

Endrigor

The Roleplaying Game

Core Rule Book

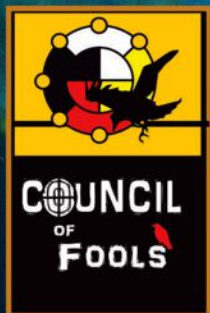


Welcome to Ehdrigohr and may The Crows be your guides!

Ehdrigohr is a land where the nine tribes must survive the terrible things that walk the lands from sundown to sunrise. Immerse yourself in a fantastic world of cultures, myths, and legends. Magic is everywhere and with it the people can bend reality to their will or break it and unleash even more terrible things trapped in the emptiness called the Twain.

Ehdrigohr is a roleplaying game focused around storytelling, high drama, and horror. Players will create heroes and heroines who hold back the tides so the people can see another day.

Make a character, take up a spear, and dance with the crows in the sun



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Ehdrigohr

The Role-Playing Game



THE CROW'S COUNT

With each new rising sun we give thanks to these heroes who stepped up to ensure that the stories of the peoples would live and the magic in our hearts would light the night. Aho!

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Ehdrigohr

The Role-Playing Game

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(Thank you for your support)

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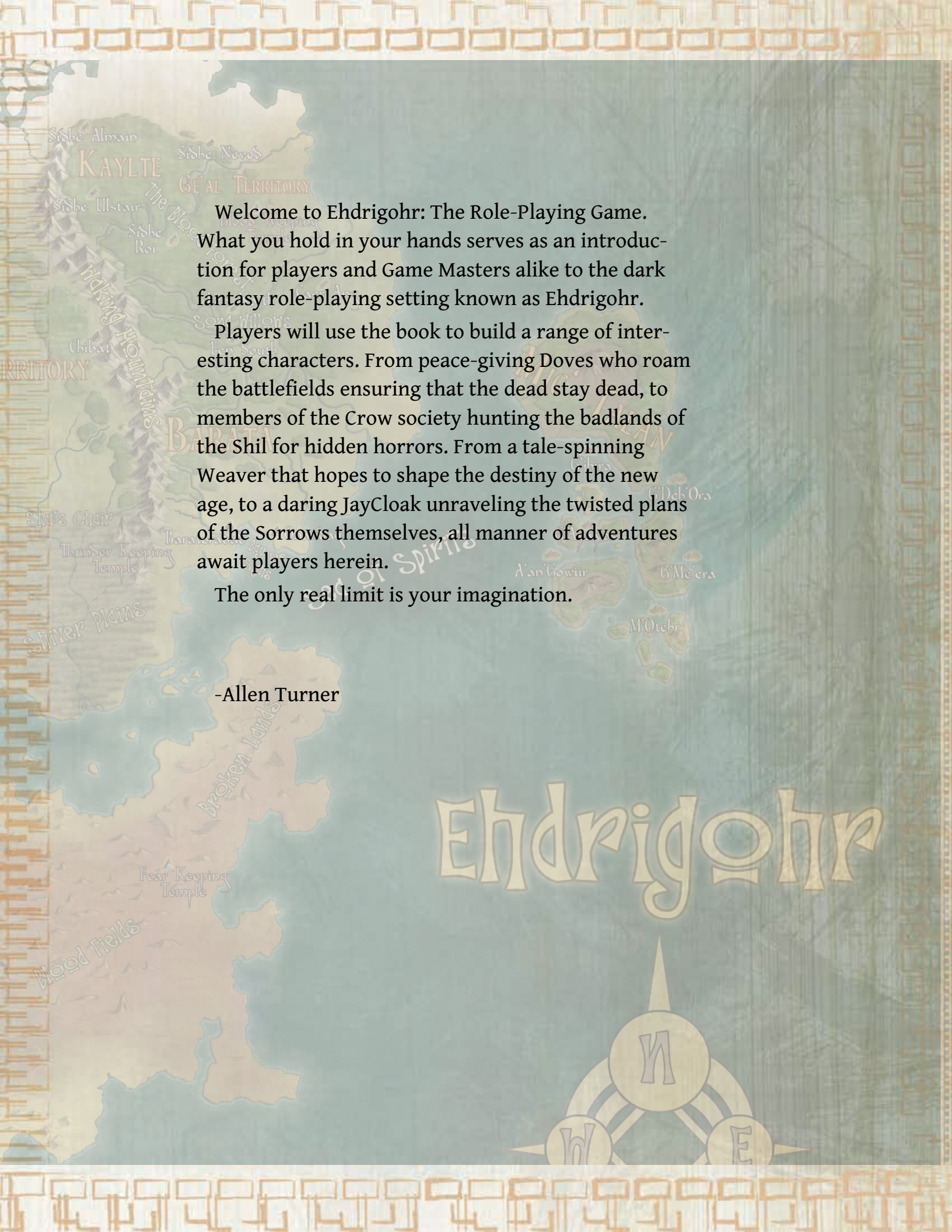
ABOUT THIS BOOK

I dedicate this book to my own tiyospaye. To my own chosen and blood family who have heard my stories and endured my strangeness over the years, thank you. Especially thank you to my most exquisite companion Karen Harvey-Turner. You have helped me keep the sorrow away and hold the shivers at bay.

For those burdened by Sorrow. Look to the light. There is always another day but the battles in the dark will be fierce. Pick up your spears, shout to the heavens, and hold your ground. The sun will come for you.

Mitakuye Oyasín,

-Allen Turner



Welcome to Ehdrigohr: The Role-Playing Game.
What you hold in your hands serves as an introduction for players and Game Masters alike to the dark fantasy role-playing setting known as Ehdrigohr.

Players will use the book to build a range of interesting characters. From peace-giving Doves who roam the battlefields ensuring that the dead stay dead, to members of the Crow society hunting the badlands of the Shil for hidden horrors. From a tale-spinning Weaver that hopes to shape the destiny of the new age, to a daring JayCloak unraveling the twisted plans of the Sorrows themselves, all manner of adventures await players herein.

The only real limit is your imagination.

-Allen Turner

Ehdrigohr

SPIRITS ON THE BREATH

The day was warm, and the air was dry. The light winds blew dust in swirls here and there on the ground – it was one of those days where dust seemed to just grow in one's eyes and mouth. The sun, who we call Han, had just begun its descent, and I was coming back from gathering wood for the fire for the evening's gathering. Cajé-wi, my sister, was tagging along behind. As always, she was not completely out of sight, but she was far enough behind to be a nuisance. We came to the top of a hill overlooking the dale where my people had gathered this season. As I was going down I called over to Cajé-wi, telling her to hurry. If she was not right alongside me as I came to my parent, my Ina would blame me.

Cajé-wi scuttled down the hill and caught up with me, and we entered the camp together. The camp was filled with mostly Wiitjasa, my people, but there were a handful of travelers who had joined us as well.

As we entered I could see Traps-the-Enemy, my uncle, fixing his drum alongside some of the other men with whom he sang. My brother, ShakesFist, and his brother, StoneInHisEye, were also nearby peeling and stretching a shiltonka hide beneath the sun. The hide needed to be peeled off of the exoskeleton before it all hardened and began to rot. I could hear my *Ina* singing in our lodge with a couple of other ladies, probably some of my aunts, as they worked on my older sister's dress.

I didn't see my father anywhere, but old ChasesSnakes told me he was helping to build a sweat lodge on the north edge of camp. Cajé-wi and I continued walking. The people of the community were all abuzz, shuffling by us as they made their evening preparations.

"LookingBoy!" It was BurnsMoccasins that called my name. He and some other boys my age were gathering all of the firewood that had been collected into a big pile at the center of the camp. I felt Cajé-wi tagging at my breeches, but I ignored her as I dumped my wood on the pile. "What are you doing at sunset?" he asked me.

"Not much," I responded. Cajé-wi was still tugging on my pants leg. "I've got to mind this one most of the time. But after she goes to sleep," another tug, "– *if* she goes to sleep," I growled, snatching my leg out of her grip. "If she goes to sleep, then I've got the rest of Han-wi's watch. Why?"

"I was asking," he responded, "because when BluntKnife's sons

get in, we're all going exploring near the edge of the south spirit tower's threshold. My cousin saw a burrow over there she thinks might be a big crawler. Would you like to come? The towers haven't shown signs of shivers in the area for at *least* a month, so my uncle thinks it should be okay as long as we're back before it gets too dark."

"Maybe," I said. I knew BurnsMoccassins was lying about having permission. He was always pushing the edge of what was safe. Cajewi tugged again and I snapped at her, "What?" She responded by simply pointing behind me.

I looked to where she pointed and that's when I saw him, a Weaver, standing atop the large hill opposite the one we had descended earlier. The wind and the dust seemed to swirl around him, never quite touching him, and the sun seemed to reflect off of his bronze colored skin.

His hair was woven into four long braids, with the two rear braids bound in leather and black feathers. Around his shoulders was draped some kind of scintillating grayish shawl, its ragged ends blowing in the wind. It felt like he was looking directly at me. After I saw him, I could tell that the rest of the camp had begun to notice him as well— it was suddenly growing very quiet all around. Eventually it got so quiet you could've heard a rat walk across the ground.

It was then that the Weaver began to descend into the camp. As he did so, he sang in the high-pitched, fluctuating rhythm that the men of the Wiitjasa nation sing at the drum.

I come walking on my father's breath
He has given me something to tell
I come walking on my mother's hair
She has given me something to tell
I come walking from my uncle's flame
He has given me something to tell
I come walking through my aunt's tears
She has given me something to tell

He walked straight down into the middle of the camp where Cajewi, myself, and the other boys were standing. We moved back a little as he stood and looked over all the people. I looked at the path that he had walked and saw to my astonishment that he had left no trace. Not even a bent blade of grass.

I looked at him again. There seemed to be shadowy images shifting around on his shawl, and he didn't really seem to be standing on the ground. This man truly was a Weaver. From his cloak I could see that he walked the Path of Owls, and that meant that he was *wakan*, *lila wakan*.

He loosened his shawl and it fell to the ground, shifting to gather beneath him as he sat down on it. By this time the people had all gathered 'round, and the Weaver waited in silence for us all to sit. When that was done, he let out a deep breath.

“Sssaaaaa. . .”

It was almost visible like heat on a very hot day. He then inhaled deeply, and that was also nearly visible. The wind picked up, but it never seemed to touch him.

He reached out to the ground in front of him and cupped a handful of dust and dirt. He whispered into it with strange words that I couldn't hear well, nor did understand what I did hear. The dirt and sand seemed to shift and settle as he spoke until it had become fine silt. He then looked around to us all. This time I got a good look at his eyes, and I could see that he was blind. He began to sing again.

This is the dust on my father's breath
What I tell will fall on your tongue
This is the dust from my mother's hair
What I tell will seep through your scalp
This is the dust from my uncle's flame
What I tell will smoke from your fire
This is the dust from my aunt's tears
What I tell will enter your dreams

He sang his song to all the people, repeating it four times as he faced each direction. The wind blew even harder, but never touched the dust in his hands. Behind me the wind blew across uncle's forgotten drum, drawing a low rumbling noise from the instrument as if many fingers tapped the taut leather.

As he sang, the dust in his hand began to sparkle like Han-wi's children in the heavens. When he had finished his song, he was again facing to the west, the direction that he started from. He put the dust to his lips and blew a long soft breath, and the dust flew out and filled the entire camp with soft sparkling motes. It swirled all about us as he sat and began weaving.

He began to tell his tale. We listened, for not only was he *wakan*, so were his tellings.

We called such stories Spirits on the Breath.



What Is Ehdrigohr?

A Land of History

The land itself has seen many changes, and many more will yet come. A war of existence, brought on by greed and perversion, shook the world to its core in ages past.

This scattered the people and broke the land, leaving a patchwork of light and darkness. The best areas are barely hospitable to the hardy folk who have regained a stronghold there. On the borders are places where existence is twisted, where horrors await a chance to destroy the works of the people.

A Land of Culture

The tribes of man, cursed to wander the lands, have divided and rejoined time and time again. From this, as a function of seeking safety, have arisen strong nations that have grown into distinctive cultures. All of these nations maintain only tentative relationships, for they have forgotten their commonalities and only see what divides them. Powerful forces from the old ages see this and work to sow chaos and despair, a gamble to ensure that when the new age comes it will belong to sorrow.

A Land of Shadows

Dark and terrible things, Horrors, lurk in the shadows and at the edge of perception. Such monsters cannot suffer the light of the sun and must always work from hidden places. These profane beings bring corruption wherever they go as they work toward the destruction of creation and (for some) a return to *the Quiet*. In addition there are those who brought chaos and sorrow in ages past and were cast out of the great web. They dwell in *the Twain* and seek opportunities to return to *the Great Web* and twist it to their own vision. Their champions, called the Sorrows, still work to enact the return of these horrors and their black rule. Finally there are those spirits of creation, driven mad in the War of Sorrows, that seek to push men to their own ideals bringing “peace” by whatever means possible.

A Land of Crows

Numerous organizations work to dispel the evil and join the peoples back together. Holding the Crow, a servant of the sun, as their primary symbol, they remember the lessons of the past and struggle to instill it into all. They maintain the hope that when the returning

time comes, and the time for the joining is at hand, mankind will be ready to take its place in the light. Others revere the Owl, the Jay, and the Mourning Dove, each which seeks to bring the people to balance. Most, however, look to the Crows to lead.

A Land of Destiny

The Spinner spins strands into *the Great Hoop*, and the Weaver weaves it into the weave of *the Great Web*. To achieve this, there are those whom the Spinner has chosen to take part in The Weaving. These are the players, bastions of community and hope. They are the great deciding factor in this unfolding story. The Spinner gives them the capacity to shape the world, but such gifts are double-edged swords. Those that grow too static can all too easily find themselves manipulated by the Spinner and Weaver, their destiny chosen for them. Heroes so great must be wary of letting sorrow take hold in their hearts lest they lose their drive and forget themselves, fading into *Sorrowstain*.

A Land of Magic

Those chosen by destiny, one way or another, manipulate *the Mysteries*. These people are said to be able to perform miracles and defy the very rules of nature. They can perform feats that are beyond the imagination of common folk. This spectacular ability finds its way across all strata of society; warriors who can shake the earth with a single blow and spit fire into the sky, tale spinners who can shape reality with a telling, craftsmen who weave their belief and conviction into their work, and artists who can break a nation with the stroke of a brush.

A Land of Hope

WhatMoves, the creator, has placed a multitude of things in the world to aid the people in finding balance and shaping it. Not the least of these being the Graces who stand against the Sorrows and inspire the people towards greatness. Neither gods nor quite human, they represent the pinnacle of what we can aspire to, and the depths to which we can descend.

Welcome to Ehdrigohr.

Make your character.

Find your place.

Come dance with the crows in the sun.

THE BASICS

Ehdrigohr is a role-playing game. If you've never played a role playing game before, the basic concept is that you and your friends get together to play a game of make-believe, or "let's pretend," like you might have done as small children in the playground. Unlike the childhood experiences, however, there are rules that govern the play, and a single individual who facilitates much of the storytelling that happens.

Players take the part of characters on a grand adventure, trying to survive in a world that is slowly unveiled by a facilitator known as a **Game Master**. The Game Master (or GM) will reveal to you the world and situations that affect it.

As a player you get to determine what your character will do to respond to the world or story as it unfolds. This process is very much like the various types of "choose-your-path" adventure books available in stores and libraries. The types of stories you tell in a role playing game vary from system to system and from setting to setting.

The background for this game is the fantastic world of Ehdrigohr. Your stories will often portray tales of survival, heroism, great losses, and horrific monsters.

Ehdrigohr uses the **Fate Core** rules system as the foundation for the play of the game. If you are already using Fate Core then you should be able to transition into an Ehdrigohr Game with relative ease. If you're not familiar with Fate Core, the basics will be provided below and expanded on throughout this book, ensuring you have all you need to know to get your game of Ehdrigohr up and running smoothly. It is highly recommended that Ehdrigohr players and Game Masters invest in a copy of Fate Core to further enhance and expand their options in play.

If you are familiar with role-playing games but not Fate then the big thing you need to know is that Fate, and Ehdrigohr, are oriented toward playing games where narrative flow and cool moments take precedence over lots of crunchy numbers and statistics.

There are many ways to play but there are some core bits that will prove helpful in getting you up and running pretty quickly.

WHAT YOU NEED TO PLAY

There's not a lot that you need to get a game of Ehdrigohr up and running. At the very least you'll need:

- **A group of 3 to 6 people.** You can play with as few

DICE ALTERNATES

If you find yourself unable to get some Fudge Dice then you can use two six-sided dice instead.

If you use these, you will need two dice of different colors. One die you will designate as the “Grace” (or positive) die, and the other you will designate the “Sorrow” (or negative) die.

These two dice will always be rolled together with Sorrow subtracted from Grace. So if you roll a +3 on the Grace die and a -2 on the Sorrow die, your result is a 1. All said, this gives you a range of -5 to +5

as two and more than six, but the flow of play changes significantly. Such situations are best left to those really familiar with the game. Of the group, one of you will take the role of Game Master. When you are the Game Master it is your responsibility to facilitate everyone through a compelling shared experience that you all create together.

- **A character sheet.** This is where players will keep track of the abilities and skills of their characters as well as any adjustments that come as a result of interactions with the world.
- **Fudge Dice.** You need at least four of these, but it works best if you can get a set of four for each player and the GM. Fudge dice are a special kind of six sided die that you can find from vendors online or from your friendly local gaming store. They are 6 sided dice that have + on two sides, - on 2 sides, and the last two sides are empty. If you are in a pinch, and can't find a set of Fudge Dice, don't worry. You can use 2 standard six-sided instead. See the side notes for how to do this.
- **Tokens** of some sort to keep track of Fate Points. These don't have to be anything special. Pennies, dried beans, anything you can count will do the job just fine. Be wary of using delicious edible candies as you might accidentally eat up your Fate Points.
- **A notebook or index cards.** These are optional but they come in helpful when you're trying to keep track of what is going on in the game story or what characters have told your character. If you've embraced the digital age then you might find it easier to do this with a note taking app on a tablet, phone, or laptop computer.

PLAYERS AND GAMEMASTERS

As mentioned earlier, When you play a game of Ehdrigohr you're put into either the role of **player** or the role of **game master**.

If you are a player then your primary role is the portrayal of your character which we refer to with the term “player character” or PC for short. Generally, as a player character you are one of the protagon-

onists of the game's story. As the story builds and you move from scene to scene it is your job to make all of the decisions for your character and to describe to everyone else what the character does and how they react to changing events and situations.

In addition to all of the narrative stuff you'll be in charge of all of the mechanical parts of playing your character. This includes such things as rolling dice, keeping track of fate points, managing stress, and choosing which abilities to bring to bear from situation to situation. There is a fine line between the narrative portion and the mechanical portion. The big issue is that, while you can describe all sorts of things, they don't automatically happen just because you say it. The mechanics are there to adjudicate whether you get to follow through with your intentions. This is especially important when there is opposition to your goals. More will be explained in the **Taking Action** section later.

If you are the game master your role is a bit different. As game master you basically manage and represent the world that the PCs inhabit. While players make decisions and manage mechanics for their characters you do this for everything else in the world. Characters in the world that are not being portrayed by players are called non-player characters or NPCs. You'll have to create and manage a large number of these to present a believable world for the players. Luckily, in most cases, NPCs aren't as detailed as player characters are. There are some long-term characters that are important to the story who will get that level of detail or more.

In addition to NPCs you will also be describing the world and setting scenes in a way that provides players enough information to make decisions and interact. A good comparison might be to take a look at a movie script. A script has dialog that is being said by characters and then expository info that sets the scene. You will be providing that exposition to your players.

As the GM you act as the final arbiter of the rules and interpret how the decisions of the players affect the world around them. What are the results? What decisions do NPCs make in response? What consequences need to be resolved? All these answers you must decide in a way that slowly reveals a believable story.

Lastly, both players and game masters have the job of working together to make everyone look awesome. This is collaborative storytelling and it is heroic storytelling. Everyone should be engaging in a sort of improv experience where you are looking for opportunities to embellish events and make the cool moments of your story as awesome as possible. That includes not just the big fights, but all of the big moments of drama. A bit of melodrama and romance goes a long

If you are a player then your primary role is the portrayal of your character which we refer to with the term “player character” or PC

As game master you basically manage and represent the world that the PCs inhabit.

way towards making the story seem meaningful. Don't be afraid to let your character get beaten, get enraged, suffer sadness, if it all moves the story along and makes it interesting. Don't be afraid to take center stage with your character, but also remember to step back and let others have moments of awesome too. It'll lead to stories that roll around in the back of your mind like a good dream.

THE CHARACTER SHEET

The character sheet is where you'll keep track of most things going on with your character. It has everything you need to know about your character in one place – abilities, personality, background info, and any other resources the character will have to make use of over the course of a game session.

Let's take a quick walk through of what is on the Ehdrigohr Character Sheet so that you'll be familiar with where everything goes when you start to make your character.

ASPECTS

Aspects are phrases that describe some significant detail about a character. They are the reasons *why your character matters*, why we're interested in seeing your character in the game. Aspects can cover a wide range of elements, such as personality or descriptive traits, beliefs, relationships, issues and problems, or anything else that helps us invest in the character as a person, rather than just a collection of stats.

Aspects come into play in conjunction with fate points. When your aspects benefit you, you can spend fate points to **invoke** that aspect for a bonus. When your aspects complicate your character's life, you can gain fate points back—this is called accepting a **compel**. Aspects can describe things that are beneficial or detrimental—in fact, the best aspects are both.

And aspects don't just belong to characters; the scene you're playing in can have aspects attached to it as well.

STRESS

Stress is one of the two options you have to avoid losing a conflict—it represents temporary fatigue, getting winded, superficial injuries, and so on. You have a number of stress levels you can burn off to help keep you in a fight, and they reset at the end of a conflict, once you've had a moment to rest and catch your breath.

More on Aspects can be found on page 92.

More on Stress can be found on page 82.

More on Refresh can be found on page 81.

REFRESH

Refresh is the number of fate points you get to spend for your character at the beginning of every game session. Your total always resets back to this number, no matter what you were at last session.

More about Skills can be found on page 100.

SKILLS

Skills are what you use during the game to do complicated or interesting actions with the dice. Each character has a number of skills that represent his or her basic capabilities, including things like perceptiveness, physical prowess, professional training, education, and other measures of ability.

At the beginning of the game, the player characters have skills rated in steps from Average (+1) to Great (+4). Higher is better, meaning that the character is more capable or succeeds more often when using that skill.

If for some reason you need to make a roll using a skill your character doesn't have, you can always roll it at Mediocre (+0). There are a couple exceptions to this, like magic skills that most people don't have at all. We'll talk about skills in greater detail in their own chapter.

STUNTS

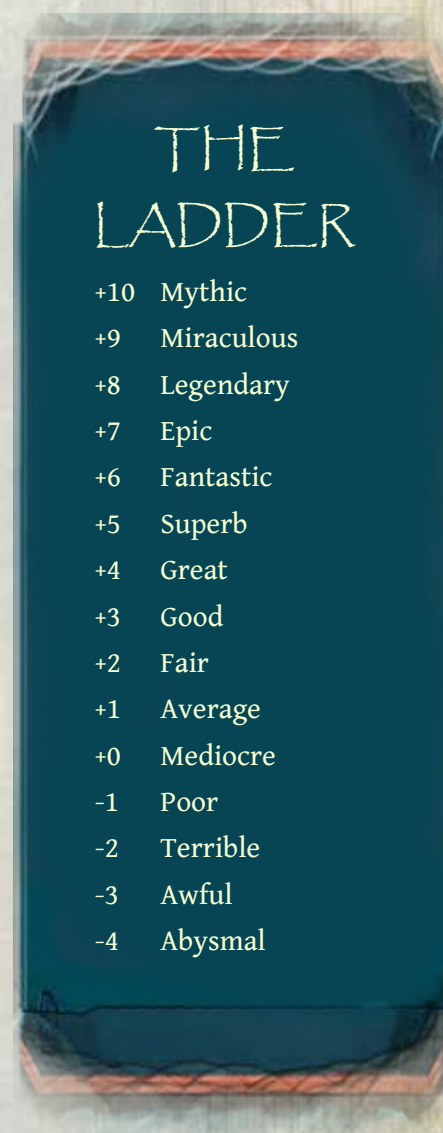
Stunts are special tricks that your character knows that allow you to get an extra benefit out of a skill or alter some other game rule to work in your favor. Stunts are like special moves in a video game, letting you do something unique or distinctive compared to other characters. Two characters can have the same rating in a skill, but their stunts might give them vastly different benefits.

CONSEQUENCES

Consequences are the other option you have to stay in a conflict, but they have a more lasting impact. Every time you take a consequence, it puts a new aspect on your sheet describing your injuries. Unlike stress, you have to take time to recover from a consequence, and it's stuck on your character sheet in the meantime, which leaves your character vulnerable to complications or others wishing to take advantage of your new weakness.

TAKING ACTION

When playing Ehdrigohr you will eventually hit the point where you want to do something. We call this **taking action** and it basically means you intend to roll the dice to see if you fail or succeed.



More about Consequences can be found on page 83

More about stunts can be found on page 101

FOUR ACTIONS

When using a skill a player and GM will determine why it is being used and assign it to one of the four basic actions:

- Overcome an obstacle.
- Create or unlock an advantage for your character in the form of an aspect you can use.
- To attack someone in a conflict.
- To defend yourself in a conflict.

Each of these actions affects the kind of outcomes you can expect from the use of the skill. More about them can be found on page 101.

In situations where there is no resistance or the task is especially trivial the GM may just allow you to do what you want to do and keep moving the story forward. In situations where there is resistance or an obstacle, especially if said resistance is another character, you will have to roll the dice.

A roll of a Fudge die results in a +1, -1, or 0. In Ehdrigohr we refer to every +1 as a “Grace” and -1 as a “Sorrow”. Players roll four dice and count their Graces and Sorrows, adding them together, to get a range of -4 to +4.

For example, I might roll 4 dice and the results might come up as follows:

+1, +1, -1, and 0,

I would read that as total a result of $(1+1-1+0) = +1$.

The total of what you roll plus any modifiers from skills, stunts, or aspects is your “**result**”. Your “result” is compared to the difficulty described below.

DIFFICULTIES AND ACTIONS

Difficulties are defined in tiers using adjectives based around what is called the **Ladder**. Each difficulty has a number associated with it that defines what character rolls must equal or exceed to be successful. The range of the ladder goes from Abysmal (-4) to Mythic (+10) as shown in the **Ladder Chart**.

Results can be higher or lower than what is allowed by the Ladder.

INTERPRETING RESULTS

The goal of rolling is to meet or exceed the difficulty set for the task. How the difficulty is determined depends on the type of actions you’re trying to take. Rolls will fall into a few categories.

Standard Roll – Where the character is rolling against a fixed difficulty determined by the GM. This is also called a **passive difficulty**.

Opposed Rolls – Here, two or more characters roll, and the high roll wins.

Complex Rolls/Challenges – Characters are trying to do something that can’t be done in a single action due to its nature or from a variety of complications.

If you exceed the difficulty, then you have overcome the challenge before you. If you win by a lot, then extra stuff will happen (doing extra damage, for example).

If you tie, you also succeed but to a lesser degree. You won’t generate the full effect you were going for, or you just barely made it and the success is fleeting.

If you don't meet or exceed the opposition then you either fail, or you succeed at a cost—there is a new turn of events that makes matters even more complicated. Some actions (like failing by a lot) may have special results on a failure and your GM will make you aware of this.

When you succeed, the difference between the difficulty and your result will be points called **shifts**. Each point the result beats the opposition by equals one shift. Shifts can be used to make an action more effective or may be necessary to do anything beyond a basic effect. We'll discuss more about that in the section on **Mysteries**.

The default difficulty for most standard tasks is Average (+1). Additional modifiers from situations and aspects can cause this to rise higher on the Ladder. Your GM will tell you what the difficulty for an unopposed task is.

POWER LEVEL

Ehdrigohr is a setting where beings of great power still walk the lands. Some of these are creatures of legend and terrible nightmares, others are beings held over from the time of creation. More commonly they are men and women who have discovered some of the great secrets of existence and have built connections so deep with certain ideals and principles that they have a profound effect on not only their personal realities but the realities of others as well. All things in Ehdrigohr are ranked in Power Levels.

What this means for players is that in addition to Difficulties, they must also contend with Power Levels. Like Difficulties, Power levels are described with words and represent tiers of increasing effectiveness ranging from "Insignificant" (the lowest) to "Unknowable" (the highest) as shown in the chart

Unlike difficulties, power levels don't have numbers directly associated with them. Instead, Power Levels are general modifiers. Most things default to "Common". If no Power Level is specifically called out then it is safe to consider it "Common".

For each tier your power level is higher than your challenge, you add +1 to your roll for attack or defense. On a hit the effect of your attack (or your defense rating, if you're the one was hit) increases by +1. If, for instance, I were to use an attack that was considered "Mighty" against a Common Defense and my result (die roll plus skills, stunts, and aspects) was Superb (5), I would increase that twice (because Mighty is 2 steps higher than common) for a result of 7.

Power levels combine in the following ways. Two levels of equal strength combine for a total level of one higher. If one power level is lower than the other, use the highest power level. So in this case, if I

RESULTS

When you make a roll, one of the following things will happen depending on your results compared to the difficulty:

WIN BY A LOT = Succeed with style.

WIN = Over come the challenge.

TIE = Succeed to a lesser degree.

FAIL = Fail or succeed at a cost.

FAIL BY A LOT = Something dramatic but catastrophic might happen.

POWER LEVELS

Unknowable

Unimaginable

Beyond

Mysterious

Overwhelming

Monstrous

Incredible

Stupendous

Mighty

Grand

Common

Weak

Insignificant

have a Grand Spear and Grand Fighting, then I would make Mighty attacks. If however, my fighting were only Common, then my attacks would be Grand.

POWER CASCADE:

If there is a difference of power level and you manage to overcome your challenge by succeeding with style, you may have Effort left over that can have varying effects. This is called Power Cascade. Power Cascade also happens anytime you spend a Fate point on an action and you succeed in style. How this Power Cascade occurs depends on the nature of the situation and how the power was used. There are 3 types of Power Cascade: Devastation, Awe, and Glory.

Devastation comes from Physical Attacks. Such attacks can continue on to other viable targets in the same zone or can be turned into free environmental aspects that persist for the scene, representing collateral damage. If the result of a physical attack is 4 more than what was needed, additional points are directed as new attacks to opponents within “reach” or in the same zone, continuing until you run out of Effort or no viable targets remain. If no other opponents are available then the extra goes into the local environment. Every environment has a Stress track and a Threshold. If the remaining power is higher than the threshold, then it causes stress to the environment. If the damage causes a consequence the attacker may freely tag it as usual.

Awe comes from Mental attacks and can also be redirected to other viable targets. Awe can seep into the environment and cause damage to it similar to Devastation. When Awe seeps into the environment it is visible as a form of energy aura around the character. If Awe manages to pass the threshold of an environment only half of it becomes environmental stress, the other half causes a hazard related to the Awe aspect of the character in question.

Glory comes from social attacks. Remaining power from social attacks can be redirected against other viable targets or it can seep into an area. In the case of Glory the affected areas are conceptual and range from family lines to entire tribes depending on the power involved. Social environmental effects allow for special consequences in the form of shame and curses that can be applied to one or more people, bloodlines, or locations. More about these can be found in the section on Running the Game, starting on p. 267.

FATE POINTS

FATE points (FP) are a resource that players use in a game of Eh-drighohr to push their characters above and beyond what they normally could accomplish. Fate Points give players and GMs a concrete

way to determine how the lives of the PCs interact with the sweep of history and the telling of their own tales. Fate Points represent who your character has been, and who she could become as she walks the ever-twisting paths of The Weaving.

You start off every session of play with a set number of Fate points which you will represent with some sort of tokens. These fate points are used to **invoke** your aspects, create scene aspects, make story detail declarations, to manipulate the **mysteries**, and to activate some of the more powerful stunts and talents.

You earn Fate Points by accepting a **compel** of one of your aspects.

Characters may, at any point, spend a Fate Point to attempt to make things better for their characters. Anytime you spend a Fate point and wind up succeeding in style on the action you will also cause a Power Cascade to occur.

INVOKE AN ASPECT

Aspects are those things that narratively describe a character and his place in the story. When you have an aspect that's applicable to a situation, it can be invoked to grant a bonus. After you have rolled the dice, you may pick one of your aspects and describe how it applies to this situation. If the GM agrees that it's appropriate, you may spend a Fate Point and do one of the following:

Reroll all of the dice, using the new result, or

Add +2 to the final die roll (after any rerolls have been done).

You may do this multiple times for a single situation as long as you have multiple aspects that are applicable. You cannot use the same aspect more than once on the same roll, though you may use the same aspect on several different rolls throughout a scene, at the cost of one Fate Point per use.

POWER A STUNT

Some stunts are particularly powerful and require a Fate Point to use. This would be detailed in the description of the stunt.

DECLARE A STORY DETAIL

You may simply lay down a Fate Point and declare something. If the GM accepts it, it will be true. This gives the player the ability to do small things in a story that would normally be something only the GM could do.

Usually these things can't be used to drastically change the plot or win a scene. Declaring "Mr. Kwamay drops dead of a heart attack" is

Ehdrigohr is a setting where beings of great power still walk the lands. Some of these are creatures of legend and terrible nightmares, others are beings held over from the time of creation.

You may simply lay down a Fate Point and declare something. If the GM accepts it, it will be true.

Aspects aren't just there to help you. Aspects will also often complicate things for your character, adding drama and tension to situations where you might not have expected it.

not only likely to be rejected by the GM, it wouldn't even be that much fun to begin with. What this can be very useful for is convenient coincidences. Does your character need a match—but doesn't smoke? Spend a Fate Point and you've got one! Is there an interesting scene happening over there that your character might miss? Spend a Fate Point to declare you arrive at a dramatically appropriate moment!

Your GM has veto power over this use, but it has one dirty little secret: If you use it to do something to make the game cooler for everyone, the GM will usually grant far more leeway than she will for something boring or, worse, selfish.

As a general rule, you'll get a lot more leniency from the GM if you make a declaration that is in keeping with one or more of your aspects. For example, the GM will usually balk at letting a character spend a Fate Point to have a weapon after he's been searched. However, if you can point to your "Always Armed" aspect, or describe how your "Distracting Beauty" aspect kept the guard's attention on inappropriate areas, the GM is likely to give you more leeway. In a way, this is much like invoking an aspect, but without a die roll.

PUSH YOUR LIMITS

If you decide to Push Limits you may spend a Fate Point on an action and treat that action as though it were one power level higher. Normally you can, at most push your limits two power levels higher than normal, which means you can spend at most 2 Fate Points on a single push. Each time you push your limit you take 2 points of stress.

For each power level you push yourself beyond the first in a single push, you take additional stress equal to *double* the previous value. If it causes a consequence the GM can freely **compel** it once. Be careful with pushing for the consequences can be deadly.

MANIFEST YOUR POWER

Not everyone is skilled in the mysteries but all characters are touched by the mysteries in such a way that they can manifest certain amounts of them through sheer willpower.

During character creation you will designate one mystery to be your Mystery Aspect. You can spend a Fate point to cause the effects of this Mystery aspect to manifest. Since you are not trained in this use of the Mystery it is stressful to you being and will cause Good stress to you when you use it.

COMPELS

Aspects aren't just there to help you. Aspects will also often complicate things for your character, adding drama and tension to situa-

tions where you might not have expected it. At these moments the GM will suggest a potential complication that might arise. This is called a **compel**.

Sometimes a compel means your character automatically fails at some goal, or your character's choices are restricted, or simply that unintended consequences cloud whatever your character does. You might negotiate back and forth on the details a little, to arrive at what would be most appropriate and dramatic in the moment.

Once you've agreed to accept the complication, you get a Fate Point for your troubles. If you want, you can pay a Fate Point to prevent the complication from happening, but we don't recommend you do that very often— you'll probably need that fate point later, and getting compelled brings drama (and hence, fun) into your game's story.

Players, you're going to call for a compel when you want there to be a complication in a decision you've just made, if it's related to one of your aspects. GMs, you're going to call for a compel when you make the world respond to the characters in a complicated or dramatic way.

Anyone at the table is free to suggest when a compel might be appropriate, for any character (including your own). GMs, you have the final word on whether or not a compel is valid. And speak up if you see that a compel happened naturally as a result of play, but no fate points were awarded.

More on Mystery-Aspects can be found on page 77.



NOW YOU ARE READY

With this info you're ready to jump in and start building characters and playing through some adventures in Ehdrigohr. We'll go into deeper detail on the stuff we've covered in the basic section as we give you more detail about the world and explain what your particular options are as both players and game masters. So prepare yourself, the night is coming. Will you stand against the Shivers until the sun rises?





THE GREAT TELLING AT ONANDAG

*What Moves moves, The Hoop turns, and What Was will
be again.*

*The Spinner spins, The Weaver weaves, The Patterns
draw us in.*

*What Lies Beyond? The Twister's brood. They breach the
Holding Pale.*

*The Jay will sing, The Crow will dance, The Owl will tell the
tale.*

*The Doves guide us in Traveling Lands,
The Thunderers hold the Line.*

*The Twain will break, The Woes come awake
When comes the Gathering Time*

— The Teller's Chant



The Following excerpts come from the Great Telling given by the Owl Elders WalksAlong of the Wiitjasa from Oya'Asiin and Ameli SkyEyesWoman of who was also the Cailleach of Paha Almain in the time of the first generations of the Still. They gave this telling, speaking as one voice, at the building of the first Medicine Town, Onandag, of the Barata marking the first 100 years of the Still, almost 400 winters ago. They then left on a Trail through Dream, with their companions. They believed that the sorrows were moving among the people and they went seeking answers for how to deal with them. None have seen them since.

In The Old Songs We Are Told...

Many who study the essences profess that these dissonant concepts, discarded by WhatMoves before it became manifest, still dwell Beyond the Twain and became manifest in their own ways in the endless void.

On occasion, as the Hoop expands, it grows to encompass one of these dissonant things which manifest in our world as curses and strangeness that rends the mind and heart.

Even the Songs are susceptible to these because they are of primal power before the WhatMoves was named and delimited. Many believe that this is what happened to Ok'O-wi and how sorrow came to the world.

THE FIRST EVENT

The time referred to as the First Event in the different languages of the people of Ehdrigohr is a time that existed long before man set foot on the land. Indeed the history of the First Event even takes place long before Ehdrigohr itself existed. Of this time it is said:

This time was "Sni"—nothingness. There was nothing that had a concept of itself but WhatMoves, a chaotic sound of possibility and silence, and WhatMoves too was Sni.

For time unknowable, What Moves was its own company, having endless conversations and ideas. Some thoughts and ways it abandoned into the nothingness. These were strange instances of dissonance, not yet song. Others it embraced.

In time, WhatMoves embraced the idea to create. It began to manifest concepts that were inherent to it by blending the sounds that erupted from within. So, after much consideration, What Moves began to sing.

The Song of WhatMoves gathered and grew. The Song broke off into two parts. One continued to create more of The Song, and the other began to gather the new songs into a pattern.

The part of The Song which continued to create more song on its own, but after the images of WhatMoves, is what is called The Spinner. That part of The Song which gathered The Spinner's song into the Web is called the Weaver.

The gathered pattern became the Web, or the Weave, or the Skein as some call it, and its outermost edges formed The Hoop, a circle without form. The Hoop is the foundation of the Web.

And so the Web was begun, the Songs its Strands. How long it took for this to come to pass cannot be measured, for time had not yet begun. The First Event began with The Song, and ended with the first weaving on the Web. That is all we need to know.

THE SECOND EVENT

This time was Sni, but not so much as the First Event. The Web had begun, but it was barren. It stretched off in all directions that were

and were not. WhatMoves sang a new Song that was of four parts. The first part was Stone, the second Fire, the third Air, and the fourth was Water.

The Song sat within the Web and drew the attention of the Weaver. The Weaver came to it and gathered the four parts of the Song, finding a place for each part. When the Weaver was done, the Songs had been joined, and V'Leh Rys, the world, was made concept, which is always the first part of creation. It did not yet have substance. It simply was, but without form.

WhatMoves then sang more Songs. Each Song was to be a caretaker for the Song V'Leh Rys. Each Song was named by What Moves so that they would know themselves from each other and their duties.

Into each, WhatMoves placed a piece of its own mystery. When it was finished WhatMoves retained only the power to Move. These named songs were sixteen in number, and found that they also could sing. They could not, however, sing as grandly as WhatMoves or the Spinner, except when they joined their songs. The ones that we remember most are M'pya Toh Who Moves-the-Sky; Bryahd Who Shapes the Earth; Brokk Tends the Fire, Counts the Winters; Myndil Dreamer of Ways, Tradition Maker; Creu-Wri Keeps the Flow, Tradition Keeper; Ok'o-wi Transformer of Ways, Tradition Breaker; Shou Bringer of light, Revealer of Truths; and Hahn-Wi Tends the Darkness, Guides the Way.

It took time for them to all come to be, and they knew themselves to be relatives to each other, the world, and to WhatMoves. As the Hoop was circle, so too was circle given to the Songs as the way for relation. There is motion in the circle and the circle is motion. They were told that to see each other and witness each other was to provide strength to each other that would keep balance. They would emanate song and receive the emanations of each other. They were the first relatives and all things that have come since have been so linked in relation. That first song is what we call love. This is not the love of the flesh, it is the witnessing of being. And so the greatest prayer is "All my Relations" as we recognize beings before us, around us, and within us that receive our being and witness our journey.

WhatMoves set them on their task and told them all to wait for his return, and that none should come seek him for the space Beyond the Twain, Beyond the Hoop was too great and too terrible for them to know just yet. The Songs began the work of creating the world, from a single knot in the Web formed from singular strands that spun for them, all gathered around the concept of the world until the concept had substance. When satisfied that their work would be

It is said that there is a rhythm and sound that the Spinner makes as it spins forth strands of creation.

It is said that this sound can be heard in the quiet of the enlightened mind. The sound is the rhythm of possibility, and so we name the whole of creation as this sound:

Wey'o Heh'Ya.

These syllables can be intoned individually as they do in mantras in Barata, or used for song without words as the Wiit-jasa and Batu do in the Shil.

In all cases, calling out the syllables of creation with our voices lifted to the sky creates new possibilities for the people. This is why these syllables are in our prayers and songs.

It is said that that Ok'o-wi's Sorrow was the first wound in the world. There was not yet medicine and the Songs had no way to help her. Because they could not help her they looked away, which is the First Shame. They broke the Circle and allowed her to slip into the darkness.

We have medicine and ways now to purge the sorrow, but Ok'o-wi had none. Only Mendyl tried to walk with her but he did not act to gather the others to find a way. This is the Second Shame.

Because of these two shames Ok'o-wi was never healed and Sorrow was brought to us all.

good, WhatMoves started the Turning of the Hoop that held the Web so that the Songs would know what had been done by the passing of time. With that done, What Moves began to travel.

And so the Second Event began with the Singing of Ehdrigohr, and ended with the Turning of the Hoop and the traveling of WhatMoves. That is all that we know.

THE THIRD EVENT

This event was the first which was not Sni, for the Hoop now turned. The world had been formed but was pale and empty. The Songs now worked to give form, function, and beauty to the world. Some of the Songs nurtured the elements and worked them until they had brought forth the plants, trees, and grasses. Other Songs nurtured the powers and brought forth the birds, beasts, and fish. The last gathering of Songs nurtured the principles and brought forth the peoples. In truth all worked on forming the peoples, but four Songs took particular ownership of the task. Those songs were Myndil, Brokk, Ok'o-wi, and Creu-Wri. Each of them sought to bring the essences of Song into some of the purest ideals. These were their people.

None worked harder on understanding the original Song of WhatMoves, while creating the people, than Ok'o-wi. She even dared to seek the Mover's council directly. Looking for him, she ventured for the briefest moment beyond the strands of the Woven Web, peered into the mystery beyond and to the Sni before existence, and called to WhatMoves. Something answered her.

Myndil later found her weeping in the shadows. He asked of her: what was the strange song that she made? She called it Sorrow. She would not speak to him of what had transpired, only offered that none should venture beyond the Twain. Myndil told her he did not like her new song. She said that neither did she. She had other new songs that she dared not sing. She asked Myndil not to share these with the others.

"What manner of song do we not share with each other?" was Myndil's response. Ok'o-wi thought and then offered that she would call them Secrets. Sorrow is a secret that is hard to keep, offered Myndil. You should not keep these Secrets to yourself. Songs are meant to be shared. No, countered Ok'o-wi. Secrets are different. They belong to me. Myndil did not like these secrets. He thought they dis eased Ok'o-wi but he let her have her way.

The peoples were put forth upon the world, but before they were awakened the Weaver and the Spinner spoke to the Songs. The Weaver and Spinner had seen the beauty and grandeur of the people created by the Songs and wished to make a people of their own. Thus were created the Iktom, beings of weave and flow and essence who would mend the places where the Weave was frail. The Iktom would be charged with the duty of teaching the people how to understand, use, and care for the Weave. They would learn to weave tales that kept the past alive, and more importantly they would learn to “Call the Weave” and control the Essences. This would allow them to come to know those things which stand above, below, and around them, and how they are relatives.

So it was that the Iktom were the first to awaken, and they prepared the way for the other peoples. The next peoples to awaken were the Brokkur, beings of earth and rock, fire and smoke, sky and thunder, and water and ice. They were led to the mountains and hills by the Iktom where they would keep the foundations and tend the sky. Then came the Ok'o-wibiyrn, beings of woods and earth, water

There is another sound, closer to us, that can be heard in the heart. It is the sound and rhythm that the Weaver makes as it gathers, loops, and pulls the threads of possibility to fashion the **Great Web**. This sound is the tangible and is how we name the world we walk in as people. That sound is **Ehdrigohr**.



and light, tenders of life and able to encourage things to grow in new and wonderful ways with their songs. They were led to the seas and forests where they would tend the green and ensure the changing seasons and the waters where they would coax the tides. Then came the Creuwryona, creatures of Wind and Principle, Fire and Will, who were led to individual lands which would become their protectorates where they would tend the hearts and deliver wisdom. Lastly there came the Myndilkin, or simply men as they came to be known. They had some of the gifts of all the children and would create in new ways every day. They were led to the Shil where they began to foster great nations, danced new rhythms, soothed the heart of the earth and celebrated the thunders in the sky.

When The Hoop had turned full, the peoples had all founded nations that were with splendor we can't imagine. There were four nations in all. The Brokkur had founded Holtabrokku which formed a wondrous maze within the mountains that allowed trade, and tended the bowels of the earth and the paths to the sky. The Ok'o-wibiyrn had founded Bruszathis, floating in the seas, reaching deep into the watery depths. Its capital—Lindra-ill—was the gem of the realm. The peoples of the waters had learned well from the Iktom and they called the Mysteries with an ease that was second only to the Iktom themselves. The Myndilkin had founded the first nation of man, O'Makota, which filled much of the Shil without displacing any of it. The nation existed in and among the forests and grasslands of the area, delved into the earth and reached up to the skies. Lastly, the Creuwryona had made no kingdoms as was their charge. Instead, they settled in the other lands and offered arbitration to the other peoples therein. Eventually each individual Creuwryona became a Revered Wise-One for his or her province, taking it upon themselves to see to it that harmony was maintained among the people.

During this all, the great songs M'pya Toh and Bryahd had grown fond of each other while the other songs made the races. They became the first companions and, by joining their songs of love and passion, gave birth to children who were like Songs but in some ways both less and more powerful. M'pya Toh and Bryahd sent their children to reside at the four corners of the world so that the people would always know what directions their relatives lie in. The four children of M'pya Toh and Bryahd became known as the Thunder Brothers, for they came out of a union where earth and sky met. Of all of the Songs they were nearly the strongest, second only to Brokk.

While most Songs grew closer together, more and more of them found it difficult to weave their songs with those of Ok'o-wi. She sang in ways that made them uncomfortable. Any time spent with

her left them thinking in ways that were unusual and which brought little bits of dissonance to the each of their songs. This dissonance also affected Ok'o-wi and she withdrew, more and more, from interactions with the other Songs. Only Myndil sought her out. His gift for changing traditions made it difficult for the dissonance to set in. He was concerned for his friend. She who transformed was being transformed, and he knew not how to stop it.

"What is it that draws you away from the others?" he asked of her.

"There is something growing in me. It is a song I don't understand. It leaves me feeling unseen and unseeable. It causes me to be and sing in strange ways. I want to belong, but belonging brings pain; and I want to stop singing, but fear I will fade."

"What is this strange song that disturbs you so?" prodded Myndil. "Name it and we will help you to find its place."

Rage filled Ok'o-wi's face as she turned and spat, "I named it before and I name it again as Sorrow! It has many faces and many ways it grows. It is mine. Mine to understand. Mine to resolve. You must respect this if you are my relative."

Myndil did not understand this but offered to walk with Ok'o-wi while she came to terms with her new secret. He was concerned that this was not the right path, but he respected her wishes.

And so it is said that the Third Event began when the first life was brought into the world, and ended when the first nations were born, the Thunder Brothers marked the directions for all, and Ok'o-wi, wracked with Sorrow, withdrew from all but Myndil.

THE FOURTH EVENT

With the coming of the Fourth Event the Peoples began to spread as generation begat generation. As they spread there arose a few conflicts which the Creuwryona quickly, easily, and justly stifled time and again. There was relative peace among all except for Ok'o-wi's children. It seemed that they had inherited much of her dissonance. They were exclusive and refused to share their songs and discoveries with the others, for fear of value deteriorating as people shared. They told all that they were special, hoarded secrets, and began to grow envious of the speed with which Myndil's children spread.

The Ok'o-wibiyrn came to covet the lands in addition to the sea. Unfortunately, it seemed that every time they wanted to move from the seas to the land that they found that there were already men there. Although the Myndilkin were more than happy to alter their traditions and to share land and kingdoms with the Ok'o-wibiyrn, the Ok'o-wibiyrn seemed to never grow content.

Sha-Er's strange thoughts were more evidence of Ok'o-wi's growing madness. Most believe these thoughts originated not from within her, but from without. It was WalksAlong's contention that Ok'o-wi was casting off concepts much like What-Moves had done just before manifestation. Unfortunately these thoughts would work their way into her people as she connected to them and developed Pride, the Third Shame.

In the 700th winter of the Fourth Event there was a born a young Ok'o-wibiyrn named d'Ral Sha-Er—"WatchesShadows"—who rose rapidly to power among her people. By her twentieth cycle she headed her own ship. She ruled her waveclan by 35, and governed an entire landed province by 40. Her province bordered a kingdom of Man known as Othase, which existed on some the most fertile land in the area.

d'Ral Sha-Er decided that because the Ok'o-wibiyrn had awakened before the Men, by all rights the Ok'o-wibiyrn were a greater people. Therefore the Men had no right to keep them from anything because the Ok'o-wibiyrn should always have first choice over men.

She sent messengers to the High Council of Othase, demanding that the people of Othase relinquish their farmlands to the Ok'o-wibiyrn of Xyris Province. The messages stated that those who tended the farms would be allowed to continue to work them, but all produce was the property of Xyris. Othase would be allowed to trade for the food produced. Resistance would be met with force.

Of course the high council was infuriated, and immediately sought assistance from Viltoshius, the Creuwryona who gave counsel for the land. Viltoshius called forward representatives from Xyris and Othase to discuss the problem. The Othase representatives came, but d'Ral Sha-Er only sent a messenger to tell Viltoshius that he was interfering in matters that did not concern him. He was ordered to stay out of the conflict or face retribution. To the Othase representatives the messenger relayed that they had ten days to relinquish the coveted lands, or Xyris would come and take them.

Not wishing any real conflict, some of the high council of Othase went to Xyris to attempt to negotiate with d'Ral Sha-Er in person. Upon arrival at Amrin, the capital of Xyris, the council members were taken captive. The covetous d'Ral Sha-Er had decided that she would have the entire kingdom of Othase. She would set the Men to working for her and her people, so that the Ok'o-wibiyrn could live the life of luxury deserved by a people of such noble stature. She massed her armies and moved on Othase.

In the heavens Myndil and Creu-Wri approached Ok'o-wi, and asked her to intervene. Unfortunately, Ok'o-wi had grown as jealous as d'Ral Sha-Er about the quick spread of Myndil's children. She felt that Myndil mocked her with his visits and poking into her secrets. Not only did she refuse to stop her children, but she sent visions directly to provincial councils and the republic as a whole, telling them that they should follow d'Ral Sha-Er's lead. The Battle of Othase was the beginning of what eventually became known as the War of Sorrows. This is also known as **The Fourth Shame**.

THE WAR OF SORROWS

The Xyrian Forces moved on Othase but were intercepted by Viltoshius and Farugran, his mate. The two great Creuwryona, angered and anxious to regain face with their peers, tried their best to route the Xyrian army. d'Ral Sha-Er's forces, however, had been prepared for possible interference from the WiseOnes. Her best weavecallers had been given orders to subdue and capture them both, and did so. The two peacekeepers were taken back to Amrin where d'Ral Sha-Er would give them her direct attention. The Xyrian forces then moved to assault Othase. The Othase council had managed to evacuate most of the people, but those that had remained to fight were either captured or taken as slaves. It was a resounding success with so few losses on the Xyrian side as to be negligible.

Word of d'Ral Sha-Er's success quickly made its way back to the ruling body of the Ok'o-win Republic. This caused great political scandals among the Ok'o-wibiyrn. Many felt that what had happened was wrong and that restitution needed to be made. However, the majority felt that the Myndilkin had had this coming for a long time. Those who had been contacted by Ok'o-wi spread word that it was the manifest destiny of the Ok'o-wi to rule, and that of the Myndilkin to serve. Anything less would be unsuitable.

The Ok'o-wibiyrn assembled armies which began to descend upon the coastlines. Soon the entire western coast of Ehdrigohr was awash with blood. The Myndilkin fought as hard as they could to maintain their freedom, but to no avail. The Creuwryona tried again and again to intervene on behalf of the Children of Myndil, but the Ok'o-wibiyrn would not hear them, and even went so far as to seek out these wisdom keepers in order to attempt capture and control them. The Ok'o-wibiyrn had learned to wield magic in ways that none could stand before. They wove patterns and sang songs of such power that even the mighty Creuwryona were powerless to stop them.

The Songs could not intervene because as her children waged war on the realms below, so did Ok'o-wi bring trouble to the other songs. She had withdrawn completely from the Circle of Songs and began to form her own circle, one of Songs and spirits made of her dissonant secrets. She knew that she could not defeat the other Songs alone, but if she had companions then together they could. Ok'o-wi knew she could not bring such powerful life into being on her own, so she devised a plan.

She sought out the Spinner, and wooed it into her confidence. Once its guard was down she took from it some of its seed, and some of the mysteries of its womb. She then placed them within her, withdrew into hiding, and gave birth. Because the essence of the Spinner

was closer to the Mover than her own, her children were the match of any of the other Songs.

The Spinner went to the other Songs and told them of what had befallen it. M'pya Toh, who led the council then, was infuriated. He called the other Songs to Council to discuss an appropriate punishment. All of the Songs were present. Myndil shared what he knew of her secrets. He had seen firsthand the ability of her dissonance to transform everything that came in contact with it. He suggested over the ages it had grown stronger and more not of the Weave or Bal-

ance. He gave the dissonance a name. He called it Evil. They agreed, with the exception of Creu-Wri, that Ok'o-wi would be brought to justice. Something had gone wrong, her song was tangled and twisted. They would have to unravel her and then sing her back into a harmonious manifestation.

Creu-Wri advised that they should find and awaken the Mover and put the problem before it, for only the Mover

had the right to decide the fate of one of its creations. The other Songs were too enraged to listen and set out making plans for dealing with Ok'o-wi.

Upon the world the Ok'o-wibiyrn were slowly taking the kingdoms of Man, and d'Ral Sha-Er rose in power until she possessed a seat among the Council of Leaves and Mists who

ruled the Ok'o-wibiryn. She bent the ears and wills of all of her fellow lords, broke the council and created her own high seat in the council, calling herself The First. Upon taking this station d'Ral Sha-Er began to receive visions from Ok'o-

wi herself. With direction from these visions, and due to the fanaticism of the Ok'o-wibiyrn in general, d'Ral Sha-Er declared herself the sole ruler of the world. She maintained the Council of Leaves and Mists as her council of advisors, filling it with those loyal to her vision, and purged all others. She, and she alone, would have final and absolute authority to make decisions for, and about, her growing empire.

In the realm of the Songs, M'pya Toh sent his scions, the Thunderers to retrieve Ok'o-wi. When they arrived at her realm, they could see that it had grown twisted and terrible, in reflection of the madness that had beset her. They approached her cave and called for her. She answered their call, saying that they must defeat her son in battle before she would go with them. Though they thought it a bother, they agreed to her request, for she was their elder. And so Ok'o-wi sent out Yyah her firstborn Sorrow: a creature that had come about from her taking of the Spinner.



The brothers looked on in surprise as Yyah burst from the ground beside them. His size was so great he was as a mountain walking. Though he was beautiful, the anger inside him marred his beauty. His song was without harmony and caused a dissonance that left the brothers confused and unfocused. Each step he took seemed to dwarf the thunder made by any single one of the Thunder Brothers. They engaged in battle, and terrible it was. Though the brothers struck with all their might, and lightning scarred the land, they had met their match in Yyah. His dissonance so scattered their minds that no one of them could stand against him singly, and together they could barely hold him at bay. As they fought, Ok'o-wi observed the battle, and began to lust for her creation as she observed his great beauty.

Eventually the Thunder Brothers yielded, and retreated. As they fled they could hear Ok'o-wi's laughter, and then her sounds of passion as she took Yyah and lay with him. When they returned they told the Circle of Songs of what had transpired. They told of Yyah's might, and of Ok'o-wi's unrelenting passion so great that she took what had come from her own song. The Songs were infuriated, and prepared for war. Brokk fired his first forge, and crafted weapons and armor for the other Songs, though he would not take up arms himself. Creu-Wri also would not fight for he saw no sense in it. He would seek WhatMoves and take counsel from him. They all ceased to refer to Ok'o-wi as ShapesTheLife—from then on she would be called Unkhte WhoIsEatenByPassions. Her brood they called the Unkhtehyla.

On the world, the kingdoms of man were taken one after the other, and the free men were forced to withdraw further and further inland until they only resided freely east of the D'grynnyn Mountains. The Ok'o-wibiyrn, however, did not stop with the Myndilkin, they also sought to subjugate the Brokkur, as well as the Creuwryona.

The Brokkur, who could not stand to have their freedom taken, began to die in captivity. Brokk, not wanting to see his people suffer as Myndil's children were, took them up into his realm where they would continue to create intricate works of beauty and clockwork function at his forges, hidden in a fold of Dream. The Ok'o-wibiyrn were infuriated when they finally penetrated the barriers to the Brokkur kingdoms, and found no Brokkur. What few Brokkur they had captured who yet lived, the Ok'o-wibiyrn used their twisted magics to warp into the "n'Dar-k'de" who poisoned all things they touched; so that the elements within a victim would fall out of balance and transform them into dust and salt, fire and soot, breath and vapors, or tears and sweat.

The rape of the Spinner was the Fifth Shame, as it caused sorrow to flow into the Spinner who was both no gender and all genders. The sorrow flowed through the Weave into all things, and thus began the divisions that would separate the song of love.

The Ok'o-wibiryn also took every Creuwryona they captured and, with the help of d'Ral Sha-Er's and Ok'o-wi's discordant songs, they created the Crip craws and cast them into the shadows to forever spread lies when they had once shared only wisdom. With Yyah and S'apela, her twisted second born son, Ok'o-wi captured Iktom, and twisted and tangled them into the Ferralak which were the deadliest of adversaries for all involved. The death stroke of the Ferralak not only killed, it also tore away the very Weave that held a being together, forever removing them from the cycle of rebirth.

Three of Unkhte's brood, Garu'Mkai BreakerOfSouls, Miktlan FlaysTheFlesh, and S'apela WhoTwistsTheMind, settled amongst the Children of Myndil and began to brew discord among them. Some men began to work with the Ok'o-wibiryn, others began to kill their own, and still others tried to divide the men up into those worthy of survival, and those that were not. Things were not looking well for mankind. Their only saving grace was that they reproduced so fast that it was very hard for the Ok'o-wibiryn to wipe them out as they had done with the Creuwryona. What also helped the men was that each generation seemed to get stronger, growing from the failings of the previous. Defeat seemed to actually make them stronger.

By the end of the 1000th winter of the Fourth event, the Myndilkin had developed Weave callers who, though few, were of almost limitless power. It was in these days that such heroes as the Twelve Companions, and Gwreu the Mighty, Kola WhoDefendsTheBlood, and Ehangwyn WhoTalksWithEarth, walked the land. The Songs warred against Ok'o-wi and her brood. Brokk and his children crafted incredible devices to help all combat the horrors that Ok'o-wi and her minions created.

Unfortunately, as the Myndilkin had grown in power leading the fight against the encroaching evil, so had they grown in pride; by this weakness they began to fracture from the infiltrations by Unkhte's dark tricksters. Some had even opted to serve Ok'o-wi and fought against their own in hopes for promised power over others when the war was done. Though the fighting ebbed and flowed, every major clash continued to grow with such intensity that all were on a path that threatened to rend the world asunder. Even the Songs themselves had fractured in their stances of what was right and wrong and some began to quarrel with each other about how to bring things to an end.

It was then that Creu-Wri, who had not found WhatMoves, returned to find all of his children had been taken by Unkhte's forces and perverted into unrecognizable monstrosities. Creu-Wri cried out in grief. He looked upon the Songs as they warred both upon the heavens and on the earth and cried again. He saw that the Children of Myndil were now fighting among themselves and would eventually bring about their own extinction, and cried again. Lastly he looked upon the horrors promoted by Unkhte and her brood, and cried again.

Four times he cried, to the four directions. None heard his cries save the Thunderers who came to see him. They had tired of the fighting and sought another way. They joined with Creu-Wri and cried to the Mover. Four times they cried as a whole, and four times the heavens shook. The thunder was so great that all things stopped and looked to Creu-Wri and the Thunderers. For a moment the fighting had ceased and the world was silent. Garu'Mkai, Miktlan, and S'apela sensed trouble, and disappeared from the battlefields and lands, along with their people. In the silence all could hear the rumble of something answering the cries of Creu-Wri and the Thunder Brothers.

The Mover had Awakened.

THE UPEAVAL

The WhatMoves had heard the cries of Creu-Wri and had roused from his sleep and returned to the Weave. The Mover looked upon the chaos laid upon the land, felt the pain of the Worldsong, and was enraged. Whatmoves called some of the power from all of the songs back into itself. He gave power to the land and it heaved and wrenched, destroying all nations upon it. WhatMoves Called to the Songs and demanded to know who was the source of this travesty. The Songs responded that it was Ok'o-wi-Unkhte who had brought the world into chaos.

WhatMoves then plucked up Ok'o-wi-Unkhte and prepared to destroy her, but found that it could not be done. When it looked upon her, it saw, from within, its own eyes looking back. "You were told not to go beyond the Hoop." It said to her. WhatMoves could now see that when Ok'o-wi-Unkhte had taken the Spinner, she inadvertently tied herself and all of her brood to the Weave. Whatever had infected her had spilled out into creation through her nature to transform. To destroy her was to destroy the Weave. Instead it stripped her song from her. Her form the Mover cast unto the Earth where it immediately shriveled and decayed; her bones formed the mountains known as the Spine of Unkh. Her essence, the corrupted song, WhatMoves cast out of the Weave, into the space that lies between the growing Great Web, built by the Weaver and Spinner, and the Great Hoop. WhatMoves then reached down, plucked up all of the Ok'o-wibiyrn he saw scattered across the land, and cast them out of the web to dwell with Unkhte in the nothingness in between the strands—what we now call the Twain.

That done, WhatMoves turned to the other Songs and their companions, and asked how it is that they could let this happen, and why it is that they saw fit to look away from Ok'o-wi, their relative. It was because they allowed the circle to break that Ok'o-wi had fallen to dissonance. To witness and to emanate was their first and greatest medicine and they had failed to bring it to bear. They had allowed her to grow dissonant, made no attempt to heal, and now warred upon the land, with no concern for how it affected their children. It was here that WhatMoves named the Shames.

As punishment, WhatMoves took the essence of the Songs and spread it out among what remained of the Myndilkin, saying that never again could the Songs walk the earth without concern for the effect upon the peoples. Forever after, the strength of the Songs would be tied to their relationships with the people. They would have no form except in Dream, Shadow, and on The Road. Only their companions, the Graces, would be allowed in the world with the people.

WhatMoves then turned to the Children of Myndil. It admonished them for allowing others to turn them against each other, and for not striving to learn the ways of the Weave as had the Ok'o-wibiyrn. WhatMoves scolded them for not having the sense to work together, and with the other children, to stop this travesty before it began. Upon the Myndilkin he invoked the Scattering. They would wander the land seeing the destruction that had been wrought due to their inability to cooperate and learn. WhatMoves then scattered the people across the land. Their essence was scattered as well, their blood

thinned so that they were not whole, and could not Call the Weave as they had done in times past.

“Your own discord is your undoing”, the Mover said unto them.

“Three times three shall your blood be scattered, and with your blood, the Weave.” WhatMoves thundered.

“When your discord has ended, and you become one, only then will the Mysteries answer your calls as they did in the past.”

To Creu-Wri and the Thunder Brothers and the companion spirits that worked to stop the Sorrows, the Mover spoke. “Even though I punish you as well, with the others, you will stand above them in my eyes. For it was you who sought to end the Sorrows that shook the land. The people must wander, but I place into your hands the task of ensuring that they do not forget. It is you who must ensure that they understand the Mysteries so that they may wield it again responsibly when they become one. For, though I have cast the broken one and her ilk out, the turmoil they bring is not forever gone.

“The Weaver and Spinner will continue to create the Weave, and so, eventually the Twain in which the dark one now dwells will be encompassed by the Hoop and the Web, and they shall return. By then the Weave will be strong enough for them to be destroyed or healed. When this time comes, I shall not intervene. This world belongs to Myndil’s children now, and they shall be the ones to decide their fate. You, however, will be their guides. You will teach them, and you will protect them against those that hid in the shadows when I cast the dark one out.”

“How will we do this?” was their reply.

“You must decide this for yourselves. However, I will give you tools that you will need to fight Yyah and his brothers and sisters who now hide from me.” spoke WhatMoves and then spoke to them no more.

WhatMoves then turned to Shua and Hahn-wi, whose brilliance illuminated the skies and were the only Songs he allowed to stay in the world. To Shua, whose light was brightest, the Mover said:

“There are those who have escaped my wrath, but never shall they walk the land during your watch. Whenever and wherever you find them, your gaze shall burn them down.” So was invoked The Withering.

To Hahn-wi, who now cried for all that was lost, the Mover said: “They will try to hide within the shadows of your light, but let your tears become their bane.” So was born to the world **WeepedStone**—also known as Moon’s Metal—which would harm the **Unkhtehyla** as



Silver is the lesser cousin, the shadow of WeepedStone. It carries some of its power but only when used in rituals. If silver is present in ceremonies involved with protection or bonding then it can be invoked as a scene aspect.

WeepedStone is much harder to come by, though it tends to be found above ground since it periodically falls from the sky. WeepedStone can be used to fashion weapon blades. WeepedStone can be invoked to cause the weapon to damage a creature as if it were one Power Level higher than normal.

a steel blade and fire would a man. What had fallen seeped into the earth and waits for men to dig it up, and once dug up it can also be sown into the earth to make a barrier against evil.

With that done, the Mover again left the world and returned to his slumber, leaving a thought in the minds of all:

What Moves moves, the Hoops Turns, and What Was will be again.

THE FIFTH EVENT

The people settled into a variety of groups who wandered the lands, and as they wandered they stumbled across Unkhtehyla who had hidden during the Upheaval. Creu-Wri and The Thunder brothers sought a way to protect the people, and so they took the birds they so loved as companions and made of them those who would be the watchers, warders, and teachers of man: the crow, the owl, the bright jay, and mourning dove. From the owl men would learn wisdom and of the Mysterious Ways; from the jay men would learn their history and to sing songs that balance the world; from the crow men would learn to fight with cunning and with honor; from the dove they would learn compassion and humility.

This was not to be an easy task for the guardians—the tribes of man were still bitter, and rather than come together, they divided themselves even more. As the years passed these enmities began to wane and the tribes of man began to come together in peace, once again forming great nations. They soon found out that Ok'O-wi was not yet through with them. There were other spawn of hers that she had hidden deep within the bowels of the earth, who slept until the noise of men's nations awakened them. Some say they were the first things born of her womb, before she had mastered the birthing process: monstrosities so great that even Ok'O-wi herself feared them.

These are the creatures known as the Woe. A terrifying mix of Ik-tom and horror, these devouring worms were as big as mountains, with untold numbers of long, willowy legs that burst from their bodies like the roots of a thousand cursed trees seeking purchase. Their awakening tore the world asunder, in what some consider the Second Upheaval, and the Woe began to devour this new world of men, scattering the people once more. These creatures rampaged for a relatively brief time before they mated and died, but it was long enough to leave the world in chaos once more.

So it went that whenever the people began to gather and settle in large numbers, new Woe would awaken and tear everything asun-

der. These times were called “Turnings” and effectively punctuated the attempts of men to come together. For many generations this continued and kept the people always moving, never forming true nations. The Woe also left a taint in their wake that gave rise to “shivers”, new monsters and terrors that prowled the lands and stalked the nights. These creatures seem to spawn from the Woe like fleas off of a dog. The people tried many times to organize groups to decipher the riddle of how to destroy the Woe once and for all. All of these attempts, however, ended in failure. This failure was mostly caused by the Sorrows like Garuma’Kai and S’Apela, and their minions that remained hidden but continued to sow discord among men. Nothing was heard from Miktlan or his followers.

Creu-Wri and the Thunder Brothers decided that stronger measures needed to be taken. So they took a number of men and women who would listen, and with them formed organizations to follow the paths of the guardians, helping and protecting the people. These groups were each named after one of the birds which the Thunders held as sacred companions: Doves, Jays, Owls, and Crows. Shua and Hahn-Wi, the only other spirits not vying for recognition among the people, offered their assistance as well, providing secrets of the elements that would help the watchers to grow and better serve the balance. This way, at least they could stave off the minions of the Sorrows and the terrors of the wilds while they tried to battle the Woe.

THE TRAIL OF DREAM AND SHADOW

There came a time when a number of elders among the guardians gathered a company of their best, sending them on a quest through Dream. This year was called the Winter of Troubled Dreams, as elders among the people received a multitude of visions from the spirit Myndil urging them to seek guidance in the traveling lands. Following visions they came upon a plan to delve into Dream, and from there, the other Traveling lands, in hopes of finding some of the lost B'te and convening a congress of men and spirits.

This quest, called the Trail of Dream and Shadow, took them to the very fringes of the traveling lands and, some say, the edge of the Twain itself. Of the initial company of warriors, only twelve men and women returned. These twelve returned after four hundred winters, though to them it seemed only months had passed. They returned in the midsummer of the Winter of Thundering Mountains when the earth was showing signs of the Woe waking from their slumber, and brought with them the Rites of Peace and Stillness. These rites in-

cluded ways of finding the slumbering Woe and extending their slumber, giving the people time to gather and unify.

These rites also had the side effect of revealing the Sorrows hidden among men and calling forth the Graces to chase them away. Now the Sorrows hide far from men in the dark places of the wild and beneath the earth. They cannot directly enter the cities and settled lands of the people but they lurk at the fringes of civilization, luring the weak and the greedy into their folds with promises of power. Some forgo men altogether, attempting instead to organize the horrors that lurk in the dark and biding their time, watching, awaiting an opening.

The peoples of the lands have, for the most part, settled and formed new nations in the dust of the old. A new age is upon them, an age referred to as the Still, for people now refer to time in relation to the times before – when the Woe rampaged – and the times after stillness was brought to them.

The fine details of what has gone in the past are mostly forgotten, though remnants of the history still live on through Tellers and traditions. Though many of the Songs have faded into relative obscurity, the Graces and guardians remain vigilant. They continue to be the forces which, to this day, stem the tide of chaos that threatens to disrupt the world.

It has been thousands of years since the Scattering and there are many who believe that the time of the Scattering is coming to an end, while others believe it is only myth and superstition. The Still has stood strong for over one hundred winters. Unfortunately, those many winters of stability have brought a complacency that has caused many others to forget or to twist the tales into stories of their own imaginings. Through it all the great birds and their servants strive to bring all together—before what lurks beyond the Weave, deep in the Twain, returns to tear all things apart

A TIME OF CROWS AND SHADOWS

The Tellers are wandering storytellers bringing the wisdom of Creu-Wri, affiliated with the Jays and Owls. They wander from town to town, nation to nation, and tell the tales of old. To some, such as the Wiitjasa of the Shil and the peoples of Kalyt, the Tellers are considered sacred and something to aspire towards. To others, such as the growing Salduun nation and the Chi'An Wu Towns, they are considered trouble bringers, for their preaching of ancient days, balance, and a time of gathering often leave civil unrest in their wake.

Though the Withering remains strong, foul things haunt the night. Travel is restricted, for few would dare a moonless sky. The

Crows patrol the borderlands and the Spine of Unkh, the southern section of the Waking mountains, in search of any Ok'O-wibyryn who may be lurking, and to try to hold down the man-born servants of darkness who frequently rise to power and seek to control or destroy. The Doves travel the lands speaking words of peace and bringing calm to the restless, while the Jays swirl their bright cloaks and sing songs to lift the spirit and strengthen hearts. The Owls watch that which moves in the dark places and in the shadows of dreams, and bring warnings to all.

Those men who serve the dark ones are many and their numbers and power grow each day. The Fiddlers sing their tales of woe and despair, sowing seeds of doubt and hatred. Many sorcerers and warriors heed the call of darkness in hopes of winning a promised immortality. In the wild lands petty warlords make pacts with dark shadows. No one knows what troubles brew to the north beyond the line, but there is even turmoil among the people of the Shil as men and women with poisoned tongues sow their seeds of doubt and intolerance. Finally, in the wild places beyond where the people have gathered, the Shivers still rise from the bowels of the earth, looking for opportunities to break the Still and end the age-long slumber of the Woe.

When this Event shall end, none can say. However there are portents that have given some cause to think that the time is nearing: strange signs in the sky, strange happenings in the lands. Most of all they say that heroes like the ones of old are beginning to walk the land. It is said that heroes on high arise only because great darkness is upon the horizon, that one day we shall see those of incredible ability, steeped in the mysteries, who will lead us from the darkness. Some simply scoff and disregard the tales as myth and conjecture, while other demonize the heroes, saying that with incredible heroes come incredible challenges that will break us all.

We must do better. We are relatives, we are tribe. The comfort that the Still has brought us is also a danger, for it allows the Sorrows to slip more easily among us as we focus on fighting shivers. We begin to dwell on who has more now that we can claim land. We begin to see value in devising scarcity rather than abundance. We create divisions with our traditions which are meant to be tools to see us through the night, not prisons to separate the people into "us" and "them." Our memories are short and our lessons are not learned as they should be. The dark things know this. Fiddlers are whispering in our ears and Enders wait in the shadows.

Who speaks the truth? None can say, but more and more people hear the words in Dream and upon the lips of the Tellers:

*What Moves moves,
The Hoop turns,
And What was will be again.*

Those who hear, find themselves wondering about the meaning of the words. Are they portents of doom, or prophesies of salvation? No matter what, everyone agrees that change is on the wind. What it is only we, the Tellers, seem to have an idea of, and day by day more people lend us their ears.

It is said, "Take heed the chant of the Teller."

*What Moves moves,
The Hoop turns,
And What Was will be again.*

It is the hundredth winter in the time of the Still, in the Fifth Event. We witness the growth of Ehdrigohr, land of shadows, land of crows. May the Graces guard your path.





LEXICON

Adept:

One who wields mastery of one or more of the Natures—Mysterious Ways that allow manipulation of the manifestations of the essential self (Body, Mind, Spirit, Soul).

Beyond The Twain:

Often used as a euphemism to suggest something is so wrong as to be unthinkable. It refers to the endless spanse of non-existence that sprawls beyond the reaches of the Hoop and into Infinity. It is devoid of creation and is composed of unthought concepts that wish to undo creation.

From time to time the Hoop expands to encompass and manifest the stuff Beyond the Twain, which brings unraveling dissonance to the world. Many believe that this might have been what happened to cause the Twister to become broken, just before she made her people.

There are even schools of thought that suggest that the Woe are such concepts from Beyond the Twain that accidentally got woven when The Mover awakened. Not everything from Beyond the Twain is bad, but most such definitely don't fit in this world.

Breach:

Generally, this is any place where a break has occurred that makes passage from the Lands to the other realms possible. More specifically it is most often used to describe a rupture that allows access from the Twain into any of the Lands.

Breacher:

A terrible creature from the Twain that has entered our lands via a Breach.

B'te

It is believed that what was left of the ancient peoples of old returned to the Songs that sired them, where they remain as spirits serving them. For the most part this usually refers to the Brokkur, elemental beings who hold the secrets of craft, and the Iktom. There are legends which say that deep within Dream are a few Creuwryona who will come when come close to the Gathering Time. Collectively these relatives of Men are called the B'te and some people, skilled in the right combinations of Mysteries and/or talents, can call them to the world and beseech them for aid. B'te must always be treated with the respect of an uncle, aunt, or grandparent: if the B'te speak ill of you, the Principles will never be in your favor. The proper term for a B'te that has taken you as a relative is "G'Neus".

It is said that the great craftsman M'Assaad was embraced by a

G'Neus who taught him the art of clockwork. With its help he further refined this skill into contraption. He became the first contraptioneer and made Salduun strong.

Calling the Weave:

An attempt to create new magics by mixing more than one Way in a dangerous and unorthodox stunt.

Contraption:

A clockwork construction powered by steam, compressed air, or little bits of elemental energies, made with the goal of making a task easier or mimicking some effects of the Mysterious Ways. Most often found in Salduun, the Wu Towns, and some areas of Barata.

Council:

Commonly a governing structure consisting of Elders who help make decisions. Most groups govern by council of one form or another. For one to say “I Bear for the Council” is to directly request an audience with the Council of the area.

Elder:

A title applied to those thought to be filled with wisdom and knowledge. Such people are often assigned to council positions. Note that the title of Elder has little to do with age and, though rare, there are those of young age who have been rewarded with this title.

Elements:

The four Elements—Earth, Fire, Air, and Water the Mysterious Ways necessary for the sustaining of existence and life. Earth is the base, holding the others together. Fire warms the land, and is both the blood and the driving force of the land’s evolution. Air directs the fires and nourishes the breath. Water cleanses and soothes, shapes and seeds. It keeps the earth from getting too hot, stills the flame, and nourishes the land.

Elementalist:

One who wields mastery of one or more of the Elements, which are Mysterious Ways that allow manipulation of the manifestations of the world (Earth, Fire, Air, Water).

The Essences:

The four Essences—Weave, Moment, Space, and Truth—are the Cycle of existence. Weave is the fabric that all things exist within, and that exists in all things. Moment is the dynamic force upon which the strands of the Weave travel. Space provides a container that supports the Weave as its strands travel along time. Truth is the controlling force, laws which direct and control Space and time, so that they may shape the Weave in order for existence to be.

Essentialist:

One who wields mastery of one or more of the Essences, which are Mysterious Ways that allow manipulation of the manifestations of reality.

Given:

People who, out of greed for power, have given themselves over to the terrible forces from the Twain. They often wield perversions of the Mysteries. The Given grow monstrous and twisted due to their exposure to the Unktehila. In time they cease to be human at all. Some suggest that as soon as they make the pact their humanity is stripped from them, and what remains is a shell inhabited by dark forces. In any case, once Given, a person is not redeemable and is considered an enemy to balance and life.

The forms the Given take differ across the world due to the natures of individual pacts. The most common type is known as a Dul Ah'gallaan, sometimes called headsmen or barrowlords.

The Hoop:

The bounding rim of existence as it passes through cycles. It is often visualized as a great medicine wheel with the Weave as a vast spider's web spanning it. The Hoop not only turns, it also expands while the Weave within gets tighter. When the Weave tightens around a person they are considered to be woven. Their actions are limited but fated to have profound effects upon the world. The turning of the Hoop ensures that in time many new things will come to exist in the world. It also ensures that old terrible things, cast



into the Twain, the space between strands, will eventually return.

Horrors:

Unnatural beings that threaten to rend reality, leftover from bygone ages. This is generally synonymous with the Ok'o-wibiyrn, though there are old stories of things that found their way into the world, things that didn't come from Ok'o-wi that were cast into the Twain. This word may also refer to things from Beyond the Twain.

The presence of Horrors is known to cause great discomfort to those things that are rightly of the world. They create a dissonance and disturb the process of thought and emotion. People become erratic and can even be driven completely insane by nearness to these beings.

Iktom:

Mighty beings that are servants of the Weaver and Spinner. Each Iktom was given a domain of existence to watch over and maintain. Iktom come in many forms, but may be identified by the presence of multiple appendages and the ability to distort the Weave, imposing their vision of reality on the world around them.

Iktom are generally thematic spirits who have a task that they maintain. Most are static, living in their own Folds in Dream or within the traveling lands. Entrances to their Folds can be found in caves and similar natural passages all around the world. Sometimes people stumble into the realm of an Iktom. Sometimes they are lured.

Iktom are also master manipulators. Because they have been given the general task of maintaining the Weave, they can draw others into plots and tricks that may be generations in the making. Even whole generations of people may be lured into a plot concocted by an Iktom to fix an existing or forthcoming imbalance. In most cases the Iktom have the best interest of the world at heart. This does not generally mean they are out to help mankind. Many have developed a distinct dislike for the chaotic nature of men. Some suggest that this is because men are on the opposite end of the spectrum from the Iktom. They are spirits of patterns and control of that pattern, where men are spirits of change. In any case the Iktom are keepers of ancient and forgotten knowledge and brave men are wise to seek them out and pass their tests.

Maker:

A craftsman skilled in the making of contraptions. The Makers of Saalduun are even considered a separate social class who vie for attention from the council to fund their projects. They run the great forges that maintain the quality of living in the Saalduun empire. Maker also refers to those who can only store the Mysteries in constructed objects

Mastincala:

The Great Hares. These mighty and intelligent rabbits serve as powerful steeds and durable farm beasts throughout most of Ehdrigohr. Common parlance uses “riding hare” and “war hare” more often since the coming of The Still.

The Mysterious Ways:

Sacred forces that come together like the threads of a great web to form the world. Some people have the talent or skill of manipulating the Mysterious Ways to great effect. They are divided into four categories – Elements, Natures, Principles, and Essences.

The Natures:

The four Natures—Body, Mind, Spirit, and Soul—are the manifestations of self-existence. Body is the container and vehicle. Mind is the effective flow of the self—the power to reason, change, and intuit. Spirit is the will of the self—the motivational and directing forces of a person’s being. Soul is the essential self where the lessons of existence are stored for study so that a new body can be chosen to learn lessons yet unlearned. Those who practice the Natures are called Adepts.

Principaler:

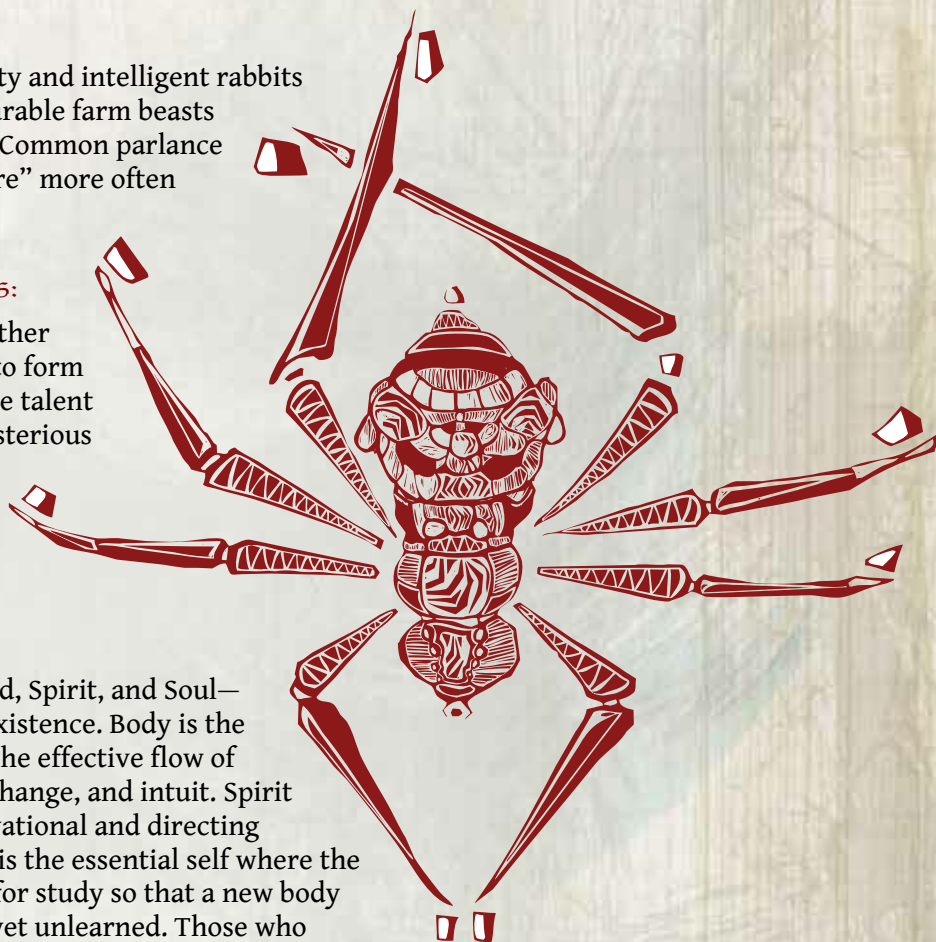
One who wields mastery of one or more of the Principles. These are Mysterious Ways which are the manifestations of Fate: Life, Love, Honor, and Destiny. The Principles are generally controlled through various forms of sympathetic rituals. As the principles are truly the embodiment of relationships, so too are their use.

The Principles:

The four Principles—Life, Love, Honor, and Destiny—are Mysterious Ways which are necessary to give purpose to existence. Life is the basis of existence. Love provides the blood and dynamism of existence. Honor directs love and nourishes the passions. Destiny cleanses existence, makes the scars on the Weave that require life, all while providing the paths that Honor will choose from, so that life can further itself.

The Quiet:

The unbounded non-existence of the age before the first turning of the Great Hoop. WhatMoves made creation by shattering this



emptiness with substance. There are those that believe that all that is wrong with the world is because the material nature of the world causes it. Destroying everything and returning to The Quiet is their goal to free all from suffering. An older term for this is “Sni”. Pronounced “SHNEE” it is generally translated to a concept of “without” or “subtraction” or “negative”.

The Schools:

The largest categorical grouping of the Mysterious Ways. These are the Elements, the Essences, the Natures, and the Principles.

Spanse:

A term used by storytellers to refer to large untamed areas. It is adopted from the terminology of the Essentialists who use it to refer to the concept of non-realized, unbounded, space that is devoid of creation.

Shivers:

Shivers are perversions of the Elements and the Natures, mixed with twisted manifestations of life. The majority come from the places where the Woe slumber, their bodies still producing corruptions far beneath the world where the Withering can't reach. They invariably find their way to the surface and hide from the Withering in dark places. They venture out at night, seeking to devour the peoples of the world.

Shivers come in a multitude of forms and sizes. It is rare for the larger or more powerful among them to venture forth, for even the slightest encounter with sunlight can be devastation for them.

Typically a Shiver is a form of infection. Larval Shivers must find hosts to attach to initially. As a Shiver grows in age it becomes more “pure,” gradually processing the original host's form into something more useful to it. Their name comes from the pronounced shaking and wrenching that people notice in a host who has begun to transform from infection by one of the more common lesser Shivers.

No matter what the original form of the host creature was, when the shiver has taken hold it becomes bizarre. There may be faces scattered across the hide, weeping sores, necrotic appendages of sundry other creatures, or its form may be composed of swarming creatures—anything is possible. Whatever form a Shiver takes is nightmarish. It is thought that they actually feed on the nightmares of humans and that is why they are drawn to the places where people dwell.

Since so many Shivers originate from beneath the earth they frequently infect burrowing creatures, rodents, colony creatures and insects, which soon become monsters. Others make their way to

the surface in a more larval form and find surface hosts to infect. These Shivers are more dangerous as their intelligence—normally that of a rabid animal—is typically magnified by that of the host. There are still others that do not need an animal host, preferring to pervert the flora of the land. Beyond those are the truly frightening creatures that can infect and manipulate nearly any form of matter.

People typically only become Shivers when they've died outside a sacred area or when sleeping in a blighted land. Such incidences allow the unmanifested larval Shivers to take root.

The most feared type of Shiver in civilized lands is the skinwalker, who takes the flesh of victims and wears it as a sort of hazard suit, allowing it to walk in daylight briefly. The skins rot and burn relatively quickly from light exposure, so a skin walker will typically go through many victims before it's caught. Whole villages have been burned due to the suspicion of a skinwalker being among them.

The Still:

The current age where the people have managed to gather and the Woe have not awakened.

Stepping:

A term for using the Mysterious Ways to move about by entering one of the Traveling Lands, moving a distance, and exiting back into the Waking Land. This is normally done because some Traveling Lands allow for quicker travel or they allow travel without being seen. Stepping comes, however, with significant perils of its own.

Talented:

Having an inborn power to affect one very focused part of the Mysterious Ways without formal training or conscious effort.

Traveling Lands:

A general term for the other realms that exist alongside the realm where the people exist (known as the Waking Land). While it usually requires significant use of the Mysteries to enter the Traveling Lands there are scattered places where people can pass from one realm to another.



The Twain:

Between the strands of the Great Weave, but within The Hoop, are the infinite spaces of the Twain. A multitude of bound spanses of emptiness, it was where the Twister's brood were cast at the end of the War of Sorrows. In time the Twain will be woven and all those imprisoned will be in the world again.

Turning:

Turning is the term used to refer to the time periods when the Woe would awaken and turn the world upside down. When this happened the Shivers would rampage and the Woe would destroy everything in their paths.

Two-Spirit:

One of the four genders. Two-Spirits are people who have a male and female soul essence in their physical shell. They often maintain a gender role of caretaker, mediator, counselor in families. In the case of death of one member of a family they will often adopt the remaining gender roles to fill that gap.

Unkhtom:

These are Iktom who were tainted during the War of Sorrows. They have gone mad, and tend to twist and pervert their domains whenever they can touch the world.



Such creatures are dangerous to be around; they will pursue their focus to the detriment of all other things. Mad Iktom are generally more powerful than Sorrows, but only in a particular way. Beware of knowledge gained from such a being, for they may be lies and half truths. No Iktom ever tells the whole truth, but the Unkhtom—as they are called—tell truths meant to harm or pervert a goal.

WaitsBeyond:

One of the more common names for Ok'o-wi, the dark thing that lies in the Twain. She sends her Breachers to find ways into the world to bring her through. Also called the Twister, Sica-Wi, and myriad other names across the languages of the peoples.

Waking Lands

A general term for the world that the people live in as opposed to the Traveling Lands where spirits roam.

Wamakaskanskan:

Also known as the “Noble Beasts.” In times long past, it is said that these were the stewards of the earth and they served the Song BryahdWhoShapeEarth, who had instilled her love for the earth in a certain number of animals that would help her tend the land.

These creatures were Mastincala (the Hares), N’ga (the Serpents), Mahto (the Bears), and Sunka (the Dogs). Of the lot, the Mastincala and Sunka have tried the most to help man since the Upheaval, and travel with him through his trials.

N'ga and Mahto help, but only after great trials have been passed. They refused to live among man’s tribes and cities, and require those that would learn their secrets also live lives of solitude. Mahto has developed a fondness for the men of the north, and introduced them to the path of the Bearwalker to aid them as they brave the dark things that lurk in the frigid lands of the White.

The Ways:

The smaller categorical parts of individual schools. For example, the Ways of the school of Elements are Earth, Air, Water, and Fire.

Witch:

Another term for Principalers. In some territories it is associated with a Principaler known to frequently use the Principles for selfish or material gain. This is not the meaning of the term however. It is worth noting that in some places “Principaler” carries this connotation, and Witch is the more common positive term. The Urali, in particular, are known to use Witch exclusively for both good and bad and frown on the use of the term Principaler as divisive.

Withen:

People who have gone to the ways of darkness. Possessed of great evil power, they have been so corrupted that the sun burns their flesh and the moon causes them discomfort. They tend to remain completely covered when around others to protect themselves and

hide their scars.

Withen can be synonymous with Given, though many Withen have found ways to steal power from the Breachers and still retain their human nature, or have chosen to directly serve a Sorrow. Most believe it's not long before such a being is Given...at the very least they're a curse waiting to happen.

The Withering:

A great curse, made by WhatMoves in a bygone era, that causes all creatures of horror and true evil to burn until dead when exposed to the light of the sun.

Woe:

Terrible, colossal creatures that sleep deep beneath the earth. They are foulness made manifest, and traditionally awakened to “break” the world whenever the people began to gather and form large communities. The Still has apparently brought an end to this cycle.

No one knows where the Woe came from. Some believe they are powerful Iktom that were broken during the War of Sorrows, and others think they are what happened to the wise beings known as the Creuwryona during the War of Sorrows. Others think that they were actually the first spawn of Ok'o-wi and they were so terrible that she buried them deep within the earth, thinking them stillborn.

A theory that had grown traction with scholars over the last couple of generations is that they are from Beyond the Twain and accidentally were trapped in the world during the Upheaval and the slight expansion of the Hoop that occurred at that time. Whatever the nature of their origins, they are so terrible that the areas beneath which they sleep are blighted for miles around.

Woven:

Someone who seems to benefit from unusual luck is said to be woven and chosen by the Spinner and Weaver for great things.



THE GATHERING

The Gathering Council looked upon the assortment of champions before them. At a glance they appeared a most intimidating collection of defenders. All had come prepared to walk the Trail of Slumbers, to battle through the hordes of Shivers, to avoid the Sorrows. Their goal: to perform the ceremonies at the Temples of the Woe.

The Elder known as Chases-Snakes slowly rose, supporting himself on a heavy, gnarled walking stick. The field around them all was filled with tall sweet-grass. You could smell its strong, but calming aroma whenever the wind blew. Normally, he would stand here, in the night, and listen to the soft rustling of the grass in the wind, but tonight the soft babble of voices from the people in the field eclipsed it. He straightened his back and the murmur of the people ceased. He cast his gaze around the crowd who now stood, waiting. The grass could finally be heard, and even it came to a still. The expectance was deafening.

There were many different peoples here, all the colors and shapes and sizes of mankind. All had made the pilgrimage for the Gathering of Nations celebration here in the trade center of O'ya'Asiin. Some came to barter, others to dance to the drums. Tellers came to collect stories as well as share them, and many came to hear the exotic tales of these prodigious wanderers. Of all those gathered, none seemed so important right now as the four who stood at the center of the circle of Drums, waiting for word from Chases-Snakes. All eyes were upon them.

“Let those who would walk the Trail of Slumbers present them-

selves!” he called, in a voice that rang out across the thousands there in the field. The lead drummer of the first Great Drum—a Ge’Al Drum carved from a bloodwood and painted with the symbols of the Calleachs—let forth a call and sounded off honor beats on the drum. His team of drummers followed suit, and the rhythm they created rolled out across the field like distant thunder.

The champions looked back and forth between themselves until the first of them stepped forward: a powerfully built woman with broad shoulders and hips. She was crowned with wild, thick red hair that cascaded from her head like fire caught in a moment of stilled time.

“My name is Kara Een of Een South, in the land of the Songwil-lows.” Her voice was strong and certain, and she spoke with the tone of one with great purpose.

“My people are the Ge’Al of the nation of Kaylte. I am born of Mara of Liice, of Een North in the land of the BloodOaks. I am fathered by Jon of Hara’Vdey in the South, in the Land of the Song-Willows.

“I am heard by the Green and call to the Stones. My hair marks me as firebairn and I dance the flames. I am trained by the daughters of Huntsman Skath and am a master of the Ashen Strikes and the Quake Steps. I have felled nine great Shivers, and countless lesser things, the first of which I killed when I had seen but twelve winters.



“I now wear the brown cloaks and follow the path of solace and awakenings in the Medicine Society of the Mourning Doves. I fight for new life and for the right for dignified passing.

“I have been hand-picked by the Coven of Sighs to come serve on the Trail of Slumbers.”

The Ge’al drum sounded off honor beats to salute her and the crowd exploded in cheers, howls, and whistles.

Chases-Snakes raised a hand and a hush fell back upon the gathering.

The lead drummer of the next Great Drum, a Wiitjasa Drum made

from the shell of an ancient shiltonka, sounded off new honor beats and his drummers followed suit as they called out the next champion.

A giant of a man, covered in furs, stepped forth. He was obviously of Urali and possibly D'zul mix. He had the broad shoulders and silver-grey eyes of an Urali Bearshirt but had dusky skin that showed his mixed heritage, and wore his hair in thick matted braids in the fashion of a D'Zul from the southwest.

"I am Called Yrjo. I come from the village of Shimmer north of the WhiteRim. I call all women and men of Shimmer aunt and uncle and recognize Mahtowakan, the Great Bear, as my grandfather. My father came from the skyward reaching crags of the Sunder to join The Line and hold off the Black Tide as it charged some thirty winters ago." He paused, his booming voice softening. "I am his gift to Shimmer, where he found warmth in his last days. I am strong in the Natures of Body and Soul and know no Shiver that can't be hewn by my axes.

"I walked the White when I was nine and slew a widderman when I was ten. I have participated in a multitude of hunts in the White and slain horrors beneath the ice. I walked among the Bears for five winters, after which I took an oath to Walk the ways of the White and claim new land for the people.

"I fought beside Crows during the battle of Oksanen Hold and like my father, I also served with Crows and Bears on The Line.

"I am chosen by the two Great Elders of the Urali high council. The first is Gita who holds the seat of "Mother of Summers", and the second is Vaino TwoSpirit who holds the seat of "Keeper of Winters". I bring my axes to "bear" in the defense of the Gathering of Nations."

A few people groaned at the pun Yrjo had snuck in there. Bear Walkers humor tended to start and end with puns because they thought them clever.

The Drums sounded in his honor, and shouts and applause rolled out from the people. Again Chases-Snakes brought a hush and the next Drum sounded.

This was a Great Drum from the Sunder, made from one of the great trees of their rainforests and covered in the skulls of warriors who had fallen in defense of the people. The leader sounded his honor beats and his drummers followed, calling out the third champion.

A small, wiry woman with almond-brown skin stepped forth from the crowd. Her hair was gathered in a long braid, the tip swaying near her heels. She was shrouded in a sparkling patchwork cloak of cerulean blues, vermilions, and greens. The colors seemed to shimmer and shift as she moved. Eye-shaped symbols, called oklos, adorned her cloak and scarves and brought smiles to many of the children in the field. They knew her to be a Jaycloak, one of the

Great Medicine Societies, and the most revered orders of tellers.

“I am Rona Zhettapong of the Baratan people, from the town Onandag on the Bay of Sighs. I have traveled all the lands. I have seen the islands of the Mic'Talan in the east and the tortoise born WU Towns of Chi'an in the west. I have seen the towers of the Uralia at the foot of the White, and seen the great forges of the contraptioners in the South of Salady.”

True to her profession, her voice rang with joyful melody, and the crowd began to sway in time to her unconscious cadence. “I wear the Jay cloak and bring word and song to all that I visit. I am trained in the Principles of Life and Love by Yogi Matsabahrn and have a talent in the Natures. I am skilled in craft and song and have mastered the Dance of the Hummingbird Blade, as taught by Keru, who Walks the Ways of the Waking Mountains. My eye is keen to the Mysteries and I can peer into the Road.

“Neither Shiver nor Haint can suffer my songs. I have mastered the singing bowls and learnt the twelve notes of Contrition, which banish all manner of evils from my path. I speak words of the Oldtongue to unravel curses. I have seen twenty-seven caravans through the Ways and slew a Given at Watcher's Seat in the peaks of the Waking Mountains.

“I was called here by the Elder ChasesSnakes and Auntie Sealla of the Coven of Leaves. She will vouch for me to any who seek her out in Dream. As a JayCloak I follow a path of joy and hope and bring smiles to the Gathering of Nations, and I pledge to chase away shadows and sorrow.”

The crowd exploded in cheers and whistles so loud that the Drums were nearly drowned out as they played honor to Rona. After a moment the onlookers quieted, and the next Drum sounded.

This Great Drum was a Chi'an Drum from the west. It was made from the shell of one of the great tortoises upon whose backs the Wu Towns had been built. The leader rolled off the honor beats with great poise, and her drummers followed in precise time, calling out the final champion.

The last champion poured forth, the very air around him seemed to ripple and fold as he moved. No one who watched could remember where he had been standing. They could only see where he now stood. It was as though he had always been there, like an ancient memory.

He was an incredibly tall D'Zul man with skin dark as night, and



darkly brilliant eyes that seemed to reflect the starry sky above. His hair was shaved close in the way of many Essentialists, symbols of the Essences tattooed on his scalp and face. He stood with a great long spear sporting a two-foot blade that seemed to shine with its own light.

“I am Five-Raven-Shouting-Rain. I am of the D'Zul of the Sunder. I dance the Air and am a Master of Essences. I can Weave what is real and what is not, Walk the River, and Bend Spaces. I am trained in the Hand of Infinite Slices. I am a Foe to Breachers and known in the Twain. I am a vessel of two-spirits.

“I walked the River as child, which let me warn my people of impending attack from the Shivers of the Sunder, and had closed two breaches by my thirteenth winter. On that same thirteenth winter I climbed the Stair, and saw what has come to pass.

“I journeyed to the BloodOaks and stood with the Tathlum against a Dul ah'gallaan that rampaged and shredded at the fabric of what is real.

“I have journeyed beneath the Ashen Cloud and stood with the Illuminators of Radeen. I ventured into the Blood Fields with Master M'Ohmad Aman to still a curse that was slaying a city of Salady.

“I come here at the request of BreaksEnemy of the Crows of the Shil, and Mother Iyan-Er of the Seers of Seven Thunder Citadel in the Wu Towns to the west. I come to close the breaches, still the Woe, and bring quiet to any Shiver who meets the Infinite Blade of my spear.”

With that, all of the drums erupted so loudly it seemed as though the very earth was shaking from their beats. The people cheered and shouted. A hollow, clicking percussion rolled out from the throats of many of the women in the crowd, and music began to play in all corners. The Gathering Festival would commence.

Chases-Snakes knew that the night would be good—though he feared what the winter ahead had in store, for fate to bring such powerful warriors together. A glance around the circle of elders showed him that each of them was thinking much the same. Change was coming. None of them knew what form it would take. This was sure to be one of the coldest and most trying of winters. He prayed that the champions would be enough to keep the Woe from rising.



CHARACTER CREATION

STEP 1: CHOOSE CHARACTER ASPECT

Every character is an assemblage of culture, quirks, personality, and history. The thing that ties all these together is a thematic description called your “Character Aspect”. If you've played other role-playing games (either table-top or as a video game) you're probably familiar with the idea of a character class. In such games you'd start by choosing to be a wizard, fighter, or swashbuckler, or some other predefined set of restrictions that determine your role in the general play of the game. In Ehdrigohr your Character Aspect serves a similar purpose, but it's more open-ended. It provides you with a filter to push ideas for your character through. It is not, however, meant to be restrictive in terms of what you are or aren't allowed to do in the game. It is meant to be restrictive in of your overall meaning to the current story. You might be a “Sweet-Tongued Rogue” or a “Fearless Hunter of the Sunder” or whatever else you can come up with that fits the general flavor of the game world. Each of those concepts suggests something about what the character can do and is likely to do, and will be of great assistance in helping you choose traits and advantages as you refine the character and bring it to life.

To assist in this progress we have provided a list of common concepts in the back of the book that set the right feel for Ehdrigohr. These are just here to get you started. The list is by no means exhaustive, but does represent concepts that add flavor and have meaning within the context of the world. Choose a Character Aspect you like from the list of starter concepts, or take inspiration from them and create a new one of your choosing, then move on to the next step. Note that some of the skills given for the starter concepts make some concepts so similar that they might seem to be effectively the same. This is what makes Aspects so powerful: they provide the narrative boost that makes the difference.

If you're looking to just jump in and play quickly, start with one of the concepts below and their suggested Aspects, followed by a culture, then choose your highest trait and set it to “Great” (+4) and go.

If you want to personalize—highly recommended for a better experience—just pick a concept and follow the rest of the steps to select abilities, advantages, skills, and other stuff. Even better would be to invent your own concept and use that core to build a character who will help you make your own unique mark on the world.

Character selection/creation should be a group process to achieve the best balance. A number of the concepts listed below are effectively “bad guys” and you should check with your group before se-

STARTER CONCEPTS

A collection of common concepts with some skills and stunts (enough to get you started) can be found beginning at page 339.

If you don't have time to build a new character from scratch, just grab one of these, tweak the skill choices and stunts to your liking, and start playing.

lecting one of them. It's one thing to bring a little dynamism to the group; it's another thing to cause outright strife. If your group is hoping to create a game centered around only good guys then your anti-hero might not fit in well. You should also double-check with the Game Master. If characters are too different in ideology and goals it can be an awful lot of work for the GM to balance everyone and give all characters a chance to be center stage.

STEP 2: CHOOSE CULTURE ASPECT

Ehdrigohr, unlike many fantasy settings, is not a land filled with strange races. There are no elves haunting its forests, nor any dwarves in mountain roots. The people of Ehdrigohr are all human. They are, however, humans that all have very distinct cultures.

The definite presence of magic, the barriers to travel brought on by the terrors roaming the night, and very hostile environments in some places have fragmented mankind. These factors have forced each of the peoples—or Nine Tribes of Myndil, called that because it was the Spirit Song Myndil that is said to have been their creator—to develop abilities and traditions that often set them apart from each other. It has not, however, always been this way.

These are what remain of the peoples that were put down to inhabit Ehdrigohr. Of the original people, only humans remain in the world. The other peoples were destroyed, cast out, or withdrawn into the spirit lands so that we only know a relationship with them as Bte. The Nine Tribes have, as a result of the Scattering, broken and reformed many times over many generations. The current version of the tribes is the longest lasting in memory: about 500 winters. The memories of men are short in times of comfort, and many of the tribes have come to think as though their tribe has always been as it is, and that their traditions are sacrosanct. This had led to some strife between the groups in recent generations

Culture is important because it colors your character's perception and experience of the world around her. There are also some advantages that arise from certain cultural Aspects. What follows is a short list of the cultures. Read the Culture section in this book to get more info about your particular culture and any effects it may have on the game and the story.

Choose an Aspect from the list of cultural aspects, or work with the GM to create an original one that is appropriate to the culture and your character's life experience.

BARATA

Since the coming of the Still, the Barata have become a society of thinkers and philosophers. They seek to understand the place the peoples have in the turning of the Great Hoop. It is said a new philosophy or ideology is born every day in the streets and halls of Baratan Great Mounds—adobe and wood towns built atop great manmade hills and ziggurats—and in the cave of every hermit or mystic. Few groups are as concerned with the wakan within, and how we are to use it, as the Barata.

The Medicine Towns of the Barata are also known, across the lands, as great observatories of the heavens and holy sites. Fashioned after the shell of the turtle, these towns sit atop gigantic Great Mounds and serve to track the cycles of the moons and stars. This knowledge grants the Barata great control over agriculture and community development. They even claim to know the hidden cycles of the Shivers beyond the cycles of the winter counts. These great mounds also served as the inspiration for the mounds that support the Temples of the Still.

BATU

The so-called “Tribes of the Striding Wolf,” the Batu are aggressive nomads who call the steppe-lands and prairies of the eastern Shil home. Fiercely passionate, they throw themselves at danger and live a life defined around overcoming obstacles. One of their life goals is to create moments that live on in song, for such songs give us strength in the night.

Though they often come to blows with the Wiitjasa over territory and shiltonka herds, they are more concerned with the bleak Shiver Plains to the south and east of them. This plain is covered with a cloud of ash created by one of the Sorrows. The ashen cloud provides one of the few places free of the sun, creating a haven for Shivers that pour out *en masse* every night, forcing the Batu to live on the move and always fighting.

The only thing that has kept the Batu from being wiped out by the nighttime Shiver hordes has been the infighting among the Sorrows. It seems that the Sorrows in the Shiver Plains are more concerned with wiping each other out than killing off humans. It also seems that the Batu have a relationship with the Blue Striding Wolves: great Iktomisunka (see p. 307) of a brilliant blue coloration that hunt and kill anything that comes out of the Shiver Plains at night.

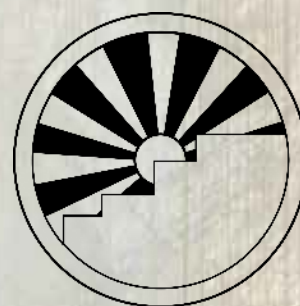
BEYDUUN

To the south live the Beyduun. Much of their lands were devastated with magical seepage during the battle with the last of the Woe

More info about the Barata
can be found on Page 194.



More info about the Batu
can be found on Page 196.





More info about the Beyduun
can be found on Page 193.

before the Still. Most Beyduun have learned to survive the rigors of this desert wasteland; some have been terribly affected by sickness and mutation, while others have turned away from the *wakan* and look instead to craft, clockwork, and medicine to ease the suffering of their peoples and tame the land. Many bear a resentment of the other tribes because it is believed among the Beyduun that they suffered the greatest during the last awakening of the Woe, fought the hardest, and haven't had any restitution for what they lost.

For the most part the Beyduun are divided between the "traditional" tribesmen who roam the wastelands and attend to the Still, and the Salduun Empire which is centered around five Forge Cities: great platforms of adobe, stone, wood, and pipes built over semi-dormant volcanoes. The pipes of the Forge Cities direct the heat from the heart of the volcanoes to drive the forges, which allow the Makers and the Council of Gears to create the contraptions that make life easier in the wastes.

CHI'AN



More info about the Chi'An
can be found on Page 200.

The Chi'an are the people who have built one of the greatest nations in Ehdrigohr. They have lifted their communities off of the ground—literally—by building on the backs of the Unciwakan, great tortoises that cluster near the western shores. The largest of these beasts has a shell that is said to be nearly a mile across.

These are the Wu Towns. The cities grow vertically from the backs of Unciwakan clusters, which become more static as they age. As the cities grow, rigid hierarchies are established. The result is that there is a great divide between those who must live close to the earth and toil and tend to the tortoises, and those who live among the clouds.

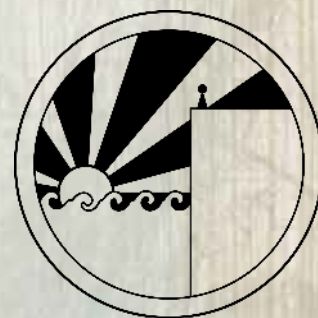
Politics are complicated and vicious; those known as "the High" constantly maneuver to control the Wu Towns. Within the towers of the Wu Towns is found another variation of contraption, concerned with using air and the gasses of the swamps to lift the High even higher. Their experimentations with balloons and floating platforms have met with varied (mostly disastrous) results. They often try to steal and extract contraption information from the Salduun Council of Gears, which has led to a bit of rivalry between the Wu Towns and the Forge Cities.

D'ZUL

As the Ge'al tend to the green of the east, so to do the Zul tend to nature among the shattered lands of the west. Living in a broken land of canyons and cliffs rising miles into the air and overgrown with rainforests, the D'Zul live a relatively vertical lifestyle. They build their Pueblo-style communities into the sides of the cliff faces

and construct bridges, ladders, and swings to move from place to place. This also forces them to live an agile life filled with great leaps, daring dives, and intense loping running needed for members of various communities to communicate and trade.

Like the Wiitjasa territories in the central Shil, the D'Zul lands are filled with ancient ruins and lost places. There is much badness lurking in the deep shadows and hidden caves, and the D'Zul take it as a duty to ferret such things out to keep their communities safe. As soon as young men are of age they are expect to quest out into the jungle to expand their communities. Few D'Zul men survive many expeditions, which has resulted in a tradition of men of age wearing veils which they rarely remove, to keep the women from getting too attached to their faces.



More info about the D'Zul can be found on Page 203.

GE'AL

Masters of the green, the Ge'al have built their society around the process of recovering much of the green that was devastated before the Still.

Their communities are built in and among the great woods and rolling hills of the eastern Blood Forest. Like the Barata, they are great mound builders and their greatest communities are built atop great manmade hills called "Paha" in the old tongue and "Sidhes" in the newer vernacular.

These Paha are always built around the feet of the Great Trees of the Blood Forest. These wondrous trees, also called *Trees of Life*, reach high into the sky and are large enough to support the actual communities which are built into them over generations. The trunk of the oldest of these trees in Sidhe Roi is said to be about 400 feet in diameter. By building their communities onto these hills and into the boughs of the great trees, the Ge'Al have lifted their homes off the ground, making them safer from what Shivers may come in the night.



More info about the Ge'Al can be found on Page 204

Incredibly skilled woodsmen and foresters, the Ge'al defend their lands fiercely. They are said to be masters of earth, fire, and blood.

MIC'TALAN

In island chains among the fierce waters of the eastern ocean dwell the Mic'Talan. The volcanic islands of the area are unstable, so they've built settlements by developing huge floating cities that are anchored by the Great Beasts of the waters, similar to the Wu Towns. Unlike the Unciwakan that support the Wu Towns, the Great Beasts are relatively maleficent creatures that some believe have grown tainted and mutated from feeding on Shivers for generations. These colossal creatures are terrible to behold, the mysteries course



More info about the Mic'Talan can be found on Page 206.

through their veins, and some consider them too much like the Woe to ignore. Luckily they are relatively lethargic and maintain long deep slumbers.

There is great infighting among the six great clans of the Mic'Talan as they strive to subjugate and enslave each other. Each clan is named for the Great Beast that supports them, and with which they also claim to share blood. The fundamental components of keeping the floating cities running are slaves and sacrifices to appease the great beasts, to curry their favor, and maintain of power over others.

The Mic'Talans' dwindling numbers have recently driven them to begin raiding for slaves and sacrifices on the mainland, which has brought them into conflict with the Barata and Ge'Al.



More info about the Urali can be found on Page 209.

URALI

In the frozen wastes of the far north dwell the Urali. Constantly at war with the environment and the terrors that lie hidden in the ice, the Urali are pragmatic but joyful people. They grow when they can, and will trade with other groups to the south. However during their long winter months they are prone to engaging in raiding activities on other tribes and even against each other.

The Urali are also mound builders, but their great mounds they top with towering structures called "Holds" that they gather the communities in for the long winter nights. "Only the strong survive" is a mantra spoken often among the Urali. They also craft taller, thinner towers called "High Spires" which exist to keep an eye out for mobs of Shivers and to act as beacons to guide travelers through snowy nights.

The Holds and High Spires of the Urali are the structures upon which the actual temple portion of the Temples of the Still are modeled.



More info about the Wiitjasa can be found on Page 211.

WIITJASA

The masters of the great badlands and prairies called the Shil, the Wiitjasa are mostly nomadic nations that have an incredible oral tradition and one of the most thorough understandings of the times before. It is said the Wiitjasa guard the remnants of forgotten kingdoms and ancient empires that centered on the Shil before the War of Sorrows, and ruins from the attempts at gathering when the Woe broke the lands. It is said the Society of Crows originates among them, but more importantly, they seem to hear from the spirits more often than any other people. Others consider the Wiitjasa partly mad at best—they claim to hear the words of change on the wind, and stay in motion to stay agile and adaptable.

All people must travel through Wiitjasa lands to reach others, so much of the ways of the Wiitjasa affect the ways of others. The Wiitjasa are the hosts of the Gathering of Nations every four Winters as their lands in the Shil tend to be best situated to see Shivers amassing before they become a threat. Paradoxically, many of the largest, most intelligent and powerful shivers are to be found in the Shil itself. This is typically believed to be because the Sorrows are very active in the Shil as well, and they seem to cultivate their own special, relatively static "breeds" of Shivers.

STEP 3: WINTER COUNTS

In Ehdrigohr there are myriad ways of keeping track of the passage of time. One that is a constant for all the peoples is the notion of the Winter Count. In the winter the nights are longer and the opportunities for Shivers to bring devastation are greater. As a result, surviving a winter is a pretty big deal, causing people to measure the passing of the years in terms of counting winters. It is for this reason that years are marked from snowfall to snowfall.

Every year has a significant event that stands out among all others and tends to become what the winter is named after. This isn't necessarily the most important event so much as it's the most memorable event. The year where there was great flooding might be known as "The Winter of Deep Waters," while a year where many children died might be known as "The Winter of Weeping Mothers," or a year where there were many cicadas might be known as "The Winter of Singing Locusts."

Winter Counts are generally regional, as each tribe has their experiences and the designated Count Keeper will keep tally and compare notes and histories with Tellers and Jays when they come through.

As you think about your character, count their important winters and develop their personal Winter Counts. Define each moment listed below in terms of a winter as well as creating an Aspect. If a winter is particular enough it could be the Aspect, otherwise you should work to define an Aspect inspired by the events identified in the winter.

The process of creating Winter Counts is meant to be collaborative and assumes at least a few people. When all is said and done, you not only have an interesting description of a character of history and

HOW MANY WINTERS?

Unless your GM says otherwise, each player should go through the six milestone Winters listed below. These will provide you with many of your key starting concepts and Aspects, and six important way points in your character's early life.

- 1-Winter of Childhood Remembrance
- 2-Winter of Becoming
- 3-Winter of Adventure
- 4-Winter of Companions
- 5-Winter of Awakening
- 6-Winter of Nightmares

culture, but you will have taken ownership of the game and described a brief history of the world as it relates to the characters. As players you gain some agency with the creation of your campaign.

As GM you end up have a small bible of material to use to build and facilitate stories that are interesting and meaningful to your players. Treat this as a tool for GMs to build a campaign around. A group of four characters will have described twenty-four winters between them (with some overlap). This is now history that your characters can engage with and are experts in. Congratulations! This story is about your characters! The experience of Ehdrigohr should always belong to you and your group.

WINTER OF CHILDHOOD REMEMBRANCE

We all begin somewhere, and childhood in the lands of Ehdrigohr can be deadly. The truth is that many don't make it past this point.

What was special about your childhood that made you strong enough or safe enough to make it through intact? Write a few sentences to summarize what happened during this winter and how you survived it. Now create an Aspect phrase that sums this up. This is your Childhood Aspect. It can be easily compelled by those who wield the Principles.



WINTER OF BECOMING

The adolescent years are some of the most harrowing times of a person's life. It's a time when you're trying to figure out who you're going to be. This is the time when your ideals and habits often become established.

What shaped you as an adolescent? Was there a particular person or incident that shaped your interactions with, and perceptions of, the rest of the world? Perhaps something you did shaped the way the world interacts with and perceives you.

Write a summary of this Winter, and name it. Then create an Aspect that sums up what is important about this winter in relation to you. Remember that this could be about another person as well as an item or location. Was there a mentor, rival, or oppressor? A secret meeting place among friends, a special inheritance? This is your Aspect of Becoming and is easily invoked and brought into scenes.

WINTER OF ADVENTURE

Life in Ehdrigohr is rarely static. Even if you come from one of the few big towns or cities in the lands, change comes. It will often force you out of your comfort zones in the deadliest of ways. What hap-

pened to your character? This is his or her first adventure. You need to come up with a title for this adventure, and it stars your character. If you have trouble with this section, refer back to your main Character Aspect and create a story based around that. Basically, how did you become what you are? Summarize this Winter. Write down the title for your adventure (and the major moments of the story if you can) and pass it to your Game Master.

This is your Aspect Of Heroic Journeys.

WINTER OF COMPANIONS

Ehdrigohr is a land where community is important. Very few people survive its rigors alone. Your many adventures have brought you into contact with myriad people who have become relatives, chosen family for better or worse.

Look at the winters the other players have created. Pass these around and choose one in which you played a supporting role.

Since you were there, think about how you affected this story. You either complicated a situation, solved one, or both. Something built a connection between you and the other character. Figure out what this was and write a few sentences for your chapter in their story. Now summarize this connection (the Winter has already been named), your part in the story, and create an Aspect representing it.

This is your Aspect of Relatives.

WINTER OF AWAKENING

The Mysteries touch everyone and are a constant part of our lives and our actions. The great heroes have been chosen by the Weaver and Spinner and some portion of their being is woven tightly with the Mysteries.

These Mysteries represent your innermost power and are what manifests when you show great displays of power that seep into the world around you.

You must choose one Mystery to associate with each of the Power Displays as follows:

Devastation: Choose from the *Natures*. The *Natures* (Body, Mind, Spirit, Soul) manifest as animals and creatures that show who we truly are inside.

- Body manifests creatures of might.
- Mind manifests creatures of cunning.
- Spirit manifests creatures of tenacity.
- Soul manifests ancestors.

Awe: Choose from the *Elements*. The *Elements* (Earth, Fire, Air, Water) manifest as energy and elemental effects.

The three types of displays are described in The Basics section (p. 22).

- Earth causes tremors, localized gravity tends to reverse, vegetation manifests.
- Air causes winds and thunder.
- Fire causes heat and coruscating flames.
- Water increases humidity, rain manifests, waves grow, and water often reverses direction and floats as in a vacuum.

Glory: Choose from among the *Principles*. The *Principles* (Life, Love, Honor, Destiny) manifest as sounds, ghostly music heard by the affected, and sudden manifestations of insects and arachnids.

- Life makes spirits on The Road and in Shadow visible; moths and scarabs may emerge from the mouth, nose, and ears of the recently deceased.
- Love causes fits of laughter and tears from those nearby. Sometimes those in the area cough up colorful or musical creatures like butterflies and crickets.
- Honor is typically accompanied by the sound of drums and distant singing. In extreme cases beetles erupt from the ground and ants form messages.
- Destiny is often accompanied by whispered stories in vague tongues. Spiders and dragonflies often manifest.

All effects are centered on the character, happening in the same zone.

Of the three Mysteries you've chosen, one of them must be selected as your most important. This is your Mystery Aspect and is effectively the greatest part of your personal self.

Your Mystery Aspect was the first to manifest and is the subject of this Winter. What happened? What did it feel like? Remember these manifestations happen in moments of intensity, great success, and great failure. How did this affect you? How did it affect those around you? Write a few sentences about this.

People might, for instance, know you to be “A Child of Fire,” “A Woman of Honor,” “Possessed of the Tiger's Rage,” or any other such Aspect description.

Your Mystery Aspect can be invoked freely once per session. It will increase the power level of whatever action you are invoking it for by one step up and it will always have a display associated with it. In addition, your Mystery Aspect will flavor all manifestations of your other power effects. For example, if you've chosen Fire as your Mystery Aspect then even when your totem manifests from physical displays of power, it will be wreathed in flames or otherwise marked by fire.

Another example: Love is your primary and Water is your source for Awe. When manifesting Awe you might have drops of rain or

snow that flutter like butterflies.

Be creative here and whenever a display occurs. Displays don't have any real game effect on their own, but they do become scene Aspects that can be invoked or compelled for advantage if you have an actual skill in the Mysteries.

A GM can always cause your inner mysteries to manifest as part of the story or adventure. This is a type of compel, and she must pay the player a Fate point to do so.

WINTER OF NIGHTMARES

There are terrible things that lurk outside of the civilized areas, beyond the protection of the spirit towers, waiting for an opportunity to destroy mankind and all that it has wrought. At some point, you have had to come face to face with the things in the darkness and witness them do that which stretched your resolve. What happened here? What kind of creature did you see? What is the defining moment of this encounter? How has it affected you? Why does it still haunt your dreams?

This is your Fear Aspect and is mostly there for the GM to compel. Remember though that compels are there to help you gain Fate points that you can do awesome stuff with. Fear Aspects are special though, because they do two things:

First it creates a Shiver that is added to the world that will be recurring and will have a particular interest in you.

Secondly it is a compel that has an intensity that you can only resist by taking stress. This can be deferred by consequences. There are things out there that you have to truly struggle with yourself to face, and you cannot do so without cost.

HEROIC SURGES

The last important thing about your Winters is that they are super special memories that drive you forward. Sometimes, when the chips are down and failure is imminent, these memories will reoccur and give you one last boost.

When you are in a conflict and reach a point where you are “**Taken Out**”, you can invoke a Heroic Surge instead. A Heroic Surge requires two things, a soliloquy and “burning” one of your Winters. The player must reinvigorate themselves by declaring how this memory has given them new drive (that's the soliloquy). After that the Aspect associated with that Winter cannot be invoked again until a milestone has been achieved. (More on milestones in the “Advancement” section, see p. 85.)

When a Heroic Surge has been successfully invoked the following

Sample creatures to get your imaginations going can be found in the section on Shiver beginning on Page 320.

ASPECTS TO GO!

You could start playing just with Aspects if you wanted to in an attempt to get a feel for who these characters are.

If you opt for this, just use Aspects instead of skills to determine what you can and can't do. Take note of what you're successful in doing and use these notes as a guide, in between sessions, to help direct your purchase of advantages.

things occur:

- One of the character's stress tracks is cleared halfway (round up).
- Light consequences are removed.
- The character also loses 2 points of **Sorrow** if he or she survives the scene. Allies who witness a Heroic Surge automatically lose 1 point of Sorrow as well. The Sorrow is not removed until the next scene begins.
- The character's actions are treated as one power level higher until they are knocked out or the scene ends, whichever comes first.

A Heroic Surge is meant to be a roleplaying moment and story-driving tool. If you don't do the soliloquy you don't get the surge. You can't just say "I have a Heroic Surge" and recover. You have to engage in the moment.

There are rules effects and tricks that might only happen after you've experienced a Heroic Surge, but you have to engage the character's history to get there. If you haven't created Winters you can't invoke Heroic Surges. This means that if you are just jumping in with a quick character who only has a couple aspects, then ignore heroic surges until the character is more complete.

A Heroic Surge has many benefits but it comes with some drawbacks. First off, you've made this brief, pure connection with the Mysteries. The effects of this linger on you for a bit. The Weaver has taken note of you and will have woven you into the web just a bit tighter. You gain the aspect "Woven" until the next significant milestone. While woven the following things happen to you:

- You become like a beacon to Shivers. It's almost impossible for you to hide from them.
- You have overextended yourself and will be at a -1 to all actions until the next milestone.
- The GM can compel this once to remove two dice from an action and make you reroll.

Be careful with using heroic surges too often as they can leave you bereft of power when you need it the most.

Welcome to your character!

These are your Aspects. With your main Aspect (high concept) and cultural Aspect added to this you should have 9 Aspects to work with

altogether. You could take the character on a test run with the GM or continue on to determine your character's Advantages.

STEP 4: ADVANTAGES

The characters of Ehdrigohr are bigger than life and are possessed of gifts that make them stand out from the common man. Sometimes, however, these gifts come at great cost.

These abilities are represented in the game with Advantages. They represent everything from unusual skill sets to magical powers, and are the things that make characters special. Advantages are broken into the categories of Skill and Stunts.

Skills

All characters start with 10 Skills assigned as follows:

- 1 Great (+4) Skill
- 2 Good (+3) Skills
- 3 Fair (+2) Skills
- 4 Average (+1) Skills

Any Skill that you did not take is treated as Mediocre (+0) and you have the aspect "Untrained" when you try to use them. A Game Master can compel this when you use untrained skills to make your life difficult. More information on Skills can be found beginning on page 100.

Full descriptions of Skills begins on Page 100.

Stunts

You get one Stunt for free. You can take up to three more by lowering your character's **refresh** by one per additional Stunt (for most Stunts). Gaining access to a Tradition is a Stunt, and costs 2 refresh.

Stunts are the things that help you refine what is special and unique with your character. There are stunts for skills, stunts for culture, and stunts that get you access to magic and special skills. Stunts can be found listed under each skill, culture, or special thing that they're associated with. As you grow comfortable with the game you are encouraged to create your own stunts.

More detailed information on Stunts can be found beginning on page 101.

Adjusting Refresh

Player characters are special. They stand head and shoulders above most people. The very fabric of the universe knows this and

seeks to use them to move the world forward. As characters adventure they will gain more and more power to shape their own destinies and the destinies of those around them. This is often referred to in Ehdrigohr with the term “being Woven” and manifests in the game as FATE points.

Players normally begin each session with 4 FATE Points (FP) to use over the course of the session. The actual number of FATE points a given player begins with per session is determined by their “Refresh”.

You start with 4 refresh and can never allow your refresh to fall to less than 1. If your refresh ever becomes 0 or lower your character ceases to become a viable character and her story ends in that scene.

Step 5: GEAR

Everybody needs a little something to get them through the days. Your character gets their basic clothes for free. This set of clothes is nothing fancy. Beyond this you can have 5 other things important to your character, as long as their cost would be negligible. If you want something more expensive, it should be described with an Aspect or Stunt. This is called an “Extra”. You can buy them with your refresh points. Discuss it with your Game Master, come up with an appropriate cost that reflects the usefulness of the extra.

Step 6: Stress Tracks

Once you have all of your Aspects and Advantages figured out it's time to determine your character's stress tracks. Stress tracks are how we keep track of how much abuse your character can endure before being taken out or defeated. They represent the knocks and bruises, slights and insults, and emotional ups and downs a character might suffer as part of a conflict.

Your stress tracks are composed of “boxes” representing your resilience. A character might get beaten down and lose some of the boxes of a given stress track, but these will recover quickly once she has time to rest and recollect herself—usually between scenes.

Characters by default have the following stress tracks:

Health - Most physical suffering and injury affects this track.

Composure - Most mental and emotional stress is applied here.

Standing - Most stress related to relationships and social standing applies to this track.

Other tracks exist for more arcane phenomena, but such things

are special cases and are covered elsewhere.

Each character can only endure so much stress in a given area. Your character begins play with 3 boxes per track, but this number can be affected by certain Skills, Stunts, and Mysteries.

Whenever a character suffers from a successful attack of any sort, the character should mark off the corresponding box on the appropriate stress track. For instance, if the character takes a three-point physical hit, he should mark off the third box from the left on the Health stress track.

At the end of a scene, unless the GM says otherwise, a character's stress tracks clear out; minor scrapes and bruises, trivial gaffes and embarrassments, and momentary fears pass away. Deeper issues resulting from attacks are called Consequences.

Consequences

Stress is a transitory thing, but sometimes conflicts will have lasting effects injuries, embarrassments, phobias and the like. These are collectively called Consequences, and they are a special kind of Aspect. We'll talk more about what this means shortly.

Any time a character takes stress, he may opt not to check off a box and instead take a Consequence. If the character takes a hit which he doesn't have a box for, either because it's higher than the number of boxes on his stress track, or because it is higher than his highest available stress box, the character must take a Consequence.

The exact nature of the Consequence should depend upon the conflict— an injury might be appropriate for a physical struggle, an emotional state might be apt for a social one.

Each consequence has an equivalent value in terms of stress boxes as follows:

Light = 2

Fierce = 4

Grievous = 6

Taking a consequence of a given severity will negate that many points of stress. A player can use more than one Consequence in one pass if necessary to negate the incoming damage from an attack. Whatever Consequence the player chooses is written down under the stress track.

Normally the person taking the consequence gets to describe what it is, so long as it's compatible with the nature of the attack that inflicted the harm. The GM acts as an arbitrator on the appropriateness of a Consequence, so there may be some back and forth conversation before a Consequence is settled on. The GM is the final

More on being Taken
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authority on whether a player's suggested Consequence is reasonable for the circumstances and severity.

Characters default to being able to suffer each severity of Consequence only once. This means that they may also only carry 3 consequences at a time by default. Certain Skills and Stunts extend this number. If the character has already taken a Grievous consequence, and they've got 5 points of stress coming in, then the only remaining option is to be taken out.

But here's the thing about Consequences being a special kind of Aspect: As long as the Consequences are on the character's sheet, they may be compelled (or invoked!) like any other Aspect. This also means that opponents may start using the Consequence as an advantage pretty easily, since it's no secret that the Consequence Aspects are now on the character's sheet!

Step 7: FINISHING TOUCHES

Once you've figured out all of the preceding steps, it's time to fill in the remaining little details that bring your character to life. Figure out her other motivations, habits, likes, dislikes, history and goals. Make sure to talk these bits over with your Game Master; they are the little hooks that she'll be using to pull your character further into the world, as well as being the things that let you find your place in the story.

ADVANCEMENT

Characters are not static objects—they grow and develop over time, evolving in response to the conflicts they face during the game and the choices they make. Settings are similar, but they grow and develop in response to the successes and failures of the various characters. The rate at which both characters and settings grow and change is measured in milestones.

Milestones & Characters

Milestones are moments in the game where something has happened to justify some kind of advancement. Milestones largely occur according to the GM's discretion, and the frequency of their occurrence will do a lot to establish the overall tone and feel of a campaign—frequent milestones allow the characters to grow rapidly, and give a sort of "epic" feel to the campaign as the opposition scales in response. Infrequent milestones make things feel more grounded and established.

Milestones fall into three categories: minor, significant, and major. There are some guidelines for when each happens, along with what characters can do during each type of milestone.



Minor Milestone

Minor milestones usually occur at the end of a session of play, or whenever one significant piece of a story is resolved. A minor milestone allows the characters to evolve in response to the story that's been unfolding before them.

When a minor milestone occurs, you may choose one of the following:

Switch the values of any two Skills, or replace one Average Skill you have with an Average Skill that isn't on your sheet.

Change any single Stunt for another Stunt with the same refresh cost.

Purchase new Stunts, provided you have the refresh to do so.

Rename one Aspect.

Minor milestones are ideal when you want to switch the focus of your character's existing abilities or change something on the character sheet, like a Skill or the wording of an Aspect. Maybe something happens in the story that makes part of your character's sheet seem inappropriate, or you've simply discovered that your choice of Skills, Aspects, and Stunts don't match your expectations in play.

Obviously, these changes should be justified as much as possible, either within the story ("Hey, my character's contact died, so I think I want to make his Joe the Reliable Contact aspect into Vengeance for Joe, okay?") or as a result of play ("So I thought I wanted this guy to have a Good (+3) Intimidation, but I'm not really using it much—it'd be more fitting if he had a lower Intimidation and a higher Rapport, so I'm going to switch it out with my Fair (+2) Rapport."). If the skill you're switching out is at Average (+1), you may change it for a skill that isn't on your sheet. Be careful when switching around a character's peak skills (his highest ones), though—this can significantly change the character, which is not the purpose of a minor milestone. Keep it in character, so to speak.

Changing High Concepts and Troubles

High concepts are pretty sacrosanct and won't change with just a minor milestone. If they change at all, it will happen with a major milestone, which you'll read about later on.

On the other hand, maybe you've taken care of your trouble. Or maybe your trouble doesn't mean as much to your character anymore. Great! Just make sure that you replace it with a new trouble, and not just any random aspect.

Significant Milestone

A significant milestone usually occurs at the conclusion of a sce-

nario or a major plotline—or once every two or three sessions, on average. Significant milestones are about advances of experience, as the characters have learned new things in dealing with problems and challenges.

When a significant milestone occurs, your character gets all of the following:

- One additional Skill rank to be applied to any one Skill.

- Your choice of one of the benefits of a minor milestone.

Of particular note here is getting one additional skill rank to spend on a new skill slot, because it can be a little confusing. One skill rank buys an Average slot, which you can then fill with any skill you want. If you want a bigger slot, you have to bank a few significant milestones' worth of advancement first.

When you're upgrading an existing skill, you need only pay the difference in cost—if you have an Average slot, you can upgrade it to a Fair slot by paying one rank. Skills exist in a column structure. To have a skill of a higher rank you must have a skill of a lower rank to support it. You can't just buy a skill at fair +2 unless there is already a skill at Average +1 there to support it.

Major Milestone

A major milestone should only occur when something has happened in the campaign that shakes it up a lot—when a few scenarios have concluded, or a long, large-scale plotline wraps up. When these kinds of events happen, the characters jump up a scale of power.

When a major milestone occurs, your character gets all of the following:

- You gain an additional point of refresh.

- Increase the power level of one of your skills +1 step.

- All the benefits of a significant milestone.

These milestones signify a major change in the power structure of your campaign. Your characters are going to be dealing with a whole new tier of obstacles from here on out. Consider how even basic character options are affected by one jump in refresh. Even just the bump to a skill that a stunt provides can radically alter the nature of a character's effectiveness.

This is a really big deal; it means that the PCs are directly able to take on more powerful threats and have a wider variety of resources to draw on to face those threats. To use a boxing analogy, an advancement of power is like stepping up to the next weight class—you might be the most skilled boxer in the world, but if



you're a featherweight, there's still only so much you can do against a less-skilled heavyweight.

Another option the GM has for a major milestone is to increase the skill cap by one rank. This allows the characters to raise their skills up into larger-than-life levels, transcending all previous expectations of human (or superhuman) capability. This can be combined with the normal refresh award as often as the GM wishes. By default, one skill cap increase should probably come every two or three major milestones, happening a few times per campaign at most. A campaign where the skill cap increases with every new major milestone gain will get to an epic scale of ability very quickly.

Changing the Defaults

The setup in this section is the default, based on the premise that if a single self-contained story is the equivalent of a scenario, then every two or three of those would warrant a major milestone.

Depending on the tone of the game, the GM might want to change the rate at which milestones occur, or even eliminate some types of advancements entirely.

At the very least, minor milestones should always be made available to the PCs. Characters that remain "static" can get boring pretty fast; with enough minor milestones, a player could have a totally different character sheet than the one he started with after the end of just a few scenarios.

Taking away or slowing down the rate of significant milestones means that, on a basic level, the characters are not going to get more capable of dealing with problems. This can firmly set the dial on a campaign's scope and breadth of challenges: a small-scale campaign that deals with solving the personal problems of characters might never require the characters to amass much more experience than they have, so as to keep conflicts satisfying. However, for some groups this has the potential issue of getting old after a while, and eventually the group will more than likely either end the campaign or decide to expand its scope.

Not using major milestones means that there are certain levels of opposition the characters simply won't be able to contend with they're stuck in their particular weight class, and there's no moving up. Again, this can be used to tightly rein in the aesthetic of a particular campaign. Again, though, this has the potential to reduce the "life expectancy" of your campaign.

The defaults above allow for the longest-running potential campaigns, where the characters could even start at the point where they've just been introduced to relatively big threats and move up in

power and experience until they're contending with the kinds of epic enemies found in high-fantasy or pulp adventure tales...and even beyond.

Completely Revising Characters

If there's enough downtime in your story between a major milestone and the next adventure, you might also consider re-creating your characters as a group— adjusting Aspects, reconfiguring Skills, buying Stunts and Extras, etc. While you don't need to go through the phases part of character creation again, it's a chance to rethink or replace your character's high concept. As long as there's some commonality to the character for a sense of continuity, this isn't a problem.

Mid-Session Power Upgrades

It's surprisingly easy to take on additional special power at a moment's notice. Stressful situations can force potential abilities to rise to the fore; bargains with mighty individuals or organizations can provide you with some power at the snap of a finger. Sometimes, it doesn't make sense to wait for a milestone to receive these abilities: you and your friends are cornered, everything seems hopeless, and you reach out to questionable sources for aid to save your butt.

When these moments occur it's appropriate for the GM to allow you to make these changes—but at a cost.

The first, of course, is appropriate justification; you shouldn't be able to just change things on your sheet willy-nilly. The group should agree that the story justifies the change, or you should provide a clear rationale for it.

The second is that you must permanently and immediately drop your refresh rating and trade in fate points equal to the cost of the power. Remember that your refresh cannot drop below one (except for truly exceptional circumstances—see "The Sacrifice" below). If you don't currently have enough fate points to pay for the upgrade, you can accrue a "debt" with the GM for the difference: you owe the GM a number of compels that don't get you fate points. These compels should be related to the circumstances under which the new powers were taken. Once you're out of debt, compels accrue fate points as normal.

The Sacrifice

The most extreme version of a mid-session power upgrade is to take your character to zero (or less!) refresh on purpose. A more over the top form of the heroic surge, this gives your character ac-

cess to incredible power in a hurry at the ultimate price: your character is no longer a viable PC. There is no way around the final choice—once you make it, you're effectively giving up control of your character, just as surely as if he'd died.

Keep in mind that, just because you're volunteering to take your refresh to zero or beyond, it doesn't mean that you get to go on a shopping spree for anything that costs refresh. Any restrictions still apply, as well as the nature of those who might be offering you power for this last hurrah.

This should never be treated as a frivolous event—it'd be lame if you set your character up to go out in a blaze of glory and didn't get the chance for dramatic payoff. So if you volunteer to upgrade your character's powers to the point where your refresh drops to zero or below, you get to retain control of the character for as long as it takes to resolve the immediate consequences of your choice. Usually this means playing out the rest of the scene or the very next scene; after that, your character is an NPC. You can use this to set up the circumstances of your character's departure and put a nice (or not so nice) capstone on his story.

Remember that this situation has to have an adequate power source which will affect what happens to the character as an NPC. Some suggestions follow.

If the power source is Love then you perform your deed, replenish the Fate pools of your allies and then move on to the Road to be reborn another day. Your allies, however, are left with a new memory that they can add to their character sheets and invoke later. To invoke this power source you must have a connection based on love with other characters. When the danger has passed, those characters suffer a Great loss to their mental or social stress tracks. If this takes them out they are overcome with anguish and must struggle to overcome the pain deep in their heart.

If the power source is Hate then you perform your deed. You become a taint upon the land, an angry emotion that rages on and threatens to absorb all into your rage. You have become a curse. You haunt the dreams of those who witness the moment. They suffer a Great mental shock. If any are taken out by this they are linked to your curse and have a new Nightmare Aspect.

If the power source is one of the Sorrows then you become a minion of some sort to the Sorrow that promised you power. The GM might actually allow you to play the character for a few sessions to show your fall from grace.

If the power source is one of the Graces then you are elevated to



the status of Bte Akicita and will sleep the long sleep until the Gathering time has come and the Battle of Endings against Ok'o-wi and her brood is met. You will be a general in this last great battle.

Other ways to deal with it abound. Game Masters are encouraged to be creative with how this works in their games, and how they weave it into the story. Such sacrifices shouldn't be common, and they should have an effect beyond the simple death or removal of the character.

Temporary Powers

In rare circumstances, it might be appropriate for a character to temporarily take on power. Usually this happens when an entity imbues someone with power for a short time in order to take on a threat or fulfill some part of its own agenda.

Regardless of the circumstances, temporary powers should be dealt with in a similar fashion to mid-session upgrades, but with less cost—the player has to spend fate points equal to the power's usual cost, but not permanent refresh. As with normal mid-session upgrades, the player can "owe" the GM some compels if there aren't enough fate points to pay for it.

Once again, this should only happen under rare circumstances, and the benefits shouldn't last longer than a scene—most things that can bestow power only do so temporarily, when the situation is extremely dire, and when there isn't really another option.



ASPECTS & FATE POINTS

WHAT IS AN ASPECT?

An aspect is a short descriptive phrase that details something important about whomever, or whatever, it is attached to. Aspects are there to keep you mindful of what is important about your characters and the things they are experiencing. They serve a mechanical purpose by being the focus of how you gain and spend fate points in the game. Fate points are spent on aspects allowing the character to get bonuses in tight situations. Fate points are gained by allowing those same aspects to complicate your life from time to time.

WHAT ARE FATE POINTS?

As mentioned in The Basics section, fate points are a pool of points that players and GMs can use to manipulate and influence the world around them. Every player starts each session with a number of fate points equal to their refresh score. GM's get a separate budget of points that renews every scene.

TYPES OF ASPECTS

When playing Ehdrigohr you'll find that aspects are everywhere. While they work the same way for the most part they have different purposes which will affect how and when you choose to invoke or compel them.

World Aspects

Ehdrigohr has a number of themes and ideas running through it that help to maintain the flavor of the world. You can always invoke, compel, or create an advantage on these aspects. These aspects are found in the history and gazetteer section.

Character Aspects

Character aspects are also permanent but they are unique to your character or someone else's. They also only apply to the character. They provide handles to connect to the character in numerous ways.

Significant personality traits or beliefs of that character (Never fear the dark, Women and Children First, Nobody Should Die Alone)

The character's background or profession (Student of Chana Academy, Warrior of the Crow Society, Village Medicine Worker)

An Important possession or noticeable feature (The Crow's Lance, Skilled with the Butterfly Blades, One-Armed Fighter)

Relationships to people and organizations (Fiddler in disguise,

Elite Defender of the Saldu, Teller of the Owl Society)

Problems, goals, or issues the character is dealing with (Banned in the Wu Towns, Searching for my husband, Hunted by the Bad Foot Clan)

Titles, reputations, or obligations the character may have (Master of the Seven Wind Strikes, Elder of the Village, Must Cleanse the Name of my Order, Chief of the Red Hill Bandits, Dove Society Undertaker, A Jay Lives to Bring Smiles).

You can invoke or compel any of your own character aspects whenever it's appropriate while GM's can always suggest compels to any PC. As a player you can propose compels for other characters but the final arbiter over whether they are appropriate or not is the GM.

Scene Aspects

A scene aspect is temporary. They generally last for a single scene or until they no longer make sense. Usually, scene aspects are attached to the environment the scene occupies and affect everyone. You can use the Create an advantage action to make more scene aspects and even attach them to specific characters.

Just as character aspects define what is significant about the scene, so too do scene aspects define what is significant about the scene. That includes:

- Physical features of the environment
- Positioning or placement
- Immediate problems or obstacles
- Contextual details that are likely to come up in play.

Whether or not you can make use of a scene aspect depends greatly on context and situation. Sometimes it'll be obvious as to how you use a given scene aspect and other time you'll have to justify your use. Generally you're able to use any aspects that you create in a scene. The GM is the final arbiter on what scene aspects you can interact with.

Consequences

Consequences are a bit like scene aspects but apply to characters (usually) and are more permanent. They're not as permanent as a character aspect. You take on consequences in order to avoid being taken out in a conflict, so they describe lasting injuries or problems that you take away from a conflict (Twisted Ankle, Broken Rib, Afraid of Soldiers, Cast Out of the Tribe). Consequences are described more in the Dramatic Moments section.

The length of time a consequence remains is typically related to its severity. Once they're known they will bring lots of compels until they go away. Anyone who can benefit from the consequence can invoke it or create an advantage on it.

Boosts

Boosts are just like scene aspects except they only stick around long enough to be invoked once. Boosts come about when you're trying to create an advantage but don't succeed well enough, or as an added benefit for succeeding with style at an action.

The person who created the boost is usually the only who gets to use it. It is, however, perfectly fine for that player to pass the boost on to someone else to use.

INVOKING ASPECTS

The primary way you're going to use aspects in a game of Fate is to **invoke** them. If you're in a situation where an aspect is beneficial to your character somehow, you can invoke it.

In order to invoke an aspect, explain why the aspect is relevant, spend a fate point, and you can choose one of three benefits:

1. Take a +2 on your current skill roll.
2. Reroll all your dice.
3. Force someone to make a Fair (+2) overcome roll to deal with an obstacle represented by the aspect. If you do this before your target's turn in a conflict, they have to use their turn on this action instead of the one they were going to do.

It doesn't matter when you invoke the aspect, but usually it's best to wait until after you've rolled the dice to see if you're going to need the benefit. You *can* invoke multiple aspects on a single roll, but you *cannot* invoke the same aspect multiple times on a single roll. So if your reroll doesn't help you enough, you'll have to pick another aspect (and spend another fate point) for a second reroll or that +2.

The group has to buy into the relevance of a particular aspect when you invoke it; GMs, you're the final arbiter on this one. The use of an aspect should make sense, or you should be able to creatively narrate your way into ensuring it makes sense.

Precisely *how* you do this is up to you. Sometimes, it makes so much sense to use a particular aspect that you can just hold up the fate point and name it. Or you might need to embellish on your character's action a little more so that everyone understands where you're coming from. (That's why we recommend making sure that

you're on the same page with the group as to what one of your aspects means—it makes it easier to justify bringing it into play.)

Free Invocations

You don't always have to pay a fate point to invoke an aspect sometimes it's free.

When you succeed at creating an advantage, you “stick” a free invocation onto an aspect. If you succeed with style, you get two invocations. Some of the other actions also give you free boosts.

You also get to stick a free invocation on any consequences you inflict in a conflict.

Free invocations work like normal ones except in two ways: no fate points are exchanged, and you can stack them with a normal invocation for a better bonus. That way, a +2 bonus can become a +4, one reroll could become two rerolls, or you can force someone to deal with a Great (+4) obstacle instead of a Fair (+2). You can also stack multiple free invocations together.

After you've used your free invocation, if the aspect in question is still around, you can keep invoking it by spending fate points.

If you want, you can pass your free invocation to another character. That allows you to get some teamwork going between you and a buddy. This is really useful in a conflict if you want to set someone up for a big blow—have everyone create an advantage and pass their free invocations onto one person, then let that person stack all of them up at once for a huge bonus.

COMPELLING ASPECTS

The other way you use aspects in the game are called **compels**. If you're in a situation where having or being around a certain aspect means your character's life is more dramatic or complicated, someone can compel the aspect. That aspect can be on your character, the scene, location, game, or any other aspect that's current available. We'll start with character aspects, and then talk about scene aspects in a bit.

In order to compel an aspect, explain why the aspect is relevant, and then make an offer as to what the complication is. You can negotiate the terms of the complication a bit, until you reach a reasonable consensus. Whoever is getting compelled then has two choices:

- Accept the complication and receive a fate point
- Pay a fate point to prevent the complication from happening

The complication from a compel occurs regardless of anyone's efforts—once you've made a deal and taken the fate point, you can't

use your skills or anything else to mitigate the situation. You have to deal with the new story developments that arise from the complication.

If you prevent the complication from happening, then you and the group describes how you avoid it. Sometimes it just might mean that you agree that the event never happened in the first place, and sometimes it means narrating your character doing something proactive. Whatever you need to do in order to make it make sense works fine, as long as the group is okay with it.

GMs, you're the final arbiter here, as always—not just on how the result of a compel plays out, but on whether or not a compel is valid in the first place. Use the same judgment you apply to an invocation—it should make instinctive sense that a complication might arise from the aspect, or it should only require a small amount of explanation.

Finally, and this is very important: if a player wants to compel another character, it costs a fate point to propose the complication. The GM can compel for free, and any player can propose a compel on his or her own character for free.

Types of Compels

There are two major categories for what a compel looks like in the game: **events** and **decisions**. These are tools to help you figure out what a compel should look like and help break any mental blocks.

Events

Event-based compels happen to the character in spite of themselves, when the world around them responds to a certain aspect in a certain way and creates a complicating circumstance. It looks like this:

- You are in ____ situation and have ____ aspect, so it makes sense that, unfortunately, ____ would happen to you. Damn your luck.

As with decision-based compels, the real mileage is in the complication itself. Without that, you don't really have anything worth focusing on—the fact that the PCs continually have complicated and dramatic things happen to them is, well, exactly what makes them PCs in the first place.

GMs, event-based compels are your opportunity to party. You're expected to control the world around the PCs, so having that world react to them in an unexpected way is pretty much part and parcel to your job description.

Players, event-based compels are great for you. You get rewarded

simply by *being there*—how much more awesome can you get? You might have a more difficult time justifying an event-based compel, as it requires you to assert control over an element of the game that you typically aren't in control of. Feel free to propose an event-based compel, but remember that the GM has the final say on controlling the game world and may veto you if she's got something else in mind.

Decisions

A decision is a kind of compel that is internal to the character. It happens because of a decision the character makes, hence the name. It looks like this:

- You have ____ aspect in ____ situation, so it makes sense that you'd decide to _____. This goes wrong when _____ happens.

Obviously, you're not obligated to follow the fill-in-the-blank approach to it if you don't want to, but if you're having a hard time making a compel work, try it.

So the real dramatic impact from these kinds of compels is not what decision the character makes, most of the time—it's how things go wrong. Before something goes wrong, the first sentence could be a prelude to making a skill roll or simply a matter of roleplaying. The complication that the decision creates is really what makes it a compel. The decision part should be very self-evident, and something that a player might have been thinking about doing anyway. The same goes for players trying to compel NPCs or each other—make sure you have a strong mutual understanding of what that NPC or other player might do before proposing this.

Players, if you need fate points, this is a really good way of getting them. If you propose a decision-based compel for your character to the GM, then what you're basically asking is for something you're about to do to go wrong somehow. You don't even have to have a complication in mind—simply signaling the GM should be enough to start a conversation. GMs, as long as the compel isn't weak (as in, as long as there's a good, juicy complication), you should go with this. If the compel is weak, poll the rest of the group for ideas until something more substantial sticks.



SKILLS

Skills represent the wide range of abilities that your character has gain over its lifetime. These abilities might have been acquired through long nights of study or training with a mentor or relative, or they might just be an innate talent that has been honed through use and happenstance. However they have been attained they help to define the capabilities of a character even further than the aspects.

Skills are rated on the adjective ladder. The higher the rating, the better your character is at the skill. They allow you to see what your character is good at, and bad at, in a glance.

In Ehdrigohr skills represent the context in which you can use the four basic game actions. Generally, if you don't have a skill in an area you can't usually use one of the game actions in that situation.

The four basic game actions are as follows:

- **Overcome:** This is used when you are presented with a challenge, hindrance, barrier, or general task that must be undertaken.
- **Create an Advantage:** This is used to assess opponents and reveal things about them that you can benefit from. It also lets you create a situation that lets you succeed better with another action. When you create an advantage it allows you to assess, discover, and create aspects which you can then invoke for free.
- **Attack:** This is used if you want to cause harm to someone. The nature of the harm varies from skill to skill, and situation to situation. In general it will fall into one of the categories of physical, mental, emotional, or social.
- **Defend:** This action is used when you wish to counter an attack.

In addition to the basic actions some skills also allow access to certain special effects. These effects vary depending on the skill but usually require no action on the part of the character to receive them.

STUNTS

While everyone in Ehdrigohr has access to the standard skill list, stunts are unique to your character. Stunts often represent some special refinement to a skill that a character may use, or an extra benefit that they may get when using the skill that is unique to the character. They can also represent connections to special groups or give access to special skills.

SKILL LIST

Alertness
Animal Handling
Art
Athletics
Attunement
Bartering
Burglary
Contacting
Deceit
Endurance
Artifice
Fists
Gambling
Intimidation
Investigation
Leadership
Lore
Medicine
Might
Mysteries
Pilot
Rapport
Resolve
Resources
Riding
Sleight of Hand
Stealth
Weapons

FATE CORE NOTE:

The skill list for Ehdri-gohr is longer than that found in Fate Core with a lot of more prosaic skills. This assumes you'll be running a game with as much social interaction as politics where artists are very important.

Most Ehdrigohr characters have a limited access to information, and lack the broad training of a standard Fate character. Of course we assume that the player characters are just a bit more worldly than their peers.

If you don't feel you'll be making use of this full list by all means cut, or collapse, some skills or use the default Fate Core list. Be sure to let your players know which skill list you'll be running with.

Stunts, as mentioned before, do a variety of different things. When you are designing stunts for your character consider the following things that stunts can do.

- Add a new action to a skill. For example you could give an attack action to a skill that normally can't be used to attack
- Add a specialty to a skill: This grants you a circumstance where you are especially good with the skill and receive a bonus. Broad circumstances typically grant a +1 bonus, and narrow circumstances typically grant a +2 bonus. These are a bit like aspects that are always on.
- Grant the ability to do something extraordinary or magical at the cost of multiple skill slots or refresh points.
- Create a single exception, in a narrow circumstance, for any other game rule that doesn't fit into the category of an action.
- Feel free to invent your own stunts. For in depth rules on the creation of stunts please check out the Fate Core System book.
- Additional stunts will appear in supplemental materials for the game.

ALERTNESS

Alertness is a measure of the character's regular, passive level of awareness. Specifically, it is the perception skill to notice things the character is not looking for. In an exchange where characters are surprised (and as such, are prevented from choosing which skill to roll), Alertness is the skill which is rolled. In conflicts of an active, physical nature, Alertness determines initiative with the highest alertness. Characters with high Alertness include guardsmen, waywardens, and criminals of a sneaky variety.

Players will rarely ask to roll Alertness – if they are actively looking for something, Investigation is usually more appropriate. Alertness is more appropriate for things that players and characters do not expect or are not looking for, such as whether they notice a surprise, or if they happen to spot a hidden clue. In short, it is reactive perception. As such, it's a skill that it's more likely for the GM calls for people to roll.

Overcome: Use Alertness to overcome any attempts to hide or sneak used by another.

Attack: Alertness is not meant as an attack skill

Create an Advantage: When you're creating an advantage with Alertness you're watching and looking for opportunities that no one else sees or creating scene aspects for small or sudden changes in the local environment.

Defend: Whenever ambushed by someone using Stealth, a character may make one final Alertness check against the Stealth of his at-

tacker, in order to see if he is surprised. If he fails this check, he can't apply his Alertness bonus for the first exchange.

Alertness Stunts

One Eye Open: It's difficult to get the jump on you as you're always just a little bit paranoid. You gain a +2 on alertness rolls when asleep.

Situation Awareness: You are great at assessing the ebb and flow of body language and how people interact with each other silently. You gain a +2 to alertness rolls to create an advantage when dealing with a group of people.

Sudden Clarity: If you're subject to a surprise attack that misses, you gain a +1 to whatever action you choose to take in response.

ANIMAL HANDLING

Animal Handling covers the breadth of interaction with animals, from training them to communicating with them, albeit in a limited fashion. This includes handling beasts of burden and carriage animals, as well as common pets. Animal Handling serves as a stand-in for all social skills when dealing with animals. Not to say animals are great conversationalists, but when one is trying to soothe or stare down an animal, Animal Handling is the skill to roll.

Overcome: When animals are unruly or you need to get an animal to perform a particular task can use an overcome action to get your desired results.

Create an Advantage: You are used to working with animals and as such can read their moods and telltale signs. Creating an revolves around assessing aspects of the animal and using them to possibly help you with an overcome action.

Animal Handling Stunts

Totem: You have an uncanny connection with a particular type of animal. When using animal handling with them you gain a +1 on your rolls.

Animal Friend: You gain a +2 to calm frightened or enraged animals.

Companion: You gain an animal companion. The animal starts out as an Average minion. You can take this multiple times. Each time you take it increase the animal's quality one step.

ART

Art measures the character's overall artistic ability, covering the gamut of endeavors, from painting to dance to music. This includes

knowledge, composition, and performance. Characters with high Art include artists (obviously), JayCloaks, and those of the avant garde. Art is actually 4 different skill sets (knowledge, craft, communication, performance) and Players must purchase them separately.

The difference between art and craft is that craft creates functionality correct but art creates something that is moving. Consider it your ability to add technique to whatever you do. It needs to be purchased separately for each area you intend for it to be effective (visual media, movement, construction, oratory, and each of the mysteries).

CREATE AN ADVANTAGE:

Art has many ways of making its effect evident in many different situations. Art can be used to create advantage in the following was

Art as Communication

While Lore covers the technical building blocks of communication, language, grammar and the like, Art covers the expression of ideas, and as such, covers most means of broad communication, like writing. These are not “pure” art forms, however, and a character’s other skills play a role in their application, so a character’s writing is usually modified by their Lore. There are exceptions, such as dry academic lectures (which use pure Lore) and poetry (which uses just Art).

Public speaking is a similar creature, but it is more beholden to the charisma and presence of the speaker – in those cases, Art modifies whatever skill (Rapport, Intimidate, Leadership or Deceit) the character is using, as long as there is a creative aspect to the communication.

OVERCOME

Art as Performance

Art can also be used to shape the mood of a group or individual. Whenever someone is exposed to an artist’s work, such as at a performance or a show, the scene may gain an aspect appropriate to the performance. Normally, this aspect only remains on the scene for the duration of the performance, but some tricks allow this to extend into subsequent scenes.

This is limited to declaring mood and emotional impact, rather than anything specific. In general, art inspires passion in a broad sense; for example, it may make someone feel hopeful, but not determine what he’ll feel hopeful about. When making a standard performance, any temporary aspects that result – either by treating the performance as a maneuver, or as an attack yielding consequences – must also be broad and nonspecific. “Hopeful” is good; “Hopeful

That Elder Kills Men Will Be Defeated” is not. There is an exception; a performance that very clearly has a target, such as a satire, may plant fairly specific opinions of a target, with the difficulty based on the status of the target.

Forgery [Art]

Imitation has a long-standing place in the art world, and thus Art is quite good at making fakes, be they “lost” symphonies or falsified documents. When a character uses Art to make a forgery, the difficulty depends on the complexity of the thing being duplicated. Having an original on hand can help reduce the difficulty. Deceit should also be used to complement the effort.

Art Stunts

Mesmerizing Performance: You gain a +2 on attempts to set mood with performance and oratory. If you get a boost, you get to instill the urge to act on a single verb in response to the work.

Signature Piece: You have a work of art that is well known. It acts as an aspect that you can invoke for free once a session in social situations applicable to the art.

ARTIFICE

Artifice is the understanding of how to make and repair complex devices and mechanism, both for purposes of building it and taking it apart. Artifice is many skills combined under one heading. The player must purchase this skill once for each area of artifice he would like training in.

The common areas are Carpenter, Tailor, Armorer, Dyer, Tanner, Weaver, Masonry, Bladesmith, Locksmith, Blacksmith, Potter, Rope-maker. Characters with a high Artifice include masons, Makers, and mechanics.

Overcome: Artifice allows you to build, break, or fix things assuming you have the proper tools to do so. Building most items is a Challenge that may combine many types of Artifice and a bit of Art as well. Whether you need to roll Artifice or not is a function of how interesting the moment or the item in question is to the narrative. If it's unimportant you should just succeed and move on. If however it is being done under stress or you're creating something that will have an effect on the story then you may have to roll.

Create an Advantage: You may create and advantage by pointing out flaws in construction to your benefit or stating how well something is put together. You could exploit “**Hairline Fracture in the Support Column**” or call out that “**The Bridge is Obviously Built to Support a Heavy Load.**”

Creating advantages with Artifice can also represent you doing quick sabotage or you putting together a makeshift item to help out in a pinch.

Attack: Artifice is usually not an attack skill though it is possible you might use it against a large contraption or that is attacking you like a creature. Otherwise it's probably just an advantage you're creating.

Defend: This is also a special case thing that you and your Game Master will have to decide on a case by case basis.

Artifice Stunts

Bits and Pieces: You've got pockets full of stuff that even you've forgotten about. Once a scene you can freely add an aspect to the scene that represents a small piece of equipment or repair materials. This stunt presumes you have some sort of clothing that has lots of pockets. You can't use it if you're unclothed.

Demolitionist: You've got a knack for breaking things. You gain a +1 to rolls to create advantages that allow you to break or sabotage a structure.

Makeshift Maker: You've got a knack for the quick fix. You can easily pull together makeshift repairs on items and structures. You gain a +2 to create advantages that allow you to get something up and working quickly. Such quick fix items return to a broken state at the end of the scene, or beginning of the next scene, whichever is appropriate. These makeshift items have an aspect "Barely holding together" that can be compelled.

ATHLETICS

This measures the character's general physical capability and overall fitness. It's mostly about your ability to move. Athletics covers running, jumping, climbing, and other broadly physical activities you might find in a track and field event. Characters with high Athletics include warriors, D'Zul people in general, and physical performers.

Overcome: Athletics allows you to overcome any obstacle that requires physical movement – jumping, running, climbing, swimming, and other similar activities. Use the overcome action with Athletics to move between zones if there is a scene aspect or obstacle in your way. You'd also roll Athletics in races and similar contests or sports.

Create an Advantage: When you're creating an advantage with Athletics you're using movement to put distance between you and an opponent, get yourself to a higher ground, or maneuver around confuse your opponent.

Defend: Athletics is the default skill to use for rolling for defense in physical conflicts against close and ranged attacks. You can also use it to defend against characters trying to move past you if you're in position to interfere. Getting in position, however, is an advantage you might have to create first,

Athletics is often the "when in doubt" physical skill, and it can get a lot of use. There's sometimes confusion as to when to use Athletics and when to use Might. As a rule of thumb, Athletics is used to move yourself, Might is used to move other things and people. When an action calls for both, they may modify one another. If there is no clear indication which should be primary, default to Athletics as primary and Might as secondary.

Athletic Stunts

Perfect Balance: You've got a knack for balancing in precarious places. You gain a +2 on action that require balance.

Free Runner: You gain a +2 bonus on rolls to traverse difficult environments in high speed situations, such as during a chase.

Child of the Spider: You gain +2 on rolls related to climbing.

ATTUNEMENT

Attunement is a skill that allows you to relax your mind and become open to the energies of the world. A character who is attuned to the world is better able to respond and react to its ever changing qualities. They're able to sense the flow of the Mysteries and even access residual shadows of that energy to enhance their interactions with the world.

Overcome: Attunement acts like investigation and Alertness in relation to the Mysteries. You can use it to overcome obstacles that revolve around finding hot spots of the Mysteries and places where the barriers between the world are being affected by imbalances in the Mysteries.

Create an Advantage: You can focus on the flows of the mysteries and use those to create advantages for your other skills.

Attunement Stunts

Element Sense: You can spend a Fate point to see the integrity of the elements in an area. This will allow you to create advantages focused around these inequalities.

Heartfelt Resonance: You gain a +1 on attempts to use empathy with those who do not wield the Mysteries.

Defensive Urge: You may spend a fate point to gain a +1 to all defense rolls against the mysteries as you so attune yourself to an area that you can feel the effects before they actually get to you.

BURGLARY

This skill is all about stealing stuff and getting into places that are barred to you.

Overcome: Burglary allows you to overcome any obstacle related to theft or infiltration. Bypassing locks and traps, covering your tracks and removing any evidence of your involvement, and similar activities all fall under Burglary.

Create an Advantage: This is used when you decide to case a location or target to discover particular vulnerability that can be exploited. You can examine what other burglars have done to figure out how a heist was done and create/discover aspects related to whatever evidence may have been left behind.

Burglary Stunts

Planting Evidence: You know other's styles so well that it's easier for you to set them up by making one of your jobs look like one of theirs. Gain+1 on attempts to cover your tracks after a job, or to create advantages that let you later to pin a job on others.

Second Story Man: Gain a +2 on rolls related to getting into buildings and structures by climbing.

CONTACTING

Contacting is the ability of connecting to and finding things out from people. A character may know a guy, who knows a guy, or maybe he just knows the right questions to ask. Whatever his methods, he know how to find things out by asking around. Characters with high Contacting include investigators, Jays and spies.

Overcome: Use this to overcome obstacle related to finding someone.

Create an Advantage: You know all the right people, or have a knack for recognizing the right people, as you move from town to town. This will be the source of most advantages you create. Maybe you made friends with a guy on guard duty, or you overheard a conversation near the well. Whatever the source this allows you to create aspects based on the idea that you knew of, met, or heard of someone who has knowledge of what or who you're looking for. This doesn't give fact, it's more about reputation and hearsay and will be reflected as such in the story detail that you add. You might say, for instance, the you heard that "Two-Dog act nice but he's not to be trusted." Whether it's true or not is beside the point. It is something you can use to press a point and get connected to someone else.

Defend: Contacting can be used to defend against others trying to create social advantages against you, provided you can get out and

spread the word to your friends. You might use it to interfere with someone using Deceit or Contacts to go unseen or to block Investigation when it is used to try to find you.

Contacting Stunts

Companion: You have a stalwart companion who is there to help you out of jams. This companion has a name, 2 stress boxes, and four skills, 2 Fair, 2 Average.

This place is familiar: You have been many places and have friends that travel too. You can create and advantage for free, once a session that adds a friends to help you out. This friends, is for the most part an average faceless NPC who might be able to help you in a social situation. They will go away at the end of the scene.

Great Respect: Many people have heard of you and your reputation is rather hard to tarnish. Any time someone tries to say something bad to create social advantages against you, you are able to actively resist, as others are standing up for you, and roll a defense against their attack.

CONCENTRATION

Concentration is the skill of focus and is the personal version of Attunement allowing one to attune to one's self. Those trained in concentration are able to narrow their focus so as to ignore other things that would distract them. This skill goes hand in hand with Resolve to build a person of great mental fortitude.

Overcome: Concentration can be used to overcome obstacles and tests that threaten to draw away a character's focus on the task at hand. It is also often used by many traditions steeped in the mysteries to help them manage the inner source of power they call "Manitu".

Create an Advantage: Concentration is used to create an advantage for another skill under the auspices of having meditated to see things more clearly.

Attack: Concentration is not an Attack skill.

Defense: A player can use the better of concentration or Resolve to defend against directed mental attacks.

Special: Character's with a high Concentration have a greater ability to withstand mental stress. Greater than Mediocre rating in Concentration grants bonus capacity to a character's Composure track indicating the character's resilience in the face of mental, emotional, and social stress. The bonus to your stress track is as shown in the table below. Additional stress can be gained through stunts.

Concentration- Composure Bonus

Average	+1 stress
Good	+1 stress
Superb+	+1 stress

Concentration Stunts

Recenter Self: Once a Session you may make a concentration roll to find your calm. This will allow you to reduce a mental consequence by one step. If there is not a free slot available, of the new level, then you must wait until such a space opens up.

Action is thought: You are able to intensely focus your efforts on a task at hand. Once a session you may freely gain a boost from concentration to be applied to your next action.

Surprising Intensity: You gain a +1 to all attempts to use Concentration in an Overcome action.

DECEIT

Deceit is the ability to lie, simple as that. Be it through word or deed, it's the ability to convey falsehoods convincingly. Characters with high Deceit include grifters, spies, and politicians.

Overcome: For simple deceptions, a contest between Deceit and an appropriate skill (usually Empathy, Alertness or Investigation) is all that is necessary, but for deeper deceptions, like convincing someone of a lie or selling someone the a town that is not for sell would become a Challenge to be work through with multiple uses of Deceit and a few other skills.

Create an Advantage: Use Deceit to put forward Aspects of identities and impression that you want people to buy into (I'm a Wealthy Merchant from Barat).

You can also use it to create momentary distractions and misdirection to help you get out of a tight.

Attack: Deceit is normally used indirectly and is not an attack skill.

Defend: Use Deceit to defend against attempts to use Empathy to discern your true motives. You can also use it to throw off attempts to Investigate you by planting false and misleading information.

Deceit Stunts

That wasn't me: You've got a skill at redirection. You gain a +1 on rolls to defend against accusations.

The other cake was a lie, but not this one: You've got a knack for confounding people, especially when you've been found out. Once a session, when a lie of yours has been revealed you can use deceit to create an advantage that distracts every one.

You can't handle the truth: When one of your lies is revealed, you can make a mental attack with deceit. If successful you may give the consequence of *shamed* to your opponent.

EMPATHY

Empathy involves knowing and being able to spot changes in a person's mood or bearing. It's basically the emotional Notice skill.

Overcome: You don't really use Empathy to overcome obstacles directly—normally, you find out some information with it, and then use another skill to act. In some cases, though, you might use Empathy like you would Alertness, to see if you catch a change in someone's attitude or intent.

Create an Advantage: The main strength of this skill, you can use Empathy to read a person's emotional state and get a general sense of who they are, presuming you have some kind of interpersonal contact with them. Most often, you'll use this to assess the aspects that are on another character's sheet, but sometimes, you'll also be able to create new aspects, especially on one of the NPCs. If the target has some reason to be aware that you're trying to read them, they can defend with Deceit or Rapport.

You can also use Empathy to try and discover what circumstances will allow you to do mental attacks on someone, figuring out their breaking points.

Attack: Empathy can't really be used in this capacity.

Defend: This is the skill to go to in order to defend against Deceit actions, allowing you to pierce through lies and see through to someone's true intent. You can also use it to defend against those creating social advantages against you in general.

Special: Empathy is the main skill you use to help others recover from social and mental consequences.

Empathy Stunts:

Good hands: Gain a +2 to create social advantages when using physical touch as part of the description.

You're not fooling me: You gain a +2 to attempts to see through to someone's true intent when you are alone in a one-on-one conversation.

Extraordinary Counselor: You have a way with helping people through their emotional trauma. Once per session you can reduce one of another character's mental consequences by one step by spending a fate point. This cannot be used on yourself.

ENDURANCE

Endurance is the ability to keep performing physical activity despite fatigue or injury. It's a measure of the body's resistance to shock and effort. In addition to fatigue, Endurance measures how

Endurance - Health Bonus

Average	+1 light
Good	+1 light
Superb+	+1 fierce

well a character shrugs off poisons and disease. Characters with a high Endurance include Linemen, athletes, and Caravan leaders.

Overcome: Endurance is a passive skill. Players will very rarely need to ask to roll Endurance; instead, the GM will call for rolls when appropriate.

Endurance can particularly come into play in long-term Challenges where the character's ability to keep performing at peak is limited by how able he is to overcome fatigue and pain; this is why top athletes have their Endurance skill on par with (or better than!) their Athletics skill. Someone without a solid Endurance skill may be a good sprinter, but will find themselves winded and falling behind in a marathon.

Create an Advantage: Usually Endurance can be used to explain why something that slows down others doesn't slow you down (I've Toiled Beneath the Bellies of the Wu Towns).

Special: Endurance also determines a character's capacity to survive physical punishment.

By default, players have 3 consequences to use in conflicts. Better than Mediocre Endurance provides you with extra consequences that can only be used for physical stress.

Endurance Stunts

Shake It Off: You can remove a single light consequence without the need for a recovery action at the end of a scene.

Burly: Whenever you take physical damage you automatically reduce that incoming stress by -1 point before any consequences are used.

Intrepid: You may actively attempt to resist attempts by any source to exhaust you or fatigue you. Such rolls are at +1.

FISTS AND FEET

This is the ability to hold one's own in a fight using just the natural weapons we're born with. Fist and Foot fighters are versed in one of the fighting styles from the nine nations. Characters with high Fists and Feet include Way Wardens, Orderbound, Great Society members, and bandits and thugs.

Overcome: The peoples are all impressed with shows of martial prowess. Warriors will often compete in demonstrations of prowess to see who has the better form and best grace under pressure. These contests are usually a variation of dance with the people gathered around in a circle while the practitioners engage in a mock combat that's more of an improvisational dance. Whoever gets tricked out of the ring first is the loser.

Create an Advantage: Use this skill to create advantages in physical combat as special moves (this is all your stunning blows, dirty tricks, and such). When up against another fighter you can use this to analyze his style and create openings you can exploit.

Attack: Fists and Feet is an attack skill. It is used to make physical attacks while in a physical conflict. You must be in the same zone as your opponent.

Defend: Use this skill to defend against other physical attacks though you can't normally use it to block ranged attacks. It is possible to defend against a weapon based attack but failing to succeed will mean you take at least 1 point of stress in addition to whatever the initial attack was doing.

Fists and Feet Stunts

Unbalancer: You gain a +2 to maneuvers where you try to throw your opponent to the ground.

Combo finisher: (Requires Signature move). If you manage to land your signature move with style you gain a +1 to your next attack in addition to any boosts.

Signature Move: You have a special maneuver that is hard to defend against. Name this maneuver. You gain a +1 to use it in a fight and it does +1 stress on a successful hit. It is taxing however and a failure results in you getting the aspect "defenses are open" for one exchange as you are left vulnerable to a counter attack.

INTIMIDATION

There are more graceful social skills for convincing people to do what a character wants, but those skills tend not to have the pure efficiency of communicating that failing to comply may well result in some manner of harm. Nothing personal.

Overcome: Even without a basis for fear, Intimidation can occasionally be used as provocation, to produce a strong "burst" of negative emotional response (such as provoking someone into a fight, or at least to anger). Regardless, it's never pretty. This is especially useful when the situation has been set up as an obstacle as opposed to a conflict. More commonly you'll be using Overcome for minions and nameless npcs and Attack for the characters and situations that really matter.

Attack: Using Intimidation is a blatant social attack, which someone can defend against with their Resolve. This is the skill for interrogation (as opposed to interviewing) as well as scaring someone into submission. Characters with high Intimidation include bandit henchmen, law enforcement, bodyguards and guardsmen. This a mental attack targeted at destroying the confidence of the opponent.

Create an Advantage: If there is a reason for the target to believe that the intimidating character is capable of harming the target when they can't do anything about it, it can be a powerful advantage. Intimidation works best from a position of power. Creating an Advantage with Intimidation is all about bringing across the perception that you are the one in power.

Defend:. Intimidation can establish a powerful, menacing first impression and can protect you from mental attacks by making the attackers second guess themselves. Again this works best when you're in a position of power or threat. Such a thing is very tough when you're apparently helpless.

Intimidation Stunts

Fierce Countenance: You have a presence about you that makes others think twice about challenging you, giving you a +2 to defend against Intimidation attacks.

Threatening Physique: If you can bring your physical skills to bear you may use Might instead of Intimidation for making intimidation attacks or creating advantages.

Bad Cop: You are good when working with a partner. A successful roll allows you to provide a boost to a partner to use with Rapport or Empathy.

INVESTIGATION

Investigation is the ability to look for things and, hopefully, find them. This is the skill used when the character is actively looking for something, such as searching a crime scene or trying to spot a hidden enemy. Characters with investigation typically include, way walkers, Jays, law enforcement, spies.

Investigation, as opposed to Alertness, is more concerned with information and is the skill most commonly called for when the character wants to look for something like clues. It is also useful for eavesdropping or any other activity where someone is trying to observe something over a period of time. When looking for deep patterns and hidden flaws, Investigation may be used as an assessment action.

Overcome: Investigation obstacles are all about information that's hard to uncover for some reason. Analyzing a crime scene for clues, searching a cluttered room for the item you need, even pouring over a musty old tome to try and find the passage that makes everything make sense.

Racing against the clock to collect evidence before the cops show up or disaster occurs is a classic way to use Investigation in a challenge.

Create an Advantage:. Investigation is probably one of the most versatile skills that you can use to create an advantage, because as long as you're willing to take the time, you can find out just about anything about anyone, or discover nearly any detail about a place or object. Likewise, it provides you a lot of power to make up aspects about nearly anything in the game world that your character could reasonably unearth.

Because that sounds broad, consider the following as just a few of the possibilities: eavesdropping on a conversation, looking for clues at a crime scene, examining records, verifying the truth of a piece of information, conducting surveillance, and researching a cover story.

Attack: Investigation isn't used to make attacks.

Defend: Investigation isn't used to defend against attacks..

This makes Investigation the flipside of Alertness; it is mindful, deliberate perception, in contrast to the passive mode of operation for Alertness. This also means that an equivalent Investigation effort is nearly always going to yield better, more in-depth, information than an Alertness effort would; the downside is that Investigation is far more time consuming.

Investigation Stunts

Quick Study: You notice behaviors and body language. If a suspect is in a room where you are trying to find evidence you gain a +2 on search attempts.

False Security: If you just fail an Intimidation or Rapport roll, you can make an Investigation check to create an advantage based on information that comes from how they respond to your failure.

Back Tracker: You gain a +2 to locate items if you have enough info to walk through the actions of the one who lost it.

LEADERSHIP

Leadership is actually many skills under one category. When a player takes leadership he must designate the type of leadership they're taking. They must take it separately for each sub-skill. Just because you can command an army in battle doesn't mean you're good with dealing with the day to day details of administration. Having any type of leadership however does make you count a "trained" when trying to use the others so you won't suffer a penalty.

A good leader knows how to direct and inspire people, but he also understands how to run an organization. As such, the Leadership skill covers acts of both types. Characters with a high Leadership include military officers, politicians, bureaucrats, and lawyers.

Administration [Leadership]

Any organization which the character is in charge of uses his Leadership as its default value for any question of how organized it is.

Overcome: This establishes the difficulty for things like bribery or theft, and also gives a general sense of how quickly and efficiently the organization acts. This skill is opposed by itself, Deceit or Empathy.

Create an Advantage: A good leader has knowledge of organizations and the rules that govern them, including knowledge of laws, bribery and other means of dealing with red tape; this is why Leadership is a key skill for lawyers. Leadership serves as an all-purpose knowledge skill for knowing how to act in a given organization, including important things like how much to bribe.

Command [Leadership]

Leadership can be used to direct troops, workers or any other group activity.

Overcome: Use leadership to convince a large group to act in an organized fashion to overcome tactical and strategic obstacles.

Create an Advantage: Use Leadership to create morale advantages from your speeches and actions.

Special: Any time the character is in a position to give orders to a group of minions, he may apply his Leadership as a modifying secondary skill on the minions' skill roll. In a conflict, offering this assistance takes the character's action, but can affect the minions attached to him. While attached minions cannot normally act, when they are being directed by the character with leadership, they act as if they were not attached.

Leadership Stunts

Calm the Masses: You are especially good when trying to convince large numbers of people to an action. You gain a +2 to speeches meant to create advantage in large groups (10 + people).

Followers: You draw others to you with ease. You have an average **minion**. Each time you take this grants you another average minion.

Inspiring Presence: Whenever you succeed on a roll with style, your friends will gain a +1 to any one task that they do in support of you.

LORE

Lore is a knowledge skill. It measures the character's learning. Lore doesn't necessarily give someone the ability to put the knowl-

edge into practice. It merely grants them an understanding of the principles and the information. Lore is actually a collection of skills and a player must purchase lore separately for each bit of knowledge he wishes to be competent with. Characters with Lore skills include scholars of antiquity, professors and know-it-alls.

The GM is free to invent new areas of lore as she sees fit, but for now the following are the more common lores available: History (specific regions based off of the regions listed in this book), Culture (specific cultures), Folklore (specific culture), Breacher Lore (knowledge of the hordes in the Twain), Society Lore (specific societies and organizations), Ancient lore (specific time periods before The Still), and Philosophy (specific philosophies).

The main use of Lore is to answer a question. Questions covered by Lore include those of history, literature, sociology or any of the “soft” sciences – in short, most information that is neither art nor science.

The player can ask the GM “What do I know about this subject?” or “What does this mean?” Often, there will be no need to roll, especially if the subject is within the character’s specialty (see Scholar, page 119) but if the GM feels the information is something that should be hard to attain (such as a clue) then she may call for a roll against a difficulty she sets. If the character succeeds, he receives the information. If he fails, he does not, but he may still attempt to research the topic (see below) – or, perhaps more entertainingly, may stumble onto a false lead that gets him deeper into trouble.

Overcome: You can use Lore to overcome any obstacle that requires applying the knowledge that your character has to achieve a goal. For example, you might roll Lore to decipher some ancient language on a tomb wall, under the presumption that your character might have researched it at some point.

Frankly, you can use Lore as a go-to skill any time you need to know if your character can answer a difficult question, where some tension exists in not knowing the answer. The following uses are also covered under Overcome:

Research: Researching a topic is frequently a time-consuming and arduous task, and exactly the sort of thing worth skimming over with a few quick dice rolls. It is treated as an extension of what knowledge the character has – he can answer some questions off the top of his head, and other questions because he knows what book to find the answer in.

Research is also something that can be represented with a Skill Challenge when the GM expects that there are particular steps that need to be followed to gain certain info.

LANGUAGES OF EHDRIGOHR

Barat

Batu

Beyduuni

Chi'an Si

D'Zuliniyeh

Ge'Al't'acht

Talan

Urali

Wo'g'la

Old Tongue

Hand Talk

Create an Advantage: Lore provides a lot of very flexible opportunities to create advantages, provided you can research the subject in question. More often than not, you'll be using Lore to get a story detail, some obscure bit of information that you uncover or know already, but if that information gives you an edge in a future scene, it might take the form of an aspect. Likewise, you can use Lore to make create advantages based on any subject matter your character might have studied, which gives you a fun way to add details to the setting.

One important note: because the GM is not always obligated to reveal the difficulty of a given roll, players may not know how much they failed it by, which means they don't know how long they'll need to research. Usually they'll just research until they find the answer, but sometimes, when time is tight, they may be limited to less time.

Lore research requires access to knowledge. Most knowledge will be found by talking to an elders council or seeking out some sort of lore keeper or teller. Though libraries are rare, they do exist, mostly found in the Wu Towns, Barata, and Saalduun. Whatever the knowledge source it will have a quality rating. The quality of the knowledge source determines the hardest possible question that can be answered within it (so a question of Good difficulty requires a Good source or better). If a character is attempting to answer a question in a library that's not equipped to answer it, the GM is encouraged to be up-front about its shortcomings.

Most Elder Councils and Tellers are Mediocre, Average, or Fair knowledge sources. They do require a bit of social interaction to get information out of them. This is another opportunity for a Challenge.

Most libraries will be Mediocre, Average, or Fair Knowledge sources. The libraries built into the Temples of the Woe are Good resources. Many Libraries also have a specialty or two where they are considered one step higher – for example, Pulling Earth temple library specializes in Earth Knowledge, Natures, and particular Woe, so as a Good Library, is treated as Great for questions in these areas. Characters may own libraries of their own or be repositories of knowledge that others may seek out.

SPECIAL

Exposition and Knowledge Dumping : Sometimes the GM just needs to give the group a lot of information, and the character with a high knowledge skill or great Learning tends to be the conduit of that. When the GM needs to drop a lot of information on the group, she may ask the character with the most knowledge if she can use them as a mouthpiece. Assuming the player agrees, the GM can share all appropriate background, and is encouraged to give the player a

fate point for having his character temporarily commandeered by the GM.

Lore Stunts

Literacy: Realize that much lore in Ehdrigohr is passed on through the oral tradition. Literacy is not very common even among those that have knowledge. You are able to read and write the languages you speak.

Speak Language: Players start off knowing one language and Hand Talk which is the general sign language for trade and basic communication. Additional languages are bought as stunts.

Scholar: Choose a subject. You have a +2 bonus to rolls involving that subject.

MEDICINE

Medicine in Ehdrigohr is synonymous with Science in our world. It holds the promise of helping mankind to understand how and why the world works. The world of Ehdrigohr is mostly a non-determinate world, in that WhatMoves has provided all of the pieces of the world, each with its own place. Everything has a “Medicine” that is endemic to its system. With the exception of people, the things of the world (plants, rocks, sky, waters) come together and interact, thereby constantly creating emergent systems. They are constantly in motion.

This skill represents a broad knowledge of the method of these interactions and the practice of how they may be manipulated, and includes the study of health medicine as well as alchemical studies, weather prediction, and the managing of energy sources. Characters with a high Medicine include medicine men, and WiseOnes, but any person who has to survive out in the world beyond the ways has at least some familiarity with the Medicines.

Overcome: Medicine can be used to answer all manner of questions, provided there’s time and equipment to look into them. A Medicine person looking to solve a problem should figure out what question he’s trying to answer, like “What killed this man?” or “What is this object composed of?”. The GM will call for a roll to see if the character can answer the question. This will require a lab of some sort, and it’s possible that some questions can’t be answered without the right equipment. In the end, this functions the same as performing research in a library.

Create an Advantage: Medicine can be use to create advantages in places where a practical understanding of a system could allow for

the character to manipulate circumstances to their benefit.

Attack: Medicine isn't normally used for attacking but it could be used to try to stop powerful afflictions. Such things might be better represented as a Challenge.

Defend: One can't normally use Medicine to defend against an attack. It is better to create an advantage within a situation.

Medicine Stunts

Powerful Medicine: Choose a specific application, or field, of medicine. Whenever you must make overcome rolls in your chosen field you gain a +2 to your roll.

MedicineMan: You have a knack for understanding patterns and the inner workings of organic systems. You gain an automatic boost whenever your use of medicine follows a successful use of investigation, empathy, attune, or rapport. You must choose whether this applies to biological, alchemical, or meteorological phenomena.

Great Healer: Once a session, per individual, you can give an individual a recovery check.

MIGHT

This is a measure of pure physical power, be it raw strength or simply the knowledge of how to use the strength one has. For lifting, moving and breaking things, Might is the skill of choice. Might may be used indirectly as well, to modify, complement, or limit some skill uses. Characters with a high Might include strongmen, laborers, and great warriors.

Fighting People

In combat, Might can be used to help with particular applications of Fists and Feet and Weapons – if force is a very significant element at play, Might will modify the primary skill. Furthermore, someone successfully engaging an opponent in a one-on-one exchange can potentially switch from Fists to Might, if executing a hold or other wrestling move where it's less about hitting someone as it is about overwhelming them with physical force. Such a switch would result from a maneuver of some sort.

Breaking Things

Might is the skill of choice for applying brute force to break things in halves or smaller pieces, and includes breaking boards, knocking down doors and the like. Using Might, items can be damaged over time or broken with a single dramatic blow.



Lifting Things

Might also controls how much the character can lift or move. The weight of the thing being moved sets the difficulty for the roll.

Character's with a high Might have a greater ability to withstand physical stress. Greater than Mediocre rating in Might grants bonus capacity to a character's Health Track indicating the character's ability to roll with the punches and walk it off. The bonus to your stress track is as shown in the table below. Additional stress can be gained through stunts.

Might Stunts

Damage Sponge: You gain +1 additional stress to your physical stress track.

Casual Strength: You gain a +2 to attempts to lift and move inanimate objects.

Forceful strikes: You hit harder than others in melee. Add +1 stress to any stress you do with an attack.

MYSTERIES

Mysteries are the secret energies and threads of power that make up the world. Mysteries are broken down into four paths – Elements, Natures, Principles, and Essences. Each of these is further subdivided into four schools each.

Those who seek to master the Mysteries will need to learn each school as a separate skill. Greater paths to power come from learning all of a schools of a particular path or philosophies.

Please refer to the section on magic for more on the Mysteries.

Mystery Stunts

The Power Within: Choose a skill. The power level of that skill is one step up on the Power Ladder. The first time you gain this skill it costs no refresh. Each time you take it thereafter on the same skill costs a cumulative point of refresh.

Great Destiny: Gain a +1 on all attempts to avoid harm.

Power Gender: Choose one of the four genders (Male, Female, Two-Spirit, Gatherer). You may invoke that as an aspect when wielding the mysteries in the following circumstances:

- **Male:** Invoke when wielding at high sun and at dawn. You gain a passive +1 during the Summer to all mystery checks, and a passive -1 during the winter. For one 28 days each year you are in cycle. During this time you give an additional gender die to all offensive and defensive use of the mysteries. This can be taken all consecutively, or one day at a time

Playing With Genders

The genders adds an entire new level of social play to your game and players and game masters must decide how comfortable they are in using them. You are welcome to ignore all reference to gender usage in your game if this does not make you feel comfortable.

Standard Ehdrigohr assumes the use of genders on some level and it is inherent in the fiction. When Gender is in play it also presumes some level of gender roles for all of the Ehdrigohran genders (not just male and female). The presumption is that each has a certain portion of creation that cycles through them that brings them moments of resonance and a moments of chaos and discord.

Part of a Gathering time campaign might include some concept of unifying the genders with the Mysteries again and how that changes gender roles and perceptions. Other campaigns that focus on the growing comfort of the people might explore how stratification and/or forced scarcity might impact or be impacted by gender roles and relationship mechanics.

spread out over a year. Only four of those days you get to choose. The other is chose by they Game Master by compelling them. When compelled you are the primary target of any shivers in the area. During this time your maleness can be the source of great personal stress and can be compelled by others to manipulate you to do things for love or out of rage. You cannot give concessions when in conflict, and you must accept compels while on your cycle.

- **Female:** Invoke when wielding before a full moon and a new moon. You gain a passive +1 during the summer to all mystery checks, and a passive -1 during the winter. You have a cycle that happens every 28 days. During this time you add additional gender die to any mystery wielding by those in the same zone as yourself. Your cycle can cause you physical pain and can be compelled against you while it is active.
- **Two-Spirit:** Invoke when wielding at twilight and dusk. You gain a passive +1 during the autumn to all mystery checks and a passive -1 during the winter. You must decide to live as a man, woman, or heyoka. As the other two genders you must accept their cycle. As a heyoka you are normally unaffected by male and female gender die. You can choose to spend a fate point when in the presence of a male or female in cycle to gain a +1 on mystery related checks per affected individual in the zone. You never gain your own gender die.
- **Gatherer:** Invoke when wielding with two or more people at their prime time. You gain a passive +1 to all mystery checks during the winter. Your cycle is in relation to people. There are people who belong to your personal tribe. You provide an additional +1 to all when in the presence of your personal tribe. Every day you go without being in the presence of your personal tribe you risk gaining sorrow. Every day of this time you are subject to an Average (+1) Mental attack. The strength of this attack goes up every 7 days you are out of the presence of your personal tribe. If you fail to resist then you gain a point of sorrow. You can feel sorrow in others and are drawn to love them to purge the sorrow. This can be compelled against you.

PILOT

The character is a skilled operator of water vessels and land vehicles. The character's skill at pilot determines the complexity of the craft she may control. Characters with high pilot skills can manage larger vessels with fewer crew. This is the

domain of Mic'Talan pirates and slavers, fishermen, and ferrymen.

Pilots with a low Resources skill probably don't own their own vessels, but it is entirely likely that they can charter one. This can be countered by certain tricks that may lead to the possession of vessel, regardless of Resources.

Pilot Stunts

Drive it like you stole it: You gain a +1 when pushing a vehicle to go faster or pull maneuvers.

Push Through: You are skilled at navigating treacherous terrain or waters with your vehicle. Gain a +1 to pilot when they scene describes the terrain or water as a source of difficulty for your vehicle.

Keep it together: You know your vehicle like the back of your hand and can keep it going long enough to complete a trip. You may use pilot, instead of craft, when jury-rigging fixes for your vehicle.

RAPPORT

The flipside of Intimidation, this is the ability to talk with people in a friendly fashion and make a good impression, and perhaps convince them to see one's side of things. Any time a character wants to communicate without an implicit threat; this is the skill to use, which makes it appropriate for interviewing. Characters with high Rapport include grifters, reporters, and good cops.

The Rapport skill is all about influencing people and getting them on your side. Unlike Deceit, it mainly relies on the use of honest appeals and natural charisma, but don't let that fool you into thinking it's just for nice guys— people can manipulate and affect you by being straightforward just as much as they can by lying to you.

Overcome: Like Deceit and Intimidation, you use Rapport to get what you want out of people, in situations where it's not interesting or dramatic to play out a contest or a conflict. Whether it's convincing a city guard to leave you alone via your charm, flattering a politician with just the right words, ingratiating yourself to the locals in a tavern, or calming down an otherwise tense situation, Rapport is the skill to use. The first time a character meets someone, the GM may call for a quick Rapport roll to determine the impression the character makes.

Create an Advantage: You might use Rapport to get information out of someone you're interacting with, by coming across as a trustworthy individual. While this will more often result in story details, if the information has a tangible benefit to you, you might represent it as an aspect such as *Talkative* or *Helpful*.

Attack: Rapport isn't typically used for attacks.

Defend: You can use Rapport to defend against attempts made to create advantages against you with Rapport or Deceit. Talking your way out of situations is your bread and butter, and as such, you know how to turn hostile words against themselves. As long as the situation is verbal in nature, you can use this against Intimidation as well.

Rapport controls the face the character shows to the world, and that includes what they choose not to show. As such, when a character tries to use Empathy to get a read on a character, it is opposed by Rapport.

You have to dig deeper in order to defend against mental attacks—see Resolve skill for that.

Rapport Stunts

Best Foot Forward. +2 to any Rapport roll made against a target whom you've been able to prepare to meet.

Haggle. Provided your Resources is no lower than 2 shifts below the difficulty of the roll, you can use Rapport instead of Resources to buy things from stores and individual merchants.

Popular. Once per scene, when you meet someone for the first time, you can make a Rapport roll against a Fair (+2) difficulty to declare that you already know them and are on good terms with them. Place an aspect to this effect on the target, but you don't get any free invocations on that aspect.

RESOLVE

Resolve is a measure of a character's self-mastery, as expressed through things like courage and willpower. It's an indicator of coolness under fire and also represents the drive not to quit. It plays a key part in efforts to resist torture or the strange mental powers of psychic villainy.

Overcome: Resolve is almost always rolled in response to something, rather than on its own. Its primary role is as defense against most kinds of social manipulation or distraction. Resolve also shines in situations which have spun very much out of control. Characters with a high Resolve have a distinct advantage in continuing to keep their head about them and respond calmly. Similarly, when all seems lost, a character with a strong Resolve is often capable of soldiering on. Resolve is the mental or social parallel to physical Endurance.

Create an Advantage: Use resolve to create advantages that show and support why you're not as phased as someone else in heated situations.

Special: Resolve also determines a character's ability to mitigate stress coming in to affect their Composure. They have more conse-

quences they can bring to bear as a function of their resolve. Better than Mediocre Resolve grants bonus consequences as listed below. These consequences can only be used to affect stress coming in to the composure track.

Resolve Stunts

Mettle: Gain an additional minor consequence. This consequence can only be used on your Composure stress track. The first time you take Mettle it is free. Each additional time requires a cumulative point of Refresh.

No Nonsense: Some things just don't bother you as much as others. Gain mental armor 1 against non-mystery based mental attacks. This reduces the incoming stress by 1 point. If the result is 0 or less then you may treat the attack as though it were unsuccessful.

Intense: Successful mental attacks that you make cause an additional point of stress.

RESOURCES

Resources describes your character's general level of material wealth in the game world and ability to apply it. This might not always reflect cash on hand, given the different ways you can represent wealth in a particular setting—in a medieval game, it might be tied to land or vassals as much as gold; in the modern day, it might mean a number of good lines of credit.

This skill is in the default list to give you a basic, easy way to handle wealth as an abstraction without getting into minutiae or book-keeping. Some people might consider it odd to give a static skill rating for something that we're used to seeing as a finite resource. If that bothers you, see the sidebar below for suggestions on how to create limitations on Resources use.

Overcome: You can use Resources to get yourself out of or past any situation where throwing money at the problem will help, such as committing bribery and acquiring rare or expensive things. Complex obstacles or contests might involve auctions or bidding wars.

Create an Advantage: You might use Resources to grease the wheels and make people more friendly, whether that represents an actual bribe (*I Scratch Your Back . . .* or simply buying drinks for people. You can also use Resources to declare that you have something you need on hand, or can quickly acquire it, which could give you an aspect representing the object.

Attack: Resources isn't used for attacks.

Defend: Resources isn't used to defend.

Usually Resources is simply a measure of available wealth, but the specific form this takes, from a secret family silver mine to a well in-

Resolve / Composure Bonus	
Average	+1 light
Good	+1 light
Superb+	+1 fierce

vested portfolio, can vary from character to character (and may be indicated and enhanced by their aspects). Usually this skill passively informs the GM what the character's available resources are, but Resources may still be rolled for large expenditures, like purchases and bribes. Some large-scale conflicts may be about trying to out-spend the other guy; here, Resources can act as an attack or defense skill.

Note: characters who have access to a fairly sized organization's resources can act as if they have Resources at Fair and, with the backing of the organization, can potentially make bigger purchases. These expenditures are tracked by the organization, and as such, if subterfuge is important, personal resources are a wiser choice.

Characters with high Resources include bandit lords, Nobles, adventurers, and successful criminals. Remember that currently there isn't that much physical wealth to throw around. Some portion of wealth actually falls to relationships, family, and connections.

Resource Stunts:

Lineage: You have familial connections of some sort that can help you get whatever you need. You gain a +1 on resource rolls when your family, or knowledge of your family, might affect the outcome.

Signature Item: You have something that has been handed down to you. This item is useful to a particular skill and gives you a +1 when applicable.

RIDING

Riding is the skill of "piloting" an animal. The riding hare is the most common means of transportation across Ehdrigohr but there are other things that the peoples will use for quick locomotion. Riding is used for riding animals in tense situations. Common slow riding can usually be handled by the Animal Handling skill. But when things heat up you should switch to Riding, especially in combat or when it comes to chases.

Characters looking to do more than the basics when riding need other tricks (like mounted archery for example), but for getting by and not falling off a mount, Riding does the job.

Whether the character personally commands a mount may be subject to character concept or judicious application of the Resources skill. Truly exceptional mounts are the domain of tricks.

Overcome: Use riding to get your steed to navigate difficult terrain and obstacles and to bring it back under control when it gets agitated. Breaking a mount is a Challenge centered on uses of Riding, Animal Handling, and Endurance.

Create an Advantage: Add scene aspects that are advantageous to you as the person riding or for the animal as they do their maneuvers.

Attack: Riding doesn't let you make Attack actions with your mount. You can attack from the back of your mount but doing so requires you to make a Good riding check with each exchange.

Defend: Riding doesn't normally let you make defense actions with your mount.

Riding Stunts:

War Steed: You can use **Attack** and **Defend** actions with Riding to get your mount to use its available attacks.

Mounted Combat: The riding check you make when attacking is only Mediocre.

SLEIGHT OF HAND

The hand can certainly be quicker than the eye. This skill covers fine, dexterous activities like stage magic, pick-pocketing, and replacing an idol with a bag of sand without tripping a trap. While Athletics is appropriate for gross physical activities, most things requiring manual speed and precision falls under this skill (that said, if you're picking a lock, use Burglary). Characters with a high Sleight of Hand include stage magicians, pickpockets, and jugglers.

Overcome: Characters may use Sleight of Hand to try to hide things in plain sight, and may use Sleight of Hand to oppose any perception check for something that they could try to hide, misplace, or distract attention from. When a character uses this skill to hide something, his skill roll indicates the difficulty of any Investigation rolls to find it

Picking a pocket is a quick contest between Sleight of Hand and the target's Alertness (which may be complemented by the target's own Sleight of Hand). Due to the difficulty of this sort of work, the target usually receives a +2 bonus and ties always go to the victim. If the target is distracted by something else, he loses the +2 bonus. If anyone else is in a position to observe the attempt, they also may make Alertness rolls to spot the attempt (though they don't gain the +2).

Create an Advantage: Sleight of hand includes little nuances that allow you to redirect the attention of your victim and/or any onlookers so that they aren't looking at you when you make your move.

Attack: This is not an Attack Skill.

Defend: This is not a Defense Skill.

Sleight of Hand Stunts

Great Distractor: You gain a +1 on attempts to distract someone's attention with Sleight of hand.

Disappear: If you are able to successfully distract someone with sleight of hand you gain a boost to use stealth to hide.

Plant: You're very good at planting items on other people. Gain a +1 on such attempts. The planted item was be small.

STEALTH

This is the ability to remain unseen and unheard. . This ability covers everything from skulking in the shadows to hiding under the bed. Characters with a high Stealth include burglars, assassins, and sneaky children.

Overcome: Stealth is directly opposed by Alertness or Investigation. When a character is hiding, he's remaining perfectly still and (hopefully) out of sight. Lighting, obstacles and other environmental factors can affect the player's roll, and the result of his Stealth roll is the basis for any contest with a searcher's Alertness or Investigation. Skulking is the art of moving while trying to remain unnoticed. It uses many of the same rules as Hiding, but is somewhat more difficult for obvious reasons.

Create an Advantage: Like Sleight of Hand this skill relies on your ability to redirect the attentions of your pursuers. Create advantages that redirect their attention or give you a good place to hide.

Special - Ambush

While we can be sure that heroes would never strike an opponent from ambush, they may end up on the receiving end of such nefarious actions! When a strike is made from ambush, the target gets one last Alertness check to see if he notices something at the last moment. On a success, the target(s) can defend normally. If that Alertness roll fails, the attack is made with the target's first defense roll at Mediocre.

Attack: Stealth is not an Attack skill.

Defend: Stealth is not a Defense skill.

Stealth Stunts

Sneak Attack: If you manage to ambush someone you're fist attack is made using your Stealth skill ranks and does additional damage equal to your Stealth skill ranks.

Step and Fade: If you manage to evade an attack with style you may attempt to make your next attack as an ambush.

Hide in a Crowd: You are particularly apt at disappearing in a crowd. You gain a +2 on attempts to create an advantage using a lot of people to hide your stealth actions.

SURVIVAL

This is the skill of outdoorsmen

Overcome: You use survival to overcome the obstacles presented by nature. . It covers hunting, trapping, tracking, building fires, and lots of other wilderness skills that a civilized man has no use for.

Create an Advantage: Survival can be used to construct blinds and other ways to help remain hidden outdoors. On a Mediocre roll, a character can build a blind or otherwise create a place to hide, which lets Survival modify Stealth rolls. Such a construction takes a few hours to build, and will last a day, plus one extra day per shift.

If characters need to scrounge up something from the wilderness – sticks, bones, sharp rocks, vines that can serve as rope and so on – they can roll Survival to find these things.

Characters with a high Survival include way-wardens, hunters, scouts, and way-walkers.

Survival Stunts

Ghost in the Wild: You gain a +2 to attempts to camouflage yourself.

Master Tracker: You gain a +2 on attempts to track things.

Scavenger: You gain a +2 on attempts to scrounge up something from the wilderness.

WEAPONS

This is the skill for fighting with weapons. This is actually multiple skills. You must learn this skill separately for each weapon category (**swords, spears, knives, axes, clubs, staff, whiplike, flails, thrown**). Use tricks to specialize in a particular weapon . The exact weapon is more of a choice of style than anything else, as damage is delivered by shifts. Though different weapons may carry aspects that can be invoked or compelled against you.

Create an Advantage: Opportunities to create an advantage with a weapon depend on the situation.

Attack: When appropriate, the Weapons skill covers the ability to throw small handheld weapons up to one zone away, or to use weapons (like a whip) with unusually long reach to attack adjacent zones, so a character would use this skill to be a good knife fighter and

knife thrower. This gives Weapons-focused characters a small leg up on folks who fight with their Fists and Feet, with the downside that a Weapons user needs to have a weapon in hand in order to make much use of the skill.

Defense: As a combat skill, Weapons inherently carries the ability to defend oneself in a fight and as such, may be rolled for defense. Weapons users are also well-versed in a variety of fighting styles and weapons, and may use this skill as a limited sort of knowledge skill covering those areas.

Characters with high Weapons include Way Wardens, Orderbound, Guardsmen, duelists, fencers, and most members of the Great Societies.

If someone is devoted to using Weapons as a strong component of their fighting style, it can safely be assumed that they possess the sufficient weaponry in order to make use of the skill, regardless of Resources rating. This is, of course, subject to the rigors of character concept and GM approval.

Weapon Stunts:

Signature Move: You have a maneuver that is more difficult to counter. You gain a +2 on the use of this move.

Parry Master: You gain a +1 you block melee attacks. If you have a shield this becomes a +2 against melee and ranged.

Weapon Specialist: Choose a particular weapon within a weapon group. You gain a +2 to attack and defend using that weapon.

WEAPONS (RANGED)

This is the skill for fighting with weapons made explicitly for long range attacks. Like the Weapons skill this must be bought separately for each category of ranged weapons (bows, slings, crossbows, and contraptions). Ranged weapons can't be used in the same zone as an attacker but can attack opponents up to 3 zones away. Every zone after that incurs a -1 penalty.

Create an Advantage: Opportunities to create an advantage with a weapon depend on the situation.

Attack: Use this skill to attack with long ranged weapons.

Defend: You can't normally defend with a ranged weapons

Aside from the fact that this skill can't be used defensively it works exactly like the Weapons skill listed above. If you want to be good at dodging while firing you'll need some training in Athletics or Fists (or an appropriate stunt).



Weapons (Ranged) Stunts

Pin: You are especially adept at creating advantages around pinning an opponent to a surface. Gain a +2 when creating such advantages.

Trick Shot: You have a particular advantage you like to create with a ranged weapon. Define this advantage. You gain a +2 when trying to initiate it.

Weapon Specialist (Ranged): Choose a weapon within a ranged category. You gain +2 on attacks you make with that weapon and you may attack up to four zones before penalties begin to accrue.

Close Combat: You can use a ranged weapon in the same zone as your opponents.



VISION
AT THE
TRAVELER'S
STAIR

Five-Raven-Shouting-Rain stood at the foot of the strange rock formation known as the "Traveler's Stair." He had heard many tales about it when talking with his uncles. He always thought it oddly named because it looked like stairs that rose off of the cliff and jutted off into space. It essentially looked like stairs to nowhere. No matter how many times he had heard the stories, or how many tales he was told, the one thing that was never told him was what one sees and experiences upon the Stair when upon their "Witnessing". This was the ritual he was about to undertake.

The Witnessing was an experience every d'Zul child who was found to have talents in the Mysterious Ways was expected to endure. It was supposed to be different for everyone, or so he had been told. Most came back and were given jobs as scouts, sentinels, midwives, and judges. Some experienced something that made them become Way Walkers. There were a few, however, of those who went on the hill that the spirits chose to be part of the Society of Whispers and Stone, or just "Whisperers" as most common people referred to them. Five-Raven-Shouting-Rain was sure that these people saw the same thing. He could tell by their eyes. Their eyes all had the same look, as if they were all always looking beyond you and into something greater that was at the same time terrible and wonderful.

They all knew something. It was something that they were not willing to speak of. Most people felt a little uncomfortable in the presence of Whisperers because they thought the look meant that they could see through you and into your soul, thereby knowing all of your inner secrets. Five-Raven-Shouting-Rain did not feel like that was the case. People misunderstood, he was sure of it. Oh sure there were those Whisperers who probably could see into a person's deepest secrets, but that was not the case with all of them. They knew something else, and it was shown to them all when they went up on the hill. And it was not just Whisperers who had the look, for Five-Raven-Shouting-Rain had noticed it in a couple of the Tellers who came into the tribe's encampments from time to time from as far west as the Shil or Barata. He has even seen one of the great bear-like Urali tellers from the north who had the look. They all knew something, Five-Raven-Shouting-Rain was sure of it.

It was because Five-Raven-Shouting-Rain was sure that there was some forbidden knowledge behind that look that he was now frightened as he stood at the bottom of the Stair. That look frightened him. It had been fear of that look that had caused him to forego his Witnessing for so long. Many men and women were afraid of seeking because they were afraid they may not be ready and the spirits would

show them nothing, leaving them to repeat the process over and over again until they were ready.

Five-Raven-Shouting-Rain had known long ago that he was ready, and could feel the spirits urging him to begin his seeking daily. He knew that when he went up upon Traveler's Stair he would be received by the spirits, and they would show him what they had shown his grandmother, and his uncle. Five-Raven-Shouting-Rain knew that when he went up that Stair he would receive the knowledge, and when he came down he would have that same look. He knew that look showed, more than anything, that a great responsibility had been placed upon the shoulders who received the knowledge. Five-Raven-Shouting-Rain did not know if he was ready for that kind of responsibility. He did not want the responsibility. He did not want the knowledge. But he could run no longer from it.

He looked up the Stair yet again. The way to the top seemed like forever. A firm, reassuring hand found purchase on his shoulder. It was his uncle.

"Are you ready?" his uncle asked.

"In a way," Five-Raven-Shouting-Rain answered.

"Your fears stay your feet?"

"Yes," Five-Raven-Shouting-Rain answered. "Is that bad? Will they be angry?"

"No. Fear is a good thing when you pay it careful heed, and use it wisely. If you had no fear you would not be ready. Don't worry so much, you may not even receive your vision yet."

Five-Raven-Shouting-Rain looked at his uncle. He appreciated the reassurance, but he knew that they both knew that would not be the case.

"Will I see what you saw?" He asked uncle, after a short silence.

"Every man's vision is his own," was the old man's answer.

Silence.

"If I do, things will never be the same for me. Will they?"

"You must choose your way, or the Iktom weave a path for you of their choosing," his uncle answered. "Regardless, no day is ever like the one that has passed, nor can it ever equal those yet to come. However, they all come together and are one, for that is the nature of the turning of the Hoop."

"Will I be able to live like the others?" Five-Raven-Shouting-Rain prodded.

His uncle stared at him hard, and then looked away to the passing clouds. He swallowed. His dark eyes seeing things in the clouds that Five-Raven-Shouting-Rain could not fathom. "No," was all that he said.

Five-Raven-Shouting-Rain sighed heavily.

Silence.

"It can be beautiful," Uncle said, breaking the silence. Five-Raven-Shouting-Rain looked up. "Just remember that beauty too is a burden, and not every man can carry it." He smiled at his nephew. "Are you ready?"

Five-Raven-Shouting-Rain sighed again. "Yes."

"Then go," his Uncle said, giving him a gentle shove forward.

Five-Raven-Shouting-Rain set his feet upon the path and turned back to look upon his uncle one last time.

"I will be waiting," his uncle said. "Here." There was a paternal smile on his face that detracted from the sadness in his dark eyes.

Five-Raven-Shouting-Rain turned and continued up the Traveler's Stair, disappearing into the jungle mists. He did not look back again. A small black starling lighted upon his uncle's shoulder. Uncle spoke to it.

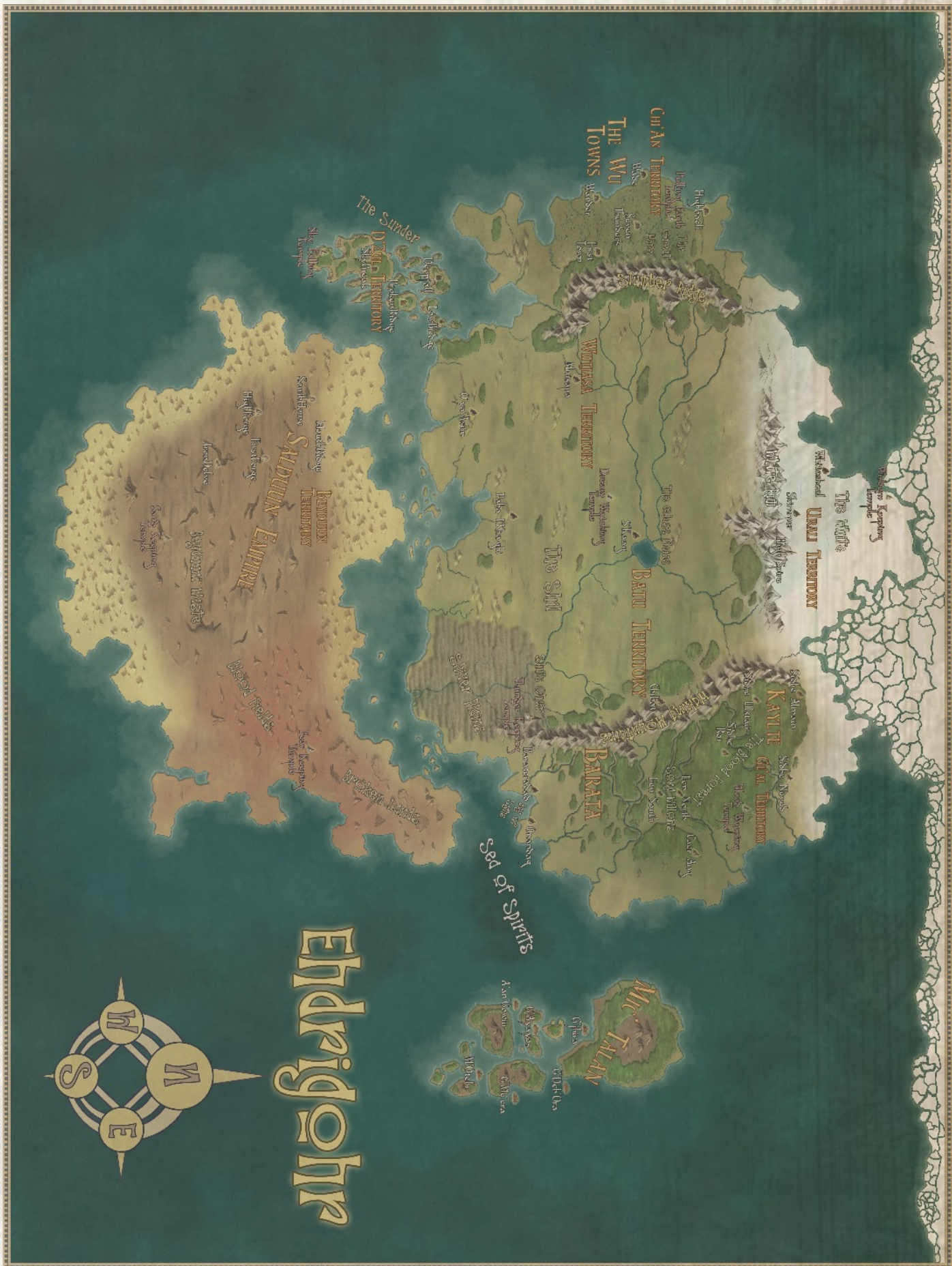
"I mourn his innocence."

"He has to know," the bird replied. "Do not worry. We feel he will do well."

That day Five-Raven-Shouting-Rain learned the following lessons of how the world works.



THE KNOWN LANDS



Ehdrigohr is a vast land that stretches some 10,000 miles from coast to coast. It is a land with peoples and cultures that are as varied as its climes.

What follows is a general gazetteer of the major environmental areas and what you are likely to find there in terms of climate, geography, peoples, and dangers.

THE SHIL

They say that “Shil” means “Center” in the Old Tongue and to many, that is exactly what the Shil is considered to be – the center of the world. It is said that since the Upheaval, and the multitudes of Turnings over the ages, the Shil has remained, more or less, in place.

Legends place it as not only the birthplace of mankind, but also the birthplace of all of the peoples created by the Songs ages past before they spread out into the world.

In the first age it was a place of unequalled beauty with cities reaching up into the skies. Those times, however, are long gone. Whatever it was like in ages past, it is now a harsh area of rocky badlands, canyons, dust, and steppes interspersed with oak savannas, dense thickets, and ruins from previous ages when men tried to unite.



The climate, while typically very warm and dry, is known for rapid weather changes. The summer is a season for tornadoes and dust storms in the center-most areas. Winters are notoriously brutal as frigid winds blow off the White Rim Mountains. Winter is particularly deadly as the changing weather patterns means the temperatures fluctuate wildly making it hard to maintain proper body warmth.

The Westernmost border is the Slumber Ridge (a mountain range blanketed in mist) and to the East lie the Waking Mountains. Going North eventually brings one to the White Rim Mountains and to the South lies the Parting Waters that must be crossed before one can get to Beyduun territories.

These natural borders make traveling to and from the Shil both physically difficult and very hazardous. The number of roads that

will take one through these areas are few but the main roads are well protected by multiple Way Wardens from all of the cultures as well as by the Crows of the Shil.

A great river called the “Mni” flows from north to south beginning at the White Rim and eventually emptying out at the southern tip of the Shiver Plains. At its midpoint it opens up into “The Bowl”, a magnificent inland sea which is also fed from other rivers flowing east and south off of the Slumber Ridge. None are as great, or as constant, as the Mni. In the winter many settlements pop up along its banks to catch the abundant fish beneath the ice. Those settlements quickly disappear, however, as the Spring comes bringing with it regular floods.

Two peoples, the Wiitjasa and the Batu, call the Shil their home. The Wiitjasa roam the badlands and savannahs proper, and the Batu claim the steppes. They meet, and sometimes clash, where the Savannahs and Steppes become prairies. Peace between the two peoples is uneasy as many of the Batu and Wiitjasa take to raiding in the summer and autumn to prepare for the hard winter to come.

In addition to the Batu and Wiitjasa are the large numbers of bandits and would-be bandit kingdoms that are scattered across the Shil. The bandits come from those who cause strife (theft, murder, rape) among the people. The most common punishment is ostracization which leaves them to die alone in the wilds, possibly devoured by shivers. From time to time, such outcasts prove resilient enough to survive, and some even create communities of their own. Unfortunately these communities tend toward criminal behaviors at the best. At the worst they’ve gone mad and fallen to cannibalism. Due to the ferocity of many of the creatures of the Shil, it turns out humans are the easiest prey. The Batu and Wiitjasa regularly send out groups of warriors and way wardens to round up and kill the most troublesome groups. Others are left to be as they’ve proven useful when forces were needed to fight off large waves of shivers.

Despite their predominantly nomadic lifestyle, a few of the bands of the Wiitjasa maintain relatively stable trading camps. The southernmost of these camps is large enough to be considered a small city. It is called O'ya'Asiin and sits along a set of roads that has the people of O'ya'Asiin interacting with travelers from all over the lands.

The Batu bands make yearly settlements and use them as launching points for raids and hunts. The exception to this is the town called Chibat. Founded in the ruins of an ancient city whose name has been long forgotten, the people of Chibat provide a central location for raid goods to be traded and even outright thrives as even bandits come here and tend to observe the peace. Chibat and

ASPECTS OF THE SHIL

High Grass Prairies, Rocky Badlands filled with dark places, Blowing Dust, Punishing Summers, Wide Open Places, Trees are sparse and tall, Strong Winds can bowl you over, You never know where an iktom sleeps or waits, Spring brings floods.

TROUBLES OF THE SHIL

Bandits are as bad as the Shivers. Wiitjasa and Batu are always fighting, Beware the great beasts, Vulnerable in open fields, Tall grasses can hide an army.

O'ya'Asiin are considered neutral grounds to all of the peoples though that neutrality is tested often.

Clothing styles for the two groups are similar with the biggest common feature being the penchant for dressing in layers due to the constantly changing weather. Feathers, a common means of decoration and symbols of status the world over, are part of the decoration of all manner of things including people, barding, and housing. The Wiitjasa tend to use a great deal more quill, metal cones, and bead work in their decorations a while the Batu favor elaborate buttons and clasps, bells, and painted hide and leather.

In addition to the people of the area, the Shil sports some of the most interesting fauna. The most notable being the huge spider-like creatures that populate it. Though the lesser iktom (as they are sometimes called due to their similarities to the beings called Iktom) are known to be found all over Ehdrigohr, the Shil has a density of them like no other. The peoples of the land feed off of the herbivorous tarantula-like shiltonka who travel in great herds across the badlands and savannas. These beasts are considered a marvel of the Shil and sacred to most of the cultures of the world. They are slow to anger and produce a wonderful song beneath a night sky as herd members call out to each other. There are smaller versions that live in, and among, the steppes as well. These beasts in general provide great resource to the people, their meat and “milk” (a lubricant produced from their mostly non-functional spinnerets) is healthy, their outer layer of their exoskeleton is a sort of hide that can be peeled off and makes a strong material for clothing and housing, their exoskeleton can be fashioned into armor or cured and used for a variety of crafts.

Scattered across the lands are the “warren-towns of the” great hares. These semi-sentient rabbits are considered among the most noble of beasts and generally great companions to men. The great-hares enjoy a symbiotic relationship with men as creatures of toil and transport and in return the humans provide them with increased safety from the shivers and companions which are apparently necessary for the emotional health of these creatures.

Not everything in the Shil is helpful to man however. There is great danger as well. Packs of grey leapers roam the high grasslands. Great manes, large lion-like creatures stalk the steppes, all manner of large predators (strong enough to fend off the shivers) look for prey for themselves.

When the sun falls, the shivers pour forth from the more desolate areas. These foul perversions or life are cursed to burn before the light of day but maintain a hunger for the destruction of men. Most

ASPECTS OF THE WHITE

Cold winds bite deep, Blowing
Snow obscures your sight, It
takes endurance to walk the
White, Beneath and within
the snow is darkness. The ice
holds many terrors, Shivers
can come from nowhere even
in the day. Long Days, Short
nights.

TROUBLES OF THE WHITE

The Crone Whispers Lies in
the Winds

When we're not fighting on
the line, we're preparing for
the Long Night.

There is an army growing
out there.

We must hold the night.

a growing season which supplements a mostly hunt and raid driven lifestyle. Additional food is imported (or raided) from Wiitjasa and Batu traders further south of the Rim.

Life is hard in the White and the only people who make a point of living here are the Uraly. They are the descendants of various groups who chased forces that served the Sorrows into the frozen wastes. A cultural sense of duty to this task has kept them here.

A great number of terrible things make their home beneath the ice. This is compounded by the fact that the White experiences extraordinarily long nights and one in particular that lasts for 30 days. During this time the shivers and horrors attempt to pour forth into the southern lands.

The Uraly maintain a wall of defense against these incursions year round. When the "Long Night" comes, Crows and Wolves from the Shil come to support the bear warriors of Uraly. Together they stand against a terrible tide and form what is reverently referred to as The Line. The Line is considered to be a sacred duty of penance and sacrifice and people looking to make a new beginning can come serve on it and stand against the evils. Whether they survive the Long Night or die, the previous lives of those who serve are washed away and they are received as new people when they return. Some, after looking the horrors in the eye choose to stay and continue fighting. Such men and women, form an orderbound society called the White Liners. They are considered to be sacred and a little bit mad.

There are a number of old ruins scattered across the White. Most of these ruins are from the old cities of man but some evidence of the ancient children of WaitsBeyond are found from time to time as well. Many of the ruins closest to the White Rim have been recovered and are maintained as Way Warding posts. The greatest of these is a watchtower called Highspire. This great tower allows the people to see for miles, making it difficult for large forces to advance without warning.

The foulest of these ruins, called Hoary Witch Tower, lies on a hidden island to the northwest. It is the prison home of the Winter Crone Sorrow also known as J'hola. Its location is known only to, and maintained by, an order of Witches called the Frost Brides who revere K'Sa, a powerful True Iktom, and one of the Graces who guards against the Sorrows.

The Frost Brides work from Wisdom Keeping Temple, along the icy northwestern shore, to maintain the Principles and Essences that keep J'hola contained and work with others to guard against The Dul Ah'Gallan and Given, who try to find and release the Winter Crone.

EASTERN AND WESTERN MOUNTAINS

The Eastern most mountain range is called the “Waking Mountains” by most people. The range is so named because in old folktales it is said that Shu, the sun, would awaken from his slumber and rise from these mountains, cross the sky, and return to his rest in the Western Mountains, called the Slumber Ridge. As the peoples moved out of the Shil this, as far as they could tell, proved to be untrue. The name, however, stuck for the eastern mountains just as “Slumber Ridge” continues to be the name for the western mountains.

There is very little travel through the mountains as they are treacherous territory. From time to time there are those who try to establish settlements within the mountains but this has typically ended in tragedy. Sometimes the more ruthless bandit tribes have managed to establish a foothold but either bounty hunters, the winter, or the shivers wipe them out. Too many places remain for shivers to hide and the greatest of them, the misshapen giants called Y'yahila, have been known to hurl boulders and tear apart the structures of men.

They are thought to be bred by the Sorrow Y'yah who intends to use them as his personal army against the other Sorrows. Shivers of *stupendous* might, with their own hands they have also been known to bring avalanches down. From time to time small forces of giants get strong enough to start reaching out from the mountains and begin terrorizing nearby settlements. When this happens hunting parties of Way Walkers, Wardens, and Orderbounds usually gather and do their best to find and kill the creatures. They're relatively easy to find due to the rock mounds they build to hide from the sun during the day. The hunters always try to kill these shivers in/with the daylight as fighting them at night is suicide. Luckily they rarely make their way up into the White or further south.

There are rumors of essentialists and mad men and women who seek refuge in the shadows of the mountains, living as mad hermits until they are taken.

THE EASTERN FORESTS

To the east of the Waking Mountains lies the Great Forest, also known as the “Blood Wood Forest”. This nickname comes from the gargantuan “blood wood” trees that make up the forest. The trees are ancient and the oldest are said to reach nearly 200 feet into the air. The bark of the bloodwood has a dark reddish hue which reminds one of dried blood and the sap carries this same pigment,

ASPECTS OF THE MOUNTAINS

Treacherous footing, There are always long shadows in the mountains, Unstable crags will come crumbling down.

TROUBLES OF THE MOUNTAINS

Shivers lurk in every deep shadow and cave, Giant Shivers are smarter than most, The Sorrow Y'yah lurks in the mountains, Boulders fall at every turn, Sudden sounds can bring a rockslide.

hence the name. The bloodwoods grow to incredible sizes and the Ge'al often build their great mounds at the foot of the trees and extend their villages up among the mighty boughs. Harming these trees is a great crime as the Ge'al consider them to be most sacred.

The dense canopy and undergrowth of the forest makes for a great deal of sunless places, providing plenty of protection for shivers to grow and multiply.



These numbers are kept under control by an order of mystic warriors call the Tathlum who wield the power of earth with such might that to hear them battle sounds like thunder in the distance.

The greatest threats to the people of the Blood Forest are what are known as “blood willows”. These are ambulatory trees that have been possessed and corrupted by a breacher or shiver. They need blood for sustenance and will steal people away to feast on them.

The southern portion of the Eastern Forests has a wider mix of trees and vegetation. Most notable is the area called Song Willows. This portion of forest is named after the beautiful willow trees with canopies that taper off into hollow reed-like branches. These branches are riddled with holes made by the larva of

the nocturnal self illuminated fire-moths. When the wind blows through the area filled with song willows it passes through the willow branches and makes a sound like flutes being played wildly in the distance. Many griots and Jays have been inspired by the mournful but playful music of the song willows. South of Song Willows the land grows a bit more swampy. Though not as overgrown as the north, it is conversely hotter and humid. It eventually gives way to the settled academies, institutions and villages of the Barata.

The settlements of the Barata look much like those of the Ge'al. They too create great mounds. The big difference is that, where the Ge'al mounds are populated with long houses and thatched wood structures, those of the Barata are mostly adobe and are twice as large. The great mounds of the Barata are usually more wheel

shaped and have large spirit towers at the four directions and smaller ones at the cross directions. There is a large central tower at the center of the towns. Each of these towns is built to be a place of learning. Each Baratan town is at once a compass, a sundial, and a lunar observatory. The Baratan philosophers and medicine people chart the stars and weather patterns with them and send warnings of harsh weather changes to the other peoples when they see something terrible on the horizon.

The Baratan claim that even the shivers have seasons and cycles that can be watched and predicted with the right medicine and dedication to studying them. These "Medicine Towns", as they are called, are also places where great study of the mysteries takes place. This has led to great discoveries among the Barata, but has also caused Baratan territories to be terribly unstable in relation to the barriers between the waking world, the *Traveling Lands* and the *Twain*. Barata has a very high occurrence of breachers. Some say it's the highest occurrence of any of the peoples. The other peoples are concerned about this and wonder how many given lurk in the hallowed halls of the Barata. They say that Barata is a terrible accident waiting to happen. One day a door will open that they will not be able to close. It is said that one should be wary of doorways and passages that lie in shadow when you are in Barata for you never know when you might accidentally "step" into something, or somewhere, terrible. It is believed that somewhere, in the shadows of Barata, R'ma – the Sorrow of Corruption has begun to stir again. The Baratans claim that this believe is just the result of jealousy and superstition.

Beyond the blood willows lies the shiver threat that all peoples face. For both the Geal and the Barata this has been a more constant struggle as the shivers find the shade of the tree canopy more to their liking. Less sun makes its way to the forest floor which means more shivers are able to gather to assault the Great Mounds of the people. Number mounds have been lost over the years all claimed by shivers. Such mounds are riddled with tunnels and often referred to as "shiver towns". From time to time warriors gather to take back one of the shiver towns but it is often deemed that the losses that ensue aren't worth the gain. However both the Barata and the Geal have lost large mounds to the shivers. These places are filled with catacombs of those who have passed and the secrets of the elders who died with them. It is everyone's dream to be able to take one of the Great Shiver Towns and reclaim these pieces of culture.

ASPECTS OF THE GREAT FOREST

Magnificent trees reach up
into the skies, Food is abundant
on the forest floor,
Hunting is good, So much
material to build with, medicine
grows everywhere.

TROUBLES OF THE GREAT FORESTS

Corruptions stirs in the East
Barata is a terrible accident
waiting to happen.

Shivers seem to like the
Great Forests as much as the
Ge'Al, There are dark places
where the trees join with
shivers, Sometimes the forest
blocks the sun, The deep
forest flow can be deadly.

THE BROKEN LANDS



To the south of the Shil lie the Broken Lands. So named due to the fact that Bey'emot, one of the largest and strongest of the the Woe sleeps close to the surface and is always on the edge of wakefulness. His constant shifting causes earthquakes and fissures that twist and shift the terrain with great regularity. Over the resting place of the creature was constructed Slumber Keeping Shrine which is monitored by an order of Witches and Elementalists the Fina'deAvilan who maintain the rites, wards, and songs needed to keep the Bey'emot contained and as close to still as is possible.

Bey'emot, due to its semi-active state, is the most prolific producer of Shivers in the land. Foul things awaken with great regularity and attack the Shrine or the bordering territories. An order of Oathbound called the Broken Spears patrol and attempt to destroy any Shiver they find.

Everynight the Broken Lands are swarming with Shivers. Some say it is as bad as the old days of the Turnings when the Woe walked. Every night the tide of shivers surges and every morning it burns away. This leaves the air with a certain acrid taste and casts a grey haze over

ASPECTS OF THE BROKEN LANDS

Earthquakes happen without warning, The ground is unstable and might split beneath your feet, Breathing the air can make you sick.

TROUBLES OF THE BROKEN LANDS

The Shivers truly own the night, Slumber Keeping Shrine must be defended at all costs.

everything.

The only thing that has kept the shivers from surging west into the Beyduuni wastes are the Blood Fields which destroy human and shiver alike. The waters of the Divide has kept the shivers from surging north. At least so far.

THE BLOOD FIELDS

South and west of the Broken Lands lay the Blood Fields. It is another hot, often humid, area filled with grass, scattered and twisted trees, hills and rocky barrens. It is prone to earthquakes due to its proximity to the Broken Lands. The air is always hazy with a reddish tint to it, as is the sand. Most of the vegetation found within also possesses a signature reddish mottling that mark it as poisonous. There is very little in the way of natural creatures to be found herein

and no sane person calls it home. It doesn't have the density of Shiv-

ers that are found in the Shiver Plains, but the few that dwell within make up for it with their sheer ferocity and power.

The Blood Fields were where the soldiers of Salduun and their supporters held the line for months while smaller groups searched for the resting place of Bey'emot to the East and Stilled it. Forces poured in from the north and west as more and more shivers assaulted from the east. When all was said and done, the area was littered with battlefields filled with broken bodies of soldiers and the twisted shapes of the creatures they slew.

Powerful magic had been brought to bear from both sides and the land was soaked with power and blood. The effects of that battle still linger as the Blood Fields are filled with curses and no one passes through them at night. The curses seek victims and blood, and care



not whether it victims are man or shiver. A person affected by a Blood Fields curse can be spotted by red mottling that begins to grow in their eyes. Such people are referred to as being “blooded” or having “The evil eye” and are, at best, chased away from external settlements. At worst, they are killed on sight.

From time to time a way-walker attempts to map the area, or a way-warden comes looking for ancient artifacts to retrieve or breaches to close. Those that make it out without being infected by a curse tell stories of horror upon horror and find their sanity more fragile. There are rumors that the weave has places of great weakness within the Blood Fields and that a breach is imminent. The Fina'deAvilan, who have studied it the most, maintain that not only are there breaches, but that the area of the Blood Fields is expand-

ASPECTS OF THE BLOOD FIELDS

This land is cursed, To walk
the Cursed lands is to court
death – or worse.

TROUBLES OF THE BLOOD FIELDS

Worse things than Shivers
lurk here, Every hour that
passes might leave you in-
fected, The Cursed area is
growing, at the center of
the cursed lands lies mad-
ness.

ing. This expansion is slow but appears to be picking up momentum. They believe that somewhere within it lurks the Sorrow called K'ui and is what give such power to the curses.

THE SUNDER

It is said that when the Woe called O'Sai was put to sleep here, they attempted to destroy it with the power of great elementalists. They effectively killed it by breaking it into several pieces. In its death throes, however, it literally shook the land apart, splintering it onto myriad shards that jut up from the sea.



These vertical shafts of land quickly grew covered in vines and trees, forming a dense jungle. Groups of warriors, now known as the D'zul, settled within the cliff faces of the Sunder as they came to seek out the remaining parts of O'Sai that remain hidden within the rocky crags. The D'zul adapted to a vertical lifestyle, building entire communities in the faces of the cliffs. They build entire communities called "Reach Towns" because they reach from the waters to the sky.

Certain parts of the Sunder have become so densely overgrown that they appear to be spires of green jutting out of the sea. The jungle canopy is so thick here that no sunlight makes its way in allowing it to become a haven for shivers to arise and grow with little interference. This situation is much like the shadowy canopy of the Eastern forests but to a much greater degree. There are old shivers here. Things that have never been touched by sunlight over generations. Some believe that they are old enough to

spawn shivers of their own causing the jungle to be extremely dangerous most of the time.

The D'zul have found that deep within the jungle are some of the remains of the time before. They believe that if they can push through find, and claim, these old places, then secrets will be revealed which will give them the advantage over the shivers. This had become quite an obsession among the D'Zul, such that all young men, who are of age, are expected to go questing into the jungle to find ruins and to destroy nests of shivers to prove themselves. This practice has resulted in an alarming decline in the male population of the D'Zul people.

What some have discovered is that, in addition to the normal shivers, there are smart, cunning shivers, that are now moving about deep in the forest. They seem to scheme and plot. Mostly they seem to be searching for something. Most believe they are searching for the pieces of O'Sai. If O'Sai's pieces can be found they can be brought together with its heart, which lies imprisoned beneath the Woe Temple called "Sky Pulling Temple". Once together, the creature will awaken and will rampage. Other pieces are said to be hidden in the four great Reach Towns of the Sunder (SkyBreak, BrokenRidge, DeepFall, and LowBridge), while others are said to have been cast out into the world.

It is this new organized effort by the shivers that has got the D'Zul venturing out into the world to seek others to come help fight off the coming trouble.

In the center of the Sunder is an island crag that rises higher than all of the others, with a mountainous top that seems to disappear up into the sky. This is called the Stair and is a place where people with talents and skills in the Mysteries are indoctrinated into the traditions and history of the D'zul. Rumor has it that the Stair actually leads to a place where the traveling land known as "The River" can be accessed easily and those with ability in the Essences can find great power.

THE GREAT MIRE

To the west of the Slumber ridge lies the Great Mire. Like the Great Forest of the east, the Great Mire is a huge expanse of vegetation. The lands are some of the lowest, and wettest, lands in Ehdri-gohr. The lowness turns what would be a vast collection of forests into a vast assortment of swamps.

ASPECTS OF THE SUNDER

Only the surefooted can traverse the Reach Towns, The Jungle Holds Great Mysteries, The Jungle Heat can wear you down.

TROUBLES OF THE SUNDER

More Shivers every night, The days of the Reach Towns are numbered, The pieces of O'Sai must not be reunited, So many dark places for things to hide.



ASPECTS OF THE GREAT MIRE

Travel through the Mire is slow, The Wu Towns are the epitome of civilization, Dangerous beasts lurk in the swamps, Quicksand is everywhere.

What's most interesting about the Great Mire is that what would appear to be land is, in fact, the backs of great creatures, called the Unciwakan, that live in the mire. The Unciwakan (also called The Stand by locals) are colossal tortoises that lie in long dormant states and gather into colonies. They are incredibly powerful and have a long standing symbiotic relationship with the western peoples. The Wu Towns are literally built upon the backs of the Unciwakan. This is similar to the towns and kingdoms built upon the creatures in the Sea of Spirits, though the relationship is considerably less hostile and more interdependent.



The areas nearest the Wu Towns are the safest in all of Ehdrigohr as far as encounters with shivers go. The great turtles excrete an essential oil into the water that makes shivers sick and makes natural creatures grow bigger and more ferocious. So while the shivers may be weaker and easier to kill, the natural creatures of the swamp are extremely deadly.

Like the Shil, the Great Mire has more than its fair share of bandits and would be bandit kings. They mimic Wu Towns by building huts and small communities on the backs of considerably smaller, but still gigantic, crab-like creatures called Creeps. This little bandit settlements are often known as "Creep Towns". Bandits aren't the only ones that make use of these creatures. Many societies of OrderBounds make their homes in the Great Mire and use very young Tortoises and Creeps to support them. Many of the OrderBounds societies are actually bandits.

From time to time a Creep town grows powerful enough that they try to attack and conquer one of the Wu Towns. They have yet to be successful but some say, with the growing discontent of the Low, it's only a matter of time before they begin to favor the bandits. Some of the bandits have become folk heroes as they have fought to bring strife to the High while helping the Low to survive.

It is worth repeating that the Great Mire is dangerous. Though

TROUBLES OF THE GREAT MIRE

The Fiddlers play at breaking all that has been built. The bandit lords are knocking at our doors, Someone must stand up for the downtrodden.

there are abundant numbers of shivers, they are not as problematic as they are in the Easter Forests. This is mostly because the local fauna are so dangerous that they can kill most shivers with ease.

There is a growing darkness in the Wu Towns and the mire. Some believe that the growing darkness is evidence of the Fiddlers manipulating things in the background, trying to break the Wu Towns from the inside and then open the gate to let the bandits finish the work.

THE SEA OF SPIRITS

To the east of the Great Forests lies the body of water known as the Sea of Spirits. These are dangerous waters filled with the so called “spirits”, monstrous creatures of truly colossal size and ferocity that destroy any ship that ventures too far from safe harbor. From time to time one of these leviathans will find its way onto the eastern coast, devastate a coastal village or two, and then descend back into the depths.

To the east of the Sea of Spirit lie the lands of the Mic'Talan. The islands here are unstable and said to be filled with shivers and even a Woe. This makes the islands far too dangerous for humans to build a settlement on. Instead, the darkness worshipping Mic'Talan have learned to tame/conquer some of the great monstrous shiver infested beasts of the waters and anchor their civilization to them.

They have built floating cities upon, within, and around the backs of these monsters. Each city is named after the monster that supports it and to whom they make sacrifices to. They look upon them as terrible deep gods to be appeased.

The Mic'Talan are a militaristic society and each of these floating cities is effectively a great war ship. They are used to launch raids upon the islands for resources and as staging grounds for incursions into the western lands for slaves and sacrifices. In addition to the main great beast, the people raise the giant mollusks that feed off of the deep gods. These mollusks have twisted shells as big as a hill. They are converted by the Mic'Talan into the crawling fortresses that incite fear into the Barata and Ge-Al when they rise up out of the waters in the night and decimate entire shore towns.

ASPECTS OF THE SEA OF SPIRITS

Treacherous waters, Only the strong survive, Only those with the blood of the Six clans can rule, Giant monsters lurk beneath the waters.



TROUBLES WITH THE SEA OF SPIRITS

This is where the slavers live, The Mic'Talan are addicted to power, Something worse than shivers or sorrows lurks in the islands.

ASPECTS OF THE SHIVER PLAINS

The sun never shines. Even the air is foul, The Illuminators bring the light. Shivers battle with shivers over humans.



TROUBLES OF THE SHIVER PLAINS

The Shivers hate each other more than us. The Illuminators must keep the shivers focused on each other, One day the tide will spill out into the Shil.

Of the islands around the Mic'Talan territory, the largest of the islands is used as training ground for warriors to learn to fight the shivers or die trying. Young men and women would become hunters and serve the Great Hunt are left there on their 13th winter in large classes and told to survive for 4 days. They are expected to kill each other and everything they come across. Only the strongest survive.

THE SHIVER PLAINS

When the Still came to be, this area had already gotten infested by shivers. The Blood Letting Sorrow Uhr R'Maahn had claimed this area. As the forces of men were focusing their attention on bringing about the Still, Uhr R'Maahn was preparing a ritual of Ash that burned the land and sent terrible clouds of ash up into the sky to block the sun. This cast the area in an eternal gray haze that made life comfortable to the shivers and himself.

The Woe of the area, called An'Nuwn, was stilled nonetheless but the Ashen Cloud was also successful. At the northern most tip of the Shivers Plain lies a mountainous spire that reaches up, beyond the ashen cloud to the sun.

This spire is called Shu's Chair and is also the site of Thunder Keeping Temple. This temple is the site which maintains the Still of An'Nuwn. It is also said to be the home of Eastern Thunder Watcher Radeen, and headquarters of the organization called the Illuminators. The Illuminators seek ways to combat the evils of the Shiver Plains, destroy the ashen cloud, and let Shua's light back into the land to scour away the shivers.

Among the Illuminators are a special order called the Illumine Spears who wage a guerilla war across the Shiver Fields. They directly oppose the Sorrow of the area seeking to break Uhr'R'Maahn's iron grip and usurp his slowly growing nation of Given and BarrowLords. The only thing that has kept the Blood Letting Sorrow from focusing his efforts on removing the Illumine Spears is that he is also at war with B'Lohr in the Shiver Depths beneath his lands. Uhr'R'Maahn wishes to awaken the sleeping Woe and lead it on a rampage to break the lands but B'Lohra strives to keep it asleep and use it to harvest her own forces with which to take retribution on Uhr'R'Maahn.

THE SHIVER DEPTHS

Beneath the Shiver Plains lies the Shiver Depths. It is said that therein lies an entire army of Shivers. This city is governed over by the Terrible Gazing Sorrow B'lohra.

Crippled in a battle with the Thunder Brothers, after being betrayed by her once partner Uhr'R'Maahn, B'lohr retreated beneath the earth. She summarily found the location of the sleeping Woe An'Nuwen, and began harvesting its essence to build an army of horrors devoted to her. The stillness of An'Nuwen is beneficial to B'Lohra and her plans for revenge. This has put her forces in direct contention with the Shivers that roam the Shiver Plains above as they seek to wake their sire. She sees them as a threat to her plans. As a result she has her forces kill off far more shivers than they do humans. Her domain is believed to reach beneath The Divide all the way to the Beyduuni Wastes where some scholars whisper that she may have more influence than we know.

THE BEYDUUNI WASTES

To the South and West lie the Beyduuni Wastes. This area is mostly hot arid desert interspersed with rocky areas, salt flats, volcanoes, and steam vents. In, and among, these harsh features lie the federated towns of the Beydunni which have been gathered into the territory known as the Salduun empire. At one the biggest, and oldest, static gatherings of peoples across all of Ehdrigohr, the Empire is a technological marvel. They have learned to turn the hazardous nature of the wastes into a strength.

The Beydunn long ago discovered the power of steam and clockwork. This came about mostly due to a need to find alternate sources of protection that didn't rely so much on the fickle nature of the Mysterious Ways. They were up against armies of Shivers from the east and there was no way for them to train people to use magic quickly enough.

Stepping up to fill the void were craftsmen who came up with the devices that were used on the frontline, mostly using the explosive **thunderdust**, an explosive mixture made from various minerals easily found in the wastelands. This led to the creation of the indirect fire weapon known as the Star Caster. It could launch hundreds of rockets, each carrying an explosive payload, into a charging mob of shivers. It served to soften the monsters up and cripple them, allowing the warriors to sweep in and easily finish them off. Very soon after the creation of the StarCaster, they discovered that steam could be used to power devices when no elemental was to be found.

ASPECTS OF THE SHIVER DEPTHS

These shivers are different. Humans don't stand a chance down here, It's like a maze down here. It's always dark. Luckily the shivers are more interested in fighting each other than most humans.

TROUBLES OF THE SHIVER DEPTHS

The Eye beneath waits for a chance to strike, Rumors abound that those seeking power can find it with the Eye Beneath. AN'Nuwen must slumber for now, no matter the cost.

ASPECTS OF THE BEYDUUNI WASTES

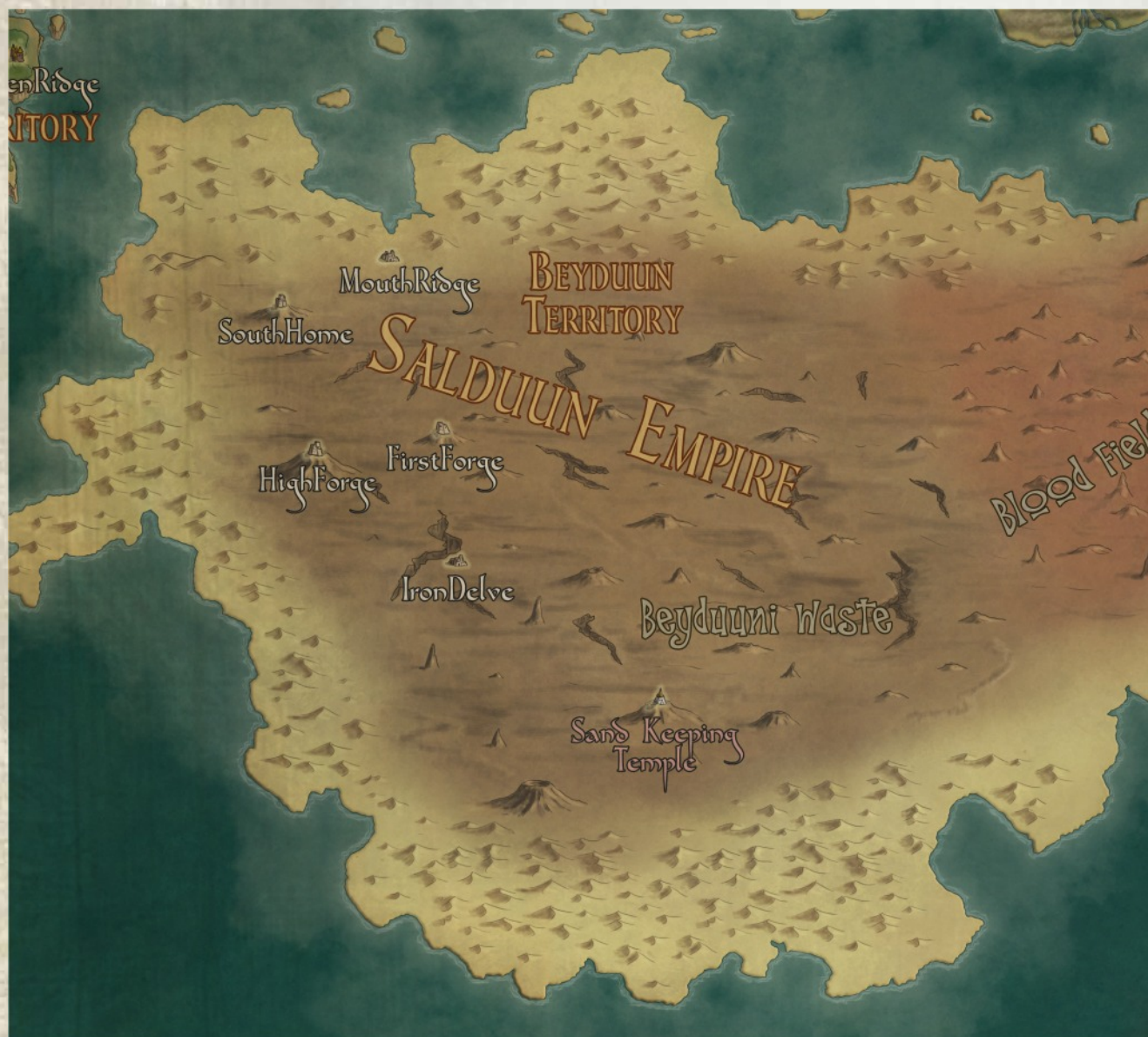
Progress will save us from the darkness, Contraction in everyday life, Bureaucracy so thick you could cut it, The land is a tool to be used like any other.

Now, due to the work of an order called the Contraptioners and the science of contraption, the Beyduuni have managed, under the auspices of their leader, Saldu IV, to expand the coverage and defense of the wastes while building great walled cities that are comfortable for the people living there.

Their rampant growth has had the unfortunate side-effect of forcing the empire to look to other areas for more resources to maintain their lifestyle and push back the shivers.

The greatest of these resources are to be found in the forests of the Eastern Forest and the Sunder. This has, unfortunately strained relations between these groups as the Beyduuni push for resources in areas held sacred by others.

Some say their need to fuel their contraptions actually has added to the growth of the Beyduuni Wastes and will awaken the Woes.



There are other voices within the Beyduuni that insist that they should look further into using the Woe beneath the waste, known as Tshai'Atan, as a resource. They feel that contraption has grown sufficient to contain the creature, allowing them to dispense with the Rituals of Still and Quiet altogether.

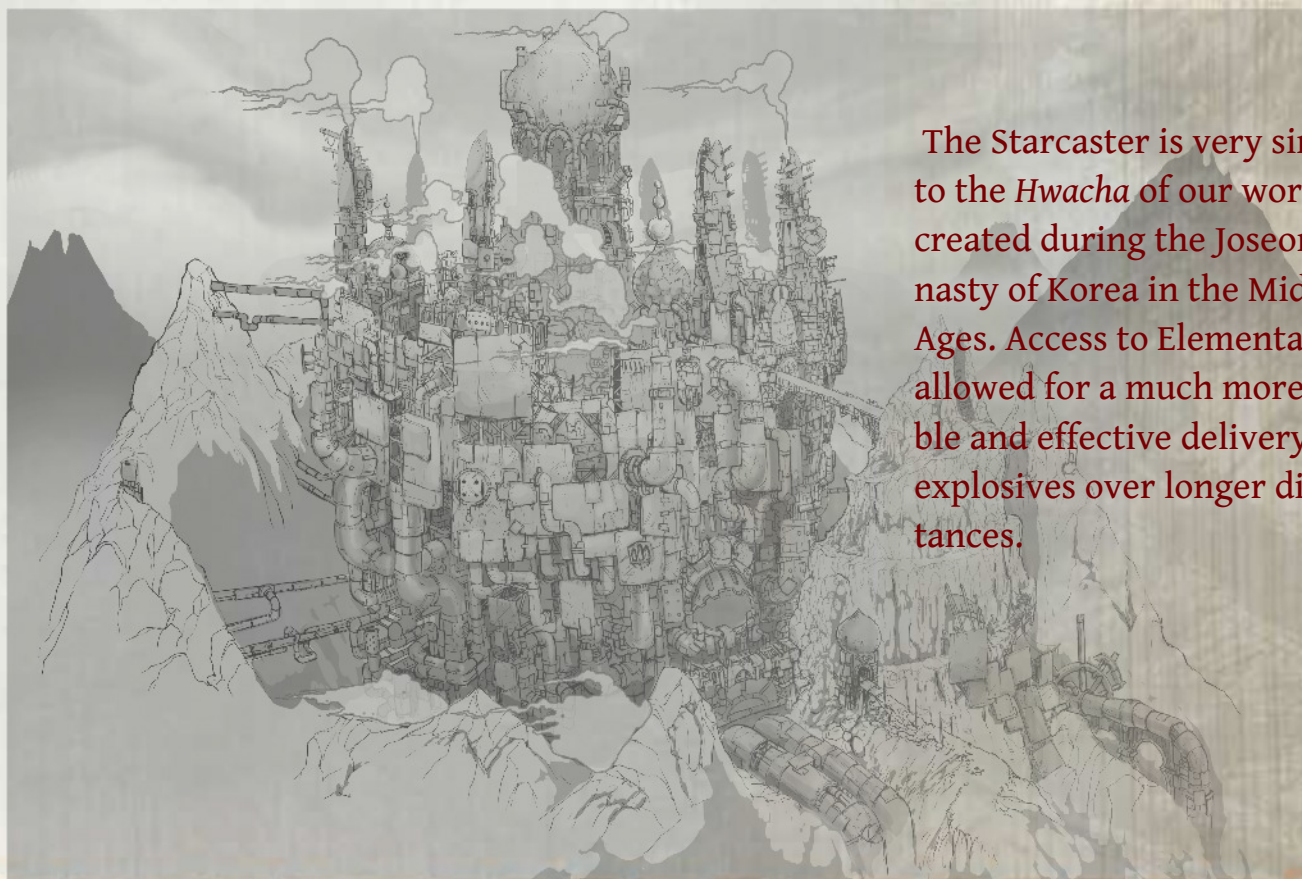
The Keepers of the Sand, an old Beyduuni order that eschews contraption and maintains the Sand Keeping Temple in the western wastes have come under fire from the politicians of the empire as fundamentalist barbarians due to their constant resistance to anyone tampering with the temple or the lives of traditional nomadic Beyduuni who do not wish to be subject to Salduun rule.. This has resulted in an atmosphere of general intolerance of the Mysterious Ways that are making a lot of Way users go into hiding.

Certain senators are calling for an outright ban of non government sanctioned uses of the Mysterious Ways, citing the existence and slow growth of the Blood Fields as evidence of the danger they pose.

TROUBLES OF THE BEYDUUNI WASTES

The Beyduuni tribesman resist the growth of the Empire, Even the shivers and Woe can become tools if we understand them. The Salduun Empire needs resources to grow, the other tribes can't stop us

In case you're wondering, Yes, thunderdust is basically gunpowder but with a little hint of the Mysteries.



The Starcaster is very similar to the *Hwacha* of our world created during the Joseon Dynasty of Korea in the Middle Ages. Access to Elementalists allowed for a much more stable and effective delivery of explosives over longer distances.

THE POWERS THAT BE...

There are a great number of groups and organizations in Ehdri-gohr that work very hard to effect a change on the world. Most work, one way or another, towards the betterment of the people and the human condition. There are some, however, that strive to bring sorrow and to shape the world to their own desires. Beyond those forces of darkness that strive toward power, there are even more terrible groups who endeavor to bring the world to ruin and return us to the void.

THE GREAT SOCIETIES

First and foremost are the Great Societies. These organizations were started by the Graces known as the Thunder Brothers (Wa'Kya, Tohr, R'Deen, and Xay'Iyahn'Gho) ages ago when the first Turning happened. They were created to guide and protect the people and keep mankind from falling into complete disarray. As civilizations have grown due to the relative safety brought on by The Still, they find themselves at odds with men and women hungry for power as often as they are up against shivers and horrors from the Twain.

SOCIETY OF CROWS

This is a great warrior society that is scattered across the lands. Every group of people has some variation on the Crows but the most iconic sect is the “Crows of the Shil” which is composed mostly of Wiitjasa, Batu, and some Urali. The Crows are the closest thing to a worldwide army. They often act like sheriffs for the ways in the areas in which they operate. It is very rare to find a Crow that operates alone. They are extremely social and the need to recognize the importance of the gifts of others is one of their fundamental teachings.

The Crows specialize in hunting shivers, and are often considered to be among the preeminent monster hunters, evil slayers, and waywardens of the lands. In addition to monsters, they have taken down more than a few bandit kings and would be warlords.

The weapon of choice of the Crow is known as the Crow lance. These are long spears sporting long wide blades at either end. The spearhead blades are about the length of a long knife. Feather and crow patterns decorate much of the spear and are especially etched



Aspects of the Crow Society

Best fighters in the lands, If
you see one Crow look for
the ones you don't see, The
Crows always find a way,
Dance in the sun or the

along the blade and pommel. These spearhead blades are removable. When removed they are recognized as they the special fighting long knives known as the Crow Talons.

Despite its efficiency as a weapon, the primary purpose of the crowlance is that of a weapon. It is a survival tool and all around utility device. Not only can the blades be removed, the haft becomes a pole which can be broken down further. Each section of the pole has multiple compartments where a crow holds medicine, rations, grappling twine, and any number of other things. It is a magnificent puzzle that can be turned into multiple configurations with a few twists and turns.

In addition to the crowlance the other symbols of the Crows are the Crow's Mark which is typically worn as brooch, the Crow's Mantle – a cowl and feathered cloak of dark coloration that shimmers and shines with the colors of the crow (black, blue, green, purple).

Crows are especially strong in the Element of **Wind** and the Natures of **Body** and **Mind**. Techniques taught to Crows come from these three mysteries first and foremost. They are powerful martial artists and their use of the mysteries is wrapped up in their martial techniques. Bringing the mysteries to bear is typically focused around various subsets of fighting skills and the use of the medicine skill. This usually requires physical maneuvers combines with a series of stances, intonations and invocations of martial ideals or the use of special powders and equipment. The use of Wind is heavily tied to the Crow Lance. Other mysteries involve the use of the Crow's Mantle and the Crow's Mark described below.

They are looked upon favorably by the Song known as ShuaBring-
sTheLight, and were the first of the Great Societies created by
Wa'Kya – Thunder Brother of the North.

In great times of need, Wa'Kya shares his power among the crows and chooses one to manifest as the "Lord of Crows". The primary goals of the Lord of Crows are to protect the peoples, build connections with the other societies, strengthen ties and relationships between Crows and the other warrior societies, and usurp any great evils or unbalancing forces that are bringing discord to the tribes. This especially means would be tyrants or power-mongers.

Crows are often looked upon by the peoples of the lands as folk heroes. They are welcomed in most places; however, their penchant for meddling and lack of political allegiances has made their presence barely tolerated in the new found Wu Towns and in the Salduun empire where political and economic power hold sway over balance and justice more with each passing day. The Red Pale of Salduun are often thought to be the empires way of telling the Crows that they



are not need. Palemen (the soldiers of the Red Pale) will often initiate a fight or attempted arrest with a Crow with very little provocation.

In the lands of the Mic'Talan the Crows are considered terrorists due to their constant interference with slavers and slave merchants. Among the Mic'Talan, even bearing the symbol of the Crow's Mark (or marks of any of the Great Societies for that matter) is punishable with imprisonment at the very least. More often than not, it results in a public execution. Many lower caste Mic'Talan and those of the Mu'a servant class secretly support the Crows and will hide them and help them when possible.

One who is said to "dance with the crows" has joined the Society of Crows, or at the least is very friendly to them.

BROTHERS AND SISTERS OF THE MOURNING DOVES

Mourning Doves are a worldwide order of healers and peace keepers who travel in flocks of teacher and students. They specialize in presiding over funerals and births. They can be found wherever a great battle has taken place, and in spring and autumn time festivals around the world. Their goal is the sending of people out of the world in peace, and bringing them in with joy, and maintaining the general well being in the days that lie in between.

Though primarily an order centered on peace, the Doves are not necessarily pacifists. When face to face with a shiver or horror a dove can become a fury to behold as they are masters of an open hand martial art known as the "Hand of Weal and Woe" and in the use of their walking cudgels known as "sunset clubs". Though they would prefer to peacefully deal with problems created by men, when someone has fallen too far into darkness, they are not above "removing an infection from the community". When a Dove can't do so on her own, they will not hesitate to call in Crows to clean house and handle the messy details.



Aspects of the Mourning Doves

We have a duty to the world
that keeps the People in
motion, No one should die
alone, A birth is a blessing
on the world, The restless
ones seek us out, We should
der the sorrows of the people,
Never leave the dead to
the Shivers

Their closeness to death has caused them to develop great knowledge of forensic techniques. This means they are often at the center of investigations of murders where the culprit is not obvious. They are oathbound to see to the rest of restless spirits which, again, sometimes puts them in the position of meddler or investigator as angry spirits often seek them out to gain justice.

The fact that spirits will regularly talk to Doves causes the order to be considered a little “creepy” and they aren’t often welcome for long in a given place. People get a little paranoid about their secrets when a Dove turns her ear and looks to be listening to nothing while looking at them.

The Doves are close to the earth and are looked upon favorably by the song known as *BryahdWhoShapesTheEarth*. They tend to her beasts, and to the green, as well as they do to men. They are the Great Society created by Tohr – Thunder brother of the West. In times of great need it is said he lends his power to the Doves, choosing one to become the Regent of Mourning who will heal the wounds of the lands and hearts.

The Doves are strongly associated with the Elemental of Earth, the Nature of Soul, and the Principal of Life. They are a Mystical order and focus greatly on the relationships of teacher and student. They’re known by the moniker “Browncloak” due to the feathered dun colored cloaks that they wear. The dun cloak is the Mourning Dove’s most prized possession. It is filled with pockets and pouches where they keep medicine and supplies. It keeps them comfortable in most climates, and allows them to blend in with natural surroundings. It is an item of great healing and allows them to call on the Mystery of life with greater ease.

For a person to say they have “taken the brown” means they’ve decide to walk a path of peace and healing, and perhaps to have sought out a teacher among the Brothers and Sisters of the Mourning Dove.

THE DREAM KEEPING SOCIETY OF OWLS

The Dream Keeping Society of Owls is a mystical tradition. They are found the world over with individual cells operating in different areas. The size of a given cluster of them ranges from a single individual, to up to 4 different owls representing different areas of the essences (Weave, Moment, Space, Truth).

Owls are, trained as waywalkers from the point of their induction. The first things a Dreaming Owl Master teaches her student are how

to make a personal persistent fold in Dream, and how to walk partly in dream and flesh so that they can more easily find the places where nightmares form. These are the places where the weave of the great web grows thin and the nature of the horrors seep through staining hope and joy, bringing depression and fear.

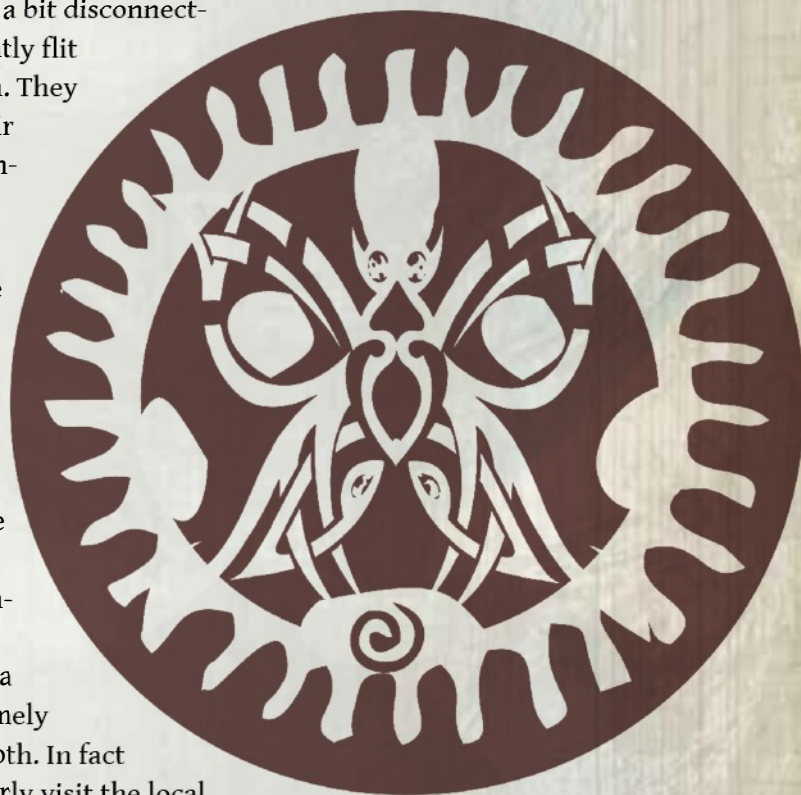
Once they master this technique, as well as how to mend the weave and banish the weakest of breachers, they are sent to walk the world and find a community to caretake. They don't stay long in any one place as they make most people uncomfortable. Their focus on battling such dark things make them a bit disconnected from most people. Their eyes constantly flit about, seeing things that no one else can. They are dripping with the Mysteries and their power is a constant reminder of how dangerous the world beyond truly is.

As they travel from place to place, investigating the lost and wild areas of the world, they invariably also accumulate a vast trove of old lore. They share this old lore whenever they can and so the people know them to be storytellers of great knowledge and skill. They are also trained in the use of medicines. They are neither as skillful healers as the doves, nor as wonderfully outrageous entertainers and storytellers as the jays. They are however skilled at both enough to do in a pinch. More importantly they are extremely practical and are better teachers than both. In fact the Doves and Jays in an area will regularly visit the local Owl elder to gain lost knowledge of healing and lore which they will, in turn, refine and perfect.

The Owls are skilled in the Mysteries of the Essences. In fact they are the most magical of the great societies. Their skill with the Essences allows them to do the most outright impossible things imaginable. By bending Space, Moment, Truth, and the Weave itself, they are able to meet the **breachers** on their own territory and lay them low.

They can intercept breaching attempts and send them back through to the other side. When they come across things that they can not handle alone, their great ability with the essences allows them to call for help and gather assistance in extremely short order.

Of all the Great Societies, the Owls are the most skilled in stepping



More about **Breachers** can be found on Page 315.

Aspects of the Owls
 We must walk the lonely
 roads, We've seen more ter-
 rors than anyone should ever
 have to, Shivers may be terri-
 fying but Breachers unravel
 the world, It's hard to connect
 to those who don't walk the
 ways, I have more knowledge
 than is safe, Never suffer a
 Breach to exist, Never suffer
 the Woe to awaken.

(moving between the traveling lands) and will often speak to others in Dream; reveal truths by stepping into the past through the River; and spy on the evil that men do through Shadow and along the Road.

The signature items of the Owls are their "Dream Blankets". They appear to be feathered cloaks, normally brown, white, or gray with large eye-like spots on the back which they wear in their travels. These cloaks can be spread upon the ground and used as doorways, allowing them to step freely among the traveling lands. They are also used to retrieve things from, or place things in, their personal Dream fold.

The Owls are also known for their wing shaped fans known as "Wind Blades" and the martial form known as "The Dance of Moth and Flame."

The Owls are favored by the song Han-Wi, they are the Society created by Xay'Iyahn'Gho – Thunder Brother of the South, Prince of Owls. In times of great need Xay'Iyahn'Gho will give his power to one person among the Owls, naming them "DreamWalking Servant" who leads the people to new levels of enlightenment.

The last DreamWalking Servant lead the 12 on the Trail of Dream and Shadow and brought back the Rites of Peace and Stillness that have since quieted the Woes and brought prosperity to the people.

To say someone "Walks in Dream" is to suggest that they have taken up the Dream Blanket and walks the path of an owl. It is used in some areas also as a derogatory term to suggest that someone is crazy or senile. It is also considered taboo to wake a sleeping beggar who seems to be talking in his sleep. The general belief is that said beggar might actually be an Owl doing battle with something terrible. Instead leave him food and coin in silent thanks just in case the life he saved was yours.

THE TROUPING JAYS

The Jays are an ecclesiastical order with a loose hierarchy which culminates in the Council of Joyful Vagabonds. They are also one of the most socially complicated of the Great Societies.

The Jays are taught the stories of the past with the expectation that they will travel the land and remind the people of what has come to pass and of their duty to the great web to ensure balance is among the people when the breachers come.

They are taught songs, artistic techniques, rituals, and dances so that in the terrible, dark nights, when shivers howl in the wilds, the people have something to distract them from their fears. They preside over weddings, unions of all sorts, and other situations where someone publicly makes an oath or commitment, or wishes to break

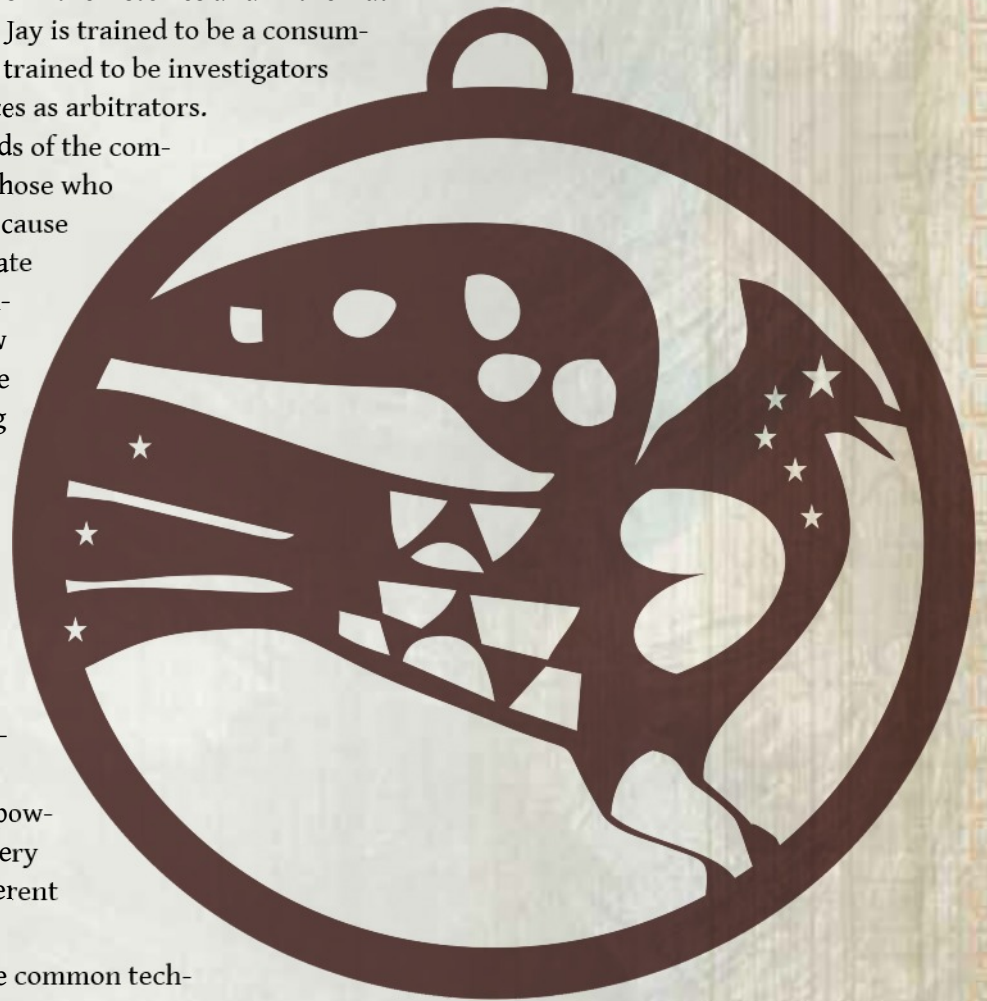
one. Most importantly, they are taught to gather the new stories of the world and share them amongst all, so that we will come to know each other as one people. Their role among the societies is one of being so obvious, spectacular, and uniting of people that the forces of darkness are drawn out by their need to destroy them. Evil cannot abide a Jay.

The direct power of the Jays is in their stories and in their attention to detail. Though every Jay is trained to be a consummate entertainer, they are also trained to be investigators and many will even offer services as arbitrators. This makes them the best friends of the common people and dangerous to those who seek to manipulate, control, or cause strife. If rumors begin to circulate about a new warlord or civil unrest, you can bet a Jay will show up in short order to find out the truth of the situation, assuming they're not the ones spreading the rumor.

Jay's are strong in the Principles and quite a few have skill with the essence of Truth. Each Jay will choose a primary art form, performance style, or social interaction that they specialize in. It is through this art form that they will invoke the power of the mysteries. Every mystery they can access will have a different technique associated with it.

The Jays have mastered some common techniques within the Principles, and other mysteries, that they can easily teach to students. The order's hierarchy controls who has access to which techniques. It is said that the Council of Joyful Vagabonds have access to songs that can break entire nations or call down fire from the heavens.

Of all of the Great Societies, relationships mean the most to the Jays. While others are often kept at arms length by the common people, the Jays are openly embraced because they bring joy, and play, and laughter. Jays take romantic partners whenever possible, but their relationships are not restricted to this. "All my relations" is the mantra of the Jays. It suggests that everyone is a relative though they



Aspects of the Jays

Everyone has a story, Always
take time to witness, Build
family whenever you can,
We are all related, Sing,
dance, be for there may be
no tomorrow, We must do
more than populate - we
must connect, Suffer not
those who divide, Suffer not
oppression or slavery, To
take a life is to quite the
world, The shivers in our
hearts are as dangerous as
the ones in the night.

may not yet know their places in your circle. The goal is to find that place for them, embrace it (and the responsibilities that come with it), thereby lifting the grace of the world a little bit more and bringing the people closer to The Gathering.

The order actually requires Jays to seek out chosen relatives in their lives, and to build multiple committed relationships with no gender or political boundaries. The power the Jays wield to shape society is not without temptation and it is believed that a single individual, with no connection to anyone, will eventually submit to pride or hubris and use the power for selfish reasons. By committing themselves to others through love, it is believed that they become more open to the possibilities of humanity and its varied needs.

Crows share this relationship model with the Jays. The big difference is that a Crow will take a wife and a husband, typically acting as a hub between all partners, and foster few children. A Jay, however will make multiple committed relationships that are romantic, platonic, and filial. They will in turn, encourage these new relatives to find relatives and partners for themselves, and actively encourage the development of relationships among their new relatives. They effectively build a large extended tribe that is joined not in blood, but by the Principles. It is not unknown to find a "jayhearted Crow" who is basically someone who could easily have become a Jay but was called more to the path of the warrior. It is believed that such individuals are the ones most often chosen to become the Lord of Crows.

The mark of a Jay's rank and is her Jaycloak which is a public display of the commitments they have made. A newly ordained Jay will have a cloak that is a brilliant blue color. Within this field of blue there will be a single ochlos which is a stylized eye shaped symbol. This represents their first commitment which is to the life of a Jay. Before a Jay is considered ready for the world they must find a love within one of the other Great Societies and make a commitment to him or her. When that union is celebrated the Jay receives the first patch on their cloak and a "Charm of Principle" which becomes a conduit of faith and love between the Jay and the partner. Those recognized as Elders within the Jays are typically adorned with charms and their Jaycloaks are beautiful multicolored patchworks on the inside, and covered with ochlos on the outside. No two Jaycloaks are exactly the same and even the term Jaycloak isn't exactly correct as isn't always a cloak. It can be an exorbitant scarf, dress, coat, shawl, or any other kind of outer wrap. They all will have ochlos and patches

Jay have ways of communicating and sharing emotions and

dreams with their partners via the cloaks and the charms. This means that, in a way, they are never truly separate from them and they actually draw a mysterious strength from them. Successful social attacks on a Jay can be particularly devastating to them and their abilities. Consequences on the social tracks will have effects on this extended family or “tiyospaye”.

Jays prefer to avoid fighting whenever possible but they are all taught to use the “hummingbird blades”. These are long, slender, rapier-like knives that are used in pairs as part of a flowing graceful martial art called “The Dance of the Hummingbird Blades.”

They, like the Crows, are favored by the song, ShuaBringsThe-Light. They are the Great Society created by R'Deen, Thunder Brother of the East. In times of great need, it is said that he lends forth his power to exalt one Jay to become the “Loving Stranger” whose very presence casts away sorrow just as the sun dissolves shadows.

Jayhearted is a term that has come to be associated with those individuals who are quick to love and slow to anger. The term “nose like a Jay” is used to reference someone who is constantly getting involved in other peoples problems or thing that others don't think should concern him. One who has joined the Jays is often referred to as having “run away with the troupe.” Owls who have gone weary of walking the ways will often become settled Jays in their old age, but Doves rarely become Jays. Their closeness to death makes it very hard for them to connect to multiple people. Jays however will go far out of their way to bring a smile to a mournful dove.

THE GREAT EVILS

While there a number of groups, like the Great Societies, that work to make the world a better place, there are also those forces that strive for altogether more terrible possibilities. These are the forces of darkness. They aren't all organizations per se, but they are easily enough categorized to be thought of as such. They are the more commonly known evils that mothers and fathers warn their children about at bedtime.

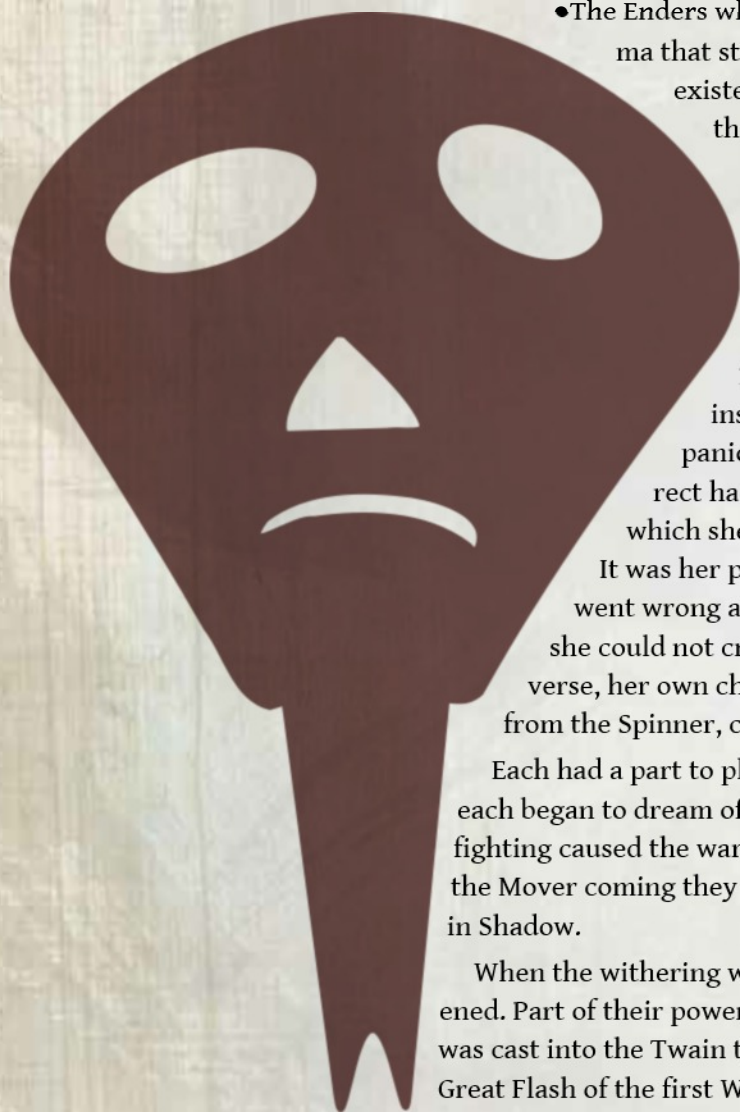
Collectively they are known as the Great Evils, though they are philosophically pretty diametrically opposed. Most people don't know the difference and, frankly, don't care. Most people don't engage the Great Evils about why they try to murder us all in our sleep. They just want them stopped.

The Great Evils are usually categorized as follows:

- The Sorrows, powerful beings trapped in the shadows of the world. The only thing that truly keeps them at bay are their

own infighting as they each work to claim the world, for themselves and remake it in their own ideal.

- The Dul Ah'gallan, who strive to serve the Sorrow K'ui and the terrible beings trapped in The Twain in hopes of securing power when Waits Beyond and her brood come pouring back into the world.
- The Fiddler Knights who serve the Sorrow Hsii and work to see mankind subjugated beneath their hateful might.
- The Enders who see the world around them as an anathema that strangles everything into a static, noisome, existence. They seek to unravel the very fabric of the world and return all to the quiet.



THE SORROWS

The Sorrows are powerful beings left over from the War off Sorrows. There were 12 in all, and these creatures are ancient and insane. They were the assistants of the Companions of Ljosa-Unkhte. They were to be her direct hand in the world (part man, part spirit) with which she would shape the world into her own liking.

It was her purview to bring change, but something went wrong and she could only sow corruption. Because she could not create anything that wasn't corrupted or perverse, her own children (which came from seed she forced from the Spinner, came out twisted, broken, and conniving.

Each had a part to play in the conflict, but as time passed they each began to dream of a world of their own rule. The resulting infighting caused the war to escalate even more. When they heard the Mover coming they abandoned their dark mother and most hid in Shadow.

When the withering was invoked they found themselves weakened. Part of their power was inherent in their mother and when she was cast into the Twain they were diminished. One was caught in the Great Flash of the first Withering and destroyed outright. Others stepped out of Shadow when the sun had set, only to find forces arrayed against them. This is how J'hola was imprisoned. Those that remained gathered their forces and hid from the world of men and begin to plot ways to regain power.

Opportunity presented itself when the Woe first awakened and the shivers were loosed upon the land. Many of them began gather-

ing shivers to them and built new armies that stormed the new found cities of men in the night. Others used the opportunity to create strongholds where they could gain a better foothold in the world. The Graces were busy helping the people against the Woe so there was little opposition to them.

Unfortunately for the Sorrows, the Woe were not controllable by anyone, including them. These colossal horrors brought ruin to Sorrow and man alike. There were Sorrows who reveled in the chaos of the Woe. Others were striving to find ways to steal their power for themselves. Each time The rampages of the Woe came to an end, what remained of mankind could see that the Sorrows grew stronger as they found ways to use terrible magic to bind new breeds of shivers to them. Soon men were constantly fighting against the newborn shivers of the Woe as well as bred shivers from the Sorrows.

The Sorrows would have long ago conquered everything were it not for the intervention of the Graces and the great societies. They realized their greatest weakness and used it against them. The jealousy and greed of the Sorrows is as inherent to them as heat is to fire. With the assistance of K'ea the Wise, the Jays embarked upon a plot to get the Sorrows more focused on each other than on men. This worked superbly. Now no Sorrow dares to March outright against the lands men for fear that another Sorrow would catch them while their guard down. Over the generations since the Still came some have managed to form uneasy alliances.

The most successful of these alliances was that of B'lohra and Uhr R'Maahn together they were able to stave off their adversaries, and the Graces, long enough to enact a powerful rite that filled the sky over a vast portion of the eastern Shil with ash. This area, now called the Shiver Plains, is now a land of what seems like perpetual darkness and filth. At the last moments of the rite, Uhr R'Maahn exposed B'lohra to the Thunder Brothers who attacked and nearly slew her. She retreated to the Shiver Depths below the plains leaving Uhr R'Maahn to complete the rite at the last moment giving him dominion over the area. She now licks her wounds and wars with her ex-partner. The Shiver Plains are now their personal battlefields.

The recent discovery of the Mic' Talan, an entire tribe of man thought lost after the upheaval has stirred things up yet again. The Mic'Talan began raiding the eastern shores a generation after the Still came to be. They are warlike slavers who apparently are wholly devoted to the dark songs known as Miktlan, Garu'Mkai, S'apel. They're cultrual goal was the destruction, or subjugation, of all that their dark gods deemed weak. Thought there is no evidence that these three dark songs survived the purging of the Mover, some Sor-

rows see the Mic'Talan as the greatest single power in the lands and work to find power with them. Some believe that the 12th Sorrow, Amisha, long thought destroyed, might actually be the force behind these ravenous people.

Other Sorrows, ignore the infighting and pursue their own goals. At least one, K'ui, is still loyal to WaitsBeyond and strives to break the pale and usher in his dark mistress and her hordes. It is the source of more Dul Ah'gallan (also known as barrowlords or headsmen due to the flying heads chained to their headless stumps) than any other Sorrow or breaching horror.

Hsii, the Black Fiddler, has taken an altogether different tact and works to sow discord among men in hopes of watching them bring ruin to themselves. His forces, the Fiddle Knights, are to be discussed later.

In the shadow of all of this the peoples of Man continue to try to pull together and build new nations. Some say the Time of Gathering is close at hand. If only the Sorrows can be kept at bay long enough for the people to unite as one and call WhatMoves back to the world. Then the land can be healed and the shadows made quiet. More information on the individual Sorrows can be found in the Cosmology section.

THE DUL AH'GALLAN

Of the creatures that bring strife to the worlds of men, the Dul Ah'gallan stand head and shoulders above all others as the most fear inspiring. Known by many names across the lands (Barrow lord and headsmen being the most common), the Dul Ah'gallan were all once human. More importantly they were once people of great power and respect. Unfortunately their pride, anger, and self righteousness eventually took them down a path where they looked to the things in the Twain for assistance and became "Given".

This process is usually facilitated by K'ui itself. This shadowy, ephemeral Sorrow would eventually lead each of these powerful people down a path that would end in a pact to WaitsBeyond. It is a very final pact for the very symbol of the agreement is the given's head.

The ritual of sacrifice traps them in a state between life and death and their soul is believed to be absorbed into the Twain, removed from the cycle of rebirth. They are left only as headless beings of spirit and flesh, of pure will and rage. Their ability for compassion and humanity, seated in the soul, are forever removed. In return they get eternal life of a sort, under the control of K'ui and the hor-

rors. They are no longer creatures of free will. This headless body travels around the land, fostering armies of dark creatures, and bringing chaos and bloodshed to the land.

Where Shivers are the ravenous hordes that prowl the night, the Dul Ah'gallan are the great bogey men. Each has a singular passion, an obsessive "truth" that they seek after, destroying everything associated with it. Well known Dul Ah'gallan include the following creatures of legend:

- Tlaroh'Niya who lost her children and seeks new ones to replace them.
- M'trifox who collected wives and murdered any woman who refused him. He now seeks new "lovers" who's hearts he hungers for.
- Sbehgaak who ate her husband who had not provided for her and now hungers for the flesh of all men.
- T'sehus who gathers children to win back the love of his lost wife Tlaroh'Niya.

The list goes on.

Though they have given up their own heads, each Dul Ah'gallan is still in possession of at least one that they have been given. They each possess a large bloated head with a face like a twisted grotesque mask frozen in a moment of perverse emotion. They have impossibly wide mouths that are usually filled with rows of rat like teeth or other means of devouring. This head (formally called an ite'sica, but more commonly referred to as "bad faces" or "Flying heads"), is actually independent of the body and flies in an eerie time distorted manner. As they fly they human like entrails trail beneath it dripping with putrid bile and blood.

These heads are actually a type of breacher that has been trapped. The head actually comes from a murderer who has been executed (one reason for tradition of burning the bodies of murderers). They are completely mad but possess forgotten, twisted secrets of the Mysteries. They are enslaved to the Dul Ah'gallan, bound to it by a magical chain that goes down into the hole where their head and



neck once sat.

If left on their own the ite'sica would fly about the land screaming and killing with wild abandon until the sun came up to destroy them with the withering. Since they are bound however, they are instead forced to obey the Dul Ah'gallan who can call the head to rest on his shoulders for a brief period and use its dark power. Really powerful and old Dul Ah'gallan have multiple ite'sica tethered to them. This is especially true of those who have help others to become Dul Ah'gallan, effectively becoming their masters. They can cause the heads to act for them, or use their power, without attaching. They can even set them free for a brief period to perform particular deeds.

The evil energy of a Dul Ah'gallan draws the twisted and dark things to it. Such creatures hunger grow to mirror the obsessions of the controlling barrow lord. They seem to have an ability to command lesser shivers, and can whisper to the dreams of men and women who've done evil to others. Especially those who have harmed their families. There are, however, shivers more powerful that actually seem to have some ability to command the Dul Ah'gallan.

Though it is generally believed that all Dul Ah'gallan serve K'ui, this is not strictly true. There are some that are believed to be independent. Such creatures tend not to last very long though without the aid of a Sorrow to conceal it. Those that do serve K'ui stalk the night, travelling murderers, acting either singly or with a troupe of shivers, who will murder an entire village or town overnight if given a chance. Typically they will capture and kill people one at a time, dragging their bodies off to their barrows or caves where shivers will be drawn to attach and re-purpose the body. The northern area known as the White is said to be teeming with Dul Ah'Gallan that seek to free the Winter Crone Sorrow. They lead the charge against The Line in every Long Night. BearWalkers seek them out in the long days and try to put them to rest.

In addition to terrorizing people, these creatures will attack the forces of Sorrows that K'ui has deemed to be rivals and betrayer to the cause of bringing WaitsBeyond back to the lands. He is so focused in punishing the "fallen" Sorrows that most Dul Ah'gallan are often so busy fighting other evils that most never get to a human settlement.

If someone sights a Dul Ah'gallan, and lives to tale the tale, the people mobilize quickly to stop it or chase it off. They do not take the threat of these things lightly at all. Unfortunately there isn't a really good way to kill a Dul Ah'gallan permanently.

A number of the Owls and old tellers maintain that you must find

the sacrificed head while the creature is in a dead state. The original head maintains a connection to the energy of the soul and keeps it trapped. That head is basically the vessel of the curse.

If you can find that head, smudge it with sage, then fill the mouth with tobacco, and burn it, the creature will stay dead. The only catch to this is that that head has, most likely, been made into an ite'sica for another.

In effect, to kill a Dul Ah'gallan you must fight his master who is more powerful. Doves are known to have techniques to force them into long sleep once dead. This at least keeps a fallen Dul Ah'gallaan out of commission for a while.

Most Dul Ah'gallan have a "territory" that they roam. They will tend to hide beneath the earth or in caves in desolate places during the day. The powerful among them eventually learn to step into Shadow or The Road to hide. Once there, however, it is hard for them to find their way back. They can always hear their names spoken however. People are warned to never say the name of Dul Ah'Gallan. If they are referred to it is usually with a title (TakesChild, or Eat-sLove for example). One never knows where the lost creature has wandered to in the traveling lands. Saying its name in the dark near places where "travelling" is easier (archways, reflective surfaces, shores, etc.) could actually call them through. Though it usually requires seven utterings of a name to get a response.

THE FIDDLERS

As has been said before, not all of the Sorrows seek a return of WaitsBeyond and her brood, from the Twain. Some seek to further only their own needs and agendas. H'sii and his Fiddler Knights are such a force.

H'sii draws personal power from chaos. Often referred to as the Mad Fiddler, H'sii was initially created to sow discord among the humans. He was to keep them from unifying and bringing all of their forces to bear against the Ok'o-wibiyrn. Not only did H'sii find that he excelled at this task, he found that he could draw power from the discord he created. He was the first force to actually twist and pervert some of the Iktom. These twisted weavers, known as "Fiddle-Backs" can only weave in darkness and wear H'sii's mark, the black fiddle, branded upon them.

He soon became a problem to all when he discovered he could draw just as much power from the Ok'o-wibiyrn as he did from the humans. As the War of Sorrows raged on many began to believe that it was H'sii who had extended the length of the war by making sure

that no side truly ever got the upper hand. There is a story that states that H'sii had drawn the ire of Ok'o-wi and, had it not been for the return of the Mover and the subsequent upheaval, she was prepared to destroy him.

H'sii was one of the first to hide when WhatMoves arrived. Having already built a refuge in Shadow he sequestered himself there. The Upheaval had temporarily trapped him in Shadow but he was able to watch much of what transpired.

He marveled at the pure chaos that WhatMoves brought when the Upheaval was initiated. Since that moment H'sii has seen himself as a twisted version of WhatMoves. Rather than keeping things in motion though, H'sii keeps things in commotion.

When he saw the pact made between the Thunderers he thought that he too would become a force to shape mankind. He would be their new Mover. He saw them as the most wonderful toy, capable of so much and spilling over with power. He was delighted when things came together to bring great misfortune and spectacular sorrow to them. He watched for the most wicked and twisted among the humans and whispered promises to them of great power if they would but entertain him.

Those that answered his call became, in effect, his performers in a great show. They became his Fiddler Knights.

The Fiddler Knights have but one goal, to play "the Great Game" and become the Champion of Winter. Every year H'sii selects a set of achievements that his knights must aspire to. The season of the game begins with "First Thaw" and ends with the long night of Mid-Winter.

During this period the Fiddler Knights are expected to go and entertain H'sii with the travails that they can engineer. In the Great Game, points are awarded for style, stealth, outlandishness, cascading effects, and achievements attained. When all achievements for the winter are attained, the Fiddlers position themselves for "final call". They are performers on a stage and the only audience that counts is H'sii himself. During final call all Fiddlers endeavor to tie up any loose ends to their plots for the year, while setting threads that foreshadow what is to come.

To put it bluntly, the Fiddlers are a secret society of psychopaths who treat the entire world as an improv stage on which to en-



tain their patron. Those who please H'sii are rewarded with magic and gifts from the Fourth Event.

Those who are chosen to become Fiddlers, will have been chosen because of great misdeeds done that have had reverberations that are far greater than the deed itself. Other times they will have been chosen because they are known for acts of flamboyant terror and chaos that they have perpetrated. All are irrevocably insane. Among the great evils, however, they remain the most human. They can even be sympathetic and appear to be antiheroes or misunderstood.

The frightening thing about the Fiddler Knights is that they are not obvious and their machinations are often unseen until too late. They may work years on one plot point, waiting for the right moment to pull at a single thread, that can break generations of love and trust and then dance with glee. Some even go so far as to soliloquy when a plot comes together. Some are so flamboyant as to present themselves as great villains and seek out someone to be their arch-nemesis, actually going out of their way to create him, and then working to destroy him.

Fiddlers cannot abide the presence of a Dul Ah'gallan. Those creatures serve forces that would end their patron's fun and they have the capacity to out them. It therefore is in the best interest of a Fiddler to help hunt down and destroy such creatures. They get even more points if they are able to thwart the plans of other Sorrows and the Graces.

They are so insidious that there have been great Fiddlers who set themselves up as heroes who could do no wrong. In truth most people who have encountered a Fiddler have done so without ever knowing. They often seem like respectable or "good" people. The truth is that whatever good they do is ALWAYS to build up hope that they can crush in the most spectacular way. A Fiddlers' song always ends in sorrow.

The symbol of the Fiddlers is a spider with a fiddle shape upon its abdomen. All Fiddlers must have it. The chance that they could get found out is part of the game. When a Fiddler gets outed they have to engage in an escape or go down in a blaze of glory. Fiddlers are also expected to have an ego signature. This is some item they leave, a theme they act within, or act that they do that lets people know who did the deed. Whatever the thing that is used for the ego signature, it is always grotesque, perverse, and disturbing.

Because of the Fiddlers constant evil doing, general insanity and depravity, and their interactions with dark things, they develop an aura of tainted mystery about them that is detectable by those who have some ability with the mysteries. Powerful Fiddlers learn ways

to shroud their taint, but after a while it grows strong enough for them to develop an aversion to sunlight. The dark gifts that are given to them by H'sii, eventually cause them to be affected by the Withering.

The Jays and Doves consider the Fiddlers to be blasphemous affront to the work that they do. They are careful, however, and avoid calling someone out as a Fiddler. Such accusations can lead to witch hunts and can cause people to turn against each other. Such a backfire would actually support the Fiddler's goals. In most cases, therefore, they will dispose of Fiddlers in "quieter" ways.

THE ENDERS

Somewhere within the noise of the great evils and the people's struggles to survive there arose a new force that focused on a single terrible idea. That idea is that the world is a big mistake and so is WhatMoves. Static existence is a sort of cosmic madness, a trap for ideas that were damaging to fluid existence beyond this bounded existence. WhatMoves is an insane concept of static being and we are his fever dream. His dream is ever growing, scooping up bits of possibility and wrapping it in a single static state that strangles it for an eternity. Basically, our world is literally a nightmare and WhatMoves must be slain.

Their belief is that WhatMoves intervened with the War of Sorrows not because he was angered by the chaos but that the union between the Spinner and Ok'o-wi put her, and everyone else too close to the fragile knots that hold this world together. They argue that the Scattering; casting the Ok'o-wibiryn into the Twain; and the circular path that souls walk upon The Road is all part of the processes of this prison. There is chaos and noise in the work so that we don't hear the whispers from without that attempt to summon WhatMoves back to sanity and break the illusion. The only way to return all the beings of the world to its proper state is to bring everything to a state of Quiet. WhatMoves must be slain so that all of this will be undone.

To the uninitiated the Enders seem like a bizarre murder/suicide cult. They operate in cells and work to polarize the peoples. They believe that the great threads that hold the prison together are made through the very act of witnessing it. Witnessing is bound up in emotion and personal filters that help us digest the illusion and accept it as truth. Extreme situations, however, cause the emotional container to unravel and create a pinhole sized aperture in the barriers of the prison. In that moment, if you die, they believe you enter the Quiet and the spaces Beyond the Twain. In that moment you return to

magnificent unfettered being. A dream without a dreamer you are freed to be pure concept.

What this means is that in their eyes, it is not enough to kill you. You must endure the most horrible things imaginable and then they bestow upon you a gift of freedom. A new birth. Some few, after the release, return as something bound in a barely maintainable human form. These are the Quiet Ones. What is in them makes even Shivers and the sorrows afraid. They seek to cause an altogether different sort of breach. Instead of opening up paths into the Twain, the Quiet Ones seek to unravel the Weave and the Hoop and send everything tumbling back into the quiet possibilities beyond.

Whether they are right or wrong, the Enders wind up being the single most persecuted religious forces around. Every organization marks professing the path of Ending as punishable by death. Because they often learn to display prowess with the Principles and Essences those mysteries will often get you suspicious looks from people unless you're obviously from another order that uses these for good. Even then many will steer clear of you just in case.

This persecution doesn't stop the Enders from traveling to find those in need of their ministrations. They believe so greatly in the power of concept that they actually profess a religious ideal. They suggest a binary world of bound and unbound where they continually force people into smaller and smaller packed concepts until their will breaks. They tend to be very logical, assertive, and convincing. In their purview, ideally they can get you to see that it's a good idea and convince you to begin walking a path of extremes, slowly separating you from your support systems and those that help you witness the world. At that point, no matter how nice an Ender might seem, you can be guaranteed that he or she will try to murder you.

It is murder that that they do. It is sloppy and raucous and perverse. They're not assassins or bandits murdering for private gain, and it is never quick or merciful. They're murdering you to help you out of a bad spot. They will do it slowly and might even sing a happy tune during the process. They think that they're doing joyful social work. The only saving grace is that they will do this to all sentient beings capable of madness. They'll do it to people, shivers, Sorrows, Graces, Fiddlers, Iktom, Dul'Ah'gallan, everyone.

The old saying goes. "End the ender before he smiles."

The terms Ender and Fiddler can be used when creating an advantage in an attempt to discredit the actions of another person during a social attack or when you're trying to sow doubt about someone.

Be careful through because if you fail to make the accusation you gain the aspect "suspicious" that can be freely invoked or compelled by your targets once each. If there is a Fiddler in the room they will use this to great effect against you.

LIFE IN ENDRIGOR

*We will continue
though the shape of darkness follows us.
And every night
and every day
Is a promise
that we fight for.
To hear our sons and daughters laughing
To see them dancing is a prophesy,
We carry with us
as we walk boldly in the Shadow.
Tears fill the river behind us
Till we meet in passing on the Road.
Or in the center we become
New Becoming to greet the sun.*

*– Translated from a song sung at sunrise
to bless the dead and the newly born by
the eastern forest and coast tribes.*



Though there are many different peoples across Ehdrigohr there are some commonalities that they share.

As a rule Ehdrigohr is a land where Most of the cultures maintain a fairly tribal aspect to them with power typically held in the hands of an elected council. The only group to steer away from this idea has been the Beyduun of the Salduun Empire with their formation of what they call an “empire” with its centralized government ruled by the emperor. Even the emperor, however, has a council of 7 Barbers who provide guidance. The Beyduuni tribesmen outside of the empire still retain their elder councils.

FAMILY

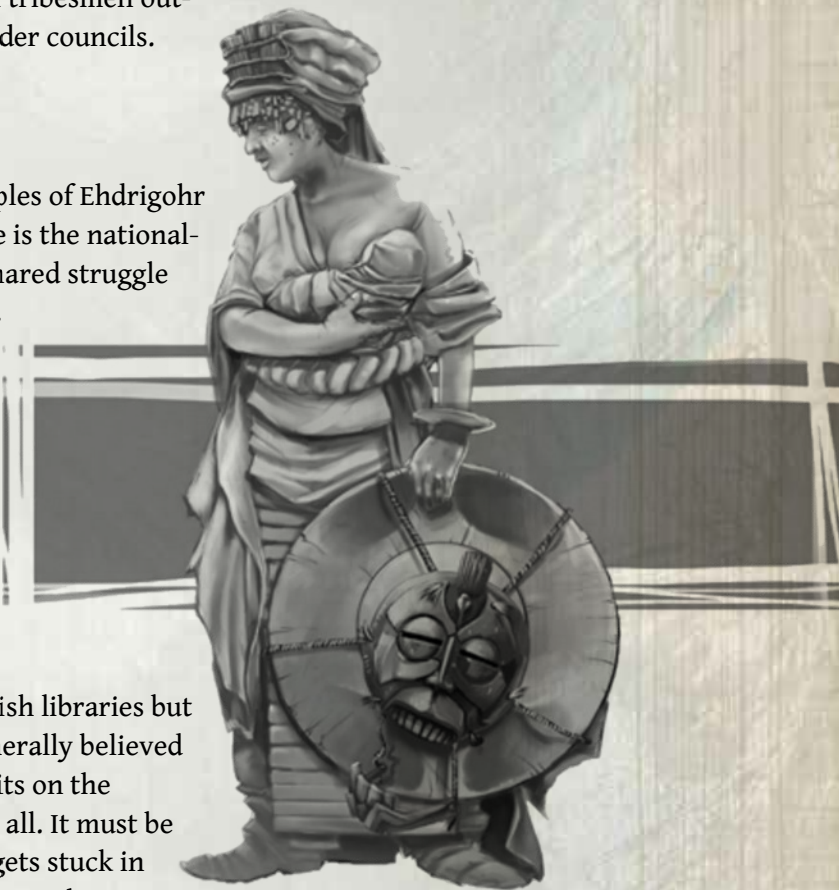
Tribe is very important to the peoples of Ehdrigohr and it exists on multiple levels. There is the nationalistic level where tribe represents a shared struggle to survive which has been successful.

The **Elders** of the tribe have seen what has come to pass and how it got to be there. This knowledge is indispensable as the world has few libraries. As a matter of fact, most of the common people lean heavily on the oral tradition as the main source of information sharing and education.

A few tribes have worked to establish libraries but this is quietly frowned upon. It is generally believed that stories and knowledge are “Spirits on the Breath” that must be shared by all to all. It must be allowed to grow and transform. If it gets stuck in one state, then the people too will get stuck. When the people struggled with the Turnings before the Still, libraries were even more frowned upon as such consolidations of information were very susceptible to destruction.

Those who have power with the Essences and Principles maintain that all the stories and knowledge of the people are maintained in the traveling land called “*The Road*”. All one needs to do is to learn to access the spirits and create a channel to them.

It is also believed that in the heart of the traveling land called “*Dream*” which is intertwined with *Mokochewakan* the place of beginning lies the truth of all knowledge and experiences. If you can cause your spirit to step into dream, you can reach the Witness with-



For more info on **Dream, Makochewakan, and Sorrow**, please refer to the **Cosmology** section beginning on Page 215.

The Four Types of Relatives

The Four Relatives come from the Four Selves which relate to the peoples perceived place in the cosmos and connection to each other.

There are **Relatives of Flesh** which refers to those who manifest similarly to us and how we connect to them physically. Upon looking at them we see obvious patterns of skin color, hair color, size, shape, and other physical manifestation. You con-

in, the Eye of Mendil, and from there you can see through the eyes of others, weep their tears, and feel their sorrows.

All people unknowingly access this when they sleep. It is how the people know they are all related. It is believed that this subconscious connection is what keeps us anchored in the world and why those who fall too far into **sorrow** lose access to Dream and eventually fade into **sorrowstain**.

On a subcultural level tribe is extremely important as groups centered around ideals and philosophies maintain a familial structure rather than strict hierarchies. Members in orders and societies recognize each other as aunts, uncles, nephews, nieces, mothers, fathers, and children. Tribes within groups intersect with actual familial tribes.

Most people don't belong to a simple nuclear family. Instead they belong to a large extended family often referred to as a **tiyospaye** (tee YOH shpah yay) tiyospaye is very much interwoven in the philosophy idea of the Four Relatives (see the Four Relatives Sidebar). A typical tiyospaye will contain multiple sets of families acting as a large unit. These families will often live in large multigenerational structures with a single large room for them all to sleep while most living occurs outside the structure.

In the Wu Towns, Salduun, and Barata the people have come to start living in multi-room structures and people in a tiyospaye divide up those rooms among themselves. This has had a side effect of making tiyospayes grow smaller and smaller so that paired grouping of parents and their immediate children. Those who engage in larger families are sometimes thought of as uncouth hillbillies.

In Salduun, tiyospayes have almost disappeared as a tradition as most focus is on building tribe to serve as a workforce to keep the forge cities running.

Families are partly measured in blood relationship but anyone can be made a relative. All cultures have a variation of what the Wiitjasa call their "*Making of a relative*" ceremony. This is used to join peoples in spirit which is believed to become blood after one generation.

This ceremony is held as sacred (much like marriage is in our own world) but is not restricted to joining pairs of life partners. If someone is adopted, it is done so through this ceremony and it is the same as blood. The groups in the tiyospaye recognize all children in their circle to be theirs. In this way most children are raised with multiple mothers and fathers stepping in to parent. Those who opt not to parent but still provide wisdom and guidance are typically recognized as uncles and aunts. In Salduun relative making is strictly sanctioned by the Viziers Council in an effort to control access to the bloodline of the Saldu.

Though growing population is important, it is considered more important that people witness each other and to support the circle. Because of this not all members of a tiyospaye elect to have children. There are those who chose to be childless in the expectation that they will help rear someone else's child or that they will support other adults and elders. Some choose it as a sacred place. These people are a special type of emotional medicine worker, almost a type of therapist, referred to as "carebringers".

Carebringers are part doula, part aunt/uncle. Some also act as match-makers. Many two-spirits and gatherers fall into this role naturally.

CRIME AND PUNISHMENT

There a number of misconducts and troubles an individual can cause that can trigger any number of punishments to be meted out. Most of these are the equivalent of misdemeanors. Different cultures handle them differently. Shame poles, where miscreants are tied to a pole for everyone to see and shame, are common. Prisons that are tucked away filled with prisoners that no one sees are extremely uncommon. The issue is that it is relatively easy for sorrow to set in and cause people to fade away.

In Salduun and the Wu Towns caning and dismemberment are very common methods for dealing with repeat criminals. Unfortunately these two cultures are rapidly growing in a type of stratification that is causing more people to become criminals to survive. The Wu Towns are actually rife with gangs among the Low, who constantly threaten revolution.

Big crimes, like murder and rape, usually result in getting ostracized and cast out into the wilds. In the case of murder, if it was a crime of passion then you aren't necessarily ostracized and are expected to serve the family of that person for a set period of time where you will be treated as a servant but eventually you can be made back into a relative. In this case you will become either a Relative of Intent unless you are found to be a Relative of Soul.

Rape in general, is the Fifth Great Shame and is seen as being worse than murder because it can instigate great **sorrow** and cause someone to fade into **sorrowstain**. Remember that the big deal about sorrowstain is that a person who has become sorrow stain will never return to the world. At least a murdered person will find their way through the traveling lands and eventually be born again. Sorrowstain is a permanent great loss to the people. Some cultures punish rape with ostracizing the perpetrator into the wilds, while others

nect on the physical level. This is where most relationships begin. Male and Female are the first two manifestations of flesh self. Two legs, four legs, crawling, flying, swimming, and unseen are the next manifestations. After that come all other physical differentiators.

Next there are the **Relatives of Blood** which come from union of male and female flesh relatives. All people come from a blood connection at one point or another. This is where the Male and Female genders tend to operate. Male and Female are the first two obvious Flesh Relatives and they produce more flesh relatives. Consumption is also part of the cycle of blood relatives in that all things die to provide nutrition for the growth of something else. Blood gives to blood.

Next are the **Relatives of Intent**. These are relatives where flesh has ceased to be as important and spirit and rhythm have become paramount. You are more concerned with another person's actions and the effect they have on the world. These relatives become societies and organizations. They become teachers and students. They can create more intent and drive the will to bring change to the world. This is where the Two-spirited gender tends to operate. They don't produce flesh offspring in these relationships but they do produce intentional offspring, and direct spirit. They are unions created purely for the sake of heart and idea as opposed to quantifiable procreation.

Lastly are the **Relatives of Soul**. These are relationships that are created before manifestation has happened.

chose imprisonment or solitary confinement. The idea behind confinement is that the thought is that rape is a crime of intent or hate with the intent being to remove someone from the River. Since solitude often induces sorrow. The perpetrator will be instead removed from the River.

Finally some cultures punish rape by death. The thought here is that something has gone wrong with the perpetrator and their form must be forced to be disassembled and the soul returned to Makochewakan, with the idea that it will be "reset" and returned to the Waking Lands as a new healthy being.

The cultures that are perceived to be broken, the Bandit tribes, Wendigo Tribes, and the Mic'Talan tend to punish the victim as they are thought of as having tricked the perpetrator into creating a Relative of Blood. That assumes, in these cultures that the victim isn't already a slave against whom rape does not count as a crime unless it is done to a slave that is not yours in which case it is a crime of theft which is perpetrated against the owner of the slave and must be recompensed for.

This is why the Great Societies work so hard to ferret out slavery and raiding because they carry with them a stratified culture that carries a high price in Sorrow. Cultures of scarcity and stratification ensure that some people become discardable and that is considered anathema to the great cultural goal of the Gathering.

Banishment

People left out in the wilds usually die in one or two nights. Sometimes they live longer. On occasion they manage to pull together and form communities of their own. These communities usually wind up being bandit communities that cause trouble for the main settlements.

If a bandit community gets to be too problematic then waywardens and groups of warriors will get dispatched to break them up or kill them.

There is only one crime that is universally accepted among the nations as punishable by death, and that is cannibalism. Very often, the scarcity of food causes bandit tribes, or individuals, to seek out the easier prey than the animals that roam the lands. These groups, called Wendigo tribes, are seen as monsters and are ferreted out and slaughtered. Even other bandit tribes will crush a Wendigo tribe if they come across them.

Wendigo tribes that aren't dealt with tend to attract curses, shivers, and all sorts of terrible things to them which invariably turn them into something post human that feeds off of more than the

flesh of other humans.

Lastly there is the issue of slavery. Slavery is looked down upon by the vast majority of the peoples. The more industrialized groups (Wu Towns and Salduun) have been given to building forced labor camps of late where they will send criminals. The Mic'Talan are outright slavers and will raid to take back slaves to be used and then eventually sacrificed to the great beasts of the six clans. Most Mic'Talan raiding parties are, therefore, often met with extreme prejudice and sometimes slaughtered outright.

TRAVEL

The people get around the lands of Ehdrigohr in multiple different ways. First and foremost is foot travel. The vast majority of people simply walk from one settlement to another. This is why it so important to manage the roads from settlement to settlement (often referred to as The Ways). Way-Wardens are the primary source of such maintenance acting as a sort of sheriff between settlements. They chase off bandits and perform bounty hunts for more notorious individuals and things.

In addition to foot travel are dogs that pull sleds across snows and grass lands. There are GreatDogs that can be ridden and then there are the Mastincala (Mah STEEN Chah lah). These great rabbits stand as tall as a man at the shoulder and come in larger and smaller sizes.

The Mastincala are semi-sentient and make great companions, pets, and fierce warriors. In the central areas of Ehdrigohr the people will ride them with blankets for saddles. They guide them with leg movements and ear tugs. In Salduun the Beyduuni long ears are a particularly fast breed that the Beyduuni will actually put a full saddle on to ride and use to stay mounted on the creature.

Mastincala are not used as much in Chi'An. They have great dogs that they prefer to ride instead. They also use enormous crabs as beasts of burden, which can carry an entire caravan.

Among the Ge'Al, deep in the woods, they prefer riding elk and war stags that help them defend the green.

Chi'An nobles, The Salduun, and some Barata have begun to experiment with balloons as a means of long distance travel but have had little success.

Among those who have power to call the mysteries there are those who are able to bend space and weave enough to be able to physically enter the traveling lands. This is referred to a "Stepping".

Most often those who step will enter the realm known as "The Road" while some are also skilled in stepping through Shadow. Step-

These relationships are created by the joining and division of souls in *Mokochewakan*.

These are great souls scattered and bring brought together by tracing resonance. This is where the Gatherer gender operates. Flesh, Blood, and Intent are unimportant in these relationships. These people are drawn together by resonance and instantly know that they are relatives. This can lead to unions of flesh, or blood, or intent, or all of three.

No type of relative is better than the other in most cultures. All have ceremonies to define when they are "real." All types of relatives are considered to be necessary to a healthy tribe. Trying to separate them only brings ruin and sorrow.

The singular prayer that recognizes all relatives is Mitakuye Oyasin which loosely translates to "All My Relations".

ping allows a person to travel great distances but puts them at great risk.

While traveling on The Road they may encounter spirits who have gotten lost, angry spirits who are looking for someone to exact vengeance on, or special Iktom who will seek to erase the traveler from these areas because they do not belong.

Similar problems exist in shadow with the addition of the fact that the barriers to the Twain are weakest in Shadow making the chances that they might run afoul of a breacher or get possessed or infected by something terrible.

TRADE

Trade is alive and well in Ehdrigohr. With the coming of the Still and the establishment of the Ways came a great deal of trade traffic among all of the peoples. Oya'Asiin, in the Shil, sits at the center of many of the Trading Ways such that it is said that "All Ways reach to Oya'Asiin". Traditionally trade has been limited to traditional pragmatic commodities. With the coming of the Still more elaborate goods like smokes, teas, spices, and contraptions are starting to find their way around.

The Wu Towns, in particular, have made themselves more sustainable by establishing trade paths early by which they could sell the spices of the swamp. Saldun has been placing heavy demands for natural resources on all of the trading groups which is becoming a bit of a problem.

DEATH

The Peoples have many traditions centered around death. Ehdrigohr is a land where souls transmigrate from the Waking world, into the traveling lands, and then back to the world anew. The body is just considered to be a vessel for the soul and its parts referred to as the Four Selves which empower the Four Natures.

Just as a person's soul can inhabit a body, so too can many shivers and dark things. Such creatures can wear human flesh like an ill-fitting suit. Likewise, while the soul travels, the spirit remains in the world and will stay attracted to the body that once housed it. People who died particularly terrible or angry deaths may have spirits that stick around the body and influence the area in proximity out of rage.

It is because of all of these things that can happen around a body that bodies are typically cremated or destroyed somehow soon after

For more information on the Four Selves please refer to the Four Selves Sidebar found in the Cosmology section on Page 215.

death. If they are not burned on a pyre then they are interred on some sort of blessed ground. The problem is that such places are only blessed as long as they are maintained. If the village near a graveyard perishes or moves, after a time the protections on the burial area will fade and shivers will seek what's left.

Many are the stories of shiver infested burial grounds that became staging grounds for assaults on other villages. The issue is that the remains of people can protect a shiver from the withering for a short time. When they find a fresh corpse or are powerful enough to possess another through psychic means or body infestation is when they are particularly dangerous. Such a creature can walk among people during the day sabotaging the settlement and setting the stage for other shivers to attack in the night. Such shiver vessels are generally referred to a “**skin walker**”.

The general rule is that anyone who dies outside of a blessed area should be burned before the next sundown or you risk dealing with a skin walker.

CALENDAR

The people of Ehdrigohr count time passing over the course of the year through “moons” and seasons. There is one moon in the sky and it has four phases. The phases are generally referred to a “resting”, “waking”, “gazing”, and “fading”. An entire cycle of these phases takes 28 days and is referred to as moon. When someone says “a moon has passed” this means that the moon has gone through its entire 28 day cycle once. This term is also used to describe the cycle of a woman as Han-wi the Song that is associated with the moon is believed to be mostly female and to control flows of all sorts in the world.

When looking at the layout of a winter count, turtles are often the symbol seen as a foundation image for turtles are the long, lived keepers of time. To look at a turtles shell is to see the way of the hoop.

There are 13 great scales on a turtle's back and 28 small ones that surround those large scales forming the rim of the turtles shell. This is the pattern that Han-wi instructed the people to use to count her passage as she watches over the people in the night.

So, like the turtles shell, there are 13 of these moons to a winter count and each is named. The names equate to the seasons and describe them and what they mean to the people. As the nature of the seasons change depending where you are in the world, so too do the names. The list below are the names as used within the Shil and is

This issue of shivers inhabiting dead bodies is a particularly dangerous one when it comes to childbirth. This is why there is such importance placed on doula and *care-bringers*.

A stillborn child can turn into a terrible tragedy that leaves all involved horrified and broken. Women who are carrying often have wards and sigils upon their bellies to ward off bad things. They are fine as long as they stay in a blessed area.

If they should miscarry while outside of a protected area, however, it could lead to what is called a “sorrow child” which might wait to be born or could claw its way out and eat the flesh of its mother and all in the vicinity until it is stopped. Even worse, it might stay in the womb and whispers things to the mother until she is driven to due terrible things as she goes mad.

Name of the Moons of the Shil:

WakingGreen
TenderGrass
GreenLeaves
Sunberry
ReachingStalks
Thickmelons
PaintingTrees
FallingLeaves
WhiteBreath
WhiteFall
TakingDark
PoppingTrees
ChargingWinds

the closest thing to a universally accepted accounting of moons. This is because the Trail of Slumbers begins in the Shil and works it's way out to the other lands. Even then, when people are in doubt as to whether they are speaking of the same moon, they can refer back to the turtle diagram.

The year, or Winter Count, ends with the end of winter. Every new year begins with spring.

SPIRIT TOWERS

With all of the terrible things waiting to feed in the night the people had to very quickly figure out how to protect themselves. The answer to this came from the Song known as Creu-Wri and a handful of the Graces. They gave the people the secret of the Spirit Towers. It was the first great gift given to the people by the Songs.

These structures represent a promise, a covenant, between the Songs and the people. This promise dictates that the Graces and the Songs will lend their power to the protection of the people. The people must, in turn, work towards restoring the world and bringing balance and honor the Songs as Great Elders.

The spirit tower is a structure, bound in the Principles, that emanates a protective aura that covers an area. This sanctified area allows a settlement to grow without shivers being able to get in too easily. The protection provided by a spirit tower is not fool proof and tend to only keep out the weaker of shivers. The faces carved on the spirit tower begin to hum and sing when a shiver comes to its perimeter.

Each tower is carved with the symbols and faces of the songs, and some of the Graces, facing in all directions. It is these faces which are enchanted to sing and hum when shivers are nearby. The particular combination of spirits and symbols will vary from region to region. There is even some variance from town to town.

Before a settlement can be made, some type of spirit tower must be erected. The creation of a spirit tower is an arduous task that often requires a multitude of craftsmen and Mystery workers to create. It is far easier to maintain a tower than it is to build a new one. There are, however, master craftsmen, even whole orders, devoted to the creation of these objects.

In general, the taller the tower, the greater the area it protects. Unfortunately tall towers cause a lot of distortion in the Mysteries as well. Some believe that towers that are too tall could actually weaken the fabric of the weave and cause a breach. The energy they generate is sometimes a beacon to the more intelligent shivers who will

herd lesser shivers before them in an effort to cause the tower to produce so much energy that a breach begins.

It is because of this phenomenon that most people live in small villages centered around a small tower. Large towns and cities will have multiple spirit towers that protect the various sections of the settlement.

The Barata philosophers have been known to experiment with tall towers on occasion. Some believe that there are particular configurations of the songs and Graces that can be used to cause purposeful controlled breaches into the traveling lands, allowing for unprecedented travel across Ehdrigohr. They believe that in the days before the War of Sorrows that the people had such things. Others believe this is madness.

The tallest towers known were built by the Urali to the north of the Wite Rim. They have what are known as their “High Towers” which are gigantic guard towers which are built to resemble a spirit tower. Atop the High Towers are great spirit towers that are dedicated to Mahto and the Thunderers. They are wondrous beacons that emanate light in the darkness. In addition, bolts of lighting can be seen streaking down from them when shivers come near and BearWalkers who sleep there are strengthened against the long, cold nights to come.

The Wu Towns are the only large cities known to not be teeming with spirit towers. It seems that the great turtles they are built upon, have their own protective magic (or medicine) due to their connection with BryahdWhoShapesEarth. The “Low” of the Wu towns are said to carve the faces of the songs and Graces into the shells of the great beasts.

Graveyards, and grave markers are denoted with special versions of spirit towers that keep the dead at peace. Most people try to avoid leaving mass quantities of dead people lying around and burn them instead. Invariably graveyards are a bad situation waiting to happen. This can't be avoided in the case of battle fields. When a graveyard does exist it is typically erected in a remote place reducing the chances for sudden attacks on settlements.

Effects of the Spirit Towers

The area protected by a tower has certain effects upon a shiver.

- First it causes them to be seen. Shivers in the area are shrouded by a white luminous fire. This fire causes them great pain and will force most to retreat. It can be invoked and used as an advantage against them in a fight



- Second no shiver without form can possess a fevered person or inhabit a corpse. (Really powerful evil things and curses have ways of getting around this effect but it's the exception not the rule)
- If a tower is dedicated to one of the songs then it can have other effects within its zone of protection. Such effects include healthier crops, healthier children, protection from winds, and others. These are basically advantages that have been created for the entire area that must be maintained or they fade away.
- Within the area of a Spirit Tower there are certain rituals that can be performed by anyone with skill in Lore, Medicine, or Art Performance focused around protection rituals. The most common such rituals are the Bringing of New Life and the Sending to Journey.
 - ❑ The former is used to usher new children into the world, reducing the chances of a stillborn child and terrible opportunity for some formless shiver to talk hold of the dead child while still in the womb.
 - ❑ The latter usher the dying into the Road, the traveling lands where they begin a journey of recreation which eventually brings them back to the world as new life. Again this reduces the chances of shivers or curses moving into the dying or recently deceased.

Portable Towers

There are smaller personal versions of spirit towers for protecting individual homes and portable ones that the WayWalkers and WayWardens will often use when out in the wilds for extended periods. The catch with these is that they have an initial period where they must be charged. The magic of a spirit tower is one of a union of Earth and Sky. A tower must be planted into the earth for 24 hours and then exposed to the sun for a day before they can work. So any camp or caravan that carries such a “portable” tower must do so with the understanding that for at least one night they will have to defend themselves. This makes it only really useful when you're to do an extend stay in one place.

WayWalkers have found that a spirit tower will not work in a cursed or tainted area. Such a place must be cleansed of its taint. They've even found that a spirit tower can be corrupted by exposing it to bad places, or when defiled by powerful evil beings.

When this happens the tower becomes the epicenter of a festering taint that attracts creatures of corruption and eventually becomes a curse. Such curses can be defeated by destroying the corrupted tow-

er but doing so is typically no mean feat due to the dark things that will gather to protect it.

TEMPLES OF THE STILL

When the Still was made manifest, and the Woe were put to sleep, great structures were erected to mark the location of the battles and the sleeping woes. There are eight temples in all, one for each of the slumbering Woes. The temples are a variant of the spirit towers but act as conduits for the energy of the ritual and keep the woe beneath asleep. The temples were not built by humans. They were erected by the Songs themselves, like great spears they were thrust into the earth to pin the sleeping woe, and are believed to be nigh indestructible.

Each temple has adherents and orders dedicated to guarding it and ensure that it doesn't get desecrated or misused. The power flowing in and around a temple is great, for not only do they hold the Woe, they also empower the use of certain Mysteries. This makes them a target for the wicked who would seek to find ways to pervert the power and use it for their own gain. There are always such men and women of greed, and it is said that there is something about the Woe that reaches out to such people in their fevered dreams and plants the idea of conquest.

No Shiver may enter the area covered by the emanations of a temple. Doing so has an effect much like that of the Withering as the evil things begin to burn as soon as they enter. This means people always know that they can seek out a temple, if one is near, for sanctuary.

The power of the temples is great, but not eternal. Like the world,



and all things created by WhatMoves and the Songs, they too have seasons. When the temple is fully powered it has an area of effect that extends for miles around it and the brilliant beacon atop of it glows like a small white star. As time passes however the temples flare as the Woe attempt to waken or when hordes of Shivers throw themselves at the edges of the barrier.

This flaring causes the temple to seep power which, in turn, causes the color of the light to change. The light goes from white, to yellow, to red, to black which is off. The light doesn't just switch, there is a period of time in which there is flicker. For a temple to go from bright, to red-flicker, takes no less than 4 years, as many as 8. When the light of a temple is in red flicker it is time to recharge it with the Rituals of Stillness, for as soon as one starts to go down then the others will follow suit as their energy is redirected to support the fading towers. The people are constantly reminded of this process through the image of the medicine wheel and the colors associated with it that permeate the cultures of the nations.

The temples don't all fade at once. They lose energy at varying, different, rates so the people never know which one is going to red-flicker first. The attendants keep watch over them. As soon as one shifts to red-flicker they send messengers to warn the world and let the nations know that the time for the Rites of Stillness to begin again is at hand. This is a dangerous proposition, for as the light fades so to do the effects of the temples on the Woe and the shivers it breeds. Creatures of darkness and evil begin to gather to assault the fading temples in hopes of bringing them down before the Rites can be enacted. Only a collection of the most stalwart of heroes can engage this journey. They must travel from temple to temple, fight through the evil and perform the Rites. This is called the Trail of Slumbers.

Once the process has begun, the TrailWalkers, as they're called, must act swiftly. They don't know how much time they have. Most elders estimate that it is typically about a year from first red-flicker to the last, though it can vary by about a moon.

The 8 temples, who watches over them, and the Woe that they keep are as follows:

Dream Watching Temple

Found deep in the center of the Shill, currently south and west of S'Kaag. It is guarded by the Crows of the Shil. Dream Keeping Temple is connected to Dream and those within it can walk directly into the realm of Dream. It maintains the Still of G'Naag Ite, Woe of Soul Eating Nightmares.

Wisdom Keeping Temple

Found in the far northern wastes of The White, north of The Line. It is guarded by the Frost Brides with support from the BearWalkers and White Liners.

Wisdom Keeping Temple is also connected to Dream and maintains the still of S'Ahmpho, Woe of Hungry Madness.

Blood Weeping Temple

This temple is found at the eastern edge of the Blood Forest. It is Guarded by the order known as the Tathlum.

Blood Weeping Temple is connected to The Road and empowers Body and Earth. It maintains the Still of D'Yargahdhu, Woe of Hungry Flesh.

Thunder Keeping Temple

Found on the highest mountain at the southernmost Waking Mountains. Known as Shu's Chair, it is on the western side of the mountains and rises above the Ashen Cloud overlooking the Shiver Plains. It is guarded by the Illuminators and the Illumine Spears.

Thunder Keeping Temple is connected to both the Road and to Shadow. It maintains the Still of An'Nuwn, Woe of Feeding Darkness.

Fear Keeping Temple

This temple is found on the border between the Blood Fields and the Blood Lands. It is the hardest temple to get to due to the sheer numbers of shivers, curses, and horrors to be found in the area. It is guarded by an order called the Broken Spears who are one of the most battle worn forces in the world.

Thunder Keeping Temple is connected to Shadow. It maintains the Still of Bey'Emot, Woe of Crawling Curses.

Sand Keeping Temple

This temple is found in the southern Beyduuni Waste. It is surrounded by the ruins of strange giant contraptions erected by the Council of Gears to try to experiment with extracting power from the sleeping Woe. It is guarded by the Keepers of the Sand who have begun a campaign of guerrilla warfare to bring down the Extraction Towers the empire keeps trying to build.

Sand Keeping Temple is connected to Shadow and The River and empowers Earth and Fire. It maintains the Still of Tshai'Atan, Woe of Bleeding Waters.

Sky Falling Temple

This temple is found on a sheer cliff face on the southern portion of the Sunder. The area is the most treacherous and ever crumbling sections of this archipelago of cliffs and crags. It is guarded by an order called the Falling Jays of SkyBreak, a troupe of mostly D'Zul Jays, supported by a number of Crows and Doves.

Sky Falling Temple is connected to The River and empowers Moment and Destiny. It maintains the Still of O'Sai, Woe of Screaming Salt.

Pulling Earth Temple

This temple is found in the Great Mire, close to the Western Coast. The poisonous mire and the monstrous animals that inhabit it, make traveling to this temple a hazard outright. This is made worse by the fact that the temple tends to move about as its Woe shifts in its sleep. It is guarded by the martial order known as the Poison Foot Scholars who appear to have mastered the poisons of the swamp and which are most effective on Shivers and people.

Pulling Earth Temple is Connected to the River and Dream and empowers Water, Soul, and Life, and Truth. It maintains the Still of B'Nanahyeh, Woe of Foetid Tongues.



THE NINE TRIBES

It is said that Man (also known as the Children of Myndil) had, at one time, shared the land with other wondrous peoples referred to as the B'te People. Something happened which brought forth the Ok'O-wibiyrn who were the darkest parts of B'te and Man. This eventually resulted in what is referred to in legend as the "War of Sorrows". When the War of Sorrows had ended the Ok'O-wibiyrn had been banished, the B'te were gone, and What Moves had awakened. In anger for what had happened, WhatMoves punished both the spirits and Myndil's children. That punishment is what is known as "**The Upheaval**".

Some spiritual leaders say that WhatMoves declared that Man would break apart never to be united again, while others argue that it was to be this way for only a limited time and the problems brought on by the Turnings are what has extended the Scattering.

Regardless of the catalysts, all scholars and Tellers agree that for some reason, WhatMoves invoked what is known as the Scattering. With this Scattering, humans not only lost their once great nations, but also the legendary ability referred to as "Calling the Weave" by some scholars.

Legend states that the Scattering was invoked over 10,000 years ago, and the people have since wandered across the lands, gathering themselves slowly into different groups; attempts to unify were typically disrupted by another cycle of what is called the Turning, where large creatures awakened and rampaged, causing earthquakes and destruction across the lands. These colossal beings are called "the Woe". Some claim they are there to remind Man of the Upheaval and their penance to WhatMoves.

A gift was given to the people of The Shil over 400 years ago. The Still" and was brought forth by rituals called the Rites of Peace and Stillness and given to heroes who journeyed into Dream to speak with the Songs. The rituals cause the Woe to extend their sleep beneath the earth. This gift has been shared across all of the peoples in the lands and every area maintains a site that marks where the ritual is to be performed.

Since the time of the coming of the Still, the Rites have been performed by every generation and the people finally were able to settle. This settling allowed the forming of numerous solidified cultural groups that have arisen around the Stilling sites across Ehdrigohr. Where the original tribes were mostly the remnants of armies of the old cities of Man, the people have been broken so many times that they no longer remember such ties. The "new" tribes are little more than groupings of people that have banded together for mutual protection against the terrors that still haunt the night and the roads

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

Names across Ehdrigohr are varied and scattered. All of the current nations have more common naming patterns these days but it is important to remember that these people have been mixed and remixed time and again each time there was a cataclysmic "Turning of the Woe" in ages past.

Add to this that the initial scattering of the people was invoked by WhatMoves who not only scattered the people but broke the Old Tongue up into pieces that would come together time and again just as the people did and you get a situation where almost any name will show up anywhere.

There is one big commonality among the people and that is that names are descriptive. Many people will just go by the trade-speak translation of their name rather than using their given name.

When naming your character it helps to just think in terms of a short two word name that describes an important characteristic of your character. Another thing that is common across Ehdrigohr is to create a name that is an Onomatopoeia. That is, it is a sound that represents an ideal. For instance, the name "Wawaskehshi", a girl's name, is the sound of a deer running through tall grass. Be creative and make sure your names are meaningful to your characters.

between settlements. It has been long enough however that these new ways of life are now referred to as “tradition”. These traditions themselves may become the new obstacle to the Gathering coming to fruition. Not to mention the ongoing threat provided by the Shivers.

Now, only the Tellers remember anything about the time before the Scattering, and to most, the stories of the past are nothing more than fanciful myths. The people are only concerned with their immediate situations and pay no heed to these tales. Most of the new found cultures tend to act as though they have always been and will always be. Some have begun to doubt the validity of the Still itself, claiming that it is simply superstition that stands in the wake of their own progress.

The tribal nations that have formed and have persisted through the Still are detailed in the following pages. They are often referred to as the Nine Tribes (Nations) of Man.

BARATA

The Barata are a people who live in the lands that lie along the southeastern coast of the continent. The land is bordered to the north by Kaylt, to the southwest by the Salduun Emirate, to the west by the Waking Mountains, and to east by the Sea of Spirits.

Cultural Aspects:

“The world has all the answers if you but seek them.”

“The soul is eternal, the flesh is fleeting.”

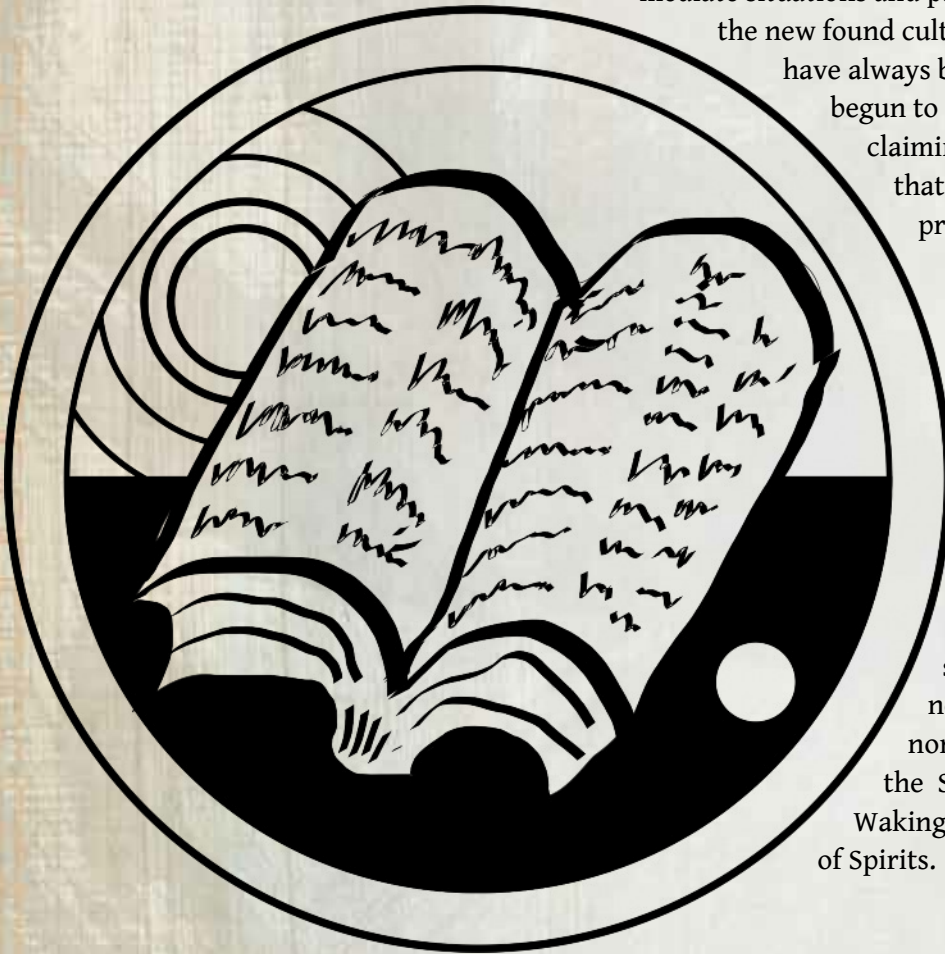
“The creator has given us many ways to access the mysteries.”

“The self is the greatest mystery.”

“To master the Essences one must sometimes break the world a little bit.”

Language: Barat

The Baratan people make their home in the area east of the Waking Mountains and to the south of the Great Forests. They share a



similar architecture with the Ge'Al in that they build large communities on the backs of great, man-made mounds. Where the Ge'Al have built their mounds at the foot of the great trees, the Barata have foremed structures that are more designed and multipurpose in their layout. The transition between the two cultures shows the growth of this architectural difference as trees become more scarce and light becomes more prevalent. The peoples of the border towns actually consider themselves to be equally of both people but claim to belong to no nation. There has been the occasional political turmoil over this, but it has never lasted long.

The Baratans do not separate themselves by national affiliation nor do they have a single nation, per se. Instead, their culture revolves around loosely allied independent Medicine Towns, each identifiable by their disparate spiritual philosophies.

The main philosophies are V'da, S'zhan, Om-Hsa, and Voddissaa. These philosophies are not characterized by divisive rivalries, however, as the Baratans live side by side with each other more or less in harmony. Indeed the people of the Baratan lands are counted among the most tolerant of the peoples of Ehdrigohr when it comes to differing world views. Where their intolerance begins to rear its head however is in their extreme dislike of any one, or thing that acts to restrict their search for knowledge. Their unusual cultural fascination with the Essences (empowered by the abstract nature of all of the philosophies) in particular makes many people uncomfortable with their all-consuming search for knowledge.

In general the many philosophies of Barata believe that the Songs have so many faces that no one can possibly know them all, so we must strive to find ways to acknowledge all faces so that no Song is angered. These enlightened philosophies begin with a concept founded on the transmigration of souls then diverge. Most suggest that you seek an understanding of the world that fits within your current station. Should you come across knowledge that is greater than your ability you should pass it on to someone greater than you and master the intricacies of what your ability allows. In your next life the knowledge will be ready for you and will return to you from the hands of someone of lesser station.

Where they differ is where they see the proper use of the Essences in this process. The V'da map the power of the mysteries in general to the Graces and Sorrows believing that each of them is actually a physical manifestation of the Mysteries. Using the Mysteries invites these forces to exert increasing control over our lives; therefore, you would do best to ally yourself with a Graceful force such as a spiritual relative and seek guidance from them. Unfortunately this means

BARATAN NAMES

Male

Chompude, Lopsakonis,
Choosakthe, Morakothe, Na-
pakpaphadis, Athiwarade,
Paweenooksiade, Butsako-
nis, Khongsakescu, Chalong-
sakis, Kowitade,
Kritsanupongiadi

Female

Kulapsi, Chintarasi, Cher-
mamsis, Kulapdis, Amornit-
ne, Anone, Ngamne,
Pawanratis, Klahanis, Kitti-
rathe, Kejmane, Ornapade,
Jirapate, Jeerawatis, Boon-
mesi

BATU NAMES

Male:

Baht'Er'd'ne, Ot'Gonby'r,
Batb'yr, L'khag'v'sren,
G'antulga, G'anbold,
G'anb'ataar, M'unKhb'aht,
N'ergu'ii

Female

A'ltants'ts'g, B'loorm'a,
Ehmk-T'uya, Er'denech'mg,
N'Arants'ts'g, M'unKhhts'ts'g,
P'uhre-V'sren, N'ergu'ii

that some seek guidance from the Sorrows instead and this brings conflict.

The S'zahn refute the idea of station, suggesting that the very existence of the Essences suggests that men were meant to shape their own destinies. They cause quite a bit of trouble as they urge people to choose to be spectacular and change the world to fit their needs. Some say they should be watched for their potential to create social unrest. The Great Societies have noted this philosophy seems to be so extreme sometimes that they have given rise to a number of Fiddlers.

The Ohm-Hsa suggest that conflict is the undoing of the harmony the people are meant to find. They are pacifists, and by focusing their energies on the pure sounds and frequencies hidden within the First Tongue they hope to find the right words and tones that will undo the knots that have formed in the weave and bring us all to balance. Unfortunately they have a penchant for finding harmonies that just unravel the weave altogether, creating breaches. There are high numbers of Enders hidden within their ranks.

The Voddissa maintain that the true coming together for the people happens on "The Road" in-between lives. They use the Essences to read the road that a person has traveled and help them to find their part in the great pattern for bringing the people together. Their constant poking around the walls between the Waking World and The Road also allows for breaches on The Road and results in a high rate of accidentally pulling people off of The Road. This often traps them in the world and causes these spirits anger and sorrow which leads them to become Curses.

Many of the Tribes look at the Barata as a really bad accident waiting to happen. Their philosophies grow more and extremists in an effort to differentiate themselves. They also have become such gluttons for knowledge for its own sake that they undertake increasingly more extreme activities to gain the knowledge. They are fascinated by the contraption work of the Beyduun and seek to work contraptions and Essences together to control reality.

BATU

The Batu are a fierce nomadic people who wander the steppe lands of the Eastern Shil where it grows into the Waking Mountains. The Batu are generally fiercely competitive (though there are exceptions) when it comes to their land, and have broken up into five highly territorial lesser tribes as a result of this. These tribes are the Batu-Man, Batu-Kha, Batu-Chibat, Batu-M'zaax, and Batu Z'zar.

Cultural Aspects:

"Aggressive Raiders"

"Better to die a warrior than to live as a coward."

"Survivors in the Wastes and Steppes of the Shil."

"Show your might, be as the wolf."

"Constant fighting between clans"

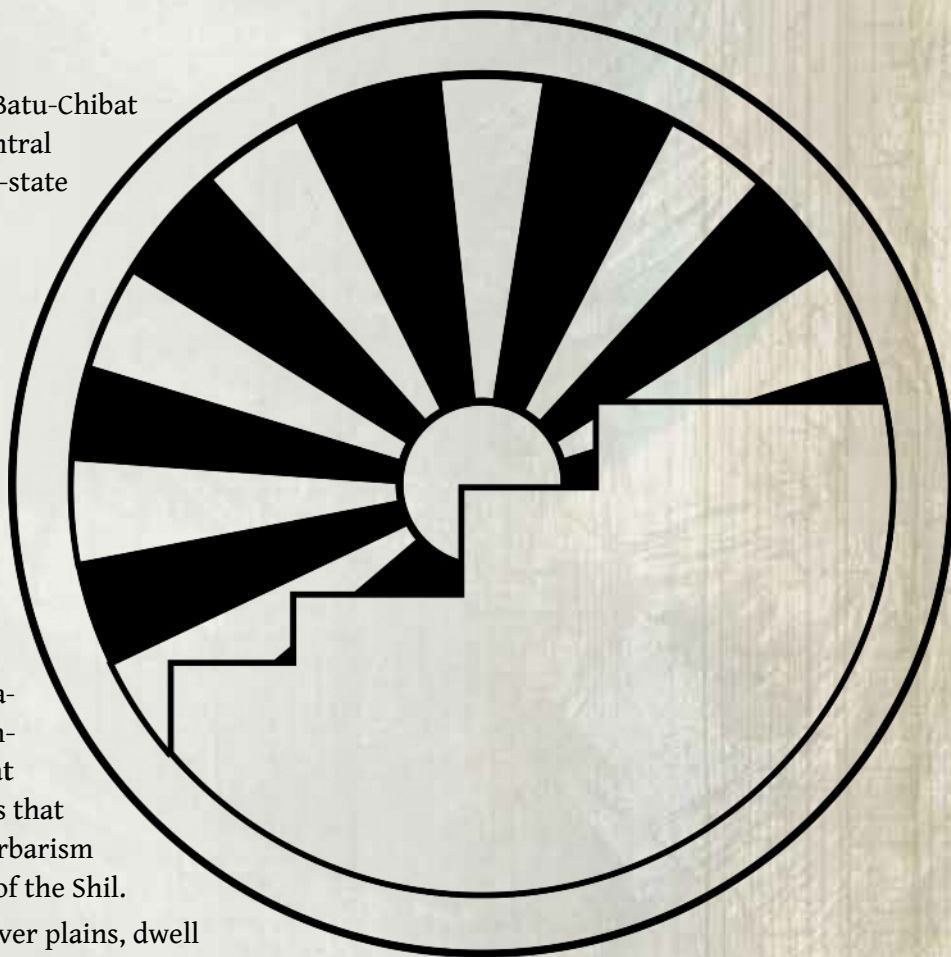
Language: Batu

Of all of the Tribes, only the Batu-Chibat have developed a stationary central government, located in the city-state of Chibat, high in the Waking Mountains.

The Batu-Man are the westernmost tribe, and they also have the largest tribal grouping. Indeed, they are so large that they have many smaller clans which often fight amongst themselves and with a number of the Wiitjasa tribes for territory. Though there are those who would view these warring clans as completely chaotic, there is something of a confederated governing system that keeps things in line and ensures that they don't fall to the level of barbarism found among the bandit tribes of the Shil.

To the south, close to the Shiver plains, dwell the tribe called the Batu Z'zar. They are well known within the Shil and in some areas outside for their very effective raiding techniques and general churlishness, developed from their constant warring with the Shivers that spill out of the Shiver Plains. They are so aggressive that even the Batu-Man give them a wide berth if they can help it.

To the north and west roam the Batu-M'zaax. They are also raiders, though they are not nearly as aggressive as the Batu Z'zar, and they rarely raid other Batu. Instead they bother the Wiitjasa, and often raid as far east as Kaylt (though the harsh winters and Shivers in



the Waking Mountains often do much to hinder this).

Lastly there are the Batu-Kha who roam south but west of the Slumber Mountains. The mountains are a major obstacle towards raiding west so their raids are mostly on the Salduun Caravans coming to the Shil and Barata. More importantly they are in constant warfare with the Shivers that attempt pour out of the Shiver Plains beneath the Ashen Cloud. They seek increased aid which the other Tribes have been reluctant to provide and much talk winds its way among them that the Batu must be forced to unify to fight the Shivers. The question is are they prepared to make it happen?

BEYDUUN

The Beyduun live in one of the harshest climes of Ehdrigohr. The Beyduuni Waste is a terrible landscape of basalt desert, blasted rock, and broken lands rife with geysers and volcanoes. It seems as though the world is breaking in slow motion all around them.

Cultural Aspects

"Masters of Engineering"

"We must reach beyond superstition if we are to battle the darkness"

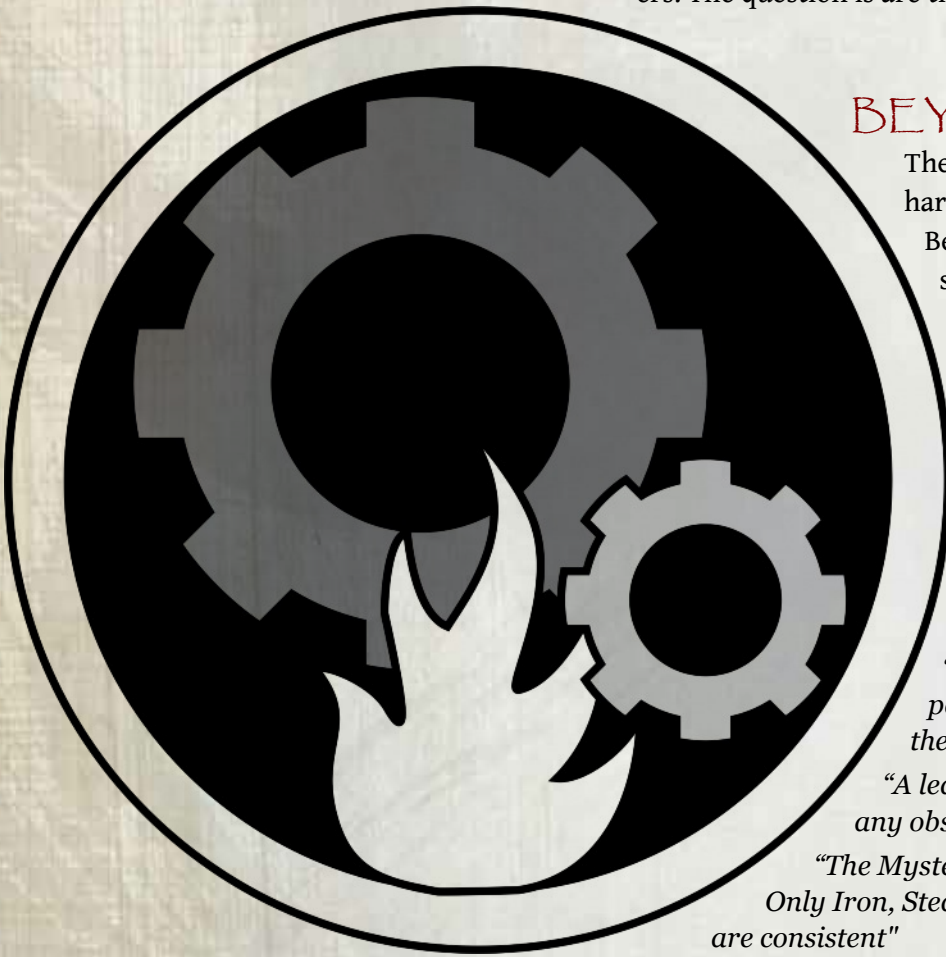
"A learned man can overcome any obstacle"

"The Mysteries are not to be trusted. Only Iron, Steam, Powder, and Flame are consistent"

"Nature is a resource that we must harness for the good of the people"

Language: Beyduuni

The harshness of the Beyduun environs have force the people to band together more so than other cultural groups. They have formed a more centralized nation known as Salduun, named after the warrior Saldu, who gathered them together after the last Turning nearly



destroyed them all.

Saldu became the first great leader of the Beyduun. His name became a title that further leaders would carry. Saldu was a fervent believer in the idea that the Mysterious Ways were too unreliable for the people to rely on as there only way of fending of both Shivers and catastrophe. He urged his attendants to learn more and more about the ways of the world, until they had the foundations of alchemy and contraption. With these they could make life easier for a greater number of the people and grow the Tribe into a nation. Every Saldu names his successor with advice from the Viziers Council.

Over the generations it is to be noted that every Saldu after the second has been male. The second Saldu was Saldu's daughter Priya who led the creation of the Council of Gears and the development of the Great Forges that have grown into cities. Around that time the Viziers Council developed a rivalry with the Council of Gears such that some suspect that the viziers caused her death and put a puppet in place as the new Saldu. Since then, the viziers have ensured they control who is chosen as the Saldu.

Today, the Beyduun are known as the Salduun Empire; hallmarks of their culture include their clockwork contraptions and expansive cities, the likes of which are to be found nowhere else. They hold the secrets of steam and can move water large distances. Their focus on contraption and alchemy has made them less reliant on the Mysteries that they therefore have very little in the way of formal training in them. Those who wield the Mysteries are actually looked upon with distrust and only those officially sanctioned by the viziers are allowed to practice in the open. Visiting users of the Mysteries are expected to declare their ability upon coming into one of the cities, where they are marked with a bright red badge in the form of an eye. The official line is that this is to remind all citizens to watch and be wary of the Mysteries. Rumors in other places, however, suggest that this is more evidence of the belief that B'Lohra has found a following deep within the government and that corruption runs rampant.

The focus on contraption and power within the forge walls of the empire has lead to a very special problem. Some say that the forge cities have grown so large that they are unnatural. The cost of maintaining a living population there has grown so great that many now live in the streets, disease grows on the fringes, and their multitudes of alleys give perfect dark places for Shivers and horrors to hide and prey on the weak.

The biggest issue many have with the Salduun, however, is that the waste has seemed to grow out of proportion to their cities. The

BEYDUUN NAMES

Male

Ta H'noon. Za'ayed, Ab
D'hualah, Ah B'dabun, Ah
B'Equa, Cha A'risa

Female

W'alla, Na O'orah, Al
A'n'nood, Al A'Kuleh, Al
A'm'Ehda, A'noki, Bo
B'Ornbazinah

CHI'AN NAMES

Male

J'hoon, S'boon, J'Unpyo,
Om'S'Woo, M'yunjay,
M'yunjun, S'Uhnpyo,
Ch'How, B'Lalpyo,
U'Smanaan

Female

S'A'anvi, F'Hanasyo,
F'Timasyo, Nur, H'Anasyo,
Z'Eynep, N'Oampi, L'Eylasyo,
Z'Inabsyo, A'N'hitowoo

need of maintaining and fueling the “comfort” of the Salduun cities is taking a toll on the land. They now seek new resources from other lands, causing strife and conflict with the indigenous populations who control the resources the Salduun crave. The darkest rumors are that the Salduun dig so deep, and take so much from the land, that soon the Rites of Peace and Stilling will not be enough to contain the Woe.

There is a growing continent of contraptioners who rebuke the government and suggest they need to find better, more sustainable means of mixing contraptions and the Mysteries as people did in the time before the War of Sorrows. These groups, calling themselves the Free Makers, seek to ensure that both the people and the land benefit from contraption. They refused to submit to government sanction and are considered renegades. Attempts to maintain the peace in the forge city of MouthRidge has attracted the attention of the Crows. This has caused them to clash a few times with the Salduun elite force known as the Red Pale who have been pulled in to hunt down renegade Free Makers and Mystery workers.

As the members of the Red Pale (often referred to as Palemen) have ventured out of the cities and into the wilder territories they have also come up against the traditional rural Beyduuni and the order called the “Keeps of the Sand” who maintain a traditional Beyduuni life in the waste. They resist the efforts of the empire to be “civilized” and maintain the Rites of Still when the empire suggests that there is no need to. There is currently great unrest within the Salduun Empire as the various factions compete.

CHI'AN

The Chi'an live west of the Waking Mountains in the northern broken lands that are mostly swamp and mire. Though the swamps are deadly, the Chi'an have developed a symbiotic relationship with the mighty colossal turtle-like beasts known as the “Unciwakan”.

Cultural Aspects:

“We all have a place and must embrace our part.”

“The life of The Low is pitiable but necessary for the High to make us greater.”

“Chi'an exists because of the Stand, but do not forget we are their masters.”

“My life is forfeit to those greater than I.”

“Before the Still there was no Low or High.”

“Our salvation is our prison.”

Language: Chi'an Sii

The Wu Towns are strange and wondrous settlements that have been built by the Chi'An upon the backs of the great creatures known as the *Unciwakan*. The *Unciwakan*, are magnificent tortoises size of mountainous proportions that maintain a symbiotic relationship with the Chi'An.

These Wu Towns range in size from small towns to medium sized cities. The maximum size depends on the size of the beast, or cluster of beasts, below.

The Great Mire stretches out, in the west, for miles in every direction. The Wu Towns call the treacherous swamp their home.

There are five of these great towns. They are:

Seven Thunders:

Just west of the Slumber Mountains, it is the largest of them all, built on the backs of seven dormant tortoises of colossal proportions. This is the seat of the council of elders.

First Town:

Found near the southern foot of the Slumber Mountains it is the oldest of the Wu Towns.

Wade:

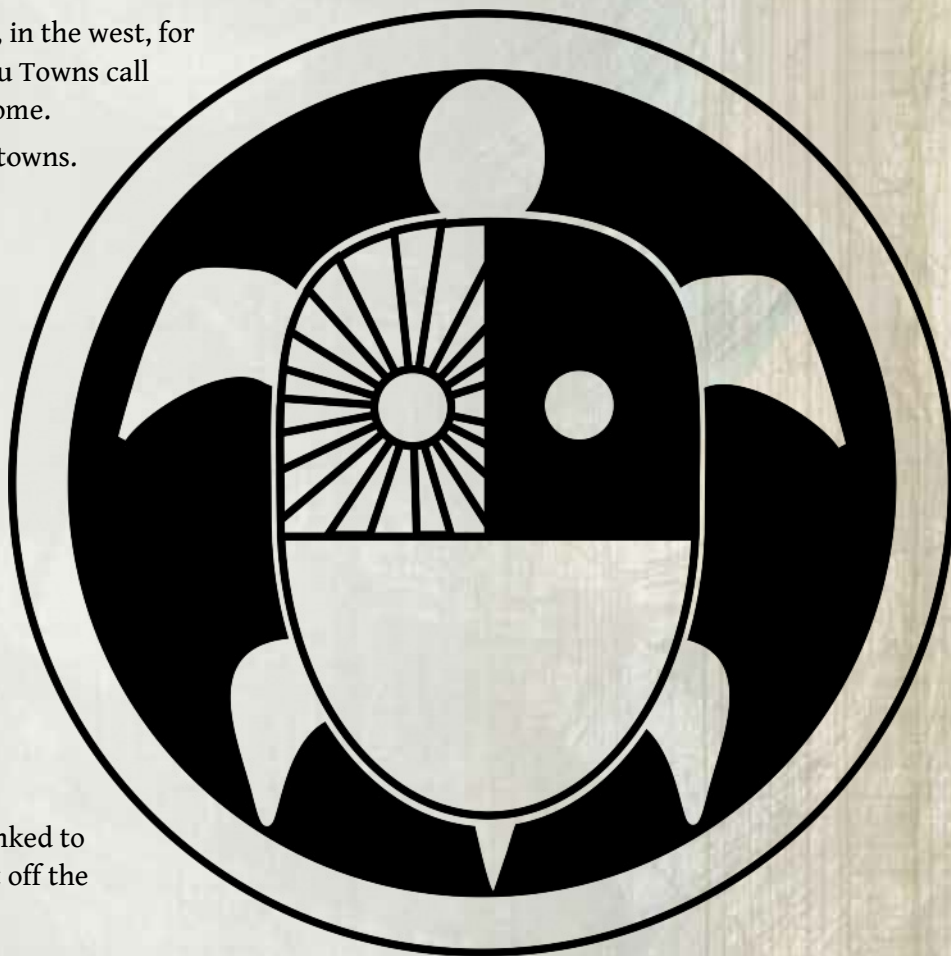
The tortoise that this town is linked to lives partially in the waters just off the western coast.

High Back:

This town is of fair size and is one of the highest standing of the tortoises.

Wander:

One of the smaller towns. The tortoise that supports Wander is small enough to still move around ensuring that the town is never in the same place twice. This one is considered by most to be little more than a bandit town. The Step Clans have a great deal of power here.



D'ZUL NAMES

D'zul names are very distinct in all of Ehdrighor. They are purely descriptive and not gender definitive and tell a story rather than speaking of a single quality. When a D'zul child is born it is named by the following patterns:

Order of Siblings - Clan - Action they came into the world doing or time of the moon - distinctive weather within the first moon of their birth.

The 13 clans are Crocodile, Goat, Turtle, Rat, Raven (Crow), Jaguar, Owl, Rabbit, Snake, Monkey, Spider, Dove, Heron

So Five-Raven-Shouting Rain's name tells the story of one who is the fifth child of a particular family of the Raven clan. He came into the world shouting and making others know he was to be recognized and great storms ensued in the first moon of his life.

Within the Wu Towns, the Chi'An the people are divided into the subcultures of Low and High. The terms Low and High refer to a physicality of station, where those closest to the backs of the *Unciwakan*, and the swamp itself, are considered Low and live in shanty towns assembled directly on the shells of the *Unciwakan*. From there they tend to the great beasts and live lives of hard labor complicated by disease and sickness brought on by their proximity to the swamp.

Above the Low, in interconnected spires that rise up into the sky, live the High. Theirs is a life of comfort and convenience that exists because of the work done by the Low.

The High are families of merchants who also manipulate the governing council who are revered elders known as the Seers of the Seven Thunders. These families have brought much science and convenience to the people by finding ways to harness not only the *Unciwakan*, but also by finding ways to harness the gases of the swamp and the air currents, giving them access to balloons and other devices that will fly them to places to trade.

Unfortunately very little of the luxurious life trickles down to the Low which has caused quite a bit of strife of late, as rebel groups have formed who insist that life must be made more even. Also, like the Council of Viziers in Salduun, the High have been pushing to regulate those who wield the Mysteries (notably the Elements).

Unsanctioned Low-born use of the Elements can result in being arrested. Gangs that have formed among the Low often recruit those who wield any mystery other than the Elements to avoid discovery. Particularly, among the gangs of Wu, those who can wield the Essences are highly prized. While the High Merchants fight over machination and control of the Elements to get goods delivered all over the lands, the Wu gangs (known as the Step Clans) focus on bending space and gaining access to the traveling lands to ensure their ability to move unseen. As a result, Essence use is considered highly suspect in visitors and outright illegal (tantamount to terrorism) within the limits of a town.

This doesn't do much for the common people however and the growing dangers of living among the Low give rise to more and more unrest every day. Some councilors among the High agree that the situation needs to change and push for more rights for the Low, while others insist that the Low must be kept in their place, by force if necessary.

D'ZUL

The D'Zul are a people who inhabit the area known as the Sunder. Here the land was broken into rocky crags, and cliff faces that

stretch from sea to sky. Some say it is where the first Turning began. It is now overgrown with hot jungle and dense rainforests that rival the forests of Kaylt.

Cultural Aspects:

"Embrace the wind and move as fast as your feet will carry you."

"Live boldly for the terrors may come at anytime."

"Our young are our greatest asset."

"Explore and recover the world. Leave no stone unturned."

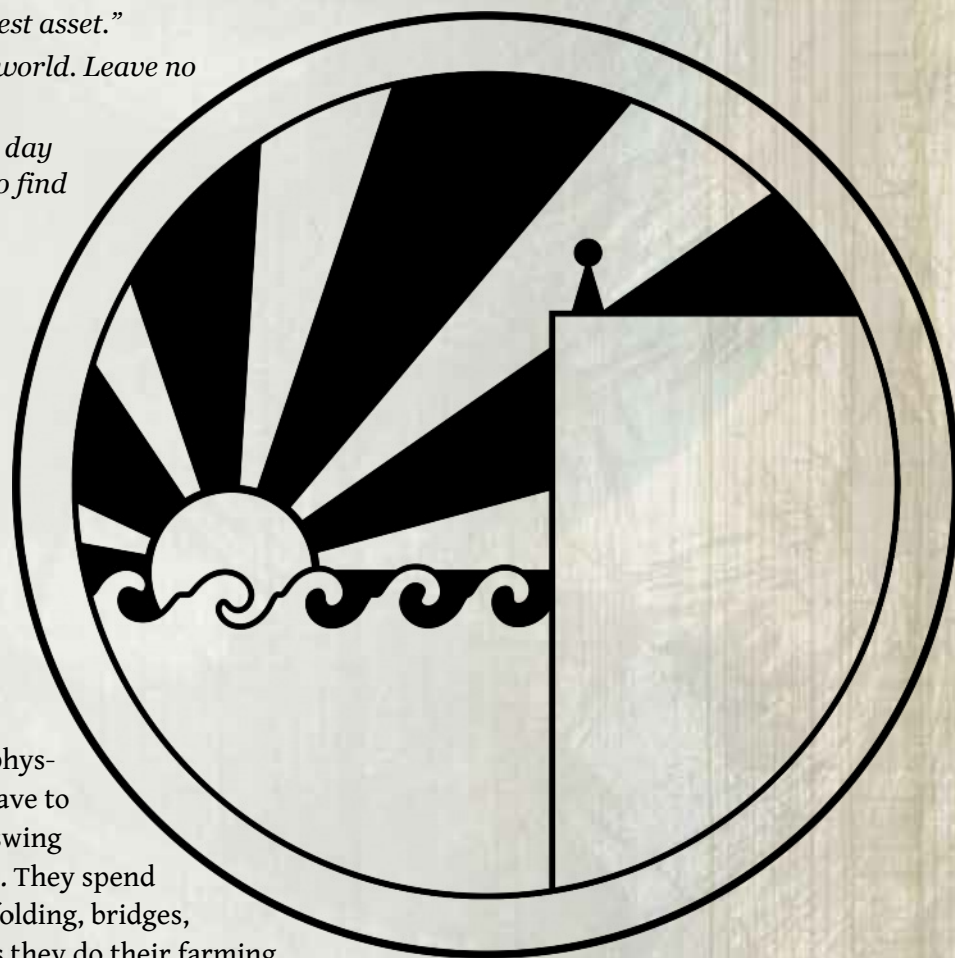
"We see fewer faces every day among the Zul. We need to find another way".

Language: d'Zuliniyeh

The D'Zul live a vertical life as they make their homes in the sheer cliff faces of the Sunder. Connecting one crag to the next are great trees and vines which they use to move about. D'Zul are known for their great height, dark skin, and incredible agility.

The D'Zul are an extremely physically active people. Children have to learn to run, jump, climb, and swing among the cliffs at an early age. They spend their days dancing among scaffolding, bridges, ropes, rocks, trees and vines, as they do their farming, hunting, playing and praying.

Waywalkers have particularly great renown among the D'Zul as it is they who keep the cliff paths and jungle ways open. More importantly they explore the miles of cliff and depths of water as it is said the Sunder used to be the last great empire of the old Tribes. Waywalker who can come back with a treasure bring wealth and secrets to the people. They must also slay the Shivers that hide in the waters, the thousands of caves, and the darkest parts of the jungle. Because the canopy grows so dense there are terrible Shivers that have never feared the light of the sun.



All young are encouraged to explore the lands of Ehdrigohr when they come of age. As the years have gone by, this process has grown more dangerous as more horrors and growing numbers of bandits have made exploration beyond the Sunder even more dangerous.

Within the Sunder more Shivers of great age awaken and descend upon the town. Now the young, more often than not, are sent out not just to explore, but to bring back champions who can do battle with the ancient creatures that move about. The attacks from the Shivers are beginning to take its toll on the overall population. Everyday Waywalkers perish and fewer arise to take their place.

GE'ALS

The Ge'als are a strong and proud breed of people who inhabit the lands known as Kaylt. The tribal peoples of the realm of Kaylt are divided into four subcultures which tend to be very clan oriented. These Tribes are the Angs, Dwatha, Dylwyth, and the Sher.

Cultural Aspects:

"We are made of blood and earth, and therein lies our power."

"There is no forest greener than Kaylt."

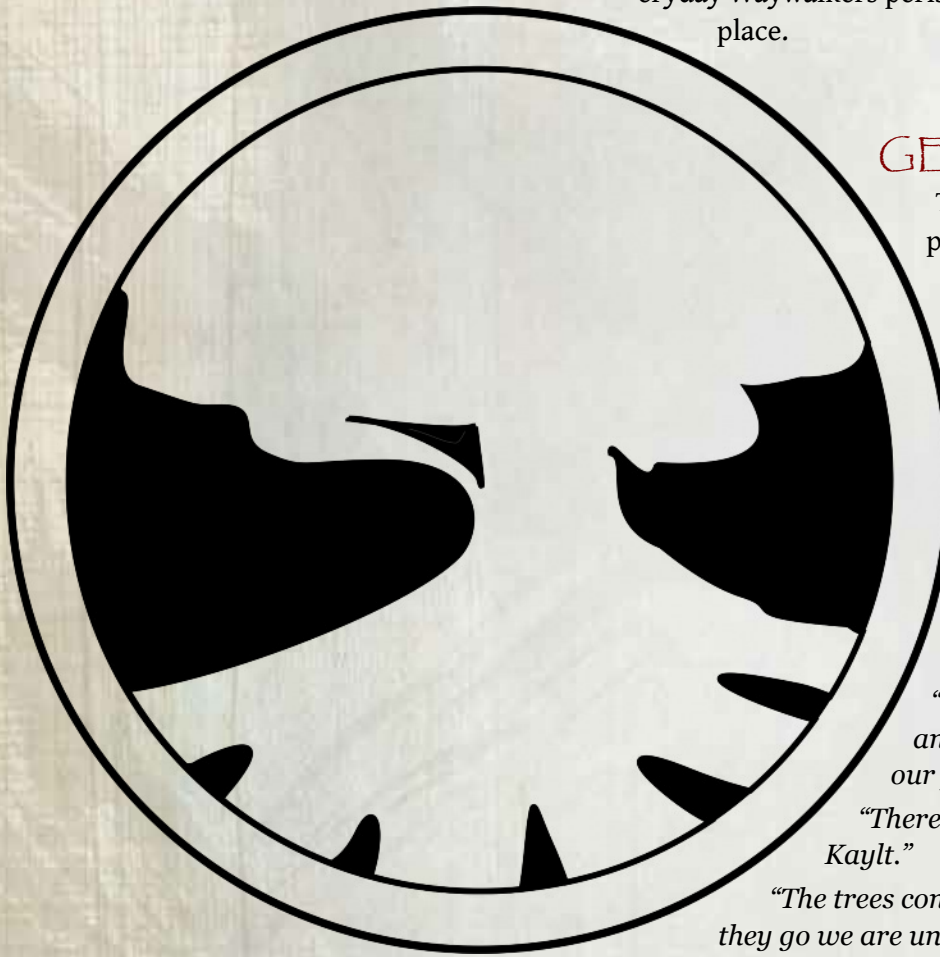
"The trees connect earth and sky. When they go we are undone."

"Dance now, drink now, for tomorrow you may die."

"The high queens require a tithe in blood to keep the still, but they take more than they need. Why?"

Language: Ge'Al't'acht

The Ge'Al live in towns that are scattered through the forests. Each of their towns are built upon a great mound called a Paha (pronounced PUH-hah) which basically means hill. All Ge'Al towns are



built around a Paha, but the great towns have massive Paha from which grow incredible trees called Blood Willows. The towns extend up into these trees and the surrounding canopy. The people only really come down to the mounds for ceremonies which must be done close to the earth. Each Paha is surrounded by a ring of spirit towers called a "Threshold" which keeps the Shivers at bay during the night.

Smaller towns have an elder's council to look over them but each great town is led by a Cailleach, also known as a Winter Mother to outsiders. Each Cailleach is advised by a council of 12 male and two-spirited female elders called the Fer-Paha. Some Cailleachs marry all of their Fer-Paha, while others treat them as older male relatives or uncles. The relationship is different from Paha to Paha and from generation to generation. Each Cailleach maintains a small effigy of each of her Fer-Paha. This effigy is bound in the Principles and is part of the joining ceremony that unites a Cailleach to a Fer-Paha. Through this she can speak to them, through them, and even use use Mysteries upon them.

The Cailleachs, themselves, form an elders council called the Coven of Sighs that try to steer the Ge'Al, as a people, towards peace and prosperity. They are often guided in dream by a spirit known as Mother Heron who dwells in the forests along the rivers and is believed to be a manifestation of one of the Graces.

During times of peace the Fer-Paha are teachers who carry what is called the "Rowan cane" to mark their position as close to the Rowan Seat (which is the place of power of the Cailleach). When great trouble comes the Fer-Paha vote to go to war by placing their canes upon the thresholds to their chambers and taking the great spears called the gh'bolge (pronounced geh-BOL-zhah) that they are trained in from birth as their new mark. This is called "Marrying the gh'bolge" and they lead able-bodied warriors as generals. The idea is that "Wisdom must guide the people but War cannot".

The Tathlum are a holy order of men and women who protect the lands much like the Crows. In truth they are a subset of the Crows of the Eastern Forests. They specialize in guarding the shores and Blood Weeping Temple which is the Temple of the Woe that holds the Still of D'Yargahdhu, Woe of Hungry Flesh

As mentioned before, towns that are built in and among the great trees of the forest of Kaylt without felling the trees as they are considered sacred. The forest is grand and old. Some say that it somehow avoided the last Turning and is one of the oldest stable lands next to the Shil. An unfortunate side effect of this is that much of the forest is so old and dense that no one dares enter. These areas are

GE'AL NAMES

Male

Ahthah, Aydan, Ahvagthee,
Aldrid, Cuvar'k, Fychan,
Gwee'On, Haylvrin, Mykal,
Meehangel, Neethah,
Powl, Rhishart, Tehhdoor,
Sharl

Female

G'wen, G'Wenthith, Fruhyer,
Frydah, Ayooig, Grian,
Dairineh, Dweesan,
Bethigg, Bronwen,
Grainyeh, Annuwyr, Ahnah,
Ahfvryl, Adlisa

said to be home to Shivers and other dark things. From time to time the Shivers encroach upon the towns and there is a great loss of life. To ward against this the towns have “Huntsmen” who travel the deep woods looking for the Shivers and killing them. Most Huntsmen belong indirectly to the Tathlum.

MIC'TALAN

The Mict'talan live far to the east in an archipelago called the Sea of Shivers. They have only recently begun to make contact with the other peoples of Ehdrigohr. For a long time to most of the cultures in Ehdrigohr, the Mic'talan were a mythical lost Tribe of humans who sided with the O'kowibiryn during the War of Sorrows. It is only now, after the Still has come that they have reached out to the peoples of the mainland. This, sadly has not been a happy reunion.

Cultural Aspects:

“Only the strong can be Mic'talan, the weak must be contained and protected.”

“We are the true people, all others are happiest when they are brought to service.”

“Though the games we prove our worth to the gods.”

“There are equals on the land. Recognize their power when you see it.”

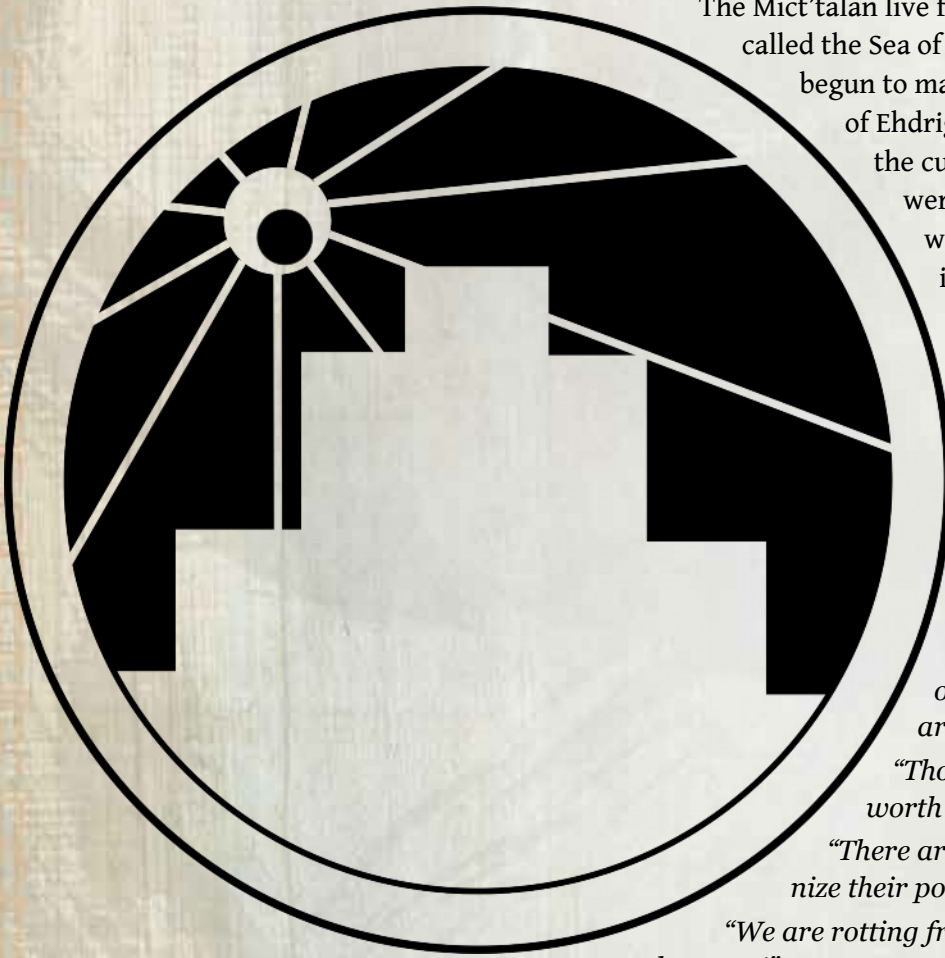
“We are rotting from within, we must find another way!”

“The world hates us and we must control it or be destroyed by it.”

Language: Talan

The Mic'talan are scattered across many islands and are broken into numerous bands. These bands each revere great beasts that live beneath the waves. These creatures are as terrifying as they are powerful. Some scholars suggest that they are Shivers who have survived numerous Turnings and grown in power.

Whatever they are, these “gods” have high priests who govern over each island like a king of a city state. The gods drive the Mic'talan to raid and assault each other. This is treated as a game



that actually has a season to it. Champions are given great power and renown. Smaller, bloodier arena games are held to choose Champions and to weed out unruly slaves and political troublemakers.

Due to the nature of the games, the societies of the Mic'talan have stratified into the great families (who followed Mictlan to the east and settled the islands), commoners (merchants and craftsmen), and slaves (artists and laborers). Slaves are an economic and social resource that keeps the system running. The slaves are typically bred from lower clans or are the result of raids. Slaves are there to build construction, do the most menial of labor, and be fed to the gods when their populations grow too large. There are great, beautiful flotilla-cities off the coast of each island that are the height of luxury for those who can live near the cities heart.

Though slavery is a way of life among the Mic'talan, not all of the great families and their islands kingdoms are active slavers. Some have actually begun a process of social enlightenment where they seek to re-balance their society. This is more out of necessity than anything else, as years of warring and poor treatment of slaves has begun to cause the available slave population to diminish severely. This has affected commoner and noble alike. Rather than restructure their way of life, most of the kingdoms have begun to look to the mainland to the west as sources of new slaves while others have come to the west looking for trade.

Power within the Mic'talan rests in the hands of the Great Families. The vast majority of active Mystery wielders are part of the great families. It is believed that the gods gave the right to the Mysteries to the families and only those of the blood have the right to wield it. They can pass on the right via blood rituals to their chosen champions. It is a crime punishable by death to hold the power of the Mysteries without being one of the great families.

There are 6 great families, each of which shares a name with its floating city. These names are:

- G'Jhira: The defacto ruling family. They have proven to be the most formidable warriors of the five families. They wield great power over Fire, Body, Water, and Spirit.
- G' Ayayos: Sworn enemies of the G'Me'era family though not traditionally necessarily allies with any of the others. Recently they have begun talks, quietly, with the G'Deh'Ora in hopes of changing the status quo. They wield power in Wind and Spirit.
- A'an'Gowiir: Allied to the G'jhira, this family is powerful in Earth and Body. As a family they are most often known for serving the other families as body guards though all know that their best and strongest are kept home or sent to the G'Jhira

MIC'TALAN NAMES

Male

Ahkolmixius, Atledes,
Koaxochedes, Coyotledes,
YaYauhquisius, Xipillius,
Toltecavio, Tlacaelvio, Teno-
chius, Patlivio,
N'zahualcosus, N'netlavedes,
Milinticavius

Female

Nenetlia, Quetzalxochia, Il-
huicatia, Cuicatlia, Eztlia,
Tlallina, Xochitalia, Mali-
nalxochia, Icnoyotlina, Eztli-
na, Cozamalotlia, Koaxochia,
Citlalmina, Chipahuasia

CLAN NAMES

In addition to a given name, all Mic'Talan also have a clan name.

The clan name comes first followed by their given name.

Clan names also change a little bit base on your station. There are three suffixes that are added to a clan name to identify station.

Adding -han says you are a commoner under the protection of the clan but not a slave. Adding -ko connotes that you are a slave and a possible object of barter.

Having no suffix marks you as one of royal lineage

Outsiders will be given the title Pahgahn (assuming they're not killed) which will mark them as not of the blood and not to be trusted.

So, for example, a G'Me'era commoner might have the name

"G'Me'era-han Patlivio" while a noble would be "G'Me'era Patlivio".

- M'Otehr: Sometimes allies, most often rivals, to the G'jhira. The M'Otehr have a secret alliance with the G'Me'era as they both agree that the horrors the people face day to day must stop. They wield great power with Wind, Mind, and Truth which allows them to stay one jump ahead of the other families and maintain their secrets.
- G'Deh'Ora: Of all the Mic'Talan, this family is considered the most ruthless, perverse, and chaotic of them all. The only thing that has kept them in check is that the others agree that they will all stand against them when they try to take power. Subterfuge with the G'Ayayos may lead this to change in the near future however. Masters of Space, Fire, and Soul the G'Deh'Ora revel in their power to bring outright destruction to anything that draws their ire. They constantly scheme for the time when they shall rule the Mic'talan and the entire world.
- G'Me'era: Rivals to the G'jhira power structure the G'Me'era have been very vocal in their efforts to change the traditions of the Mic'talan. They are masters of Fire, Water, Earth, and Life. The only family with a connection to the Principles, they are often seen as weak by the other families though the G'jhira respect their healing powers and encourage the others to reach out to them to make stronger children.

These six families represent the major path to learning, and legally wielding, the Mysteries in Mic'talan.

URALI

The Urali are a hardy people who live in the cold territories known as the White. This great, snowy tundra turns into islands of ice and darkness in the far north.

Cultural Aspects:

"In the name of Brother Bear!"

"The White reveals the true heart of a man!"

"You think this is cold..."

"Rage is your fuel, and warms your heart."

"Only sadness comes when rage lives and persists cross the threshold."

Language: Urali

The Urali have become acclimated to life in the brutally cold lands north of the White Rim. They make long houses of wood and skins, and small houses of ice to house the people from winter to winter. Where other people have received wisdom from the great birds, only

the Crow has the wherewithal to survive the north. To help the people it is said that the Spirits chose the Bear to show the people of Ural how to survive. Crow led them to the great Bear, *Mahtotanka*, and they learned to make their home in the White.

Bear required and oath from the people that there would be those that followed his way. This gave rise to a warrior society known as the Bearwalkers. They are charged with searching the icy wastes for shivers and signs of breaching. They also keep others from breaking the ice, and guard the paths of those who undertake the Rites of Peace and Stillness.

The path of Bear is not an easy life to lead and many are lost to the ice and snow. More dangerous however is the madness that can be brought on by extended periods in the blinding howling White. They say men do and see things when left there for too long. Bear teaches them to use their rage to keep them going but sometimes that rage overcomes even the greatest of warriors. It can also be a path to madness. Just as Bear's brother was broken by the horrors, so too, have some of the greatest Bearwalkers been twisted into "Widdermen". They are terrible within warriors who serve the horrors.

These Widdermen, on occasion, lead small forces of Shivers into the towns of the Urali. The Bearwalkers and Crow have maintained a guard that has kept them at bay for now, but there are rumors of great numbers organizing deep in the White. Word from Waywalkers and scouts are that these forces are led by one they call the Fimbul who seeks to end the Still in the North, free the Winter Crone Sorrow J'hola, and bring a new Turning that will break the lands forever.

In addition to Bear, Urali have build relationships with some of the other survivor creatures of the White. They have a relationship with two of the deadiest predators in the White.

The first is the Wicate-wa, or White Death. It is a breed of the jumping Iktom that normally travels in packs deep in the white. Almost invisible in the snow they kill, and eat nearly anything they can



URALI NAMES

Male

Aapotok, Ilkkavik, Juho,
Juhotok, Jaakko, Ismovik,
Oskaroolik, Rainoverk, Yrjo,
Yrjovik, Urho, Akiak, Tah-
vonak, Ville, Vaino, Vain-
ogak, Terovak, Stigagvak,
Ilmaritok

Female

Ida, Iidavik, Kaisavok, Liisi,
Lotta, Auliserk, Milaserk,
Marjapok, Noora, Outi, Vap-
putik, Riavak, Riikkagak,
Pirkkotik, Reeta, Oona, Anu,
Anja, Aamutik, Hanna, Hel-
vitik

catch. When raised from eggs they can be domesticated though they always remain just a bit wild. These creatures are favored by the Urali as sled pullers as they aren't slowed down by blizzards and they have a heat producing gland under their faceplate that lets them melt snow.

The second friend of the Urali is the G'ra-shnekt. A great creature that is vicious fighter and a powerful burrower, it is highly sought after as a guard beast for households and entire camps. Fiercely independent in the wild, they are, conversely, incredibly loyal when they have bonded with people and will defend their charge to their last breath.

WIITJASA

The Wiitjasa are a confederated nation of nomadic and semi-no-



madic Tribes who roam the vast area known as the Shil. The nomadic life of most of these people is governed by the movements of the huge Bate (or Shiltonka). These huge furred tarantulas are the source of food, clothing, and tools for the Wiitjasa people. These great beasts travel in great herds across the rocky plains.

Cultural Aspects:

"From the earth comes life. If you must take from it, make sure you also give to it."

"To settle is to invite woe."

"We brought the Still so we could prepare, not so that we could stagnate."

"We are the oldest of people and all should listen to us."

"Never forget the old stories."

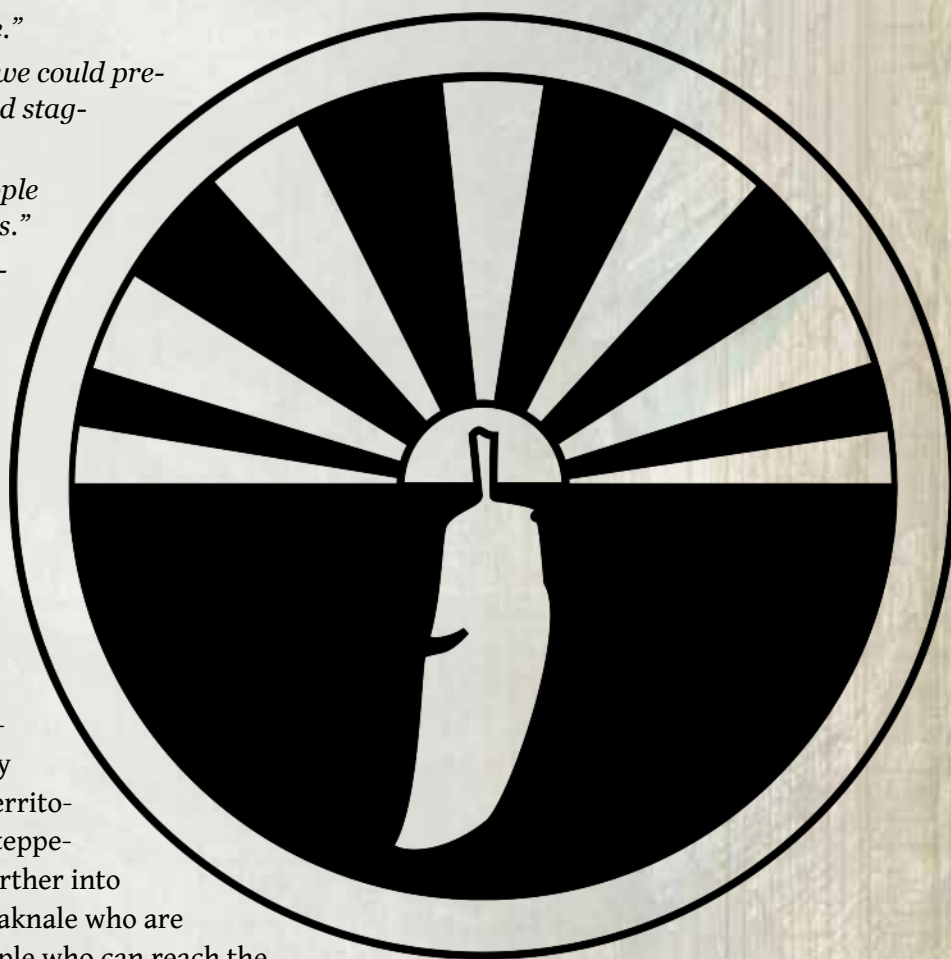
"Tradition is our prison."

Language: Wo'g'la

There are seven bands within the Wiitjasa Nation proper. These bands are the Kuyamiye and Tolkala who hunt the Central Shil; the MISCate and Odindu who regularly fight with the Batu over the territory where the Shil meets the Steppelands; the Dachil who roam further into the cold wooded north; the Waknale who are traders and trade with all people who can reach the Shil; and the Barule who live farther southwest where the Shil becomes lush forest and gives way to the Sunder.

The Wiitjasa do not gather themselves into cities and geographical states. Like the traditional Beyduuni nomads, they shun this form of lifestyle by choice and consider the constant wanderings to be a tradition.

The Wiitjasa, of all the peoples of Ehdrigohr, remember the most about the world before the Scattering. The knowledge that they have about the War of Sorrows and the Songs themselves is maintained by



WIITJASA NAMES

Male

Ch'Qala, H'Otah, I'Kagi,
M'Ahipi, M'Ankatoh,
M'Ahtoh, W'Amblii, M'Ika,
L'Ootah, E'Napay,
Ch'Ayton, W'Ashtey,
Ah'Kiichetah, Ch'Aske,
Skah, K'Ohana

Female

Ch'apa, K'Mimilah,
M'Achah, W'Nonah,
W'Achi-wi, M'Ika-wi,
T'Alutah-wi, Sh'Appah,
M'Aka-Wi, D'Owano-Wi,
Ch'Uhmani, EH'Ha-wi

a number of dream societies which would put the greatest libraries in Salduun, Kaylt, and Barat to shame even though these dream societies follow a completely oral tradition.

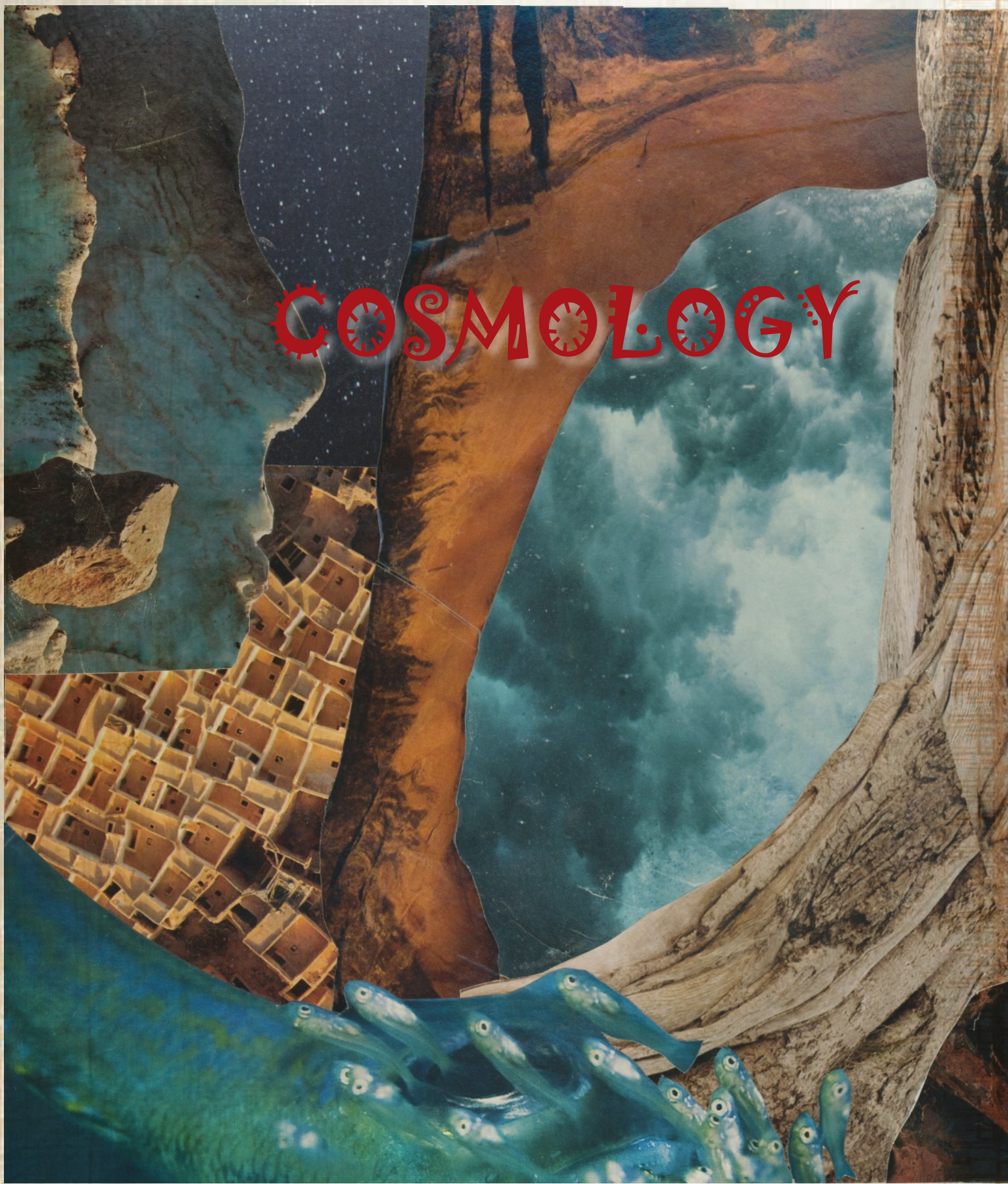
There are bands among the Wiitjasa who do not believe or remember the old stories and care only about things they consider tangible. There are very few dream society members from these bands, for the members of the societies only share their knowledge with those they deem enlightened enough to understand.


Since the coming of the Still, the world has changed greatly. This has caused some stress to the Wiitjasa way of life as borders have become more of an issue as various groups claim areas of the land as their own. Increased interaction with the other Tribes has resulted in more mixing of peoples and cultures among the Wiitjasa. Within the Wiitjasa strife grows among them as many have begun to espouse a belief that power comes from purity of blood and bloodline.

As a result, those groups who are composed of the greatest varieties of peoples have been the recipients of a great deal of prejudice, and in some cases violence. The Waknale in particular, traditionally the keepers of the Rites of Peace and Still, are being questioned about their worthiness for such a task, and their stories are being systematically discarded as "corrupted".



COSMOLOGY





Ehdrigohr is a world of lands and paths, not all of which are visible to the eye. Scholars have argued for ages about the nature of the relative lands. Some say that in some of them hide what remains of the B'te from ages long pass. The realms of Ehdrigohr are broken into 3 types – Folds, Looms, and Traveling Lands. The land that we know the most is referred to as the Waking Land as it is the place where we first open our eyes when the **Four Selves** are joined and we emerge from the womb.

Folds are small anomalies. They are strangely twisted dimensional intricacies that cause a small space to exist that has limited physical accessibility. The folds, themselves are never very big, but those who control them have great power within them.

Looms are considerably bigger. If we were to compare a Fold to a single room then a Loom would be a mansion. They are like unto whole new realities that exist within a super fold of virtually unlimited space. Being trapped in a Loom can often feel like you were in another world altogether.

Traveling Lands are realms that are part of the Weave and are part of the fabric of the world. Some cosmographers among the Barata liken them to being super-folds. Some argue that the realm the mankind lives in is actually a Super Fold and that the Traveling Lands are the reality. Still others suggest that they are, in effect, the hoop and that all the strands of the Great Web connect to them. A small few suggest that they are the wall to a vast prison and all the folds and looms are cells within, including standard reality. Those people usually wind up dead because that's Ender talk.

TRAVELING LANDS

Traveling lands are the most common types of realms that the people will encounter in their day to day lives. It is said that before a person dies they will have “traveled” multiple times in their life without ever having known it.

There are four traveling lands – The Road, Shadow, Dream, the River.

THE ROAD

The Road is often called “the Path of Souls”. It is said to be the path that souls take when they come into the world from Ma-kochewakan, the homeland of spirits, as well as when they leave. Ma-kochewakan is the place where spirits are prepared to return to the world in an endless cycle of reincarnation. People are presumed to

THE FOUR SELVES

The Mystery of the Natures speaks to the *witness* that inhabits the body and causes it to be a person. The Self of Flesh is the Body and upon death it eventually becomes dust as it is anchored in Earth. The Self of Flow is in the Blood escapes and flows out, drying and returning to the waters to which it is connected. The Self of Intent is in the Spirit which may linger to animate the body for a time, but eventually returns to air and the Principles. The Self of Being is the Soul and it enters the Road and travels to **Ma-kochewakan** to share all that it has witnessed

Makochevakan

Makochevakan is said to lie within the center of the Great Web. Some say it lies within the Spinner itself. It is the great concept, the originating moment that is always becoming. It is both the womb and testicle of manifested creation. Here is where the concept of being begins and is recreated from moment to moment.

All threads of the Weave begin here. The threads of the weave became unraveled due to the Second Shame and are split into the Connecting Ways (or genders) that permeate our world causing both commotion and motion. Whenever a soul returns to this place it may join with other souls, or it may subdivide into myriad parcel souls and then those parcels rejoin with other souls forming

always have one foot on The Road and the other in the Land. The young and the elders are closer to The Road than others, and people at those stages of life will be more likely to have encounters on The Road for these people can be seen by travelers from the other side.

Many are those who linger for one reason or another on The Road. Mostly these are the spirits of those who cannot commit to their Journey, for they have left too many important matters unresolved at home. Some are powerful people who have opted to guard the paths while others have been twisted by the powers of darkness and try to lure other travelers off into the shadows beyond The Road.

There are creatures, a type of Iktom called the Gatherers, who manage the weave of The Road and work to ensure that there is always as steady flow of spirits in both directions.

SHADOW

Shadow lingers in places where very little light falls and where the truth remains unfocused. It is said that all shadows are connected one needs but learn how to travel its myriad roads.

Contrary to popular belief there is light in Shadow. It is a very dim twilight that creates ever more shadows and pathways. Were it completely dark it would be The Twain but there are places in Shadow where no light shines and it is usually here that most breachings occur.

Shadow isn't inherently evil or good. Strangely it more an issue of possibilities and these possibilities make it inherently unstable. More breachings occur in Shadow, it is believed, than anywhere else because here it is equally easy to tear through going into the Twain and coming out. It is because of this that it is a dangerous place filled with horrors and things twisted and left over from the War of Sorrows. Luckily it's considerably harder to come from Shadow into the Land than it is to go from the Land into Shadow.

Masters of the Essences are the most frequent users of the Paths of Shadow. The Essences are notoriously strong here and notoriously unstable. It is believed that some of the Sorrows have created Folds in Shadow where they hide and plot, tricking the wicked and the greedy into opening doors for them to step through to effect the world.

DREAM

Dream is the realm that unites all minds and powers the creativity of man. It is the secret gift given to men by What Moves. It is said that Mendyl sits at the center of Dream and is the great Witness of our lives in this world.

Dream is unique among the Traveling lands in that it is constantly connected to all of the other Traveling Lands. Any dreamer has the capacity to will open a doorway into one of the other places, but the most that the average dreamer ever does is open up one-way windows that allow them to have an experience with the other traveling land without actually being affected by it.

It is said that all men pass into Dream every night into their own personal fold. Their spirits reach out to it and are cleansed, preparing them for the days to come. Anyone denied access to Dream for too long will go mad.

When most people visit Dream however it is as a subconscious entity. Their body remains behind and is maintained by their spirit while their minds bathe in the possibilities of Dream.

There are a few who are so connected to Dream that they can actually pass into it consciously and reach into the Wilds of Dream. This is usually the purview of those who are powerful in the Aspect of Mind, or in the Principles. These people often begin with no control of the ability and seem to sleep more than most, or seem to fall asleep at random times. They can learn, however, to open up actual doorways between Dream and the Waking World. Essentialists who learn this area particularly dangerous because they can turn their personal fold into a personal loom, granting them, effectively their own reality to manage and play with. Or so it is said.

Dream is rife with dangers. The people are constantly creating things and giving form to their fears and anxieties. These are called tulpas. In addition to creating tulpas the people are also always creating connections to all sorts of strange places and energies. This can become problematic in that these dreams can get cross-fertilized by unchecked energies and develop a will of their own, especially when terrible things happen to large groups of people. These beings can wander from dream to dream influencing and possessing people trying to find a way out into the real world.

Curses also, being made of the intense emotions of people, can reach out into Dream as well. Dream travelers must be careful of passing into the personal fold or loom of a curse. Even worse a powerful curse can create its own tulpas allowing it greater ability to reach out and get wayward travelers.

On the bright side, it is said that quite a number of the Graces dwell in Dream in much the same way that many Sorrows dwell in Shadow. These Graces endeavor to keep the majority of Dream safe for the everyday visitors, and will often even visit people in their personal folds to give them good dreams and a morale boost.

new experiences of being. This is the essence of the Gathering. The gathering is always trying to happen within Makochevakan even though the people are slow to act on it in the Waking Lands.

The division and rejoining of souls speaks to the points of resonance we find in life. Those who we are inexplicably drawn to are relatives made in Makochevakan. They are pieces of ourselves that we need to regather. None feel this more than the Gatherers who always return to Makochevakan as mighty souls linked to many and always splinter.

WAY OF THE RIVER

The Way of the River is an underpinning philosophy of many of the peoples of Ehdri-gohr. It is centered on the idea that everything is related and that any given thing is always becoming. The metaphor is that life is a river and that you exist at all parts of your river simultaneously. As River you are at your beginning, middle and end at all times. As River you are the fish, the rocks, the banks, the bed. We merely shift our perception up and down and focus on small pieces of our River at a time but we are always all of them. This philosophy is very much wrapped up in the **Essences** in general and in **Moment** in particular.

We strangely sometimes get distracted by the rocks in our river and forget to return to the flow. We are drawn to the

THE RIVER

The River flows alongside us as we move forward in our lives. All moments continue to happen in The River. Those who find access to the River can move back and forth along their own time lines. Unfortunately, the River is the hardest of the traveling lands to get access to.

Most people do get to touch it from time to time by opening a window to it through Dream, and at the moment of death it is said that your soul folds back upon itself, swimming across The River to get to The Road, and at the point you see your entire life in one quick flash. It is said that old masters of the Principles, Essences, and Aspects had different ways of getting to the River for different effects without dreaming or dying.

Playing around in the River is dangerous mostly because of the Iktom that manage it. These creatures work diligently to ensure that big changes do not come to the greater river, also known as the Flow. If your individual manipulations of the River have effects that ripple out into the Flow then the Iktom will come to fix it and will endeavor to remove you in the process.

Though most people only ever move their perceptions up and down The River, there are those who have learned to move the entirety of their being through the River. This is very difficult to maintain and no one alive admits to ever being able to reach beyond the time of the first Still.

SORROW

The people of Ehdri-gohr live in a world that is wondrous and magical. Beauty and magnificence abound in wild places of the world and within the constructions and creations of mankind. Unfortunately, so do things that are terrifying.

Terrible things that threaten to control, corrupt, or destroy lurk in the unseen regions of the world, and within the hearts of men. The very cycle of day and night in the world is a constant reminder of this. The beautiful meadow, or grand mountains, that inspire joy or hope when the sun shines, become the source of fear, and a threat to survival when the night comes.

What is worse is that regardless of what a person's imagination might conjure up, it typically pales in comparison to coming face to face with the true nightmares that lurk in the darkness. The only way for the people to continue to grow, however, is to learn to manage their fear.

The game differentiates between what is simple fear and what is truly horrifying. Fear attacks are mental attacks that target emotions and typically result in emotional consequences. Something that causes fear typically has a strength depicted by a term from the ladder that is used to modify the roll. The results cause mental stress normally and can be staved off with consequences.

If you are taken out by a fear-based attack you will typically be left with a mild phobia related to the subject of the attack. This is treatable with medicine and therapy.

Horror is something altogether different. Horror comes into effect when the expected natural rules breakdown. This can be from witnessing a terrible act of perversity or from being in the same space with unnatural things (note that most spirits are considered natural in this context).

A horror attack affects more than one stress bar though it comes in initially as a mental attack. Most Horror is mental and physical. Whatever stress get through your mental defenses is applied equally to your composure and your health. Sometimes they don't even affect your composure, instead affecting your reputation and health. In such circumstance you think you're fine, but something is just not quite right with you anymore.

When a Horror attack manages to take you out you may be left with a phobia depending on the circumstances. More importantly you will be left with Sorrow. Sorrow is like inverse Fate. The player can never choose to spend their Sorrow. The GM can use it affect the characters aspects and winters. A single point of Sorrow can be used to negate an aspect for a scene. Once spent by the GM it is gone until a new session or until the player fails a challenge. Two points of Sorrow can be spent to negate a player's Winter Aspect for an entire scene. A point of Sorrow can be spent permanently by the GM to permanently remove an aspect from your character. Four Points of Sorrow can be spent permanently to likewise remove a Winter.

Sorrow is dangerous because it whittles away at you slowly, causing you to forget who, and why, you are. You lose drive and passion, and eventually fade into nothing. If a character's Sorrow is ever greater than their Refresh then they are overcome by Sorrow. When this happens the character will not be able to enter Dream the next time they sleep. More importantly, if they sleep and are unwatched they will disappear, cease to exist, leaving nothing but a black smudge, called a Sorrowstain, behind.

Sorrow can be countered by spending a Fate point. It can be removed by engaging in a social attack against yourself to instigate a joyous moment. The removing of a single point of Sorrow is a Great

points when other flows join and leave us; to our tributaries and swales. It's at these places that we are drawn that we make the mistake of thinking that our river should stop there, but it does not.

To stop your river at any one place is to bring imbalance to your spiritual, emotional, and physical ecosystem. We must push through these blockages and dams and be river. Only then can our flow be healthy. Only then can we add to the flow of others.

Live your life, celebrate your river and all that it has touched and been touched by. Be flow, be love, and always keep becoming. The shivers can never truly destroy you. Your only real danger is Sorrow as it can remove you from the flow and cease your becoming.

task. For every point beyond the first that you have, the difficulty to remove one point goes up the ladder one step. Each person that you bring into the ritual that you have a connection to (some shared aspect) gives you a +1 to the roll.

Such a ritual can only be tried once per milestone. It takes time to fully cleanse oneself of Sorrow. There are places in the world that will cleanse Sorrow just by meditating there. There are also places that will taint you with Sorrow over time.

Aside from being great forces of evil, the aptly named powerful beings known as the **Sorrows** are particularly dangerous to as it relates to Sorrow. They have an aura of dissonance and wrongness around them that automatically give you a point of sorrow with no chance to resist for most people. The strength and rate at which this happens varies among the Sorrows and with their victims. When you are primed to become “sorrowstain” the Sorrows can interrupt that process and recreate you as something . . . else. What’s more dangerous is that, since they often walk the world in disguise, you may not even know it happened. One morning you just wake up with some Sorrow, and all you can think about is that strange, haunting child you met in the alleyway. Other horrors and breachers have been known to have similar effects.

THE SORROWS AND THE GRACES

During the War of Sorrows it is said that Ok’O-wi chose 12 of her greatest companion spirits to lead her armies across the world. Though powerful, these spirits existed as intermediaries and as such they were of flesh - mockeries of men, though of stronger make. These beings are called the Sorrows and some say that they were born to the Songs from copulation with the races. Regardless of their origins, it is believed that when the Sorrows set foot upon the world the Songs of Light responded by sending forth their own companions, known as the Graces, to counter the Sorrows. They were to rally and guide the forces of good.

When the Upheaval came, the Sorrows were not sent to the Twain (or Osni) with the other Unktehila. This was for many reasons: some had gone into hiding in Mictlan, others had been locked into battle with the Graces, and others had created their own realms that were neither in the mortal lands nor the Song realms. Lastly, one Sorrow – Amisha was destroyed outright by Shua's gaze.

After the Upheaval all remaining Sorrows (and the Graces as well) found the ties that bound them to their respective Songs had been broken. For the first time they had the free will to choose their own paths.

Each of the Sorrows set themselves up in places around Ehdrigor from which they could set out to conquer the land wholly for themselves. The Graces, however, sought to aid humanity during the wandering time of the Scattering. Some acted as advisers to councils while others tried to cleanse the land of any remaining monsters that would harm the people and helped them recover from the Turnings of the Woe.

What follows are descriptions of these beings. They still affect and walk the lands of Ehdrigohr and have influence among the Peoples. They are seen as both human-like and spirits of a primal nature. Though none of them are worshiped through formal religions per se, they do each have one or more societies (many such societies having several sub-factions) which have grown out of the original companies and followers devoted to the given spirit. These societies affect the course of things in a way more real than anything done by Breachers or Songs.

Many of the Sorrows have plots and goals which have nothing to do with anything other than their personal need to rule and subjugate, while others are still devoted to seeing that Ok'O-wi and her minions find their way from the Twain, cross the Pale, and back into this world to finish what they started. Because not all of the Sorrows wish to see Ok'O-wi's return, there is a great deal of plotting and subversion going on that frequently is the cause of many a foul plan going awry. Sometimes all a Grace has to do is to ensure that the Sorrows learn of each other's plans.

SORROWS

B'Lohra — Makes Given, The Eye Beneath.

A powerful warrior who wields a great club that is said to be able to shatter mountains with a single blow. She lost the use of one eye in her first battle with M'trynaan, after which time it she was gifted by Ok'o-wi with the ability to direct her ire with her one angry eye and slay legions in an instant. Bold and harsh, B'Lohra was not one of the more subtle of the Sorrows. She is the Sorrow of Tyranny where one rules through might and fear. She is credited with causing many men to become Given as she showed them the might that Ok'o-wi's brood would visit upon those who dared to take what they would from their lessers. Many would-be tyrants have since come and gone, conquering in her name. Her influence is felt nowhere more than it

is in Salady. Even now her symbol and ways are bred into the culture as the Taker's Eye and the Evil Eye are phrases that still bring chills to the soft hearted.

Hsi — Black Fiddler

Hsi's black songs are said to be able to rot the soul of whoever listens. He is the Sorrow of Dissonance. Some of the Iktom were broken by him and turned to darkness. It is believed that he is in hiding among the peoples. Though many refute this possibility none can deny the existence of the Fiddlers, a dark organization said to be governed by Hsi himself. These agents of evil work feverishly to sow mistrust and discord among the Nine Tribes. Selling their services to the highest bidder, they are assassins and terrorists who work to ensure that the tribes never reunite, all in the name of a game with meaning only to them. They are among the most foul of Given and will stop at nothing to ensure the ruination of all that People devise. They are especially entrusted with the task of destroying any attempts made by the Thunder Brothers to unite their forces. Hsi is said to be the Sapela's hand in Ehdrigohr.

K'ui — The Unseen

Kui is Ok'O-wi's assassin who struck with neither warning, nor remorse. K'ui is said to be the master of Haints and the Sorrow of Terror. He is the embodiment of Fear that kills. He is said to have no form and calls upon the blackest spirits to do his will. Though Ok'O-Wi fashioned him to be her supreme spy, it is his hunger for death that makes him inadequate for that particular job. He cannot go for long periods of time before he must partake of souls to nourish himself. It is said that no man follows K'ui. They can only fear him.

Meh'xune — The Trampler

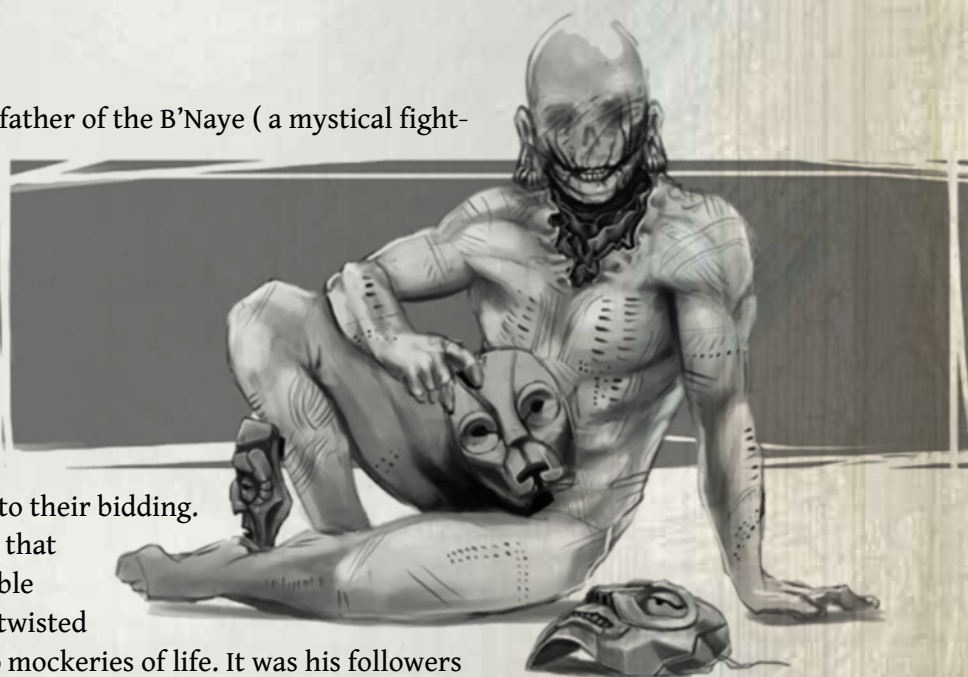
The strongest of the Generals, the power of his legs was legendary. He is said to be the creator of the horrible "Step without Shadow, Stomp without Form" kick-fighting techniques. The Sorrow of Rage, Meh'xune was a force that wrought devastation wherever he walked. His was a scorched earth policy that was its own end. A bastion of chaos he inspired men toward rage.



Scholars generally agree that he has not surfaced in the land in over a thousand years and indeed his legend is all but lost to common lore. Legend states that when last he walked the land he dared to try to destroy La-Oh who brought ruin to his kingdom. It was during this encounter that La-Oh is supposed to have captured Meh'xune's terrible shadow and spirited it away, rendering Meh'xune helpless. It is said that his followers spread to the four corner's of the world to retrieve the shadow and still search till this day. The band of terrorists and murderers known as the Black Stomp Society are said to be all that remains of Mezuoni's company. They are very deadly remnants indeed.

R'ma — B'Naye Prince

R'ma, master of magic, and father of the B'Naye (a mystical fighting society which brought terror to much of eastern Ehdrigohr in generations past). The Sorrow of Corruption, It was he who occupied much of R'Deen's time during the War of Sorrows. He gifted those who followed him with knowledge that let them force the weave to their bidding. His was the magic of elements that ended in the Paha Sica, a terrible place of legend where magics twisted the land and those within into mockeries of life. It was his followers who became some of the most powerful of Withen (sorcerers and witches who used life as their power source) and corrupted the land. The last in this legacy was Aswiid the Mad who in a bid for immortality accidentally brought on the last Turning which was ended by the coming of the Still.



J'hola — The Crone

This Sorrow is a twisted illusionist who's magic turned brother against brother. The Sorrow of Lies and Intolerance, J'hola is said to still live on a terrible island covered in bogs and snow. From there she hatches plots that incite wars between kingdoms. She would do far worse but her island is a prison carefully guarded by Bearwalkers and Witches that keep her from leaving and walking the lands of men. She was placed there, it is, said by K'Sa the wise.

Shiivh — The Flayer

The Sorrow of Murder, Another of Lojosa's pet killers who is said to carve the flesh from his foes in combat, and wears a suit of armor composed of those who have fallen before him. Shiivh has not been seen in an age. Rumor has it that he was captured by the Graces and hidden away somewhere secret. K'ui's forces still strive to find and release Shiivh and unleash a genocidal rampage.

B'baa — Grandmother of Night.

The Sorrow of Nightmares, B'baa prowled the darkness, raising the dead and luring hapless souls into her dark mists. She took special interest in corrupting the innocence of children and filling them with fear, fear which she used to power terrible machines. Her servants were bogeys, twisted little spirits who snatched children from their beds.

Yyaa — Son of Ukh

The Sorrow of Consumption, he was great giant who devoured all that he surveyed. He wears a scar upon his face given to him by Wakya (who is his mortal enemy) and cannot heal, it seeps with a foulness. There are those who say the pus of Yyaa's wound can provide power to those willing to find it. The power, so far has always been accompanied by madness and insatiable appetites for the bizarre and perverse. He is said to dwell in a Fold somewhere beneath the Waking Mountains.

Wiitzyl — The Plotter

The Sorrow of Manipulation, and a warrior of renowned skill, he was said to be without par in the tactical arena. He is said to continue to elude the Graces and exercises his might regularly among the people. The Jays are quick to spot his schemes however so, none have yet succeeded.

Uhr R'Maahn — The Blood Letter

The Sorrow of War, this one was said to be without peers in the field of direct battle. Her enemies fell before her like grain before the sickle. Her whereabouts are unknown as she seemed to disappear around the time of the Still. Many death cults seek her attentions.

GRACES

K'sa — The Wise

The Grace of Wisdom, and relative of the Weaver, K'sa shares a kinship with the Iktom. He is said to be able to see the patterns woven by evil and undo them. A being of much wisdom and great wit, K'sa has a love for jokes and children.

M'trynaan — The Vindicator

The Grace of Justice, She is said to gain power based upon the wrongs of her opponent. Only she could stand against Uhr R'Maahn during the final battle, and it is said that she will lead the forces of light in the battle to come. It is said that none can look into the many eyes of M'trynaan without having to face their own inner demons. Those who attempt do so either die or become reborn in grace.

Keru — The Warder

Grace of Shelter, she was set by the Songs of Light to guard the Weaver and Spinner against Ok'O-wi's evil machinations, she and her folk also protect all that is good. She has passed on the traditions and secrets of symbols to those who would follow her path. Many dark Iktom have been sealed away deep beneath the earth and his servants ensure their bindings.

Mazda — The Gatherer

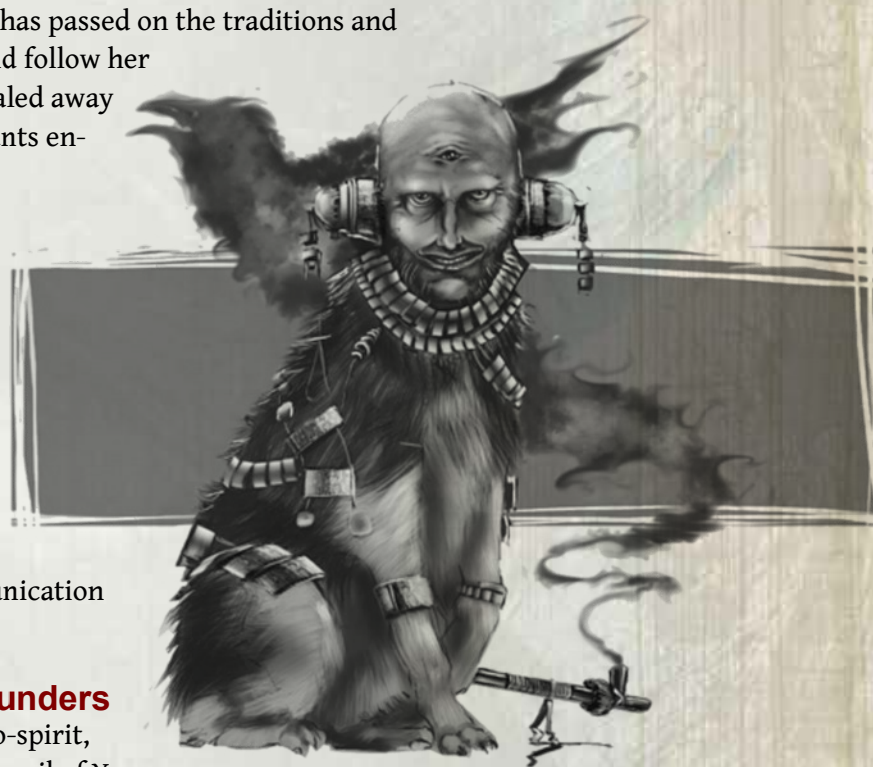
Grace of Family, Mazda sought to gather as many of the people as he could and lead them to places of safety. His wisdom was second only to K'sa and was Raama's greatest thorn. Some say that Mazda is the first gatherer and that it's sex and gender are fluid allowing her to be whatever is needed to enable communication and the growth of chosen family.

Wa'Kya — Leader of the Thunders

The Grace of Love and the first two-spirit, He put himself against the devouring evil of Yyaa wherever he struck. Thunder of the North, Lord of Crows, Favored of the Sun, his spear struck like lightning. Warriors who followed him were schooled in the Road of Secrets and the Crow Lance. The Crows of the Shil maintain this tradition. Wa'Kya walks the day as a woman and the night as a man. He has both sired and given birth to many children in the land. Tohr has been both her lover and midwife.

Tohr — Thunder of the West, Brother of Doves

Grace of Changes, He watched for and battled darkness in the West. He is said to wield a mighty club fashioned from the storms by Mapyato. Warriors who followed him were taught the Way of the Four Seasons of Man and the 4 Weapons of Virtue (Sunset Club,



Knife, Spear, and The Hand of Weal and Woe). Steadfast and righteous was the ancient order called the Virtue's of Tohr. They were said to represent all that was good in the People and to soothe the suffering of others first and fight only as a last resort. Healers and aesthetics they are revered by the people of the West. He has never borne any children of his own but adopts from the people often and has delivered the children of all of the Thunders and has delivered them to the Road as well.



R'Deen — Thunder of the East, The Prince of Jays

Grace of Beauty, R'Deen embodied the great experience of life, and taught the Heaven's Fist and Path of Gold to his warriors. It is said that the rainbows after a terrible storm was R'Deen brilliantly colored armor leaving colors to bring smiles to the frightened and revealing the hiding demons so that his brother/sisters could strike. No Withen could stand the power of his songs. Those who followed his way sought out the withen in the dark places where they hid lured them out into the light. They were the Illuminators and Jays who brought light to men's hearts and songs to their souls.

Xay'Iyahn'Gho — Thunder Brother of the South, Prince of Owls

Grace of Remembrance, his wind blades and were often called Wiitzyl's bane. He was the creator of the "Dance of the Butterfly Blade" and chosen of the Moon. His eyes could see through any darkness or any deception, always perceiving the truth and bringing it too light. Those who follow his path ensure that none forget the past. Entertainers and tellers all, they bring joy to all they meet and make men forget the sorrows of war. They maintained the lines of communications in the most war torn of areas. As storytellers and historians they can be considered second only to the bookish Rooks who build libraries in the east. This telling tradition is especially sacred to the cliff side order of J'va of the d'Zul who still maintain the maps drawn by their ancestors and know the faces of world of old.

Tsd'A'ardta — Peacegiver.

Grace of Peace, her voice is said to bring rest to all angry souls, and quiet the rumblings of war. She ensured that all that died found their way to Makochewakan where they could safely wait to be reborn. She seeks out haints, lurks, and curses, seeking to give them rest and peaceful dispersion. She favors the Doves and has been known to come to them in times of need. Some say She personally guides every Dove to Makochewakan.

V'meenin — Bright Singer

Grace of Compassion, antithesis of Hsi, her songs healed and brought life, while burning away at Hsi's darkness. She brought the secrets of the singing bowls to the Barata. She was said to have used her bowls and songs to subdue the Woe known as the S'ahmpho while the people enacted the Rites of Still upon it.

La-Oh — Brother of Rooks

Grace of Knowledge, he helped the people to discover their gifts and directed them to those who needed them most. It is said that there was no knowledge forbidden him.

B'Raam — Highspeaker

Grace of Clarity, Given the power to name the spawnings of evil, thereby giving them form, and mortality. B'Raam foiled many of K'ui's assassinations by giving him form and fighting him off. It is also said that B'Raam is the first and was given no set form so is neither male nor female. It was B'Raam who named the other Graces and brought them into this world.

THE MYSTERIES



In Ehdrigohr, magic is an integral part of everyday life. The average person does not truly understand how (or even why) it works. What they do know is that it does, indeed, work.

A person need not be a magician in order to work magic. The only requirement is that characters have a focus, and something that drives them. People who do not get involved with life in one way or another cannot generate or attract the energies that allow someone to engage and manipulate the Great Mysteries.

Those people who do have focus, and have a cause to believe in, will find that if they are driven enough, some of the Great Mysteries — the essence of existence, begins to adhere itself to their souls. When this happens, the Weaver or Spinner will have taken notice of this person, and will send to them, or to someone the person is close to, a vision. This vision will give notice that the person in question has gained the potential to shape the stuff of existence, sometimes called the Great Web, The Hoop, The Dreaming, or more commonly — The Telling.

This can be viewed as both a blessing and a curse, for if one gains the attention of The Telling and doesn't do anything with the power gained, then The Telling will attempt to weave you as it sees fit. It is true that those with the power can choose their own destinies, but more often than not it is the destiny that does the choosing.

It is said that in times long past, before the War of Sorrows and the Scattering, people had the ability to learn to wield all parts of the Telling with equal ability. This level of Magic is referred to as "Calling the Mysteries" or "Tale Making". However, because that power was either neglected or abused, it was taken when The Scattering was invoked. It is said that when the Scattering comes to its end and the Gathering begins; when Ok'o-wi and all her children began to return from the Twain; there would be those who, born of the Joining, would find within themselves the ability to again Call the Mysteries.

Until this moment comes — and there are many who believe that the ability is pure legend and impossible — the ability to Call the Mysteries is considered lost to the world. Magic is still present but in a diluted form. The Weave has been broken into myriad smaller parts and there are no known people who can use all parts. Most scholars and lorekeepers count four distinct categories of power, referred to as Owayawa or "Schools", which are further subdivided into four Hetkiya or "Ways".

These Schools and Ways are organized by most cultures in the world in a variant of a circular, direction based model often referred to as the *Hetkiyawakan Hocokatonyankte* in the old tongue spoken by the wandering Tale-Keepers. This name, loosely translated, means

CREATING TALENTS

Creating a talent is relatively easy to do. Simply look through the myriad things one can do with the Mysteries. Pick one and make it a stunt. This stunt will be tied to one of the skills and will use it for making things happen. Buying the talent doesn't cost any refresh. It does cost a stunt slot (or two if it is particularly powerful) and it always costs a fate point to activate.

"The Circle of Mysterious Ways." Most people are content to refer to them as simply Hetkiyawakan, or "Mysterious Ways" or "The Mysteries".

The four Schools of the Mysterious Ways are generally broken down into the **Elements**, the **Natures**, the **Principles**, and the **Essences**. They are ordered as such because they each are believed to flow into the others in the way of a circle. Each School, as stated above, is further subdivided into four "Ways". It is the Mysteries skill that allows conscious control of the Ways. Those who study the Schools and their ways are usually taught to understand the interrelatedness of the Schools. This gives them a special understanding of the way things work, that most common folk don't understand.

Many common people can, and do, develop the ability to use small, very focused, bits of the ways. These people rarely have conscious control of the ways and know little of the schools. They simply have singular talents.

Talents are a source of great conjecture among scholars as many cataloged talents do things outside the purview of the wide ranging mastery of a given Mysterious Way. Some talents even seem to have bits of other Ways mixed in with them. This is often cited in the belief that there is a path to Calling the Weave and what seems to be an interesting rise in the number of talents is evidence of it. The general belief is that stability of life is needed for people to learn to access the Ways without thought. The constant *Turnings of the Woe* that came about whenever mankind stabilized kept this from occurring. Now that the Still is here the people will be able to achieve greater and greater things.

There are those who insist that talents are unnatural and their use should be moderated if not outright banned. They suggest that talents are mere perversions of the Ways and are either evidence of cavorting with beings in the Twain, or will lead to a Breach if used too often. They cite the belief that Turnings happened sooner in the days before the Still in places with a high density of Talented individuals as evidence of their theory. They insist that if the Talented are allowed to run rampant they will eventually break the Still.

LEARNING THE MYSTERIOUS WAYS

There are a multitude of paths for one to learn to wield the Mysterious Ways. To study them does not necessarily mean that one actually attends an institution or subscribes to the tenets of a particular

organization. There are many who insist that their way the only way things should be done, and those who do otherwise are dangerous.

Callers (a generic term for those who can “call the mysteries”) are found from all walks of life and all traditions. There are organized institutions, loose fraternities, master student relationships, solitaires and any number of other methods in which people come into their power. Though the rules, rituals, and politics might change they are all pulling on the same power source. The thing that must be noted however is cultural purview does have an effect on how one accesses the Mysteries and how it's use affects you.

When a player chooses to learn the ways she must choose a special stunt that **costs 2 stunts and 2 refresh** called a “**Tradition**”. The tradition dictates how easy or difficult it is to use certain things. The most common traditions are listed below.

TRADITIONS

The first thing one must do when creating a character who wields the Mysteries in Ehdrigohr is to choose a tradition. Tradition is important as it affects how you access your abilities. Different traditions have different rules. These rules are in addition to the rules of the particular mysteries.

The available Traditions are:

- Ecclesiastical Order: Large institutions rife with rules and politics about who can use what and when.
- Mystics: You have a great teacher who has taken you under their wing to teach you some mysteries and a particular life philosophy which you must maintain to keep access to the Mysteries.
- Solitaires: You’ve learned to do what you do naturally without even thinking about it. You’ve got great power with the Mysteries but you lose control easily when pushed out of your comfort zone.
- Warrior Societies: Your manifestation of the Mysteries is tied to your martial prowess. Every use of power is a martial technique.
- Eclectic: You learn your abilities from interaction with others, taking on a mish mash of traditions, stealing secrets, and breaking rules.
- Dynasts: What Mysteries you have access to are defined by your bloodline. You wield power more easily but it is extremely hard to get access to new abilities.
- Makers: You can wield a wide range of Mysteries but everything you do is contained in a device or object of some sort.

QUICK MAGIC

The rules for the Mysteries can be quite complicated and a bit overwhelming to first time players. If an effort to get you up and running quicker here are some quick magi rules.

Ignore the idea of the traditions for now. Simply require an aspect and base all Mysteries use off of a Mysteries skill for each Way. Every Mysterious Way is strictly related to the trappings of what they represent.

A player announces what they want to do and the GM assigns a difficulty. The difficulty starts at Average and goes up from there based on the complexity of the situation.

The normal outcome rules apply but failure gets some result plus stress equal to the difficulty. Failing by 3 or more results in some sort of critical breakdown of the Mysteries that causes a scene aspect. Succeeding with style gets the player some unexpected bonus scene or personal aspect that they can invoke for free.

THE BARBERS OF SALDUUN:

Purpose: They are a spies and agents serving the Viziers Council in the Forge Cities of Salduun. They are renowned for their investigative skills and their remorseless application of the orders and laws set forth by the Viziers Council and the Saldu.

Mysteries Taught: The Barbers are trained in investigation and employ a host of techniques to investigate, infiltrate, and track down quarry. They are taught the Principles of Honor and Destiny, as well as The Nature of Mind, and Essence of Moment. The Viziers consider the use of any Essence but Moment dangerous and they are considered forbidden.

Mystery use and Trappings: Their use of their abilities are controlled by the skills Lore, Investigation, and Intimidation, and Medicine. Their techniques (secrets) focus around extreme means of investigation, getting into the mind of an opponent, and enacting oaths that bind others to particular actions.

The Barbers, have as a focus, a small lens known as their "Shirat". Many wear it on their person as a pendant, some fashion it into a monocle, while others attach it to canes and staves. Peering into the shirat allows them to see what is unseen to others.

To take a tradition requires the player to take a particular stunt for that Tradition. When doing this you don't take a stunt, for instance, called Tradition: Dynast. You must be very particular with the stunt. Instead of Dynast you would say something like Blood of G'Meera.

This restricts you to the trappings dictated by that particular bloodline. Players and GM's should work together to devise the narrative trappings of a given Tradition Stunt. Mechanically they all tend to work the same way. Of course you and your game master are welcome to come up with variations on given traditions. The Council of Gears, for instance, could be built for one player as an Ecclesiastical Order and as Maker Tradition for another.

Ecclesiastical Order:

You are a member of a formal and large institution that has multiple rules and regulations about who can manipulate the Mysteries and what they are allowed to do with the ability. These are typically Relatives of Intent though they may be organized also as Relatives of Flesh.

The general philosophy of such groups is that a hierarchy of control must exist or things spin out of control. There is usually a caste system that tends to separate people into the worthy and not worthy though the common parlance may seek to make these terms more appealing to those considered not worthy. Joining an ecclesiastical organization carries the following benefits and penalties:

Mysteries are linked to Lore skills named after each Mystery. Players must learn each Lore skill separately. Each use of a Mystery causes stress to the ecclesiast because they have no real organic relationship with the Mysteries.

Students of an Ecclesiastical order also possess a focus. This is typically a physical object that is in the Caller's possession. It is assumed that a caller is using their focus to utilize their mystery. If the focus is lost it can be compelled, increasing the difficulty of any attempt to call the mysteries without it by +2.

They have a special Mystery track called manitu. Whenever an Ecclesiast uses magic they take stress off of this track. Their lore skill works as a sort of armor against this stress.

By default the track has 2 stress it can take before being taken out.

There are also special set of consequences which can only be used on this track.

Worn (1)

Harried (2)

Limit (4)

Once these consequences are used up the player can switch to using the physical and composure tracks and their associated consequences.

Students can reduce the damage they take by taking particular uses of the mysteries as stunts. These are called secrets. When a secret is used it reduces the difficulty of a task by 2.

Whenever a student learns a new Way they immediately gain 4 secrets in that ways for free.

Typically there are groups associated with each Way and you must gain favor and pass tests with each group to gain access to that Way.

Gaining access to new abilities requires you to make social checks that show that you have matured to handle new abilities.

Ecclesiasts also have another stress track called Standing. This track represents their standing with the order. The track can take 2 stress by default. It has the following consequences “warning”(2), and “probation”(4). Taken out equates to “**out of favor**”.

Learning as an ecclesiastical student includes a path for superiors to lock you out of your powers. Because the superiors have extensive knowledge of your training and personality they know how to shut you down. Superiors can invoke their rank to gain a +2 to their rolls to dispel or counter powers of students of the same school/order.

You must tithe to the organization. What this tithe actually is varies from organization to organization. If a character does not tithe to their organization they will quickly fall **out of favor** which will make learning new abilities harder and getting things done in the order difficult.

Illegal or heretical usage of the **Forbidden Mysteries** may bring retribution from the organization. The order typically has a list of Ways and Stunts they will not teach. Any order member caught using such power can incur serious penalties (up to and including death depending on the severity and the particular order).

Mystics:

Mystics are similar to ecclesiastical orders with the exception that they place little to no restrictions on the stratification of power and knowledge and focus around a mentor/apprentice relationship. They are typically Relatives of Intent or Soul. Power learning is restricted to what is known by the mentor, though the student can be actually better than the teacher. Seeking new powers requires seeking a new mentor. This can have serious repercussions as filial piety is of great importance to mystics. It is rare for a mystic to focus on offensive powers preferring in general to move towards abilities that lend themselves toward love, healing and understanding.

The GM can compel the consequences of the character's Standing track whenever a student is trying to use or gain access to powers outside of their tier of access as well as when they are trying to gain social or mental based advantage over someone in the order. The consequences equate to a -2 each making **Out of Favor** equal a whopping -6

Compel Forbidden Mysteries

Ecclesiastical tutelage focuses on rigid rules and disdains unorthodox usage of power. GM's can compel Unorthodox and Forbidden Mysteries each separately to enforce this. Otherwise this is a passive effect and Students find it incredibly hard to loosen up enough to use the Mysteries in unorthodox ways. The difficulty of augmenting and manipulating outside of your secrets increases by +2. Using Forbidden Mysteries is another +2 in all instances.

CHANA ACADEMY OF BARATA:

Purpose: The power of the Essences, the Self of the universe is mirrored in the Natures which are the “Self” of man. Nestled in the hills north of Onandag in Barata, the Chana Academy teaches those who can, to “reach to the great within and the great without” to work towards a balance in the world

Mysteries Taught: The academy teaches all four paths of the Natures and the Essences to its students. Trying to master the “great within” and the “great without” is their eternal focus. They look down upon the Principles as illusions that bind the will and freedom of the selves. They likewise frown upon the elements as dangerous distractions giving an illusion of power but still being very limited.

Mystery Use and Trappings: The Chana see the great selves as works of art that must be mastered to be whole. Through music, oratory, chant, dance, and song the student is brought to understand the ripple that they make in the greatness of it all. All students must create a special instrument called the singing bowl that resonates with their hearts. Playing the tones of their bowl allow them to reach deeper and deeper into the selves. The use of Chana techniques focus on performance and art skills. A great many Jays come here to study.

Mysteries are linked to the Attunement Skill (though the Mystic must learn it for each way they wish to control) and tied to Empathy as a controlling attribute. Because of this they are highly affected by the flows of the Mysteries in an area.

Mystics initially gain access to 2 Mysteries.

Mystics share something in common with Solitaries in that they have restrictions associated with their power use. These are called taboos and must be adhered to. Taboos are linked to behaviors and must restrict the actions of the Mystic. It can be foods that can't be eaten, activities that can't or must be performed. Taboo's are marked with a Favor track to determine how in tune the character is with their pact. Breaking a taboo results in an attack on this track. When the Favor Track is taken out the character finds their ability to use the mysteries severely curtailed. If a taboo is broken then the character will suffer a -2 penalty to all Attunement Skill rolls until they have atoned. A broken taboo can be compelled to cause the Mystic to take stress from the use of the mysteries until it is atoned for. The amount of stress taken is equal to the difficulty of the attempt.

A Mystic can only gain access to a Mystery as a major milestone. Doing so also gains them a new taboo.

Mystics are able to control their favored mysteries very well but learn very little in the way of offensive use. Compel a character's mystic tradition to add +2 to the difficulties to wield their mysteries as an attack. It can be invoked to gain a +2 bonus on all defensive and utilitarian uses as well as attempts to dispel.

Solitaries:

Solitaries are people who come into their power without help from others and usually without knowing they have them. They typically possess one or two abilities of great intensity and it becomes harder to learn new abilities. Stunts come easy to solitaries but they typically possess a psychological restriction which affects how they use their abilities. This restriction is often associated with an occupational skill which is how they typically discovered their talent.

Solitaries must tie each mystery to a particular artistic skill or craft. Empathy is their controlling skill.

Before they can begin to use their talent (assuming it isn't passive) they must synchronize themselves with the source of said power by performing the skill. Anything that keeps them from performing their skill severely inhibits their use of the power.

Baruthay the artist, for example, can only use her ability to use life and body after she has created an image of what she wants. If

someone is hurt and she paints a picture of them healed, they will begin to heal as though she used Life on them.

A solitary can force themselves to use the power without the skill but doing so requires the expenditure of a fate point and even then the usage is subject to a -2 penalty on the roll. Spectacular failures always begin with the art or craft and then move on to have their normal affects. The effects created by a Solitary can often be halted through creating advantages that result in the interruption or destruction of the art or craft. This is only possible while the work is still in progress. Once the work is finished all the magic has gone where it is supposed to go.

The power of solitaires is inspiring. A solitary gains a free one level boost on the power level of their powers. This means that by default the power level of solitary powers is Grand. This is one of the reasons that others often consider them too dangerous.

Solitaries aren't usually aligned with other groups (hence the name). When they do try to work with others they tend to get along with mystics and warrior societies most and ecclesiastics and other solitaires least.

Warrior Societies:

A cross between ecclesiastical orders and mystics, warrior societies typically focus on one entire School. These are usually Relatives of Intent or Soul. Power usage is typically associated with a given martial skill and power focus is on combat relevance.

The biggest problem to the Warrior schools is that using the powers is closely tied to the martial tradition and its politics and is based almost entirely on techniques. Available Schools and Ways are very strict. Leaving the society typically leaves one marked for retribution regardless of how one uses one's abilities.

Joining a Warrior Society give you an aspect called "Member of [name of society]". This aspect can be invoked or compelled in relation to the tenets and nature of your society.

Members also gain a stunt that is their fighting style. Each Fighting Style is connected to a particular Mysterious Way. So an order might have their Seven Flame Strikes which is tied to uses of the Way of Fire. This is either a Stunt for the Fighting skill, or for the Medicine skill. As a fighting stunt it allows the use of Attack, Create Advantage, and Defend actions using the associated Mysterious Way. As a Medicine stunt it allows the use of Overcome and Create Advantage actions using the Mysterious Way in relation to healing (or harming).

The structure of a society is typically one of chosen family. Those

SARAIYA OF FOUR SIGHS GROVE

Saraiya is an Elder, born in southern Barat, and who has wandered the world over multiple times over. She has settled in the Grove of Four Sighs located in the foothills south and east of the Waking Mountains. She never takes more than 4 students at a time and has a few tests of character that she puts prospective students through before she imparts knowledge of the more dangerous mysteries.

Mysteries: Saraiya's path focuses Life and Truth as the mysteries that lead people toward balance. She excels in these mysteries and is capable of doing things that many didn't know possible.

Taboos: Taboos in Saraiya's way focus around acts of service rather than things that are forbidden. Saraiya teaches gratitude, benevolence, and truth over all things.

Gratitudes: (sung prayers of a sort) must be given before every meal. The Sun and the Moon are also greeted with gratitudes.

Benevolence: They must also go out of their way to help others in need.

Truth: Telling a lie is forbidden to Saraiya's students. They may avoid speaking the truth but they can never tell an outright lie. This makes adherents of Four Sighs well trusted by most in terms of arbitrations but many are also cautious of them as their ability to manipulate truths to achieve a goal is staggering. It is said that one must pay careful attention to what is not said when dealing with Four Sighs Grove.

Sample Warrior Societies in Ehdrigohr include the Red Pale of Salduun and the BearWalkers of the Urali lands.

above you are considered uncles and aunts and are respected as such. Those of higher status than you are typically more powerful but such is not necessarily the case and unlike the Ecclesiastical groups they don't necessarily have anything built into their structure to shut down a student down outside of, shame, beating them up, or killing them. Nonetheless the power of family is great and filial relationships can be invoked or compelled in situations when the relationship might make an impact. Warrior Societies have a Standing track like Ecclesiastical orders do. Going against the tenets of the society or the societies elders causes stress on one's relationship with the society.

While Warrior Societies typically don't have much in the way of outright taboos, they do have those things that they stand against. These are called their Oaths. These things are dictated by the society and breaching them brings creates stress on the characters as they are bound in the principles. Breaking an oath causes stress to the Favor Track as well as Health or Composure.

Every Society has four Oaths that must be adhered to.

While Fighting Styles give you access to the Mysteries that access is not as fluid as what is learned by other traditions. Warrior Societies also have a manitu stress track that acts as a buffer to their access to the Mysteries. Warrior Societies learn the technique of invoking their manitu to make their power even greater.

A **technique** is a special stunt that gives a warrior an aspect for a particular action related to the Mysteries they have access to. Passively the technique allows the use of the maneuver without penalty or harm to the warrior. In addition, when using a technique a warrior can invoke the technique and spend a fate point (this means the player must actually call out the maneuver video game style). Doing so raises the power level of the effect by one step. So a warrior using the Seven Flame Strike and invoking the technique would treat the effect as Grand as opposed to Common. Each technique has a manitu cost that is basically stress that is done to the manitu. A warrior has 3 consequences to use with his manitu: Worn (1), Worn (4), Limit (6). Each use of a technique in succession increases the cost of the technique by one. So delivering 4 of the same strikes in a row can wipe you out.

Warrior society members find it relatively hard to create effects with the mysteries on the fly. They are heavily reliant on techniques. If they try to do so it is damaging to their systems as it flows outside the conduit of their manitu. Such an attempt incurs stress to health or composure equal to the difficulty of the maneuver.

The most common techniques used by all warrior societies are listed

below. It is important to remember that each school has a unique name for each of these techniques. Those with Lore (Warrior Societies) can create advantages in response to knowing what attacks or techniques are being used against them.

- **Strike:** This allows the Warrior to use a particular Mystery to attack via a physical punch or kick. It does 2 stress and causes 1 stress to the manitu track. When invoked it always manifests symbols of the warriors order.
- **Weapon Strike:** This is like strike but requires the use of a particular weapon. Succeeding with style allow the attacker to choose a consequence if a consequence is caused.
- **Defensive technique:** This technique allows the warrior to absorb 2 points of incoming stress while they maintain it. The attacker must Overcome the Defense by making an overcome that is greater than the Fighting or Medicine skill used to create it. A Fighting defense is usually based on blocks and a Medicine based defense is usually based on evasion or magical avoidance. Weapons use blocks or redirection. Using this technique does 1 point of stress to manitu. When invoked the defense may cause the attacker to take their own damage. When one tries to overcome a defense it typically appears as the attacker is raining down blows until the defender is overwhelmed.
- **Denial of manitu:** This attempts to use your mystery to create a barrier that keeps the target from being able to connect to their manitu. This requires any defense the target has up to be overcome and then the broken defense to be invoked for an advantage. Then the attacker can use Medicine to create a "Denial of Manitu". This costs the attacker 2 Manitu and forces the defender to not be able to access her mysteries without incurring stress. If the "Denial of Manitu" is invoked. It manifests as some sort of visual restraint that is indicative of the order's martial style and increases the stress the target takes from attempts to use the mystery. This attack is opposed by the Might, or Medicine of the target. One affected the target can use Might, Medicine, or Resolve to overcome the barrier.

Be creative in coming up with techniques. The quick and dirty rule is that things that should be easy to do cause 1 stress, those that should be difficult or have effects that linger over the scene do 2 stress, those that are very powerful or combine multiple effects should do 4 or more. Techniques can have power levels too to represent how intense they are. Every level of power between your skill and the tech-

EXAMPLE DYNASTS:

The 6 Great Families of the Mic'Talan are the most well-known dynast groups in Eh-drigohr. Others exists but are considerably smaller families (small clans, merchant families, etc.) and are harder to come by.

nique will result in 2 additional points of stress taken. Use can not use consequences to block stress coming from a source 2 or more power levels greater than you. Be careful, for techniques that are far too powerful for you can kill you.

Eclectic:

Eclectics are similar to solitaires in that they belong to no formal tradition. They have no favored school and no real restraints. They start off with knowledge of one Mystery, and within it, one Way. To learn more requires help from others. They carry no real restrictions or taboos on the use of their power. In fact, they are virtuosos' of free weaving and may freely come up with effects for their known mysteries. They are not good with constraints however and as such may not learn techniques. Eclectics pick up skills from others as such their use of the mysteries are typically tied to the skill that the person they learned it from used it with.

Eclectics also never quite learn the buffers like manitu, or other restraints, that other traditions have. As a result their uses of the Mysteries cause stress directly to their physical and composure tracks. An eclectic can, with effort, redirect this energy in manner that resembles a power cascade that redirects the stress into the environment at the cost of one fate point. This adds a scene aspect but also causes stress to the weave of the location. The scene aspect is always thematically related to the mystery in use. When the stress is enough to "Take out" the area, the Great Web is disrupted in the area which cases **seepage** related to the mystery.

Needless to say, Eclectics are considered a bit dangerous by everyone. Some communities forbid their presence altogether some warrior societies take an oath to capture or kill them. Eclectics are also the most likely to become Given or seek out the darker paths to power which bring them into the auspices of the Sorrows.

Eclectics must overcome political difficulties with the other traditions to learn new abilities or invent a path for themselves. They can learn without a teacher but doing so is very difficult as they must create their own path to the power. Learning new powers requires the Eclectic to overcome a social, or mental, or physical obstacle with an organization or person who has the mystery she seeks. She can then choose "Willing to teach" as a consequence. This also often marks the Eclectic as an enemy or out of favor with the source.

Doing this allows the Eclectic to add access to the Way on a minor milestone if they have the refresh. Otherwise they have to wait till a significant Milestone to learn a new Way.

Since they don't have the true innate understanding of many oth-

er users of the mysteries they never learn to control it on the same level. Opponents can compel the Callers status as an Eclectic when the Eclectic attempts to dispel the power of others. When opponents are attempting to Overcome the effects created by eclectics they may invoke the eclectic status to gain a bonus.

Like Solitaries, eclectics can come from anywhere and have no formal structure.

Once power is learned Eclectics have a unique ability to see the way that the Ways and Mysteries are interconnected. This gives the Eclectic the unique ability to pull stunts referred to as “Calling the Weave”. They must first invoke the aspect of the Ways they intend to use in the stunt (by spending a fate point each). They then describe the stunt. The GM sets a difficulty that starts with +1 and increases for each ability being used. The eclectic makes Mystery Lore Roll to pull this off. If he fails the roll the eclectic takes mental and physical stress equal to twice the number of ways he attempted to use and he causes stress to the Zone equal to the number of Ways he attempted to use. If he succeeds but fails to generate spin, the effect goes off but he also takes mental stress equal to the number of Ways he attempted to use. If he generates spin the Stunt occurs as described and the eclectic takes no stress.

This, generally unorthodox acquisition of mysteries, and lack of control, and dangerous ability to stunt, often leads to problematic mysteries which in turn makes them appear to be problems to society at large. At the least they are considered eccentrics to be cautiously dealt with. At worst they are considered heretics and anathemas and are often sought out for punishment by various groups. Eclectics have the easiest times forming relationships with warriors societies and solitaries, are avoided by mystics, actively disliked by ecclesiastical groups, and hated by dynasts.

Dynasts:

Dynasts are similar to ecclesiastical orders in their implementation of strict hierarchies; however the hierarchies and castes systems revolve around Relatives of Blood and social power. These groups insist that the path to power must flow through blood and is the right of those with the blood to rule. They often actively seek out those with power who are not known to be of a particular bloodline or ecclesiastical group with the goal of purging them.

Dynasts are much like solitaries in their power structure since they rely on natural talent rather than tutelage. Dynasts are limited to mysteries inherent to their particular bloodlines.

They will have one or two particular Ways that they are strong

with and know next to no other power. When using their mysteries, dynasts don't have to make activation rolls. In addition they can use their physical stress track as a power source. In this manner they can boost the results of an given use of the mysteries on a 1 for 1 basis without having to use any fate points. Dynasts typically have access to 2 Mysterious Ways. One is considered their primary and the other is their secondary. The primary way is treated as one step higher in power level when dealing with others who are not of the same bloodline or thematic bloodline group.

Mysterious Ways outside their bloodline list can be learned but are always treated as one Power level lower and require an activation roll.

Dynasts do not take stress like others when failing a roll. They may opt to invoke their bloodline to reduce the incoming stress by 2 points.

Dynasts get along well with ecclesiastical orders and warrior societies as long as they connect themselves to a particular bloodline or order. They abhor solitaries and eclectics and mystics are typically thought of as trouble makers if not outright criminals.

Because the Dynasts are typically the sole proprietors of their craft in their areas they have become quite wealthy from this. Members of Dynasts may invoke their bloodlines when making Resource checks. They may also do this when making Social checks as they command great presence due to the power flowing through their blood.

Dynasts are known for often being the privileged who exploit their power and manipulate others. This means that they have enemies lurking around every corner. Every dynast has **conspirators** which the storyteller may compel once per session.

Makers

Makers are an interesting group of Mystery callers. While there have been solitaries who were able to weave the mysteries into craft, none of them have been able to do so on the level of Makers. They objects that Makers are able to imbue are typically complex multi-part objects, usually with some moving part. Many seem to believe that it is the motion that keeps a Maker vessel imbued with power. Contraption in particular seems to be very good vessels for Making with to the point that most people assume that any contraption they see is imbued with the mysteries.

Makers are a subset of all of the other traditions. That is to say that each tradition includes some makers in it.

To become a maker you must simply choose to be a maker when you choose to be able to wield the mysteries. Becoming a maker has the following effects.

You can only use the mysteries if you place them into a device.

Any use of the mysteries without a device means that the effect is treated as one step lower in power level. If this should take is off the chart then you just can't use that mystery without having a device.

Devices similar to the secrets and techniques learned by Ecclesiastical and Martial traditions. Treat them as a type of aspect that can be passed along to someone else and they enable the use of the contraption but make the results of that use be wrapped in the trappings of that skill.

For example, Gathi is a Salduun maker that has constructed an item he calls his handjet which is imbued with Fire. The hand jet is a device that allows an attack to be made with fire at a range. This basically allows Gathi to use the ranged weapon skill but using the trapping fire as part of its effect.

Makers must learn Mystery Lore for each Mysterious Way they intend to be able to imbue. They will also have a separate contraption for each type of action they wish to undertake.

Attack

Overcome

Defend

Create an Advantage

It is generally assumed that Makers are carrying all sort of items on their person. So a Maker can always invoke his tradition to suggest he has something appropriate to the mystery in question. Such things are considered scene aspects and will be gone when the scene ends (contraptions are fragile after all).

USING THE MYSTERIOUS WAYS

To use any of the Mysterious Ways a character must first **Harmonize** to the particular Way they intend to use. This requires a **Resonance** roll with whatever they're associated skill is. Any skill that your tradition associates with the Mysterious Ways gains the action **Resonate**, which is an overcome action.

The base difficulty to harmonize is Fair (2). This is further modified by the individual School of mystery and your tradition.

- The Natures are close to you and suffer no modification.

- The Elements are outside of you and require a bit extra effort. (+1)
- The Essences are everywhere but require a deep abstract understanding of the nature of existence. It actively resists being meddled with (+2)
- The Principles are set in motion and require considerable effort to manipulate (+1)

Situation also modifies the base. Harmonizing in a relaxed situation requires no roll (unless you've got a special aspect that can be compelled). Harmonizing in a stressful situation increases the base by +1. Harmonizing while being actively attacked increases the base +2.

Lastly there are places where the environment is more or less in harmony with the particular Mystery or Way.

If have a **Lore** skill keyed to a particular Way then you can use it to create an advantage in areas that are in **Resonance** with a particular magic. Likewise there are some places that are **Dissonant** to a particular type of magic. **Dissonance** provides an obstacle that must be overcome before a connection can be made. **Dissonance** gets added directly to the base roll.

In addition to the Resonance roll there is the **Effect Threshold** or ET. The effect is what you intend to do with the Way in question. Just making the Resonance roll allows you access the power of the Way at its most basic. As you strive for more finesse over a Way or to push it to do more effective things (listed in each Way's description) then you must also meet the Effect Threshold of the desired effect.

- If you meet and exceed the **Effect Threshold** and the Resonance check then you succeed in doing whatever it is you want to do.
- If you gain Resonance but fail to meet the Effect Threshold you get to do what you want to do but you also take stress equal to the difference of the two difficulties.
- If you fail to gain Resonance then you have failed completely in your attempt to use the magic. In such a case you take stress equal to the difference between the Effect Threshold and what you actually rolled.
- If you fail to gain Resonance by 3 or more you have had a **catastrophic failure**. What happens in these situations is detailed in the descriptions of each Mysterious Way.

THE ELEMENTS

Trappings: *Elemental Effects and control.*

Elements — Earth, Fire, Air, and Water — are necessary for the sustaining of existence and as a life base. Earth is the actual base, and it holds the others together. Fire warms the land, and is both the blood and the driving force of the land's evolution. Air directs the fires, and nourishes the breath. Water cleanses and soothes, shapes and seeds. It keeps the earth from getting too hot, stills the flame, and nourishes the land.

Those choosing the path of Elements can choose according to their tenets of their tradition.

On a Catastrophic Failure you unbalance the elements in your body and negative elemental aspect that the storyteller may compel for free for this scene. Examples of such an aspect are “Overheated”, “Lost my Breath”, “fluid in my lungs”, “choking on dust”.

If you fail by 4 or more you accidentally draw power from all living creatures in the zone and they all receive the negative elemental aspect. Others can avoid this by spending a fate point.

On a failure of 6 or more the elementals runs rampant in the zone you occupy and you lose the ability to control the element for this scene. The aspect is persistent until someone manages to remove it or it fades away on its own.



USING THE ELEMENTS

Attack

Elemental attack is used whenever the elementalists wants to use their element to actively attack another person or object assuming they have some of their chosen element within the same zone from which to draw. There does not need to be much (torch, bowl of water, potted plant, and a breath of air).

Elemental attacks are always physical in nature. The elementalists uses her skill to initiate the attack and the target defends with whatever skill is appropriate. In most cases this is Athletics or another Mystery that allows them to Defend. Ranged attacks generally have a range equal to your rating in the elemental skill. An attack typically comes and goes in an instant, and affects a single target.

Elementalists can achieve enhanced effects by augmenting the Effect Threshold.

Example adjustments include:

Area of Effect. You can attack everyone in a zone instead of a single target. To do so increase the Resonance Roll by +4. This is an indiscriminate attack and will harm friends and foes alike. Instead of a Weapon Rating, this attack has an explosive rating. The base explosive rating is 1.

Increase damage by +1. Difficulty +2 per +1 added to the attack to a maximum of +6

Selective targeting: When choosing to attack a zone increase the difficulty +1 per target you want left out of an AOE attack.

Defend

Elementalists may mold and shape existing elements to obtain a variety of effects and defenses. An elementalist can always use their element to defend against incoming attacks. Typically this means they have whipped a bit of the element into the path of the incoming attack to block or deflect it.

The attack you're defending against typically sets the target Effect Threshold. This makes defense a fairly dangerous proposition as failing not only means you may get hit by whatever you were trying to avoid, it also means you might hurt yourself or others in the process from any possible backlash that comes with your failures.

SPECIAL

Dispel the effects of another elemental with an element you are skilled in. This requires an opposed roll. The winner gets to disperse the effect or control the effect if they make another activation roll equal to the element's original activation roll. If you try to control and fail to do so you are overwhelmed by the element and you take stress damage as normal and the effect is dispersed. Sometimes it's easier (and safer) to simply attack the effect instead of the control. If a powerful elemental creates a barrier it may be easier to punch a hole through the barrier than wrest control of it.

Elementalists may increase their toughness against elements they are skilled in by making an opposed Elemental skill roll. Success reduces the incoming damage by half the difference (round down).

Create an Advantage

You can use your element to place an aspect on yourself, an object, or a zone. Add +2 to the difficulty whenever you want to do this. Especially difficult or complicated maneuvers may incur higher difficulty modifiers as deemed appropriate by the GM.

Aspects placed this way are temporary and generally last either a round or until a victim can remove them. For maneuvers that create longer lasting effects increase the activation difficulty +2 for every time increment above a round.

For Maneuvers that are not directly related to combat, such as controlling the Air to create an Aspect of Thunderstorm, the GM might allow you to cover multiple zones or an entire city. Such a Maneuver should increase the activation difficulty equal to the Size of the area you intend to affect.

SPECIAL

As a special use of Create an Advantage, elementalists can erect a barrier composed of a chosen element that obstructs an area (effectively dividing a zone into two zones). Others wishing to pass through the barrier must make an overcome roll of some sort.

If it is meant to last longer than an exchange, increase Resonance difficulty by +2 and the particular barrier counts as a supplemental action until released. The effects of the barrier vary depending on the Element used:

Fire has no real substance (unless combined with a physical element). It does not bar movement. Instead it has the aspect “*Wall of Fire*” and does environmental damage to those attempting to pass through. The base damage is determined by the number of shifts you succeeded with.

Earth creates a solid wall which has the following aspects:

“Blocks Line of Sight”

“Solid”

Water can be formed into a barrier with the following aspects.

“Hard to pass through”

“Obscures Vision”

Those attempting to pass through will be attacked must take the risk of drowning in all the churning water.

Wind works like water having the following aspects:

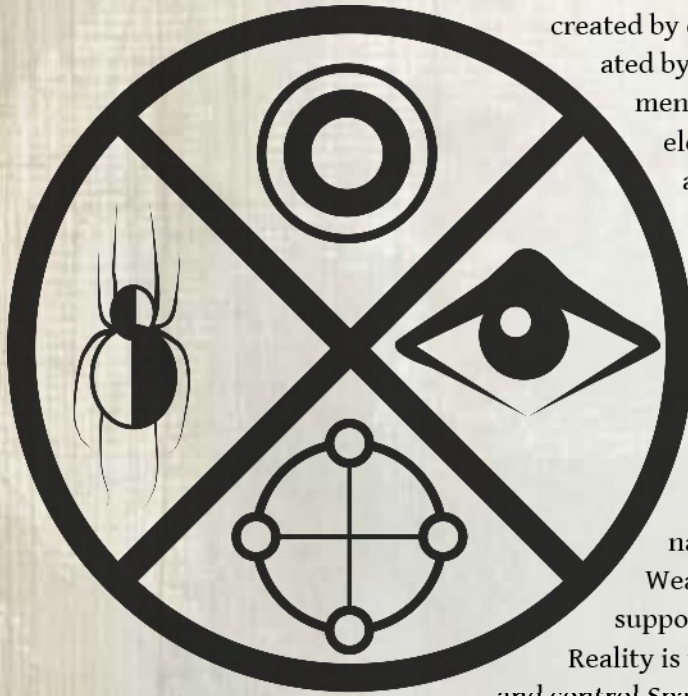
“Hard to pass through”

“Redirects missiles and projectiles.”

The default stress caused by a barrier for passing through it is Average. This damage can be increased +1 for each +2 difficulty you add to the Effect Threshold.

Overcome

An elementalist can always try to use their Element to overcome obstacles composed of their element, find an way around obstacles



created by other elements, and to dispel the effects created by another elemental who uses the same element. This is especially necessary for when an elemental's power goes awry as the result of a catastrophic failure.

THE ESSENCES

Trappings: *Strange reality warping effects.*

The Essences — Weave, Moment, Space, and Truth — are the Cycle of existence. Weave is the fabric that all things exist in, and that exists in all things. Time is the dynamic force upon which the strands of the Weave travel. Space provides a container that supports the Weave as its strands travel along time. Reality is the controlling force and laws of which direct and control Space and Time, so that they may shape the Weave in order for existence to be.

Those who wield the essences are often called “Essentialists” and any of them would tell you that the essences may be some of the most spectacular of schools but are also the most dangerous. Mishaps with the essences can rip the fabric of the Web and let things in from the twain. It also runs the risk of driving the user insane.

Those choosing the Mystery of Essences must choose in accordance with their traditions.

When it comes to using the Essences, success and failure work slightly differently than they do for other mysteries. If you fail the Resonance Roll, but still succeed against the base difficulty, you suffer the difference in stress but can still use the essence as normal.

If, however, you fail to meet the base Resonance you cause turbulence in the essences and suffer the difference in stress, the essences quiver uncontrollably, and you may cause stress to the Weave.

Every scene has Weave Stress track of at least 5 with three tiers. The consequences of the tiers are “stretched”, “weakened” and “broken”. Any time an Essentialist fails a Resonance Roll she does stress to the Weave. The amount of stress done is 1 point per 2 points they failed to Resonate by. This means that trying to augment the Essences is among the most dangerous things imaginable.

An example:

Kwamay is an essentialist who is trying to manipulate time to slow his enemies but not affect his friends. His normal Resonance roll is 3. Normally he can only slow one person but he is trying to affect an

entire zone and exclude his friend from the effect. This adds a +2 and a +2 for the friend. These adjustments are added to the Resonance Roll and give him a Resonance difficulty of Epic (7). He's got an Attunement Time skill of Good (+3). He rolls and gets a -4 on the dice giving him a final result of -1. This fails the base activation and causes stress to the Weave. To get the stress done we take the difference between his roll and the final difficulty (a total of 8 points) and divide by 2 for a total stress of 4. The Game Master blocks some all of the stress by using the consequence "Weakened". Kwamay better be careful because he's now dangerously close to causing a breach and no one knows what lay on the other side.

These affects can be averted by another essentialist spending a fate point and making a Resonance Roll equal to their base + your skill.

Weave

The user can make solid objects out of nothing. With the base activation roll the shape made can be any size between a 1' cube and a 5' cube without.

The objects created are not real and composed of solid weave laced with the will of the creator. They have a shimmery, soft appearance, as though you were looking at something dreamy and out of focus.

The default duration of the created object is a just a couple of exchanges. If you succeed with style the object lasts for the entire scene. This assumes basic forms that are either spherical or flat. The essentialist can create more complex objects by increasing the Effect Threshold as follows.

Create a Barrier that is anchored to a real world location. This barrier has a stress track of 2 and an armor rating of 1. You can increase the armor by 1 point for each +2 you increase the ET.

Create a path: This is a platform that is fixed in space. This is basically a wall but it seems to hover, anchored in mid air. The platform can hold things as if you were using the Might skill with a rating equal to whatever skill you're using to manipulate the Weave. If it is ever forced to bear too much weight or someone manages to wrest it from its location, it simply dissipates. You can increase the size factor of this Strength by +1 per +2 you add to the Resonance Roll. This platform can be made to move at a speed of one zone per exchange by adding +2 to the ET. This speed can be doubled for another +2.

Create more complex objects such as simple tools and weapons with no moving parts (+2 ET)

Create more complex object with moving parts (+4 ET)

Construct objects with complex exteriors and interiors. (+4)

Create detailed objects that look like real world objects (+6)

Disintegrate natural inanimate, unintelligent, objects by unraveling their weave matrix (+4).

Disintegrate man made objects (+6). This is harder because every act of creation by people inherits a little bit of their own weave.

Attack a person by trying to unravel the Weave that holds them together (+6 to Resonance and +1 per point of stress you wish to do. If they are taken out they are unmade and cease to exist physically

Moment

The user can Create an Advantage by manipulating the flow of time in numerous ways. They can slow or increase the passage of time either personally or locally in the zone.

Precognition: The essentialist can actually look into the future of the subject or location they focus upon. They can perceive a number of hours into the future equal to half their skill. If they succeed with style this doubles the maximum period they can see forward. The base activation roll allows an essentialist to perceive with just one sense. Each additional sense the essentialist intends to use increases the Resonance by +1. The essentialist can continue to perceive beyond her allotted time by continuing to make activation rolls. Each roll gets cumulatively harder, adding +2 to the difficulty per roll made. This all gives them access to information which can be used for advantage.

Postcognition: As Precognition except the essentialist can peer backwards through time but only 10 minutes per skill point. Time periods with big secrets may require an opposed skill roll as passive forces of the weave try to keep the truth hidden. Again the difficulty increases +1 for each additional sense to be used beyond the first.

Decelerate. Success reduces the subject's current speed. A success reduces movement by -1 zone, all attack, defense, and initiative rolls by -1. Each additional -1 raises the difficulty +1. An entire zone can be affected but increases the difficulty by +2 and effects everyone but the essentialist. The essentialist can exclude targets at a rate of +2 to the roll per target excluded.

Stop: A target can be frozen in time for 1 turn, prevented from performing any actions. This increases the difficulty by +4. Targets skilled in the Essences or Natures can resist with an opposed Spirit, Will, or Moment roll (whichever is highest). Each additional target the essentialist wishes to freeze increases the difficulty by +2.

Accelerate: Success increases the targets current speed. This works like Decelerate except a basic success increases movement by +1 zone, and increases attack, defense, and initiative rolls +1. Each additional -1 raises the difficulty +4.

Loop: To loop a subject the subject must first be stopped and then time is rewound to the turn you want repeated (TN +8). The subject will repeat this round for a number of turns equal to your skill.

Space

The user can move things about in space and affect how space affects others.

Sense: The essentialist can move the actual point of origin, of one his or perceptions, to any other place within one zone. If he cannot actually see the new point of origin this difficulty increases by +2. For each additional +2 added to the difficulty the range increases one range increment. The essentialist can move one sense per point of skill to the same place using the base activation. If she wants to move the senses to different places the difficulty is +1 per sense. The essentialist can also perceive in multiple different spaces at once. Each additional point of origin beyond the first increases the difficulty by +2.

Expand: The user can cause objects to grow in size. A success moves the object up one size category. For each +2 to difficulty the user can cause another growth step. To affect a living creature the difficulty increases +4.

Contract: As Expand above, but the user is able to reduce the size of an object.

Fold: The user is able to bend and shape space. On a success they are able to reduce or increase the distance between two points by 1 zone. For every zone increase the TN +2.

Warp: Essentialist can expand/contract all dimensions of the space of a contained area by one zone for a +4 increase to difficulty. Each additional zone added or subtracted in this manner incurs an additional +4 to the difficulty.

Break: The essentialist can seal off an area from all other areas by essentially breaking it off and looping it upon itself. The difficulty do this is +6 for one zone. Note that this difficulty is a base difficulty can result in extreme stress damage to an area. Each additional zone increases the difficulty by +4.

Shift: The essentialist can move an object one zone without having to cross the intervening space. The size of the object that can be moved is determined by using the skill score as Strength. Every +4 on the difficulty doubles this number. Affecting a living creature increase the difficulty +2 per creature.

Truth

Truth is all about illusions and transformations. Cause people to experience what has not happened. Truth gives you the following actions through Create an Advantage.

Vision: You can cause a people in a zone to see, or not see, something of your choosing on a success. This is only visual but seems real otherwise. The vision must be small enough to fit a zone. For every +2 to the difficulty this area can be doubled. To have other senses effected you must also add another Truth effect. You can create a number of visions equal to your skill. For each additional vision in a zone increase the difficulty +1

Echo: As vision, but you can cause a people to hear, or not hear, something of your choosing on a success. This is by default a sound that is hard to understand. You might hear voices but won't be able to make out what they say. For +2 TN you can provide a much more detailed sound. For each +2 you can add another effect/sound.

Sensation: You can provide, or remove, a tactile sensation to another person on a success. This is typically a touch, taste, or strong resistance. It can be sharp enough to cause pain and can cause physical stress to the target.

This can also be used as an Attack or Defense action. If used to attack it can cause physical stress or mental stress. Such rolls are made using your skill opposed by the targets Resolve, if unseen, and Alertness or Endurance if accompanied by a vision. Damaging sensations are limited to effecting 1 target at a time. To affect an entire zone, increase the difficulty by +2 but includes all subjects in the zone capable of perceiving the sensation. To exclude subjects increases the difficulty +2 per subject. You can manifest a number of simultaneous sensations equal to your skill rating. Each sensation beyond that increases the difficulty by +1.

Puppets: By manipulating possibilities you can make a single one manifest and create what is known as a puppet. Creating a puppet increases the Resonance Roll by +8. Puppets are real in that they could have been and currently are. Such creatures are have no minds and can only do what you instruct them to do. They are treated as an Average Minion. You can only control puppets that you can see. If you lose sight of a puppet it will dissipate. This makes essentialist with any kind of extend senses particularly dangerous. Each puppet beyond the first, increase the difficulty another +4.

THE NATURES

Trappings: Personal transformation, telepathy, and external force.

Tradition defines how you will Attack, Defend, and Create an Advantage. The description of your actions must fall within the limits of the trappings of your chosen Nature.

The Natures — Body, Mind, Spirit, and Soul — are the things that are the manifestations of self-existence. Body is the container and vehicle. Mind is the effective flow of the self — the powers to reason, change, and intuit. Spirit is the will of the self — the motivational and directing forces of a person's being. Soul is the essential self, the glue that bind us into existence, and where life lessons are stored, like an eternal winter count to be studied between lives helping us move closer to the Gathering time. Those who practice the Natures are called Adepts.



The Natures are mighty but potentially dangerous to the user. Those trained in them have incredible control over their own limitations and ability to affect the world around them. Since the Natures focus on pushing the limits of the self on all levels, and all of these manifestations of the self are contained in the body, they can cause considerable damage to the practitioner if they go awry. Pushing the personal selves beyond their limits means that failure can bring corruption to the user.

Any stress that comes from using the Natures comes off of the Physical Stress Track. Consequences manifest as extreme physical exertion. Severe consequences result in “Mutations” that require the Adept or another to remove.

Damage from using the Natures and failing is particularly noticeable as it can often leave the adept twisted and disfigured. Some powerful adepts that wander the wilds are known, and named, for their disfigurements.

When gaining access to one of the Natures, the player must follow the restrictions of their tradition.

Using the Natures

Using the natures follows the standard rules for gaining Resonance. Any stress that comes from using the Natures comes off of the Health or Composure tracks.

On a **Catastrophic Failure** you automatically suffer a consequence on your physical stress track. If there is a preexisting consequence (or one occurs for taking stress from the failed roll) then this consequence is of the next available severity.

If this results in a **Taken Out** then adept has twisted themselves so severely they gain an “aberrant” aspect. This is a persistent aspect that represents some sort of physical mutation or mental imbalance (as is appropriate to the nature being used). This aspect must heal by careful application of the Nature again, either by the adept or another adept, who beats a difficulty of your skill + 6. There are many monsters out there in the lands who were once adepts but lost control of themselves.

Nature Effects

The Natures function in many different ways and can be manipulated with the following adjustments and limitations:

Attack

Each of the Natures may be used in different ways in order to attack.

Body:

- The adept uses his body to attack. The form this attack takes is up to the adept. It might be claws, a special punch or kick, razor hair, or any other spectacular martial technique. By default this is a resolved using the skill appropriate to the effect.
- The attack is good for one use. Each use after the first requires a new roll.
- You can make the attack last for the entire scene for a +4 adjustment to the ET.
- You can make the attack into a ranged attack at a cost of +1 ET per zone it reaches.
- Normally a body-based ranged attack remains connected to you. For another +2 ET you can make it into a projectile.
- The damage can be enhanced +1 per +2 applied to the ET.
- Most normal physical combat maneuvers can be performed with body attacks.

Mind:

- Mind allows you to make mind to mind contact with another person for communication if you are in physical contact with them. This requires an Overcome roll resisted by the resolve of the other person.
- If you make physical contact with another sentient creature you may try to overwhelm them. This is considered a mental attack but it requires you to connect with a physical attack by default.

- For +4 you can use it as a purely mental attack that requires no physical touch. Typically this attack manifests as a type of mental static and ringing that becomes painful and overwhelms the target. Stress is only applied to the composure track.
- The same modifications that apply to body attacks apply to mind. The adept can perform maneuvers that force opponents into a particular mental state.

Spirit:

- You can channel the force of your will directly at someone or something. This is a physically forceful attack that does physical stress.
- Spirit use is visible as a colorful ripple in the air around the practitioner and along the lines of force of his attack. It can be made to be invisible for a +4 to the base roll.

Soul:

- With Soul you can directly attack the life force of another.
- It requires touch but ignores most mundane types of armor doing physical stress to the target. This is a physical or mental attack and it allows you to heal stress boxes equal to half the stress that you opponent receives of the same type. Using soul causes your self to manifest as a coruscating aura that envelops you and the target.
- Because the natures are so personal it isn't normally possible to attack an entire zone. Additional individual targets can be affected, however, by increasing the activation difficulty by +2 per additional target.

Defend

Adepts may manipulate their natures in many ways in order to protect and bolster themselves. An adept can give himself natural armor against mental, physical, or soul damage 1 for one scene per rank of your skill. Armor subtracts directly from incoming stress.

- Body grants physical armor that resists all non-Soul related damage sources (punches, spears, arrows, fire, etc).
- Mind grants mental armor that resists all attempts to mentally damage or overwhelm the character, as well attacks against their ability to discern truth from illusion.
- Spirit protects against attempts to manipulate your passions or transform the adept and resists Sorrow. It also reduces stress from supernatural environmental sources. This is use-

ful to resist the disquiet and sorrow effects of being near breaches and breachers.

- Soul protects against attacks on the life force, personal energy sources, and as a type of armor against Sorrow. This comes in especially useful when fighting off attempt at possession from spirits and other creatures.
- The base armor may be increased by increasing the ET+2 for each additional +1 you want to add to the armor.

Create an Advantage

- Body can be used to perform extreme stunts oriented around the Physical Abilities. On a successful activation roll you may add your Body skill to physically based rolls.
- Mind allows you to assign mental advantages to yourself as you rapidly calculate odds and opportunities. Like a master of billiards you are able ascertain the tactical layout of a situation and place an aspect of opportunity on your self or another. Your Mind skill rank bonus determines how many simultaneous situations you can manage before accruing penalties.
- With Spirit you can force your will upon someone and attempt to do physical maneuvers on them without actually touching them. In these situations your Spirit skill is your effective Might.
- With Soul you may “flex” your aura and cause it to make you seem greater or lesser. With a successful activation roll you may treat your social encounters as though they were one step higher in power level.

Overcome

- You can attempt to dismiss an effect created by another. To do so you must make a roll using your Nature skill opposed by the opponent's Nature skill. If you are successful the effect is negated. On a failure you take mental or physical stress equal to the opponent's skill score. If you succeed with extra shifts, the effect is negated and the opponent takes stress equal to your skill score + the amount over spin.
- Body can be used as a bonus for physical tests that you might use Athletics, Endurance, or Might for. Each +1 you wish to add raises the ET +1.
- Mind can be used for any Overcome that you might use a social skill for. Before you can make mind to mind contact with

someone you must establish a connection with an overcome roll resisted by the opponents Mind or Resolve.

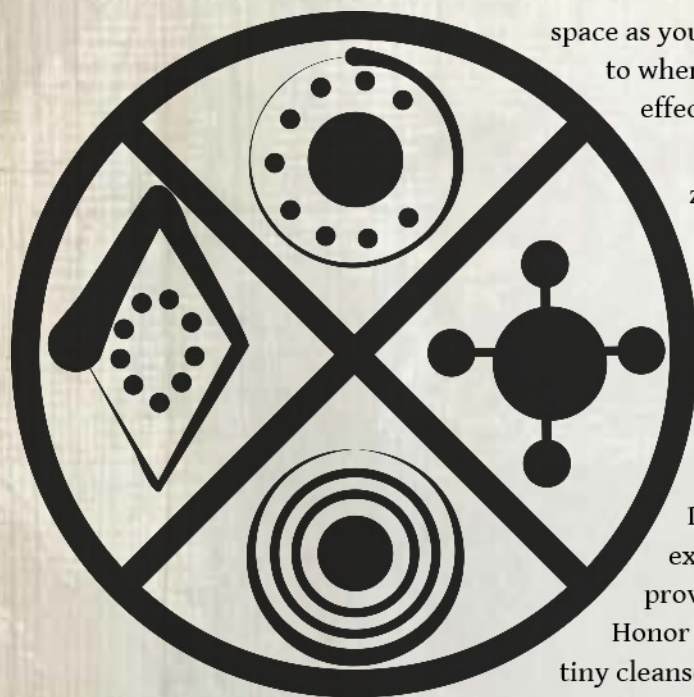
- Spirit can be used to perform physical actions and contests without actually physically engaging with your subject.
- Soul can be used to overcome obstacles related to dying or Sorrow.

SPECIAL

Projections:

Projections can be created by expending a fate point and making a Resonance roll at +4 difficulty. Success creates a creature of sorts that is an extension of the particular Nature in use. Critical failures result in creatures that are uncontrolled and free willed. Such a creature will escape at first opportunity and will stalk the adept who created it as a foe until either it, or the adept, is destroyed. Such creatures are built as minions with a quality of Average. Every step increase of their quality adds +2 to the difficulty.

- Projections created with Body are called **Shadows**. Creating one is a +4 to difficulty. It looks like you and has one of your physical skills at Fair. You and a Shadow can be in two different places at the same time. If your Shadow is destroyed it causes stress to you equal to its rating.
- Projections created with Mind are called **Phantoms**. They can cause no physical harm and do only mental stress damage. They cannot affect the physical world but can perceive it and allow you to perceive through them. If they are destroyed you take Mental Stress equal to their rating.
- Projections created with Spirit are called **Furies**. They gain an emotional aspect that may be compelled. They are pure force and willpower and can only do physical stress. Furies are obviously artificial things and have a certain inherent luminescence. Furies must be actively controlled (you must make the Resonance check each time you do an action) or they will wander off and perform activities based on their emotional aspect. If they are destroyed you take Mental Stress equal to their rating.
- Projections created with Soul are called **Avatars**. They cannot affect the physical world or be affected by it in most cases, but you can sense through their senses. They can cause stress to living creatures that ignores most forms of armor. If it is destroyed the adept takes stress equal to their rating +1. At anytime you can opt to instantly occupy the same



space as your Avatar. This allows you to travel instantly to where they are. Doing so immediately ends the effect.

Normally projections can only move up to 1 zone away from you. For each zone you'd like them to be able to travel increase the ET +1.

THE PRINCIPLES

Trappings: Fate and personal coincidence warping effects.

The Principles — Life, Love, Honor, and Destiny — are necessary to give purpose to existence. Life is the basis of existence. Love provides the blood and dynamism of existence. Honor directs love and nourishes the passions. Destiny cleanses existence, makes the scars on the Weave that require life, all while providing the paths that Honor will choose from, so that life can further itself.

Manifestations of the Principles are rare and those who wield it are often called principalers. Their effects are not as overtly visible as the other paths. This make many people not trust principalers as they feel they can never be sure when an action they take is their own or influenced by the principaler.

In actuality it is harder to have influence over a person than most people think. Those who can touch and weave the principles must put a great deal of time and effort into doing so. Though it is possible to instantly force your will on someone (called taking and described below) such feats are the domain of the truly powerful. It is simply very draining to actively manipulate another person's principles. People have their own paths to walk and they will passively (and actively when aware of the attempt) resist. Again, only the most powerful of Principalers have the ability to do this long term.

When a principaler learns a Principle, she leans in accordance with her tradition. Most often principalers must prepare a relationship that is sympathetic using the rules of their tradition.

A principaler who uses his or her abilities directly for personal game for himself, or others, quickly becomes known for it. These people are often referred to as a witches. The social standings of principalers and witches varies greatly from culture to culture. The terms principaler, or witch, do not inherently carry any moral connotations. Instead they speak of ethics of power. One groups is much more passive aggressive, while the other is direct and overt.

To effect another being a principaler must first establish resonance between themselves and their chosen target. This can be done in one of two ways, Taking or Sympathy. You never have to gain sympathy to effect yourself, areas, non-sentient animals or plants.

Taking:

The first, and the hardest is called “taking”. Taking is an Overcome action that involves a sudden wrenching of another's principle threads and forcing your will into their pattern. To do this a Principaler must be able to interact with the target directly and focuses their will upon them. This initiates a battle of wills where those involved make opposed rolls. The attacker whatever skill they use for that Principle while the defender defends with Resolve (Adepts can use Soul, and Essentialist may use the greater of Moment or Truth).

If the attacker wins then she may follow up with a roll for the particular principle she is attempting to use. If the defender wins they might overwhelm the attacker who must make another skill roll with a base difficulty equal to the defender's original defense roll. If principaler fails this roll she takes stress equal to the difference.

If the roll is failed by 3 or more, then the principaler has suffers dissonance and suffers a -2 to all attempts to establish resonance with that target for 24 hours.

On a catastrophic failure the opponent gains the aspect “hated enemy” in regards to the principaler. This is aspect is persistent and can be invoked for free by the subject, and compelled normally by anyone except the principaler. This hindrance can only be removed by establishing resonance with the target at a later date after both the target and the attacker have rested.

The duration of a taking last for one scene. Gaining a boost increases the duration for one hour. The attacker can attempt to maintain beyond the established duration, but doing so requires another battle of wills.

Sympathy:

Obtaining “sympathetic resonance” requires a ritual to be performed by the attacker. This ritual allows the principaler to establish a more durable and less dangerous long term connection with a given individual but is a bit more involved.

The ritual is a Challenge involves the principaler crafting a representation of the target. Usually this is a small fetish but traditions may affect what this could be. This attempts to create a sympathetic relationship between the principaler and target which the target passively resists.

As they create the fetish, the principaler focuses upon the target in their minds. They then must use their Principle to try to Overcome the Self of the target. The principaler must make one roll per mental or social skill that the target possesses. Each roll has a standard Resonance difficulty of Fair (3). If a target is skilled in Soul, Spirit, or any of the Essences then add +1 to Resonance difficulty per Way they have access to. The target's skill rating is added to the Resonance difficulty to find the Effect Threshold.

If any of these rolls fails, but still is higher than the Resonance difficulty, the principaler takes the difference as mental stress and continues on.

If any of the rolls fail to even meet the base difficulty, then the principaler takes that difference as social stress. And must make a Good (3) Endurance or Resolve roll to avoid having to start the whole process over. If they succeed on this roll they can try what they failed again.

If the principaler is forced to take a major or greater consequence on either track, the ritual fails and must be started anew with new materials.

The principaler should work to create advantages with other more mundane skills to add things belonging to the targets to this process to get a bonus to the roll as follows:

A piece of clothing.

An item of importance to the target.

A lock of hair (if the ritual fails this becomes useless and a fresh sample must be procured).

An ounce of blood (if the ritual fails this becomes useless and a fresh sample must be procured).

A contract of compliance between the ritualist and the target +4.

The target is an active compliant participant in the ritual +4.

Once the principaler meets or exceeds the difficulty they may place the aspect "In sympathetic resonance" on the target in relation to the targeted principle. This aspect is persistent for 24 hours. While this aspect is in place, the principaler can attempt to manipulate the targeted principles at anytime within the next 24 hours. Increasing the Resonance difficulty by +4 increase the duration to a new time increment for each +4 added.

After the initial duration the ritual can be maintained by simply gaining another set of successes on the existing fetish. These attempts to be persuaded can now be actively resisted by the target with an opposed Will Roll by the target but the target suffers a penalty of -1 to the roll per principle that the principaler is in sympathy

with. In addition, any item bonuses the principaler had, now become penalties to the target's roll. If the doll is ever broken the resonance is dispelled. Other ways to break resonance also exist.

Once sympathy has been established, the principaler can use any of the Create an Advantage or Overcome actions of a given principle on the target from up to a mile away.

Life

Give another character a roll to recover from a consequence. You can add a +1 to these rolls for every +2 you add to the difficulty.

Remove a negative physical aspect on another.

Remove a stress equal to your skill from another person outright. +2 per point.

Make the subject resistant to attacks from any creature with the aspects **unnatural**, **tainted**, **breacher**, or **taken**. The subject gains an armor of 2 against the damage of the attacker.

Commune with nature. Doing this gives the principaler a sense of the overall health of an area and notes the presence of evil taint and contamination within a zone. For every +2 added to the roll the range of this ability increases one distance increment.

Create a barrier in an area against the target creature. The creature cannot physically enter the area without first making an Overcome roll vs. you.

Love

The principaler may give himself a +1 to all social and mental rolls against the target. For every additional +1 increase the difficulty +2.

Cause the target's social skills and likeableness to decrease, giving him a -1 on all rolls to interact socially or mentally with others. For every additional -1 increase the difficulty by +2.

Control animals. You can make a single creature of animal intelligence do your bidding.

Creatures of power gain a +2 to resist.

Other creatures may gain additional bonuses as determined by the GM.

Trying to make a creature that is untrained for combat fight, gives the creature an additional +2 to resist.

You can control a number of creatures, simultaneously, as your Love skill.

Create a personal connection between you and another with a +4 difficulty. This causes them to see you as important and they will take reasonable effort to ensure your safety and happiness.

Create a connection between two people. This is the same as personal connection, but the connection is to a person other than you.

Create a repulsion between two people. The target sees the other person as an “Enemy”. They gain the aspect “enemies with. . .” which you can compel for free.

Create a connection between a person and an object. The person gains the aspect “obsessed with” in relation to the object. You can compel this for free. This assumes a singular object. You can make the object be broader categories by increasing the difficulty. Each step of breadth increases the difficulty by +2. Examples include going from a particular sword, to all swords, to all bladed weapons, to all metal weapons, to all weapons.

Create a repulsion between a person and an object. The person gains the aspect “**Phobia of. . .**” in relation to the object. You can compel this for free. This assumes a singular object. You can make the object be broader categories by increasing the difficulty. Each step of breadth increases the difficulty by +2. Examples include going from a particular sword, to all swords, to all bladed weapons, to all metal weapons, to all weapons.

Honor

Vow:

Establish a vow between a person and another person. If the target breaks the vow he must make an Empathy Roll opposed by your Honor skill. If he fails he takes the difference as Mental stress. If you succeed with style on the roll the stress is social instead. For every additional person bound by the vow increase the activation roll by +2. You can make the results more stressful by increasing the stress suffered by +1 for every +2 increase to the difficulty.

Oath:

Give the target a habit in relation to an idea (can never swear, can't strike someone in the back, must bathe at sunset, etc). The subject gains the “oathbound” aspect in relation to the idea. If they should break the oath they must make an Empathy Roll opposed by your Honor skill. Failure means they take the difference as Mental stress. If you gain spin on the roll the stress is social instead. This oathbound aspect is compellable but only in relation to its intended goal.

Compulsion:

Give a target a compulsion in relation to an idea. They gain the aspect “Obsessed with. . .” in relation to the idea. If the target should ever try to ignore the compulsion they must make an opposed Resolve roll vs your Honor skill. Failure means they must act on it and they suffer the difference in mental stress.

Driven:

Give the target the “Death wish” aspect in relation to a particular goal. The target will ignore most danger to their person to achieve the goal. Trying to avoid danger requires them to make an opposed Will roll vs. your Honor skill. Failure means they take mental stress equal to the difference and must continue on.

Praise:

Give the target the “Phobia” aspect in relation to not receiving approval from a particular person. You may freely compel this when making social and mental attacks against the target.

Destiny

Give a person +1 to any one type of roll. If you succeed with style this bonus last on the rolls of the chosen type for the entire scene. This effects their Wild Die as well. Each additional +1 increment raises the difficulty by +2.

Give a person a -1 to any one type of roll. If you achieve spin this bonus last on the rolls of the chosen type for the entire scene. this effects their Wild Die as well. Each additional increment -1 raises the difficulty by +2.

Cause a target to take additional stress equal to your Destiny skill when they take stress from another source.

Give a target access to an expert advantage for one turn. Difficulty +2. You can extend this to the entire scene for another +2 to difficulty.

Give a target access to a heroic advantage for one turn. +4 difficulty. You can extend this to the entire scene for another +2 to difficulty.

Increase the stress the target causes when they successfully cause stress to another (regardless of type). The amount of stress caused is equal to your Destiny Rating. You may increased this number by +1 for every +2 the difficulty increases.

ILL TIDINGS

“What is it that you saw?” Demanded Grian from the comfort of the Rowan Seat as the woman Dairine entered the hall. Whatever news was on Dairine’s tongue, Grian new that it would be ill tidings.

“When first we crested the hill top towards Paha Almain. . .” Dairine began while genuflecting before Grian, the Cailleach.

“We saw nothing but oily smoke that billowed to the sky. So thick was the air with it, that our lungs were coated with filth. We were at first driven to our knees gasping for breath.”

“Was the Paha destroyed?” inquired Grian.

“No, the Paha still stood but Almain, the town, was a horror to be seen. The palisade had been breached.”

Dairine settled to the ground a sitting kneel. Taking a deep breath she continued.

“We rushed to see if there were any survivors but there were none. They all looked to have fallen to some horrible disease or faded to sorrowstain. Blisters and boils covered them from head to toe and the smell of pus cooking in the heat of the sun was as overwhelming as the sound of buzzing flies. You could hear the maggots burrowing though the bodies of the fallen.”

“Disease that works that fast can only be one of Yyachs consumptions. Then it was as Maerlow professed.” pondered Grian. “No Batu was the source of this assault.”

“No, it was not them. Why would they come across the mountains to kill Ge-al? Whoever told you otherwise is a Fiddler for sure, and should have their tongues cut out and their noses clipped. This attack was from shivers. A lot of them. The foul stain of shivers passing tainted the earth even as their pestilence desecrated the land. These were shivers most likely bred by Yyah somewhere in the mountains and infected with one of his consumptions. We rushed to the Paha in case any might be left within the mound or among the boughs of the Blood Willow. We had hoped that the threshold of spirit towers would have staved off any attempts by the shivers to enter.”

“And?! Get to the meat of this tale and quickly girl!” Grian commanded, her impatience growing.

“It mound had been breached as well!”

Grian jolted to her feet,

“No! How can that be? No Shiver may cross the threshold of a Paha, they don't have the strength. Bryahd's forbiddance and the spirit towers ensure it!”

“It wasn’t Shivers but Dul Ah’gallan. Two of them, a Barrowman and a Barrowhag. They held no badfaces or flying heads so we suspect that the attack was part of their declaration of Giving. Sit down sister for this news will strike fiercely. The spirit towers were all shattered, again evidence that Fiddlers were working from within. They have claimed the Paha. It is now a Barrow.”

“What! How can they have done so that quickly?” questioned the Cailleach as she sank back into her seat, stunned.

We no longer have anyone capable of devoting a Paha in less than a season. Who could have been brought over who wielded such might.

“Maeve, the best scout among us, saw the standards of the fiends emblazoned on the death-hares that roamed the mounds. We could not see the entirety of the force, however. No sooner than she seen those corrupted *mastincala*, they too had detected our presence. It would seem that strands of glamour of Truth and Weave that Darvra had wrapped us in was shattered, and in a breath the death-hares descended upon us from seemingly all sides. I called to me a number of winds in order to . . .”

“The standards girl, I care not about the battle! Grian hissed between her teeth. I can see that you are alive! Tell the rest to the griot. I want to know who the Barrowhag and Barrowman were.”

“It was your grandmother Selain and her companion Fachtne of Paha Nia Nair. Long from this world have they been but no bodies ever were found. It would seem that the fanciful tales of love and a happy end are not true. She ran to the Sorrows it seems, and he followed her.”

“Shua protect us!” Invoked Grian as a deathly pallor overtook her dark olive complexion.

“Indeed sister, for she has forgotten more ways to call the mysteries than we have ever known.”

Grian's eyes widened suddenly as realization fell to her. “Quickly send riders to Paha Neved and Paha Roi.”

“Do you think that they will be attacked next my Cailleach?”

“No, it is we who shall need their aid. Selaine will complete her family before she moves further. She will come for me.”

Her words were punctuated by a silence that seemed to last for ages until it was broken by Dairine.

“There is one other thing Cailleach. Trellaine has found the Fer-Paha chambers empty. She was to have had class with Aedan this morning but found nothing but his Rowancane across the threshold. She checked for the others only to find the same thing.”

“I know. Aedan came to me last night. He said that they have married the *gh’bolge* and gone to the south to lead the Tathlum to battle

a force of Mic'Talan, G' Ayayos clan if the reports are correct, who landed a crawling shrine in the Bay of Sighs and began enslaving Barata and pushing north into the Songwillows.

Now the Tathlum are away and the greatest among us have become Given. Foul times are upon us sooner than I expected. I must go summon the other Cailleachs to Dream for a Coven of Sigh.

Dairine you will be my voice until I return from Coven. I may actually have to attend physically at HighGrove. Until then you must go and gather all others that can fight like the Thunders.

Send word for any Huntsmen, Crows, Owls, and Waywardens that are in the area. A group of petitioning Linewalkers, heading north to the Line, passed through two days ago. Send someone to retrieve them. We will need their spears here first. We will need anyone skilled in the mysteries. Tell them all to paint themselves for war.

If Ulstair falls these Dul'Ah Gallan will have opened a path straight to Blood Weeping Temple. So we must ensure that our side, Paha Ulstair, does not fall."

RUNNING THE GAME

Ehdrigohr is meant to be a game about hope and heroism. Player Characters are meant to be moving steadily forward towards making the world a better place. They are fending off the dark things, bringing the people closer to the time of the Gathering, and all the while becoming the stuff of legends. Ehdrigohr is meant to be a game of legendary and mythic events unfolding and changing the physical and social environment that the characters live in. With that said it is important to remember that Ehdrigohr is also meant to be your game.

You and your player might be interested in investigating wholly different themes and adventures than I might have originally intended for the setting and that is perfectly cool. I want GMs and players alike to feel empowered to find the version of Ehdrigohr that speaks to them.

What follows in these pages are my suggestions for running campaigns and adventures in Ehdrigohr. These suggestions are there to give you and your players what I think would be the best experience of the setting and I encourage you to explore as many of the tropes that are integral to the default Ehdrigohr experience. I assume that you picked up the book because you wanted something off the beaten path. If so then let's go down the rabbit hole together.

CAMPAIGN THEMES

As stated before, even though Ehdrigohr is a game of heroism, it is also a game of horrors assailing a struggling mankind. There are many terrible things out there waiting to destroy the people and/or the world, given the chance. You might even be asking yourself how the people survive. Well the spirit towers certainly help, and the Great Societies and the Graces do their part to stem the tide. Beyond those two forces, it is the player characters doing the really hard jobs.

The real truth of it all, however, is that not all the great evils are meant to be in full force in your game. The expectation is that you'll pick an evil or two to be more forefront than the others and use what remains to fill in the spaces in between. You might even have your campaigns greatest evil force flip-flop or change outright as the players do things that change the way of the world. What follows are some suggested campaign themes to get your game underway. Please don't feel constrained by these themes. Mix and match them as you see fit and create new ones as suits your group.

AGAINST THE SHIVERS

In a Shivers driven campaign, the Shivers are on the rise. They are designated as the major force keeping the people down. There's not just one or two wandering near a town or camp from time to time. Instead they come in waves when the sun goes down and every night is a struggle for survival. As dawn comes the creatures scatter, looking for cover from the Withering.

It has already been established that, across Ehdrigohr, the Shivers come out at night or roam in the dark places. That presumes that they are arising in remote areas and slowly working their way towards civilizations. When people do encounter them they would be a handful here or there, and rarely is there a large scale attack on established settlements.



If you chose them to be your major threat however you begin to look at an altogether different picture. The Shivers are amassing and coming against the people in waves of growing intensity. Such a campaign looks a lot like a zombie apocalypse type of scenario. It works best if it doesn't happen all at once however. Let the game grow into the situation.

You have to be creative with the kinds of Shivers you throw at your characters. Don't be afraid to take the creatures from the Winter of Nightmares, created by characters and make them regularly reoccurring shivers. Allow some NPCs to grow on players and build rivalries, then allow them to be infected/subsumed by a shiver and return as nightmarish generals. Such creatures even become a threat to Dul Ah'Gallan and Sorrows alike.

In such a game the Sorrows become crazed landlords who rule and try to manipulate from a distance. They are best brought into play as great tempters and forces that will try to manipulate the fall of characters who are impassioned and in pursuit of a solution.

In time this campaign grows into the rise of one of the Woes or the loss of a tribe which are fates the players should be striving to prevent.

DEFEATING THE DUL AH'GALLAN

These twisted creatures could begin a concerted campaign to conquer the lands of men. They are great and powerful with the might

to drive lesser shivers before them. They too are affected by the curse of withering so much of their activities will happen in dark places and at night. You could treat them as “death knights” but they work so much better as empowered psychopaths. They are more like dragons in traditional fantasy mixed with horror movie boogey men like Freddy and Jason.

If you chose to make the Dul Ah’gallan your major villains then remember that they are also inherently tied to K’ui so you’ll have to think about what role you intend for it to play in your campaign. You’ll need to figure out what other Sorrows and Graces might be intervening, for ill or good, on either side.

A Dul Ah’gallan campaign may start with the players facing off against a single Barrow Lord but will grow to include a ring of such mighty champions working to bring about a plan crafted by K’ui. At higher power levels it might grow into a direct campaign against K’ui and may culminate in K’ui letting powerful Breachers through to take the world.

As horror foes, the Dul Ah’gallan are the closest thing in Ehdrigohr to vampires. These creatures, however, are not remotely sexy and are purely, absolutely, monstrous. I highly recommend the Necroscope Series by Brian Lumley for inspiration for the Dul Ah’Gallan in your game.



THE EVIL THAT MENDO

This is a campaign focused around the attempts of the people to grow coming up against the baser needs of the greedy and wicked among them. Such a campaign is focused on the people with the shivers, the Sorrows and their minions becoming forces in the background that are rarely seen directly.

The players, instead, would be facing off against the likes of Enders, Fiddlers, and encroaching Mic’Talan raiders and the monstrosities they serve. A great force to use in such a story is the growing power of the Salduun Empire. What are their motivations in your

campaign? They, alongside the Wu Towns, could be leading the world into the first true renaissance and industrial age. What is the cost? Will it make the world better, or poison it irreparably? Is there corruption among the Great Societies? The default stance of Ehdri-gohr is that they are the collective conscience of the peoples and they fight for balance. What if, however, they were to get mired in, and distracted by, their own traditions? What if ideals meant to facilitate growth got corrupted into rigid rules that strangled growth and innovation? Don't be afraid to say "what if" as you play in Ehdri-gohr.

It's important to remember that in Ehdri-gohr the idea of comfort and safety is a relatively new thing. The peoples have all been fighting non-stop against one mini cataclysm or localized apocalypse after another.

With the coming of the Still they are finally able to settle. They finally have some tools with which to shape communities wrapped in a certain level of safety. These are places where ideas and philosophies greater than "can I make it through to tomorrow" can finally begin to take root. These are peoples who have a certain level of paranoia, fear of the dark, a special fear of being alone, and just general fear that is a part of their cultural norm. There has always been safety in numbers.

A layered range of polyfidelitous relationships are a norm among most cultures of Ehdri-gohr. This is especially seen and supported among the Great Societies. People had many children because you could be sure that some would die. Gender and sexuality became fluid because, aside from the need to produce offspring, the threat of depression reducing whole villages to sorrowstain puts the need for companionship very high on the ladder of survival. Those who didn't have others to "witness" them might eventually just fade away.

With the coming of comfort the aforementioned paranoia is taking a curious shift. Groups are claiming resources, building walls, and separating things people into "us" and "them" in an effort to maintain the comfort and safety they've earned. It's seemingly much easier to maintain safety among groups of like-minded individuals than to manage diversity. To a point, there is a cultural shift among some from "value defined by abundance to community" to "value defined by scarcity and access control". There is power to be had by offering protection to those who can't protect themselves. Certainly there have always been bandits but, traditionally, there was not much in the vein of a politician.

While many wield this newfound power wisely and justly some see it as something to hoard. Others begin to learn why the Sorrows find such power attractive. Then there are those who see it as something

that can be taken away from them and they are prepared to keep it no matter the cost. These people don't start off "evil", just frightened. Giving into that fear is what makes them fall towards evil and what makes them interesting as antagonists. They present opportunities to explore ethics and morals and the growth, or death, of new cultures.

Then there are those that go mad altogether. Such people get driven by strange ideas that arise inside their own minds without perspective or by whispers they hear in dark places (or both). Perhaps they were touched by a curse or infected by a shiver. Whatever the cause, they get taken down a path of extremeness. As a culture this is represented in the Mic'Talan. They have gone down a path of such extremes that they must find a way to reset themselves or selfdestruct.

A strong thread within Ehdrigohr is the idea that Traditions are great safety nets and training wheels. They give us a foundation to initially agree upon to begin explorations. When they become an obstacle to our growth, however; when they become a crutch without which we are afraid to move; they then have become a problem.

Each of the 9 tribes/nations of Ehdrigohr are at various stages of this problem. Their traditions provide filters for processing the world. These are filters that grow more and more restrictive. At what point do they cause more harm than good?

Where, as a GM and players do you draw these lines? This is what "The Evil That Men Do" campaign explores.

CREATING ADVENTURES

Once you've decided on a campaign theme you will need adventures to support your theme. You may have also decided that you have no intention of running a themed campaign, preferring an episodic growth of your campaign. In either case you will need adventures for your players to engage in and explore the world through.

When crafting adventures you should consider the following things:



CAMPAIN SCOPE

When you first sit down to run an Ehdrigohr campaign, it is also beneficial to think about “scope”. There is a lot of stuff floating around in the book. There are lots of big ideas and small ideas to work from. Most of these ideas are, purposely left with a lot of details you have to fill in. This is so you can really make Ehdrigohr your own. You do not have to engage everything in the book as part of your big story. It is best to pick a small starting space. This might be just one culture, it might be a single organization, a single family, or a particular type of trouble.

Start with this small thing and take the time to explore it with your players. Combine that with the aspects and winters your players come up with. That is there way of saying what they’d like to explore. Don’t feel like every campaign has to be about stopping the Sorrows, or combating Breachers. Sometimes epic things happen in small moments. Explore the relationships that come out of those small moments and allow your campaign to expand one layer at a time as it makes sense.

CORE EXPERIENCE

Every adventure has a core experience woven deep into the bits and pieces of narrative and interaction that compose it. Figuring out what that is will help you to give focus to the overall adventure as you write it and as you run it. You don’t need lots of detail, just enough to facilitate motion through the experience.

Sample experiences include:

- **Fleeing:** Something terrible is coming and Players have to maintain pace to keep ahead of it or to get away altogether. Allowing the threat to catch up is bad news.
- **Gathering Resources:** There’s something the players have to do but to be successful in the endeavor they must collect x amount of something.
- **Survival/The Gauntlet:** The players must survive a, more or less, continuous assault from external forces. There is an end to how long they must endure (either through time or via a distance they must travel). In any case the end is in sight, all they have to do is make it there.
- **Relationship Management:** Two or more people have something that is causing dissonance and the players must find the elements that can be used to mend the deteriorating connection before it erupts in hostilities.
- **The Hunt:** Something is out there that has made life problematic for others. The players must track down this thing and remedy the problem. Often this means “killing” the prey

somehow. “Killing” can be anything from a fight, to fixing something, trapping something, or any other way you can think of to solve the problem. The issue is less about the end resolution and more about the path to locating the source of trouble.

- **Escape:** Similar to fleeing, and certainly might just end of in a fleeing situation, but the Escape finds the players trapped and they must devise a way to overcome the things that have entrapped them before they can commit to an actual flee situation. Here the fleeing portion is the end resolution, while in an actual flee scenario it is what is happening most of the time.
- **Cleansing:** This is all about making an area safe. This works best when tied to other scenario options as a timer. You might have a Gauntlet scenario that ends when the cleansing is done. The issue is that the focus of the experience is the cleansing, not just winning the interaction portion.
- **Investigation:** Players have been asked to assemble all of the information about an incident and then determine what the truth of the incident was. This might be something simple like figuring out a whodunit or something more involved like trying to understand how a curse came to be so that you can reverse its effects.
- **Protection:** The players must keep someone or something intact until a certain place is reach, condition has been met, or a certain time has passed.
- **Other core experiences for scenarios abound.** Just look through any book on writing fiction for ideas. I highly recommend “Dave Perry of Game Design: A Brainstorming Toolbox”. It’s filled with little snippets of ideas that will get your brain churning.

In any case the point of your core experience is that it is what will be driving much of the kinds of activities and events that you lace through your adventure. If your adventure is a “Fleeing” scenario, opportunities for the players to just hang out, be casual, and do what they want will be relatively rare. Instead, your events will serve to prod and direct your players, maintaining a certain pace.

It is perfectly fine to combine 2 or more scenarios into an adventure but typically one things still rises to the top to direct the overall experience and flavor of the adventure. The players might have to deliver a child to its father while fleeing cannibal bandits. That’s fine. The crux of this adventure might fall however on keeping the child alive. Arriving without the living child won’t be good.

NECESSARY NON-PLAYER PARTICIPANTS

Most adventures will involve more characters than just those that the players play. You'll have to decide who they are and prioritize the development of details for them based on density of player interaction. What this means is that some characters are going to be actively involved with the player and will need more details figured out up front. If, for example, a meeting must be had with a town elder you will need enough info about that elder to keep the player's interested and answer any questions related to the elder from players or from character assessments. Most non-player characters don't even need much in the way of stats to be figured out for them beforehand. Players will be typically more interested in the story of a character and less in the rules that define it. If it is possible for a conflict to arise with this character then you'll need to know enough to resolve the conflict.

Characters that are put in an adversarial role are going to be either minions or named characters. Minions need to be interesting enough to affect player tactics if mixed up, but beyond that they don't need a ton of stats to be figured out. Named characters, however are meant to be recognizable and to be a threat by themselves. These characters need the pertinent stats figured out. Even then you should separate named characters into lesser, threat, and villain.

Lessers are little more than minions with names and a few extra abilities. They're relatively easy to dispatch and, as a rule, don't come back. Threats are henchmen and the like. They're reoccurring but don't really need you to figure out more than one aspect of the character. Is the bounty hunter really important to the big tale or is she just there to provide a fight? If she's just there to provide the fight you really only need to know how she works in a fight. Is that Wu Town senator someone the players will fight or is he just there to cause social conflicts for the characters in court? If it's the latter then he's just a social threat and you only really need to determine those pieces.

LOCATION, LOCATION

The places that pepper your adventure should have character. They will make your adventure have more character itself. Remember that players will need information about spaces to assess and declare assets to tag. They can't do this if you're not prepared. As a part of preparation, try to think of your locations as living places. There should be some sort of motion or activity within that helps it to stand out. If there is no real activity at first consider activities that

could come into being with prodding from players and NPCs. Use these things to build a stress track for the location. The things that could happen are consequences on that stress track.

So, imagine a tavern for instance. When players come into it there are jovial patrons, well worn tables and chairs, supports that have seen a few too many close encounters with axes, knives, and clubs, fragile lanterns, a wall of alcohol, and vases of alcohol.

You might create a stress track that looks something like OOOOOO with consequences like broken furniture (2), damaged supports (4), Alcohol everywhere (6), and “Ceiling collapses” as a taken out state. Now as a fight happens in the tavern you can cause misses and mishaps to affect the stress track of the area. Stress is fended off with consequences that players and their foes can invoke and compel. As the fight progress the entire area can grow more dangerous and eventually the entire ceiling collapses when the stress bar is filled up. This can bring a great deal of life and interaction to a space that might have otherwise just been a map for your miniatures to move around in.

Try to keep things lively, it will encourage your players to look out for advantage aspects and get more actively involved with play.

ADVENTURE STRESS

Beyond managing the damage states of a location, stress tracks can be used in many places in your adventures and your campaigns.

When you are laying out the course of events for an adventure, try to avoid scenarios that are simply waiting for players to make things happen. Consider not only creating events that the players will drive directly, but also events that can be driven indirectly. These indirect events can be mapped as consequences on an Narrative Stress Track. Assign actions that the players take (or don't take) a “damage” rating and take it off of the Narrative Stress. As damage comes in consequences fire off as events that keep the whole thing moving and seeming to be alive.

You can have multiple parallel Narrative Tracks and players don't have to know about all, or any, of them. Each track would be affected by particular types of events. So imagine the adventure where the players are fleeing a horde of bandits. If the players are crafty they could set traps for the bandits and kill off their numbers. The bandits have a Narrative Stress track that might eventually lead to a completely different tactic or mutiny as a final state. Simultaneously they are in a cave where neither group knows that a nest of shivers hibernates. Loud sounds and fighting cause damage to the hibernation Narrative Track. When this track fills up the Shivers wake and

swarm out trying to kill everyone. Now you have a plot twist waiting to be stumbled across.

Narrative Stress Tracks could be persistent across adventures as well. So maybe over a number of adventures your players come back to the cave where the shivers sleep, slowly, unknowingly picking away at the hibernation Stress Track. Then one adventure the Shivers swarm out complicating something that might have normally been a walk in the park.

This is all about working in layers and establishing relationships between opportunities for drama in your game. A central theme of Ehdrigohr is “We are all Related” and that should show in your adventures. Nothing happens in a vacuum. What you do now that seems small might become a boon or bane when the right catalyst is in play. As a game master you should always be looking for those catalysts and weaving them into your design.

Consider a situation where the Stress Track revolves around politics and the player’s interactions move the story closer and closer to having a corrupt elder come into power. They don’t even know this elder is corrupt. The elder may not start out corrupt but it exists as a “mental” consequence on this politics track. Something they do may cause a wound that turns the elder from the light. They may open an opportunity with a consequence that a dark force can invoke to affect the elder with the aspect “corrupted by vengeance” or whatever the catalyst is. The opportunities are endless.

This makes for fun adventures that can be run multiple times, regardless of your oratory or fast thinking skills as a GM, and still have interesting surprises for players to enjoy.

SUPPORTING CHARACTERS

One of your most important jobs as a GM is creating the NPCs who will oppose the PCs and try to keep them from their goals during your scenarios. The real story comes from what the PCs do when worthy adversaries stand between them and their objectives—how far they’re willing to go, what price they’re willing to pay, and how they change as a result of the experience.

As a GM, you want to shoot for a balancing act with the opposing NPCs—you want the players to experience tension and uncertainty, but you don’t want their defeat to be a foregone conclusion. You want them to work for it, but you don’t want them to lose hope.

Here’s how.

Take Only What You Need to Survive

First of all, keep in mind that you're never obligated to give any NPC a full sheet like the ones the PCs have. Most of the time, you're not going to need to know that much information, because the NPCs aren't going to be the center of attention like the PCs are. It's better to focus on writing down exactly what you need for that NPC's encounter with the PCs, and then fill in the blanks on the fly (just like PCs can) if that NPC ends up becoming more important in the campaign.

The NPC Types

NPCs come in three different flavors: **nameless NPCs**, **supporting NPCs**, and **main NPCs**.

Nameless NPCs

The majority of the NPCs in your campaign world are nameless—people who are so insignificant to the story that the PCs' interactions with them don't even require them to learn a name. The random shopkeeper they pass on the street, the archivist at the library, the third patron from the left at the bar, the guards at the gate. Their role in the story is temporary and fleeting—the PCs will probably encounter them once and never see them again. In fact, most of the time, you'll create them simply out of reflex when you describe an environment. "The plaza is beautiful at midday, and full of shoppers milling about. There's a town crier with an extremely shrill, high pitched voice barking out the local news."

On their own, nameless NPCs usually aren't meant to provide much of a challenge to the PCs. You use them like you use a low-difficulty skill roll, mainly as an opportunity to showcase the PCs' competence. In conflicts, they serve as a distraction or a delay, forcing the PCs to work a little harder to get what they want. Action-adventure stories often feature master villains with an army of mooks. These are the mooks.

For a nameless NPC, all you really need is two or three skills based on their role in the scene. Your average security guard might have Fight and Shoot, while your average clerk might only have Lore. They never get more than one or two aspects, because they just aren't important enough. They only have one or two stress boxes, if any, to absorb both physical and mental harm. In other words, they're no match for a typical PC.

Nameless NPCs come in three varieties, **Average**, **Fair**, and **Good**.

Average

Competence: Rank-and-file order-takers, local conscripts, and the like. When in doubt, a nameless NPC is Average.

Purpose: Mostly there to make the PCs look more awesome.

Aspects: One or two.

Skills: One Average (+1).

Stress: No stress boxes—one shift of harm is enough to take them out.

Fair

Competence: Trained professionals, like soldiers and elite guards, or others whose role in the scene speaks to their experience, such as a sharp-tongued courtier or talented thief.

Purpose: Drain a few of the players' resources (one or two fate points, stress boxes, possibly a mild consequence).

Aspects: One or two.

Skills: One Fair (+2), and one or two Average (+1).

Stress: One 1-shift box—two shifts of harm is enough to take them out.

Good

Competence: Tough opposition, especially in numbers.

Purpose: Drain the players' resources—as Fair, but more so. Provide a decent stumbling block (in numbers) on the way to a more significant encounter.

Aspects: One or two.

Skills: One Good (+3), one Fair (+2), and one or two Average (+1).

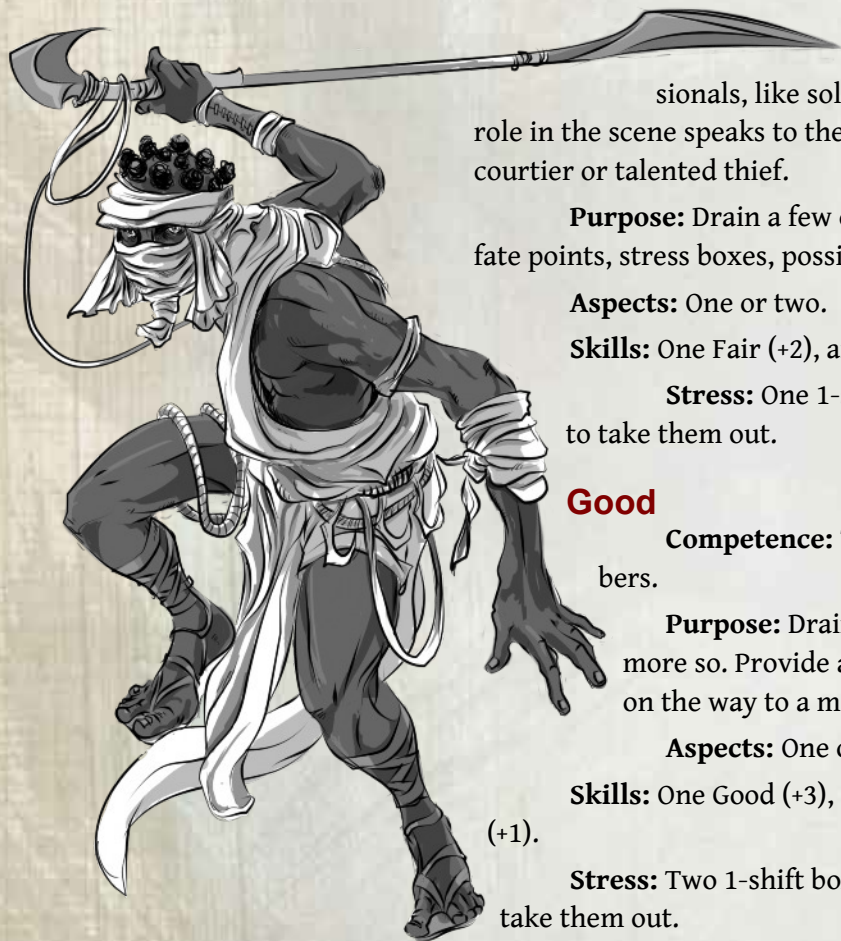
Stress: Two 1-shift boxes—three shifts of harm is enough to take them out.

Mobs

Whenever possible, identical nameless NPCs like to form groups, or **mobs**. Not only does this better ensure their survival, it reduces the workload on the GM. For all intents and purposes, you can treat a mob as a single unit—instead of rolling dice individually for each of three thugs, just roll once for the whole mob.

See the Teamwork section in the previous chapter to see how mobs can concentrate their efforts to be more effective.

Harm and Overflow



When a mob takes harm, shifts in excess of one NPC's stress boxes are applied to other NPCs in the mob, one at a time. In this way, it's entirely possible for a PC to take out a mob of four or five nameless NPCs (or more!) in a single exchange. When a mob takes enough stress to reduce it to a single NPC, try to have that orphaned NPC join up with another mob in the scene, if it makes sense. (If it doesn't, just have them flee. Nameless NPCs are good at that.)

Supporting NPCs

Supporting NPCs have proper names and are a little more detailed than nameless NPCs, playing a supporting role in your scenarios (hence the name). They often display some kind of strong distinguishing trait that sets them apart from the crowd, because of their relationship to a PC or NPC, a particular competence or unique ability, or simply the fact that they tend to appear in the game a great deal. Many action-adventure stories feature a "lieutenant" character who is the right-hand man of the lead villain; that's a supporting NPC in game terms. The faces that you assign to the locations you make during game creation are supporting NPCs, as are any characters who are named in one of the PCs' aspects.

Supporting NPCs are a great source of interpersonal drama, because they're usually the people that the PCs have a relationship with, such as friends, sidekicks, family, contacts, and noteworthy opponents. While they may never be central to resolving the main dilemma of a scenario, they're a significant part of the journey, either because they provide aid, present a problem, or figure into a subplot.

Supporting NPCs are made much like nameless NPCs, except they get to have a few more of the standard character elements. These include a high concept, a trouble, one or more additional aspects, one stunt, and the standard two stress tracks with two boxes each. They should have a handful of skills



(say four or five). If they have a skill that entitles them to bonus stress boxes, award those as well. They have one mild consequence and, if you want them to be especially tough, one moderate consequence.

Skills for a supporting NPC should follow a column distribution. Because you're only going to define four or five skills, just treat it as one column. If your NPC has a skill at Great, fill in one skill at each positive step below it—so one Good, one Fair, and one Average skill.

Skill Levels: A supporting NPC's top skill can exceed your best PC by one or two levels, but only if their role in the game is to provide serious opposition—supporting NPCs who are allied with the PCs should be their rough peers in skill level. (Another actionadventure cliché is to make the “lieutenant” character better than the main villain at combat, contrasting brawn to the villain's brain.)

Concessions: Supporting NPCs should not fight to the bitter end, given the option. Instead, have them concede conflicts often, especially early in a story, and especially if the concession is something like “They get away.” Conceding like this serves a few purposes. For one, it foreshadows a future, more significant encounter with the NPC. Because conceding comes with a reward of one or more fate points, it also makes them more of a threat the next time they show up. What's more, it's virtually guaranteed to pay off for the players in a satisfying way the next time the NPC makes an appearance. “Hah! LookingBoy! I remember you! Do you remember me? This time you're the one that'll be left in the river.”

Main NPCs

Main NPCs are the closest you're ever going to get to playing a PC yourself. They have full character sheets just like a PC does, with five aspects, a full distribution of skills, and a selection of stunts. They are the most significant characters in your PCs' lives, because they represent pivotal forces of opposition or allies of crucial importance. Because they have a full spread of aspects, they also offer the most nuanced options for interaction, and they have the most options to invoke and be compelled. Your main “bad guys” in a scenario or arc should always be main NPCs, as should any NPCs who are the most vital pieces of your stories.

Because they have all the same things on their sheet as PCs do, main NPCs will require a lot more of your time and attention than other characters. How you create one really depends on how much time you have—if you want, you can go through the whole character creation process and work out their whole backstory through phases, leaving only those slots for “guest starring” open.

You could also do things more on the fly if you need to, creating a partial sheet of the aspects you know for sure, those skills you definitely need them to have, and any stunts you want. Then fill in the rest as you go. This is almost like making a supporting NPC, except you can add to the sheet during play.

Main NPCs will fight to the bitter end if need be, making the PCs work for every step.

Regarding skill levels, your main NPCs will come in one of two flavors— exact peers of the PCs who grow *with* them as the campaign progresses, or superiors to the PCs who remain static while the PCs grow to sufficient strength to oppose them. If it's the former, just give them the exact same skill distribution the PCs currently have. If it's the latter, give them enough skills to go at least two higher than whatever the current skill cap is for the game.

So, if the PCs are currently capped at Great (+4), your main NPC badass should be able to afford a couple of Fantastic (+6) columns or a pyramid that peaks at Fantastic.

ON THE TRAIL OF SLUMBERS

Just as they finished making camp, and the moon was peaking over the trees, Five-Raven was the first to notice the motion in the darkness. He felt it before he saw it, a terrible pulling on the essences that made his stomach turn. Quickly scanning the twilight of the forest he found the source. A rip was appearing in mid-air.

It was like a wound opening up as though reality were a bloated belly that someone was cutting with a ragged knife. The rip was being created by someone powerful on this side of the Pale. On the other side he could see an inky blackness, darker than the night surrounding it.

It all happened in the blink of an eye. By the time Five-Raven had assessed what he saw and cried out a warning, the small rip had burst open and torrent of twisted and misshapen forms were pouring through the breach like angry bees from a shattered hive. They were looking for blood. Shivers! Lots of shivers. He knew at once that this wasn't a true *breach*. Someone, or something, had “stepped” a force of shivers through Shadow to attack them.

They reached Kara first. A shadowy blur of claws and limbs engulfed her as she turned to face the mass of shivers, flames beginning to flicker in her hair. There was a shout and then the TrailWalkers all lost sight of her as even more of the creatures poured forth.

Rona rolled to her feet and released a terrible keening that caused a rift in the mass like boiling water thrown into snow. Yrjo and Five-Raven brought spears and axes to bear, taking advantage of the opening made by Rona's scream, and became a blur of blades as they chopped and sliced their way through to the breach that continued to grow with every passing moment.

“We should get Kara,” shouted Yrjo to Five-Raven.

“Don't worry about her!” Five-Raven barked. “Shes fought on The Line twice and can handle a few shivers. Worry more about what happens if we don't close that breach now. Clear a space for me to weave!”

Ducking beneath and blocking the swipes of multiple misshapen masses, Yrjo cut them down in one mighty spinning sweep of his axe. As more charged at him he bit his lip and spat blood into the air. Calling on the mysteries of the Natures, and having mastered the fighting techniques of the Bears Blood, he struck at the sanguine spray in midair with his axe, and invoking the seventh technique of the Bears Blood – “Avalanche of Rage”. In response the blood splattered and shifted. Each drop transformed into claw-like forces of fiery blood that spun out into the darkness killing tens of the creatures at a time. This cleared a space near the breach that Five-Raven stepped into.

Once near the breach, Five-Raven spoke a blessing onto his spear and swiped at the air before him. As he did so, the very night sky

seemed to get smudged and pulled as though he were a painter blending colors on a canvas. With every stroke more of the world seemed to get pulled and smeared into the breach and the opening got narrower and narrow.

As this ensued Rona had joined Yrjo's side. Her hummingbird blades flashing as she darted in and among the shivers. Every strike she landed seemed to slow a creature and pin them to the air waiting for Yrjo's axe to finish the job. Between the two of them the battle seemed more like a performance than a fight; a performance in which the shivers were volunteering to die.

Five-Raven drew close to completion. The tide has stemmed and all he needed to do was invoke the Weave, closing the gap permanently. As gossamer threads of reality made manifest and began to sew the breach closed, he was suddenly aware of a terrible humming like a thousand-fold chorus of locust, all singing some foul prayer. It seemed to come from all around and grew in intensity with every passing second. The sound was debilitating and seemed to overwhelm the minds of all three warriors. They could feel doubt growing in their ability to continue. Sorrow was trying to take root.

"What is that?" screamed Yrjo as he tried desperately to cover one ear while wildly swinging at the oncoming creatures with his axe. Rona too was thrown off balance by the psychic onslaught but managed to continue her dancing through the shivers.

"Ferralak!" returned Five-Raven as a great black scythe-like blade pierced through the nearly closed breach with a smoldering hiss like a hot poker dipped into water.

With a single downward stroke it severed all of the threads and the rest of this horror, the Ferralak, a perverse, mantis-like, monstrosity began to emerge. Five-Raven had faced one before with a host of Illuminators beneath the Ashen Cloud on the Shiver Plains. This thing didn't come from a Woe. It was bred, sculpted, by one of the Sorrows. Its body was a writhing congregation of locust-like things, all with the screaming faces of children in twisted agony as they constantly melted and reformed. It was disturbance to reality and disquieting to look at as. The mind and soul wanted to deny its existence. The flesh recoiled at the possibility of its existence. With every movement the malformed locust bodies dripped off like hot lead then hurried to return to the mass, leaving *sorrowstain* where they had touched the earth.

Rona dove to the ground as a bear sized shiver, with great knotty fists swung at her. Its face was covered in layers of peeling, desiccated flesh that sloughed off like loose bandages as it lumbered. As she came back to her feet she produced her singing bowl and dowel and, with one intense circular stroke, began playing the piercing and sorrowful "Eighth Note of Contrition" which seemed to counter the effects of the ferralak's droning prayer. The tone also would act as a

beacon to any Crow who could feel its call. LookingBoy and his brothers and sisters would hopefully still be close enough to return in time.

The earth rumbled and roared. Rona spun around in preparation to avoid another attack from the shivers. Instead she saw that they all seemed to be being pulled back to a swirling column of rock shards and flame that had erupted from the ground.

At the center of the column hovered a Kara, twirling, sheathed in stone and immolated in flame. The earth itself dragged every shiver in sight back, on crested grasping waves, to the deadly column where they were churned, and burned, into an ashen pulp.

Yrjo rushed at the emerging ferralak. He dropped into a hip slide, narrowly avoiding a stroke of its “Truth Rending” scythe-like arms, and then rolled back onto to his feet. Though he wished for the glory of defeating the thing, he could see that Five-Raven was trying to gather energy to finish the job once and for all. Having fought beside essence masters on The Line he knew how much more important closing the breach was than his own glory and was so compelled to switch to a defensive stance to guard the lithe D’Zul essentialist. Invoking the stance “Mountain Blocks the Blizzard” he called on the Nature of Body to increase his form so that he was mighty enough to stand toe to toe with the terrible creature.

As he moved, the sound of flesh stretching, and bones being remade, was audible. He actually doubled in size and his axe began swinging so swiftly it seemed to be a wall of blades blocking every strike the creature launched. This was magnificent but wearing on his body as his skin began to rip and peel, and his eyes bled, but he persevered. He remembered when he last saw a Ferralak, as a child in what his village called the Winter of Hungry Ice. At that time, such a beast slew his aunts and uncles and nearly an entire village before a host of BearWalkers and Crows arrived to stop it. He was a child then but today he was a man and walked the Bear’s path. That memory drove him forward. His ferocity even made the Ferralak hesitate, and show a bit of concern.

After what seemed like an eternity Five-Raven caused the world around them to ripple as though a stone had been dropped into water. The ripple exploded outward and then coalesced into a large shimmering orb that seem to reflect everything around them. With a shout he launched the ball into the terrible creature. There was a moment of silence. The ferralak froze in mid attack, then exploded into a swarm of grotesque locusts as the magic that had bound its form was unraveled. The swarm tried to escape, but Five-Raven followed up with a wind that blew them into Kara’s maelstrom where they were destroyed like the shivers before it.

In the moments that followed, the maelstrom subsided, Kara descended to the ground, and Five-Raven closed the breach.

"The Graces preserve us!" exclaimed Kara as she walked over to the others, the flames in her hair subsiding. "We've only just begun the damned Trail of Slumbers, haven't even made it to the first temple, and they hit us this hard? What's it going to be like when we get to the end?"

"I do not know," Five-Raven responded. His gaze drifted over the treetops and landed on the hill to the north. "But we are not yet done with this particular engagement." He motioned to the hill in that way that D'Zul do, pointing with chin and lower lip.

The others looked up and could see, standing on the high hill, a human-like figure. Where his head should have been, there was instead, a collar connected to seven chains that lead out to bloated flying heads that alternately yanked and pulled at the tethers like rabid dogs. The heads had malformed faces like grotesque, perverse theater masks. Their mouths seemed open and chattering, caught in an endless silent scream. The largest head, as big as a pumpkin, the creature held beneath one arm, while gripping a great spear in the other.

"No! A Dul Ah'gallaan!" Rona observed with a hissed breath. She tucked away the singing bowl and drew forth a small dorje with a bell on one end.

"We call them Barrowmen" in the Great Forest added Kara. "The Calleach has mobilized all of the Tathlum against one with just three heads. I've never heard of anything so monstrous as one with seven."

"We call them WidderMen in the White, and we can take this thing!" growled Yrjo though he could barely stand after his recent efforts. "I don't care how many heads it has, I'll break them all open like squash!"

"It won't be that easy," countered Five-Raven.

"Why not?"

As the words left Yrjo's mouth, one of the creature's heads barked out a baleful wail that resonated throughout the forest. Immediately shivers began to crest over the hill. A small army of them. Ten times more than they had just fought. These were regimented and under control of the Du' Ah'gallaan unlike the wild things they had just defeated.

"Oh," observed Yrjo. "I see. Well then we shall die as legends!" He shouted, hefting his axe as the creatures began to race down the hill.

"That's not your job," came a voice from behind them.

Turning to look, they saw a tall figure stepping out of the darkness, wearing a cloak that shimmered with blacks, blues, purples, and greens and carrying a distinctive two-headed spear. It was LookingBoy. Materializing from the shadows of the trees, dropping like descending birds, came even more like him, by the dozens. "The Crows heard your call and have come!"

The LookingBoy approached, kissed Rona gently, then turned, speaking to the rest of the group. "Sisters, brother, grandfather. . ." he addressed them. "Your role in this is to walk the Trail of Slumbers. Please continue on to Dream Keeping Temple and serve the Still to the Woe beneath. We will hold for you here. We will bleed if we must, till the sun rises to wash away the evil things. Go"

With that the Crows charged forth, running across the grass and leaves, borne on a wind that smelled of sage and sweet grass, singing out in whoops and caws, and engaged with cowlances and magic. Meanwhile, quickly mounting their great hares, the Trailwalkers rode off, continuing to their destination with haste.

DRAMATIC MOMENTS

Over the course of play players will be presented with situations that cause the players to come face to face with obstacles. Sometimes this obstacle is passive (like a mountain that needs to be climbed), other times the obstacle is active (Like having to fight of the black thing that attacked you in the night). All of these are moments of high drama that fall under the narrative auspices of a conflict. There are three different ways to focus in on a conflict to attempt to resolve it. It all comes down to how you frame the situation.

The 3 ways to frame a situation is to decide if it's a Challenge, Contest, or Conflict. A given situation can be framed multiple different ways. How you choose to frame is a function of what makes narrative sense at the moment.

Here are some quick guidelines

Challenges: Use this when one or more characters are trying to do something dynamic or relatively complicated.

Contest: Use this when two or more characters are competing for a goal.

Conflicts: Use this when two or more characters are trying to do harm to each other. Harm can be defined as physical, mental, emotional, social, etc.



CHALLENGES

A single overcome action is sufficient to deal with a straightforward goal or obstacle—the hero needs to pick this lock, disarm this bomb, sift out a vital piece of information, and so on. It's also useful when the details of how something gets done aren't as important or worth spending an intense amount of time on, when what you need to know is whether the character can get something done without any setbacks or costs.

Sometimes, however, things get complicated. It's not enough to unpick the lock, because you also have to hold off the hordes of attacking zombies and set up the magical ward that's going to keep pursuers off your back. It's not enough to disarm the bomb, because you also have to land the crashing blimp and keep the unconscious scientist you're rescuing from getting hurt in said landing.

A challenge is a series of overcome actions that you use to resolve an especially complicated or dynamic situation. Each overcome action deals with one task or part of the situation, and you take the individual results as a whole to figure out how the situation resolves.

GMs, when you're trying to figure out if it's appropriate to call for a challenge, ask yourself the following questions:

Is each separate task something that can generate tension and drama independently of the other tasks? If all the tasks are really part of the same overall goal, like “detaching the detonator,” “stopping the timer”, and “disposing of the explosive material” when you're disarming a bomb, then that should be one overcome action, where you use those details to explain what happened if the roll goes wrong.

Does the situation require different skills to deal with? Holding off the zombies (Fighting) while pushing down a barricade (Physique) and fixing your broken wagon (Crafts), so that you can get away, would be a good instance for a challenge.

To set up a challenge, simply identify what the individual tasks or goals are that make up the situation, and treat each one as a separate overcome roll. (Sometimes, only a certain sequence for the rolls will make sense to you. That's okay too.) Depending on the situation, one character may be required to make several rolls, or multiple characters may be able to participate.

To conduct a challenge, call for each overcome action in whichever order seems most interesting, but don't decide anything about how the situation turns out until after you've collected all the results—you want to have the freedom to sequence the events of each

roll in whichever order makes the most sense and is the most entertaining. Players, if you get a boost on one of your rolls, feel free to use it on another roll in the challenge, provided you can justify it.

CONTESTS

Whenever two or more characters have mutually exclusive goals, but they aren't trying to harm each other directly, they're in a contest. Arm wrestling matches, races or other sports competitions, and public debates are all good examples of contests.

GMs, answer the following questions when you're setting up a contest:

What environment does the contest take place in? Are there any significant or notable features of that environment you want to define as scene aspects?

How are the participants opposing each other? Are they rolling against each other directly (like in a straight sprint race, or a poker match), or all trying to overcome something in the environment (like an obstacle course, or a panel of judges)?

What skills are appropriate for this contest? Does everyone have to roll the same one, or do several apply?

Now you can get started.

A contest proceeds in a series of **exchanges**. In an exchange, every participant gets to make one skill roll to determine how well they do in that leg of the contest. This is basically an overcome action.

Players, when you make a contest roll, compare your result to everyone else's.

If you got the highest result, you win the exchange. If you're rolling directly against the other participants, then that means you got the highest rank on the ladder out of everyone. If you're all rolling against something in the environment, it means you got the most shifts out of everyone.

Winning the exchange means you get to score a **victory** (which you can just represent with a tally mark or check mark on scratch paper) and describe how you take the lead.

If you succeed with style and no one else does, then you get to mark two victories.

If there's a tie, no one gets a victory, and an unexpected twist occurs. This could mean several things depending on the situation—the terrain or environment shifts somehow, the parameters of the contest change, or an unanticipated variable shows up and af-

fects all the participants. GMs, you should create a new scene aspect reflecting this change and put it into play.

The first participant to achieve a three-victory lead wins the contest.

CONFLICT

In a conflict, characters are actively trying to harm one another. It could be a fist fight, a shootout, or a sword duel. It could also be a tough interrogation, a psychic assault, or a shouting match with a loved one. **As long as the characters involved have both the intent and the ability to harm one another, then you're in a conflict scene.**

Conflicts are either physical or mental in nature, based on the kind of harm you're at risk of suffering in it. In physical conflict, you suffer bruises, scrapes, cuts, and other injuries. In mental conflict, you suffer loss of confidence and self-esteem, loss of composure, and other psychological trauma.

Setting up a conflict is a little more involved than either contests or challenges. Here are the steps:

Set the scene describing the environment the conflict takes place in, establishing who's participating and what side they're on, and creating scene aspects and zones.

Determine the turn order.

Start the first exchange: On your turn, take an action and then resolve it.

On other people's turns, defend or respond to their actions as necessary.

At the end of everyone's turn, start again with a new exchange.



You know the conflict is over when everyone on one of the sides has **conceded** or gets **taken out**.

Setting the Scene

GMs and players, you should talk briefly before you start a conflict about the circumstances of the scene. This mainly involves coming up with quick answers to variations of the four W-questions, such as:

Who's in the conflict?

Where are they at relative to one another?

When is the conflict taking place? Is that important?

What's the environment like?

Don't get lost in details here. All you need to do is to establish enough info so that everyone is aware of the situation and the important bits of what's going on. Remember that you have to leave room for the players to add to this as well.

GMs, you're going to take this information and create situation aspects to help further define the arena of conflict.

Situation Aspects

When you watch a good action movie, a scene is always alive and filled with little things that the characters use to affect the situation. Likewise, you should be considering what else is in your environment that can be turned into situation aspects. These allow you to hang these narrative hooks in the scene that entice players to act on and take advantage of them in interesting and cinematic ways. You don't need a lot of them, 3 to five of these is usually sufficient to get players started. New opportunities will arise over the course of the conflict.

Good options for situation aspects include:

- Anything regarding the general mood, weather, or lighting—dark or badly lit, storming, creepy, crumbling, blindingly bright, etc.
- Anything that might affect or restrict movement—filthy, mud everywhere, slippery, rough, etc.
- Things to hide behind—vehicles, obstructions, large furniture pieces, etc.
- Things you can knock over, wreck, or use as improvisational weapons—bookshelves, statues, etc.
- Things that are flammable

As the conflict courses onward and the scene progress, play-

ers will also be adding aspects to the environment. High grasslands, for example, might allow a player to invoke the High Grass to help a stealth roll. If the aspect they're trying to add requires them to do something to make it happen then they need to take a "create an advantage" action to do it. So a player would create and advantage to set the high grass **On Fire!** By using whatever skill is deemed appropriate at the time.

Zones

GMs, if your conflict takes place over a large area, you may want to break it down into zones for easier reference.

A zone is an abstract representation of physical space. The best definition of a zone is that it's close enough that you can interact directly with someone (in other words, walk up to and punch in the face).

Generally speaking, any given conflict probably shouldn't involve more than a handful of zones. Two to four is probably sufficient, save for really big conflicts. This isn't supposed to be a miniatures board game—zones should give a tactile sense of the environment, but at the point where you need something more than a cocktail napkin to lay it out, you're getting too complicated.

If you can describe the area as bigger than a house, you can probably divide it into two or more zones—think of a cathedral or a shopping center parking lot.

If it's separated by stairs, a ladder, a fence, or a wall, it could be zones, like two floors of a house.

"Above X" and "below X" can be zones, especially if getting there takes some doing—think of the airspace around something large, like a blimp.

When you're setting up your zones, note whether there are any situation aspects that make moving between those zones problematic. That'll be important later, when people want to move from zone to zone during the scene. If that means you need more situation aspects, add them now.

Turn Order

Your turn order in a conflict is based on your skills. In a physical conflict, compare your Notice skill to the other participants. In a mental conflict, compare your Empathy skill. Whoever has the highest gets to go first, and then everyone else in descending order.

If there's a tie, compare a secondary or tertiary skill. For physical conflicts, that's Athletics, then Physique. For mental conflicts: Rapport, then Will.

GMs, for simplicity's sake, pick your most advantageous NPC to determine your place in the turn order, and let all your NPCs go at that time.

The Exchange

Exchanges in a conflict are a little more complicated than contests or challenges. In an exchange, every character gets a turn to take an action. GMs, you get to go once for every NPC you control in the conflict.

Most of the time, you're going to be attacking another character or creating an advantage on your turn, because that's the point of a conflict—take your opponent out, or set things up to make it easier to take your opponent out.

However, if you have a secondary objective in the conflict scene, you might need to roll an overcome action instead. You'll encounter this most often if you want to move between zones when there's a situation aspect in place which makes that problematic.

Regardless, you only get to make one skill roll on your turn in an exchange, unless you're defending against someone else's action—you can do that as many times as you want. You can even make defend actions on behalf of others, so long as you fulfill two conditions: it has to be reasonable for you to interpose yourself between the attack and its target, and you have to suffer the effects of any failed rolls.

Full Defense

If you want, you can forgo your action for the exchange to concentrate on defense. You don't get to do anything proactive, but you do get to roll all defend actions for the exchange at a +2 bonus.

Resolving Attacks

A successful attack lands a hit equivalent to its shift value on a target. So if you get three shifts on an attack, you land a 3-shift hit.



If you get hit by an attack, one of two things is going to happen: either you're going to absorb the hit and stay in the fight, or you're **taken out**.

Fortunately, you have two options for absorbing hits to keep that from happening—you can take **stress** or **consequences** to stay in the fight. You can also **concede** a conflict before you're taken out, in order to preserve some control over what happens to your character.

Stress

One of your options to mitigate the effect of a hit is to take stress.

The best way to understand stress is that it represents all the various reasons why you just barely avoid taking the full force of an attack. Maybe you twist away from the blow just right, or it looks bad but is really just a flesh wound, or you exhaust yourself diving out of the way at the last second.

Mentally, stress could mean that you just barely manage to mitigate some comment, or clamp down on an instinctive emotional reaction, or something like that. Stress boxes also represent a loss of momentum—you only have so many last-second saves in you before you've got to face the music.

Your stress boxes each have a shift value. By default, all characters get a 1-point and a 2-point box. You may get additional, higher-value stress boxes depending on some of your skills (usually Physique and Will). On your character sheet, you have a number of stress boxes that have different values.

When you take stress, check off a stress box with a value equal to or greater than the shift value of the hit (and only that stress box). If there is no next available box and you can't take any consequences, you're taken out of the conflict.

Remember that you have *two sets of stress boxes*! One of these is for physical stress, the other for mental; you'll start with a 1-shift and a 2-shift box in *each* of these. If you take stress from a physical source, you check off a physical stress box. If it's a mental hit, check off a mental stress box.

After a conflict, when you get a minute to breathe, any stress boxes you checked off become available for your use again.

Consequences

The second option you have for mitigating a hit is taking a **consequence**. A consequence is more severe than stress—it represents some form of lasting injury or setback that you accrue from

the conflict, something that's going to be a problem for your character after the conflict is over.

Consequences come in three levels of severity—mild, moderate, and severe. Each one has a different shift value: two, four, and six respectively. On your character sheet, you have a number of available consequences, in this section:

When you use a consequence, you reduce the shift value of the attack by the shift value of the consequence. You can use more than one consequence at a time, and even combine the use of stress and consequences if they're available.

However, there's an additional penalty. When you use a consequence, your character also gains an aspect that represents the lasting effect incurred from the attack. The opponent who forced you to take a consequence gets a free invocation, and the aspect remains on your character sheet until you've recovered from that consequence. While it's on your sheet, it gets treated like any other aspect, except because the slant on it is so negative, it's far more likely to be used to your character's detriment.

Unlike stress, a consequence slot may take a long time to recover after the conflict is over. Also unlike stress, you only have *one* set of consequences; there aren't specific slots for physical versus mental consequences. This means that, if you have to take a mild consequence to reduce a mental hit and your mild consequence slot is already filled with a physical consequence, you're out of luck! You're going to have to use a moderate or severe consequence to absorb that hit (assuming you have one left). Still, it's better than being taken out.

Naming a Consequence

Here are some guidelines for choosing what to name a consequence:

Mild consequences don't require immediate medical attention. They hurt, and they may present an inconvenience, but they aren't going to force you into a lot of bed rest. On the mental side, mild consequences express things like small social gaffes or changes in your surface emotions. Examples: ***Black Eye, Bruised Hand, Winded, Flustered, Cranky, Temporarily Blinded.***

Moderate consequences represent fairly serious impairments that require dedicated effort toward recovery (including medical attention). On the mental side, they express things like damage to your reputation or emotional problems that you can't just shrug off with an apology and a good night's sleep. Examples: ***Deep Cut, First Degree Burn, Exhausted, Drunk, Terrified.***

Severe consequences go straight to the emergency room (or whatever the equivalent is in your game)—they’re extremely nasty and prevent you from doing a lot of things, and will lay you out for a while. On the mental side, they express things like serious trauma or relationship-changing harm. Examples: *Second-Degree Burn*, *Compound Fracture*, *Guts Hanging Out*, *Crippling Shame*, *Trauma-Induced Phobia*.

Recovering from a Consequence

In order to regain the use of a consequence slot, you have to recover from the consequence. That requires two things—succeeding at an overcome action that allows you to justify recovery, and then waiting an appropriate amount of game time for that recovery to take place.

The action in question is basically an overcome action; the obstacle is the consequence that you took. If it’s a physical injury, then the action is some kind of medical treatment or first aid. For mental consequences, the action may involve therapy, counseling, or simply a night out with friends.

The difficulty for this obstacle is based on the shift value of the consequence. Mild is Fair (+2), moderate is Great (+4), and severe is Fantastic (+6). If you are trying to do the recovery action on yourself, it’s two steps harder.

Keep in mind that the circumstances have to be appropriately free of distraction and tension for someone to make this roll in the first place—you’re not going to clean and bandage a nasty cut while ogres are tromping through the caves looking for you. GMs, you’ve got the final judgment call.

If you succeed at the recovery action, or someone else succeeds on a recovery action for you, you get to rename the consequence aspect to show that it’s in recovery. So, for example, *Broken Leg* could become *Stuck in a Cast*, *Scandalized* could become *Damage Control*, and so on. This doesn’t free up the consequence slot, but it serves as an indicator that you’re recovering, and it changes the way the aspect’s going to be used while it remains.

Whether you change the consequence’s name or not—and sometimes it might not make sense to do so—mark it with a star so that everyone remembers that recovery has started.

Then, you just have to wait the time.

- For a mild consequence, you only have to wait one whole **scene** after the recovery action, and then you can remove the aspect and clear the slot.

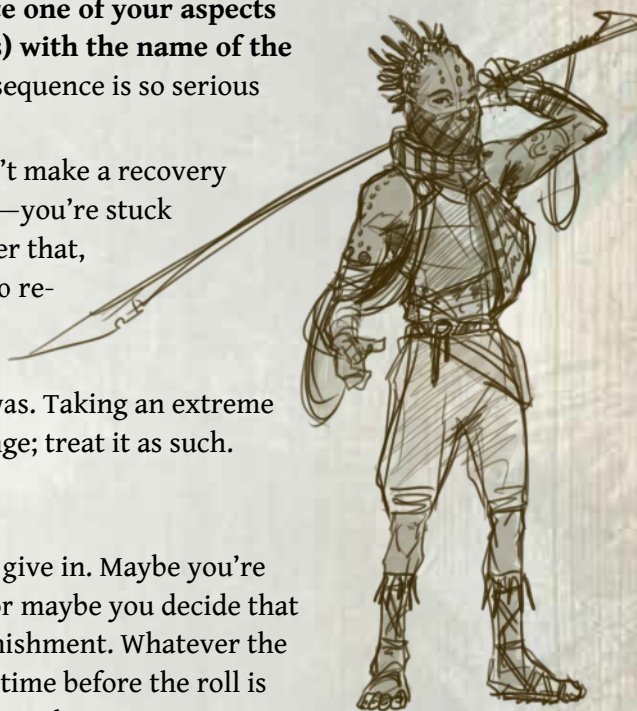
- For a moderate consequence, you have to wait one whole **session** after the recovery action (which means if you do the recovery action in the middle of a session, you should recover sometime in the middle of next session).
- For a severe consequence, you have to wait one whole **scenario** after the recovery action.

Extreme Consequences

In addition to the normal set of mild, moderate, and severe consequences, every PC also gets one last-ditch option to stay in a fight—the **extreme consequence**. Between major milestones, you can only use this option once.

An extreme consequence will absorb up to 8-shifts of a hit, but at a very serious cost—you **must replace one of your aspects (except the high concept, that's off limits) with the name of the consequence**. That's right, an extreme consequence is so serious that taking it literally changes who you are.

Unlike other consequences, you can't make a recovery action to diminish an extreme consequence—you're stuck with it until your next major milestone. After that, you can rename the extreme consequence to reflect that you're no longer vulnerable to the worst of it, as long as you don't just switch it out for whatever your old aspect was. Taking an extreme consequence is a permanent character change; treat it as such.



Conceding the Conflict

When all else fails, you can also just give in. Maybe you're worried that you can't absorb another hit, or maybe you decide that continuing to fight is just not worth the punishment. Whatever the reason, you can interrupt any action at any time before the roll is made to declare that you concede the conflict. This is super-important—once dice hit the table, what happens happens, and you're either taking more stress, more consequences, or getting taken out.

Concession gives the other person what they wanted from you, or in the case of more than two combatants, removes you as a concern for the opposing side. You're out of the conflict, period.

But it's not all bad. First of all, **you get a fate point for choosing to concede**. If you've sustained any consequences in this conflict, you get an additional fate point for each consequence on top of that. These fate points may be used once this conflict is over.

Second of all, **you get to avoid the worst parts of your fate**. Yes, you lost, and you have to reflect that loss when you narrate. You

can't use this privilege to undermine the opponent's victory, either—the group has to pass muster on whatever you say happens.

But it can make the difference between, say, being mistakenly left for dead and ending up in the enemy's clutches, in shackles, without any of your stuff—the sort of thing that can happen if you're taken out instead. That's not nothing.

Getting Taken Out

If you don't have any stress or consequences left to buy off all the shifts of a hit, that means you're **taken out**.

Taken out is bad—it means not only that you can't fight anymore, but that the person who took you out gets to decide what happens to you after the conflict and what your loss looks like. Obviously, they can't narrate anything that's out of scope for the conflict (like having you die from shame), but that still gives someone else a lot of power over your character that you can't really do anything about.

Character Death

So, if you think about it, there's not a whole lot keeping someone from saying, after taking you out, that your character dies. If you're talking about a physical conflict where people are using nasty sharp weapons, it certainly seems reasonable that one possible outcome of defeat is your character getting killed.

In practice, though, this assumption might be pretty controversial depending on what kind of group you're in. Some people think that character death should always be on the table, if the rules allow it—if that's how the dice fall, then so be it.

Others are more circumspect, and consider it very damaging to their fun if they lose a character upon whom they've invested hours and hours of gameplay, just because someone spent a lot of fate points or their die rolls were particularly unlucky.

We recommend following the latter approach, mainly for the following reason: most of the time, sudden character death is a pretty boring outcome when compared to putting that same character through hell instead. All the story threads that character was connected to just kind of stall with no resolution, and you have to expend a bunch of effort and time figuring out how to get a new character into play mid-stride.

That doesn't mean there's no room for character death in the game, however. We just recommend that you save that possibility for conflicts that are extremely pivotal, dramatic, and meaningful for that character—in other words, conflicts in which that character

would knowingly and willingly risk dying in order to win. Players and GMs, if you've got the feeling that you're in that kind of conflict, talk it out when you're setting the scene and see how people feel.

At the very least, even if you're in a hardcore group that invites the potential for character death on any taken out result, make sure that you telegraph the opponent's lethal intent. GMs, this is especially important for you, so the players will know which NPCs really mean business and can concede to keep their characters alive if need be.

Ending a Conflict

Under most circumstances, when all of the members of one side have either conceded the conflict or have been taken out, the conflict is over.

GMs, once you know a conflict has definitively ended, you can pass out all the fate points earned from concession. Players, take the fate points for when your aspects were invoked against you, make a note of whatever consequences you suffered in the fight, and erase any checks in your stress boxes.

Even More Options

For a more involved discussion of what you can do within a conflict it is recommended that you refer to the "Fate Core" rulebook. The information therein expands on the above notes to show a wide use of advantages and options that

CREATURES AND FOES

Ehdrigohr is filled with myriad creatures both fair and foul that must be reckoned with by heroes and common folk alike. There are some creatures, however, that while common in other fantasy settings are either non-existent or singular in nature. There are no orc, kobolds, or any other monstrous races in the traditional RPG sense of the word. There are definitely common monsters but these are typically natural animals. Just as a tiger may or a bison may have been monstrous to people, so too are Leapers and Shiltonka to the people of Ehdrigohr.

With that said, there are things that are not “natural” (keep in mind that most spirits are considered natural). The unnatural things are manifestations of ideals and corruptions. They also include spirits and creatures that have been twisted to an extreme, or outright broken. Others are horrors that have crept into the world from beyond the Strand and the depths of the Twain. Though they may occasionally appear in multitudes, they have no society or group conscience. They can't be made better than they are, or saved, and they definitely can't be mated with (attempts to do so result in corruptions, body infusions, and the passing on of curses). Most importantly, they are most definitely hostile and destructive. These beings find humans to be as painful to be around as we do nails on a chalk board and humans find their presence equally uncomfortable. These creatures cause a disquiet in men that eventually leads to madness. Only those who are twisted or broken inside seek these things out in some misguided belief that they have discovered a new way, or truth.

The principles of the world are actual forces, energies of a sort, that are damaging to their polar opposites. A withen or shiver might

Creature Power Levels

Creatures here are listed with a subheading that designates their power level. This power level affects all attacks, defenses, and skills the creature has. Remember to include this in your calculations.

If a power level isn't listed then assume it is common.

Creature Stress

Most creatures will have stress tracks that match their challenge rating. So a monster labeled fair has 2 stress boxes of each type. Creatures with special stress will have that called out.



sound pained and misunderstood but it is not. It is “Evil” with a capital “E”. It is elemental and therefore infectious. Dark things may have great knowledge but that knowledge will typically come at a price which inflates with time.

CREATURES OF NATURE



Gray Leapers (Fair)

Common Beast

These eight-legged arachnids prowl the wilds of Ehdrigohr in packs. They are each about the size of a large mastiff, amazingly agile, and can leap great distances. Gray Leapers can be caught and trained as war beasts. They are highly prized as hunting companions by the Batu of the Shil Steppes, as well as across Ge’Al and Barata where they are of great assistance in the deep woods. Despite their name Gray Leapers aren’t all gray. They range in coloration from coal gray to brown with a variety of stripe and spot patterns in their fur to help them camouflage.

Aspects: Iktomihila (spider kin), really fast, incredible jumper, camouflaged hunters

Skills: Fair (+2) Fight, Average (+1) Athletics

Stunts: *Lethargic Poison* (If a grey leaper manages to succeed with style on an attack they can pace the aspect “Muscles slowed and aching” on their opponent. Victims can overcome this with a Fair Endurance challenge.)

The creature of the white known as a Wicate-wa is a cold weather variant of the Gray Leaper.

They don’t have much in the way of poison. Instead they have a heat gland in their face plate that allows them to burrow beneath ice and surprise prey.

They are generally tougher than the normal Shil leapers.

Wicate-wa have Fair Endurance and Average Rapport. Their heavy fur subtracts 1 point from incoming physical stress.

The Great Birds (Good):

Common Beasts

The great birds are said to be the original companions to the Thunder Brothers and blessed by the Sky Father himself. They are each gifted in strange and wondrous ways. They are as intelligent as people and wise in the Mysteries. They can speak, though not all can hear their words. While Jay and Crow can force themselves to speak so that all can hear, only those touched by the Spinner and the Weaver are in tune with The Mysteries enough to make sense of the words of Mourning Dove and Owl.

A bird that survives over time becomes an Elder which carries great ability. Elders are created as Main NPCs. In times of great trou-

ble the Great Birds will congress and choose champions to fight for them.

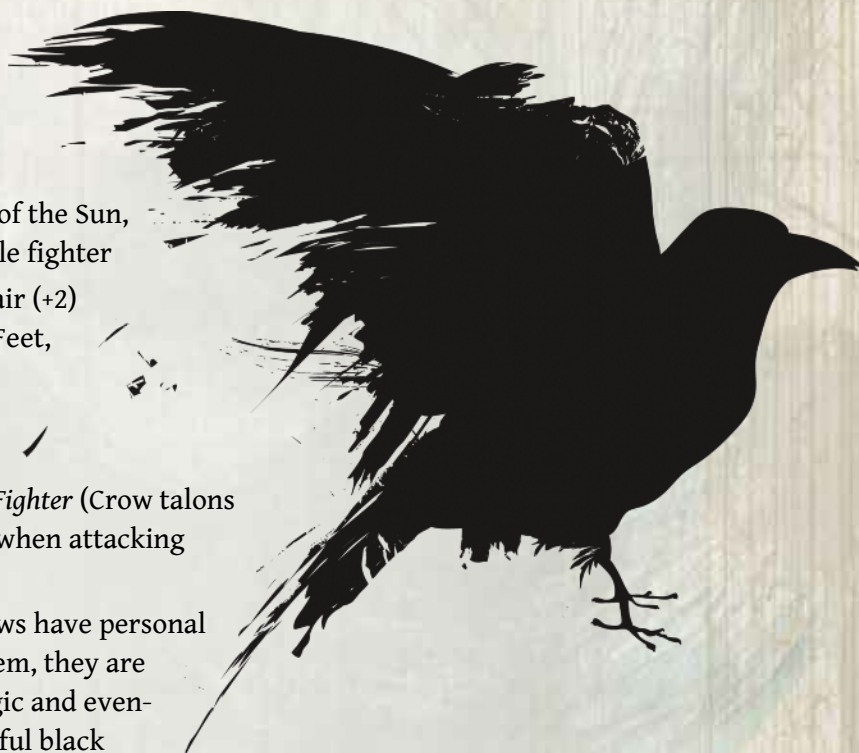
Crow

Aspects: Great Bird, Servant of the Sun, Keeper of Wind, Tricksters, Agile fighter

Skills: Good (+3) Athletics, Fair (+2) Stealth, Average (+1) Fists and Feet, Deceive

Stunts: *Agile Flier* (+2 to athletic checks to dodge and maneuver in tight spaces), *Sacred Fighter* (Crow talons and beaks are considered holy when attacking shivers.)

Mysteries: It is said that crows have personal life tasks and, as they attain them, they are blessed with longevity and magic and eventually transforming into powerful black thunderbirds who serve the Thunder bringers directly. Most crows will never achieve this but those that do become a true threat to evil. As crows achieve life quests they are granted access to great powers by their ancestors and the Thunder Brothers. Ancient crows have been known to teach these abilities to great heroes and tricksters. A given elder crow will have one or more of the following Mysteries: Wind, Truth, Body, Mind



Jay

Character Aspects: Great Bird, Servant of the Song, Keeper of the flows. Captivating voices

Skills: Good (+3) Art/singing, Fair (+2) Athletics, Average (+1) Deceit and Lore

Stunts: *Sacred Song* (Jays can use Art to sing and make an Attack against things of evil. Such attacks cause mental stress. If they cannot sing they can't use this attack).

Mysteries: Like Crows, Jays have personal life tasks that lead them to becoming thunderbirds who are a brilliant cerulean blue color. Ancient jays have been known to teach their mysteries to inspired artists. A given elder Jay will have one or more of the following Mysteries: Truth, Water, Spirit, Love

Owls

Character Aspects: Great Bird, Eyes of the Moon, Keeper of Flames, Powerful claws

Skills: Good (+3) Alertness, Fair (+2) Intimidation, Stealth, Average (+1) Fists and Feet, Athletics

Stunts: *Shriek* (The owl can use intimidation to attack things of evil with a loud shriek. The attack cause physical stress to the evil thing. They get a +1 on such attacks and must expend one fate point to use it), *Night Vision* (The owl can see in darkness as well as in light.), *Sacred Fighter*

Mysteries: Owls, like crows, have personal life tasks that lead them to become thunderbirds of a red color. Ancient owls have been know to teach their abilities to people. Of great wisdom A given elder owl will have one or more of the following Mysteries: Space, Truth, Fire, Body, and Destiny

Mourning Dove

Character Aspects: Servant of the Earth, Keeper of the Sorrows, Spirit Sight, Healing songs

Skills: Good (+3) Medicine, Fair (+2) Alertness, Average (+1) Athletics and Empathy

Stunts: *Repose* (Mourning Doves are noted for how they gather near battlefields and sing their soft mournful coos when all has quieted. It is almost as if they were crying for the lost. Any bodies interred in the presence of a mourning doves song will rest true and will be immune to possession. Evil beings in the presence of the doves song treat it as a barrier/hazard that covers a 2 zone radius around the dove. The hazard has a Good attack against evil and increases +1 step for each dove in the area.) *Spirit Sight* (Mourning Doves can use alertness and investigate see spirits and invisible things.)

Mysteries: Mourning Doves, Like Crows, have personal life tasks that lead them to become thunderbirds of a white color. Ancient Mourning Doves have been know to teach their abilities to people of great compassion. A given elder dove will have one or more of the following Mysteries: Body, Earth, Life, Honor.

Great Hare (Good)

Common Beast

Character Aspects: Stalwart Companions, Terrifying in Battle, Powerful Legs, Swift Runner, Great leaper

These great rabbits can be found all over Ehdrigohr. They come in many different colors and fur patterns. The smallest are six feet at the shoulder and the larger, more powerful “War Hares” are easily 8 feet at the shoulder and are very aggressive.

People all over the world use Great Hares for traveling the ways and even as beasts of burden (namely the Work Hare which is a less aggressive cousin of the War Hare).

In general great hares are highly prized for their speed, strength, and intellect. They are considered nearly impossible to tame but make stalwart companions. Great Hares are among of the “Noble Beasts” that can speak and seek out the companionship of men through various tests designed by their peoples and the Songs they are allied to.

In times long past, it is said the great hares were the stewards of BryahdWhoShapeEarth who had no “people” to put upon the world. She instead instilled her love for the earth in a certain number of animals who would help her tend the land. These creatures were Mastincala - the Great Hares, N’ga-The Great Serpents, Mahto - The Great Bears, and Sunka - the Dogs. Of the lot, the Mastincala and Sunka have tried the most to help man. Ng’a and Mahto help man but only after great trials have been passed.

Skills: Good (+3) Athletics, Fair (+2) Fist and Feet, Average (+1) Endurance and Resolve.

Stunts: *Hare’s Step* (If a hare succeeds with style on an athletic defense they can opt to put themselves one zone away from their attacker. *Hare’s Stomp* (If a hare succeeds with style on an attack they immediately follow up with a quick succession of kicks that do 2 additional points of mental damage as opponents are overwhelmed. Opponents can ignore this by winning a good Endurance challenge).



Iktomisunka (Great)

Grand Beast

These great predators prowl the the deep forests and the open badlands. They are often considered the “defacto” rulers of the Shil. Thankfully they are few and relatively solitary creatures. They are mighty enough to carry off one of the great Shiltonka. As a rule they stay away from the settlements of Men, but old ones who are near death and hungry, and the newly born, will sometimes descend on a settlement for easy prey, even then they prefer to feast on a Mare before a human.

Aspects: Collossal Beast, Hard Carapace, Fearful presence, Terrifying Bellow, Hatred for Shivers

Skills: Great (+4) Might, Good (+3) Fist and Feet, Fair (+2) Intimidation and Endurance, Average (+1) Alertness and Survival

Stunts: *Armored Hide* (Subtract 2 points from all incoming physical stress), *Poison* (This is a Good (+3) attack. The poison of the Iktomisunka induces vivid hallucinations and cataplexy. Placing the aspect “Overwhelmed with visions” on the victim. Physical consequences are varying stages of paralysis. It simultaneously causes mental stress and with consequences resulting in increasing stages of madness.), *Bellow* (Once per scene the Iktomisunka can release a Bellow for free. This adds a +3 to attempts to intimidate. It



can also be used as a Good (+3) mental attack.), *Attuned to Balance* (Ik-tomisunka are nature's destroyers of wrong things. They gain a +2 on alertness, Investigation, and Survival rolls when dealing with Unnatural things.)

Shiltonka (Fair)

Aspects: Grand Beast, Norally Docile Herd, Stampede Easily, Sacred Creatures, Travel in herds, Thick Hide

Large eight-legged beasts that travel in herds across the Shil. They have been hunted by the peoples of the Shil for sustenance, clothing, and shelter for generations. They are considered sacred and the eyes of the Iktom.

Skills: Fair (+2) Fist and Foot, Average (+1) Survival

Stunts: *Herd Beast* (It's rare to find a solitary shiltonka, they are usually in mobs of 5 at the least.) *Durable* (Shiltonka are resistant to physical damage. Incoming physical stress is reduced by 2 points.), *Poison* (The poison of the Shiltonka is not fatal but it induces a heavy nearly catatonic sleep upon the target. They are delivered by the Shiltonka flicking its front legs at a target. The Shiltonka has a +2 to attack with the quills. If they hit they can create an advantage of "Lethargic fatigue" on the target. A given shiltonka only generates enough poison to attack with it once a day. Each member in a herd or mob can do this. It is typically reserved for when the Shiltonka wishes to flee. *Purr* (Soothing sound that is produced when the Shiltonka is relaxed. All within 2 zones are +2 on defense rolls against fear/terrify attacks. This purr is painful to unnatural things which must succeed in a fair Overcome roll (+1 per shiltonka purring) to enter the protected zones.)



SHORTER LEGS?



TALLER?

Waglutawakan:

The waglutawakan are worm-like creatures of significant size that share the world with men. These creatures range from things that are actually true worms to the simply worm-like which includes most of the large many-legged creatures that aren't iktom or shivers. They are mostly just animals and have differing relationships with human settlements. Some are beneficial, and are even domesticated, others are outright dangerous predators to be avoided at best.

Crawlers (Average)

Common Waglutawakan

Crawlers are worm-like creatures, with many legs. They get as big as a large dog. They are relatively harmless, crawl everywhere, and

have a thick carapace that they can roll up into, forming a ball. They eat vegetable matter and compost. They can be found in forests and often kept by farmers for grazing and the rich manure they produce from compost that is beneficial to crops. They are fairly docile and get along well with people. Some are even kept as pets and children enjoy getting them to ball up and rolling them around. When content they make a rumbling sound and produce a lavender-like scent that many find relaxing. The shells that they leave after molting are often turned into bowls and pots that are hardened with resin and painted.

Aspects: Calming, Adorable little roly-polly. Armored shell

Skills: Average (+1) Rapport

Stunts: *Armored Shell* (Subtract 1 from incoming physical stress.)

Earthmovers: (Fair)

Incredible Waglutawakan

Gigantic Worms left over from the early times when the world needed molding. They slumber deep beneath the earth but on occasion they rise and move about. When this happens they cause small tremors for miles around as they find a new place to slumber.

These creatures are not related to the Woe and they avoid the presence of Shivers. On the rare occasions when they move above ground and trample into the territory of men it is usually because shivers are active beneath the earth near it.

Aspects: Mighty Great Beast, Colossal, Ancient, Too large to notice you

Skills: Fair (+2) Swallow, Average (+1) Endurance

Stress Tracks: Physical 10, Mental 5

Stunts: *Swallow everything* (When an earthmover makes a swallow attack it swallows the entire zone. It gets a +4 bonus to get any creatures of average size or less with these attacks.), *Move Through* (The earthmover is so large that it occupies multiple zones. Any creatures that occupies a zone that it moves through, of average size or less, gets attacked with a +4 bonus just for being in the same zone. This is not considered an attack by the earthmover.)

Rush:

Common Waglutawakan

These long, wide, flat scavengers are like crawlers but they can be very dangerous. Their many legs are longer and clawed allowing them to climb into trees and across rocky crags. They like to sleep beneath rocks and in cave like areas. They have been pests for those groups who have tried to settle and build sewer cities. The silver rush in particular likes wet, cave-like environments. It is smaller but faster and carries a very poisonous bite.

Aspects: Did you see that?, Those things creep me out, Can't tell if it's coming or going, Those legs are terrifying, Where did that come from?

Skills: Average (+1) athletics

Stunts: Squeeze through (Rushes can squeeze into very small spaces. They can slip into a space that is at least one inch high and 4 inches wide.), Blurry Movement (Rushes are so fast that physical attacks against them are -2 to hit), Poison (If the silver rush succeeds with style on an attack it poisons it's victim immediately giving them a physical consequence related to the poison).

SPIRITS

Iktom (Epic)

Overwhelming Spirits

Great ancient spirits who are tied to the weave. Each has the form of a great spider in a web of their own making.. Iktom have their own agendas and may help or hinder those who stumble across their lairs. Some have taken it upon themselves to weave a new plot for the children of Myndil or to make new life though it be twisted and terrible. "Put no faith in the Iktom but give them your full attention" is the wise man's saying.

Iktom are very powerful beings. Some say they are as powerful as the Graces and Sorrows. There is evidence to support this belief due to the fact that at least one Grace (K'sa) is known to be an Iktom.

Iktom are **Overwhelming** forces of nature who have Epic (+6) mastery of all of the Essences.

Aspects: Godlike power, Thematic focus, Constantly plotting, too powerful to fight, can grant a wish, granted wishes always have a cost.

They are better used as dramatic forces and challenges as opposed to actual opponents unless your players have at least a few skills that or of Mighty power or greater.

Inbetweeners (Superb)

Stupendous Spirits

These spirits, some left over from the time before, others of the new time, inhabit the dream space that we can only enter when we sleep. This is also the space of the Iktom. Inbetweeners, like men, have their own agendas. Those trained in the Principles can often call them for aid. Some believe these spirits are what remains of forgotten Songs that hid during the War of Sorrows, opting to not to



side with any of the engaged forces.

Aspects: Mysterious Spirit, Summoned by Principles, Things of dream, Never fully here, can grant one wish.

Inbetweeners are best used as plot devices and challenges.

Lurks (Average)

Weak Spirits

Lurks are small spirits that are attracted to places where the people gather. Such spirits are constantly peeking in on the people and will, from time to time, find individuals, families, or groups which they attach themselves to as family. Such spirits will find a place in the household or place of gathering and make themselves known as they begin to do beneficial things for their chosen family. Such activities include things like gathering fallen rice into piles, or lining shoes up, or polishing mirrors. In addition the lurks will tend to look after the wellbeing of a family and can be very protective. Most families look forward to discovering that they have a lurk in the household.

Aspects: Helper spirit, dedicated to a task, needs family.

Skills: Average (+1) (A particular task)

Stunts: *Specialist* (Lurks gain a +2 to rolls related to their main purpose.

Haints (Varies)

Various Power Levels Spirit

When a person dies the **four selves** that make up her being retreat from the world. One of those selves, the Self of Intent, will linger in the world briefly. Usually this is just long enough to touch those things or people that they love one last time.

On occasion, when a person is strongly tied to an ideal or died with great emotion, the Self of Intent can linger indefinitely and continue to effect the world as a manifestation of Spirit. These manifestations of Spirit are called Haints.

They seek to either continue doing what they hold as important, right a wrong, or enact vengeance.

They are not people, per se. They are the extreme remnants of the intent of a person. There are said to be rituals of the Principles that can bind a Self of Intent to a location or item the world on purpose. Some of the ancient tribes practiced this to protect what they considered to be sacred paces or object. It makes a much more cognizant Haint, but is considered by many tribes to be on the edge of barbarism. Both the Ge-Al and Barata are known to practice a variant of these rituals to protect their most important mounds. The Mic'Talan are said to know a way of making a haint slave to another person.

While most haints are at best Average minions or are better used as plot devices, they can become very dangerous. Normally, the longer a Haint exists the greater it grows.

A haint starts out at Average (+1) for any roll it needs to do something. Every four years of the haints existence this goes up one step. At Great (+4), If the haint is filled with rage then it may become a curse, otherwise it just becomes a local spirit that sleeps in the area until it is awakened. Haints will always be awakened by someone possessing a fragment of soul that it was once attached to. In these case the haint will pester or haunt the person until they right the wrong, or do what the haint wants done to go free.

Aspects: Lonely Spirit, Consumed by duty, Driven by passion, Intangible

Average (+1) Spirit

Stress: 5 Composure.

Hag (Fair)

Grand Spirit

These terrifying spirits, which typically appear as withered old women or men, are somehow related to Ikton, though they are very much weaker. They look for people to feed off of much like a mosquito. They only visit people when they sleep. They pick a food source and will stay with it for as long as they can. Hags rarely kill their victims outright and they don't come every day.

Medicine people believe that they collect some essence from people and return it the web deep beneath their chosen tree. Every hag has a hag tree. Though they are a spirit of nature, what they do is incredibly troubling, in as much as having giant leeches feed on you at night is.

Hags are normally intangible, but they must physically manifest to feed. When enough mental damage is done to them they will concede and return to the road and find their way back to their tree. If you burn a hags tree at sunrise, it is said to destroy the hag.

There are some hags that have been infected with foulness. This has come from the interference by the Sorrow B'baa. These creatures are much stronger (Good at least) and prey on people for the fun of watching them suffer.

Aspects: Needs the essence of people, Normally intangible, Moves without sound, Nearly invisible, Smells like old leaves.

Skills: Fair (+2) Haggling, Average (+1) Stealth

Stunts: *Not Really There* (Hags are unharmed by physical attacks that are made with items affected by the mysteries).

HORRORS

While many natural creatures can be terrifying, and all spirits can be unsettling, nothing is as terrible as being before a horror. Horrors are things that are not supposed to exist. They are by products of the War of Sorrows and all the tainted magic floating around. Some consider them to be variations of breachers trapped in the world while others suspect that they are actually things from beyond the Twain that somehow were given manifest form when the fabric of the weave was weak. All agree that they seem to be manifest the most terrible traits of both shivers and curses.

Being in the presence of a horror for very long causes stress on the soul of a person. Every 24 hours a living creature is within the vicinity of a horror they must make a Moderate Willpower roll. Failure,

causes the victim to gain a point of mental stress per shift they failed by that does not go away as normal. If a creature is taken out by this, they fall into a coma filled with horrifying dreams and gain a point of sorrow each day they are left in this state.

Horrors can be held at bay by special blessings and rites. If an area has been made sacred ground then no horror can willingly set foot upon it. If they do find themselves in a sacred area they must make a Toughness check every round of exposure or suffer physical stress. The difficulty is determined by the power of the ward. If they are incapacitated in such an area they instantly wither away into nothingness.

In the presence of sunlight Horrors suffer a great Mighty Great attack every round they are exposed. During midday the power of this attack is Overwhelming.

Sample Horrors

Cripcraw (Fair)

Common Horror

These terrible creatures are often found in dark dank places close to where terrible things happen to people and where people do terrible things.



Their appearance is that of a man-sized, long, worm-like creature composed of shadow in the form of hundreds of long spidery legs. To many, it looks much like the shadow of a rush. They can move across any surface and can step from shadow to shadow.

They actually seem to feed off of sorrow and suffering and their mere presence can cause people to develop obsessions and phobias. To them a person is a fruit where juices of pain and sorrow cultivate. They nudge people to do more and more terrible things causing them to taint themselves with more and more evil. When the evil and pain has developed sufficiently in a person, the cripcrawl drags them into shadow, kills them, hollows them out, and uses them as a place to store their eggs.

When the hatchlings are born there are hundreds of them and they animate the husk making it seem like a person, except this person is on a murderous rampage. If the body gets damaged enough the spawn swarm out. If this is before they have vested in enough sin they will just die. If at least one has enough, however it will scurry away into the shadows and grow strong and eventually return to complete the cycle.

Aspects: Horrible Thing, Steps through shadow, Creeps along the walls, Terrifying to behold.

Skills: Fair (+2) Deceit, Average (+1) Stealth, Rapport

Stunts: *Shadow Step* (A cripcrawl can step into a shadow and exit from any other shadow within an adjacent zone as an action.), *Flexible* (The cripcrawl can squeeze itself through any openings and areas a rat could fit into as long as there is enough shadow for it to displace some of itself to do so.), *Compulsion* (A character that is shaken or wounded by a cripcrawl must make a resolve or receive a compulsion. If this is not cured the character will start to go to greater and greater extremes to resolve the compulsion until he either winds up killing himself or another.)

Dark Whispers (A cripcrawl can focus its attentions on someone within 2 zones of them, using Rapport, and develop a telepathic link. The victim can oppose this with a Resolve roll. This causes mental stress. If the victim resists the first attack (suffering no effect) the cripcrawl cannot try to affect that victim again that day. If the victim suffers a consequence, however, they develop a compulsion or anxiety that makes them suffer a -1 to all rolls until they actually act on it.

Every time this compulsion is acted upon the penalty for resisting it increases by another -1 when it goes for 24 hours without acting on the compulsion. When this penalty equals their Spirit die, they are broken and will submit themselves to being feasted upon by the

cripcraw. If the victim can go for 4 days without acting on the compulsion they make a Good (+3) Resolve roll. If they make it Overcome the compulsion, if they fail they become “**Exhausted**.” If they fail a second time they become “**Depressed**”. If they succeed with style they can sense the presence and location of the horror legs.

Stress Tracks: Health 3, Composure 3

Breachers

Things from the twain. Breachers are abominations that wait for opportunities to find purchase in the Great Web. They bring wrongness and pervert the world twisting the weave of the web. Sane people consider them something to be slain on sight. Unfortunately most are far too powerful for common people to deal with. Breachers share a similarity with Horrors in that they cause stress on people via long term exposure.

In addition they bring corruption to the land and the Mysteries determined by the power of the thing. Anyone who fades to sorrow-stain as a function of exposure to Breachers also always leaves a curse as well. Breachers, for now, are best used as plot devices rather than creatures to battle. As their power is so great.

CURSES

When the Scattering was invoked and the Weave was broken the places where the Song had been tightly woven with darkness and corruption maintained sufficient hatred to continue. They lurk in the world as dark concepts that can infect the very being of a person or place. Curses aren't living or dead and they aren't spirits. They are the concept of corruption waiting to happen. They don't move of their own accord but they will “infect” a creature or place. If a creature is infected with a curse it can move it from place to place. If a location is infected with a curse then it will try to infect creatures who come into contact with it.

When a creature comes in contact with a curse the curse immediately begins trying to find ways to affect the creature depending on the nature of the curse. Every 24 hours, or portion, thereof that a creature is in the presence of a curse it must make a Spirit roll. Failure results in a level of fatigue that only goes away once out of the presence of the curse. At this point the curse has begun to consume them. Once they reach a state of taken out the curse has completely infected them. Their mind is replaced by the will of the curse as it possesses them. They become twisted and monstrous and bound to the curse with an aspect “Cursed” upon them. The next day their stress tracks and consequences clear and they rise in service to the

curse. At that point they cannot stray more than a mile from the curse. Separating someone from most curses is a lost cause. In general it is a Mighty Great challenge to be overcome using mysteries if the curse isn't destroyed first.

Aspects: Bad magic is here, Something twists the ways of the world, hate without form, can't be touched by normal weapons

Stress: Composure 6

Skills: Good (+3) A curse is considered to be at least Good in all things related to its ideal and area of effect,

Stunts: *Entity* (As a pure concept the curse has no real substance to combat. It can only be harmed via exorcisms and special cleansing rites. In cases where it could be harmed treat it as though it has a Composure track of 6.. If it is dispelled (taken out) then the area of its demise must be immediately sanctified or it will rise again in a year and a day.),

Minion (Curses will corrupt animals and people in its area and use them to defend itself. These creatures use their normal attributes except their Mind, which is that of the curse. In addition their natural attacks have the capacity to pass on a fever if a Fair +2) Endurance roll isn't made. If they succumb to the fever they suffer a -1 to all rolls until cured, but more importantly, They are considered “**Open**” and the curse can attempt to possess them from a distance when they sleep with Good Spirit roll opposed by the victim's Resolve. The curse can, of course invoke, the aspect **Open**, once for free.)



GIVEN

Weaveborn champions of terror. The Given were once people, but they made pacts with the terrible things in the twain, or with the Sorrows, and lost their souls in the process. Their flesh and minds

have been terribly twisted and everything that was one human has been removed.

The forms the Given take differ across the world due to the natures of individual pacts. The most common type however is what is known as a Dul Ah'gallaan (also known as headsmen and barrow-lords) who collect heads that act as vessels for mad breachers to inhabit. These animated flying heads enlarge in size as a function of the twisted magic of the breachers and are physically bound to the Given. In exchange for the power the Flying Heads provide the Given sacrifices his own head to the one who he makes a pact with in a terrible pyramid scheme of sorrow. A sample Dul Ah'gallaan is shown below.

Ahn Sutek

Given - Dul Ah'gallaan (Great)

Grand Given

Aspects: Master Spearman, Unstoppable fury, Creature of Evil, Nightmarish Presence, Two heads

Skills: Superb (+5) Athletics, Great (+4) Might, Good (+3) Weapon – Spear, Fair (+2) Intimidation, Average (+1) Alertness

Stunts: *Expert Fighter* (+2 on all combat situations), *Master of Air* (The main head allows good control of Air. If it is off of his shoulders, he can only use it to make Fair Air attacks.), *Master of Fear* (The second head allows Good (+3) mental attacks and telepathic communication. If it is off of his shoulders, he can only use it to make (Fair) mental attacks.), *Bound With Darkness* (Normal weapons subtract 2 from the stress that they inflict), *Woeful opponents* (Facing a Dul Ah'gallaan may cause you to develop Sorrow. When the scene ends, make a Good (+3) Resolve check to avoid incurring a point of Sorrow.)

Stress Tracks: Health 6, Composure 6

PEOPLE

The most common adversary that characters will encounter, outside of shivers in the night, are other people. Despite the struggles that all must face, there are always others who are driven out of self-interest, selfishness, greed, or righteousness to control or subjugate people. In most cases to create a human adversary you only need start with one of the archetypes listed in the character creation section and give it attributes. Even that isn't strictly necessary. You can assume that all traits are mediocre for quick and dirty disposable minions and just focus on skill rolls and aspects.

For characters that you intend to keep around for a while, or who are part of your big story, build them like a player character. Even then you don't need to know everything about them to start using them in a game. An example is shown below.

Bandits (Average)

Thieves and cutthroats of the lowest orders, they've come to realize that the best way to get what they want is to take it from those weaker than they. These vermin mostly stalk the trade paths called the Proven Ways, preying on those seeking "safe" routes between the known towns and villages during, and after, the day-lit hours.

Aspects: Bandit of the Ways, "Give me what I want and I might let you live!"

Skills: Average (+1), Weapon – long knife

Bringer of Shadows: (Fair)

These people want to help the things in The Twain to gain access to this world in hopes of gaining power and knowledge. They make terrible pacts with the things that whisper in the shadows of dreams. They are often revealed by the madness that grows within them. In time most become Given, monstrosities that lost their humanity and free will and are puppets of the things in the Twain.

Aspect: Twisted Bringer of Shadows"; "The whispers in my dreams guide me to my destiny!" (Will)

Skills: Fair (+2) Deceit, Average (+1) Intimidate

Stunts: Con Man: +1 to attempts to deceive others.

Dark Servant: This is a +2 consequence that when used, reveals the servant as a thing of evil.

Ender: (Good)

An organization that believes that peace will only return to the world when all is returned to the quiet. Often skilled in the Essences



(Time, Space, Weave, Truth) or they seek formulae and artifacts to enhance their power to unravel reality itself.

Aspects: Psychotic Ender, “My dream is a world without your endless chattering”

Skills: Good (+3) Lore - Weave, Fair (+2) Breacher Lore, Essence Lore, Investigation, Average (+1) Deception, Intimidation, Weapons, Endurance, Resolve

Stunts: *That wasn't me, You can't handle the truth*

Dark Fiddlers in disguise: (Fair)

A member of a global organization in the guise of tellers and entertainers who seek to further the separation of the tribes of man. The Dark Fiddlers are servants of Hsii the Black fiddler, they seek to sow discord, madness and malice wherever they go in a hope to bring ruin to civilization.

Aspects: Hate-mongering Fiddler, “You can trust me. I'm your friend”

Skills: Good (+3) Deceit, Fair (+2) Art – Contacting, Weapons – knife, Average (+1) Lore – Language, Lore – History

Stunts: *Well Known* (+1 to resist social attacks), *Wink and A Smile* (+1 to Rapport checks with people of attracted genders), *Grease the Wheels* (+1 to resource checks), *Even I believe it* (Empathy uses against the character suffer a -2 penalty.)

Orderbound: (Good)

These fighters have taken their martial prowess to the next level by mixing them with the mysterious ways. They are capable of astounding feats of might and their tales are the bread and butter of tellers the world over. Like guardsman, orderbound belong to like-minded groups who practice and teach particular martial arts and philosophies. Intense rivalries often erupt between different groups of orderbound. Unlike guardsmen most orderbound don't arbitrarily sell their services, though there are orderbound groups who specialize in guarding particular types of targets.

Aspects: Member of the Order of Silver Spears, “Our Silver Spear style is unmatched!”

Skills: Good (+3) Weapons – Spear, Fair (+2) Lore - Martial World, Fist and Feet, Average (+1) Concentration and Athletics

Stunts: Sweep (If a Spear attack succeeds with style the spearman can choose to knock the opponent to the ground).

Stress: Health 4, Composure 3

Soldier (Good)

Long standing settlements of size are most likely to have armies filled with soldiers trained to fight whatever they are pointed at. Many small battles and wars have been fought between the people over the years for territory and ideas. All have been fought with rank and file soldiers.

Aspects: Grizzled Veteran, Career Soldier, Not easily shaken

Skills: Good (+3) Endurance, Fair (+2) Weapons – Spear, Average (+1), Athletics, investigation

Stunts: Not Down Yet (has an extra Light consequence)

SHIVERS

Shivers are perversions of the Elements and the Natures mixed with twisted manifestations of life. The majority come from the places where the Woe slumber, their bodies still producing corruptions far beneath the world where the Withering can't reach. They invariably find their way to the surface and hide from the Withering in dark places. They venture out at night, seeking to devour the peoples of the world.



Shivers come in a multitude of forms and sizes. It is rare for the larger or more powerful among them to venture forth for even the slightest encounter with sunlight can be devastation for them.

As stated before, shivers are made of stuff mixed with perversions of the Elements (earth, air, fire, water) and the Natures (Body, Mind, Spirit, Soul). Typically the shiver is a form of infection. They must find hosts to attach themselves to initially. As a shiver grows in age it becomes more “pure” as it processes the original hosts form into something more useful to it. Their name comes from the pronounced shaking and wrenching that people notice in a person who has begun to transform due to the infection of some of the more common lesser shivers.

Since so many shivers originate from beneath the earth they have typically infected burrowing creatures, rodents, and insects which they turn into monsters. Others make their way to the surface in a more “larval” form and find surface hosts to infect. These shivers are the more dangerous as their intelligence is typically magnified by that of the host. There are others that do not need an animal host, preferring to pervert the flora of the land. Beyond those are the truly frightening creatures that can infect and manipulate nearly any form of matter.

Every Shiver has its tainted mystery aspects which makes up its essence. These can be assessed, compelled and invoked when fighting these creatures. For some it may be the only way in which they can be destroyed.

GMs should create new shivers with great regularity. Doing so is easy. Start with some flora or fauna and then add one or two Mysteries to them. Imagine how the mysteries you've added can twist the basic creature and what abilities you think it should have. Think of the role you want the shiver to play in the story and build accordingly. They work well as the ravenous hordes and as singular bug-eyed monstrosities. Get as alien and weird as you can. Remember it's not until a shiver comes from a human, or works with a Given, that they get to the point where they can become masterminds.

Some sample Shivers are provided below as a starting point. More will come in later supplements.

There are a number of stunts that you can use in the design of your shivers but the following are common to most.

Ravenous: Any attempts to perform mental attacks that rely on reasoning with the creature fail.

Moonbane: Moonlight burns these creatures like a reduced sunlight causing average damage per round of exposure. They are susceptible to the essence of the moon stored in silver (also known as

moonstone). Silver weapons can be invoked causing the power level of damage caused against the shiver to be increase by 1.

Fear of the Light: Sunlight is the enemy of these risen creatures. Bright light is painful for them and can be used to drive them back. Sunlight exposure causes them to take Great damage every round they are exposed.

Heartrending: If this creature manages to cause a Fierce consequence it instead gives the target 1 point of sorrow.

Nightmarish: Those who witness this creature have it linger in their minds making it difficult to sleep. If they were harmed at all they receive the temporary aspect – unrested do to the random nightmares.

Swift: This creature will typically act first in encounters. Only those who succeed at an alertness check with style can act normally.

Regenerating: This creature recovers x number of stress each exchange.

Oarkul (Good)

Common Shiver

Tainted Mysteries [Spirit, Air]

Oarkul are Bad spirits that have chosen to inhabit a human body alive or dead, twisting it in the process, into something terrible and



not of this world. Their natural from is that of a foul smelling odor. A body that has become Oarkul resembles a feral wolf-like thing that carries a carrion stench which can be smelled long before it is seen.

These shivers flock to areas that have curses for they can freely occupy any body that has died in a cursed area.

Outside of a cursed area any dead body that it left unattended has a chance every night of rising as an oarkul. It is because of this that most cultures are swift to either burn the bodies of the dead or sew shut all orifices to keep the shiver from entering. Bodies can be also protected with a variety of blessings and rituals.

A body that rises gains the following changes:

Skills Good (+3) Fist and Foot, Fair (+2) Stealth, Average (+1) Might
Stress: Health 3

Stunts: *Ravenous*, *Fear of Light*, *Moonbane*, *Mark* (The corpse of anyone killed by an oarkul gains the "Marked" aspect. This causes the corpse to be like a beacon to more oarkul. Unless burned or blessed these bodies will rise in 24 hours transformed and ready to feed.)

Ferralak (Superb)

Mighty Shiver

Tainted Mysteries [Fire, Air, Soul]

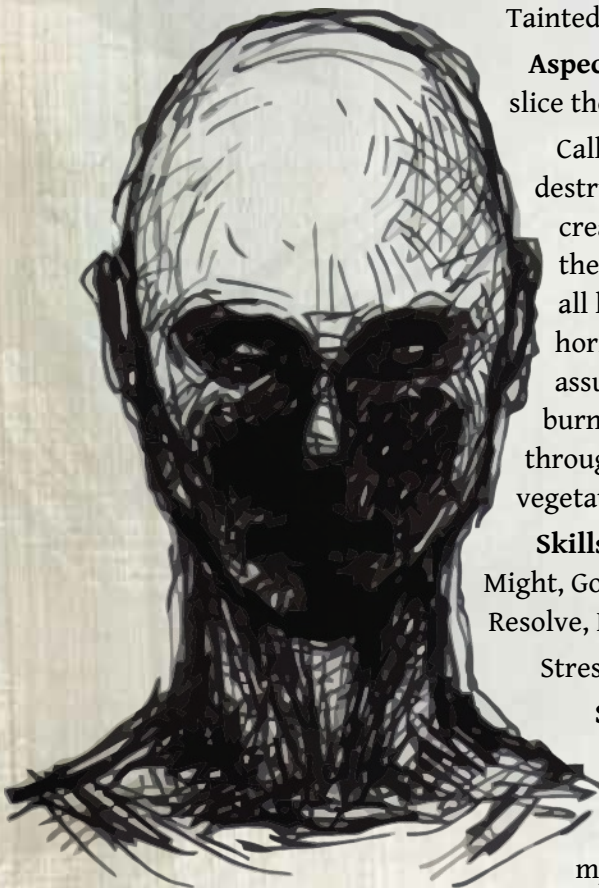
Aspects: Terrible to behold, Swift as the wind, Claws slice though anything

Called the swift death they are a mad thing made for destruction. Twice as fast as the fasted warhare these creatures can literally rip and tear at the essences themselves. They destroy everything in their path and all living creatures killed by them rise again as twisted horrors. They appear as a mass of locusts that have assumed a mantis-like form. Its scythe-like forearms burn with such heat that they can carve their way through most materials. Their very presence destroys vegetation within acres of their position.

Skills: Superb (+5) Fist and Foot – Claws, Great (+4) Might, Good (+3) Athletics, Fair (+2) Endurance, Average (+1) Resolve, Intimidate

Stress: Health 6, Composure 5

Stunts: *Ravenous*, *Fear of Light*, *Moonbane*, *Body of Vermin* (The Ferralak's body is composed of thousands of tiny locust like things. Singular attacks that aren't directly affecting one of its tainted mysteries can never do more than a major conse-



quence which always is discorporation.), *Flaming Gaze* (This is a special Good attack that places the aspect “On fire” on all opponents causing 2 stress per exchange until the fire it put out), *Desiccating Aura* (The Ferralak is constantly drawing the life from every natural creature around it. The Ferralak can invoke this aura to drain life from a creature in the same zone as it. This is a Great attack that does Great stress. That damage heals the Ferralak for a like amount.)

Skinwalkers (Good)

Graand Shiver

Skin walkers are terrible physical spirits that change form by taking the face of another leaving that person faceless and suffocating. They have magics that let them keep their victims alive though the form erodes. When the form is destroyed, the victim dies quickly afterwards.

Tainted Mysteries (one, or more, of the Principles)

Skills: Good (+3) Acting, Fair (+2) Intimidation, Average (+1) Fist and Foot – Claw or Weapon

Stress: Health 3, Composure 3

Stunts: *Fear of Light*, *Moonbane*, *Shapechanger* (The Skinwalker can take on the form of anyone it has captured. To do so they must have eaten some of the flesh of their victim. Doing so gives them the physical and mental traits of the person from sunset to sunset. If the victim is freed before they die, or before the skinwalker’s disguise is destroyed, the skinwalker is forced to resume its natural form.)

Shield of flesh (Though it severely reduces the length of time they can use a given form, a skinwalker can skin their victim and wear the skin like a suit. This will allow them to walk about in the light for a brief period. During this period the skin seems to react as though the person had developed a severe light allergy. After 4 days the skin will have rotted to the point of being useless.)







APPENDIX I: Sources and Inspirations

Ehdrigohr draws inspiration from a wide range of sources. It's worth it for players and game masters to check out some of the comics, books, television, movies, art, and folklore listed below. They'll help in setting the right frame of mind for running and playing in an Ehdrigohr campaign.

BOOKS

LAKOTA MYTH, James R Walker:

A Great collection of Lakota stories that deal with creation myths and cycles of man. It's filled with powerful spirits, the growth of traditions, and big magic. Though it is a fairly academic text, it paints a picture of a Lakota world which is largely different from the image most books of collected Native mythology present. The collector tries to weave the various stories together in the form of a chronological epic (which they weren't necessarily mean to be). It doesn't work all the way through but it is inspirational.

SONS OF THE WIND: SACRED STORIES OF THE LAKOTA, Edited by D. M. Dooling:

This is a more flavorful, non-academic, retelling of much of the same material covered in Lakota Myth. It's a great read if you're just looking to get the essential bits of these stories and get to know the characters.

JOURNEY TO THE WEST, Wu Cheng'en:

The story of Monkey King and companions as they travel across the lands, guarding the monk Tripitaka, as he journey's to retrieve some sacred texts. The world they live in is one filled with monsters, and pockets of civilization. The characters are big and epic in the way that Ehdrigohr characters should be towards the end of their story. The various demons and such that they run into are analogous to given and sorrows in Ehdrigohr.

I AM LEGEND, Richard Mattheson

The book is very different from the movie and paints a frightening picture of the night. Robert Neville would be a Waywalker in Ehdrigohr who actively seeks out the shivers and horrors during the day, finding safe places in the wild to hold out through the night.

THE WARDED MAN, Peter V. Brett.

If there is a book that captures the danger of Ehdrigohr's nights, it's the Warded Man. Shivers are very much like corelings but they must hide when the sun comes up. Arlen is someone who has developed skill in the Natures and a prime candidate for a member of the Crows, while Rojer is a solitary Principalers and a JayCloak. Guan Yin is very much one of the Graces.

THE BLACK COMPANY SERIES, Glen Cook

An awesome series focuses on a ragtag team of mercenaries in a world gone mad with being capable of wielding mythic power. The vast dangers of the Shining Plains are much like those of the Blood Field and beneath the Ashen Cloud. The Ten could be Given or weaker versions of the Sorrows. The Black Company is, itself, an Orderbound group.

PROMETHEAN: The Created, White Wolf Games

A wonderful game that captures the sense of otherness so wonderfully I think most people don't know how to handle it. The pandorans are great examples of Shivers that have grown in power and intellect.

WEREWOLF: THE APOCALYPSE, White Wolf Games

The minions of the Wyrms are great examples of the Breachers that come from Beyond the Twain.

THE SOUL RIDER SERIES, Jack L. Chalker

Though long out of print, if you can get your hands on one of these books, especially the first 3 (*Spirits of Flux and Anchor*, *Empires of Flux and Anchor*, and *Masters of Flux and Anchor*) they are worth the read. The power to wield the flux is analogous to the great power of the Essentialists. Flux use can often lead to considerable warping of the user especially if they can't keep their thoughts straight. The twisted results of flux gone bad are great examples of mad essentialists and curses.

MOVIES and TV**NAUSICAA AND THE VALLEY OF THE WIND, Hayao Miyazaki**

The great beasts of Nausicaa's world are very much like the huge creatures of nature that are all over the lands of Ehdrioghr. Nausicaa, herself is very much an Ehdrioghr waywalker solitary with some talents in Life and Wind.

GAMERA (Hesei Series)

These great kaiju films (*Guardian of the Universe*, *Advent of Legion*, and *Awakening of Irys*) showcase awesome terrible creatures of colossal proportions wreaking havoc and showing nature's awesome might. The creatures that Gamera fights (especially Legion) truly showcase shivers out of control.

THE GRUDGE, Takashi Shimizu

The terrible curse that is the focus of this film is the epitome of the type of terrible, self aware curses that haunt the edge of Ehdrioghr communities, trying to find a way to get in. The big difference is that the people of the land know they're there and are on the watch for evidence of their infestation. They fear curses like plagues.

CHINESE GHOST STORY, Tsui Hark

This film wonderfully captures the feel of folkloric horror where terrible spirits wield power in the depths of the wild.

ZU WARRIORS OF THE MAGIC MOUNTAIN, Tsui Hark

More folkloric, dreamy styled, fantasy where great heroes of legend fight off an epic evil that threatens to infect and conquer the world.

ONMYOJI

A wonderful film, overflowing with folklore, Abe no Seimei would be a principaler who is a powerful active medicine man who deals with the Iktom and Graces.

SCIENCE NINJA TEAM GATCHAMAN (Aka Battle of the Planets)

If you don't see similarities between the heroes of this show I watched as a kid and the great societies of Ehdrigohr, then you're just not paying attention.

PEACOCK KING: CASTLE OF ILLUSION

This film is fairly standard anime fair but is filled with lots of big ideas that have a place in Ehdrigohr. Kojaku and Onimaru are Shiver Hunters (possibly of some sub-order of the Society of Crows). There are great examples of the dark organizations that have given themselves to the horrors, as well as outlandish use of the Mysteries and the various traditions of use coming together.

PRINCESS MONONOKE, Hayao Miyazaki

Very tribal societies coming to into conflict with nature, mighty spirits, the balance, and each other. The city folk have strong analogs in the Salduuni contraptioners and the Chi'an of the Wu Towns.

COMICS

The focus here is on the macabre, mysterious, superheroic, holding ground against never ending dark forces, and big uses of magic. Give them a read if you get the opportunity.

SWAMP THING, ANIMAL MAN (DC Comics)

The new run that's part of the New 52

THE BLOOD SWORD, BLOOD SWORD DYNASTY, STORM RIDERS

These are Hong Kong, wuxia comics of epic scope by Wa Ming Shing. Filled with elementalists, orderbound, principalers, and adepts. Every thing is aspected from names to fighting styles

WEAPONS OF THE GODS

More Hong Kong, wuxia fantasy. The author is Tony Wong. The characters are so much over the top fun it's ridiculous. Aspects just drip off these guys, even in their names.

ROM SPACEKNIGHT (Marvel Comics)

No longer in print but the Dire Wraiths are very much like breachers and their plots are ripe for game material)

ESSENTIAL DOCTOR STRANGE (Marvel Comics)

The quintessential essentialist, Strange maintains the barriers between us and them)

NAUSICA AND THE VALLEY OF THE WIND:

The original graphic novel that inspired the movie. The wasteland and it's creatures are very much like the Shil and some of the other more dreaded areas of Ehdrigohr.

SAINT LEGEND

More Chinese heroic fantasy, more aspect driven characters, and more Monkey King. This is by Andy Seto and features truly mythic heroes taking on everything in heaven. These characters wield the kind of power that was thrown around during the War of Sorrows.



APPENDIX II

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APPENDIX III

Starter Concepts

Bandit of the Ways:

Thieves and cutthroats of the lowest orders, they've come to realize that the best way to get what they want is to take it from those weaker than they. These vermin mostly stalk the trade paths called the Proven Ways, preying on those seeking "safe" routes between the known towns and villages during, and after, the day-lit hours.

Character Aspect: Infamous Bandit of the Ways

Other Aspects: "Give me what I want and I might let you live!"

SKILLS: Great +4 (Riding), Good +3 (Survival, Stealth), Fair +2 (Endurance, Athletics, Weapons [Spear]), Average +1 (Intimidation, Weapons-Ranged [Bow], Foot and Fist, Might)

Stunts: Step and Fade, Ghost in the Wild, Child of the Spider

Craftsman:

They create the goods that others buy and sell. Most craftsmen self identify through a particular skill set (blacksmiths, potters, carpenters, etc.)

Character Aspect: Hardworking Blacksmith

Other Aspect: "Put your back into it!"

SKILLS: Great +4 (Artifice), Good +3 (Endurance, Lore [Craft]), Fair +2 (Contacting, Might, Athletics), Average +1 (Art, Lore [Language], Lore – Local History, Weapons [Hammer], Rapport, Lore [Language], Fist and Foot)

Stunts: Bits and Pieces, Intrepid, Literacy

Warrior of the Society of Crows:

Fervent seekers of evil. They stand against the machinations of the Sorrows and wander the lands seeking the breachers and other foul things that would bring corruption and suffering to the people. Though there are different factions they are, as a whole, present in most cultures throughout the world. They are one of the oldest of the warrior societies.

Character Aspect: Tireless Crow Warrior

Other Aspect: Training since childhood

SKILLS: Great +4 (Weapons [Spear]), Good +3 (Endurance, Might), Fair +2 (Athletics, Alertness, Survival), Average +1 (Foot and Fist, Mysteries – Wind, Mysteries – Body, Medicine)

Stunts: Member of the Crow Society, Crow Lance Specialist,

Elementalist:

Having mastered the mysteries of one of the elements Earth, Fire, Air, or Water) the Elementalist find myriad uses for their talents. Most find some sort of utilitarian work as craftsmen of one sort or

USING STARTER CONCEPTS:

There are a few ways to use starter concepts.

Jump In: The easiest way is just to grab one, give it a name and start playing right away.

Swap Aspects; You can replace the aspects with new versions that you create. Aspects are one of the most defining descriptors of a character. You could even go so far as to go through the Winter Counts and then apply the results to the starter concept.

Swap Skills and Stunts: Replace the skills and stunts with choices you think suit your version of the character.

What ever you opt to do the goal is to get you up and playing quickly and immersed in the particulars of Ehdrigohr's cultures and concepts.

another while the more militarily minded may find work on nearly any battle field or as henchmen for the rich and powerful.

Character Aspect: Village Water Witch

Other Aspect: "The waters call out to me"

SKILLS: Great +4 (Mysteries - Water), Good +3 (Lore - Water, Resolve, Art - Water Sculpting), Fair +2 (Lore - Mysterious Ways, Lore - Water), Average +1 (Mysteries - Earth, Survival, Rapport, Endurance),

STUNTS: Literate, Mystic Tradition (student of Master Kwamay)

Farmer:

They have learned the skills for making the land give up its bounty. They are the foundation of most settled communities.

Character Aspect: Wise Farmer

Other Aspect: "Nobody should have to be hungry"

SKILLS: Great +4 (Endurance), Good +3 (Medicine - Weather and Agriculture, Weapon - Staff) Fair +2 (Survival, Animal Handling, Lore - Local History), Average (Riding, Contacting, Resources, Might)

STUNTS: Burly, No- Nonsense, Animal Friend

Guardsmen:

These people have honed their martial skill to such a point where others seek them out for protection. They sell their services to caravansaries and guilds who are willing to pay a premium price.

Character Concept: Stalwart Guard

Other Aspect: "I'll keep an eye out. . ."

SKILLS: Great +4 (Foot and Fist), Good +3 (Weapons - Spear, Weapons - Axes), Fair +2 (Alertness, Survival, Might), Average +1 (Medicine, Rapport, Intimidation, Resolve)

STUNTS: Situation Awareness, Sudden Clarity, Unbalancer

Medicine Man/Woman:

Few understand the power of the earth's harvest like these people. Very much sought after, they are healers extraordinaire. Their knowledge of the power of the herbs and minerals seems almost magical. Most towns have at least one, and in smaller settlements they often double as the local wise-person. They often revere the mourning dove as their guide.

Character Concept: Village Herbalist

Other Aspect: "This should make you better."

SKILLS: Great +4 (Medicine - Healing) Good +3 (Medicine - Alchemy), Fair +2 (Survival, Empathy, Rapport), Average +1 (Concentration, Investigation, Weapons - Staff, Lore - Language)

STUNTS: Literate, Medicine Man, Speak Language

Mystics:

Wakan who find solace in the mixing of the Natures and the elements, mystics often live a wanderer's life and preach a path of minimalism and balance with the world. Some gather into orders while others prefer a solitary life. Most revere the owl as their guide while others turn to the great crow called the Raven.

Character Concept: Wandering Mystic

Other Aspect: "Calm your mind before you act. . ."

SKILLS: Great +4 (Mysteries – Nature of your choice), Good +3 (Mysteries – Element of your choice, Lore – The Natures), Fair +2 (Survival, Attunement, Lore – The Elements), Average (Athletics, Medicine – Healing, Rapport, Empathy)

STUNTS: Mystical Tradition, Great Healer, Two-Spirit

Nobles:

These privileged few are only found in the bigger settlements and cities. They dwell at the top of the social ladder in these places and often hold power over land or people due to bloodlines or traditions.

Character Concept: Self Serving Noble

Other Aspect: Voice of Authority

SKILLS: Great +4 (Resources), Good +3 (Contacting, Leadership – Bureaucracy), Fair +2 (Riding, Deceit, Rapport), Average +1 (Weapons – Knife, Intimidation, Resolve, Lore – Local History)

STUNTS: Popular, Best Foot Forward, Lineage

Orderbound:

These fighters have taken their martial prowess to the next level by mixing them with the mysterious ways. They are capable of astounding feats of might and their tales are the bread and butter of tellers the world over. Orderbound belong to warrior societies who practice and teach particular martial arts and mysteries. Intense rivalries often erupt between different groups of orderbound. Unlike guardsmen most orderbound don't arbitrarily sell their services, though there are orderbound groups who specialize in guarding particular types of targets.

Character Concept: Member of the Order of Silver Spears

Other Aspect: "Our Silver Spear style is unmatched!"

SKILLS: Great + 4 (Weapon – Choice), Good +3 (Weapon – Choice, Lore – Martial World, Endurance), Fair +2 (Might, Foot and Fist, Lore – Elements), Average +1 (Mysteries – One Element, Attunement, Survival, Concentration)

STUNTS: Member of Warrior Society (Name Martial art, Choose Element) , Weapon Specialist (Martial Art)

PeaceGiver of the Dove Society:

These wandering healers and mystics tend to live on the outskirts of civilization. They are touched by the cycles of life and particularly are in tune with the processes of death. Often called Browncloaks due to the mottled brown cloaks they wear in homage to the mourning dove who they revere as a spirit guide, they are generally invited into towns and villages in during births and funerals to lay their blessings and ease the pain of all involved. More importantly they are seen on battlefields when many are expected to die. As the sun comes down, the opposing forces will call truce and retreat to let the Peacegivers “calm” the dead and recover the wounded lest dark and terrible thing possess the bodies. In most civilized areas Peacegivers are considered wakan and are thereby mostly untouchable. Still no one likes them to linger for there is an oddness, and a sadness, to them that unsettles common folk.

Character Concept: Traveling Undertaker

Other Aspect: “Face life, and death, with grace and dignity.”

SKILLS: Great (Mysteries – Life), Good +3 (Medicine, Empathy), Fair +2 (Rapport, Attunement, Weapons – Club), Average (Intimidation, Foot and Fist, Investigation, Concentration)

STUNTS: Member of the Dove Society, Weapon Specialist (The Sunset Club)

Priest:

These people have adopted the philosophies of the Graces or the Sorrows, and believe they are given gifts by them to steer the people. They have turned these philosophies and their stories into dogma. In some places this is taken to an extreme and whole towns nations may be governed by a particular dogma. In these places priests are often a type of noble. Otherwise most see them as yet another mystic (especially those that exhibit some mysterious abilities).

Character Concept: Priest of the Graces

Other Aspect: Chosen by the Graces

SKILLS: Great +4 (Leader Ship – Magnetism), Good (Lore – The Graces, Lore – The Sorrows), Fair (Leadership Bureaucracy, Rapport, Contacting), Fair +2 (Lore – Language, Resolve, Empathy), Average (Art – Oratory, Survival, Weapon – blade, Medicine – Weather and Agriculture)

STUNTS: Literate, Mesmerizing Performance, Calm the Masses

Owls Society Way Keeper:

Wakan who have grown in sufficient power, and especially those skilled in paths beyond the essences are approached by this secretive

society which works to maintain the delicate fabric of reality, sealing breaches wherever they are found.

Character Concept: Ancient Revered Elder

Other Aspect: “Little in the world surprises me”

SKILLS: Great +4 (Mysteries – Weave), Good +3 (Lore – Weave, Lore – Space), Fair +2 (Mysteries – Space, Alertness, Survival), (Weapon – Staff, Lore – Truth, Investigation, Lore – Geography)

STUNTS: Chosen of the Owl Society, Literate

Songbound of the Jay Society:

A global organization of lorekeepers who seek to orchestrate the reunion of the tribes of man and to prepare us for the next age. Servants of the Thunder Brothers and sworn to the path of the Jay, they maintain information among the network of crows and ravens who police the world against the unnatural.

Character Concept: Nosy Jay Cloak

Other Aspect: A Wink and a Smile

SKILLS: Great +4 (Art – Oratory), Good +3 (Art – Movement, Investigation), Fair +2 (Contacting, Rapport, Deceit), Average (Mysteries – Love, Resolve, Foot and Fist, Athletics):

STUNTS: Member of the Jay Society, Quick Study

Scouts:

Related to the soldier they investigate the lands to gain information for strategic purposes. Rarely do they travel as far as the Way Walkers and Way Wardens without specific orders.

Character Concept: Spy for the Council

Other Aspect: Like a shadow

SKILLS: Great +4 (Stealth), Good (Alertness, Survival), Fair +2 (Athletics, Contacting, Weapon – Spear), Average +1 (Riding, Animal Handling, Weapons – Bow, Lore – Local History)

STUNT: Hide in Plain Sight, Free Runner, One Eye Open

Soldier:

Long standing settlements of size are most likely to have armies filled with soldiers trained to fight whatever they are pointed at. Many small battles and wars have been fought between the people over the years for territory and ideas. All have been fought with rank and file soldiers.

Character Concept: Grizzled Veteran

Other Aspect: Career Soldier

SKILLS: Great +4 (Endurance), Good +3 (Might, Weapon – Choice),

Fair +2 (Resolve, Animal Handling, Athletics), Average +1 (Empathy, Medicine – Health, Intimidation, Lore – Tactics and Strategy)

STUNTS: Shake it off, Burly, Damage Sponge

Solitary:

A wandering warrior mystic who has eschewed the bindings of the life of an orderbound. Their paths and reasons are their own. These wandering holy warriors can also be the most vile of villains if they give in to the ways of the sorrows.

Character Concept: Wandering Fighter

Other Aspect: “Secrets Maneuvers”

SKILLS: Great +4 (Fists and Feet), Good +3 (Endurance, Resolve), Fair (Weapon – Choice, Athletics, Might), Average (Survival, Alertness, Intimidation, Rapport)

STUNTS: Forceful Strikes, Combo Finisher, Signature Move

Tellers:

Related to the Way Walkers the Tellers wander from settlement to settlement bringing news of the world as well as tales of the ancient days. In some regions entire festivals center around their arrival, and in others they are banned for their stories bring hope and unrest to a cowed populace. Tellers follow many different traditions and most can be discerned by the elaborate cloaks they wear. The Jay Cloaks are among the most notable for their fabulous cloaks of bold blues.

Character Concept: Travelling Storyteller

Other Aspect: Behold the Master Entertainer!

SKILLS: Great +4 (Art – Oratory), Good +3 (Lore – Ancient History, Lore – Language), Fair +2 (Art acting, Lore – Language, Rapport), Average +1 (Empathy, Deceit, Lore – Language, Survival)

STUNTS: Literacy, Speak Language, Mesmerizing performance

Thief:

Living in the safety of the civilized areas, the thief's trade revolves around taking from others sometimes out of greed, sometimes for the challenge.

Character Concept: Roguish Thrill Seeker

Other Aspect: Daredevil

SKILLS: Great +4 (Burglary), Good +3 (Stealth, Athletics, Deceit), Fair (Weapons – Knife, Intimidation, Sleight of Hand), Average (Resources, Contacting, Survival, Alertness)

STUNTS: Hide in a Crowd, Second Story Man, Great Distractor

Traders:

They make their living selling goods made by others, themselves, or some combinations there of. In bigger settlements they may belong to a guild or a bloodline which sits high in the social order. In most settlements however Traders are just another source of goods. They may have a trade specialty by which they're defined (furrier, grocer, livestock, etc).

Character Concept: Savvy Merchant

Other Aspect: Hard Sell

SKILLS: Great +4 (Rapport), Good +3 (Resources, Contacting), Fair +2 (Animal Handling, Lore- Local History, Lore – Language), Average +1 (Intimidation, Empathy, Investigation, Weapon – Knife)

STUNTS: Haggle, Intense, Companion

Dynastic Oath Binder:

Your family has been known for generation for their gifts in keeping people honest. People came to your grandmother to gain her services as a matchmaker and to bind oaths and unions. Though your magic is a bit rough around the edges, people trust you and are drawn to you

Character Concept: Charismatic Androgynous Mystic

Other Aspect: Two-Spirited

SKILLS: Great +4 (Mysteries – Honor), Good (Empathy, Alertness) Fair +2 (attunement, Resolve, Medicine – Alchemy), Average +1 (Mysteries – Love, Rapport, Investigation, Contacting)

STUNTS: Dynastic Tradition – Family of principalers, Gatherer

Wakan:

The people have found a talent with one or more of the Essences, mysterious powers that defy and warp reality. Often living far from civilization, they strive to understand the workings of WhatMoves.

Character Concept: Untrained Savant

Other Aspect: “Sometimes it just works”

SKILLS: Great +4 (Attunement), Good +3 (Resolve, Art – Music), Fair +2 (Empathy, Rapport, Survival), Average +1 (Fists and Feet, Medicine – Weather and Agriculture, Resolve, Endurance)

STUNTS: Solitary Tradition – Truth and Space, Scholar (Weather)

Way Walker:

Holy men and women, who travel far from the Proven Ways looking for lost secrets in hopes of bringing the people back into balance with the world. It is said they hear the whispers of the Iktom in their dreams and are drawn to those dark places where they lie in hopes

of learning their secrets. Sometimes what they learn causes more trouble than they expect. Some call them mad others call them saints.

Character Concept: Hunter of Evil

Other Aspect: Has seen the terrors first hand

SKILLS: Great +4 (Survival), Good +3 (Resolve, Attunement), Fair (Mystery - Choice, Lore - Breachers, Weapon - Choice), Average +1 (Attunement, Endurance, Athletics, Stealth)

STUNTS: Eclectic Tradition, Defensive Urge

Way Warden:

These Warriors specialize in traveling the ways and guarding those who would risk it. They often hire out as guides, but spend most of their times weeding out bandits and finding lost caravans and travelers.

Other Concept: Bounty Hunter

Other Aspect: "All you've done is piss me off"

SKILLS: Great (Survival), Good (Weapon - Choice, Resolve), Fair +2 (Endurance, Stealth, Alertness), Average +1 (Intimidate, Rapport, Contacting, Athletics)

STUNTS: Master Tracker, Parry Master, Fierce Countenance

Witch:

Strong in the Principles these people are gifted in divining, guiding, and manipulating the people. Though these traditions are born out of lessons from the Sorrows, many are drawn to it due to the power it brings.

Character Concept: Gifted Strategist

Other Aspect: "Your every choice is laid bare before me!"

SKILLS: Great +4 (Artifice - Talismans), Good +3 (Medicine - Alchemy, Lore - Principles), Fair (Resolve, Rapport, Empathy), Average +1 (Alertness, Intimidation, Medicine - Health, Survival)

STUNTS: Maker Tradition, You're not fooling me.

NAME

CULTURE

CONCEPT

Refresh



ASPECTS

SKILLS

Superb (+5)				
Great (+4)				
Good (+3)				
Fair (+2)				
Average (+1)				

MYSTERIES

[Techniques/Secrets]

STUNTS

Devastation

Awe

Glory

HEALTH

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COMPOSURE

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STANDING

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CONSEQUENCES

2 Light

4 Fierce

6 Grievous

