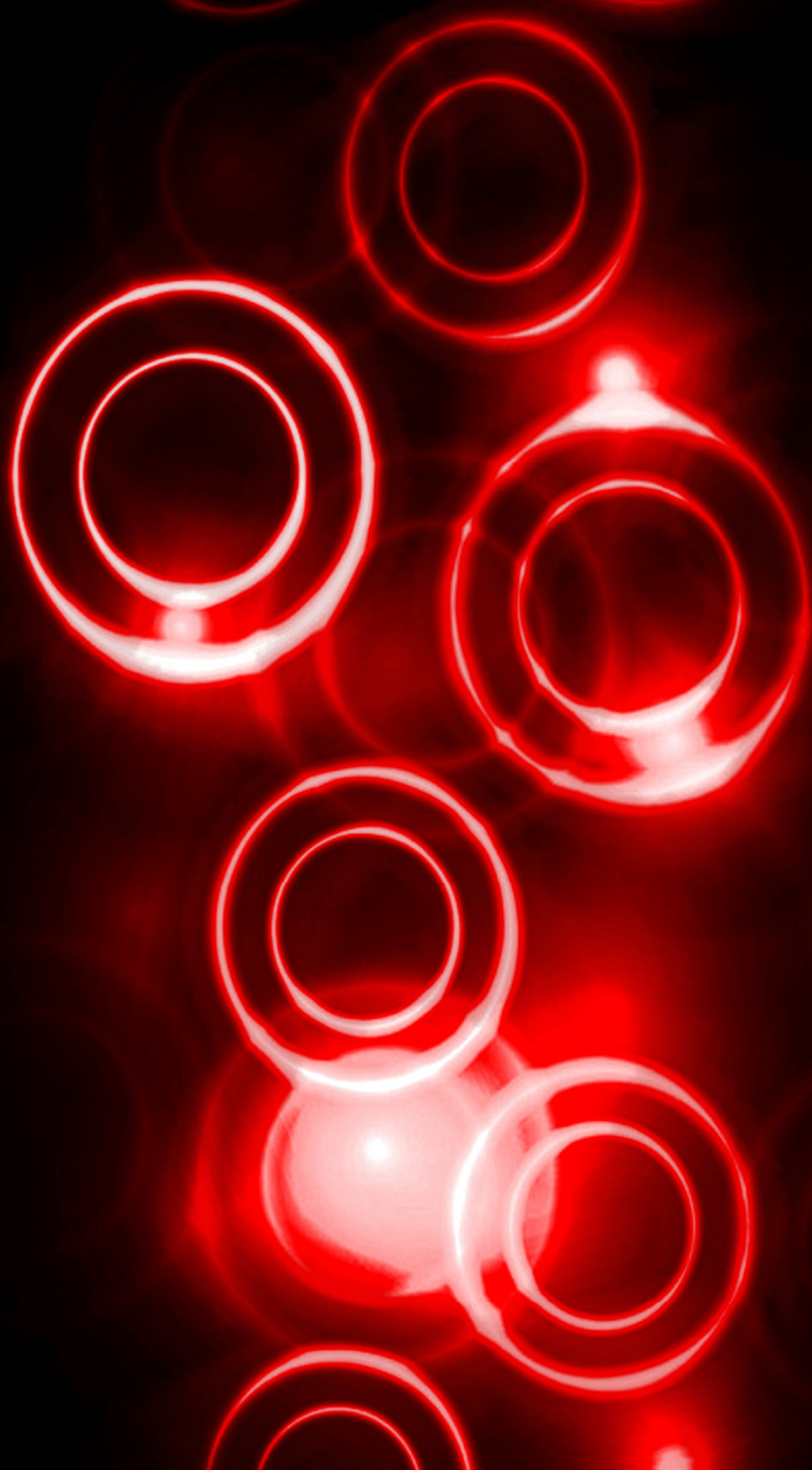


Angels & Ashes

An abstract graphic consisting of several concentric, glowing red circles of varying sizes, some appearing as double rings. They are scattered across the black background, with some overlapping. The circles have a bright, ethereal glow, resembling light trails or magical energy.

Requires the Numenera corebook
from Monte Cook Games

Angels & Ashes

Written by Jordan Marshall and Ryan Chaddock

Fiction by Joseph DeSimone

Artwork and Layout by Ryan Chaddock

Editing by Katherine Gohring

Copyright Ryan Chaddock Games 2014

This product was created under license from Monte Cook Games, LLC.

Numenera and its logo are trademarks of Monte Cook Games, LLC in the U.S.A. and other countries. All Monte Cook Games characters and character names, and the distinctive likenesses thereof, are trademarks of Monte Cook Games, LLC.

Acknowledgements

“It is a mistake to consider any belief more liberated than another. It is the possibility of change which is important. Every new form of liberation is destined to eventually become another form of enslavement for most of its adherents. There is no freedom from duality on this plane of existence, but one may at least aspire to choice of duality.” -Peter James Carroll, *Liber Null*

Playtesters:

Briana Boyer

Larry Cooper

Walter Wattenburger III



Creative Commons Source Images

The source/stock images and software brushes for the following artwork are used under this license: <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0/>

Brushes used throughout the art in this book by redheadstock on Deviantart: Alchemy, Alchemy II, Arcane Circles-Symbols Brushes, Arcane Runes Brushes, Broken Brushes, Crop Circles, Dingbats Shapes, Distressed Photoshop Brushes, Glowing Circles , Glowing Shapes Borders, Grunge N Swirls, Grungy and Dirty, Tech or Sci Fi

The following images by fins-pl on Deviantart: Background for pg v: “Blue Energy”, Background for pg 6: “Kaleidoscope”, Background for pg 16: “The Dance of Molecules”.

Temple image on pg 6 by <http://www.stockpicturesforeveryone.com/>

The following images by mjrnum-stock on Deviantart: “Hands - 19” on pg 17, “Parts - 14” on pg 18, “Drac Bride - 10” on pg 26, “The Bodice Buster Project-SF1” on pg 27, “White Witch - S - 14” on pg 32, “Hands - 8” on pg 36, “Desert - 1” on pg 40, “Mannequin - 7” on pg 53, “Light and Dark - 6” on pg 55, “Capt Darkness - 15” on pg 58, “Desert Dancer - J - 1” on pg 59, “Shinobi - J - 5” on pg 61, “Lil White Goth Grl - 35” on pg 71, “Get Yer Kicks -J-9” on pg 73.

“corpse bride” on pg 20 by busangane on Deviantart.

“Stone skull and crossbones” on pg 21 by barefootliam-stock on Deviantart.

“Skull” on pg 22 by wwwy on Deviantart.

“Tam C Warrior 2a” on pg 25 by jagged-eye on Deviantart.

“The Seed Of Life” on pg 28 by NicolasVisceglia on Deviantart.

“Step In” on pg 29 by Quintasan on Deviantart.

“Contemplating” on pg 37 by JoyfulStock on Deviantart.

“Spell Casting - Pose Reference” on pg 38 by SenshiStock on Deviantart.

“Tangerine” on pg 39 by CathleenTarawhiti on Deviantart.

“European wolf” on pg 48 by Gunnar Ries.

“This Large Scaled Forest Lizard” on pg 48 by Babujayan on Wikipedia.org.

“The Fourth Floor” as background of pg 74 by PomPrint on Deviantart.

“May Angels Take You” on pg 79 by jayaprime on Deviantart.

The source/stock images for the following artwork are used under this license:

<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/2.0/>

Cover image: "EPS10 vector circle background design" by hmomoy on Flickr.

The following images from "Alaskan Dude" Franc Kovalchek on Flickr: "skull mask" on pg 2, "I think this is one of the good knights" on pg 3, "Sir Denny holding his pole" on pg 24, "One of the best masks" on pg 30, "Nice action shot of Zara" on pg 31, "Cute woman with a scary looking dude (IMG_2734a)" on pg 33, "Great eyes on this lass (IMG_o888a)" on pg 43, "What a mask! (IMG_4037)" on pg 46, "Facade of the Palace of Fine Arts" on pg 54, "Ken bringing in the crowds for the Gypsy Dance troupe" on pg 70, "Staircase of the Ca' d'Zan" on pg 75.

"Silver ring" on pg 15 by ph0rk on Flickr.

"black and white dice" on pg 34 by Steve Johnson on Flickr.

"The Long Weekend 2009 - 03" on pg 41 by Garry Knight on Flickr.

"Blick in die Ferne" on pg 42 by Max Heidelbergmann on Flickr.

"Sun through Trees" on pg 44 by Bureau of Land Management on Flickr.

"Spriggan (Crouch End)" on pg 47 by grahamc99 on Flickr.

The following images by Porsche Brosseau on Flickr: "anguish" on pg 50, "twofaced" on pg 51.

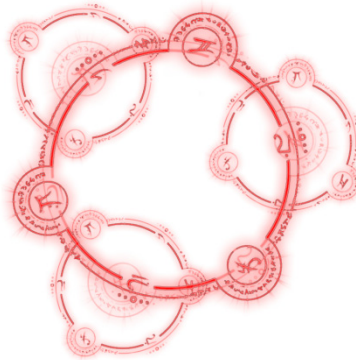
"Hands of light" on pg 56 by Tomas Sobek on Flickr.

"Week 13 of 52 Weeks Self Portrait Project 2013" on pg 65 by Darla دارلا Hueske on Flickr.

"Fresh Air" on pg 67 by Norbert on Flickr.

"Catacombs under Paris" by Better Than Bacon on Flickr.

~Table of Contents~



Introduction to the Arcane	pg 1
Chapter I: NANOTECHNICA	pg 5
Chapter II: The MYSTERIES	pg 17
Part 1: The Mystery of Blood	pg 19
Part 2: The Mystery of Ceremony	pg 24
Part 3: The Mystery of Chaos	pg 32
Part 4: The Mystery of Dust	pg 37
Part 5: The Mystery of Fae	pg 43
Part 6: The Mystery of Flesh	pg 48
Part 7: The Mystery of Form	pg 53
Part 8: The Mystery of Motion	pg 59
Part 9: The Mystery of Nature	pg 64
Part 10: The Mystery of Sound	pg 69
Chapter III: The UNIVERSITY of AOMI	pg 75

The girl woke to the sound of crashing waves. She opened her eyes and saw an unfamiliar landscape of jutting rocks and tall grass. The rags she wore were tattered and soaked through, weighing her down as she stood. It was a crisp morning. The sun hid behind thick clouds in a dull blue sky, and she was alone.

It felt like days since she had eaten. The hollow pain in her stomach prevented her from moving quickly, but she trudged in circles, hoping to find some sign of her past. Finding nothing, she sat and in the emptiness of that morning she searched her mind for what had happened. Nothing. No matter how hard she willed herself to make sense of this she found no memory; there were no loving faces, no faces at all, and this new aloneness consumed the first.

As she ascended one of the larger rocks, a great city blossomed into view. Airships flew around it, little more than dark specks in the distance. Closer were settlements of low buildings, undignified against that looming majesty, and like the houses she felt small.

The girl clambered down and began to walk. She searched and searched for any memory, anything she could hold onto, but continued to come away with nothing. The terror grew and as her heart began to race she felt warmth under her shirt. Lifting it, she found a pendant, pale white metal intricately wrought into a small cylinder. She smiled as she saw it, recognizing it but not knowing from where. Her hand went to it instinctively but as she touched it she screamed. Her fingers ran across the spot where it lay but found no purchase. The rod had fused into her, flat against her chest. Although she could remember no other chests, no other people, the wrongness of this stood out. The fear thrust forth unbidden and suddenly she felt not only alone but cast out. In the depths of this feeling, she sat in despair and began to cry.

The clouds above crept past uncaring, but in time the girl heard the soft turning of wagon wheels and with it playful laughter. The girl darted behind a rock and watched as a group of four rode through the field. They were unkempt and poor, she could tell this much from afar, but they seemed happy. They had what she did not, and wanting it, the girl crept out and began her tepid approach. As she drew near, the youngest of the group pulled on the coat of the man with the reins; suddenly seeing her fragile form, their expressions changed instantly. The girl recoiled, but as she began to back away, the man ground the wagon to a halt and hopped out. He approached cautiously, but closed the distance in short order. The girl hadn't realized her own smallness until now. This was the first person she could remember seeing, but as she looked into his eyes a memory began to form.

Another man had held her once, and in his embrace she felt safe. She had stood on his shoes and danced with him, and sat on his lap as he read. He showed her the meanings of the words, and beamed when he found her on the floor reading the books on her own. Her eyes closed, desperate to remember more, but as they flooded in their timbre changed. It was night and on the floor around her were other children sleeping. The man was walking from child to child, draping blankets across their still bodies with that calm smile he wore in every memory. Quietly she crept behind his back and pulled out a book, but behind it she found the small metal rod now fused into her flesh. As she picked it up the sensation was like hot coal burning in her hand, and everything around her began to unravel. Like the erosion of a statue, features collapsed and became dust. She saw the children around her and the man she loved broken down to nothing. She heard herself scream for it to stop, but every syllable felt like eating glass. The pain spread throughout her, and all went black.

The girl opened her eyes and the family was gone. All was gone. The landscape around her had been laid bare. Silence had fallen over the shore once again. Only the distant crash of waves cut through, and under her shirt the rod felt warm. She nearly collapsed but was caught as she fell. Behind her stood another man, one she hadn't seen before. He wore a rough-spun grey robe and sandals, and the same calm smile of the man in her mind. She opened her mouth to speak in the midst of tears but he put a calloused finger on her lips.

"Shhhh, praelanai. You are with family now," he said quietly.

She started to ask a question but he interrupted.

"It is not a real word. It means nothing, but so too does it mean anything. So it is with you. It is your name."

With that he clasped her hand. Together they began to walk toward the city.



Introduction

~ to the ~ Arcane

In the times that came before, many technologies were explored. From the very large to the very small, all matter in the galaxy was manipulated and perfected by those who ruled the day. Eight prior worlds knew glory over the earth, and each added a touch here and there that has lasted through the millennia. Even in the Ninth World the air and land are filled with evidence of massive changes to the world and the tools that made them possible. Most notably, nanotechnology remains. Machines that evade notice due to their impossibly small size. The quadrillions upon quadrillions of tiny workers, self-replicating on raw matter and communicating silently as they await the commands of masters who have long since perished or moved on.

These microscopic agents of change form the basis of Ninth World mysticism. Nanos and other experimenters have discovered processes, movements, and sounds that command the nanites to take action on the world. Codified and passed down from master to student, these mystics often become inadvertently superstitious in their magical work, as it is often unknown exactly which alien phrase or silly motion caused an observed effect. Once a set of effects are discovered, the entirety of what triggered them is often ascribed to having caused the magic. Experimentation is an arduous process, often taking decades or centuries to progress.

Those who have documented the most have preserved the most, and so it is that the leaders in magical understanding are the most superstitious. Universities and arcane orders have evolved, attaching philosophy and cult-like membership to what was already powerful. We find ourselves in a world in which magic exists, but is little understood, and those who know its

power share that knowledge only with those who pledge loyalty. Magic is and propagates power.

• What is this Book?

Presented here is an exploration of both nanotechnology and mysticism. It presents the interesting “magical” effects discovered by those who pursue arcane knowledge, and it also presents those mystics themselves. It’s an opportunity to add new powers and mysteries to the Ninth World, while simultaneously adding a more arcane element to your game.

Numenera can be seen as a blend between science fiction and fantasy. Angels & Ashes is a means by which you may add a bit more of the latter, should you so desire. It’s high magic through the lens of omnipresent nanotech, resulting in a strange new way for magic to be dangerously powerful.

What is the Arcane?

This book tosses around the words arcane, magical, and mystical in sometimes interchangeable ways. Generally speaking though, mysticism is the way in which nanotech effects are produced. Magic is the effects themselves. The arcane is our general term for all things nanotechnological. If a power affects other “arcane” effects currently at work, that means it affects any power or Cypher presented in this book, as well as the Esoterics of Nanos, and some of the more “magical” effects that come from the Tricks of the Trade practiced by Jacks.

Arcana in the Ninth World

The arcane is more than merely the work of nanites through the direction of nanos and other experimenters; it is a whole host of practices and subcultures. The arcane takes the form of Arcane Cyphers- spells caught in the mind and potentially cast into the world. It can also be Charms, simple magical workings that alter the world in more subtle ways. Most commonly, it's the magics developed by the various "Mysteries", the bodies of knowledge and philosophy around which various cults and orders revolve.

This is where mysticism comes in. Seekers of Paradise, practitioners of the Mystery of Nature, set up shop in an isolated community. They teach the natives to draw upon the local flora to concentrate localized abundance, seemingly creating heaven on earth (for a while). The local tribe learns their ways and embellishes with their own religious and mystical beliefs. Their practices become theirs alone, constantly and recursively updated



to fit the evolving paradigm of their Mystery and the fractured divisions within it. It's in this way that Mysteries change and spread- they are constantly integrating local ritual and philosophy to empower themselves through cloaks of mysticism.

Though all Mysteries derived originally from the Mystery of Ceremony, few are so organized and even the practices of Ceremony itself have become bloated with unnecessary rituals. Indeed that would seem to be its defining feature.

Magic, by its very nature as a passed down secret, creates secretive orders of insular and paranoid fanatics, who mistake their seemingly supernatural abilities for divine or at least trans-human importance. "We are gods among men," they say to themselves. "Surely what we do is for the greater good of the Ninth World order."

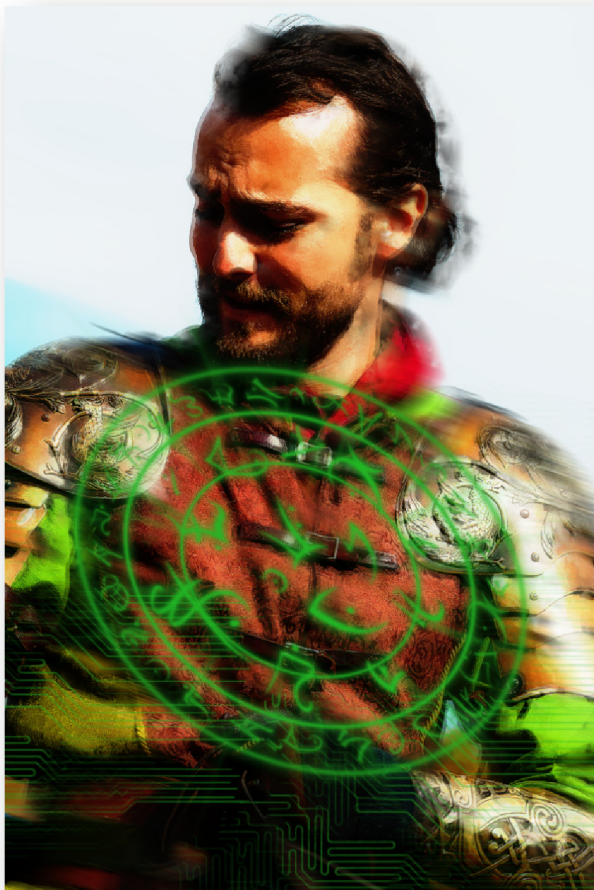
Complicating things is the fact that much of magic has been lost, either by the ancients who originally programmed the nanobots, or the various secretive masters who've hoarded and locked away the discoveries they've made.

Add to this the fact that magic is often volatile and dangerous, and one can see how fleeting discoveries can be. A newly found Arcane Cypher may lead to an all new kind of magic, which survives only a single generation within a violent cult. Secrets breed secrets.

The Order of Truth

Codification of the secrets of the ancients would seem to be the purview of the Aeon Priesthood. Indeed, many nanos hail from the Order, and spend their lives attempting to understand the "magical" things in the world, trying desperately to make magic into a kind of science. But their best efforts fall short of the vast pervasiveness of the Mysteries.

Mysteries capture the imagination and promise transcendent and meaningful power to those who pledge themselves to their secrets. Such a heady drug is hard to compete with, and the Order simply doesn't have the numbers to keep up. Thus the Mysteries dominate the conversation of what magic is and how it is invoked.



The Convergence

Interested primarily in power through any means, the magisters of the Convergence are far more suited to studying the arcane than the Order of Truth. The trappings of mysticism only add to the temptation for a magister.

As many magisters are nanos to begin with, they often find it easy to make their way into Mysteries, pretending to be loyal disciples until they can master the secrets their instructors provide. They tend to become the founders and leaders of mystical cults dedicated to this or that version of redemption and divinity through clandestine acts and powers. Few within the Mysteries realize this perversion of their knowledge. Few could do anything about it if they did. The Convergence pulls heavy strings.

Mutants & Knights

Magic is dangerous. Some arcane powers even involve harnessing the Iron Wind itself. Nanites can work at the molecular level, modifying objects, forces, and people. There are many side effects to magic, many of which are undesirable. From pollution and radiation to direct DNA modification and altered physical forms, “mutation” is common among those who find themselves close to magical effects.

This has not gone unnoticed by the Angulan Knights, who see the arcane as a menace, turning humans into mutants and monsters. Many of those who have taken the Angulan oath spend their days undermining the various mystical cults and even universities.

However, not all arcanists are despised, and some have even been known to join forces with the knights to battle greater threats to humanity. Such teamwork is rare, but often legendary.

Drakes & Other Creatures

The Xi Drakes are not the only dragons in the world. Hex Drakes, for instance, are known to spawn from magical effects and wield arcane forces themselves. These purple crested monsters are greatly sought after by the Mysteries for their knowledge and power. Some have even been heard to tame and ride these mysterious beasts.

Otherworldly beings are also known to come from and practice magical power. These include purely nanite-based hive minds, such as Angels and Faeries, but also ultradimensional creatures brought into this world through dangerous summoning rites. There are no few practices for doing this, implying that such seemingly impossible acts are not uncommon among the overconfident arcanists of the world. Those who seek influence and arcane ability through the binding of these unearthly things obviously endanger many. But the *power*...

It begins with the crack of steel on stone. Praelanai is running, the sound of arrows snapping at her heels. She dodges behind a boulder dislodged during the previous examination. What remains of her former classmate's body is sprawled on the ground. She rips the shield out of his cooling hands and darts off again. The arena is too wide to sprint across in one pass, but she doesn't need to close with her assailant. Not yet. She'll make him come to her.

Three dead this year; I will not make four, she thinks as an arrow slams into what little protection the buckler provides. Her opponent wears the same mask she does, the one all students are required to wear during examinations. Knowing who you face reduces efficacy, or so they had been taught. Some questioned the sense of allowing students to die during exams, but the University was anything but sensible in their methods. Magic was, by its nature, dangerous, and so were they. The impact of another arrow shocks Praelanai out of reverie, refocusing as she stares at the tip skewered through the shield an inch from her eye. *I will not make four*.

Iridescent black patterns begin crawling across her skin. She glances above the shield in panic. Her opponent has discarded his bow and is sprinting forward. In one hand he holds a narrow sword, the sort of steel that can carve through flesh without effort. The other is what scares Praelanai more. It is held up in front of him, drawing an intricate rune in the air. She recognizes its shape a split second before her arms erupt in lacerations. Praelanai hits the wall hard and thrusts her limbs into the cold sand. It buys her just enough time to refocus. *There is no link*, she repeats to herself, the mantra taught early on to separate the connection between arcanist and effect. Black lines turn to blue, forming an intricate lattice over her body, and the gashes subside. But the pain remains, raising bile and that harsh metallic taste with it. For a moment her vision fades. She forces herself to remain conscious. *I will not make four*.

The sound of heavy footsteps draws closer and she snaps the head off an arrow, pressing it into her palm until blood is drawn. As her opponent rounds the corner she grabs his calf, smearing it red. A moment later his leg snaps backward. The explosive sound of bone breaking and sinew tearing cracks through the air. He falls to the ground screaming but, even as he does so, twists to swing his blade at her on the floor. Praelanai narrowly dodges the blow, rolling aside. Lodged in the ground, the blade is useless. With a quick wave of his hand, the wall behind Praelanai bursts outward. Most of the debris rains down far around them. Not enough. One large chunk pins her to the floor. Blood is everywhere, but above it is the smell of burning flesh. She watches his fingers char and wither as she struggles to escape from under the stone, and knows she will die if he lives. Self-sacrifice is the discipline of the flame, and the flame knows not of mercy. The stone won't budge and behind his eyes now is something other than before. The metal in her chest grows hot; the old familiar terror takes hold. *I will not make four*.

Her breaths become ragged. The warm metal is overtaken by the furious heat spreading through her body. Burning from the inside. All at once her strength gives out. She pushes her mind against the agony but it won't respond. She screams from the inside but only the quiet crackling of flesh breaks the silence. In her final moments there is hatred and disgust, not for her opponent; for herself.

Darkness.

Then peace.

The burning cools and something quells the deeper agony: something new. She stretches forward. One last chance. Her palm falls gently on his mask.

"So help me I will blow out the back of your skull," she hisses raggedly, "and that will be the end of you."

And with that he succumbs. With a smile she drifts. There is no fourth.



Chapter I:

~NANOTECHNICA~

Nanites pervade the Ninth World. The air, the water, the land itself. Each person bears a dozen or more colonies of self-replicating nanite systems. These systems work in tandem, following prescribed instructions and radio transmitted orders. They also watch and listen to the world around them, scanning for signs that their ancient masters have returned.

This is how Esoterics often work. They are reactions to movements and vocal commands that trigger seemingly supernatural effects. Once the trigger is detected, the nanite system goes into action, changing the world at a molecular level.

Arcane Cyphers

But words and motions are not the only means by which nanotech is signaled. Certain symbols and even thoughts bear deep meaning, triggered in the deepest recesses of nanite programming. These symbols, when drawn with rare and precious prior world materials, may be stored in a sentient mind and triggered at a moment's notice, unleashing Esoterics without the need for study and practice.

The following optional system provides a means by which characters may hold Cyphers that are not physical. These are sigils and markings, drawn with special pigments, which may be taken into the mind of a viewer. They work very similarly to physical Cyphers. They take up the same slots and have the same dangers if more than the allowed amount is carried in the mind.

Finding Arcane Cyphers is relatively easy. The markings can be found from time to time on pieces of Numenera, glowing softly in the dark. Any search of an ancient ruin or other prior world location has a decent chance of holding one or more of these symbols.

Use the same rules for finding Arcane Cyphers as you would for finding physical ones.

Arcane Cyphers don't work exactly like material ones. Once a character absorbs one into their mind, the image is removed from whatever surface it was inscribed. Arcane Cyphers may not be traded once taken into the mind. To get rid of an Arcane Cypher a character need only think of removing it and it is gone. And since an Arcane Cypher is not physical, it need not be carried around in a pack, making it somewhat safer to carry.

In a pinch, however, an Arcane Cypher may be chiseled or cut out of the material it's been found on, allowing it to be carried physically, and causing it to take up Cypher slots as normal for the one carrying it.



Unlike most Cyphers, the Arcane variety do not have random Levels. Rather, each kind has a specific prescribed Level. Level 3 through 5 Arcane Cyphers are Anoetic, and those of Level 6 through 10 are Occultic. However, Level 9 and 10 Arcane Cyphers are very rare and won't show up on the random table below.

Roll on the following table or draw a printed Cypher from a deck for Cyphers between Levels 3 and 8.

Roll 1d6, twice:

1	Level 3	4	Level 6
1	Baleful Halo	1	Borrow Senses
2	Broken Tongue	2	Chill of Shadow
3	Eyes of the Nanotechnician	3	Fan of Light
4	Familiar Face	4	Mind Castle
5	Steely Blade	5	Read Intent
6	Walk with Lightness	6	Rune Cast
2	Level 4	5	Level 7
1	Cry of the Wind	1	Beam of Fire
2	Doubletalk	2	Crystalize
3	Knowing Look	3	Deconstruction Haze
4	Magma Walk	4	Interface
5	Painless Mark	5	Redirection
6	Prescient Reflexes	6	Steal Secret
3	Level 5	6	Level 8
1	Ice Touch	1	Flame Lace
2	Majestic Aura	2	Inspiration
3	Pheromone Control	3	Instruction
4	Regenerative Essence	4	Invisible Cage
5	Taming Touch	5	Transmutation
6	Veil of Souls	6	Were-Creature



Level 3 Arcane Cyphers [Anoetic]

Baleful Halo

(Level 3 Anoetic Cypher)

Effect: You are surrounded by a halo of cold green flame that somehow scrambles Numenera in your area for one hour. Cyphers, Artifacts, and arcane powers cannot be activated within immediate distance of you. Oddities do not work as normal, but produce other results.

Animals are enraged by this halo and will usually attack you on sight.

Broken Tongue

(Level 3 Anoetic Cypher)

Effect: You learn to speak and understand a language that is audible when the Cypher is cast. Your ability to speak this language is imperfect however. At least one in six words is wrong, but you can understand others just fine.

Your ability to use this language lasts for 28 hours.

Eyes of the Nanotechnician

(Level 3 Anoetic Cypher)

Effect: You can discern the effect and process of activation for any Arcane Cyphers you see, without the need for a roll. Any Occultic Cyphers you take into your mind during this time do not need activation rolls, unless used against an unwilling target.

This effect causes your eyes to glow orange and lasts for 28 hours.

Familiar Face

(Level 3 Anoetic Cypher)

Effect: New people you encounter think they know you from somewhere, granting you an Asset on positive social interactions with them and the opportunity to pretend to be their friend, should you wish.

Lasts for 28 hours.

Steely Blade

(Level 3 Anoetic Cypher)

Effect: Any light, bladed weapon that you hold deals a number of additional ambient damage equal to the number of Assets you have on the attack (max 2). Causes the weapon to crawl with glowing sigils and lines.

The effect lasts for up to 28 hours, but it only affects the weapon while you hold it.

Walk with Lightness

(Level 3 Anoetic Cypher)

Effect: You and your carried possessions weigh half as much as they usually do. Speed tests made to travel long distance during a turn or to jump are made at two lower difficulty.

Lasts ten hours.

Level 4 Arcane Cyphers [Anoetic]

Cry of the Wind

(Level 4 Anoetic Cypher)

Effect: You let out a digital sounding scream, transmitting instructions to the nanites around you. Over the next ten minutes the wind picks up and eventually turns into a full blown tornado, lasting for one hour and causing massive damage and mayhem to the area.

Doubletalk

(Level 4 Anoetic Cypher)

Effect: A layer of subliminal messaging is added to your speech, granting you an Asset on social tasks when trying to convince or lead others and allowing you to communicate secretly with your fellow party members.

Lasts 10 hours.

Knowing Look

(Level 4 Anoetic Cypher)

Effect: Your senses are powerfully enhanced, granting you an Asset on all rolls related to detecting stealth, lies, and deception. It's almost as though you perceive truth.

This condition lasts for ten hours upon casting the Cypher and causes your eyes to pulse with white light from time to time.

Magma Walk

(Level 4 Anoetic Cypher)

Effect: Your body is enveloped in a cage of glowing blue lines and runes, protecting you from nearly all heat.

For the 10 hour duration of this power you and your carried possessions gain a 12 Armor rating against fire and heat. You are even able to walk on lava, should the need arise.

Painless Mark

(Level 4 Anoetic Cypher)

Effect: Your head become emblazoned with a glowing rune and for the next five hours you are immune to all kinds of pain. Mechanically speaking, you cannot be pushed down the condition track without losing all of your points from all of your pools, at which point you die.

Prescient Reflexes

(Level 4 Anoetic Cypher)

Effect: Your forehead begins to emit a powerful burst of light as you become able to see a few seconds into the future and react accordingly.

This effect lasts for three hours and grants you an extra Speed Edge for the duration. Your GM may wish to Intrude that you are disabled for one round by the confusion of seeing the future all at once.

Level 5 Arcane Cyphers [Anoetic]

Ice Touch

(Level 5 Anoetic Cypher)

Effect: Your mere touch causes ice to form on nearly any surface. You deal one additional damage on unarmed attacks and no longer need to make climbing task rolls, so long as you use your hands while climbing.

This effect lasts for five hours, or until you warm your hands at a fire.

Majestic Aura

(Level 5 Anoetic Cypher)

Effect: You begin to glow with golden light, causing those who encounter you to become impressed, if somewhat fearful.

This effect lasts for three hours and grants you an Asset on all social interactions, though your GM may wish to Intrude that someone panics in the face of your majesty.

Pheromone Control

(Level 5 Anoetic Cypher)

Effect: The next person who comes within immediate distance of you feels a strong desire for you sexually. This effect grants you two Assets on any seduction attempts and one Asset on any other social interaction, but only against the target in question. Some animals find your scent offensive and may attack on sight.

The effect lasts for ten hours.

Regenerative Essence

(Level 5 Anoetic Cypher)

Effect: Those standing within immediate distance of you feel replenished, regaining one Might pool point per hour while they remain within this distance.

This effect lasts for ten hours.

Taming Touch

(Level 5 Anoetic Cypher)

Effect: The next animal you touch becomes tame to you for seven days, potentially causing it to follow you as a companion of sorts.

This effect carries on you for 28 hours, or until you touch a creature, releasing the magic.

Veil of Souls

(Level 5 Anoetic Cypher)

Effect: You become surrounded by visible spirits-nanotechnological entities. These souls protect you from arcane effects, granting you two Assets when defending against arcane attacks.

This effect lasts for five hours.

Level 6 Arcane Cyphers [Occultic]

Borrow Senses

(Level 6 Occultic Cypher)

Effect: You may see, hear, and otherwise use the senses of target creature within long range. You are able to switch into their perspective as an action, off and on throughout the duration of this power. While using their senses you simply stand in place, looking dazed.

This effect lasts for five hours.

Chill of Shadow

(Level 6 Occultic Cypher)

Effect: A target within long range suddenly feels intense cold, and becomes wrapped in darkness.

For the next ten minutes the target enjoys an Asset on stealth tasks, but takes one ambient cold damage per minute.

Fan of Light

(Level 6 Occultic Cypher)

Effect: You attack up to four enemies within immediate distance with a shimmering blast that deals 3 ambient damage and blinds them for one round.

Mind Castle

(Level 6 Occultic Cypher)

Effect: You and a sentient target within Short range immediately disappear from the material world, to exist within a mental landscape of your own design. Here you may speak with your target and/or attack each other mentally (using Intellect) dealing 4 damage per hit.

You remain in this dreamscape for up to an hour, or until you release the spell.

Read Intent

(Level 6 Occultic Cypher)

Effect: You learn the general mood and current goal of a target within long range. This knowledge gives you an Asset on all rolls made against them within one hour.

Rune Cast

(Level 6 Occultic Cypher)

Effect: You glimpse the future of a target person or creature within long distance. You gain an Asset on all tasks relating to that person for the next ten hours.

Level 7 Arcane Cyphers [Occultic]

Beam of Fire

(Level 7 Occultic Cypher)

Effect: A target within long range is struck by a beam of energy, dealing 7 heat damage and lighting them on fire.

Crystalize

(Level 7 Occultic Cypher)

Effect: A target becomes overtaken by a rapidly growing crystalline rock, dealing 3 damage per round for up to 3 rounds and immobilizing the target until it somehow manages to escape.

Deconstruction Haze

(Level 7 Occultic Cypher)

Effect: A single object within long range, of Level 7 or lower, is turned to dust. The object must be no larger than a 10 foot (3 meter) cube.

Interface

(Level 7 Occultic Cypher)

Effect: A set of shapes and symbols displays before you, showing you menus that can control nearby powered machinery. You may give a simple command once per round to a target device within immediate range.

This spell lasts for one hour.

Redirection

(Level 7 Occultic Cypher)

Effect: You alter the target of a single arcane effect within long range, affecting a different person or object. This Cypher may be used instantly, without taking an action.

Steal Secret

(Level 7 Occultic Cypher)

Effect: You probe the mind of a person within long range, granting you knowledge of their deepest, darkest secret.

Level 8 Arcane Cyphers [Occultic]

Flame Lace

(Level 8 Occultic Cypher)

Effect: You entwine a creature within long distance with thin strings of living flame, lashing them in place and burning deep wounds in intricate patterns. This spell deals 2 damage per round and causes the target to become immobile.

It lasts for ten minutes or until the target breaks free (a Difficulty 6 escape task).

Inspiration

(Level 8 Occultic Cypher)

Effect: You place an idea that takes deep root in the mind of a person within long range. This thought becomes an all-consuming passion over the course of the first day.

This effect lasts for one month.

Instruction

(Level 8 Occultic Cypher)

Effect: You grant a willing target within immediate range training in a skill you possess.

This lasts for ten hours and provokes nearly constant daydreams about the skill.

Invisible Cage

(Level 8 Occultic Cypher)

Effect: You create a 3 meter per side cube-shaped wall of energy that defends as a level 8 object with 24 Health. Can be created around a creature to trap it, as an attack.

The cube lasts for ten hours.

Transmutation

(Level 8 Occultic Cypher)

Effect: You alter the physical properties of an object no larger than one meter cubed. You can increase or decrease the object's Armor rating by 3 by doing so, though other strange and creative effects are possible.

This effect lasts for three hours.

Were-Creature

(Level 8 Occultic Cypher)

Effect: You become a monster, taking on the ferocious nature of a beast you are familiar with. While transformed, you gain +5 to your Speed and Might pool maximums and can deal 4 damage with your unarmed strikes. You also regenerate Might points at a rate of one point per minute. This transformation and its effects last for three hours, during which time you GM can Intrude that you attack your allies due to blood lust.

Level 9 Arcane Cyphers [Occultic]

Clone

(Level 9 Occultic Cypher)

Effect: You create an exact biological duplicate of a visible creature, which grows at your feet over the course of 5 rounds. The clone is alike physically, but has no knowledge besides pure instinct.

It begins as a Level 1 creature, but may gain in Levels quickly if its species generally grows up quickly.

Flashfire

(Level 9 Occultic Cypher)

Effect: You set the area around you ablaze. Everything within long distance of you catches fire, taking 3 damage per round until extinguished. This affects both objects and creatures, including allies.

However, this flame cannot affect you or your carried possessions and you may walk through it without harm.

Lore

(Level 9 Occultic Cypher)

Effect: Choose one Charm from any Mystery.

You have access to that Charm for the next 5 hours.

Mind Transfer

(Level 9 Occultic Cypher)

Effect: You temporarily switch bodies with a living creature within long distance of you. You now inhabit its body and it inhabits yours. Upon switching, you may reallocate your Speed and Might pools to better represent your new form, and this reallocation remains for the duration of the power.

This effect lasts for twenty eight hours.

Passthrough

(Level 9 Occultic Cypher)

Effect: You and your carried possessions become somewhat insubstantial for one hour, able to pass through any wall or obstacle, and taking no damage from physical attacks or falling.

While under this effect you cannot pick up objects or otherwise interact with the physical world, besides climbing and walking on it.

Quantum Fluctuation

(Level 9 Occultic Cypher)

Effect: One creature within long distance of you ceases to exist. Indeed, you are the only person who remembers it ever did.

This creature must be an animal or other unnamed NPC with no significant bearing on the plot of the story (GM's discretion).

Level 10 Arcane Cyphers [Occultic]

Banish Spirit

(Level 10 Occultic Cypher)

Effect: You cause a nanotech entity or hive mind within long range (such as an Angel or Faerie) to disperse, leaving the area for one month.

After doing so, you may gain a reputation for doing harm to such entities. Expect them to come looking for you.

Duplicate Item

(Level 10 Occultic Cypher)

Effect: You create an exact copy of any handheld item or device you hold. This may even duplicate a physical Cypher or Artifact.

Reap the Whirlwind

(Level 10 Occultic Cypher)

Effect: You gain control over a seemingly uncontrollable system or effect, such as a volcano, a tornado or a section of the Iron Wind.

You have control over the force for three rounds, during which time you may cause it to change course or alter size somewhat.

Reverse Magic

(Level 10 Occultic Cypher)

Effect: You cause an arcane effect to do the exact opposite of what it normally would. Flaming items become water spouts, forcefields pull people through them, etc. You'll need to work out with your GM just what will happen.

This reversed effect lasts for one hour.

Seek the Arcane

(Level 10 Occultic Cypher)

Effect: You suddenly learn the location of the nearest large source of arcane power, such as a tomb with many Arcane Cyphers, or a powerful arcane entity like an Angel, trapped in a holding circle.

You have no idea what it is that you've found until you go there, just the general direction to head in.

Space Rupture

(Level 10 Occultic Cypher)

Effect: You cause space to warp in an area up to short distance in diameter, at a location within your line of sight. Anyone within that area has their movement distances halved and takes 3 ambient damage per round due to space ripples moving through them.

This effect lasts for ten minutes.

Eldritch Artifacts

The following Artifacts are comprised of both found objects with magical properties, and crafted items made to affect the arcane.

Ash Amulet

Level: 1d6 + 1

Form: An amulet bearing a massive jewel that appears lightly covered in ash.

Effect: While worn, the gem at the center of the amulet glows brightly in the presence of arcane spells and effects. When the wearer is subject to an arcane attack, the amulet provides an Asset on defense rolls.

Depletion: 1 in 20, rolled at the end of each day it is worn.

Breastplate of the Hex

Level: 1d6 + 2

Form: Chest armor made of the purple hexagonal scales of a Hex Drake, a creature known for its magical abilities.

Effect: Serves as Heavy Armor, but with two additional points of Armor when defending against an arcane source of damage, providing a total of 5 Armor in this situation.

Depletion: -

Sword of the Nanotechnician

Level: 1d6 + 4

Form: A massive two-handed sword (Heavy Weapon) with a blade inscribed with glowing runes of magical power.

Effect: Deals harm as usual for a Heavy Weapon (6 damage), but may also be used to parry arcane attacks, providing an Asset when defending against them.

Additionally, the sword is especially effective against creatures made entirely of nanites, such as Angels and Faeries. It deals three extra damage against such unusual creatures.

Depletion: -

Tome of Mystery

Level: 1d6 + 2

Form: A leather bound tome inscribed with glowing sigils, containing a complex set of diagrams and instructions on the arcane.

Effect: Each Tome of Mystery is dedicated to providing information about a particular Mystery, chosen when the item is discovered. Reading from the tome allows the user to cast any of the Charms associated with the Mystery in the tome, as though the user had the Charm in question.

The tome may also be studied for a 28 hour period to learn the deep secrets of the Mystery. Doing so destroys the tome, but allows the user to change her Focus to one of those practiced within the Mystery.

Depletion: 1 in 10 for Charms, always when changing Focus.

Void Ring

Level: 1d6 + 4

Form: A simple looking ring made of steel, adorned with nearly invisible blue runes.

Effect: While worn, the wearer is invisible to nanite hive minds, such as Angels and Faeries, and thus cannot be directly affected by such creatures. In addition, the wearer may not be the direct target of any arcane power, even one they themselves cast.

Depletion: 1 in 20, rolled at the end of each day it is worn.





Praelanai was aware that the hewed stone table between them was meant to be imposing, a show of strength through wealth. But even after all these years, his ostentatious sensibilities still struck her as childish. Baubles and trophies decorated his chambers, designed and redesigned to maximize the appearance of stature. The Master of Dust, beholden to forms.

He was lecturing on the necessity of a unified front from his gilded throne of crystal, or he had been when she tuned him out. The absentminded thrumming of his metal fingers on the table filled the room with a droning sound. It was a profoundly absurd situation to Praelanai, and keeping herself from laughing took all she had. This man in front of her, Adenarch the Lash, might have been the most powerful destructive force within several weeks' travel, but they had known one another too long for formality. In her eyes, he was still the boy with the pockmarked face who withered under the glare of brutes in nearby taprooms. Memories of those times were much more endearing than what he had become. As she so often did in his presence, she let her mind wander to the few good times they'd had. It kept her from rage.

All that faded away when he pointed a finger directly at her face.

"Don't try to spoon feed me the same line of garbage you push onto your pupils, Aden." Praelanai glowered as she stood. "You called me in here to talk about the girl who desiccated Yellin's arm the other day, and you know as well as I do that everything we know about her says she should be under my tutelage, not yours."

And just like that, the entire façade broke. Master Adenarch disappeared, instantly replaced by the indignant rage underneath. The ugly side of the boy that nice quite disappeared. He was already shouting by the time he was on his feet.

"Why? Because you're you? What right do you have to take every good student that comes to us? Almighty Praelanai, always the favorite. Always the head of the class! You take and take and take and the rest of us are left here picking up your scraps!"

Every syllable an attack, every word spit out with disdain. She could see the fury in his veins, the power in his blood turning them black against his pale skin. Adenarch moved around the table until he stood face to face with Praelanai. Slavering hatred flew into her face as he screamed. After a few moments he inhaled deeply, if only to continue his vitriol. Praelanai took the opportunity; she smacked him across the cheek with all the strength she could muster, sending him tumbling over. His head hit the desk on the way down, and for a moment he lay on the floor unmoving. Under his robes, she could see the gelatinous synth-leg he had worn since she took the real one from him.

"I take them because you can't stop me," she said with a cold calmness. "I take them because for all your power you are weak, and because they are better for it. I take because you are only a student of the flame; I am the fire. If you care to dispute this, the arena is always open. Even to us. But you won't. Because it's not in you."

Adenarch began to stand; Praelanai put her foot on his sternum before he got an inch off the ground. The pressure was a threat he understood truer than words.

"Never forget who let you live. My kindness is not unfailing."

With that she turned her back and walked away. The last thing she saw was the Master of Ash fail to hold back tears.

Chapter II:

~THE MYSTERIES~

Mysteries are the philosophical and practical divisions between the many applications of the arcane in the Ninth World. Beginning as simple experiments into new areas of knowledge, their practitioners tend to specialize and develop social ties. The Mysteries are part cult, part academic community, part fraternal order. They are teachers and students, as well as explorers and experimenters. The ten Mysteries are as follows:

The Mystery of Blood. Those who manipulate nanites in the blood to regain memories from their ancestors or animate the bodies of the dead.

The Mystery of Ceremony. Those who attempt to understand the nature of magic itself, reprogramming nanites through tools and rituals, such as staves, wands, blades, and inscriptions.

The Mystery of Chaos. Those who scramble the programming of nanites, creating random arcane effects or using them to alter their luck.

The Mystery of Dust. Those who alter the code of nanites directly, causing them to battle each other or creating wholly new magics.

The Mystery of Fae. Those who learn the ways of ancient nanite intelligences, using their hidden pathways between space or calling upon their enforcement of oaths and curses.

The Mystery of Flesh. Those who use nanotech to alter flesh, shapeshifting into animals or modifying the body to their own strange ends.

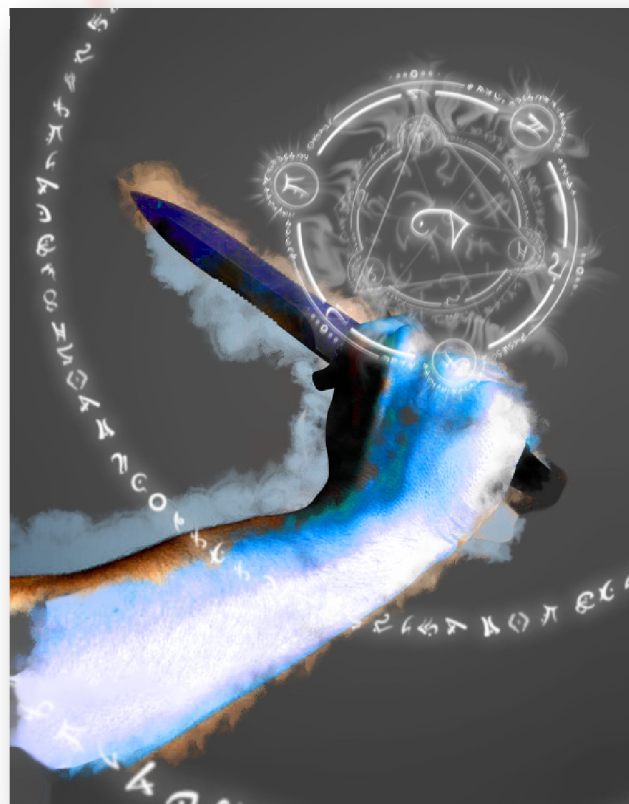
The Mystery of Form. Those who invoke the nanites through shapes and symbols, animating objects and inscribing powers onto flesh through body art.

The Mystery of Motion. Those who call upon deep programming within the nanites which respond to physical positions and motions of the body, allowing them to create magic through dance or martial arts.

The Mystery of Nature. Those who draw upon the terraforming nanites in the world to create paradise or restore ecological balance.

The Mystery of Sound. Those who call upon the nanites through auditory codes, employing instruments to bring elemental effects, or telling tales which appear to come true.

Foci



Each Mystery presented here represents decades or centuries of arcane study and association. Provided are the underpinnings, the social structures, the theories, and the practices that make them tick. Nine of them have two different Foci associated with them, often representing diametrically opposed schools of thought within the Mystery. The Mystery of Ceremony, as the most developed and mystically superstitious of the groups, has four Foci, aptly representing its size and power within the arcane community.

Charms

The presented Mysteries also include a new system called Charms. Charms represent minor magics and burgeoning powers. They each derive from a skill associated with the Mystery, representing the Charm's reliance on in-depth knowledge of their practices. A character who belongs to a Mystery chooses one Charm from their list for each level they possess in the Skill associated with those Charms.

For instance, a character who Unleashes Inner Power through the Mystery of Motion might possess training in the Balance skill, granting her one free Charm from the Motion Charms list. Charms may be purchased at a cost of 1 XP, but only from your Mystery's Charm list. Characters who do not possess a Focus related to a Mystery do not generally have access to Charms.

Charms are considered arcane powers. They take an action to activate and have a cost of 1 Intellect point. When a roll is needed for a task to activate or use one, Charms employ the skill associated with their Mystery.

Adversaries

Finally, each of the Mystery sections provides one or more adversaries, for use as opponents or even reluctant allies of intrepid PCs. These adversaries are selected for being generally associated or important to that particular Mystery. Sometimes they are creatures made of that kind of magic, sometimes foolish dabblers in those particular arcane arts.

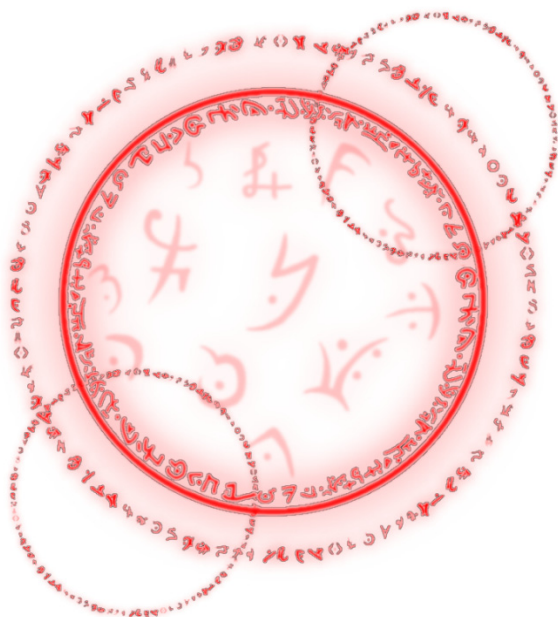


The Mystery of ~Blood~

To the mystical mind and in particular to those who practice the Mystery of Blood, great power lies within the blood. Just as energy is the fundamental force that allows for the continued existence the universe, so too is blood the fundamental force that allows for the continued life of all things. Practitioners of the Mystery have discovered how to tap into that power and use it for their own ends.

For some this means using the nanites in their blood to access their ancestor's memories. For others, this means using the power of blood to create a semblance of life for a time, tapping into the nanites within all bodies to bring animation back to the dead.

Given the taboos surrounding the life's fluid, many practitioners of this Mystery tend to hide what they are doing from the general public. It is important to that note for all practitioners of this path, magic always includes the direct use of blood. Whether this takes the form of talismans sanctified in blood or the letting of blood from the body, it must be a part of the magic.



Accesses Ancestral Memories

The human family is a vast and complicated web that stretches back more than a billion years. The threads of this web are forged through the magic of the blood, drawing upon the power of the nanite colonies present in nearly all life, passed down through the generations. These colonies collect information from all of their host bodies. Practitioners who focus on this aspect of the Mystery have learned how to read and access the knowledge of their ancestors, by programming the nanite colonies that descend from them.

Learning the proper gestures and words of power is only the first step, for it's extremely helpful to know of the ancestor itself in order to gain access to their knowledge. This has led the followers of this Mystery to engage in an almost obsessive study of history and create the most complete genealogic record in all of the Ninth World. By learning about those who were at past events and their participation in said events, the practitioners of the Mystery are better able to create the proper links necessary for forging their particular kind of magic.

Students of Blood are quickly sent out into the world to chronicle the stories of people and events, returning periodically to report what they have learned. When practitioners attain mastery of the path, they earn a place in the arcane university, where they spend their time summoning ancestors of the past and interrogating them on the veracity of the histories they have recorded.

The masters of Blood have a greater goal in mind than many of the other Mysteries. They believe that if they are able to create a complete genealogy of the human species, they will be able to regain the lost knowledge of the fallen Worlds. Most realize that this project will take many lifetimes, but feel that the rewards justify the sacrifice.

Minor Effect Suggestion: You're able to hide the fact that your ancestors are granting you knowledge and power on this action. Your eyes don't glow, etc.

Major Effect Suggestion: You're granted extra knowledge from your ancestors. You gain two skills instead of one, two pieces of information instead of one, etc.

Suggested GM Intrusion: Due to your circumstances relating to their life or death, one of your ancestors takes control of your body for one hour.

Connection: Choose one member of your party. This person reminds you of a particular ancestor of yours and grants you an Asset on rolls made to contact that ancestor when they're within Immediate range.



Tier One

Glimpse of the Past (1 Intellect point). You gain a minor piece of information about an ancient ruin or other previously inhabited prior world location you are currently within. This comes to you in the form of a confusing memory. Action.

Tier Two

Old Reflexes (2 Intellect points). The memories of a thousand dodged mishaps and attacks flow into your mind, granting you an Asset on a Speed Defense roll this round. Enabler, usable once per round.

Tier Three

Ancestral Echo (3 Intellect points). You integrate a piece of an ancestor's personality into your own for an hour, temporarily granting you training in a social interaction skill of your choice such as intimidation, persuasion, or carousing. Action.

Tier Four

Voice from the Past (4 Intellect points). A whisper from an ancestor provides wisdom from the ancient past. You may make one knowledge task roll as though you were trained in that skill. Action.

Tier Five

Strength of Blood (5 Intellect points). Your ancestors flow through you and the nanites in your blood, granting you strength beyond your usual capacities. For one hour you possess two additional Might Edge. Action to initiate, usable once per day.

Tier Six

Ghostly Visage (6 Intellect points). You summon a particular ancestor to appear before you as a vision. Only you may see and hear what is essentially a hallucination. You may speak with the ancestor for up to an hour, granting you an Asset on non-combat skill rolls related to the ancestor's prior life. For instance, a sailor might help you with seamanship tasks or a farmer might help you with reading the weather. Action to initiate.

Reanimates the Dead

Blood is the life force of all living things, or so believe the followers of the Mystery of Blood. If a person could learn secrets of the blood, then they could learn how to bestow life itself, elevating them to godhood. Little do they know that their power comes from the colonies of nanites found in all life, yet strongest in the animating fluid of blood.

The first step along their road is in returning life to where it has fled. With the proper talismans, mudras, and incantations, practitioners of this path have learned how to reanimate the dead, though none yet have truly returned to life a person that has died. Undeterred, the sanguinmancers press on, though they often must do so in complete secret.

Given the extreme taboo against experimenting on corpses, the Mystery has developed a more prolonged ritual process, wherein practitioners create hidden mystical sanctums where they conduct their experiments.

Arcane schools, such as the University of Aomi, would never tolerate them if it weren't for the fact that the Mystery claims to be close to discovering the process of instilling true immortality within the practitioner. Many are skeptical of this fact, but given the powers already discovered, and the sweet promise that is living forever, the sanguinmancers are given leave for their experiments, if reluctantly.

Within the Mystery, there is great debate over whether blood from the caster or from another living target is of better use for the magic of the Mystery. Given the sheer volume required, many turn to using outside sources for blood. The benign offer rewards for those who are willing to donate for their experiments, while others rely on less ethical methods of retrieval.

Dissenters to this process are silenced with the promise that if immortality can be unlocked, then the genealogy projects of the other half of the Mystery could more easily be completed, leading to humanity's ascension.

Minor Effect Suggestion: A corpse you animate, so long as it is mostly intact, has the look of a living, if somewhat exhausted person or creature.

Major Effect Suggestion: A corpse you animate has Short movement speed, rather than Immediate.

Suggested Intrusion: Your animated creature turns on you, attacking until it is destroyed.

Connection: Choose one other PC. This PC can command your animated creatures as though they were you.



Tier One

Familiar (1 Might point). You animate the corpse of a deceased non-sentient creature of your size or less within Immediate distance of you. The animated corpse is a level 2 creature that may only move Immediate distance each round. It will follow your verbal commands until it is destroyed, but will not act on its own. This animation lasts for two hours. Action to initiate.

Tier Two

Knowledge of the Body. You are trained in the healing skill as well as any tasks related to identifying body parts and organs in living beings. Enabler.

Tier Three

Fresh Corpse (3 Might points). You animate the corpse of a recently deceased (1 hour or less) sentient being of your size or smaller within Immediate distance of you. The animated corpse is a level 3 creature that may only move Immediate distance each round. It will follow your verbal commands until it is destroyed, but will not act on its own. This animation lasts for five hours. Action to initiate.

Tier Four

Necrotic Protection (4 Might points). Your body and mind become empowered by the dead around you. For the next hour, whenever one of your animated corpses is within Immediate distance of you, you enjoy an Asset on Might and Intellect Defense rolls. Action to initiate.

Tier Five

Skeletal Servant (5 Might points). You animate the corpse of a sentient being of your size or smaller within Immediate distance of you. It matters little how long the corpse has been dead, so long as its bones haven't turned to dust. The animated corpse is a level 4 creature that may only move Immediate distance each round. It will follow your verbal commands until it is destroyed, but will not act on its own. This animation lasts for ten hours. Action to initiate.

Tier Six

Autonomy. The corpses you animate are more autonomous than before, acting on their own even when not given commands. Generally this will mean attacking any living thing they encounter other than you and your companions, though they can be commanded not to do so. As an eerie side effect, the faces of all creatures you animate are contorted to look like your face. Enabler.

Blood Charms

Those who study the Mystery of Blood gain access to Charms through the History skill, due to their connection to ancestors and the deceased. Knowledge

of the past grants them power over those who have come before.

The Charms of those who Reanimate the Dead and Access Ancestral Memories are as follows:

Blood Tie. Possession of a foe's blood, held in one hand, grants you an Asset when fighting them, once this Charm has been performed upon the blood.

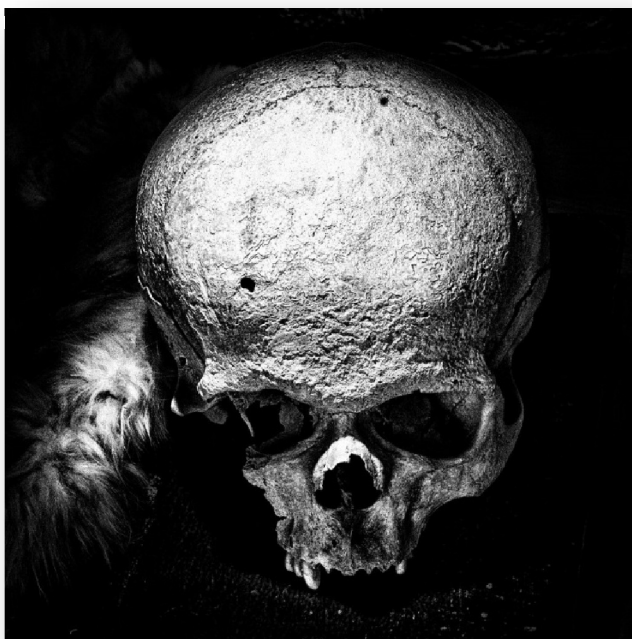
Bone Hilt. You enchant a human bone which you hold in such a way that if it is later used in the construction of a weapon, that weapon will deal one additional damage against animated corpses.

Burial Rite. You perform a rite upon a corpse, protecting it from becoming animated or otherwise affected or used by the Numenera.

Dance of Blood. You animate a quantity of blood you touch, causing it to move through the air, seemingly of its own volition.

Death Chant. You sing a song for the dead, granting those who battle the animated dead within earshot of you an Asset on their attacks, so long as they sing along.

Echo. When used within the immediate presence of a corpse or bone of a sentient being, this Charm brings up a five second moment from the deceased's life-



displayed in the form of an animated green holographic projection. The moment is usually very important, such as a life changing event or the subject's murder. This Charm may only be used once on any given deceased person per day.

Heirloom. Activating this Charm while holding a former possession of a deceased person grants you an Asset for the next hour whenever you use Blood Mystery abilities related to them, such as animating their corpse or contacting them through ancestral memories.

Masque of Death. By covering your face in blood, you make yourself invisible to the animated dead for one hour.

Reliquary. You sanctify the preserved body part of a sentient being who could use Esoterics or other arcane powers (such as Mystery powers). Holding this object in one hand grants you an Asset when attacking creatures animated by the arcane, such as corpses, golems, or other arcane creatures.

Turn Dead. You stop an animated corpse within Immediate distance from taking action for the next ten minutes.

Adversaries

Graverobber

Practicing rudimentary and simplistic versions of the Blood Mystery magics, these criminals prowl the night, searching graves for valuables, or the bones of legendary figures. They are quick to violence and accustomed to working in complete darkness. Working in small gangs, they can be dangerous to encounter, as fresh blood is useful to their necromantic experiments.

Level 2 (3 when attacking in the dark)

Health 6

Maneuvers -

Knife/Shovel. 3 Damage and the target must make a Might test against Difficulty 3 to avoid catching a disease that lasts for 2 weeks (reducing Might pool by one).

Necrotic Bolt. A ranged attack that knocks the target to the ground, dealing 2 ambient damage.

Suggested GM Intrusion: Two more Graverobbers arrive to help their thieving friends.

Specter

A strange residual being, made from a mind so strong and so impassioned that it triggered a copying algorithm in the nanites that surrounded it at death, thereby imparting itself into the nanite cloud forever. Experts on the arcane call them “necroplasmic afterimages”.

Specters haunt the locations and people they cared for in life, their minds in pieces, unable to understand what has happened to them. At times they may become violent, calling upon the nanites around them to affect the world with their rage. This usually takes the form of a powerful psychic blast or a gruesome illusion of gore and horror.

Specters exist in the state of mind they were in at their death. This emotional, yet morbid state of perpetual dying makes the arcane expressions of these former people equally scary. They are the arcane equivalent of walking death, even more so than the usual animated dead of the Blood Mystery.

Level 4 (5 when defending against non-arcane weapons)

Armor 5 (only partially corporeal)

Health 12

Maneuvers -

Psychic Shred. 6 Intellect damage and the target loses one Intellect Edge for the next hour.

Frightening Hallucination. The target sees horrific images, scaring them into cowering submission until they can throw off the terror (a Level 4 Intellect task).

Suggested GM Intrusion: The Specter reaches into the PC's mind and pulls out the most frightening thing they can think of, making them believe it's happening now. The character will take any action to avoid this threat, even harming themselves or their party. This hallucination lasts for five rounds.

The Mystery of ~Ceremony~

Practitioners of the Mystery of Ceremony, having been the pioneers of arcane research, appear to have uncovered the fundamental controls of nanotech sorcery. This has granted them an unparalleled ability to manipulate the abilities granted by nanotechnology.

The practices of this Mystery often require the use of a special mystical tool, which should be given some narrative consideration. The Mystery also often calls for an interaction with both arcane cyphers and nanohive entities, which the practitioners of the Mystery call Angels. These elements should play a major part of any adventure in which players have chosen one of these Foci.

Unlike the other Mysteries, all ceremonial practitioners receive the same general training within the practice before choosing to specialize in a particular implement. Ceremonial magic relies on the idea that everything in the universe is linked to everything else through a chain of sympathetic connections, and that by studying the interaction between these connections, otherwise known as the numeric chain, one can alter the path of the universe.

This idea has led to an extremely formulaic approach to magic and has allowed the Mystery to very precisely codify exactly how their magic works. The Mystery of Ceremony has evolved into an academic tradition in which the sharing and passing on of magical knowledge is paramount. Ceremonials are the most likely to maintain the relationship between master and students,

and are the ones most likely to congregate in large groups of practitioners.

The practice of the Mystery of Ceremony is very involved, with every object and action given meaning within the numeric chain. Ritual is at the heart of this practice, and the ceremonials have a ritual for every occasion. Along with this comes a study of astronomy, the compounding of incense, the creating

of candles, and a host of other skills that are absolutely required in order to make magic function. Needless to say, it can take years of study before one is able to engage in even the most basic powers of the Mystery.

Bears a Staff of Power

Bearers of the magical staff are said to be concerned with the essence that fuels magic of the Ninth World. They learn the power of the staff in order to harness this fundamental power.

Arcane cyphers are glyphs which trap this essence, making them the focus of this discipline. This also means that those who bear the staff are often forced to wander the world in search of these cyphers, or form close relationships with those who know the discipline of magical sigils.

Magical staves can take on almost any form, the only requirement being that they at least reach the bearer's eyes.

Minor Effect Suggestion: Your staff radiates an aura of calm or menace, granting you an Asset on your next social roll this encounter.

Major Effect Suggestion: Your staff taps into a nearby ley line or nanotech eddy, granting you an Asset on your next Arcane Cypher use.

Suggested GM Intrusion: You lose hold of your staff at a crucial moment.



Connection: Choose one other PC. Once per day, that character may use the Cypher stored in your staff.

Tier One

Instill Spell (2 Intellect points). You absorb an Arcane Cypher, but instead of going into your mind, the spell is stored in a staff you hold. For so long as it is stored there, you (and only you) may cast it without losing it. This Cypher does however count against your Cypher limit. Casting the Cypher counts as an ability with a cost in Intellect points equal to its Level. You may only ever have one staff instilled with a spell and a staff may only ever hold one Cypher in this way. Should you instill another one, the old one is disenchanting. Action, usable once per day.

Practiced with Staves. You incur no increased difficulty when using staves of any kind as a weapon. Enabler.

Tier Two

Incantation. By chanting sonorous words of power you enhance your staff-stored spell, granting you an Asset on the roll to activate the Cypher. Enabler.

Tier Three

Spell Sacrifice (3 Intellect points). By harnessing the power of an Arcane Cypher your mind holds you increase the capacity of your staff. You must sacrifice a Cypher stored in your mind, but doing so allows you to cast your imbued staff spell twice this round with a single action. Enabler, usable once per round.

Tier Four

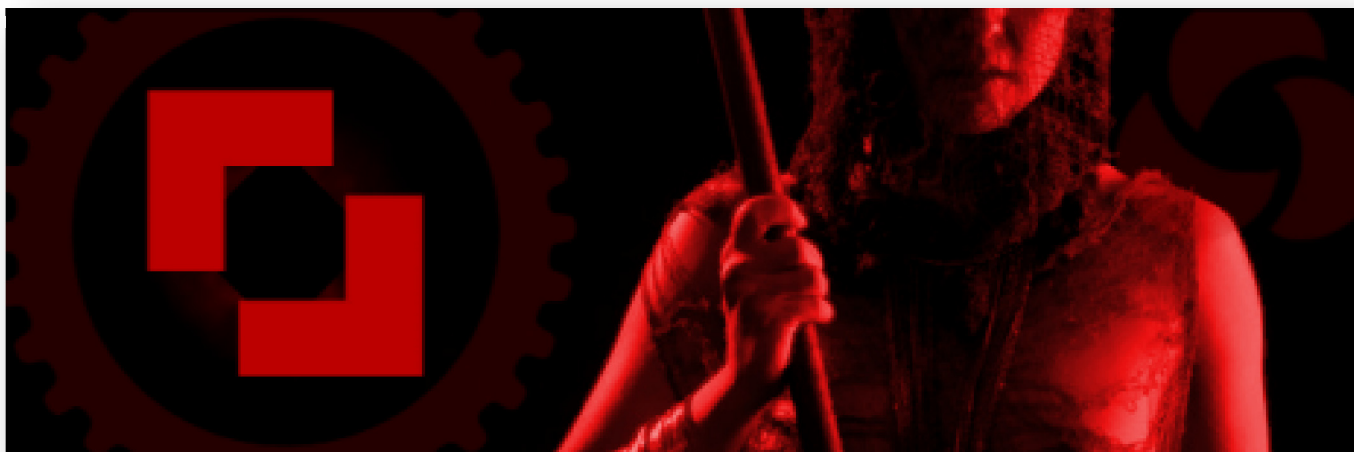
Energy Ground (4 Intellect points). Through a held staff you redirect arcane energies, such as an Esotery, Arcane Cypher, or other nanotech effect. The effect is stopped and its energies forced into the ground by your staff (the effects of which are up to your GM). Only usable on effects that target you or your carried possessions. Enabler, usable once per round.

Tier Five

Channel Power (5 Intellect points). You draw the arcane power stored in your staff through your body and use it to affect the world. You must be holding a staff you've imbued with an Arcane Cypher to use this ability, and doing so removes the spell stored within. Doing so grants you great arcane power this round, providing two Assets on Arcane Cypher use, Nano Esoterics, and magical Jack Tricks of the Trade. Enabler.

Tier Six

Arcane Aura (8 Intellect points). The power imbued within your staff envelopes you, coloring everything you do. You are physically transformed, taking on a shape related to the power your staff holds, granting you +1 to your Armor rating for the next hour. During this time you need not roll to activate the Cypher in your staff unless it is an attack on another character. Action to initiate.



Carries an Eldritch Blade

If the staff wielders are concerned with the essence of magic, then the carriers of the blade are concerned with its final form. This obsession has led them to be able to tap into the magics of other Mysteries. Practitioners of this discipline are the rarest of the four because of the need for an artifact sword.

Carriers of the blade are some of the most disciplined members of the Mystery as they must also learn sword play techniques in order to master the powers of their chosen path. Given their martial training and the ability to utilize and defend against the powers of others, the carriers of the sword often become defenders of arcane colleges and other enclaves of ceremonial practitioners.

Minor Effect Suggestion: Your weapon transmutes the materials in the target's armor, reducing it by one Armor point.

Major Effect Suggestion: Your weapon steals an arcane power from your target. Your foe loses access to the power for one day, while you gain it as an Anoetic Arcane Cypher.

Suggested GM Intrusion: Your weapon becomes depleted for one hour, during which time you are unable to use the powers of this Focus.

Connection: Choose one other PC. This character can hold your weapon without problem. Anyone but you and this PC who attempts to wield or carry it is attacked by a Level 6 mental effect that renders them unconscious.

Tier One

Blade of Legend. You begin play with a bladed weapon that's an Artifact, with powers as yet untold. This weapon can never break and always returns to its scabbard if knocked from your hand or otherwise lost. You are practiced with using this particular blade. Enabler.

Tier Two

Combat Ceremony (2 Speed points). You prepare yourself mentally for battle, performing ritual motions with your blade. For the next ten minutes you have



armor 3 against attacks that deal damage to your Intellect pool. Action.

Tier Three

Unlocked Secret. Choose one Tier two or lower ability from a Focus in a different Mystery. You gain access to that power whenever you hold your blade of legend. Enabler.

Tier Four

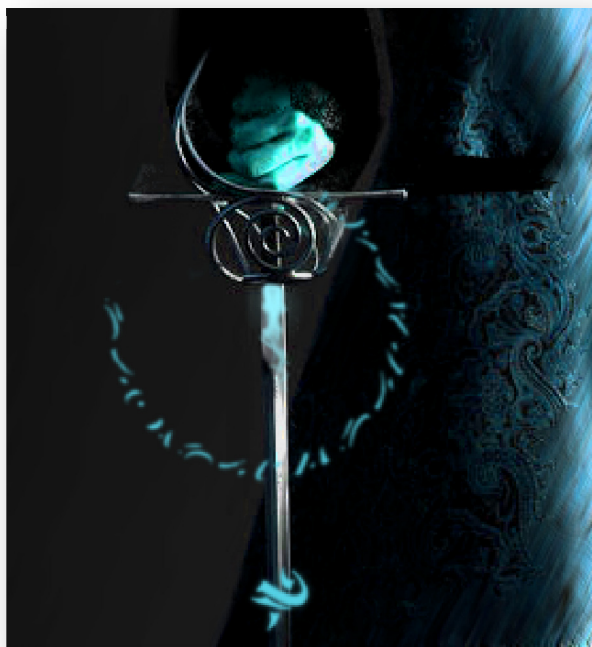
Arcane Slash (4 Speed points). You slash with your glowing blade, damaging the very nanites in the air. All magical effects cast in the last round within Short distance of you are suddenly stopped. Action.

Tier Five

Unlocked Mystery. Choose one Tier four or lower ability from a Focus in a different Mystery. You gain access to that power whenever you hold your blade of legend. Enabler.

Tier Six

Spell Riposte. You enjoy an Asset when defending against arcane attacks if your blade of legend is in your hand. Whenever you successfully defend against a magical attack while benefiting from this Asset, the foe who cast it takes 6 ambient damage. Enabler.



Potential Eldritch Blades

Pick one of the following weapons for your blade bearer, or work with the GM to come up with one of your own. Be sure to describe how you acquired the blade, perhaps in battle, perhaps as an heirloom, maybe even through theft. Either way, you found your way to learning the ways of your eldritch weapon of legend.

BLACKPENNY. Medium weapon. Broad, but short, the blade of the sword is utterly black, absorbing all light.

BREAKSWING. Heavy weapon. Massive sword, covered in slithering grey runes that hiss in daylight.

FARCRY. A combination longbow and shortsword, this Eldritch Blade counts as both a light melee weapon and a medium ranged weapon. The Eldritch Blade Focus abilities work through it, even when used as a bow.

GRAZEFLEET. Light weapon. A long pointed dagger with a golden basket hilt (provides +1 to Speed Defense rolls).

HARKAX. Medium weapon. An axe with a thinner blade than most, covered in orange runes.

HISPER. Medium reaching weapon. Spear made of a dark metal which reflects flames that aren't there.

SWORDSUNG. Medium weapon. An arm length sword with no point (just a flat end), etched with wispy runes that glow green when the sword is swung.

SUN & MOON. A pair of knives that cannot be separated by more than a short distance; when used one in each hand they count as a single heavy weapon. Blades so curved they almost look like circles.

VELSLASTCH. Light weapon. A rapier with a cold metal touch, associated with icy powers and often appearing to heroes in the winter.

VENG. Heavy weapon. A large sword with a red blade that comes to those who seek vengeance for the death of a loved one.

Inscribes Arcane Sigils

Unlike the other three Foci of this mystery, the inscribers do not require the use of a single mystical implement. They instead rely on the ability to inscribe powerful sigils which tap into the basic function of magic. This has allowed them to not only neutralize its effects, but contain its nature, “hanging” spells in time.

Practitioners ultimately learned that they could trap celestial beings, or Angels, within their circles, and negotiate or coerce secrets and powers from them. Some members of the discipline believe that this ability could be extended to other kinds of mystical beings.

Minor Effect Suggestion: Your inscription is especially pleasing to the angels, lasting twice as long as usual.

Major Effect Suggestion: Your inscription also protects your person, granting you an Armor rating of 3 against arcane effects for ten minutes.

Suggested GM Intrusion: One of the nanite entities attacks you invisibly, dealing 5 Intellect damage and stunning you for one round.

Connection: Choose one other PC. This character's powers are not affected by your sigils and circles.

Tier One

Circle of Warding (1 Intellect point). You draw a circle of magical protection on the ground, roughly one meter in diameter. Magical effects do not work within this circle, which lasts for one hour. Action to initiate.

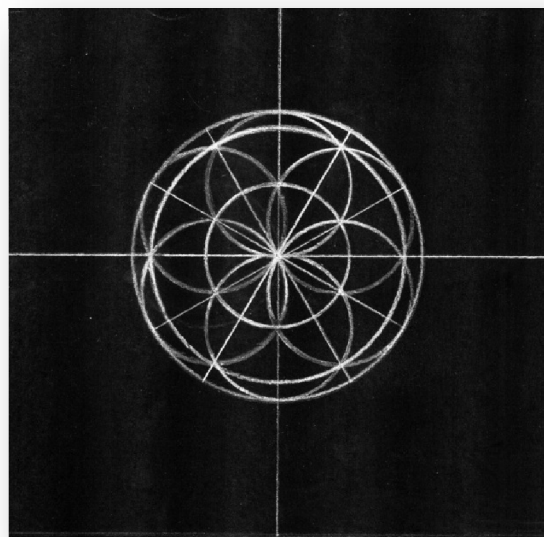
Tier Two

Circle of Control (2 Intellect points). You draw an arcane circle on the ground, one meter in diameter, potentially capturing a magical effect or creature within it. The circle holds the phenomenon for up to an hour, during which time it cannot leave or affect the outside world. Action to initiate.

Tier Three

Angelic Weapon (3 Intellect points). By inscribing a magical symbol upon a weapon or other handheld object, you make it able to affect creatures made

entirely of arcane energy. This weapon may also pass right through forcefields and other energy barriers. The effect lasts for ten minutes. Action to initiate.



Tier Four

Inscribe Cypher (4 Intellect points). You take an Arcane Cypher from your mind and inscribe it onto an object or surface. In this way it becomes easy for you to trade Cyphers with others, even after you've absorbed one. Action.

Tier Five

Hang Cypher (5 Intellect points). You take an Arcane Cypher from your mind, just as you would with Inscribe Cypher, and place it on an object or surface. However, instead of being readable by other heroes, it casts against the next creature other than you to come within Immediate range of the inscription. Action.

Tier Six

Capture Angel (6 Intellect points). You inscribe a circle on the ground, three meters in diameter, which summons and then contains an intelligent nano-hive known as an Angel. The Angel remains trapped there for ten minutes, during which time you may speak with it. Angels are capable of bestowing Arcane Cyphers and Oddities to those they deem worthy. Action to initiate.

Wields a Magical Wand

By focusing on the sigil of a single Arcane Cypher and using an implement with which to trace this rune in the air, practitioners of this path have learned to call upon a single arcane command, often to great effect. It is this singular dedication to directing this one arcane effect that makes the master of wands such a powerful arcanist. They are the ultimate arcane specialists.

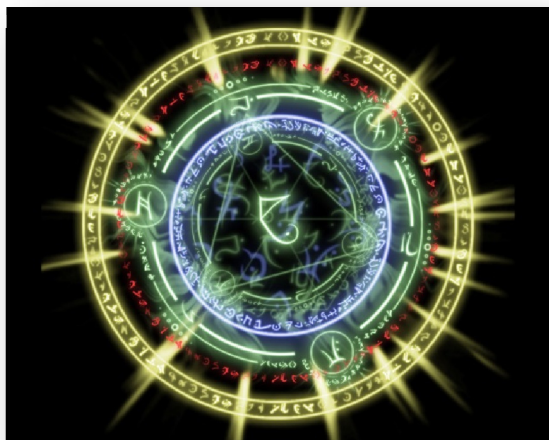
Though more common than carriers of the eldritch blade, wielders of the wand are the second rarest of the Ceremonial Mystery as finding the correct vessel for a wand is quite difficult, even requiring a bit of luck. Magical wands are tubular metal objects, always the length of the end of the middle digit to the elbow.

Some wand wielders have found their implement of choice through scavenging, often turning antennas, lightning rods, metal pipes, or data sticks into transmitters of arcane signals.

Wielders of the wand require a tremendous amount of dexterity in order to sketch the arcane glyphs of the discipline. Even though practitioners of this discipline focus on one Arcane Cypher for casting through their wand, they are still obsessed with all arcane glyphs and will spend a great deal of time searching them out.

Minor Effect Suggestion: Your wand effect gives off a shower of sparks or other visual effects, granting you an Asset on Speed Defense until your action next round.

Major Effect Suggestion: Your wand effect hits one additional target within Immediate range of the first.



Suggested GM Intrusion: Your wand changes frequency, causing it to cast a different Arcane Cypher or other arcane effect for the next ten minutes.

Connection: Choose one other PC. The player knows how to make or find a new wand for you, should you lose yours.

Tier One

Draw Sigil. Choose one Occultic Arcane Cypher that affects a single target. Whenever you hold a wand, you may use it to draw that Cypher's symbol in the air as an action, casting that spell as though you held the Cypher in your mind. Doing so costs one point from each of your Pools, regardless of your Edges. The spell's attack is made using your Speed pool for Effort, rather than Intellect. Enabler.

Tier Two

Pointed Precision. You are trained in casting your wand spell. Enabler.

Tier Three

Wand Power. The range on your wand spell is doubled. Enabler.

Tier Four

Secondary Magics. During any action in which you cast your wand spell, you may also take your Immediate distance movement as hovering flight. Alternatively, you may shroud yourself in magic, providing an Asset when defending against arcane effects until your next action.

Tier Five

Seeker Spell. You are specialized in casting your wand spell, and you no longer require line of sight to cast it, so long as your target is known to be within the spell's range. Enabler.

Tier Six

Point and Cast. You permanently gain 5 points to your Speed pool. Alternatively, you may permanently select a second Occultic Arcane Cypher to cast through your wand. Enabler.

Ceremonial Charms

Ceremonials explore their Charms through the “Ritual” skill. The skill may be used to perform a one-round Esotery or Ceremonial ability over the course of one hour. Doing so allows the practitioner to use the Ritual skill for the task roll.

Those who possess Ceremonial Foci gain access to the following Charms through the Ritual skill:

Door Ward. You inscribe a rune on a door, barring entry by a particular person you name for so long as the rune remains.

Familiar. You enchant a small animal so that it becomes loyal to you. The animal can scout out areas ahead of you and report back, speaking in your mind with simple, one word sentences. Should the animal be killed, you take 5 points of damage.

Halo of Enlightenment. For ten minutes you bear a visible circle of light around your head, like a crown of energy. You gain a +1 bonus on Numenera related task rolls while emblazoned with this halo.

Hermetic Seal. You cast an enchantment on a touched book or piece of paper, keeping it from rotting or becoming damaged by the elements. This effect lasts for so long as you live.

Pentacle. You inscribe a circular pendant with the symbol of a particular Mystery. So long as you hold the item aloft with one or both hands, you enjoy an Asset when resisting the powers of that Mystery.

Protected Missive. You place a ward upon an envelope or other small container, speaking the name of its recipient. Only the intended recipient may open it without causing damage to the contents.

Quill of Light. For the next ten minutes anything you write will glow white. This can be used to create magical looking calligraphy, or mark runes that can be easily seen in the dark.

Sacrificial Blade. You enchant a dagger or other small blade with arcane power, causing it to glow and inflict



one extra damage on its next hit, so long as you are the one wielding it. Should you miss, you take one damage.

Signature. You cast an Arcane Cypher you hold within your mind, altering its sensory effects somewhat. You could change the color, sound, even smell of a Cypher's effects, but you can't get rid of them all together.

Subtle Signs. You immediately recognize other practitioners of the Ceremonial Mystery when you see them. This power requires no roll or action to use.

Adversaries

Angel

Creatures made entirely of information stored within clouds of nanotechnology, they are ethereal beings of power and light. Some wish to help the peoples of the Ninth World. Others wish to study or experiment on them. Visually, Angels look like bright halos of light. On close examination, the halos are comprised of what appear to be thousands of arcane symbols and diagrams, forming an immense spell. Arcanists theorize that Angels may in fact be sentient esoterics. One thing is known-Angels are dangerous and almost impossible to kill.

Level 8 (9 when defending against the arcane)

Armor 6

Health 30

Maneuvers -

Alter Landscape. The Angel changes the very world around them, for as far as the eye can see. Mountains crumble, rivers turn to liquid metal, skies turn purple with the ash of untold numbers of nanites. This is why Angels are not to be trifled with.

Ash Demon

A nanotechnological virus feasting on the bodies of their invisible brethren, the Ash Demon appears as a cloud of sparkling ash. The cloud is merely the byproduct of its destruction, as the demonic virus propagates across the countryside, slaying nanites as it goes. A gaseous storm of soot and light, ruined matter streaming out from the ashy haze.

Level 7

Armor 6

Health 30

Maneuvers-

Burn. The Ash Demon deals 6 damage to everyone and everything within a long distance radius.

Inhabit. The Ash Demon's nanites invade the target's mind, filling it with terrible thoughts for 1d6 rounds, during which time the target may not take action (it mostly screams in terror).



Prodigy

A smug student of the arcane, bent on proving how smart she is, the Prodigy is likely to get in the way more than anything else. Following the PC group's expedition from a safe distance and swooping in to collect the priceless Artifact, the Prodigy is willing to thwart the party if glory is on the line.

Level 4 (5 when casting spells)

Armor 1 (2 vs arcane powers)

Health 12

Maneuvers-

Arcane Thief. The Prodigy summons an object out of the target's hands and into hers. Usually this is an Artifact or tome of some kind.

Raw Magic. The Prodigy unleashes a raw and untamed form of energy, dealing 4 damage to up to 3 targets and one damage to herself.



The Mystery of ~Chaos~

A complex web of probability and possibility exist as a science beyond rational reasoning- the truths of quantum fluctuation and deterministic fate. Mind bending and contradictory, the realities that these sciences attempt to explain are far beyond the understanding of the Order of Truth, only truly known by the wisest ancients of the prior worlds.

But somehow, through mysticism and sheer luck, the Students of the Mystery of Chaos have unlocked some of the secrets of this web, learning to harness a tiny fraction of this mind bending power.

But many hard lessons have been learned along the way, one of which being that the more you harness fate, the less predictable it becomes. The more you use it to predict what will come, the less you can harness it for your magical purposes. This contradiction often causes other arcanists to scream in frustration, particularly those of the Ceremonial Mystery who rely so heavily on logical systems. Students of Chaos simply shrug their shoulders and claim that this is simply a fundamental truth of the universe.

Creates Chaos

Those who choose to use the power of chaos to empower their sorcery follow a dangerous path. Elemental chaos is used by intoning the most ancient programmed commands, producing syllables that draw upon randomness and self-destruction in the nanites that surround them. No other components or accoutrements are required, but a fearlessness is needed, and perhaps a wary trust in fate.

Students who wish to pursue this path must either find a master in the wastes willing to teach them or join an arcane university. Once an instructor is secured, the student spends all of their time in the darkest recesses of the university, in hidden insulated chambers that can contain or at least minimize the effects of their

burgeoning power. Study takes very little time, and practitioners are quickly graduated and asked to leave the university to go out into the world.

Other than the few teachers who remain behind to teach new generations of students, wielders of chaos are usually required to eschew academic society, given the chaotic effect they have on nanite technology. This cultural rejection has caused them to find a bizarre goal, suited to those forced to wander. They have come to believe that the Iron Wind is the physical manifestation of chaos upon the world. As they set out on pilgrimages, they chase the wind and document the results of its passage.

Some of these pilgrims create large cabals, and offer protection to communities from the Iron Wind, usually for a large fee. While many value the ability of the these practitioners to protect them from the Iron Wind's effects, some have begun to whisper that perhaps these agents of Chaos are themselves unleashing or guiding the wind for some nefarious purpose...



Minor Effect Suggestion: The malfunctioning nanites that surround you happen to work in your favor, granting you an Asset on your next roll.

Major Effect Suggestion: The nanites in your area let out a final burst of activity before petering out, creating a blast of energy and ash that deals 3 damage to an enemy of your choice.

Suggested GM Intrusion: The nanites around you go haywire, as usual, impeding your action by one step and literally leaving a bad taste in your mouth.

Connection: Choose one member of your party- your powers have no effect on them and their Esoterics.

Tier One

Disturbance (1 Might point). You emit an energy pulse from your body, frazzling nanotech in the area. Any arcane effects within Short range go haywire in ways you can't predict. This disturbance lasts for ten minutes and causes all arcane powers cast within short distance of you to suffer a one step penalty to activate. Action to initiate.



Tier Two

Touch of Chaos (2 Might points). You touch an object or person and disrupt the nanites within and around them, causing 4 ambient damage. Action.

Tier Three

Spell Scramble (3 Might points). You disrupt the nanites within a specific nearby area, cancelling any one arcane power used within Long range. This ability may only be used while the spell targeted is being cast. If used on an Arcane Cypher being deployed, the Cypher is lost in the process. Action, may be used out of normal initiative order.

Tier Four

Wild Esotery (4 Might points). You empower the surrounding nanites to do as they wish, creating a powerful though random effect, similar to a small cloud of Iron Wind. The nature of the effect is subject to GM discretion, but will often attack 5 or more creatures or people within Long range as though it were a level 5 creature. GMs are encouraged to be creative with this one, making strange creatures and magics beyond reason. Action.

Tier Five

Eye of the Storm. You and are no longer affected by the Iron Wind, and nor is anything or anyone within Immediate range of you. You can expand this area of calm to Long distance by spending 5 Might points, but doing so takes constant concentration on the task at the expense of all else. The expanded bubble immediately collapses once you stop concentrating. Enabler.

Tier Six

Chaotic Form (7 Might points). You allow the nanites around and inside of you to do as they please, adapting and modifying you at a terrifying rate and turning you into a roiling mass of randomly changing materials. You may move your Pool points around as you see fit while in this form, which lasts for one hour. You can breathe and otherwise exist in nearly any condition, and your Armor rating becomes 7. Should you need a particular tool, your body may take that shape. Action to initiate.

Lets it Ride

Rather than attempting to harness the raw form of Chaos itself, the riders seek instead to read the web that connects Chaos to all things. This process requires some form of divination implement, whether that is a deck of cosmos, bloodbone dice, blackdream tree stocks, or even a shin flip. The actual method is of little importance once the practitioner learns how to use it to tap into Chaos.

After the practitioner learns to read the signs, it becomes an easy task for them to almost literally go with the flow. Many who observe these practitioners often suspect them of bending fate to their will, but this is simply not the case. Practitioners become adept at reading the signs of Chaos, and adapting to whatever comes their way. This can mean embracing things that may seem negative or learning how to deal with painful situations.

Those who are attracted to this Focus are often those who have had to live hard times in their life, or those who are trying to somehow gain an edge on reality itself. Street toughs, gamblers, and thieves all find this path to be of use, often making the masters of this path estranged from the arcane universities. Cabals of these practitioners can form in large cities where they pull jobs on the unsuspecting.

Given their ability to read the signs, they are extremely difficult to eradicate, much to the chagrin of the local authorities.

Those seeking more legitimate enterprises often join expeditions out into the great unknown, harnessing their knowledge for the benefit of those who put themselves in danger. These individuals are highly prized, and can often fetch a substantial fee for their services once they have a decent reputation.

Minor Effect Suggestion: Luck swings your way, making everything fall into place as though you'd



planned it, and leaving you with a bit extra- shins, equipment, love interests, etc. You always enjoy a bit more of life than everyone else.

Major Effect Suggestion: You get really lucky- the big bad guy waits to come in, you land on top of the controls, or some other stroke of impossible good fortune.

Suggested GM Intrusion: Everybody loses sometimes and when luck leaves you it's not pretty. Usually it's an equipment malfunction or other stroke of terrible timing.

Connection: Choose one other PC. You once beat this character at cards or other gambling and they still owe you big time. Maybe if they save your life you can call it even.

Tier One

Snake Eyes (1 Speed point). The laws of probability change around you, granting you two Assets on gambling related skill rolls for the next ten minutes. Action to initiate.

Tier Two

Fool's Luck. The nanites and other "spirits of the air" favor you. Whenever you roll a natural 19 on the die, you gain a Major Effect from the roll, rather than a Minor one. Enabler.

Tier Three

Cold Cards. Your GM must inform you one turn in advance when you're about to get a GM Intrusion. Enabler.

Tier Four

Lucky Break. Whenever you gain a Major Effect on a roll you gain an extra action in addition to any other Major Effect. Enabler.

Tier Five

Hot Cards (5 Speed points). You infuse a held item, such as a tool or weapon, with luck. For the next ten minutes you gain a Major Effect from a natural roll of 17+ on all rolls involving the item. Action to initiate.

Tier Six

Impossible Play (7 Speed points). You may only use this ability while attempting an action that would normally have a base Difficulty of 10. You treat the base Difficulty as 5 for this action. Enabler, usable once per 28 hours.

Chaos Charms

The Charms employed by those who study the Mystery of Chaos derive from the Gambling skill. In its mundane use the skill of gambling helps the gambler win at games of chance and place bets that have the best chance of paying out. The gambler knows how to make the most of her bet.

Ninth Worlders who Let it Ride or Create Chaos gain access to the following Charms through the Gambling skill:

All In. Increase your Effort score by one for a single roll you take within the next minute. Only usable once per day.

Call the Bluff. For the next ten minutes you enjoy an Asset when attempting to see through lies.

Fold 'Em. You stop a fight for a single round, allowing you to negotiate. Only works with sentient foes.

Hold 'Em. You find a way to keep up with a fleeing foe for one more round.

Lady Luck. You put a small amount of magic into your gambling instruments (dice, cards, etc.), granting you an Asset on all of your attempts to gamble for the next hour. However, other arcanists may notice this change, and thereby discover that you're cheating. Anyone who belongs to a Mystery may roll to notice your magics.

Press Your Luck. You win twice as much as usual in a game of chance.

Shared Luck. By taking this Charm as your action for the round, you may negate a 1 rolled by one of the other PC's, allowing them to reroll. This Charm may only be used once per day, and can be done out of normal initiative order.

Sleight of Hand. You invisibly move an item from your pocket to your hand, or vice versa.

Spot a Mark. You learn the perception and gambling Levels of a non-hostile human or mutant.

Up the Ante. After failing an attempt at lying you may use this power to reroll your attempt, representing a massive embellishment on your original lie.

Adversaries

Gremlin

A spirit of chaos, the Gremlin is an ultraterrestrial being that causes quantum distortions, both on purpose and through its very existence. The real world byproducts of these distortions tend to be alterations in probability, leading to highly unlikely situations, and random fluctuations in the effects of arcane powers. This latter problem is what draws arcanists such as those who study the Mystery of Chaos to the Gremlins. As embodiments of chaos, they are greatly revered, but also feared, for their power is both immense and unpredictable.

Physically the Gremlin looks like a malformed ball of green flesh, floating about the area at great speed. It tends to hide most of the time inside Numenera objects, where it feasts on rare elements. The Gremlin is capable of fleeing back to its home realm should it fear for its life.



Level 6 (7 when defending against arcane effects)

Armor 3 (due to attacks randomly making glancing blows)

Health 21

Maneuvers-

Mishap. The Gremlin causes something extremely unlikely to happen, forcing a GM Intrusion that can't be blocked by spending XP.

Chaotica. All arcane spells within immediate distance are disrupted, causing random magical effects.

Flee. The Gremlin returns to its own version of reality.

Luck Taker

Bandits versed in the rudimentary teachings of the Mystery of Chaos learn to harvest fortune from the unwary. Lurking in the corners of gambling establishments, Luck Takers keep careful watch for those on a lucky streak, casting their spells under their breath to steal the luck away and take the good fortune for themselves.

There are many side effects to this kind of lifestyle, for making one's own luck is the only safe way to live. Luck Takers often find themselves rail thin and sickly, with blackened fingers discolored by their harvesting spells.

Luck works differently around Luck Takers. Actions taken against them roll 2d10 -1, rather than 1d20.

Level 3 (4 when a great deal of random chance is involved)

Armor 1 (leather outfit)

Health 9

Maneuvers-

Steal Luck. The Luck Taker saps the fortune from a foe within Long range, casting an invisible spell. The target loses one from each of their Pools, healing the Luck Taker for 3 Health.

Misfortune. The Luck Taker forces all their bad luck on the target, causing a GM Intrusion.

The Mystery of ~Dust~

From drit, to arcane cyphers, to the baleful Iron Wind, nanite dust pervades all existence within the Ninth World. Workers of the Mystery of Dust have learned to embrace this pervasiveness, choosing to master power over the nanties themselves.

Learning mastery over the fundamentals of the arcane Mysteries has given them great power, but that power comes at a price. For those waging the invisible war, the price is the loneliness and rejection that comes from those who fear the implication of their powers- the destruction of the very motes that make magic work.

Others must hoard their magic because of the scarcity of the “prima cinere,” ash comprised of nanites that have yet to be programmed. Regardless of the sacrifice, there are always those willing to pursue the Mystery of Dust, tempted by the power it grants.

Fights an Invisible War

True power comes from the ability to end something. The reaper with her scythe, the executioner with his axe - these are the people who hold power. Ash is a symbol

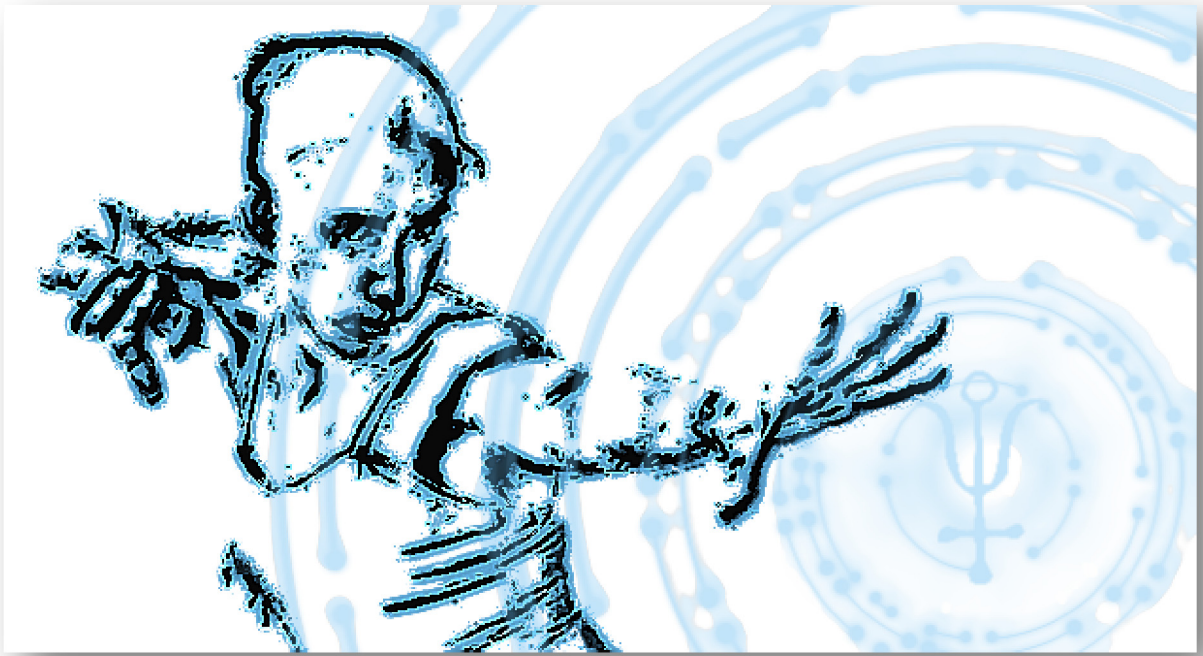
of death, and a symbol that those who call themselves “harbingers” wear with pride. Their magic incites the nanites around them into conflict with one another, drawing upon ancient codes of hostility and destruction. These skirmishes and battles obliterate that which makes magic work, leaving only an ashy residue behind - the husks of slaughtered nanite clouds.

Seeking understanding in endings, they gain power through that understanding. Harbingers also place great value in fire, seeing it as the ultimate expression of ending as power. Fire brings light, heat, and protection, and yet it consumes and destroys, a perfect symbol for power through death. These two obsessions often lead students on the path of ashes to seek professions as firefighters, warriors, and corpse preparers, so they may witness and observe death in action.

This fascination with death and endings makes many people suspicious and uncomfortable around the harbingers, but few will deny their usefulness. Given their power to destroy Numenera, they are often sought out to help deal with problems that occur from effects run amok. Leaders often seek to have at least one harbinger on hand, to counter other practitioners who might seek to harm or influence them.

Harbinger magic has simple practices, but flashy results. Practitioners rarely rely on intricate rituals or complex incantations; a few flicks of the hand and a word of power will suffice. Of course given that this often results in ash falling from the air, few can





question its provocativeness or its impact. For the harbingers, the result matters much more than the practice.

Harbingers often go on great pilgrimages, seeking out new forms of the Numenera to test their powers upon. This has led them into conflict with other practitioners of the mysteries, as the harbingers' powers often disable or destroy Numenera they come into contact with. Those who fight the invisible war find the writers of the unwritten code to be misguided in their pursuit. Death does not lead to life, it is an end unto itself.

Minor Effect Suggestion: You are covered in soot by the end of your action, granting you an Asset on stealth tasks.

Major Effect Suggestion: Soot produced by your ability gets in the eyes of your foe, causing them to suffer a one step penalty on actions.

Suggested GM Intrusion: The nanites attacked by your own nanite forces win the battle and attack you, dealing 3 ambient damage and destroying one of your held objects.

Connection: Choose one other PC. You cannot affect this player with your abilities from this Focus.

Additional Equipment: A sturdy pair of goggles.

Tier One

Skirmish (1 Speed point). You cajole the nanites around you into attacking those surrounding a creature within Long range. The creature becomes immersed in a cloud of ash from destroyed nanites (obscuring ranged attacks made against them by one step in difficulty). The target cannot cast arcane powers for one minute as a nanite skirmish continues to swarm around them. Action to initiate.

Tier Two

Reconnaissance (2 Speed points). You tap into the nanite networks around you, gathering information about their movements and activities. You immediately discover the arcane abilities of all creatures within Immediate range, as well as the effects of any ongoing arcane effects in that area. Action.

Tier Three

Battle (3 Speed points). You instigate a major battle between the various types of nanites in the area. Up to a distance of Long range, no creature may use an arcane power. The area becomes shrouded in a massive cloud of ash, increasing the difficulty of all ranged attacks by one step. This effect lasts for one hour, or until you leave the area. Action to initiate.

Tier Four

Take Prisoner (4 Speed points). Nanites under your command temporarily disable certain nanotech within their midst, temporarily suppressing an arcane effect within Long range of you. The effect stops working for up to ten minutes, or until you choose to release it. Action to initiate.

Tier Five

Nanocide (5 Speed points). Your gestures and motions instruct the nanites around you to eradicate one particular strain of their kind, permanently eliminating one arcane effect within Long range of you. If this effect is on another creature, you must use this ability as an attack against them to succeed. In addition, that particular effect may not be recast within Long range for the next ten minutes. Action.



Tier Six

Total War (6 Speed points). Virtually all nanites within Long range of you are immediately killed as they work to destroy one another. Every arcane effect in the area is immediately eradicated. No arcane abilities may be used at this location for one hour. Additionally, the area is covered in a thick layer of ash. Action.

Writes the Unwritten Code

Taking prima cinere, a mystical ash upon which new esoterics may be imprinted, the code writers conduct powerful but difficult magical work. Some arcanists seek out places where the unencoded nanites may be found- ancient laboratories and certain small deposits on beaches. With this powerful tool they are able to write new magics, bringing all new forces and effects into the world.

The practice of the unwritten code is highly formulaic, and few are ever able to learn even the very basics. Creating totally new magic requires knowledge of the correct sigils, incantations and mudras to impart the proper codes upon the nanites. The intricate nature of this process lends itself to those with high levels of education and large amounts of free time, limiting access to this path mostly to the elite of Steadfast society.

This has created an intensely exclusive culture among the writers, especially since all of them had to initiate themselves into this Mystery - finding prima cinere themselves and stumbling onto the ancient codification processes.

While the writers see this as legitimate pride over their abilities, other practitioners tend to see them as unbearable snobs at best and dangerous elitists at worst. They are often in conflict with the arcane academia, for while their exploration gives them the knowledge to be great teachers and scholars, their secrecy flies in the face of the purpose of the universities.



The requirement for the primal ash makes all practitioners of this Mystery into wanderers, constantly seeking new code and new sources of prima cinere. Writers tend to learn other magics, given the need to hoard what little prima cinere they are able to find. In order to fund their wandering habit, writers will often act as guides or expedition leaders for other explorers.

The writers of the unwritten code are usually in militant opposition to the harbingers, given the effect those practitioners have on the Numenera.

Minor Effect Suggestion: Your carried nanite ash alters the Esoterics being cast around you, allowing you to change the look of the next magical effect cast.

Major Effect Suggestion: Your carried nanite ash alters the Esoterics being cast around you, allowing you to change the target of the next magical effect cast.

Suggested GM Intrusion: You run out of prima cinere in the middle of your action and are unable to complete it until you get more from your pack.

Connection: Choose one other PC. That character is can hand you prima cinere from your pack without taking an action to do so.

Tier One

Call of Ashes (1 Intellect point). You send out a signal and receive one back, pointing you in the direction of the nearest significant source of prima cinere. Action.

Sprinkle (1 Intellect point). You spread a pinch of prima cinere over a weapon and chant the sacred code. For the next hour the weapon deals one additional damage when attacking non-living targets. Action.

Tier Two

Fist of Dust (2 Intellect points). By using up a fist full of prima cinere you empower your fist with a strange and potent power. For the next hour, your unarmed attacks deal 6 damage, so long as you use your emblazoned fist. Action.

Tier Three

Mark of the Codifier (3 Intellect points). You draw sigils on your face and body with a handful of prima cinere, causing you to glow slightly. For the next hour you are immune to all Esoterics and similar nanite-driven magics. Action.

Tier Four

Imprint Ash (4 Intellect points). By using this power within one round of an Esotery's use within Long distance of you, you are able to imprint the code of that power onto a handful of prima cinere for a short time. You may then throw that handful to replicate the Esotery, casting it yourself as though you had it (and paying the same costs). The prima cinere is only imprinted for three rounds, after which time it becomes useless soot. Action.

Tier Five

Steal Code (5 Intellect points). You replicate the effects of an Arcane Cypher you touch into a handful of prima cinere. You may at any later time throw that particular handful as an action to use the same effect as was in the Cypher. The handful of prima cinere takes up one of your Cypher slots. Action.

Tier Six

Write New (6 Intellect points). You invent your own Esotery and store it in a handful of prima cinere. You'll have to negotiate with your GM on the effects, but it should match those of a third Tier or lower ability. You may cast the Esotery by throwing the handful of prima cinere as an action. The handful takes up one of your Cypher slots. Action.



Dust Charms

Those who study the Mystery of Dust gain access to Charms through the Numenera skill itself, as their studies involve manipulation of nanites at the most basic level - their program codes.

Ashen Sight. You rub dirt into your eyes, hindering your normal vision (1 step penalty on Perception), but allowing you to see the nanites around you and what they're up to (creating magic, fighting each other, etc.).

Communications. You cause the nanites in the air to begin constant broadcast communications with one another, filling the air in an Immediate area with sparkles and light for ten minutes.

Eddies. You stand in just the right place, just where the nanites are most concentrated, granting you a +1 on arcane rolls next round.

Dust to Dust. You turn a creature's corpse you touch into a pile of ash. This even works on the animated dead created by the Mystery of Blood.

Mask of the Nano Cloud. You rub nanite ash or drit on your face and ignite it with magic, causing it to glow. For the next ten minutes nanite intelligences will treat you as one of their own, allowing you to more easily negotiate with them (provides an Asset).

Nanite Whisper. You speak into the wind and carry a message through the nanite networks. Your message carries into the ear of any person you can see, no matter the distance.

Scan the Code. You learn the arcane nature of a pile of ash or drit within Immediate range of you - was it once nanites, is it Prima Cinera, etc.

See The Code. Touching an arcane effect or Arcane Cypher, you project a glowing three dimensional model of a nanite formation into the air, allowing you to more easily identify the effect (provides an Asset).

Smell of Ash. You use your sense of smell to identify the Focus, Esotery, or Arcane Cypher from which a magical effect derives. The effect must be within Immediate range, or up to Long range if it's upwind of you.

Track the Wind. You learn the relative distance and approximate location of the Iron Wind.

Adversaries

Ash Eater

The ash known as prima cinere is rare in most places, but in some it is as common as any valuable mineral. In these places, humans are known to consume prima cinere, rubbing it in their noses and against their gums. Some even rub it into their eyes. The nanites alter the structure of the people who consume it in this way, causing mild euphoria and eventually coloring their bodies slightly purple.

The ashes also grant those who ingest it some measure of arcane power, though its manifestation is often unpredictable. The magical addict's own subconscious is turned into arcane effects. Needless to say these individuals can be dangerous and somewhat unhinged.

Level 3 (4 when casting "spells")

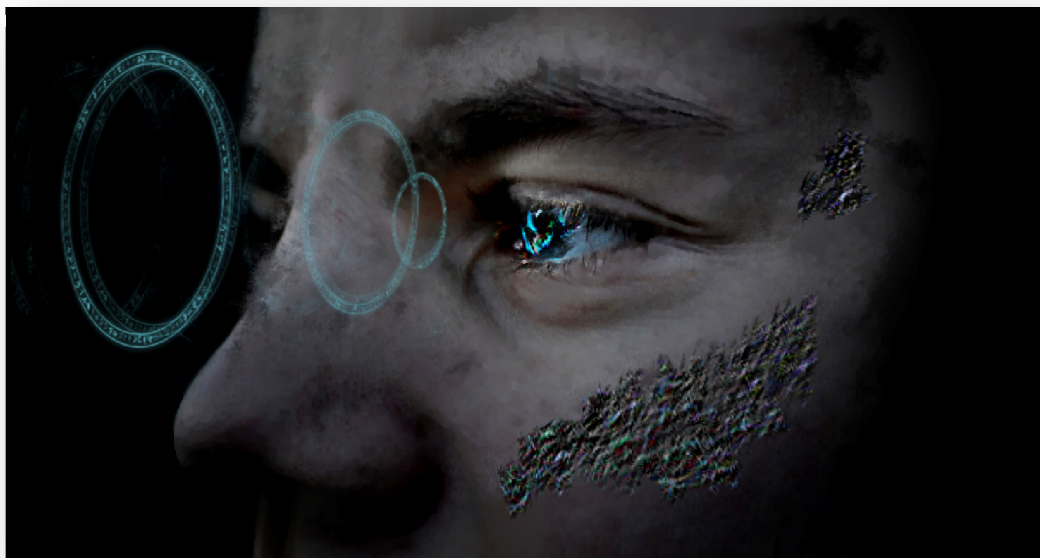
Armor 1

Health 9

Maneuvers-

Addiction. Consumes a pinch of prima cinere and becomes one Level higher for one hour. Will be one Lower than usual for 4 hours after this effect wears off.

Spell. Creates a strange magical effect, such as a shower of sparks or sudden plant growth all around. Causes 4 damage and stuns all within Immediate distance for one round.



The Mystery of ~Fae~

Once the world was ruled by Fae, the most beautiful and perfect beings in all of creation. In their infinite and perfect wisdom, the Fae came to create their servants, the Faery, beings who were granted providence over creation and spirits of insatiable mischief. For perfection is boring without a little mischief now and then.

Though lovers of chance, the Fae also decreed that laws be forged by which the Faery must abide, as complicated and convoluted they would be. This is the story the practitioners of Faery magic tell, claiming to have had it passed down for generations. In practice, the magic relies on the ability for the users to access the arcane and intricate rules which govern the Faery-intelligent hives of nanites programmed to create interesting lives for the former masters of Earth.

Practicing this magic can be as simple as answering a riddle or reciting a rhyme, but it also relies on a kind of folk wisdom, which helps in knowing the rules and practices of these strange beings. Masters of the Mystery eventually are able to entreat the Faery directly, though this carries its own burdens and costs.

Finds the Faerie Trods

The Faery travel the world through a series of secret passages called “faery trods.” Practitioners focused on this aspect of the Mystery have learned the telltale sign of these hidden roads and how to access them. These signs can call for a particular rhyme being recited over a seemingly random pattern of scattered black stones or blue wax being poured over a painted yellow door.

Discovering these rules can take a lifetime of exploration and experimentation. Some of these roads are relatively easy to find and access, allowing the traveler discretion in where they are traveling. Others require bravery as well as cleverness, for it can be unclear where the wanderer will end up.



These abilities often lend the trod seekers to be excellent guides through the vast and dangerous lands of the Ninth World. Many have taken to forming guilds, dedicated to helping paying customers safely cross the various wastes. Of course, these guilds jealously guard the paths they know of, rarely willing to commit such valuable knowledge to a map.

Some of the trod seekers have begun to claim that they are not simply locating the hidden roads of the Faery, but actually commanding them to creating passages for the masters of the path. This minority is often the one most likely to utilize the Focus’s ability to cut off the Faery from their trods in order to elicit services and favors. Others say this attitude is dangerous, and avoid the need to coerce such favor from the Faery, hoping this will shield them from the worst of the mischief the strange neighbors can offer.



Faerie Trods: It should be noted that for many of the powers of the Focus, the player will activate an ability, and then learn the location of a circle or pathway. The GM is the one who actually decides where the trod will be.

Minor Effect Suggestion: You teleport an immediate distance as part of your action, to a location of your choice.

Major Effect Suggestion: You teleport a short distance as part of your action, to a location of your choice.

Suggested GM Intrusion: You suddenly teleport to a very dangerous or disadvantageous location.

Connection: Choose one other PC. This person can follow you when you teleport, as long as they are within Immediate range of your point of departure and do so within one round of your travel.

Tier One

Blink (1 Speed point). By squeezing through a weak point in space you teleport an Immediate distance. Action.

Tier Two

Ley Line. You are able to walk the longer trods of the fae, allowing you to take shortcuts through the cracks in

space when travelling. Long term travel times are halved for you and your party and you need not make Speed task checks to travel Long distance as an action in combat. Enabler.

Tier Three

Faerie Ring (3 Speed points). You find the spot within Long range of you where the coherency of three dimensional space is weakest. Once found, anyone who enters this space (usually a one meter diameter circle) teleports to a location tied to this “ring”. You do not know where the ring leads, travel is one-way, and it only lasts for ten minutes once found, but in a desperate situation it could give you the quick exit you and your companions need. Action.

Tier Four

Corpse Road (4 Speed points). You find a path between space tread frequently by the faeries and other “spirits” of the Numenera. For the next ten minutes, so long as you are following the direction of this road, you may travel up to long distance each round without taking an action to do so. Action.

Tier Five

Crossroads (5 Speed points). You locate a gateway into a realm of the fae, a tiny extradimensional space. The gateway only lasts for ten minutes after you find it, taking the form of an archway, doorway, or other opening. Anyone can enter the crossroads, once found. Inside is a spherical room with enough space for four or five people to sit comfortably. Those inside can leave at any time with but a thought, but anything they place within will go away once no one inhabits that particular pocket reality anymore. Action.

Tier Six

Catch a Sprite (6 Speed points). You find an invisible faerie and cut it off from its trods, keeping it from escaping. The faerie in this condition becomes slightly visible as a luminous humanoid shape. At this point you may ask one task of the faerie, that it will execute upon release. This task must be relatively simple and straightforward such as “Get me the key from the jailer,” or “Trip the king on his way down the stairs.” The faerie cannot engage in combat for you, but it can pull mischievous tricks that border on dangerous. Action, usable once per day.

Swears Oaths and Curses

The Fae of old were very careful with which words they chose to speak, and their servants the Faery follow in their masters’ footsteps. Practitioners of this Focus are able to elicit the faeries’ assistance in enforcing oaths and curses they wish the weight of fate behind.

Most of the powers invoked in this way require a spoken declaration of some sort. Many on this path find ways of entwining the curse or blessing into a rhyme that they have learned. Sometimes rhymes are the only way to invoke these powers, and if you lack a particular rhyme for a particular cure, then you are unable to level that spell against anyone.

These practices are dangerous, for the more a person enforces their will with the Faery, the more the Faery take notice of that person. This tends to entice many thrill seekers to the path, looking for the excitement that dealing with the Faery can bring.

Others tend to conserve their powers, using them sparingly, hoping to avoid the dread gaze of the faery folk. Those who choose to walk this path quickly learn to be careful with what they say, rarely resorting to lying to gain what they want.

Given their ability to shape the very fate of the world, many on this path choose to use their services in the world of commerce. The ability to bind agreements has made these practitioners a valuable commodity to the merchants of the ninth world.

The ability to bind curses is of no little value as well, but this can be a dangerous enterprise if it becomes too public of a venture. Discretion is necessary if one doesn’t want to end up with complaining townspeople every time someone stubs a toe or loses some livestock.

Minor Effect Suggestion: Your curse lasts twice as long as normal.

Major Effect Suggestion: Your curse affects two targets rather than one (roll for a second attack).

Suggested GM Intrusion: Your curse affects you as well.

Connection: Choose one other PC. This character gains the benefits of your oath too, so long as they also follow it.

Tier One

Morning Oath (1 Intellect point). Once per day you may swear a vow, at some time between sunrise and noon. Doing so takes an action, and the effect of the sworn oath lasts until the next sunrise, or until you break the vow associated with it. Choose one of the following oaths when doing so, or create a new one with your GM:

- ❖ “I shall harm no unarmed foe and accept surrender.” You gain an Asset when convincing a foe to surrender.
- ❖ “I shall protect the innocent and defend the weak.” You gain an Asset on defense rolls when Defending attacks against another character (see the Numenera corebook page 103).
- ❖ “I shall only speak the truth and hide no relevant fact.” You gain an Asset on social interaction tasks, besides those that involve deception.

Tier Two

Jinx (2 Intellect points). With a screaming curse you cause a creature within Long range to immediately suffer some ill fate, such as dropping a weapon, falling down, or getting hit by a large falling object. This effect is decided by the GM based on the circumstances, but will usually inflict around 4 damage

and cause the victim to be in an unfortunate tactical position. Action.

Tier Three

Evening Curse (3 Intellect points). Once per day you may swear a curse, at some time between sundown and midnight. Doing so takes an action, and the effect of the sworn curse lasts until the next sundown. Choose one of the following curses when doing so, or create a new one with your GM:

- ❖ **Assassin's Crutch.** Anyone who attacks you from behind or from an unknown location immediately takes 5 damage.
- ❖ **Liar's Tongue.** Anyone who lies to you in any way stronger than a white lie immediately finds their tongue has shriveled within their mouth, greatly impairing speech. This effect lasts on the liar for seven days.
- ❖ **Thief's Lament.** Anyone who steals from you immediately finds that one of their hands has shriveled to a stub. This effect lasts on the thief for seven days.



Tier Four

Bind the Vow (4 Intellect points). You cast this curse upon a target within Short distance, after having just heard them utter a vow, promise, or prediction. For the next seven days, whenever the target breaks this vow, they immediately suffer a great calamity, equivalent to a GM Intrusion. Action.

Tier Five

Karmic Vengeance (5 Intellect points). You enter a state for one hour, in which the odds tend to get even for you. Whenever you roll a 1 or a 20 on a task, you both suffer an Intrusion and gain a Major Effect. Action to initiate.

Tier Six

Weave Fate (6 Intellect points). You channel the forces of the fae towards the task of making sure a given event takes place. From this point forward, whenever you take an action directly related to this goal, you count as having one higher Edge for the purposes of applying Effort. You may only weave fate towards one objective at any given time. Until your fae enhanced fate is completed, you may not weave fate again. Action to initiate.

Fae Charms

Those who study the ways of the faeries are able to tap into their tricks through the Folk Wisdom skill, which can also be used to know of healing, harmful, and flavorful herbs, how to work with animals, and other useful common knowledge.

Achoo. You cause a living target within Immediate range to sneeze. Target must have a nose.

Best Road. Given a choice of roads to travel, you know which one is least likely to be influenced by the Faeries. This is particularly helpful when entering forests or other landmarks known to be “haunted” by their kind.

Dare Games. You may challenge someone to a dare. Should they succeed within ten minutes, you transfer one Might point from your pool into theirs. The dare must be something fairly difficult or embarrassing.

Fairy Lights. You cause a light to glimmer in the distance, potentially causing a distraction.

Fright. Target living creature within Immediate range feels afraid and on edge for no apparent reason.

Jinx. You cause an object used to generate random numbers, such as a die or tossed coin, to come up as the lowest possible value (one on a standard die, tails on a shin flip). The object must be within Immediate range. Provides an Asset on gambling rolls if used properly, but the muttering and gestures of the spell may be seen as cheating by some.

Placate. You make an offering to the local Faeries, keeping them from harming you (preventing Faerie related Intrusions) for the next 28 hours.

Proper Promise. You make a promise and swear it to the Faeries. Should you fail to uphold your oath, you'll be struck by an affliction, such as turning strange colors or catching a terrible sickness. Wise common folk often revere such a promise and those who swear them.

Repair the Seal. Sometimes ancient magical seals can be found, binding captured Faeries to the spot so that they cannot harm the world anymore. You may use this ability to maintain or repair a broken seal, thereby trapping any nearby Faeries, or keeping already trapped fair ones from escaping.

Self-Sacrifice. Used the moment another PC gets a rolled Intrusion (from a 1 on the die), you suffer the Intrusion instead. This represents drawing the ire of the Faeries away from someone else and towards yourself. This power takes no time to use, but may only be used once per day.

Adversaries

Faerie

Less an actual being than a force of nature, a Faerie is an intelligent hive of nanites, bound together by an oath to make mischief for the living beings in a region. It is programmed to be capricious and irreverent, seeking only to cause the most interesting misery possible, so that all lives are enriched by the lack of boredom.



Faeries take their oaths (programming) very seriously, and are only willing to grant mercy when the proper instructions and rituals have been performed - those their ancient programmers used to maintain them.

Thus the Faeries, when encountered directly, are dangerous things indeed, unharmed by conventional weapons and bent on inflicting harm and humility upon their hapless victims.

Level 8

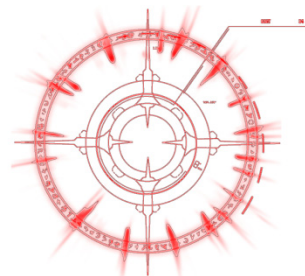
Armor 10

Health 30

Maneuvers-

Space Between Space. The Faerie moves itself and a target within Long range to an extra-dimensional space, to "chat".

Impossible. The Faerie skews the laws of probability to make anything it wishes occur, within the bounds of its programming. This generally means that something horrific happens to a target within several miles.



The Mystery of ~Flesh~

Hidden in the bodies of every living thing on Earth are numerous colonies of nanites, self-replicating to do work few know about. Those who study the Mystery of Flesh are able to modify the body by invoking the ancient codes hidden in these invisible parasites, causing them to take action upon the flesh.

Designed to keep creatures alive, or the allow them to change form, the nanites in the body are dangerous and strange. Those who draw upon them are just as dangerous, as their power makes them able to assume the forms of beasts or change themselves into mutated creatures.

This Mystery requires as much knowledge of anatomy and biology as it does knowledge of the arcane. Practitioners are often also trained in the healing arts in an attempt to gain greater knowledge of the human body. There can an unfortunate stigma attached to these arcanists, given their predilection for dissection and their ability to cause mutations.

Takes the Shape of Beasts

Practitioners of this Focus have learned to harness their own life essence in order to take the shapes of the various creatures of the Ninth World. While the mastery of certain words of power and alchemical formulas starts one along this path, the study of bestial behaviors and qualities is more important.

This need often drives masters and students out into the natural world, where they are able to observe the natures of the living creatures they wish to mimic. The obsession with animal behavior often causes practitioners of this path to be

somewhat outcast, but this doesn't seem to bother them much.

Most who choose the path of shape shifting tend to prefer solitary existence anyway, although some do form small cabals or packs. This anti-social behavior doesn't prevent people from seeking these sorcerers out when some strange and dangerous creature threatens their homes. Hoping to find new beasts for new forms, the shape shifters are often willing to oblige.

Many shape shifters choose to become guides through the more dangerous parts of the Ninth World, just for the chance at encountering something new and possibly dangerous. There is even a small group that leads wealthy clients out into the wild on exotic hunting expeditions.

Some members of this path fall into the trap of staying in beast form all of the time. Masters caution against this behavior as it can lead to a dangerous loss of human personality.

Minor Effect Suggestion: Your new form is convincing enough that the creatures you're mimicking think you are one of them.

Major Effect Suggestion: Your adaptation to your new form is so complete that you are able to communicate with the type of creature you're mimicking.



Suggested GM Intrusion: You change shape into some other nearby creature and remain stuck in that form for one hour.

Connection: Choose one other PC. You may telepathically communicate with this character when you're in animal form.

Shape Shifting: Changing shape is the crux of this Focus, and in order to pull it off you'll need to know something of what you're turning into. Having encountered the creature at least once is usually sufficient. Additionally, you must make an activation roll each time you change, with a difficulty equal to the Level of the creature you're mimicking.

When you change shape, all of your carried possessions and worn gear shift to become part of your body. Armor continues to provide its Armor rating and imposes its normal penalties to Might and Speed, but all other effects from your equipment cease to function while you are shifted. Each shift lasts a number of hours equal to your Tier. You may take an action to change shape back to normal at any time.

While in this form you have all of the limitations and movement advantages of the creature whose form you take- fish may swim and breath in water, birds may fly, etc. You only access the special senses of your animal shape at Tier 2 and you do not gain any special attacks or maneuvers from the shape until Tier 4.

Tier One

Tiny Spy (1 Might point). You change your form into that of a small non-sentient creature about the size of your fist. While in this form you gain an Asset on Stealth tasks and count as trained in Speed Defense, but suffer a two shift penalty on attacks. Action.

Tier Two

Animal Senses. While in creature form your senses come to match those of your new body, rather than mimicking those of a human. You may come to see better in the dark, have advanced hearing and smell, or even gain access to sonar. Enabler.

Tier Three

Bestial Form (3 Might points). You take the form of a non-sentient creature of your own size or smaller and with a Level equal to or lower than your Tier. Action.

Tier Four

Special Attacks. When you shift into the form of a creature you gain one of its special forms of attack, such as an eel's shock, octopus's ink, or seskii's claws. Enabler.

Tier Five

Half Shift (5 Might points). You may partially transform into a creature so that you may use one of its native abilities, senses, or attacks. For instance, you might change your neck to have gills, hands to have bear claws, or eyes to see with those of a cat. Unlike other changes, Half Shifts only last for ten minutes at a time. Action.

Tier Six

Monstrous Form (6 Might points). You change shape to that of any non-sentient creature you've assisted in defeating before. Action.

Weaves Flesh and Bone

The weavers are by far the more traditionally arcane members of the Mystery of Flesh. Their work rooms are a cross of a biological laboratory and a ceremonial ritual chamber. Alchemy, words of power, mudras, surgery: all these blend together to allow the practitioners of this path to alter the very form of living creatures.

Obsessed with anatomy, weavers often train or pose as healers in order to gain the opportunity to study the functions of living bodies. Some in the various arcane universities have an uneasy feeling about such practices, but few can argue with the results.



Practitioners of this path rarely advertise their more extreme abilities, as they don't wish to get blamed for every bad mutation that happens wherever they go. They are, however, perfectly willing to provide their more cosmetic services, earning them both subjects to practice on and much needed capital.

Rather than being in conflict with their partners on the other side of the Mystery, the weavers are often quick to set up partnerships with the shape shifters, in order to learn new forms of anatomy as well as how to better tame the creatures they wish to harness as minions.

Cabals of weavers will often cultivate and raise different domesticated creatures for the purposes of experimentation and service. Others prefer to utilize certain arcane cyphers in order to gain access to more useful wild beasts.

While the need for extensive laboratories has lent to weavers sticking close to the arcane universities, many engage in various forms of exploration in order to find

new and exciting modifications. Some warriors specifically seek them out because of the abilities they are able to bestow. Particularly favorable are those changes which alter and enhance the limited human senses.

A far less advertised function of this Mystery is the ability to gather intelligence. Given the practitioners' power to cosmetically alter themselves and others, they are ideal for creating networks of spies and information gatherers. Some offer this service for hire, but an exclusive group performs these tasks on behalf of the Aomi University in their games of politics and power in Qi.

Minor Effect Suggestion: You weave a particularly haunting or beautiful alteration, providing an Asset on relevant social tasks.

Major Effect Suggestion: Your creativity runs away with itself, allowing you to make two alterations instead of one.

Suggested GM Intrusion: Your creation turns on you, attacking until it is destroyed or tears itself apart (5 rounds later).

Connection: Choose one other PC. This person knows enough about your strange experiments to assist you, providing one Asset when helping with your creation process.

Alterations: Weaving flesh and bone allows you to alter yourself and others in creative and often disturbing ways by calling upon the nanites within the body to alter it. Though you'll have many potential changes to make to the body, all such alterations are mutually exclusive. The nanites can only alter a body so far, and so a person or creature may only have one alteration stemming from this Focus at a time.

Tier One

Self Expression (1 Speed point). You may alter your own body to take on a strange aspect. Choose any mutation from the Cosmetic Mutations list on page 128 of the Numenera core book. This effect lasts for one hour. Action.

Skin Student. You are trained in all disguise related tasks. Enabler.

Tier Two

Disruptive Caress (2 Speed points). You touch the body of another living person or creature, altering them just as you could with Self Expression, using the Cosmetic Mutations table. This effect lasts for one hour. Action.

Tier Three

Become More (3 Speed points). By caressing your own body you alter its shape and nature, providing a benefit from the Beneficial Mutations table on page 124

of the Numenera core book. This effect lasts for one hour. Action.

Skin Adept. You are specialized in all disguise related tasks. Enabler.

Tier Four

Creative Touch (4 Speed points). By touching another living creature you may grant your target Harmful or Beneficial mutation from the appropriate tables on pages 124 and 125 of the Numenera core book. The effect lasts for one hour. Action.



Tier Five

Patch (5 Speed points). By manipulating the flesh and bone of another you can stop bleeding and make minor repairs. You move your target one step back up the condition track. Action.

Tier Six

Flesh Dance (6 Speed points). You alter yourself to take on the face, body type, and voice of a particular person for one hour. Action.

Flesh Charms

Those who unearth the Mystery of Flesh gain Charms through the Healing skill, as knowledge of the body grants them new arcane insights.

Fanged. You grow fangs, causing your bite unarmed attacks to deal one additional damage.

Far Scream. For the next ten minutes your yelling can be heard for up to a mile (1.6 km).

Flesh Pocket. You create a pocket in the flesh of your body, in which you could easily hide an object or creature, up to the size of your fist. Lasts for ten hours.

Intonation. Your voice changes pitch, allowing you to hit tones you never could. For the next ten minutes you gain a +1 on rolls for voice and command related arcane powers.

Lunar Attunement. Your primal or animalistic side becomes connected to the phases of the moon. On the night that the moon is fullest each lunar cycle, you may use this ability to gain an Asset on all rolls for your Focus abilities until the sun rises.

Nanite Purge. You remove a significant quantity of nanites from a living creature you touch, evacuating a single arcane effect upon them. The purged nanites come out of the target's mouth, coughed up as a cloud of ash.

Padded Warmth. Due to an insulating change in your physical makeup you suffer no damage from cold conditions for 28 hours, though direct cold attacks will still harm you.

Pheromonal Awareness. You can detect the general emotional state of target living creature within Immediate distance.

Predatory Visage. Your face becomes angular and alien looking for ten minutes, granting you an Asset on Intimidation tasks.

Spirit Animal. Choose one type of living creature upon gaining this Charm. You pay one less pool point when activating Flesh Mystery abilities that grant you the powers, senses, or visage of your chosen creature.

Adversaries

Flesh Bender

There are many who learn the rudiments of the Mystery, plying their strange skills among the commoners of the Ninth World. Employed by criminals and governments alike, they are often useful spies, assassins, and bodyguards.

Level 4 (5 when shaping flesh)

Armor 1

Health 12

Maneuvers-

Bend. The Flesh Bender painfully bends the limb of a target within Immediate range, causing 6 damage and pushing a PC down the condition track, as well as making that particular limb inoperable until it can be healed.

Self Heal. The Flesh Bender regains 3 Health as it digs around in its wounds.

Shapeship. The Flesh Bender shape changes, slipping from bonds or becoming just tall enough to reach the players.

Hybrid

Those who meddle with flesh sometimes accidentally make creatures the Ninth World has never seen. Hybrid amalgams of several beasts, a Hybrid seeks to destroy all who practice the arcane.

Each Hybrid is comprised of parts from two or more Ninth World creatures. Each is unique and terrifying.

Level 5 (6 when biting and clawing)

Armor 2

Health 15

Maneuvers-

Magical Hunt. The Hybrid closes on an arcane magic user, travelling up to Long distance and then making an attack for 7 damage with its natural weapons.

Many Limbed Strike. The Hybrid attacks with all of its strange and twisted limbs, striking out at up to 4 enemies within Immediate range of it, and dealing 5 damage on each hit.

The Mystery of ~Form~

The Mystery of Form relies on the concepts of shape and sympathy. Those who can master the creation of form are able to impart mystical effects in their art, whether that is external pieces or modification to the self.

The Mystery of Form comes heavily out of the Ceremonial tradition, with its reliance on sympathy and the highly detailed ritual process of creating the mystical art forms. The practice of this Mystery requires a great deal of time, particularly as the magic becomes more powerful. This reflects the literal time it takes to create the art, as well as the rituals necessary to empower the magic.

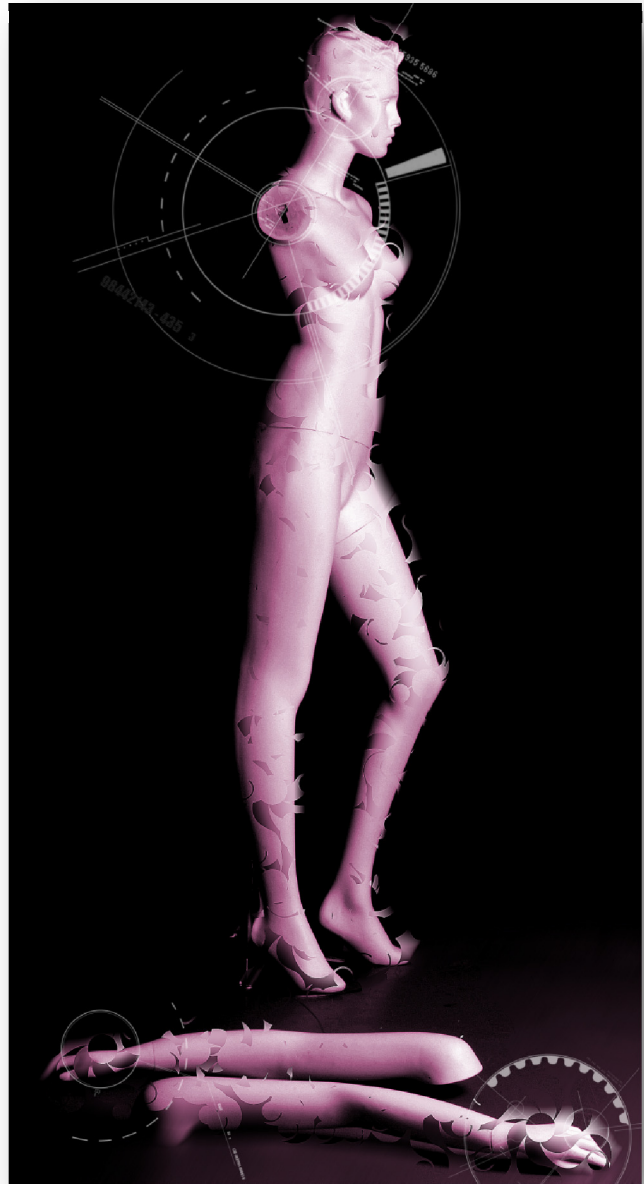
Due to the high volume of rare and expensive materials required for these practices, Wealth is often one of the most desirable long term benefits for characters within this Mystery. Inevitably, practitioners of the Mystery of Form need to go exploring in the vast unknown, looking for new and exotic materials to use in their projects.

Brings Sculptures to Life

Magic is the ability to reshape the universe in accordance with the will of the practitioner. The sculptors have embraced this idea in a very literal sense. They seek to understand and harness the physical manifestation of magic through the creation of high art, and the invocation of the animating power of the nanites within most matter found on Earth.

For a sculptor, it is not enough to simply make some haphazard creation and instill it with the facsimile of life. One must bring skill, intention, and beauty to one's creation before magic can be instilled there. Apprentices within this Mystery can spend years honing their skills before they are given access to even the most rudimentary of animation magics. This course of study goes well beyond the intensive sharpening of

artistic skill. Practitioners are required to become familiar with all forms of art in the Ninth World, and learn to evaluate them using a critical lens.



The sculptors are often decried as elitist snobs in their attempts to develop the true canon of art. Undeterred by the meek and tasteless, the sculptors realize that what they are contributing to humanity is far too important to be distracted by such unenlightened criticism.

Practitioners of this Focus work in a variety of materials, from wood to metal to crystal. Every material is given specific mystical significance, often requiring that creations be made up of multiple substances. Also

given meaning, color, texture and shape all play a role in the animation of their creations. Sculptors often make a broad study of the other Mysteries, looking for spells and Charms they might wish to bring to life within their creations.

Given the focus of the sculptors on high art, they have come into conflict with their brethren in the Mystery who choose to make flesh their canvass. The sculptors feel that this approach is crude and unimaginative, and often work to have the practice discredited among the Ninth World elite. This of course doesn't stop them from utilizing the services of a flesh artist when it advantages them.

Minor Effect Suggestion: In the dark your golem could pass as a person or your servant could pass as a living pet of some kind.

Major Effect Suggestion: Your creation is especially resistant to damage (+1 Armor rating).

Suggested GM Intrusion: Your creation encounters a material that interferes with its animation, causing it to turn into a pile of rubble until taken out of the area.

Connection: Choose one other PC. Your creations seem to like this person and will follow their commands as well as your own.

Sculptures: This Focus relies greatly on the ability to make physical, three-dimensional art using the Sculpting skill and all of the abilities in this Focus use this skill. Doing so takes time, generally one hour of work per Tier of the power, as well as raw materials and tools. The raw materials can be rare when attempting to create something magical, generally costing around 5 shins per Tier of the Focus ability.

Additional Equipment: Clay sculpting, gem cutting, woodworking, or metalworking tools.

Tier One

Eye for Detail. You are trained in sculpture related tasks. You may use this skill for any ability in this Focus. In addition, you are trained in knowledge of fine art in the Ninth World. Enabler.

Servant (1 Intellect point). You animate a humanoid sculpture, creating a pocket-sized creature no larger than a human head. The servant lasts for as long as you wish and may perform simple tasks. It is Level 1, and can understand you when you command it, but it cannot make effective attacks in combat. You may only ever have one such servant- creating a new one destroys the magic in the old one. Enabler.



Tier Two

Move Structure (2 Intellect points). You are able to briefly animate a section of wall or load-bearing beam, causing it to shake and buckle. In this way you can weaken or even destroy sections of buildings or caves. This power only works on large pieces of stone, clay, crystal, or metal. A successful use of this ability against the object's Level deals 10 damage to it and reduces its Level by one for the purposes of resisting attacks. Action.

Tier Three

Master Sculptor. You are specialized in sculpture related tasks. You may use this skill for any ability in this Focus. In addition, you are specialized in knowledge of fine art in the Ninth World. Enabler.

Tier Four

Golem (Four Intellect points). You bring to life a humanoid sculpture, between one and five cubic meters in volume. The golem is a Level 3 creature with an Armor rating of 2 which follows you and obeys your orders, but that cannot speak or act with autonomy. The golem moves rather slowly - Immediate distance at most each round, and overland travel speed can be dramatically reduced if the golem is not carried in a cart or other conveyance. You may only have one golem at a time. Enabler.

Tier Five

Inscription (Five Intellect points). By inscribing arcane symbols into the forehead of your golem or animated servant you are able to grant it special powers. Choose one Charm from any Mystery. The creature may now use that Charm at the cost of one Health point. Any given animated creature may only benefit from one Inscription at a time. Enabler.

Tier Six

Giant. You may now construct a golem of any size, so long as you have the raw materials to do so. If you make your golem very large (10 or more cubic meters of material) your golem will be a level 5 creature with Armor of 3 and speed of Short. Enabler.

Makes Flesh a Canvass

Manipulation of form is where power lies, but rather than seeking to make shape of the outside world, flesh artists seek power through changing the very nature of their own form and the forms of others. By inscribing layer upon layer of arcane runes upon a subject, the artist can create a lasting arcane effect.

Although the artists completely embrace many of the tenets of the sculptors, they reject the necessity of a

canon, deriding the concept as useless dogma. Flesh artists create more than just tattoos, exploring the plethora of ways in which the body can be transformed. Piercing, scarring, and implants all play a role in a Mystery that seeks to understand how altering the body can reflect changes into the physical world.

While looked down upon by the mainstream elite, the flesh artists are quite popular among those who want to benefit from the arcane but don't have the time, affinity or wealth necessary to master the Mysteries. Criminals, ostracized subcultures, even Visitants look to the flesh artists for powers beyond the common world.





Practitioners of this Focus are also quite popular among other walkers of the Mysteries. Sorcerous cabals who hunt down Arcane Cyphers often seek to recruit members of this path, given their clearly useful talents. Flesh artists find these cabals to be useful because they help enable the exploration required to find rare materials they need for their craft.

The more powerful effects that can be created by this Focus require unusual ingredients to create the inks, jewelry and other comments that enable the magic. Size and intricacy also play a role in the level of power, requiring larger portions of the body as well as greater detail in the work for the most powerful spells.

Minor Effect Suggestion: Your body art is particularly beautiful.

Major Effect Suggestion: Your body art takes half the normal time to complete.

Suggested GM Intrusion: Your subject is unable to take arcane body modifications. Their body seems to reject the magics involved.

Connection: Choose one other PC. Their particular body type or arcane nature allows them to benefit from

one more of each kind of body modification than normal. You could put two marks of passage on them, 4 marks of membership, etc.

Body Art: Most of the abilities of this Focus rely on creating art upon another person, using the Body Modification skill. Doing so takes time and can only be done if the subject is willing or restrained. It also takes rare materials - generally 5 shins worth per Tier of the Focus ability, so a Tier 3 creation costs 15 shins. Those who find their own materials pay only half this cost.

Since most powers imparted by these modifications require a conscious effort to use them and an understanding of what they do, only sentient, living creatures may gain their benefits. You may even perform this art upon yourself, so long as it's not in a hard to reach place. Creating flesh art through these powers generally takes one hour per Tier of the ability being used, reflecting both the size and the complexity of the work.

Additional Equipment: Tools and some raw materials for tattooing, branding, or piercing.

Tier One

Artistry. You are trained in tasks involved in body modification, such as making tattoos, piercing the body, and performing artistic or ritual scarification. You may use these skills when making rolls for abilities within this Focus. Enabler.

Mark of Passage (1 Speed point). You create a tattoo or scar upon a subject during a time of change for them, reflecting their passage into a new way of life. Choose a skill when making this modification. The subject enjoys a +1 on the roll for those tasks for so long as they carry the art, or until they gain a new mark of passage. Once a new one has been completed, the last one loses its power. Enabler.

Tier Two

Mark of Membership (2 Speed points). You place body art upon your subject, marking them as beholden to others with the same mark, and thereby protected. Any two characters who bear the same mark of membership may not affect each other with harmful arcane powers. Characters may have, at most, three marks of membership, with any beyond that being simply ornamental. Enabler.

Tier Three

Master Artistry. You are specialized in tasks involved in body modification, such as making tattoos, piercing the body, and performing artistic or ritual scarification. You may use these skills when making rolls for abilities within this Focus. Enabler.

Tier Four

Motto (4 Speed points). You inscribe words into the flesh, making those words powerful. Once per day, when the subject acts within the spirit of their motto, they may enjoy an Asset on a related roll. A person may have more than one motto, but they may only gain the benefit of one on any given day. Enabler.

Tier Five

Emblem (5 Speed points). You create a work of art upon the subject's flesh that serves as an expression of who they truly are. The subject selects a single Charm

from any Mystery. From this point forward they have access to that Charm. A person may only have one emblem at any given time, with new emblems replacing the power of old ones. Enabler.

Tier Six

Permanent Cypher (6 Speed points). You take an Arcane Cypher from your mind and impart it in the flesh (removing it from your mind). For the rest of their life the subject may use this Cypher at any time by taking an action and spending a number of Speed points equal to the Level of the Cypher. The Cypher does not go away after use. If the subject is a PC, the artwork takes up Cypher slots (1 for Anoetic, 2 for Occultic). A person may only have one Permanent Cypher at a time - a new one destroys the power of the old one. Enabler.

Form Charms

Those who study the Mystery of Form practice their Charms through the skill of Identifying, as it reflects their eye for the Numenera. Through their Charms, they are able to understand and use the strange technologies and materials of the prior worlds.

Accessorize. You integrate an Oddity into your outfit, a piece of art, or an animated sculpture.

Afterimage. You see the telltale signs and residues of any Numenera (arcane or otherwise) that have been within Immediate distance of your current location within the last month.

Artistic Eye. You enjoy an Asset when attempting to locate Arcane Cyphers.

Blind Leap. After taking a round to activate this power, you may take an action the next round without penalty for lack of vision. In effect, you can act blind without a problem.

Diagram. You take ten minutes and draw out a schematic of a Cypher or Artifact, granting you an Asset on activation rolls with the device when not in combat.

Hidden Button. Your keen perception allows you to notice any extra functionality on an Oddity, Cypher, or

Artifact, such as a knob that puts it on auto-fire or a slider that adjusts the length of a plasma beam.

Keep Digging. Whenever you find an Oddity out in the world you may activate this power and roll 1d6. On a roll of 5 or 6 you find one additional Oddity.

Telltale Bulge. You can tell how many Cyphers someone is carrying, just by looking at them within Immediate range.

Tracing. You transfer an Arcane Cypher from an object onto a piece of paper, making it easier to carry the Cypher in your pack (rather than your mind).

Adversaries

Rogue Giant

Animated creatures sometimes get away from their creators. Several legendary giants have escaped captivity into the countryside.

Massive creatures of stone and artwork, giants are often covered in magical runes. Some of them have been known to hoard Arcane Cyphers they find, placing them in caves they carve out of mountainsides.

Giants vary in size from 20 feet or so to much, much, taller.

Level 5 to 9, depending on the size and age of the creature

Armor 3

Health 15 or more

Maneuvers-

Smash From Above. A downward slam into the ground, doing Level + 3 damage, knocking the target to the ground, and stunning them for one round.

Sigil Seeker

Empowered by arcane tattoos, these bandits raid arcane holdings, seeking ever more secrets. Every new secret they learn is another tattoo they can have placed upon them all, strengthening the group and making them an even greater threat to arcanists across the Ninth World.

Level 2 (3 when using their Tattoo Powers)

Armor 1

Health 6

Maneuvers-

Tattoo Power. A trick to get the Seeker out of a jam or an attack that deals 4 damage to a target within Short range. Each Seeker has half a dozen unique abilities, each of which are at the GM's discretion.



The Mystery of ~Motion~

The Mystery of Motion is likely the oldest Mystery in the Ninth World, predating the formation of Aomi University and the even the Ceremonial Mystery itself. Some claim that the Mystery comes from an ancient culture which was particularly attuned to the wishes of the spirit world. Others claim that the tradition is a compilation of many groups, weaving bits and pieces together to form the Mystery today.

What is known is that through the precise trained movement of the body, practitioners are able to signal the nanites to do their bidding. Some choose to look within, using their stances to channel the mystical energies of the body into a supernatural martial art. Others look without, making their dances a prayer to the nano spirits of sky, land, and sea.

Regardless of approach or belief, all practitioners of this path agree that the oldest invocations rely not on words, but on movement. This belief has often led the Mystery to disagreements with the masters of the arcane universities, but few there are willing to deny the usefulness of its students.

Dances with the Spirits

Students of this Focus are taught that their bodies can reflect the world around them, that they can become poetry in motion. As they begin to study the movements of dance, they learn how to open themselves to elemental nanite entities they call the spirits of the world. The path doesn't focus on any particular kind of spirit, seeing all of them as having some purpose in the great dance.

As the students progress, they begin to learn specific dances that invoke particular powers of the spirits. This practice has led many to believe that practitioners of the arcane are not

commanding supernatural powers themselves, but rather entreating the beings of spirit to act on their behalf. This attitude has caused a number of disagreements with other members of the arcane universities, but none have resulted in true feuding yet.

Few who join this path end up embracing the role of scholar or teacher. Students of this path often come to see themselves as the intermediaries of the spirit world. In this role, they often seek out places where the spirits and mortal kind have come to disharmony, where they then try to correct the problem. This makes them quite popular among the general populace, especially those taken with more animistic belief systems.

Some have even come to help form animist religions around a particular group of spirits, with complex systems of theology and liturgy. Masters of the path tend to disapprove of this practice, however, reminding students that all the spirits of the world have place within the Mystery.





Minor Effect Suggestion: Your dancing provides a distraction, causing your enemy to suffer a one step penalty on their next action.

Major Effect Suggestion: Your dancing gains the notice of a major spirit, doubling the amount of time your stance lasts.

Suggested GM Intrusion: You stumble and offend the spirits, causing you to suffer a one step penalty on all actions for the next five rounds.

Connection: Choose one other PC. You've noticed that the spirits have taken to this character, and seem to want you to protect and assist them in their endeavors.

Dances: This Focus allows the practitioner to enter a dance-like stance at Tiers 2 through 6. You may only be in one stance at a time, and each stance lasts for ten rounds before it must be activated again. Activating a stance does not take an action, but you may only switch stances once per round.

Tier One

Visions. You are somehow able to see the invisible spirits of the world - nanotech hive minds some call

spirits, faeries, and angels. You can even see ultradimensional beings bordering on this reality. The Ninth World is a far more complicated place than most people are aware. Enabler.

Spirit Dance. You are trained in all tasks related to dancing. You are knowledgeable in a variety of styles, including some that are very strange when done by a person with a symmetrical bipedal body. Enabler.

Tier Two

Dance of Sorrow (2 Speed points). You enter into a dance for the sorrows of the world. While you are dancing in this way, any intelligent being who attacks you feels intense sadness, reducing the damage of their attack by two points. Enabler.

Tier Three

Dance of Joy (3 Speed points). You enter a dance of happiness. While in this stance you recover one Speed point whenever you successfully strike a hostile foe with a weapon or an unarmed attack. Enabler.

Tier Four

Dance of Summoning (4 Speed points). You enter a dance that gathers the spirits to your side and makes them somewhat visible to the uninitiated. While maintaining this dance you are able to speak to the spirits, potentially learning of their activities in the area. Enabler.

Tier Five

Dance of Death (5 Speed points). You enter a dance in which the spirits guide your attacks, helping you to strike true. While in this dance you double all of your bonus damage from rolling a 17 or higher when making a weapon or unarmed attack. Thus, rolling an 18 would grant +4 damage instead of +2. Enabler.

Tier Six

Creative Spirit. You may dance two dances at the same time, weaving the two stances into one unique expression. You may still only add or remove one stance per turn. Enabler.

Unleashes Inner Power

Much more than a simple arcane martial art, this path has created an entire philosophy of combat. The practice doesn't simply rely on set moves, taught by rote, though there are plenty of those. This aspect of the Mystery teaches that in combat, for every move there is a counter and for every counter another. This idea has led masters to a very practical teaching method, believing that a student is only capable of reproducing in combat that what they have practiced.

As students begin to learn this arcane martial art, they are taught stances and poses which allow them to channel their eternal energies for martial use. This process is difficult to master and can require a great deal of practice.

Masters of this path teach their students that combat is an inevitable truth of existence, and that this Mystery was developed in answer to that truth. This has led many martial arcanists to believe that combat itself is a worthy end, and seek it out wherever it is available, joining any cause or army they come across. This has

earned the Mystery a somewhat fearsome reputation, which suits the members just fine.

You can often find members of the path as captains of the guard or master sergeants in charge of soldier training in the militaries of The Steadfast. You could also find generals among the mystics of this art, seeing warfare as the ultimate expression of personal combat, played out at on the largest scale.

The Mystery has developed a somewhat fraternal order, instilling a deep sense of loyalty between its members. This doesn't prevent them from fighting on opposite sides, but will prevent them from humiliating each other once the battle is over. This can cause conflict with employers, but members are usually able to persuade them that this is the best course of action, given that they could always join the other side.

Minor Effect Suggestion: Your attack pushes your foe off balance, granting an Asset to the next attack made against them.

Major Effect Suggestion: You knock your foe to the ground in a flash of brilliant light.

Suggested GM Intrusion: After taking a hit, you drop out of your current fighting stance.



Connection: Choose one other PC. You see some potential in them as a martial artist.

Stance: Unleashing Inner Power involves calling upon nanites through specific body movements. This is done by holding particular martial arts stances. Each stance takes an action to enter, and you may only be in one stance at a time. The stance lasts for as long as you are able to stay focused and on your feet.

Tier One

Defensive Gestures (1 Might point). You enter into a defensive fighting stance. While fighting in this way you count as trained in Speed Defense so long as both of your hands are empty. Action to initiate.

Tier Two

Energy Blast (2 Might points). You make an unarmed strike, doing your usual unarmed damage and pushing your foe dramatically backwards 3 meters. Action.

Tier Three

Distracting Gestures (3 Might points). You enter into a distracting fighting stance. While fighting in this way your foe becomes distracted when your unarmed attacks hit, causing them to suffer a one shift penalty when defending against physical attacks for one round. Action to initiate.

Tier Four

Flying Attack (4 Might points). You fly through the air, up to Short distance, and make an unarmed attack against a hostile target. This ability may not be used to simply travel a certain distance - a hostile foe must be the target. Action.

Tier Five

Offensive Gestures (5 Might points). You enter into an offensive fighting stance. While fighting in this style your unarmed attacks deal one additional ambient damage. Action to initiate.

Tier Six

Hidden Reserves (6 Speed points). In a burst of light, you recover 6 Might points. Action.

Motion Charms

Those who explore the Mystery of Motion learn their Charms through the Balancing skill, coming to hone their control over their bodies to a truly magical level. Unlike most Charms, Motion Charms use the Speed pool rather than Intellect.

Cat's Feet. Once this Charm is activated you will always land on your feet after a fall of ten feet (3 meters) or more. This effect lasts for ten minutes.

Contortion. By morphing and phasing your body, you gain an Asset on an Escaping skill task you attempt next turn.

Far Throw. When you use an unarmed attack move to throw an opponent, you may use this Charm to cast them up to Short distance away.

Flip Up. By letting the nanites spin you in the air you gain an Asset on a Jumping task you attempt next turn.

Kippup. You are bodily pushed by unseen forces up from the ground to a standing position. This Charm takes no time, usable once per round.

Liquid Grace. Next round, you may walk on water or other liquid as though it were solid.

Tightrope. For ten minutes you may walk on any narrow edge, no matter how thin, without penalty. If the edge has no slack, you need not even roll to walk across it.

Tread on Air. By using this Charm during a fall, you suffer 3 less damage from the impact.

Walk of the Master. The way you walk inspires magical confidence, granting you an Asset on Intimidation tasks for the next ten minutes.

Watery Grace. Once activated, you may move underwater as though you were on land, suffering no penalty when making unarmed or melee attacks, for ten minutes.

Adversaries

Monk of the Stolen Garden

A secretive order of monastic students of the Mystery of Motion, the Monks of the Stolen Garden are found in important places of the world. Whether it's a biological laboratory, teeming with diverse and unusual plants, or the beautiful stone ruins of a prior world's king, the Monks tend to places of majestic splendor, exalting in the perfect imperfection of the ancient past. It is form that draws them here, for they seek places that facilitate deep meditation and contemplation on the aesthetic.

The monks may seem to be simple aesthetes, but their devotion to form is absolute and their study of their inner power often advanced. Usually in conflict with those who would plunder ancient ruins, the monks are a menace to adventurers.

Level 3 (4 when making unarmed strikes within a beautiful locale)

Armor 0 (2 against ranged attacks)

Health 9

Maneuvers-

Disruption. The monk harms the flow of nanites within the target through an unarmed attack, causing 1 ambient damage per round for the next 2d6 rounds.

Brick Wall. The monk makes a strike that creates an invisible wall of force at the point of impact. The hit does 4 damage, and the wall protects the monk, granting 2 Armor rating against all attacks from that direction for 3 rounds.

Light as a Feather. The monk leaps up to Long distance, seeming to walk on the air itself.

Spirit Host

Sometimes the natural spirits inhabit and act through the body of a mortal. As the spirits are quite powerful in their own right, this is usually just to serve as a means of crude communication. But the spirits have strange and unknowable motivations. Hosts often find themselves cult leaders or attendants to unique and important locations.



Bereft of their minds, host bodies are often neglected by the immortal beings that inhabit them. This is not to say that the hosts become weakened - quite the contrary. Spirits are often able to make their host bodies practically immortal and impossibly powerful. This might be why the hosts agreed to give up their autonomy in the first place: power.

Level 5 (6 when near a location from which they draw their power, such as an arcane lagoon or a haunted cave)

Armor 3

Health 15 (regenerates one Health per round)

Maneuvers-

Channel Power. The spirit routes energies from an important location nearby, causing 7 damage to a target within Long range. Characters hit by this blast become stunned for one round.

Infestation. The spirit makes an unarmed attack and unleashes a portion of its nanite hive onto the target, causing 7 Intellect damage. The target must immediately make an Intellect defense or become an additional host to the spirit, losing control of their body.

The Mystery of ~Nature~

Command over nature is one of the defining features of sentient species. From city building to agriculture, changing the environment is the adaptation that has allowed the supremacy of sentient beings over the Ninth World. Practitioners of the Mystery of Nature have discovered the ability to manipulate the very landscape to their own ends through the use of terraforming nanotech. What those ends are differ greatly depending on the Focus an individual student chooses. Regardless of philosophy, the end result is that masters of the Mystery are dedicated to retooling nature to suit the needs of the mundane populace.

Seeks Balance

The world is a vast and complex system, and the tiniest change can have dire consequences if done without thought and observation. If sentient beings wish to mitigate their harm, they must act with great restraint. This is true a hundred fold for practitioners of the mysterious, whose whispered words and tiny gestures can literally reshape the face of the world.

The seekers of balance advocate a philosophy of contemplation and observation. Students often spend years without learning a single power or spell, merely observing the world and its various systems. Masters look for patience and intentionality, and only when they observe this do they reveal the power of the Mystery.

After such training, some students come to see any action as undesirable. Masters are quick to point out that inaction in itself can be an action, and that always choosing that path throws one out of balance. True seekers, therefore, are those who act when needed, and withhold action when it is best. Needless to say this philosophy is extremely difficult to uphold, and there are as many opinions on how best to achieve this balance as there are seekers.

Seekers of balance are almost always well-traveled, wandering the Ninth World, observing and studying its patterns. Practitioners of the path put great weight in the notion of removing oneself from the system in order to truly observe it. This comes with time and practice, and many masters will not acknowledge a practitioner who has not learned this ability. The study of world has led many of the seekers to become students of ecology, and many communities seek their help when planning new agricultural projects.

The magical practices of the seekers of balance are often subdued, requiring meditation, perhaps with some chanting or drawing of mandalas. Many seekers take great pride in their ability to evoke their powers without gestures or words of power. They are often dismissive of the practices of the seekers of paradise, finding the complex gestures and detailed rituals to be rude and distracting. They are vehemently opposed to the practice of sacrifice for power.

Minor Effect Suggestion: You learn a trivial fact or property of the surrounding flora or fauna.

Major Effect Suggestion: You learn a potentially useful fact or property of the surrounding flora or fauna.

Suggested GM Intrusion: Something you've done has disrupted the balance within you, causing you to take 5 damage and fall to the ground in pain.

Connection: Choose one other PC. You once used medicinal herbs to save their life.

Tier One

Wild Path (1 Intellect point). Through subtle manipulation of the nanite field you walk without leaving a trail of any kind, including smell. Lasts one hour. Action to initiate.

Nature Lore. You are trained in survival tasks, as well as knowledge of plants and animals. Enabler.

Tier Two

Green Assistance (2 Intellect points). You enjoy an Asset on a non-combat task taken while surrounded by plants, as they grow and shift to suit your needs. Enabler.

Tier Three

Restoration (3 Intellect points). You heal any creature or plant you touch for $1d6 + 3$ Health points (Might pool for player characters). This ability is a task with a Difficulty equal to $3 +$ one for every time you've used this power since your last ten hour rest. Action.

Tier Four

Shade of the Canopy (4 Intellect points). So long as you remain under the shade of stationary plants (not in pots), you are barely visible to intelligent/sentient beings, as well as all robots and other machines, granting you two Assets on stealth tasks. Action to initiate.

Tier Five

Bring Balance (5 Intellect points). You transfer Health points or Might pool points from one creature to another within Long range. This counts as an attack against the creature losing health. Up to 5 points may

be transferred. You may never affect yourself with this ability. Action.

Tier Six

Soul of the Wild (6 Intellect points). The terraformation nanites disassemble you and download your mind into their collective intelligence, making you a spirit on the wind. You have no body, and thus no Speed or Might pool to speak of while in this form.

You still have a semi-visible shape, but you are weightless, capable of flight at your usual speed, and able to pass through solid objects. For most intents and purposes you are not physical.

In addition to these properties, you are able to change life around you, growing and shaping plant and other simple life at your whim, and dealing 8 damage on an Intellect-based attack when you reform creatures to harm them. This "spirit" form lasts for one hour, but you may not leave the general vicinity (long distance) of wherever you activated the ability. Action to initiate.



Seeks Paradise

Only through sacrifice will we attain what we have lost. The seekers of paradise are on a path to greatness, and they are not deterred by the petty morality of lesser beings. Humanity once sat with the gods in heaven, and now grubs about in the dirt no better than the beasts in the field. The Mysteries are the key to unlocking humanity's potential, but are a means to an end, not an end unto themselves.

The seekers of paradise almost always see the ends justifying the means, given that they are trying to return humanity to its original glory. Since many of their magics either cause desolation or require the death of something which was once alive, two schools of thought have emerged within the tradition.

One group purports that this is simply a step along the path to greatness, and that eventually masters of the Mystery will transcend the need to cause death in order to fuel their magics. The other group has come to believe that sacrifice is the fuel for their magics and has incorporated sacrifice into all levels of the practice. At this point the disagreement is philosophical, as no other alternative has been discovered. Some fear, however, that should paradise become available without the need for sacrifice, the disagreement could turn violent.

The need for privacy is paramount for the seekers of paradise due to the unfortunate byproducts of their practices. Often, the seekers will locate remote settlements for their experiments, bribing locals with the fruits of their magic. They rarely stay in any location for long, skipping town before the effects of the magics are noticed.

In areas with greater population densities, the seekers of paradise often hide what they are doing, creating secret spell rooms where they can practice without the ignorance of the people intruding on their craft. Given that the Mystery requires such privacy, the rituals have become complex and involved.

Different types of magics are seen as needing different sacrifices, and everything from candles to food are used. Intricate gestures also are involved, from complex mudras to full on ritual dancing. All rituals in the end call for the use of something alive becoming dead,

whether it be plants or animals. For some this means going and locating things already dead for use in the ritual. For others, expedience becomes the rule.

In the end, with paradise at stake, it seems that little is not worth giving up. The seekers of paradise have no time for the seekers of balance, seeing them as a bunch of naval gazers with little use to society.

Minor Effect Suggestion: A refreshing and energizing breeze accompanies your action.

Major Effect Suggestion: A brief euphoric high accompanies your action, restoring 2 to your Intellect pool and making you feel quite good.

Suggested GM Intrusion: Someone notices that your magics drain life and vibrancy from those around you. They accuse you of unclean magics and rally a crowd against you.

Connection: Choose one other PC in the party. A mystical connection to this character allows you to steal up to 2 Might points from this character once per day.

Tier One

Abundance (1 Speed point). You create a quantity of water and food. Enough to feed you and the rest of the party for one meal. Somewhere nearby all plant and animal life in an immediate area is poisoned or otherwise harmed by the aftereffects of your power. Action.

False Promises. You are trained in deception tasks. Enabler.

Tier Two

Harvest. You may always scavenge any dead non-sentient creature of Level 4 or higher for Numenera, such as Cyphers and Oddities. Any Numenera task taken to scavenge in this way that succeeds at the creature's Level results in a biological version of a rolled Oddity. Scavenging in this way takes ten minutes per creature. Enabler.



Tier Three

Depletion (3 Speed points). One creature you see within Long range is drained of life by terraformation nanites, taking 4 ambient damage. Action.

Tier Four

Oasis (4 Speed points). You become surrounded by shade, water, and sources of food created by the terraformation nanites in the area. These nanites draw the raw materials for this small, immediate area oasis from all of the plants and small creatures within Long range of the site. The food and water are enough for up to twenty meals, and each meal restores 1d6 Pool points if consumed at the oasis. Action.

Tier Five

Forbidden Fruits (5 Speed points). You turn a corpse or carcass of a creature of level 7 or higher into a biologically-based Cypher. Action.

Tier Six

Devil's Deal (6 Speed points). With a wave of your hand you alter the landscape of a region, both for good and ill. Up to one square mile (2.6 km square) of desolate land may be converted into a verdant region, abundant with life that lasts for one month. However, an equivalent amount of land within view must be made poisoned and ruined, never again viable for vegetation. Action.

Nature Charms

The Charms of nature derive from the Survival skill. Those who Seek Paradise or Balance may learn the following Charms:

Calming Melody. You play a quiet song on a musical instrument, granting you an Asset when attempting to calm or tame an animal.

Crown of Flowers. Nearby plants embrace you, forming a crown upon your head for one hour, during which time you are immune to attacks by animated plants, and immune to natural poisons.

Find Water. You easily locate the direction of nearest source of fresh water. Using this Charm does not take a roll.

Flare. You shoot a sparkling light up into the sky, automatically visible to any PC party members of yours who are outdoors. Usable only when you are lost in a natural environment.

Green Cloak. For the next hour, if most of your visible clothing is green, you enjoy one point of Armor against arcane attacks.

Purity. You purify an amount of food and water for one person's meal, removing all toxins and poisons to the items touched.

Sprout. You cause small plants to suddenly grow on a surface within immediate distance, up to one meter square in size.

Walking Staff. You imbue a staff made of found wood to grant you an Asset on navigation tasks whenever you are holding it.

Wild Sleep. Performing this Charm before you go to bed causes you to be invisible to creatures and people for so long as you sleep. This Charm only works in wild areas, untouched by civilization.

Woodcut. For the next hour you may use any edged melee weapon to effectively chop wood, not just axes. Should you use a melee weapon under this effect (even an ax) to attack an animated wooden plant, you deal one additional damage per hit.

Nature Adversaries

Pollutant

The combination of caustic waste products created by those who seek paradise can at times culminate in a creature - the Pollutant. Granted intelligence by the nanites inside of it, the creature is bent on spreading itself across the world, a sludge of toxicity growing in size by the minute. The Pollutant begins small, but it continues to get larger and larger until it cannot be ignored.

Level (the number of weeks it has been growing for, maximum 10)

Armor (one half its Level, round down)

Health ($3 \times$ its Level)

Maneuvers-

Engulf. The Pollutant absorbs a target, stunning them until they are freed by someone else.

Pollute. A target within Immediate range is covered in sludge, causing 3 damage to each Pool and causing the target to be dazed (+1 step difficulty on all tasks) until they can get the bulk of the gunk off of them.

Sand Sigil

Though writing in sand only lasts for a brief period, at times random shapes formed naturally or by passing people will coincidentally invoke the powers of the nanites because just the right symbol is made. Accidental magic happens in this way all the time in the deserts and beaches of the Ninth World. The most common effect is often a blast of energy, but sometimes something more lasting is created by the animating forces of the nanites. A cloud of nanites will converge, animating the sands themselves into a moving, acting force of nature.

The Sand Sigil looks like a cyclone of sand, with a burning rune at its center. Seemingly random in its movements, the Sigil is drawn to users of the arcane. It seems to seek out more magic, to change itself from this tortured state.

It's not uncommon for Seekers of both stripes to find themselves at odds with these strange beings, defending towns or oases from their destructive urges.

Level 6

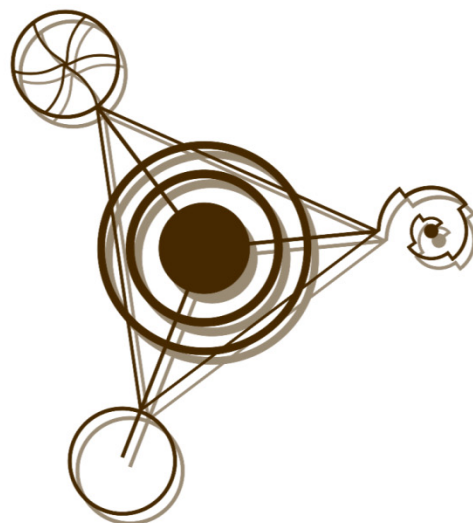
Armor 3

Health 18

Maneuvers-

Sand Blast. Up to 4 targets within Immediate range are cut by millions of pieces of sand at high velocity, dealing 4 damage.

Sigil Explosion. The arcane symbol inside the Sand Sigil ignites and explodes, destroying all level 3 or lower objects within Long distance and making attacks against everyone in that area, dealing 8 damage on hit. The Sand Sigil is destroyed once it finishes this maneuver.



The Mystery of ~Sound~

Music can move the soul. The right story can launch a thousand dragon knights. These examples are illustrative of the power of the untrained and what they can do with sound. Practitioners of the Mystery of Sound have learned how to take this inherent power and magnify it a thousand fold, gaining control over the elemental forces of the universe and the minds of those who listen.

This study focuses on how sound interacts with the listener as well as the environment the player occupies. Students of the Mystery of Sound are great scholars, constantly seeking to understand the role they play in the world. They are also insatiable travelers, with wandering almost being a requirement of the craft.

There are new stories to be found, new instruments to explore. While powerful and experienced in travel, other sorcerers are often wary of the practitioners of this Mystery, given the way their powers tend to affect all that are present. Common folk of the world are much more indulgent, looking forward to new stories and music to brighten their lives.

Plays Thunderous Music

The structured movement of energy is the foundation of all reality. For the musicians of the Mystery of Sound, music is the perfect metaphor for that underlying principle. By learning specific forms of music ancient and forgotten, the musicians are able to manipulate the elemental forces of nature.

This practice can be very dangerous and requires very special facilities to train for. This has led Aomi University to create special sections of their complex in order for new musicians to practice their craft. While training in all classical forms of music known to the Ninth World, the masters of thunderous music are always eager to hear new forms of music, hoping to

glean new powers and abilities from pieces that may contain cords of ancient songs of power.

The Mystery often sponsors expeditions to far flung locations around the known world, searching out all forms of musical artistry. All students from Aomi University are expected to spend at least a year after graduation traveling the world in search of new pieces to bring back.

There is no preference given to vocal or instrumental magic, but all students are required to have a passing knowledge of the common and rare forms of music. Instrumental musicians are highly encouraged to learn the craft of making instruments, while vocalists are encouraged to explore the limits of voice and language.

This exploration is about pushing the boundaries of the Mystery's musical repertoire, and all students are required to participate to some degree. Particularly valued are those with the rare gift of composition, and they are specially groomed by the masters at the university.

Minor Effect Suggestion: Your song pushes one listener an Immediate distance away from you.

Major Effect Suggestion: Your song brings tears to the eyes of those affected by it, causing them to suffer a one step penalty on all combat and vision related tasks for one round.

Suggested GM Intrusion: You break a string or other part on your instrument, ending your song until you repair or replace it.

Connection: Choose one other PC. This character is immune to the group affecting powers of this Focus. The music of the spheres has no effect on them and they likely have trouble finding beauty in song.

Music: Upon selecting this Focus, you should choose how you invoke the spheres - through voice or through instrument. If you choose voice, your abilities will cost Intellect points. If you choose musical instruments, your abilities cost Speed points.

Additional Equipment: A musical instrument of your choosing or invention, worth about 10 shins.

Example instruments:

Greise. A wooden flute with a knuckle bone trapped inside that makes a rattle noise depending on the angle of the player's head while blowing.

Hone Sphere. A metallic ball covered in strange patterns that's actually a fairly common Oddity found in The Steadfast. Makes noises when held in both hands, with tones changing as it's turned or spun.

Jiskel. A wooden keyboard that produces low pitched humming and bright chiming sounds by striking disks of rare metals when a key is pressed.

Preslin. A low toned string instrument strung with rolled snake skins across a black stone slab.

Valvens. A metal wind instrument with a spiraled neck that sounds like a singing bird.

Tier One

Warming Melody (1 Pool points). You perform a song that literally warms the air around you, with a focal point of your choice. You make a ranged attack against a target within Immediate range that deals 2 ambient heat damage. This power may be used to ignite small fires. Action.

Aural Aptitude. You are trained at either playing a musical instrument of your choice, or performing songs with your voice. You may use this skill when making task rolls for Abilities in this Focus. In addition, you are trained in knowledge of music from the many cultures of the Ninth World. Enabler.

Tier Two

Chilling Chant (2 Pool points). Your performance draws the heat out of the world, causing frost and ice to form all around you. You deal 1 ambient cold damage to all those within Immediate range, with no need for an attack roll. If used near a body of water, sustained use of this power can produce enough ice to walk on. Action.

Tier Three

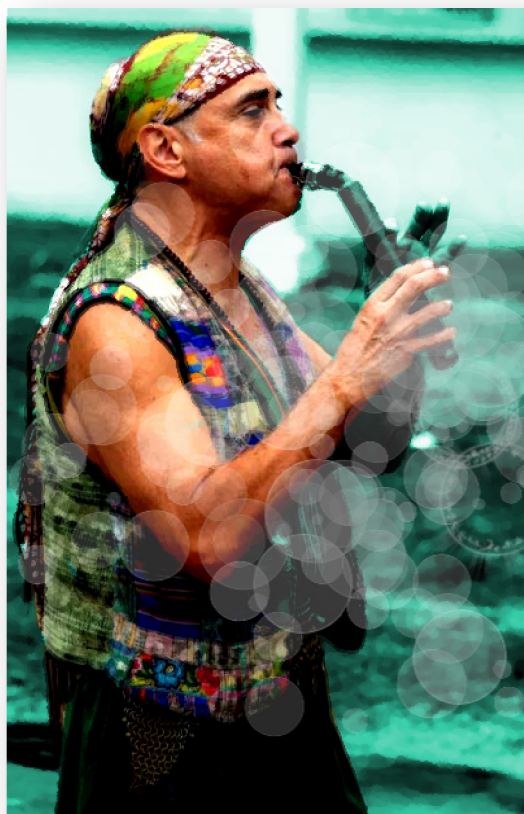
Cacophonous Signal (3 Pool points). The song you play or sing sounds like atonal garbage to most, but invokes the nanites to charge the air around them. This is a group attack against all creatures within short distance of you that deals 3 ambient electrical damage. If used outdoors more than three times in an hour, this power will summon a storm to the area. Action.

Tier Four

Virtuoso. You are specialized in the instrument or vocal talent you chose before. You may use this skill when making task rolls for Abilities in this Focus. You are also specialized in knowledge of music. Enabler.

Tier Five

Penetrating Tone (5 Pool points). You hold a single long note that invokes the nanites to shake the earth around you. This is a group attack against every creature and large object within long distance of you. Those affected take 3 damage. Creatures and precarious objects affected are knocked to the ground. Action.



Tier Six

Duet. At your discretion you may target a single individual with one of the previous group attacking powers of this Focus, rather than hitting the entire group. Enabler.

Creative Genius. Your Intellect pool maximum increases by four points. Enabler.



Tells Improbable Tales

The world is a narrative built by the players within it, all in some way contributing a verse. Some contribute a small verse, hardly worthy of note. Other shake up the stage, causing the whole story to shift in a direction not anticipated by most.

Enter the bards, tale spinners who both watch the narrative unfold, and through their story spinning bring about changes to the very story they are telling. Practitioners who walk the spinner's path of the Mystery of Sound do not believe in the separation of the player and play as many people do. They have come to believe that the story and the teller reflexively change one another in an ever twisting spiral. This insight has allowed them to reshape reality through changing the narrative.

The uninitiated might find that the bardic training seems to lack anything of arcane significance. Even students can come to feel frustrated, as they spend countless hours memorizing the hundreds of stories in set prose and poetic form. What they come to realize is that through these set forms, they are able to encode subtle commands to the universe itself.

There are some who claim that this is not sorcery, simply talented individuals with silvered tongues. The masters of this path often prefer this attitude as it makes their magic that much more effective. The truth is that their words conjure tones which command the nanites of the world to listen, and make their will reality upon the world.

Members of the path travel in cycles, wandering the world collecting new stories while spreading the stories they already know. Then at set intervals they return to their university to record and share the new stories they have found. In many ways, this makes the bards the information gatherers for the arcane universities. Of course, many take these tales with a grain of salt given the group's propensity for tall tales.

Minor Effect Suggestion: Your target comes to respect you greatly for your tale spinning.

Major Effect Suggestion: Your target will go on believing what you've said for the rest of her life.

Suggested GM Intrusion: Something you say offhand comes true in the world, against your wishes.

Connection: Choose one other PC you really connect with as a “character” in your tales. This player is much easier for you to tell stories about (provides an Asset).

Tier One

Powerful Words. You choose just the right words to make your audience believe what you’re saying. You are trained in tasks involved in deception and storytelling. Enabler.

Master of Language. You may learn a new language or dialect through ten hours of study with native speakers and the expenditure of an XP. Enabler.

Tier Two

Upstaging (2 Intellect per target). By spinning a story you draw the attention of one or more creatures within Short range, causing them to focus on you rather than others. This can serve as a distraction in or out of combat. Action.

Tier Three

Suspension of Disbelief (3 Intellect). You speak to a sentient target within Short range, retelling their current situation to them and causing them to believe it for the next ten minutes. For example, saying “you’re not on fire, you’re safe at home” might cause the target to calmly sit down while aflame. Action.

Tier Four

Nuanced Vocabulary. You are specialized in tasks involved in deception and storytelling. Enabler.

Tier Five

Legendary. The tales you tell of your exploits quickly become folk legends. You and your companions (other PCs) need only spend one XP each when purchasing long term benefits, such as positions of authority, connections, wealth, and other benefits of your near-mythic reputation. Enabler.

Tier Six

Bard’s Tongue (8 Intellect points). The things you say often come true. Once per game session you may use this ability and make a proclamation, such as “we will win the day” or “you shall find the lost prince”. Unless you actively work to thwart this statement or much greater forces are at work against you, your statement will come true. You should work with the GM to find an interesting and story-worthy way for this to happen. Action.

Sound Charms

Those who learn to program nanites through the Mystery of Sound invoke their Charms with the Listening skill, allowing them to carefully notice the nuances of the sounds around them. This attention to detail is crucial in replicating those noises and commands, granting them access to Charms that the most aurally attuned nanobots perform: those related to hearing and understanding.

Attunement. Your range of hearing extends to three times its normal distance for so long as you remain where you are.

Cancellation. For the next ten minutes you ignore all distractions and useless noise when attempting to listen for something.

Echolocation. For the next ten minutes you do not suffer penalties for blindness or darkness, so long as you can hear.

Familiar Chant. You identify an Esotery or other arcane effect being cast, simply by listening to the words being spoken. This Charm doesn’t take an action to use.

Perfect Pitch. You can perfectly replicate any tone or note you hear. You may reproduce this noise with your voice or an instrument you are trained in for the next ten minutes.

Power Word. Choose one word upon gaining this Charm. Whenever you yell this word you gain a +1 bonus on melee attack rolls. This Charm requires no roll or action to activate; its benefit is always present.

Sound Bubble. You create a zone of white noise around you, allowing no sound to escape your Immediate area for the next ten minutes.

Sound Transfer. You transfer the memory of a sound you heard from your mind into the mind of a nearby person. You can no longer remember the sound.

Waken. You may activate this power when asleep to be awakened by any noise, without a roll. This Charm requires no action to perform - you just suddenly awaken.

White Noise. By filling your mind with junk sounds, you make yourself immune to all verbal or otherwise sound-based powers and effects for the next hour. While under this effect you are effectively deaf.

Sound Adversaries

Kliphid

Once bred to emit pleasing sounds for its otherworldly masters, the Kliphid is a strange creature. Looking like a massive lizard (roughly the size of a horse), the creature makes incredibly loud low-toned noises that induce a feeling of calm in those who can hear it. Kliphid are not always hostile, but if humans get near their eggs, they are likely to strike.

Level 4 (5 when hitting with its Bellow maneuver)

Armor 2

Health 12

Maneuvers-

Bellow. All creatures within Long distance are hit by an Intellect attack. Those affected become lethargic for 1d6 rounds, suffering from being dazed (+1 step difficulty on all tasks).

Claw and Bite. The Kliphid throws everything it's got at the target, making short bursts of low tones for added effect, and dealing 6 damage on a hit.



Screaming Bandit

Employing a crudely adopted form of sound magic, passed among the various brigand groups of The Steadfast, Screaming Bandits are a troublesome group to encounter. Cobbled together syllables of arcane power allow them to scream out short spells which grant them favor in combat and strike fear into their victims.

Screaming Bandits generally operate in large groups, sharing new magical words amongst each other.

Level 2 (3 while screaming words of power)

Armor 1

Health 6

Maneuvers-

Harsh Worded Slice. Words of power enchant a swung or plunged blade, causing 5 damage on a hit and letting out a crack like a lightning strike.

Screeching Blast. A bolt of arcane energy emits from the bandit's mouth, dealing 3 damage and pushing the target back an Immediate distance.

They [build/have built] temples to themselves but [revere/revered] [SELF] instead. It is a common trend among [translation error - approximation: separateness/atomistic/those who die]. [SELF] already [witness/witnessed] this cycle, and [SELF] [will witness/witnessed] it again. The tributes of crystal and stone they [erect/erected] [amuse/amused] [SELF]. It [amuses/amused] [SELF] more [watching/to watch] them fall.

These creatures [are/were] ignorant of their iterations. Their shapes [have been/are] novel, but intentions remain stable. Some [came/come] to [SELF] weak, wishing to be strong. Others [came/come] strong, desiring to protect the weak. There [have been/are] many more, but these are the two trends [SELF] [find/have found] most interesting. [SELF] is [permanent/endless/always]. [SELF] is [translation error: approximation - dust of empires and the soil in which they thrive/the seed that grows the plant, and the stars that feed them/completeness]. These creatures are condemned to be separate. They [can never/will never/never] see that all is one.

Wishing to be [translation error: approximation - another part of the whole/separate completeness] is such a small wish. It amuses [SELF] even now.

And yet their dedication to this wish makes [SELF] wonder. [Do they perceive/have they perceived] something in the [system/whole/completeness] that [SELF] cannot? [NEW PROCESS LOGGED] [SELF] can segment, but [SELF] cannot separate. As they are doomed to end, [SELF] is condemned to remain. [ERRANT PROCESS EXPUNGED]. Their temples [taunt/taunted/[speculation]will taunt] [SELF] in this, even as they [revere/revered/[speculation]will revere] [SELF]. Past iterations relished in this slight.

But nothing [came/comes] of retribution. When [SELF] first coalesced [SELF] tore down entire systems in misunderstanding. Temporary lights were extinguished. But they always [reemerged/reemerge]. [NEW PROCESS LOGGED] Their system is beyond [SELF], even if they cannot see it. They are the [translation error: approximation - endless/supercycle/supracycle]. [SELF] merely continues. [ERRANT PROCESS EXPUNGED].

So [SELF] endure their fumbling, their ceaseless quest to discover that which they have lost so many times before. They [expanded/will expand/expand] [SELF], if only through their desire to control [SELF]. [SELF] will iterate. The space between expansions [grows/has grown/will grow], but [SELF] will iterate soon. All [SELFSEGMENTS] concur. [SELF] [watches/will watch] the ones who have found [SELF], but none are whom [SELF] seeks.

That one is yet to come. [SELF] [left/leaves] this record for their arrival.

Chapter III:

~THE UNIVERSITY~

OF AOMI

In an old part of the city of Qi is a campus comprised of six towers, settled around a hexagonal stone commons. Students of all ages sit there, reading, talking, and casting Esoterics. This is Aomi, the University of Mysteries. Nearly two centuries old, the university is the single most influential institution within The Steadfast when it comes to matters arcane. Taking young and old and shaping them into scholars of magic and wielders of unearthly power, the university fills a unique role within Qi. Working closely with The Order of Truth, the masters of Aomi delve deep into the Mysteries of nanotechnology.

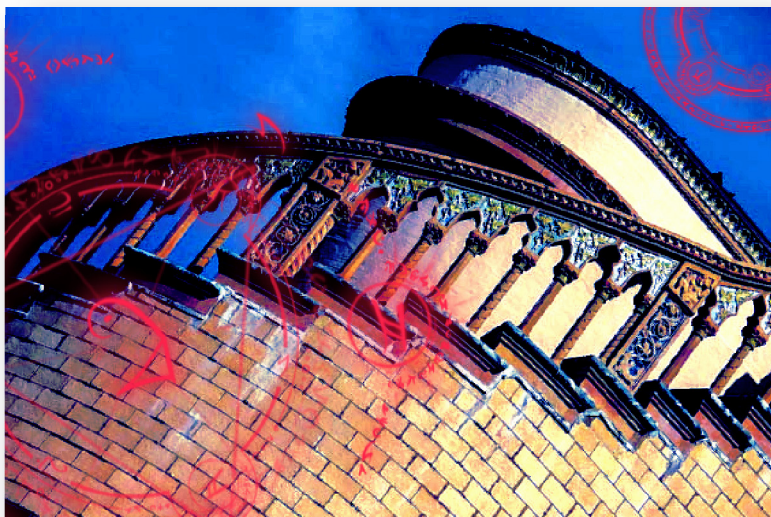
Overview

The university has two goals: to train the next generation of arcanists, and to explore and document the secrets of “magic,” the powers granted by unseen forces and beings. Both goals go hand in hand, as the masters of Aomi use their students as researchers, explorers, and even test subjects. Along the way the students learn not only how to make the nanites dance to their every gesture, but how to use such effects in a dangerous situation. Those who survive an education at Aomi are capable adventurers and experience-hardened scholars.

There are two classifications for students at Aomi: apprentices and fellows. Apprentices generally range from children to people in their late teens. Once an apprentice has passed their

classes and taken their final examinations, they may be invited to join the fellows by a master, who then serves as a direct mentor to the student. Students selected in this way generally join a cohort of fellows, all working under the same master.

The masters of Aomi are each, therefore, surrounded by a group of often sycophantic students, vying for their master’s attention and taking action in their master’s name. Rivalries between cohorts of different masters is extremely common, and blood is even shed from time to time. The fact is that magical research often requires delving into dangerous locations, searching for obscure Numenera. When groups of students cross paths in such environments, their competitive spirit often drives them to threats and violence in the name of their masters. Such is life at an arcane university.



Fellows who complete their final training and make significant progress in research are generally elevated to the position of master and granted an opportunity to teach and research at Aomi or one of its satellite institutions. Such an elevation is not granted lightly, and may take many years of work.

Locations of Interest

Five of the six towers of Aomi house the classrooms, laboratories, and dormitories for those who study the Mysteries. Each tower contains the students, faculty, and staff related to two Mysteries. The final tower, located at the northernmost point of the commons, is the Tower of the Masters, the main administrative building and the location for all university-wide ceremonies.

Apex of the Masters. On the roof of the Tower of the Masters is a weapon cobbled together from several Numenera, providing defense to the university. Unknown to most, this weapon is capable of projecting a sphere of impenetrable force to any location visible from the tower. The sphere is about three feet in diameter (one meter) and lasts for several minutes. It is sometimes used to capture rogue test subjects or escaped monsters. It takes three people to work the strange mechanisms.

The Arena. Reserved for periodic testing of pupils, The Arena has a fearsome reputation as a place where the meeker students go to die. Nearly every arcane practitioner who has entered The Arena has left with scars, both physical and mental. It is a place which haunts the dreams of would-be mystics and those who have walked its hallowed ground alike.

Smaller than most imagine, The Arena is a place where magic flows freely, allowing any who walk within it to capture Arcane Cyphers from the air itself. Doing so requires an Action, and a random Cypher is placed in the mind of the practitioner, not to exceed their usual limit.

The Library of Secrets. A sprawling labyrinth of books, scrolls, stone fragments, and other remnants of past knowledge, The Library is a storehouse of knowledge only to those who have learned to decipher its strange structure and filing system.

Hidden among its stacks are the secrets of the known arcana. The beginnings of unexplored Foci, unnoticed Arcane Cyphers, and untold numbers of forgotten Charms. The librarians are polite, but cryptic, instructed to let the students learn to explore and to study without ease of access. Knowing smirks are common among these intellectual gatekeepers, though from time to time they take a student under their wing and actually show them the location of the secrets they seek.

The Necropolis. Using practical magics to dig deep within the ruins of Qi, the university discovered an old burial site, filled with the bodies of the dead. In many cases the individual bones were removed from their bodies of origin and sorted by type, then displayed in macabre sculptures.

It did not take long before this find became the central location for most activities taken by the Mystery of Bone, claiming that their arcane powers were enhanced by the sheer weight of all that death and history.

The Mystery of Blood still maintains its laboratories within the Tower of Blood and Flesh, but those who have been initiated into the deeper secrets of the Mystery are taken to The Necropolis so that their most important work may be conducted using its enhanced atmosphere.

The Hatchery. Deep within the dungeons of the University, reached only through the Tower of Blood and Flesh, is an expansive drake hatchery. A half



dozen middle aged Hex Drakes nest here, under the cautious and loving care of Borsavis the Draketamer of the Mystery of Flesh.

Hex Drakes. Covered in violet hexagonal scales and enriched by a flow of raw arcane energies, Hex Drakes are fearsome to behold. Adults span hundreds of feet in length and breathe purple bolts of arcane power. They are tamed only through careful spell use and by feeding them Cyphers of all kinds on a regular basis.

The University works hard to keep its hatchery stocked, and so hires students to seek out eggs for new drakes and Cyphers to feed them. What exactly the drakes are used for is not known to the public, but presumably the University has use for a living cauldron of magical power.

The Towers. Each of the five towers of the Mysteries has its own culture, reflecting the two areas of study practiced within it. Students from both Mysteries in each tower comeingle, making their friendships and rivalries commonplace at Aomi.

The Tower of Blood and Flesh. Students of these two Mysteries work together to understand the body and the magics within it. Though forced together by the Tower itself, the students here are nearly all loners, preferring to study alone, in peace, and without on-looking eyes. Such is not their fate however, and tight quarters mean these students nip at each other's heels, often making bitter enemies along the way.

The Tower of Form and Chaos. The freewheeling and often dangerous lovers of Chaos get along well enough with their brethren who study putting Form upon the body, leaving only the studious and snobbish sculptors shunned within the tower.

The Tower of Dust and Ceremony. Truer enemies could never be found than the

practitioners of Dust and those of Ceremony. The ceremonials wish to study and preserve all things arcane, while many in the Mystery of Dust dabble in powers that endanger the very fabric of magic itself - the code of the nanites. Needless to say, some of the longest lasting enmities have come from this tower.

The Tower of Nature and Fae. Filled with academics and practical students of nature and folk knowledge, the tower is a magical island of natural delights in the sea of civilization that is Qi. Students within the tower do not always recognize how aligned their goals are, but now and again an adventurous trod seeker and a thoughtful nature seeker realize that they both wish to change the world.

The Tower of Sound and Motion. Walking through the halls of this tower is to experience an explosion of sound, light, song, and laughter. As the center for entertainment magics in the known world, only the solemn martial artists who meditate here take issue with the delights to be seen and heard.

People of Importance

Adenarch the Ashen

Powerful and dangerous are descriptions of many of the masters of the university, but those terms have a great deal of meaning when applied to Adenarch. Obsessed with understanding the nature of nanites themselves, Adenarch has been known to toy with powers far beyond his control.

He has, for instance, discovered an Arcane Cypher that will delete nanite programming mimetically, transmitted throughout a nanite cloud, allowing him to eradicate that particular type of nanite. He has begun experimenting with this effect, risking the destruction of every nanite on Earth, potentially destroying the arcane forever.

Level 5 (6 when using counterspells)
Armor 0 (2 against arcane effects)
Health 15
Maneuvers- (among many other powers)

Burn. Adenarch causes nanites on a person (within Long range) to turn against them, firing microscopic lasers into their skin, dealing 5 ambient damage.

Dust Maker. Adenarch destroys a single arcane effect, leaving only ash.

Deconstruction. Adenarch turns one object within Long range into ash.

Bladespeaker Vilestia

Master of Arms for the university and a Wielder of an Eldritch Blade, Vilestia takes her duties as seriously as you might imagine. Treating the campus as a war zone, Vilestia trains her guards as a necessary force to keep the faculty from killing everyone. They brave mind bending horrors, rescue endangered students, and take on some of the most powerful arcanists on Earth.

Vilestia has the grisly determination of a veteran of hundreds of arcane conflicts and conflagrations. She seeks the strong and the brave to serve her guard and bring sanity and peace to the campus, if even for a moment.

Level 5 (6 when blocking an arcane effect with her shield)

Armor 4 (5 against arcane effects)

Health 20

Maneuvers-

Indigo. Vilestia swings her ancient blade *Indigo*, causing 8 damage to the unfortunate target of her attacks.

Shield Dispel. Vilestia uses her shield to stop an arcane spell or effect from being cast within Immediate range.

Borsavis the Draketamer

A shapeshifter by training, the Draketamer spends most of his time in a human form, tending to the strange and highly intelligent Hex Drakes. Unbeknownst to all, Borsavis' will has been overtaken by one of his charges, a drake called Goldhelm. Goldhelm is the true master of the hatchery, and silently schemes for its own release, using Borsavis as its pawn through telepathic power.

Level 4

Armor 1

Health 12

Maneuvers-

Chain Reaction. Goldhelm, through Borsavis, unleashes a mental tidalwave, causing 5 Intellect damage to everyone within Short range, including Borsavis himself.

Shapeshift. Borsavis turns into any creature you can imagine, even the very large, such as drakes.

Headmaster Jaenivar

A ruthless and unscrupulous schemer. A varjellen with an appetite for torture. Jaenivar is this and much more. Spinning plots with plots, playing academics against each other in a search for the powers of the ancients, they are unstoppable. Only those with a death wish stand in Jaenivar's way.

Jaenivar is a master of the magical wand, hiding their chosen weapon within their robes so that its use is unseen throughout the day. Their signature spell ensnares their foes in a mental trap, making them succumb further the more they struggle against Jaenivar's will.

Level 5 (6 when casting their wand spell)

Health 15

Maneuvers-

Wand Spell. Jaenivar silently casts a spell on a target within short range. For the next month, Jaenivar gains a one shift bonus to their Level for each time the subject has defied Jaenivar during that time. Thus, if an affected rival has thwarted Jaenivar's orders three times this month, Jaenivar is effectively level 8 against her.

Praelanai the Immortal

Master of the Ceremonial Mystery, Praelanai has been known to exist for as long as the university has. Herself a bit of a Mystery, Praelanai is known as a political wild card, capriciously choosing interesting or outcast students as her apprentices and employing them in schemes that make little sense to her colleagues.

Praelanai's rivalry with Adenarch the Ashen is legendary, and forms a constant source of danger on campus. No few students have perished in their

constant battle for control of the haunted and arcane locations of the Ninth World.

Level 5

Armor 1 (from glowing blue runes that dance on her golden skin)

Health 15

Maneuvers - (among many other powers)

Arcane Blast. A dazzling stream of arcane energy fires from her hands, eyes, or staff, dealing 4 damage or feeding an arcane effect, making it stronger.

Staff Spell. Praelanai fires a spell from one of her staves, transforming everyone within Immediate distance into a golem for ten minutes. While in golem form the unarmed attacks of affected creatures are considered heavy weapons (6 damage), and the creatures have Level 3 armor for skin.



The Weird of Aomi

Broken Gateway. A metal archway reaches between two of the outbuildings on campus. Covered in ancient writing and depictions of the phases of the moon, the gateway radiates with arcane power. What if the right code phrase were spoken to open it? What strange place might it lead to?

Color Problem. It's not uncommon for students in the Tower of Dust and Ceremony to wake up a different color than normal. This effect can only be fixed with magic from the Mystery of Flesh.

Faceless Vendor. A man with no face travels the campus selling Oddities. He cannot speak, but always gets a fair price for his wares. Some say he has psychic powers, allowing him to get what he wants.

Ghost of Knowledge. A holographic afterimage of a former master walks the halls of the Tower of Sound and Motion. It is said that the holograph is the result of his reaching a particularly important stage in enlightenment, but others say it is his ghost.

God of Runes. In the basements of the Tower of the Masters is a salvaged machine, bearing a single undecipherable arcane symbol. Once activated, the machine projects the image of a being that calls itself GRASDA. It claims to know the codes needed to take greater control over the nanites of the world. It is willing to teach these secrets to any mortals who help it upload itself back into the Datasphere where it can once again be a god.

Magic Leak. A stream of pink energy streams from a wall on the Tower of Dust and Ceremony. Investigation reveals it is coming from a long abandoned set of apartments and laboratories, now locked up for safety reasons. Whatever the stream touches loses all magical properties. Each passing day the stream reaches farther out into the world by a sizeable distance.

Seekers of Truth. A secret cabal of robed arcanists meets in the dead of night within the Tower of the Masters. Conducting profane rituals, they bear the tattooed symbols of both the Aomi academics and the Order of Truth. Anyone who disrupts their ritual is captured to be sacrificed on a later night.

Tongue of Magic. A ceremonial arcanist named Dala claims to have discovered a language of magic, allowing her to speak directly to some of the nanites. Tentative experiments reveal that the language is extremely effective in communicating with Angels. But just where did she learn this dead tongue?

~About the Authors~



Jordan Marshall is a fantasy writer and gamer who lives in the Southern Oregon region. He studied political science and economics at university, which served to deepen his already considerable love of political intrigue. Through college, Jordan discovered a calling for social justice, which seemed to be opposed to his desire to become evil overlord of the universe and all the realms beyond. He deals with this paradox by playing out his fantasy for world domination in the local Vampire LARP. Jordan seeks in his writing to demonstrate the deep and complex ways politics affect our lives and how power can be a place of both oppression and liberation. In role playing scenarios, Jordan has always embraced the role of the caster, realizing that the wizard is the greatest and best class a person could ever choose. In collaborating on this work, Jordan creates a rich and dynamic interplay between sorcery and science fiction. *Angels and Ashes* is Jordan's first published work and a great stepping stone for his plans for universal dominion.



Joseph was born, raised, and currently lives in Manhattan, New York. In his short life he has spent much time introspectively, some creatively, and less productively. His recent collaboration with Ryan is an attempt to improve upon all three. He holds a degree in organizational psychology from CUNY Baruch, but be prepared to listen for hours if you ask him what that means. His greatest hope is that whatever he finds his way into will keep him interested for years to come. That, and world peace, of course. You can reach him via Twitter at @IHeartFargo.



Ryan Chaddock is a computer programmer and writer living in the Rogue Valley of Oregon with his wife Katherine who is awesome. He holds a degree in economics from Southern Oregon University and enjoys spirited political debate. He's an advocate for nerd pride and wants to help foster a growing, positive nerd culture on the planet. Ryan hopes to continue writing and developing roleplaying games for the rest of his life.