy folk, and that could not be ignored. The triad spent years tracking down these claims, but it would finally be closer to home, in Hong Kong itself, that they would encounter the first of many titans on that island.

Xian Li, a tall, well-mannered elder from the northern provinces, represented an order known as the Fists of Righteous Harmony, and he came with an offer for the triads in Hong Kong.

#### **First Encounters**

The Fists of Righteous Harmony was a monastic order that became deeply troubled by the encroachment of foreign interests into Chinese affairs as the 19th century progressed. They were also angry with the Ch'ing Dynasty for allowing this unacceptable situation to occur - and even, in some cases, aiding the foreigners. The Fists were a reclusive order whose focus on external martial arts was characteristic of the northern provinces, where their main temples were located. Foreigners

who had traveled to northern China were impressed by both the brutality of the monks' art as well as their devotion to the ancient practices of their homeland. These same foreign travelers did not see the sideways glances or hear the private condemnations of the order's elders.

The Fists had always been a highly spiritual order in addition to being masters of their own style of martial arts. When rumors arose that "spirit folk" were once again walking the Earth, they sent emissaries across the land to confirm or rebuke these rumors. They were never able to confirm the rumors, but the rumors themselves had sparked a renewed commitment to the traditions of ancient China. This would also turn out to be the seed of the nationalism that would turn the Fists against the Ch'ing and the foreign invaders a few decades later.

About the same time as the Fists' emissaries were sent out across the land, a baby was left at the monastery by unknown parents. The monks raised the child, who they called Xian Li, as one of their own, and soon found that he had an extraordinary aptitude for the martial arts. By his mid-teens, he had begun already to surpass even their greatest masters in skill, strength, and agility. Out of respect for his elders and the humility they had taught him, Xian Li secluded himself in his room for several days. When he emerged, he announced that he had sworn a vow to never practice the martial arts again. Instead, he would train as a diplomat and learn the arts of the cultured class. The young man was allowed this conceit, although the monks privately wondered about the young man. Almost 40 years later, Xian Li would reassert himself in the order and convince the others that it was time to fight against the foreign invaders.

The catalyst for the monks' active recruitment of nationalistic allies outside the order was the Opium War of 1839-1842 and the disregard it showed for Chinese national sovereignty. They thought to find easy allies among the triads who had fled to Hong Kong because of their oppression by the ruling dynasty. They found, however, that they were wrong. The triads were not interested in working against the dynasty that had essentially reopened the illicit opium trade by putting it in the hands of the British.

One triad was interested in listening to Xian Li's proposal, however, not so much because they were patriots but because their leader recognized a special spark in Xian himself. The Four Skies wondered if the Fists of Righteous Harmony could lead them to answers about the mysterious "spirit folk" who were said to walk the earth. They agreed to meet with the elders of the monastery and to provide limited funds to the growing movement. Their only condition was that Xian Li himself should stay with them in Hong Kong. Although he was uncertain about this strange request, Xian Li sent word back to the monastery and within weeks several of the monks arrived in Hong Kong.

The meetings were long and both sides eventually grew frustrated, as it became more and more apparent that they did not share one another's goals. The triads simply wanted the most proficient fighters of the monastery to stay in Hong Kong where they could act as muscle - and, secretly, so the triad could find

out if they did indeed possess supernatural powers. The Fists argued that they would need their best fighters to lead the armies of peasants they would raise. If the Four Skies would simply provide the necessary funds, then the Fists could successfully bring down the foreign invaders and shame the Ch'ing into relinquishing their control over China's government. Neither side found it could make appropriate concessions, however, and the meetings stalled. The two groups parted ways amicably, however, and they would meet once again nearly 50 years later in Taiwan.

### Unity

The next time the two groups met was in Taiwan, following the ousting of Chiang Kai-Shek from mainland China by the Communists led by Mao Tse-tung. The Fists of Righteous Harmony had sided firmly with Chiang, the nationalist, against the Kuomintang defectors and communists under Mao. They had already left many of their temples as the Communists took control of northwestern China, and had eagerly fought alongside Chiang's armies until they were finally driven to the island of Formosa, which, as Taiwan, would be their home from then on. On Taiwan, the Fists built new temples and dedicated themselves to the liberation of the mainland from the Communists. They found new recruits from among the soldiers that had



fought for China, and some from the island who exhibited special powers similar to those of their venerable leader, Xian Li. With a fervor only increased by their recent defeats and the recent resurgence in their membership, the Fists sought a way to make their dreams of a unified, pure China, free of foreign invaders, a reality.

Meanwhile, several of the Hong Kong triads, including the Four Skies, had come to Taiwan to cement their place with the new governor, Chiang Kai Shek. Xian Li heard of this and commanded that he be taken to the new capital to see the men with whom his elders had failed to form a partnership so many years ago. Although none of the current leaders of the Four Skies had been present during those meetings, one of their representatives remembered Xian from his time in Hong Kong. Although he was only a small child at the time, he could still recall the feeling of magnetism that Xian exuded. It was a powerful presence, and one that he was instantly aware of now, even though Xian seemed only a shrunken and venerable old man.

The two talked through the night, discussing all that had happened in the decades since Xian first encountered the Four Skies. The Fists had been an integral part of China's history during that time period, having led a rebellion that almost toppled a dynasty and having been an integral part of the army that nearly unified China under a nationalistic banner. The Four Skies, meanwhile, had been equally successful at staying out of the public eye. Their business had grown both in size and in scope, and they now controlled a worldwide network of criminals.

After they caught up with each other and discussed the state of China's affairs, Xian Li requested a meeting in Hong Kong with the triad's leaders. He refused offers to bring the triad's leaders to Taiwan, instead saying that he wanted the trip to Hong Kong to be his final journey. He went back to his temple to prepare and to put all of his effects in order. The temple was placed under the control of Xian Li's favored disciple, Lo Shen, and he set out for Hong Kong to forge an alliance with the Four Skies.

Xian Li's argument was simple. It looked as though China could not be retaken by force, as the Soviets were now fully backing the new Communist government in Beijing. Taiwan was not truly China anymore, and the British ran Hong Kong. However, through the triad's international contacts, Xian Li saw a way to turn the tables on the foreign invaders. By joining forces with the formidable martial and spiritual power of the Fists, the Four Skies could not only claim a larger share of Hong Kong's underworld, it could also afford to expand its international operations even further. Members of the order would set sail to San Francisco and London to oversee the triad's activities. Since they were an unknown factor, it would be harder for the local authorities to trace their movements. They could establish a power in the various Chinatowns across the world that would clearly assert the dominance of the Four Skies.

The two parties discussed the various options available for several days, and by the end of the conference they had reached an agreement - something their forebears had not been able to

achieve. The Fists would indeed disperse to locations around the world to act as stealthy informants and muscle to the various Four Skies interests in other countries. In return, the Four Skies would work with the Fists in China to undermine the social and political obligations that have ripped their country and its people asunder. The organizations would remain separate, but a council of eight would be created to oversee their joint operations. The members of this council were known as the Eight Heavenly Dragons.

### Forging Ahead

Good things began to happen for both groups almost as soon as the partnership began. The Four Skies saw more revenue coming in and were able to take control over several of what had previously been hotly contested areas both in Hong Kong and abroad. The Fists of the Righteous Harmony were able to build new temples and expand their recruitment efforts into China once more, where they acquired many converts. As the Fists spread out across the world, incidences of titan births among them increased dramatically. (While in the homeland the monks were for the most part chaste, those who traveled abroad were more inclined to deviate from this tenet of the faith.)

Once the groups had worked together successfully for nearly two decades, the Eight Heavenly Dragons merged the organizations into one grand alliance. They took the name of their council of leaders, and as a result of this unity became much more efficient and powerful. The business that most benefited from the presence of the Fists was that of the opium trade. With even more smuggling channels open and the Fists able to provide nearly impenetrable protection to the triad's dealers and storage houses, it achieved a near-stranglehold upon the opium flowing from China to Europe and the Americas. While the business has suffered in recent years thanks to technological advances and the other cartels gaining access to titans of their own, the Eight Heavenly Dragons still control very nearly 60% of the world's heroin trade.

As the organization grew in power and stature, so did its supernatural resources grow. It gained the service of new titans, many of which came out of the fall of the Soviet Union (eager to find employment and better their lot, some of the titans who worked for the KGB and other Soviet apparatuses moved to countries such as China to sell their services.). One of the members, Wong Ho Lee, also gained a keen interest in acquiring magical artifacts from China's past. This has put them at odds with members of the Promethean Order, who can often be found in Tibet seeking ancient magical writings and items of power.

Meanwhile, in other parts of the world, opium dens, gambling, prostitution, and racketeering all combined to provide an incredible amount of wealth to the triad. While the technology and legal hurdles changed all around them, the Eight Heavenly Dragons continued to succeed and surpass their previous achievements. The explosion in Jerusalem and subsequent chaos has had very little effect on the criminal organization, which continues to exploit the countries that once exploited its

native land. With each sale, each illegal immigration, and each fortune lost in their gambling houses, the Eight Heavenly Dragons look on and smile at the slow but terrible revenge they have wrought.

## Goals and Methods

The reason the Four Skies and the Fists finally merged was to help one another grow stronger against what they saw as the enemies of their homeland. Although it was the Communist coup that finally drew them together, they have grown more comfortable with the government of China since the fall of the Soviet Union. They are now free to focus on their main goal, which is the successful growth of their many criminal activities around the world. They particularly enjoy poisoning and siphoning off the populations of the United States and Great Britain, the two main culprits in their eyes of the destruction of China's ancient ways. To that effect, they have established several different businesses that thrive in ways no triad ever imagined possible.

The growth of their opium dealings in the last 50 years has been incredible. As the populations of affluent countries like the U.S. have gained more and more leisure time and disposable income, the use of drugs there has risen to phenomenal levels. The Eight Heavenly Dragons' early position in Hong Kong has given them great advantages in growing this trade, and their contacts around the world, especially in London where the opium is processed, have ensured that they maintain tight control of the Chinese opium industry. From London, the processed heroin is shipped throughout Europe and to North America, usually coming in through New York City and then being distributed by dealers loyal to the Eight Heavenly Dragons. These distributors are extremely dangerous men and women, trained in the ancient arts of the Fists of Righteous Harmony, although they tend to eschew firearms, since these are easily traced and detected by law enforcement agencies.

In fact, the triad's operatives as a whole are generally expected not to carry firearms on their person, instead relying on martial arts, supernatural powers, and trailing gunners to provide protection. Those who are aware that they are dealing with a member of the Eight Heavenly Dragons usually fear reprisal enough (or simply know well enough) not to assault its operatives. The gangs generally keep an arsenal of guns and other equipment at their headquarters or at the homes of high-level members (the two are often one and the same). Guns are rarely used in or around these bases, and the Eight Heavenly Dragons are usually content to settle things with fists rather than bullets. This preference ends as soon as they leave their turf or if they are dealing with foreigners, however.

The Eight Heavenly Dragons base their operations in cities with heavy Chinese populations. This way they can easily blend in with the local population when they are being watched or followed. It is a common joke amongst the triad's operatives that the "white devils" cannot tell them apart. Chinese communities in other countries also tend to be fairly insular. They do not like outsiders coming into their neighborhoods, even law enforce-

ment and other officials. This usually means they would rather protect a triad criminal from capture and deal with him on their own terms than allow a domestic police officer to find them. Many times these communities are so dependent or fearful of the triad that they do not seek remuneration for these acts.

In addition to the various Chinatowns around the world, the Eight Heavenly Dragons have a large presence in many of the major port cities of Europe and the Americas. Much of their business is conducted by sea, including heroin importation and illegal immigration. San Francisco, New York City, and

Miami are the three biggest import points for the triad, and each city has a large enough Chinese population to hide the triad and its activities within the sympathetic (or fearful) communities. These cities also have the advantage of containing a large and well-developed infrastructure for criminal dealings. The triad has favorable relationships with money-laundering operations, hired muscle (which it uses as extra security for particularly dangerous or high-profile transactions), and a ready supply of crooked law enforcement and political contacts.

With their criminal activities well entrenched around the world and functioning smoothly, some of the leaders of the Eight Heavenly Dragons have begun to pursue pet projects that have

## A Selection of Artifacts from the Museum of Wong Ho Lee

**The Chongqing Fan:** This fan was used by a courtesan of a Ming emperor to defend him from attacks in his court. If the fan is held open, it acts as a protection from arrows/bullets spell that protects everyone in a 5-foot radius. The fan can protect against up to 100 points of damage per day, after which it falls inert until 24 hours have passed.

**Type:** Wondrous Item (magic); Caster **Level:** 5th; Purchase DC: 33; Weight: 3 lb.

**Fists of Shadow:** These black leather gloves will fit perfectly over any pair of hands. They grant the wearer the ability to spider climb at will and also grant the wearer a +4 bonus to Hide checks in dark or shadowy conditions.

**Type:** Wondrous Item (magic); Caster **Level:** 3rd; Purchase DC: 29; Weight: 1/2 lb.

**Deadly Stick (Wong Ho Lee owns a pair of them):** This bamboo fighting stick is magically treated to be as hard as steel without adding any additional weight. It acts as a +1 metal baton. As a free action, a wielder can activate the deadly stick, causing a 4-inch-long razor-sharp blade to emerge from one end. This blade allows the stick to be used as a +1 knife of wounding. When a victim is struck by the knife-blade, he bleeds for 1 point of damage each round thereafter. Multiple wounds from the handgun result in cumulative bleeding loss (two wounds for 2 points of damage per round, and so on). The bleeding can only be stopped with a successful Treat Injury check (DC 15) or the application of a healing spell or birthright.

**Type:** Weapon (magic); Caster **Level:** 10th; Purchase DC: 28 each; Weight: 2 lb.

little or nothing to do with the triad. Wong Ho Lee (Strong 3/Soldier 3/Martial Artist 2) has begun to collect Chinese artifacts, and is particularly interested in those that reputedly have magical abilities. Gao Zu (Strong 3/Fast 2/Martial Artist 8/Explorer 4), the eldest of the triad's patriarchs, is an art collector of some renown. Recently his studio was broken into and several paintings were stolen. He is using all of the triad's contacts to track down the criminal. Another of the triad's leaders, Zhao Hu (Strong 2/Smart 3/Martial Artist 4), is interested in learning more about the titans and their role in the Jerusalem disaster. He can often be found in Tel Aviv with dozens of agents, who he sends covertly into the area around Jerusalem to find clues to the nature of the disaster. He is also an avid collector of monstrous trophies, and buys stuffed monster carcasses for outrageous sums on the black market. He keeps these in a museum in Hong Kong, an entire floor of penthouse suites in one of the most expensive buildings on the island.

### Organization

The Eight Heavenly Dragons are based in Hong Kong and Taiwan, each headquarters having separate responsibilities. The Hong Kong headquarters is located in the heart of downtown Hong Kong, taking up the majority of an office building that the triad owns. Those who work here control the organization's cash flow, its recruitment efforts, and the logistical side of importing and exporting illegal substances. The Taiwan headquarters is located in the main temple used by the Fists of Righteous Harmony when they first took up residence on the island in support of Chiang Kai Shek. The monks here train members in their own brand of mystical martial arts and maintain the codes and traditions of the triad. Whenever a triad precedent or law needs to be consulted, the monks have the final say in the matter. Each headquarters has separate administrations and methods, and they have learned to respect one another's ways, but they both report to the triad's council.

The London-based operation is arguably the most important of the triad's subsidiary organizations because of its vital role in the opium and heroin trades. They have a heavily fortified bunker beneath the River Thames in which they train recruits, process opium, and torture enemies. This bunker is home to the bloodiest work that the triad does, and those who have been stationed there for long learn the brutal ways of the business very quickly. Not all members can stomach such work, a fact that the triad remains aware of when placing its operatives here. Transfers can be had quite easily, but those who leave are watched very closely until they have proven that they harbor no ill intent toward the London operation or its parent.

The New York operations of the Eight Heavenly Dragons are almost solely involved with the importation of heroin from London. They have intentionally kept their operations small to avoid drawing too much attention to the large amount of drugs that come through the ports each year. They have traditionally also ceded much of this turf to the New York mafia, although in

recent years the Eight Heavenly Dragons have encroached more and more on the goodfellas' territory. It is possible that an all out war will be waged across the city of New York, as either of the groups is liable to lose patience as they clash more and more frequently. The bosses in Hong Kong are already putting together a plan of action should such an eventuality come to pass.

The San Francisco group is only nominally involved in the drug trade. Instead, it focuses on the large Asian population of the city by running various gambling establishments, some legitimate and others underground. It uses the sheer amount of money floating around Silicon Valley to engage in large-scale money laundering operations, and it also handles much of the illegal immigration that occurs in Los Angeles and Seattle. The triad bosses here prefer to keep their groups small, so they have split their resources into several smaller gangs. Not only does this dissuade rival gangs from attempting to muscle in on such seemingly crowded territory, but it allows them to control a great number and variety of operations without any of them attracting attention to the larger umbrella organization. Thus, despite not having much of a hand in the international heroin trade, the San Francisco operation provides a great deal of income to the Eight Heavenly Dragons. Perhaps even more important are the contacts it is able to make with new business entities and venture capital firms.

### Characters in the Eight Heavenly Dragons

Characters who are a part of the triad are not likely to be very heroic, in the classical sense, as the Eight Heavenly Dragons has few legitimate business activities. It is possible that a character may be in the organization as a plant, but doing so and adventuring outside the confines of his triad-sponsored activities would be very dangerous indeed. The triad does employ all kinds of titans, however, so the opportunities are there if one is willing to set aside his morals to pursue power and material gain. The antihero is also a character archetype easily playable within an Eight Heavenly Dragons campaign. Troubled by a conscience he can't shake, the antihero struggles between the life he has lead and the life his heart tells him he should lead.

### Current Plotlines

It is possible to include the Eight Heavenly Dragons in a game without the characters having to be a part of the organization or even working toward anything immoral or illegal. Some of the suggestions below take this route, while others assume that the characters do not mind breaking the occasional law or, in some cases, are full-fledged members of the triad's organization. Although the Eight Heavenly Dragons have worked together successfully for over half a decade, such partnerships are prone to in-fighting and external influences such as law enforcement and rival organizations. Some cracks have been appearing lately in the armor of the triad, but so far they have all been dealt with in good fashion. The time may come when the triad openly wars with itself, and it might not be a clean break between the monks in Taiwan and the businessmen in Hong Kong.

### War of the Ring

Wong Ho Lee has uncovered evidence of an ancient Chinese artifact, a ring worn by the first emperor of China, in a hidden temple on the side of a mountain in Tibet. The Promethean Order also want the ring because they believe an encoded message may be written around the ring's four rubies that can help them in their quest to seal the gates to the Otherworld.

#### **Poisoned Breadcrumbs**

Zhao Hu has found out about Project Titan through a contact in Tel Aviv, and now he wants their research into the nature and cause of the dimensional rift for himself. Rather than assault them at the scene of the crime, he has secretly unleashed triad operatives in San Francisco to gain entry into Project Titan's secret facilities there. The other members of the triad's council are unaware of this, for it would be considered a major breach of protocol if discovered, possibly even a crime against the triad that would warrant Zhao Hu's "removal."

#### **Garden of Blood Poppies**

The port authorities in New York City have been tracking a shipment of heroin from London all the way toward their city. They believe it is coming in on behalf of a triad, but have no clue which one. To further complicate the matter, several mafia killings lately have pointed toward a new gang war that could rock the city.

#### **Monks at War**

A group of martial artists trained by the Eight Heavenly Dragons has decided to split off and form their own gang in San Francisco's Chinatown district. The streets have turned into a war-zone of magic, martial arts, and strange monsters. The police do not know what to do, as the citizens of Chinatown remain stoically quiet about what is going on, and they do not have the resources to effectively penetrate the wall of silence surrounding both gangs.

#### **Secrets**

- Unbeknownst to any of the members of the triad, one of the leaders from the Fists of Righteous Harmony is actually from the Otherworld. Long ago he crossed into our world through happenstance. He is a creature of power able to conceal his true form. None, not even his closest advisors, knows this secret. Unable to return to his world until now, this being now wonders what changes have occurred while he was gone from his world.
- One of the members of the San Francisco operations is a powerful mystic who plans to attempt a coup that could leave the operations fractured or even destroyed. She has access to several vials of a powerful biological weapon that she plans to use against the triad's most powerful San Fran members - but if it is released it could infect the entire peninsula and even the Bay.

#### **Enemies**

**Golden Sun:** A group of rival martial artists and mystics who challenge the Fists of Righteous Harmony, believing them to have abandoned the true path of enlightenment in exchange for money and power. These conservative monks sided with Moa

during the Chinese Cultural Revolution.

**40k:** Many triads are rivals of the Eight Heavenly Dragons, but 40K is the most zealous of them. Recently, this organization has become even more aggressive, and the Eight Heavenly Dragons have lost a number of key markets to the rival triad's new expansion. Even more concerning is this: all of the moles that the Eight Heavenly Dragons had hidden within the rival organization went missing suddenly less than a month ago.

#### **Genre**

The Eight Heavenly Dragons can be played as a relatively straightforward criminal organization, which will tend to make the game feel like a Chow Yun Fat or mobster movie. Secret deals, double-crosses, arcane codes of conduct, and a brutal disregard for human life will all combine to keep the characters on their toes. On the flip side, the triad also uses well-trained martial artists, titans, and magic to achieve many of its goals. A campaign, especially one set in China or another part of Asia, could very much take on the feel of a wuxia festival movie - the kind of film that features incredible fight choreography, monks performing feats of agility and strength that can only be possible through the use of magic, and clearly defined protagonist(s) who make their way through the movie by wit, luck, and skill (but mostly skill). Such high-flying fun can make for an excellent campaign with plenty of intrigue, over-the-top characters, and ass-kicking action sequences.

The clever GM will be able to find a way to mix these two genres, perhaps drawing from the action-comedy *Big Trouble in Little China* for inspiration, featuring a mixture of martial arts, magic, and monsters in the heart of a Chinese community. The villain Lo Pan from that film could easily be a powerful titan who controls one of the myriad gangs in San Francisco that work for (or against) the Eight Heavenly Dragons.

#### **Inspirations**

The following all serve as inspiration material for a campaign including the Eight Heavenly Dragons as either protagonist or antagonist. The tales below may be told from the criminals' perspective or that of the hero(es). There is room for both in a campaign centering on the Eight Heavenly Dragons.

#### **Film:**

Hard Boiled; Casino; The Black Mask; Goodfellas; Bulletproof Monk; Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon; The Replacement Killers; The Heroic Trio; Gasaraki (anime).

#### **TV:**

The Sopranos

## **First Team**

*We're the First Team. Who's second? Who cares.*

*- First Team slogan*

Some Allegiances are noble, selfless, and altruistic - but not all of them. First Team is a band of mercenaries based in South America. They'll work for whoever pays them, no matter what the job. And

perhaps they'll protect the world from Otherworld incursion in the process, but only because it's in their own best interests.

## History

When people think about military forces, they generally think about countries like the United States, Russia, Germany, Britain, or China. When they think about elite forces, they consider America (for its Seals, Rangers, and Green Berets), Britain (for its SAS), Russia (for the Spetnatz), and Israel (for various special forces). Most never even realize that South America has militaries, or at least that those forces might be any good. But some of them are very good indeed.

In particular, Colombia and to a lesser extent Venezuela, Ecuador, and Peru have very proficient armed forces. These military units are hired, outfitted, and trained by drug-lords and other local magnates, tasked to maintain their property and protect their interests. It's an excellent job for those who don't mind protecting drug dealers and who don't object to violence. Soldiers who work for such men are expected to be completely



loyal, to obey orders without question, and never to reveal anything they have seen or done.

Ten years ago, one of the best military units in South America was a small band in the employ of a premiere Colombian drug-lord. The team had no problem with their employer's activities or with the missions he assigned them, but they were tired of getting paid so little in return for their excellent work, and decided their talents were being wasted. So they left. When their former employer insisted they return, the team did so - in the middle of the night, through all of his remaining bodyguards and other soldiers. The man's head was found sitting on his desk the next morning, with the team's letter of resignation in his mouth. A month later, the team resurfaced in Brazil and announced that First Team was open for business.

In the years since then, First Team has gained a remarkable reputation. Soldiers around the world have heard of them, and they are generally acknowledged to be the most proficient mercenary team in the world. Special units such as the Rangers and the SAS have run across members of First Team, and have reportedly lost every engagement - because of this, most consider First Team to be the finest special unit in the world as well. First Team is very careful in its neutrality, however. Its members admit openly that they will work for anyone, and once they take a job they will finish it, but they are not in any way involved in an employer's politics or other activities. The team has refused every long-term job they've been offered because they do not want to be identified too strongly with any one person or organization. First Team is out for itself, first and foremost.

No one knows where First Team actually resides. Contacts are routed to a secure satellite phone, sent to a protected email server, or mailed to a post office box in Belém, Brazil.

Most of the world doesn't know First Team exists. Yet every military and every intelligence agency has a file on them, even though few details exist: they know the team's name, its function, some of its activities over the years, and how to contact them for jobs - and that's about all. Those who have worked with First Team are, understandably, reluctant to describe the unit or its methods. Those who keep track of world events, especially military actions and regimes, may have heard the name First Team, but don't know much more. Rumors exist, of course, describing them as anything from a band of noble freedom fighters to a team of cold-blooded killers to a collection of supernatural monsters who can fly and can shoot lasers from their eyes. First Team has not bothered to deny - or confirm - any of these notions.

First Team has been responsible for a variety of activities in the last ten years. They've protected diplomats and dictators, assassinated despots and ambassadors, invaded palaces, diverted bombs, planted explosives, and many more. Perhaps their most famous mission, however, was conducted in Jakarta. The ruler of that nation was kidnapped and killed, his armies slaughtered, and a new ruler installed in his place. In mercenary circles, it was announced that First Team had been responsible

for the coup. In fact, they had not been involved, and when they heard the rumors they took immediate action. The new ruler was killed during a parade, his advisors were murdered, and his army decimated. Then First Team made their own announcement.

"We are the First Team," the announcement read, "the best there is at what we do. If you lie about our activities, we'll come and destroy you." No one has ever falsely blamed First Team again, nor has anyone ever tried to claim credit for something First Team has done.

## Goals and Methods

First Team is a mercenary band, pure and simple. They are interested in making money, and eventually in retiring and living comfortably off their earnings. The team will take on any military assignment: they do reconnaissance, search-and-rescue, kidnapping, sabotage, terrorism, counterterrorism, coups, bodyguarding, perimeter defense/security, and, of course, murder. They will work for anyone, provided the job is feasible and the pay is sufficient. First Team does not negotiate; it assesses the job at hand, including timeframe, area, materials, and risk factor, and gives the prospective employer a price. If the price is met, they take the job. If not, they walk away. First Team will not reveal anything about prospective jobs, even ones they did not take, and they will not betray an employer. Conflicts of interest are not allowed, and no matter how attractive an offer, they will never take a job that goes against another current assignment. This is not to say that First Team cannot be bought by the opposition, but they will always complete the first assignment - if one person hires them to protect a man for a week, and another hires them to kill the same man, they'll protect him for exactly one week and then turn around and kill him an hour later, after the first contract has expired.

First Team takes only short-term projects; the longest they'll work for one person or group is one month. When approached with a job, they investigate the situation fully, and compare their information with whatever the potential employer provided. If everything matches up (that is, if the employer did not deliberately lie to them or withhold vital information) and the job can be done in the given timeframe with a reasonable chance of survival, they determine a price. Once the price is met, First Team provides their prospective employer with a contract, which must be signed in their presence. The contract is placed in a hidden location, as insurance against betrayal. Then the team scouts the area and sets up shop. They establish a camp for their team in a secure location; if the mission involves being in a particular place (like protecting a man in his own home), the team sets up a camp on the premises. For them, the key is having a defensible location with clear sightlines, a secure communications channel, and an accessible exit. Status reports are made once a day for longer missions, once an hour for short ones (or at regular intervals, as necessary, during any major action within a longer mission, like withstanding a siege against the employer's home), and logs are kept of every report. Rendezvous points and escape locations are established

beforehand, and transport is always standing by.

One thing First Team does not do is disguise. They will change their clothing to suit the local weather, and to blend in more effectively, but they do not alter their appearances or take on the guise of another person. They also do not use nuclear weapons - the team can be hired to disable a nuke, or to safeguard someone who has a nuke, but they will not employ such devices themselves. First Team also never takes suicide missions: they only accept jobs that they have a reasonable chance of surviving. As one of the members said to a potential employer once, "We're in this for the money, and you can't spend it if you're dead."

The only time First Team takes action without being paid is when someone threatens them directly. This includes a variety of activities, however. Claiming credit for something First Team has done, or blaming them for something they did not do, could damage their reputation and thus is threatening. Attacking the Amazon rainforests is a threat, but only because First Team's base camp is located there. But the team has considered going after people who are endangering the world in general. Thus an eco-terrorist might become a target, since his success could mean things like deforestation, which could alter the world's climate and reduce the amount of breathable oxygen. The reasoning seems strained, but the team will soon go after someone they consider a threat to the status quo. Just as they need to be alive to spend their money, the team cannot live in luxury if someone has destroyed all luxury items or the places they can be obtained and enjoyed.

## Organization

Most people think First Team consists of between 5 and 8 members. Actually, there are 117 current members of the team, but only 5 to 8 are assigned to any single mission. First Team includes both men and women, and treats both genders equally - reliability and competence are far more important than gender or appearance. All members reside at Base Camp, a military base located in the Amazon rainforest near the Tucumai Falls and the Negro river. The Falls provide ambient noise that hides any traces of gunfire, explosives, or other loud sounds, and the river provides an easy way to travel to and from the camp itself.

### The First First Team

First Team is led by a group known as Alpha, the original "First Team" - the soldiers who walked away from Colombia and who, as they gained more money and reputation, began to recruit new members and expand their operation.

Alpha has five members, all of whom have assumed new names and identities (see "Secrets"):

**"Mac" (Miranda Ortez) (Fast 5/Super Soldier 4/Spec Ops 3 Void Phoenix):** Short and wiry, with delicate features and a mane of black curls, Miranda is lovely, passionate, and deadly. She is also a titan, a Void Phoenix, although only the other members of Alpha know this for fact (rumors circulate among other First Team members, but none can be confirmed). She was formerly the team's networks (i.e., assassination) specialist, although

she rarely takes on such work these days, and before joining First Team's predecessor she was an intelligence agent working for the CIA. She is in charge of Command at Base Camp.

**"Sam" (Mark Page) (Dedicated 4/Soldier 6 Hidden Sun):** Page is the team tactician, and he is second only to Miranda in terms of control of Alpha. Average of height and build, with pleasant but nondescript features and medium brown hair, Mark's dull-seeming eyes hide a quick mind and a razor-sharp wit – as well as the titanic powers of a Hidden Sun. Mark is the only real joker on the team, and enjoys every form of humor, from satire and sarcasm to pratfalls and practical jokes. He is in charge of Daily Activities, and handles those duties with precision and flair.

**"Chico" (Diego Griss) (Tough 4/Soldier 5/Spec Ops 3):** Tall, lanky, and deceptively casual, Diego is the combat specialist and demolitions expert. He can launch into a blur of motion without warning, but normally affects a laid-back demeanor and a slight drawl. He handles Training, and is a strict but fair instructor.

**"Hawk" (Chandra Marillo) (Fast 4/Soldier 3):** Chandra is Alpha's recon and sniper. Average height and slender build, with long light brown hair and gray eyes, Chandra can sit motionless for hours on end, and can seem to be sleeping yet hears and remembers everything occurring around her. She is in charge of Quarters, which seems strange given that people with her occupation tend to be rather solitary, but Chandra is very observant and good at listening, and can prevent conflicts before they occur by noticing the warning signs and heading off any dispute.

**"Sandy" (CJ delaSol) (Smart 5/Techie 7):** CJ is the team's communications and transport expert. Tall, dark, and athletic, with thick bleached-blond hair (cut short) and piercing blue eyes, CJ is pleasant enough, but she ultimately prefers devices to people. She is in charge of Equipment, and knows every item in First Team's inventory by heart.

Alpha originally had six members, but the sixth, Jason Land (the team's communications expert and medic), was killed on one of their first missions.

#### Operation Protocols

All First Team members are designated as either Alpha, Bravo, Charlie, or Delta. Bravo team includes only senior members who've proven their worth and their loyalty. They can usually turn down assignments, request assignments, specify other teammates, and change mission parameters to some degree. Charlie team is comprised of those who have proven their ability, but who are not yet completely trusted. They can request assignments and specific teammates, but they can't turn down a mission or affect its parameters. Delta team includes junior members who have not yet proven themselves (they've only been on three missions at most, or only three successful ones). They have no say in missions, and are expected to follow orders, period.

It should be noted that, while not every member of First Team is a titan, a number of them are. First Team treats birthrights and other titan abilities as one more tool for the team, and each titan member is trained in the full use of their powers, both sep-

arately and in teams. Groups of First Team members are often sent on training missions in the jungle so they can learn to work together and to watch each other's backs. The first principle for each mission is to succeed, but the second is to bring the team back intact. Coming back alive is third.

All the money received for missions is placed in the First Team collective accounts. Several accounts are in Swiss banks, while others are offshore or in places like Panama and Bermuda. The team cycles which accounts it uses on a random basis. Every month, team members receive their salary, which is based upon the previous month's payments minus any costs for equipment and materials. While at Base Camp, team members do not have to pay for anything, but most have accounts in Rio or some other South American city, or wherever they regularly go for vacation.

#### Base Camp

Base Camp is divided into five areas: Training, Daily Activities, Quarters, Equipment, and Command. Each area falls under the leadership of a member of Alpha, and any problems are reported to that person.

#### Training

Training includes everything necessary for learning and honing First Team's necessary skills. Base Camp has several classrooms and laboratories for academic training, but it also has areas for practical instruction. Three different firing ranges exist, one for thrown and missile weapons, one for firearms, and one for explosives (including grenade launchers and bazookas). The Combat Pit is a large earthen pit where members can practice hand-to-hand skills. "The Jungle" is a section of the rainforest that has been specially prepared for use as an obstacle course, and is also used for practicing stealth, observation, and ambush techniques.

#### Daily Activities

This division is not a location, but includes nearly anything First Team members may do in Base Camp that does not involve training or missions. This includes the Mess Hall, where everyone takes their meals, and the Rec Room, where people can play a variety of games. The camp has a satellite uplink, and the Internet Café (an ironic name, since no coffee or food is served there) contains computers so that First Team members can go online. Not surprisingly, firewalls are strictly enforced and online activity closely monitored. The Theater is a collection of medium-sized rooms, each with several couches, a large projection screen, and a DVD player – members, alone or in groups, can claim a room and select a DVD to watch. The Watchtowers are technically also part of Daily Activities: all Charlie and Delta members take turn standing guard in the towers hidden around the base camp, checking for movement both visually and with motion detectors and other equipment.

#### Quarters

Base Camp's living quarters are those areas where members actually live and sleep. The barracks are the majority of this, of course, and they are divided by rank. Delta Barracks are stan-

standard bunkhouses, each having bunk-beds, trunks, and small dressers, with shared washrooms at the end of the hall. Charlie Barracks are dorm-style, with four people to a room, four rooms and a large bathroom on each hall. Bravo Barracks are quads, two double rooms with a bathroom between them. Alpha Barracks is a collection of single bedrooms, each with its own bathroom. Each barracks has a communal room where people can simply sit and relax, although most members prefer to spend their free time at the Rec Room. The Infirmary also falls under Quarters, since injured or sick teammates may have to sleep there; it's a long, low building with separate areas for first aid, surgery, medical testing, x-rays, and beds. The Brig is also considered part of Quarters, for the same reason as the Infirmary; this area is basically a bunker dug out of the earth, with narrow slit windows in each cell and doors in the roof. Prisoners descend via a rope ladder (or are simply dropped in), which is pulled back up before the door is shut. Food and water are provided through a hole in the door, and each cell contains a toilet and a sink, both anchored with heavy steel bolts. First Team members are only placed in the Brig when they've disobeyed direct orders or in some way jeopardized a mission, a teammate, the unit, or a combination of the above. Most other offenses (like simply mouthing off to a member of Alpha or failing to fulfill one's daily responsibilities) are punished by a restriction of privileges and docked pay.

#### **Equipment**

Equipment controls all of the base camp's materials. The Armory is where weapons and armor are stored, while the Storeroom contains basic supplies - both are built into the ground in the same way as the Brig, although they have stairs leading down from their storm-cellar doors. A small repair shop with both mundane and specialized tools and parts provides the means to make or repair equipment on-site rather than sending it out somewhere. Vehicles fall under Equipment, and are kept either by the launch pad, along the docks, or by the "road" (a narrow, winding, barely visible path to the river), respectively. Equipment also handles R&D, a long, low building where new equipment, explosives, chemicals, and other tools are tested.

#### **Command**

Command controls the essential elements of First Team operations. The Command Post is a small building where Alpha meets, sometimes with specific Bravo members, to discuss missions. All long-term planning

takes place there. The Log Room is another small building, this one with a satellite uplink, filled with monitors, computers, and phones. When members send in their status reports, they are received by someone on the Log Room, who records the transmission. At the end of each day, the files are copied onto a backup system, and at the end of each week those backup files are burned onto a CD. Finally, the Vault is an underground room where all First Team's files are kept. The CDs of past status reports, all employment contracts, and the team's financial accounts (including the Swiss bank account numbers and off-shore account numbers) are all here. The Vault is entered through a trap door in the floor of the Command Post, but it is actually located under the Rec Room, roughly one hundred yards away.

#### **The First Teams**

Not every member of First Team is at Base Camp all the time. Members can take vacations; to do so, one must put in a request for time off, and include a detailed itinerary of where he or she is going. Some go to visit family, while others go someplace like Rio or the Riviera to be pampered and others do things like climbing Mount Everest or hang-gliding the Grand Canyon. Alpha encourages every member to take at least one week off every six months, to get out into the world and let off some steam.

Any First Team member currently in Base Camp can be assigned a job at any time. Note that some team members may handle more than one of the positions below, but each position is assigned to someone on the team even if the mission is not

expected to need that area. Thus, Supplies may also be Medic and Heavy Weapons, especially since medical aid is only necessary after combat and heavy weaponry may not be involved in the job at all. Every First Team member is at least competent in all of the above areas, although most have specialties, but the designated individual is in charge of a task even if another member is actually more skilled, and can issue orders concerning their position even to a more experienced member or to the team leader.

Each assembled team contains the following positions:

**Tactics/Team Leader:** This member handles all on-site team decisions, assigns daily tasks, sets up guard rotations, and composes status reports.

**Communications:** This member handles all actual communications with Base Camp (including sending in the status reports), and also covers tapping phones, picking up enemy transmis-

#### **The Rule of No Names**

Outside of Base Camp, every team is referred to simply as "First Team." Team members are referred to by particular names (all of which can apply to either gender), based upon their position in the team: the Team Leader is always called Mac, for example, while Communications is always Sandy. If a member has more than one position, he or she uses the name of the position that will apply or be in use most often - thus, someone assigned to both Demolitions and Supplies would go by the Supplies name of Danny.

This practice reinforces the widespread notion that First Team is actually a small unit, rather than a large collection of people. The teams identify themselves to the Log Room through their initial statements, which are addressed to a number (such as "First Team to Base Eleven, over"). The number is the unit's designation, based upon how many teams are currently on assignment - the numbers go from 5 to 19, then start again.

sions, and triangulating locations based on broadcasts.

**Transport:** This team member is in charge of arranging and handling any transportation, from planes to cars to hovercrafts to skis.

**Demolitions:** This member handles all explosives, both setting and defusing, and is responsible for the proper storage and preparation of such devices.

**Sniper:** The team member assigned to long-range assassinations or providing cover for other team members.

**Medic:** The medic is in charge of medical supplies and medical aid for any member.

**Supplies:** This team member selects, organizes, distributes, and tracks all equipment, food, weaponry, and other items to the team. The only exceptions are those that fall under another member's purview - for example, Supplies does not touch the Sniper's rifle, or the Medic's first aid kit.

**Heavy Weapons:** This team member handles all large weapons, such as rocket launchers, anti-tank guns, and torpedoes.

**Reconnaissance:** The team member in charge of gathering information about the location, nearby individuals, and the mission situation. Recon is sometimes about stealth but just as often about blending in and asking the right questions, especially in an urban setting.

Although anyone at Base Camp can be assigned to any team, senior members can often pick their assignments and their teammates. Because of this, certain pairings or teams occur often enough that the members have essentially become a standing team, with their own team name.

The current standing teams include the following:

**Bag-tag:** This team specializes in wetworks (murder or assassination) - their name is a play on the term "bodybag."

**Windsurfers:** These members are all expert paratroopers, with a specialty of mid-air insertion.

**Nightside:** First Team's premiere stealth ops unit, specializing in reconnaissance, sabotage, and assassination.

**Rictor:** The heavy weapons crew, who handles weapons that "make the ground shake with terror."

**Aqua Blue:** First Team's aquatic unit, proficient in scuba, snorkeling, deep-sea diving, boating, underwater explosives, handling submarine vehicles, and the like.

**Flying Monkeys:** This team specializes in guerilla warfare and sabotage, particularly in a jungle or forest setting.

**Glam Lads:** These are First Team's urban infiltration unit. Its members have a talent for disappearing into crowds and for finding out information in a

city or large town.

**Stones:** (As in, "he's got a lot of...") This group handles body-guarding assignments, mostly, and each member prides himself (or herself) on the amount of damage he or she can take without going down.

### Characters in First Team

First Team is one of the easiest Allegiances to run as a campaign hook. It provides clear assignments, goals, and structure for the PCs to fill. All PCs likely belong to a single team and are given assignments by Base Camp. It is also easy to include members of First Team in campaigns not centered on this Allegiance. Most mercenaries enjoy their time off, for what good is making money if you can't spend it? As such, First Team members can be anywhere in the world on personal business and become involved in plots centered on other Allegiances.

### Current Plotlines

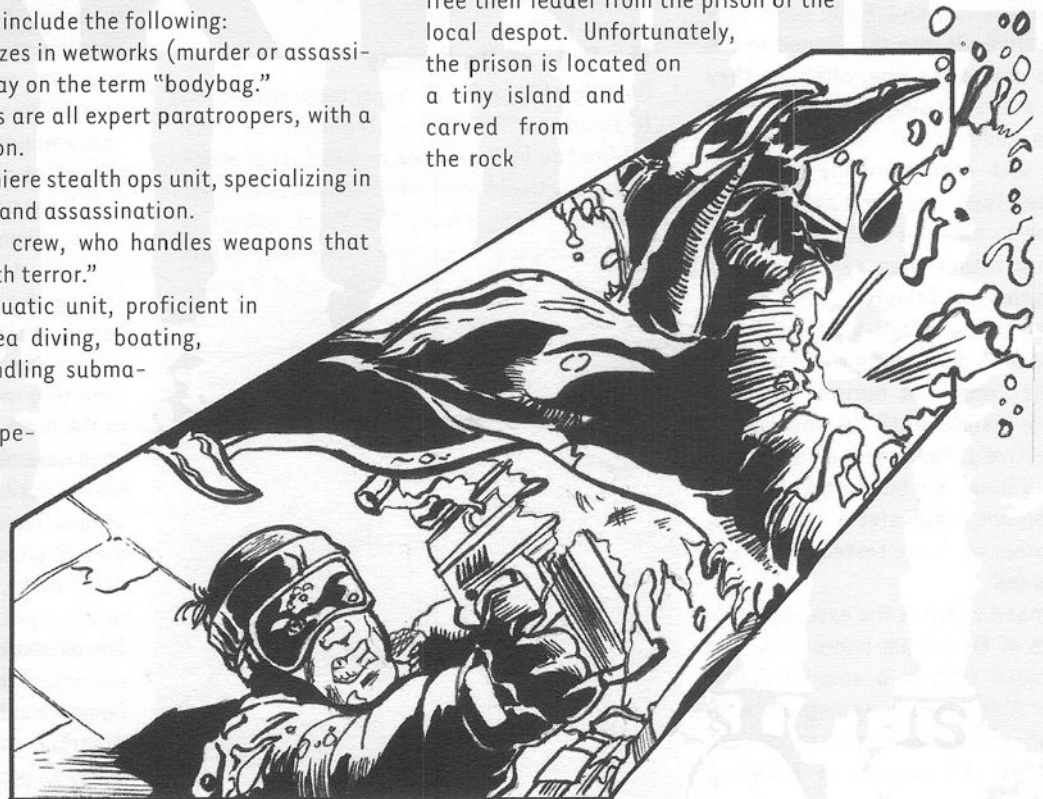
First Team is never completely idle—the organization only makes money when it's accomplishing missions. Thus there are always several jobs in the works, and more being investigated and considered. Right now First Team is involved in the following:

#### Ripcord

First Team has been hired by the Israeli government to locate and (if possible) rescue one of their senior ministers, a man named Samuel Levine. Levine was last seen in Jerusalem just before the Rip, and is most likely still trapped in the city somewhere.

#### Prison Reform

A band of Taiwanese freedom fighters have hired First Team to free their leader from the prison of the local despot. Unfortunately, the prison is located on a tiny island and carved from the rock



itself, so a straight assault probably won't work.

### Back-biting

The U.S. government has hired First Team to sabotage a project - one funded and run by the U.S. government! The project's directors have been embezzling funds, and want the project destroyed so no one can trace the finances. Then they plan to demand even more money to rebuild the project.

### Terror Below

Tankers are going missing in the North Atlantic and no one has discovered why. First Team has been contracted by Yamashita Industries to protect a tanker carrying some valuable cargo.

### World's Most Wanted

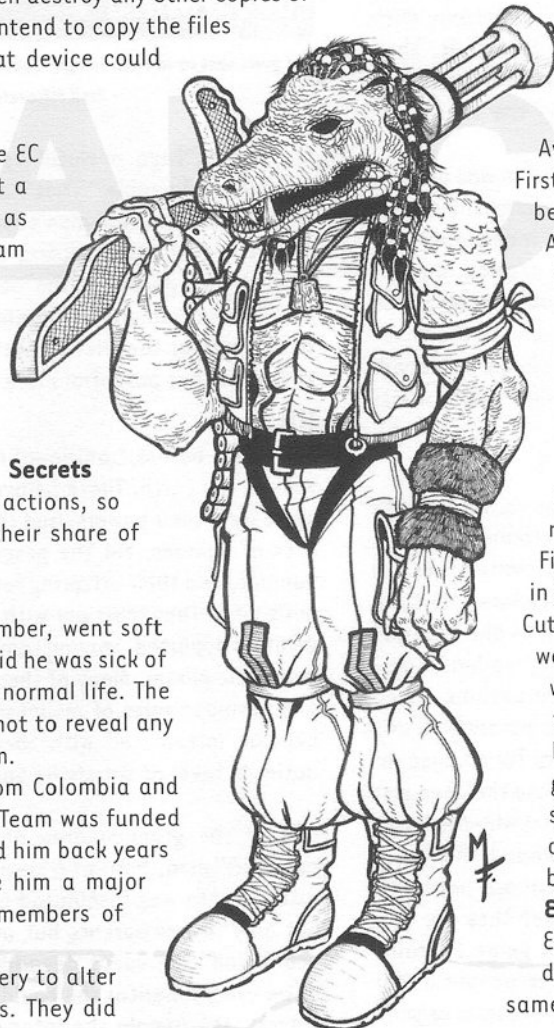
First Team has taken a job to locate and assassinate Osama bin Laden. The terrorist is thought to be still hiding in the Middle East - in a series of caves and warrens that he knows like the back of his hand and has probably booby-trapped.

### Jet Power

An aeronautics company claims it's developed a new jetpack, one far more portable than any previous version and with more power and maneuverability. First Team has been hired to steal the jetpack and the plans, and then destroy any other copies of the records. They've agreed, but intend to copy the files for themselves as well, since that device could become very useful.

### Sour Grapes

Someone's planted a bomb in the EC Parliament building and has sent a note claiming responsibility - as First Team. Now the real First Team has to find the bomb, defuse it, figure out who planted it, and teach them a lesson, and then finally expose them so everyone knows First Team was not responsible.



### Secrets

First Team is unscrupulous in its actions, so it's no surprise that they have their share of dark secrets to hide.

- Jason Land, the sixth Alpha member, went soft and wanted out of the unit. He said he was sick of all the killing and just wanted a normal life. The rest of Alpha couldn't trust him not to reveal any of their secrets, so they killed him.
- When they made their break from Colombia and set up their own operation, First Team was funded by a Bolivian drug-lord. They paid him back years ago, with interest, but still owe him a major debt - and he knows who the members of Alpha Team really are.
- Alpha have all had plastic surgery to alter their faces and their fingerprints. They did

this before they emerged as First Team, and no one else in the organization knows their original names or faces. Miranda took some top-secret info with her when she left the CIA, and they placed a price on her head as a result. Of course, she no longer looks the same, but if anyone finds out her real identity, every bounty hunter in the world will be looking for her.

- Most of Alpha have no family, or at least none they care about. However, CJ has a younger brother, Jake, back in Venezuela. She maintains occasional contact with him, unbeknownst to her teammates. This could present a breach in their security.
- Every member of First Team, upon joining, is given a dog tag, which they are expected to wear at all times. The tags are made of plastic, so they won't set off a metal detector. Each tag also contains a tiny but powerful explosive, a tracking device, a bug, and a remote detonator. Alpha monitors the tags of every team member not at Base Camp, and can eliminate anyone who is about to betray them.

### Enemies

First Team also has its share of enemies. This does not include people who simply dislike mercenaries, or who First Team opposed on a mission - those are too many to count. But some people hate First Team itself for a variety of reasons.

**Avalanche:** This is another merc team, which First Team sometimes refers to as "the second-best on the planet - or maybe the third." Avalanche had 10 members, and they all hate First Team for always showing them up. They would love to discredit or destroy First Team. Jason Land's former lover, **Natalie Giomini (Dedicated 2/Charismatic 4/Investigator 3)**: Natalie knows Jason wanted out of First Team, and suspects that they killed him or let him be killed. She wants to know the truth, and wants revenge on whoever is responsible for his death. Unfortunately for First Team, she's also connected - her family is in the Italian mafia.

**Cutthroat:** This five-man team was once a top networks unit for NATO. They lost face, however, when they were assigned to a target and failed to take her out - because First Team had been hired to protect her. After resigning in disgrace, Cutthroat has become a team of assassins for hire. But their real goal now is to find and kill as many First Team members as possible.

**Ernesto Castenada (Tough 5/Soldier 4):** Ernesto's father Domingo was the Colombian drug-lord Alpha originally worked for - the same one they killed in his own home. After

Domingo's death, his organization was torn apart by would-be heirs. It took Ernesto eight years to eliminate all of his rivals, including several siblings, and take control. Now he wants his father's killers found and brought to him, so that he can repay them for his father's death. He doesn't know that they became Alpha, but he has his suspicions.

**Ricardo Martinez (Charismatic 6):** The Bolivian "businessman" who initially helped finance First Team. He doesn't trust them, in part because he knows they'll kill him if (when) someone hires them to do so, despite their debt to him. He wants them dead before they pose a threat to him.

**Stan Freeburg (Dedicated 5/Investigator 4):** Freeburg is a conspiracy theorist and would-be journalist who has written articles in several mercenary magazines and has even published a book. He believes that clandestine militaries are responsible for most of the problems in today's society, and particularly blames one elusive group: First Team. Freeburg is determined to find out all of First Team's secrets and to expose them to the world.

**Johanna Wilde (Dedicated 1/Charismatic 3):** Ms. Wilde is a romance novelist who wants to be a journalist instead. She's heard rumors about First Team (mainly from an ex-boyfriend turned soldier of fortune), and has decided to become their official biographer - whether they want her to or not. She's tracking down every bit of info on them she can find, and plans to publish it all as a book. It could destroy the team, and endanger every member, especially Alpha.

**Tim Hendricks (Strong 3/Soldier 4/Spec Ops 3):** Tim was a member of First Team, a Delta, but he wasn't loyal enough: he agreed to accept a bribe to let a target go. Alpha was monitoring him, of course, and activated the explosives in his dog tag, but Tim (realizing that he was done with First Team) had already pulled off the tag to throw it away. He lost his right hand in the ensuing explosion, but he survived, and First Team thinks he's dead. Now Tim wants revenge on Alpha for maiming him - and he wants control of First Team for himself.

### Genre

First Team is firmly in the "elite military unit" genre. Think of the team in the film *Predator* - a small group of extremely dangerous men, each with their own attitudes and specialties - or the Marine unit in *Aliens*, or the Australian mercenaries in *Dark Angel*. Each member of the team has special skills and is deadly on his or her own, but, more importantly, they work as a single unit. They're trained to cope with lethal situations, often with deadly force of their own, and they react instantly to any threat. These are not men and women who lobby for a cause, or read about events in the paper, or write a letter to their senator - these are people who live life on the edge, and who deal with situations head-on. They also don't beat around the bush, mince words, or look for a compromise - these are hardened soldiers, trained to fight and to take orders, and they are very direct and very effective at what they do. This genre contains both good guys (heroic teams fighting to save people or for some noble cause) and bad guys (terrorists, assassins, or sim-

ply teams out for their own profit). First Team can be neither, or both - it simply does what it's paid to do. But the degree of efficiency, the ease with which the team works together, and the deadly force controlled by that handful of people is the same in every case.

### Inspirations

The following all serve as inspiration material for a First Team campaign.

#### Film:

*Predator*; *Aliens*; *Alien Resurrection*; *Mission: Impossible*; *Delta Force*; *Operation Condor*; *The Dirty Dozen*; *Event Horizon*; *Deep Rising*; *Stargate*; *Ronin*; *Fair Game*.

#### TV:

*Freedom*; *Above and Beyond*; *Dark Angel*; *Stargate SG-1*; *Without a Trace*; *The A-Team*; *Undercover*.

#### Books:

*The Black Company series*, by Gene Wolfe

#### Comics:

*Stormwatch*; *Team Achilles*; *Team One*; *Networks*.

## Fugo a Watu

*The gods cast us in their image. Leave it to mankind to mess that up.*

*- Emil Miseteri, member of the Planning Committee*

The name "Fugo a Watu" is Swahili, translating roughly as "breeding of people." That's an apt description for the group's central purpose, and also captures the fact that, to the group, people are merely livestock, to be treated and bred as necessary for their purposes. The members of Fugo a Watu understand more about humanity's potential than anyone, and are willing to make great sacrifices - both their own and others' - in order to access that potential more fully.

### History

Long ago, before traditional recorded history, the progenitors walked the Earth. These beings were gods in the flesh, so awesome were their powers, and their forms only vaguely resembled that of humans. Yet the progenitors could and did mate with humans, and their offspring retained a large portion of the parent's gifts. Then their war with the Host took place and the progenitors departed, leaving some of their children behind to safeguard the planet. Many of these demigods obeyed their parents and assumed roles of responsibility and leadership, but others became intoxicated with their own power and ignored their duties in favor of satisfying base desires.

### Revelation

One of the grandchildren of the progenitors was a woman named R'Letta, born of a responsible demigod and his African wife. R'Letta was fascinated by her heritage, asking questions not only of her parents but of every other Child of Might she could find. She spent decades wandering the globe, tracking down every inheritor she could, and kept careful records of her travels, the people she interviewed, and their lineages. Upon

her return to Africa, R'Letta gathered a handful of friends and let them read her notes. R'Letta had discovered that each inheritor grandchild had less power than his or her parent had, and the parent had less power than the original progenitor. In places where R'Letta found great-grandchildren and even a handful of great-great-grandchildren of the progenitors, those people had even less power than their immediate forbears. In desperate attempts to retain the family legacy, some lines had attempted to mate within their own families, to keep the blood pure. However, sadly, this had resulted in weaker powers rather than greater ones. What if, R'Letta's friend Ogaku suggested, the key is not making the line pure but instead making it impure? Or, to be more precise, what if little bits of power exist in every line, and the more lines one breeds across, the more power the resulting offspring? Studying her notes, R'Letta agreed - the children with the strongest powers had come from parents who were born in different areas, as if each area contained one element of power and it was necessary to combine two or more for increased strength. And if that was the case, breeding together people from every corner of the globe should result in children whose powers rivaled the progenitors' own children, possibly even the progenitors themselves!

### Grasping the Inheritance

R'Letta and her companions agreed that the planet needed protectors, its gods and its demigods. Having discovered the possible secret to retaining their ancestral powers, they felt it was their responsibility to provide the world with those leaders by breeding in as many lines and races as possible. And thus the project began, although, also around this time, a portion of Fugo a Watu split away. This new group was more interested in knowledge for its own sake than in breeding inheritors, and devoted itself to finding and safeguarding valuable secrets. The new group became known as the Promethean Order.

At first the Fugo a Watu's mandate was simply a matter of talking people into marrying each other. R'Letta and her friends would find a man and a woman from different counties or

regions who were both descended from a progenitor, introduce them, and encourage them to marry. The group paid the woman's bride-price and provided the couple with enough money to start a comfortable life together. Few of their chosen objected. But in order to maintain the mix, they eventually needed to go farther afield, and many of the prospective brides and grooms refused to leave their homes and travel to another country with these odd strangers who insisted their children might help save the world. So R'Letta and her friends had to resort to other methods.

Sometimes they were able to convince the chosen, so that they came willingly. Sometimes they bribed them. And sometimes they simply kidnapped them. After all, having the couple live together happily was merely a side benefit - all they really needed was for the couple to mate. Locals began referring to the group as the "fugo a watu," people who breed other people as if they were cattle, and the group did not deny this claim. They did, however, relocate to a quiet valley away from any villages, to avoid the risk of interference or of anger at their meddling in people's personal lives.

As time passed, Fugo a Watu grew larger. Those children who showed an aptitude for sciences and an acceptance of the group's purpose were educated, trained, and inducted as members. The others were found homes and allowed to live out their lives, provided they remained available to mate when the group demanded it. Research into the principles behind heredity continued, and Fugo a Watu in fact theorized the existence and purpose of DNA centuries before its actual discovery. They proved the principles not only with their human subjects but also with plants and animals, and could breed traits from parents as desired. The group also dubbed the genes that provided the inheritors with their powers as the Godgenes long before modern scientists began to use that term, and through careful records could accurately predict how much power an individual would acquire. Some members of the group felt this knowledge should be shared with the rest of the world, so that everyone could benefit from it by growing better crops and raising healthier livestock and breeding out inherited diseases; in the end, though, those who wished to keep their knowledge secret and safe, won out.

### Goals and Methods

Fugo a Watu prides itself on its scientific principles, its organization, its ancient traditions, and its devotion to a single cause - to breed inheritors back into the world. The original founders were very organized individuals, and established clear-cut lines of authority, responsibility, and action, and these have been retained as much as possible. At the same time, the group has taken advantage of new technology as it becomes available, and eagerly updates the organization and its methods whenever possible.

On the surface, the organization's goals are very simple: they want to make sure the Godgenes do not weaken or disappear altogether from the human gene pool. In order to do this, they



keep close track of everyone with Godgenes in their bloodline (the inheritors) and breed them with other inheritors from a different original region to ensure that the couple's children will have the genes from both parents. This prevents the genes from diluting too much and being lost, or from being reinforced only by their own strain and thus becoming pure but impotent.

Because lineage is so crucial, a large portion of Fugo a Watu's attention is devoted to genealogy. Members constantly track individuals and update their records to show marriages, divorces, children, and deaths. They also watch for anyone who shows signs of power - the progenitors were spread so thinly around the globe that R'Letta and her team could not locate every Child of Might. In the centuries since, many more lines have been discovered and their family trees mapped as far back as possible, but some unknown lines still surface occasionally, and those Godgenes cannot be allowed to vanish. Thus, every time a story surfaces of a man or woman (or child) with unusual power, a member of Fugo a Watu investigates. If the person really does possess any sign of power, the family tree is traced and the person is placed on file.

The second major aspect of the group's mission involves not just tracing inheritors, but breeding them. Sometimes the group can afford to be subtle. Its members work in dating service and social clubs near most known inheritors, and can introduce prospective partners. If the couple hit it off, the group can simply sit back and watch. If not, they may need to take extra steps to encourage the union. Of course, Fugo a Watu also has connections with sperm banks in those areas, in case an inheritor donates sperm or comes in seeking a donor. They also administer chat groups online, in case an inheritor uses such services and can be directed to a mate through the Internet.

If a selected pair does not take to one another, or cannot be brought together by any conventional means, Fugo a Watu resorts to more extreme measures. The Collection Agency is responsible for gaining blood, sperm, and if possible eggs from various inheritors. These are kept in the Body Bank. If a female inheritor is already in a relationship with a man who has not been selected by Fugo a Watu, the Insemination Unit (known as the "Baby Fairies" by some members) is sent in. These agents wait until the couple has had intercourse, then drug both mem-



bers and artificially inseminate the woman with sperm taken from an inheritor. The woman, if all goes well, becomes pregnant, and never realizes that her significant other is not the father (the Unit does its best to select a sample whose donor matches at least one of the couple in coloration, though mistakes have been made). For male inheritors already in an unapproved relationship, Fugo a Watu can try to replace the woman's eggs, but this is of course very difficult to accomplish without anyone noticing. Instead, they simply take a sperm sample and save it. Sometimes they can use the sample and an egg taken from a female inheritor to create a baby, who is then raised by the Fugo a Watu or one of its agencies. Otherwise, they simply keep the sample in file at the Body Bank until it is needed.

Of course, creating a new inheritor is only the first step in the process. The child must then be educated, not only in the use of his or her powers but also in heritage and responsibility. Fugo a

Watu has members placed in schools around the world, ready to provide special lessons for particular children. They also have tutors and people who can strike up Internet conversations with the young inheritors, for instance. Stray emails, misdirected letters, mysterious unsigned gifts of books and videos are all used to make the youths aware of their true history, the power of their blood, and their duty to protect the planet and its people.

On a darker note the Fugo a watu have another goal. This is making the Inheritors invisible. They want to cover up the existence of the inheritors and the existence of artifacts of the lost age. They insure this through the Shadow Unit. The Shadow unit exists to appropriate known artifacts from the Lost Age and to destroy, through assassination of life or character, those who stand in the way of the organizations goals.

It is important to note that Fugo a Watu considers its mission crucial to the world's continued survival. Because of this, they are willing to use any means necessary to accomplish their goals. In some instances throughout history, where an inheritor was in an unapproved relationship and the group could not find any way to insert a child or the proper heritage, the inheritor's mate has simply been killed off; this sort of activity is generally frowned upon today, but some in the organization have no such qualms. Children have been kidnapped when no other way of tapping their potential exists, and female inheritors have been forcibly impregnated and then held until the birth to

ensure that no harm occurred to the child. Fugo a Watu firmly believes that its labors will eventually produce children as powerful as the progenitors themselves, or at least as strong as the most powerful Children of Might. Until this occurs, less powerful inheritors are useful only to engender more powerful children, and after an inheritor has performed that duty he or she is no longer important. Impotent and sterile inheritors are routinely eliminated or at least sterilized to prevent their obstructing the process.

Not surprisingly, Fugo a Watu's outward principles are reflected internally. Most of the organization's members are born into the group, and the majority are themselves inheritors or related to them. Members are raised and educated within Fugo a Watu and find jobs somewhere within its system. Those who do not believe in the mission are given less critical tasks, such as running some of the cover companies or providing basic services at one of the Controls. Only those who fully accept the mission of keeping inheritor legacy alive are allowed to take part in the various central committees and units, and only those who accept the need for extreme methods are recruited for the agencies handling those activities. Members are raised to accept the importance of family, of heritage, and of loyalty, and no one willing to work within the organization is turned away - Fugo a Watu only asks that its children respect their elders, obey orders, attend sanctioned rituals, and do their duties. Marriages are prearranged by both the parents and the PPU (see below), usually while the children are still prepubescent. Fugo a Watu is very much a culture in and of itself, and takes great pride in being able to trace its history, and the lineage of nearly every member, back many thousands of years.

## Organization

Fugo a Watu was founded in Africa, and still has its main base there, hidden within a valley in Nigeria. R'Letta and her colleagues chose to remain in Africa because the continent possessed a wider degree of racial heterogeneity than anywhere else in the world, with literally hundreds to thousands of different tribes. Many of the progenitors had also settled in Africa and borne children there, so that continent historically contained more strains of the Godgene than any other.

### Controls

The group has close to 10,000 members now, with headquarters all over the world. These are referred to as Controls - Control One is the original headquarters in Nigeria, Control Two is in Egypt, Control Three is in Paris, and so on. The organization prefers to disguise its headquarters as medical or scientific research facilities, though some also appear as fertility clinics, blood banks, and orphanages. This allows the members to carry out medical tests on sophisticated equipment without anyone suspecting their true purpose, and the cover provides funding for the group's clandestine activities. Less dedicated members often take jobs in these places so that they can fulfill their "familial obligations" while participating in work they enjoy and consoling themselves that they are not directly involved in

the group's more deplorable activities.

Whenever possible, the Controls are located beneath the cover facilities, in underground laboratories. In places where this is not possible, the top floors are set aside instead, and access is restricted through the use of keys and security codes. Every Control contains a Blood Bank, where blood, semen, and egg samples are kept; a Monitor Room with computers, televisions, radios, and phones to monitor local activities (this is also where reports are made by the Nodes); a Hostel where young inheritors are kept after being abducted and before being placed either in a foster home or in a larger Control; and a Conference Room where the Directors can meet with the Controller. Larger Controls also have Orphanages, where young inheritors can be raised; Study Halls, where they can be educated; and Dormitories where group members live. In smaller Controls, the members have separate residences and simply go to work like anyone else, although each room is staffed around the clock. The organization also maintains Nodes - surveillance units each dedicated to a specific inheritor and his or her immediate family, and each consisting of 1 to 4 members. Nodes usually rent or purchase a home or apartment near the family in question, and craft cover stories for themselves as neighbors so that they can openly approach the family without suspicion. They watch the family constantly and monitor all activities - in particular, they keep track of romantic involvements, potential pairings, and pregnancies.

Fugo a Watu is also divided into smaller departments and groups, each with a specific purpose. Each Control has a Director for each of these organizations, and those Directors are in charge of that purpose in that location. The Directors answer to the Controller, who oversees the Control in general and who is also ultimately in charge of all Nodes in that area. Controllers and Directors both answer to the Executive Planners, who form the Planning Committee that runs the entire organization.

**The Education Committee (EC):** These are the people who handle educating young inheritors in their powers, lineage, and responsibilities. Members of the EC monitor the youths' schooling and other activities, and intervene as necessary. This may mean placing one of their own in a position to tutor the children directly, or it may simply mean anonymously providing information to the children. The EC may also send materials to that family's Node, so that they can present the information to the children directly.

**The Recruitment Board (RB):** This unit handles searching for previously unknown inheritors. It monitors newspapers, magazines, news programs, and online bulletin boards, and highlights anything about people with unusual abilities. These are forwarded to the Director in that area, who sends RB members to investigate. If the materials prove accurate, and the person in question appears to be an inheritor, the RB informs the Genealogy Unit, and the local Controller also assigns a Node.

**Planned Pairing Unit (PPU):** This unit and its sub-units handle all of the intricacies in breeding new titans. Some handle dating services in the Inheritor's area, and arranges for inheritors who register to meet with other suitable inheritors. The PPU also uses its offices to make arranged pairings of non-inheritors, in order to test theories on genetics and heredity. Genealogy Unit (GU) is the bookkeeping arm of PPU. These are the members who handle mapping family trees of all known inheritors. They are constantly updating their information to show births, deaths, marriages, divorces, and children. Each entry is also coded to show location, Control, and Node. The Insemination Unit (IU), also known as Baby Fairies, is responsible for artificial inseminations, particularly those not requested or planned by the inheritor in question (or his/her significant other). This is the most aggressive branch in Fugo a Watu, and only those who show no qualms about such activities and who are steadfast in their loyalty to the principle mission are recruited for the IU. Working along side the IU is the Donor Central (DC) unit. This group controls the sperm banks in an inheritor's area and ensures that the inheritor does not father any children without their knowledge. Sperm samples from inheritors are usually kept separate, to avoid the danger of accidentally wasting them on an unfavorable match.

**Social Committee (SC):** This group handles the social clubs in an Inheritor's area. An SC member may run or at least participate in a local club, dance school, a karate club, a softball league, a bridge club, a gourmet group, or any other local gathering where the inheritor might meet potential mates. eBreeding is a fairly recent technology based offshoot of the Social Committee of Fugo a Watu. eBreeding administers several businesses that are essentially dating services and escort services that provide means for people to either meet others of like mind (or compatible genes) or a date for a single evening.

**The Collection Agency (CA):** The group is responsible for obtaining blood samples from every known inheritor, as well as semen and eggs if possible. The CA members work at hospitals, at blood banks, and at doctors' offices, especially the offices of any OB/GYNs. Sometimes they are the doctors themselves, but more often the CA members are simply nurses and technicians who can get their hands on samples and sneak them out, using well-established and proven methods, to the local Control's Blood Bank.

**Shadow Unit (SU):** This is the covert operations and wet works arm of Fugo a Watu. They specialize in theft and destruction. They steal the artifacts of the lost age but they also steal the lives of their enemies through character assassination. When things require it they also are known to actually engage in assassination. They were once tied to the Relocation Committee. Originally there was also a Relocation Committee (RC), which handled the abduction of young inheritors. Those tasks have since been assumed by the Node assigned to a particular inheritor, though, so that committee was dissolved, much to the relief of more fastidious members.

## Planning Committee

The Planning Committee runs Fugo a Watu. It includes the Executive Planner of each smaller organization and the Controller of Control One, where the Committee lives and meets. These leaders determine how the organization can meet its long-term goals, how to budget funds, what new approaches to try (or what old approaches to discontinue), where to set up new Controls, whom to promote to Directorships and Controller positions, and anything else that would affect the organization as a whole.

The current members of the Planning Committee are listed below. Every member of the Planning Committee is an inheritor except for Sophie Gardenet - she is of the proper bloodline, but lacks enough of the Godgenes to manifest any birthrights (but see "Secrets," below). Colleen often teases her about this, much to Sophie's chagrin. The committee discusses all major matters together during its daily meetings. Each member has one vote (on vote-worthy matters), and a majority is necessary for a matter to be resolved - in the case of a tie, Emil Miseteri has an additional tie-breaking vote.

**Andrew Tysen (Dedicated 7 Crimson Lord):** Planner for the Education Committee. Tysen is a young, energetic man, tall and thin with sandy brown hair and a short goatee. He's zealous about education, and spends his free time tutoring local children (mainly the children of the organization's members).

**Lucille Catera (Smart 4/Dedicated 8):** Planner for the Recruitment Board. Lucille is middle-aged, short, and heavy-set, with wispy gray hair and an innocent expression. She wears thick glasses, but her pale blue eyes rarely miss anything and she has an astounding memory for details.

**Jared Mason (Charismatic 5/Crusading Advocate 5 Storm Crow):** Planner for the Genealogy Unit. Jared is average height and slightly stocky build, with thinning brown hair and slate gray eyes. He is an inveterate list-maker, extremely organized, if not meticulous and high-strung - his unit's offices in Control One are spotless.

**Colleen Diaz (Smart 3/Charismatic 3/ Field Scientist 6 Crimson Lord):** Planner for the Donor Central. Colleen is tall, slender, dark-haired, dusky-skinned, and lovely. Half the men in Control One are in love with her (including several of the Planning Committee), and Colleen delights in the attention, leading each of them on in her deep, throaty voice. She is serious about her work and about the organization's goals, but takes everything else as a joke.

**Mary Lansky (Tough 2/Dedicated 3/Charismatic 4 Hidden Sun):** Planner for the Planned Pairing Unit. Mary is a tall, broad-shouldered woman with bushy red-brown hair and a friendly face. She's the perfect dating-service administrator, friendly and personable and helpful to a fault. She's also a born match-maker, and an incurable gossip.

**Todd Margolis (Dedicated 5/Techie 4):** Planner for eBreeding. Todd is the youngest member of the Committee, a short, thin man with dyed-blond hair, numerous tattoos and piercings, and

jet black eyes. He is hyperactive and can barely sit still through meetings, yet he can sit in front of his monitors for hours on end without moving more than his fingers and his eyes. He is a major proponent for innovation, and is always suggesting ways that the organization could improve and evolve.

**M'Batu Janisay (Tough 2/Dedicated 4/Investigator 4 Crimson Lord):** Planner for the Social Committee. M'Batu is one of the only Africans on the current committee, a short stocky man with coffee-colored skin, close-cropped graying hair and warm black eyes. He rarely speaks much, but is an excellent listener and can get almost anyone to open up to him. M'Batu likes to be in the thick of things, and often organizes the social events in Control One's area, much to his assistants' chagrin.

**Sandra Nicholls (Smart 5/Field Medic 8 Void Phoenix):** Planner for the Collection Agency. Sandra is a short dark woman with almost-black skin, jet black hair, and surprisingly green eyes. She is a trained doctor, though her excellent medical skills are offset by her rather too clinical bedside manner. She also has a tendency to see people as statistics and measurements rather than as individuals, and has to be reminded to call her subordinates by name rather than number.

**Sophie Gardenet (Dedicated 3/Charismatic 7):** Planner for the Insemination Unit. Sophie is very pretty, of average height, and voluptuous, with long chestnut-brown hair and a slightly rosy complexion. She and Colleen seem to be competing as to which of them can infatuate more of the men in Control One. Unlike Colleen, however, Sophie takes everything seriously, even jokes and friendly competitions.

**Emil Miseteri (Charismatic 4/Dedicated 5 Crimson Lord):** Controller for Control One. Emil is a tall, dark-skinned man with thick black hair streaked with white and a thick mustache and beard going white at the edges. He is in charge of Control One, and handles all of its daily operations. Emil is also the de facto leader of the Planning Committee, in part because he is the oldest member, in part because he is Controller for Control One, and in part because he is a direct descendant of R'Letta, the founder of Fugo a Watu. Emil is a soft-spoken, dreamy-eyed man who believes fervently in the purpose of their organization, and who envisions a world where someday the inheritors will reclaim their role as leaders and defenders of the world. He never raises his voice and rarely argues, but once his mind is made up there is no changing it.

**Joshua Amir (Tough 3/Dedicated 3/Soldier 4/Investigator 7 Storm Crow):** Controller for Shadow Unit. A bit of an enigma he was once a member of the Israeli Mossad. Joshua was recruited by Fugo a Watu when his inheritor nature expressed itself. He is of medium height and build with short loosely curled black hair and dark eyes. He is friendly and gregarious when surrounded by people but this can turn in a moment to cold quiet and calculating.

#### Internal Factions

Fugo a Watu also has several factions. These are actual approved subgroups, however, each one a research or practical unit dedicated to a particular goal, method, or concept. In

order to form a faction, the organizers must submit a formal proposal to the Planning Committee. If this proposal is approved, the group is given an official designation: they are granted whatever funds and equipment they require (by approval), a meeting room of their own, and access to files and personnel (again, by approval). They are expected to present monthly status reports, and may have their funding and approval revoked if they do not demonstrate reasonable progress.

Fugo a Watu's current factions include the following:

**Inheritor Oversight:** This group would be a committee except for the fact that it only exists in Control One. Inheritor Oversight is responsible for overseeing the inheritors at Control One, and for assigning them to tasks in which their powers and skills will be most useful. They also handle testing the limits and powers of those inheritors. The head of Inheritor Oversight answers directly to Emil Miseteri.

**Global Parity:** This group feels that everyone in the world should ultimately be an inheritor. They are mapping population projections and analyzing crossbreeding models, first to see if it is even feasible for everyone to be an inheritor and then to project what that might mean to the world. Ultimately they intend to create a full description of the world as all-inheritor, complete



with population densities, projected life spans, traffic, pollution, consumption, and general activities.

**Limited Access:** This group is generally opposed to Global Parity. They believe that too many inheritors in the world will overbalance the population and endanger the planet. But they also feel that inheritors should be servants, not leaders, and that they must be tightly controlled to prevent them from abusing their powers - most of the members of this group are actually inheritors themselves, and know firsthand how tempting such power can be. The group is working on ways to control inheritors and to prevent this misuse, as well as their own analysis of how many full Inheritors the world can safely contain.

**Natural Selection:** This group falls between Global Parity and Limited Access. They feel that Fugo a Watu's task is to chronicle and track inheritor bloodlines, not to actively control them - Mother Nature will do that on her own. This group believes that inheritors should be allowed to mate as desired, perhaps with nudges in the right direction, but not overtly controlled. They also feel that inheritors should not be abducted from their families, but should grow up at home as nature intended. This group is performing psychological tests to demonstrate how abduction and fosterage alter personality and negatively impinge on beliefs in family, structure, authority, and justice.

**Superlative:** This faction believes that, while the Godgene can manifest once a minimum number of strains are combined, there are optimum combinations which will result in the most powerful inheritors. The group is comprised almost entirely of geneticists, who test different combinations of the Godgenes to see which is the most effective. The group also contains a few genealogists, who keep track of theoretically promising combinations and how those can be achieved through the actual inheritors available.

**Mutation Control:** This faction feels that, just as humanity has evolved over time, the inheritors may also evolve. Mutations occur when a species is threatened, and the genome attempts to cope. In order to force this process, this group is subjecting inheritor blood samples (and inheritors themselves, in some cases) to various dangers and diseases in the hopes of causing a beneficial mutation.

**Animal Influence:** Inheritors are descended from both progenitors and humans. This group feels that the progenitor side is the only one that is truly important, and that such beings could have successfully mated with anything. They are running experiments with certain exceptional animals, and have begun experimenting with injecting the Godgenes into animal DNA, in the hopes of creating animal versions of the inheritors who might be both more powerful and more easily controlled.

#### Characters in Fugo a Watu

In practice, Fugo a Watu members can also be divided into three broad categories: loyal, dedicated, and committed.

The loyal are those who believe in supporting their family, but not necessarily in its actual goals. These people are all children of Fugo a Watu members (or have been brought into the fold as

children) and have been raised and educated within its system, but do not personally accept the necessity of keeping the inheritor legacy alive.

The dedicated are members who believe in Fugo a Watu's goals, but particularly in chronicling the lineages of each inheritor. Some may agree that encouraging good matches is necessary, but they do not necessarily accept the need for forcing the issue.

The committed are those who firmly believe that Fugo a Watu is responsible for keeping the inheritor legacy alive. They feel that simply watching is not enough - inheritors must be bred to keep the Godgenes active. This is a major responsibility, and they feel it is acceptable to use any means necessary.

#### Current Plotlines

Fugo a Watu is an active research and experimentation group, and its members are constantly tracking, monitoring, influencing, breeding, and educating inheritors around the world. There are also various internal matters to handle. Below are a few of the organization's current activities or concerns:

##### New Leadership

Emil Miseteri is getting old. At some point he will either die or become unable to handle Control One any longer, and then a new Controller will need to be elected. Whoever gains that position will also gain Emil's seat on the Planning Committee, and his tie-breaking vote for committee decisions. Several Controllers are vying for the position already, as are several Directors and several of the Planners' assistants. Depending on who gets the position and when, the organization could be in for a drastic restructuring.

##### Jerusalem Studies

Since the Rip, Jerusalem has become the gateway to another world. Fugo a Watu has some of the oldest records in the world, and knows all about the war the progenitors fought against the Host, and about the city they sundered from our world. Is this the same place? If so, it's from a world that had inheritors of its own - if those bloodlines can be added into the mix, the Godgenes could become stronger than ever.

##### Strange Visitations

Stories of strange creatures are popping up around the world in increasing frequency. What does it mean? If there really are monsters out there, now might be the time long foretold, when the inheritors are most needed? Are they ready? And how can Fugo a Watu control the situation, and its carefully bred super-soldiers?

##### Lost Blood

Someone broke into Control Seven, in Los Angeles, and robbed it. They took all the money on the premises, which is not important - but the thieves also broke into the Blood Bank and took the inheritor samples! Did they know what they were doing, or did they simply assume that anything that protected must be valuable? If the organization can't find the thieves and regain the samples, there's no telling what could happen!

##### Node Failure

One of the Nodes in the London area has vanished - its members

are simply gone. When another Node is sent to replace them, they find no trace of the Node or its assigned inheritor family. Did the inheritors find out about the Node, eliminate its members, and then run away? Or did something take out both groups at once? This could expose all of Fugo a Watu, either to the inheritors or to some other agency.

### Inner Revolt

A young Inheritor named David, who was raised at Control One, is causing trouble. He's started talking about how he and the other inheritors are being oppressed, and how they need to be free to live their own lives and make their own decisions. And many of the other inheritors are listening! If Inheritor Oversight and the rest of Control One can't handle them, the local inheritors could revolt against the organization. That would mean losing their carefully-bred army. It could also create an enemy who know all of Fugo a Watu's weaknesses, and could destroy the entire breeding program or at least set it back by decades or more.

### Secrets

Fugo a Watu is certainly not above taking extreme measures. Not all of its activities are things to be proud of, and many of them could be used against the organization. The group also has its internal problems and conflicts, and these could also weaken the organization if exposed.

- Sophie Gardenet is not actually descended from an inheritor at all. She was adopted as an infant, after her parents' real child died, and the incident was kept so quiet even the GU never found out. She's constantly afraid that someone will learn the truth and kick her out of the organization—or kill her, since she knows too much to be allowed to leave freely.
- One of eBreeding's best people, a man named Johnson Tate, has plans of his own. Tate has been matching not only inheritors but normal humans to create a breed of superior people, and he's been keeping track of these matches and their children. He has an ally in EC who is slowly influencing all of these children, and they hope to create an army of loyal soldiers, both optimal humans and inheritors.
- Outbreaks of Ebola and some of the other deadly viruses are not spontaneous or completely natural. Fugo a Watu keeps track of bloodlines around the world, and several times it has eliminated whole villages or towns when the inhabitants were too inbred to breed undamaged children any more.
- Fugo a Watu runs several slave-brothels. When necessary, it drugs and abducts female inheritors, takes them to the brothel, gets them pregnant, and then keeps the babies.
- The organization sometimes "removes" the step-siblings of inheritor children, in order to make the parents spend more time and attention with the inheritor youths.
- Deep in a vault beneath Control One is a thick hand-made book filled with notes, charts, and diagrams. These were created by R'Letta herself during her travels. Included in this book are the names of every inheritor should could find, their parentage, and

as much of the history of the progenitors as she could piece together from all her sources. It is the most complete account of the progenitors and their battle with the Host in the world.

- Fugo a Watu is well aware that it has no control over most of the inheritors in the world. Because of this, it is training its own inheritors in how to fight other titans, in case it needs to block the activities of other inheritors and assume control.

### Enemies

Fugo a Watu keeps a very low profile to avoid anyone learning of its operations or its goals (and to prevent endangering its inheritors by drawing attention to them too soon). Unfortunately, it has not been completely successful at hiding itself over the centuries, and its activities have garnered it some opposition. Those who know about the organization and disapprove of it include the following:

**Promethean Order:** This Allegiance began as a splinter group of Fugo a Watu. The Promethean Order knows of the Fugo a Watu and many of its nefarious practices, and knows the location of Control One and several of the other headquarters. Fortunately, the two Allegiances have completely different interests, so their activities and agents do not often intersect (or conflict).

**Straightline:** Several decades ago, an inheritor couple gave birth to a boy named Gavin Olson. Gavin was taken by Fugo a Watu and raised at Control One. But something odd had happened - somehow, despite his parents being potent inheritors of different strains, Gavin was born human, with no power whatsoever. The other inheritor children often picked on him, and when he reached puberty Gavin finally snapped. He escaped from Control One and eluded pursuit, but vowed to make the entire organization pay. Ten years later, he reappeared as the president of Straightline, an organization dedicated to helping cultural groups maintain pure bloodlines. Gavin is deliberately counteracting Fugo a Watu's work, encouraging people to breed with others of a similar genetic background. His goal is to remove the Godgenes completely by making each strain so pure it becomes incapable of crossbreeding. None of his subordinates knows Gavin's past or the truth behind his organization. Fugo a Watu has tried several times to eliminate him, but each attempt has failed.

**Titan Liberation League:** This is a group of titans who oppose anyone trying to control inheritors or their actions. The group knows about Fugo a Watu (and of a covert U.S. military project [Project Titan]), although they don't know the organizations' names or the locations of their headquarters. They consider Fugo a Watu to be evil tyrants who dominate titans for their own ends, and they will attack any members they find and free any titans they can. Of course, Fugo a Watu's goals are actually noble (if their methods are sometimes rather misguided), but the Titan Liberation League doesn't know that, and is more concerned with current behavior than with long-term plans.

**Operation Super-Soldier:** This is a secret research project funded by several different nations, intended to produce super-sol-

diers for those countries' armies (see the Super Soldier advanced class in Chapter Three). The project has heard of inheritors, but they have not yet figured out how to selectively breed their powers into a new generation. The project's scientists have heard rumors, however, about an organization that breeds inheritors and that has extensive knowledge of their genetic structure and heredity. Operation Super-Soldier has agents of its own, and these are now tasked with finding out as much as possible about this other organization. If they can locate Fugo a Watu, they will try to break into Controls and steal their Blood Banks and any files for their own use.

### Genre

Fugo a Watu is a combination of two different genres: the "uncaring scientific organization" and the "ancient breeding cult." Many films and TV shows have a secret conspiracy or organization who knows more of the truth and works desperately to keep secrets secret. The Fugo a Watu is such a society. For the scientific organization, think of a cold, clinical team of scientific researchers willing to use humans in experiments or projects with no regard for the subject's safety or comfort. These are men and women dedicated to a single mission, and determined to reach it by careful, logical steps: emotion often does not enter into the equation. For the breeding cult, think of ancient groups and ages-old societies dedicated to preserving certain bloodlines. These people follow family lineages and carefully arrange - or break - marriages to ensure that the line continues in a particular fashion. Often, such cults also protect the people in question, although they may do so surreptitiously; usually, the actual family does not even know the cult exists. The two things both types of organizations have in common are patience and zeal. Neither has any problem waiting decades or even centuries before the project reaches fruition. They're also both totally committed to these projects, and many agents will happily die to protect or further their cause. Often, however, these groups lose sight of the original goal, and only remember their specific mission. For example, a scientific organization might be devoted to finding the cure to a particular disease, and they will continue their research even if everyone else in the world has already been killed by the disease in question. This genre, then, is all about focus, dedication, long-term planning, logic over emotion, and "the end justifies the means."

### Inspirations

The following all serve as inspiration for a Fugo a Watu game. Although many of the names mentioned on this list come from disparate genres, they all encompass the feel of the ancient but scientific breeding cult.

#### Film:

Boys from Brazil; Dune; Gattica; The Fury; Mimic; Species; The Golden Child.

#### TV:

Dark Angel; The Pretender; Highlander: The Series; Veritas: The Quest; Poltergeist: The Legacy.

#### Books:

*I, Weapon* by Charles W. Runyon

*The Fury*, by John Farris

*The Dune series*, by Frank Herbert

*The Deryni series*, by Katherine Kurtz

*Polgara the Sorceress*, by David and Leigh Eddings

## International Geographical Society

*We come together not as scientists or educators, journalists or explorers, but as a synthesis of all these disciplines. The increase and diffusion of geographical knowledge is our most worthy aim. Knowing who, what, and where we are - these are the fundamental elements of understanding - and the price of wisdom is beyond that of the rarest rubies.*

*- IGS President Joe Fahy, March 1991*

The verdant green cover of the Journal of the International Geographical Society has become a world-famous symbol, one almost synonymous with science and exploration, with pushing the boundaries of knowledge and understanding. You can find the magazine on newsstands across the civilized world, and where you can't find the magazine, you'll find the reporters and researchers of the Society. There are few places on Earth that the IGS cannot reach - and, given time, few secrets it cannot uncover...

### History

The International Geographical Society is, in its present form, only 12 years old. In 1991, more than four dozen research groups, science journals, wildlife foundations, and other organizations signed the Revised Charter and merged together to form the Society. It is modeled heavily on its single largest forebear, National Geographic, but the IGS has a much wider scope of activities than any previous such organization.

The 1991 merger was the result of more than forty years of information-sharing and mutual help between the various societies. The idea of some sort of overarching institution was first suggested in the late 1960s, but was rejected out of hand due to fears about the identity of the smaller groups being lost in the resultant monolithic society. The idea of a merger began to gather support again as glasnost led to more contacts between Western scientists and their Soviet counterparts. The proposal also acquired a champion around this time, in the formidable person of Professor Janet Neaves, a renowned professor of political science from Edinburgh. Over the next decade, Neaves tirelessly gathered support for an international society, beholden to no single government or institution: "the scientific equivalent of the Red Cross," as she often phrased it.

Neaves won over the smaller groups by pointing out that she was chair of an obscure trust called the Carthage Club. Formerly a gentleman's club for explorers and world travelers in the 19th century, the Club had dwindled to a handful of members and a small suite of rooms in London. If such an inconsequential

group could retain its independent identity within a larger society, argued Neaves, then surely larger, more prestigious groups also could. One by one, she methodically browbeat even the most territorial and fiercely independent groups into submission.

The launch of the International Geographical Society attracted worldwide media attention, and its reputation has grown greatly since then. It has its own cable television channel, and its documentaries and reports are shown across the world. The Journal of the International Geographical Society is one of the most popular scientific publications in the world, and was the first non-military source of accurate information about the incident at Jerusalem.

### The Jerusalem Report

The recent March 2003 issue of the Journal of the International Geographical Society has demonstrated just how much the Society has changed since the signing of its Charter in 1991. Unlike its precursor publications, the Journal is willing to cover current events as eagerly as any newspaper, in its own particular idiom. While the rest of the media's early reports, which concentrated on the hideous loss of life and the political and military repercussions of the destruction of Jerusalem, the IGS team brought back information about the nature of the disaster, about the strange new world that had suddenly intersected with this one.

The editor of the Journal, Jack Calvin, has allocated every pos-

sible resource available to investigating the disaster. His efforts were initially hindered by Mossad and the Israeli security forces, who closed off access to Jerusalem. The IGS teams were able to gather data from outside the security perimeter, but it was almost impossible to tell what had happened in the city from outside. On February 16th, one week after the disaster, the impossible happened.

A team from the International Geographical Society had been recording an archaeological documentary just outside Jerusalem. After the disaster, they were listed as missing, presumed dead, as there was no sign of them anywhere near the dig site. In fact, they survived the initial explosion with only minor injuries and immediately headed into the city to investigate. There, the team unknowingly passed through a dimensional gate into the Otherworld. They spent five days exploring and filming the bizarre land they encountered there, before returning to the gate. Although the security forces confiscated most of their equipment, the lead cameraman managed to smuggle six CD-ROMs full of compressed video out. The team's reports, combined with the various data and analysis performed by the Society, were expertly compiled and edited into the March Journal.

To a world shocked and confused by the disaster, the Journal was the first clear summary and analysis of what had happened. In his editorial, Calvin wrote, "we don't know exactly what happened. No one does. Anyone who claims to is either a fool or a



liar. What happened on the 9th of February was utterly unprecedented in history. All assumptions, all beliefs, all we know and think we know about the nature of the world, must be examined and weighed in the face of what has happened in Jerusalem.”

Today, the Journal is at the forefront of exploration of the Otherworld, and maintains Pioneer Base, one of the largest permanent camps on the far side.

### **The Carthage Club**

Once the International Geographical Society was founded, Janet Neaves (Smart 5/Charismatic 3/ Field Scientist 3/Crusading Advocate 5) retired. The creation of the IGS was the crowning glory of her career, and she was content to step back and take a much less active role. She had greatly neglected her family during the years of negotiation, and there was a whole generation of grandnieces and nephews that Neaves barely knew.

One of these relatives, a young woman named Iseult Spencer (Smart 2/Charismatic 3 Crimson Lord), grew up idolizing her distant great-aunt, and had followed to some extent in Neaves’ footsteps. Iseult had also studied political science, and was beginning a career in journalism. The two women became friends, and eventually Iseult felt close enough to confide in her great-aunt. For years, Iseult had suffered from bizarre dreams, and occasionally manifested what she could only describe as “weird powers.” Parapsychology was one of Neaves’ early hobbies, albeit one she had abandoned for the sake of her scientific credentials, so she did not dismiss Iseult’s claims immediately. Instead, Neaves began to study her granddaughter.

The results were astonishing. Verifiable, quantifiable experiments proved that Iseult possessed superhuman abilities. Neaves delved into the literature of parapsychology. With the resources of the IGS, she was able to correlate a vast amount of data, and quickly became convinced that something quite astonishing was happening in the world. Powers once thought to be entirely mythical were now being sighted everywhere. Neaves and Iseult began to gather some of the more striking examples of the phenomenon together for fuller study. The Carthage Club, a decaying society founded for Victorian adventurers, now served as a cover for Neaves’ efforts.

Neaves read the reports of the Jerusalem incident with horror. She suspected that the impossible events had some connection to the impossible powers of her protégés. Until the truth could be found out, the Carthage Club’s new purpose would have to be kept secret. Today, under the guise of the Club, Neaves uses the IGS to seek out more people possessing bizarre powers, and hunts for the secrets of their abilities. The woman who founded a society for sharing knowledge now conceals it from her peers.

### **Goals and Methods**

The charter of the International Geographical Society begins with the declaration “We intend to found a society dedicated to the promulgation and dissemination of knowledge regarding all aspects of this planet and its fragile cargo of life, and of the proper place of our species on this world. No one nation, gov-

ernment, or institution shall be the sole beneficiary of what we discover – our students are all humanity, our muse is Science.”

The IGS still holds true to those ideals. The society funds dozens of projects across the world, organizes conferences and exhibitions, coordinates joint efforts between universities and other science groups, and produces a host of magazines, publications, and television programs. Society members try to hold themselves to the highest standards of both scientific and journalistic ethics. The IGS has a reputation for presenting unbiased, high-quality information. Still, in recent years, there has been some criticism that the Society’s television shows are become more sensationalist and crowd-pleasing, concentrating too much on animal attacks and over-hyped and under-researched historical conspiracies.

While research teams do take risks when traveling into dangerous environments or violent regions, few are willing to throw themselves into jeopardy for the sake of the Society. The IGS is not a newsgathering organization in the way a newspaper or a global news channel is. It is rarely worth dying for an IGS story. The one exception is the current area of focus for the Society – the Otherworld. Many young scientists and researchers see the wilds of the Otherworld as a chance to make their mark on science, and willingly put their lives in peril while exploring.

At minimum, an IGS research team consists of a team leader, two or three specialists, a camera operator, and a logistics expert (commonly called a “roadie”). In expeditions to the Otherworld, the roadie is often a trained soldier or bodyguard. All members of a team are cross-trained in each other’s jobs, so that even the most absent-minded geologist can handle a microphone boom or a hunting rifle in an emergency. For smaller projects, the IGS prefers to get a large quantity of footage over quality. Their editors are used to finding the least jittery and blurry shots of a charging rhino. Larger projects get assigned expert camera operators, and teams on such projects may have dozens or hundreds of members.

Every month, the Society publishes its flagship magazine, the Journal, along with 62 other bi-weekly or monthly newsletters and magazines and over 300 hours of television programming.

### **The Hidden Charter**

After the fall of Communism in 1989, a young graduate student named Douglas Hill posed a question to an email list for supporters of the proposed IGS. Given that the collapse of the USSR is likely to greatly destabilize much of the world, he asked, should the Society use its global reach and resources to guide the affected nations? The proposal was shouted down almost immediately, as the idea of the Society intervening was contrary to the most basic ideals of science and ethics.

Hill’s suggestion was never quite forgotten, however, and has been adopted a small group within the Society. They refer to themselves as the Big Scientists. Since 1995, Society members have occasionally “pushed.” Such “pushing” mostly takes place in and around war-torn countries, and has included supplying arms and training to revolutionaries, helping break through

governmental restrictions on communications and internet access, bringing medicine and technology to deprived areas, reporting on human rights abuses, and diverting Society funds to help disaster relief. Recently, the Scientists have developed links with various far left and extreme technology groups. International Geographical teams in sub-Saharan Africa have secretly seeded genetically modified plants there, for example. These kudzu-derived plants are designed to fix the soil in place and prevent the growth of the desert. Under normal circumstances, the plants would be stuck in laboratories and test farms for decades, but the Big Scientists decided that desertification had to be tackled immediately. With each project, they grow more confident. This is applied science, technology being put to use where it is needed without consideration of borders or politics or anything else.

### Breaking the Rules

The Big Scientists' activities are conducted under the guise of Society research. They have sympathizers in the Society's accounting department, and can get tens of thousands of dollars allocated to a particular project in less than a week. The global scope of the Society gives them easy access to travel and a worldwide network of contacts and scientific institutions that can serve as safe houses in a pinch. Below are some of the current projects being undertaken by the Big Scientists.

- Helping dissidents in two former Communist countries set up a pirate television broadcast.
- Gathering evidence of human rights abuses in China.
- Distributing the formulae for restricted medicinal drugs to underground labs.
- Sabotaging the construction of several major dams.
- Using IGS credentials to get inside forests marked for logging, then sabotaging the logging efforts.

Most of the Big Scientists are idealists: young, talented, educated Westerners who believe that the world can be fixed through the proper application of science. On a high of post-millennial optimism, and finding opportunity in the chaos and confusion spread in the wake of the Rip, they're empowered by the resources of the IGS to make a real difference. They believe they can cut through all the old tribal boundaries and bureaucratic regimes to get knowledge to where it is needed. For many of them, it's an extension of student activism to a global scale. Some of the older members, however, are becoming increasingly extreme in their methods. Sometimes, all the protest websites and culture jamming on the web won't make a difference, but an assassin's bullet just might. As the reach and influence of the IGS grows, so too do their ambitions.

### Hunting Myths

Under Professor Neaves' guidance, the primary goal of the Carthage Club is to learn more about the nature of supernatural abilities in humans (they are completely unaware of titanic legacies and birthrights, at least in that vernacular), and to

locate and recruit any who demonstrate such abilities. If a potential recruit is interested, Neaves arranges for them to be hired by the IGS and brought to London. There, Neaves and a small team of trusted scientist study the titan's abilities, and help her to master her powers if necessary. Some stay on in London after this probationary period. They may keep working for the IGS or pursue other activities, but they remain members of the Carthage Club.

Carthage Club members are assigned to IGS missions that are likely to be extremely dangerous or to garner knowledge of the supernatural - or, more often, both. If the right strings are pulled, the entire team is composed of Carthage Club members, and they can use their abilities openly. Otherwise, the inheritors must try to conceal their nature from the rest of the team. There have been slips, and stories about miraculous escapes and bizarre feats of heroism have begun to circulate through the IGS. It's an open secret that something strange is going on at the Carthage Club.

The Club also keeps tabs on reports of paranormal activity, and sends teams to investigate anything that sounds credible and important. Since the Rip, they've clocked up tens of thousands of frequent flyer miles...

### Organization

The main offices of the International Geographical Society are in Washington, D.C. Most of the Society's administration is carried out in a downtown office building, while the official headquarters is in a rambling 18th-century townhouse. The 27-member Steering Committee of the Society meets at least twice a year in Washington. Twelve committee members are nominated by the universities and institutions that form the Society, and another twelve are elected by the Society membership every four years. The remaining three positions are taken by the Secretary, Treasurer, and President of the Society. A President is elected by a mandatory vote of the members every 10 years, at most, while the other two are chosen by the committee.

The current President is Albrecht Kirsher, a German geographer. Kirsher took office only recently, following the retirement of former President Joe Fahy due to ill health. Fahy was the first president of the IGS, and was extremely popular. He was president of the old National Geographic before the merger, and he was able to use his established influence to keep the Steering Committee together. Kirsher lacks such a power base, and the various factions in the Society are now battling for control of the committee.

The publishing arm of the Society is based in New York, but has offices all over the world. The department head is a former newspaper editor, Jack Calvin, who has brought his taste for foul cigars, deadlines, and shouting to the IGS. Since the Rip, the Journal has been run more like a newspaper, with new revelations and reports about the Otherworld and the other bizarre phenomena in the Middle East. The Journal has been breaking sales records under Calvin's guidance. However, the publishing arm is also responsible for the Society's cable channel, which is

hemorrhaging money badly. If the channel fails to recover, it is in danger of being sold off to one of the media moguls. Calvin is pushing his teams to provide more gripping programs, which has led to criticism that he's "dumbing down" the channel. Calvin's solution to this is to send teams into more dangerous situations. IGS-TV's highest rated show to date was a live feed from the ruins of Jerusalem, which ended with the stunning on-screen death of two team members.

#### **Pioneer Base**

Part of the problems with IGS-TV stem from its ambitious sponsorship of Pioneer Base, a permanent research station and beachhead on the far side of Jerusalem, within the Otherworld. The base consists of a trio of geodesic domes containing laboratories, living quarters, and supplies for expeditions. Almost a hundred people work in Pioneer Base, with another four dozen on regular missions deep in the Otherworld. The base is designed to be a 21st-century frontier fort, and is capable of surviving a moderate military assault. Supplies are trucked in every fortnight from Jerusalem. Activities at the base include cataloguing native flora and fauna, mapping the Otherworld, making contact with the native inhabitants of the Otherworld, exploring the various ruins near the Rip, and delving into the bizarre physics of the region. One scientist at the Base has published a paper drawing fascinating parallels between certain anomalies present in the Otherworld and ancient myths of magic on Earth. Fears of contamination by an alien organism or virus prompted the original designers to include biohazard containment technology in the base. These strict protocols are obeyed at Pioneer Base, but the staff worry that the other explorers from Earth, such as the Israeli station just inside the Rip, will one day bring back a lethal pathogen from the Otherworld.

One of the most important instruments at Pioneer Base is a massive radio transmitter. Compasses cannot be trusted in the Otherworld, and GPS is non-existent there. Expeditions into the Otherworld thus use the Pioneer Beacon to navigate. For IGS teams, the only link with Pioneer Base is a thin, ghostly signal that rises and fades with the wind.

Pioneer Base is commanded by "Short Walk" Thom Charrette, who was previously stationed at the IGS Antarctic facility; he got his nickname when he got separated from his team in the middle of a snowstorm. The weather was so severe the rest of the team gave him up for dead. Seventeen hours later, he knocked on the outer door of their habitat, frozen and frostbitten, but very much alive after hiking across a glacier. Several members of the Carthage Club assigned to Pioneer Base suspect that Charrette possesses some supernatural ability.

#### **The Carthage Club**

Stepping through the ornate doors of the Carthage Club is like stepping back in time to the glory days of the British Empire. Phileas Fogg might have just left, muttering about having a train to catch. The building, located in the heart of London, is a lovingly restored gentleman's club. The walls are paneled in dark oak, the chairs upholstered in green leather, and the air

above the billiard tables redolent of an earlier time. Animal heads and curios from across the world decorate the rooms. The Club library, though, is filled with the latest reference books and broadband internet terminals, even if the map embedded into the great table still has blank spaces in Africa and South America.

Upstairs are Professor Neaves' rooms, where she continues her investigation of supernatural phenomenon. In addition to laboratories, offices, and a well-equipped surgery, the Club building boasts several cells, hidden rooms, and secret passages, mostly legacies from the Club's heyday. One of the passages leads to an abandoned tube station.

Officially, the Carthage Club is still a haven for explorers and adventurers. A decade ago, it had less than two dozen surviving members, all but three of them retired and over eighty. Now the Club numbers almost fifty, and many of them are inheritors (none of whom would use that term) recruited by Neaves. The Club is funded by a bequest from a former member, and also has access to the Society's resources.

From her comfy seat by the fireside, Professor Neaves rules the Club with an iron fist and a fierce intelligence. She has a tremendous grasp of science and geopolitics, and a talent for drawing together radically different elements into a coherent whole. She is focused on getting to the bottom of the mystery of the supernatural resurgence she and her grand-niece have "discovered," but also encourages Carthage Club members to help the IGS. The Professor suspects that the incident at Jerusalem and appearance of the gifted humans are merely part of a larger crisis facing humanity as a whole, and the Club is the beginning of her response to this crisis.

Much of the daily running of the Club is handled by Rupert Gull, a curator emeritus in the British Museum and another long-standing member of the Club. While Gull is mostly retired, he has a wealth of experience of field work dating back to the excavation of Tutankhamen, and he can be trusted to give useful if interminable advice to team members. Supernatural training and any illicit activity is commanded by Neaves' grand-niece Iseult.

#### **The Big Scientists**

The Big Scientists are a loose collection of activists and idealists. The Big Scientists keep their projects as secret as possible. Most of their communication is carried out on an anonymous mailing list. An inner circle of three conspirators deal with any major threats to the Big Scientists, but mostly the group just chooses its targets and covers its tracks. They use a two-tiered cell structure within the IGS. One tier is composed of administrators, editors, network administrators, and other office staff, who work together to cover up the group's activities. The second tier is made up of IGS field-team members who actually go out and do research (with a little pushing on the side). No member from one tier is supposed to know anyone from the other tier: all communication is carried out through anonymous email and hidden messages. In reality, most of the Scientists members know or suspect who many other members are, but the cell system should contain the damage to the organization if an oper-

ation goes seriously wrong.

There are dozens of competing ideologies and factions in the Big Scientists, but they are all united by the common purpose to make the world a better place. What exactly constitutes a better place is a matter of constant debate - in one notable incident in 2000, one cell blew up a warehouse full of genetically modified seeds that another cell had just secretly smuggled into Korea. Despite their political differences, the various members are willing to work together, and the Scientists can draw on a vast amount of scientific knowledge and young talent. The inner triumvirate is aware of the fractures in the group, but differ on how they should proceed. Douglas Hill (Smart 4/Dedicated 3/Charismatic 3), who essentially founded the conspiracy almost twenty years ago, is still convinced that the IGS as a whole should intervene, and would happily jettison the more extreme elements. Gina Wilkes (Smart 3/Dedicated 4/Investigator 2), who co-ordinates most of the group, is a pragmatist who will work with anyone to get the job done. The third conspirator is Iseult Spencer, Professor Neaves' grand-niece, who is also a powerful titan, a Crimson Lord. Iseult feels driven to help the Scientists, for dispensing blessings, driving back the darkness, and being aided by (and almost worshipped by some) followers resonates in her soul. So far, she's managed to keep the three parts of her double life - journalist, Carthage Club mentor, and Big Scientist - separate, although she has convinced four other inheritors from the Club to help the Scientists.

### Characters in the International Geographical Society

The Society is designed to grow and adapt along with a campaign. Characters can start off as simple researchers, blundering into danger all over the worlds. Titan PCs can later be brought into the Carthage Club, bringing the campaign a single step into the shadows, and be given occult missions by Neaves instead of mundane investigation. The Society slowly becomes a plot device for getting the PCs from place to place, feeding them hints and clues instead of entire adventure hooks. Around the mid-point of the campaign, the characters can be approached by or encounter the Big Scientists, which might force the characters to become proactive rather than merely responding to mission hooks. They can try to shut the Big Scientists down or get involved, but they cannot just ignore the group.

In dealing with the Big Scientists, the characters should become influential enough to affect the direction of the Society. The IGS is currently in a state of flux: it might break up, parts of it might be taken over by outside interests, or it might rededicate itself to pure science or become a secret force for good or ill in the world. The IGS will end up reflecting the desires and morals of the characters themselves. In investigating the mysteries, the PCs will end up investigating themselves.

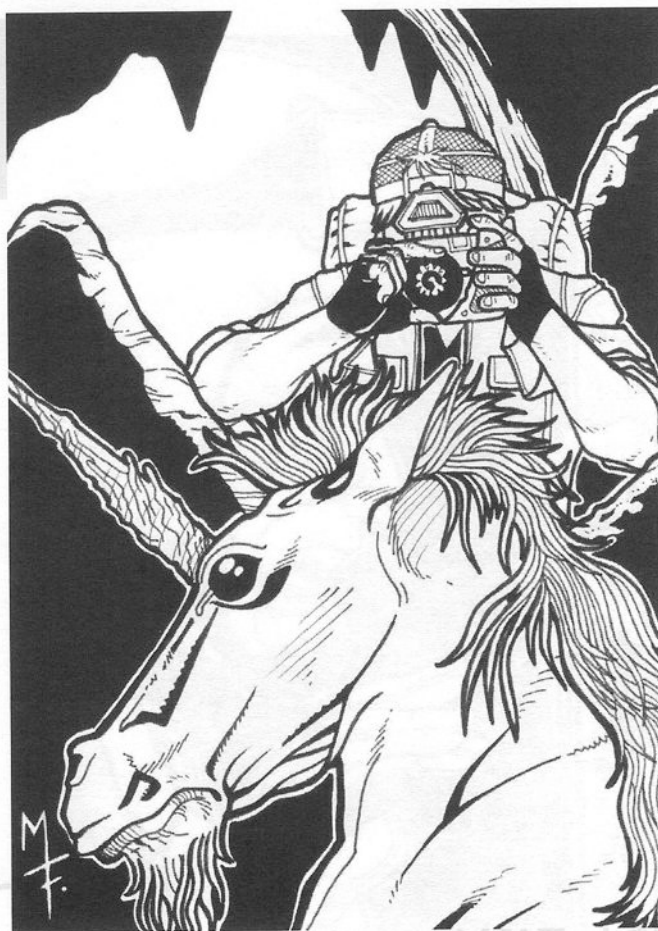
### Current Plotlines

**Otherworld Zoological Research:** The Otherworld is the new frontier, the new unmapped wilderness. The International

Geographical Society is at the forefront of the exploration of this strange new world. Pioneer Base is one of the few installations on the far side of the Rip that isn't controlled by the military, so a lot of private companies and research projects go through the IGS. Operation Noah is a massive project jointly undertaken with the San Diego zoo, which intends to capture examples of all the Otherworldly creatures and bring them back alive. Another joint project, funded by a consortium of pharmaceutical firms, is aimed at cataloguing the flora of the Otherworld and searching for new drugs and medicines.

**Big Business:** Many IGS members have complained that the Society is paving the way for massive exploitation of the Otherworld, and that a firm stand should be taken against such activities now, before they become overwhelming. The Big Scientists have already sabotaged oil-finding expeditions from Shell and Exxon, and are ready to strike again if the multinationals continue their efforts. The IGS has worked hard to position itself as the gateway to the Otherworld, and soon they'll have to decide who should be let through the door.

**Veils of Mystery:** In the aftermath of the incident at Jerusalem, a large complex of tunnels and chambers was discovered beneath Temple Mount. The site had been extensively investigated before the Rip, but geophysical analysis had shown no



sign of the complex. Something shielded the place from scans, something that was apparently erased by the Rip – or the tunnels are a new addition. Some researchers hypothesizes that the complex was mystically warded until the Rip opened. More and more archaeological sites are being reinvestigated by the Society, and many new structures, temples, tombs, hidden fortresses, and dungeons, have been rediscovered...or have reappeared. If some ancient civilization knew the Rip might one day reopen, might they have hidden away clues that could only be found when needed?

**Cracks in the Foundation:** The International Geographical Society is heading into a crisis. It was created by rough-welding a number of influential scientific bodies together, and cracks are beginning to develop. The initial euphoria of the Society's founding is giving way to factionalism and sniping. Parts of the Society are swelling with research grants related to the Rip, while other sections are struggling to get by. Information is being hoarded instead of shared. Unless the Society can overcome its petty internal politics, it will lose any chance of making a difference in the world.

Some have suggested that a massive, high-profile project that that drew on all the diverse branches of the Society could reunite the IGS and give its many members and employees a common

purpose. For example, the Journal seized the attention of the world in March 2003, and a comprehensive examination of the Otherworld could equal that shining moment of pride and unity. Others whisper that only by clearing out corruption and self-service in the Steering Committee can the IGS be saved.

**Coming Out:** The Carthage Club and its gifted members are fast becoming an open secret within the Society, and the existence of titans will certainly become public knowledge from some other source within the year. While all of the other Allegiances are trying to conceal themselves, the Carthage Club has no intention of staying secret forever. However, Professor Neaves is aware of the danger of a backlash against what she has come to call "the Gifted" by a scared and confused humanity. If the origin of the Gift can be discovered (i.e., if she learns and is convinced of the truth of the titanic lineages), if she can prove that the Gifted aren't demonic invaders from the Otherworld or some other paranoid fear, then the Carthage Club can go public.

Currently, the Club has less of an understanding of what inheritors are than any other group. Neaves' background in parapsychology and sociology has blinded her to the genetic elements of the titan phenomenon. If she could bring all the Society's knowledge to bear on the problem, however, the Club might well leap ahead of nearly everyone else in their understanding of titans. The moment the Society starts investigating titans, though, is the moment they become a danger to those who want to keep titans hidden...

**Scattered Relics:** On the morning of February 10th, the corpse of Dr. Lili Cabell, a curator in the Smithsonian museum, was found in her office. An autopsy was inconclusive, but doctors suggested the cause of death was probably a stroke. Cabell was involved in cataloguing a set of a dozen stone statues that had been found at a dig in Paraguay. Over the last few months, the set of statues has been broken up, and the ugly little figurines have made their way across the world. Some are in museums across Europe and the Pacific Rim, others in universities and private collections scattered. Four have been stolen.

Only two people have noticed the strange movements of the statues. One of them is dead now, the other running for her life, pursued by shadows of madness. For when the Daemonhost returned, their stony servants awoke...

### Genre

The International Geographical Society is, to put it bluntly, fairly clueless when it comes to titans. The vast majority of the IGS is only barely aware of the existence of the supernatural. For the most part, they are ordinary scientists and journalists. They don't have an ancient occult history or access to secret government research. The IGS is only just beginning to find out what is going on. This very obliviousness allows the GM to introduce the players to the world of Dark Inheritance at the same time as their characters.

The Society is essentially an "adventure hook dispenser." If the characters are researchers or Journal reporters, they can simply be given a camera, a microphone, a plane ticket to their desti-



nation, and a mystery. IGS teams might find themselves tracking down monsters in (or from) the Otherworld, raiding tombs in Egypt, investigating fringe science in Singapore, or exposing illegal oil drilling in Antarctica. The IGS is a perfect framework for running an X-files-style "mystery of the week" game.

IGS adventures should always centre on investigation and mystery. The Society is dedicated to discovery and knowledge. In any horror story, there's always someone who hears the bump in the night and who, instead of hiding, goes out to see what made the noise. The Society is entirely made up of such people. They shine a light into the darkness, they push back the boundaries of science and civilization, and they go happily into the isolated research station that's been mysteriously abandoned.

The Carthage Club lets you do all the above, only with birthrights and perhaps a little more style. The elegant surroundings and traditions of the Club lend their occult battles a touch of class and old-world charm. The Club's research into the origin of supernatural powers can be used as a springboard into investigating any occult phenomenon. Neaves often puts Club members on the front line against mysterious horrors – she knows of no-one else who can fight fire with fire and deal with the supernatural on its own terms.

The Big Scientists are another potentially rich source of adventure hooks. The PCs can work to change the world, fighting against pollution, corruption, and injustice – or to pull the Big Scientists out of trouble if things go wrong. Big Scientist operations are always in danger of going in too deep and uncovering things that the IGS would never encounter in its regular activities.

### Inspirations

#### Film:

Raiders of the Lost Ark; The Thing; The Mummy; The Mummy Returns; Tomb Raider; Blair Witch Project.

#### TV:

National Geographic; The X-Files; Veritas: The Quest; Relic Hunter; Stargate SG-1.

#### Books:

*National Geographic*, National Geographic Society

*At The Mountains of Madness*, H.P. Lovecraft

*House of Leaves*, Mark Z. Danielewski

*The Hollowing*, Robert Holdstock

*Hellboy*, Mike Mignola

## Project Titan

*With one turn of the microscope they returned to the beginning of creation. They aren't trying to play God, they're trying to steal him.*

*- Jeremiah Kurk, rogue titan, moments before he and the journalist to whom he was talking were killed.*

Project Titan is a black ops division of Department-7; its mission is to control information about the Godgene and to identify, then either recruit or destroy, titans all over the world. It

uses a combination of counterintelligence, espionage, and lethal force to carry out its mission, which not even many of the highest-level operatives in other sections of Department-7 fully understand. They, along with powerful members of the Promethean Order, are responsible for the Rip occurring in Jerusalem, although neither group knows of the other's involvement. The unleashing of the Daemonhost has radically altered the timeline for all of Project Titan's goals, which has made their methods less compromising and strained their resources to the limit.

### History

The group known as Project Titan was formed in 1968 as a research unit within Department-7. Sporadic "incidences" involving titans during the wars of the previous three decades had sparked the interest of Department-7. At first they believed the stories were evidence of a super-soldier program that had been rumored to exist during WWII. They focused their studies on living (and sometimes even dead) German soldiers who had fought in the war. This research stalled quickly, however, and they could find no survivors to corroborate their suspicions.

After nearly being denied funding in 1970, they refined their theory of "super-soldiers" to include possible radiation exposure from the various nuclear programs and detonations that



had occurred between 1945 and the 1960s. During this time, they became closely involved with the gene research being undertaken at Stanford University and other institutions across the United States. Project operatives were sent to infiltrate research facilities, labs, and university programs, and over the next few years Project Titan became the most concentrated reservoir of genetic data on the planet.

These early Project scientists were primarily involved in experimenting with the effects of radiation on genetic materials, when, in 1972, a discovery was made that would forever change their course. Paul Berg's successful creation of the first recombinant DNA molecule shocked the global research community, and its repercussions were so great that research in the area was heavily regulated in no time. This technological breakthrough allowed the manipulation and investigation of DNA at its most fundamental level.

After years of experimenting on bacteria and other simple life forms, the leap was made to examining and working with human DNA. Almost immediately, there were several proposals to map the human genome, though only one made any significant progress to get funding. Members of Project Titan were involved with all three proposals. In two of the cases, they intentionally bogged down the proceedings with legislative and parliamentary concerns that fractured the efforts. In one case, however, a Project Titan plant in the Department of Energy was able to secure funding for what would eventually blossom into the National Center for Human Genome Research. Under the twin banners of the National Institute of Health and the Department of Health and Human Services, this new department began to investigate the technical and organizational challenges of mapping the human genome.

Project Titan, in the meantime, was gearing up its efforts to control the flow of information about the genome. It saw its funding rise considerably in the late 80s and early 90s, and its

operations truly became global as it opened covert offices in London, Paris, Rome, and Tokyo. These four cities saw the most activity concerning genome research; Project Titan operatives spearheaded at least two of these projects. The director of Project Titan considered it absolutely essential that his teams control the flow of information both to and from these separate endeavors, and he secretly believed that the key to understanding the titans would be found therein.

#### **Titan Recruitment**

In addition to its role in shaping genetic research, Project Titan has been engaged in finding and recruiting titans to work on behalf of Department-7. They began by searching newspapers and periodicals for stories and reports of amazing feats or paranormal activity. Their access to DARPANET and other federal resources ensured them of timely and complete information about incidences of titan activities. They followed up all leads, and watched potential titans for weeks to determine if they did in fact exhibit any extraordinary traits. Once a confirmation was made, the teams would approach the individual and take him or her into custody.

Department-7 thus practiced covert recruitment, meaning that the titans were never told what they were being recruited for, but only that they could serve their country by joining. They were not told that they had special abilities, although in most cases they knew or suspected already. A titan who refused the offer was allowed to resume his life with the understanding that he could not reveal what had happened to him. Those who did not follow this suggestion were quietly dealt with by Project Titan operatives and never heard from again.

Titans that did come aboard - and there were many - were trained as covert agents. General training included firearms use, martial arts, and mental acuity, while each titan was given a specific regimen to help him better understand and utilize his particular talents. With each new recruit, Project Titan grew,



and its ability to impose its agenda on the world was further enhanced. Titans were used to infiltrate all levels of academia and government, as well as being inserted as field operatives in the ongoing recruitment of other titans. All were adept at espionage and counterintelligence, hoping to hamper non-U.S. genetic research efforts, as well as destroying evidence of the titans' very existence around the world. It was during one of these missions that the first temporary dimensional fissure was discovered, giving Project Titan yet another avenue to explore in their quest to understand the nature of the titans.

While their early efforts were limited to North America, primarily the continental United States, the establishment of offices around the world in the early 90s along with the globalization of trade and information brought a global perspective to their recruitment efforts. The opening of Soviet records near the end of the 20th century revealed that the KGB had been involved in similar efforts throughout Russia and Eastern Europe. All of the titans who worked for the Soviet intelligence agency were now freelance operatives, and could be found working for the Russian mafia, the Chinese military, and other organizations that threatened U.S. interests around the world. Titans in Islamic countries were of particular concern, as well, due to the increase in terrorism and related incidences in the U.S. and around the world. Project Titan began to work closely with the Mossad in 1998, after bombs rocked U.S. embassies in Kenya and Tanzania - a relationship that would play a role in the recent disaster in Jerusalem.

Recruitment of foreign titans began in earnest about a decade ago, although such activities were much more sensitive than their domestic counterparts. The risk of alerting an enemy of the United States was great, and governments around the world would have been infuriated to learn that the U.S. was recruiting its citizens in such a way. Thus potential recruits from other countries were dealt with in a more direct way than those in the United States. The motto was simply "join or die," although prospective recruits were never told as much. Those who joined underwent rigorous reeducation in addition to their regular training in order to insure their allegiance to Project Titan. They were accepted as full members, but were more often than not given assignments close to "home" so that they could be monitored at all times.

Out of this recruitment policy came the current explicit mission of Project Titan: to recruit or destroy all known titans. Although adherence to this implicit directive has opened a major rift within Department-7, the Project continues to get funding. The directors of Project Titan use this to their advantage, but know not to bite the hand that feeds them too eagerly. They have nearly free rein to run the Project how they please, and are granted nearly any budgetary, personnel, and intelligence request they make. In return, they temporarily assign titans to aid Department-7 in a variety of ways. Project Titan's involvement in the events that lead to the Rip in Jerusalem has left an opening for Department-7 to break their ties with Project Titan,

however, who they could brand as a rogue agency whose activities were hidden from the Department, but for now they have decided to continue the relationship while things are sorted out around the world.

### **The Godgene Revealed**

While research groups around the world geared up to begin mapping the human genome, Project Titan had its own scientists working on the mystery of the titans. It did not take long before they discovered an anomaly in a string of DNA submitted by one of the scientists that worked for the project. They detected a specific sequence of genes within the titans that, while it existed in other samples, behaved differently in those with gifts. In the titans, these genes worked with one another across chromosomes to create something greater than the whole. It seemed that whenever this string was found on multiple adjacent chromosomes, a titan was born.

The discovery was a major step for Project Titan, who nevertheless kept it a secret from Department-7. The directors decided it was much too risky to leak this information, and they ordered an immediate task force to be set up to determine how best to control this information. They knew that others around the globe were researching this very thing, but that they lacked access to the same level of information that Project Titan had from its operatives around the world. They decided that it was acceptable for genome research to continue, but they informed their operatives to make sure that this particular discovery was hidden at all costs. This was achieved mostly by tampering with samples from titans, ensuring that the Godgene, as they now called it, was removed or altered before it could be tested. Through these agencies, they fed bad data to similar research groups around the world, whose efforts are to this day without success.

Protection of the Godgene is one of Project Titan's top priorities. The network of geneticists they have planted around the world has its own support structure, and scientists are moved around occasionally to avoid suspicion. Since they are far ahead of any of the competing genome projects around the world (except perhaps the Fugo a Watu), they use information leaks to create red herrings about specific other genes to keep scientists moving in the wrong directions. They hope these tactics will work at least until the problem of the Daemonhost is brought under control, as the thought of another agency or country gaining control of the Godgene during this time of crisis is one they cannot afford to have become reality.

### **The Rip**

The discovery of dimensional fissures was a major one, and Project Titan scientists believe that the radiation that escaped them might be the cause of the Godgene. Even though they were not sure what these tiny anomalous energy matrices were, they immediately expanded their research to include covert field teams that would collect samples of the radiation as well as local flora and fauna from around several of the anomalies for investigation.

One of these research teams ran into an unusual breach while in Jerusalem. The readings they took did not match the others at all, and they detected a great deal of ambient energy just on the other side of the fissure. Weeks of testing frustrated the scientists, until a young recruit brought in a transcription of an ancient Mayan tablet that he had learned about in his days at Harvard. The tablet spoke of a gateway to another world and described physical phenomena that closely resembled what the scientists had observed at a fissure site in the Andes. The subsequent discovery of several fissures buried deep within ancient Mayan structures only served to excite them more. What if these truly were gateways to another world? How would the Mayans have known? Unless... unless something had come from within them. Believing that the same thing might be happening in the gate under the Temple Mount, they immediately sent a team to contact the Mossad. After striking a bargain to share all information gained with the Mossad - in this case the information leak was acceptable - the scientists probed the fissures for more than two months, searching for signs of another world and evidence that this was indeed a portal.

They gained no new information, until one day a research assistant noticed that energy seemed to be escaping the nuclear reactor they used to power their tools; after some study, the scientists theorized that the energy was being redirected into the fissure. Meanwhile, the fissure had grown larger. Excited by this development, they quickly obtained permission to allow a controlled burst of radiation to enter the fissure in hopes that it would grow even larger, and perhaps even stabilize.

The first test was scheduled for the morning of February 11th, 2003, the morning after the Promethean Order was to cast the ritual to close the rift forever. By some accident of fate, however, the project leader's husband was killed in an automobile accident the previous Sunday. Instead of delaying the experiment until after her return, she pushed up the schedule until just several hours before her departure back to New York - at 0630h, local time, on the morning of February 10th.

In the aftermath of the resulting explosion, the escape of the Daemonhost, and the merging of Jerusalem with the Otherworld, Project Titan has taken an active role in trying to figure out exactly what is happening. At the same time, they attempt to keep the project's involvement with the disaster a secret, an easy task since most who were involved are now dead. While the Promethean Order reels from its failure and attempts to track down the Daemonhost, Project Titan sends research teams into Jerusalem in order to determine whether or not the damage can be reversed. In the meantime, their other projects go on as usual, although with less funding and supervision than before, and their relationship with Department-7 is more strained than ever.

### Goals and Methods

As noted above, Project Titan has three primary goals at present: (i) To prevent access to information about the Godgene and its role in the titans' development, (ii) To recruit or eliminate all known titans, and (iii) To determine the nature of the

breach in Jerusalem and find out whether or not it can be sealed.

Project Titan has planted scientists, administrators, and in the case of one former Soviet republic, even government officials in its attempt to control access to the Godgene. So far, the information is secure, although they know several potential breaches have been reported over the past decade. It is possible that someone has escaped with knowledge of the Godgene, and is now searching for the highest bidder or the most trustworthy organization to feed the information. The Project has its field agents stay alert to any information on such a free agent, but thus far nothing has been found (or at least proven).

Their recruitment efforts have become less secretive in the months since the disaster, but the Project has begun to use Department-7 more regularly as a cover for their activities. Rather than recruit titans for the Project specifically, they have been using discretionary funds to recruit for Department-7 under the guise of protecting the U.S. and its allies from the monsters that have been unleashed. They now openly approach titans within the U.S. and work with intelligence agencies from other countries who are aware of Department-7 and have dealings with them already. In this way they are able to continue their recruitment without drawing attention to themselves, and in cases where their offers are not accepted, they are still able to track the rogue titans.

The early policy of eliminating potential titan recruits who refuse to accept the Project's offers has given way in recent years to one of surveillance. Since the organization is now openly recruiting under the guise of Department-7, it cannot be so blatant about assassinating titans, especially at a time when the world is beginning to look to the titans to help defend it from whatever exists within the twisted remains of Jerusalem (and elsewhere, although most do not know it yet). Teams that once specialized in titan assassination are now routinely assigned to accompany scientific missions into Jerusalem. Now they send deep cover agents and surveillance teams in their stead.

Project Titan has moved most of its research team to new facilities in Tel Aviv, where they are closer to the breach and can analyze it more carefully. Scientists are sent into Jerusalem weekly to gather evidence on the breach, the Otherworld that seems to have merged with our own, and the monsters that now roam the streets. Heavily armed military personnel accompany these research teams to ensure that they come back alive.

Despite the bizarre nature of the happenings in Jerusalem and the terror and chaos that has been unleashed upon the region, Project Titan holds to its belief that everything can be explained in a scientific manner. The Project's leaders use titans and their abilities to aid in its research and missions, but they still do not believe that anything is beyond the bounds of science. Perhaps this is one reason they have not made the connection between their own experiments, the Promethean Order's ritual at Temple Mount, and the explosion that rocked Jerusalem and rendered it a city caught between two worlds. To this day, they believe that

their research will find a way to seal the breach and banish the monsters back to the Otherworld forever.

### Organization

Project Titan's headquarters are found in a secret base beneath the San Francisco Bay. They were built to be close to the research facilities at Stanford University, where much of their early research was done. They have auxiliary facilities in Washington, D.C.; New York City; and Los Alamos, New Mexico. Each of these auxiliary facilities has a specific purpose within the Project, and until recently one of the three directors of the project resided at each facility. With the disaster in Jerusalem, however, this has changed.

Worldwide, the project has operatives in almost every major city in the world - wherever there is a genetic research program or a significant population of known titans, Project Titan is there. Its four largest overseas facilities are located in London, Paris, Rome, and Tokyo, the sites of the original satellite facilities opened in the early 90s. The project is divided into three basic divisions, Administration, Operations, and Research and Development, each of which is under the authority of its own director.

### Administration

Administration is the most mundane of the three divisions, but easily the most important, since it is responsible for keeping the Project funded and alive under the auspices of Department-7. It encompasses the business side of the Project (accounting, acquisitions, etc.) as well as being its link to Department-7. Administration is responsible for the Project's budgets, staffing, and political affairs. The last of these has been especially important since the Jerusalem event, as Project agents were able to quickly and effectively negotiate with the Mossad

for access to the site, despite all evidence pointing to them having caused the blast in the first place.

### Operations

Operations includes all covert actions, intelligence, counterintelligence, and recruitment initiatives. If it happens outside the labs and offices of the Project, Operations is in charge. This is the military wing of the Project, and utilizes nearly all of the titans that work within it. This division has seen its primary mission change over the past few months, from one of recruitment and assassination to one of damage control and monster hunting. It routinely provides protection for the research missions that go into Jerusalem, and its titans are among the most well-trained in the world for dealing with the otherworldly threats that emerge from that site.

### Research

Research and Development was primarily involved in unlocking the secrets of the Godgene until the disaster. Now they spend their time analyzing the event, Jerusalem, and everything that comes out of the city. Their teams go into the chaos of the merged city looking for creatures, artifacts from the Otherworld, and anything else they can find that might hold a clue as to the nature of the breach. Research into the Godgene has not ceased completely, however - now more than ever, the Project believes it is imperative to understand and utilize the Godgene for the sake of the world.

### Project Titan's Directors

Project Titan has three Directors, two of whom have been with the Project since its inception. They convene only to vote on important matters and new initiatives within the Project, spending most of their time overseeing projects currently in various stages of completion.



**Alan Korelli, Director of Administration (Smart 5/Charismatic 2/Field Scientist 8/Crusading Advocate 2):** Alan Korelli was a medical specialist for the U.S. army during the Korean War, who put his extensive knowledge to use for Department-7 after the conflict. When Project Titan was first discussed, Korelli encouraged its creation as a research tool that could end future wars and place the United States in a position to destroy their most powerful enemy at that time, the Soviet Union. When the Project was convened, he dove wholeheartedly into the work of linking genetic mutations to the manifestation of titan abilities. Even when genetic science became the avenue of choice for his research, Korelli still maintained that nuclear energy was in part to blame. Because of his insularity in the Project and his interest in its science, he never truly abandoned his Cold War attitude. When a "nuclear accident" merged Earth with the Otherworld, he gloated that he had been right all along. In reality, the other two Directors cannot wait for Korelli to die so that they can get a more forward-thinking person into the position. Korelli deals with Department-7 on issues of personnel, access to equipment, information, and manpower, and manages the Project's annual budget. He lives near the Project's headquarters in northern California, where he regularly makes inspections of the facilities. Ever since the directorship was split into three parts in 1990, he has attempted to involve himself in more and more of the everyday affairs of the project. Most in the project see him as a senile Cold War-hawk who cannot handle the world as it exists today. Although they respect him a great deal for his vision in leading the initial charge of the Project, most grow weary of him and look forward to his eventual removal.

**Simon LaSavain, Director of Operations (Tough 2/Dedicated 4/Charismatic 3/Soldier 2 Crimson Lord):** Simon LaSavain came on board in the mid-1980s as a means to escape being jailed for his role in the Iran-Contra affair. He was ruthlessly patriotic and would do anything to further the interests of the United States. A titan of the Crimson Lord Legacy with full knowledge and control of his powers, LaSavain used every ability he had in service to his country. When he joined Project Titan, he requested to be put in with one of the teams in charge of locating and recruiting titans around the world. He liked the idea that foreign titans were given the opportunity to join in service to the U.S. - but he liked it even more when they refused. Although the fervor with which he carried out some of his duties was not unnoticed, his efficiency and dedication could not be ignored. After only three years of service to the Project, LaSavain was asked to be one of its directors. It is widely whispered that this was to keep him out of active duty more than it was to find an able director.

Despite that, LaSavain has shown an amazing ability to change with the times. In the months since the explosion, LaSavain has not only embraced the new recruitment policy, he has helped shape it. He single-handedly created the new division to handle surveillance operations on foreign titans, and even relocated to Tel Aviv so that he could personally oversee the protection of

the research division. LaSavain is quickly becoming a favored leader within the Project, and Department-7 has even considered pulling him out of the Project and putting him in charge of its operations in these unusual times.

**Dr. Albert Johnson, Director of Research and Development (Smart 7/Techie 8):** Albert Johnson was also around at the beginning of Project Titan, although he was assigned to the project as a Research and Technical Assistant. A brilliant new graduate of MIT, Johnson was one of the brightest computer minds in the country. He was called upon to help install state-of-the-art computer systems for the Project, and then to stay around to provide technical support to its scientists. He proved much more than a computer whiz, however, as he helped make several important breakthroughs that led to the Project being able to more ably analyze and modify DNA, thus allowing them to first isolate and analyze the Godgene. When the decision was made to expand the directorship of the project into three distinct chairs, Albert was a natural choice to direct the R&D division. Albert has recently moved with the research teams to Tel Aviv, where he coordinates their efforts and continually works to refine and invent technologies that will help them study the breach. He is the main source of the Project's reliance on science and technology, rather than magic, to solve its problems. He does not believe any of the "spiritual mumbo-jumbo" that he hears from people outside the Project, preferring instead to rely on empirical data to guide his judgment. Albert's sheer brilliance when it comes to technology, even though he began in the field over 30 years ago, demands respect from those he works with. Although sometimes his personal skills suffer for his obsession with technology, those around him enjoy working with him and often find themselves in awe over his genius at innovation.

#### Characters in Project Titan

It is likely that all the PCs belong to the Operations division, although they might have several different roles under the auspices of that division. They could be part of a surveillance team whose mission is to locate titans within an area, or to track the movements of a titan who has refused to work for Department-7. They could be tasked with bringing down a rogue titan who is using his powers to aid an enemy of the United States. Alternatively, there is much adventure to be had guarding one of the many research teams that routinely make forays into the chaotic world of the merged cities. All of these provide potential adventures for Project Titan characters.

#### Current Plotlines

The major current plotline involving Project Titan is its role in the Jerusalem disaster and in studying it after the fact. The group has relocated its research facilities to Tel Aviv and sends regular "rad squads" into the merged city to collect samples for analysis. None of the Project's other pursuits has been suspended due to this activity, but many of them have changed. Here are several possible plot hooks involving Project Titan.

#### Dark Rites

One of the rad squads has found the remnants of a magic circle

near the Temple Mount. The arcane writing is of recent origin. The characters are first sent to investigate the ritual site and then to follow any leads this may give them and determine the nature of the ritual and those involved.

#### **Inheritance of Terror**

A North Korean titan has been tracked to Mexico and it is feared that he may have entered the United States through its porous southern border. The characters are a titan squad trained to track down and deal with rogue titans, and this is their first mission.

#### **Gremlins in the Works**

Someone is corrupting the Project's research at its Tel Aviv base, and Research cannot figure out where the sabotage is coming from. Operations determines it is time to step in and begins an all out hunt for the source of the bad data. Could a daemon have infiltrated Project Titan?

#### **Cat Out of the Bag**

A missing Italian research assistant who most recently worked at the Italian Genome Project has turned up in Colombia and is offering evidence of the Godgene up to the highest bidder. An Operations team must suit up, find the missing assistant, and obtain all copies of the research before the leak reaches critical levels.

#### **Enemies**

Project Titan has pissed in everyone's backyard, as it were, to the extent that it would be easier to list who was not among the Project's enemy. There are, however, a number of individuals and groups who particularly hate or work against the secret organization.

**Fugo a Watu:** The breeding cult and Project Titan have been butting heads for nearly three decades. Neither knows much of the other, except that they are both interested in titans. The fact that neither institution has learned much about the other is a credit to both organizations' internal security. But the recent events in Jerusalem coupled with a successful project mole being placed into the cult may change the relationship between the two Allegiances forever.

**TransGenX:** This international biotech conglomerate is a constant thorn in the side of Project Titan. No other company has come closer to cracking the secret of the Godgene than TransGenX. The company is run by Sandra Goldthwaite, a dynamic and ruthless woman who has taken her company from its small start as a biotech lab in Portland, Oregon, to a worldwide multinational corporation.

**The Daemonhost:** These newly released daemons are extremely interested in limiting Project Titan's success when it comes to the merged city, the breach, and themselves. Therefore, they have targeted the Project and its operatives as a high priority in their quest to dominate Earth. As far as they have determined so far, all titans are working under the auspices of a single group, Project Titan, so their mission seems simple - destroy the only group that can possibly hold them back. Of course this is not the case, and so far the Daemonhost has been beset by too many enemies to make

a good attempt at destroying the Project for good.

**Department-7:** It is sad to say, but the very department that funds Project Titan has become unhappy with the way things have been run. Department-7 is also working on a way to separate itself from the Project without having it go rogue and possibly harming the U.S.'s world relations. So far, the two groups remain inextricably linked, but the agency has two highly trained agents attempting to sever the ties between them. One possible avenue is to reveal the Project's "clandestine" assassination policy whereby they eliminated non-cooperative titans. However, the Department is not comfortable with this tactic - yet. The longer the breach is open, however, and the longer monsters are allowed to run free in the world, the more ground the agency has to release this kind of information without hurting its own reputation too badly.

#### **Genre**

Project Titan encompasses everything from classic espionage to monster horror. Since its teams deal with the scientific and the physical problems of both the Godgene and the Otherworld, there exists a variety of ways to structure such a campaign. Perhaps the characters are a covert operations unit designed to infiltrate any building or organization and steal information. They may be titan-hunters, whose job it is to follow up on leads as to the whereabouts of unknown titans, or they may be tasked to kill titans who use their powers to the detriment of the United States. The group could be assigned to guard a rad squad during its forays into the merged city, where monsters and other dangers pose a constant threat.

No matter the mission, a veil of secrecy obscures everything they do. While the Project has become visible in the months since the explosion, it is still a secret organization that goes by many names other than its own. Its agents are highly trained in stealth and espionage as well as both lethal and nonlethal combat. There is also a feeling of urgency due to the failed experiment and subsequent chaos. If the Project does not find a solution, and quick, Department-7 could cut its ties to the group, which would leave it vulnerable to any number of enemies it has made.

#### **Inspirations**

The following all serve as inspiration material for a Project Titan campaign.

##### **Film:**

Le Femme Nikita; Predator; Mission: Impossible (1 & 2); Alien; The Fugitive; Resident Evil.

##### **TV:**

Alias; 24; Dark Angel; The Pretender; X-Files.

## Promethean Order

*Understand that the wheels of fate have not stopped turning, only that our hands are no longer spinning them.*

*- Zao Chin, reflecting on the Order's failure to contain the Daemonhost.*

The Promethean Order is an ancient cult of mystics and sages whose original intent was to shepherd the titans until they were once again needed to fulfill an ancient prophecy - to prevent the Daemonhost from escaping their abyssal prison and wreaking havoc in the world. Members of the Order have been involved in science and religion since their founding, and have slowly steered things toward acceptance and understanding of the titans. Without meaning to, they helped to cause the breach in the Daemonhost's prison when the ritual that was to keep the gate closed backfired. Now the Order is reeling at its failure to uphold the prophecy, and while its seers attempt to divine what went wrong, it bends its knowledge toward the destruction of the Daemonhost.

### History

The Promethean Order has its origins in the area of ancient Greece, long before the time of the rise of the great philosophers. At this time, the existence of titans was well known, although their origins were shrouded in mystery and magic. The



great heroes of the world were considered children of the gods, who were come down to destroy the monsters that roamed the Earth. These were the progenitors, the fathers of the titans. Soon, however, the progenitors were no longer needed. The island city of Atlantis (really the capital of the Ascendancy) had been destroyed. The Host were now reeling, and most were trapped in an abyssal prison from which they could not escape. The portals to the Otherworld were sealed, and the world was free from the monsters it had known. All that was left to do was to safeguard their legacy within the humans they walked among, so that, should the need ever arise again, the titans could be awakened from their slumber. The progenitors rested. Around the time of Plato and other great mystic philosophers of Ancient Greece, so the Order's histories have it, a call came down from the Oracle at Delphi, who, unknown to the people of Greece, was herself one of the few remaining Children of Might. The Oracle went silent for days and would speak to no one but the great mystics of the land. When they assembled within her temple, she spoke to them of a grave vision that would affect the destiny of the human race. She told them of the progenitors and the battles they had waged against the Daemonhost, and she outlined the reasons for their withdrawal from the world. At last she spoke of her prophecy. It showed the Daemonhost straining at their bonds, about to break free of their prison until a great many titans reinforced the prison's walls and the horde were pushed back.

The philosophers went apart and spoke of these things for days, returning to her when they were satisfied with their deliberations. They believed that the titans held the future of humanity in their hands, but that, if they were allowed to flourish among "normals," humans might not live to see the days of these grim events. The Oracle concurred, and thus was the secret of the titan's existence conferred to a cabal of wise men who called themselves the Promethean Order, after the god who had brought fire to man.

### Forgetting the Titans

At first, it is said, the masters of the Order spent time learning the secrets of the titans, and to them was given the knowledge of how to propagate even more. They mingled with the denizens of North Africa and the Middle East in order to keep the gene pool as diverse as possible, although they did not understand the science of what they must do. While it was inevitable that other titans would be born, the Promethean Order became the sole guardian of the knowledge that could save the world.

Others, such as the great philosophers, sought to help people forget about the titans by forming theories about the nature of man, the gods, and nature. Plato sought to hide the titans' existence in his theories of the universal and the particular, while others focused on man's inner development and his relationship to the universe. In 204 BC, a member of the Order (and possibly its last Stoic philosopher) saw in Judaism a way to hide the legacy of the titans for as long as was necessary. (The Stoics left the Promethean Order, unconvinced of its methods and

conclusion, a split that mirrors the present-day agitation between the science of Project Titan and the mysticism of the Promethean Order.)

These agents of the titans thus encouraged the spread of the monotheistic ideology, even to the point of casting titans as prophets of its virtues. Even as they spread a deeper understanding of the natural world that did not include the traditional gods, monotheism took root in the Roman Empire, whose vast territory became fertile ground for the spread of a new type of religion. The believed, rightly, that the affirmation of a single creator would help the world forget what had taken place.

Christianity in the West, Zoroastrianism and later Islam in the Middle East were exactly the kinds of belief necessary to keep the people of the world from discovering the truth about the titans and their legacies. The road to such secrecy was not without its bumps, however - perhaps most notably the 3rd-century philosopher Plotinus, whose hypostases included God, Titan, Intelligence, and Soul. The Promethean Order scrambled to blow philosophical holes in Plotinus' theories so that they would not take root, and indeed they managed to destroy much of his writings on the Titan hypostasis, so that today we only read about the other three. Still, his theories were as close to the truth as anyone had ever gotten, and the Promethean Order always worried that more like him would arise.

#### **Notable Figures Throughout the Ages**

**Leonardo da Vinci (1452-1519):** The true Renaissance Man - painter, sculptor, author, architect, technological prophet - da Vinci embodied a new humanist branch of the Promethean Order, one dedicated to uplifting man's supremacy until at last he would be ready to accept the responsibility of his genetic destiny. Although he was the most high-profile member of this new philosophy, many more existed.

**Gregor Mendel (1822-1884):** Gregor Mendel was a dedicated member of the Order who determined that the time was right to unleash the first information that would help prepare the world for the titan's legacy. He took his experiments to the Order's council, but they told him to be patient while they debated what to do. His research into the inheritance of traits in bean plants and peas would open the door for more dedicated science into the inheritance of traits in humans, and eventually it would lead to the discovery of the titans. Frustrated by what he saw as a never-ending debate, he revealed his research to the world. In one respect, the Order had been correct, for science had not advanced to the point where it could handle Mendel's claims, but over the next two decades his work helped open avenues that changed the course of biological science forever.

**Adolf Hitler (1889-1945):** A devout member of the Order in his younger days as an artist in Vienna, Hitler soon became disillusioned by the council's conservative philosophies. He believed that only through breeding a pure race of titans could the gene be controlled. He split from the group to form his own mystic society, which eventually took political form in Nazism. Hitler never abandoned his mystic roots, however, and he had teams

of archaeologists scouring the world for artifacts that would help awaken the Godgene within him and his pure race.

**James Watson (1928-):** The most important public member of the Order in the last five decades, James Dewey Watson brought the secret of DNA's composition to the world. Since then dubbed Neo-Prometheus by the Order, Watson, through his "discovery," allowed for the identification of the Godgene just as the time of the prophecy was arising. Unfortunately, in the eyes of the Order, the discovery has not yet been made. They have trouble understanding why the various genome projects around the world could not decipher this all-important clue, and consider it a possible reason that the prophecy failed.

#### **Titans Reborn**

The 20th century has seen a boom in incidences of titan manifestation, especially in the baby-boomer generation and beyond. This is thanks to the ease of travel and relocation that mass transportation and the global economy have engendered. While the Promethean Order had been arguing over the release of scientific and technical information on the genetic level, they had failed to see the role that such technological innovations would play in the rebirth of the titans. It was an oversight that cost them valuable preparation time, and one that perhaps contributed to the failure of their destiny.

With the growth of titan activity in the world throughout the last two centuries, it was inevitable that an interest in mysticism and monsters would rise once again in the West, where it had lain dormant for hundreds of years. Sightings of monsters such as Bigfoot and the Loch Ness monster were one manifestation of this, as was an increased interest in alternate spiritual views such as those offered by the Theosophists and the Golden Dawn. Titans played heroic roles on all sides of almost every war of the 20th century, and the Order even thought that an uncontrolled nuclear explosion might cause the seal to be breached to the Otherworld. Thus they began organization anti-nuclear groups almost as soon as the technology was revealed to the world. The irony of this hypothesis is still unknown to the Order.

#### **Preparing for Destiny**

It became clear to the Order about midway through the 20th century that the prophecy was speeding toward a conclusion, and that nothing its membership did now could hope to contain or prolong it. They immediately began building programs to find and recruit titans from all the legacies, so they could find their chosen representatives. They used magic rituals to locate titans across the world, explaining the history of the Order and the titan's legacy that was woven into their genetic code.

Many of the titans simply laughed off the Order's revelations, chalking them up to the ravings of a cult that dealt with magic and mysticism. Some reacted violently, so that the Order began sending combat-trained Storm Crows along with every mission. Sometimes the titans had disappeared by the time the Order arrived to explain their exciting destiny to them, and to this day the Order debates what happened to these missing individuals. A large-scale effort was made by the mystics of the Order to

locate the breach that would be the location of the battle. They knew of breaches all across the world, but could not discern from which breach the Daemonhost would launch their attack. After seeking ancient scrolls in a cave underneath the Mediterranean coastline, however, the Order finally determined that Jerusalem was to be the site of the battle.

The Order recently withdrew to its hidden retreats in the mountains of Africa and the Australian outback. They took with them several dozen titans who had proven to be the best and brightest of their generation. Storm Crows, Hidden Suns, and Crimson Lords went to Africa, while Wild Bloods and Void Phoenixes went to Australia.

Here they learned how to better use their powers, trained in physical skills such as acrobatics and combat, and meditated upon the task that was to come. The Order's council oversaw these preparations, and as the time neared they selected the ten most outstanding prospects and put them through trial that only one of each legacy would survive.

These five became the Chosen, and they went to Jerusalem on that February morning to fulfill their destiny - but prophecies are not certainties, and something threw off the course of destiny. The Order failed.

### Goals and Methods

The Promethean Order has always known that it was necessary to keep the ancient knowledge alive long enough to prevent the Daemonhost from escaping their prison. The Order would shepherd humanity through the centuries while they secretly awaited the final confrontation, a battle they were confident they would win. The disaster in Jerusalem has changed all that. Far from caring about secrecy now, with magic and monsters let loose on the world in unprecedented numbers, the Order now tends to operate virtually in the open, attempting to use the ancient ways to solve what they see as an ancient problem. Their primary goals now include recruiting titans to their cause and training them in the mystic ways of the Order, forcing the Daemonhost back into their prison and sealing the breach, and discovering why they failed to fulfill the prophecy in the first place.

During its first thousand years, the Promethean Order became quite efficient at recruiting like-minded individuals who would not compromise its place in the world. Perhaps it is the cult-like nature of the group that attracted such loyal and intelligent followers, or perhaps it was the promise of something bigger. Titans

and humans alike were drawn to the Promethean Order for its hidden secrets, its call to power, and its role in saving humanity. Now, after the Rip, the Order is recruiting titans in a desperate attempt to seal their error before the world comes to understand its failure. Some titans are drawn to the Order out of a sense of duty to the world, while others sought other things. The Order is not opposed to using titans who have run afoul of the law, and promise them asylum and a new life in exchange for using their powers to aid in its quests. Others seek it because they have always felt a spiritual connection to the world but were unable to tap into it. The Order teaches them how to use their abilities and become one with their true nature. In return, these individuals become loyal members of the Order, who understand better than any their legacy and its ramifications.

The problem of the Daemonhost is a huge one, and one that, truth to tell, even the progenitors found daunting. The Order knows that in order to battle this formidable opponent, which now has the advantages of technology in addition to its natural powers, it will have to call together every resource possible. Recruiting as many titans as possible is only one element to this fight. They have also begun scouring the globe for artifacts, both new and ancient, that can help them fight this terrible horde. This new mission takes them into forgotten temples, long-buried caves, and even into the arctic wastelands, where it is said the

Daemonhost buried weapons for use if they ever escaped their prison.

The Order also strives to contain creatures of the Daemonhost that have already broken free. Its members are stationed around the globe in an effort to hunt the Daemonhost, especially where large numbers are assembling together, and track down information about those who have gone into hiding. This is incredibly difficult, since many of them can take on the form of humans, or even inhabit the body of a living being. Members of the Order are not nearly as organized as a Project Titan operations group, but they can work together effectively. A few of their agents are rogue, however, and work alone even under the most difficult of circumstances. The Order is in no position to question the methods of those who work to their benefit.

Still, the elder members of the council attempt to keep track of all teams working on behalf of the Order so that they can contact them if need be. They include a powerful telepath who can communicate instantly with any member of the Order. Members are forced to leave a personal belonging at the group's headquarters at all times to make these communications easier.



When a major cell of monsters is identified, the Order calls all nearby agents into action in order to contain things as quickly as possible. As far as the world knows, the titans are doing this of their own accord, but some are starting to suspect a unified effort.

Discovering what lies behind the Order's failure in Jerusalem has proven to be as daunting a task as any the Order faces. There is a great library beneath the Order's hidden temple in Australia, and its greatest spiritual and analytical minds have spent the past few months poring over the texts and parchments found within. They are seeking a clue as to where the Order went wrong, whether it was the product of human weakness or the prophecy itself was flawed. So far, nothing has come of this research, but those in the library are constantly asking for aid from the council in the form of expeditions to retrieve lost tomes, artifacts, and other esoteric items that could hold the clue they have been missing.

### Organization

The Promethean Order does not have any public headquarters, as they prefer to keep their activities as far from the world's eyes as possible. They do have meeting places all over the world, which they call temples, but which can be as simple as a member's apartment or a secret room in the back of a restaurant. The one thing all such temples have in common is the presence of special runes that allow the council to more easily scry the location, and others that allow members to communicate between temples as well as with the council itself.

The two largest temples are found in Australia and Africa. The Australian temple, Dar Akan, is located beneath the Uluru monolith, a great rock that stands free in the arid outback. Uluru is known for its unusual color changes throughout the day, going from a deep blue to bright red depending on the position of the sun. It is a sacred place to the Aborigines, who have a great deal of mythology about the place. Among their beliefs are that it is hollow beneath the ground and that it is the source of "dream energy." Much of this may be due to early contact with titans of the Promethean Order, perhaps even the progenitor who once lived miles beneath the rock and had powerful telepathic abilities.

Within this temple lies the grand Library of Hermes, the world's foremost collection of esoterica, mystical studies, and magical knowledge. The library includes artifacts, tomes, and preserved tissue samples relating to nearly every manifestation of magic in the world's history. There are religious texts, including some unaltered originals, as well as copies of thousands upon thousands of prophecies that have been made over the last three thousand years. The Order's most respected sages reside in this temple, making use of the library to try to figure out what went wrong with the prophecy. Members with a specific interest are also allowed to use the library after defending their research before a review board of these sages. The information contained within would surely convince the world that magic was as real as science, but it could also be imminently destructive in

the hands of those not wise enough to wield it. Thus, the Order keeps it hidden away, hoping one day to find the answers they so desperately seek.

The African temple, Rel Akan, is also located underground, this in a series of caverns that lay beneath the glacier-capped peak of Mount Kilimanjaro in Tanzania. Here the Order monitors its members throughout the world in a series of scrying chambers that allow them to see not only their temples but also their members. They do not normally scry individual members without first notifying them that they are doing so, but temples are always open to being viewed whenever a member of the council deems it necessary. It is here also that the council meets to deliberate. They have a large chamber painted with runes, ancient symbols, and hieroglyphic representations of the great battles of the progenitors. Eight columns span the chamber from floor to ceiling, each holding one of the eight sacred incantations of the Order.

Both of these large temples are protected by powerful abjurations that prevent them from being detected either magically or technologically. Even the most sensitive geographic modeling satellites have not been able to break through these protections to see the caverns beneath the mountain. In addition, the council uses its familiars to keep watch outside the mountain for anyone who could possibly be looking for their hidden temple. Magical wards protect the physical entrances to the temple, while its members use hidden portals to travel between them as well as to enter and to leave.

### The Council

The Promethean Order is governed by a council of five, one councilor from each legacy, who have all lived far beyond their normal human lifespans. They meet regularly to discuss the matters going on in the world and to deliver reports on their operatives around the world. Most of the council, being superannuated and venerable, remain at all times in special chambers known as esquat, of which there are only two in the world - one in each of the temples in Australia and Africa.

**Abasi Husani (Charismatic 4/Dedicated 1/Medic 6/Initiate 6 Hidden Sun):** Abasi Husani is the council's true leader, and it is said that he has not left the temple under the mountain for well over two hundred years - and that he was already as old as the hills when he first came there. His legacy, that of the Hidden Sun, has given him powers of healing beyond any other now living. He believes fully in the Order's role in bringing down the Daemonhost, so much so that he will not admit that they failed to do so. Instead, he argues, that the Order's true test has been laid before them, and they must now prove themselves worthy in the eyes of the progenitors by defeating the Daemonhost and driving them from the world once more. He posits that the progenitors knew the Daemonhost would escape at a time when humanity was ready to learn the secrets of the Otherworld, including that of magic. Now he focuses his efforts on the spread of information on the monsters and magic that have been let loose upon the world, monitoring the world's media

outlets, academic journals, and other sources of information. Abasi works hard to feed information and to correct falsehoods without giving away his position or that of the Promethean Order. Some on the council believe that his quest to aid humanity has made him lose sight of their primary duty, but Abasi continues to believe that his is the true goal that the progenitors laid out before them.

Husani was a plainsman in central Africa, part of a larger tribe that had flourished despite (or perhaps because of) the vibrant slave trade on the eastern shores. He held a good position within the tribe, but his jovial attitude and dedication to the tribe won him as many enemies as friends. One of these enemies accused him of a terrible crime within the tribe, one that was corroborated by the man's allies. Husani was forced to go on a spirit quest to prove his innocence, so he was let loose on the plains with a spear and a shield and tasked to bring back the mane of a lion. While on the hunt he was gravely wounded and thought he would die. He crawled to a river, where he tried to drink but blacked out from the effort. When he awoke, his wounds had been healed. He did not know how this had happened, but was grateful to the gods or spirits who must have aided him. A member of the Order who could trace birthright manifestation had detected a surge of power greater than any she had seen before. Soon she tracked Husani to the plains and spoke to him, encouraging him to explore his remarkable gifts.

**Ursula Kane (Smart 7/Dedicated 3/Initiate 8 Crimson Lord):** Ursula Kane is the council's Crimson Lord representative, and her attitude toward the rest of the council is representative of that found throughout her Legacy. She chafes at being under the leadership of Abasi Husani, but respects the wishes of the rest of the council. She is a powerful sorceress whose skills lie primarily in divination and enchantment, and it is she who has created the runes of scrying that allow the temples to remain connected even when they are separated by thousands of miles. Ursula was the daughter of a Protestant leader in the colonial city of Boston in the middle of the 17th century. The family name her father gave her was Christian, but she would pervert it to Kane after the town in which she had grown up persecuted her. It began with her interest in science and anatomy, neither of which were considered to be godly pursuits for a female or a child. She would sneak off into the woods where she could kill small animals and examine their entrails. She enjoyed the flashes and waking dreams she would get when she manipulated them. Soon she was caught at her games, however, and the stories she told of seeing the godly people in her life do quite ungodly things did not earn her a reprieve - they earned her condemnation. Even her own father turned against her, and she was forced to flee into the wilderness. Being only a child of twelve years, she knew that she would not survive long if she did not seek help. Using her powers of vision to guide her, she found a group of outcasts living in the White Mountains that took her in. These turned out to be titans who understood her powers and helped her learn to control and develop them. Eventually she

and another of these outcasts, Achak Tokala, would become members of the council of the Promethean Order.

**Jacques Lorie (Smart 5/Dedicated 3/Eldritch Monk 6 Wild Blood):** The council's Wild Blood is truly a paragon of his legacy but surprises anyone who expects him to be a sharp-eyed beast. He was in his youth a hunter of amazing skill and talent and is the one representative most troubled by his prolonged stay within an esquat. But he has always been a scoundrel at heart and plays tricks on the other council members regularly to keep himself amused, a fact that has not changed since the disaster in Jerusalem. In fact, his jests have become even more elaborate in the wake of the prophecy's failure, as he tries to maintain the morale and focus of the council during its dark days. He, like Ursula, can sense the fading grasp on life that many of the council are feeling. Despite his light-hearted attitude toward the other members of the council, Jacques is as dedicated as any to the task of defeating the Daemonhost and repairing the damage the Order has caused the world. He believes it is the Order's responsibility to shepherd the world into a new age, where magic and technology are equal parts of everyday life. Lorie's powers are strongest in his legacy's shapechanging birthrights.

Jacques Lorie's journey toward the Promethean Order began nearly two centuries ago in Lorraine in his native France. He was a roguish fellow who made his living deceiving noblemen and bilking them for cash. Once he had completed one job, he always made his way to another town so as not to go to the same well one too many times and get caught. One such town, though, Annecy in southern France, near the Swiss and Italian borders, held little welcome for the traveling scoundrel. The town had suffered a recent spate of wolf attacks, and the locals were convinced that a "loup-garou," a werewolf, was responsible. When he arrived in the town, the folk there immediately regarded him with suspicion. Disregarding their sullen attitude and their sideways glances, he took a room at the local inn. As usual, he was out during the night seeking suitable targets for his wiles. When the innkeeper knocked on his door and found the room empty, he immediately called for assistance from the villagers. When Jacques returned, several of the townsmen ambushed him and cut him down. They threw him in a ditch outside of town and left him there to rot. A member of the Promethean Order who had been tracking Lorie found him there, still barely alive, and nursed him back to health while explaining his place in the world. Lorie gave up his rambling ways to study with the Order, and eventually became the council's Wild Blood representative.

**Sashenka Muskovski (Charismatic 3/Dedicated 3/Mystic 8/Crusading Advocate 3 Void Phoenix):** Sashenka was chosen for the council because of her ability to face hardship without complaint, and also because she is one of the few Void Phoenixes who has not been driven at least partially insane by the physical changes brought about by her Legacy. So pure and innocent is she, the other Phoenixes report, that not even her

horrible transformations and the derision and ridicule of her townsfolk were enough to break her spirit. To this day, her eyes are those of the slight, friendly Russian girl who found her way to the Order so many years ago. She uses her powerful protective birthrights to serve the council, and her divine abilities to block the existence of both Dar Akan and Rel Akan from the world has proven invaluable as technology has caught up to - and even surpassed in some cases - the power of magic and birthrights.

Sashenka grew up in a small Russian town at the base of the Caucasus Mountains around the beginning of the last century, during the time of the Communist Revolution. In another era, it may have been possible for her to hide her features as they slowly transformed into something other than human, but, in Russia in 1917, any abnormal behavior was reported as traitorous activity, and her withdrawal was taken as a sign of disloyalty. She was brought into the town square and beaten, then left for the revolutionaries to do with as they pleased. One of her childhood friends took pity on her, however, and loosened her bonds in the middle of the night, encouraging her to flee the fate she would meet in the morning. The young girl blessed her savior and then set out, hoping to find somewhere in the world to fit in. She found such a place with a group of gypsies who were leaving Russia for a new land - their leader also happened to be a member of the Promethean Order. He recognized the young woman's Legacy immediately, and sent her off to study at a nunnery that has long acted as a front for the Order to train female members. There Sashenka learned to see her gift for what it was, and to confront the terrible curse that her legacy had bestowed upon her. Her dedication to the Order and the purity of her motives eventually led to her being chosen as the Void Phoenix representative on the council.

**Achak Tokala (Fast 3/Tough 4/Soldier 7/Infiltrator 6 Storm Crow):** The Storm Crow representative on the council, Achak Tokala, acts as the spiritual advisor for the others. His powers include seeing into the spirit world and speaking to the souls of those long dead. The other members respect him a great deal, although some cannot shake their innate prejudices, seeing him as a savage: he still practices his tribe's ancient ways and has never learned to speak any language but his native Algonquin, so that he must always use an interpreter, his grandson six times over, who stays at his side at all times. Achak is a fox shaman, although his cunning is rarely used to deceive; he prefers enigmatic riddles that guests must decipher. He wears a foxtail necklace at all times, which he uses as the focus for his arcane incantations and rituals.

Tokala was once a member of an Algonquin tribe who resisted the efforts of early American colonists to move into their lands. He was the shaman to a band of warriors who raided the colonists' villages and cut down explorers who trespassed too deeply into the tribe's traditional lands. Soon, however, the colonists began fighting back. Achak and his band were caught one evening by a large party of colonists who began slaughter-

ing them without mercy. When all hope had been lost, Achak fled, and his powers soon led him to others who shared his secret, the titanic heritage in their blood. Achak has never forgiven himself for abandoning his tribesmen, but takes comfort in aiding the Order in its quest to save the world - his new tribe.

### **Characters in the Promethean Order**

Player characters can fit rather easily into the Order's loose structure. The Order is active anywhere there is titanic, magical, or daemonic activity, and its lack of a real command structure gives the PCs freedom to pursue their own ends while keeping the Order apprised of any threats or items of interest. Teams are generally placed under the purview of one of the five on the council, but they rarely interact directly with them, instead reporting to seniors in local temples when they arrive at a new location or have information that is of interest to the Order.

The Order accepts members from all five legacies equally, as well as normal humans who know of titans; the only other prerequisite is a genuine interest in the development of one's skills, talents, birthrights, and the defense of humanity against the Daemonhost. As one of the most prestigious and ancient mystical orders in the world, the Order also has a number of learned and skilled magical practitioners. Potential titan members are approached by a single representative from the Order, preferably as close to the first manifestation of their legacy as possible, and told of the true history of the world. Once they have been initiated into the Order, a process that takes about eight weeks, they are either sent off on their own or joined with others to face greater dangers that the Order has identified.

### **Current Plotlines**

The Promethean Order is primarily concerned with protecting the world from their failure, and to that end they have begun arming their members, titan or otherwise, with an even greater knowledge of the Daemonhost. Their teams are now engaged in a global battle to drive the monsters back into their prison and to return the world from its state of shock and chaos. To this end, there are a few current plotlines within the Promethean Order, as outlined below.

#### **Key to Failure**

One of the Order's Storm Crow seers has heard rumors of information that may be the key to understanding why the Order failed to bring the prophecy to fruition. A team of the Order's titans is dispatched to Tel Aviv to investigate what may have been found there and by whom.

#### **Golden Child**

A titan of great potential power has been detected somewhere in New York City, and a team of investigators is sent to identify the titan so that s/he may be approached by the Order. Of course, the Daemonhost and other organizations are trying to get to the titan first. The titan in question has in fact recently turned down an offer to join Project Titan - and the Project team that hunted him or her down in the first place is not used

to rejection.

#### **Sunken Relics**

The Order has identified an ancient prayer wheel in a sunken Buddhist temple in Tibet. They believe the wheel may be one piece in a relic collection that has encoded messages from one of the progenitors. It may be of use in deciphering the puzzle of the failed prophecy. The sunken temple is now the home to several of the released Daemonhost, however, who have made it into a deadly maze of falling corridors and magical snares.

#### **Daemons Amok**

A group of daemons is tearing its way through the French countryside, and the Order sends a team of titans to stop them before they reach Paris and cause irreparable damage to the city.

#### **Secrets**

•The Order has maintained its focus for over a thousand years, but some of its members have found their faith wavering after the failure in Jerusalem. A small group of titans have been flirting with starting their own order, because in their hubris they believe that they can succeed where the monolithic Promethean Order has failed. They have cautiously approached one member of the council as a possible ally. The other council members have their suspicions, and internal agents have been given missions on all sides of this messy situation.

• Unknown to nearly all members of the current order, the Promethean Order was originally an offshoot of the Fugo a Watu. The ancient breeding cult held many ancient secrets and the few modern members who know of the cult's existence greatly desire what is hidden in their vaults. The cult, on the other hand, is quite aware of the order and the role they have played in bringing the knowledge of Titans to the world. And there are those in the cult who find the order's plots as dan-

gerous revelations that must be kept from spreading.

• In addition, daemons have managed to possess several members of the Order, who are now actively working to sabotage its work. The council has feared this would happen and is starting to suspect it is so. They know that they will have to deal with this problem soon or face an internal collapse as the Order becomes fractious and suspicious of each other to function.

#### **Genre**

The Promethean Order is a secret society whose members all (or nearly all) have powers that separate them from society at large. This evokes a mystical feeling interlaced with themes of acceptance and rejection, self-exploration, and inner conflict over whether or not to help those who do not understand. The characters might be bounty hunter types, living on the edge as they bag their next monstrous prey. They may simply be interested in the spiritual or archaeological side of things, spending their time searching old ruins and remote caves for artifacts that could hold clues to ancient mysteries.

#### **Inspirations**

The following all serve as inspiration material for a campaign centered on the Promethean Order. Although many of the names mentioned on this list come from disparate genres, they all encompass the feel of the Promethean Order.

#### **Film:**

Fallen; Raiders of the Lost Ark; Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade; X-Men; Highlander.

#### **TV:**

Angel; Kung Fu: The Legend Continues; Highlander



# NEW CHARACTER OPTIONS

chapter three



The Dark Inheritance setting sourcebook provides you with new options for building characters and a whole new playable character type, the titan. Characters in Dark Inheritance follow all the rules presented in the d20 Modern Roleplaying Game, and you need this book to create characters and play this game.

### Occupations

Each of the occupations detailed in the d20 Modern

# NEW CHARACTER OPTIONS



Roleplaying Game (see Chapter One: Characters in that book) is available to characters in Dark Inheritance, but also included below are seven new occupations.

### Caregiver

Caregivers include housewives or house-husbands, health-care workers for the elderly or the disabled, and anyone who otherwise spends the majority of his or her time caring for those who are unable to care for themselves.

**Prerequisite:** Age 18+.

**Skills:** Choose three of the following skills as permanent class skills. If a skill you select is already a class skill, you receive a +1 competence bonus on checks using that skill.

Concentration, Craft (visual art), Diplomacy, Knowledge (popular culture), Listen, Sense Motive.

**Wealth Bonus Increase:** +1.

### Child

A child is anyone who has yet to enter his or her teens. Any person who has yet to turn 13 falls under this "occupation."

**Prerequisite:** Age 12 or less.

**Skills:** Choose three of the following skills as permanent class skills. If the skill you select is already a class skill, you receive a +1 competence bonus on checks using that skill.

Balance, Climb, Hide, Move Silently, Search, Sense Motive, Spot, Tumble.

**Bonus Feat:** Select one of the following: Animal Affinity, Dodge, Great Fortitude, Iron Will, or Lightning Reflexes.

**Ability Score Adjustments:** As per Table 1-9: AGE EFFECTS in d20 Modern Roleplaying Game™, Chapter One: Characters, Vital Statistics, Age.

### Cultist

Cultists are those who fanatically follow an extreme religious sect usually guided by an authoritarian, charismatic leader.

**Prerequisite:** 15+.

**Skills:** Choose two of the following skills as permanent class

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skills. If a skill you select is already a class skill, you receive a +1 competence bonus on checks using that skill.

Concentration, Decipher Script, Knowledge (arcane lore, or theology and philosophy), Research.

**Bonus Feat:** Select one of the following: Endurance, Focused, or Personal Firearms Proficiency.

**Wealth Bonus Increase:** +1.

### Gambler

Las Vegas high rollers, Monte Carlo card-sharks, poker aces, Atlantic City slot junkies, and bookies all fall into the scope of this starting occupation.

**Prerequisite:** 18+.

**Skills:** Choose three of the following skills as permanent class skills. If a skill you select is already a class skill, you receive a +1 competence bonus on checks using that skill.

Bluff, Concentration, Gamble, Gather Information, Knowledge (streetwise), Sense Motive, Sleight of Hand, Spot.

**Wealth Bonus Increase:** +2.

### Mystic

Mystics include shamans, tarot card readers, psychics, palmists, and even, sometimes, stage magicians. This occupation reveals a background in mysticism and that which concerns the spirit.

**Prerequisite:** 18+.

**Skills:** Choose two of the following skills as permanent class skills. If a skill you select is already a class skill, you receive a +1 competence bonus on checks using that skill.

Bluff, Concentration, Decipher Script, Knowledge (arcane lore, history, or theology and philosophy), Sense Motive, Sleight of Hand, Spellcraft.

**Bonus Feat:** Select one of the following: Alertness, Attentive, Deceptive, or Focused.

**Wealth Bonus Increase:** +1.

### Streetperson

Streetperson is an "occupation" that applies to the homeless, club kids, and street kids. The street is for anyone who has few employable skills and has no place to call home.

**Prerequisite:** 13+.

**Skills:** Choose three of the following skills as permanent class skills. If a skill you select is already a class skill, you receive a +1 competence bonus on checks using that skill.

Bluff, Gamble, Gather Information, Hide, Knowledge (popular culture or streetwise), Search, Spot, Survival.

### Tribal

Not everyone lives in a prosperous and technologically advanced nation. The Tribal occupation reveals a background outside the modern world that many of us take for granted. Bushmen, Mongolian nomads, Andean shepherds, New Guinea farmers, Polynesian fisherman, and many others might fall

within this occupation.

**Prerequisites:** 13+.

**Skills:** Choose two of the following skills as permanent class skills. If a skill you select is already a class skill, you receive a +1 competence bonus on checks using that skill.

Climb, Handle Animal, Hide, Jump, Listen, Ride, Spot, Survival, Treat Injury.

**Bonus Feat:** Select one of the following: Archaic Weapon Proficiency, Brawl, Guide, or Toughness.

## Skills

All of the skills presented in Chapter Two of the d20 Modern Roleplaying Game™ are available to characters in Dark Inheritance. Below you will find a few rules for new uses of skills presented in the d20 Modern Roleplaying Game™.

### Decipher Script (Int)

**Cryptography:** You can encode data so that only someone with the proper key can decode it. You can also decipher coded data.

You make a Decipher Script check when you encode data. You get a +20 circumstance bonus if you have access to a computer and encryption software. Anyone who has the proper key can decode the data with a successful Decipher Script check (DC 10). If using a computer and the proper software key, the person can automatically decode the data without making a check (and thus need not have any ranks in Decipher Script to do so). If you intercept data encoded by someone else, you can try to break the code without the key by making a Decipher Script check. Your check result must exceed that of the person who encoded the data. If you have access to a computer and codebreaking software, you get a +10 circumstance bonus on the check.

### Knowledge (arcane lore) (Int)

Remnants of the Lost Age: You can use the Knowledge (arcane lore) skill to answer questions about titans, the Daemonhost, and even the lore of the Otherworld or the progenitors.

Question Concerns...	Minimum DC
Titans	20
Daemonhost	25
Otherworld lore	30
Progenitors	35

### Knowledge (streetwise) (Int)

Scrounge: Use this skill to survive in the urban jungle. You are a skilled scavenger of the streets, capable of finding the essentials of life in any city or urban environment, from the urban nightmare of Hong Kong slums to the deadly streets of Los Angeles.

DC	Task
10	Find your way in a city if lost
15	Find drugs, food, or temporary shelter, which gives you a +4 circumstance bonus on Fortitude saves against severe weather while in an urban environment. You may grant the same bonus to one other character for every 1 point by which your check result exceeds 15.
15	Gain a +2 synergy bonus to a Gather Information check to discover information on the street.

A Scrounge check takes 1d4 hours. Basic Scrounge checks occur once each day in a city or whenever a hazard presents itself. You may try to find sustenance or check the safety of a particular building once per day.

You gain a +2 synergy bonus if you have at least 3 ranks in Survival. You may attempt to gain the synergy bonus for a Gather Information check only once per use of the Gather Information skill.

### Repair (Int)

Repairing Sabotage: Fixing a device that has been sabotaged requires an opposed check against the result of the Disable Device check the saboteur made when rigging the device. If you have to improvise the proper parts for the repair, you suffer a -2 circumstance penalty.

Special: If you set up and maintain (or have access to) a proper repair facility, you gain a +2 circumstance bonus on your Repair checks.

## Feats

All of the feats in the d20 Modern Roleplaying Game™ are available to characters in Dark Inheritance. Your GM may allow you to choose feats from other sources as well. The following section presents many new feats also available to characters in Dark Inheritance.

In this section we also present special feats that are specific to only two character types. The first, the legacy feat, is available only to inheritors. These feats either affect the way an inheritor manifests birthrights or bestow actual powers as spell-like or supernatural abilities. Every legacy feat has, at a minimum, a prerequisite that the character be a titan. Whenever your titan character gets a new feat for character level advancement (but not as bonus occupation and class feats), you may choose one of these feats instead.

The second feat is specific to characters that are members of daemon-worshipping cults. These feats enhance the cult rules presented in Chapter Seven: Terrors.

TABLE 3-1: FEATS

Feat	Prerequisite
<b>Benefit</b> Birthright Aid Aid another to manifest birthrights	<i>Titan</i>
Blind Shot Concealment miss chance halved	<i>Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot</i>
Combat Sense Legacy bonus to Defense equal to half your BBB	<i>Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Titan, base birthright bonus +2</i>
Daemonic Boon character level +2 for determining cult level	<i>None</i>
Daemonic Spell Able to cast one additional cult spell per day	<i>Receive spells from a cult</i>
Gunfight Adept +2 on ranged attack on ready action against attacker	<i>Point Blank Shot</i>
Improved Far Shot range penalties halved	<i>Far Shot, Point Blank Shot</i>
Improved Shot on the Run Can move and make a full round attack using firearms	<i>Dexterity 15, Point Blank Shot, Dodge, Mobility, Shot on the Run</i>
Kip-Up Stand as a free action	<i>Defensive Martial Arts or Tumble 4 ranks</i>
Lead Foot You can increase or decrease a vehicles speed more quickly	<i>Drive 4 ranks, Vehicle Expert</i>
Lieutenant You get a cult lieutenant cohort	<i>None</i>
Lightning Footwork Receive a +4 attack bonus against opponent	<i>Combat Reflexes, Improved Combat Martial Arts</i>
Longevity Live 150% normal lifespan	<i>Titan, base birthright bonus +3</i>
Great Longevity Live 250% normal lifespan	<i>Titan, Longevity, base birthright bonus +5</i>
Immortality You suffer no penalties for aging	<i>Great Longevity, Titan, base birthright bonus +8</i>
Mobile Shot +4 dodge bonus against attacks of opportunity cause by making	<i>Dexterity 13, Dodge, Personal Firearms Proficiency</i>



ranged attacks

**Personal Power** *Titan*

Strain penalty on chosen birthright is one less

**Ignore Strain** *Personal Power, Titan*

Gain no strain penalty on chosen birthright when strain check is successful

**Resilient Ability** *Personal Power, Titan, base birthright bonus +2*

Strain penalty reduced -2 for birthrights of chosen ability

**Potent Foci** *Charisma 10, Sorcerous Birthright*

+1 level to focus's base total spell levels

**Potent Lineage** *Titan*

Manifest 1 birthright per day without making strain check

**Prone Fighting** *Combat Martial Arts, Defensive Martial Arts, base attack bonus +2*

No penalties for fighting while prone

**Ranged Disarm** *Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, base attack bonus +10*

May attempt to disarm with a firearm

**Revelation** *Titan, base birthright bonus +2*

Level bonus to Bluff and Intimidate checks against non-titans

**Sense the Daemonic** *Titan or intuition (Dedicated hero talent)*

Use Sense Motive skill to determine daemonic taint

**Sorcerous Birthright** *Charisma 10*

Cast two 0-level spells for free and focus not needed to cast 0-level and 1st-level spells

**Surgical Savant** *Surgery, Treat Injury 11 ranks*

Patients recover quicker from surgery

**Titanic Resistance** *Titan*

+2 bonus to saves against birthrights and Daemonhost abyssal powers

### Birthright Aid

You are able to help another character manifest a birthright.

**Prerequisite:** Titan.

**Benefit:** As a full round action you may use the aid another action, the character gives a +2 circumstance bonus to that ally's Strain check.

**Normal:** Without this feat a character may not help an ally manifest a birthright.

**Special:** Other aid another bonuses, such as the Dedicated

Heroes' Improved Aid Another talent, apply as described

### Blind Shot

You are skilled at making well-placed shots at concealed targets.

**Prerequisites:** Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot.

**Benefit:** If your target has concealment, your miss chance is halved instead. This feat has no effect if the target has total cover, although it is still effective against total concealment.

### Combat Sense

Your reflexes are supernaturally attuned to danger, increasing your ability to defend from attack.

**Prerequisites:** Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Titan, base birthright bonus +2

**Benefit:** You gain a legacy bonus to your Defense equal to one-half your base birthright bonus, round down. Even when you are surprised, flat-footed, or otherwise in a situation in which you would lose your dodge bonus to Defense, you retain this legacy bonus.

**Normal:** When you are surprised, flat-footed, or otherwise denied your dodge bonus to Defense, you do not gain your Dexterity bonus to your Defense.

### Daemonic Boon

You have a daemonic patron who provides power to your cult.

**Benefit:** You may treat your level as if it were 2 higher when determining the maximum level of your cult (see "Cults" in Chapter Seven: Terrors). Thus, a 10th-level character could lead a 12th-level cult if she took this feat once, or a 14th-level cult if she took it twice. This feat may be taken a maximum number of times equal to your Charisma modifier.

**Normal:** The maximum level of a cult is normally limited to the current level of its leader.

### Daemonic Spell

You are able to cast an additional spell per day - for a price.

**Prerequisites:** You must receive spells as a result of your connection to a cult.

**Benefit:** You may cast one additional spell each day, which may be of any level you are normally capable of casting as a result of your connection to your cult. However, casting this bonus spell deals 2 points of temporary Constitution damage to you.

### Great Longevity

You are blessed with an incredibly long lifespan.

**Prerequisite:** Titan, Longevity, base birthright bonus +5.

**Benefit:** You will live to roughly 250% of the lifespan common to people of your nationality and gender (your exact maximum lifespan is decided by the GM). Your age categories are modified by a similar amount (see d20 Modern Roleplaying Game™, Chapter One: Characters, Vital Statistics, "Age"). For instance, a typical human becomes "old" upon reaching 60 years of age -

with this feat, you become old when you turn 150 years of age.

### Gunfight Adept

You know when to keep your head down in a firefight and when to pop up and take a few shots of your own.

**Prerequisites:** Point Blank Shot.

**Benefit:** If you ready an action to shoot back at someone shooting at you, you receive a +2 competence bonus to your attack roll. Note that you receive this bonus only if you use your action to interrupt someone taking a shot at you, and only if you are aware of the target.

### Ignore Strain

You can manifest a birthright and not gain a strain penalty.

**Prerequisites:** Personal Power, Titan.

**Benefit:** When you purchase this feat you choose a single birthright that you also have chosen for the Personal Power feat. When you manifest this birthright, you do not suffer a strain penalty as long as the strain check is successful.

**Normal:** You gain a strain penalty equal to half the birthright's purchase cost when you successfully make a strain check but your total does not exceed the strain DC by more than 5.

### Immortality

You have gained the much sought-after eternal life of the progenitors.

**Prerequisite:** Great Longevity, Titan, base birthright bonus +8.

**Benefit:** Your body stops aging, and you are thus virtually immortal. You no longer suffer penalties to your physical stats for aging, although you still gain the bonuses to mental stats; you do not gain ability points back if you have already lost them to advanced age. You are immune to natural toxins and diseases (but not chemical or magical ones), but may still be injured or killed normally.

### Improved Far Shot

You are skilled at making accurate ranged attacks at great distance.

**Prerequisites:** Far Shot, Point Blank Shot.

**Benefit:** When you use a firearm or archaic ranged weapon (such as a bow), its penalties due to range is halved: thus, each full range increment causes only a cumulative -1 penalty on your ranged attacks.

**Normal:** Each full range increment causes a cumulative -2 penalty on a character's ranged attacks.

### Improved Shot on the Run

You are skilled at making multiple ranged attacks with firearms while on the move.

**Prerequisites:** Dexterity 15, Point Blank Shot, Dodge, Mobility, Shot on the Run.

**Benefit:** As a full attack action, you can make multiple ranged attacks with a firearm (assuming you are normally capable of making multiple ranged attacks) and still move your base

speed. You can make these attacks at any point during your normal movement. For example, if your base speed is 30 feet and you can normally make two ranged attacks, you could move 10 feet and take your first attack, move 5 more feet and take your second attack, and then move your final 15 feet - any combination of moving and firing that totals 30 feet of distance and your usual two ranged attacks.

**Normal:** You cannot move further than 5 feet if you use a full attack action to get more than one attack per round.

**Special:** You get the benefits of this feat only when making ranged attacks with a firearm. You can't use this feat if you are in heavy armor.

You can use the feat whenever you are allowed multiple ranged attacks in a round, such as with a high base attack bonus or the Two-Fisted God of Guns' firestorm class ability.

### Lead Foot

You can accelerate and decelerate much more quickly than most drivers.

**Prerequisites:** Drive 4 ranks, Vehicle Expert.

**Benefit:** When you declare your vehicle speed category for a new round, you can choose to go up to two categories faster or slower than the vehicle's speed in the previous round.

**Normal:** The driver can choose to go one category faster or slower than the speed the vehicle was traveling the previous round, or else the driver must perform either a dash or a hard brake stunt.

### Lieutenant

You have a fanatical lieutenant who assists you in the day-to-day running of your cult.

**Benefit:** Whenever you take this feat, you may elevate one cultist to the position of lieutenant. This allows you to increase the number of cultists under your control by one-half the level of your new lieutenant. Note that this does not make your lieutenant trustworthy; it simply allows you to instill the members of your cult with enough confidence to obey his orders.

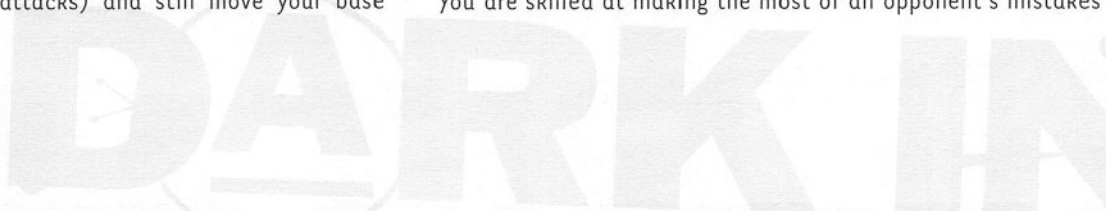
The GM should create an ordinary character of a level equal to 1/2 your level + your Charisma modifier to act as your lieutenant (but never more than your level -3). You do not have complete control of this character, although he will generally do as you ask or command. If your lieutenant should die or otherwise be removed or incapacitated, you can replace him with another lieutenant from among your cult members in 1 month.

**Normal:** You cannot have more members in a cult you lead than your current level.

**Special:** You can select this feat more than once. Each time you take this feat, you gain another lieutenant. You may never have more lieutenants than a number equal to your Charisma modifier.

### Lightning Footwork

You are skilled at making the most of an opponent's mistakes



during unarmed combat attacks.

**Prerequisites:** Combat Reflexes, Improved Combat Martial Arts

**Benefit:** If an opponent misses you in melee combat and your next action is a full-round attack action against that target, you receive a +4 circumstance bonus to your unarmed attack and damage rolls made against that attacker for one round.

### Longevity

You are blessed with a long lifespan.

**Prerequisite:** Titan, base birthright bonus +3.

**Benefit:** You will live to be roughly 50% older than is usual among people of your nationality and gender (your exact maximum lifespan is decided by the GM). Your age categories are modified by a similar amount (see d20 Modern Roleplaying Game™, Chapter One: Characters, Vital Statistics, "Age"). For instance, a typical human becomes "old" upon reaching 60 years of age - with this feat, you become old when you turn 90 years of age.

### Kip-Up

You can stand or flip up quickly from a prone position.

**Prerequisite:** Defensive Martial Arts or Tumble 4 ranks.

**Benefit:** You can move to a standing position from prone as a free action.

**Normal:** Standing up from prone is a move action.

### Mobile Shot

You are adept at dodging attacks while firing a ranged weapon.

**Prerequisites:** Dexterity 13, Dodge, Personal Firearms Proficiency.

**Benefit:** You gain a +4 dodge bonus to your Defense against attacks of opportunity incurred when you make a ranged attack within a threatened area.

**Special:** A condition that makes you lose your Dexterity bonus to Defense (if any) also makes you lose dodge bonuses. Also, dodge bonuses stack with each other, unlike most other types of bonuses.

### Personal Power

You suffer less strain from the use of a single birthright.

**Prerequisite:** Titan

**Benefit:** When you purchase this feat you choose one birthright, which you currently possess. Whenever you manifest this birthright and gain a strain penalty, your strain penalty is one less.

### Potent Foci

A focus bound to you can hold more spells than normal.

**Prerequisite:** Charisma 10, Sorcerous Birthright.

**Benefit:** The base total spell levels that can be imbued into the bound focus increases by 1.

### Potent Lineage

Your potent heritage allows you to ignore the effects of birthright strain for a time.

**Prerequisite:** Titan.

**Benefit:** Once per day, you may manifest any one birthright power you know without rolling a Strain check.

**Normal:** A character must spend an action point to ignore the effects of strain.

### Prone Fighting

You are skilled at fighting while prone.

**Prerequisites:** Combat Martial Arts, Defensive Martial Arts, base attack bonus +2.

**Benefit:** You do not suffer a penalty on attacks or to your Defense against melee attacks while prone.

**Normal:** While prone, you suffer a -4 penalty on melee attack rolls and a -4 penalty to Defense against melee attacks.

### Ranged Disarm

You are able to shoot a weapon or other object out of the hand of your target.

**Prerequisites:** Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, base attack bonus +10.

**Benefit:** You may initiate a disarm action using a gun, as follows:

*Step 1: You must take a full-round action to attempt a ranged disarm.*

*Step 2: You make an attack roll against your target, who gains a +6 circumstance bonus to his Defense for this purpose. This increases to a +8 circumstance bonus if the targeted weapon is held in both hands.*

*Step 3: If you hit, your target must make a Fortitude save (DC 10 + the damage caused by your attack). If the target fails his save, he drops the weapon or other object in hand immediately. Otherwise, he suffers half damage from your attack but does not drop the weapon.*

**Normal:** You may make a disarm attack only with a melee weapon.

### Resilient Ability

You are able to shrug off the effects of birthright strain more easily.

**Prerequisite:** Personal Power, Titan, base birthright bonus +2.

**Benefit:** Choose one of your six base ability scores (Str, Dex, Con, Int, Wis, or Cha). The Strain DCs for all birthright powers you manifest that are associated with the chosen ability are reduced by 2.

### Revelation

You can awe your enemies by showing them a glimpse of your hereditary power.

**Prerequisite:** Titan, base birthright bonus +2.

**Benefit:** As a full-round action, you may show others a glimpse of the legendary power of your progenitor(s), made manifest through your face and bearing. This provides you with a morale bonus equal to your character level on any Bluff or Intimidate check you make in the following round against any non-titan who witnesses the display.

### Sense the Daemonic

You can discern the presence of the daemonic based on the evidence of your six senses.

**Prerequisite:** Titan or intuition (Dedicated hero talent).

**Benefit:** You may make a Sense Motive skill check (DC 10 + the Charisma modifier of the daemon involved) to determine whether a creature, an object, or an area is somehow tainted by the daemonic (either a Daemonhost or one of their daemon servitors). This check requires at least 1 minute to complete, and longer if you wish to discern more detailed information. A successful check does not provide you with any information about the object or creature observed, but merely identifies either past or present contact with the daemonic. You must be able to see the target of your investigation clearly for the entire time it takes to complete the check. The amount of information revealed depends on how long you study a particular area or subject.

**1st Minute:** Presence or absence of daemonic taint.

**2nd Minute:** Number of different daemonic taints and the strength of the strongest taint.

**3rd Minute:** The strength and location of each taint.

Daemon-infested areas, multiple types of daemons, or strong local taints may confuse or conceal weaker taints.

**Taint Strength:** A taint's relative power depends on the daemon's HD/level, and whether or not a daemon has inhabited (i.e., lived in or possessed) the creature or object or whether it is in fact physically present itself (i.e., not possessing another item or creature).

Creature/Object/Place	Daemonic Power
Formerly inhabited	HD ÷ 5
Currently inhabited	HD ÷ 2
Daemon or outsider	HD

Daemonic Power	Taint Strength
Lingering (see below)	Dim
1 or less	Faint
2-5	Moderate
6-12	Strong
13+	Overwhelming

If a taint falls into more than one category, Sense the Daemonic indicates the stronger of the two. A "lingering" aura is left behind by a daemonic creature that was in the area, and the taint lingers for an amount of time based on the creature's relative power.

**Length Aura Lingers:** How long a daemonic taint lingers after the source has vacated the location depends on the taint's original strength.

Original Strength	Duration
Faint	1d6 minutes
Moderate	1d6 x 10 minutes

Strong	1d6 hours
Overwhelming	1d6 days

Each minute, the titan can turn to sense things in a new area. This effect can penetrate barriers, but 1 foot of stone, 1 inch of common metal, a thin sheet of lead, or 3 feet of wood or dirt blocks it.

**Special:** Sense the Daemonic counts as a supernatural ability.

### Sorcerous Birthright

You are descended from a magical lineage and have a close connection to the Ethereal Plane.

**Prerequisite:** Charisma 10.

**Benefit:** Choose any two 0-level spells. You may cast each of these spells once per day as a spell-like ability, as the spell cast by a 1st-level caster.

In addition, if you are a member of a spellcasting class, you can cast 0-level and 1st-level spells without a focus (see Chapter 5: Magic, "Magical Foci").

**Normal:** You must have a focus to cast any spell.

**Special:** You may take this feat only as a 1st-level character.

### Surgical Savant

Your surgical patients suffer less fatigue from your efforts than normal.

**Prerequisites:** Surgery, Treat Injury 11 ranks.

**Benefit:** Your surgical patients are fatigued for 24 hours, minus 2 hours for every point by which you exceed the DC of your Treat Injury check. The period of fatigue can never be less than 2 hours.

**Normal:** Surgery fatigues patients for at least 6 hours.

### Titanic Resistance

You are highly resistant to birthrights and daemonic magic.

**Prerequisite:** Titan.

**Benefit:** You receive a +2 bonus on any saving throw made to resist the effects titan birthrights and the abyssal powers of Daemonhost.

In addition, you may spend an action point to succeed automatically at any such save, provided that the ability or spell normally allows a saving throw. This ability does not allow you to resist birthrights, spells, or other abilities that may not normally be resisted.

## Titans

Hidden among the throngs of humanity are those few born with a unique ancestral legacy. Across the world, in every nation, descendants of primeval gods and monsters discover the inheritance passed down to them through their very genetic codes. Within these individuals hides a secret long buried and nearly forgotten - a secret that has only rarely manifested itself, until recent centuries. By some quirk of fate or some transcendent design, more and more people today are manifesting the traits

of these ancient beings, through family lineages so old that the pyramids of Egypt are young by comparison. You are one of these nascent demigods. Within your very genes lies the seed of greatness, a birthright that transcends human limitations. You are an inheritor, a titan, a child of ancient gods or terrifying monsters. By the virtue of your blood, you carry the powers of the gods and heroes of antiquity.

### Creating a Titan

This section provides the simple changes to the character creation process necessary to make a titan. The process for creating an inheritor follows the same guidelines presented for normal characters, as detailed in *Wizards of the Coast's* (d20 Modern Roleplaying Game). However, there are a few alterations that must be made, as titans are a bit more than human. First, you must choose one of the five legacies presented later in this chapter. These legacies are the few titanic lineages that have survived till today, and the one you choose is your character's link to her deific ancestor. Once chosen, the character's legacy can never change. You gain all the benefits and weaknesses associated with the legacy you choose.

You also choose one birthright from the birthright trees available to characters of your legacy. In order to manifest birthrights, titan characters gain a base birthright bonus (BBB), which is similar to a base attack bonus (BAB). All newly created titans start with a BBB of +0 (see Chapter Four: Birthrights).

Each birthright has prerequisites you must meet before you can purchase it. In compensation for these ancestral gifts, you gain only one feat (not two like normal human characters) at the time of character creation, and you always gain skill points as if your Intelligence were 2 points lower than it actually is (both at character creation and at each subsequent level).

### Titans are Balanced!?

It's true. Titan characters begin at 1st level right alongside their fully human comrades. They may have birthrights unlike completely human characters, but there are a number of disadvantages that come along with being the genetic inheritors of the gods and monsters of myth. Besides starting with one less feat and gaining skill points more slowly than fully human characters, titans have a number of other features that balance them in comparison to a normal human.

1. Every legacy has a weakness that can be exploited or that might come into play at the most inopportune time.
2. Gaining new birthrights costs action points that could be used for many other purposes.
3. Manifesting birthrights can be dangerous not only because of the effects of strain (see Chapter Four: Birthrights), which can leave the titan weakened at critical moments, but also the threat of severe legendary transformations that can leave an inheritor distanced from his fellow man with noticeable disadvantages or inhuman traits or characteristics.

### Character Concept

As with creating any character, it is vitally important to have a clear concept in mind when you create a titan. Without one, your ability scores, skill ranks, and feats are no more than marks on paper. If you have a strong concept in mind, it will be easier to give life and personality to your character.

### Nationality

While you may think that a titan's legacy plays the biggest role in determining who or what she is, in actuality she is most likely affected by very much the same environmental factors that shape us all. Where is the character from and what has she experienced? - these are the things that will influence her the most. Genetics, even in *Dark Inheritance*, give only potential and perhaps some degree of general proclivity. It is what the character has experienced and what she chooses to do with this potential that shapes her being. Does your character come from a strongly religious family in the heart of the Bible Belt, or was she raised in the slums of Hong Kong? Think about this aspect of your character concept carefully: It can make the difference between a mediocre character and a great one.

### Legacy

There are five lineages known to have survived to the modern era. Each legacy is based upon mythological archetypes and gives you a general direction toward which to develop your character. This choice will affect the feats and skills you choose, and will limit the choice of birthrights your character may have, but legacies are not meant to hinder you. Just because you are one of the Hidden Suns, who inherit a propensity to gather forbidden knowledge, does not mean you must be a librarian or an archaeologist. Perhaps you hunt for lost or secretive martial arts forms. Perhaps you eschew book lore for first-hand experience, having a rapacious appetite for dangerous thrills. When selecting your character's legacy, it is a good idea to pick an aspect of the legacy you like and expand upon it in a unique way. The legacies are fully detailed later in this chapter.

### Birthrights

Every inheritor is born with a talent to harness the power hidden within her genes. Birthrights are supernatural abilities that allow a titan to briefly surpass her human companions. Some of the more powerful birthrights might let an inheritor perform actions only told of in legend. No two legacies have access to the same birthrights, which are divided into groups according to important characteristics of each legacy. These are called birthright trees. Mastering these birthrights is both time-consuming and hazardous. See Chapter Four: Birthrights for information on how to gain and use these powers.

### Idiosyncrasies

We all have quirks, habits, hobbies, and foibles that, while not central to our character, tend to make us a little more interesting (if not annoying or, one hopes, endearing). Idiosyncrasies give a character depth and make her seem more real. Write down a few words or even a few paragraphs describing quirks

and other unique qualities or habits that you can use to flesh out your character.

### Allegiances

What motivates your character? What does she want? Allegiances provide a means to quickly get a handle on why a character does what she does. While running black ops for Project Titan might simply be exciting, what are the real reasons she puts her life on the line? Is she merely a thrill-seeker? Was her father a journalist (or was he really a spy...) killed by third-world guerrillas, prompting her to want to make the world safe so others do not have to suffer through such a painful loss?

#### Playing Humans

While *Dark Inheritance* assumes that most if not all the characters are inheritors, this certainly does not have to be the case. Titans have no ECL and can be played right alongside more normal characters. Character creation for humans is treated normally using the d20 Modern Roleplaying Game™.

## Legacies

Titans are divided into lineages called legacies. Legacies represent a common heritage between characters that expresses itself by way of specific hereditary legacy traits and the manifestation of common birthrights. The progenitors, deific and alien entities of vast power, are the originators of these lines of descent. Every member of a legacy is a descendant from the founder or founders of his legacy and is related, although perhaps quite distantly, to every other member of that legacy.

While all those of a legacy are in truth family, few think of themselves as such or treat others of their legacy as kin. There are no real legacy fraternities or chapter houses where all those descended from a single lineage can come and congregate. For instance, the Hidden Suns do not have a secret online club where they post messages on spells and clandestine research. The scattering of the seed of the Progenitors across the world means that titans of a single legacy can manifest anywhere in the world. Even though all inheritors of a single legacy descend from a common ancestor and share some common traits, that is about as far as the similarities go. Behavior, political and spiritual beliefs, interests, and goals are what make each member of a legacy unique, just as it is with any human. Titans of common legacies have faced each other in war and fought for disparate beliefs and nations. Today, inheritors do as they did even in the distant past. Each has his or her own agenda and goals that are independent from their descent from a far distant progenitor.

But history isn't kind to heredity lines. Some geneticists claim that all of humanity is descended from a single female they have dubbed "Eve"; all those who were not descended from this single woman, it is said, simply did not survive. So it is with titan legacies. Only five legacies remain today, although once there were many more, such as the Sky Deceivers, wily tricksters and thieving travelers. Over the millennia, these lines of inheritance faded from the gene pool and disappeared from existence. The five that survive today are the regal Crimson Lords, the darkly secretive Hidden Suns, the wise warrior Storm Crows, the nihilistic Void Phoenixes, and the atavistic Wild Bloods.

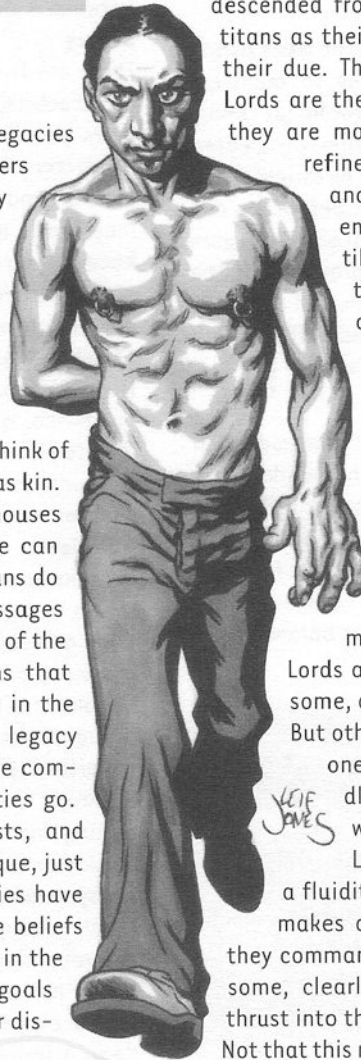
### Crimson Lords

*Eat, drink, and be not afraid. For the world is our dominion, and all life our charge. We shall not let our subjects come to harm.*

Though mythology alone, and not fact, indicates that the progenitors had a hierarchy amongst themselves, the Crimson Lords claim this was indeed the case - and that they are descended from the leaders. They claim command over all titans as their heritage, and dominion over all the Earth as their due. This may not be idle boasting, for the Crimson Lords are the closest thing to the essence of true royalty: they are masters of emotion and wisdom, cultured and refined, manipulative and demanding, yet playful and passionate. Their realms include not only emotion but culture, not only attention but fertility and life itself. Those who disapprove call the Crimson Lords spoiled children who treat others as mere playthings, but their supporters cherish the wisdom, nobility, and charisma of these titans, as well as the way they love life and encourage others to follow their example.

#### Nature

If titans are the inheritors of the gods and monsters, Crimson Lords are the inheritors of the god-kings, those deities who ruled the others - or so they would have the other legacies believe. Other titans tend to call this mere foolishness and arrogance: the Crimson Lords are no better than any of them and worse than some, and their right of leadership is all in their heads. But others admit that, whether a matter of attitude or one of heritage, the Crimson Lords do seem to handle themselves with an air of genuine royalty. For, while individuals vary of course, every Crimson Lord to some degree possesses a natural grace, a fluidity of movement and of speech, and an air that makes others listen when they speak and obey when they command. The Lords of Creation, as they are called by some, clearly have a talent for rulership, and are often thrust into the role of director, organizer, and chairman. Not that this role is undesired. Most Crimson Lords are fond of



their own voices. They appreciate organization and structure and dislike carelessness and untidiness. They also like to construct, whether buildings or languages or styles, and enjoy adding to the culture of the world. Almost invariably, they adore civilization, and are most at home in the midst of a large crowd, watching humanity teem about them. They delight in conversation and entertainment, music and dance, clothes, and other recreational pursuits. And above all else, they love to party.

The Hedonists, as they are often called by their detractors, love pleasure and excess. Crimson Lords like to sample the pleasures of the flesh in every variation, tasting and trying and tempting to the very limits of human endurance – and well beyond. They gamble and drink and inhale and inject and dance and sing, every type of activity designed to amuse and stimulate and divert. Indeed, according to the Crimson Lords it is by its excesses that humanity may judge itself, and only by experiencing those excesses can its leaders know their people fully and appreciate their desires and their needs. Yet excess, possibly the legacy's most notable trait, is generally not a problem for the Crimson Lords; a lack of self-control and of self-awareness is, surprisingly, antithetical to most of them. One should recognize one's own limits, most Lords would argue, and accept them, rather than risking the lives of others. The Hedonists thus enjoy their pleasures, but, they argue, they do so as much for the connection to other people as for the pleasure itself; vice is rarely a solitary activity, and never does a person reveal more of his or her true nature than while taking and/or giving pleasure. Crimson Lords enjoy watching other people, studying the play of emotion in face and body, and are generally as happy to give pleasure as to receive it.

Crimson Lords are, as a rule, at their most comfortable in the spotlight. One can usually be spotted even in a crowd, by those who know what they seek, through several tell-tale signs. The first is a matter of bearing, kingly or queenly: a Crimson Lord rarely slouches or shuffles, but strides boldly and fluidly about the room. The second sign is style, for Crimson Lords are the epitome of elegance, and most dress to the height of fashion. The third sign is wine, for a Crimson Lord in a social setting is rarely without a drink, be it wine or liquor or even beer (though only for certain occasions); alcohol is the symbol of revelry, and thus the reveler's chosen tool. The fourth and perhaps most telling sign is cleanliness. Crimson Lords, though masters of the Earth, are yet above it, and so quite literally cannot be sullied by its grime and its filth. Even when wading through mud or staggering through a sandstorm, a Crimson Lord is always clean, as if the dirt, recognizing its rightful ruler, refuses to sully him or her with its touch.

Crimson Lords are not by nature subtle, and they are not austere – many accuse them of being too frivolous, too arrogant and self-centered to be of use. But this is not true, for, despite all their style, the Crimson Lords are often loyal, and sometimes to a fault. The best of them recognize their duty to the world and to its people, and are prepared to shoulder their responsibilities fully. A

Crimson Lord is as much a knight in shining armor as a host and reveler, and will leap to protect those in need without a thought for personal safety. In battle, Crimson Lords may order others about, but they tend to lead from the front, boldly striding toward the enemy and rallying the troops by example as well as by word. What many people never see is the quieter, gentler side of a Crimson Lord. They witness the hedonists, and they may even see the generals and the knights, but they rarely see beyond those roles. Yet the Crimson Lords, as masters of the earth and its children, are also its surrogate parents, and can be nurturing and utterly selfless. Within them lies the power to encourage growth and health, to enhance fertility and provide a bountiful harvest to folk, beasts, and crops alike. They accept the flaws of humanity even as they rejoice in its merits, and constantly work to lessen the former while enhancing the latter.

### The Past

For the Crimson Lords, history is as much feeling as fact. They believe, absolutely, that the progenitors had a hierarchy, that some were greater and others lesser, and that these deific beings had rulers. And it is from these rulers that the Crimson Lords descend. A noble class existed, so they say, and these nobles ruled the world, with all the other progenitors serving in specific and necessary roles beneath them.

No proof exists of this "essential truth," a fact which members of other legacies enjoy pointing out to the Lords. Most records of the progenitors are long since lost, and those few which remain are so fragmented they reveal nothing about structure, government, or organization – assuming that any given group of titans is even aware of the progenitors.

Mythology, however, certainly seems to support the Crimson Lords' claims. In most pantheons around the world, one god or a pair of deities ruled the others. And it is from these gods that the Crimson Lords draw their lineages. Their original sire was great and terrible and wise, wily and eloquent, a powerful warrior but a charmer as well. From him sprang the gods of love and of beauty – such Aphrodite, Apollo, Balder, and others – and these too are the forebears of the Crimson Lords, grace and

### Alternate Names for Crimson Lords

All-Fathers  
Captains of the Feast  
Children of Bacchus  
Guardians  
Hedonists  
Imperialists  
Lords of Creation  
Masters of the Word  
Sensualists  
Shepherds  
Shining Knights  
The Revelers  
World's Hosts

style and nobility incarnate. Yet other children carried on their father's mastery of the earth, like Ceres and Demeter and Geb and Silvanus, who brought forth the harvest and protected the land and its people. Other children fostered civilization - Dionysus, Brigit and Diancecht, Nephthys. Though the names change from land to land, the progenitors remain the same - the All-Father and his children, who embody grace, beauty, love of the land, and love of its people and their social activities. Some scholars, both within the Crimson Lords themselves and in the Hidden Suns, believe that the All-Father bore only two children, male and female, and these two contain all of these traits. According to this belief, it is the children of these twins who became the first Crimson Lords, inheriting their grandsire's majesty and his right to rule.

Certainly, though, the Godgenes of the Crimson Lords appeared all around the globe. Their strongest presence was always in those lands where civilization flourished, and where both beauty and martial skill were revered. It may be that the presence of the Crimson Lords encouraged this atmosphere and caused the culture there to prosper, for their presence has always marked many a great nation. Crimson Lords were said to have been strong in ancient age of Greece, as in the Roman Empire - Epicurus himself is thought to have been an inheritor of this legacy. In Japan, the Crimson Lords found the perfect home among the samurai and their predecessors, men trained in swordsmanship and penmanship, in archery and in poetry. The culture's reverence for beauty and combat and its appreciation for the fine arts was a perfect fit for the Crimson Lords. China, too, where the Mandarins, for instance, took great pleasure in their vices, had its share of Crimson Lords. The Lords thrived in great cities, often in ports where many nations intersected. Venice was a great favorite, for its sailors traveled far and wide, and the pleasures of the city were of great renown. Arabia was also the home to the Lords, with its palaces and fountains. New York, Paris, Rome, Los Angeles, Rio de Janeiro, Hong Kong, and Tokyo are all places to gather and enjoy the excesses of the modern world.

### Today

The modern world is a delight to the Crimson Lords. In particular, the Crimson Lords take pleasure in the sheer variety of entertainment now readily available. There are so many pleasures to be experienced, both permissible and illicit. Films, both domestic and foreign, are easily accessed; food and intoxicants from all over the world can be found within a few square blocks; conversations, whether in person or remote, can take place over multiple continents and in a variety of tongues. The intersection of languages and cultures fascinates and delights them, and they enjoy hosting large parties with guests of all nationalities and creeds. The Crimson Lords are particularly interested in modern media and the way it can reach so many at once. As expected, many Crimson Lords are patrons of the arts, encouraging if not practicing theater, music, the visual arts, and any other forms of expression. They also take a hand in corporate

businesses, as much for the joy of controlling such a large "kingdom" as for any real need for money or position.

One area in which the Crimson Lords tend to surprise most people, however, is in matters that deal with the environment. As (self-)appointed stewards of this world, they feel the call of the earth, a duty to protect the planet from devastation, and most have watched with horror over the last century and more as forests have been razed, rivers dammed, and whole ecosystems lost forever. Many of these titans are involved, directly or indirectly, in reclamation and preservation projects, and they work to keep various animal species from extinction and the globe itself from becoming too depleted to survive.

Those of this legacy who knew of the prophecy concerning the Daemonhost generally did not pay it much heed, for they believed simply that the Daemonhost were never to escape. The job of guarding was left to others, for the Crimson Lords are best suited to action and direction, to shaping the present and the future, not dwelling upon the ancient past.

Then the day arrived - and they failed. The Daemonhost did escape.

This was a mighty blow to the legacy, to fail in such a task. The Crimson Lords are commanders born, and do not blame their troops for mistakes they themselves have made. Thus these titans hold themselves responsible for failing to restrain the Host. They had been charged with overseeing this world's defenses, and proved too weak, too flawed, too distracted. The city of Jerusalem is a constant reminder of their disgrace, but the Crimson Lords do not shirk from their duty; while they may have little modesty, they do not lack honor. This disaster, this horrible transformation of a once-great city (once ruled by its kings, the Crimson Lords David and Solomon), calls out for retribution. The Host have been loosed upon the world, and now the world demands its protectors should step forth and smite these interlopers. And the Crimson Lords have vowed that they will not fail a second time.

The best course of action is plain. The city must be rid of any creatures who would harm the residents. Then it must be returned to its proper condition, the taint of the Otherworld cleansed away. Many titans wish to retain the gateway, and this is acceptable, for the Otherworld, if carefully controlled and ruled, might offer new vistas to explore and new forms of entertainment. But the gateway can be maintained without the presence of the ruins - those must be purged, that the City of Gold may return to its proper glory. The Daemonhost themselves have escaped and spread across the globe, and these must be hunted down to the last and either returned to their prison or destroyed completely. Humanity must be protected, and the world made safe again. The Crimson Lords recognize their own failure in preventing this catastrophe, but most remain confident they can rectify the matter. The battle was lost because they grew overconfident and allowed their attentions to wander. Now they are ready, focused on the task at hand.



## Character Concepts

Cult leader, entertainer, playboy, porn star, military commander, drug lord, media mogul, diplomat, respected priest.

### The Strong Crimson Lord

Single-classed Strong characters are not rare among the Crimson Lords, although they are not particularly numerous; many have one or more levels in this class, however, in addition to any other(s). Most Crimson Lords prefer to surround themselves with strong allies and aides, but this does not make them incapable of physical exertion themselves. Many Strong Crimson Lords take talents from the ignore hardness or melee smash talent trees. They lead by example rather than by word, tending to prefer direct action to careful strategy. Vitality is a favored birthright for the Strong Crimson Lord, as his own strength is his central focus, but the perception birthrights of the Grace tree are also common.

### The Fast Crimson Lord

Fast Crimson Lords are not terribly common - although most of these titans possess speed and grace, they do not focus on such things, and the ability to dodge and run seems too close to the notion of running away rather than facing a foe. Still, a Fast Crimson Lord can be very impressive; he concentrates on his agility rather than his brawn, often dazzling those around him with his reflexes and his cat-like speed. Grace birthrights fit nicely for this character, enhancing already impressive speed and providing more style and elegance to naturally quick reflexes. A Fast Crimson Lord often taunts his opponents by running rings around them, humiliating them in battle to make them lose control. These characters also make excellent instructors, teaching their students to move swiftly and gracefully and turning combat into a martial ballet.

### The Tough Crimson Lord

Tough Crimson Lords are more common than they might seem, for many of these titans pride themselves on their ability to withstand any attack. It is important for a military commander that his troops see him standing tall and unbowed, for he can stand upon the field of battle and direct his men even while receiving wounds of his own. Vitality plays a large part in this, and as with Strong characters the Tough Crimson Lord leads more by action and example than by speeches and tactics. Unbreakable talents are an excellent combination with the Vitality birthrights, as are damage reduction. Many Crimson Lords start out as Tough heroes, just as others do in Strong, before advancing to a different class.

### The Smart Crimson Lord

These are the least common among Crimson Lords. It is not that a Crimson Lord cannot be clever, but Smart heroes are often more focused on book-learning and reasoning than on practical matters, and most Crimson Lords are too direct (or too impatient) to sit still long enough to think through matters. Those who do become Smart Crimson Lords, however, are master strategists, able to devise clever plans for trapping and

destroying their opponents. Not all Smart Crimson Lords turn to armed combat, either - a trap can be laid at a dinner party just as it can on a battlefield, and a foe can be humiliated or have his reputation destroyed through conversation as well as with swords or guns. Smart Crimson Lords favor the Emotion birthrights and the perception-based Grace birthrights, and generally turn to the strategy talent tree as soon as possible (selecting one research talent and then moving on).

### The Dedicated Crimson Lord

Dedicated heroes are the second most common type among the Crimson Lords. Most of the inheritors of this legacy feel very strongly about their duties and devote themselves to fulfilling their role as nobles, in whatever fashion they deem best. Thus the Dedicated hero is a perfect fit, a Crimson Lord who sets his responsibilities above all else. These characters tend to stop and consider matters, just as Strong characters do, but the Dedicated do not turn to books and scrolls - instead they watch people and ask questions to find out what they wish to know. Most Dedicated Crimson Lords are very sociable and make excellent listeners, for they radiate warmth, approval, and a paternal (or maternal) affection. The Emotions birthrights are a favorite for this class, though the healing birthrights of Vitality are also appropriate. The Dedicated Crimson Lord usually prefers the empathic talent tree, with insightful after that - although the Vitality birthright includes some healing, it is more about the Crimson Lord's own person, and many feel their talents are best served directing true healers and providing emotional comfort rather than physical.

## How Do Crimson Lords View the Other Legacies?

**Hidden Suns:** The "hidden" part is certainly accurate - these bookworms always hide themselves away in their books and scrolls. They know much, but they lack the warmth of the human touch and are often ill-suited to dealing with others. Our researchers and advisors, they may provide us with useful information, but often lack the wisdom to know how to use it well.

**Storm Crows:** Mighty warriors blessed with foreknowledge, these are our shock troops, our captains. We admire their gift for combat, but most have little skill at strategy - despite seeing possible outcomes, they tend to charge in unheeding. They need our leadership, and may earn our friendship.

**Void Phoenixes:** Powerful yet hideous - a sad combination, but a useful one. These were our bodyguards and our watchdogs, and shall be again. That's generally all they're good for.

**Wild Bloods:** As we hold dominion over our people and our Earth, so do these titans have lordship over beasts. Our wild cousins, once our huntmasters and game wardens, our provisioners and scouts, perhaps they are worthy to become our allies. Perhaps.

### The Charismatic Crimson Lord

Not surprisingly, this is the most common class for Crimson Lords. Charismatic heroes of this legacy use their charm and allure to captivate audiences, impassion armies, and cultivate allies. These Lords tend to rely on eloquence and appearance more than martial skill, and can fascinate those around them with their slightest words and gestures. This is not to say that Charismatic Crimson Lords hide behind their words, but they will use their verbal skills to weaken their opponents, make them confused and self-conscious, and thus tilt the coming conflict in the Crimson Lord's favor. Grace and Emotion are the preferred birthright trees for this class, and all three of the Charismatic talent trees (charm, fast-talk, and leadership) fit well. Those who take charm are more likely to play hosts and dinner guests, ambassadors and mediators. Those with fast-talk lean more toward con artists and media moguls and businessmen, while those with leadership may become military leaders, politicians, counselors, or cult leaders. Most Crimson Lords have at least a few levels in this class, to make full use of their natural gifts for speech and gesture.

### Legacy Traits

Crimson Lords have the following game statistics:

**Social Grace:** Crimson Lords are masters of the social graces, adept at swaying, entertaining, and reading people. They are also observant of their surroundings. Select one of the skills listed in the paragraph below. The Crimson Lord gains a +2 legacy bonus when making checks with that skill.

Bluff, Diplomacy, Gather Information, Intimidate, Knowledge (behavioral sciences), Listen, Perform (any single skill), Sense Motive, Spot.

**Drug Resistance:** Crimson Lords long association with intoxicants of all kinds provides them with a +2 legacy bonus on Fortitude saving throws to resist the negative affects of drugs of all kinds.

**Easy Fame:** All Crimson Lords receive the Renown feat at no cost.

**Cleanse:** All dirt and grime "avoids" the Crimson Lord's body and clothing. Bruises and minor tears also vanish - the Lord always appears as if recently washed, shaven, and styled, and his or her clothes always appear fresh and clean. If a Crimson Lord's clothing or possessions suffer major damage, it will still show, although it will look as if the clothing has been cleaned and pressed since the damage occurred.

**Decant:** As a full-round action, the Crimson Lord can touch a liquid or its container (up to a 2-liter bottle) and transform the liquid instantly into an excellent wine (type of his or her choosing). She can do this a number of times per day equal to her character level.

**Imperturbable:** Because they are experts of

manipulation and language themselves, masters of emotion, Crimson Lords receive a +4 legacy bonus on all saving throws against mental control, emotion control, charm spells or effects, and any other method of altering their mood or mind-set.

### Legacy Weakness

**Call of Bacchus:** Whenever anyone is celebrating nearby, you must make a Will save (DC 15 + the number of days since you last indulged yourself) or leave whatever you are doing to take part in the festivities. Note that if you are at a party and people are celebrating or toasting off to one side, you need not roll - you are already participating in the larger festivities. If you fail the save and join in the revelry, you may make a new Will save (DC 15) every hour to break away.

### Beginning Birthrights

The following are the three birthright trees of the Crimson Lord Legacy; beneath each tree are those birthrights available to starting Crimson Lord characters. Rules for manifesting birthrights and descriptions for birthrights are found in Chapter 4: Birthrights.

#### Emotion

light of joy.

#### Grace

Blend in or gracious eloquence.

#### Vitality

Draught of aesculapius or gift of tammuz.

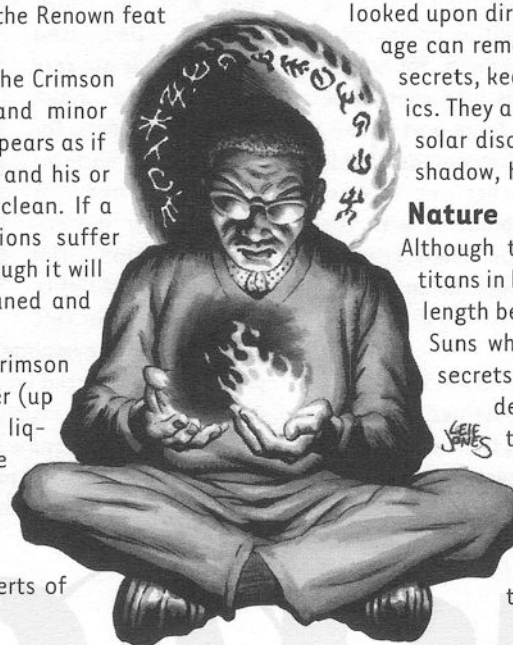
### Hidden Suns

*You may not see me, but I am there, in the shadows and in the light. Nothing can hide from me.*

These resplendent scholars and healers delve the underworld, tombs, laboratories, and libraries for the secrets and forbidden lore held within. Just as the Sun cannot be seen at night nor looked upon directly during the day, those born of this lineage can remain unseen. The Hidden Suns are masters of secrets, keepers of lore, and practitioners of illicit magics. They are the underworld sun as well as the noon day solar disc. Theirs is the province of death, fire, light, shadow, healing and the occult.

#### Nature

Although the Storm Crows may be the most deadly titans in battle and the Wild Bloods are kept at arm's-length because of their feral natures, it is the Hidden Suns who are feared the most. It is they who find secrets best left hidden and who have the insatiable desire to uncover them. If this is not enough, those born into the Hidden Suns have a connection to death unrivaled by any other legacy. The name Keepers of the Dead is one that has haunted the legacy for millennia. It does not help that the necromantic arts come as easily to them as summoning



the potent solar energies of the Sun. The very substance of the underworld, often referred to as shadow, is theirs to command. The Hidden Suns can see into the very heart of darkness and lift the veil that guards one's inner most secrets. Nothing is safe from their prying eyes and minds.

However, the other legacies tend to overlook the Hidden Suns' other notable trait, their bond to the Sun. To have shadow, one must have light, and so it is with the Underworld Suns. It is from the Sun that shadows come, for without its light bringing qualities nothing could be seen nor shadows cast. Nearly every member of this Legacy feels a close and abiding relationship with the star our Earth orbits. Even those who concentrate solely on the gifts of shadow or secrets know that without their connection to the primal solar disc, their birthrights would be powerless.

Unique to those who have such an abiding connection to light and the Sun is an aptitude for healing. The sun brings light, life, and clarity of vision. The healing arts may be a passion for only a minority of Hidden Suns, but these individuals are greatly respected. The sun is dynamic, and so are those closely associated with it. Surprisingly, at least to outsiders, the majority of legends within the Hidden Sun Legacy concern those who have followed the path of the sun rather than its shadow.

Notoriety follows those of this Legacy like the smell of old grave goods on a tomb robber. When something awful rears its ugly head, everyone turns to see what the Hidden Sun has done. Elders of the other legacies warn their young wards that if a Hidden Sun is presented with something she desires, she will take it: "A weakness of the line," they say.

Regardless of what a Hidden Sun may say, curiosity is as legendary as their propensity for dark secrets. Some are driven by a ravenous hunger for any knowledge related to a specific subject, while others gather to themselves relics from days forgotten by historians. Everyone knows that Hidden Suns hoard knowledge; the stereotype of the morbid academic has haunted the legacy for centuries. What few understand is that Hidden Suns do not simply want to collect knowledge - they want to use it. Knowledge is power only when it is used to some end. Thus, while the book-bound scholar is a common stereotype for the legacy, such people are in actuality the minority; they are merely the most obvious.

Anonymity can be a Sun-Touched's most prized possession. Knowing information one should not can be bad for one's health. This Legacy's propensity for exposing carefully protected secrets necessitates learning skills to obtain them. Bypassing security, moving past guards unseen, and, of late,

hacking into sensitive computers are common skills among Hidden Suns. The best secrets, after all, are not left out where anyone can get at them. It takes dedication, skill, and not a little underhandedness to obtain what people do not want you to have.

## The Past

The Keepers have one of the most complete histories of any legacy. Their penchant for gathering information and hoarding even the smallest scrap of knowledge means that there are literally hundreds of scrolls, books, and journals written by the Hidden Suns about their many observations. Even in ancient times, Sun-Touched scholars and sages gathered their accumulated knowledge. If legacy lore is true, the Library of Alexandria held many writings created by the Hidden Suns, and much of the legacy's written lore was lost during the burning of the grand library - a loss still felt sharply today. It is from the records that survived this religious purge that titan scholars and historians

among the Promethean Order and similar groups today know much of the information about the progenitors and their children.

Extant fragments of scrolls and tablets claim the lineage descends from a god of great glory and darkness, a being so vast that his form could blot out the sun. His touch could bring instant death or healing. The mighty being had a great and terrible intellect, and nothing could remain hidden when in his presence. He was as cold as the space between the stars, but once his passion was ignited, it flared like a raging sun.

After the progenitors disappeared, the Godgenes for the many original legacies were spread throughout the world. The genes of the Hidden Suns were most common among the people of Northern Africa, Mesoamerica, Japan, and India. While the Godgenes were rarely expressed in Japan and the Mesoamericas, the opposite was true in North Africa and India. Both regions were regularly inundated with foreign people, through both migration and invasion. The resulting mixture of bloodlines allowed the Hidden Sun Godgenes to express more often. In fact, Early Fugo a Watu cultists would probably not have been as quick to deduce the gestalt nature of the genes if they had not been able to observe the multi-ethnic Egyptian culture.

The Egyptian philosophy and spirituality of death, combined with that culture's veneration of the solar disc and mystical knowledge, certainly fit the stereotypes associated with the Hidden Sun legacy. Both had a respect for knowledge, a love for secret lore, and a fascination with the diurnal passage of the sun. It is impossible to determine whether the Underworld Suns were the cause of this Egyptian fixation or if it was the Egyptian

## Alternate Names for Hidden Suns

Keepers  
Children of Aten  
Underworld Suns  
Inheritors of Apollo  
Keepers of the Dead  
Sun-Touched  
Dog Children

culture that molded the common beliefs of the legacy. Most probably, each affected the other, creating a new, amalgamated philosophy.

India, on the other hand, bred an entirely different sort of Inheritor. These titans were more attuned to fire and the healing arts but this attunement did not hinder them at all from aggression. The warrior Storm Crows, called Thunder Children by the people of India, were also present in considerable numbers there, and the two legacies cooperated very effectively in making war. The mystics of the subcontinental cultures, both Storm Crow seers and Hidden Sun sages, took upon themselves the mantle of gods and required sacrifices and offerings for their blessings.

### Today

The modern world is a cornucopia of information, a great renaissance for the Keepers. Knowledge is as plentiful as rain and nearly as easy to gather. Science, archaeology, and even a rise in mysticism provide outlets unavailable in centuries past. Even the old legacy stereotypes are beginning to change. New icons are emerging: the focused scientist, the crafty archaeologist, the chilling mystic, and the brilliant hacker. The 21st century is also a time to rediscover the mysteries of the past. Although legacy legend passed down from ancient times holds that Egypt was guided by pharaohs and priests who were born of the lineage, there has been no way to prove the legend until now. Some of the modern members of the legacy are archaeologists and geneticists, who have managed to isolate DNA from mummies and hope one day to find a mummy with the Godgene. Until then, they use the new scientific tools to uncover lost relics and forgotten wisdom.

The Rip changed everything. The age of legend has come full circle. Creatures from the depths of the past have returned, and a world only hinted at in even the most prehistoric tales is now laid bare. The secret myths long kept safe by the Children of Aten now have real-world applications. Hidden Suns are pouring out of libraries and research facilities and into the field. Knowledge hoarded over thousands of years is now once again a highly desired commodity. The ruins of the Otherworld and the increased potency of magic there have many Suns clamoring to be involved in expeditions to the newly discovered world.

Some Underworld Suns claim that even the ancient enemies of the progenitors have returned. The Host, they say, is again

prowling the world, but they are not like they once were. Shadows, specters, or malign spirits are all that remain of these adversaries, they say. Hidden Sun investigators and mystics search for a method of uncovering the creatures' presence and proving them to be the threat they claim them to be.

### Character Concepts

Cryptic sage, morbid investigator, unseen assassin, antiquities collector, enigmatic hacker, wise thanatologist, fearless smuggler, right-to-die activist, solar physicist, and miracle healer.

#### The Strong Hidden Sun

Possibly the fewest characters of the Hidden Suns are Strong heroes; they tend to leave such direct, physical work to those legacies most suited to it. However, this does not mean that there are none. Sometimes it takes a strong hand to wrest a desired secret or object from the one who has it. The world is a

rough place, and these characters thrive in it. Strong Hidden Suns like straightforward thinking, and they tend to concentrate on finding direct applications for their knowledge. They are most apt to concentrate on the Sun birthrights. Healing and the glory of the Sun mesh seamlessly with the direct nature of these inheritors.

#### The Fast Hidden Sun

A surprising number of Hidden Suns are Fast heroes. Agility, flexibility, and quick reflexes are traits admired by the legacy and found in abundance of those who take levels in this class. The protective measures provided by the class also help a Hidden Sun survive encounters and come out of them intact. Fast Hidden Suns tend to focus their energies towards Shadow and Secret birthrights, often even choosing one path over the other. The Fast hero class is also the quickest path to such advanced classes as the

Infiltrator, a favorite among those of this legacy. Fast heroes have the ability to get into places they are not supposed to be, and this ability is a perfect mirror to the birthrights of the Hidden Suns. For these reasons, many Hidden Suns take a few levels in this class.

#### The Tough Hidden Sun

Nearly as few Hidden Suns choose to be Tough heroes as Strong heroes. Those few Tough Hidden Suns, though, are often the most rugged and resilient titans in all the legacies. They are the keepers and protectors of knowledge and of relics. As guardians, these characters take it upon themselves to protect sacred items and threatened knowledge from any person or organization. They are undaunted by threats of violence, hails of bullets, or even torture. While their various talents, feats,

### How Hidden Suns View the Other Legacies

**Crimson Lords:** Lords of the Earth... Not likely. Every one that I've met seems far more interested in imbibing as much booze and drugs as possible, and being an armchair general than getting his hands dirty.

**Storm Crows:** Most are good for shock troops and as bodyguards, but their seers are downright spooky, all doom and gloom. They call us morbid, but at least we're not fatalistic.

**Void Phoenix:** They bring destruction. They are certainly the children of Lilith.

**Wild Bloods:** We have very little in common. They can have the wild lands, for I certainly don't want them.

and birthrights allow such characters to survive dangerous encounters more easily than nearly any other class combination, the limited number of skill points is too much of a downside for it to be a favorable choice for many Hidden Suns. Still, the most strategically minded Hidden Suns are often are multi-classed Smart/Tough heroes.

### The Smart Hidden Sun

The Smart hero is the archetypal Hidden Sun. Nearly all born of the legacy inherit a clear mind and an inquisitive nature. Coupled with the drive to learn and to discover, this aptitude marks those of the legacy for greatness. The scholar, academic, occultist, and scientist are natural life paths chosen by Hidden Suns. This class gives the skills, talents, and feats the Hidden Suns prize. The birthrights of the Secrets tree are favored, although Shadow birthrights are also a favorite. The Smart hero class also gives them the expertise to use the knowledge they acquire and leads to advanced classes such as the Field Scientist, the Techie, or the Initiate (for this last advanced class, see "New Advanced Classes" later in this chapter). Almost all Hidden Suns take a few levels of the Smart hero class sometime early in their lives.

### The Dedicated Hidden Sun

Once one understands the complex nature of the Hidden Suns, it comes as no surprise that many are Dedicated heroes (although some would call them "Obsessed" heroes). While it is true many Keepers will do everything within their power to achieve their ends, however, few would admit that they are obsessive. They would admit to being passionate or even driven, but none see such perseverance as a shortcoming. Interestingly, most Dedicated Hidden Suns pursue the healing talent tree and the class's easy access to the Investigator and Field Medic advanced classes complement the healing birthrights of the Sun tree, making the Hidden Sun a more effective medic.

### The Charismatic Hidden Sun

Manipulation, diplomacy, and influence are very important abilities for a Sun-Touched. Those who choose the path of the Charismatic hero attain knowledge in ways far different than their Smart and Dedicated cousins. Through the clever use of the skills provided by the class, many secrets and treasures can be acquired without the need for direct conflict or plotting. Why put your life in jeopardy? Why take something by guile or by force when you could simply receive it as a gift? After all, a gifted seductress is just as likely to gain access to a relic hidden in some reclusive millionaire's well-protected collection than even the greatest thief, and all without the slightest risk to herself. Charismatic Hidden Suns have a tendency to focus upon skills, talents, and birthrights to uncover or protect secrets.

### Legacy Traits

Hidden Suns have the following game statistics

**Natural Scholar:** The Hidden Suns are consummate researchers of lost and hidden lore. Select a skill listed in the following paragraph. The Hidden Sun receives a +2 legacy bonus when making checks with that skill.

Decipher Script, Forgery, Hide, Investigate, Knowledge (any

single skill), Research, Sense Motive, Treat Injury.

**Low-light Vision:** A Hidden Sun sees twice as far as a normal human in poor lighting conditions. He can still distinguish colors, even in dim lighting.

**Eldritch Blood:** Hidden Suns are intimately connected to the mystical energies of shadow, light, and fire. Whenever a Hidden Sun casts a spell or uses a power that has one of those three words (shadow, light, or fire) as part of its name or as a descriptor, he casts the spell or uses the ability at +1 caster level.

**Solar Protection:** Hidden Suns receive a +4 legacy bonus on Fortitude saving throws against prolonged exposure to heat.

### Legacy Weakness

**Knowledge Obsession:** Choose a specific Knowledge skill. Whenever you have the opportunity to learn something that falls within the purview of this skill, you must make a Will saving throw (DC 15) or be compelled to pursue the opportunity, regardless of the potential consequences.

### Beginning Birthrights

The following are the three birthright trees of the Hidden Sun Legacy; beneath each tree are those birthrights available to starting Hidden Sun characters. Rules for manifesting birthrights and birthright descriptions are found in Chapter 4: Birthrights.

#### Secrets

Discern falsehood or whispering paper.

#### Shadow

Diminishing life or shadow mien.

#### Sun

Hands of light, or rest of the blessed.

### Storm Crows

*Once we knew with certainty what was to be. With certainty, we raised our swords. We had Fate's blessing. Now, we are like blind men. We hear only the enemy before us, sense only the darkness beyond, and beyond that, we feel only an infinite emptiness.*

War and conflict call to the children of this Legacy, for these things sing to them in their blood. Like the crows that flew before the armies of old, the Storm Crows herald the coming of doom. They are soldiers of unsurpassed skill, perspicacious tacticians. As the champion of fate, the Storm Crow warrior is blessed by fortune and opportunity. But Storm Crows are known for their prophetic gifts as much as for their supreme aptitude at battle. Storm Crow seers once saw the patterns of fate and the certainty of the future like sharp-eyed birds of prey soaring far above the earth. Now, however, their second sight is nearly blind, and the future is merely as distant thunder at night.

### Nature

It is said that to face a Storm Crow in battle is a sure way to die, and this is often true. The cries of war and conflict reverberate within the heart of every Storm Crow and grant him great strength. Storm Crows are known for pushing themselves beyond their own limits, habitually refusing to yield. In doing so, they court disaster, believing that only through great sacrifice and great risk can the impossible be achieved. The desire to challenge, to push oneself past one's limits is at the core of all

Storm Crows. What few realize is that this love of conflict extends beyond the battlefield, for it arises from a deep-seated desire to defeat the enemy within, not simply to beat one's rivals. Storm Crows argue and debate. They enjoy fighting on many levels. Some, however, feel that if weapons must be drawn, then the real battle is lost.

Storm Crows love causes, *raison d'être*. Not only do they allow him to challenge himself, but they are opportunities to test the resolve and determination of others. Most require that the cause or challenge be worthy of attention, while there are those who fight simply for the challenge of the task. Before joining an Allegiance or cause, the titan tests the people who are a part of it. First, he investigates the person or group who desires his service. He then baits them in some way to determine how they decide to act. It is important to discover what they are willing to do to reach their goals, what weaknesses they reveal, and what they will sacrifice. How one evaluates the results of the tests is entirely dependent upon the Storm Crow involved.

Although Storm Crows may seem straightforward and direct, they can be crafty, cunning, and shrewd. Storm Crows are not necessarily stupid; they do not attempt a frontal assault if it is obvious to them that such a plan of action will fail. Conflict is only partly a sport for the body; it is primarily a struggle of the mind.

Notions of doom and sacrifice also pervade the Legacy. For thousands of years, Storm Crow seers looked resolutely into the future and stared unflinching at destiny. Calmly, most simply accepted the lot dealt to them, sometimes imparting their visions to those who deserved or were required to hear them. Fate is rarely pleasant, often filled with pain and suffering. Storm Crow philosophy is harsh and unforgiving. Sacrifice is simply necessary, and those who are unwilling to forfeit that which they prize do not deserve a grand destiny.

Like Odin, the Doombringers believe that suffering and pain are vital paths to understand and gaining power. The scars of these trials are worn with pride; they distinguish the inheritor as one worthy of his power. Rarely does a Storm Crow apologize for his actions. Mistakes and failures happen; they are not something one should be afraid of or ashamed of, merely learned from.

Still, every Storm Crow deals with foreknowledge in his own way. Some seem pessimistic and stoic, others optimistic and carefree.

Only those who have given up on life and hope become apathetic and dispassionate. These sad individuals are pitied by the others of their Legacy. Elders sometimes attempt to guide and restore such unfortunates, assigning them quests and Herculean tasks. If this does not work, they may resort to a more direct approach or even manipulate events so that problems descend upon the stubborn inheritor like rain, forcing the titan to deal with this flood of issues.

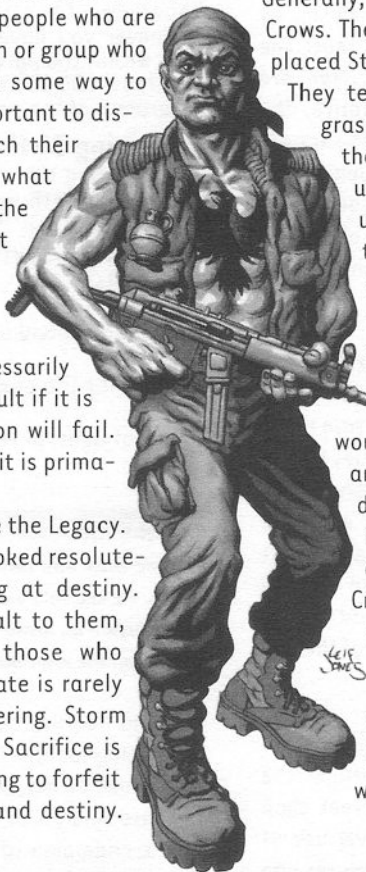
## The Past

Generally, where there has been war there have been Storm Crows. Their affinity with conflict and their powers of prophecy placed Storm Crows at all the important crossroads of history.

They tested the mettle, honor, and resolve of those who grasped at greatness. Following the dictates of destiny, the members of this Legacy ensured the success or failure of entire kingdoms and empires. When fate smiled upon an endeavor, the Champions of Fate rallied to the banner, and when she frowned they undermined and destroyed it. Not a few fleets have sunk as a consequence of a Doom Prophet's vision and the legacy's command over the elements.

Surprisingly, the Storm Crows were the most likely to be regarded as gods, even though the Crimson Lords would claim otherwise. The power to call down lightning and change the weather was seen as an obviously divine trait. Thunder Gods could insure a good harvest by bringing rain or cause famine by calling up a devastating storm. The physical changes caused by Storm Crows' legendary transformations also instilled awe and respect in many people. Even if such devotion was not desired, preventing worship was nigh unto impossible.

Very little is known of the twins who, legend asserts, founded the legacy. Some traditions claim the twins were two boys, while others insist they were a man and a woman. Hidden Sun academics shake their heads knowingly, for gender was a matter of preference for these two mercurial progenitors. Either way, the two are likened unto Venus, the morning and evening star. They were the two faces of fortune, good luck and bad luck; two-headed Janus, looking forth and back across the threshold. Many myths passed down through the oral traditions of the legacy demonstrate the two progenitors' fondness for conflict and happenstance. Not only would each test and challenge the other, continuously seeking to outstrip one another, but they would make bets on the outcome of the strangest events. One story has the two betting



## Alternate Names for Storm Crows

Champions of Fate  
Doombringers  
Spears of Baal  
The Blinded Eye  
Valkyries  
Thunder Gods  
Doom Prophets  
Children of Storms

upon the outcome of a race between two ants. The winner of the bet was to humiliate himself in front of the other progenitors – but the ants never crossed the finish line. Instead, they wandered in different directions. One was stepped on by a blind man and the other was eaten by a bear.

The abundance of storm gods, lightning wielding deities, and weavers of fate is testament to the Legacy's appearance among many cultures. Fragments of the Storm Crow Godgene are spread evenly across the world. People of every ethnicity have been born into the legacy. Some cultures, however, seem to favor specific aspects, specific birthrights of the legacy. The dominion over the forces of nature is particularly strong among titans from Scandinavia, Central America, East Africa, India, and South East Asia. The prophetic gifts are strongest among those from Southern Europe, North America, Central Africa, and Central Asia. War, it seems, is a talent passed down through all lines.

### Today

War across the centuries has changed dramatically, yet at the same time, as they say, it has remained the same. This can also be said of the Storm Crows. No other legacy has gone through the changes and trials as the Storm Crows, and the Doom Prophets would have it no other way. The ability to see the paths of fate and destiny has always guided the members of the Legacy. Although individual Storm Crows have fought against fate, all have nevertheless felt the rightness or wrongness of important events. Those who did not act in harmony with fate's precepts were removed by those Doombringers who were nearby or by fate itself. But the derailment of destiny that culminated in the Rip has blinded even the Legacy's most gifted seers. The Storm Crow Legacy is foundering, too often these days rapt in internal conflict. Without their guiding visions, the formerly disciplined Spears of Baal have fallen askew.

The Rip has affected the Storm Crows more profoundly than any other legacy. Traditionally, whatever their misgivings, the other legacies have looked toward Storm Crow seers for direction and forewarning. It is a great blow to their pride that they did not foresee the immense disaster in the Golden City. Now they sense only a darkness, a nebulous area of fate that cannot be seen, but only dimly felt. And as the gathering cloud draws ever more closely in, the Gift of Sight grows ever more diffuse. A great doom gathers on the horizon, but the Storm Crows cannot discern what exactly it is or even when it might hit.

### How Storm Crows View the Other Legacies

**Crimson Lords:** Degenerates, yes. But look into their eyes and you find a nobility of spirit that has not diminished with time. They sense the role they will play in the coming Ragnarok.

**Hidden Suns:** They live within a darkness even our Sight cannot penetrate. They say they bring light, and many do, but who knows what they are really doing there in the shadows?

**Void Phoenixes:** Half-breed demons all. Why our ancestors stayed their hand instead of smiting them with hammers from the sky I will never know.

**Wild Bloods:** Fortitude, prowess, yes – but too often they lose themselves to the raging tides of battle.

The current conflicts across the world continue to draw the interest of the Children of Storms, even if the wars of the last several decades have been short local skirmishes, nothing like the continent-spanning campaigns of the World Wars. Now, following the Rip, the Storm Crows feel the heavy weight of a great battle coming. They hear the thunder of destructive change and are preparing for the war they believe will ignite the world and possibly the Otherworld.

Keen common sense coupled with their now limited ability to discern the course of history has many Doombringers convinced that the next war will be over the resources of the Otherworld. Even preliminary exploration of the Otherworld has convinced the U.S and Israel of the wealth that can be gained by exploiting the new planet. The revelation of the existence of a whole new world beyond the torn wreckage of Jerusalem came as a great shock to the leaders of many nations along with the rest of the world. These countries were not happy to learn of such a momentous discovery through the pages of International Geographical Society. Anger and resentment towards Israel and the U.S. is growing, as those two countries seem very hesitant to share the only stable doorway to the new world.

Storm Crows are on both sides of this conflict. Some work with Project Titan (see Chapter Two: Allegiances), while others work independently for various nations or organizations that want access to the Otherworld but are currently unable to get it. Many nations are maneuvering for advantageous positions in preparation for possible aggression, and all are clamoring for their piece of the proverbial pie.

It certainly is an exciting time to be a Storm Crow.

### Character Concepts

Mercenary unit leader, prosecuting attorney, extreme sportsman, fighter pilot, rebel guerrilla, manipulative fortune teller, storm chaser, conspiracy prophet, tribal shaman.

#### The Strong Storm Crow

It may seem likely that the Strong hero would be the most common Storm Crow class, but that isn't in fact the case. True, this class has much to offer the Champions of Fate, but a good attack bonus and simple damage output is not what drives most Storm Crows. However, those who do follow this path are truly dynamic fighters and athletes who live for physical confrontations. The talents and abilities the class provides mesh seamlessly with the War birthrights of the legacy. Navy Seals, mercenaries, and revolutionaries are common choices for Strong Storm Crows, but so are athletes of all sorts – the more danger-

ous the sport the better.

#### **The Fast Storm Crow**

The Fast Storm Crow is a dynamic and energetic character, built for stealth and gunplay. A surprising number of Storm Crow seers are Fast heroes. As mystic warriors, they use their prescient birthrights to great effect. The ability to see moments into the future combines wonderfully with the high initiative, Defense, and ranged attack bonus of the Fast hero class. When used with the birthrights of War, Storm Crows of this base class become expert tactical support fighters and ambushers, able to strike without warning and move away from harm fractions of a second before the lethal retaliatory blow falls.

#### **The Tough Storm Crow**

Being able to endure pain and suffering is seen as a mark of greatness within this Legacy, and certainly no other class offers so many ways to do so. The quintessential Storm Crow is a Tough hero, capable of action long after his companions have fallen. Those who concentrate on this single class are revered for their ability to stand as a bulwark against harm, protecting those who would fall from a blow. The Tough Storm Crow is likely to concentrate on Thunder and War birthrights, harkening back to the storm gods of myth. It is uncommon to see a Storm Crow who has no scars from some battle or accident. They wear such marks with pride. Even the ancient art of scarification is returning among the younger Tough Storm Crow heroes. Each carving of the skin is a sign of wisdom gained and a reminder of the sacrifice she has made along the way.

#### **The Smart Storm Crow**

There are relatively few titans of this Legacy who care for knowledge not tempered by wisdom. The Storm Crow cherishes experience and intuition over logic and book-learning, so the Smart Storm Crow is a rare creature indeed. The uncommon Storm Crow who is enamored with knowledge always looks for practical ways to use what he knows. Smart Storm Crows often focus on their legacy's attachment to weather, perfecting their skill with the Thunder birthrights. The Smart Storm Crow does not spend much time inside researching; rather he goes looking for new data to create more information. But Smart Storm Crows are not just mystic weathermen. The best titan tacticians are found among Smart Storm Crows, as are the most venerated of elder mystics. The combination of knowledge and wisdom is rare but priceless.

#### **The Dedicated Storm Crow**

Responsibility and perseverance seem like inbred traits for Storm Crow titans. The Dedicated Storm Crow is a common and a powerful archetype. These titans have the nerve to look into the face of destruction without flinching. Within themselves, they find reservoirs of strength and endurance. Dedicated Storm Crows tend to concentrate their birthrights within a single tree, maximizing their potency but at the same time enduring the consequences. It is common for Storm Crows to multi-class as Dedicated/Tough heroes, giving the inheritor the will to persevere and the hardiness to survive in the face of over-

whelming danger.

#### **The Charismatic Storm Crow**

Charismatic Storm Crows are as mercurial as the weather and as terrifyingly beautiful to behold as a thunderstorm. Instead of being charming and disarming, like Charismatic Crimson Lords, for instance, these titans are more likely to intimidate and frighten. Their personalities fill a room, pressing relentlessly down upon those who have their undivided attention. Charismatic Storm Crows are outspoken, thunderous orators and lightning-fast leaders. They use their talents to marshal armies and to browbeat and dishearten (or terrify) weak-willed assailants. These inheritors tend to focus on the birthrights of Thunder and of War.

#### **Legacy Traits**

Storm Crows have the following game statistics:

**Soaring Sight:** The Storm Crows are capable of keen intuition and focused action rivaling those of the greatest prophets and warriors of legend. Select a skill listed in the following paragraph. The Hidden Sun receives a +2 legacy bonus when making checks with that skill.

Concentration, Knowledge (earth and life sciences, tactics), Listen, Navigate, Search, Spot, Survival.

**Prescience:** The warrior's awareness of every Storm Crow exists a fraction of a second in the future. Storm Crows gain a +1 legacy bonus to initiative checks.

**Blessing of War:** The Storm Crow Legacy is closely tied to conflict and battle. All Storm Crows add their Wisdom modifier (if positive) to their Constitution score for determining their massive damage threshold.

#### **Legacy Weakness**

While they most often present themselves as stoic warriors and true-sighted seers, the Storm Crows are also children of storms and the ever mutable weather.

**Price of Destiny:** Fate can be fickle and as the Storm Crows are closely tied to the strands of destiny they suffer from the titans' failure to prevent the Rip and the release of the Daemonhost. Once per gaming session the GM chooses a single action that receives a legacy penalty equal to 2 + the Storm Crow's base birthright bonus (BBB).

#### **Beginning Birthrights**

The following are the three birthright trees of the Storm Crow Legacy; beneath each tree are those birthrights available to starting Storm Crow characters. Rules for manifesting birthrights and descriptions for birthrights are found in Chapter 4: Birthrights.

##### **Second Sight**

Augury or whispers of the past.

##### **Thunder**

Scent of storms



## War

Child of mars or maru's fearsome presence.

## Void Phoenixes

*We will not fail again.*

They claim to be the first titans, creatures who climbed forth from the primordial chaos to help the fallen gods shape the earth. Sadly, they believe their efforts failed and, rather than the perfect world they envisioned, they created a misshapen and deformed atrocity. They point to the horrors people inflict upon one another, the wars that wrack the world, and, most recently, the return of the Daemonhost as proof of their failure. They also see the rift into the Otherworld as their chance to right these "wrongs," to rebuild the world to their original specifications.

## Nature

The Void Phoenixes are quiet and watchful - and the most dangerous of all titans. To others, they seem placid and emotionally cool, but inside their spirits swirl with desperate anger and they seethe with hatred for the world around them. Where other titans battle to save the world they know and love, the Void Phoenixes simply want to stop the Daemonhost. Then they can destroy the world themselves and build it up from the ashes as they see fit.

Virtually every Void Phoenix feels that the world has somehow failed him: it has proved time and again that it is irreparable and should be scrapped. Something within each member of this Legacy evokes a sense of ennui, a feeling that nothing matters because everything has already failed. But instead of falling into an abyss of despair, the Void Phoenix rises from the ashes of despair to lash out at the world, to it, to purify it in the fires of his fury.

Void Phoenixes are the ultimate watchers:

## Alternate Names for Void Phoenixes

Fiends  
Chaos Dragons  
Warpers  
Children of Tiamat  
Genesites  
Blackhearts  
Conquering Wyrms

reactive (but not passive), focused, and alone. The life of a person descended from the greatest monsters of myth is difficult for even the strongest-willed person. It isolates him from humanity, even if he often feels a need to guard and protect his fellows from the decay that he sees destroying the world. But in some great, selfless act of martyrdom, like the fiery phoenix from which the legacy is named, the Void Phoenix bends his will to change the world. From the fires of destruction a new, a more perfect order will arise.

Perfection is an admirable goal, but the Void Phoenixes are obsessed with a vision of perfection seen through anger

and bitterness. They see the forest instead of the trees. They often find it difficult to look beyond their lofty ideals to see the individuals their actions affect. Empathy is a rare quality among Void Phoenixes. Personal bonds are difficult for most to form and maintain, yet when they do form such bonds, they are resiliently and utterly loyal.

Being around a Void Phoenix can be a very disquieting experience. They generally speak little, and what few words they use are bitter and filled with a hateful longing. They do not love the world they fight for, they simply hate those they fight against. Though they are perhaps the greatest foe the fiends of the Daemonhost face, the dark souls of these titans cause many others to view them with a grave distrust. While a Void Phoenix is an invaluable ally in the war against the Otherworld, you must always watch your back when she is around. Should she ever decide you are as much of a threat as the daemons she hates, she will waste no time attempting to end your life.

## The Past

Hidden Sun manuscripts mention the progenitor that birthed the first monsters, a dark mother, a primal chaos, as the ancestor of the Void Phoenixes. This creature was the least human-seeming of all the progenitors. Her wisdom was all-consuming, and she enjoyed destruction and creation in equal measure. Her foul, devastating majesty, her very presence killed all but the most valorous. The reasons for her involvement in the war against the Host cannot even be guessed at. With her departure, her children also disappeared, although there have always been those born who showed her Legacy. Fortunately, in most cases, the human portion of their being called to them with a stronger voice than their vicious mother.

The history of the Void Phoenixes is fraught with tragedy and horror. It is believed that some men saw them as angels, but others saw them as demons. In the Legacy's own legends, it is said that even shortly after their birth there were those of their number who wanted nothing but to destroy the world, to scrap it all and try again. The tales of the battles between the two sides of this titanic faction were absorbed into the myths of the world, and the first Void Phoenixes thus became



the demons and divine agents of the ancient world.

As men grew more sophisticated, the Void Phoenixes adopted new strategies and eventually accepted the permanence of the world. Though a few renegades still appeared from time to time, intent on using their powers to destroy creation and bring the age of men to a close, they were inevitably stopped by other Chaos Dragons (and/or other titans) and destroyed before they could cause troubles again.

When other titans appeared in areas formerly controlled by those of this Legacy, the Void Phoenixes quietly withdrew from most of the cities and large population centers of men. They retired to hidden lairs and formed into small cabals to plot their course for the future. There are those who claim it was during this period of their history that the Void Phoenixes wrote the first Purgation Codex, a book detailing methods for bringing the world to a peaceful end so that it could be reborn in a more suitable form. Though the Codex was, obviously, never put to use, the fact that copies of it still crop up from time to time disturbs the other inheritances.

### Today

Now, these nihilistic titans seem to be everywhere. They rise from among the disaffected children of the affluent, they stumble out of methadone clinics, they rage in straightjackets and padded rooms, and they stalk the halls of government with proclamations of war clenched in their fists. Where the Blackhearts go, horror inevitably follows and destruction flows in their wake like a river of blood. Unfortunately (or fortunately, depending on your point of view), Void Phoenixes tend to live short, violent lives.

The power of the Void Phoenixes lies in their origins. Spawned in primal chaos, they rule over the fundamental powers of destruction and creation. Their control over chaos itself allows them to reshape the world around them in strange and frightening ways, either to create entirely new items or to warp or destroy existing items. In the hands of a Void Phoenix, even the simplest tool can suddenly become a deadly weapon, and the most powerful of them can conjure material from the chaos beyond reality itself.

Today, the Void Phoenixes spend the majority of their time seeking out ways to reintroduce chaos into their environment. While they are certainly capable of using creative and destructive powers to do so, they are also becoming very adept at turning allies against one another and using their skills to destroy otherwise stable groups with internecine conflicts. Their control over chaos gives them ability to infect the minds of those around them with fear and uncertainty, bringing even powerful organizations to their knees when their leaders are compro-

## How Void Phoenixes View the Other Legacies

**Crimson Lords:** Let them rule a world that will soon die in flames.

**Hidden Suns:** They search for the answers to unvoiced questions and stumble in the darkness of ignorance.

**Storm Crows:** Of all of us, these wise warriors saw the truth that lay ahead. Pity that they were looking at the horizon rather than what was in front of them.

**Wild Bloods:** The others see us two as brothers because we so often wear the shapes of monsters, but these animals are as different from us as apes are from humans.

mised.

Most Void Phoenixes do their best to hide their true nature from others, knowing what effect their Legacy can have on those not born to the primal force of creation. Unfortunately, those who use their powers frequently find themselves transformed, becoming creatures of nightmare. Some claim their changes are brought on by tampering with the tainted world, that it is a physical sign of the corruption running riot through the world. Thus, the most powerful of these titans must hide their true nature from those around them, and many of these powerful inheritors retreat from the world entirely to work through intermediaries and other titans. With their bodies twisted into sculptures of fiendish horror, the Void Phoenixes become increasingly bitter and twisted with their hatred of the world's imperfections, a state of mind that can lead to their ultimate destruction. The whispered tales of Void Phoenixes gone

mad with despair and self-loathing are horrific in the extreme, legends of entire races warped and deformed by dark magic, and no sane titan is willing to take the chance of such things coming to pass again.

### Character Concepts

Morbid scholar, deviant inventor, depressed protector, fatalistic occultist, avant-garde sculptor, utopian philosopher, demolitions expert.

#### The Strong Void Phoenix

Scarcely seen these days, Strong Void Phoenixes in antiquity were the source of legends of giants. Myths and legends still recount the twisted memory of their passing. While there is a slow resurgence amongst this type of hero in the Void Phoenixes, it is doubtful they will ever regain the stature they possessed in days of yore. Instead, they now focus their abilities on learning a few of the more destructive Chaos birthrights and using those to augment their natural combat skills.

#### The Fast Void Phoenix

Like the Strong hero, the Fast hero has not made a real impact on the Void Phoenixes in the past. Though they are able to put the creative powers of the Void Phoenixes to good use, most Fast heroes lack the raw skills necessary to get the full benefit of their birthrights. Still, recent tales of deadly assassins using Void Phoenix birthrights lead many to speculate that the Fast heroes are coming into their own.

#### The Tough Void Phoenix

The ability to withstand damage from physical and energy sources makes the Tough Void Phoenix a surprising and deadly enemy. Because she can often withstand the brunt of her own birthrights, the Tough Void Phoenix often wades into the midst of her enemies and unleashes devastating powers to bring her opponents to their knees. This ability to resist the damaging effects of energy also allows the Tough Void Phoenix to use some

of the creative abilities other Void Phoenixes fear to tamper with due to the painful side effects.

#### **The Smart Void Phoenix**

With his vast number of skills, this type of Void Phoenix is able to make the maximum use of the more arcane abilities of his birthrights. The Smart Void Phoenix is a titan quite capable of deciphering the ancient tools and scripts left behind by the ancient Void Phoenix, including the fragments of the Purgation Codex. Smart Void Phoenixes are quite common in the modern world, where their status in society as professionals and technical individuals gives them access to large organizations and the infrastructure of the modern world. There is even rumor of a small cadre of Void Phoenix black-hat crackers who enjoy bringing chaos into the networks of the world.

#### **The Dedicated Void Phoenix**

Perhaps most disturbing of all the modern Void Phoenix types, the Dedicated heroes are quickly earning their reputation as a faction of bloodthirsty fanatics. In truth, the Dedicated Phoenixes see the modern world with open eyes, and have fully embraced the fact that the world as we once knew it has already come to an end. They work tirelessly now to bring about the new world, although in some cases they seem to be having some trouble agreeing on exactly what that new world should look like.

#### **The Charismatic Void Phoenix**

As in the past, the Charismatic Void Phoenix of today uses her natural charm and supernatural abilities to gather a respectable following. While not a cult in the true sense, these followers virtually worship the Charismatic, perhaps believing she is the one who can lead them through these troubled times. As often as not, though, these followers find themselves used up and cast aside as a result of one or more of the Void Phoenix's schemes. A few see the truth and are horrified at the changes they witness taking place in their idol's body and mind. These poor unfortunates rarely survive long, finding their end at the hands of the one they once worshipped.

#### **Legacy Traits**

Void Phoenixes have the following game statistics:

**Void's Resilience:** The Void Phoenixes are protected from most minor magics thanks to their powerful connection to primal chaos. As a result, they receive a +2 legacy bonus on all saving throws against spells, spell-like abilities, or supernatural effects of any type, including psionics and birthrights.

**Fatalist:** The Void Phoenix does not fear death: He understands it as a possibility, but it is nothing for him to fret over. He also understands that the world is always poised at the brink of utter annihilation, and very little has the power to frighten him. As a result, the Void Phoenix receives a +4 legacy bonus on all saves against fear effects.

**Universal Balance:** The Void is both the beginning and the end and if this balance is maintained, the Void Phoenix finds his birthrights are more potent. As long as the Void Phoenix has a nearly equal number of Genesis Fire and Ash birthrights, his birthrights are more difficult to resist. The number of birthrights in one tree cannot exceed or be exceeded by more than one in the other birthright tree. As long as this condition is true, the saving throw DC to resist all of the Void Phoenix's birthrights increases by 1.

#### **Legacy Weaknesses**

The monstrous Void Phoenixes have two weaknesses.

**Apathy:** Void Phoenixes descend from primal chaos and from the monsters and terrors of myth, which expresses itself both in the knowledge that the world is ending and in the desire (whether conscious or subconscious) to do nothing about it. Void Phoenixes suffer a -1 legacy penalty on all initiative rolls.

**Monstrous Heritage:** The Void Phoenixes are intimately connected to the warping power of chaos. They're descent from the monsters and terrors of myth expresses itself in a terrible transformation. Every time the Void Phoenix gains a BBB, he also gains a -2 legacy bonus to all Charisma checks, except Intimidation skill checks. This penalty stacks each time. This penalty is the mechanic effect of the disfiguring changes all Void Phoenixes undergo. You choose what these monstrous characteristics are, though they provide no actual benefits to the character.

#### **Beginning Birthrights**

The following are the two birthright trees of the Void Phoenix Legacy; beneath each tree are those birthrights available to starting Void Phoenix characters. Rules for manifesting birthrights and descriptions for birthrights are found in Chapter 4: Birthrights.

##### **Ash**

Corrosion or will decay.

##### **Genesis Fires**

Augmenting touch or wisdom of the void.

#### **The Wild Blood**

*The entire world is our wilderness.*

Scattered around the globe, the members of the Wild Blood Legacy harken back to an earlier time, when the beasts and men were not so very different. They are brothers to beasts and the creatures of myth. Wild Bloods are masters of the hunt and bestial spirit manipulation, shapeshifting titans who bring the wilderness with them wherever they might go.

##### **Nature**

The Wild Bloods are the most savage of the titans, and the history of the Legacy is one drenched in the blood of fallen enemies and lost allies. Within each Wild Blood are those primal urges resisted by civilized folk. Instead of hiding from their instinctive need to hunt, Wild Bloods revel in it, hunters and predators all. Legends of old speak of Enkidu, Grendel, Wendigo, and Muhnochwa, all stories of Wild Bloods. Humans have rarely understood them, and their fear drove them into the wasteland beyond civilization where their descendants still roam.

While humanity's incomprehensible fear of them has driven them away, though, most Wild Bloods have not forgotten the old pacts and promises made by their progenitor. These inheritors are driven to wander by instincts older than humankind. The Wild Bloods move from place to place, generally using their powers to hunt down threats to humanity wherever they go - even if those threats are those of their Wild Blood brethren who have forgotten their ancient charge. Sadly, danger dogs their footsteps, and the Wild Bloods often find themselves running into trouble far

more often than solving it. In ancient times, these wandering travelers were seen as mystics or lunatics, either to be venerated or reviled, depending on the culture. Yet the Wild Bloods were there in the darkest of times, either as lone heroes or desperate packs, struggling to fight back the threats to men and preserve a civilization they did not understand.

Yet, being at least partly human, Wild Bloods are often observers as well as hunters. They have watched through the passing centuries and have sometimes recorded or passed on what they have seen through oral traditions within the Legacy.

Song and poetry two such methods. Although it would come as a great surprise to many other titans, the use of the written word does not make one a pariah among these wild hunters. Curiosity has even brought some modern Wild Bloods back to the civilization they once abandoned. The metropolis of today can be as deadly and untamed as any natural wilderness. Here, though, people are their own greatest

## Alternate Names for Wild Bloods

Beastmen  
Skinwalkers  
Chimerae  
Berserkers  
Satyrs  
Lunatics

predator. The corruption that plagues the world is best hunted in the streets and boardrooms of the glass-and-steel forest. Like their ancestors before them, the Wild Bloods of today hunt down those who prey upon humanity.

The Rip has only driven the Wild Bloods to greater ferocity, as the hunters of the Daemonhost. But the Wild Bloods have also brought with them a message to civilization: Its time may be drawing to a close. The self-destructiveness of humankind and its predation upon the planet will end, and end now. People who refuse to stop such heinous acts will soon learn that the untamed wilderness can be found everywhere, even in the shadows of the city.

### The Past

The history of the Wild Bloods can be seen most clearly in the legends of tribal peoples, tales of animals who speak with men, of raging creatures who are both man and beast, and of clever

ravens who bring blessings to their people and death to the wicked. When men were still wandering the plains in search of their next meal, the Wild Bloods ran beside them and offered advice and help where they could. When men settled into small villages, the Wild Bloods still lived with them and protected their lands from beasts from the Otherworld. But when tribal villages grew into towns and then into cities, the Wild Bloods retreated from their kin, withdrawing to places where they could still stalk the wilderness in peace, always hunting the enemies of a people who no longer understood or appreciated their wild ways.

When the cities grew, the territories of the Wild Bloods shrank, and the titans found themselves wandering further afield in their quest for enemies to vanquish or mysteries to explore. They distanced themselves from the tribes they had once loved and known so well, becoming isolated and feral. Though they instinctively sought out and destroyed members of the Daemonhost, the Wild Bloods began to love the hunt for its own sake, and protected humans only as an afterthought. Their bloody rampages became things of legend, and dark tales of the wendigo and the werewolf sprang up where the Wild Bloods stalked.

Yet, despite their bloodlust and their wanderings, the Wild Bloods found companions in their travels. Their savage nature and wild hearts called out to those humans who were sympathetic to their ways, and the Godgenes were scattered like seedpods into the wind. Over time, the number of Wild Bloods dwindled, and only the rise of a global culture and the mingling of their scattered descendents have allowed these titans to make a comeback, of sorts.

The widespread travel of the ancestors of the modern Wild Blood was beyond that of any of the other legacies. No corner of the world has eluded their presence. They could be found within the tales of beast gods and animals who spoke to the wise men of the tribe. And wherever they traveled, they left behind lineages that today stalk the urban wastelands as well as the rural.

### Today

The modern world is probably not ready for the Wild Bloods, and it is certainly not ready for the changes they bring. In the past, men saw the Wild Bloods as incomprehensible creatures that did battle with even stranger and more inimical demons. But today, the Wild Bloods are seen as barbaric and crude, their bloodlust mistaken for a homicidal mania. Men have learned to fear the beast within and, by extension, they fear the Wild Bloods and all they represent.

For all their ties to the past and their primitive nature, though, many Wild Bloods have embraced the modern world as their own. While the pull of their ancient Legacy and the memories of their blood stir in them the lust for wide-open spaces and far wanderings, modern Wild Bloods can also see the wilderness in the gleaming steel canyons of New York City and can smell the blood on the wind in tattered Jerusalem. Where once the city cast out its wild cousins and left them to wander the neglected places, today the Wild Bloods have claimed the urban wilderness as their own and they rejoice in their new surroundings.

The enemies of man have returned, as well, slinking through the Rip in search of souls to torment, minds to break, and bodies to rend. Older Wild Bloods rejoice at the prospect of such a worthy



foe once again in their midst, and revel in the joys of the hunt. Alone amongst the titans, the Wild Bloods see the return of the Daemonhost as an opportunity, a chance to recapture their ancient glories and exult in the rightful thrill of the hunt once more. Though they are well aware of the dangers posed by these evil creatures, the Wild Bloods are often blinded by the hunt and become too excited to deny its lure for long.

Perhaps most surprising are the types of Wild Bloods appearing in the streets of today's cities. Though there are certainly a fair number of urban "tribals," with their lurid tattoos and posts of metal pierced through their flesh, there are as many or more individuals from less "uncivilized" backgrounds. Private detectives of this Legacy use their awakened titan abilities every day. Police officers of this blood hunt criminals on the job, but at night they seek daemons and creatures from the Otherworld. Businesspeople awaken during merger meetings, drawing upon the primal urges within to dominate those around them and bring a "survival of the fittest" ethos to their business dealings. The beast within does not discriminate against the nature of one's hunt when it comes time to rouse itself from its slumber. Those who become Wild Bloods do not often conform to stereotypes. Computer programmers who never see the light of day are as likely to be Wild Bloods as rugged hunters who spend months in the outback. When the beast calls, it brings with it all the urges, drives, and instincts men have struggled so long to forget, and it claims all its hosts with equal ferocity. Once the fewest in number, the Wild Bloods may now be the most populous of modern inheritors - it seems that the long centuries of wandering and "cross-pollination" practiced by the ancient Wild Bloods is now bearing fruit, now that Godgenes are once again expressing in greater numbers.

If the Wild Bloods can once again organize themselves, as in the packs of old, they might become a truly mighty force to be reckoned with. As it is, with their scattered membership, its numbers largely uneducated in the ways of their powers and their Legacy, they are simply lone, deadly hunters and canny travelers. As the inevitable legendary transformations ensue among those who do not know how to use their powers safely and wisely, many titans believe the Wild Bloods will go underground and, eventually, find one another by their inhuman traits. If this is true, then the time is nearing when the old myths will be heard again, and the sounds of predators howling in the urban jungles will chill the blood of their prey.

## Character Concepts

Savage hunter, wily traveler, grifter, charismatic con artist, crazed mystic, urban squatter, vigilante, obsessed investigator.

### The Strong Wild Blood

One of the most common types of Wild Blood, the Strong hero exemplifies the powerful physical nature of this legacy. Direct and dominant, Strong Wild Bloods are capable of ripping a foe apart with their bare hands, often not even bothering with their birthright powers unless faced with a truly dangerous foe. The Strong Wild Blood tends to focus on the Wild Flesh birthright, enhancing his already formidable strength with the power of his wild forms and its natural weaponry. The Strong Wild Blood is like a bear, powerful and ready to explode into action, rending his foes with powerful weapons and phenomenal strength when

roused to the hunt.

### The Fast Wild Blood

Like the Strong Wild Blood, the Fast Wild Blood is a physical creature who revels in her natural gifts. Agile and flexible, the Fast Wild Blood benefits from reflexes that allow her to avoid danger and get the drop on her opponents. The Fast Wild Blood is also likely to focus on her Wild Flesh birthright. If the Strong Wild Blood is a great cat, the Fast Wild Blood is a great hunting cat, using her superior speed and tactics to shred her quarry to pieces.

### The Tough Wild Blood

Weathering the attacks of others is not necessarily a trait for which Wild Bloods are known, but the travelers amongst their number are often of this type. With their ability to endure the hardships of nature and the resilience to bounce back from strange illnesses or the effects of venomous bites, the hermits and wasteland wanderers of the Wild Bloods are often of this class, as well. This type of Wild Blood certainly has survivability down in spades, and might be likened to a wolf, worrying and wearing down its foes until they cannot stand against the onslaught.

### The Smart Wild Blood

While it may seem an ill fit, the Smart Wild Blood is actually a quite competent character. The large number of skill points allows the Smart Wild Blood to really benefit from the diverse skills useful to Wild Bloods. Rather than focusing on a few of the skills he finds most important, the Smart Wild Blood is often very skilled in a wide variety of talents. Given the diverse backgrounds from which Wild Bloods are now springing, the Smart Wild Blood is actually quite common, and tends to focus on the Chimera or Bestial Urge birthrights to maximize their intelligence and command of many skills.

### The Dedicated Wild Blood

The hunt is everything to these savage Wild Bloods, and their obsession with destroying the Daemonhost gives them great power. The Dedicated Wild Blood does not focus on any single birthright, but rather advances through an intuitive path that allows her to take best advantage of her wisdom and her keen senses. While other members of the Wild Blood enjoy the hunt, the Dedicated only feel truly alive when bringing down prey. This obsession with the hunt often leaves Dedicated Wild Bloods as the most wild, in both appearance and behavior, of their Legacy.

## How Wild Bloods View the Other Legacies

**Crimson Lords:** They might as well just stay at their parties and let those who can actually accomplish the task do their job without interference.

**Hidden Suns:** None of the others really trusts them, but they do know the secrets of our enemies. In any case, what do I care? If a Hidden Sun betrays me, I'll rip his throat out.

**Storm Crows:** They don't see how similar we really are. The cry of blood calls to us both.

**Void Phoenixes:** Live with what is, man! - forget what might have been. Only now truly matters.

### The Charismatic Wild Blood

Blessed with natural good looks and a primal charm, Charismatic Wild Bloods often specialize in the Bestial Urge birthright, eschewing the shapeshifting abilities common to others of their kind. These Wild Bloods are the “bad boys” and “bad girls” our parents warned us about, the epitome of animal magnetism, those who can captivate with a smoldering glance and who incite others into behavior they cannot explain or deny. When a Charismatic Wild Blood is about, pheromones run high and even the most civilized and scholarly feel their pulse quicken and their breath grow shallow as the beast begins to wake. Though they are natural leaders, Charismatic Wild Bloods have a hard time holding their throngs together, as the powers of the Urge tend to push others toward more bestial behaviors.

### Legacy Traits

Wild Bloods have the following game statistics:

**Call of the Wild:** The Wild Bloods are able to draw upon the primitive energies within their spirit when using certain skills. Select a skill listed in the following paragraph. The Wild Blood receives a +2 legacy bonus when making checks with that skill.

Handle Animal, Intimidate, Knowledge (Streetwise), Move Silently, Sense Motive, Scrounge, Survival.

**Bestial Exertion:** Once per day as a free action, a Wild Blood may call upon the primal power of the beast within her. This grants a +2 legacy bonus to her Strength, Dexterity, and Constitution. The increase in Constitution increases the Wild Blood’s hit points by 1 hit point per level, but these hit points go away at the end of the bestial exertion.

While under the effects of bestial exertion, a Wild Blood cannot use ranged weapons, skills, or abilities that require patience and concentration. Further, she cannot use the benefits of the following feats: any firearm or driving feat, Cautious, Combat Expertise, Creative, Deceptive, Gearhead, Meticulous, and Studious.

Bestial exertion lasts for a number of rounds equal to the Wild Blood’s base birthright bonus (see Chapter Four: Birthrights) + her current Constitution modifier (minimum 1 round). Once the effect ends, she is fatigued (-2 to Strength and Dexterity, can’t charge or run) for the duration of the encounter.

**Scent of the Hunt:** Wild Bloods are nearly impossible to shake off the trail once they begin the hunt. Wild Bloods may track by scent as if they had the scent ability (although they gain no other benefits of that ability); see d20 Modern Roleplaying Game™, Chapter Eight: Friends and Foes, “Common Special Qualities” for more information on scent. Wild Bloods also gain a +2 legacy bonus to all Survival checks made to track anyone in this way; this bonus increases to +4 if the Wild Blood is tracking an individual she has fought in the past 24 hours.

### Legacy Weakness

**Primal Fury:** Once a Wild Blood suffers a critical hit in any combat, she must make a Will saving throw (DC 10 + amount of damage taken) or enter a berserk frenzy. While frenzied, the Wild Blood is unable to stop fighting until her enemies have fled or lie motionless around her. This frenzy is unstoppable, in most cases, although other legacy abilities, birthrights, or spells may be able to pull the Wild Blood out of the combat lust once it sets in. A Wild Blood may spend an action point to avoid a primal fury

without needing to make a saving throw or to halt one once it has begun.

## Beginning Birthrights

The following are the three birthright trees of the Wild Blood Legacy; beneath each tree are those birthrights available to starting Wild Blood characters. Rules for manifesting birthrights and descriptions for birthrights are found in Chapter 4: Birthrights.

### Bestial Urge

Anat’s calling or cusith’s urge.

### Chimera

Blood of the unicorn.

### Wild Flesh

Senses of the beast or ursa’s bones.

## New Advanced and Prestige Classes

In addition to the advanced classes presented in the d20 Modern Roleplaying Game™, characters in Dark Inheritance can choose from those detailed below. Also presented are two new prestige classes, the Spec Ops and Two-Fisted God of Guns.

### Stim Freak

Intelligence agencies, military units, and criminal gangs all have members who are well trained in physical combat. Still, not all can be as physically gifted as their leaders might desire, and sometimes a particular job calls for someone with just that little bit of extra - oomph. The Stim Freak gives them just what they need.

Stim Freaks are people who use high-intensity steroids, methamphetamines, or the like to enhance their physical performance for short periods of time. They are usually physically impressive themselves, and almost always have trained intensely in some kind of martial combat. The continuous use of performance-enhancing drugs has many repercussions on them both psychologically and physically, however, and as a result many governments frown upon these tactics. Still, Stim Freaks are always in ready supply because of the high prices they can command on the open market and because there are always those who value fast living over boredom or who value the ends over the means.

Select this advanced class if you want your character to excel at physical combat, heedless of personal danger.

The fastest path into this advanced class is from the Strong hero basic class, though other paths are possible.

### Requirements

To qualify to become a Stim Freak, a character must fulfill all the following criteria.

Base Attack Bonus: +3.

Base Fortitude Save: +2.

Feat: Brawl.

**TABLE 3-2: THE STIM FREAK**

Class Level	Base					Special	Defense Bonus	Reputation Bonus
	Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save				
1	+1	+2	+0	+0		Shot in the arm	+1	+1
2	+2	+3	+0	+0		Relentless	+1	+1
3	+3	+3	+1	+1		Bonus feat	+2	+1
4	+4	+4	+1	+1		Weapon Focus	+2	+2
5	+5	+4	+1	+1		A shot in the arm	+3	+2
6	+6	+5	+2	+2		Bonus feat	+3	+2
7	+7	+5	+2	+2		Weapon Specialization	+4	+3
8	+8	+6	+2	+2		F'ing crazy	+4	+3
9	+9	+6	+3	+3		Bonus feat	+5	+3
10	+10	+7	+3	+3		Ultimate weapon	+5	

**Special:** Must either be a member of an organization that can provide with the necessary drugs or have the means and contacts to buy a steady supply.

**Class Information**

The following information pertains to the Stim Freak advanced class.

**Hit Die**

The Stim Freak gains 1d10 hit points per level. The character's Constitution modifier applies.

**Action Points**

The Stim Freak gains a number of action points equal to 6 + one-half his character level, rounded down, every time he attains a new level in this class.

**Class Skills**

The Stim Freak's class skills are as follows. Climb (Str), Craft (structural) (Int), Intimidate (Cha), Jump (Str), Knowledge (current events, popular culture, streetwise, tactics) (Int), Listen (Wis), Profession (Wis), Read/Write Language (none), Repair (Int), Scrounge (Wis), Speak Language (none), Spot (Wis), and Swim (Str).  
Skill Points at Each Level: 3 + Int modifier.

**Class Features**

The following features pertain to the Stim Freak advanced class.

**Shot in the Arm**

The Stim Freak must use some form of drug to enhance his performance. This can be anything from a street-level drug such as methamphetamines to a serum designed by a secret military agency looking to produce a legion



of super-soldiers. Whatever the drug, it is highly addictive, and must be taken at least once per day to avoid the withdrawal symptoms (see below). A Stim Freak that is part of a syndicate that supplies his drug of choice need not worry about purchasing it, but if such a supply is not available he must purchase it himself. The drug must be purchased weekly and has a Purchase DC equal to 5 + the Stim Freak's class level. The more he takes

the drug, the more potent and plentiful each dose must be.

Starting at 1st level, a Stim Freak can temporarily increase one of his physical ability scores (Strength, Dexterity, or Constitution) a number of times a day equal to his Stim Freak class level. He gets to increase the selected ability score by 1d4+1 points. The increase lasts for a number of rounds equal to his class level. At the end of the duration, the Stim Freak is fatigued (-2 Strength and Dexterity, can't run or charge) for 1d4+1 rounds.

At 5th level, the Stim Freak can temporarily increase two of his physical ability scores by spending 1 action point. If he does so, the Stim Freak is fatigued for 1d6+2 rounds at the end of the duration.

**Withdrawal:** A Stim Freak who does not get his daily fix starts to go into withdrawal. As long as he is in withdrawal, the Stim Freak loses access to all class abilities (although base attack bonus, saves, Defense, and Reputation are unaffected).

Each morning, starting with the morning after he did not take the drug, he must make a Fortitude save (DC 15 + the number of previous withdrawal saves). Failure indicates that the character suffers 1d2

points of temporary Constitution damage, while success means that he has fought off the suffering for a day. Two successful saves breaks the addiction completely, but the Stim Freak permanently loses access to all Stim Freak class abilities.

#### **Relentless**

The Stim Freak's Constitution score is considered to be 1 point higher per class level for the purpose of determining the effects of nonlethal damage. This ability stacks with the Improved Damage Threshold feat.

#### **Bonus Feats**

At 3rd, 6th, and 9th level, the Stim Freak gets a bonus feat. The bonus feat must be selected from the following list, and the Stim Freak must meet all the prerequisites of the feat to select it.

Advanced Combat Martial Arts, Armor Proficiency (light), Armor Proficiency (medium), Athletic, Brawl, Combat Martial Arts, Dodge, Heroic Surge, Improved Brawl, Improved Combat Martial Arts, Improved Damage Threshold, Improved Knockout Punch, Knockout Punch, Mobility, Power Attack, Streetfighting, Toughness.

#### **Weapon Focus**

At 4th level, a Stim Freak gains the Weapon Focus class feature, providing the benefit of the feat with the same name. The Stim Freak must choose a specific weapon; he can choose unarmed strike or grapple as the weapon. The Stim Freak must be proficient with the chosen weapon.

You add +1 to all attack rolls you make using the selected weapon.

#### **Weapon Specialization**

At 7th level, a Stim Freak gains weapon specialization with a specific melee or ranged weapon that he or she also has applied the Weapon Focus feat or class feature to.

You get a +2 bonus on damage rolls with the chosen weapon.

#### **F'ing Crazy**

The Stim Freak is so wild in combat and has such an obvious drug-crazed mind that any character of his level or less that enters melee combat with him must make a Will save (DC 18) or be shaken (-2 penalty to attack rolls, saving throws, and skill checks) for 1d4 rounds. A character who makes this save is immune to that Stim Freak's f'ing crazy ability for one day.

#### **Ultimate Weapon**

Whenever the Stim Freak spends 1 action point to improve the result of any action he takes while engaged in combat, he gets to add 2d6 to the result instead of the usual 1d6.

### **Super Soldier**

These genetically altered humans have greater abilities than normal due to genetic transplants and DNA manipulation. They are often the result of experimental gene therapies undertaken by governments, militaries, and espionage agencies, all of whom use "their" super-soldiers as expendable resources in their wars and machinations. Normal soldiers have several nicknames for these genetic super soldiers - gene cheats, mods, alter boys, etc. - and tend to keep their distance from

them out of jealousy, disgust, and even fear. The Super Soldiers themselves tend to be outcasts and others who have nothing to lose and do not mind risking their lives for the chance to enhance their natural abilities.

Select this advanced class if you want your character to be a genetically enhanced and highly trained "uber-soldier."

The most likely path into this class is from the Strong hero basic class, though other paths are possible.

#### **Requirements**

To qualify to become a Super Soldier, a character must fulfill all the following criteria.

Base Attack Bonus: +3.

**Skills:** Knowledge (tactics) 6 ranks.

Feats: Combat Martial Arts, Personal Firearms Proficiency.

**Special:** The character must be part of an organization with the technology to continue to alter her DNA. Should she lose this status, she can no longer advance in this advanced class, but keeps any abilities she has already gained.

#### **Class Information**

The following information pertains to the Super Soldier advanced class.

##### **Hit Die**

The Super Soldier gains 1d10 hit points per level. The character's Constitution modifier applies.

##### **Action Points**

The Super Soldier gains a number of action points equal to 6 + one-half her character level, rounded down, every time she attains a new level in this class.

##### **Class Skills**

The Super Soldier's class skills are as follows.

Climb (Str), Craft (structural) (Int), Intimidate (Cha), Jump (Str), Knowledge (current events, streetwise, tactics) (Int), Listen (Wis), Profession (Wis), Read/Write Language (none), Repair (Int), Speak Language (none), Spot (Wis), and Swim (Str).

Skill Points at Each Level: 3 + Int modifier.

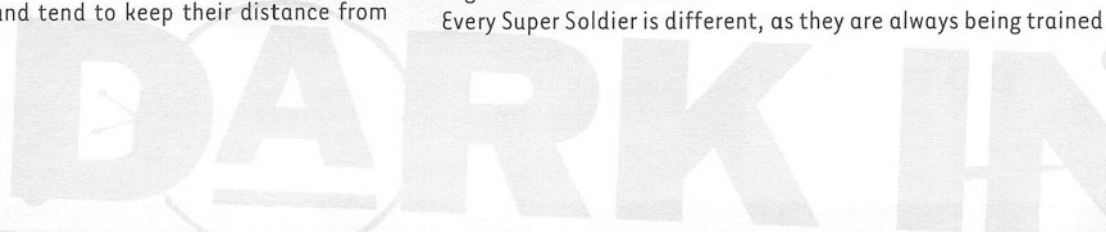
#### **Class Features**

The following features pertain to the Super Soldier advanced class.

##### **Genetic Enhancements**

A character in the Super Soldier program must submit herself to constant genetic testing and DNA manipulation. Her superiors use her body as a living laboratory in which to test more and more powerful genetic enhancement techniques. She usually undergoes physical and psychological training in addition to this gene therapy in order to prepare her body and mind for the changes that will be taking place. A Super Soldier must visit her home base each time she gains a level at which this ability is gained. If she cannot, she does not gain the enhancement until she does visit her home base, but still gains all the other advantages of her new level.

Every Super Soldier is different, as they are always being trained



and genetically programmed for new missions. In some cases, the Super Soldier may even be able to request certain enhancements if she is not needed for anything specific at the time of her "upgrade." Whenever the character reaches a new level at which she gains a physical or mental enhancement, she may choose from the following. (The GM can limit the Super Soldier's choices to reflect the current mission she is on, or for reasons her superiors know but keep from the character.)

**Physical Enhancements:** A Super Soldier chooses one physical enhancement at 1st, 4th, 7th, and 10th level.

**Ability Enhancement:** Choose one physical ability score (Strength, Dexterity, or Constitution), and gain a +1 bonus to that ability. You can choose this enhancement more than once and apply it as you see fit each time.

**Physical Aptitude:** Choose one physical skill (any skill that uses Strength, Dexterity, or Constitution as its relevant ability). You gain a bonus equal to your Super Soldier level when making checks with that skill. You can choose this enhancement more than once, but it must apply to a different skill each time.

**Physical Talent:** You gain one of the following basic class talents, even if you are not a member of the appropriate class and do not meet the prerequisites.

Evasion (Fast), extreme effort (Strong), increased speed (Fast), remain conscious (Tough), robust (Tough), stamina (Tough).

In all cases, use your Super Soldier class level in place of basic class levels for calculations necessary to these talents. For example, use Super Soldier level in place of Tough level to determine the number of extra hit points gained from the robust talent. If you also have ranks in the appropriate basic class, these levels and your Super Soldier levels stack.

**Animal Senses:** You gain one of the following feats or special qualities, even if you do not meet the usual prerequisites.

Alertness, low-light vision, or scent.

See *d20 Modern Roleplaying Game™*, Chapter Eight: Friends and Foes, "Common Special Qualities" for more information on the low-light vision and scent abilities.

**Mental Enhancements:** A Super Soldier chooses one mental

enhancement at 2nd, 5th, and 8th level.

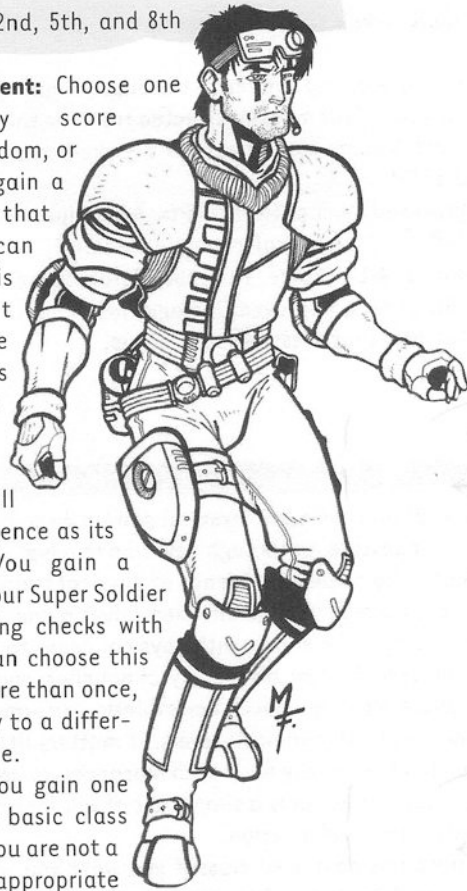
**Ability Enhancement:** Choose one mental ability score (Intelligence, Wisdom, or Charisma), and gain a +1 bonus to that attribute. You can choose this enhancement more than once and apply it as you see fit each time.

**Mental Aptitude:** Choose one skill that uses Intelligence as its key modifier. You gain a bonus equal to your Super Soldier level when making checks with that skill. You can choose this enhancement more than once, but it must apply to a different skill each time.

**Mental Talent:** You gain one of the following basic class talents, even if you are not a member of the appropriate class and do not meet the prerequisites.

Aware (Dedicated), cool under pressure (Dedicated), improved aid another (Dedicated), intuition (Dedicated), linguist (Smart), plan (Smart), savant (Smart).

In all cases, use your Super Soldier class level in place of basic class levels for calculations necessary to these talents. For example, use Super Soldier level in place of Smart level when making the level check for the plan talent. If you also have ranks in the appropriate basic class, these levels and your Super



**TABLE 3-3: THE SUPER SOLDIER**

Class Level	Base				Special	Defense Bonus	Reputation Bonus
	Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save			
1	+1	+2	+0	+0	Physical enhancement	+1	+0
2	+2	+3	+0	+0	Mental enhancement	+2	+0
3	+3	+3	+1	+1	Bonus feat	+2	+1
4	+4	+4	+1	+1	Physical enhancement	+3	+1
5	+5	+4	+1	+1	Mental enhancement	+4	+1
6	+6	+5	+2	+2	Bonus feat	+4	+2
7	+7	+5	+2	+2	Physical enhancement	+5	+2
8	+8	+6	+2	+2	Mental enhancement	+6	+2
9	+9	+6	+3	+3	Bonus feat	+6	+3
10	+10	+7	+3	+3	Physical enhancement	+7	+3

Soldier levels stack.

### Bonus Feats

At 3rd, 6th, and 9th level, the Super Soldier gets a bonus feat. The bonus feat must be selected from the following list, and the Super Soldier must meet all the prerequisites of the feat to select it.

Advanced Combat Martial Arts, Agile Riposte, Armor Proficiency (light), Armor Proficiency (medium), Athletic, Defensive Martial Arts, Dodge, Far Shot, Heroic Surge, Improved Combat Martial Arts, Improved Damage Threshold, Improved Initiative, Mobility, Toughness, Weapon Focus.

### Eldritch Monk

Not all who call upon mystical powers do so by incantation and occult gesture, or through devotion to a higher power; there are those who channel by means of physical training the raw magic of the cosmos to augment themselves alone. The Eldritch Monk melds mystical energy with physical might to become a warrior surpassed by few others. By channeling mystical power, the Eldritch Monk enhances her athletic performance and combat abilities to superhuman levels. It matters little to her whether you bind her or gag her – such nuisances do not hinder her powers, for it takes only a simple act of will for an Eldritch Monk to burst into deadly action.

Select this advanced class if you want your character to be a mystical martial artist, enhancing her skill with magical might. The fastest path into this advanced class is from the Fast hero basic class, though other paths are possible

### Requirements

To qualify to become an Eldritch Monk, a character must fulfill the following criteria.

Base Attack Bonus: +2.

**Skills:** Knowledge (arcane lore) 3 ranks, Tumble 6 ranks.

Feats: Combat Martial Arts, Focused.

**Special:** Be inducted into an order or monastery that ritually marks the character with the proper tattoos or scars to cast spells without foci.

### Class Information

The following information pertains to the Eldritch Monk advanced class.

The Eldritch Monk gains 1d8 hit points per level. The character's Constitution modifier applies.

### Action Points

The Eldritch Monk gains a number of action points equal to 6 + one-half her character level, rounded down, every time she attains a new level in this class.

### Class Skills

The Eldritch Monk's class skills are as fol-

lows.

Balance (Dex), Climb (Str), Concentration (Con), Craft (visual arts), Escape Artist (Dex), Hide (Dex), Jump (Str), Knowledge (arcane lore, theology and philosophy), Move Silently (Dex), Profession (Wis), Read/Write Language (none), Speak Language (none), Spot (Wis), Swim (Str), Tumble (Dex).

Skill Points at Each Level: 3 + Int modifier.

### Foci

An Eldritch Monk does not require a focus to cast spells. The ritual tattooing or scarification imbues the character with the ability to cast magic inherently.

### Class Features

All of the following features pertain to the Eldritch Monk advanced class.

### Magical Skills

An Eldritch Monk has access to the following magical skills. These skills are considered class skills for the Eldritch Monk, and she can use her skill points to buy ranks in them, just like other skills in the game.

**Concentration (Con):** The normal Concentration skill expands to include FX applications, as defined below.

**Check:** You must make a Concentration check whenever you may potentially be distracted while engaged in an activity, including casting a spell, manifesting a power, or concentrating on an active spell/power, that requires your full attention.

If the check succeeds, you may continue with the action as normal. If the check fails, the action automatically fails and is wasted. If you were in the process of casting a spell/manifesting a power, the spell/power is lost. If you were concentrating on an active spell/power, the spell/power ends.

In situations where the distractions listed under the concentration skill occur while you are casting a spell/manifesting a power, add the level of the spell to the DC.

**Try Again?:** You can try again, but doing so doesn't cancel the effects of a previous failure.

**Special:** By making a check (DC 15 + spell/power level), you can use Concentration to cast a spell/manifest a power defensively, thus avoiding attacks of opportunity. If the check succeeds, you can attempt the casting/manifesting without incurring any attacks of opportunity.

**Spellcraft (Int):** Trained only. Use this skill to identify spells and magical effects already in place.

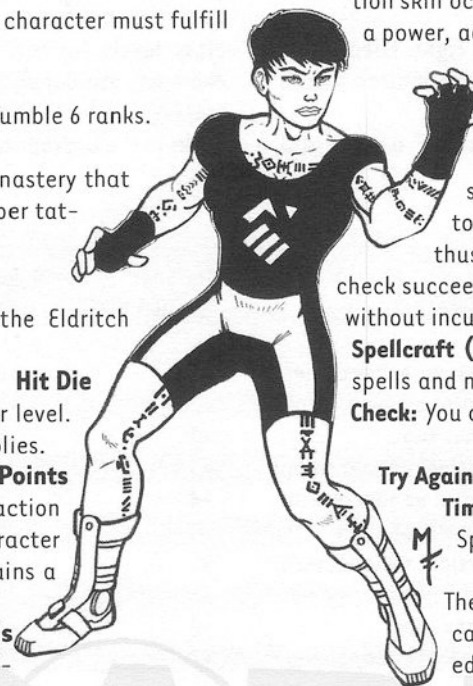
**Check:** You can identify spells and magic effects.

**Try Again?:** See above.

**Time:** Unless otherwise indicated, using the Spellcraft skill is a move action.

### Spells

The Eldritch Monk's is unique in her ability to cast spells that affect only herself. She is limited to a certain number of spells of each spell



DC	Task
15 + spell level	Identify a spell being cast. (You must see or hear the spell's verbal or somatic components.) You can't try again.
15 + spell level	When casting detect magical aura, determine the school of magic involved in the aura of a single item or creature you can see. (If the aura isn't a spell effect, the DC is 15 + one-half caster level.)
20 + spell level	Identify a spell that's already in place and in effect. (You must be able to see or detect the effects of the spell.) You can't try again.
20 + spell level	Identify materials created or shaped by magic. You can't try again.
20 + spell level	Decipher a written spell (such as a scroll) without using read magic. One try per day.
25 + spell level	After rolling a saving throw against a spell targeted at the character, determine what spell was cast upon the character. This is a reaction.
25	Identify a potion. This takes 1 minute.
30 or higher	Understand a strange or unique magical effect. You can't try again.

level per day and a certain number of spells known of each spell level, according to her Eldritch Monk class level. She is limited to spells that are on the Eldritch Monk spell list found below, and does not gain bonus spells per day or bonus known spells for having a high ability score. Determine the Eldritch Monk's total number of spells per day and number of known spells by consulting the two tables below.

An Eldritch Monk does not need to prepare spells ahead of time; rather, her spells are cast spontaneously. While an Eldritch Monk does not require any components (somatic, verbal, or material), the magical aura of the Eldritch Monk becomes visible while she is casting a spell. Opponents may attempt to disrupt an Eldritch Monk while she casts a spell or identify her spell with a Spellcraft check as per the normal rules.

All spells cast by Eldritch Monks have a range of personal, regardless of what it may say in the spell's description. An Eldritch Monk regains all expended spell slots after 8 hours of rest.

To learn or cast a spell, the Eldritch Monk must have a Charisma score of at least 10 + the spell's level. An Eldritch Monk may cast a lower level spell in place of a higher-level one if she desires.

As all spells the Eldritch Monk casts are personal, there is no Difficulty Class for saving throws to resist the effects of the Eldritch Monk's spells.

#### Eldritch Monk Spell List

**0-Level:** Cure minor wounds, detect magical aura, read magic, resistance, virtue.

**1st-Level:** Change self, comprehend languages, cure light wounds, feather fall, jump, mage armor, magic weapon\*, shield, true strike.

**2nd-Level:** Aid, blur, cure moderate wounds, darkvision, delay poison, enhance ability, lesser restoration, protection from arrows/bullets, resist energy, remove paralysis, see invisible, spider climb.

**3rd-Level:** Displacement, greater magic weapon\*, haste, keen edge\*, remove disease, tongues, water breathing.

**4th-Level:** Dimension door, freedom of movement, neutralize poison, stonkskin.

\* These spells only affect weapons that are in hand. If the weapon is dropped or in some way leaves the possession of the Eldritch Monk, the spell ends immediately.

#### Eldritch Ability

At 2nd, 5th, and 8th levels, the Eldritch Monk gets to choose an eldritch ability from the following list. In order to activate an eldritch ability, the Eldritch Monk must expend one or more spell levels' worth of spell slots she has available. Some of the special abilities allow the expenditure of an action point instead of spell slots, as noted below. The Eldritch Monk can choose to expend multiple spell slots that equal the level of spell slot needed to activate the special ability. For example, an Eldritch Monk wishes to activate glancing blow, at a cost of 2 spell levels; she may choose to expend a 2nd-level spell slot or two 1st-level spell slots to do so.

Eldritch Monk Level	- Spells per Day by Spell Level -				
	0	1	2	3	4
1st	2	-	-	-	-
2nd	2	1	-	-	-
3rd	3	1	-	-	-
4th	3	2	-	-	-
5th	3	2	1	-	-
6th	4	2	1	-	-
7th	4	3	2	1	-
8th	4	3	2	1	-
9th	5	4	3	2	-
10th	5	4	3	2	1

Spells Known	Level				
	0	1	2	3	4
1	3	-	-	-	-
2	4	1	-	-	-
3	4	2	-	-	-
4	4	3	-	-	-
5	5	3	2	-	-
6	5	4	3	-	-
7	5	4	3	2	-
8	5	4	4	3	-
9	5	5	4	3	-
10	5	5	4	4	2

0-level spell slots cannot be used to activate eldritch abilities. Except where otherwise noted, eldritch abilities are supernatural abilities.

**Boost Initiative:** By channeling magic energy into her body at the beginning of an encounter, the Eldritch Monk can increase her initiative by an amount dependent upon the number of spell levels she uses, as shown in the following table.

Spell Levels Spent	Initiative Bonus
1	+1d4
2	+1d6
3	+1d8
4	+1d10

Alternately, an action point may be expended to gain a +1d8 enhancement bonus to initiative.

**Deep Wound:** As a free action, before rolling for the success of an attack (melee or ranged), the Eldritch Monk can choose to spend up to 4 spell levels to "charge" her attack with eldritch energy. If the attack is successful, it deals +1d4 points of damage for every level spent in this way. If the attack misses, the spell slots spent are lost.

**Glancing Blow:** As a free action in response to an attack made against her, after the attack roll is made, an Eldritch Monk can infuse her body with mystical energy, possibly turning a deadly attack into a harmless miss. For each spell level expended, up to 4 maximum, she gains a +1d4 deflection bonus to her Defense against that attack. Glancing blow may only be used once per round, and the number of spell levels to be spent must be declared before she rolls for her deflection bonus.

**Spell Resistance:** This ability is activated as a standard action, and costs 4 spell levels to activate. The Eldritch Monk gains

spell resistance of 10 + her Eldritch Monk level that lasts a number of rounds equal to the Eldritch Monk's level (or until she wills it to dissipate, if sooner).

The Eldritch Monk may instead spend 1 action point to activate this ability, in which case her spell resistance is 15 + her Eldritch Monk level.

**Move as the Wind:** An Eldritch Monk can enhance her body with arcane power to increase her base speed. For each spell level expended, up to 4 maximum, her speed increases by 10 feet for a number of rounds equal to her Eldritch Monk level.

#### Bonus Feats

At 3rd, 6th, and 9th levels, the Eldritch Monk gets a bonus feat. The bonus feat must be selected from the following list, and the Eldritch Monk must meet all prerequisites of the feat to select it. Acrobatic, Advanced Combat Martial Arts, Archaic Weapons Proficiency, Blind-Fight, Combat Reflexes, Defensive Martial Arts, Exotic Melee Weapons Proficiency, Improved Combat Martial Arts, Improved Initiative, Toughness, Weapon Focus.

#### Inscribe Tattoo

At 4th level, an Eldritch Monk can create magical tattoos on her own body. Each tattoo is a single-use item that is used to duplicate a single spell. Inscribe a tattoo takes one full day, and requires a successful Purchase check (DC 15 + the tattoo's spell level + the inscriber's Eldritch Monk level) to acquire the necessary inks and other raw materials. The Eldritch Monk must also spend a number of XP equal to the tattoo's spell level x her Eldritch Monk level x the purchase DC of the materials for the tattoo. Finally, she must make a Craft (visual arts) check (DC 10 + the tattoo's spell level + the her Eldritch Monk level) to successfully create the tattoo.

See d20 Modern Roleplaying Game™, Chapter Ten: FX Abilities,

TABLE 3-4: THE ELDRITCH MONK

Class Level	Base				Special	Defense Bonus	Reputation Bonus
	Attack	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save			
1st	+0	+1	+1	+0	Magic skills, spells	+1	+0
2nd	+1	+2	+2	+0	Eldritch ability, spells	+1	+0
3rd	+2	+2	+2	+1	Bonus feat, spells	+2	+0
4th	+3	+2	+2	+1	Scribe tattoo, spells	+2	+0
5th	+3	+3	+3	+1	Eldritch ability, spells	+3	+1
6th	+4	+3	+3	+2	Bonus feat, spells	+3	+1
7th	+5	+4	+4	+2	Combat casting, spells	+4	+1
8th	+6	+4	+4	+2	Eldritch ability, spells	+4	+1
9th	+6	+4	+4	+3	Bonus feat, spells	+5	+2
10th	+7	+5	+5	+3	Counterstrike,	+5	+2



"FX Items" for more information about tattoos.

### Combat Casting

At 7th level, an Eldritch Monk becomes adept at casting her spells during combat. She gains a +4 bonus on Concentration checks made to cast a spell while on the defensive.

### Counterstrike

The 10th-level Eldritch Monk can spend 1 action point as a free action to make an immediate attack against an opponent that just attacked her. All bonuses, penalties, cover, invisibility, etc., currently affecting the Eldritch Monk or her target must be taken into account. The Eldritch Monk must have an appropriate weapon in hand. For instance, if the attacker is not within melee range, she must have a ranged weapon in hand. Counterstrike does not count as an attack of opportunity.

## Explorer

The Explorer travels the world, driven by a desire to discover, uncover, and overcome great obstacles. These bold men and women encounter rarely seen vistas and experience the wilderness most civilized people avoid. Explorers can be found crossing inhospitable deserts, climbing impossible peaks, penetrating the deepest jungles, or even delving into tombs and ruins in search of lost and buried relics. They look at the impossible with excitement and dare the fates with their exploits. An Explorer can be an enterprising young naturalist photographer who crawls through disease-ridden swamps in search of a bird spoken of only in local legend. An Explorer can also be a wealthy adventurer who hunts rare big-game prizes and climbs Mount Everest for fun, or even a greedy smuggler of ancient artifacts of great antiquity or power. The connection between all who take levels in the Explorer advanced class is a lust for discovery and a tough hide.

Select this advanced class if you want your character to trek through the wilds and excel at survival and legend lore, uncovering the truth of ancient mysteries.

The fastest path into this advanced class is from the Tough hero basic class, though other paths are possible.

### Requirements

To qualify to become an Explorer, a character must fulfill all the following criteria.

Base Attack Bonus: +2.

**Skills:** Gather Information 3 ranks, Survival 6 ranks.

**Feat:** Athletic.

## Class Information

The following information pertains to the Explorer advanced class.

### Hit Die

The Explorer gains 1d10 hit points per level. The character's Constitution modifier applies.

### Action Points

The Explorer gains a number of action points equal to 6 + one-half his character level, rounded down, every time he attains a new level in this class.

### Class Skills

The Explorer's class skills are as follows.

Balance (Dex), Climb (Str), Decipher Script (Int), Drive (Dex), Gather Information (Cha), Knowledge (arcane lore, art, earth and life sciences) (Int), Listen (Wis), Pilot (Dex), Profession (Wis), Read/Write Language (none), Search (Int), Speak Language (none), Spot (Wis), Survival (Wis), Treat Injury (Wis).

Skill Points at Each Level: 5 + Int modifier.

### Class Features

The following features pertain to the Explorer advanced class.

#### Survive Extremes

An Explorer gains a +2 bonus to all Fortitude saving throws to resist damage from prolonged exposure to heat and cold and a +2 bonus to Constitution checks to avoid damage from a lack of food or water.

#### Favored Terrain

At 2nd level, the Explorer selects two regions in which he has exceptional experience; for this purpose, each region is comprised of a terrain type and a temperature type. There are six primary terrain types and three temperature types, as listed below. Thus, for instance, an Explorer who specializes in finding lost Egyptian artifacts might be exceptionally experienced in traversing hot desert regions and hot underground regions.

Terrain	Environment
Desert	Cold
Forest	Hot
Hill	Temperate
Marsh	
Mountain	
Plains	
Underground	

When the Explorer is in his favored terrain, he gains a +1 dodge bonus to Defense (a character who is denied his Dexterity



modifier to Defense also loses any dodge bonuses). The Explorer also gains a +2 bonus to any Drive, Hide, Knowledge (earth and life science), Move Silently, Search, Spot, or Survival checks made in that terrain. Finally, his base speed increases by 5 feet when in a favored terrain. These bonuses do not apply if the Explorer is in a building or other edifice within his terrain (e.g., if the Explorer enters a complex that is located on a mountain).

#### Bonus Feats

At 3rd, 6th, and 9th level, the Explorer gets a bonus feat. The bonus feat must be selected from the following list, and the Explorer must meet all the prerequisites of the feat to select it. Alertness, Armor Proficiency (light), Defensive Martial Arts, Guide, Great Fortitude, Improved Damage Threshold, Shot on the Run, Run, Vehicle Expert.

#### Legend Lore

At 4th level, the Explorer develops a knack for learning the local legends of any place he travels through. By taking 1d4+1 hours to talk to the locals, he may make a Gather Information check with a bonus equal to his Explorer level + his Charisma modifier to see whether he uncovers some relevant information about local legends, mystical items, or noteworthy places. This check will not reveal the powers of a relic but may give a hint as to its general function. The Explorer may not take 10 or take 20 on this check, as this sort of information is not necessarily given willingly to foreigners. The GM will determine the Difficulty Class of the check by referring to the table below.

DC	Type of Knowledge
10	Common, known by at least a substantial minority of the local population.
20	Uncommon but available, known by only a few people in the area.
25	Obscure, known by few, hard to come by.
30	Extremely obscure, known by very few, possibly forgotten by most who once knew it, possibly known only by those who don't understand the significance of the knowledge.

#### Magical Skill

At 4th level the Explorer gains access following magical skill. This skill is hereafter considered a class skill for the Explorer, and he can use his skill points to buy ranks in it.

**Use Magic Device (Cha):** Trained only. Use this skill to activate magic devices, including scrolls and wands that the character could not otherwise activate.

**Check:** You can use this skill to read a spell from a scroll or spellbook or activate a magic item. This skill lets you use a magic item as if you had the spell ability or class features of another class or a different allegiance.

When you attempt to activate a magic item using this skill, you do so as an attack action. However, the checks you make to determine whether you are successful at activating the item

take no time by themselves and are included in the activate magic item attack action.

You make Use Magic Device checks each time you activate a device such as a scroll or a wand. If you are using the check to emulate some quality in an ongoing manner, you need to make the checks once per hour.

Task	DC
Activate blindly	25
Decipher a written spell	25 + spell level
Emulate class feature	20
Emulate ability score	See text
Emulate allegiance	30
Use a scroll	20 + caster level
Use a wand	20

**Activate Blindly:** Some magic items are activated by special words, thoughts, or actions. You can activate such items as if you were using the activation word, thought, or action even if you are not, and even if you don't know it. You do have to use something equivalent: You must speak, wave the item around, or otherwise attempt to get it to activate. You get a +2 bonus on the check if you have activated the item at least once in the past. If you fail the check by 10 or more, you suffer a mishap. A mishap means that magical energy is released, but it doesn't do what you wanted it to. The GM determines the result of a mishap. The default mishaps are that the item affects the wrong target or that uncontrolled magical energy deals 2d6 points of damage to you.

**Decipher a Written Spell:** This works like the same use of the Spellcraft skill (see the Eldritch Monk class ability earlier in this chapter), except that the DC is 5 points higher. Deciphering a written spell takes 1 minute of concentration.

**Emulate Class Feature:** Sometimes you might need a class feature to activate a magic item. Your effective level in the emulated class equals your check result minus 20.

This skill use doesn't allow you to actually use the class feature of another class. It just lets you activate items as if you had the class feature.

If the class whose feature you are emulating has an allegiance requirement, you must also meet it. This may require a separate check to emulate allegiance (see below).

**Emulate Ability Score:** To cast a spell from a scroll, one generally needs a high ability score in the appropriate ability. Your effective ability score (appropriate to the class you are emulating when you try to cast a spell from a scroll) equals your check result minus 15. If you already have a high enough score in the ability, you don't need to make this check.

**Emulate Allegiance:** Some magic items have positive or negative effects based on the user's allegiance. You can use these items as if you were of an allegiance of your choice. You can only emulate one allegiance at a time.

**Use a Scroll:** Normally, to cast a spell from a scroll, a character must belong to a class that has access to the spell inscribed therein. This use of the skill allows you to use a scroll as if you were of the appropriate spellcasting class. The DC equals 20 + the caster level of the spell you are trying to cast from the scroll. To cast a spell from a scroll, you must first decipher it (see above). In addition, casting a spell from a scroll requires a minimum score of 10 + the spell's level in the appropriate ability. If the character doesn't have a sufficiently high score, he or she must emulate the ability score with a separate check (see above).

**Use a Wand:** Normally, to use a wand, a character must belong to a class that has access to the spell ensorcelled therein. This use of the skill allows you to use a wand as if you were of the appropriate spellcasting class.

**Try Again?:** Yes, but if you ever roll a natural 1 while attempting to activate an item and fail the check, then you can't try to activate that item again for 24 hours.

**Special:** You can't take 10 or take 20 with this skill. If you have at least 5 ranks in Use Magic Device, you gain a +2 synergy bonus to your level check to bind a relic (see Chapter Five: Magic).

### Outland Contacts

An Explorer seems to have friends and associates in the most remote of places and at the most strategic of times. At 5th level, the Explorer can make a level check (DC 15) to spontaneously gain a low-level outland contact. At 8th level, the Explorer can gain mid-level contacts. A low-level contact has a character level of roughly one-third the Explorer's character level, and never higher than 4th level in any case. A mid-level contact has a character level of roughly one-half the Explorer's character level, and never higher than 8th level.

Each time the Explorer gains an outland contact, the GM should

develop a supporting character to represent that contact. The player can suggest the type of contact his or her character wants to gain, but the outland contact must be an ordinary, not a heroic character. This outland contact can only provide limited aid in the general area where the outland contact was gained.

An outland contact will not accompany an Explorer on missions or risk his or her life. He or she can, however, provide information or render a service (make a specific skill check on the Explorer's behalf).

The Explorer can't call on the same outland contact more than once per week, and when he or she does call on an outland contact, compensation may be required for the assistance the contact renders. In general, a professional associate won't be compensated monetarily, but instead will consider the Explorer to owe him or her a favor.

Outland contacts with underworld connections usually demand monetary compensation for the services they render, and experts in the use of skills normally want to be paid for the services they provide. For underworld outland contacts, this expense is represented by a Wealth check against a purchase DC of 10 for the low-level outland contact or 15 for the mid-level outland contact. For skilled experts, the purchase DC is 10 + the number of ranks the expert has in the appropriate skill.

### Improved Favored Terrain

At 7th level, the Explorer reaches may impart the benefits of favored terrain on a number of companions equal to his level. In addition, the Explorer now gains a +2 dodge bonus to Defense and receives a +4 bonus on any Drive, Hide, Knowledge (earth and life science), Move Silently, Search, Spot, or Survival checks. He may now also move through a favored terrain at his full

TABLE 3-5: THE EXPLORER

Class Level	Base		Ref Save	Will Save	Special	Defense Bonus	Reputation Bonus
	Attack Bonus	Fort Save					
1st	+0	+2	+1	+0	Survive extremes	+1	+0
2nd	+1	+3	+2	+0	Favored terrain	+1	+0
3rd	+1	+3	+2	+1	Bonus feat	+2	+1
4th	+2	+4	+2	+1	Legend lore, magical skill	+2	+1
5th	+2	+4	+3	+1	Outland contact (low-level)	+3	+1
6th	+3	+5	+3	+2	Bonus feat	+3	+2
7th	+3	+5	+4	+2	Improved favored terrain	+4	+2
8th	+4	+6	+4	+2	Outland contact (mid-level)	+4	+2
9th	+4	+6	+4	+3	Bonus feat	+5	+3
10th	+5	+7	+5	+3	Damage threshold	+5	+3

speed, despite such hindrances such as deep bogs or thick forest.

Alternately, in place of the above bonuses, the Explorer may opt to select two new regions for which he gains the Favored Terrain bonuses.

### Damage Threshold

At 10th level, the Explorer can spend 1 action point to temporarily add his Explorer level as a bonus to his massive damage threshold (see *d20 Modern Roleplaying Game™*, Chapter Five: Combat, Injury and Death, "Massive Damage"). This bonus remains for 1 minute (10 rounds), after which time the Explorer is fatigued (-2 Strength and Dexterity, can't run or charge) for 1d6+2 rounds.

### Initiate

The Initiate is one who walks down the treacherous path of eldritch power and occult knowledge. By pouring over fragments of ancient manuscripts and scavenging through the scattered remains of the Lost Age, the Initiate uncovers the lost mysteries of true power. Twisted secrets, forbidden rituals, and arcane incantations are her tools of choice. The Initiate uses these tools to break the boundaries of science and pull on the strings of power that bind the universe. These seekers of the hidden and the lost truth of the past are not scholars who hide in ivory towers from the dangers of the world. Rather, the Initiate strides fearlessly into the unknown, certain that her skill and occult power will see her through even the most hazardous of perils.

The Initiate who travels far down this road learns that power does not come cheaply, as there is always a sacrifice or a price that must be paid for learning the secrets of the ancients. The Initiate is a scholar of ancient lore who has the best chance to reveal the secrets of the Otherworld and repel the terrors that escaped from the Abyss.

Select this advanced class if you want your character to uncover forbidden lore and wield eldritch power through incantation and potent talismans.

The fastest path into this advanced class is from the Smart hero base class, though other paths are possible.

### Requirements

To qualify to become an Initiate, a character must fulfill the following criteria.

**Skills:** Decipher Script 6 ranks, Knowledge (arcane lore) 6 ranks, Research 6 ranks.

**Feat:** Educated

**Special:** Must be accepted as a novice into a magical order.

### Class Information

The following information pertains to the Initiate advanced class.

#### Hit Die

The Initiate gains 1d6 hit points per level. The character's Constitution modifier applies.

#### Action Points

The Initiate gains a number of action points equal to 6 + one-half her character level, rounded down, every time she attains a new level in this class.

#### Class Skills

The Initiate's class skills are as follows.

Computer Use (Int), Concentration (Con), Craft (writing), Decipher Script (Int), Investigate (Int), Knowledge (arcane lore, behavioral sciences, current events, earth and life sciences, popular culture, technology) (Int), Profession (Wis), Read/Write Language (none), Research (Int), Search (Int), Speak Language (none), Spellcraft (Int).

Skill Points at Each level: 7 + Int modifier.

#### Spells and Armor

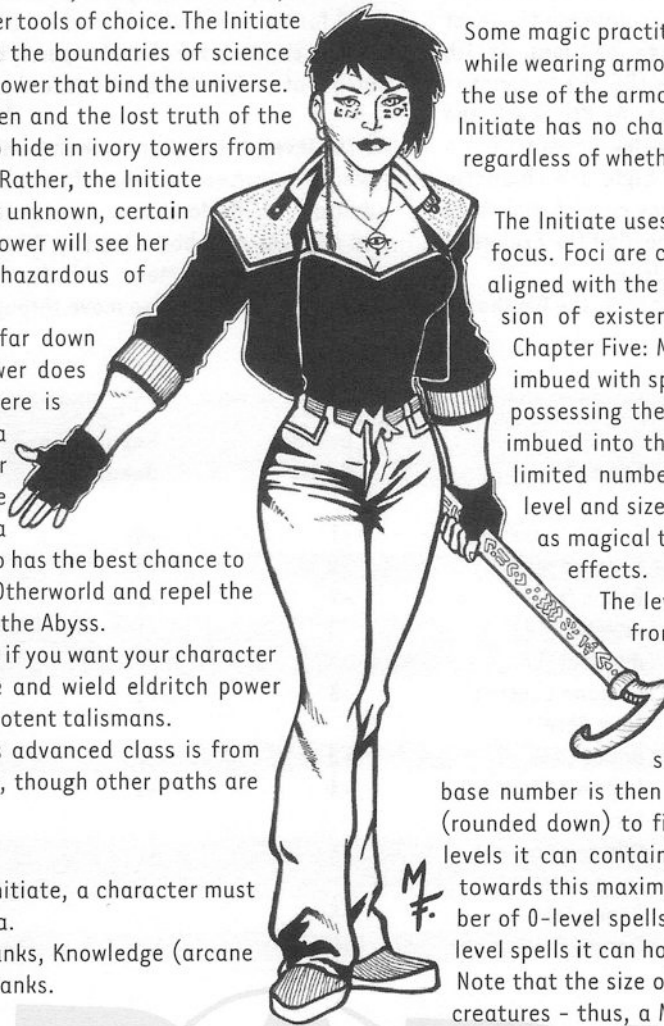
Some magic practitioners find it more difficult to cast spells while wearing armor of any sort, even if they are proficient in the use of the armor. An Initiate has no such restriction. The Initiate has no chance of spell failure while wearing armor, regardless of whether the spell has a somatic component.

#### Foci

The Initiate uses a device of magical technology called a focus. Foci are created using material that is sensitive or aligned with the energy of the Ethereal Plane, the dimension of existence from which magic arises (see also Chapter Five: Magic for more on foci). These objects are imbued with spells that can then be cast by any Initiate possessing the focus, as long as she knows the spell is imbued into the focus. Foci can only be imbued with a limited number of spells, depending upon the focus's level and size (see the tables below). A focus will read as magical to detect magical aura or similar spells or effects.

The level of the focus, designated as a number from 1 to 5, determines two things: (i) The maximum level of any spell that can be contained within it; and (ii) The base number of total spell levels a Medium-size focus of that level can contain - this base number is then multiplied by the focus's size multiplier (rounded down) to find the actual maximum number of spell levels it can contain. Note that 0-level spells do not count towards this maximum (i.e., any focus can contain any number of 0-level spells without affecting the number of higher-level spells it can hold).

Note that the size of a focus is given in terms of objects, not creatures - thus, a Medium-size focus is roughly the size of a



Medium-size weapon, not a human being. A Large focus, then, is probably something about the size of, say, a heavy 6-foot staff or a normal-sized television.

An Initiate can't cast any spell without a focus (except for read magic, which some don't think is real magic at all). While she may use another focus if hers become lost or stolen, she will not gain as much benefit from it until she has bound the new focus to her (see below) and re-imbued it with the spells she knows. An Initiate can be bound to only one focus at a time.

Initiates bind themselves to their foci. Binding is an arduous ritual that takes 48 hours, during which time the Initiate can't eat, drink, or sleep, suffering all the possible consequences of such denial. (See d20 Modern Roleplaying Game™, Chapter Seven: Gamemastering, "The Modern World" for more on dangers like starvation and thirst.) At the end of this time, the Initiate makes a Spellcraft check (DC 15 + focus level). A failed check causes no harm; however, the Initiate must wait a week per focus level to attempt to bind that focus again.

The Initiate begins play bound to a level 1 focus of any size she desires, provided to her by the order or society that initiated her into the secret ways of magic. This focus is imbued with the spells the player has chosen for the character. Every time the character achieves a new level of Initiate, she gains 2 new spells of any level or levels that she can cast, according to her new Initiate level; these spells are assumed automatically to have been imbued by her into her focus. Although it is difficult, the Initiative can also imbue spells found from other sources into her focus (see below).

When the Initiate uses a focus to which she is not bound, she casts all spells from it at -1 caster level, and she can only cast the spells that she knows are imbued into the magical device. To determine what spells are imbued into a focus, the Initiate must delve the object: to delve a focus, one must cast read magic to attune oneself to the energies "written" therein, and then study

the focus for a number of hours equal to the level of the focus. At the end of this time, the Initiate makes a Spellcraft check (DC 15) to find what 0-level spells are in the focus: for every point by which her check beats DC 15, she discovers an additional level's worth of spells.

For example, Salome, a 4th-level Initiate, has just found an 8-inch-diameter clear crystal ball with a set of spinning orichalcum wheels in the center, which happens to be a Small level 3 focus. She wants to learn what spells are in it. After casting read magic and then spending 3 hours delving the object (since it's a level 3 focus), Salome makes a Spellcraft check. The player rolls an 8 and adds Salome's Spellcraft skill bonus of +8, for a total result of 16. Unfortunately, Salome discovers only any 0-level and 1st-level spells in the focus (as she exceeded the DC of 15 by only 1 point). The character cannot attempt to delve an object again until she gains at least 1 rank in Spellcraft.

Each time the character discovers a new spell (aside from those she gains automatically when she gains a new level of Initiate), whether from a scroll or ancient tome, or from another focus, she must take the time to expend effort to imbue her focus with the new spell. This imbuing process takes a number of days equal to the level of the spell that she is imbuing into the focus. An Initiate can also remove spells that are imbued into a focus. This is a much simpler process, accomplished in just 1 hour and requiring only a Spellcraft check (DC 10 + spell level).

If at any time the Initiate's class level allows her to access and cast spells of a greater level than her current focus can hold, she must return to her order or magical society to obtain a new focus capable of containing spells of the level she can now cast. If she has behaved in ways that her order finds acceptable, they will provide her with a new, more powerful focus. Some magical societies require services or favors in exchange for the new focus. An Initiate banished from her order finds it extremely difficult to obtain the foci she needs as she rises in power.

Foci are strange and marvelous magical apparatuses. They come in many forms: from 1-inch adamant squares with no visible moving parts (a Diminutive focus), yet which nonetheless vibrate slightly when held, to ornate orichalcum and crystal mechanisms half again the size of a full grown man (a Huge focus). Some modern Initiates have found ways to hide their foci within mundane appearing pieces of technology or to disguise them in other ways. Regardless of its appearance, the Initiate must make physical contact with her focus in order to cast the spells imbued within it.

### Class Features

The following features pertain to the Initiate advanced class.

#### Magical Skills

An Initiate has access to the following magical skills. These skills are considered class skills for the Initiate, and she can use her skill points to buy ranks in them, just like other skills in the game.

Focus Level	Maximum Spell Level	Base Total Spell Levels
1	1	3
2	2	8
3	3	12
4	4	16
5	5	25

Focus Object Size	Size Multiplier
Diminutive (bracelet)	0.25
Tiny (large necklace)	0.5
Small (crystal ball)	0.75
Medium-size (cane)	1
Large (large staff)	1.5
Huge (a big statue)	2

DC	Task
15 + spell level	Identify a spell being cast. (You must see or hear the spell's verbal or somatic components.) You can't try again.
15 + spell level	After casting read magic, delve a focus to find determine what spells it contains. (You must be touching the focus throughout the delving process.) You find all spells of a level equal to or less than your check result - 15. This takes 1 hour per level of the focus. You can't try again until you gain at least 1 rank in Spellcraft.
15 + spell level	When casting detect magical aura, determine the school of magic involved in the aura of a single item or creature you can see. (If the aura isn't a spell effect, the DC is 15 + one-half caster level.)
20 + spell level	Identify a spell that's already in place and in effect. (You must be able to see or detect the effects of the spell.) You can't try again.
20 + spell level	Identify materials created or shaped by magic. You can't try again.
20 + spell level	Decipher a written spell (such as a scroll) without using read magic. One try per day.
25 + spell level	After rolling a saving throw against a spell targeted at the character, determine what spell was cast upon the character. This is a reaction.
25	Identify a potion. This takes 1 minute.
30 or higher	Understand a strange or unique magical effect. You can't try again

**Concentration (Con):** The normal Concentration skill expands to include FX applications, as defined below.

**Check:** You must make a Concentration check whenever you may potentially be distracted while engaged in an activity, including casting a spell, manifesting a power, or concentrating on an active spell/power, that requires your full attention.

If the check succeeds, you may continue with the action as normal. If the check fails, the action automatically fails and is wasted. If you were in the process of casting a spell/manifesting a power, the spell/power is lost. If you were concentrating on an active spell/power, the spell/power ends.

In situations where the distractions listed under the concentration skill occur while you are casting a spell/manifesting a power, add the level of the spell to the DC.

**Try Again?:** You can try again, but doing so doesn't cancel the effects of a previous failure.

**Special:** By making a check (DC 15 + spell/power level), you can use Concentration to cast a spell/manifest a power defensively, thus avoiding attacks of opportunity. If the check succeeds, you can attempt the casting/manifesting without incurring any attacks of opportunity.

**Spellcraft (Int):** Trained only. Use this skill to identify spells and magical effects already in place.

**Check:** You can identify spells and magic effects.

**Try Again?:** See above.

**Time:** Unless otherwise indicated, using the Spellcraft skill is a move action.

### Spells

The Initiate's primary focus is the ability to cast magical spells that are bound into foci. (See d20 Modern Roleplaying Game™, Chapter Ten: FX Abilities for a list and description of spells.) All spells an Initiate casts must be imbued into a focus that she is physically touching at the time she casts the spell. To learn, imbue, or cast a spell, the Initiate must have an Intelligence score of at least 10

spell's level. An Initiate can cast spells from the divine or arcane spell lists. An Initiate is limited to casting a certain number of spells of each spell level per day. This is dependant upon her Initiate class level. An Initiate gains bonus spells per day based on her Intelligence score. Use the charts below to determine the Initiate's total number of spells per day.

An Initiate does not prepare her spells each day, as they are already imbued into her focus. The Initiate regains spent spell slots after 8 hours of rest.

Initiate Level	- Spells per Day by Spell Level -					
	0	1	2	3	4	5
1st	4	1	-	-	-	-
2nd	4	2	-	-	-	-
3rd	4	2	1	-	-	-
4th	5	3	2	-	-	-
5th	5	3	2	1	-	-
6th	5	3	3	2	-	-
7th	6	4	3	2	1	-
8th	6	4	3	3	2	-
9th	6	4	4	3	2	1
10th	7	5	4	3	3	2

Intelligence Score	- Bonus Spells by Spell Level -				
	1	2	3	4	5
12-13	1	-	-	-	-
14-15	1	1	-	-	-
16-17	1	1	1	-	-
18-19	1	1	1	1	-
20-21	2	1	1	1	1
22-23	2	2	1	1	1



The Difficulty Class for saving throws to resist the effects of an Initiate's spells is 10 + the spell's level + the Initiate's Intelligence modifier.

### Eldritch Protection

At 2nd level, an Initiate gains the ability to thwart an attack or a portion of an attack with mystical power. When an attack would reduce the Initiate to 0 or fewer hit points, she can instantly (even if it is not her turn), as a free action, expend one of her spell slots for the day to reduce the damage by 1 hit point per spell level thus expended. An Initiate may only do this once per day, and she can't expend more than one spell slot (regardless of that slot's level) at a time.

### Bonus Feats

At 3rd, 6th, and 9th level, the Initiate receives a bonus feat. The bonus feat must be selected from the following list, and the Initiate must meet all the prerequisites of the feat to select it. Archaic Weapons Proficiency, Armor Proficiency (light), Defensive Martial Arts, Elusive Target, Focused, Low Profile, Personal Firearms Proficiency, Studios, Toughness

### Sacrificial Spell

Some mystical power is not free: it comes with a price most people are unwilling to pay. An Initiate, however, is willing to sacrifice even a portion of her self to control the energies of the Ethereal Plane. Starting at 4th level, the Initiate is able cast spells without expending spell slots by sacrificing her life energy. When an Initiate casts a sacrificial spell, she takes temporary Constitution damage equal to 1 + the level of the spell she casts. The Initiate must have enough Constitution to absorb the damage, otherwise the spell fails. Note that the Initiate's hit points decrease by 1 per level for every 2 points of temporary Constitution damage she takes.

For example, Salome, now a 5th-level Initiate, is desperately trying to hold off three Eternal Serpent cultists. She has already used up all her 2nd- and 3rd-level spell slots, but really needs to bring these fanatics down fast. She casts slow (a 3rd-level spell) as a sacrificial spell, and thus takes 1 + 3 = 4 points of

temporary Constitution damage; this in turn decreases her hit points by (2 x 5) = 10. However, Salome's allies are now able to make quick work of the sluggish cultists.

### Eldritch Defense

As the Initiate expands her understanding of the manipulation of magical energies, she learns to weaken the boundary between herself and the Ethereal Plane. Starting at 5th level, an Initiate can expend a spell slot to gain concealment (see d20 Modern Roleplaying Game™, Chapter Five: Combat, Combat Modifiers, "Concealment"). The degree of concealment thus gained depends upon the level of the spell slot spent, as shown on the chart below. The Initiate can use eldritch defense once per day per Initiate level. Eldritch defense counts as a supernatural ability, and requires an attack action to activate. Each use this ability last for a number of rounds equal to the Initiate's Intelligence modifier. An Initiate can't expend more than one spell slot at a time in this way.

Note that concealment does not stack with other forms of concealment. Simply apply the effects that produce the highest miss chance.

Spell Level	Concealment	Miss Chance
1	One-quarter	10%
2	One-half	20%
3	Three-quarters	30%
4	Nine-tenths	40%
5	Total	50%

### Sacrificial Reach

An 8th level, the Initiate can extend the range of a touch spell to affect a target up to 15 feet away. No other features of the spell are changed. If the spell normally requires a touch attack, then the Initiate must make a ranged touch attack against her target. Such a manipulation of the Ethereal Plane is difficult, dealing temporary Constitution damage to the Initiate equal to

TABLE 3-6: THE INITIATE

Class Level	Base				Special	Defense Bonus	Reputation Bonus
	Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save			
1st	+0	+0	+0	+2	Magical skills, spells	+1	+0
2nd	+1	+0	+0	+3	Eldritch protection, spells	+1	+0
3rd	+1	+1	+1	+3	Bonus feat, spells	+2	+1
4th	+2	+1	+1	+4	Sacrificial spell, spells	+2	+1
5th	+2	+1	+1	+4	Eldritch defense, spells	+3	+1
6th	+3	+2	+2	+5	Bonus feat, spells	+3	+2
7th	+3	+2	+2	+5	Combat casting, spells	+4	+2
8th	+4	+2	+2	+6	Sacrificial reach, spells	+4	+2
9th	+4	+3	+3	+6	Bonus feat, spells	+5	+3
10th	+5	+3	+3	+7	Sacrificial heighten	+5	+3

1 + the level of the spell modified in this way.

### Sacrificial Heighten

At 10th level, the Initiate can cast a spell as though it were a spell of a higher level than it actually is. Sacrificial heighten thus increases the effectiveness of the spell: All effects dependent on spell level (such as saving throw DCs, duration, and range) are calculated according to the heightened level. No spell may be heightened to greater than 5th level through the use of sacrificial heighten. Using this powerful ability damages both the Initiate's body and soul. She takes temporary Constitution damage equal to 1 + the effective level of the spell (after it is modified by this ability), and she also takes temporary Wisdom damage equal to the effective level of the spell. The Wisdom damage goes away after 8 hours of rest, although the Constitution damage is healed normally.

### Mystic

Few in the modern world, with its slavish devotion to technology and its sneering attitude toward anything that cannot be explained by science, seek spiritual answers to life's many problems. Those who do turn to religion, for the most part, but occasionally one will turn to mysticism to study the power of spirit made real. Most humans can only dabble in such things, using half-understood arcane rituals as a springboard for bettering their own lives. But some people desire something greater, and when they delve into such mysteries they find that they can actually wield great powers and see into the future and past. These few are known as mystics. Select this advanced class if you want your character to be a wise seer who is able to see distant places and use telepathic powers. The fastest path into this advanced class is from the Dedicated hero basic class, though other paths are possible.

### Requirements

To qualify to become a Mystic, a char-



acter must fulfill all the following criteria.

**Skills:** Knowledge (arcane lore) 6 ranks, Knowledge (history) 4 ranks, Knowledge (theology and philosophy) 4 ranks, Sense Motive 6 ranks.

**Talent:** Empathy.

### Class Information

The following information pertains to the Mystic advanced class.

#### Hit Die

The Mystic gains 1d6 hit points per level. The character's Constitution modifier applies.

#### Action Points

The Mystic gains a number of action points equal to 6 + one-half his character level, rounded down, every time he attains a new level in this class.

#### Class Skills

The Mystic's class skills are as follows.

Concentration (Con), Craft (structural, visual arts, writing) (Int), Decipher Script (Int), Knowledge (arcane lore, art, earth and life sciences, theology and philosophy) (Int), Listen (Wis), Profession (Wis), Read/Write Language (none), Sense Motive (Wis), Speak Language (none), Spellcraft (Int), and Treat Injury (Wis).

Skill Points at Each Level: 5 + Int modifier.

#### Foci

A Mystic does not require a focus to cast spells. Through intense mental discipline, mystical mnemonic exercises, and meditation the Mystic casts spells. By using these techniques the Mystic connects his desire and intent to the Ethereal Plane, thereby creating magic.

### Class Features

The following features pertain to the Mystic advanced class.

#### Magical Skills

The Mystic has access to the following magical skills. These skills are considered class skills for the Mystic, and he can use his skill points to buy ranks in them, just like other skills in the game.

**Concentration (Con):** The normal Concentration skill expands to include FX applications, as defined below.

**Check:** You must make a Concentration check whenever you may potentially be distracted while engaged in an activity, including casting a spell, manifesting a power, or concentrating on an active spell/power, that requires your full attention.

If the check succeeds, you may continue with the action as normal. If the check fails, the action automatically fails and is wasted. If you were in the process of casting a spell/manifesting a power, the spell/power is lost. If you were concentrating on an active spell/power, the spell/power ends.

In situations where the distractions listed under the concentration skill occur while you are casting a spell/manifesting a power, add the level of the spell to the DC.

**Try Again?:** You can try again, but doing so doesn't cancel the effects of a previous failure.

**Special:** By making a check (DC 15 + spell/power level), you can use Concentration to cast a spell/manifest a power defensively, thus avoiding attacks of opportunity. If the check succeeds, you can attempt the casting/manifesting without incurring any

attacks of opportunity.

**Spellcraft (Int):** Trained only. Use this skill to identify spells and magical effects already in place.

**Check:** You can identify spells and magic effects.

**Try Again?:** See above.

**Time:** Unless otherwise indicated, using the Spellcraft skill is a move action.

### Spells

The Mystic casts a number of spells per day according to his Mystic class level. In addition, the Mystic gains bonus spells based on his Wisdom score. The tables below show the number of spells and bonus spells the Mystic may cast per day. The Mystic must meditate for 1 hour per day in order to focus his mind enough to cast spells. It is his faith in his own abilities that allows him to see other places and to manipulate reality. To learn, prepare, or cast a spell, the Mystic must have a Wisdom score of at least 10 + the spell's level. The Mystic can learn, prepare, and cast any spell of a spell level that he can cast - arcane or divine - from the Abjuration, Divination, or Enchantment schools (see d20 Modern Roleplaying Game™, Chapter Ten: FX Abilities, "Spells"). He can prepare a lower-level spell in a higher-level slot if he wishes. The Difficulty Class of a saving throw to resist the effects of a Mystic's spell is 10 + the spell's level + the Mystic's Wisdom modifier.

### Arcane Sense

At 2nd level, the Mystic's connection with his surroundings is such that he can sense the presence of invisible or hidden creatures even if he cannot see them. The Mystic immediately becomes aware of the presence of such creatures whenever they are within 30 feet. In addition, he gains a +4 bonus to Spot checks made to see hidden creatures.

### Bonus Feats

At 3rd, 6th, and 9th level, the Mystic gets a bonus feat. The bonus feat must be selected from the following list, and the Mystic must meet all the prerequisites of the feat to select it. Animal Affinity, Archaic Weapons Proficiency, Armor Proficiency (light), Attentive, Educated, Iron Will, Studious, Track.

### Lesser Mindlink

At 4th level, the Mystic gains the ability to use the lesser

Mystic Level	- Spells per Day by Spell Level -					
	0	1	2	3	4	5
1st	3	2	-	-	-	-
2nd	4	3	-	-	-	-
3rd	4	3	2	-	-	-
4th	5	4	3	-	-	-
5th	5	4	3	2	-	-
6th	5	4	4	3	-	-
7th	6	5	4	3	2	-
8th	6	5	4	4	3	-
9th	6	5	5	4	3	2
10th	6	5	5	4	4	3

Wisdom Score	Bonus Spells by Spell Level				
	1	2	3	4	5
12-13	1	-	-	-	-
14-15	1	1	-	-	-
16-17	1	1	1	-	-
18-19	1	1	1	1	-
20-21	2	1	1	1	1
22-23	2	2	1	1	1

mindlink power three times per day. This ability does not require psionic ability or cost power points to use. Otherwise, this ability acts just like the psionic power of the same name.

### Clairaudience/Clairvoyance

At 5th level, a Mystic gains the ability to use the clairaudience/clairvoyance power once per day. It requires 1 minute of concentration to initiate the ability and it can be maintained for up to 1 minute per Mystic level. During this time, the Mystic may take only move actions. This ability does not require psionic ability or cost power points to use. Otherwise this ability acts just like the psionic power of the same name.

### Arcane Sight

At 7th level, the Mystic enhances his awareness and perception

DC	Task
15 + spell level	Identify a spell being cast. (You must see or hear the spell's verbal or somatic components.) You can't try again.
15 + spell level	When casting detect magical aura, determine the school of magic involved in the aura of a single item or creature you can see. (If the aura isn't a spell effect, the DC is 15 + one-half caster level.)
20 + spell level	Identify a spell that's already in place and in effect. (You must be able to see or detect the effects of the spell.) You can't try again.
20 + spell level	Identify materials created or shaped by magic. You can't try again.
20 + spell level	Decipher a written spell (such as a scroll) without using read magic. One try per day.
25 + spell level	After rolling a saving throw against a spell targeted at the character, determine what spell was cast upon the character. This is a reaction.
25	Identify a potion. This takes 1 minute.
30 or higher	Understand a strange or unique magical effect. You can't try again.

**TABLE 3-7: THE MYSTIC**

Class Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special	Defense Bonus	Reputation Bonus
1	+0	+0	+0	+2	Divine skills, divine spells	+1	+1
2	+1	+0	+0	+3	Arcane sense, divine spells	+1	+1
3	+1	+1	+1	+3	Bonus feat, divine spells	+2	+1
4	+2	+1	+1	+4	Lesser mindlink, divine spells	+2	+2
5	+2	+1	+1	+4	Clairaudience/clairvoyance, divine spells	+3	+2
6	+3	+2	+2	+5	Bonus feat, divine spells	+3	+2
7	+3	+2	+2	+5	Arcane sight, divine spells	+4	+3
8	+4	+2	+2	+6	Combat casting, divine spells	+4	+3
9	+4	+3	+3	+6	Bonus feat, divine spells	+5	+3
10	+5	+3	+3	+7	Mindlink, divine spells	+5	+4

to an even greater level. He can now see the aura of any creature within 30 feet. Hidden creatures are immediately revealed and invisible creatures glow to the Mystic while inside this area. The Mystic can now target invisible creatures with spells or attacks, as well as reveal their location to others, but he still suffers a 20% miss chance due to the limited nature of his awareness.

**Combat Casting**

By 8th level, the Mystic is experienced at casting spells in combat. He gains a +4 bonus on Concentration checks made to cast a spell while on the defensive.

**Mindlink**

At 10th level, the Mystic gains the ability to use the mindlink power once per day. This ability does not require psionic ability or cost power points to use. Otherwise this ability acts just like the psionic power of the same name.

**Crusading Advocate**

While many people have ideals they believe in, the Crusading Advocate has a cause that he is willing to die for. The Crusading Advocate has the strength of belief to stand by his principles and fight for his conviction. Some Crusading Advocates are guided purely by a desire for knowledge or justice, while others have more complex motives. A Crusading Advocate might work for money, to prove a point, or to further some laudable goal. The scientist determined to find a cure for AIDS, the corporate researcher developing new weaponry, the eco-terrorist intent on preventing an environmental disaster, or the brilliant physicist scorned by her narrow-minded peers – anyone who upholds a cause and has the perseverance and dedication to never give up can be a Crusading Advocate.

Select this advanced class if you want your character to have clearly defined goals and the great strength of will and resolve to reach that goal.

The most likely path into this class is from the Charismatic hero basic class, although other paths are possible.

**Requirements**

**Skills:** Diplomacy 6 ranks, plus Knowledge (any one) or Craft (any one) 6 ranks.

**Feat:** Iron Will.

**Class Information**

The following information applies to the Crusading Advocate advanced class.

**Hit Die**

The Crusading Advocate gains 1d8 hit points per level. The character's Constitution modifier applies.

**Action Points**

The Crusading Advocate gains a number of Action Points equal to 6 + one-half her character level, rounded down, each time she attains a new level in this class.

**Class Skills**

The Crusading Advocate's class skills are as follows. Bluff (Cha), Computer Use (Int), Craft (chemical, electronic, mechanical, pharmaceutical, structural, visual art, writing) (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Gather Information (Cha), Investigate (Int), Knowledge (any) (Int), Profession (Wis), Read/Write Language (none), Research (Int), Sense Motive (Int), Speak Language (None)

Skill Points at Each Level: 5 + Int modifier.

**Class Features**

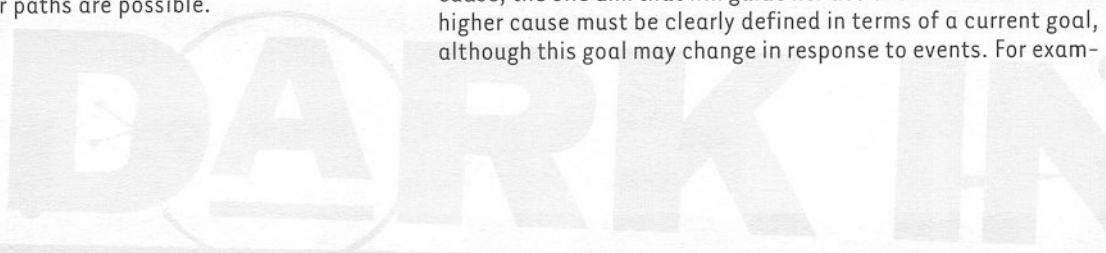
The following features pertain to the Crusading Advocate advanced class.

**Driven**

The Crusading Advocate's will sustains her in times of stress. Whenever she gains a level in this class, she may add her Charisma modifier to the die roll when rolling for hit points. The character's Constitution modifier is still applied as normal.

**Higher Cause**

At 2nd level, the Crusading Advocate must choose her higher cause, the one aim that will guide her actions and research. This higher cause must be clearly defined in terms of a current goal, although this goal may change in response to events. For exam-



ple, if her higher purpose is to “find out what happened to Jerusalem,” the Advocate’s initial goal might be simply to “get funding for a research expedition to the ruins of Jerusalem.” If she then discovers that her funding is being cut by Mossad agents, her goal might become “find a way to block Mossad’s influence.” The goal will always be a stepping stone to accomplishing the character’s higher cause.

Once the character has chosen a higher cause, she may spend an action point to reroll any failed Gather Information, Diplomacy, or Research check if that failure would keep her from accomplishing her current goal. Further, the character adds her Wisdom modifier as a bonus to the reroll. The character may only reroll a failed check once using this class feature.

#### Bonus Feats

At 3rd, 6th and 9th level, the Crusading Advocate gets a bonus feat. The bonus feat must be selected from the following list, and the Crusading Advocate must meet all the prerequisites of the feat to select it.

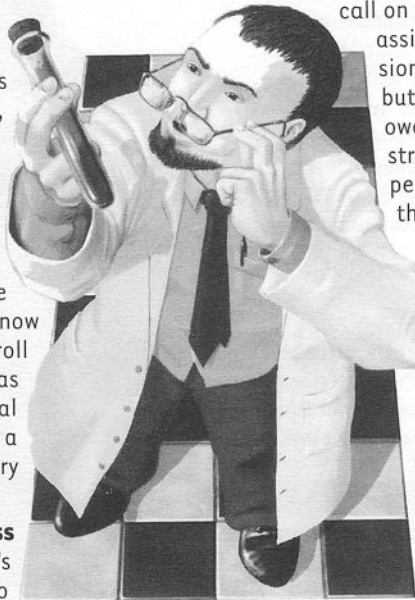
Archaic Weapons Proficiency, Combat Expertise, Educated, Focused, Gearhead, Guide, Heroic Surge, Personal Firearms Proficiency, Point Blank Shot, Renown, Studious.

#### Skill Mastery

At 4th level, the Crusading Advocate’s obsession with her higher cause spreads throughout her life. She may choose a number of skills equal to her Intelligence bonus plus her Charisma bonus. She may now use her higher cause class feature to reroll failed checks in any of these skills, as long as the success of the Crusading Advocate’s goal is at stake. She must have at least 1 rank in a skill to select it as one of her skill mastery choices.

#### Minor Success

At 5th level, one of the Crusading Advocate’s plots for furthering her higher cause comes to



fruition. This minor success provides the Crusading Advocate with one of the following benefits.

+1 bonus to Reputation, +2 bonus to Wealth, or a mid-level contact. Contacts include informants, politicians, military personnel, embassy clerks, reporters, and others who can provide limited aid and information pertaining to the Crusading Advocate’s goal. Each time the Crusading Advocate gains a contact, the GM should develop a supporting character to represent the contact. The player can suggest the type of contact his or her character wants to gain, but the contact must be an ordinary, not a heroic character. A mid-level contact has a character level of roughly one-half the Crusading Advocate’s character level, and never higher than 8th level.

A contact will not accompany a Crusading Advocate on missions or risk his or her life. A contact can, however, provide information or render a service (make a specific skill check on the Investigator’s behalf). The Crusading Advocate can’t call on the same contact more than once in a week, and when she does

call on a contact, compensation may be required for the assistance the contact renders. In general, a professional associate won’t be compensated monetarily, but instead will consider that the Crusading Advocate owes him or her a favor. Contacts with underworld or street connections usually demand monetary compensation for the services they render, and experts in the use of skills normally want to be paid for the services they provide.

For underworld or street contacts, this expense is represented by a Wealth check against a purchase DC of 15 for the mid-level contact. For skilled experts, the purchase DC is 10 + the ranks the expert has in the appropriate skill.

#### Dedicated Survival

At 7th level, the Crusading Advocate can spend 1 action point to reduce the damage dealt to her by a single attack or effect by 5 points.

**TABLE 3-8: THE CRUSADING ADVOCATE**

Class Level	Base		Ref Save	Will Save	Special	Defense Bonus	Reputation Bonus
	Attack Bonus	Fort Save					
1st	+0	+0	+0	+2	Driven	+1	+1
2nd	+1	+0	+0	+3	Higher cause	+1	+1
3rd	+1	+1	+1	+3	Bonus feat	+2	+1
4th	+2	+1	+1	+4	Skill mastery	+2	+2
5th	+2	+1	+1	+4	Minor success	+3	+2
6th	+3	+2	+2	+5	Bonus feat	+3	+2
7th	+3	+2	+2	+5	Dedicated survival	+4	+3
8th	+4	+2	+2	+6	Voice of conviction	+4	+3
9th	+4	+3	+3	+6	Bonus feat	+5	+3
10th	+5	+3	+3	+7	Major success	+5	+4

### Voice of Conviction

At 8th level, the Crusading Advocate's may verbally inspire her allies through the strength of her conviction. A number of times per day equal to her Charisma bonus, by taking at least a full-round action to urge her listeners on, the Advocate may grant her companions a +1 bonus to all skill checks and attack rolls made directly in pursuit of her higher cause. This inspiration lasts for up to 30 minutes. The Crusading Advocate may inspire a maximum number of people equal to her Crusading Advocate level + her Charisma bonus.

### Major Success

At 10th level, the Crusading Advocate makes a great leap towards fulfilling her higher cause (or even accomplishes it, and now chooses another, greater higher purpose). This success also provides the Crusading Advocate with one of the following benefits.

+2 bonus to Reputation, +3 bonus to Wealth, or a high-level contact.

A high-level contact is similar to the mid-level contact gained through the minor success class feature, except that the high-level contact has a character level of roughly one-half the Crusading Advocate's character level, but never higher than 12th level. For underworld or street contacts, the potential expense incurred by the high-level contact's employment is represented by a Wealth check against a purchase DC of 20. For skilled experts, the purchase DC is 10 + the ranks the expert has in the appropriate skill.

## Prestige Classes

Prestige classes in a modern d20 game are slightly different than most normal prestige classes in a d20 game. Prestige classes progress only 5 levels as characters first progress from base classes to advanced classes before they reach a prestige class.

### Spec Ops

Delta Force, Combat Controllers, SAS, Army Rangers, Navy SEALs, SOCOM, Spetsnaz, GIGN, Sayeret Tzanhanin, GSG9 - every major military force in the world has them. The term Special Operations, or Spec Ops, has been defined as "military

operations conducted by small teams of specially trained personnel organized in special equipped units in hostile or denied territory." These brave, elite few have special training and secretly authorized clearance to assassinate high-profile targets, to retrieve property lost by or stolen from their home country (including captured nationals), and even, in some extreme cases, to topple whole governments. Even among the civilians of the world, the mysterious and brutal legend of the Spec Ops soldier is something that to be feared.

Select this advanced class if you want your character to be a highly trained combat expert.

The fastest path into this prestige class is from a combination of the Strong hero base class and the Soldier advanced class, though other paths are possible.

### Requirements

Base Attack Bonus: +7

**Skills:** Demolitions 5 ranks, Hide 5 ranks, Move Silently 5 ranks, Spot 10 ranks.

**Feats:** Advanced Firearms Proficiency, Armor Proficiency (light), Armor Proficiency (medium), Burst Fire, Improved Damage Threshold, Personal Firearms Proficiency, Stealthy.

**Special:** The character must have at least one level in a military-oriented class such as Infiltrator, Soldier, Stim Freak or Super Soldier, and must have the Military occupation.

### Class Information

The following information pertains to the Spec Ops prestige class.



TABLE 3-9: THE SPEC OPS

Base Class Level	Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special	Defense Bonus	Reputation Bonus
1st	+1	+2	+1	+0	Team leader	+1	+0
2nd	+2	+3	+2	+0	Drawing a bead (+2)	+1	+0
3rd	+3	+3	+2	+1	Coordinated suppression fire	+2	+1
4th	+4	+4	+2	+1	Drawing a bead (+4)	+2	+1
5th	+5	+4	+3	+1	Terrain mastery	+3	+1

The Spec Ops gain 1d10 hit points per level. The character's Constitution modifier applies.

### Hit Die

The Spec Ops gains a number of action points equal to 7 + one-half his character level, rounded down, every time he attains a new level in this class.

### Action Points

The Spec Ops class skills are as follows.

Balance (Dex), Climb (Str), Demolitions (Int), Disable Device (Int), Drive (Dex), Escape Artist (Dex), Hide (Dex), Intimidate (Cha), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Navigate (Int), Repair (Int), Search (Int), Spot (Wis), Survival (Wis), Swim (Str), Treat Injury (Wis), Tumble (Dex).

Skill Points at Each Level: 5 + Int Modifier.

### Class Features

The following features pertain to the Spec Ops prestige class.

#### Team Leader

At 1st level, the Spec Ops has grown in his ability to take command of a situation. This confidence leads to split-second action, even in situations where reaction times might otherwise be slow. A number of times per day equal to half his class level (minimum once per day), the Spec Ops can effectively take 20 on his initiative roll. This ability cannot be used more than once per encounter, and the Spec Ops cannot use a delay or ready action during the same round he uses this class feature.

#### Drawing a Bead

At 2nd level, a Spec Ops can burst fire at an opponent using tracer rounds (see Chapter Six: Equipment herein) to help his teammates "draw in on his bead" - that is, use the stream of his fire to help target their own shots. When a Spec Ops fires tracer rounds at an opponent and successfully hits, his allies receive a +2 circumstance bonus to ranged attacks against that opponent for 1 full round. At 4th level, this circumstance bonus increases to +4. Drawing a bead cannot be used simultaneously with the coordinated suppression fire class feature (see below). The circumstance bonus granted by this class feature stacks with that from other Spec Ops using the same ability.

#### Coordinated Suppression Fire

At 3rd level, a Spec Ops can use the aid another action (see d20 Modern Roleplaying Game, Chapter Five: Combat, Special Attacks, "Aid Another") when firing a gun. He must have a gun in hand with at least five bullets loaded, must fire all five bullets, and

must declare a single target of his aid another action (who cannot be engaged in melee combat) to use this ability. If the aid another action is successful, his allies gain a +2 circumstance bonus to attacks or to Defense against the chosen target. The circumstance bonus granted by coordinated suppression fire stacks with that from other Spec Ops using the same ability.

#### Terrain Mastery

At 5th level, the Spec Ops has gained such skill in covert movement and infiltration that he is virtually invisible. By spending 1 action point, a Spec Ops gains a +10 bonus to any roll or check opposed by a foe's Listen, Search, or Spot check. Terrain mastery lasts up to 1 minute per Spec Ops level.

### Two-Fisted God of Guns

Many people know how to shoot a handgun, and some even train to make their gun an extension of their own body. The Two-Fisted God of Guns goes beyond such mundane training. Instead of merely working in concert with his handguns, the Two-Fist God of Guns makes them a part of his soul, elevating firefights to a sublime spiritual event, wielding his two blazing weapons with the grace and precision of a striking raptor. A Two-Fisted God of Guns may be a rogue triad hit man, a beautiful undercover CIA field agent, or even a sleazy outlaw on the run from the mafia.

Select this advanced class if you want your character to be a master of using firearms in close combat, becoming a virtual torrent of burning lead.

The fastest path to this prestige class is through a combination of the Fast basic class and the Gunslinger advanced class, though other paths are possible.

#### Requirements

Base Attack Bonus: +5.

**Skills:** Sleight of Hand 10 ranks, Tumble 10 ranks.

**Feats:** Advanced Firearms Proficiency, Dodge, Personal Firearms Proficiency, Precise Shot, Two-Weapon Fighting.

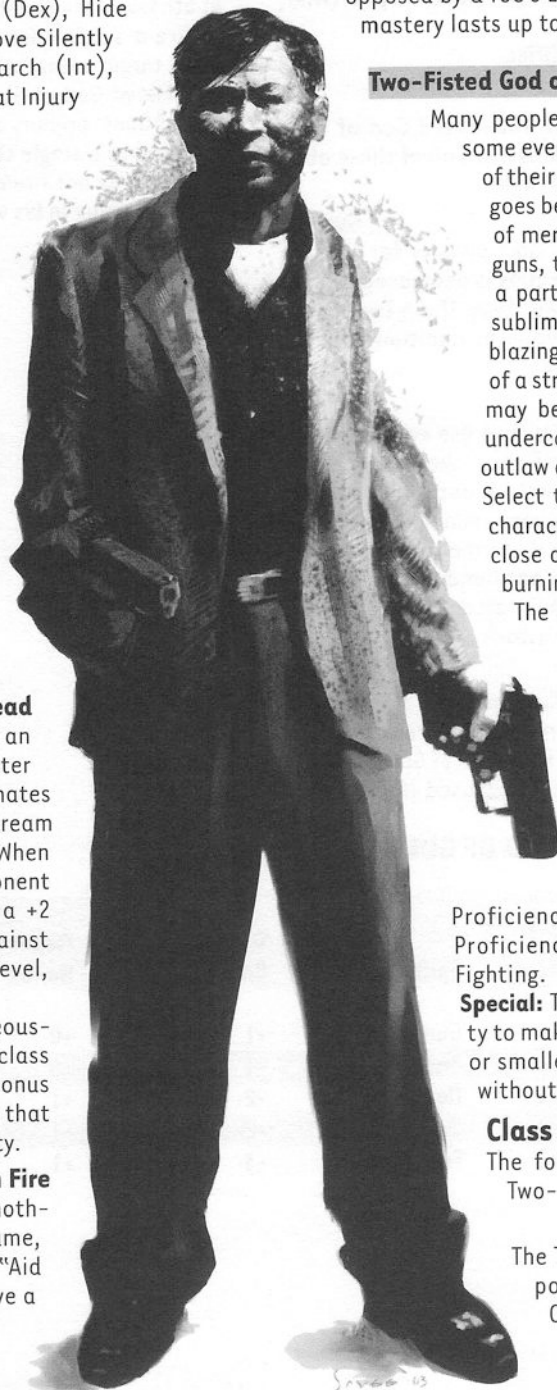
**Special:** The character must possess the ability to make ranged attacks with a Medium-size or smaller firearm while in a threatened area without provoking an attack of opportunity.

#### Class Information

The following information pertains to the Two-Fisted God of Guns prestige class.

#### Hit Die

The Two-Fisted God of Guns gains 1d8 hit points per level. The character's Constitution modifier applies.



### Action Points

The Two-Fisted God of Guns' gains a number of action points equal to 7 + one-half his character level, rounded down, every time he attains a new level in this class.

### Class Skills

The Two-Fisted God of Guns' class skills are as follows. Balance (Dex), Bluff (Cha), Demolitions (Int), Drive (Dex), Gamble (Wis), Intimidate (Cha), Knowledge (current events, popular culture, streetwise) (Int), Move Silently (Dex), Profession (Wis), Read/Write Language (none), Scrounge (Wis), Sleight of Hand (Dex), Speak Language (none), Spot (Wis), Tumble (Dex).

Skill Points at Each Level: 5 + Int Modifier.

### Class Features

The following features pertain to the Two-Fisted God of Guns prestige class. A Two-Fisted God of Guns loses all of these abilities when wearing armor heavier than light.

#### Gun-Fu

At 1st level, the Two-Fisted God of Guns' penalty for fighting with two Medium-sized or smaller firearms is decreased by 2. In addition, he gains Blind Shot as a bonus feat. If the Two-Fisted God of Guns already has this feat, he gains no additional feat or ability as a replacement.

#### Backfire

At 2nd level, the Two-Fisted God of Guns can use even an opponent's guns against her. If the God of Guns makes a successful unarmed disarm attack in melee against an opponent wielding a Medium-size or smaller firearm, he may immediately take a free attack with that firearm against its former user. The Two-Fisted God of Guns must have at least one hand free to use this ability, and the attack uses his primary attack bonus. Only a single shot can be fired with this free attack.

#### Deadeye

At 3rd level, the Two-Fisted God of Guns may, as a full-round action, fire a single shot with a firearm that ignores cover and concealment. The shot uses the Two-Fisted God of Guns' primary attack bonus. This class feature cannot be used if the target

has total cover or total concealment.

#### Dodge Fire

At 4th level, the Two-Fisted God of Guns can spend 1 action point to dodge all ranged attacks made against him for 1 round, from the start of his action until the beginning of his next action. Any ranged weapon attacks (but not ranged touch attacks from spells or the like) targeting the Two-Fisted God of Guns during this round automatically miss. Dodge fire is a full-round action.

#### Firestorm

At 5th level, the Two-Fisted God of Guns can spend 1 action point to fire a single shot or burst (if the weapon is automatic) at every target within range, to a maximum of one target for every Two-Fisted God of Guns level. Each attack uses the Two-Fisted God of Guns' primary attack bonus, and each enemy may only be targeted by a single shot or burst. Of course, the Two-Fisted God of Guns may not fire more shots or bursts than he has ammunition remaining in his weapon. Firestorm is a full-round action.

**TABLE 3-10: THE TWO-FISTED GOD OF GUNS**

Class Level	Base		Ref Save	Will Save	Special	Defense Bonus	Reputation Bonus
	Attack Bonus	Fort Save					
1st	+1	+0	+2	+0	Gun-fu	+1	+0
2nd	+2	+0	+3	+0	Backfire	+1	+0
3rd	+3	+1	+3	+1	Dead aim	+2	+1
4th	+4	+1	+4	+1	Dodge fire	+2	+1
5th	+5	+1	+4	+1	Firestorm	+3	+1

# BIRTHRIGHTS

chapter four



The wondrous abilities exhibited by titans are the most obvious sign of their potent lineage. While some unenlightened people may think of their powers as mere spells or trickery, the truth is more amazing. In some as yet unknown method, titans manipulate the energies of the Ethereal Plane. As they unlock the secrets buried within their own genetic codes, titans learn to manifest these powerful genetic abilities. The birthrights of each inheritor are literally a part of him, a manifestation of his genetics the same way hair color and eye color are expressions of inherited DNA. An inheritor's birthrights are a direct mark that he is a descendant of ancient gods or primordial monsters, and as his potency increases the mark becomes more and more obvious to all who look upon him.

Inheritors of each legacy manifests very different birthrights. The birthrights available to a legacy expand upon that legacy's archetypes. This is both a strength and a weakness, for while the power a titan wields is limited to the domains of his legacy, within this realm he can surpass his human companions albeit briefly. In the Lost Age, inheritors were even more powerful. These beings were nearly alien in their perspective and lived above and beyond the mass of humanity. The titans of the past wielded powers unseen today and possibly never to be seen again. Titans born into the modern age have the same immense potential, however, a greatness bestowed upon them by birth. As they age and use their birthrights, they slowly change, both physically and psychologically. Over time, inheritors become more and more like their ancient forbears, as their bodies and minds are forced to change in order to handle the tremendous energies they wield. Somehow, the ethereal energies unlock more of the mysteries coded into their very bodies. This is both a boon and bane, for while the transformation allows greater acumen in manifesting birthrights it also bestows upon them the legendary weaknesses of their divine ancestors.

The chapter that follows describes these mystical abilities of the titans, how they function, and how they change the character.

# BIRTHRIGHTS

## Birthright Basics

A birthright is a one-time magical effect manifested by a titan character. As birthrights are an innate characteristic of titans, no arcane gestures, eldritch words, or material components are needed to manifest them, although the titan must be able to move freely to manifest most birthrights. Birthrights are supernatural abilities and are thus not subject to spell resistance, do not provoke attacks of opportunity, and never require



Concentration checks. Birthrights are grouped together into trees of linked birthrights based upon a common theme and purchased with action points. All but the very first birthrights in a tree require the inheritor to have purchased other, less expensive birthrights as prerequisites.

### Acquiring Birthrights

Every legacy has a number of birthright trees from which the titan's player can choose birthrights. Characters from one legacy cannot purchase or acquire birthrights from another legacy's birthright trees. Most birthrights cost from 1 to 5 action points, but some very powerful birthrights may cost 6 or more action points to obtain. The cost of a birthright is listed in the birthright's description.

#### Acquiring Birthrights at 1st Level

At 1st level, you may choose one birthright from your character's available birthright trees at no cost. This is one of the benefits of being an inheritor. You must meet all the prerequisites for the birthright you wish to choose. The beginning birthrights available to your Legacy can be found at the end of your legacy's description in Chapter Three.

#### Acquiring Birthrights after 1st Level

Every level, you may purchase more birthrights from any tree available to those of your character's legacy. You must meet the birthright's prerequisites and pay the action point cost in its description. At any given level, you may only spend a number of action points in this way equal to half your total character level (rounded down).

### Manifesting a Birthright

Birthrights use a rules mechanic that is somewhat different from other d20 System™ powers, such as spells or psionics, but players will find the basics of this mechanic very familiar. The first step in manifesting a birthright is to choose which birthright to manifest. Titan characters can choose from any birthright they have purchased. Most birthrights require the titan to be free to move, but there are some that can be manifested even while restrained. To manifest a birthright, select a birthright you know and makes a Strain check. A character may

legendary transformations. Legacy points can also be purchased with action points, but the cost is high: It costs 5 action points to purchase 1 legacy point.

**Base Birthright Bonus:** Every titan has a base birthright bonus (BBB). Titans begin play with a BBB of +0. The base birthright bonus is similar to a base attack bonus, but it does not increase naturally as one advances in level, as do base attack bonuses. Rather, a player may spend legacy points to purchase a new BBB 1 point higher than his or her character's current BBB. The cost to raise one's BBB, in legacy points, is equal to the value of the new BBB. Thus, to raise one's BBB from +5 to +6, one must spend 6 legacy points.

The base birthright bonus is added to a birthright's key ability modifier to create a birthright modifier, which is the value used when one makes a Strain check (see below). This total birthright modifier is often called "potency" (or "birthright potency").

### Don't Be That Guy!

As a titan character's BBB is primarily increased through the use of birthrights, some munchkin will probably want to manifest a bunch of birthrights during down time or between gaming sessions to quickly raise his character's BBB. To put it simply: Don't be that guy! And don't let your players be that guy, either.

The legacy point system is a way to separate the BBB from the constraints of level advancement. Titan birthrights are an inherent ability that is independent of the character's level. As with most rules, there are ways to abuse the system. Abusing these rules can unbalance your character in comparison to his non-titan companions and ruin the fun for everyone.

New BBB	+1	+2	+3	+4	+5	+6	+7	+8	+9
Legacy point cost	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

always expend 1 action point to manifest a birthright without checking for strain, as long as he or she is not currently exhausted (see d20 Modern Roleplaying Game™, Chapter Five: Combat, sidebar: "Character Condition Summary").

Below are a few definitions of the elements that make up the basic framework for birthright manifestation.

**Legacy Points:** Each time a titan rolls a natural 20 on a Strain check, he gains a single legacy point. Legacy points are used to buy a higher base birthright bonus or to remove penalties from

**Key Ability:** Each birthright is associated with one ability score (Str, Dex, Con, Int, Wis, or Cha). The modifier for this ability is added to the BBB (resulting in one's "potency" for that birthright) and together they are applied as a bonus to the Strain check.

**Potency (Birthright Potency):** Unlike spells or psionic powers, birthright powers are not dependent upon the character's level. Instead, a birthright's effects, range, and duration

depend upon the titan's potency in that specific birthright. A titan has a potency value for every birthright he has purchased. Potency is equal to the character's BBB + his key ability modifier for that birthright. As the key ability of one birthright may be different from another, one's potency can vary from power to power. Potency can never be a negative value, however. If the potency would be a negative number due to a negative ability modifier, treat it as +0.

**Legendary Transformations:** These undesirable changes can occur either when a titan becomes exhausted as a result of using a birthright or if he rolls a natural 1 on a Strain check (see below) when manifesting a birthright. A titan makes a Transform check (see below) on the appropriate birthright tree's legendary transformation chart any time either of these events happens.

**Strain Penalty:** The penalty a character applies to all Strain checks, accumulated through previous manifestations of birthrights.

### Strain Checks

Manifesting birthrights is extremely stressful on the human body. Each manifestation of a birthright power runs the risk of, for instance, mutating the titan's body or damaging her mind, moving her further towards her legendary heritage - at the cost of her humanity. Strain is the titan's unconscious struggle to maintain her human qualities. When she fails in this struggle, her Godgenes forcibly alter her so she can better handle the intense ethereal energies flooding her system.

Every time a titan character manifests a birthright, she must make a Strain check against the strain DC indicated in the description of that birthright power. This check takes into account the titan's skill at manifesting birthrights (base birthright bonus), her natural ability (key ability modifier), and her sheer luck (the die roll).

As with attack rolls, a natural roll of 20 on a Strain check is an automatic success, while natural 1 is always a failure. Remember, if you roll a 1 on a Strain check, the birthright does not manifest and you must also make a Transform check, as

described later in this chapter.

To make a Strain check, roll:

**1d20 + birthright potency**  
**(Birthright potency = base birthright bonus + key ability modifier + miscellaneous modifiers)**

The higher your result, the better. You want to get a result that equals or exceeds a certain Difficulty Class (DC), which is listed in the description of the birthright being manifested.

#### Effects of Strain

If the Strain check result exceeds the DC by 5 or more, the birthright power is manifested and the titan suffers no strain. Any other result may cause strain penalties for the titan. See Table 4-1: Strain Check Results to determine the exact result of a Strain check.

Strain penalties are applied to all subsequent Strain checks, so it is important to keep track of your character's strain penalty, as it can rise and fall many times during a gaming session.

Note that if you are already fatigued, whether as the result of a previous Strain check or some other cause, and you fail your strain check by 5 or more, you become exhausted rather than fatigued. You suffer all the normal detrimental effects of becoming exhausted through the use of birthrights.

A titan who is exhausted cannot manifest birthrights.

#### For Example

If Emily attempts to manifest maze of the minotaur (Strain DC 14) and her Strain check result is a 10, she failed her Strain check by 4 (14 - 10), so she is shaken for 1 round and the Strain DC for future strain checks is 2 higher (the purchase cost of maze of the minotaur).

If she had rolled a total of 5, she'd have failed her Strain check by 9 (more than 5, but less than 10). Thus, she would be fatigued, her Strain penalty would increase by 2, and she would be forced to make a Transform check.

Remember, by spending 1 action point, a character can manifest a birthright without having to make a Strain check. However, an action point can only be spent in this way if she is not already exhausted.

**TABLE 4-1: STRAIN CHECK RESULTS**

Check ...	- Result -
Exceeds DC by 5+	No strain penalty.
Succeeds	Strain penalty increases by 1/2 the purchase cost of the birthright manifested (rounded down)
Fails	Shaken for 1 round; strain penalty increases by the purchase cost of the birthright manifested
Fails by 5 or more	Fatigued; strain penalty increases by the purchase cost of the birthright manifested
Fails by 10 or more	Exhausted; strain penalty increases by the purchase cost of the birthright manifested; must make Transform check
Is a natural 1	Birthright does not manifest. Shaken for 1 minute; fatigued; strain penalty increases by 2 times the purchase cost of the birthright manifested; must make Transform check

### Recovering From Strain

Eventually, titans recover from the strain they put their bodies through when they manifest the potent genetic abilities within them. For each hour that passes, even if the character is engaged in strenuous physical activity (including combat), the strain penalty decreases by an amount equal to the character's base birthright bonus. Further, 8 hours of complete, uninterrupted rest always brings the character's strain penalty back to 0, regardless of how high the penalty has become or whether the titan has a +0 BBB.

At any time, a titan may spend 1 action point to completely clear his strain penalty.

### Condition Summary for Failed Strain Checks

#### Shaken

A shaken character suffers a -2 penalty on all attack rolls, saving throws, and skill checks.

#### Fatigued

Characters who are fatigued can't run or charge and suffer a penalty of -2 to Strength and Dexterity. After 8 hours of complete, uninterrupted rest, a fatigued character is no longer fatigued.

#### Exhausted

Characters who are exhausted move at half speed and cannot run or charge. Furthermore, they suffer a -6 penalty to Strength and Dexterity. After 1 hour of complete, uninterrupted rest, an exhausted character becomes fatigued. A titan who is exhausted cannot manifest birthrights.

### Manifestation Time

Manifesting a birthright takes a certain amount of time, which is listed in the Manifestation Time line of the birthright's description. Some birthrights can be manifested as free actions. Birthrights can only be manifested once per round, even if they have a free action manifestation time.

### Resisting Birthrights

Most harmful birthrights allow an affected target a saving throw to avoid some or all of the effect. Each birthright lists which saving throw type applies, if any. The DC for a saving throw to resist a birthright is 10 + purchase cost of the birthright + the titan character's key ability modifier for the birthright. The terms used to define the various types of saving throws and results are the same as for spells.

### Primal Scream

The birthrights of the progenitors and their children were far stronger than the ones titans manifest today. But even far distant inheritors can call upon a portion of the great powers of

old. Every birthright can be enhanced by the expenditure of 1 action point. The rules for what happens when you spend an action point in this way are described in the Primal Scream section of the birthright description.

Only one action point can be spent while manifesting a birthright: One cannot spend an action point to activate the Primal Scream and also spend an action point to avoid making a Strain check, for example.

### Aid Another and Birthrights

Birthrights are a profoundly personal ability. A titan cannot cooperate in order to manifest birthrights unless he has the Birthright Aid feat (see the "New Feats" section in Chapter Three: New Character Options).

### Legendary Transformations

While increasing your BBB seems easy, at least with some luck, there are some definite downsides to recklessly using birthrights to do so. Failure to control the ethereal energies cascading through an inheritor's body can alter him, making him less human while at the same time bringing the inheritor closer to his ancient ancestors. The human body was never designed to channel the potent ethereal energies summoned by birthright manifestation. The physical and mental transformations induced by the manifestation of birthrights are an attempt by the body's DNA to change its body so as to be able to better handle the intense energies. Legendary transformations are unique to each birthright tree and reflect the themes of that tree.

All legendary transformations change or penalize the titan in some undesirable way. Some transformations alter the physical appearance of the character - changing eye color or sprouting elaborate horns are minor examples of this type of transformation - and some of these changes only appear while the titan is actually manifesting birthrights. These legendary transformations are obvious and reveal the inheritor for what he truly is, a descendant of inhuman beings.

Other changes cannot be seen with the eye, but produce changes every bit as extreme within the titan, modifying his personality or demeanor. The psyche of the inheritor takes on qualities of the birthright he was using when the transformation occurred. A Storm Crow may become more violent or argue more often. A Wild Blood may become obsessed with survival, or be compelled to stalk people. These personality changes can be thwarted, but it generally takes an act of will to overcome the potent drives born of such powerful blood, represented by a Will saving throw. The DC for such saving throws is listed in the individual legendary transformation description.

#### Transform Checks

Each time a titan exhausts her self when manifesting a birthright or rolls a 1 on a Strain check, she must make a Transform check. Failure causes an immediate and possibly permanent change to the inheritor as the effects of a legendary transformation are applied.

To make a Transform check, roll:

### 1d20 + miscellaneous modifiers

The higher the roll on the 1d20, the better. Consult the appropriate legendary transformation chart (found at the end of each birthright tree, later in this chapter) to determine if the result rolled inflicts a legendary transformation on your titan character and, if so, of what level of severity.

Legendary transformations are separated into three categories: minor, major, and severe flaws. Minor flaws usually last for only a short time, although their short-term effects may be hard to handle or conceal. Major flaws last for some time or are permanent and have a pervasive effect on the character. Severe flaws, on the other hand, are always permanent until paid for in legacy points or experience. These severe flaws defiantly proclaim the titan's true heritage and can, at times, be quite debilitating.

The legendary transformation charts included with each birthright tree are examples that can be used by a GM to create individual charts for each titan character. Creating an individualized legendary transformation chart for each titan PC is highly recommended, as it enhances the unique individuality of the character. Be tough, though. Legendary transformations are meant to be scary. Use the ones contained in Dark Inheritance as examples.

### Purging Legendary Transformations

Whenever a titan suffers a legendary transformation as a result of a birthright manifestation gone awry, he receives a penalty or some potentially harmful, dangerous, or debilitating effect. However, it is possible to remove, or "purge" these penalties or negative effects by paying either legacy points or experience points. The cost to purge legendary transformations is given on Table 4-2: Legendary Transformation Purge Costs.

**TABLE 4-2: LEGENDARY TRANSFORMATION PURGE COSTS**

Transformation Severity	PurgeCost(Legacy Points/XP)
Severe Flaw	2/1,000
Major Flaw	1/500
Minor Flaw*	-/250

\* Note that up to two minor flaws can be purged with the expenditure of 1 legacy point.

### How to Read a Birthright Description

In many ways, a birthright description is identical to a spell description. (See d20 Modern Roleplaying Game, Chapter Ten: FX Abilities, "How to Read a Spell Description" for information that is not listed below.) Where birthright descriptions and spell

descriptions differ, the differences are summarized below.

### Descriptors

Descriptors are a way of classifying powers that have a common characteristic; they are often useful for knowing which creatures are or are not affected by a power. For instance, Apollo's imbue and fist of solar fire both have the fire descriptor, meaning that they affect normally any target that is not immune or resistant to fire effects. Likewise, fist of Ewiniar and Zeus's javelin both carry the electricity descriptor, meaning that they are effective against any target that can be damaged by electricity effects.

A power's descriptors (if any) appear in brackets on the line containing the birthright's key ability. Descriptors used for the powers in this book include the following: cold, compulsion, electricity, fire, language-dependent, mind-affecting, and sonic.

### Purchase Cost

The number listed here is the cost in action points to purchase the birthright. A titan cannot spend more action points than a number equal to half his character level when buying birthrights.

### Prerequisites

A few simple birthrights can be purchased outright. Most birthrights, however, are dependent upon other, less advanced birthrights. Titan characters cannot purchase a birthright without first having purchased all its prerequisite birthrights.

### Manifestation Time

Manifesting a birthright can be an attack action, a move action, a full-round action, or even a free action, depending on the birthright. See the birthright descriptions later in this chapter for details.

### Saving Throw

Most harmful birthrights allow an affected target a saving throw to avoid some or all of the effect. Each birthright lists which saving throw type applies, if any. The DC for a saving throw to resist a birthright is 10 + purchase cost of the birthright + the titan character's key ability modifier. The terms used to define the various types of saving throws and results are the same as for spells.

### Descriptive Text

A birthright's descriptive text explains how the birthright works or what it does.

### Primal Scream

Every birthright can be enhanced with the expenditure of 1 action point. This section explains what happens when that action point is spent, and may include an alternate Strain DC for the Strain check if it is different than with the normally manifested birthright.

### Birthright Lists

This section begins with a listing of all the birthrights described later in the chapter. The information below pertains to all titans of every legacy.

**Hit Dice:** The term "Hit Dice" is used synonymously with "character levels" for effects that affect a number of Hit Dice of creatures. A creature with only Hit Dice from its species, not from any classes it may have, has a character level equal to its Hit Dice. A creature with class levels is considered to have Hit Dice equal to the total of its Hit Dice and its class levels.

**Character Level:** A birthright's power sometimes, although very rarely, may depend on the titan's level, which is the character's total level. Creatures with no classes have a character level equal to their Hit Dice unless otherwise specified.

**Potency:** A birthright's power nearly always depends on the total of the titan's BBB and the key ability modifier for the birthright, otherwise known as potency.

**Creatures and Characters:** "Creatures" and "characters" are used synonymously in the spell descriptions.

**List Format:** This section lists the birthright trees by Legacy and in alphabetical order. All the birthrights for a birthright tree are presented together in general hierarchical order.

## Crimson Lords

Crimson Lords rule over the realm of culture and society. They are gifted speakers, consummate diplomats, and hedonistic revelers. They are the inheritors of social manipulation and natural leaders. While the other legacies argue, the Crimson Lords bring compromise and direction. But while they may enjoy the festivities of victory and the pleasure of peace and prosperity, the Children of Bacchus see themselves as the guardians of mankind. While they believe they have the divine right of rule, the legacy also believes it has a responsibility to those they guide. Civilization is a flower that must be fostered and protected else it fall into barbarism and ruin.

## Emotion

Crimson Lords control not only the senses but the emotions. They are passionate as a rule, feeling their own emotions strongly. But they can also be surprisingly empathic, tapping into the emotions of those around them. These titans can manipulate those emotions, creating different moods and feelings or reinforcing existing ones to further their own goals.

## Light of Joy

Charisma [Compulsion, Mind-affecting]

**Purchase Cost:** 1; Strain DC: 13; **Prerequisites:** None; **Manifestation Time:** Attack action; Range: Touch; **Target:** One living creature; **Duration:** 1 round/potency; **Saving Throw:** Will negates  
You can make another person feel spontaneous joy. That individual is at -2 penalty on all saving throws, attack rolls and skill checks - he or she is too happy to function properly.

**Primal Scream:** You now affect up to four people, all of whom must be within 20-feet of each other.

## Kiss of Dionysus

Constitution

**Purchase Cost:** 3; Strain DC: 15; **Prerequisites:** Light of Joy;

**Manifestation Time:** Attack; action; Range: Touch; **Target:** One living creature; **Duration:** 1 round/potency; **Saving Throw:** Fortitude negates

Crimson Lords have a special affinity with alcohol, and with its effects. Using this birthright, you can cause an individual to feel the full effects of an evening of heavy drinking, even if that creature has not touched a drop. How the creature reacts depends on the individual (some people become rowdy, others melancholy, others giddy, etc.). For the duration of the birthright, the subject is shaken and the character's effective Wisdom score drops by 6 for the duration of kiss of dionysus.

**Primal Scream:** You can expand the effect to include four other people, each specifically selected, provided they are all within a 20-foot radius of you.

## Face of Kali

Charisma [Fear, Mind-affecting]

**Purchase Cost:** 4; Strain DC: 16; **Prerequisites:** Kiss of Dionysus; **Manifestation Time:** Attack action; Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./potency); **Target:** One living creature; **Duration:** 1 round/potency; **Saving Throw:** Will negates

For bit a brief moment your face expresses the rage of a divine being. You evoke fear, as the spell, in one creature.

**Primal Scream:** The target changes to an area of cone.

## Grip of Fear

Charisma [Compulsion, Mind-affecting]

**Purchase Cost:** 5; Strain DC: 17; **Prerequisites:** Face of Kali; **Manifestation Time:** Full round action; Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./potency); **Target:** One living creature; **Duration:** 1 day/potency; **Saving Throw:** Will negates

You can inflict a phobia, an unreasoning fear, on the subject. This phobia can be directed to a type of animal (spiders, snakes), an activity (climbing, driving), a substance (milk, wine, wood) or a type of place (heights, closed spaces). For the duration of the effect, treat this as a real phobia-the subject will avoid the element in question at all cost, will run away screaming if forced into contact with it, and will generally be useless around this element. It requires a Will save (DC 15 + potency) for the creature to overcome this fear, and his success only lasts a minute. (see d20 Modern Roleplaying Game™, Chapter Eight: Friends and Foes, Creature Weaknesses, Aversion)

**Primal Scream:** The phobia becomes permanent, though not quite as extreme (Will save DC 10 + potency).

## Passion Play

Charisma [Compulsion, Mind-affecting]

**Purchase Cost:** 3; Strain DC: 15; **Prerequisites:** Light of Joy; **Manifestation Time:** Full round action; Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./potency); **Target:** One living creature; **Duration:** 1 round/potency; **Saving Throw:** Will negates

You intensify the target's emotions. If the creature was con-

tent, they become deliriously happy. If they were melancholy, they become depressed. Irritable becomes furious, and so on. For the duration of the birthright, the subject immediately acts on his or her heightened emotion. The GM determines what the action may be.

**Primal Scream:** Everyone within a twenty-foot radius of you has their emotions intensified. You can dispel this effect at a touch (each individual must be touched separately) at any time.

### Sorrow of the Past

Charisma [Compulsion, Mind-affecting]

**Purchase Cost:** 4; Strain DC: 16; **Prerequisites:** Passion Play; **Manifestation Time:** Attack action; Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./potency); **Target:** One living creature; **Duration:** 1 round/potency; **Saving Throw:** Will negates

Your target suddenly recalls one of his or her saddest memories. The individual is reduced to tears, and is dazed for the duration. If attacked, the creature gets another Will save to attempt to recover.

**Primal Scream:** You can select up to four people, all of whom must be within 20-feet of each other.

### Mirror of Narcissus

Charisma [Compulsion, Mind-affecting]

**Purchase Cost:** 2; Strain DC: 14; **Prerequisites:** Light of Joy; **Manifestation Time:** Attack action; Range: Touch; **Target:** One living creature; **Duration:** 1 hour/potency; **Saving Throw:** Will negates

With a touch you plant a deep attractive compulsion in the mind of the creature you touch. The subject of this birthright is under the effects of attraction, as the psionic power.

**Primal Scream:** You now affect up to four people, all of whom must be within 20-feet of each other

### Words of Hera

Charisma [Compulsion, Mind-Affecting, Language-Dependent]

**Purchase Cost:** 4; Strain DC: 16; **Prerequisites:** Mirror of Narcissus, Passion Play; **Manifestation Time:** Full round action; Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./potency); **Target:** One living creature; **Duration:** 1 hour/potency or until completed; **Saving Throw:** Will negates

You manipulate the actions of the creature by offering it a course of action (limited to a sentence or two). You must word this in such a way that the course of action seems reasonable. Asking a creature to jump off a bridge, or other ridiculous suggestions end the birthright. However, you may suggest that a dangerous stairway is in fact safe to traverse or that a glass of hydrochloric acid is really water. The creature takes the suggested courses of action and the birthright ends either when the task is complete or the duration expires.

**Primal Scream:** Although the target gets a +6 bonus to the Will saving throw, you may make ridiculous or suicidal suggestions.

### Hathor's Eyes

Wisdom [Mind-Affecting]

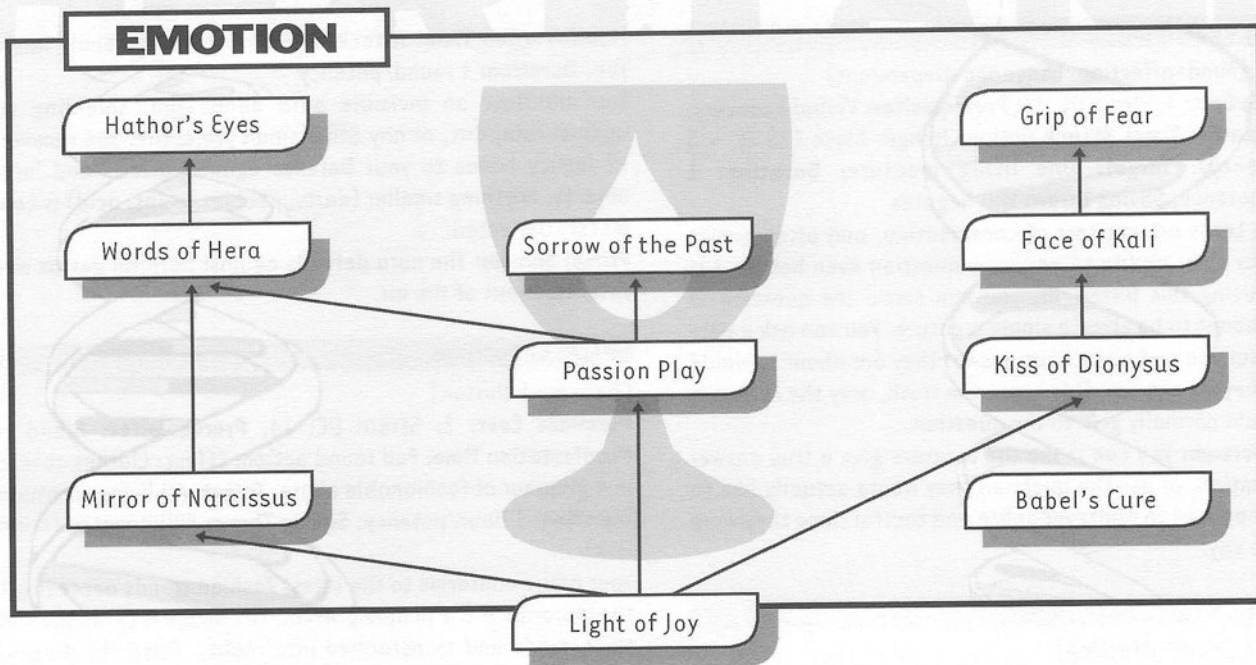
**Purchase Cost:** 5; Strain DC: 17; **Prerequisites:** Words of Hera; **Manifestation Time:** Full round action; Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./potency); **Target:** All living creatures; **Duration:** 1 round/Potency; **Saving Throw:** Will negates

You effortlessly read the surface emotions of all living creatures with the range of the birthright. You sense not only the basic needs, emotions, and drives of the creatures but mood and motives as well. For instance, you know that the senator is feeling fatigued and that his friendliness is not truly felt rather he is motivated by a sense of patriotism. You also sense that he is angry at his driver and really wants to undress the woman who just shook his hand.

**Primal Scream:** By speaking with someone for a period of time no less than 10 minutes you determine the person's price; everyone has one. This price may be as crass as money or sex but can be as complex as justice for childhood abuse or the recovery of a long lost love. You discover what will cause the person to cave in the quickest to bribery or deal-making. The GM determines what this blood price is.

**Table 4-3: EMOTION LEGENDARY TRANSFORMATIONS**

Legendary Check	Result
1 - 4	You have a hard time sorting through your heightened emotions. Whenever under stress (such as the beginning of combat or tense negotiation) you must make a Will saving throw (DC 17) or be dazed for a round. You only make a save once per stressful situation. (Severe - Permanent)
5 - 9	You find yourself lacking in courage. For a span of 4 months you receive a -4 penalty to saving throws against fear effects. (Major Flaw - Temporary)
10 - 16	You temporarily gain an aversion to a single source. The GM may either choose this source or roll on <b>Table 8-26: SOURCES OF WEAKNESS</b> in the d20 Modern Roleplaying Game™. See the d20 Modern Roleplaying Game™, Chapter Eight: Friends and Foes, Creature Weaknesses for details on aversion. (Minor Flaw - Temporary)
17 - 20	No Legendary Transformation



### Babel's Cure

Intelligent

**Purchase Cost:** 2; **Strain DC:** 14; **Prerequisites:** None; **Manifestation Time:** Attack action; **Range:** Personal; **Target:** You; **Duration:** 1 hour/potency; **Saving Throw:** None

You are able to communicate clearly with any intelligent creature (Intelligence score 3+). You effortlessly speak and understand any spoken language for the duration of the birthright. You still only speak in one language at a time and so may be forced to repeat yourself if you are conversing with multiple people who speak different languages.

**Primal Scream:** Everyone within a 25-foot radius of you is able to communicate regardless of language.

### Emotion Legendary Transformations

Legendary transformations for the Emotion tree are, naturally, emotional in nature. They can relate to the Crimson Lord's own emotions or effect the emotions of people around them. Crimson Lords are more inclined to drama than to subtlety, and so their emotions tend to be expressed publicly and passionately. Emotion transformations reflect this.

### Grace

The Crimson Lords are, above everything else, graceful. Their movements are fluid, their actions sure, their language eloquent. But it is more than that, for these titans are masters of observation, of language, and of fashion. They perceive hidden and half-spoken things, and react to them quickly and appropriately—what many consider wisdom is merely the ability to know what the other creature really wants or is willing to give up, and what appears to be reflexes are really the foreknowledge of another creature's actions.

### Gracious Eloquence

Charisma

**Purchase Cost:** 1; **Strain DC:** 13; **Prerequisites:** None; **Manifestation Time:** Full round action; **Range:** Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./potency); **Target:** One creature; **Duration:** 1 round/potency; **Saving Throw:** Will negates

Crimson Lords are gifted leaders, in part because their speeches can sway almost any listener. With this Birthright you unconsciously select the best words from the minds of one listener, crafting conversation or speech specifically to that creature's desires. You gain a +4 legacy bonus to all Bluff, Diplomacy, and other Charisma related skill checks against that creature.

**Primal Scream:** You draw words and concepts from the minds of everyone within a 25-foot radius gaining a +4 legacy bonus on all Bluff, Diplomacy, and other Charisma related skill checks for the duration of the birthright.

### Verbal Recovery

Charisma

**Purchase Cost:** 3; **Strain DC:** 15; **Prerequisites:** Gracious Eloquence; **Manifestation Time:** Free action; **Range:** Personal; **Target:** You; **Duration:** Instantaneous

You can recover from even horrible social faux pas. When you fail a Charisma based skill check you can manifest this birthright as a free action. You immediately reroll the check with all the same modifiers as the first check.

**Primal Scream:** You gain a +2 legacy bonus to the skill check reroll.

### Leading Questions

Wisdom [Mind-affecting, Language-Dependant]

**Purchase Cost:** 4; **Strain DC:** 16; **Prerequisites:** Verbal Recovery; **Manifestation Time:** Attack action; **Range:** Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./potency); **Target:** One living creature; **Duration:** 1 round/potency; **Saving Throw:** Will negates

Crimson Lords are masters of conversation, and often amaze people by their ability to answer a question even before it is asked. Using this Birthright, you can sense the question or answer about to be given a single creature. You can ask a person a question and know what answer they are about or would give if they do not say. This is not the truth, only the response they would normally give to the question.

**Primal Scream:** You can make the creature give a true answer to a question, or ask the question they would actually like to ask, as opposed to whatever polite and tactful thing they were about to say.

### Blend In

Charisma [Mind-affecting]

**Purchase Cost:** 1; **Strain DC:** 13; **Prerequisites:** None; **Manifestation Time:** Attack action; **Range:** Medium (100 ft. + 10 ft./potency); **Target:** All living creatures; **Duration:** 1 minute/potency; **Saving Throw:** Will negates (harmless)

You seamlessly blend into nearly all social situations, both at cultural soirées and seedy bars. It is not that others see you attired differently, rather you just seem to fit in and will not be bothered unless you bother others or do something to draw attention to yourself. Blend in does not allow you to walk by guards or enter sensitive areas without being confronted; it merely allows you to remain unmolested in general public environments.

**Primal Scream:** Even if you draw attention to yourself, others find you non-threatening and treat you with general respect given to others that frequent the establishment. If you do something to threaten, insult, or denigrate someone, this birthright ends.

### Defensive Aura

Charisma

**Purchase Cost:** 2; **Strain DC:** 13; **Prerequisites:** Blend In;

**Manifestation Time:** Attack action; **Range:** Personal; **Target:** You; **Duration:** 1 round/potency

You manifest an invisible aura about you, shielding you against rain, dirt, or any other small projectile. You receive a +2 legacy bonus to your Defense against arrows and larger objects. Anything smaller (darts, pebbles, coins, acid) is completely deflected.

**Primal Scream:** The aura defends against harmful gas as well, filtering it out of the air.

### Height of Fashion

Charisma [Illusion]

**Purchase Cost:** 2; **Strain DC:** 14; **Prerequisites:** Blend In; **Manifestation Time:** Full round action; **Effect:** Clothes covered in a glamour of fashionable attire; **Target:** All living creatures; **Duration:** 1 hour/potency; **Saving Throw:** Will negates (harmless)

Your attire conforms to the latest fashion trends according to the majority of the people present—the image is compiled from their minds and transformed into reality. Once the duration expires, your clothes return to their previous state.

**Primal Scream:** Your attire, whatever it is, becomes the height of fashion for all those within visual range.

### Aphrodite's Language

Intelligence

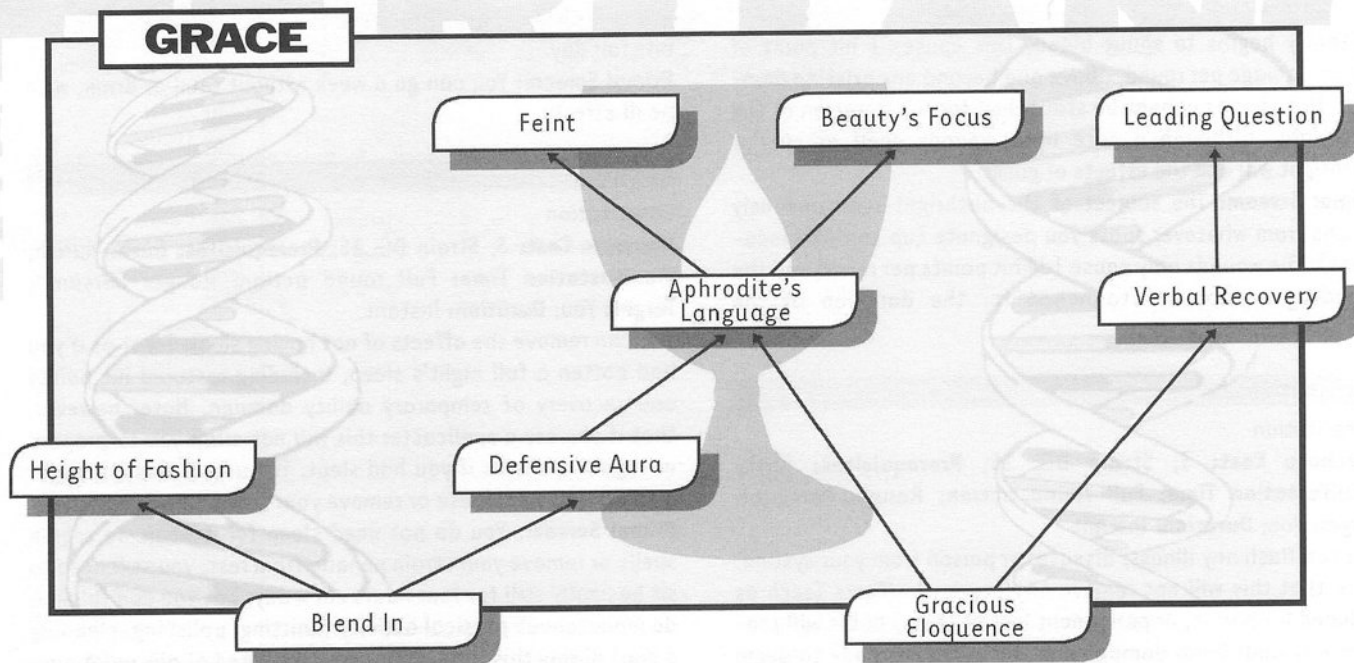
**Purchase Cost:** 3; **Strain DC:** 15; **Prerequisites:** Defensive Aura, Gracious Eloquence; **Manifestation Time:** Attack action; **Range:** Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./potency); **Target:** Any number of intelligent creatures; **Duration:** 1 round/potency; **Saving Throw:** Will negates

You can read people's body language like the proverbial book. Not only does this allow you to understand others motives but it is a great boon during combat. In social situations you gain a +8 insight bonus to all Bluff, Diplomacy, and other Charisma related skill checks.

**Primal Scream:** In addition to the benefits you normally gain, you receive a +2 insight bonus to initiative checks, attacks rolls, and Defense.

Table 4-4: GRACE LEGENDARY TRANSFORMATIONS

Legendary Check	Result
1 - 4	Your perceptions have become skewed. You take a -2 penalty to your Defense and Charisma skill checks until you purge yourself of this legendary transformation. (Severe Flaw - Permanent)
5 - 9	Like the Mona Lisa's eyes, for a span of four months all those around you feel as though you are watching them. You gain a -4 penalty to all Charisma related skill checks. (Major Flaw - Temporary)
10 - 16	For a month when you manifest any birthright, you weep tears of blood, causing you to lose one hit point every time you manifest a birthright. (Minor Flaw - Temporary)
17 - 20	No Legendary Transformation



### Feint

Dexterity

**Purchase Cost:** 4; **Strain DC:** 16; **Prerequisites:** Aphrodite's Language; **Manifestation Time:** Attack action; **Range:** Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./potency); **Target:** Any number of creatures; **Duration:** 1 round/potency; **Saving Throw:** Will negates  
Your mastery of body language allows you to mislead those who fight against you. You send out contradictory physical clues to confuse attackers. All those attacking (who are using sight as their primary sense) are at -4 to hit.

**Primal Scream:** You can position opponents so that, if they fail a Will save they wind up attacking each other instead of you. There must be multiple attackers for this to function.

### Beauty's Focus

Wisdom

**Purchase Cost:** 4; **Strain DC:** 16; **Prerequisites:** Aphrodite's Language; **Manifestation Time:** Full round action; **Range:** Visual; **Target:** One creature; **Duration:** 1 round/potency; **Saving Throw:** Will negates

You fix your attention on a single creature. That creature cannot escape your observation as long as you are in the same general area (as long as opaque walls do not separate you). You can hear everything the creature is saying and see everything they are doing, regardless of distance—it is as if you are standing right next to them.

**Primal Scream:** You can actually see and hear the creature clearly even if you are not in the same area—walls, floors, and other impediments are no obstacle. This focus can extend up to 50 ft. + 5 ft./potency.

### Grace Legendary Transformations

Most of the legendary transformations for the Grace tree are

perceptual in nature, dealing with either the Crimson Lord's own perceptions or the way people perceive him or her.

Crimson Lords claim that they are tied to the Earth itself, as befits its rightful rulers, and this birthright tree supports their claim. The Vitality birthrights grant the Crimson Lords the power to effect life itself: fertility, growth, health, immunity, and recovery. It also grants them powers over blood and crops.

### Gift of Tammuz

Constitution

**Purchase Cost:** 1; **Strain DC:** 13; **Prerequisites:** None; **Manifestation Time:** Full round action; **Range:** Touch; **Target:** One living creature; **Duration:** 1 hour/potency; **Saving Throw:** Fortitude negates

You increase the subject's fertility. The target is more likely to become pregnant or to make his next lover pregnant. Although contraception works normally, if adequate protection is not used, pregnancy will happen.

**Primal Scream:** The child that results from a union is born without any hereditary illnesses, diseases, or health problems, and of any other problems that could begin before birth. There are rumors of a more potent version of this birthright that bestows instant pregnancy upon a woman - a virgin birth.

### Gush

Strength

**Purchase Cost:** 2; **Strain DC:** 14; **Prerequisites:** Gift of Tammuz; **Manifestation Time:** Attack action; **Range:** Touch; **Target:** One living creature; **Duration:** 1 round/potency; **Saving Throw:** Fortitude negates

A successful touch attack reopens an existing wound that

instantly begins to spout blood. This causes 1 hit point of lethal damage per round, above and beyond any existing damage. The wounds cannot be staunched for the duration of the birthright, although a cure light wounds spell or similar birthright will end the effects of gush.

**Primal Scream:** The subject of the birthright spontaneously bleeds from whatever spots you designate (up to three locations). The wounds only cause 1d4 hit points per round and the bleeding cannot be staunched for the duration of the birthright.

### Purification

Constitution

**Purchase Cost:** 3; Strain DC: 15; **Prerequisites:** Gush; **Manifestation Time:** Full round action; Range: Personal; **Target:** You; **Duration:** Instant

You can flush any illness, disease, or poison from your system. Note that this will not remove any previous effects (such as reduced hit points, or permanent loss of stats) but it will prevent any additional damage and will allow the body to begin natural healing.

**Primal Scream:** You gain permanent immunity to that poison, disease, or illness (though, if it is something like a cold, you are only immune to that particular strain).

### Draught of Aesculapius

Constitution

**Purchase Cost:** 1; Strain DC: 13; **Prerequisites:** None; **Manifestation Time:** Free action; Range: Touch; **Target:** One container; **Duration:** Instant; **Saving Throw:** None

You can transform any liquid you touch, infusing it with some of your own potency. The transformed liquid is highly alcoholic (equivalent of strong whiskey), regardless of taste. It can also clean wounds, providing a +2 legacy bonus to Fortitude saving throws to prevent infection, stabilize the dying (restore a disabled or dying character to 1hp), and restore the senses (Will saving throw DC 15 - potency to recover from Dazed or Stunned).

**Primal Scream:** You can produce wine, or any other alcoholic beverage, from thin air, filling a cup, flagon, or other container. Up to one container may be filled per point of potency, and the beverage provides as much sustenance as a light meal (treat as one full meal), as well as the other properties listed above (though it now restores the injured to 4hp).

### Nourish

Constitution

**Purchase Cost:** 2; Strain DC: 14; **Prerequisites:** Draught of Aesculapius; **Manifestation Time:** Full round action; Range: Personal; **Target:** You; **Duration:** 1 day

The great fortitude of the elder gods sustains you when you manifest nourish. You can go without food or drink for a day without ill effect. Treat as if you had proper food and drink for

one full day.

**Primal Scream:** You can go a week without food or drink, with no ill effects.

### Refresh

Constitution

**Purchase Cost:** 3; Strain DC: 15; **Prerequisites:** Gush, Nurish; **Manifestation Time:** Full round action; Range: Personal; **Target:** You; **Duration:** Instant

You can remove the affects of not having slept. Treat as if you had gotten a full night's sleep, including restored hit points and recovery of temporary ability damage. Note, however, that if you are a spellcaster this will not allow you to prepare or regain spells as if you had slept. The use of this birthright also does not decrease or remove your strain penalty.

**Primal Scream:** You do not need sleep for a week. To regain spells or remove your strain penalty from rest, you still need to sit basically still for four hours each day, but you can think or do monotonous physical activity (knitting, polishing, cleaning a gun) during this time. If you are exhausted at any point during this week, you must rest normally to rid yourself of the condition, though it does not end the effect of the birthright.

### Marvelous Immunity

Constitution

**Purchase Cost:** 5; Strain DC: 17; **Prerequisites:** Purification, Refresh; **Manifestation Time:** Attack action; Range: Touch; **Target:** One creature; **Duration:** Instant; **Saving Throw:** Fortitude negates (harmless)

You can flush illnesses or diseases from yourself or another creature's system. This birthright functions as the spell remove disease.

**Primal Scream:** The creature affected is cured of even diseases that have no cure.

### Body Mending Touch

Constitution

**Purchase Cost:** 4; Strain DC: 16; **Prerequisites:** Refresh; **Manifestation Time:** Full round action; Range: Touch; **Target:** One living creature; **Duration:** Instant; **Saving Throw:** None

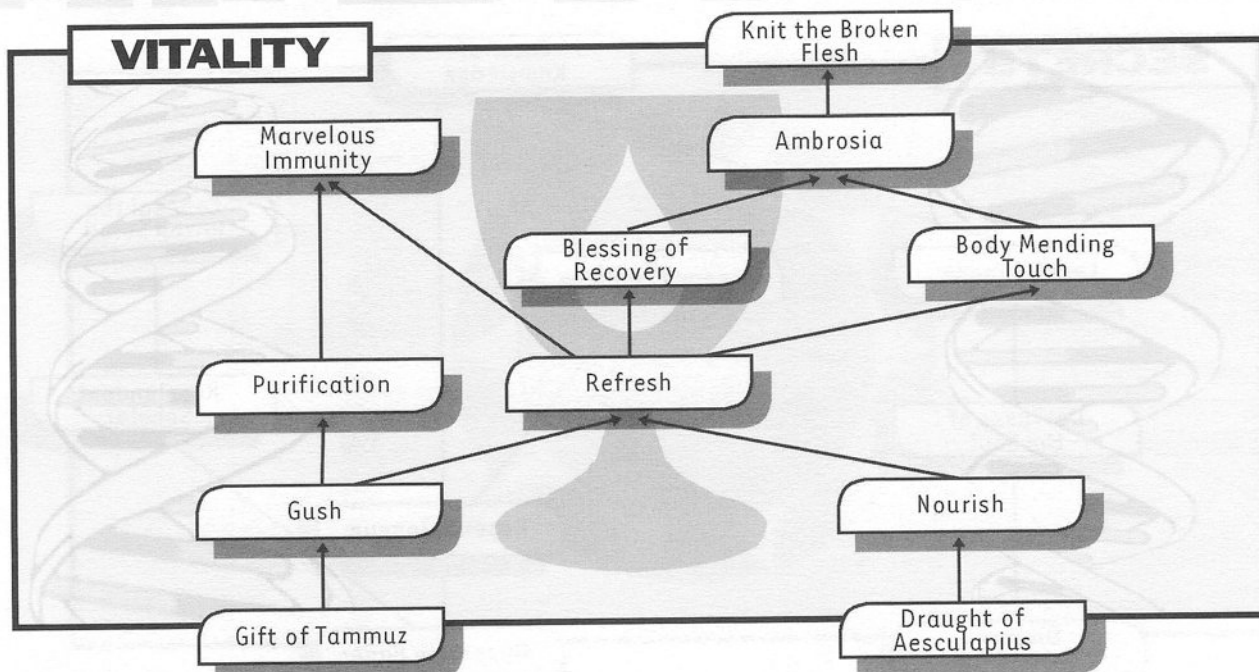
You can heal your wounds, or the wounds of another creature. The selected character regains 1d4 hit points/potency.

**Primal Scream:** You not only heal an existing wound, you knit the body together so tightly it resists additional damage. For the next two minutes, the subject gains damage reduction of 2/-. This damage reduction stacks with other forms of damage reduction; however, the total damage reduction can't be higher than 5/-.

### Blessing of Recovery

Constitution

**Purchase Cost:** 4; Strain DC: 15; **Prerequisites:** Refresh; **Manifestation Time:** Full round action; Range: Touch; **Target:**



One living creature; **Duration:** Instant; **Saving Throw:** Will negates (harmless)

You lay your hands upon a living creature and immediately heal 1d4 points of temporary ability damage. This birthright does not restore permanent ability drain.

**Primal Scream:** The creature touched can be healed of 1d4 points of permanent ability damage but you are required to immediately make a legendary check.

### Ambrosia

Constitution

**Purchase Cost:** 5; **Strain DC:** 17; **Prerequisites:** Blessing of Recovery, Body Mending Touch; **Manifestation Time:** 1 day; **Range:** Personal; **Target:** You; **Duration:** 1 hour/potency  
You concentrate the vitality of your bloodline and ignore all effects caused poisons or disease. You also gain immunity from a single energy drain attempt and fast healing (2).

**Primal Scream:** The effect lasts for an entire day and energy

drain causes you no harm.

### Knit the Broken Flesh

Constitution

**Purchase Cost:** 6; **Strain DC:** 18; **Prerequisites:** Ambrosia; **Manifestation Time:** Attack action; **Range:** Personal; **Target:** You; **Duration:** 1 round/potency

You quicken your body and burst with vitality inherent to those of your blood. With a surge of energy you gain fast healing (4).

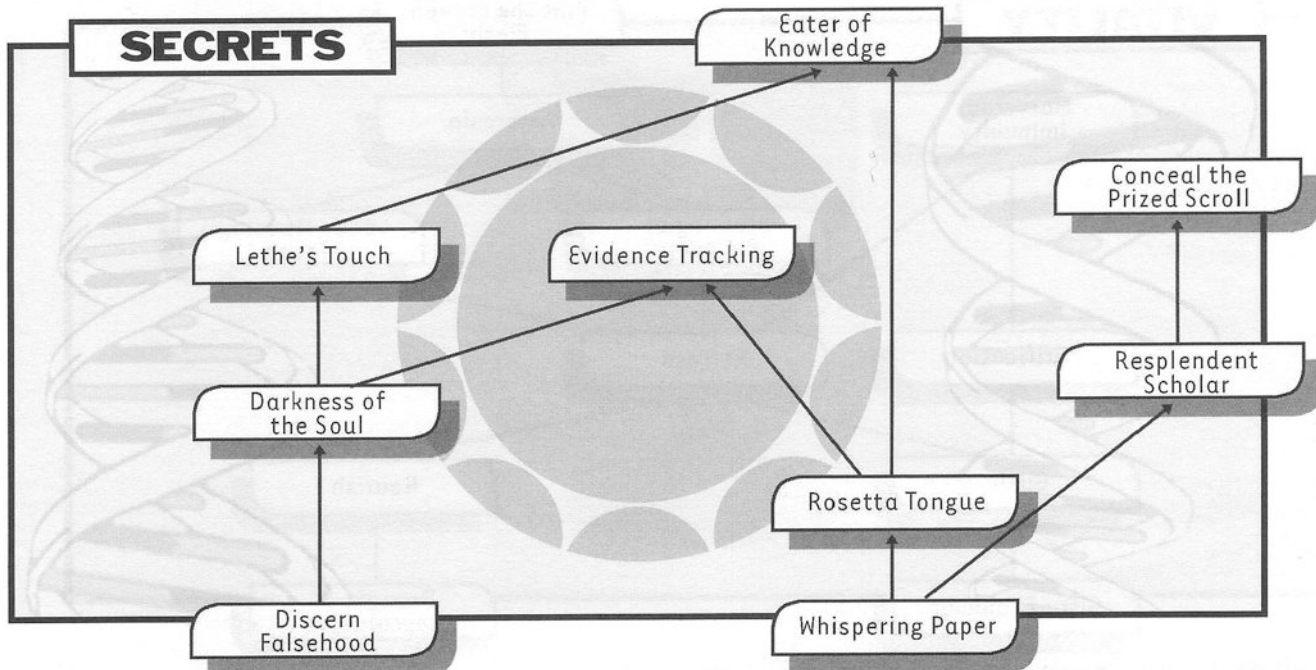
**Primal Scream:** The healing ability increases to fast healing (5).

### Vitality Legendary Transformations

Vitality tree legendary transformations are always physical, and have to do with health, energy, and growth. Some transformations show the Crimson Lord's own vitality, while others cause that potent energy to spill out upon the titan's surroundings. Here are a few examples:

**Table 4-5: VITALITY LEGENDARY TRANSFORMATIONS**

Legendary Check	Result
1 - 4	Your vitality leaks from you making it more difficult for you to be healed either by spell, birthright, or natural rest. You regain 2 fewer hit points any time you recover hit points in any way. (Severe - Permanent)
5 - 9	For a month your effective Constitution score is 2 lower than it truly is. As a consequence, for this time you lose 1 hit point per level, your Fortitude save drops by 1, and your potency for any birthright with a key ability of Constitution falls by 1. (Major Flaw - Temporary)
10 - 16	You epitomize the laziness of the Crimson Lords. Instead of requiring 8 hours of uninterrupted rest to recuperate, regain spells, etc, you require 10 hours. (Minor Flaw - Permanent)
17 - 20	No Legendary Transformation



## Hidden Suns

The talents of the Hidden Suns lie in the glory of the sun and the shadows it creates. Secrecy and the discovery of the hidden are abilities they excel at. No darkness or lock can keep these demigods away from revealing or acquiring what they seek. This legacy also wields the very substance of solar fire and the shadow it creates. By channeling these forces the titan can heal himself and others, cloak himself in darkness, and steal the most vile secrets from a person's mind.

## Secrets

The occult and forbidden draw the curious Hidden Suns like moths to flame. Many grow obsessed with uncovering carefully hidden secrets or hiding even the obvious from sight. By using the gifts of the blood they are able to reveal and conceal the secrets that so intrigue them.

### Discern Falsehood

Wisdom

**Purchase Cost:** 1; **Strain DC:** 13; **Prerequisites:** None; **Manifestation Time:** Attack action; **Range:** Touch; **Target:** One creature; **Duration:** 1 round/potency (D); **Saving Throw:** Will negates

Each round, you concentrate on one subject, who you must be touching. You know if the subject deliberately and knowingly speaks a lie. The birthright does not reveal the truth, uncover unintentional inaccuracies, or necessarily reveal evasions.

**Primal Scream:** The range of the birthright extends to Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./potency).

### Darkness of the Soul

Wisdom

**Purchase Cost:** 3; **Strain DC:** 15; **Prerequisites:** Discern Falsehood; **Manifestation Time:** Attack action; **Range:** Touch; **Target:** One creature; **Duration:** Instantaneous; **Saving Throw:** Will negates

This birthright gives you one dark secret of the creature touched. The GM decides upon the secret that is revealed. The information appears in your mind silently and the subject has the feeling that you know the particular secret that was revealed.

**Primal Scream:** You can choose to either extend the range of the birthright to Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./potency) or keep the knowledge of the revelation from the subject.

### Lethe's Touch

Charisma [Language-Dependent, Mind-Affecting]

**Purchase Cost:** 4; **Strain DC:** 16; **Prerequisites:** Darkness of the Soul; **Manifestation Time:** Attack action; **Range:** Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./potency); **Target:** One creature of Medium-size or smaller; **Duration:** Instantaneous; **Saving Throw:** Will negates

Those born of the Hidden Suns can obscure as well as reveal. You can cause a creature who fails his Will saving throw to forget a period of time or a piece of information. You can remove a memory of up to 1 round per two potency rating. Thus, a titan with a potency of 3 in lethe's touch could cause a creature to forget up to 12 seconds. You choose what memory is removed, up to a week in the past. You cannot read the target's memory with this birthright, so you either must have specific knowledge of his activities in the last week or remove a memory that you yourself witnessed (that he just saw you walk past for

instance).

**Primal Scream:** Your ability to remove memory becomes enhanced and you are able to make a subject forget how to read, walk, fire a gun, etc. The information must be something that can be learned. The length of time that the knowledge is forgotten is 1 round/potency.

### Whispering Paper

Intelligence

**Purchase Cost:** 1

**Strain DC:** 13; **Prerequisites:** None; **Manifestation Time:** Attack action; **Range:** Touch; **Target:** One item; **Duration:** 1 round/potency; **Saving Throw:** None

After manifesting this birthright, the inheritor gains a cursory understanding of the contents of any book, scroll, or storage device she touches. The titan knows the general contents of the item touched, but not the specifics such as chapter titles or information covered. For instance, a titan may learn that a book contains family genealogical information but not information on which family. It also does not reveal the special qualities or powers of an item. Each round the titan can touch one item.

**Primal Scream:** More information can be garnered when the inheritor expends an action point at the time of manifestation. In the above example the main family surname would be discovered and the fact that it traces titan lineages for two thousand years. Specific individuals or detailed information is still not learned.

### Rosetta Tongue

Intelligence

**Purchase Cost:** 2; **Strain DC:** 14; **Prerequisites:** Whispering Paper; **Manifestation Time:** Full round action; **Range:** Personal; **Target:** You; **Duration:** 1 day/potency

Language is one of the greatest secrets of man and a barrier to discovering secrets. You may spontaneously learn how to fluently speak, read, and write any modern or ancient language. Your GM might determine that you cannot learn a specific language due to the circumstances of your campaign.

**Primal Scream:** You permanently know how to read, write, and speak the language chosen. Immediately make a legendary check.

### Resplendent Scholar

Intelligence

**Purchase Cost:** 3; **Strain DC:** 15; **Prerequisites:** Whispering Paper; **Manifestation Time:** Full round action; **Range:** Personal; **Target:** You; **Duration:** Special (see text)

After successfully manifesting this birthright, a titan gains a +10 legacy bonus to her next Decipher Script, Knowledge, or Research check. As it can be used to influence a Knowledge check to learn if the titan knows a creature's weaknesses, the birthright is as valuable in the field as it is in the library.

**Primal Scream:** The bonus increases to +15.

### Conceal the Prized Scroll

Intelligence

**Purchase Cost:** 5; **Strain DC:** 17; **Prerequisites:** Resplendent Scholar; **Manifestation Time:** Attack action; **Range:** Touch; **Target:** One Small or smaller item; **Duration:** 1 hour/potency; **Saving Throw:** None

In some situations hiding an object can be even more vital than hiding your self. By using this birthright you can conceal an item even from modern scans such as x-rays and metal detectors. The use of this birthright increases the Spot DC for noticing concealed objects by +15.

**Primal Scream:** You can conceal Medium-sized and Large items or increase the Spot DC for Small or smaller items by +30.

### Eater of Knowledge

Intelligence

**Purchase Cost:** 6; **Strain DC:** 18; **Prerequisites:** Lethe's Touch, Rosetta Tongue; **Manifestation Time:** Full round action; **Range:** Touch; **Target:** One creature; **Duration:** 1 hour/potency; **Saving Throw:** Will negates

The Hidden Sun can temporarily increase his ranks in a Knowledge or gain ranks in a Knowledge he does not normally have. By touching a subject he gains 1/2 the subject's ranks in a Knowledge the subject has as a legacy bonus to any checks using that Knowledge for the duration of the birthright. If the titan does not have ranks in the Knowledge skill stolen, he can make skill checks as if he had 1/2 the subject's ranks in the specific Knowledge.

**Primal Scream:** The inheritor gains the full ranks in the stolen Knowledge skill rather than 1/2 the ranks. The duration also increases to 2 hours/potency.

### Evidence Tracking

Wisdom

**Purchase Cost:** 5; **Strain DC:** 17; **Prerequisites:** Rosetta Tongue, Darkness of the Soul; **Manifestation Time:** Full round action; **Range:** Special; **Target:** One creature; **Duration:** 1 day/potency; **Saving Throw:** None

After making a successful Investigate skill check, the titan can manifest this birthright to trace any discovered evidence back to the person it came from. The titan feels a pull in the direction of the creature that left the evidence. There is no maximum range for this birthright as a titan in Chicago will feel a pull from the East if the creature is now in New York. This birthright can only be manifested one time per successful Investigate check.

**Primal Scream:** The inheritor gains a brief glimpse of the creature that left the evidence as he appeared at the time he left the evidence, enough to recognize him if she sees him, though it does not see through even mundane disguises.

**Table 4-6: SECRETS LEGENDARY TRANSFORMATIONS**

Legendary Check	Result
1 - 4	You become even more obsessed with secrets and the Hidden Sun weakness has a stronger hold on you. The Will save DC to shrug off the Hidden Sun weakness increases to 18. (Severe - Permanent)
5 - 9	For six months your Knowledge checks have a -4 legacy penalty as your mind tries to keep knowledge secret even from your self. (Major Flaw - Temporary)
10 - 16	A halo of shadowy and fiery script surrounds your head when you manifest a Secrets birthright. You may spend an action point to suppress this display. (Minor Flaw - Permanent)
17 - 20	No Legendary Transformation

**Secrets Legendary Transformations**

Most of the legendary transformations for the Secrets tree are psychological in nature. Each must in some way influence the titan's ability to reveal or hide knowledge. It is thought that the Promethean Order may have been created due to a legendary transformation that made it difficult for the founders to keep secrets hidden.

**Shadow**

The way of the underworld sun is one fraught with danger. Those who delve the illicit birthrights of Shadow follow in the footsteps of beings greatly feared by men. Death, decay, and the darkness in men's hearts are as much a part of this realm as the substance of shadow itself. For while those new to their birthrights prize the manipulation of shadow, those who master these powers do so only after laying bear their own souls and sacrificing growth and life for the musty halls of the dead.

**Diminishing Life**

Intelligence [Death]

**Purchase Cost:** 1; **Strain DC:** 13; **Prerequisites:** None; **Manifestation Time:** Attack action; Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./potency); **Target:** One creature; **Duration:** Instantaneous; **Saving Throw:** None (harmless)

Your acute sensitivity to death and decay allow you to see how

touched by these forces a person is. You may determine how many hit points a target currently has.

**Primal Scream:** The range of the birthright extends to Medium (100 ft. + 10 ft./potency) and you also can clearly tell if the subject currently has ability damage, is diseased, or poisoned. Once this birthright is manifested you can also make a Treat Injury skill check with a +2 legacy bonus to treat the disease or poison.

**Soulrending**

Charisma [Darkness, Death]

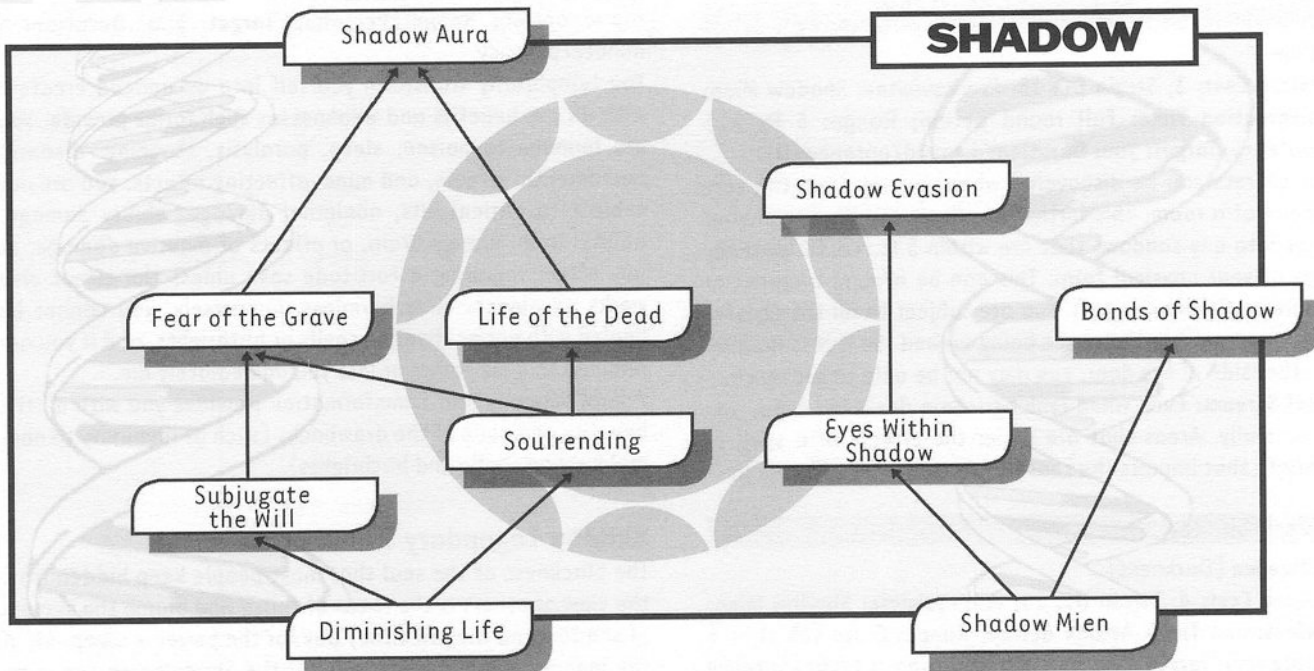
**Purchase Cost:** 3; **Strain DC:** 15; **Prerequisites:** Diminishing Life; **Manifestation Time:** Attack action; Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./potency); **Target:** One creature; **Duration:** Instantaneous; **Saving Throw:** Fortitude half

Life leeching shadows erupt from the target's orifices, dealing 1d4 points of damage per potency rating. Half of the damage inflicted is added to your total hit points. These absorbed hit points first heal you to your normal maximum, and then any additional hit points become temporary hit points that last for potency rating in rounds. You may double your normal hit points in this manner, although you cannot go over this limit. Even after you have reached your absorption limit, targets still take full damage.

**Primal Scream:** The range of the birthright extends to Medium

**Table 4-7: SHADOW LEGENDARY TRANSFORMATIONS**

Legendary Check	Result
1 - 4	Your skin becomes permanently cold to the touch and darker in complexion. Anytime you regain hit points due to healing spells, birthrights, or even natural healing from rest, you regain 4 fewer hit points. (Severe - Permanent)
5 - 9	You become extremely sensitive to light and suffer a -1 penalty on attack rolls, skill checks, and saving throws in sunlight or in brightly lit areas. (Major Flaw - Permanent)
10 - 16	It is said that the eyes are a mirror to the soul. If that is the case, those with this legendary transformation are indeed in trouble. Your eyes, including the whites, turn completely black. The unnerving quality of your eyes increases the DC of all social checks by 4 unless you are able to hide the legendary transformation. (Minor Flaw - Permanent)
17 - 20	No Legendary Transformation



(100 ft. + 10 ft./potency) and deals 1d6 points of damage per potency rating. All other effects remain the same as the original birthright.

### Subjugate the Will

Intelligence [Mind-Affecting]

**Purchase Cost:** 2; **Strain DC:** 14; **Prerequisites:** Diminishing Life; **Manifestation Time:** Attack action; Range: Touch; **Target:** One creature; **Duration:** 1 minute/potency; **Saving Throw:** Will negates

You can weaken the will of a person, making him more susceptible to further manipulation. The subject of this birthright receives a legacy penalty to his Will save equal to your potency rating. Multiple manifestations do not create cumulative results.

**Primal Scream:** The range of the birthright extends to Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./potency).

### Fear of the Grave

Charisma [Fear, Mind-Affecting]

**Purchase Cost:** 4; **Strain DC:** 16; **Prerequisites:** Soulrending, Subjugate the Will; **Manifestation Time:** Attack action; Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./potency); Area: Living creatures; **Duration:** 1 round/potency; **Saving Throw:** Will negates

Living creatures have a natural fear of death and you exploit this when manifesting this birthright. Targets that fail their saving throws suffer a -2 morale penalty on saving throws, and they flee from you in panicked terror. A panicked creature has a 50% chance to drop what it's holding, chooses its path randomly (as long as it is getting away from immediate danger), and flees any other dangers that confront it. If cornered, a panicked creature cowers. A cowering creature loses its

Dexterity bonus, can take no actions, and takes a -2 penalty to its Defense.

**Primal Scream:** Victims of your birthright are paralyzed rather than panicked.

### Shadow Aura

Charisma [Death]

**Purchase Cost:** 4; **Strain DC:** 16; **Prerequisites:** Fear of the Grave, Life of the Dead; **Manifestation Time:** Attack action; Range: Personal; Area: 10-ft. radius emanation; **Duration:** 1 round/potency (D); **Saving Throw:** Fortitude half

Drawing upon the deathly energies of your inheritance you create a sphere of entropic energy that damages all that come within its range. Those who are within the area of effect at the time of manifestation or come into it while it is present, take 1d4 points of damage per potency rating per round.

**Primal Scream:** You may insure that your allies or innocents are unaffected by the aura.

### Shadow Mien

Dexterity [Darkness]

**Purchase Cost:** 1; **Strain DC:** 13; **Prerequisites:** None; **Manifestation Time:** Full round action; Range: Personal; **Target:** You; **Duration:** 1 round/potency; **Saving Throw:** None

By wrapping yourself in shadow you can increase your ability to remain unseen. While under the effects of this birthright you gain a +10 legacy bonus to your Hide and Move Silently checks.

**Primal Scream:** You may extend this bonus to those allies nearby. You can cloak a total number of creature's equal to your potency but they must stay within 10 feet of you or the shadows slip from their forms.

### Eyes Within Shadow

Wisdom

**Purchase Cost:** 3; **Strain DC:** 15; **Prerequisites:** Shadow Mien; **Manifestation Time:** Full round action; Range: 5 ft. + 1 ft./potency; **Target:** You; **Duration:** 1 round/potency (D)

Many secrets can be discovered when you spy from the very shadows of a room. This birthright allows you to extend your senses into any shadows that are within 5 ft. + 1 ft./potency range of your physical form. This can be around a corner or even behind a door or wall. You are subject to all the sensory impairments within the space being viewed. So if it is dark on the other side of the door, you may not be able to see much.

**Primal Scream:** Even when looking into a darkened area, you see normally. Areas that are under the effects of a spell or birthright that impairs the senses, however, still affect you.

### Bonds of Shadow

Intelligence [Darkness]

**Purchase Cost:** 4; **Strain DC:** 16; **Prerequisites:** Shadow Mien; **Manifestation Time:** Attack action; Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./potency); **Target:** One creature; **Duration:** 1 round/potency (D); **Saving Throw:** Reflex negates

With a gesture you summon bands of nearly impenetrable blackness out of your target's own shadow. They instantly wrap around the target, rendering him helpless. The creature held in the bonds may break free with a successful Strength check (DC 15 + potency).

**Primal Scream:** Not only do the shadows hold the subject motionless, they also deal 1d4 points of damage per round.

### Shadow Evasion

Dexterity

**Purchase Cost:** 5; **Strain DC:** 17; **Prerequisites:** Eyes Within Shadow; **Manifestation Time:** Free action; Range: Personal; **Target:** You; **Duration:** Instantaneous

Once per round, even if you are flat-footed, you may manifest this birthright as a free action. You become as difficult to hit as the shadows under your control. You add a legacy bonus to your Defense equal to your potency.

**Primal Scream:** Instead of gaining a bonus to your Defense, the attack simply does not hit.

### Life of the Dead

Charisma [Death]

**Purchase Cost:** 6; **Strain DC:** 18; **Prerequisites:** Shadow Mien, Shadow Aura, Fear of the Grave; **Manifestation Time:** Full

round action; Range: Personal; **Target:** You; **Duration:** 1 minute/potency

You temporarily transform yourself into an undead creature with all the benefits and weaknesses such forms provide. You are immune to poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning, disease, necromantic effects, and mind-affecting effects. You are not subject to critical hits, nonlethal damage, ability damage, ability drain, energy drain, or effects of massive damage, or any effect requiring a Fortitude save unless the effect also works on objects or is harmless. Conversely, you cannot be healed with normal healing spells or birthrights, and if you are reduced to 0 hit points or less you immediately die.

**Primal Scream:** Your transformation provides you with all the benefits and none of the drawbacks (such as immunity to normal healing spells and birthrights).

### Shadow Legendary Transformations

The blackness of the soul that most people keep hidden from the view of others is the focus of those who plumb the secrets of shadow and the price they pay for the power is steep. All of the legendary transformations for the Shadow tree somehow bring the titan closer to his dark nature or make it visible for all to see.

#### Sun

The Hidden Suns may be feared due to their legendary proclivity with death and forbidden secrets but just as the underworld sun rises in the East, so too does the power of those of this legacy who channel the bright, living energies of the Sun. While the inheritors who follow a path into darkness remain cloaked in black shadow, the titans who turn their attention to the light cannot be seen in the same way that the center of the noon day Sun cannot be seen. Glory, healing, and solar fire are the province of this birthright tree.

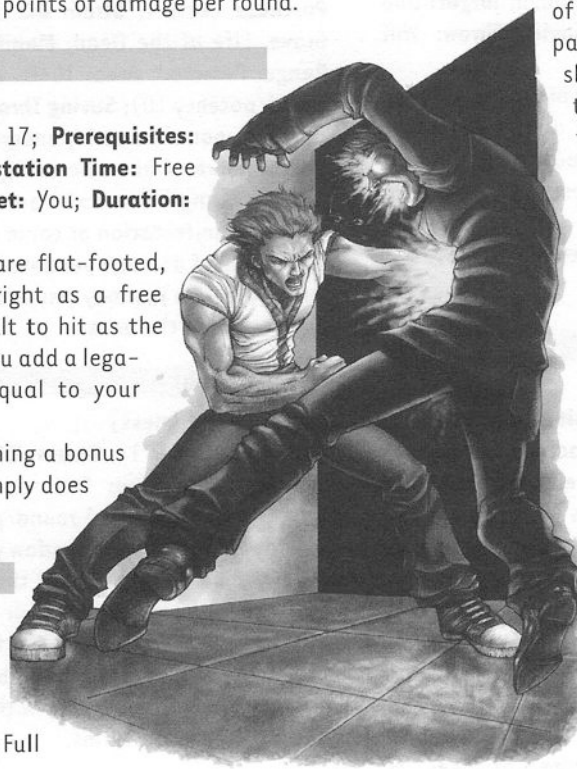
### Hands of Light

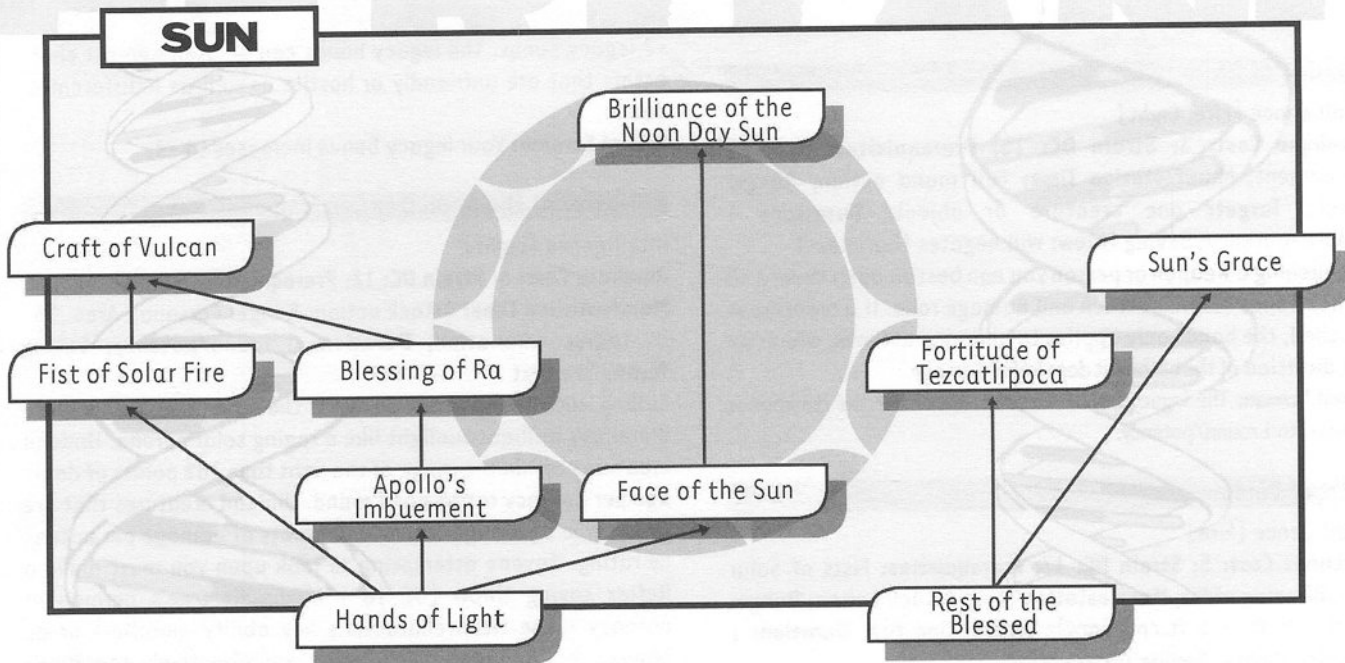
Intelligence [Fire, Light]

**Purchase Cost:** 1; **Strain DC:** 13; **Prerequisites:** None; **Manifestation Time:** Attack action; Range: Personal; **Target:** You; **Duration:** 1 minute/potency

You cause your hands to glow with sunlight, shedding light in a 20-foot radius from you.

This light is as natural sunlight but is not strong enough to harm creatures vulnerable to sunlight. It may, at GM discretion, cause problems to those who are light sensitive but only while within the area of effect. Magical darkness or darkness cause by birthrights, extinguishes the light.





**Primal Scream:** Your hands do an additional 1d4 points of lethal fire damage but can't catch flammable materials on fire.

#### Apollo's Imbuement

Intelligence [Fire, Light]

**Purchase Cost:** 2; **Stain DC:** 14; **Prerequisites:** Hands of Light; **Manifestation Time:** Attack action; **Range:** Touch; **Target:** One weapon, unarmed attack, or projectile; **Duration:** A single use; **Saving Throw:** None

You can summon the radiant power of the sun into yours or someone else's hand, weapon, or ammunition (such as arrow, bolt, bullet, and shuriken). A successful attack made with the imbued weapon deals an extra 1d6 points of fire damage. The strike can easily ignite flammable materials or structures, but will not ignite creatures struck.

**Primal Scream:** The duration increases to 1 round/potency. Projectiles affected by this power must all be in contact with each other at time of manifestation.

#### Table 4-8: SUN LEGENDARY TRANSFORMATIONS

Legendary Check	Result
1 - 4	You cannot benefit from spells, abilities, or birthrights that provide concealment (such as invisibility) or increases to your Hide or Move Silently skills. (Severe - Permanent)
5 - 9	You become attached to the diurnal passage of the Sun. At night you have a -2 penalty to all dice rolls. (Major Flaw - Permanent)
10 - 16	For four months you must spend at least 4 hours a week in the sun otherwise you become unable to heal naturally (hit points as well as ability damage), recover naturally from conditions, or even regain spells. (Minor Flaw - Temporary)
17 - 20	No Legendary Transformation

#### Fist of Solar Fire

Intelligence [Fire, Light]

**Purchase Cost:** 3; **Strain DC:** 15; **Prerequisites:** Hands of Light; **Manifestation Time:** Attack action; **Range:** Medium (100 ft. + 10 ft./potency); **Target:** Up to five creatures, no two of which can be more than 15 ft. apart; **Duration:** Instantaneous; **Saving Throw:** None

One brilliant ray of solar fire per two potency ratings erupts from your open palm, dealing 1d4 points of damage per ray. You have two at potency 3, three at 5, four at 7, and a maximum of five at 9. If you shoot multiple missiles, you can have them strike a single creature or several creatures. A single missile can strike only one creature. You must succeed at a ranged touch attack with each ray to strike a target.

**Primal Scream:** You double the number of rays that can be shot.

**Blessing of Ra**

Intelligence [Fire, Light]

**Purchase Cost:** 3; **Strain DC:** 15; **Prerequisites:** Apollo's Imbuement; **Manifestation Time:** Full round action; Range: Touch; **Target:** one creature or object; **Duration:** 1 minute/potency; **Saving Throw:** Will negates (harmless)

By touching a weapon or person you can bestow upon them a +2 legacy bonus to their attack and damage rolls. If a creature is touched, the bonus only applies to unarmed attacks, which for the duration of the birthright does lethal damage.

**Primal Scream:** The legacy bonus increases to +4 but the duration is reduced to 1 round/potency.

**Craft of Vulcan**

Intelligence [Fire]

**Purchase Cost:** 5; **Strain DC:** 17; **Prerequisites:** Fists of Solar Fire, Blessing of Ra; **Manifestation Time:** Attack action; Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./potency); **Target:** One fire; **Duration:** 1 round/potency; **Saving Throw:** None

You can command any flame or fire within range, shaping it or moving it in any way you desire. Such crafting can produce intricately shaped flame sculptures, weapons of brilliant flame, or can even be used to attack enemies that are standing within 5 ft. of the fire's source. Such attacks can be made with a move action, require you to make a successful attack against the target at your regular melee attack bonus, cause 1d6 points of damage, and may catch the target's hair and/or clothes on fire (see d20 Modern, Chapter Seven: Gamemastering for rules on catching fire).

Once shaped, the fire will retain its crafted form for the duration of the birthright. Weapons made with this birthright do an additional 1d6 points of damage and the target may have to make a Reflex save (DC 15) or catch on fire. Reshaping a fire under your control is a move action. This birthright cannot be used to increase the size, ferocity, or intensity. It does, however, confer upon you protection from the fire under your control. This birthright allows you to even move fire across surfaces where there is no fuel to feed it, the supernatural energies of the birthright maintain its intensity.

**Primal Scream:** You may also increase the size, ferocity, and intensity of a fire under your control. You may increase the size by up to 20 ft. and damage by 2d6 (for a total of 3d6 points of damage). Also, for the duration of the birthright you are immune to all fire damage.

**Face of the Sun**

Charisma

**Purchase Cost:** 2; **Strain DC:** 14; **Prerequisites:** Hands of Light; **Manifestation Time:** Attack action; Range: Personal; **Target:** You; **Duration:** 1 round/potency (harmless)

The glory of the Sun shines through you and imbues your very words and actions. All Charisma-based skill checks receive a

+2 legacy bonus. The legacy bonus can be used against characters that are unfriendly or hostile as well as indifferent or better.

**Primal Scream:** Your legacy bonus increases to +4.

**Brilliance of the Noon Day Sun**

Intelligence [Light]

**Purchase Cost:** 6; **Strain DC:** 18; **Prerequisites:** Face of the Sun; **Manifestation Time:** Attack action; Range: Personal; Area: 25-ft. radius emanation; **Duration:** 1 round/potency; **Saving Throw:** See text

Calling upon the glorious power of the solar disc, you radiate blindingly brilliant sunlight like a raging solar corona. Undead creatures within the range of the light take 1d8 points of damage per potency rating each round. Undead creatures that are vulnerable to sunlight take 1d10 points of damage per potency rating. Anyone attempting to look upon you must make a Reflex saving throw (DC 10 + birthright tree's permanent potency + the titan character's key ability modifier) or be blinded for 1d4 rounds. As a result, you effectively gain Nine-tenths concealment from any attack made against you.

**Primal Scream:** Even creatures that are not undead take 1d6 points of damage per potency rating and the solar flames surrounding you provide a +4 legacy bonus to your Defense as well as the concealment described above.

**Rest of the Blessed**

Intelligence

**Purchase Cost:** 1; **Strain DC:** 13; **Prerequisites:** None; **Manifestation Time:** 1 minute; Range: Touch; **Target:** one creature; **Duration:** 1 day; **Saving Throw:** Will negates (harmless)

You can beneficially augment a creature's natural healing by laying your hands upon him. For the duration of the birthright the creature regains health five times as quickly, effectively quintupling the character's level for determining natural healing. For example, a 5th-level hero recovers 25 hit points per evening of rest (8 hours of sleep) rather than 5. The effects of this birthright stack with the benefits of a successful treat injury skill check for long-term care.

**Primal Scream:** The duration increases to 1 day per potency rating.

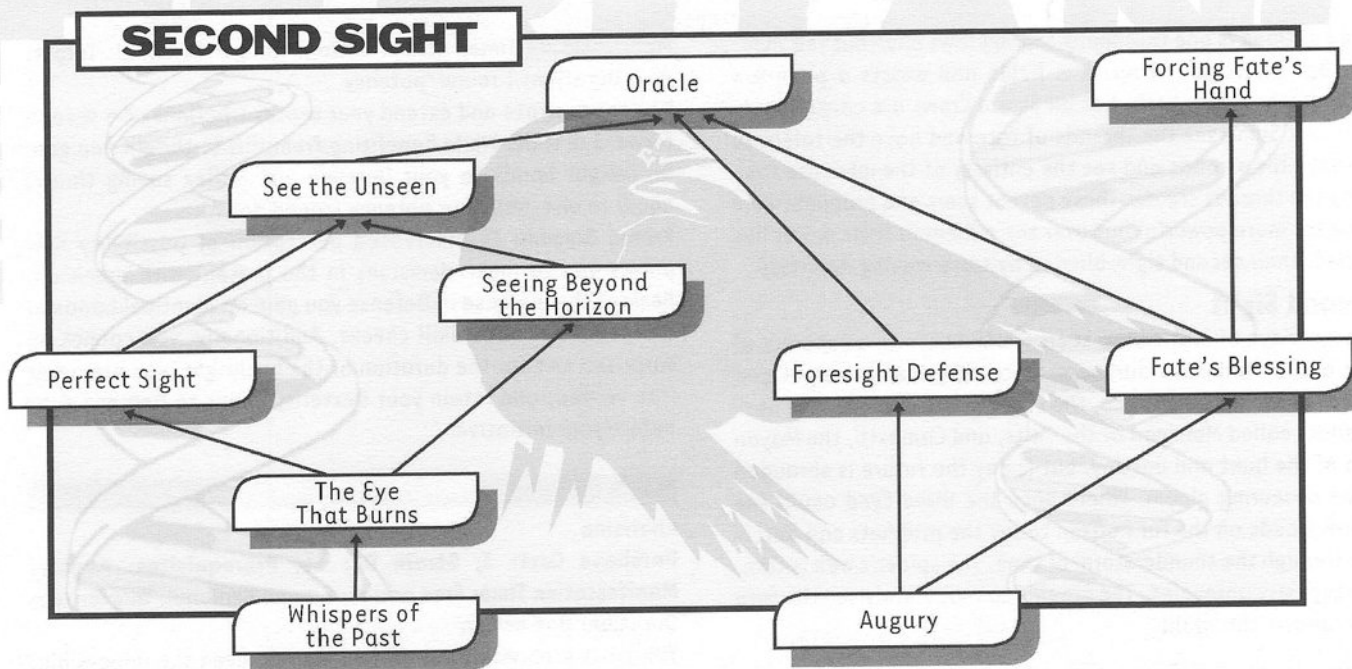
**Fortitude of Tezcatlipoca**

Intelligence

**Purchase Cost:** 3; **Strain DC:** 15; **Prerequisites:** Rest of the Blessed; **Manifestation Time:** Attack action; Range: Touch; **Target:** one creature; **Duration:** 1 minute/potency; **Saving Throw:** Will negates (harmless)

Just as the warriors of the Mesoamerican sun god could shrug off lethal blows, those you touch with this birthright gain a legacy bonus equal to potency to all massive damage Fortitude saves.

**Primal Scream:** For the duration of the birthright, the creature



you bestow fortitude of tezcacipoca upon is not required to make a Fortitude save for massive damage.

### Sun's Grace

Intelligence

**Purchase Cost:** 4; **Strain DC:** 16; **Prerequisites:** Rest of the Blessed; **Manifestation Time:** Attack action; **Range:** Touch; **Target:** One creature; **Duration:** Instantaneous; **Saving Throw:** Will negates (harmless)

Your touch can heal the living or harm the undead. By calling upon the solar power within your blood, you can heal 1d10 points of damage +1 point per potency rating. As the powers of the Sun are anathema to the undead, the birthright wounds such creatures rather than heals them. An undead creature can attempt a Will save to take no damage.

**Primal Scream:** You may choose to heal a creature or harm an undead creature for 2d10 points of damage +1 point per

potency rating or increase the range of the birthright to Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./potency).

### Sun Legendary Transformations

The transformations caused by the use of Sun birthrights reveal the glory of the solar disc in the titan. Most alter the titan only while he manifests the solar powers of his lineage but there are a few that change the behavior of the inheritor.

### Storm Crows

The Storm Crows hold dominion over war, storms, and fate. In battle the Storm Crow soldiers are the first on the field and the last to retreat. The gods of war bless them with the skills, expertise, and ferocity to prevail against their enemies. At times it even appears that fate steps in and deflects a lethal blow or insures a clean strike cuts deep. The power of thunder

**Table 4-9: SECOND SIGHT LEGENDARY TRANSFORMATIONS**

Legendary Check	Result
1 - 4	You are now blind and suffer all the penalties associated with that condition. (Severe - Permanent)
5 - 9	Fate seems to be unhappy with you. One per gaming session the GM chooses one attack roll, skill check, or saving throw. This roll fails no matter what you roll. The GM chooses the roll to be affected only after you make your roll. If you spent an action point on the roll, you do not lose the action point. (Major Flaw - Permanent)
10 - 16	For two months Lady Luck frowns on you, imparting a -1 luck penalty to attack and damage rolls, skill checks, and saving throws. (Minor Flaw - Temporary)
17 - 20	No Legendary Transformation

and lightning is one that many Storm Crows have but few master. But the raging tempest is fickle and exacts a price few other birthrights match. Not all Storm Crows are consummate warriors. Some see the threads of fate and have the talent to reweave the strands and see the entirety of the intricate tapestry the threads create. These potent seers and prophets were once far more powerful but over the millennia their power has waned, their second sight blinded by some waxing darkness.

### Second Sight

The inner eye of Storm Crow seers is dimmed with a cataract of age and an unknown darkness. Once they had the sight and power of the Norns of myth, the virgin goddess Maya, the dark goddess called Morrigan by the Celts, and Camaxtli, the Mayan god of the hunt and destiny, but today the future is shrouded in an obscuring gloom. Where once the Blind Eyed could see storm clouds on the far horizon today the prophets can barely see through the thunderstorm of time. The spider's web is torn, the tapestry unraveled. The oracles cannot clearly see the fate that awaits the world.

### Augury

Wisdom

**Purchase Cost:** 1; **Strain DC:** 13; **Prerequisites:** None; **Manifestation Time:** Attack action; Range: Personal; **Target:** You; **Duration:** Instantaneous

Once the seers of the Storm Crows knew precisely the direction fate was to flow but now their vision is blurred and such surety is no longer possible. This birthright functions identically to the spell augury.

**Primal Scream:** Your ability to divine becomes more potent and accurate, though still enwrapped in riddles. The primal scream version of augury can provide you with a useful piece of advice in reply to a question concerning a specific goal, event, or activity that is to occur within 1 week. The advice can be as simple as a short phrase, or it might take the form of a cryptic rhyme or omen.

In all cases, the GM controls what information you receive. Note that if your companions do not act on the information, the conditions may change so that the information is no longer useful.

The base chance for a correct divination is 70% + 2% per potency. The GM adjusts the chance if unusual circumstances require it (if, for example, unusual precautions against divinations have been taken). If the dice roll fails, you know the birthright failed, unless specific magic yielding false information is at work.

Multiple divinations about the same topic by the same titan use the same dice result as the first divination and yield the same answer each time.

### Foresight Defense

Wisdom

**Purchase Cost:** 3; **Strain DC:** 15; **Prerequisites:** Augury;

**Manifestation Time:** Attack action; Range: Personal; **Target:** You; **Duration:** 1 round/potency

You concentrate and extend your senses fractions of a second forward in time. While benefiting from this birthright you gain an insight bonus to your Defense and Reflex saving throws equal to one-half your potency (round down).

**Primal Scream:** The increased perception of possibility now allows you to make decisions in the present with precision. Besides the increase in Defense you gain an identical bonus to all attack rolls and skill checks. Additionally, you cannot be surprised and for the duration of the birthright, you are never flat-footed, and retain your Dexterity bonus to Defense even before your initiative.

### Fate's Blessing

Charisma

**Purchase Cost:** 3; **Strain DC:** 16; **Prerequisites:** Augury; **Manifestation Time:** Free action; Range: Personal; **Target:** You; **Duration:** One action

You twist probability to allow you to do even the impossible. You gain a luck bonus equal to 2 times your potency on all actions the round fate's blessing is manifested. Injudicious and continuous use of the birthright has resulted in disaster for the seer as luck turns upon the inheritor. The GM may at any time reverse the effects of the birthright if he feels you are abusing the wishes of fate by relying too heavily upon this power.

**Primal Scream:** Instead of twisting probability you banish it. The primal scream version of fate's blessing insures the success of a single action. No roll is needed to succeed.

### Forcing Fate's Hand

Charisma

**Purchase Cost:** 6; **Strain DC:** 18; **Prerequisites:** Fate's Blessing; **Manifestation Time:** Full round action; Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./potency); **Target:** All allies or enemies; **Duration:** 1 round; **Save:** Will negates (harmless)

With a slight nudge to the strands that bind the fate of existence together, you change the luck for allies or foes nearby. You must choose whether the effects of the birthright will help your allies or hinder your opponents. If the birthright benefits your allies, all allies within range gain a legacy bonus equal to your potency on all rolls for the round. Conversely, if you manifest the birthright to penalize your enemies, all within range receive a legacy penalty equal to your potency on all rolls for the round.

**Primal Scream:** You concentrate the power of this birthright upon one creature. The legacy bonus or penalty is equal to 2 times your potency but is applied to only a single action.

### Whispers of the Past

Wisdom

**Purchase Cost:** 1; **Strain DC:** 13; **Prerequisites:** None;

**Manifestation Time:** Full round action; **Range:** Touch; **Target:** One object; **Duration:** Instantaneous; **Saving Throw:** None (object)

You can see, hear and feel what has happened in the past around a particular object. For instance, a knife used in a killing can be “read” to get a vision of the murderer, as well as the room where it took place. However, you cannot necessarily choose the angle of viewing - you may only see a man in a dark, hooded cloak, but not his face. Multiple items may not be targeted. You choose the time period, but it can be accompanied with a request for a particular event (“Who used this knife to kill the CEO?”). How far you can see into the past depends upon your potency.

Potency	Distance into the Past
1	Events that occurred no longer than one day ago
2	Events that occurred no longer than one week ago
3	Events that occurred no longer than one month ago
4	Events that occurred no longer than one year ago
5	Events that occurred no longer than one decade ago
6	Events that occurred no longer than one hundred years ago
7	Events that occurred no longer than five hundred years ago
8	Events that occurred no longer than one thousand years ago
9	Events that occurred no longer than ten thousand years ago

**Primal Scream:** By expending an action point to manifest Whispers of the Past’s primal scream, you are able to make two extra requests of the GM to enhance your viewing of the past event. This can be as simple as the angle you wish to view the event from to letting you see the event regardless of darkness or inclement weather.

### The Eye That Burns

Intelligence

**Purchase Cost:** 2; **Strain DC:** 14; **Prerequisites:** Whispers of the Past; **Manifestation Time:** Full round action; **Range:** Personal; **Target:** You; **Duration:** 1 round/potency (D)

Like the great eye of myth and legend your sight pierces through solid matter to see what is on the other side. You actually see through thin materials, like wood (up to a Hardness of 10).

**Primal Scream:** You can now see through denser materials, like concrete walls or a thin sheet of steel (up to a Hardness of 30).

### Seeing Beyond the Horizon

Wisdom

**Purchase Cost:** 4; **Strain DC:** 16; **Prerequisites:** The Eye That Burns; **Manifestation Time:** Attack action; **Range:** See text;

**Duration:** 1 minute/potency (D); **Saving Throw:** None

You are able to move your senses to some other location. Distance is not a factor, but the location must be known - either a place familiar to you or an obvious place (such as behind a door or around a corner). Any birthright or magical enhancements to your senses remain in effect. You cannot, however, cast spells or manifest birthrights to the area you are viewing.

**Primal Scream:** You are able to share the vision you see with those who are touching you.

### Perfect Sight

Wisdom

**Purchase Cost:** 3; **Strain DC:** 17; **Prerequisites:** The Eye That Burns; **Manifestation Time:** Attack action; **Range:** Personal; **Target:** You; **Duration:** 1 minute/potency; **Saving Throw:** None

When you manifest perfect sight you are able to perceive the world normally even in perfect darkness or when you are blinded. You suffer no penalties from fighting blind and may act normally. Magical darkness or blindness and supernatural abilities that create similar penalties, including birthrights, have no effect while you benefit from perfect sight. You are, however, vulnerable to gaze attacks as though you could see normally.

**Primal Scream:** You may impart perfect sight upon others. The range of the birthright extends to touch and the target becomes one creature.

### See the Unseen

Wisdom

**Purchase Cost:** 5; **Strain DC:** 17; **Prerequisites:** Perfect Sight, Seeing Beyond the Horizon; **Manifestation Time:** Attack action; **Range:** Personal; **Target:** You; **Duration:** 1 minute/potency; **Saving Throw:** Will negates (harmless)

You gain the gift of second sight, allowing you to see magical auras, invisible and ethereal creatures, and objects or creatures hidden by magic or birthright. The range this sight is 60 feet.

As with true seeing, however, see the unseen does not penetrate solid objects. It in no way confers X-ray vision or its equivalent. It does not cancel concealment, including that caused by fog and the like. See the unseen does not help the viewer see through mundane disguises, spot creatures who are simply hiding, or notice secret panels hidden by mundane means. The effects cannot be combined with other spells, birthrights, and powers.

**Primal Scream:** You may impart this gift upon others. The range extends to touch and the target becomes one creature.

### Oracle

Wisdom

**Purchase Cost:** 6; **Strain DC:** 18; **Prerequisites:** Fate’s Blessing, Foresight Defense, Seeing Beyond the Horizon; **Manifestation**

**Time:** Full round action; **Range:** Personal; **Target:** You; **Duration:** Instantaneous

You receive glimpses into the future, as if you were actually present at a particular future event. The visions you receive are by no means assured: the future can be changed by the actions of those in the present. You can use this birthright in two ways.

First, you can voluntarily attempt to see the future of a particular person, place, or object, with which you are in contact (including yourself). You must be able to see or touch the subject of your birthright.

Second, your vision may spontaneously activate at the GM's discretion when you are in contact with a subject with a particularly strong tie to fate or there is a momentous event approaching in the future.

In either case, the result of your vision is dependent upon a potency check (potency + 1d20), which the GM should make secretly so you do not necessarily know if a particular vision was accurate or not. Consult the table below for the results of a prescient vision, based upon the potency check.

Potency Check Result	Vision
Below 10	No result
10	A vague vision of the future that may or may not be accurate.
13	An accurate glimpse at the future.
15	Awareness of how long remains before a particular event occurs.
20	Awareness of the people involved in a particular future event.

**Table 4-10: THUNDER LEGENDARY TRANSFORMATIONS**

Legendary Check	Result
1 - 4	All armor you wear or natural armor you have becomes somewhat cloud-like. You gain less of a bonus from equipment or natural armor bonuses to Defense. All such bonuses are counted as one-half their listed amounts. (Severe - Permanent)
5 - 9	For two months your attacks become like mist. Every time you make a successful unarmed or melee attack you must make a percentile roll. If you roll less than 20%, your attack misses. (Major Flaw - Temporary)
10 - 16	Some people find rainy days depressing and storms frightening. Your moods are directly tied to the weather. When it rains you are sad, when it thunders you are angry, and when it is sunny you are happy. You can overcome this intimate connection to the weather for a time (a single day) by making a Will saving throw (DC 15 + BBB). You may only make this saving throw once per day. (Minor Flaw - Permanent)
17 - 20	No Legendary Transformation

25

Awareness of the time, subjects, and location of a future event.

30

Near complete knowledge of a particular future event and everything involving it.

**Primal Scream:** By activating the primal scream version of oracle you look directly into the very blinding heart of the future. The potency check made secretly by the GM receives a +10 legacy bonus. However, the cost for the use of this birthright is severe. You are immediately exhausted and must immediately make a legendary check.

### Second Sight Legendary Transformations

The legendary transformations caused by Second Sight birthrights are strange and disturbing. Some titans loose the ability to differentiate the past, present and future. Other transformations may affect the titan's normal sight or create extra sensory organs.

### Thunder

The raging power of storms and the angry winds is at the command of those who draw upon thunder. Icy winds, torrential monsoons, and lightning are the violent children of the Storm Crows. By calling upon the anger suppressed deep within their blood, the Child of Storms can command and call into existence the raging anger of the Earth.

### Scent of Storms

Wisdom

**Purchase Cost:** 1; **Strain DC:** 13; **Prerequisites:** None; **Manifestation Time:** Full round action; **Range:** 20 miles; **Area:** circular area 20 miles in diameter, centered on you; **Duration:** 1 day (24 hours); **Saving Throw:** None

You can sense the changes of weather and can predict the coming of storms, rain, and clear weather. The weather knowl-

edge you gain is only for the next 24 hours but is completely accurate as long as no magic or birthright changes it.

**Primal Scream:** The weather knowledge you gain extends to a week in the future.

### Fist of Ewiniar

Constitution [Electricity]

**Purchase Cost:** 2; **Strain DC:** 14; **Prerequisites:** Scent of Storms; **Manifestation Time:** Free action; Range: Personal; **Target:** You; **Duration:** 1 round/potency or until discharged; Save: Fortitude half

You can imbue your unarmed strikes with the power of a thunderstorm, adding 1d4 electrical damage per potency to your next successful attack. Once you have manifested this birthright your hand remains charged for a number of rounds equal to your potency in Thunder. The next object or creature you touch receives the damage of the birthright. In battle you can either deliver the blow with an unarmed attack, which adds the damage of the attack to the Fist of Thunder damage, or you may deliver the attack with a touch attack.

**Primal Scream:** The duration extends to 1 minute/potency and you determine the attack or touch that discharges the effect, enabling you to touch a friend or even attack a lesser enemy without setting off the First of Thunder.

### Hammer of Thor

Strength [Electricity]

**Purchase Cost:** 3; **Strain DC:** 15; **Prerequisites:** Fist of Ewiniar; **Manifestation Time:** Free action; Range: Touch; **Target:** One object; **Duration:** 1 round/potency; Save: None

You charge a weapon with electricity, covering the weapon in crackling energy. The shocking weapon deals an additional +1d6 points of electrical damage each time you land a successful hit. A ranged weapon such as a gun, bow, or other projectile has its ammunition charged. If you drop the weapon or give to another person, it loses its shocking enhancement.

**Primal Scream:** The weapon you charge gains the added abilities of a thundering weapon in addition to the shock damage described above. In your hands the weapon creates a crash of thunder upon striking a successful critical hit. The thunderclap does not harm you but deals +1d8 points of bonus sonic damage to the creature struck. If the weapon's critical multiplier is x3, add +2d8 points of bonus sonic damage. A ranged weapon such as a gun, bow, or sling has its ammunition enhanced with the thunderous energy. Creatures struck by a

critical hit must make a Fortitude save or be deafened permanently.

### Clap of Thunder

Strength [Sonic]

**Purchase Cost:** 3; **Strain DC:** 15; **Prerequisites:** Scent of Storms; **Manifestation Time:** Attack action; Range: Personal; Area: 30-ft. radius burst centered on you; **Duration:** Instantaneous; Save: Fortitude partial (see text) (object)

By clapping your hands together forcefully you create a loud clap of thunder that damages and deafens creatures within the radius of effect. Any creature within the area is deafened for 1d8 rounds and takes 1d6 points of damage. A successful save negates the damage and reduces the deafness duration by half. Any exposed brittle or crystalline object, such as a window or a crystal vase, takes 1d6 points of damage per potency. Creatures holding such objects take half that damage unless they make successful Reflex saves.

Deafened characters suffer a -4 penalty on initiative checks, automatically fail all Listen checks, and have a 20% chance to miscast and lose any spell with a verbal component that they may attempt to cast.

This birthright cannot penetrate spells such as silence and are ineffective against targets that cannot hear.

**Primal Scream:** On top of the effects described above, targets that fail their Fortitude save are also stunned for 1d6 rounds.

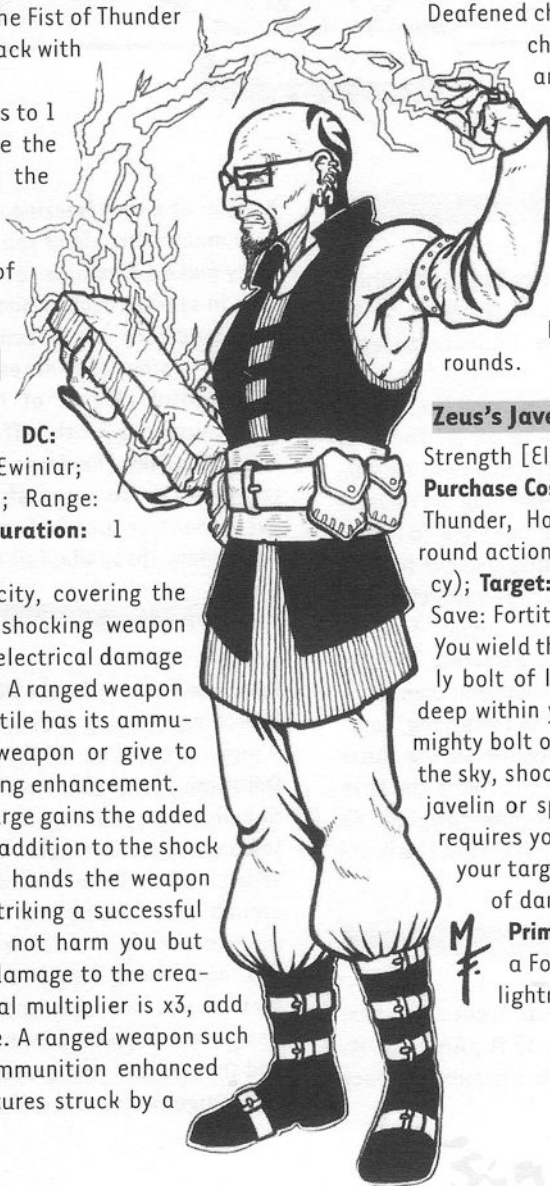
### Zeus's Javelin

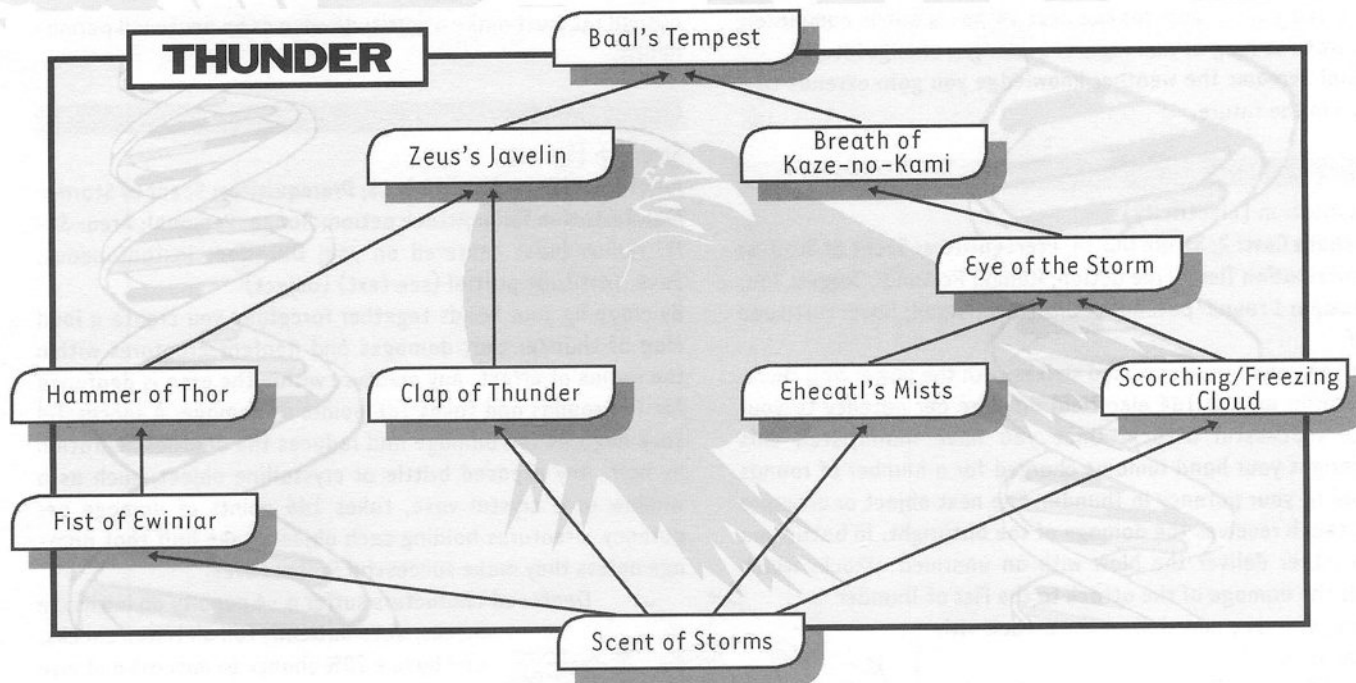
Strength [Electricity]

**Purchase Cost:** 5; **Strain DC:** 17; **Prerequisites:** Clap of Thunder, Hammer of Thor; **Manifestation Time:** Full round action; Range: Medium (100 ft. + 10 ft./potency); **Target:** One creature; **Duration:** Instantaneous; Save: Fortitude half

You wield the weapon of the gods of storm, the deadly bolt of lightning. By calling up the tempest held deep within your soul you can strike an enemy with a mighty bolt of lightning. This bolt can either drop from the sky, shoot from your hand, or even be hurled like a javelin or spear; the result is the same. The attack requires you to make a ranged touch attack against your target. A successful attack inflicts 2d6 points of damage per potency.

**Primal Scream:** Your target no longer receives a Fortitude save to lessen the damage of your lightning attack.





### Ehecatl's Mists

Constitution

**Purchase Cost:** 3; **Strain DC:** 15; **Prerequisites:** Scent of Storms; **Manifestation Time:** Attack action; Range: 50 ft.; Area: 50-ft. diameter spread centered on you; **Duration:** 1 minute/potency (D); **Saving Throw:** None

You spontaneously create a dense fog that materializes out of the very air around you and spreads out to 50 ft. The mist obscures all sight, including darkvision, beyond 5 feet. A creature 5 feet away has total concealment, providing a 40% mischance to all attacks and attackers cannot use sight to locate the target. Only high wind (40+ mph) can disperse the fog in 1 minute (10 rounds). Hurricane force winds (75+ mph) clear the mist in only half that time. A fireball, or similar spell or birthright burns away the fog in the area affected. You are immune to the detrimental effects of the mists you create.

**Primal Scream:** The dense mist becomes a choking fog, forcing all within to successfully make a Fortitude saving throw every round or take 1d4 points of damage the round the save was failed. Those who fail the save also become fatigued. As above, you are immune to the detrimental effects of the mists you create.

### Scorching/Freezing Cloud

Constitution [Fire or Cold]

**Purchase Cost:** 3; **Strain DC:** 15; **Prerequisites:** Scent of Storms; **Manifestation Time:** Attack action; Range: 30 ft.; Area: 30-ft. diameter spread centered on you; **Duration:** 1 minute/potency (D); **Saving Throw:** Fortitude negates

A cloud of either freezing mist or scorching steam spews from your mouth. The cloud you create forces all within to immediately make a Fortitude save as though they have spent 10 minutes in searing heat or bitter cold. Every round they remain in the cloud they are forced to make another saving throw as though another 10 minutes had passed. You are immune to the detrimental effects of the cloud (see d20M Chapter 7: Gamemastering for the effects of extreme environments).

**Primal Scream:** The dense mist becomes a choking fog, forcing all within to successfully make a Fortitude saving throw every round or take 1d4 points of damage the round the save was failed. Those who fail the save also become fatigued.

### Eye of the Storm

Constitution

**Purchase Cost:** 4; **Strain DC:** 16; **Prerequisites:** Ehecatl's Mist, Scorching/Freezing Cloud; **Manifestation Time:** Move action; Range: 10 ft.; Area: 10-ft. radius emanation centered on you; **Duration:** 1 hour (D); Save: Fortitude (harmless)

Not only can you negate the adverse effects of hot or cold temperatures (see d20M Chapter 7: Gamemastering for the effects of extreme environments) but bad weather bends around you, leaving you dry and comfortable. Natural rain, wind, and even the debris carried along with it veer around you, not coming within 10 feet of your body. Those within 10 feet of you are also under your protection. You and your charges are protected from winds up to hurricane strength. You and those under your protection also ignore the first 10 points of damage that is cold and electrical, regardless of whether the

source of damage is natural or magical.

**Primal Scream:** No matter how strong the storm, the most you feel is a light breeze. Besides the normal benefits of the birthright, this mystical defense protects you from magical weather and elemental spells of up to 3rd level. The strain DC increases to 20.

### Breath of Kaze-no-Kami

Wisdom

**Purchase Cost:** 5; **Strain DC:** Variable (see below); **Prerequisites:** Eye of the Storm, Fist of Ewiniar; **Manifestation Time:** Full round action; Range: 100 ft.; Area: 100-ft. diameter spread centered on you; **Duration:** 1 minute/potency; **Saving Throw:** Variable (see below)

Like the storm gods of myth you can temporarily manipulate the weather conditions around you. Your ability does not extend to massive changes of weather and only affects the area around you for a limited time. The changes to the local weather are abrupt and happen once the full round action is completed. The strain DC for each weather effect is listed separately. Altering the weather is very difficult. Once you have created a weather affect you must let it run its course. Any changes you want to make to the limited weather conditions you have created must be accomplished through another manifestation of this birthright.

Conflicting use of this birthright (or similar spell) is adjudicated as follows. The Storm Crows are the inheritors of a mighty deity of crushing tempest. This birthright overcomes any weather manipulation, creation, or control spell of level 4 or below. Conflicting uses of this birthright force the combatants to roll separate strain checks. The titan with the higher result enforces his will upon the weather.

**Thunderstorm (DC 17):** You create a torrential downpour with crashes of thunder. Any creature caught within the area of effect is inflicted with a -2 penalty to all attack rolls, skill checks, and they lose their Dexterity bonus to Defense. The rain also obscures vision (but not darkvision) providing those with one-half concealment (20% miss chance).

**Sleet Storm (DC 16):** Driving sleet blocks all sight (even darkvi-

sion) within it and causes the ground in the area to be icy, slowing movement to one-half normal. Additionally, any creature in sleet that attempts to move must succeed at a Reflex save or fall down instead. The sleet extinguishes small fires and provides nine-tenths concealment (40% miss chance).

**Arctic/Desert Blast (DC 17):** The area is filled with blasting wind. All creatures in the area must make a Reflex save per round or fall down. Due to the shear winds, all creatures in the area of effect have a -2 penalty to melee attacks and -4 to all ranged attacks (magical attacks are exempt from this penalty).

**Clear Skies (DC 15):** All inclement weather is temporarily banished. **Primal Scream:** You are not required to make a strain check per minute.

### Baal's Tempest

Constitution

**Purchase Cost:** 6; **Strain DC:** Variable (see description); **Prerequisites:** Breath of Kaze-no-Kami, Eye of the Storm, Zeus's Javelin; **Manifestation Time:** 1 minute; Range: 100 ft.; Area: 100-ft. diameter spread centered on you; **Duration:** 1 round/potency; **Saving Throw:** Variable (see below)

Baal's Tempest is similar to Weather Witching but far more powerful. You are able to abruptly change the local weather to extremes rarely seen in nature. Such massive alterations to the local weather are very tiring. Any strain check that fails immediately fatigues you rather than just leaving you shaken the next round as normal.

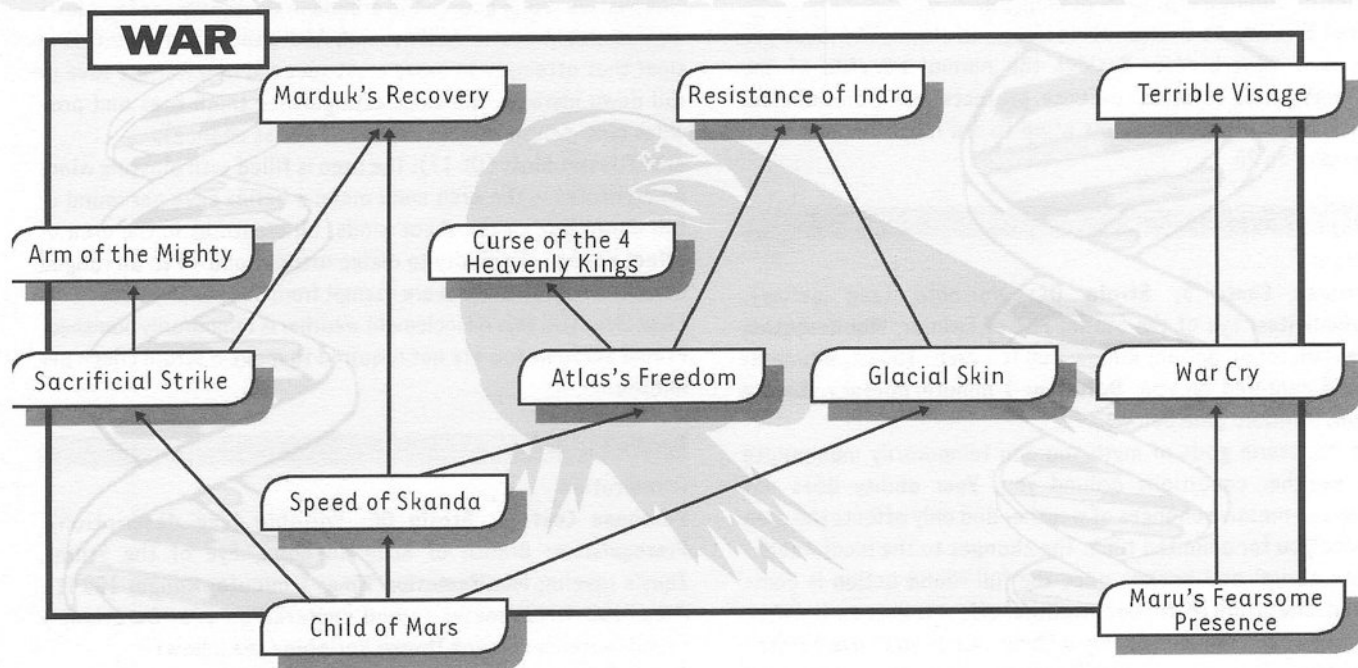
As with weather witching, conflicting use of this birthright (or similar spell) is adjudicated as follows. This birthright overcomes any weather manipulation, creation, or control spell of 5th level or below. Conflicting uses of this birthright force the combatants to roll separate strain checks. The titan with the higher result enforces his will upon the weather.

**Hailstorm (DC 19):** Massive stones of ice fall from the sky, dealing 5d6 points of damage to creatures caught within the storm; the damage is 3d6 impact plus 2d6 cold.

**Tornado (DC 19):** A single whirling vortex materializes under your command. This extremely destructive whirlwind has a face of 10-ft. by 10-ft. Creatures caught within the tornado or

**Table 4-11: WAR LEGENDARY TRANSFORMATIONS**

Legendary Check	Result
1 - 4	War is painful and bloody. You have one wound that can't be healed, even with magic. This permanent wound causes you to always be down 8 hit points. (Severe - Permanent)
5 - 9	Whenever you are threatened verbally or physically you must make a Will saving throw (DC 15 + BBB) or immediately challenge the one who threatened you, even if you are at a disadvantage. You can't back down and if your challenge isn't met, you take out your anger on the surrounding environment. The fury passes once you have either beaten your foe (or were beaten) or destroyed everything near you that you could get your hands on. (Major Flaw - Permanent)
10 - 16	You become overly enthusiastic in battle and for 4 months have a -2 penalty to Defense. (Minor Flaw - Temporary)
17 - 20	No Legendary Transformation



come into contact with it take 2d6 points of damage and must make a Reflex save or fall down or if Small size or smaller be taken aloft. Unfortunate victims sucked up by the tornado take 1d6 points of damage per turn and may make a Reflex save to extract themselves, at which time they take 1d6 points of falling damage.

**Typhoon (DC 22):** A hurricane descends upon the area. The effects of a thunderstorm (described above in the Weather Witching birthright) are coupled with the raging power of a tornado but affect all within the area of effect.

**Primal Scream:** The area of effect is shapeable, allowing you to affect only those creatures you wish.

### Thunder Legendary Transformations

The mercurial nature of weather, its rages as well as its serenity mark those who progress down the road of Thunder. But those most touched by the hand of these birthrights exhibit physical signs of inclement weather, abnormally cold, hot, or wet skin is only the beginning of the transformation process.

### War

War sings in the veins of the Storm Crows. They fly before armies like the ravens of Morrigan, crying the clarion call of battle. Conflict comes naturally to those who are children of the tempest. The Spears of Baal are perfected warriors undaunted by fear or death. They wade into their enemies like reapers entering a field of ripe wheat.

### Child of Mars

Strength

**Purchase Cost:** 1; **Strain DC:** 13; **Prerequisites:** None; **Manifestation Time:** Move action; **Range:** Personal; **Target:** You; **Duration:** 1 round/potency; **Saving Throw:** None  
Your blows crack like thunder when you hit. You cause devastating damage when you make melee or unarmed attacks. For the duration of the birthright your Strength is treated as one-half times its true score (round down) when determining damage. Your increased strength, however, does not increase your attack roll, weight you can lift, or carrying capability.  
**Primal Scream:** When you determine melee and unarmed damage you triple your strength bonus.

### Speed of Skanda

Dexterity

**Purchase Cost:** 2; **Strain DC:** 14; **Prerequisites:** Child of Mars; **Manifestation Time:** Move action or Attack action; **Range:** Personal; **Target:** You; **Duration:** See text; **Saving Throw:** None  
For a moment the spirit of war guides your actions allowing you to act more quickly the next round of combat. Your initiative check raises an amount equal to your potency. By giving up your move action or attack action the round you manifest the birthright you move yourself higher in the initiative order next round.

**Primal Scream:** Before initiative is determined you may manifest the primal scream version of speed of skanda as a free action, thereby gaining a legacy bonus to your initiative this round.

### Atlas's Freedom

Dexterity

**Purchase Cost:** 3; **Strain DC:** 15; **Prerequisites:** Speed of Skanda; **Manifestation Time:** Free action; Range: Personal; **Target:** You; **Duration:** 1 hour/potency; **Saving Throw:** None

While under the effects of this birthright you can move more freely in any armor you wear. The armor penalty applied to the following **Skills:** Balance, Climb, Escape Artist, Hide, Jump, Move Silently, and Tumble decreases by one for every two potency.

**Primal Scream:** When you spend an action point to manifest the primal scream version of this birthright the duration decreases to 1 minute/potency but your Dexterity bonus to your Defense is not limited by the armor you wear. You also receive the benefits from the normal manifestation of atlas's freedom.

### Curse of the Four Heavenly Kings

Strength

**Purchase Cost:** 4; **Strain DC:** 16; **Prerequisites:** Atlas's Freedom; **Manifestation Time:** Attack action; Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./potency); **Target:** One creature; **Duration:** 1 round/potency; **Saving Throw:** Fortitude negates (object)

Small cracks and imperfections appear momentarily on the armor or hide of the creature curse of the four heavenly kings is used against. Upon manifesting this birthright, the target's natural armor or equipment bonus to Defense is reduced. The creature retains these bonuses if he makes a Fortitude saving throw, otherwise, for the duration of the birthright the bonus it gains to Defense from armor, whether natural or equipment, is reduced by half your potency (rounded up). Each manifestation only affects one creature. Bonus from equipment and natural armor return to normal after the duration has past.

**Primal Scream:** For your potency in rounds, the subject gains no bonus to Defense from any natural or equipment armor bonuses.

### Glacial Skin

Constitution

**Purchase Cost:** 3; **Strain DC:** 15; **Prerequisites:** Child of Mars; **Manifestation Time:** Attack action; Range: Personal; **Target:** You; **Duration:** 1 minute; **Saving Throw:** Fortitude (harmless)

As master warriors Storm Crows must be able to survive the grueling damage caused by physical conflict. When you manifest this birthright a thin sheet of ice appears on your skin. For the duration of the birthright your massive damage threshold increases by an amount equal to your potency.

**Primal Scream:** The range of the birthright extends to Touch, allowing you to bestow the effects of the birthright to others. The effects of this birthright may be ignored with a successful Fortitude saving throw but as the birthright is harmless, few would want to do so.

### Resistance of Indra

Constitution

**Purchase Cost:** 5; **Strain DC:** 17; **Prerequisites:** Atlas's Freedom, Glacial Skin; **Manifestation Time:** Free action; Range: Personal; **Target:** You; **Duration:** Instantaneous

You gain some resistance to critical hits. As long as you are not flat-footed, when struck by a forceful blow that is a critical threat you may manifest this birthright as a free action. You roll a 1d20 + potency versus your opponents subsequent attack roll to determine if the threat becomes a critical hit. If your result is greater than your opponents attack total, the critical threat does not become a critical hit. Treat the effects of the initial attack as normal.

This birthright does not work against an opponent that automatically confirms a threat as a critical hit due to a spell, class ability, species trait, or birthright.

**Primal Scream:** When you spend an action point at the time of manifesting this birthright the attack is treated as a normal attack, not a critical threat. No roll is required. The primal scream version of resistance of indra counters an opponent's ability to automatically confirm a threat as a critical hit.

### Sacrificial Strike

Strength

**Purchase Cost:** 3; **Strain DC:** 15; **Prerequisites:** Child of Mars; **Manifestation Time:** Free action; Range: Personal; **Target:** You; **Duration:** One round

On your action, before making your attack rolls for the round, you may choose to sacrifice your Defense to increase your chance to hit your opponent. You may subtract a number from your Defense, and add this number to all your melee or unarmed attack rolls. This number may not exceed your potency. This penalty to your Defense applies until your first action the following round.

**Primal Scream:** Each point of Defense you sacrifice increases your melee and unarmed attack rolls by two.

### Arm of the Mighty

Strength

**Purchase Cost:** 4; **Strain DC:** 16; **Prerequisites:** Sacrificial Strike; **Manifestation Time:** Attack action; Range: Personal; **Target:** You; **Duration:** 1 round/potency

You channel the very spirit of battle increasing your chance of inflicting a critical hit. Your critical threat range for melee, unarmed, and ranged attacks increases as shown in the chart below. This increase to your critical threat range stacks with other special abilities, spells or feats that increase a character's critical threat range.

Permanent Potency in War	Critical Threat Range Increase
2 - 3	+1

4 - 6	+2
7 - 9	+3

**Primal Scream:** In addition to the above effects, when you score a critical hit your damage multiplier increases by 1.

### Marduk's Recovery

Dexterity

**Purchase Cost:** 5; **Strain DC:** 17; **Prerequisites:** Sacrificial Strike, Speed of Skanda; **Manifestation Time:** Free action; **Range:** Personal; **Target:** You; **Duration:** Instantaneous

Your inbred connection to conflict allows you to recover from failed attacks, turning failure into success. When you fail to hit a creature with an attack you may manifest this birthright and re-roll your attack. All modifiers that affected the first attack roll affect the re-roll. You may only manifest this birthright once per round.

**Primal Scream:** You gain a +3 legacy bonus to your reroll.

### Maru's Fearsome Presence

Charisma

**Purchase Cost:** 1; **Strain DC:** 13; **Prerequisites:** None; **Manifestation Time:** Attack action; **Range:** Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./potency); **Target:** One creature; **Duration:** 1 hour; **Saving Throw:** Will negates

Intimidation is a warriors weapon just as surely as a rifle or knife. Your voice becomes more commanding and threatening under the effects of maru's fearsome presence. The DC for the opposed level check of any creature you attempt to intimidate is increased by your potency. Also, you do not take a -2 penalty to your intimidate check for every size category you are smaller than your target but gain +4 legacy bonus to your intimidate check for each size category you are larger. This birthright allows you to intimidate even the fearless. Those immune to fear are affected by the birthright as normal and can be intimidated.

**Primal Scream:** The primal scream version of maru's fearsome presence makes you appear as an overpowering elemental entity, not fully human. In addition to the benefits described

above, you are treated as two size categories larger than you truly are for Intimidate skill checks only.

### War Cry

Charisma

**Purchase Cost:** 3; **Strain DC:** 15; **Prerequisites:** Maru's Fearsome Presence; **Manifestation Time:** Full round action; **Range:** Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./potency); **Target:** All allies within range; **Duration:** 1 round/potency; **Saving Throw:** Will negates (harmless)

Good commanding soldiers not only drive fear into the hearts of their enemies, they also bolster the morale of their allies. You are able to make a war cry, which requires a full round. Once the full round action is completed all your allies within range of the birthright gain a morale bonus equal to one-half your potency (rounded up) to all attack rolls, damage rolls, and saving throws.

**Primal Scream:** The duration extends to 1 minute and the morale bonus is equal to your potency.

### Terrible Visage

Charisma [Mind-affecting]

**Purchase Cost:** 5; **Strain DC:** 17; **Prerequisites:** War Cry; **Manifestation Time:** Move action; **Range:** Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./potency); **Area:** Cone; **Duration:** 1 minute (D); **Save:** Will negates

While on the battlefield, facing down opponents, you seem to be an avatar of devastation. Your terrible visage makes you seem taller, fiercer, and more dangerous. Creatures attempting to face you find it extremely difficult to do so. As a free action each round you must declare what direction you are facing to determine the area your cone affects. Enemies within the area of effect must make a Will save or suffer a morale penalty on attack rolls, Defense, skill checks, and saving throws. The morale penalty is equal to your potency.

**Primal Scream:** You do not even need to face your enemies for this birthright to affect them.

### War Legendary Transformations

War is bloody, violent, and terrible and so are many of the

**Table 4-12: ASH LEGENDARY TRANSFORMATIONS**

Legendary Check	Result
1 - 4	Chaos corrodes your mind and your Wisdom suffers 2 points of ability drain. Unlike other ability drain effects, this legendary transformation can be purged normally. (Severe - Permanent)
5 - 9	For two months the chaotic forces you control turn on you and twist your hands into claws. You suffer a -2 penalty to all skill checks that require the use of your hands and you are unable to use firearms. (Major Flaw - Temporary)
10 - 16	For two weeks all damage dice you roll are a die type lower than normal. A d6 becomes a d4 for instance. (Minor Flaw - Temporary)
17 - 20	No Legendary Transformation

transformations caused by the birthrights of War. While War legendary transformations may increase your ability to take or deal damage they also hinder your ability to deal peacefully with others. The fabled rages of storm gods and mighty heroes stem from such changes.

### Void Phoenix Birthrights

Their dual powers of creation and destruction make the Void Phoenixes both revered and reviled by their allies. While they are certainly very useful when it comes time to boost the skills or abilities of their friends, their destructive powers are often too horrifying to behold. More importantly, at least in the eyes of the other titans, the Void Phoenixes receive significant increases in power when their powers are used to destroy first and then create from the liberated matter and energy. It is this dualistic nature that causes many titans to view the phoenixes as creatures only a short step from the Daemonhost.

### Ash

The birthrights found in this tree unleash the power of entropy to destroy their targets by freeing the matter and energy used to create the target in the first place. Though these powers do affect physical objects and creatures, they are also able to affect thoughts and minds, as well. At its most powerful, Destructive Entropy is able to reduce a target to its constituent particles and waves, leaving nothing of its original form behind. All effects in this Birthright tree are distinctly unnatural and horrific in appearance. They are the result of the direct application of chaos to the target's mind or body,

and the results are never pretty.

### Corrosion

Intelligence

**Purchase Cost:** 1; **Strain DC:** 13; **Prerequisites:** None; **Manifestation Time:** Attack action; **Range:** Medium (100 ft. + 10 ft./potency); **Target:** One creature or object; **Duration:** Instantaneous; **Saving Throw:** Fortitude negates

You use this power to bring the power of entropy to bear on a single creature or object of a size no greater than large (for creatures) or 500 pounds in weight (for objects). If the target fails its save, entropy immediately gnaws away at it, reducing matter to particles and energy to aimless waves. This causes 1d4 + one-half your potency in lethal damage to creatures or objects. This damage ignores the object's hardness. Note that objects held or worn get a saving throw equal by the creature holding or wearing the object.

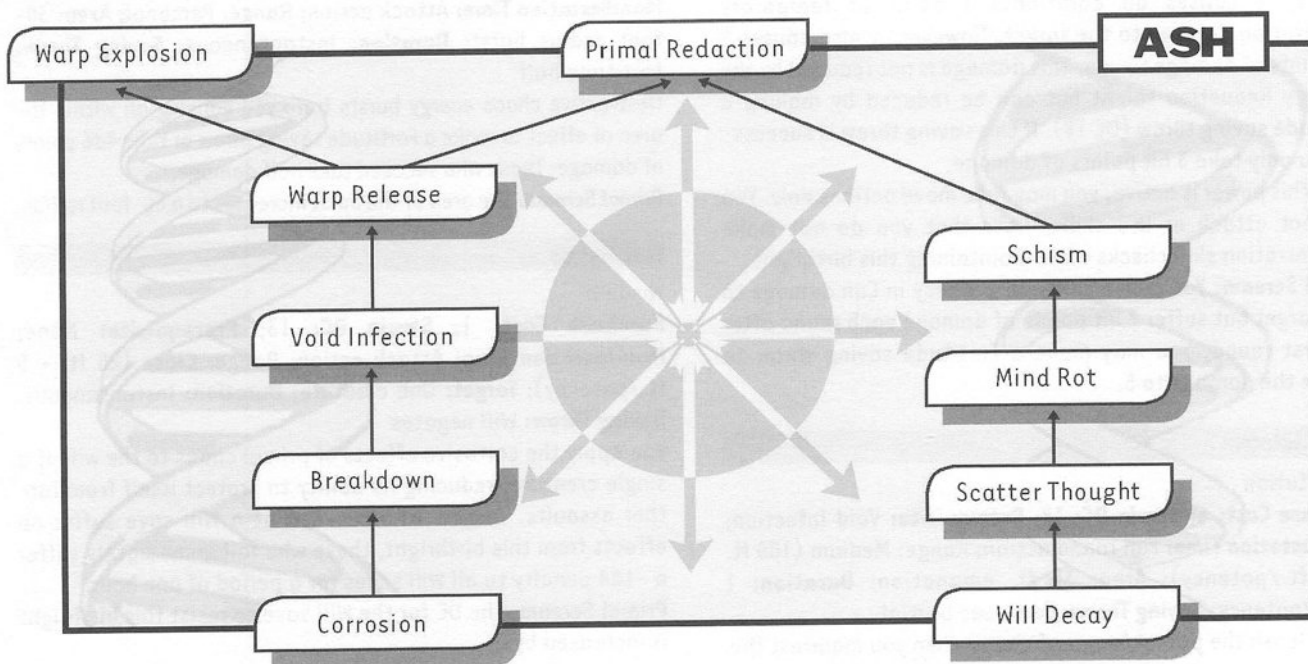
**Primal Scream:** The damage inflicted by this power is increased to 1d8 + one-half your potency of lethal damage to either objects or creatures.

### Breakdown

Intelligence

**Purchase Cost:** 2; **Strain DC:** 14; **Prerequisites:** Corrosion; **Manifestation Time:** Attack action; **Range:** Medium (100 ft. + 10 ft./potency); **Target:** One machine or electrical device; **Duration:** Instantaneous; **Saving Throw:** Fortitude negates

When this power is used, you cause a single machine or electrical device to fall prey to the powers of entropy. Any fault or defect in the device is seized upon and magnified, rendering



the machine or device useless. This ability may only be used on machines weighing less than 2,000 pounds, allowing it to affect any machine up to the size of a small car.

When a machine stops functioning, it simply will not work. It cannot be selectively broken (such as making a phone receive only incoming calls), but stops functioning entirely at the moment this birthright affects it. To repair a broken object requires a successful Repair skill check (DC 10 + potency) and the device can't be jury-rigged.

**Primal Scream:** The difficulty of repairing the object is increased by an additional +5.

### Void Infection

Constitution

**Purchase Cost:** 4; **Strain DC:** 16; **Prerequisites:** Breakdown; **Manifestation Time:** Attack action; Range: Medium (100 ft. + 10 ft./potency); **Target:** One living creature; **Duration:** See below; **Saving Throw:** Fortitude negates

You send a thread of the void into a single target. The thread is uncontrolled and quickly erodes the health of the target as it randomly rearranges or destroys bits and pieces of its body. But this birthright is not without its dangers, and only the toughest or most highly skilled Phoenixes have the ability to use it for long.

If the target fails its Fortitude save, they are infected and immediately suffer 1 point of temporary Constitution damage. You may, if you so desires, immediately stop the birthright at that point and will suffer no damage. If you choose to continue inflicting damage on your target, however, you open yourself to injury.

For every round after the first that this birthright is maintained, it causes an additional 1 point of temporary Constitution damage to the target. However, it also causes 5 hit points of damage to you. This damage is not reduced by the Damage Reduction talent but can be reduced by making a Fortitude saving throw (DC 18). If this saving throw is successful you only take 3 hit points of damage.

While this power is active, you may take move actions only. You may not attack or use skills. Note that you do not make Concentration skill checks while maintaining this birthright.

**Primal Scream:** You cause half your potency in Con damage to your target but suffer 7 hit points of damage each round after the first round. You may make a Fortitude saving throw to reduce the damage to 5.

### Warp Release

Constitution

**Purchase Cost:** 6; **Strain DC:** 18; **Prerequisite:** Void Infection; **Manifestation Time:** Full round action; Range: Medium (100 ft. + 10 ft./potency); Area: 30 ft. emanation; **Duration:** 1 round/potency; **Saving Throw:** Fortitude partial

You unleash the primal forces of chaos when you manifest this birthright, sweeping through the area of effect with destruc-

tive results. Any creature, mechanical object, or electrical device caught in the area of effect must immediately make a Fortitude saving throw to avoid the worst of the birthright's effects. Those who make their save suffer only 1d6 hit points of damage every round in which they are in the area of effect. Regardless of how long an individual stays in the area of effect, only one saving throw is required – if it succeeds, the target suffers 1d6 hit points of damage each round while within the area of effect. Those who fail are twisted and tortured by the blasts of raw chaos in the area. The subject is affected as detailed below each and every round they remain within the area of effect – even if they leave the area and return later.

When a save is failed, the subject immediately suffers 2d6 hit points of damage and is stunned. Though no additional Fortitude saves are allowed to mitigate the damage effects, the target is allowed a Will saving throw at the beginning of each round thereafter in order to remove the stunned condition for that round. If the subject fails the Will save, he is stunned for that round.

Unattended mechanical objects or electrical devices are treated as though they failed their saving throws. The damage the object takes ignores its hardness.

**Primal Scream:** Subjects and objects suffer 2d8 hit points of and are shaken for 1d4 rounds, even after they exit the area of effect, regardless of the results of their Saving throws. Those that make their saving throws merely suffer 1d8 hit points per round they are within the area of effect.

### Warp Explosion

Strength

**Purchase Cost:** 7; **Strain DC:** 19; **Prerequisite:** Warp Release; **Manifestation Time:** Attack action; Range: Personal; Area: 30-foot radius burst; **Duration:** Instantaneous; **Saving Throw:** Fortitude half

Destructive chaos energy bursts from you causing all within the area of effect to make a Fortitude saving throw or take 4d6 points of damage. Those who succeed take half damage.

**Primal Scream:** The area of the burst increases to a 50-foot radius.

### Will Decay

Wisdom

**Purchase Cost:** 1; **Strain DC:** 13; **Prerequisite:** None; **Manifestation Time:** Attack action; Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./potency); **Target:** One creature; **Duration:** Instantaneous; **Saving Throw:** Will negates

You apply the corrosive effects of primal chaos to the will of a single creature, reducing its ability to protect itself from further assaults. Targets who succeed at a Will save suffer no effects from this birthright, those who fail immediately suffer a -1d4 penalty to all Will saves for a period of one hour.

**Primal Scream:** The DC for the Will save to resist this birthright is increased by 2.

## Scatter Thought

Intelligence

**Purchase Cost:** 2; **Strain DC:** 14; **Prerequisite:** Will Decay; **Manifestation Time:** Attack action; Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./potency); **Target:** One creature; **Duration:** 1 round/potency; **Saving Throw:** Will negates (see below)

By injecting a blast of chaos into the target's mind, you are able to confuse and disorient the target, leaving them virtually unable to act. Targets who fail their Will save are dazed. At the beginning of each round, thereafter, the target must make another Will save (whether the first save was successful or not). If that save fails, the target immediately becomes dazed until the next round.

**Primal Scream:** You may affect an additional target for every point of Charisma modifier.

## Mind Rot

Wisdom

**Purchase Cost:** 3; **Strain DC:** 15; **Prerequisite:** Scatter Thought; **Manifestation Time:** Attack action; Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./potency); **Target:** One creature; **Duration:** 1 minute/potency; **Saving Throw:** Will negates

This birthright allows you to erode the skills of your target. To use this power, you must see the target using a skill for at least one round. At that point, you may activate this power to attack that skill. If the target fails his Saving Throw, the subject immediately suffers a -1d4 + potency legacy penalty to that skill. Subsequent skill losses from the use of this Birthright do not stack.

**Primal Scream:** The subject suffers a -1d4 + potency penalty rather than -1d4.

## Schism

Constitution [Death]

**Purchase Cost:** 4; **Strain DC:** 15; **Prerequisites:** Mind Rot; **Manifestation Time:** One minute; Range: Touch; **Target:** One creature; **Duration:** Instantaneous; **Saving Throw:** Will negates

This horrifying power siphons away the life energy of the target, bestowing a negative level upon those who fail their Will save. You must engage the target in conversation for at least one minute before this birthright is used, in order to determine the appropriate weakness to attack. At that point, you need merely touch your target to deliver the power of the birthright. This may require a touch attack.

**Primal Scream:** The subject gains two negative levels rather than just one.

## Primal Redaction

Wisdom

**Purchase Cost:** 7; **Strain DC:** 19; **Prerequisite:** Schism, Warp Release; **Manifestation Time:** Attack action; Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./potency); **Target:** One creature; **Duration:** Special

(see below); **Saving Throw:** Will negates

By directing the corrosive power of chaos onto your target, it is possible to completely eradicate the target's existence. However, doing so has serious risks and can create secondary effects you may not be prepared to handle. Only those with great fortitude or in-depth knowledge of the arcane power of chaos can ever hope to survive the use of this Birthright.

When you use primal redaction, it pits your willpower and chaotic energy against the physical form of the target. When the birthright is activated, the target must immediately make a Fortitude save (DC 10 + potency). If this save is unsuccessful, the target immediately suffers 6d6 hit points of damage (massive damage rules apply).

At the beginning of every round thereafter, you must make another strain check as an opposed check against the target's Fortitude saving throw. If you win the contest, the subject suffers 3d6 hit points of damage. If the subject wins the contest, however, you immediately suffer 1d4 points of temporary Wisdom damage. During this series of contested checks, neither you or your target may take any other action - you are linked in a struggle for existence that cannot be ended until one or the other of the combatants dies.

If the subject is ever reduced to zero hit points as a result of the damage caused by primal redaction, the creature is immediately and irrevocably destroyed, its body reduced to a roiling cloud of chaotic particles that quickly dissipate and are lost forever. If you are reduced to 0 Wisdom as a result of damage caused by this birthright, you fall unconscious.

Should your target ever be killed or rendered unconscious by an outside force while this Birthright is in effect, the other is immediately released from the grip of chaos and the birthright ends immediately.

**Primal Scream:** When this version of the birthright is activated, you receive a +2 natural bonus to your strain checks made as a result of this birthright.

## Ash Legendary Transformations

Chaos easily turns on those who call upon its power. Legacy transformations caused by the use of Ash birthrights most often cause physical degradations in the titan. A few, more dangerous transformations corrode the mind of the unfortunate inheritor.

## Genesis Fire

Just as the power of chaos can be used to destroy, it also contains vibrant creative energies. When properly controlled, this creative fuel can provide a powerful boost to the abilities of an individual or even be used to create entirely new objects - or creatures. Note that all of these birthrights are more powerful when used in conjunction with the Entropy birthrights, above. This is discussed in more detail below, in the descriptions of the Birthrights.

**Table 4-13: GENESIS FIRE LEGENDARY TRANSFORMATIONS**

Legendary Check	Result
1 - 4	The chaos causes growths within your brain and you suffer -3 penalty to all skill checks. (Severe - Permanent)
5 - 9	You bloat with fluid for two months, losing all Dexterity bonus to your Defense. You also do not add your Dexterity modifier to any skill checks. (Major Flaw - Temporary)
10 - 16	The balance inherent within the powers of the void cause you to take 1 point of damage any time you cause physical harm to another. (Minor Flaw - Permanent)
17 - 20	No Legendary Transformation

### Augmenting Touch

Strength

**Purchase Cost:** 1; **Strain DC:** 13; **Prerequisite:** None; **Manifestation Time:** Attack action; Range: Touch; **Target:** One creature or object; **Duration:** 1 round/potency; **Saving Throw:** Will negates (harmless)

This birthright sends a jolt of chaotic energy through your target, improving its physical properties or functioning. In living organisms, this results in either greater physical power or resistance to damage, while objects become more resilient, sharper, or otherwise more effective.

If used on a living creature, the creature gains a +1 natural bonus to Strength, Dexterity, or Constitution for the duration of the birthright. If used on a weapon, the weapon gains a +1 enhancement bonus, and all other physical objects receive a +1 natural bonus to hardness and an additional +10 hit points.

**Primal Scream:** Double the bonuses granted by this Birthright.

### Chaos Fuel

Wisdom

**Purchase Cost:** 3; **Strain DC:** 15; **Prerequisite:** Augmenting Touch; **Manifestation Time:** Attack action; Range: Touch; **Target:** One creature or Object; **Duration:** Variable (see below); **Saving Throw:** None

This birthright manipulates chaotic energy to provide needed energy for weapons, machines, or creatures. If used on a weapon, the weapon needs no ammunition or power for a number of minutes equal to the Void Phoenix's level, no matter how many shots or discharges are fired from the weapon in question.

If used on a car, van, or passenger truck, it provides enough fuel to power the vehicle for a number of hours equal to your potency.

When used to augment a creature, it can have one of the two following effects. It may either provide the Fast Healing (1) special ability or the Damage Reduction 2/- special ability. Either ability persists for a number of minutes equal to your potency.

**Primal Scream:** This range extends to a 20-foot radius and affects all within.

### Warp Rush

Strength

**Purchase Cost:** 4; **Strain DC:** 16; **Prerequisite:** Chaos Fuel; **Manifestation Time:** Attack action; Range: Personal; Area: 15 ft. emanation; **Duration:** 1 round/potency; **Saving Throw:** Fortitude negates (harmless)

You gather chaotic energy in the area and use it to augment the physical capabilities of your allies. When this ability is active, all of your allies within the area of effect gain a +2 natural bonus to Defense, Fast Healing (1), and a +2 legacy bonus to Strength and Constitution.

**Primal Scream:** The radius of the area of emanation is increased to 30-feet, rather than the standard 15-feet.

### Vital Infusion

Wisdom

**Purchase Cost:** 4; **Strain DC:** 16; **Prerequisite:** Chaos Fuel; **Manifestation Time:** Attack action; Range: Touch; **Target:** One creature; **Duration:** 1 round/potency; **Saving Throw:** Fortitude negates (harmless)

While this birthright is in effect, the target gains a base speed increase of 15 feet per round and gains +3 legacy bonus to both Constitution and Strength. If the target expends an Action Point, he also gains Fast Healing (2) for the duration of the birthright.

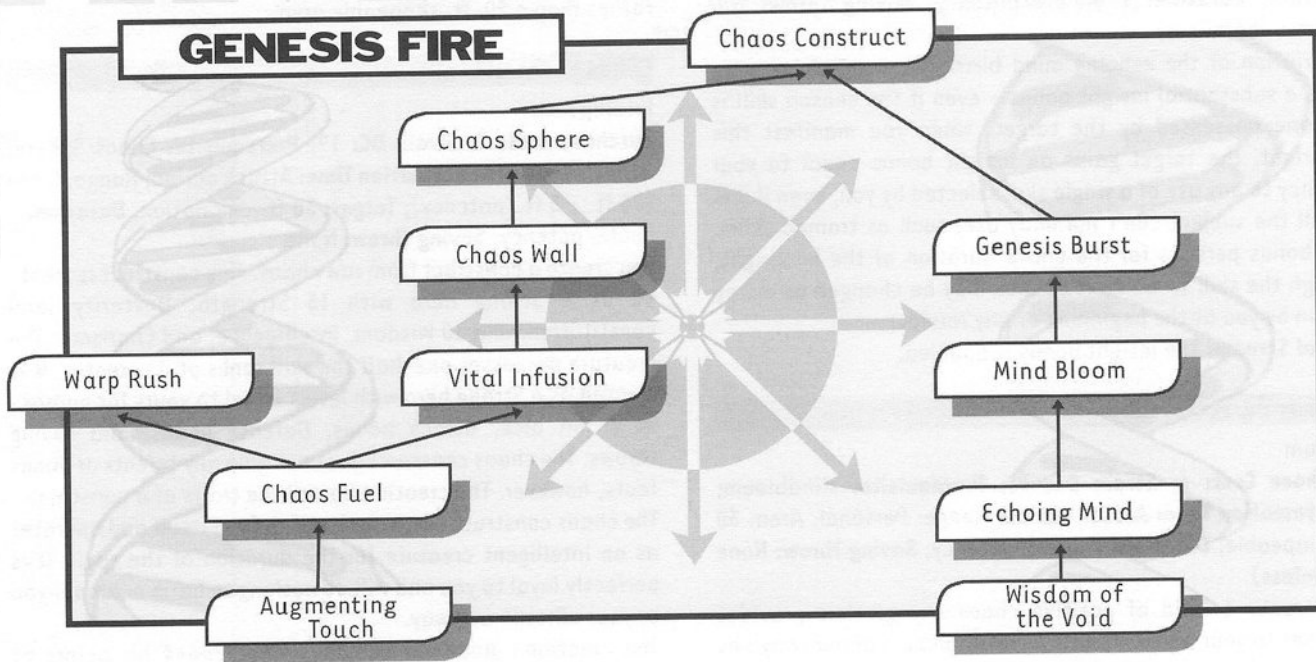
**Primal Scream:** The duration of this birthright is doubled.

### Chaos Wall

Constitution

**Purchase Cost:** 5; **Strain DC:** 17; **Prerequisite:** Vital Infusion; **Manifestation Time:** Attack action; Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./potency); Effect: Anchored plane of metal, up to one 5-ft. square + 1 ft./potency; **Duration:** 1 round/potency; **Saving Throw:** See text

You gather chaotic energy in the area and create a plane of black colored metal. The wall is 1 inch thick per potency. A chaos wall cannot form in an area occupied by physical objects or creatures. Its surface must be smooth and unbroken when created. The metal has a hardness of 1 and 3 hit points per inch



of thickness. If a creature tries to break through the wall with a single attack, the DC for the Strength check is 10 + potency. The wall disappears after the duration expires.

**Primal Scream:** Your wall has a hardness of 2 and 6 hit points per inch of thickness. The Strength check to break through increases to 15 + potency.

### Chaos Sphere

Intelligence

**Purchase Cost:** 6; **Strain DC:** 18; **Prerequisite:** Chaos Wall; **Manifestation Time:** Attack action; Range: 10 ft.; Area: 10-ft.-radius spherical emanation, centered on you; **Duration:** 1 round/potency; **Saving Throw:** None

Your skills at manipulating chaos expand to the point where you can create a field of chaotic energy that interferes with spells. You create a bubble of chaos that behaves identically to the spell minor globe of invulnerability.

**Primal Scream:** The sphere grows to 15-foot radius.

### Wisdom of the Void

Wisdom

**Purchase Cost:** 1; **Strain DC:** 13; **Prerequisite:** None; **Manifestation Time:** One minute; Range: Touch; **Target:** One person; **Duration:** 1 round/potency; **Saving Throw:** Will negates (harmless)

You know that chaos can reveal as well as conceal and by infusing the thoughts of the one you touch with threads of chaos, it is possible to discover much by seeming chance. When this ability is activated, the target receives a +4 insight bonus

to any skill checks made.

**Primal Scream:** The insight bonus increases to +6.

### Echoing Mind

Intelligence

**Purchase Cost:** 2; **Strain DC:** 14; **Prerequisite:** Wisdom of the Void; **Manifestation Time:** Attack action; Range: Touch; Area: Target; **Duration:** 1 round/potency; **Saving Throw:** Will negates (harmless)

You use the currents of the void to create a second mind that reverberates with the thoughts and skills of the target. While this birthright is active, the target gains an additional action each round. This action can only be used to use a specific skill, chosen by the target at the time this birthright is manifested. This action must be one that can be used in a single round and must not require the target to take a movement action.

On the first additional action taken as a result of this Birthright, the subject makes his additional skill check as normal. For each additional round, he suffers a cumulative -1 penalty to the skill checks made as a result of this Birthright. If this penalty is ever equal to the current ranks the target possesses in the skill, the ability ends immediately.

**Primal Scream:** The subject gains a +4 legacy bonus to the skill checks.

### Mindbloom

Wisdom

**Purchase Cost:** 4; **Strain DC:** 16; **Prerequisite:** Echoing Mind; **Manifestation Time:** Attack action; Range: Touch; Area: One

creature; **Duration:** 1 minute/potency; **Saving Throw:** Will negates (harmless)

A variation of the echoing mind birthright, mindbloom provides a substantial insight bonus – even if the chosen skill is not one possessed by the target. When you manifest this birthright, the target gains an insight bonus equal to your potency to any use of a single skill selected by you, even if it is a skill the subject can't normally use, such as trained skills. This bonus persists for the entire duration of the Birthright, though the skill to which it applies may be changed as a free action by you at the beginning of any round.

**Primal Scream:** The insight bonus is doubled.

### Genesis Burst

Wisdom

**Purchase Cost:** 6; **Strain DC:** 18; **Prerequisite:** Mindbloom; **Manifestation Time:** Attack action; **Range:** Personal; **Area:** 30 ft. shapeable; **Duration:** 1 round/potency; **Saving Throw:** None (harmless)

You create a field of positive chaos energy that provides bonuses to your allies. As long as this ability is active, any ally (as determined by you) within the area of effect receives the following benefits at the beginning of each round:

- 1d6 hit points of damage are healed per round
- +5 legacy bonus to all saving throws against Poisons, Diseases, or spells.
- +2 legacy bonus to all attack and damage rolls.

**Primal Scream:** The area of effect is a 50-ft shapeable area,

rather than a 30-ft. shapeable area.

### Chaos Construct

Intelligence

**Purchase Cost:** 7; **Strain DC:** 19; **Prerequisite:** Chaos Sphere, Genesis Burst; **Manifestation Time:** Attack action; **Range:** Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./potency); **Target:** 30 ft. emanation; **Duration:** 1 minute/potency; **Saving Throw:** None

You create a construct from raw chaos. This construct is treated as a Strong hero with 15 Strength, Dexterity, and Constitution, and 10 Wisdom, Intelligence, and Charisma. The creature possesses one-half the skill ranks of its creator. It is treated as a Strong hero with levels equal to yours for purposes of hit dice, attack bonus, Defense bonus, and saving throws. The chaos construct does not gain any talents or bonus feats, however. The creation has all the traits of a construct.

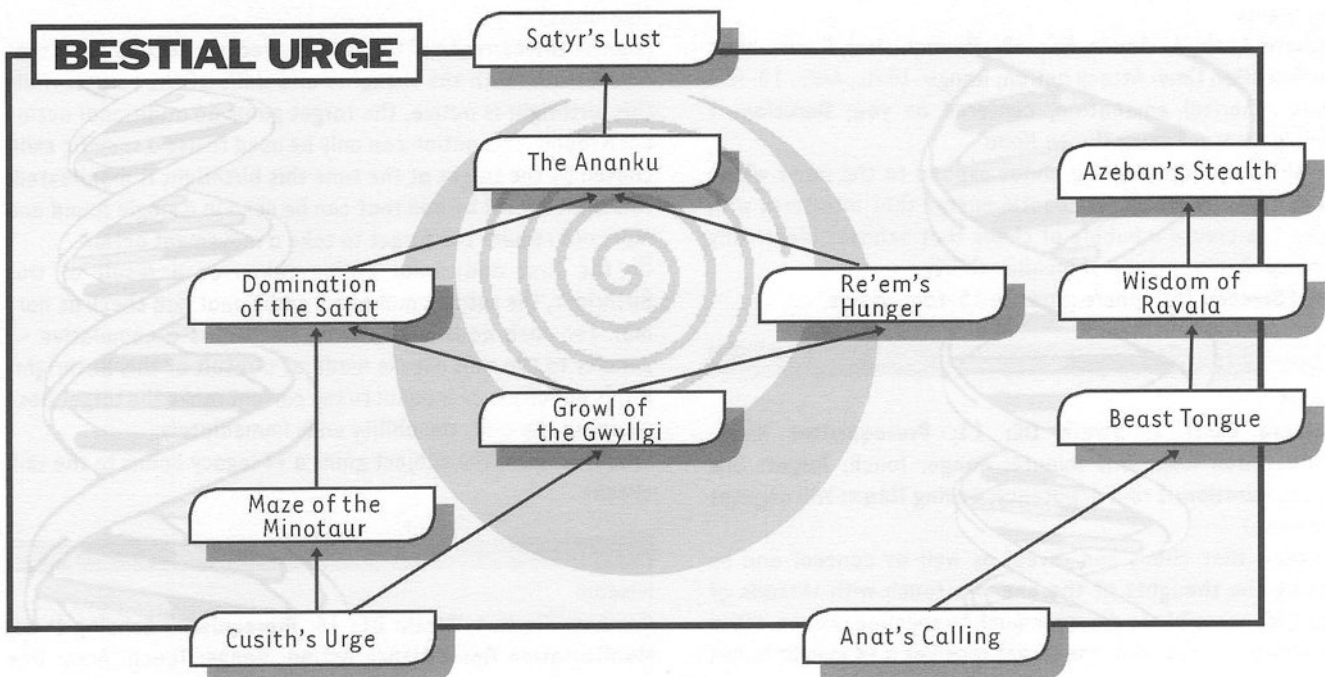
The chaos construct can attack and defend itself and operates as an intelligent creature for the duration of the spell. It is perfectly loyal to you and will do nothing to harm or hinder you or your allies in any way.

The creation's unarmed attacks inflict 2d6+4 hit points of lethal damage and have a critical range of 19-20/X2.

**Primal Scream:** The primal creation has Damage Reduction 5/-

### Genesis Fire Legendary Transformations

Instead of corroding as the Ash legendary transformations do, Genesis Fire transformations cause unexpected growths and uncontrolled expressions of chaos.



**Table 4-14: BESTIAL URGE LEGENDARY TRANSFORMATIONS**

Legendary Check	Result
1 - 4	The mind of the beast overcomes you and you suffer 4 points of Intelligence ability drain. (Severe - Permanent)
5 - 9	Your bestial nature is noticeably close to the surface and people find you untrustworthy. You suffer a penalty to all social skill checks equal to your BBB. (Major Flaw - Permanent)
10 - 16	For a month you suffer a -4 penalty to all Intelligence based skill checks. (Minor Flaw - Temporary)
17 - 20	No Legendary Transformation

### Wild Bloods

The Wild Bloods are known for their ability to take on the physical qualities of the beasts they feel so in tune with. Although the legends of the legacy's shapechanging skill are far in excess of their actual ability, they are still fearsome chimeras who can slip into the form of a few favored animals. But such physical manifestations of their lineage are merely the most obvious of their supernatural abilities. These cunning hunters can call upon the beast in all of us and coldly manipulate the urges we desperately attempt to suppress.

### Bestial Urge

These birthrights focus on the power of the bestial spirit, either to control others or to call upon the spirits found in nature. Those who master this tree find their power over the nature of others and the world around them increasing significantly, though often not in pleasant ways.

#### Cusith's Urge

Charisma [Compulsion, Mind-Affecting]

**Purchase Cost:** 1; **Strain DC:** 13; **Prerequisites:** None; **Manifestation Time:** Attack action; Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./potency); **Target:** One Medium-sized or smaller humanoid; **Duration:** 1 minute/potency; **Saving Throw:** Will save negates

This ability fills humans with a strong attraction to you, though not one that is easily defined. Those who would be sexually attracted to you are overwhelmed with lust, while those who would not be attracted to a member of your sex feel an overpowering sense of friendship. In either case, the result is the same - you and any of your allies receive a +2 legacy bonus to the use of the Bluff or Diplomacy skills against an affected subject. More importantly, the subject will not take a hostile action against you and will cease any hostilities unless the subject is again attacked.

**Primal Scream:** The bonus to Charisma related skill checks to incite base behavior receive a +4 legacy bonus.

#### Maze of the Minotaur

Charisma [Compulsion, Mind-Affecting]

**Purchase Cost:** 2; **Prerequisites:** Cusith's Urge; **Manifestation Time:** Attack action; Range: Touch; Area: 20-foot. radius sphere around the creature touched; **Duration:** 1

round/potency; **Saving Throw:** Will negates

This useful birthright merges the bestial and human natures of all those within its area of effect to create confusion. Those creatures caught in the area of effect that fail their will save are unable to take any action as their twin natures struggle for dominance. Creatures who are attacked receive an additional Will save to throw off the effects of this birthright, but are shaken while the birthright is in effect. You are unaffected, even if you remain or return to the area of effect.

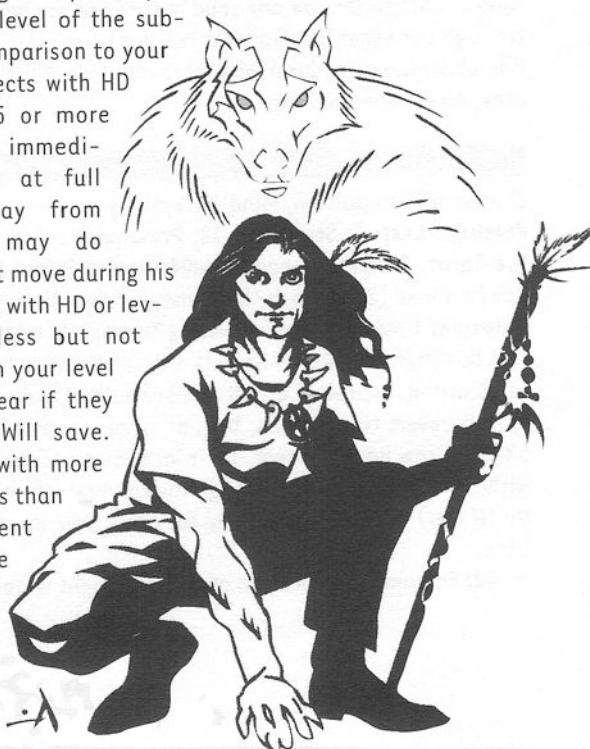
**Primal Scream:** The sphere becomes shapeable, allowing you to protect your allies from the confusing effect of the birthright.

#### Growl of the Gwyllgi

Charisma [Fear, Mind-Affecting]

**Purchase Cost:** 3; **Strain DC:** 14; **Prerequisites:** Cusith's Urge; **Manifestation Time:** Free action; Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./potency); **Target:** 1d4 creatures, no two of which can be more than 20 ft. apart; **Duration:** 1 round/potency; **Saving Throw:** Will negates

This power is unleashed with a powerful, rumbling growl that fills those who can hear it with crushing dread. The effects of this birthright depend upon the HD or level of the subjects in comparison to your level. Subjects with HD or levels 5 or more below you immediately flee at full speed away from you. He may do nothing but move during his turn. Those with HD or levels 4 or less but not higher than your level cower in fear if they fail their Will save. Creatures with more HD or levels than your current level are shaken for a sin-



gle round. Targets who succeed at their Will save are unaffected by the Grawl.

**Primal Scream:** Add five to your level for purposes of determining the effects of this Birthright, only.

#### Domination of the Safat

Charisma [Compulsion, Mind-Affecting, Language-Dependant]

**Purchase Cost:** 4; **Strain DC:** 16; **Prerequisites:** Grawl of the Gwyllgi, Maze of the Minotaur; **Manifestation Time:** Full round action; Range: Close (20 ft. + 5 ft./potency); **Target:** One creature; **Duration:** 1 round/potency (D); **Saving Throw:** Will negates

Your words become powerful and call to the primal beast within the target creature. You are able to force that creature to attack another creature (who must also be in the range of this birthright) for the duration of the ability.

**Primal Scream:** You are able to draw out the fury of the beast in your target, who receives a +2 bonus to all attack and damage rolls they make while under your domination.

#### Re'em's Hunger

Charisma [Compulsion, Mind-Affecting]

**Purchase Cost:** 4; **Strain DC:** 16; **Prerequisites:** Grawl of the Gwyllgi; **Manifestation Time:** Full round action; Range: Personal; Area: 20 ft. emanation; **Duration:** 1 round/potency (D); **Saving Throw:** Will negates

Creatures within the burst radius who fail their save are immediately consumed by a powerful hunger that drives them into frenzy. These creatures will attempt to satisfy their hunger in any way possible, and will continue to eat until the effects of the birthright end. If these creatures are stopped from pursuing food, they will attack those who interfere with the pursuit. Food is categorized as any food substance, including animals (though not other intelligent creatures).

**Primal Scream:** The duration of this ability is measured in minutes, rather than rounds.

#### The Ananku

Charisma [Compulsion, Mind-Affecting]

**Purchase Cost:** 6; **Strain DC:** 18; **Prerequisites:** Domination of the Safat, Re'em's Hunger; **Manifestation Time:** One minute; Range: Close (25 ft. +5 ft/1 potency); Area: 20 ft. emanation; **Duration:** 1 round/potency; **Saving Throw:** Will negates

This birthright awakens the dark side of the beast in all creatures within its area of effect. Those who fail their save immediately revert to a vicious, bestial state in which they attack all who draw near to them. Their immediate targets are those within the area of effect, though the survivor of the initial battle (if any) will begin searching for other prey as soon as possible.

**Primal Scream:** The duration of this birthright is doubled.

#### Satyr's Lust

Charisma

**Purchase Cost:** 7; **Strain DC:** 19; **Prerequisites:** The Ananku; **Manifestation Time:** Attack action; Range: Close (25 ft. + 5ft/potency); Area: 30 ft. burst; **Duration:** Instantaneous; **Saving Throw:** Will partial

While this birthright is active, you are able to seize control of the beast spirit within a character and use it to destroy their very essence. By assaulting the will of a target with his own bestial urges, you are able to twist aside the veneer of civilization to lay bare the beast within.

Those caught within the burst radius of this birthright feel the animal spirits swarming through them, trying to dredge up ancient memories and haunted pasts. Targets who fail their Will save immediately suffer a number of points of temporary Wisdom damage equal to your potency. Those who succeed at their save suffer one-half your potency in temporary damage to their Wisdom score. This effective damage disappears once the birthright ends.

**Primal Scream:** The DC of the Will save to resist the effects of this birthright is increased by 5.

#### Anat's Calling

Wisdom [Compulsion, Mind-Affecting]

**Purchase Cost:** 1; **Strain DC:** 13; **Prerequisites:** None; **Manifestation Time:** One minute; Range: See below; Effect: Animals summoned of total HD no greater than 2 times your potency; **Duration:** 1 minute/potency; **Saving Throw:** None

The power of your bestial spirit can be enough to sway the creatures of the wild to aid you. When you exert this ability, animals flock to you, arriving over the course of a minute until the total HD of all gathered animals is equal to 2 times your potency but no single animal can have HD higher than your potency. These animals will fight to protect you and can follow simple orders (i.e. Keep that man from following me!").

Only animals within the general area are called and you have no control of what type of animals come to your call. It normally takes a few rounds for the first animals to show up but they all arrive within three rounds at the longest.

**Primal Scream:** The animals you call are so inspired to do your bidding they receive a +2 circumstance bonus to all attack rolls, damage rolls, and skill checks.

#### Beast Tongue

Wisdom [Compulsion, Mind-Affecting]

**Purchase Cost:** 3; **Strain DC:** 15; **Prerequisites:** Anat's Calling; **Manifestation Time:** Attack action; Range: Close (20 ft. + 5 ft./potency); **Target:** One animal; **Duration:** 1 minute/potency (D); **Saving Throw:** None

While this birthright is active, you may communicate flawlessly with any one animal that you can see and that is within range at the time you manifest the birthright. Once the communion begins, you are able to maintain perfect communica-

**Table 4-15: CHIMERA LEGENDARY TRANSFORMATIONS**

Legendary Check	Result
1 - 4	Regardless of damage reduction, you suffer full damage from weapons forged of silver, silver bullets, or bolts. In addition, you are allergic to silver and suffer a -6 penalty to all checks while touching the metal. (Severe - Permanent)
5 - 9	Your genetic connection to the mythical creatures of the past somehow affects your mind. You have a -2 penalty to all skill checks to use, operate, repair, disarm, or manipulate modern technological devices. (Major Flaw - Permanent)
10 - 16	You are afflicted with arsonphobia, an unreasoning phobia of fire. Flames bigger than the flame from a match or cigarette lighter can send you into a panic. If you fail a Will save (DC 10 + potency) you flee from the source as fast as you are able. If you are unable to flee, you take a -2 morale penalty on attack rolls, weapon damage rolls, and saving throws. (Minor Flaw - Permanent)
17 - 20	No Legendary Transformation

tion with the animal until the end of the duration, even if the animal moves beyond your sight. Animals are able to communicate what they see and hear at the time they see and hear it, but their memory is very hazy when it comes to events more than a few minutes in the past. An owl may remember a group of people passing it a few hours before, but will not remember how many there were or any other details.

The animal will also follow simple, non-dangerous directions. An animal summoned as a result of Anat's Calling, however, will follow all of its instructions without question.

**Primal Scream:** The duration of this ability is doubled.

### Wisdom of Ravola

Wisdom

**Purchase Cost:** 4; **Strain DC:** 16; **Prerequisites:** Beast Tongue; **Manifestation Time:** One minute; Range: Close (20 ft. + 5 ft./potency); **Target:** You; **Duration:** 1 minute/potency (D)

Your senses become one with the spirits of the animals around you, both those living and those who have passed on. This provides you with a 360-degree arc of vision, but also allows you to move your senses up to 25 ft. + 5ft/potency away from your current location. You may not move them through walls or other barriers, as you are actually commanding the spirit of an animal to take your senses to the location you desire. As long as a mouse could pass through a hole in a barrier, however, you can guide your senses through, as well.

While using this birthright, you are still aware of your own point of view and may act normally with a successful Concentration skill check.

**Primal Scream:** Your senses are contacted by a greater spirit of the animal world, one that may move through barriers less than 1 ft. thick as if they were not there at all.

### Azeban's Stealth

Wisdom

**Purchase Cost:** 6; **Strain DC:** 18; **Prerequisites:** Wisdom of Ravola; **Manifestation Time:** 1 minute; Range: Medium (100 ft. + 10

ft./potency); **Target:** One animal; **Duration:** 1 minute/potency (D); **Saving Throw:** None

After mastering the wisdom of ravola, you discovered a way to transfer your entire spirit into the body of an animal. Your current body becomes a lifeless husk when this power is used, and quickly becomes dust, your clothing and equipment left behind. You now control the animal form and may use it as you see fit. At the end of this birthright's duration, however, your spirit is immediately ejected from the animal (appearing adjacent to the animal's current location) and a new body is formed for you, identical in every way (including spell effects, poisons, or diseases) to the body you left behind.

If the animal is killed while you are within its spirit, you die as well. **Primal Scream:** Your new body is completely free of diseases, poisons, or magical effects when it is reconstructed. In addition, if the animal you are possessing is killed, you make a Will saving throw (DC 15). If successful, you are ejected as though the duration of the birthright ended.

### Bestial Urge Legendary Transformations

The feral nature of the Wild Blood is brought forth from legendary transformations gained by the use of Bestial Urge birthrights. They have more trouble keeping the beast within them calm and even display strange behavioral quirks associated with the beasts they call brother.

### Chimera

Those who learn the birthrights of this path are capable of exhibiting the traits of magical beasts. These Wild Bloods can manifest the abilities and even powers of creatures of legend. The supernatural abilities bestowed by the use of these birthrights certainly affected mankind in days long past. As these inheritors gain mastery over their own flesh, the legendary spirit grows so powerful it can be clearly seen by others.

### Blood of the Unicorn

Constitution

**Purchase Cost:** 1; **Strain DC:** 13; **Prerequisites:** None; **Manifestation Time:** Full round action; Range: Personal; **Target:** You; **Duration:** 1 round/potency

By calling upon the ancient spirits of the wilderness, you are able to force your body to heal itself more rapidly than would otherwise be possible. Though this will not repair the damage caused by poisons or diseases, it is quite capable of stitching together even mortal wounds, given time.

While this ability is active, your body heals 1d4 hit points of damage each round.

**Primal Scream:** You heal 1d6 hit points per round, rather than 1d4 hit points each round.

### Coils of the Leviathan

Strength

**Purchase Cost:** 3; **Strain DC:** 15; **Prerequisites:** Blood of the Unicorn; **Manifestation Time:** One attack action; Range: Close (20 ft. + 5 ft./potency); **Target:** You; **Duration:** 1 round/potency

When activated, this birthright causes two tentacles of black, scaly flesh to burst from your body. These tentacles have the same Strength bonus as you do. You may use these tentacles to make grapple attacks on all those within reach and you

threaten the area within reach as well. This birthright does not allow you to make more attacks in a round than you normally could.

**Primal Scream:** The Strength score of the tentacles is 4 higher than your Strength score for purposes of determining damage. You have the Improved Grapple feat while using these tentacles. In addition, you are considered one size category larger for purposes of resolving grappling attacks.

### Likeness of the Legendary Beast

Dexterity

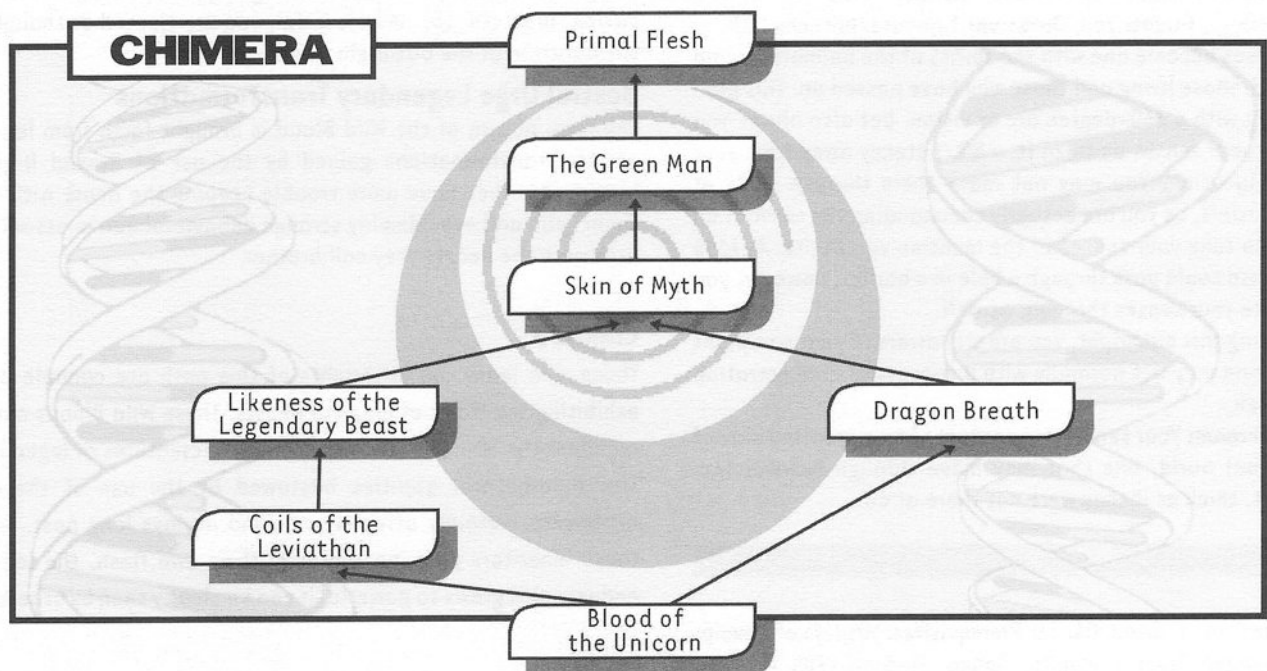
**Purchase Cost:** 4; **Strain DC:** 16; **Prerequisites:** Coils of the Leviathan; **Manifestation Time:** Full round action; Range: Personal; **Target:** You; **Duration:** 1 round/potency; When you manifest this birthright you may express a single species trait from a magical beast, with HD no more than 2 times your potency. You choose the species trait you emulate at the time you manifest the birthright.

**Primal Scream:** You may choose from magical beasts with HD no more than 3 times your potency.

### Dragon Breath

Wisdom [Fire]

**Purchase Cost:** 4; **Strain DC:** 15; **Prerequisites:** Blood of the Unicorn; **Manifestation Time:** Attack action; Range: Close (20



ft. + 5 ft./potency); Area: Other; **Duration:** Instantaneous;

**Saving Throw:** Reflex half

You breathe a 20 ft. + 5 ft./potency long, 5-foot wide line of fire. Any creature in the line of fire takes 1d10 + potency in damage, or half if a Reflex save succeeds.

**Primal Scream:** Your breath weapon deals 2d10 + potency in damage

### Skin of the Myth

Dexterity

**Purchase Cost:** 5; **Strain DC:** 17; **Prerequisites:** Dragon Breath, Likeness of the Legendary Beast; **Manifestation Time:** Full round action; Range: Personal; **Target:** You; **Duration:** 1 minute/potency

You are able to take on a specific form of a magical beast of hit dice no greater than your potency. Whenever you gain this birthright, you must choose which magical beast's form you can adopt. While in this form, you gain all abilities of the magical beast, as well as any skills the magical beast possesses which you do not, or for which your skill total, including bonuses, is less than the bonus of the magical beast.

You may purchase this birthright multiple times. Each time a new magical beast is chosen.

**Primal Scream:** You gain a +4 natural bonus to both Strength and Dexterity while in this form and you add your potency to massive damage threshold.

### The Green Man

Wisdom [Compulsion, Mind-Affecting]

**Purchase Cost:** 8; **Strain DC:** 20; **Prerequisites:** Skin of Myth; **Manifestation Time:** One minute; Range: Personal; Area: 20-foot radius emanation from you; **Duration:** 1 minute/potency; **Saving Throw:** Will partial

You become the avatar of the wild, the Green Man. The exact appearance of the Green Man changes from titan to titan, but all are hybrid creatures combining various animal and legendary beast traits with a vaguely humanoid shape. The Green Man is inimical to civilization, and his very presence unleashes the spirits of the beasts in the area and ignites the passions of those around him.

You gain a +4 natural bonus to Strength, Dexterity, Constitution, and Charisma. As such, your hit points temporarily increase by 4 per level and your massive damage threshold increases by 4. In addition, your natural attacks cause 4d6 hit points of slashing damage (plus Strength modifier) and you

gain the benefits of one manifestation of trait of the legendary beast.

Any creature within 20-feet of the Green Man must immediately make a Will save or become obeisant to the Green Man, behaving as though under the effects of lesser domination. Those who succeed at their Will Save are still affected by the Green Man's presence and become lustful as their inner beast is released. They behave as though under the effects of attraction, with the attraction being towards other people in the area. Many immediately toss off their clothing and begin acting like animals, running wild and rutting loudly. Though those who succeed at their Will Save do not become violent, they do not respond in a civilized fashion for the duration of this birthright.

The touch of the Green Man is even more dangerous. Any human touched by the Green Man must succeed at a Will save or be transformed into an animal of 5 HD or less for the duration of the birthright. Any transformed creature becomes immediately obedient to the Green Man.

**Primal Scream:** The range of your affect on others increases to 50-feet and the duration increases to one hour.

### Primal Flesh

Strength

**Purchase Cost:** 10; **Strain DC:** 22; **Prerequisites:** Skin of the Myth; **Manifestation Time:** Full round action; Range: Personal; **Target:** You; **Duration:** 1 round/potency

You may take the form of any magical beast of 20 HD or less. You gain all abilities of this magical beast, and any skills it possesses for which you either have no bonus or have a lower bonus than the magical beast.

**Primal Scream:** This version of the Primal Flesh ability allows you to adopt the form of an aberration or a magical beast, at your discretion.

### Chimera Legendary Transformations

The legendary transformations caused by the Chimera birthrights are possibly the strangest of any Wild Blood transformations. The titan gains otherworldly features and weaknesses associated with the beasts and creatures of myth.

### Wild Flesh

This birthright tree involves changing the shape of the titan's body as he calls upon the power of his lineage. Though most of the alterations are temporary in nature, a titan who overuses

**Table 4-16: WILD FLESH LEGENDARY TRANSFORMATIONS**

Legendary Check	Result
1 - 4	Your hands transform and grow pads and small natural claws of the animal you feel most close to. You suffer a -6 legacy penalty to any skill checks that require fine dexterity, such as Repair, most Craft skills, Drive, Forgery, Sleight of Hand, and any other the GM feels is appropriate. (Severe - Permanent)
5 - 9	For two months your facial bones and muscles change painfully into a mixed combination between the animal of your choice and your human self. Such a noticeable change is nearly impossible to conceal. You can't wear gas masks, night vision goggles, or similar devices. You suffer a -6 legacy penalty on all Bluff, Diplomacy skill checks, and appropriate Charisma checks. (Major Flaw - Temporary)
10 - 16	When you manifest a birthright, an apparition of your animal nature superimposes itself on you, alerting others of your manifestation. You may spend an action point to suppress this display. (Minor Flaw - Permanent)
17 - 20	No Legendary Transformation

the birthrights within this tree may find himself becoming more bestial, eventually transforming entirely to resemble one of the ancient mythical beasts.

**Senses of the Beast**

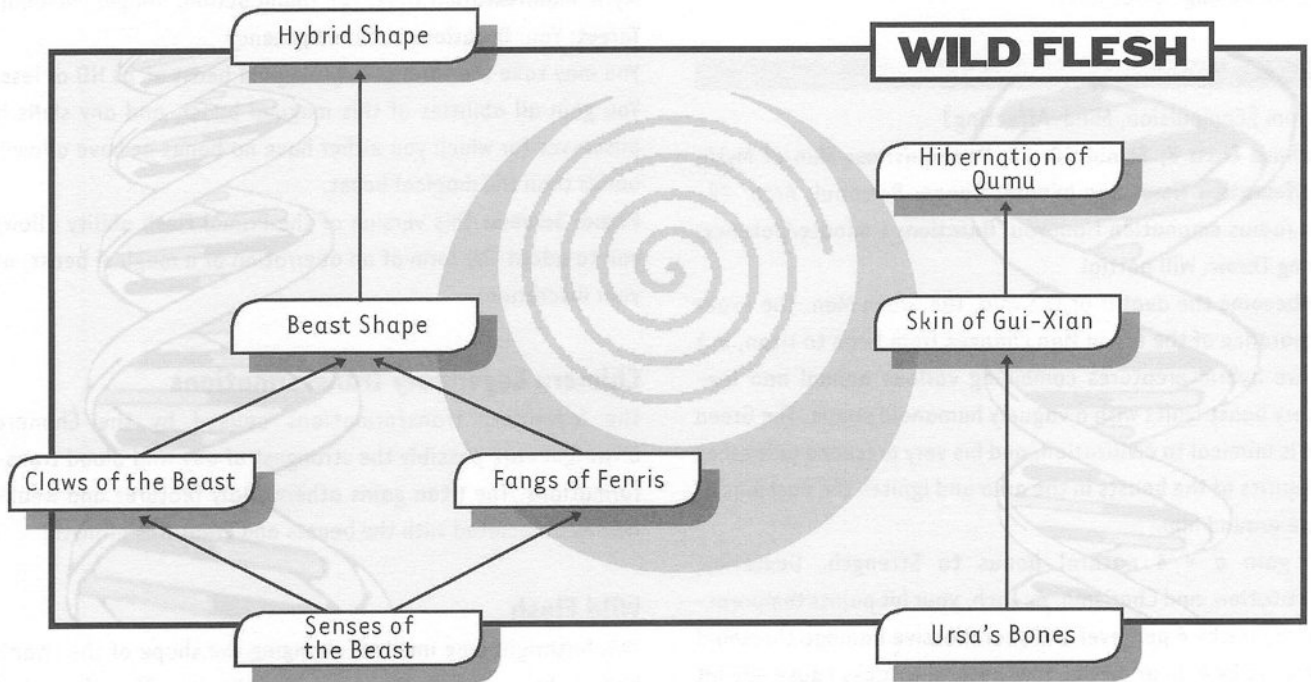
Wisdom

**Purchase Cost:** 1; **Strain DC:** 13; **Prerequisites:** None; **Manifestation Time:** Attack action; Range: Personal; **Target:**

You; **Duration:** 1 round/potency (D)

You take on the enhanced senses of the beasts your bloodline is so in tune with. You gain the low-light (60 feet) and scent abilities. (see d20 Modern Roleplaying Game™, Chapter Eight: Friends and Foes, Common Special Qualities)

**Primal Scream:** You gain Blindsight (60 feet) and a legacy bonus equal to your potency on all perception type checks.



## Claws of the Beast

Dexterity

**Purchase Cost:** 2; **Strain DC:** 14; **Prerequisites:** Senses of the Beast; **Manifestation Time:** Attack action; Range: Personal; **Target:** You; **Duration:** 1 round/potency (D)

When this birthright is activated, your fingers and toenails grow thick and sharp, ready for rending the flesh of your foes. Your unarmed attacks are now considered armed and cause 1d6 hit points of lethal slashing damage (plus Strength modifier), rather than the standard nonlethal damage caused by unarmed attacks. This damage increases to 2d6 hit points of lethal damage when you have a potency of 6 and 3d6 hit points of lethal damage at potency 10. Your unarmed attacks have a critical hit range of 19-20/X2.

**Primal Scream:** Damage increases one die type, such as from 1d6 to 1d8, and the critical hit range increases to 18-20/X2.

## Fangs of Fenris

Strength

**Purchase Cost:** 2; **Strain DC:** 14; **Prerequisites:**

Senses of the Beast; **Manifestation Time:** Attack action; Range: Personal; **Target:** You; **Duration:** 1 round/potency

Your face takes on a lupine, ursine, eusuchian, or the shape of any other massively jawed animal and your teeth become huge incisors capable of punching through armor and snapping bones. While this birthright is active, you gain a natural bite attack that counts as an armed strike. This attack causes 2d6 hit points of damage (plus Strength modifier) and has a critical threat range of 18-20/X2.

**Primal Scream:** Your bite now does 4d6 hit points of damage (plus Strength modifier) and you gain the improved grab special quality.

## Beast Shape

Dexterity

**Purchase Cost:** 3; **Strain DC:** 15; **Prerequisites:** Claws of the Beast, Fangs of Fenris; **Manifestation Time:** Full round action; Range: Personal; **Target:** You; **Duration:** 1

minute/potency (D)

Activating this birthright transforms your body into that of a single type of animal (chosen at the time this birthright is gained), of large size or smaller. You gain all natural abilities of the animal form and all skills possessed by the animal form, unless your skills are greater than those possessed by the animal form. You retain your consciousness while in the new animal form.

This birthright may be purchased multiple times. Each time a new animal is chosen.

**Primal Scream:** You may take on the form of any animal you see when activating this power, provided it is of no greater than large size.

## Hybrid Shape

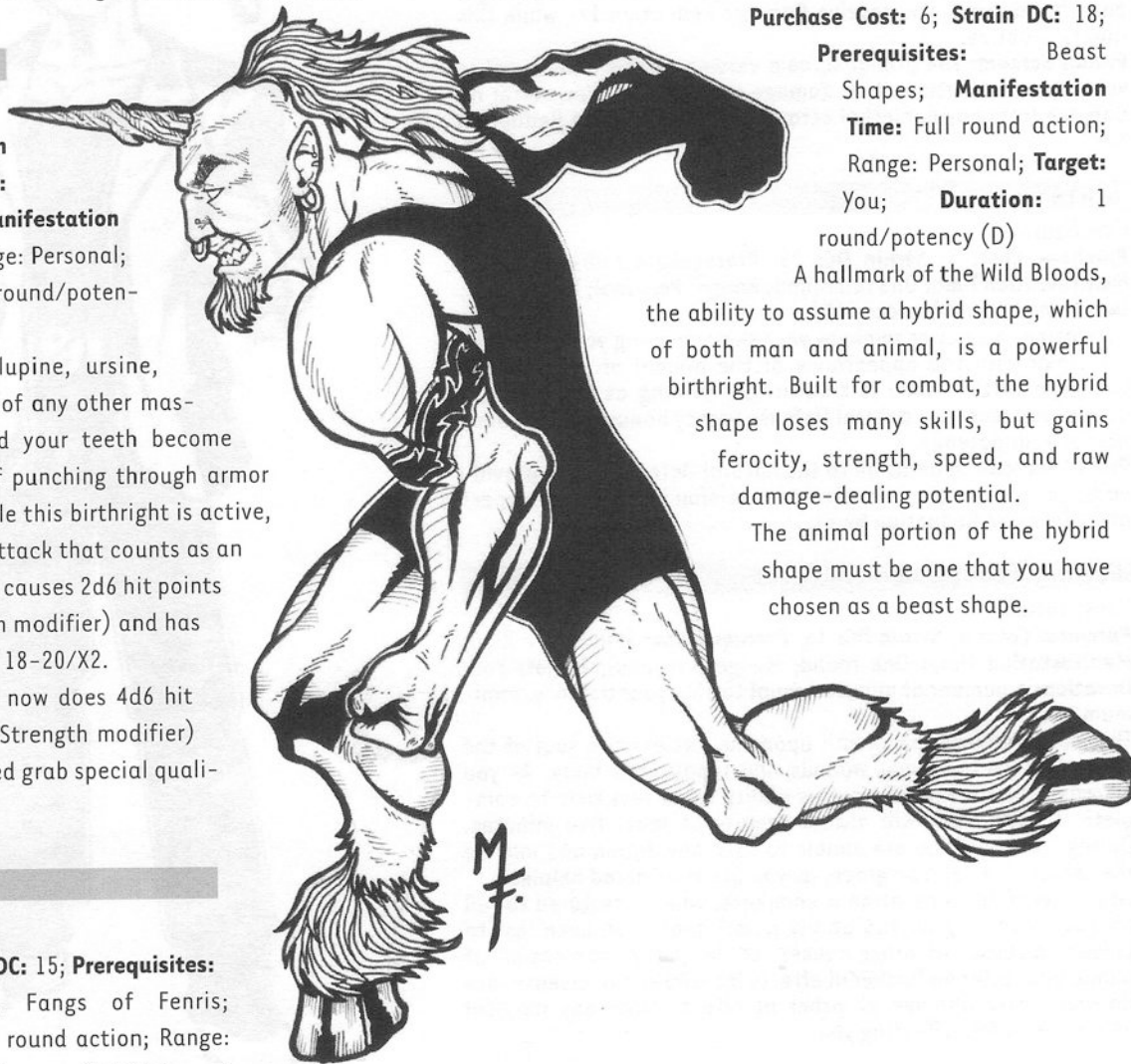
Dexterity

**Purchase Cost:** 6; **Strain DC:** 18;

**Prerequisites:** Beast Shapes; **Manifestation Time:** Full round action; Range: Personal; **Target:** You; **Duration:** 1 round/potency (D)

A hallmark of the Wild Bloods, the ability to assume a hybrid shape, which of both man and animal, is a powerful birthright. Built for combat, the hybrid shape loses many skills, but gains ferocity, strength, speed, and raw damage-dealing potential.

The animal portion of the hybrid shape must be one that you have chosen as a beast shape.



While in hybrid shape, a wild blood may use only the following **Skills:** Balance, Climb, Escape Artist, Jump, Spot, Swim, and Tumble. Other skills require too much concentration and fine control, both of which are greatly lacking in the hybrid shape.

While in hybrid shape, you gain a +6 natural bonus to your Strength, a +4 natural bonus to your Dexterity, and your massive damage threshold increases by your potency. You also receive the benefits of claws of the beast and fangs of fennis.

**Primal Scream:** Increase the Strength bonus to +8, the bonus to Dexterity to +6, the massive damage threshold bonus to 2 times your potency.

### Ursa's Bones

Constitution

**Purchase Cost:** 1; **Strain DC:** 13; **Prerequisites:** None; **Strain DC:** 13; **Manifestation Time:** Full round action; Range: Personal; **Target:** You; **Duration:** 1 minute/potency

When this power is active, your body is far more resistant to damage than is otherwise possible. Your Constitution is considered to have a +4 bonus for the purposes of resisting nonlethal damage, only. In addition, you receive Damage Reduction 1/- while this ability is active.

**Primal Scream:** The primal scream version of this ability makes you even more resistant to damage than normal. You suffer no damage from any nonlethal attack and have Damage Reduction 3/-.

### Skin of Gui Xian

Constitution

**Purchase Cost:** 3; **Strain DC:** 15; **Prerequisites:** Ursa's Bones; **Manifestation Time:** One full round; Range: Personal; **Target:** You; **Duration:** 1 round/potency (D)

Activating this power thickens your skin, covering you in a natural armor with the appearance of the animal of your choice, though a turtle's shell is traditional. As long as the power is active, you receive a natural Defense legacy bonus equal to one-half of your potency.

**Primal Scream:** In addition to the natural Defense bonus provided by this power, the primal scream version increases any operating Damage Reduction by +1.

### Hibernation of Qumu

Constitution

**Purchase Cost:** 4; **Strain DC:** 16; **Prerequisites:** Skin of Gui Xian; **Manifestation Time:** One round; Range: Personal; **Target:** You; **Duration:** A number of minutes equal to 15 - your potency, minimum of 5

This ability allows you to call upon the ancient fire soul of the bear spirit to heal your wounds and repair your body. As you increase in personal power, this ability takes less time to complete its work, but will always require at least five minutes. During this time, you are unable to take any action and may be the target of a coup de grace, as you are considered helpless.

When this ability's duration is complete, you are restored to full hit points and regain 1d6 ability points that have been lost to poison, disease, or other causes. While in the hibernation of qumu, you suffer no further ill effects from poison or disease, nor do you suffer damage or other ill effects from any magical effects currently affecting you.

When you wake from the hibernation of qumu, you are allowed a new saving throw against any diseases, poisons, or other effects that were affecting you at the time you entered the hibernation. You receive a +4 legacy bonus to this save which, if successful, immediately halts any further detriments from that effect.

**Primal Scream:** When you emerge from the hibernation of qumu, all detrimental spells, poisons, or diseases are removed from your system and no longer affect you.

### Wild Flesh Legendary Transformations

The beast harbored in the souls of the Wild Blood expresses itself in ways civilized people find disturbing. At the extreme, the Wild Blood permanently takes on the bestial qualities of the animals he associates most closely with.



# MAGIC

chapter five



This chapter explains how magic works in Dark Inheritance, including the use of foci. In addition to providing some new spells, it also gives complete rules for relics. Relics in Dark Inheritance are potent collections of items to which one or more people can bind themselves. The powers these relics bestow depend entirely upon the levels of those bound to the items, growing in power with the characters.

### **The Fifth Force**

The amazing discoveries made in the short time since the Rip occurred are too many to list, for the ruins embedded into the city of Jerusalem were not empty. One discovery that broke the news headlines only recently was that of a new force, what scientists are calling "an entirely new type of energy." Physicists studying the eight metal bars found in post-Rip Jerusalem discovered that all but one vibrated at slightly different frequencies, yet were composed in an identical fashion of identical

## **MAGIC**

alloys. It was an enigma that the scientist thought would take years, perhaps decades to unravel. But an accident provided an amazing, possibly world-shattering insight.

The one rod that did not vibrate was accidentally dropped by a technician while moving it from a filmless radiography system. But instead of falling to the floor, the bar remained at exactly the same position it was in when dropped, hovering in mid-air. Stunned, the technicians hurriedly investigated the event. Readings indicated that the floating bar was now vibrating at a unique frequency in comparison to the other cylinders. The object gave off no electromagnetic energy, nor was its hovering caused by any other discernible forces. The bar was easily moved, but wherever it was released, it remained. Somehow it was defying gravity, but did so using some force not yet discovered by modern scientists.

This accidental discovery is being hailed, unsurprisingly, as a revolutionary finding. Physicists are stymied, and think the rod must somehow be manipulating a "fifth force" to cause the effect. The hunt is now on to find more artifacts, and researchers are attempting to use the cylinders themselves to qualify and quantify the new force.

Unbeknownst to the scientists, however, there are already people on Earth who know full well what the rods are composed of and what it is they are supposed to do.

### **Nature of Magic**

The mystery of the power ancient cultures called "magic" or "sorcery" is in fact a precise and scientific manipulation of this fifth universal force. Scientists have long believed that the universe is composed of layers of dimensions, the majority of them undetectable by human senses. The force of magic is really the result of careful manipulations of an extra-



dimensional plane of existence. This dimension is called the Ethereal Plane, a place accessible to all intelligent creatures, as it seems to resonate with the will of a mystical practitioner. The focus of a "will-worker's" intent is accomplished by ritual or incantation. Concentration and determination are required to cast spells. But a strong will and occult knowledge, provided by certain advanced classes and prestige classes, are not the only tools needed to create these apparently supernatural effects.

The Ethereal Plane lies at a further distance, in one sense (time and space are difficult to relate in terms of planar relationships), from Earth than it does from the Otherworld. This is why materials attuned to the Ethereal Plane are more common on the Otherworld, and also why so many magical creatures have evolved there. Mystically active materials may be metals (adamant and orichalcum), plants, minerals (gems and crystals), and even specialized glands within magically adapted or evolved beasts. Harvesting these materials can be difficult, as one must first identify the substance and then extract it. Identifying a possible source of magical energy or a magically sensitive or active material requires a Spellcraft check (DC 20 or higher, at GM's discretion). After the material has been identified, it still must be gathered, whether that means ore must be mined or plant fibers harvested, etc. This task may require further skill checks or specialized machinery.

### Magical Foci

Specialized tools are necessary to influence the Ethereal Plane. Initiates (see "New Advanced Classes" in Chapter Three for more information on foci) call these objects foci (or, alternately, in some cultures, fetishes or talismans). The manufacture of these magical tools requires the use of materials that are in tune with the Ethereal Plane. Such material does not exist naturally on earth, which is one the primary reasons magic has been so rare on Earth. Those foci crafted by ancient sorcerers used alien material that was handed down from the time when the two worlds were connected or were artifact talismans found amidst the wreckage of the Lost Age.

Foci are rated in levels, from 1 to 5. This number denotes the highest level of spell that can be cast with that focus, as well as determining, as a function of the focus's physical size, the number of spell levels that can be imbued into it (see the Initiate advanced class in Chapter Three for more detailed information on using foci). Foci with levels above 4 are extremely rare, nearly unique, although some knowledgeable in the magical arts speculate that powerful foci of level 6 and even higher might exist as artifacts from the Lost Age or alternate worlds. They are examples of eldritch engineering unseen among human sorcerers in recorded history. Foci can be found in museums, temples, ancient tombs, and among the belongings of mystical orders and mystics. Magicians are deadly serious when it comes to their foci. Without them, they are unable to incant even the most minor cantrip.

The vast majority of foci available on Earth are of level 1 or 2,

"low-tech" examples of magical tools. Lost within the ruins of Jerusalem, hidden in cryptic vaults, and in the control of magical societies such as the Promethean Order are foci of far more potent power, devices that rival the more technological tools of our world. Various Otherworld civilizations have crafted more advanced tools that will be explored in future products, along with rules for creating foci.

### FX in Dark Inheritance

A Dark Inheritance campaign uses the spells and magic items from the d20 Modern Roleplaying Game™, Chapter Ten: FX Abilities, but there are two minor changes to FX that GMs should be aware of:

- First, spell components are not required or used in Dark Inheritance. Some casters must have a special object called a focus (see "Magical Foci," below), while others may ignore the standard d20 Modern™ material component requirements altogether. Spell components are still listed for each new spell in this chapter, but only so that Game Masters can use the spells provided here in other settings that do use spell components.
- Second, there is no distinction between divine and arcane magic in Dark Inheritance. Magic is magic, and all spells are cast by one's manipulation of the Ethereal Plane. This does not mean, however, that all spellcasters can cast all of the spells from among both the arcane and the divine spell lists. While a few are able to choose freely from any spell list, most advanced classes allow the spellcaster to choose from only the arcane spell list or the divine spell list, or from some subset of the two. This is a matter of style, not source. Arcane/divine designations are given for each new spell in this chapter, but only so that Game Masters can use the spells provided here in other settings that do require that distinction.

### New Spells

All of the spells presented in the d20 Modern Roleplaying Game™ can be used in a Dark Inheritance campaign. Below are a few new spells that blend the technology of the modern world with magic.

#### Don't I know you?

Enchantment [Mind-Affecting]

**Level:** Arcane 4; **Components:** V, S, M; **Casting Time:** Combat action; **Range:** Touch; **Target:** All creatures in a 20-ft. radius; **Duration:** 10 minutes/level (D); **Saving Throw:** Will negates; **Spell Resistance:** No

This spell causes you or the one you touch to appear to onlookers as someone they know and can trust. If a character is cur-

rently being threatened or attacked the targets receive a +5 bonus to their Will save to resist the spell's effect. The spell does not allow you to control those affected or give the recipient of the spell any special knowledge. Those who fail their saving throw perceive your words and actions in the most favorable ways, but you must beat a subject in an opposed Charisma check to convince him to do anything he would not normally do for a trusted friend. You may not retry this opposed Charisma check if you fail. Any suicidal requests cause the spell to fail as does threatening a person under the spell's effect.

Material Component: An expired driver's license or other form of ID.

### Freedom of Information

Divination

**Level:** Arcane 3, Divine 3; **Components:** V, S, M; **Casting Time:** Attack action; **Range:** Touch; **Target:** One living creature; **Duration:** See text; **Saving Throw:** Will negates; **Spell Resistance:** Yes

You gain common information about a single living creature. This information is the current legal information about the subject and thus can reveal those who are pretending to be someone they are not. If the person has legally changed his or her name, this spell provides you with information about the new name, but not the previous legal name. You gain the following information about the next living creature you touch. Legal name, birth date, current address, driver's license number (if applicable), social security number (or other common identification code), and credit history score.

Material Component: Any piece of personal identification.

### Gremlin

Transmutation

**Level:** Arcane 3; **Components:** V, S; **Casting Time:** Attack action; **Range:** Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels); **Target:** One electrical or mechanical device; **Duration:** Instantaneous; **Saving Throw:** Fortitude negates; **Spell Resistance:** No

This spell immediately disables the targeted device so that it no longer functions without first being repaired. The object or device affected may be fixed with a Repair check (DC 23), although this takes at least 1 hour per level of the caster. The device may still be jury-rigged (Repair DC 18). If a person currently holds the device, the creature makes a Fortitude save on behalf of the device.

### Jump Start

Transmutation

**Level:** Arcane 0; **Components:** V, M; **Casting Time:** Attack action; **Range:** Touch; **Effect:** Starts one motorized vehicle; **Duration:** Instantaneous; **Saving Throw:** None; **Spell Resistance:** No

You start a motorized vehicle. The vehicle must be in a state

that would allow it to start normally. For example, a car must have gas and the engine must be functional. The vehicle functions exactly as it normally would if it had been started conventionally.

This spell can affect any vehicle such as, a car, truck, plane, boat, or any other vehicle that has an engine. This engine does not need to be gas-powered. The spell works just as well on electrically powered vehicles or those powered in other ways.

Material Component: A car key.

### Living Console

Transmutation

**Level:** Arcane 3; **Components:** V, S, M; **Casting Time:** Attack action; **Range:** Personal; **Effect:** Interact with network device; **Duration:** 1 minute/level; **Saving Throw:** None; **Spell Resistance:** No

By picking up a cable (phone, network, cable TV, etc.), you can interact with the attached network as though you were an appropriate device. For instance, if you picked up a phone cable you would gain the ability to make or receive phone calls. If you picked up an Ethernet cable, you would be able to interact with the network as any normal computer. You do not, however, gain any special knowledge, passwords, or rights when you cast this spell.

If you use this spell to access a computer network with the intent of hacking into the network, you gain a +4 circumstance bonus to your Computer Use checks while this spell is in effect. Material Component: A 1-foot-long piece of coaxial cable.

### Makin' Bank

Illusion

**Level:** Arcane 1; **Components:** S, M; **Casting Time:** Attack action; **Range:** Touch; **Target:** Handful of paper scraps; **Duration:** 1 minute/level; **Saving Throw:** Will negates

You can turn an ordinary wad of newspaper strips into a wad of cash. You can affect 10 strips of newspaper per caster level. This provides a temporary increase to your wealth bonus, which is randomly determined by rolling 1d6.

Roll	Wealth Bonus Increase
1	+1
2-3	+2
4-5	+3
6	+4

People accepting the bills can get a Will save to notice the illusion. Material Component: Cut strips of newspaper and 1 real bill.

### Rune of Scrying

Divination

**Level:** Arcane 3; **Components:** V, S, M; **Casting Time:** Attack action; **Range:** See text; **Target:** 1 rune; **Duration:** 1 hour/level;

**Saving Throw:** None; **Spell Resistance:** No

When you cast this spell you must etch or trace the outline of a strange and complex rune in charcoal or sulfur paste on the desired surface. When the spell is complete, the rune fades into the surface and becomes nearly invisible.

As a standard action until the end of the spell, you may switch your sensory input between your current surroundings and the area surrounding the rune. Changing your sensory focus to the rune is a move action. When you do this you view the area

where the rune was traced as if you were standing on the rune. You can turn 360 degrees in place, and you have full use of all your senses. Any magical enhancements to your senses remain in effect. You cannot use any detection magic through the rune, even if it is cast on you prior to using the rune. You also may not use magic or supernatural abilities to affect anything you see or hear through the circle. However, you may be affected by certain sensory-damaging or influencing spells while you are scrying through the rune. For instance, you might be affected by a creature's stench if such a creature were within smelling distance of the rune.

The rune is hard to detect. When the rune is active, that is when you are scrying through it, the rune becomes a magical sensor. Any creature nearby with an Intelligence of 12 or higher may make a Knowledge (arcane lore) skill check (DC 20) to notice the active rune. Runes that are located can be identified with read magic and a successful Spellcraft skill check (DC 12). A rune of seeing that has been located may be dispelled. If the rune is dispelled, the spell ends. If this happens, you know that your rune was cancelled in this manner.

**Material Components:** Charcoal or sulfur dust or paste which must be used to draw or trace a rune.

## Modern Elementals

Below are four modern elementals commonly summoned with the summon elemental ally spell.

### Glass Elemental

The glass elemental looks like a tall thin man made of coherent shards of broken glass.

Glass elementals use their bare hands which are covered in razor sharp claws as they are made of broken glass to do their slam attack.

#### Species Traits

**Elemental (Glass):** Glass elementals have the traits and immunities common to elementals.

**Shred (Ex):** Shred is a ranged attack where the elemental ejects a deadly rain of glass shards from its body in a 15 ft. long, 5 ft. wide line. Shred can only be used every other round. Shred does 2d6+1 hit points of damage to all in the area of effect.

**Glass Elemental:** CR 5; Medium-sized elemental (glass); HD 4d8+12; hp 28; Mas -; Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; Defense 18, touch 13, flat-footed 15 (+3 Dex, +5 natural); BAB +5; Grap +6; Atk +8 melee (1d6+1 slam); Full Atk +8/+3 melee (1d6+1 slam); or +8 ranged; FS 5 ft. by 5 ft.; Reach 5 ft.; SQ elemental, darkvision 60 ft.; AL neutral; SV Fort +7, Ref +4, Will +1; AP 0; Rep +0; Str 12, Dex 17, Con 15, Int 4, Wis 11, Cha 8.

Skills: Listen +4, Spot +7.

Feats: Weapon Finesse (slam).

### Radiation Elemental

The radiation elemental looks like something from a B SciFi Film of the 50s. It is a sickly green pulsating solid cloud.

It attacks either by reaching out with a semi-gaseous pseudopod and striking or by enveloping its enemy.

#### Species Traits

**Elemental (Radiation):** Radiation elementals have the traits and immunities common to elementals.

### Shadow Blast

Evocation [Darkness]

**Level:** Arcane 4; **Components:** V, S; **Casting Time:** Attack action; **Range:** Close (25 ft. +2 ft./level); **Target:** One creature or object; **Duration:** Instantaneous; **Saving Throw:** Fortitude half; **Spell Resistance:** Yes

A shadow blast is an explosion of damaging darkness that detonates with the sound of a vacuum being filled with air - a loud whoosh and boom. The explosion does 1d8 points of damage per caster level (maximum 12d8) to the creature or object targeted. As with a fireball, the blast creates no concussive force.

After you incant this spell, your shadow races towards the target where it detonates, although you are not required to have a shadow for the spell to function properly. You can send the shadow through a narrow openings, such as under doors, and strike a target on the other side.

**Material Components:** A vial of squid or octopus ink.

### Summon Elemental Ally

Conjuration (Summoning)

**Level:** Arcane 5; **Components:** V, S, M; **Casting Time:** Attack action; **Range:** Close (25 ft. +2 ft./level); **Duration:** 1 round/level (D); **Saving Throw:** None; **Spell Resistance:** No

This spell conjures into the physical world a Medium-sized elemental of the modern age. It appears where you designate and acts immediately, on your action. This elemental will follow simple orders while the spell is in effect; attack enemies retrieve items etc, it then returns to the Ether after its action on the last round of the spell. The elemental conjured into existence include Concrete, Steel, Radiation and Glass. Material Component: A piece of the material of the creature you intend to summon and a candle, not necessarily lit. For instance, to conjure into existence a radiation elemental you need something radioactive, an old radium clock-face will do.

### Tune In

Divination

**Level:** Arcane 2; **Components:** V, S, M; **Casting Time:** Full-round action; **Range:** Unlimited; **Target:** One cell phone; **Duration:** 10 minutes/level; **Saving Throw:** None; **Spell Resistance:** No

You are able to tap into cell phone calls. By dialing the number you wish to spy on, you are able to hear anything that is said on calls coming into or out of the cell phone attached to that specific number. Distance is not a factor, but the number of the cell phone you wish to tune into must be known. Only one cell phone may be targeted per casting of this spell.

Material Component: A cell phone (which need not be operational).

### You Are Here

Divination

**Level:** Arcane 1, Divine 1; **Components:** V, S, M; **Casting Time:** Attack action; **Range:** Personal; **Target:** You; **Duration:** Instantaneous; **Saving Throw:** None; **Spell Resistance:** No

You immediately know your latitude and longitudinal coordinates, no matter where you are. As the information gained is merely number coordinates, you most likely need a map and some understanding of navigation to make sense of it. In game terms, you are here provides you with a +4 insight bonus to your next Navigate check within the next 24 hours. This bonus does not stack with the equipment bonus gained from the use of a GPS receiver.

Material Component: A map.

**Envelop (Ex):** By completely surrounding an opponent with its own body the radiation elemental can cause burn damage and radiation poisoning. Radiation burns do 2d6 points of damage and force a Fortitude saving throw (DC 14). Failure causes 1 point of Constitution damage and must make another Fortitude save one day later or suffer 1d4 additional points of ability damage to Constitution. Envelop is a full round attack.

Radiation burns are also possible if the elemental is attacked with natural weapons. Attackers take 1d6 hit points of damage and are forced to make a Fortitude saving throw as described above or suffer the effects of radiation.

**Radiation Elemental:** CR 5; Medium-sized elemental (radiation); HD 4d8+12; hp 28; Mas - ; Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; Defense 18, touch 13, flat-footed 15 (+3 Dex, +5 natural); BAB +5; Grap + 6; Atk +8 melee (1d6+1 slam); Full Atk +8/+3 melee (1d6+1 slam); FS 5 ft. by 5 ft.; Reach 5 ft.; SQ elemental, darkvision 60 ft.; AL neutral; SV Fort +7, Ref +4, Will +1; AP 0; Rep +0; Str 12, Dex 17, Con 15, Int 4, Wis 11, Cha 8.

Skills: Listen +4, Spot +7.

Feats: Weapon Finesse (slam).

### Steel Elemental

The steel elemental appears to be a featureless man made of steel and covered with spikes.

The steel elemental uses brute force in combat. Steel Elementals are tough to damage and are juggernauts of destruction.

#### Species Traits

**Elemental (steel):** Steel elementals have the traits and immunities common to elementals.

**Damage Reduction 10/- (Ex):** A steel elementals ignores the first 10 points of damage dealt by any non-magical weapon.

**Steel Elemental:** CR 5; Medium-sized elemental (radiation); HD 4d8+16; hp 32; Mas - ; Init +0; Spd 20 ft.; Defense 15, touch 10, flat-footed 15 (+0 Dex, +5 natural); BAB +5; Grap + 8; Atk +8 melee (1d6+3 slam); Full Atk +8/+3 melee (1d6+3 slam); FS 5 ft. by 5 ft.; Reach 5 ft.; SQ elemental, damage reduction 10/-, darkvision 60 ft.; AL neutral; SV Fort +8, Ref +1, Will +1; AP 0; Rep +0; Str 15, Dex 10, Con 18, Int 4, Wis 11, Cha 8.

Skills: Listen +7, Spot +4.

Feats: Power Attack.

### Relics

The world is filled with relics, bits and pieces of historical and magical significance that have become lost or misplaced over the eons. Most items of power are so shrouded in myth and legend their true powers are all but forgotten, making finding and using them all the more difficult. Perhaps more importantly, few really understand the truth of relics or how they were used in the past by the Daemonhost and those who battled them. For starters, a relic is not a single item, as most might expect, but rather a collection of items used together for a common

## Concrete Elemental

A concrete elemental is a lumbering, grinding man-shaped pile of concrete rubble.

The concrete elemental are strong and tough and though it moves slowly, it is relentless.

### Species Traits

**Elemental (concrete):** Concrete elementals have the traits and immunities common to elementals.

**Pavement Mastery (Ex):** As long as the concrete elemental stands upon concrete or asphalt, it gains a +1 attack and damage bonus.

**Concrete Elemental:** CR 5; Medium-sized elemental (radiation); HD 4d8+12; hp 28; Mas -; Init -1; Spd 20 ft.; Defense 14, touch 9, flat-footed 15 (-1 Dex, +5 natural); BAB +5; Grap +10; Atk +10 melee (1d6+5 slam); Full Atk +10/+5 melee (1d6+5 slam); FS 5 ft. by 5 ft.; Reach 5 ft.; SQ elemental, pavement mastery, darkvision 60 ft.; AL neutral; SV Fort +7, Ref +0, Will +1; AP 0; Rep +0; Str 21, Dex 8, Con 16, Int 4, Wis 11, Cha 8.

Skills: Listen +7, Spot +4.

Feats: Power Attack.

purpose. The Holy Grail, for example, is not an item of power in and of itself, but when combined with the Staves of the Apostles, it becomes an instrument of remarkable significance. Similarly, the Round Table is not an item of power in itself - but when combined with the Shields of the Valorous, they create a mystical circuit much greater than the sum of its parts. The forebears of the titans are as much to blame for this misinformation regarding the nature of relics as are the Daemonhost: both factions struggled to hide the truth from mortals who might misuse their powers in the days to come. As a result, these items of power were either lost or hidden, and the vast majority remain so to this day.

But they will not remain lost or hidden forever. As occult knowledge begins to spread once more and the daemonic mentors of the Abyss guide their cultists toward them, the relics of a previous age are slowly being gathered together once again. The titans, too, seek them out, and the various Allegiances all have their own desires for these items. Presented here are the rules for finding and using these relics, as well as a few sample relics currently sought after by the various Allegiances.

### Looking for a Relic

Finding relics is not an easy task, for most have been deliberately hidden, others lost through cataclysms so that only fragmentary information remains to point the way to their whereabouts. Even worse, the very act of looking for a relic may tip your hand, starting your enemies down the same path - after all, it is difficult to dig for information without shoveling aside a little dirt in the process. The more cautious you are when gathering your information, the less likely others are to discover what you are up to, but the

more difficult it can become to actually accomplish much of anything.

The first step in finding a relic is learning about it. Some titans and occultists spend a great deal of time in research, hoping for just a tiny clue to the existence of a powerful relic, while others are lucky and stumble across the information during the course of their travels. This last option falls into the realm of the GM's territory, however, while the former can be actively undertaken by anyone with the Knowledge (arcane lore), Gather Information, or Research skills.

### Knowledge (Arcane Lore)

Knowledge (arcane lore) is the most straightforward and the fastest of these methods, since it doesn't require talking to anyone or searching through musty old tomes and the like. You simply make a Knowledge (arcane lore) check (DC 25 or higher, as set by the GM) and, if successful, your character already knows some facts or information about the relic in question. Otherwise, this method follows the standard rules for making Knowledge checks.



### Gather Information

Using Gather Information is a relatively fast way to get the job done (compared to the Research option, at least), but it is also the riskiest and the costliest, since it involves nosing around and schmoozing with others who might just get the idea to go poking around for themselves. Determining the existence of a relic in this way requires several things: a Wealth check (DC 15), 1d4 weeks' time, some connection with the occult world (not difficult for titans, Initiates, or Mystics, who can always inquire of their Allegiances), and, finally, a successful Gather Information check (DC 25 or higher, as set by the GM). You can gain a bonus on the Gather Information check by offering up more money, as described in the Gather Information skill (d20 Modern Roleplaying Game™, Chapter Two: Skills).

If the Gather Information check succeeds, you gain some information about a potential relic, including its name and its last known location. This method requires at least a few hours each day spent in pursuing possible leads, which generally precludes most adventuring activities. The GM should, however, also make a Gather Information skill check (DC 25) for all "connected" villains or opposing forces in the area (i.e., any who might conceivably catch wind of the PC's activities). Those who succeed learn that someone is looking for a relic and may try to find out just who would be up to such nonsense, leading to all kinds of adventures and competition.

You may avoid attracting attention in this way by making more discreet inquiries, thus suffering a -5 penalty on your Gather Information check. While this does make it harder to find any useful information, it also prevents others from knowing what you are up to.

### Research

The Research option is more difficult to use and much more time-consuming than the Gather Information skill, but it does not stand the same chance of alerting others to your intention and it doesn't cost you anything. This option requires a full 2d4 months of your time, during which you cannot take part in any adventuring activities. At the end of this time, you may make a Research check (DC 30 or higher, as set by the GM) to find out the name and last known location of a relic. For every additional month you voluntarily spend researching this topic, you gain a +1 circumstance bonus to your Research check. This bonus cannot exceed +5 in any case, however.

### The Hunt

Just knowing the name of a relic and its last known location is not enough to gather its pieces and put it to use. You must often track down each piece individually and figure out how to use them through experimentation and research. The hunt for relics is fraught with peril, as those who hid the relics often also generally warded them with powerful traps or hid them deep within dangerous labyrinths. Though it is certainly possible to recover them, those who do so without proper precautions may find their bones moldering in the bottoms of pits or their bod-



ies impaled upon the spines of ancient and forgotten traps. GMs should use the hunt for a relic as an opportunity for an epic adventure. Locating the various pieces of the relic should be difficult and challenging, as befits the reward. If it were an easy task to dig these things up, after all, someone would have dozens of them on hand already.

Play up the "race against time" aspects of the hunt, making the adventure a competition between the characters and their nemeses. If the PCs were careful in their research, then they might be able to get ahead without much trouble, giving them a crucial lead. But the mere act of looking for a relic should start a chain reaction, giving other interested parties the impetus to set out on their own quests, either in pursuit of the heroes or in a different direction entirely ("Hey, maybe they know something we don't!"). Once the quest is under way, the characters should feel the pressure to complete the quest and claim the relic before someone beats them to it.

For an added twist, perhaps the PCs learn that their enemies are closing in on a different relic altogether. The characters must decide whether to pursue their own quest to its conclusion or take some time off to thwart the efforts of the villains. These tensions and choices should be present throughout the quest - it is a thing worthy of myth to reclaim a relic, and the quest should have all the mythical trappings that opposed the greatest of heroes.

### **Binding a Relic**

Once a relic is recovered, the battle is far from over for those who claim it (even if their enemies don't come after it). A relic is useless until it is bound, perhaps a priceless object of antiquity, but not capable of any unusual powers. While it is certainly impressive for your allegiance to claim ownership of the Holy Grail, it's not much more than a tempting target until you can actually put the thing to use.

The binding process itself is a simple level check (1d20 + your level) against the Power Rating of the relic, made by each character who wishes to be a part of the binding process. This check requires 1 full hour for every point of the relic's Power Rating, during which time the members of the binding process can take no other actions. All of the component parts of the relic must be present for binding to occur. Those who wish to bind the relic do not have to touch it, but they do need to be able to see it to establish the initial connection. A character may simply leave off trying to bind the relic at any time once the process has begun, but he or she must start again from scratch if the process was not yet complete.

Note: If you have at least 5 ranks in Use Magic Device, you gain a +2 synergy bonus to your level check to bind a relic. If you fail to bind a relic, you may not attempt to bind it again until you have gained a level.

If the binding works, those who successfully bound the relic may immediately be able to use one or more of its powers (see "Using the Relic"). If the binding fails, there are no ill effects beyond the knowledge that you now possess a relic you cannot

use. (Of course, you may feel compelled to protect it from others who may be able to use it for their own ends. This can be a heavy burden, but makes an excellent seed for a campaign. Custodians of powerful relics who must prevent them from falling into the hands of the Daemonhost are interesting characters, after all.)

In addition to simply binding the relic, however, a user must meet certain requirements to access the specific powers of the objects involved. It is possible for a character to be bound to a relic and be unable to actually use any of its powers. Each relic may be bound only by a certain maximum number of individuals (as given in that particular relic's description), and once this number is met, no others may bind it. A bound character may willingly release the bond to a given relic at any time as a full-round action, but otherwise the character is bound to that relic until his or her death.

### **Using the Relic**

Each relic listed later in this chapter contains a description of how each of its powers is used and of the prerequisites necessary to access that power. Most powers are used reflexively (use-activated), providing those bound to it with new innate abilities, but some require a specific ritual or command word to activate or are limited in the number of times they may be used each day. All relic powers have certain requirements that must be met before that power can be used. These requirements may be as simple as a specific character level, but more often require a combination of level, skills or abilities, and the will of several individuals to accomplish.

### **Relic Basics**

There are some very important qualities common to all relics, regardless of their origin or age. First, they all require multiple users to activate their most potent powers. Second, the personal power of those using a relic determines the relic's ultimate power level. While weaker individuals may be able to make use of the simplest of a relic's powers, only the most capable titans, Initiates, or Mystics will have a hope of awakening their most miraculous abilities.

### **Relic Descriptions**

All relics are described in a standard format, as detailed below.

#### **Bind Number**

This entry gives the maximum number of people that may be bound to the relic at any given time.

#### **Power Rating**

All relics have an assigned Power Rating, a rough indication of the relative power of the relic, which dictates both how difficult it is to bind the artifact and the amount of time required to bind it.

#### **Purpose**

Most relics were designed with a specific purpose. When they are not used to fulfill that purpose, they may be much more difficult to activate or may simply not function at all. Each

relic's description contains information about its purpose and any benefits or penalties in effect while its purpose is fulfilled (or is not being fulfilled, in some cases).

### User Requirements

While a relic can be used by a single bound individual, relics rarely present their full powers until several powerful individuals are bonded and use them together. However, even after you have bound yourself to a relic, you must fulfill at least one of its user requirements to make it do anything. In order for more than one person to access the relic's powers, they must each have all of the required abilities for that number of users. Thus, if a relic is bound by more than one individual, all of them must meet the requirements listed under "User Requirement x" (where x equals the number of characters bound), as well as all those listed under each previous requirement.

For example, if three 11th-level characters have successfully bound themselves to Kathar's Legacy, each of them must meet all the requirements listed under user requirements 1, 2, and 3 for that relic in order to use any of its powers. Thus, each character must have at least 6 ranks in Craft (mechanical, structural) and Knowledge (physical sciences), a BAB of +7 or higher, a base Will save of +5 or higher, and the healing knack class talent to access the relic's abilities. If all of these requirements are met, then any one of the three characters can use any of the relic's powers requiring 33 total character levels or less.

Note that, once the users are bound to the relic, the relic's components need not remain assembled to grant their powers, unless otherwise noted.

### Available Powers

This section lists those powers the relic can provide to those bound to it, and the limits placed on those powers. These levels refer to the total number of levels or HD of all beings currently bound to the relic. If there are four individuals with 10 levels/HD currently bound to the relic, the relic provides all powers found at the 40 level mark or lower to all those bound to the relic.

## Sample Relics

### Kathar's Legacy

Kathar is an Ugaritic deity once revered for his facility with the creation of weapons, who has not been worshipped on Earth in thousands of years. However, Kathar's Legacy – a set of four massive hammers weighing roughly 13 pounds each – last appeared only 60 years ago, during World War II, when a vicious battle over the shaft of the Weeping Spear was fought in northern Africa, leaving no survivors. The hammers have not been recovered, nor was the spear shaft, but few doubt they still exist.

The four hammers of the Legacy each appear as ancient bronze implements, their surfaces worn with age. Tiny cracks can be seen throughout their handles, and the striking heads appear to be badly fractured as well. To the uninitiated, these weapons

appear virtually worthless, aside from their obvious antiquity. When held by an individual capable of binding one of the hammers, however, their true value becomes apparent. The weapon at once feels lighter and more substantial than before, the bronze glows warmly, and the handle shifts in the wielder's hand to fit his grip more comfortably. Most tellingly, the cracks in the weapon glow brightly, as if from the light of a fire within. Designed to be used in battle, Kathar's Legacy also has enormous potential to heal.

**Bind Number:** 4.

**Power Rating:** 16.

**Purpose:** This relic was meant to protect humanity from the ravages of other relics which were designed for destruction. This purpose is fulfilled whenever Kathar's Legacy is used either to prevent someone from acquiring another relic or when battling an individual or group with relics of their own. The other relic must be present or currently in use in order for the Legacy to grant any power greater than The Hammer.

### User Requirements

User Requirement 1: Base attack bonus +7, Craft (mechanical) 6 ranks.

User Requirement 2: Base Will save +5, Craft (structural) 6 ranks

User Requirement 3: Healing knack class talent, Knowledge (physical sciences) 6 ranks.

User Requirement 4: Base Fort save +5, Treat Injury 6 ranks.

### Available Powers

12 Levels – The Hammer. Each user of one of the relic's four hammers may wield it as a simple Medium-size melee weapon. Each Hammer weighs a mere 5 pounds to the wielder and deals 2d6 points of bludgeoning damage (critical 19-20/x2). It provides a +2 enhancement bonus to all attack and damage rolls.

18 Levels – Reconstruction. The Hammer wielder may use it to heal 1d4 hit points of damage to a touched creature (but not including him or herself) as a full-round action. This ability may be used as often as the wielder dares, but the wielder suffers potentially dangerous consequences for its use. Whenever Reconstruction is used, the wielder takes 2d8+2 points of non-lethal damage.

25 Levels – Kathar's Valor. The Hammer wielder gains the benefits of the second wind class talent. A wielder who already has this talent due to levels in Tough hero (or from some other source) may use second wind once per day without paying its action point cost.

33 Levels – Bolstered Resistance. The Hammer wielder gains spell resistance equal to 11 + one-half his character level.

45 Levels – Kathar's Wrath. The Hammer wielder may spend 1 action point as he attacks a piece of machinery, a structure, or an otherwise manufactured object with his Hammer. This attack deals an additional amount of damage equal to his action point dice (by level) + his character level. Thus, a 16th-level character may use Kathar's wrath to deal 5d6+18 points of damage (including the Hammer's usual 2d6+2 damage), plus any Strength modifiers.

60 Levels – Soulforge. The Hammer wielder may spend 1 action point to activate a burst of healing energy. This is a full-round action that does not provoke attacks of opportunity. The

wielder makes a Treat Injury check, and all living creatures within 5 feet per level of the wielder are healed of a number of hit points equal to his Treat Injury check result. Further, if the Treat Injury check result matches or exceeds the save DC of any poison or disease currently affecting a creature in the healing effect's radius, those poisons or diseases are considered to be removed from his or her system. Whenever Soul Forge is used, the wielder takes 4d6 points of nonlethal damage.

**80 Levels - Shattering Fire.** This power works can be used only if Kathar's Legacy is bound to four people. If all four wielders are within 30 feet of one another, they may each spend 1 action point to activate a 100-foot-radius burst of white-hot flame from the Hammer of the wielder with the highest base Fortitude save bonus (in the case of a tie, the character with the highest Will save bonus). The wielders must all act on the same initiative count to use shattering fire, so three of the wielders must ready or delay their actions; shattering fire is a full-round action for all four wielders.

Shattering fire kills anyone bound to another relic (who is not also a wielder of Kathar's Legacy) who fails a Fortitude save (DC 25). Those who succeed at the Fortitude saving throw still take 10d6 points of fire damage and are dazed (cannot act, but still gain Defense bonus) for 1d6 rounds. All other creatures in the burst take 5d6 points of fire damage (Reflex half, DC 25). All relics bound to a creature killed by this power are also utterly destroyed, their physical form blasted to shards. The wielders of Kathar's Legacy are unharmed by the shattering fire.

### The Thirteenth Floor

This relic is a product of modern beliefs and superstitions, proof that relics can be created by sufficient faith, however misguided, in a relatively short period of time. Created to fill the void left by the lack of a thirteenth floor in many buildings, this relic has been adapted by a group of industrious titans to contain a number of "scientific" advances into its design, combining many conspiracies of alien technology and hidden laboratories into its archetype. There are rumors that more than one Thirteenth Floor exists, but so far this has not been proven.

Until it is bound, the Thirteenth Floor appears as a simple key ring containing six old, corroded keys. Each of the keys is visibly different from the others, and they can easily be told apart at a glance. When bound, the key ring is replaced by six individual keys, each of which appears to be an elevator key of some sort. When inserted into the key slot in an elevator, they open the elevator doors at the thirteenth floor - which theoretically doesn't exist. Note that this only works in buildings with at least 14 floors.

**Bind Number:** 6.

**Power Rating:** 13.

Purpose: This relic's original purpose was modified by titans, so that its purpose is now to assist research. That purpose is fulfilled when those bound to it reside within and use their collective knowledge and skills to combat the creatures of the Otherworld. Though the relic can be used for other purposes, any individual who uses the Thirteenth Floor to perform research or to create items not intended for use against the creatures of the Otherworld takes 1 point of temporary

Constitution damage for every hour she spends thus misusing the relic.

### User Requirements

User Requirement 1: Computer Use 10 ranks  
User Requirement 2: Craft (chemical) 10 ranks  
User Requirement 3: Craft (electronic) 10 ranks  
User Requirement 4: Craft (mechanical) 10 ranks  
User Requirement 5: Craft (pharmaceutical) 10 ranks  
User Requirement 6: Research 10 ranks

### Available Powers

**10 Levels - The Net.** You are able to use the relic to research virtually anything related to the Otherworld on the Internet. This effectively allows you to make a Computer Use check in place of Knowledge (arcane lore) or Knowledge (theology and philosophy) checks while within the Thirteenth Floor, as long as your search parameters involve information about the Otherworld

**20 Levels - The Lab.** You receive a +2 bonus to Craft (chemical) while in the Thirteenth Floor.

**30 Levels - Edison Factory.** You receive a +2 bonus to Craft (electronic) while in the Thirteenth Floor.

**40 Levels - Machine Shop.** You receive a +2 bonus to Craft (mechanical) while in the Thirteenth Floor.

**50 Levels - Lab Upgrade.** You receive a +2 bonus to Craft (pharmaceutical) while in the Thirteenth Floor.

**60 Levels - Forensic Scope.** You receive a +2 bonus to Research while in the Thirteenth Floor.

**70 Levels - Supply Closet.** Once per day, you may extract one item from the Thirteenth Floor that has a purchase DC equal to or less than 5 + your character level.

**80 Levels - Raw materials.** You receive a +5 bonus to Wealth checks made to acquire raw materials for any Craft (chemical, mechanical, electrical, or pharmaceutical) check made in the Thirteenth Floor.

**90 Levels - Genius.** By spending 1 action point, you automatically succeed at any single Craft check you make while in the Thirteenth Floor.

**100 Levels - Assistants.** The Thirteenth Floor now provides you with assistants, strange, translucent creatures with no will of their own. Their presence reduces the time required for any Craft check by 25%.

**110 Levels - Otherworld Portal.** There is a portal to the Otherworld in the Thirteenth Floor. The portal is very small (6-inch diameter), but it allows you to create magic items or other objects normally available only in the Otherworld, provided you have a model to work from.

**120 Levels - Shared Expertise.** All bonded individuals are considered to have a number of ranks in Craft (chemical, electrical, mechanical, and pharmaceutical) equal to the number of ranks of the most skilled of all bonded individuals. Thus, if one member of the bonded group has 15 ranks in Craft (electrical), all bonded individuals within the Thirteenth Floor are considered to have 15 ranks in that skill; if another has 17 ranks in Craft (pharmaceutical), then all have that number of ranks. This effective increase in skill only applies among those individuals who are currently within the Thirteenth Floor.

## Mercury's Blood

Named for the messenger of the Greek gods, Mercury's Blood is a relic with a checkered past. Roughly half of those who use it eventually feel misled or lied to by the relic, while the other half swore by its effectiveness – right up until the moment of their death.

As with many things from the Otherworld, the true worth of Mercury's Blood is difficult to ascertain. It does provide glimpses of the future, and it also allows its bonded users to see vast distances and to communicate with one another. The relic has its own agenda, however, and seems to subtly distort the images it presents to its bonded users.

When discovered, Mercury's Blood looks very much like a puddle of metallic red fluid. It is sometimes found contained in flasks or vials of various sorts, but is more often discovered in small depressions within caverns or near natural springs. While in use, the Blood coats the eyes of the bonded wielder(s) in a metallic red sheen, obscuring their eyes entirely. After bonding, but when not in use, Mercury's Blood is contained wholly within the bodies of its bonded users and is virtually undetectable.

**Bind Number:** 3.

**Power Rating:** 11.

**Purpose:** Mercury's Blood was created by a small group of well-meaning titans during a particularly brutal incursion by Otherworld fiends. Intended to provide them with some insight as to what they should do to combat their foes, Mercury's Blood instead proved to be their undoing. It is now thought to work to preserve the balance of power between the Daemonhost and the titans, sabotaging or aiding the efforts of its wielders as necessary to prevent the total annihilation of either side.

### User Requirements

User Requirements 1: Alertness, Listen 8 ranks

User Requirements 2: Combat Reflexes, base attack bonus +5

User Requirements 3: Improved Initiative, Spot 8 ranks

### Available Powers

6 Levels – Presentient Sight. Three times per day, you may call on the Blood to grant you a +4 insight bonus to all Search and Spot checks for a number of rounds equal to your Constitution modifier (minimum 1 round). Activating presentient sight is a move action.

9 Levels – Glimpse. You may call on the Blood to peer briefly into the future, effectively gaining the benefits of the defensive roll class talent. If you already have this talent due to levels in Fast hero (or from some other source), you may use defensive roll once per day without paying its action point cost.

14 Levels – Hidden Opening. Twice per day, you may call on the Blood to allow you to take advantage of an opponent's failed attack. This ability may only be used after a foe attacks you in melee and misses. When activated, hidden opening grants you a free melee attack against that opponent. This does not count as an attack of opportunity.

21 Levels – Deific Intuition. Once per day, you may call on the Blood to allow you reroll a Reflex save you just failed.

30 Levels – Sight Beyond Sight: You may use the clairvoy-

ance/clairaudience power at will (although only to see an area, not to hear). However, if you are a titan trying to perceive Otherworld creatures or evidence of their activities, or vice versa, there is a cumulative 10% chance (rolled secretly by the GM) that your vision is misleading in some crucial detail, as determined by the GM. Sight beyond sight is a supernatural ability.

40 Levels – Resonance. You may use the locate object spell at will, as a supernatural ability. However, resonance has the same chance of being misleading as sight beyond sight.

60 Levels – True Seeing. You may use the true seeing spell at will, as a supernatural ability. However, this has the same chance of being misleading as sight beyond sight.

# EQUIPMENT

chapter six



The world has become a much more terrifying place since the Rip. Safety has quickly become a prime concern for all who live in these darker times. Because of this, titans must be able to trust their equipment as much as they can trust themselves. Technology, along with resourcefulness, has become a key for survival. Like resourcefulness, though, technology sometimes fails.

### Reliability

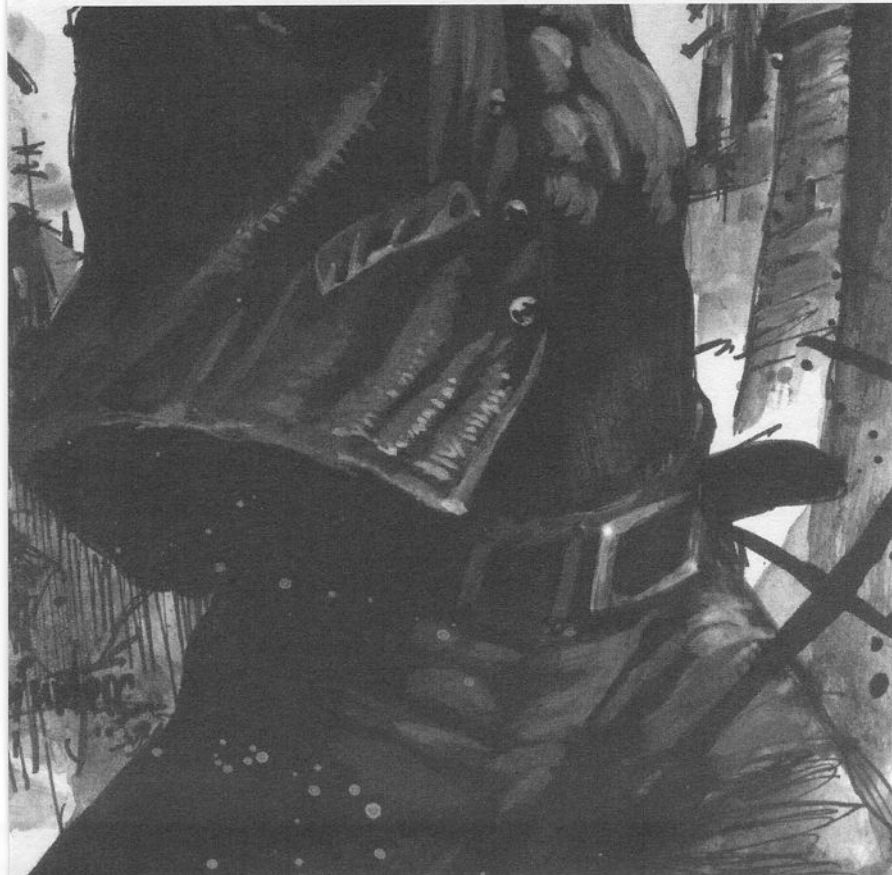
Some firearms are less reliable than others, and all firearms become less reliable if they are not well maintained. Of course, that's true for all forms of equipment, and for non-firearm weapons as well. Dark Inheritance assumes that characters carry out reasonable maintenance on their equipment in their rest time and between adventures.

All modern firearms are normally considered reliable (unless noted otherwise in the weapon description). No special rules apply to reliable weapons.

A firearm can become unreliable through a number of circumstances, as described below. An unreliable weapon has a 5% chance of weapon failure every time it is used. Each additional separate cause of unreliability increases the chance of failure by 5%. (For example, a weapon using exotic ammunition that is then immersed has a 10% chance of weapon failure.)

With the GM's permission, to avoid making an extra percentile roll with every firearm attack, you can combine the failure chance with the attack roll. Thus, for a 5% failure chance, any natural 1 rolled for an attack roll results in fail-

## EQUIPMENT



ure. For each additional 5%, increase the range by 1 point (so a 10% failure occurs on a natural 1 or 2).

If weapon failure occurs, the firearm has become jammed. Clearing a jam is a full-round action.

**Age:** Age and heavy use can render a weapon unreliable. While this should never be a factor through the degree of time and use typical to a normal campaign, the GM can determine that an older weapon obtained by the characters is already unreliable due to age. A weapon that has been sitting in a museum might not become unreliable until fifty years have passed, but one that has sat in the leaky trunk of an abandoned car for a couple months might well be unreliable. This cause of unreliability only goes away if the weapon is overhauled. Overhauling a firearm is a complex Repair check.

**Damage:** Any firearm that has taken 1 point or more of damage is unreliable. This cause of unreliability only goes away if the weapon is repaired.

**Environment:** A steamy jungle, dusty desert, or similarly

rough environment can make a weapon unreliable. Whenever the characters spend an extended period of time in an extreme environment, the GM can determine that firearms require extra care to avoid becoming unreliable. When that's the case, characters must spend 30 minutes per day (per weapon) doing extra maintenance. Any weapon not so maintained becomes unreliable after 1d3 days. This cause of unreliability goes away as soon as the weapon receives 30 minutes of special maintenance.

**Immersion:** Immersion in water, mud, or other liquids can affect reliability. Any time a firearm is immersed, it becomes unreliable. (Slight wetness, such as that caused by rain, is not sufficient to affect reliability.) This cause of unreliability goes away when the weapon is dried out, which takes 1 minute if the weapon is disassembled and dried by hand, or 1d4+2 hours (and maybe more or less depending on the humidity of the local environment) if it's left to dry on its own.

**Unreliable Ammunition:** Ammunition can become unreliable due to age, damage, or environment, just as firearms can. A weapon firing unreliable ammunition is unreliable. This cause of unreliability only occurs when the weapon is used with unreliable ammunition.

**Unusual Ammunition:** Conventional ammunition does not affect reliability, but some exotic forms, such as AET ammo and some

types of shotgun shells, are an exception. This cause of unreliability only occurs when the weapon is used with exotic ammunition.

## New Equipment

### Handguns

Highly concealable and very effective, the pistol is a hallmark of today's warfare. As life has grown more dangerous on the streets, these ballistic foot soldiers are becoming more and more common.

#### Colt Delta Elite

The Delta Elite is a 1911A1 pistol redesigned to fire the 10mm Auto cartridge. Colt, having made these weapons from 1987 through the mid-1990s, no longer produces them. Just like the M1911A1, this handgun is available in several finishes, and many parts are interchangeable between the two guns.

#### HK 0.45 Mk 23 Mod 0 USSOCOM

This highly modified version of the USP is the official pistol of the United States Special Forces. It was given the designation

**TABLE 6-1: HANDGUNS**

Weapon		Damage	Critical	Range Increment	Rate of Fire
<i>Colt Delta Elite</i>	<i>(10mm autoloader)</i>	2d6	20	30 ft.	S
Magazine	Size	Weight	Purchase DC	Restriction	
7 box	Small	3 lb.	17	Lic(+1)	

Weapon		Damage	Critical	Range Increment	Rate of Fire
<i>HK 0.45 Mk 23 Mod 0 USSOCOM</i>		2d6	20	30 ft.	S
Magazine	Size	Weight	Purchase DC	Restriction	
12 box	Small	3 lb.	22	Res(+2)	

Weapon		Damage	Critical	Range Increment	Rate of Fire
<i>HK 0.45 USSOCOM (silenced)</i>		2d6-1	20	30 ft.	S
Magazine	Size	Weight	Purchase DC	Restriction	
12 box	Med	4 lb.	22	Res (+2)	

Mark 23 Mod 0 USSOCOM (which is short for United States Special Operations Command). The SOCOM is typically seen with a Knights Armament Corporation sound suppressor, one of the most efficient on the market.

When fitted with its suppressor, this is a suppressed weapon. Although the weapon's firing is audible, determining the location of this weapon by its sound alone requires a Listen check (DC 15). When fitted with its suppressor and firing cold-loaded ammo (see "Ammunition" later in this chapter), this weapon operates as if silenced; a Listen check (DC 15) is required to notice the sound of the weapon firing.

### Submachine Guns

Effective for close-quarters combat and capable of unleashing a much more fierce fury than their smaller cousins, submachine guns are quicker, more lethal, and more versatile.

#### FN P90

Designed for support personnel and spec ops teams, the P90 is compact and portable. It helps clear up two major problems always suffered by special ops teams: (1) Arming troops whose primary mission isn't small arms; and (2) Arming troops with compact heavy firepower for their missions. This is the official weapon of choice for First Team (see Chapter Two: Allegiances).

#### HK MP5SD6

The MP5 is a very popular weapon among the militaries of the world. The SD series has an integrated silencer, which lowers the cartridge gasses in the barrel to slow the bullet down below the speed of sound. This is a silenced weapon. A Listen check (DC 15) is required to notice the sound of the weapon firing.

The MP5SD6 features a 3-round burst setting. When used with the Burst Fire feat, it fires only 3 bullets instead of 5 and can be used with only 3 bullets in the weapon. This setting does not grant the ability to make burst fire attacks without the Burst Fire feat; if you use the setting without the feat, you make a normal attack, and the extra 2 bullets are wasted.

### Assault Rifles

Used primarily by military forces, the assault rifle is a symbol of the modern soldier. Capable of automatic fire, the assault rifle can lay down enough damage within seconds to destroy small buildings.

#### Alliant Techsystems OICW

Originally not intended for deployment until approximately 2009, the Alliant Techsystems OICW is now being deployed to the U.S. troops at home and abroad as the standard firearm for the Armed Forces. It is taking the place of the M16A2, which has been the flagship weapon for over 20 years. The OICW assault rifle itself can be dismantled from the rest of the weapon, making it much more portable. However, the full device has a day/night viewscope with a laser range finder that can be set to either infrared or a visible dot.

Separating the rifle from the remainder of the weapon, or reattaching it, is a full-round action. If the rifle is fired separately, the attacker suffers a -1 penalty on attack rolls. On its own, the rifle portion of the weapon weighs 6 pounds.

The rifle portion of this weapon has a 2-round burst setting. When the Burst Fire feat is used with this weapon, the penalty on the attack roll is only -2 instead of -4. Also the weapon fires only 2 bullets instead of 5 and can be used with only 2 bullets in the weapon. However, the weapon only deals +1 die of damage instead of +2 dice of damage. (In effect, using the Burst Fire feat

TABLE 6-2: SUBMACHINE GUNS

Weapon	Damage	Critical	Range Increment	Rate of Fire
FN P90	2d8	20	70 ft.	S, A
Magazine	Size	Weight	Purchase DC	Restriction
50 box	Large	8 lb.	21	Res (+2)

Weapon	Damage	Critical	Range Increment	Rate of Fire
HK MP5SD6	2d6-1	20	40 ft.	S
Magazine	Size	Weight	Purchase DC	Restriction
30 box	Large	8 lb.	22	Mil (+3)

**TABLE 6-3: ASSAULT RIFLES**

Weapon	Damage	Critical	Damage Type	Burst Radius	Reflex DC	
<i>Alliant OICW (assault rifle)</i>	2d8	20	Ballistic	-	-	
Range Increment	Rate of Fire	Magazine	Size	Weight	Purchase DC	Restriction
70 ft.	S	30 box	Large	18 lb.	17	Mil (+3)

Weapon	Damage	Critical	Damage Type	Burst Radius	Reflex DC	
<i>Alliant OICW (burst shell - air)</i>	3d6	20 S	Slashing	10 ft.	15	
Range Increment	Rate of Fire	Magazine	Size	Weight	Purchase DC	Restriction
70 ft.	S	6 box	Tiny	-	18	Mil (+3)

Weapon	Damage	Critical	Damage Type	Burst Radius	Reflex DC	
<i>Alliant OICW (burst shell - impact)</i>	2d6	20	Slashing	5 ft.	14	
Range Increment	Rate of Fire	Magazine	Size	Weight	Purchase DC	Restriction
70 ft.	S	6 box	Tiny	-	18	Mil (+3)

Weapon	Damage	Critical	Damage Type	Burst Radius	Reflex DC	
<i>Norinco QB2 (5.8mm)</i>	2d8	20	Ballistic	-	-	
Range Increment	Rate of Fire	Magazine	Size	Weight	Purchase DC	Restriction
80 ft.	S, A	30 box	Large	8 lb.	20	Res (+2)

with this weapon results in the effect of the Double Tap feat.) This setting does not grant the ability to make burst fire attacks without the Burst Fire feat; if you use the setting without the feat, you can make a normal attack, and the extra 2 bullets are wasted. The OICW has no automatic rate of fire, and cannot be used to make autofire attacks.

When used in standard or window mode, firing the OICW burst weapon is a full-round action. The 20mm shell explodes within 3 feet of the target (or beyond the target window). Determine the effects of cover based upon the point at which the shell explodes, rather than the direction from which the attack is made.

When used in impact mode, attacking with the OICW burst

weapon is identical to throwing an explosive (see d20 Modern Roleplaying Game™, Chapter Four: Equipment, “Explosives and Splash Weapons”). You make a ranged attack against a specific 5-foot square (instead of targeting a person or creature). The difference in using the OICW as opposed to standard hurled explosives lies in the range of the weapon and the fact that the OICW requires the Personal Weapons Proficiency to use without penalty. Because the 20mm burst weapon is optimized for use in an air burst mode, when used in impact mode the weapon deals 2d6 points of damage instead of 3d6.

The OICW burst weapon has no iron sights. Using this weapon without the fire control system imposes a -1 penalty on

attacks.

The purchase DC given for the 20mm burst shell is for a box of 6 shells.

#### Norinco QB2 Type 95

A recent addition to Chinese elite army units, the Norinco QB2 Type 95 came into common use during the handover of Hong Kong to China back in 1997. The rifle has iron sights, but can easily use an optical sight. The fire selector/safety switch is movable to either side, making for easy use by right- and left-handed firers.

### Shotguns

Sometimes your average hunting shotgun just isn't going to cut it. Used for close-quarters combat or to clear a street - fast - there are a wide variety of military-use shotguns. From single fire to semi-automatic to fully automatic shotguns, there is one to suit your every need: injure, maim, or destroy.

#### Benelli M1 Super 90

The M1 Super 90 is based on the mechanism of the 121 M1, however the design is all new. The reloading is quick, much like its predecessor's.

**TABLE 6-4: SHOTGUNS**

Weapon		Damage	Critical	Range Increment	Rate of Fire
<i>Benelli M1 Super 90 (12-ga)</i>		2d8	20	40 ft.	S
Magazine	Size	Weight	Purchase DC	Restriction	
7 int.	Large	8 lb.	17	Lic (+1)	

Weapon		Damage	Critical	Range Increment	Rate of Fire
<i>Daewoo USAS-12 (12-ga)</i>		2d8	20	40 ft.	S, A
Magazine	Size	Weight	Purchase DC	Restriction	
*	Large	11 lb.	18	Res (+2)	

Weapon		Damage	Critical	Range Increment	Rate of Fire
<i>Benelli M1 Super 90 (12-ga)</i>		2d8	20	40 ft.	S
Magazine	Size	Weight	Purchase DC	Restriction	
7 int.	Large	8 lb.	17	Lic (+1)	

Weapon		Damage	Critical	Range Increment	Rate of Fire
<i>Pancor Jackhammer (12-ga)</i>		2d8	20	50 ft.	S, A
Magazine	Size	Weight	Purchase DC	Restriction	
7 int.	Large	8 lb.	17	Lic (+1)	

\* See this weapon's description for details.

This weapon can fire 3.5-in. shells. When loaded with one or more such shells, its magazine capacity is reduced to 6.

#### **Daewoo USAS-12**

A gas-operated shotgun, the Daewoo USAS-12 is a semiautomatic weapon designed for military purposes. Designed for minimal recoil and ease of handling, it can take a 12-round box or a 28-round drum. This weapon fires 2.75-in. shells only.

This weapon is unreliable (see "Reliability" earlier in this chapter).

#### **HK 512**

A gas-operated semiautomatic shotgun, the HK 512 fires only standard-length cartridges. A built-in choke disperses the shot as a vertical rectangle or oval, tightening the strike zone. The choke isn't removable, so slug ammunition cannot be used.

This weapon is unreliable when firing low-powered shells (see "Reliability" earlier in this chapter).

#### **Pancor Jackhammer**

The Pancor Jackhammer is a fully automatic shotgun. Using a revolver-like style, its ammunition is loaded in disposable cylinders. Most of the shotgun is made of a new tough plastic with glass fiber.

#### **Choke**

Shotguns are normally set on standard choke. Changing a shotgun's choke requires a Repair check (DC 10) and 1 minute of work. In addition to standard choke, a shotgun can be set on open choke or full choke.

Slug ammunition can only be used in shotguns set on open choke.

**Open Choke:** The weapon grants a +1 circumstance bonus on attacks. However, the weapon's range increment is halved.

**Full Choke:** Instead of the normal penalties for multiple range increments (-2 to the attack roll for each range increment), attacks with the weapon suffer a -1 penalty on attack and damage rolls for each range increment.

#### **Ammunition**

The standard ammunition type for a shotgun is 00 (called "double-ought") buckshot; the '00' designator identifies the diameter of the shot pellets). However, most shotguns can fire a variety of other ammunition types.

**Birdshot:** Birdshot shells are similar in design to buckshot, except that the pellets are much smaller and more numerous. Because of their lighter design, they penetrate less effectively and deal less damage. Birdshot shells are shot ammunition.

Birdshot shells are low-powered; some semiautomatic shotguns become unreliable when firing low-powered shells.

**CS:** The shotgun fires what is effectively a tiny tear-gas grenade. The shell itself deals 2d4 points of nonlethal damage, but is generally not fired at individual targets. Instead, a 5-foot square is targeted (Defense 10).

On the round that is fired, a CS shell produces a 5-foot-radius cloud of irritant that causes eyes to fill with tears. Anyone caught in a cloud of CS gas must make a Fortitude save (DC 15) or be stunned for 1d6 rounds. A gas mask renders the target

immune to the effects. A wet cloth held over the eyes, nose, and mouth provides a +2 bonus on the Fortitude save.

On the following round, the cloud expands to a radius of 10 feet. It disperses after 10 more rounds, although a moderate wind (11+ mph) disperses the smoke in 4 rounds, and a strong wind (21+ mph) disperses it in just 1 round.

CS shells are low-powered slug ammunition, and can only be used in a shotgun with an open choke (see "Choke," above); some semiautomatic shotguns become unreliable when firing low-powered shells.

**CS Penetrator:** This shell is similar to the CS shell, above, except that it's designed to be fired through doors and other barriers to deliver its tear gas load into the space beyond.

A CS penetrator shell deals 2d6 points of normal damage. When fired at a door, wall, or other barrier no more than 4 inches thick, if it deals damage equal to or greater than the barrier's hardness, it penetrates the barrier and affects the 5-foot square on the other side.

On the round that it is fired, a CS penetrator shell fills the square on the opposite side of the barrier with a cloud of irritant that causes eyes to fill with tears (identical to the cloud produced by a normal CS shell). On the following round, the cloud fills all adjacent squares. It disperses after 10 rounds, though a moderate wind (11+ mph) disperses the smoke in 4 rounds, and a strong wind (21+ mph) dispenses it in 1 round.

**Dragon:** This shell shoots out a gout of fire, effectively turning a shotgun into a low-powered flamethrower. When fired, the shotgun shoots a 5-foot-wide, 20-foot-long line of flame that deals 2d6 points of fire damage (Reflex half, DC 16) to all creatures and objects in its path. No attack roll is necessary.

Any creature or flammable object that takes damage from a dragon shell risks catching on fire (see "Catching on Fire" in *d20 Modern Roleplaying Game™*, Chapter Seven: Gamemastering, The Modern World).

Dragon shells do not provide the necessary gas pressure to operate semiautomatic shotgun mechanisms; for this reason, a weapon firing dragon shells always operates at the single shot rate of fire. Furthermore, any weapon that fires a dragon shell becomes unreliable until it receives special maintenance (requiring 30 minutes).

**Riot:** Riot shells are used to break up riots or subdue targets without seriously injuring them. A riot shell deals nonlethal damage. Riot shells are low-powered; some semiautomatic shotguns become unreliable when firing low-powered shells.

**Slug:** A slug shell contains a single, heavy projectile, similar to a conventional bullet fired from a rifle or other longarm. Because of its size and low velocity, a shotgun slug is not as accurate as a rifle bullet; except at short range, slugs are inferior to rifle rounds, and are generally only offered to provide a close-range alternative to shot ammunition that doesn't require a separate weapon. Slug shells are slug ammunition, and can only be used in a shotgun with an open choke (see "Choke," above).

**Slug Penetrator:** This is a slug shell designed to penetrate armor or cover. Slug penetrator shells are slug ammunition, and can only be used in a shotgun with an open choke (see Choke below).

#### Shotgun Ammunition Lengths

Standard shotgun ammunition is 3 inches long. Shotguns shells are also available in 2.75 inch and 3.5 inch lengths. Not all shotguns can fire 3.5-in. shells, but any shotgun that fires standard-length shells can also fire 2.75-in. shells.

Using 3.5-in. shells grants a +1 equipment bonus to damage. Using 2.75-in. shells imposes a -1 penalty on damage.

### Pistol and Rifle

#### Ammunition

You're stuck crouching behind a car as a madman unleashes hell upon the streets with an AK-47 assault rifle. Bullets spray toward you like water from a kid's super-soaker, tearing into the riddled metal heap that until moments ago was your car. You look up for a moment to gain some perspective when you notice with a shudder that this madman has thought ahead - he's wearing Kevlar armor. Sometimes just a normal full metal jacket won't do. Sometimes you just need more.

The gun isn't the only thing you need to consider in a good old-fashioned gunfight anymore. Ammunition can make or break your chances of survival. Described below are a series of ammunition types that should help make the battle between good and evil a bit more interesting.

**AET Ammunition:** The accelerated energy transfer (AET) round is a recent and frightening advance in ballistics technology. Capable of tearing through armor, yet still capable of slowing down enough to significantly injure their targets,

**TABLE 6-5: PISTOL AND SUBMACHINE GUN AMMUNITION**

Caliber	Ammunition Type	Damage	Purchase DC
.22-in. LR	Ball	2d4	4
	Glaser1	2d4+2	8
	Hollowpoint1	2d4+1	4
.25-in. ACP	Ball	2d4	4
	Glaser1	2d4+2	8
	Hollowpoint1	2d4+1	4
.32-in. ACP	Ball	2d4	5
	Glaser1	2d4+2	9
	Hollowpoint1	2d4+1	4
.380-in. Auto	Ball	2d4	5
	Glaser1	2d4+2	9
	Hollowpoint1	2d4+1	4
.38-in. Special	Ball	2d6	5
	Armor piercing2	2d6-1	6
	Glaser1	2d6+2	9
	Hollowpoint1	2d6+1	5
.357-in. Magnum	Ball	2d6	5
	Armor piercing2	2d6-1	6
	Glaser1	2d6+2	9
	Hollowpoint1	2d6+1	5
.40-in. S&W	Ball	2d6	5
	Cold-loaded	2d6-1	6
	AET	2d6+1	10
	Cold-loaded	2d6	11
	Armor piercing2	2d6-1	6
	Cold-loaded2	2d6-2	7
	Glaser1	2d6+2	9
	Cold-loaded1	2d6+1	10
	Hollowpoint1	2d6+1	5
Cold-loaded1	2d6	6	
.41-in. Action Exp.	Ball	2d8	6
	AET	2d8+1	11
	Armor piercing2	2d8-1	7
	Glaser1	2d8+2	9
	Hollowpoint1	2d8+1	6
.45-in. ACP	Ball	2d6	5
	Cold-loaded	2d6-1	6
	AET	2d6+1	10
	Cold-loaded	2d6	11
	Armor piercing2	2d6-1	6
	Cold-loaded2	2d6-2	7
	Glaser1	2d6+2	9
	Cold-loaded1	2d6+1	10
	Hollowpoint1	2d6+1	5
Cold-loaded1	2d6	6	
.44-in. Magnum	Ball	2d8	5
	Armor piercing2	2d8-1	6
	Glaser1	2d8+2	9
	Hollowpoint1	2d8+1	5

.50-in. Action Exp.	Ball	2d8	6
	Glaser1	2d8+2	10
	Hollowpoint1	2d8+1	6
5.45mm	Ball	2d4	5
	Glaser1	2d4+1	5
5.7mm FN	Ball	2d8	7
	Cold-loaded	2d8-2	8
	Armor piercing2	2d8-1	8
	Cold-loaded2	2d8-3	9
7.62x26mm Russian	Ball	2d6	6
	Cold-loaded	2d6-1	7
	Hollowpoint1	2d6+1	6
	Cold-loaded1	2d6	7
9x18mm Russian	Ball	2d4	5
	Hollowpoint1	2d4+1	5
9mm Parabellum	Ball	2d6	5
	Cold-loaded	2d6-1	6
	AET	2d6+1	10
	Cold-loaded	2d6	11
	Armor piercing2	2d6-1	6
	Cold-loaded2	2d6-2	7
	Glaser1	2d6+2	9
	Cold-loaded1	2d6+1	10
	Hollowpoint1	2d6+1	5
	Cold-loaded1	2d6	6
	Tracer	2d6	7
10mm	Ball	2d6	5
	AET	2d6+1	10
	Armor piercing2	2d6-1	6
	Glaser1	2d6+2	9
	Hollowpoint1	2d6+1	5

**1** If your target has armor or natural armor, you suffer a -1 penalty on attack rolls when using this ammunition type.

**2** If your target has armor or natural armor, you gain a +1 circumstance bonus on attack rolls when using this ammunition type.

AET rounds are capable of dealing a lot of damage.

Using AET ammunition adds a +1 equipment bonus to your weapon's attacks and damage. Use of AET ammunition makes the weapon unreliable.

**AP Ammunition:** Typically coated with Teflon, armor-piercing (AP) rounds have the ability to penetrate armor easily. However, they also have the ability to penetrate the target just as easily, decreasing the amount of damage the round can do. If your target has armor or natural armor, you gain a +1 circumstance bonus on attack rolls when using this ammunition type. However, you suffer a -1 penalty on damage rolls (regardless of whether your target is armored or not).

**Ball Ammunition:** This is the standard ammunition of a pistol. This is also known as the full metal jacket.

The standard damage shown for each weapon in this book reflects ball ammunition; no special rules apply.

**Cold-Loaded Ammunition:** Cold-loaded rounds are normal cartridges that have been loaded with less charge, allowing the bullet to never break the speed of sound. This makes the round subsonic and relatively silent. A listener must make a Listen check (DC 10) to hear a gun discharging cold-loaded rounds.

For firearms that normally deal 2d4 points of damage, cold-loaded ammunition has no special effect. For those that normally deal 2d6 points of damage, cold-loaded ammunition imposes a -1 penalty on damage. For firearms that normally deal 2d8 or 2d10 points of damage, cold-loaded ammunition imposes a -2 penalty on damage. Cold-loaded ammunition is not available for weapons that normally deal more than 2d10 damage.

Some silenced weapons do not require cold-loaded ammunition. However, using standard ammunition in these weapons imposes the same penalties on damage as the use of cold-loaded ammunition (because the weapon slows the bullet's speed in the same manner that cold-loading does).

**Glaser Ammunition:** Glaser ammunition is a light round. It has almost no ability to penetrate armor. However, when it impacts the target, it shatters and makes it much more deadly by tearing up the flesh and internal organs.

If your target has armor or natural armor, you suffer a -2 penalty on attack rolls when using this ammunition type. However, you gain a +1 circumstance bonus on damage.

**Hollowpoint Ammunition:** Hollowpoint rounds, also known as "dum-dums," are hollow-tipped bullets that mushroom out into a larger surface area upon impact. Thus, they transfer all of their energy into the target rather than punching cleanly through tissues, doing much more damage. Due to their

lack of penetrating capability, they are largely ineffective against armor.

If your target has armor or natural armor, you suffer a -1 penalty on attack rolls when using this ammunition type. However, you gain a +1 circumstance bonus on damage (regardless of whether your target is armored or not).

**Tracer Ammunition:** Tracer rounds have tiny phosphorous flares located in the back of the cartridge. They're used to draw a line of fire for the gunner to target his opponent (and possibly the gunner's teammates can benefit as well, if they and the gunner have the proper training; see the Spec Ops prestige class in Chapter Three). Typically, tracers are placed in every third, fifth, or tenth round, depending upon the type of firearm and its rate of fire.

This ammunition grants a +1 equipment bonus on attack rolls,

but only when the weapon is fired on autofire and 10 bullets are used in the attack. For instance, this bonus applies if you make a standard autofire attack. If you use the Burst Fire feat, you gain the bonus only if you choose to fire 10 bullets instead of the 5 normally required by the Burst Fire feat (firing these additional bullets does not otherwise affect your attack or

damage rolls).

The damage shown for with each weapon description and on the weapons tables reflects standard ball ammunition. Using alternative types of ammunition usually results in the weapon dealing different damage.

**TABLE 6-6: RIFLE AND MACHINEGUN AMMUNITION**

Caliber	Ammunition Type	Damage	Purchase DC
5.45x40mm Russian	Ball	2d8	5
	Armor piercing1	2d8-1	6
	Tracer	2d8	7
5.56mm	Ball	2d8	4
	Cold-loaded	2d8-2	5
	AET	2d8+1	9
	Cold-loaded	2d8-1	10
	Armor piercing1	2d8-1	5
	Cold-loaded1	2d8-3	6
	Glaser2	2d8+2	8
	Cold-loaded2	2d8	9
	Hollowpoint2	2d8+1	4
	Cold-loaded2	2d8-1	5
	Tracer	2d8	6
5.8mm Chinese	Ball	2d8	6
7.62x39mm Russian	Ball	2d8	4
	Armor piercing1	2d8-1	5
	Tracer	2d8	6
4.7mm HK Caseless	Ball	2d8	10
	Armor piercing1	2d8-1	11
7.62mm	Ball	2d10	4
	Cold-loaded	2d10-1	5
	AET	2d10+1	9
	Cold-loaded	2d10	10
	Armor piercing1	2d10-1	5
	Cold-loaded1	2d10-2	6
	Glaser2	2d10+2	8
	Cold-loaded2	2d10+1	9
	Hollowpoint2	2d10+1	4
	Cold-loaded2	2d10	5
	Tracer	2d10	6
7.62x54mm Russian	Ball	2d10	4
	Armor piercing1	2d10-1	5
	Tracer	2d10	6
9mm SP-5	Armor piercing3	2d8-3	10
9mm SP-6	Armor piercing3	2d8-1	10
	Cold-loaded2	2d8-3	11
.50in Browning	Ball	2d12	6
	Armor piercing1	2d10-1	7
	Tracer	2d12	8
12.7x107mm R.	Ball	2d10-1	6
	Armor piercing1	2d10-1	7
	Tracer	2d12	8

### Magic Items

Since the opening of the Rip, things just have not been the same. Titans are more commonly in the public eye (or at least ear). The Daemonhost have begun putting their Machiavellian plans into motion. Along with that, seemingly mundane items have begun to show rather arcane traits. From pistol clips that never end to wallets with endless space, these items are truly remarkable to the initiated and the skeptical alike.

### Arnold's Clip

When not in use, this item appears as an old ammunition clip with a single bullet inside. When held against a firearm of any type, Arnold's clip melds with the weapon. It can be removed at any time by field-stripping the weapon (requiring 5 minutes). While the clip is attached to a weapon, however, that weapon will never run out of ammunition.

When the weapon's normal ammunition is exhausted, the clip automatically chambers another single round. This limits the number of attacks the weapon can make to a single shot every round (regardless of its normal rate of fire or the number of attacks its user normally has), but it may make that single attack every round without running out of ammunition.

The gun can be reloaded as normal while the clip is melded into it, and the clip is completely undetectable while so melded.

Type: Wondrous Item (magic); Caster Level: 9th; Purchase DC: 37; Weight: -.

### Band-Aids of Curing

These Band-Aids always come in boxes of 10. When applied to a wound, no matter what the size, a band-aid immediately heals 1d8+3 hit points of damage and then fades away.

Type: Wondrous Item (magic); Caster Level: 3rd; Purchase DC: 29; Weight: -.

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27; Weight: -.

### Pistol Talisman

This item appears to be nothing more than a necklace with a small coin depending from it, but it is much more than that. At the wearer's will, with a slight tug, the talisman transforms into a pistol. Transforming the talisman requires 1 attack action. This action transforms the necklace into a fully-loaded (with standard ammunition) handgun of your choice. The weapon operates as normal for a weapon of its type in all ways, until it is emptied of ammunition. At that point, it crumbles to fine dust and blows away.

Type: Wondrous Item (magic); Caster **Level:** 5th; Purchase DC: 28; Weight: -.

### Shades of Darkvision

These stylish sunglasses grant the wearer the benefit of the darkvision spell while worn.

Type: Wondrous Item (magic); Caster **Level:** 3rd; Purchase DC: 31; Weight: -.

### Skeleton Key

This tool is a must have for lock pickers. A key made of actual bones, this device can be used to break into any locked place that has a keyhole. With a full-round action, a character can use the key on any key-locking mechanism, thus gaining a +10 bonus on his Disable Device check to open that lock.

Type: Wondrous Item (magic); Caster **Level:** 5th; Purchase DC: 32; Weight: -.

### Stuntman's Steering Wheel

Many people love fast cars, and some seem to live for making their car that much faster and that much smoother. One item that often gets overlooked is the steering wheel. However, the stuntman's steering wheel could be the most significant upgrade to any car. The wheel is black, with a smooth leather rim. When attached to a car, it grants the driver a +3 bonus to all Drive checks that involve steering the vehicle. The wheel can be attached to any car in just 1 minute.

Type: Wondrous Item (magic); Caster **Level:** 4th; Purchase DC: 32; Weight: 2 lb..

### The Van

While it appears like a normal cargo van from the outside, once you get inside, The Van is clearly anything but. The driver's cabin is separated from the rest of the van by a sheet metal wall and is mundane in every way. The cargo area, however, contains a large extradimensional space that can only be entered by those who know the command word to open the doors. If anyone else opens the doors (which are never locked) they see nothing but the normal cargo area of an empty van.

The extradimensional space is a 20-foot cube, lit by a pair of lamps mounted on the wall. These lamps are equipped with

dimmer switches and can be set from complete darkness to near-daylight illumination. There are two electrical sockets in the room (120-volt only), and the temperature is always comfortable. The area does not contain any food or water, however, nor does it have a restroom or other waste disposal devices. Many versions of The Van are used by government agencies for surveillance or transportation of prisoners. Painted black with deeply tinted windows, these black vans are becoming a much more common sight in the world since the appearance of the Daemonhost.

Type: Wondrous Item (magic); Caster **Level:** 9th; Purchase DC: 42; Weight: -.

### Wallet of Currency

Looking like a standard brown or black leather billfold wallet, the wallet of currency has the ability to change any money within it to any other currency at will, always at the current rate of exchange. Further, whenever a charge is expended, the owner gains a +1 bonus to Wealth for his next purchase check. A character can use up to all of the remaining charges at once. This item begins with 10 charges; once these are used up, the wallet becomes nonmagical.

Type: Wondrous Item (magic); Caster **Level:** 4th; Purchase DC: 33; Weight: -.

### Wallet of Holding

Looking like a standard brown or black leather billfold wallet, the wallet of holding has enough room within its extradimensional folds to hold up to 250 pounds of items. No individual objects to be put into the wallet can be any larger than roughly the size of a football or weigh any more than 25 pounds. The owner can pull any item he has placed into the wallet out with 1 full-round action.

Type: Wondrous Item (magic); Caster **Level:** 3rd; Purchase DC: 32; Weight: -.



# TERRORS

chapter seven



The world of Dark Inheritance is filled with nightmares. First among them are the Daemonhost, decadent, spiteful, and profane creatures from the Abyss. They despise the humanity they once ruled and desire to do so again. As if this was not bad enough, the Rip released not only the dread Daemonhost but their daemonic servants as well. For ages, the daemon cults summoned these lesser servitors of the Host to do their bidding, but now they are released into the world without the controls of even the debased cults. And the creatures from the dark realm of the Abyss are not the only threats facing the world.

Humanity is also threatened by strange creatures that slip silently into our world from the Otherworld, predators who are not fearful of man and who now hunt in the shadows just beyond our sight. Rumors of these creatures are heard nightly on the evening news, but little physical evidence has been released. Terror does not, however, always come from

## TERRORS



some outside source; it lives behind closed doors and in the shadows of the cities. No other terror is more debased than the atrocities men commit upon other men. Terrors driven by fear, lust, and greed are horrible sights to behold, and are often far more difficult to uncover and prevent than some creature stalking a children's playground.

### Cults

The return of the Daemonhost has opened a new chapter in the book of horrors, one that is well-known yet alien, fearsome and bloody. The creatures from the Abyss have found many who will aid them in their endeavors, especially when the creatures must only offer up a few meager scraps of power to their mortal servitors. Wise evils know well the power of these servants and have formed organized groups of humans to aid them in their endeavors, creating the first real cults in thousands of years.

Though the majority of these cults lack much real power, they present a very real threat to the titans. The Daemonhost have perfected many diabolical rites, allowing them to extract the raw power from the bodies of the inheritors, ripping them apart and leaving them spent and broken in the process. It is little understood how this works, yet it is known that it involves tapping into the power of the birthrights and ripping it from the titans' tortured flesh.

For game purposes, all cults receive their knowledge and power from a member of the Daemonhost. These daemonic patrons provide the cultists with the rituals, spells, and other techniques they need to carry out the wishes of the patron and further the goals of the Daemonhost. Because of this, cults naturally tend to fall into conflict with the titans, who may find them to be surprisingly difficult to deal with and frighteningly hard to destroy.

## Formation of a Cult

Occult knowledge is not a common thing, and it grants the possessor a certain degree of power. In the times before commonly recorded history, this knowledge was spelled out explicitly, but much the occult knowledge of the ancients has long since been fractured and lost. As men and their protectors, most notably the titans, destroyed those who would prey upon them, the most powerful occult masters were laid to waste and their strange towers and dark libraries were cast down and lost.

In the intervening millennia, scraps and fragments of this lost lore have resurfaced and been incorporated into the mysterious cults of men. Few possessed enough of the accumulated knowledge to accomplish anything meaningful, yet a tiny fraction among those who pretend to true understanding actually gained enough insight to begin practicing real rituals. When the Daemonhost returned, it swept up many of these men and women and is now using them for its own ends. Though some were strong enough to hold fast to their own beliefs and principles, and are even now stretching their occult wings to gather the suddenly available occult lore, most were more than happy to have a daemonic patron to call their own.

But the greatest effect of the Daemonhost on the world of the occult is the way in which it has stirred the currents in its search for greater power. The Daemonhost, in their search for items of true occult power, have tipped off pretender cults and revealed the true roots of power in the process. For every daemon-guided cultist in search of a moldering old tome, there are five more who are alerted to his actions and who begin seeking it out on their own, seeking the power of their rivals. This has turned the quest for occult lore into a dangerous scavenger hunt, with the participants willing to kill anyone who gets in their way.

Once the seed of a cult is planted, it grows quickly. In this troubled time, anyone who appears to have any of the answers is regarded as a person worth knowing. Those of weak will or who fear that the end of times is upon them latch onto these men and women, and the core of the cult is created. As more and more find their way into the cult, it grows in power and its membership swells, giving it yet more power, a curious and terrible cycle of daemonic influence. Every person who joins the cult may draw others into the cult's embrace, and very large cults often take on a life of their own, far exceeding the original goals of the founder.

## The Leader

The leader of a cult either has previous knowledge of the occult or is given such knowledge by a daemon. In the former case, the cult leader has at least 10 ranks in the Knowledge (arcane lore) skill, representing a deeper understanding of arcane secrets than is possessed by most. Any character with this level in the appropriate Knowledge skill may attempt to form a new cult. Characters with a daemonic patron may attempt to form a cult without any ranks of Knowledge (arcane), provided the patron has the capability of providing his followers with the power they crave.

Regardless of how the character fulfills the prerequisites to become a cult leader, there may be difficulties in creating a cult. Doing so requires interpersonal skills, arcane knowledge,

and a steady pool of followers from which to draw power.

## The First Initiates

The leader of the cult will normally initiate those he already knows into his cult first, perhaps even inducting his own family into the inner circle of his knowledge. In its earliest stages, the cult cannot yet rely on word of mouth to grow, and its size must instead increase based solely on the efforts of its leader. Encouraging someone to join a cult requires a successful Diplomacy check (DC 25). Each attempt requires a week's worth of consultation with the prospective cultist, with at least 1 hour each day spent discussing with the target the cult, its goals, and the benefits it may provide. The following circumstance bonuses or penalties apply to this skill check:



Target seeking occult lore	+2
Target already belongs to rival cult	-5
Leader can display minor occult power (1st-level spells)*	+5
Leader can display major occult power (2nd- or higher-level spells)*	+10
Target is skeptical of occult lore	-5
Target belongs to an organized religion	-2

\* Apply only one of these modifiers.

The initiator's Reputation modifier also applies to any attempts made to bring another into the cult, which is one reason modern cults love to get celebrities attached to their cause, even if only covertly. It's one thing to have that weird guy at the corner bookshop ask you to join his coven, but it's quite another to be asked to join a special circle of friends by your favorite pop star or your corporation's CEO.

The GM should use the above as guidelines and feel free to apply other modifiers, as appropriate. If the Diplomacy check succeeds, the subject agrees to join the cult and is considered a member for one month (see below for more information about cult membership).

If the leader needs to find suitable subjects for his cult (having exhausted the prospects among his family, friends, coworkers, and the like), he can make a Gather Information check (DC 25) to locate possible recruits. This check requires one week's time and takes up at least 2 hours each day of that week. If the check succeeds, the cult leader has located a potential member and may attempt to recruit her, as noted above.

Once a cult has at least three initiates, other than the leader, it begins to take on a life of its own and may grow without the leader's direct intervention.

### The Initiates

Initiates of a cult are the rank-and-file members, those who follow the leader and do as he says in order to gain occult or earthly power of one sort or another. They range in personality and nature as much as members of any religion, from the wild-eyed fanatics to the dabblers who attend services a couple of times each month as a hedge against the unknown rather than from any real sense of devotion. Whatever their nature, those who pledge their loyalty to a cult become its support system and the medium through which others find and join the cult. Once a cult has at least three initiates, each of them may attempt to invite others to join the cult, with the permission of the leader. Each initiate may make the appropriate Gather Information and Diplomacy checks, as detailed above, to find and invite potential cultists. If these checks succeed, additional members are brought into the cult and begin contributing to the overall strength of the group.

The problem with large numbers of initiates is that it makes the cult easier to find and increases the difficulty of hiding its activities from the prying eyes of other cults. While this may not be a problem, once a cult begins making a name for itself, it is certain that there will be repercussions and enemies to deal with, even if these are only outspoken detractors on the local town council. Particularly amongst the more powerful or

**TABLE 7-1: CULT POWERS BY LEVEL**

Level	Granted Power	Ritual Powers	Spells
1	+5 ability bonus, max +1 per cultist	Benison/curse	1 spell level (max 0-level)
2	+5 ability bonus, max +2 per cultist	Daemonic whispers	1 spell level (max 0-level)
3	+10 skill bonus, max +1 per cultist	Daemonic warding	1 spell level (max 1st)
4	+10 skill bonus, max +2 per cultist	Blessing/hex	2 spell levels (max 1st)
5	+10 ability bonus, max +3 per cultist	Calling the lost	2 spell levels (max 1st)
6	+15 skill bonus, max +2 per cultist	Rending the Veil	2 spell levels (max 1st)
7	+5 Wealth bonus, max +1 per cultist	Spirit mount	3 spell levels (max 1st)
8	+5 Reputation bonus, max +1 per cultist	Daemonic influence	3 spell levels (max 1st)
9	+20 skill bonus, max +2 per cultist	Visions	3 spell levels (max 2nd)

10  
+10 Reputation bonus, max +2 per cultist  
Summoning  
4 spell levels (max 2nd)

11  
+10 Wealth bonus, max +2 per cultist  
Spiritual pestilence  
4 spell levels (max 2nd)

12  
+30 skill bonus, max +3 per cultist  
Chain the soul  
4 spell levels (max 2nd)

13  
+15 Reputation bonus, max +3 per cultist  
Assault the mind  
5 spell levels (max 2nd)

14  
+15 Wealth bonus, max +3 per cultist  
Child of Darkness  
5 spell levels (max 3rd)

15  
+5 save bonus, max +1 per cultist  
Binding  
5 spell levels (max 3rd)

16  
+10 ability bonus, max +4 per cultist  
Daemonic vessel  
6 spell levels (max 3rd)

17  
+20 Wealth bonus, max +4 per cultist  
Daemonic guardians  
6 spell levels (max 4th)

18  
+20 Reputation bonus, max +4 per cultist  
Daemonic mentor  
6 spell levels (max 4th)

19  
+10 save bonus, max +2 per cultist  
Slaying  
7 spell levels (max 4th)

20  
+15 ability bonus, max +5 per cultist  
Otherworld haven  
7 spell levels (max 5th)

active cults, however, competition can be fierce and deadly. In any case, a cult's size is limited by the level of its leader: A cult may never have more members than three times its leader's current level. This number can be expanded through the use of the Lieutenant feat (see Chapter Three), but larger cults often find themselves targeted for destruction by titans or other groups who do not wish to see them become too powerful. Note that no member of a cult can ever be of a level greater than the leader's level -3. This can lead to a coup, however, as a lieutenant encroaches on the power of the leader and chooses to destroy the cult's founder rather than stifle his own growth.

### The Power of a Cult

A cult's power is tied directly to the power of its individual members. A cult has a level, just like a character, and gains benefits based on that level. The more powerful the cult, the greater its ability to provide for its membership and the more powerful its benefits. A small cult with a few powerful members, for example, will be able to provide all of its members with some minor or even intermediate powers, while very large cults will either have correspondingly larger numbers of members with minor powers, a few members with significantly greater powers, or some combination of the two. Whatever the exact dispersion of powers within a cult, it is a simple fact that cult power is often proportional to membership size.

#### Determining the Level of a Cult

The cult's level is determined by three factors: its leader's level, its number of members, and the overall power of those members. The leader's level is an indirect factor, as it simply determines the maximum level of the individual members. To determine the level of a cult, first calculate the average level of its members, then add 1 to this number for every five members (other than the leader) who belong to the cult. Note that the cult may never have a level higher than its leader, unless the leader also has the Daemonic Boon feat (see Chapter Three); if the cult's level would otherwise be higher than the cult leader's level, reduce it to the same level. Once the level of cult is determined, check the table below to see what potential powers the cult can offer its members. Note that there are three columns: Granted Powers, Ritual Powers, and Spells. Granted powers are normally ability score adjustments, virtual feats, or other constant enhancements to the power of the cultists. Ritual powers can be called upon by the cult but only at great cost to themselves or others - sacrifices are the order of the day, since these costs can be heavy. Spells details the number of spell levels available to the cult, as well as the highest level of spells the cultists can learn.

**Granted Power:** Granted powers are provided as a total cumulative bonus, with a maximum upper limit per cultist. Thus, the leader of a 5th-level cult would have 20 points of ability bonuses to distribute, as well as 20 points of skill bonuses; no individual cult member could receive more than a +3 bonus to ability scores (these 3 points can be distributed however she wishes among her abilities, though) and a +2 bonus to skills. All bonuses provided by the cult have no type, and thus stack with other bonuses to the same ability, skill, and so on. The leader of the cult can divide the total accumulated bonuses up amongst his followers however he wishes, and the individual

cult member may divide the points she is given in any way she sees fit.

**Ritual Powers:** See below. A cult cannot normally perform more rituals in a month than its leader's Charisma modifier (minimum 1).

**Spells:** The ability to work magic is a powerful gift and one not to be taken lightly. At each level, the cult gains a new number of spell levels to grant to its members, along with a level limit to any individual spell granted. For this purpose, treat 0-level spells as being 1/2 a spell level. This works in much the same way as granted powers. At level 9, for example, the cult may bestow up to 18 spell levels on its members, but none of the spells made available may be above 2nd level. No single cultist may ever be provided with more than 3 spells by the cult at a single time.

If your campaign, unlike Dark Inheritance, separates magic into arcane and divine types, then all spells granted in this way are normally arcane, but may be divine at the GMs discretion. It is recommended that divine spells cost twice as many levels to gain in this way, however (i.e., a 2nd-level divine spell would cost 4 spell levels).

### Ritual Powers

In addition to the many individual benefits members of the cult gain, the cult as a whole may benefit from the many ritual powers available to a cult as it grows in size and strength. These ritual powers require a great deal of time investment and drain the personal energies of those involved. Under normal circumstances, a cult cannot perform more rituals in a month than its leader's Charisma modifier (minimum 1), although there are those who have discovered methods for increasing this limit (see "Sacrifices," below).

It is important to realize that rituals are not spells in the standard sense of the word, but draw directly upon the strength of the Daemonhost to generate their benefits. This means they cannot simply be dispelled or counterspelled. The best time to stop a ritual is while it is being performed. Once completed, the benefits of the ritual commence immediately and may only be stopped by an opposing ritual.

A Gather Information check (DC 30 - the level of the cult performing the ritual) is necessary to discover a ceremony being performed in a given city. For these purposes, a city is considered to be a major metropolitan area with from 100,000 to 499,999 people. For local populations of different sizes, consult the chart below to find the modifier to the Gather Information DC.

Population	DC Modifier
499 or less	-10
500-2,499	-5
2,500-9,999	-2
10,001-99,999	-1
500,000-1,000,000	+1
1,000,001-2,000,000	+2
2,000,001+	+5

If you know at least one member of any local cult, you gain a

further +2 circumstance bonus to any Gather Information skill checks made to learn of an impending ritual.

After you discover the ritual in its planning stages, you will have 1d4 weeks before the ritual begins (this may be modified by your GM as appropriate, and is meant to serve as a guideline only). You can disrupt a ritual simply by preventing one or more of the involved cultists from attending.

If, after discovering the ritual in progress, you succeed at a Knowledge (arcane) skill check (DC 10 + level of the cult performing the ritual), you may attempt a counter-ritual. Your counter-ritual must take place during the same time period as the ritual, and you must have as many total levels of participants as the total levels of the cultists participating in the ritual you are attempting to stop.

To perform the counter-ritual, you engage in an opposed level check (1d20 + your cult's level) against the cult's level check (1d20 + the cult's level). You find your cult level by exactly the same method as you determine a normal cult's **Level:** see "Determining the Level of a Cult," above. If you succeed, you are able to prevent the success of the ritual.

Note that your enemies may discover your counter-ritual in the same manner as you discovered the ritual in the first place.

If you want to take a more direct hand in stopping the enemy cultists, you can raid the ritual itself. Killing or rendering unconscious any member of the ritual will end the ritual immediately, but will also gain you the enmity of the cult, who is likely to attack you posthaste.

### Ritual Descriptions

The various known cult rituals and their benefits are described below.

#### Benison/Curse

The simplest of rituals, the benison provides a +2 profane bonus to all skill checks made by cult members as long as they are attempting to achieve a specific goal for the cult. This goal must be stated explicitly when the benison is performed: for example, the proclamation "We must expand our membership" might grant its bonuses to all Diplomacy, Gather Information, and Knowledge (arcane lore) used directly in the service of recruiting new members. The GM is the ultimate arbiter for determining which skill checks are contributing to a cult's current goal, but if there is any doubt the bonus most likely should not apply.

A curse is precisely the opposite of a benison, and imposes a -2 profane penalty to all skill checks made by individuals while they oppose the current stated goal of the cult.

Either version of this ritual requires at least 10 members (not including the leader) to perform and a full 8 hours to complete. The benefits of this ritual last until a period of one week has passed, or until the goal is attained, whichever comes first.

#### Daemonic Whispers

The occult scene is always buzzing with rumors of new discoveries and tantalizing hints of forgotten lore. Daemonic whispers allows the cult to gain further insight into the powers they flirt with and to learn more about others who might be investigating the same powers. Daemonic whispers can be used to

learn one of the following, although this list is by no means exclusive:

- A relic's location. This requires a successful Gather Information check (DC 25), and does not require any of the other expenditures of time or money associated with the search for a relic (see "Looking for a Relic" in Chapter Five).
- Information about another cult. This requires a successful Gather Information check (DC 15). If successful, this ritual reveals any basic facts about that cult, such as the identity of its leader, its current membership, any ritual planned by the targeted cult during the next month, and its current goals and ordinances.
- The presence and general location of the nearest titan within 10 miles per level of the cult of the place in which the ritual is performed. For one lunar month from the time the ritual is performed, the general location of the titan remains discernible to every member of the cult who takes a full-round action to sense it, even if the titan subsequently moves further afield. The cult does not gain information about the titan's exact location. They can tell his general location (for example, that he is staying in a particular hotel in Little Rock, Arizona), but cannot pinpoint it with any more exactitude than that. Note that being aware of the titan's location might not be of any use if she moves hundreds or even thousands of mile away, unless the cult can afford to send members after her - and capturing her may not be the cult's intention in any case...

Daemonic whispers requires at least 7 members (not including the leader) and a full 7 hours to perform.

#### **Daemonic Warding**

Cults need protection, and daemonic warding is the best way to get that protection without investing in massive security contracts. When performed, the warding prevents the passage of enemies into a particular area unless they succeed at a Will save (DC 10 + 1/2 the level of the cult + the leader's Charisma modifier). Those who succeed are able to enter the warded area, which may be a single structure or location no more than 10 square feet in size per level of the cult that performed the ritual. Once inside the structure, individuals are no longer affected by this warding in any way, though if they leave and attempt to re-enter the warded area they must make the save again.

This ritual requires at least 13 members (not including the leader) and 1 hour to perform, and must be performed at night. The benefits of this ritual last until a period of one lunar month has passed.

#### **Blessing/Hex**

This is identical to the benison/curse ritual, except it provides a +4 bonus/penalty rather than +2.

#### **Calling the Lost**

This powerful ritual covers a 20-mile radius around the cult's ritual site with a powerful urge for others of a like mind to seek out the cult. Those who are inclined to be interested in such

things will naturally gravitate toward the cult site, automatically providing 1d4 potential new recruits over the course of the next month. Diplomacy checks made to initiate these prospective cultists receive a +4 bonus.

Note that calling the lost also makes it much easier to find the cult in question, providing a +2 bonus to any Gather Information checks made to locate the cult during the month in which the ritual's effects are active.

This ritual requires at least 9 members (not including the leader) and 24 hours to perform.

#### **Rending the Veil**

Speaking with the dead is a time-honored tradition amongst cultists, and this ritual is used to do just that. By concentrating on a person deceased no more than 10 years per level of the cult, the cultists performing this ritual can open a brief contact with that person's spirit. The spirit can answer any question to which it knew the answer in life. The spirit remains in contact with the cult for 1 minute per cult level. GMs should handle interrogation of the cult in real-time.

This ritual requires at least 3 members (not including the leader) and 30 minutes to perform, and can only be performed in the presence of a defiled holy object or location.

#### **Spirit Mount**

The Daemonhost do not have bodies of their own in the physical world. It is considered a great honor (and is sometimes necessary to the cult's survival) among certain cultists to allow a Daemonhost to possess his or her body. This terrible ritual summons one of the Daemonhost (see "Daemonhost" later in this chapter), a servant of the cult's daemonic patron, which did not escape the Abyss during the Rip. This Daemonhost possesses a willing cultist's body for one day per level of the cult, after which time the Daemonhost returns to the Abyss. The Daemonhost cannot have more HD than an amount equal to the Charisma modifier of the cult leader. Daemonic patrons often demand frequent use of this power in exchange for their favors.

This ritual requires at least 13 members (not including the leader) to perform. The ritual must be begun at precisely midnight, and is completed just as the sun touches the horizon (or after 6 hours, whichever is longer).

#### **Daemonic Influence**

It is sometimes necessary to gain a measure of influence over an individual in order to further the goals of the cult. The affected target will not do anything to benefit the cult directly, but will use his authority and any powers his social or official position entails to keep the cult out of trouble. This is most often used to target local police officials, for instance, to keep them from investigating the cult too efficiently. Individuals targeted by this ritual are allowed a Will save (DC 10 + 1/2 the level of the cult + the leader's Charisma modifier) to avoid its effects. If the save fails, the cultists have gained a new friend for the next month, after which time the effects of

this ritual fade completely, with no memory of undue actions left in the mind of the victim.

This ritual requires at least 5 members (not including the leader) and 2 hours to perform. It must be performed at night.

### Visions

This ritual provides the cult leader (or a cult member he designates) with a limited ability to see and hear a target at any distance. The cult member may attempt to focus on a target place or individual he knows or has seen at least once. With a successful Concentration check (DC 15), the cultist sees and hears anything that transpires in or around the target for 1 minute per level. If the cultist knows the target well or is very familiar with the location, the DC is reduced to only 10. If the target is a place (such as a room or a particular street corner), the cultist may not move his point of view outside of the targeted area, though he may freely move his vision throughout the area. If the target is a person or creature, the cult leader sees and hears only what the person sees and his point of view moves with the person or creature.

This ritual requires at least 3 members (not including the leader) and 1 hour to perform.

### Summoning

The cult is now able to call up a fiend from the Abyss and put it to work temporarily. This ability allows the summoning of any one creature of the Abyss with HD/levels no greater than the current level of the cult. This creature will do as commanded by the cult leader for a period of no more than 1 day per level of the cult, after which it disappears and returns to the Abyss. This ritual requires at least 11 members (not including the leader) to perform and requires also either the presence of a defiled holy object or a human sacrifice. The ritual must be begun at dusk, and runs until just before dawn.

### Spiritual Pestilence

This ritual attacks an individual directly, slowly devouring his spirit over the course of the next month. The target must be known to the cult leader, at least, and must be within 50 miles + 10 miles per level of the cult of the ritual site. The target is allowed a Will save (DC 10 + the level of the cult) each morning, including the first morning after the ritual takes effect, to avoid the effects of the ritual for that day. If the save succeeds, the target suffers no ill effects other than a general unease and a sense of impending doom. If the save fails, however, the target immediately suffers the loss of 1 point of Wisdom. Although this damage is not permanent, it may not be healed until the ritual's effects have expired, exactly one month from the time the ritual is completed. Targets killed by this ability appear to the uninitiated to have died from natural causes, though the exact cause varies from person to person. A character who makes a Knowledge (arcane lore) check (DC 15 + the level of the cult responsible) recognizes that the effect is unnatural, possibly resulting from a curse or enchantment of some sort. A remove curse spell can cancel the ritual, but the caster must first make a level check against the cult's

level to succeed.

This ritual requires at least 11 members (not including the leader) and 5 hours to perform. It must be begun at precisely midnight.

### Chain the Soul

This is a more powerful version of the daemonic influence ritual. Targets affected by this ritual must do whatever they can to protect the cult, however, including endangering their own lives or livelihood. The ritual is otherwise identical to daemonic influence.

### Assault the Mind

This spell is most often used against enemy cultists, especially cult leaders. It operates much as the spiritual pestilence ritual, but affects Intelligence rather than Wisdom (Will DC 15 + 1/2 the level of the cult + the leader's Charisma modifier). The target is clearly deranged while under the effects of this ritual, plagued by visions of daemonic creatures assaulting him. This ritual requires at least 13 members (not including the leader) and 13 hours to perform. Otherwise, this ritual is identical to spiritual pestilence.

### Child of Darkness

This vile ritual binds a daemonic spirit into the body of an unborn child. The child, when born, becomes a focus of power for the cult, immediately increasing its level by 1. As long as the child lives, this ritual may not be performed again. If the child is ever slain, the cult immediately loses its bonus level, but otherwise suffers no ill effects.

At the GM's discretion, the child may begin to exhibit unearthly and malevolent powers as it ages.

This ritual requires at least 17 members (not including the leader) and 8 hours to perform. It must be performed at night.

### Binding

When this ritual is performed, a daemon called up by the summoning ritual may be bound into service permanently. Once this ritual succeeds, the daemon will remain in service to the cult as long as it lives. A cult may have more than one daemon bound in this way, but may never have more HD/levels worth of daemons in service than the cult's level.

Otherwise, this ritual is identical to summoning.

### Daemonic Vessel

Through the use of this ritual, the Daemonhost patron of the cult is summoned and allowed to inhabit the body of the child infected through the Child of Darkness ritual. If the patron has more levels/HD than the cult's level, the ritual fails. If it is successful, the patron may use the physical body for as long as it lives, allowing it to perform magic or use other abilities requiring a physical body. If the Child of Darkness is killed, the daemonic patron is not killed, but is banished back to the Abyss. This ritual requires at least 21 members (not including the leader) to perform and requires also either the presence of a

defiled holy object or a human sacrifice. The ritual must be begun at dusk and runs until just before dawn.

### **Daemonic Guardians**

This increases the power of any daemon held in service to the cult through the binding ritual. When the ritual is performed, all such daemons gain 1 HD, with all the benefits that entails. This allows the daemons to exceed the normal limit on HD/levels as explained in binding.

This ritual requires at least 13 members (not including the leader) to perform and requires also either the presence of a defiled holy object. The ritual must be begun at dusk and runs until just before dawn.

### **Daemonic Mentor**

There are creatures in the Abyss with knowledge completely unknown to living men. This ritual calls one such creature into the service of the cult for a period of one month. During this time, the cult leader either receives a +10 insight bonus to any skill checks he makes with skills in which he already has at least 1 rank, or he is assumed to have 20 ranks in any one skill (even a normally exclusive or class-dependent skill) he does not already possess. The skill not possessed by the cult leader must be chosen at the time the daemonic mentor is summoned.

This ritual requires at least 9 members (not including the leader) and 9 hours to perform.

### **Slaying**

This powerful ritual slays any creature the cult leader knows or has seen at least once before. At the moment of its completion, the ritual creates a powerful and intense blast of Abyssal energy centered on its target. The target is allowed a Fortitude save (DC 10 + 1/2 the level of the cult + the leader's Charisma modifier) to avoid having his Constitution score reduced to 0 and thus dying instantly. If the target succeeds at the save, he instead takes 1d6 points of Constitution damage.

This ritual requires at least 13 members (not including the leader) to perform and also requires the presence of a defiled holy object and the sacrifice of a young animal or human. The ritual must be begun at dusk and runs until precisely midnight, at which point the ritual strikes.

### **Planar Haven**

This most powerful ritual available to a cult moves a single building of up to 2,000 square feet area into a nearby alternate dimension, wrapping it in protective energies sufficient to sustain those who remain within it indefinitely. Time spent in the planar haven is not counted against the span of a creature's natural life, nor do those who remain within the haven have any need for food or water. At least one door to the haven must remain in place in the normal world, which allows cultists to travel freely between one world and the other. A cult may never have more than one planar haven at a given time.

This ritual requires exactly 33 members (not including the leader) and 33 hours to perform, and also requires the sacri-

fice of a titan.

### **Sacrifices**

Over the millennia, the creatures of the Daemonhost perfected serious sacrificial rites by which power was transferred from the life force of mortals into the energy used by the Daemonhost for their own magical powers. These sacrificial rites have survived the ages and are now in use by the modern cultists.

As noted in "Ritual Powers," above, there is normally a limit to the number of rituals that can be performed each month, per cult. This limiting factor can be overcome, however, with the proper sacrifice of life energy, a practice many cultists are more than eager to learn and use.

In general, a cult may gain an additional ritual each month by sacrificing sentient creatures with total HD or levels equal to the level of the ritual to be performed. When titans are sacrificed in this way, their levels each count as 2 levels/HD due to the more potent energy found within their life force. This makes titans particularly ripe targets for cultists, who expend no little effort in tracking down and capturing these enemies of their masters.

This type of sacrifice is not a simple affair, requiring one day per 5 total HD or levels of the sacrificial victims. When a sacrifice is being planned, it can be located just like any other ritual activity, with a +5 circumstance bonus to the Gather Information skill check due to the need to bring in sacrifices and all the extra activity that entails. Sacrifices are often kept tied or drugged while they await their turn on the altar, but all are killed at the appointed time, normally with their veins slashed and the blood collected in a sacrificial urn or other implement.

### **Creatures**

Since the Rip, a new range of creatures has begun to roam our earth. Predators and prey alike, these creatures have evolved with a different set of rules for survival. Now they wander through our jungles, wild and urban alike. They stalk us in the shadows and remain on the edges of our sight, seen only out of the corner of our eyes. These terrors have strange appearances and alien behaviors. Some can do things no beast on earth has ever been able to do, using supernatural abilities to better survive in their magic-rich environment. These creatures come from a much deadlier world, where hunters do not only threaten prey from behind trees or in carefully laid ambushes, but from across the boundaries of the Ethereal Plane.

### **Daemonhost**

The Daemonhost were once the Host, the hedonistic and cruel citizens of a wicked empire that once spanned the world and beyond. Decadence, sadism, and avarice were virtues they upheld. They crafted technology both mundane and magical. Theirs was a golden age of bleak hopelessness and darkness. But they eventually came to rival the gods and threaten the divinities' domains. Although the reasons are lost to time, the progenitors of the titans grew angry with the Host and waged a bloody and final war with them. They finally cast them down and ripped their souls from their quickly cooling bodies. Then the progenitors opened a gateway to the Abyss and threw the Host into the great basalt, iron, and brass cities of the

demons, binding them to the plane so that they could not escape.

But the Host are masters of spellcraft and the eldritch arts. They bent the realm to their will in time, but were also caught in the corrupting grasp of the Abyss. Now they are the masters of the Abyss, the lords of demons. But although the Daemonhost are powerful creatures who draw power directly from the Abyss, they are also marked by it, and those who know how to see its corrupting influence can find them.

When the Rip tore open the seals that had long bound them, many of the Daemonhost escaped into the physical world. For the few minutes that all realms were one, the Daemonhost rampaged through the city (and through many other places in our world). But as the walls between the worlds fell back into place they once again became disembodied souls, weak and vulnerable. Without physical bodies, the Daemonhost do not have the power they did when residing within the Abyss, so they fled. Each Daemonhost is a unique being composed entirely of spirit. They are disembodied souls who possess others to regain access to their power. They are driven by pride, hatred, corruption, and unquenchable desire for power over others.

In spirit form, Daemonhost are invisible entities. The sensitive may detect a lingering feeling of malice, but nothing more. Those who have special abilities to sense ethereal or intangible creatures may be able to locate a nearby Daemonhost. To those able to perceive such spirits, the Daemonhost appear as a roiling, serpent-like cloud of smog that seems to devour itself continually.

When possessing a person, the Daemonhost is indistinguishable from a normal human. As they have access to most of the host's memories, they can deceive even friends and family, although long contact with the Daemonhost can reveal noticeable personality changes caused by the possessing spirit.

The Daemonhost are not a monolithic antagonist. Every member of the Daemonhost has its own debased desires, depraved goals, and brooding plans. The Daemonhost are a factionalized enemy with as much competition focused towards other Daemonhost as towards any common enemy. This is one of their greatest weaknesses. While all are devious, manipulative, and driven, many are also irreversibly insane, maddened by their long imprisonment. Some have plans of a new grand empire that spans the two worlds, while others are content to hunt down and slay victim after victim.

The Daemonhost wield impressive eldritch powers that they rip from the Abyss that was once their prison. But they are unable to use most of these powers without a physical body. Soon after the Rip, they took possession of people to protect themselves and hide from those who could hunt them down. Most Daemonhost enjoy playing elaborate games with "lesser minds." They like to fight from a distance, keeping themselves and their host from harm. If pressed into a physical confrontation, a Daemonhost fully manifests itself, tapping directly into the heart of the Abyss for power - but rapidly burning out its host.

The Daemonhost speak and write their own language, a lost agglutinative tongue that may have some relation to Sumerian. They also speak any language spoken by their host and the Abyssal tongue, the language of the Abyss.

The Daemonhost can be divided into four rough categories:

most common, the "attendant"; then the lords; the dukes; and the (thankfully rare) princes. A Daemonhost attendant is the weakest, usually having no more than 2 or 3 class levels, if any, in addition to its base HD. A lord usually has from 4 to 7 class levels in addition to its base HD, with perhaps a few spellcasting class levels. Dukes typically have from 7 to 12 class levels, usually with levels in some spellcasting class. A prince always has 11 or more class levels, and always has a number of levels in a spellcasting class.

#### **Disembodied Daemonhost Species Traits**

**Touch of the Abyss (Su):** The disembodied Daemonhost's touch saps the very life out of its victim, bestowing 1 negative level upon the victim. The Daemonhost gains a +2 profane bonus to its Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma for 24 hours after it inflicts a negative level in this way (since profane bonuses do not stack, it can never have more than a +2 bonus in this way at any given time). If the touch attack scores a critical hit, however, the profane bonus increases to +3. Using touch of the Abyss is an extremely pleasurable and invigorating experience for the Daemonhost.

For each negative level, the opponent suffers a -1 penalty on all skill checks and ability checks, attack rolls, and saving throws, and loses 1 effective level or Hit Die (whenever level is used in a die roll or calculation). A character with spellcasting ability loses the ability to cast one spell of the highest level he or she can cast (player's choice); this loss persists until the negative level is removed.

Negative levels remain until 24 hours have passed or until removed with a spell. If a negative level is not removed before 24 hours have passed, the afflicted opponent must attempt a Fortitude save with a DC of  $10 + 1/2$  the Daemonhost's HD + the Daemonhost's Constitution modifier. On a success, the negative level goes away with no harm to the creature. On a failure, the negative level goes away, but the creature's level is reduced by one. A separate saving throw is required for each negative level. A creature that loses all of its levels or Hit Dice dies and becomes a zombie (See d20 Modern Roleplaying Game™, Chapter Eight: Friends and Foes, "Zombie").

**Host (Su):** Only by possessing a host can the disembodied Daemonhost access its full powers. A Daemonhost can possess any humanoid creature with an Intelligence of 3 or higher. The Daemonhost may possess only one creature at a time.

Possessing a host is not a fast process and takes a number of minutes equal to the HD/levels of the creature being possessed. A disembodied Daemonhost must remain within 5 feet of an intended host to possess that target creature. At the end of each minute, the target must make a Will saving throw opposed to the Daemonhost's Will saving throw.

Once the possession process has elapsed, the number of successful Will saves made by the target is compared to the number of successes garnered by the Daemonhost. If the target succeeded at more of the Will saving throws, he is thereafter immune to possession by this specific disembodied Daemonhost. Moreover, he knows that he was spiritually assaulted, but does not gain any special knowledge from the attack. If the Daemonhost garners more successes than the target, he is possessed. If the numbers of successes are the same, the possession did not work, but the Daemonhost may

attempt to possess that target again. If the intended host successfully threw off the possession attempt.

Other creatures may attempt to prevent the disembodied Daemonhost from taking possession of the target at any time during the possession attempt. Such attempts must be magical in nature (including birthrights). For instance, casting resistance or prayer on the intended host might assist the target in making his Will saves. Casting mage armor or a similar force effect upon the intended host provides a +4 circumstance bonus to his Will saving throws to resist the possession. If the Daemonhost successfully possessed the target, that creature's mind is completely subjugated. The Daemonhost may act as if the body were its own. The possessing Daemonhost have access to all of its host's memories and knowledge, as if by means of the psionic power mind probe. Once a Daemonhost possesses a host, apply the Daemonhost template to the possessed creature. A disembodied Daemonhost may leave its host at any time as a free action. The host retains only fragmentary memories of the experience. Once a disembodied Daemonhost has taken a host, it is extremely difficult to exorcise. Only spells such as dismissal and certain magic items and relics can drive the creature from its host.

**Spectral Eyes (Ex):** Disembodied Daemonhost are unable to sense the physical world, relying solely upon their ability to perceive the spiritual essence of creatures. While disembodied, the Daemonhost can sense any intelligent life (Intelligence score 3+) within 60 feet, but is unable to see, hear, taste, touch, or smell. Creatures hidden behind or within a force effect cannot be sensed by the disembodied Daemonhost.

**Incorporeal (Su):** While disembodied, the Daemonhost have no bodies. They can be harmed only by other incorporeal creatures, +1 or better magic weapons, and spells, spell-like abilities, or supernatural abilities (including birthrights). They are immune to all non-magical attack forms. Even when hit by spells or magic weapons, they have a 50% chance to ignore any damage from a corporeal source (except for force effects, such as magic missile). A disembodied Daemonhost can pass through solid objects at will, but not force effects. Its touch attacks pass through natural armor, armor, and shields, although deflection bonuses and force effects (such as mage armor) work normally against it. Disembodied Daemonhost have no scent and move perfectly silently, and thus cannot be heard with Listen checks.

**Telepathy (Su):** Disembodied Daemonhost can communicate telepathically with any creature within 100 feet that has a language. This is their only means of communication.

**Automatic Languages:** Daemonhost read, write, and speak Abyssal as well as their own language, which has no name.

**Disembodied Daemonhost Attendant:** CR 3; Medium-size outsider (incorporeal); HD 2d8+2; hp 11; Mas 12; Init +0; Spd 30 ft., fly 30 ft. (perfect); Defense 14, touch 14, flat-footed 10 (+4 deflection); BAB +2; Grap +2; Atk touch +2 melee (1 negative level); Full Atk touch +2 melee (1 negative level); FS 5 ft. by 5 ft.; Reach 5 ft.; SQ touch of the Abyss, host, spectral eyes, incorporeal, telepathy; AL evil; SV Fort +4, Ref +3, Will +8; AP 0;

Rep +0; Str -, Dex 11, Con 12, Int 18, Wis 16, Cha 18.

**Skills:** Bluff +6, Concentration +3, Intimidate +6, Knowledge (arcane lore) +6, Read/Write Language (any one ancient language), Speak Language (any one ancient language), Spellcraft +6.

**Feats:** Archaic Weapons Proficiency, Iron Will.

**Possessions:** None.

**Advancement:** By character class.

### Disembodied Daemonhost Lord, Dedicated Hero 3/Charismatic

**Hero 3:** CR 9; Medium-size outsider (incorporeal); HD 2d8+2 plus 3d6+3 plus 3d6+3; hp 38; Mas 12; Init +0; Spd 30 ft., fly 30 ft. (perfect); Defense 17, touch 17, flat-footed 13 (+3 class, +4 deflection); BAB +5; Grap +5; Atk touch +5 melee (1 negative level); FS 5 ft. by 5 ft.; Reach 5 ft.; SQ touch of the Abyss, host, blindsight, incorporeal, telepathy; AL evil; SV Fort +8, Ref +6, Will +11; AP 3; Rep +3; Str -, Dex 11, Con 12, Int 18, Wis 16, Cha 19.

**Skills:** Bluff +14, Concentration +10, Decipher Script +7, Gather Information +10, Intimidate +12, Knowledge (arcane lore) +15, Knowledge (theology and philosophy) +8, Listen +9, Read/Write Abyssal, Read/Write Daemonhost, Read/Write Language (any one ancient language), Sense Motive +9, Speak Abyssal, Speak Daemonhost, Speak Language (any one ancient language), Spellcraft +6, Spot +6.

**Feats:** Archaic Weapons Proficiency, Deceptive, Frightful Presence, Iron Will.

**Talents (Dedicated Hero):** Empathy, intuition.

**Talents (Charismatic Hero):** Charm, fast talk.

**Possessions:** None.

### Daemonhost Template Traits

"Daemonhost" is a template that can be added to any humanoid creature (referred to hereafter as the base creature). The creature's type changes to outsider. The template can be applied in a number of ways to create unique Daemonhost of varying power.

**Challenge Rating:** Half that of the base creature (round down), plus the HD/levels of the disembodied Daemonhost.

**Outsider:** Daemonhost have the traits common to outsiders (see d20 Modern Roleplaying Game™, Chapter Eight: Friends and Foes, "Outsiders")

**Hit Dice:** Same as the base creature, plus any class Hit Dice from the disembodied Daemonhost.

**Speed:** Same as the base creature.

**Defense:** Same as the base creature, plus any Defense bonuses from any character levels the disembodied Daemonhost possesses. The Daemonhost loses its deflection bonus to Defense since it is no longer incorporeal.

**Base Attack:** As the base creature, plus the base attack bonuses from any character levels the disembodied Daemonhost possessed.

**Attacks:** As the base creature, plus the Daemonhost retains all attacks from any character levels it had as a disembodied Daemonhost, with the exception of touch of the Abyss.

**Special Qualities:** A Daemonhost retains all the special qualities of the base creature and gains the additional special qualities described below.

**Mark of the Abyss (Ex):** The Abyss marks those who have been corrupted by it. Something about the Daemonhost's presence, whether it is disguised or not, causes animals to become unsettled: dogs whine and back away, horses rear and roll their eyes, and so on. This aura affects all creatures within a radius of 100 feet that have the animal type. An animal must succeed at a Will save (DC = the disembodied Daemonhost's HD + the Daemonhost's Charisma modifier) or become shaken for as long as it remains within 100 feet of the Daemonhost. If it fails the save by more than 10, it becomes panicked.

The Daemonhost can also be sensed by those sensitive enough to feel the mark of the Abyss. Dedicated heroes with the intuition talent (or other characters with a similar ability from some other source) may make a Will saving throw (DC 15 + the Daemonhost's Charisma modifier) when within 100 feet of a Daemonhost. If the saving throw is successful, the character gets a bad feeling, though he cannot determine just what the "bad vibe" comes from. A character with the Sense the Daemonic feat (see "New Feats" in Chapter Three) has a good chance to discern the Daemonhost. Some birthrights, spells, or magic items may be allowed by the GM to detect this mark as well. The spell true seeing reveals the presence of a Daemonhost or any other possessed individual.

**Telepathy (Su):** Daemonhost can communicate telepathically with any creature within 100 feet that has a language.

**Darkvision (Ex):** Daemonhost are able to see clearly in even conditions where there is no source of light as the Abyss is a realm of perpetual and complete darkness. Daemonhost have darkvision with a range of 60 feet.

**Daemon Form (Su):** When threatened with physical conflict, a Daemonhost may reveal its demonic nature even through the human body it possesses. The demon form of every Daemonhost is unique. The rank of the Daemonhost determines the number of daemon form characteristics the template creature gets: Daemonhost attendants choose 1 characteristic from among the selections offered below, Daemonhost lords choose 1d3 characteristics, dukes choose 1d3+1 characteristics, and princes choose 1d4+2 characteristics. Changing to or from demon form is a move action. A slain Daemonhost reverts to its humanoid form, although it remains dead.

• **Claws (Ex)** - The Daemonhost's hands transform into razor sharp claws capable of causing horrific wounds. They deal 1d6 points of damage + Strength modifier (1d8 + Strength if the Daemonhost is Large, or 1d10 + Strength if Huge), and they may penetrate damage reduction as if they were magic weapons with a +2 enhancement bonus (although they confer no actual bonus to attacks).

• **Daemonic Armor (Ex)** - The Daemonhost gains a +4 natural armor bonus to Defense. The daemonic armor can appear as thick hide, scales, jagged plates, chitinous shells, or some other form of natural protection, but once chosen the appearance of the armor remains the same whenever it takes on the daemon form. The natural armor bonus gained from this ability stacks with all other natural armor bonuses.

• **Daemonic Aura (Ex)** - The body of the daemon form is wreathed in shadowy flames of the Abyss. Any opponent within 10 feet must make a Fortitude save (DC 10 + 1/2 the

Daemonhost's HD + the Daemonhost's Constitution modifier) or take 2d6 points of fire damage (half on a successful save). Every round that a creature remains in range of the effect, another Fortitude saving throw is required.

• **Damage Reduction (Ex)** - The Daemonhost gains damage reduction 15/+1. It ignores the first 15 points of damage dealt by a nonmagical weapon, but takes full damage from weapons with a +1 or better magic bonus. Damage reduction does not apply against energy attacks (even nonmagical ones), spells, spell-like abilities, or supernatural abilities (such as birthrights).

• **Deadly Breath (Su)** - The Daemonhost can breathe a 20-foot-long, 5-foot-wide line of abyssal energy twice a day as an attack action. Choose one of the following energy types: acid, cold, sonic/concussion, electricity, or fire. Any creature in the line takes 4d10 points of the chosen type of energy damage, or half damage with a successful Reflex save (DC 10 + 1/2 the Daemonhost's HD + the Daemonhost's Constitution modifier). This daemon form quality may be chosen only once.

• **Enormous Maw (Ex)** - The Daemonhost's mouth grows large and filled with terrifyingly jagged teeth. The Daemonhost gains a bite attack, as well as the improved grab and swallow whole qualities when using this attack (see d20 Modern Roleplaying Game™, Chapter Eight: Friends and Foes, "Common Special Qualities"). The bite deals 1d6 + Strength modifier in damage (1d10 + Strength if the Daemonhost is Large, or 2d6 + Strength if Huge). The Daemonhost can only use its swallow whole ability against an opponent of up to two size categories smaller than itself.

• **Foulness (Ex)** - The Daemonhost exudes a toxic, foul-smelling odor. Any creature within 10 feet must make a Fortitude save (DC 10 + 1/2 the Daemonhost's HD + the Daemonhost's Constitution modifier) or become nauseated for as long as it remains in the affected area and for 1d4 rounds afterward. A nauseated creature cannot attack, cast spells, use spell-like abilities, or do anything else requiring attention or concentration. The only action a nauseated creature can take is a single move action per round. Creatures that successfully save are unaffected and cannot be affected again by the same Daemonhost's foulness for 24 hours.

• **Huge Size (Ex)** - The Daemonhost must have the "Large size" daemon form quality to take this option. The Daemonhost may now grow from Medium-size to Huge size instead of merely to Large. While Huge, it gains a +16 size bonus to Strength and a +8 size bonus to Constitution, but it suffers a -4 size penalty to Dexterity. The change in size also reduces its attack bonus and Defense by 2 (total), although it gains a +5 natural armor bonus to Defense; the Daemonhost receives a -8 size penalty to Hide checks, but gains a +8 size bonus to grapple checks. In addition, the Daemonhost's fighting space increases to 15 ft. by 15 ft. and its reach extends to 10 ft.

• **Immunity (Ex)** - The Daemonhost is immune to one specific type energy or weapon damage. Choose one of the following energy types or weapon damage types. This specific daemon form quality may be chosen multiple times. With each selection, the Daemonhost gains immunity from another energy or weapon damage type.

Acid, cold, sonic/concussion, electricity, fire, ballistic, bludge-

eoning, piercing, slashing, poison, radiation.

• **Large Size (Ex)** – The Daemonhost grows to Large size. It thus gains a +8 size bonus to Strength and a +4 size bonus to Constitution, but it suffers a -2 size penalty to Dexterity. The change in size also reduces its attack bonus and Defense by 1, although it gains a +2 natural armor bonus to Defense; the Daemonhost receives a -4 size penalty to Hide checks, but gains a +4 size bonus to grapple checks. In addition, the Daemonhost's fighting space increases to 10 ft. by 10 ft. and its reach extends to 10 ft.

• **Massive Damage Threshold Boost (Ex)** – The Daemonhost doubles its current Constitution, but only for the purpose of calculating its massive damage threshold.

• **Abyssal Tentacles (Su)** – The Daemonhost sprouts six writhing, shadowy black tentacles. Each tentacle is 10 feet long (Large) and saves as the Daemonhost does. Each tentacle a Defense of AC 16, 1 hit point/per HD of the Daemonhost, an attack bonus of +1/per HD, and a Strength score of 19 (+4 bonus). Every round that a tentacle is not already grappling someone or something, starting the round after it appears, it makes a grapple attack at a random creature or object within 10 feet of it. These attacks take place on the Daemonhost's turn. The tentacles do not attack each other, nor do they attack objects that are smaller than a Medium-size creature. The attacks are like regular grappling attacks, except that they don't provoke attacks of opportunity from opponents. Also, they cause 1d6 points of lethal damage (+4 for Strength).

**Abyssal Powers:** A Daemonhost rips power from the Abyss itself. The rank of the Daemonhost determines the number of Abyssal powers the template creature gets: Daemonhost attendants choose 1 power from among the selections offered below, Daemonhost lords choose 1d2 powers, dukes choose 1d2+1 powers, and princes choose 1d3+2 powers. Some Abyssal powers count as two or more for determining the number of abyssal powers a Daemonhost possesses, as indicated in the power itself.

• **Abyssal Deflection (Ex)** – The Daemonhost uses the power of the Abyss to protect itself. It thus gains a +4 profane bonus to Defense. This bonus remains even if the Daemonhost somehow loses its Dexterity bonus to Defense or is flat-footed.

• **Abyssal Smite (Su)** – As a free action, the Daemonhost may spend 1 action point to increase the damage of a successful melee attack it has just made by an amount equal to its action point dice result (see d20 Modern Roleplaying Game™, Chapter One: Characters, Vital Statistics, "Action Points").

• **Abyssal Initiate (Ex)** – The Daemonhost must have levels in the Initiate class (see Chapter Three, "New Advanced Classes") to take this Abyssal power. The Daemonhost now acts as a conduit for Abyssal energy, effectively turning it into the equivalent of a Huge level 5 focus; thus, the Daemonhost may "carry" spells within itself, and need not use an actual physical focus to hold its spells. It may also bind itself to a physical focus, thus dramatically increasing the number of spells to which it has access.

• **Abyssal Touch (Su)** – The Daemonhost can use its touch of the Abyss attack (see "Disembodied Daemonhost Species Traits,"

above) while in a physical host. This power counts as 2 for determining the number of Abyssal powers a Daemonhost possesses.

• **Aura of Fear (Su)** – As a free action, the Daemonhost can create an aura of fear in a 20-foot radius. This is otherwise identical to the fear spell cast by an 8th-level Initiate (Will DC 10 + 1/2 the Daemonhost's HD + the Daemonhost's Charisma modifier). If the save is successful, that creature cannot be affected again by the aura of fear for 24 hours. Other Daemonhost are immune to the aura of fear.

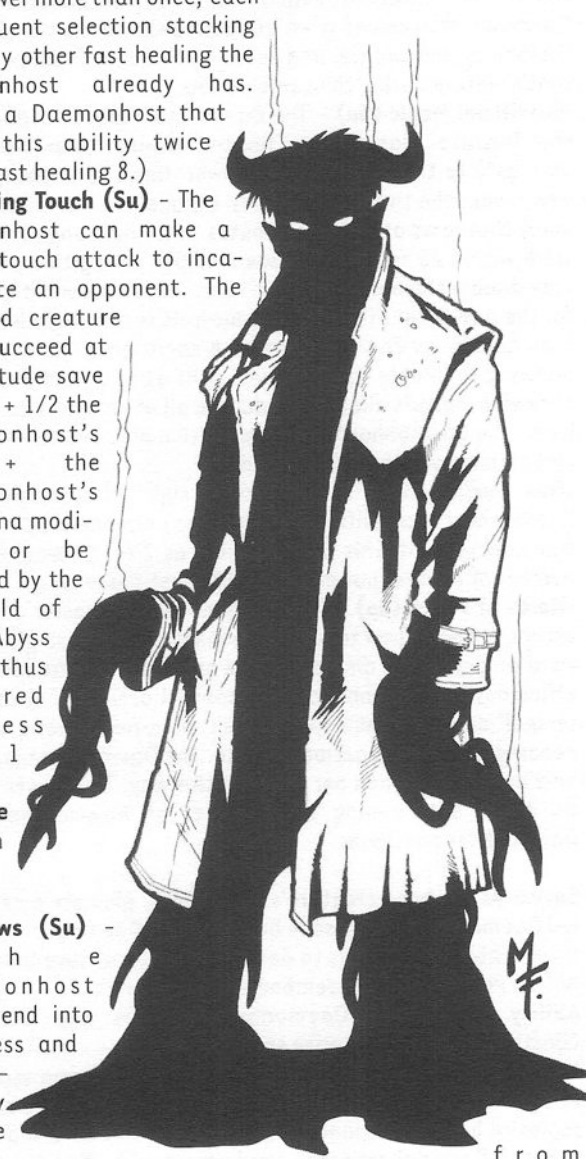
• **Baleful Attacks (Su)** – The Daemonhost gains a profane bonus to all melee attacks equal to its Charisma modifier.

• **Fast Healing (Ex)** – The Daemonhost channels Abyssal energy into the body of its host. It thus gains fast healing 4. Fast healing does not restore hit points lost from starvation, thirst, or suffocation, and it does not allow the Daemonhost to regrow or reattach lost body parts. A Daemonhost may take this power more than once, each subsequent selection stacking with any other fast healing the Daemonhost already has. (Thus, a Daemonhost that takes this ability twice gains fast healing 8.)

• **Freezing Touch (Su)** – The Daemonhost can make a melee touch attack to incapacitate an opponent. The touched creature must succeed at a Fortitude save (DC 10 + 1/2 the Daemonhost's HD + the Daemonhost's Charisma modifier) or be numbed by the icy cold of the Abyss and thus rendered helpless for 1 round.

• **One with**

**Shadows (Su)** – The Daemonhost can blend into darkness and practically fade



from

sight. It thus receives a +4 profane bonus to Hide checks. Further, during any conditions other than full daylight, it can meld into any shadows as a move action, granting it three-quarters concealment. To gain concealment in this way, the Daemonhost must be within 10 feet of a natural shadow cast by an object, structure, or being other than itself.

**•Probe Soul (Su)** - As an attack action, the Daemonhost can make a melee touch attack to form an empathic link with a living creature. During that moment, both the Daemonhost and the target creature experience an image of the creature's greatest desire - and of that temptation realized. The target must make a Will save (DC 10 + 1/2 the Daemonhost's HD + the Daemonhost's Charisma modifier) or become extremely amenable to the Daemonhost's subsequent words and actions. An amenable creature suffers a -6 profane penalty on all saves against Enchantment spells and spell-like abilities of that Daemonhost for a number of days equal to the amount by which the creature failed its save. Additionally, the Daemonhost receives a +6 circumstance bonus on all Bluff, Diplomacy, Intimidate, and Sense Motive checks made against that creature during the same period.

**•Sacrificial Magic (Su)** - The Daemonhost must have levels in the Initiate class (see Chapter Three, "New Advanced Classes") to take this Abyssal power. Once per month, at the new moon, the Daemonhost may engage in a sacrificial ceremony that lasts at least 15 minutes. If a single bound mortal is slain within 20 feet of the Daemonhost during this period, it may double the number of 1st-level Initiate spells it can cast for the day. A sacrifice of three mortals in this way also allows it to double its 2nd-level spells. A sacrifice of seven mortals allows it to double its 3rd-level spells as well, and a sacrifice of twelve mortals allows it to double all of its spells up to 4th-level. The Daemonhost can benefit from only one such sacrificial ceremony within a lunar cycle.

**•True Seeing (Su)** - The spectral sight of a disembodied Daemonhost is amplified, giving it the permanent benefit of a true seeing spell. This power counts as 2 for determining the number of Abyssal powers a Daemonhost possesses.

**•Words of Power (Sp)** - The Daemonhost is a master of incantation; it knows how to make the most of even a single arcane word and can thus disrupt hostile spells with great speed and efficiency. The Daemonhost can spend 1 action point to counterspell an opponent's spell at will, as a free action, without needing to ready an action to do so. The Daemonhost may cast only one counterspell per round in this way. This power counts as 2 for determining the number of Abyssal powers a Daemonhost possesses.

**Saves:** As the base creature's base saves, plus the disembodied Daemonhost's base save bonuses. The Daemonhost applies its new ability modifiers to determine its total save bonuses. Action Points: As the disembodied Daemonhost.

**Ability Scores:** A Daemonhost retains the Strength, Constitution, and Dexterity scores of the base creature, while keeping its own Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma scores.

**Allegiances:** Previous allegiances of the base creature are lost, replaced by the allegiances of the disembodied Daemonhost.

**Skills:** A Daemonhost takes the highest rank of any skill pos-

sessed by either the base creature or the disembodied Daemonhost and then applies its new ability modifiers to determine its total skill check bonuses.

**Feats:** As the base creature, plus those of the disembodied Daemonhost.

**Talents:** A Daemonhost retains all the talents of the base creature and the disembodied Daemonhost.

**Advancement:** By character class.

**Daemonhost Lord (Human Strong Hero 1/Tough Hero 1; Disembodied Daemonhost Dedicated Hero 3/Charismatic Hero 3):** CR 10; Medium-size outsider; HD 1d8+2 plus 1d10+2 plus 3d6+6 plus 3d6+6; hp 47; Mas 15; Init +1 (Dex); Spd 30 ft.; Defense 17, touch 16, flat-footed 16 (+1 Dex, +5 class, +1 leather jacket); BAB +4; Grap +6; Atk +7 melee (1d6+2 nonlethal, unarmed strike), or +6 melee (1d4+2/19-20, knife); Full Atk +7 melee (1d6+2 nonlethal, unarmed strike), or +6 melee (1d4+2/19-20, knife), or +5 ranged (2d6, Colt M1911); SQ mark of the Abyss, telepathy, darkvision, daemon form (claws, daemonic armor), Abyssal powers (aura of fear, fast healing 4); AL evil; SV Fort +11, Ref +7, Will +11; AP 3; Rep +3; Str 14, Dex 12, Con 15, Int 18, Wis 16, Cha 19.

Occupation: Blue-collar (class Skills: Drive, Intimidate).

**Skills:** Bluff +14, Concentration +10, Craft (mechanical) +5, Decipher Script +7, Drive +5, Gather Information +10, Intimidate +12, Knowledge (arcane lore) +15, Knowledge (popular culture) +2, Knowledge (streetwise) +2, Knowledge (theology and philosophy) +8, Listen +9, Read/Write Abyssal, Read/Write Daemonhost, Read/Write English, Read/Write Spanish, Read/Write Language (any one ancient language), Sense Motive +9, Speak Abyssal, Speak Daemonhost, Speak English, Speak Spanish, Speak Language (any one ancient language), Spellcraft +6, Spot +6, Swim +3.

**Feats:** Archaic Weapons Proficiency, Brawl, Deceptive, Frightful Presence, Iron Will, Personal Firearms Proficiency, Simple Weapons Proficiency.

**Talents (Strong Hero):** Extreme effort.

**Talents (Tough Hero):** Remain conscious.

**Talents (Dedicated Hero):** Empathy, intuition.

**Talents (Charismatic Hero):** Charm, fast talk.

**Possessions:** Leather jacket, Colt M1911 (.45 autoloader), 50 rounds of .45 ammunition, knife, various gear and personal possessions.

## Daemon Hounds

The Daemonhost require servants that come in all shapes and sizes. By infesting normal canines with the corrupting energy of the abyss, the Daemonhost transform man's best friend into a creature from hell. Daemon hounds resemble in build and general shape two eight foot tall Dobermans and they always wander their hunting grounds bound by two iron collars chained together with a single chain. Their skin is callous with obsidian scales and a smattering of coarse fur. The eyes of these canine-like creatures are a fiery red with flames flickering up over their brows. Their build is very athletic, taut and strong with a very slender maw, and sharp fangs protruding from its snarling mouth.



These dogs roam around fields or forests, guarding what their masters command them to protect. Popular legend says that where you find daemon hounds, you will find a tear. Rarely are daemon hounds found loose in cities, but if these monstrosities somehow escaped their demon lords they defend their urban turf just as ferociously as they would any coveted junkyard. Daemon hounds range from almost eight feet long, six feet high to twelve feet long, nine feet high. Weight ranges from 400 to 800 pounds.

#### Species Traits

**Rend (Ex):** Daemon hounds that hit with both claw attacks can rend their opponent as a free action. This action does 2d6 points of damage.

**Daemon Hound:** CR 9; Large outsider; HD 10d8+30; hp 62; Mas 17; Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; Defense 15, touch 10, flat-footed 14 (-1 Size, +1 Dex, +5 natural); BAB +10; Grap +14; Atk +14 (1d8+5, bite), or +14 (1d8+5, slam); Full Atk +14 melee (1d8+5, bite), +12 melee (1d6+5, 2 claws); FS 10 ft. by 10 ft.; Reach 10 ft.; SQ darkvision, rend; AL evil; SV Fort +10, Ref +8, Will +7; AP 0; Rep +0; Str 20, Dex 13, Con 17, Int 2, Wis 10, Cha 8.

**Skills:** Hide +5, Listen +13, Move Silently +10, Spot +10.

**Feats:** Multiattack, Alertness, Dodge.

**Advancement:** 11-13 HD (Huge).

#### Ethereal Predator (L. Gulo Aetherius Formidabilis)

This predator is sometimes referred to as a "mist wolverine" (reduced on at least one notable occasion to "mysterine") or

by the misnomer "space ghoul" (playing on the creature's Latin designation).

Through some quirk of evolution, the ethereal predator does not have binocular vision. Instead, its eyes are back along the sides of its fur-massed face, which gives it approximately 270 degrees of vision. It has a snout that dangles from the front of its face. Resembling a combination of an armadillo and a large wolverine with its black and gray-lined short-furred coat, it looks very soft and cuddly. However, it is a fierce predator. Its eyes are a smoky white, and can in fact see into the Ethereal Plane. Its claws are made of a strange material that has quickly become prized for its great hardness and magical properties. Ethereal predators are primarily a solitary species, wandering wherever over the territory they consider home and looking for anything small to eat.

#### Species Traits

**Ethereal Strike (Su):** The claws of the ethereal predator can strike any creature that exists in either the Ethereal or the Prime Material Plane. These claws may be used if taken from a dead ethereal predator and used as improvised weapons, dealing 1d3 points of slashing damage; when removed from the predator, the claws retain the ethereal strike ability.

**Ethereal Sight (Su):** An ethereal predator can see clearly into the Ethereal Plane with the same acuity as it sees in the normal visual spectrum. Any creatures hidden from normal sight, such as those using an invisibility spell, can be seen clearly. Spells that magically affect vision itself, such as darkness, will still affect the creature.

**Bonus Feat:** Ethereal predators gain the bonus feat Weapon Finesse (claws).

**Ethereal Predator:** CR 3; Small magical beast; HD 3d8+6; hp 20; Mas 15; Init +3 (Dex); Spd 30 ft.; Defense 16, touch 14, flat-footed 13 (+1 size, +3 Dex, +2 natural); BAB +3; Grap -2; Atk +6 melee (1d3-1, claw); Full Atk +6 melee (1d3-1, 2 claws); FS 5 ft. by 5 ft.; Reach 5 ft.; SQ ethereal strike, ethereal sight, low-light vision; AL none; SV Fort +5, Ref +6, Will +3; AP 0; Rep +0; Str 9, Dex 17, Con 15, Int 2, Wis 14, Cha 7.



**Skills:** Listen +11, Spot +13.

**Feats:** Alertness, Weapon Finesse (claws).

**Advancement:** 4–7 HD (Small); 8–9 HD (Medium-size).

### Mentiscaptor Whipspider (L. Mentiscaptor Tarantulidae Amblypygi)

Ranging from 2 to 4 feet high and roughly the same size round, these spider-like creatures were originally mistaken by scientists in post-Rip Jerusalem for great whipspiders of some kind, akin to those found throughout the world. Yet the “mentiscaptors,” as they are now most often called by travelers in the Otherworld, are far from arachnid. Their rear four legs are used to support their callous, orb-shaped bodies, while the front four are used in striking their prey. Both forelegs and rear legs are from 2 to 3 feet long, with chitinous plates to protect them, much like their body. The front four legs have 6-inch spearlike claws used to pierce their prey.

Mentiscaptors have an array of milky black eyes, which they use to watch intently for prey. These pack-hunters roam only at night, typically in groups of 3 to 8, and are gifted with two notable evolutionary talents: the ability to distort their location, which makes it more difficult to strike them, and a strange power to paralyze their victims, making it easier to capture their prey.

#### Species Traits

**Mind Freeze (Ex):** When two mentiscaptors flank a target, they can channel ethereal energy from their minds to hold a creature in place. This requires a full-round action from both mentiscaptors, so one or the other must delay or ready an action to use this attack simultaneously. When the attack occurs, the target makes a Will saving throw (DC 14). If the target fails the save, he is held in place for 2 rounds. A held creature is aware and breathes normally, but cannot take any physical actions, even speech. He can, however, execute purely mental actions (such as using psionic powers). A winged creature that is held cannot flap its wings and may fall. A swimmer can't swim and may drown.

**Blur (Su):** A light-warping effect continually surrounds a mentiscaptor, making it difficult to discern the creature's true location. Any melee or ranged attack directed at it, including spells or other powers that require a touch attack, has a 50% miss chance unless the attacker can locate the beast by some means other than sight. A true seeing effect allows the user to see the beast's position, but see invisibility has no effect.

**Fear of Light (Ex):** The mentiscaptor is frightened by sunlight. Any time it is exposed to sunlight or a sudden bright light, it must make a Will save (DC 20) or flee as quickly as it can. If unable to flee, the creature is shaken (-2 penalty on attack rolls, saving throws, and skill checks) for the remainder of the encounter or until the light source is removed. On a successful save, the creature overcomes the fear and can approach the source or otherwise act without penalty.

**Collective (Ex):** All mentiscaptors within 1 mile of one another are in constant communication. If one is aware of a particular danger, they all are. If one in a group is not flat-footed, none of them are. No mentiscaptor in a group is considered flanked unless all of them are.

**Skill Bonuses:** Mentiscaptors receive a +4 species bonus on Hide and Move Silently checks, a +6 species bonus on Jump checks, and a +8 species bonus on Listen, Search, and Spot checks. If their blindsight is negated, they lose the Listen, Search, and Spot bonuses.

**Bonus Feat:** Mentiscaptors gain the bonus feat Weapon Finesse (claws).

**Mentiscaptor:** CR 4; Small magical beast; HD 4d10; hp 22; Mas 11; Init +4 (Dex); Spd 30 ft., climb 20 ft.; Defense 19, touch 15, flat-footed 15 (+1 size, +4 Dex, +4 natural); BAB +4; Grap -2; Atk +9 melee (1d4-2, claw); Full Atk +9 melee (1d4-2, 4 claws), +4 melee (1d3-2, bite); FS 5 ft. by 5 ft.; Reach 5 ft.; SQ mind freeze, blur, fear of light, collective, blindsight 30 ft.; AL none; SV Fort +4, Ref +8, Will +1; AP 0; Rep +0; Str 6, Dex 18, Con 11, Int 2, Wis 11, Cha 5.

**Skills:** Climb +8, Hide +10, Jump +4, Listen +12, Move Silently +10, Search +6, Spot +10.

**Feats:** Weapon Finesse (claws, bite).

**Advancement:** 5–8 HD (Small).

### Plategrazer (L. Armamakapros Priodontes Maximus)

Typically standing around 4 feet tall at the shoulder, the plategrazer is a bulky animal. Built something like a great wild boar, its wide body is fully covered with dusty brown bony plates, slatted with black stripes that zigzag across from head to toe. It has an uncanny ability to blend in with the plains and forest floors. What is noteworthy about these creatures is that its face is little more than a wide rectangular plate of calcium compound, the same type as that of fingernails. It is tinted brown, much like the plategrazer's coat of armor.

The purpose of this plate is for food-gathering. The plategrazer charges the strange trees of the Otherworld, butting them with its heavily plated head, knocking seeds or fruits from the branches above. An herbivore, the grazer is a very docile creature, keeping largely to itself. However, bashing loudly into trees is a sure way to attract predators - hence the bony plates. When forced to fight, the plategrazer rams its attackers with its callous bone face-plate. It will continue to do so only until the attacker retreats. It will then run in the opposite direction.

#### Species Traits

**Ram (Ex):** When charging, the plategrazer deals double damage on a successful attack and also initiates a bull rush as a free action; this does not provoke an attack of opportunity.

**Skill Bonuses:** Plategrazers receive a +4 species bonus on Hide checks. \*In grassy or overgrown areas, this bonus increases to +8.

**Plategrazer:** CR 2; Medium-size animal; HD 2d8+2; hp 11; Mas 13; Init +0; Spd 20 ft.; Defense 17, touch 10, flat-footed 17 (+7 natural); BAB +1; Grap +4; Atk +4 (1d6+4, slam); Full Atk +5 melee (1d6+4, slam); FS 5 ft. by 5 ft.; Reach 5 ft.; SQ ram, low-light vision; AL none; SV Fort +4, Ref +3, Will +2; AP 0; Rep +0; Str 16, Dex 11, Con 13, Int 1, Wis 14, Cha 4.

**Skills:** Hide +8\*, Listen +5, Spot +5.

**Advancement:** 3-4 HD (Medium-size); 5-6 HD (Large).

## Pteroraptor (L. Pteroraptor Rhyncophobo)

This creature stands about 10 feet tall. It has a very callous hide that looks much like that of an elephant. Its arms are very thick and muscular, with a translucent membrane upon each arm that goes from wrist to thigh, just like that of a pterodactyl. These membranes act as wings that, when fully spread, have a span approaching 22 feet. It has reverse articulated legs, like a bird's, which are used to scoop up its prey as it swoops down. These legs have small but sharp talons. It relies on bashing its prey against surfaces or dropping it from the sky. Its head is very crocodilian, with a long snout and sharp teeth for rending the battered prey. Pteroraptors like to fly in packs of three to five. They soar upon thermals during the daylight hours, finding their homes upon plains and desert lands, where they sit firmly at the top of their domain's food chain. When the sun begins to set, losing their access to thermals, the pteroraptors look for a place to safely sleep. Typically caves or thickly forested edges of the lands they fly over are their choices.

### Species Traits

**Diving Strike (Ex):** The diving strike works just like a charge, but the diving creature must move a minimum of 30 feet. It can make only its claw attack, but this deals double damage on a successful attack.

**Skill Bonuses:** Pteroraptors receive a +4 species bonus on Spot checks checks. \*In daylight, this bonus increases to +8.

**Pteroraptor:** CR 8; Large animal; HD 12d8+36; hp 90; Mas 17; Init +2 (Dex); Spd 30 ft., fly 90 ft. (clumsy); Defense 17, touch 11, flat-footed 15 (-1 size, +2 Dex, +6 natural); BAB +9; Grap +17; Atk +13 melee (1d6+6, claws); Full Atk +13 melee (1d6+4, claws), +8 melee (1d8+2, bite); FS 10 ft. by 10 ft.; Reach 10 ft.; SQ diving strike; AL none; SV Fort +11, Ref +10, Will +5; AP 0; Rep +0; Str 19, Dex 15, Con 17, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 9.

**Skills:** Listen +5, Move Silently +6, Spot +9\*.

**Advancement:** 13-20 HD (Large); 21-24 HD (Huge).

## Screamer

The screamer is a four-legged predator standing up to 4 feet high at the shoulder, all muscle and coarse hair. It is a swift hunter, so the muscle is lean and compact. Screamers have large heads, larger than a creature of its size usually has. The front of the creature's face is all teeth and a solitary "ear" - where the eyes, forehead, and nose would be in a more familiar creature is a large organ similar to a bat's ear, but uncovered. The monster's front legs end in a pawlike hand. This appendage is not really dexterous enough to manipulate fine objects, but capable enough of tearing freshly killed meat and putting it in its mouth.



Screamers hunt not by sight but by echolocation: It screams to locate its victims. However, when it sends out its sonar screams, a large portion of the sound is within the auditory range. The terrifying shrieking fills those who know of screamers with abject fear.

Hunting in packs of three to six, the screamer is very social and highly intelligent for a beast. They shriek at each other to coordinate complex hunting techniques, similar to other pack hunters like the wolf.

Finally, given its regenerative abilities, the screamer is an extremely dangerous animal. The best way to deal with them is with acid or fire, which negates their quick healing.

### Species Traits

**Shriek (Ex):** As a full-round action, the screamer may shriek at its prey. This produces 60-foot cone that deals 2d6 points of sonic damage and dazes all in the area for 1d2 rounds. Each creature in the area may make a Fortitude saving throw (DC 13); on a success it takes only half damage and is not stunned.

**Regeneration (Ex):** A screamer regenerates 5 points of damage each round, but it cannot regenerate acid or fire damage. If a screamer loses a limb or body part, the lost portion regrows in 3d6 minutes. The creature can reattach the severed member instantly by holding it to the stump.

**Fear of Noise (Ex):** Screamers are frightened by very loud noises. Any time a sudden explosive sound, like gunfire, occurs within 60 feet of a screamer, it must make a Will save (DC 15) or flee as quickly as it can. If unable to flee, it is shaken (-2 on attack rolls, saving throws, and skill checks) for 1 round for every point by which it failed its Will save. On a successful



save, the screamer overcomes the fear and can approach the source of the sound or otherwise act without penalty. If a screamer makes its Will save against a particular kind of loud noise (such as gunfire), it is unaffected by further instances of that noise for 24 hours.

**Skill Bonus:** Screamers receive a +2 species bonus on Move Silently checks and a +4 species bonus on Listen and Spot checks. If their blindsight is negated, they lose these bonuses.

**Screamer:** CR 4; Medium-size magical beast; HD 5d10+5; hp 31; Mas 12; Init +3 (Dex); Spd 30 ft.; Defense 15, touch 13, flat-footed 12 (+3 Dex, +2 natural); BAB +5; Grap +7; Atk +7 melee (1d6+3, bite); Full Atk +7 melee (1d6+3, bite); FS 5 ft. by 5 ft.; Reach 5 ft.; SQ blindsight 60 ft., shriek, regeneration 5, fear of noise; AL none; SV Fort +5, Ref +7, Will +3; AP 0; Rep +0; Str 15, Dex 16, Con 12, Int 3, Wis 14, Cha 4.

**Skills:** Hide +6, Listen +10, Move Silently +8, Spot +10.

**Feats:** Alertness, Weapon Finesse (bite).

**Advancement:** 6–8 HD (Medium-size); 9–10 HD (Large).

### Shadowcrawler

From the depths of the Abyss comes this daemon lackey of the Daemonhost, a creature that has sometimes been called lurker, mite, gremlin, tommy-knocker. Children of many ages in this world have known these little imps as the “monsters under the bed.” Shadowcrawlers, long ago, used to watch children to decide who was worth being used in their masters’ plans. With the ability to quickly shift locations, though, they easily eluded the watchful eyes of parents. They crawl around on ledges and within air ducts with equal facility, acting as spies for their terrible lords. Shadowcrawlers crawl quickly with their long arms and legs, and excel at skulking in the long stark shadows of anywhere they may be sent.

Though the Daemonhost were eventually locked away many ages ago, the memories of these fearful creatures have haunted children for millennia upon millennia. Now that the Daemonhost are free, they are used for scouting out potential hosts for their masters and for spying upon their masters’ enemies.

Shadowcrawlers are varied in shape, look, and size. They range from 2 to 4 feet tall, and their skin can be anything from slick and slimy to smooth, like a toad’s skin. They all tend to have squat torsos with long arms and legs. Ineffective in combat, their main technique of survival is simply to disappear.

#### Species Traits

**Spell-Like Abilities:** 3/day – blur, dimension door, invisibility. These abilities are as the spells cast by a 7th-level Initiate.

**Allegiances:** Each shadowcrawler has a primary allegiance to its Daemonhost master, then to the Daemonhost in general. Shadowcrawlers also have an allegiance to evil.

**Skill Bonus:** Shadowcrawlers receive a +4 species bonus on Hide and Move Silently checks. \*In darkness or shadow, this bonus increase to +10.

**Bonus Feat:** Shadowcrawlers receive the bonus feat Simple Weapons Proficiency.

**Automatic Languages:** Shadowcrawlers read, write, and speak Abyssal.

**Shadowcrawler:** CR 3; Small outsider; HD 4d8–4; hp 14; Mas 9; Init +2 (Dex); Spd 30 ft., climb 15 ft.; Defense 14, touch 13, flat-footed 12 (+1 size, +2 Dex, +1 natural); BAB +4; Grap –1; Atk +3 (1d3–1, claws); Full Atk +3 melee (1d3–1, claws); FS 5 ft. by 5 ft.; Reach 5 ft.; SQ spell-like abilities, darkvision 60 ft.; AL master, evil; SV Fort +3, Ref +6, Will +5; AP 0; Rep +0; Str 8, Dex 14, Con 9, Int 11, Wis 12, Cha 8.

**Skills:** Climb +9, Hide +17\*, Listen +7, Move Silently +11, Read/Write Abyssal, Speak Abyssal, Search +2, Spot +7.

**Feats:** Alertness, Simple Weapons Proficiency.

**Advancement:** By character class.

### Shaskarath, The Cold Death

From the lightless and frigid depths of deep black oceans comes the Shaskarath, a behemoth, a demon that stands 60 feet tall, with strides as long as four men. Its skin is slick and cartilaginous, colored with blended streaks of blue, gray, and white. Shaskarath shoulders are broad and muscular. The daemon’s shoulders and spine are lined with shark-like fins. Shaskarath’s torso is very thin that branches into two very strong and well-muscled legs.

Wandering the icy cold depths of deep oceans, it seeks to cause anguish and pain to anything it sees. Now that it has been freed from the Abyss, the daemon has thousands of years of terror and havoc to make up for. Shaskarath is filled with rage and likes to stalk and slowly draw the terror out of its prey. Only after the hunt has left its prey a gibbering mess does Shaskarath slowly torture and murder its victim.

Though bound to the Daemonhost as a servant, Shaskarath is given much leeway between its vicious missions, free to do as it wishes if it serves the Daemonhost’s ultimate goals.

#### Species Traits

**Spell-Like Abilities:** At will – change self, detect magical aura, sleep, water breathing; 3/day – invisibility, mage armor, magic missile, protection from arrows/bullets; 1/day – fear, haste, lightning bolt. These abilities are as the spells cast by a 16th-level Initiate.

**Acid and Fire Resistance (Ex):** Shaskarath ignores the first 20 points of damage from any attack that deals acid or fire damage.

**Damage Reduction (Su):** Shaskarath ignores the first 20 points of damage dealt by any non-slashing weapon.

**Immunities (Ex):** Shaskarath is immune to electricity and poison.

**Mark of the Abyss (Ex):** In Shaskarath’s presence, animals become unsettled: dogs whine and back away, horses rear and roll their eyes, and so on. This aura affects all creatures within a radius of 100 feet that have the animal type. An animal must succeed at a Will save (DC 29) or become shaken for as long as it remains within 100 feet of the daemon. If it fails the save by more than 10, it becomes panicked.

Dedicated heroes with the intuition talent (or other characters with a similar ability from some other source) may make a Will save (DC 18) when within 100 feet of Shaskarath. If the saving throw is successful, the character gets a bad feeling, though he cannot determine just what the “bad vibe” comes from. A character with the Sense the Daemonic feat (see “New Feats” in Chapter Three) has a good chance to discern Shaskarath’s

presence. Some birthrights, spells, or magic items may be allowed by the GM to detect this mark as well.

**Allegiances:** Shaskarath has a primary allegiance to his Daemonhost master. Shaskarath also has an allegiance to evil.

**Bonus Feat:** Shaskarath receives the bonus feat Archaic Weapons Proficiency.

**Automatic Languages:** Shaskarath reads, writes, and speaks Abyssal.

**Shaskarath:** CR 18; Gargantuan outsider; HD 16d8+128; hp 222; Mas 29; Init +2 (-2 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative); Spd 70 ft., swim 40 ft.; Defense 22, touch 4, flat-footed 22 (-4 Size, -2 Dex, +18 natural); BAB +16; Grap +39; Atk +28 melee (2d6+22, claw); Full Atk +28 melee (2d6+15, 2 claws), +22 melee (2d8+7, bite), +22 melee (1d8+7, gore); FS 20 ft. by 20 ft.; Reach 15 ft.; SQ spell-like abilities, acid and fire resistance 20, damage reduction 20/slashing, immunities, mark of the Abyss, darkvision 60 ft.; AL evil, Daemonhost; SV Fort +18, Ref +8, Will +13; AP 0; Rep +3; Str 40, Dex 6, Con 26, Int 20, Wis 16, Cha 16.

**Skills:** Balance +6, Bluff +11, Climb +25, Decipher Script +13, Hide +5, Intimidate +19, Investigate +15, Jump +31, Knowledge (arcane lore) +17, Knowledge (behavioral science) +13, Knowledge (history) +21, Knowledge (theology and philosophy) +13, Listen +21, Move Silently +14, Navigate +13, Read/Write Abyssal, Read/Write Language (any three ancient), Search +11, Sense Motive +13, Speak Abyssal, Speak Language (any three ancient), Spot +21, Swim +29.

**Feats:** Alertness, Archaic Weapons Proficiency, Athletic, Attentive, Cleave, Improved Damage Threshold, Improved Initiative, Power Attack, Renown, Weapon Focus (claw).

**Advancement:** By character class.

## Spider Ebon (*L. Melanopithecus Polydextera*)

The difference between spider ebons and actual gorillas



(which they closely resemble), other than their relatively small stature, is that these primate-like creatures have six arms and two feet and do not bear live young, nesting deep in forested areas. Their fur is typically matted with loam, though their coat colors range from a silvery sheen to dark grey. Spider ebon legs are also a bit longer than a gorilla's, lending to their swift movement and agility. Although they are generally only about 5 to 6 feet tall, these typically non-aggressive creatures can be very fierce when their families are threatened. With overdeveloped, gorilla-like chests, they can tear an average man in two within seconds.

Spider ebons glide through trees effortlessly. When hunting, they hang from their two highly manipulative feet until prey comes within reach. They then grab the creature, lift it into their multiple arms to hold it, and then snap the creature's neck while pinning it to their broad chests.

Spider ebons live in packs of five to eight, hunting a large territory in conditions much like those of sub-tropical forests.

### Species Traits

**Improved Grab (Ex):** If a spider ebon hits with a slam attack against a Small or smaller creature, it deals normal damage and attempts to start a grapple as a free action without provoking attacks of opportunity. No initial touch attack is required.

When the spider ebon gets a hold after an improved grab attack, it pulls the opponent into its space. Again, this does not provoke attacks of opportunity. The spider ebon is not considered grappled while it holds the opponent, so it still threatens adjacent squares and retains its Dexterity bonus. It can even move, provided it can drag the opponent's weight.

**Uncanny Dodge (Ex):** The spider ebon cannot be flanked; it can react to opponents on opposite sides of itself as easily as it can react to a single attacker.

**Spider Ebon:** CR 3; Medium-size animal; HD 6d8+6; hp 33; Mas 13; Init +2 (Dex); Spd 40 ft., climb 30 ft.; Defense 15, touch 12, flat-footed 13 (+2 Dex, +3 natural); BAB +4; Grap +8; Atk +8 melee (1d4+6, slam); Full Atk +8 melee (1d4+4, 6 slams); FS 5 ft. by 5 ft.; Reach 5 ft.; SQ improved grab, uncanny dodge, low-light vision; AL none; SV Fort +6, Ref +7, Will +3; AP 0; Rep +0; Str 19, Dex 15, Con 13, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 8.

**Skills:** Hide +6, Listen +5, Move Silently +6, Spot +5.

**Advancement:** 7-10 HD (Medium-size); 11-12 HD (Large).

## Spring Snake

Ranging, it is believed, from 14 to 20 feet long, the spring snake has the unique ability to contract itself as tightly as possible and then release itself, launching itself as if by a catapult, towards its prey. Super-extending its mouth, it can swallow its prey in one lightning-fast leap. Only a few explorers have encountered such creatures, but they quickly had a name for this incredibly deadly Otherworld denizen. Scientists have been unable to study one (or even to see one), but speculate that the creature must have a cartilaginous skeletal system. Thus, given a body of incredibly flexible and super-dense muscle, it can spring remarkable distances; further, without the limitation of a "normal" snake's bone structure, these creatures can swallow a creature up to the size of a man.

**Skills:** Listen +11, Spot +13.

**Feats:** Alertness, Weapon Finesse (claws).

**Advancement:** 4–7 HD (Small); 8–9 HD (Medium-size).

### Mentiscaptor Whipspider (L. Mentiscaptor Tarantulidae Amblypygi)

Ranging from 2 to 4 feet high and roughly the same size round, these spider-like creatures were originally mistaken by scientists in post-Rip Jerusalem for great whipspiders of some kind, akin to those found throughout the world. Yet the “mentiscaptors,” as they are now most often called by travelers in the Otherworld, are far from arachnid. Their rear four legs are used to support their callous, orb-shaped bodies, while the front four are used in striking their prey. Both forelegs and rear legs are from 2 to 3 feet long, with chitinous plates to protect them, much like their body. The front four legs have 6-inch spearlike claws used to pierce their prey.

Mentiscaptors have an array of milky black eyes, which they use to watch intently for prey. These pack-hunters roam only at night, typically in groups of 3 to 8, and are gifted with two notable evolutionary talents: the ability to distort their location, which makes it more difficult to strike them, and a strange power to paralyze their victims, making it easier to capture their prey.

#### Species Traits

**Mind Freeze (Ex):** When two mentiscaptors flank a target, they can channel ethereal energy from their minds to hold a creature in place. This requires a full-round action from both mentiscaptors, so one or the other must delay or ready an action to use this attack simultaneously. When the attack occurs, the target makes a Will saving throw (DC 14). If the target fails the save, he is held in place for 2 rounds. A held creature is aware and breathes normally, but cannot take any physical actions, even speech. He can, however, execute purely mental actions (such as using psionic powers). A winged creature that is held cannot flap its wings and may fall. A swimmer can't swim and may drown.

**Blur (Su):** A light-warping effect continually surrounds a mentiscaptor, making it difficult to discern the creature's true location. Any melee or ranged attack directed at it, including spells or other powers that require a touch attack, has a 50% miss chance unless the attacker can locate the beast by some means other than sight. A true seeing effect allows the user to see the beast's position, but see invisibility has no effect.

**Fear of Light (Ex):** The mentiscaptor is frightened by sunlight. Any time it is exposed to sunlight or a sudden bright light, it must make a Will save (DC 20) or flee as quickly as it can. If unable to flee, the creature is shaken (-2 penalty on attack rolls, saving throws, and skill checks) for the remainder of the encounter or until the light source is removed. On a successful save, the creature overcomes the fear and can approach the source or otherwise act without penalty.

**Collective (Ex):** All mentiscaptors within 1 mile of one another are in constant communication. If one is aware of a particular danger, they all are. If one in a group is not flat-footed, none of them are. No mentiscaptor in a group is considered flanked unless all of them are.

**Skill Bonuses:** Mentiscaptors receive a +4 species bonus on Hide and Move Silently checks, a +6 species bonus on Jump checks, and a +8 species bonus on Listen, Search, and Spot checks. If their blindsight is negated, they lose the Listen, Search, and Spot bonuses.

**Bonus Feat:** Mentiscaptors gain the bonus feat Weapon Finesse (claws).

**Mentiscaptor:** CR 4; Small magical beast; HD 4d10; hp 22; Mas 11; Init +4 (Dex); Spd 30 ft., climb 20 ft.; Defense 19, touch 15, flat-footed 15 (+1 size, +4 Dex, +4 natural); BAB +4; Grap -2; Atk +9 melee (1d4-2, claw); Full Atk +9 melee (1d4-2, 4 claws), +4 melee (1d3-2, bite); FS 5 ft. by 5 ft.; Reach 5 ft.; SQ mind freeze, blur, fear of light, collective, blindsight 30 ft.; AL none; SV Fort +4, Ref +8, Will +1; AP 0; Rep +0; Str 6, Dex 18, Con 11, Int 2, Wis 11, Cha 5.

**Skills:** Climb +8, Hide +10, Jump +4, Listen +12, Move Silently +10, Search +6, Spot +10.

**Feats:** Weapon Finesse (claws, bite).

**Advancement:** 5–8 HD (Small).

### Plategrazer (L. Armamakapros Priodontes Maximus)

Typically standing around 4 feet tall at the shoulder, the plategrazer is a bulky animal. Built something like a great wild boar, its wide body is fully covered with dusty brown bony plates, slatted with black stripes that zigzag across from head to toe. It has an uncanny ability to blend in with the plains and forest floors. What is noteworthy about these creatures is that its face is little more than a wide rectangular plate of calcium compound, the same type as that of fingernails. It is tinted brown, much like the plategrazer's coat of armor.

The purpose of this plate is for food-gathering. The plategrazer charges the strange trees of the Otherworld, butting them with its heavily plated head, knocking seeds or fruits from the branches above. An herbivore, the grazer is a very docile creature, keeping largely to itself. However, bashing loudly into trees is a sure way to attract predators - hence the bony plates. When forced to fight, the plategrazer rams its attackers with its callous bone face-plate. It will continue to do so only until the attacker retreats. It will then run in the opposite direction.

#### Species Traits

**Ram (Ex):** When charging, the plategrazer deals double damage on a successful attack and also initiates a bull rush as a free action; this does not provoke an attack of opportunity.

**Skill Bonuses:** Plategrazers receive a +4 species bonus on Hide checks. \*In grassy or overgrown areas, this bonus increases to +8.

**Plategrazer:** CR 2; Medium-size animal; HD 2d8+2; hp 11; Mas 13; Init +0; Spd 20 ft.; Defense 17, touch 10, flat-footed 17 (+7 natural); BAB +1; Grap +4; Atk +4 (1d6+4, slam); Full Atk +5 melee (1d6+4, slam); FS 5 ft. by 5 ft.; Reach 5 ft.; SQ ram, low-light vision; AL none; SV Fort +4, Ref +3, Will +2; AP 0; Rep +0; Str 16, Dex 11, Con 13, Int 1, Wis 14, Cha 4.

**Skills:** Hide +8\*, Listen +5, Spot +5.





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