

The Secrets OF Cats Feline Magic

By Richard Bellingham



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THE SECRETS OF CATS:
**FELINE
MAGIC**
WORLD OF ADVENTURE EXPANSION

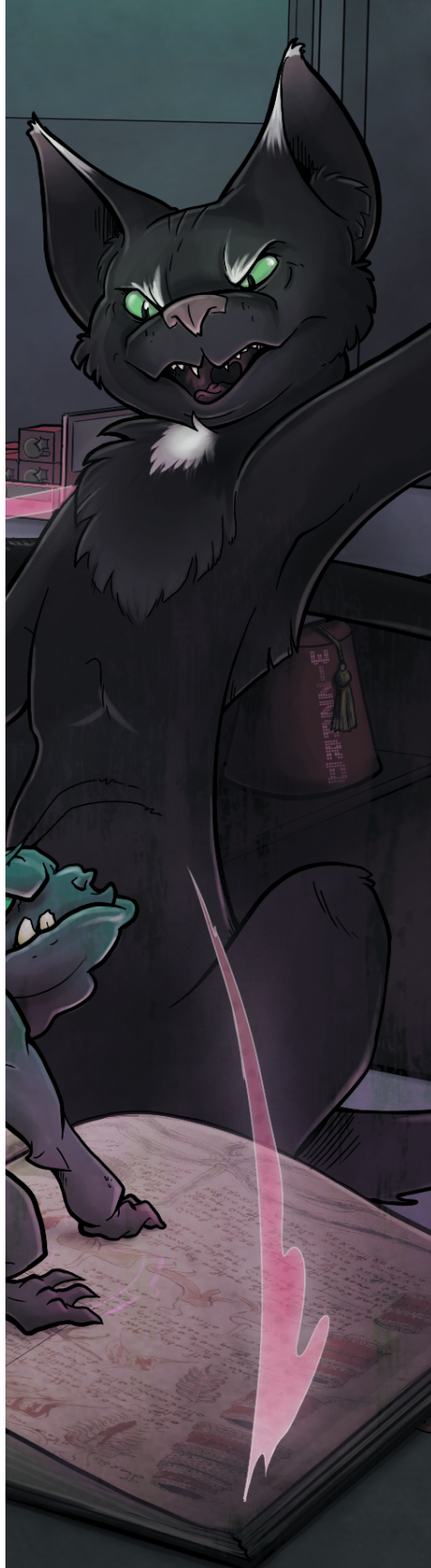


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The Secrets of Cats: Feline Magic

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This is a game where people make up stories about wonderful, terrible, impossible, glorious things. All the characters and events portrayed in this work are fictional. Any resemblance to real people, haunting spirits, vermin, or magical talking shapeshifting cats is purely coincidental, but kinda hilarious.

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USING THIS SUPPLEMENT

A cat can perform magic with a single twitch of her whisker that would make a human sorcerer green with envy. In *The Secrets of Cats* we told you about the four main schools of feline magic—Warding, Shaping, Naming, and Seeking—and some of the feats that cats can achieve with them. Then, in *The Secrets of Cats: Animals & Threats* we touched on the powerful and addictive magic that's forbidden by every Parliament of Cats.

This book rounds out our exploration of feline magic with many new tools for your cats to use in defense of their Burdens. But beware! New temptations are enclosed within for those who are drawn to power regardless of the cost...

- In Chapter 1, we'll discuss knacks, the innate magic tricks some cats can perform outside the more rigorous schools of magic.
- In Chapter 2, we'll describe the Alchemy school of magic.
- In Chapter 3, we'll describe the Illusion school of magic.
- In Chapter 4, we'll give you some new stunts for all of the other schools of magic.
- In Chapter 5, we'll reveal the amazing and powerful effects cats can achieve by mingling two schools of magic.
- Finally, in Chapter 6, we'll delve deeper into the realm of forbidden magic.

INTRODUCTION

The ghostly bell of the Burned Place tolls for the third and final time. As its echo slowly fades, you feel a whisper of magic in the air that makes your fur stand on end. This is the liminal hour, the hour straddling the thresholds between life and death, flesh and spirit, power and possibility.

It is the witching hour.

You and your fellow students are focused, attentive. Two years have passed since Jezzabella initiated you into the Parliament and explained the sacred duties of cats. You were restive then, fidgety, but now you're old enough to contain your energies and to give Jezzabella your full attention. It's finally time to learn the secrets that have been dangled above your noses, like feathers tied to twine, for so long.

The bony old cat slips from the shadows before you, her eyes huge and glowing in her wizened face. Her assistant Sable follows close behind, sleek and in his prime. He's ready and eager—some say too eager—to succeed Jezzabella when she finally takes her rest.

Jezzabella sits silently, her gaze directed at each of you in turn. She pauses for a long while, but eventually she says, “As I look at you now, I remember how you were as kittens and I am filled with pride.

“How you’ve grown! In body, in magic, and in mind. You’ve found your True Names and discovered your place in this world. Soon, as I and the others of my generation fall away, it will be your responsibility to uphold our traditions and teach future kittens of the ways of the Parliament and of feline magic.

“But before you can teach them, I must teach you. The arcane secrets possessed by cat-kind are many, and in your lessons so far you have barely scratched the surface of them. It is time you learned more.”

She circles and paddles at the ground for a few moments, kneading the grass into submission, and then gingerly sits down. “Now that I’m sitting comfortably, I’ll begin.”



CHAPTER 1: KNACKS

“The formal schools of feline magic are powerful and versatile, and the tried-and-tested techniques of each are pawed from cat to cat through the generations. Throughout your life, you will also develop your own applications of magic through diligent study—or invention born of necessity.

“But cats are innately magical, and we are not constrained by our formal schools. Many of us have our own knacks, clever little magics that let us defy logic and reason.”

Building a Knack

- A knack is a mildly magical stunt tied to a non-magical skill. You can’t buy knacks for skills rated at Mediocre (+0) or worse.
- You can have as many knacks as you want for each skill.
- Some cats are born with knacks; others develop them later in life. You can buy knacks with your free normal stunts at character creation, or buy one with refresh at a milestone.
- Knacks always break the rules or do something interesting in the story. They never just swap skills or give a bonus to rolls.

- Every knack has a **catch**, a flaw or complication that can lead to interesting situations. For example, the Burglary knack Invisible Pockets (*The Secrets of Cats*, page 26) says you can't retrieve the object you've hidden on your person if you know anyone is watching you.

Example Knacks

Athletics

Heisenberg's Cat: It's uncertain where you are at any given time, as you move when people aren't expecting it and without physically crossing the intervening space. You may use your single zone of free movement at any time each exchange (*Fate Core*, page 169), and you can use your action to move on your turn as well, if you like. **Catch:** You can't use this stunt if there are any obstacles between you and the zone you want to move to. When you appear at your destination you make a pop from displacing air, removing any non-magical stealth aspects you had.

Deceive

Perfect Lie: Once per session, you can convince yourself that a lie you tell is completely true. Nobody can use Empathy to detect this perfect lie, and you get +2 to Deceive rolls when you tell corroborating lies. **Catch:** You're stuck believing the perfect lie until you pay a fate point or accept a relevant compel. Until then, you can't be persuaded that the lie's not true, even if you're confronted with evidence. A compel might involve being caught out by physical proof, or could relate to the cognitive dissonance of holding two contradictory facts as true at the same time.

Example: You agree to provide an alibi for a shady cat who was up to no good during the recent new moon. You say, "Sure, you were with me the entire night." Until you pay a fate point or accept a relevant compel, you will believe that the cat spent the entire night with you. Later, when you tell an investigator you were with the shady cat that night, it's impossible for them to detect the lie with Empathy. If they ask exactly what you did with the shady cat that night, you get +2 to Deceive when you explain that you spent the night hunting mice together in the woods.

Empathy

Blood from a Stone: You can sense an inanimate object's emotions by creating an advantage with Empathy. A knife that has been used for murder feels sad, angry, or empowered; a house that's full of danger feels scared or smug. You stay aware of the object's emotional state until you leave its zone or concentrate on a new object, and you sense if it changes emotions. **Catch:** You just get the object's single strongest emotion without any context. This can be confusing and it's up to

you to interpret what the emotion aspect actually means—getting it wrong is fertile ground for compels.



Fight

Unstoppable: Your paws are engines of huge destruction, at least for walls, doors, furniture, and other inanimate objects. You can swat holes in inch-thick wood without ruffling your fur, and interior doors are only a Fair (+2) challenge. Solid wood exterior doors put up Good (+3) resistance, interior walls are Great (+4)



opposition, and—oh yeah—you can even punch through solid brick walls against Superb (+5) opposition. Successfully overcoming an obstacle with this knack means you make a hole just big enough for you to fit through. Catch: Whenever you use this knack, you create an aspect with a free invoke for an opponent that's related to the collateral damage you've caused.

Investigate

Penetrating Gaze: To you, hidden objects and trace evidence glow, making them visible even through walls, doors, and other objects. This sense is so powerful that you can find fingerprints, blood spatter, and the like. You can investigate an area the size of a large house for clues or hidden objects without moving a muscle and in half the time it would normally take. Catch: You find it really difficult to hide things. Whenever you try to conceal objects or evidence, you always roll with a Poor (-1) rating.

Lore

Savant of Symbols: Your magic allows you to intuit the meaning behind symbols and therefore read any written language. Catch: Due to your lack of experience with context, connotation, and syntax, especially when you're trying to understand something really important or you're under pressure, you sometimes end up with two or more interpretations of the text. You then have to work out which is correct from other clues.

Notice

Eyes in the Back of My Head: You don't literally have rear-facing eyes, but you can magically see just as easily behind you as in front of you. This is mainly a story effect, but it does prevent opponents from invoking aspects like **Behind You** when you make a Notice roll. Catch: You struggle to tell the difference between forward and backward, and sometimes go the wrong way. When you move, you can be compelled to move to a zone in the opposite direction from the one you intended.



Physique

It's Just a Scratch: You can suffer serious injuries but magically appear to be unhurt. Physical consequences you take don't get free invokes, and you can roll Physique to oppose attempts to add free invokes to your physical consequences. Catch: You find it difficult to persuade people that you're injured, and face Great (+4) opposition if you need to do so.

Provoke

Menacing Aura: You have a permanent *Menacing Aura* that lets you mentally attack anyone. Catch: You can't turn off your *Menacing Aura* even if you're trying to be nice. When you roll Rapport and your target's opposition gets a result lower than your Provoke rating, use your Provoke rating as passive opposition instead.



Rapport

Soothing Purr: All cats have a soothing purr, but yours is the stuff of legends. When you settle down and begin to purr, people find their mood calming and improving until it's much harder to act hostilely. When you start purring, all characters in your zone begin recovering any mild mental consequences. You can also actively oppose any hostile action in the zone with Rapport. If you succeed, then they can't bring themselves to disrupt the peaceful atmosphere. Catch: You can't use this knack if you have a mental consequence or a situation aspect describing a heightened or disturbed state of mind.

Stealth

Slendercat: You can hide behind objects that are far too narrow for you to logically be able to hide behind, like streetlights, chair legs, and tall blades of grass.

Catch: If anyone sees you despite your hiding place, you have to pretend nonchalance. You can't move outside your zone during the same exchange you're spotted while you slowly get up, pretending you were about to leave anyway.



Territory

Spirit Guardian: You have a magical bond with a ghost or other spirit that's anchored to something on your territory (*The Secrets of Cats*, page 46). Once per session, you can propose a compel relating to your spirit ally without spending a fate point. **Catch:** Your bond works in both directions. Once you've used the stunt, you can't use it again until you perform a minor service for your spirit ally.

Will

Contradict: You're so stubborn that you can assert your will over reality itself. Once per session, you can spend a fate point to declare a story detail that contradicts a previously established fact. Your new detail becomes reality for everybody, and they will remember that it has always been that way. **Catch:** This story detail cannot involve any character, including yourself, and you can't contradict a fact that you've declared using this stunt. Should you want to contradict a fact asserted by a rival feline with this stunt, the winner of a Will versus Will roll gets to have their way.

CHAPTER 2: ALCHEMY

“Since the dawn of time, humans have been fascinated with the stuff that makes up the world. They have dedicated lifetimes to stuffy rooms full of shiny, breakable things containing smelly liquids and powders and who-knows-what in an effort to unlock the secrets of matter.

“Of course, the cats who practice the school of alchemy are far in advance of the humans who study these things. Where humans require rooms full of pretty things and fire and so on and so forth, feline alchemists can transmute matter and create magical potions using nothing but magic and their own bodies.”

The Alchemy Skill

If you learn Alchemy, you will be able to brew unusual components in your throat and stomach and then throw up potions and reagents with magical effects. If you master this school, add the word **Alchemist** to your high concept and gain access to the school's exclusive stunts.



Overcome: You can use Alchemy to taste a substance and identify it, including its magical effects if it's a potion or something similar. This is opposed by the complexity of whatever it is you're analyzing, starting at Average (+1) for a simple chemical like dilute sulfuric acid. Generally you'll face the same opposition to identify something as its creator did to make it.

Once you have created an alchemical potion in your stomach, you can later roll Alchemy to overcome obstacles using the potion.

*Example: You've already created a **Powerful Acid** and are now holding it in your stomach. When you encounter a locked door, you phlegm up your acid on the lock and roll Alchemy to overcome the obstacle posed by the locked door.*



Create an Advantage: You can use Alchemy to create chemicals and potions. The potions can be mundane chemicals like acid or bleach, minor potions that provide about a stunt's worth of effect when drunk or poured on something, or more significant potions that provide an effect equivalent to a non-exclusive stunt from another school of magic. Your potions can be used by anyone.

To make one, you must swallow appropriate ingredients and combine them with milk, water, and grass, then brew the concoction for a time, passing it between your throat and stomach. You must focus on your internal crucible constantly, adjusting the flow of chemicals in and out of your stomach, adding bile, blood, enzymes, and other chemicals to perfectly moderate the reaction and produce the desired potion.

You must swallow at least one suitable ingredient to form the basis for your potion. GMs, if a player's intended potion has an outright magical effect, be stricter about what constitutes a suitable ingredient.

*Example: To make a **Strong Acid** you might swallow some fluid from a car battery or a snake's venom. If you're making an **Invisibility Potion**, then you'll need something like a Warden's claw or a sample of ghostly ectoplasm.*

You're immune to the hostile effects of anything you swallow as an alchemical ingredient, but until the potion is finished you'll have a **brewing aspect** describing a side effect of the potion as it ferments inside you.

*Example: If you're brewing a strong acid, you might have an **Acid Reflux** brewing aspect. If you're brewing a poison you'll have **Mild Poisoning** instead, which would also work if you were brewing a **Cure for Arsenic**.*

Some Alchemy stunts require you to take a physical or mental consequence while you make the potion. This consequence replaces the brewing aspect.

Unless specified otherwise by a stunt, brewing a potion takes a base timeframe of one week. For each appropriate ingredient you swallow after the first, move the timeframe one step down the time ladder, to a minimum of a day:

- Two Ingredients: Several Days
- Three Ingredients: A Few Days
- Four Ingredients: A Day

At the end of the brewing period, roll Alchemy against Fair (+2) opposition if you're making a mundane chemical, Great (+4) opposition if the potion's effect roughly equates to a mundane stunt effect, or Fantastic (+6) opposition if the potion has a magical effect.

*Example: Creating a simple **Strong Acid** faces Fair (+2) opposition, while making an **Invisibility Potion** is a roll against Fantastic (+6) opposition. Making a **Feather Fall** potion that gives you +2 to Athletics rolls to avoid damage from falls faces Great (+4) opposition.*



If you tie on the roll, you create your potion and it works as intended, but has a mild side effect that gives a boost to an opponent when you use it.

If you fail the roll, you have a choice:

1. You create your potion without any ill effects, but it has an unintended side effect when you use it. Your **Strong Acid** produces a noxious gas when it burns through the lock, or your **Invisibility Potion** makes you invisible but turns your fur pink. This is a situation aspect with a free invoke for one of your opponents, and it lasts at least until the end of the scene.
2. You create your potion and it works as intended, but you must take a moderate or severe consequence as the process of finalizing your brew does unpleasant things to your innards. If you were using a stunt that required you to take a consequence while you were brewing the potion, you must keep that consequence.

You can only brew one alchemical potion at a time unless you have the Twin Crucible stunt (page 14).

You can keep a completed potion in your stomach until you need it, but you can't brew another until you sick it up. If you have the Twin Crucible stunt, you can store two potions or store one and brew another. Once you throw up a potion, it will last indefinitely as a weirdly colored paste with the consistency of cat vomit until you use it, as long as you keep it moist. Alas, humans have a habit of cleaning potions up if they find them.



Attack: You need a stunt to attack with Alchemy, but you can invoke alchemical potions to aid attacks you make with other skills.



Defend: Because you're used to brewing harsh alchemical potions in your throat and stomach, you can roll Alchemy to defend against ingested poisons instead of your Physique. You need a stunt to defend others with Alchemy.

Alchemy Stunts

Healing Salve: You can combine catnip, lemongrass, and a few other herbs into a thin paste that accelerates the healing of wounds. Roll Alchemy against Great (+4) opposition, suffering **Mild Numbness** as the brewing aspect. The result is a **Healing Salve** that you can lick on a wound to accelerate its healing. When you use the salve, roll Alchemy against Average (+1) opposition for a mild consequence, Good (+3)



opposition for a moderate consequence, or Superb (+5) opposition for a severe consequence. If you succeed, the consequence begins to recover. If you succeed with style, the consequence begins to recover and heals in the time required for a consequence one step less severe. If you fail, the wound begins to recover but your subject has an **Allergic Reaction** to the salve, which lasts until the recovering consequence is erased.

Hydrophobic Potion:

Everyone knows that cats don't like water, and you literally have a solution for that. To make it, you swallow a mixture of oil, various water weeds, and at least one pond skater or water boatman. Roll Alchemy against Fantastic (+6) opposition and take a **Mild Hydrophobia** brewing aspect to begin concocting a **Hydrophobic Potion**. Anyone who drinks it can enter and leave water and remain completely dry, and without needing to surface for air, until the end of the scene. The imbiber can also use your Alchemy instead of their Athletics to take actions underwater.



Truth Serum: Sage is a primary ingredient of this potion, which to make requires an Alchemy roll against Great (+4) opposition and an **Aversion to Lying** brewing aspect. The result is a clear green **Truth Serum** that, when introduced into someone's stomach or bloodstream, makes it much more difficult for them to tell lies. Successfully dosing a target with the serum gives them a **Compulsive Truth Teller** aspect until the end of the scene and allows you to oppose their efforts at deceit with your Alchemy.

Toxophile: You've specialized in brewing unpleasant toxins with lingering effects. Choose whether your toxin is a poison to be ingested or a venom to be injected into the victim's bloodstream, then roll Alchemy against Great (+4) opposition. The resulting potion is something like **Paralyzing Venom** or **Lethal Poison**, and during the brewing you suffer a weaker version of the toxin you're making. You

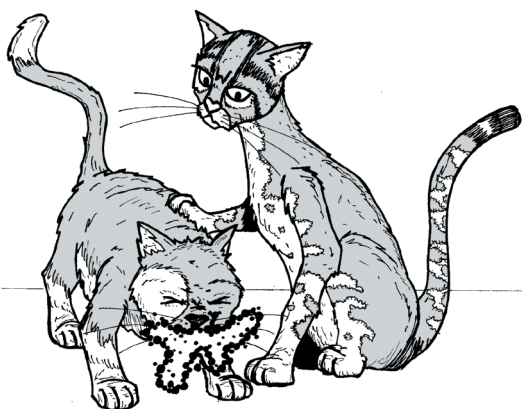
can introduce venom into your victim by coating your claws or teeth with it and then inflicting a consequence, or you can trick them into eating or drinking poison. Once introduced, your toxin attacks the victim on each of their turns until the end of the scene with your Alchemy defended by their Physique. If your target succeeds with style on their defense, they eliminate your toxin instead of gaining a boost.

Exclusive Alchemy Stunts

As normal for exclusive stunts, these can only be taken by cats who have mastered Alchemy.

Bezoar: A bezoar is a matted, calcified hairball that can cure any poison or toxin—if your Alchemy is powerful enough. A small quantity of gold—a physically and spiritually pure metal—is always an ingredient in a bezoar. To cultivate a bezoar, roll against Great (+4) opposition and take a **Severe Poisoning** brewing aspect. Brewing a bezoar has a base timeframe of a month rather than a week, but you can reduce this to a minimum of one week by swallowing more ingredients.

Once you complete your bezoar, anyone can use it two ways:



They can touch the bezoar to a vial of toxin or a poisoned dish to nullify the toxin. If the toxin is magical, you must roll Alchemy opposed by the toxin creator's Alchemy, unless you are a master of Alchemy. Unless you succeed at a cost, the bezoar is not used up and they can keep it for later use.



If they've ingested poison, they can swallow the bezoar

to instantly end the poison's effects. If the toxin is magical, you must roll Alchemy opposed by the toxin creator's Alchemy, unless you are a master of Alchemy. This always destroys the bezoar.

Elixir of Spiritual Corporeality: You can brew a potion with a spirit's ectoplasmic residue as its chief ingredient. To do so, roll Alchemy against Fantastic (+6) opposition and take the **Not All There** brewing aspect. If you spit, splash, spray or otherwise distribute the resulting **Elixir of Spiritual Corporeality** through the space occupied by a spirit, roll Alchemy opposed by the spirit's Forceful—unless the spirit accepts the elixir, in which case no roll is needed. If you know the spirit's True Name, you get a +2 bonus to this roll. Similarly, if you

made the potion with this spirit's ectoplasm, you get +2. If you succeed, the spirit becomes physically corporeal for the rest of the scene, so it can interact with—or be attacked by—mundane physical objects. If you fail, the spirit gains the ***Intermittently Corporeal*** aspect with a free invoke.

Green Paw Potion: To brew this potion, you must eat a small amount of copper, fertilizer, and leaves and take the ***Addicted to Sunlight*** brewing aspect. Roll Alchemy against Fantastic (+6) opposition to complete your ***Green Paw Potion***. Swallowing it turns the drinker's fur green and gives them the ability to telepathically control plants. This lets them roll to create plant-based advantages—like ***Entangling Vines***—with the lower of their Will or your Alchemy. Alternatively, this potion can be poured on a plant to make it grow incredibly rapidly; roll your Alchemy against Fair (+2) opposition, and increase its size on the scale ladder (*The Secrets of Cats*, page 20) by one step for each shift. The user can spend one shift to make a fruiting plant grow enough food for a human-sized meal instead of growing the plant itself.

Potion of Transmutation: You brew a potion that can transform matter from one form to another. When you begin making the potion, you must choose the subject to be transmuted and the resulting substance, and must swallow a sample of the subject and result. Roll Alchemy against Fantastic (+6) opposition and take the ***Mercurial Moods*** brewing aspect. Once it's made, you can smear your ***Potion of [Subject] to [Result]*** on something made of the subject material and roll your Alchemy opposed by its size, starting at Average (+1) for insect-sized objects and increasing by two per rung on the scale ladder (*The Secrets of Cats*, page 20). You cannot succeed at a cost; the potion must transmute the entire subject or else have no effect. Using this potion to transmute living things into stone or similar is possible—but heavily frowned upon by most Parliaments—and works as an attack with Alchemy, defended against with Physique. When you use the potion on a living subject, it has no effect unless you get enough shifts to take out the target.

Pyrolytic Compound: By drinking some gasoline and charcoal, you can create a substance capable of setting a particularly virulent fire. To make it, roll Alchemy against Great (+4) opposition and take the ***Chronic Heartburn*** brewing aspect. You can spread the ***Pyrolytic Compound*** to start a fire that's very difficult to put out; attempts to do so are opposed by your Alchemy. Otherwise, you can ignite it as it leaves your mouth to attack something within a zone of you with your Alchemy at Weapon:2. During each exchange, the zone on fire attacks anyone inside it with your Alchemy at the beginning of each defender's turn.

Twin Crucible: You are so in control of your stomach and other bodily processes that you can brew two alchemical concoctions simultaneously. You experience both brewing aspects.

CHAPTER 3: ILLUSION

“The acknowledged masters of illusion are sapient foxes, whose magic springs from their deceitful nature. Foxes are always capricious and often cruel, and use their illusions primarily to trick and confuse humans and other animals. In contrast, the illusions crafted by felines are works of art that are used to uplift, communicate, or entertain as often as to deceive.”

For the details of foxes and their illusion magic, read *The Secrets of Cats: Animals & Threats* (pages 18–19).

The Illusion Skill

When you first learn this skill, you will be able to weave subtle illusions that affect one or two senses at a time. With practice, you will learn to create more widespread and immersive effects. If you master this school, add the word **Illusionist** to your high concept and gain access to the school’s exclusive stunts.



Overcome: Your familiarity with illusions makes it easier for you to recognize those created by others, and you can use this skill to pierce or recognize illusions.

*Example: A fox you’re chasing blocks the end of an alleyway with an **Illusory Wall**. Because you are an illusionist yourself, you roll *Illusion* rather than *Notice* to identify that the wall is a fake and carry on your way.*

If you describe using a minor illusion to help you overcome an obstacle and the group agrees it makes sense, you gain +1 to your skill roll. If you need a bigger benefit from your illusions, you’ll need to create an advantage.



Create an Advantage: You can create a convincing illusion that lasts for a scene and affects one or more senses. Your opposition starts at Fair (+2) for an illusion as big as a rat that affects one sense, but if you’re a master then it starts at Mediocre (+0). This opposition increases as follows:

- Add +1 for each extra sense affected.
- Add +2 if the illusion affects up to half a zone.
- Add +4 if the illusion affects a whole zone.

What about mobile illusions?

Without a stunt, you can’t take an illusion out of the zone where you created it.

Example: You want to create an illusion of deep leaf litter over a zone full of broken glass. You decide to affect both sight and hearing so anyone walking in the zone hears the crunch and shush of fallen leaves. That's one extra sense, increasing the opposition to Good (+3). You also want the illusion to affect the whole zone, so that increases it by +4 to a total of Epic (+7).

If you fail, you can still create the illusion, but its free invoke can only be used by opponents.

*Example: You roll Superb (+5), which isn't enough to create your leaf litter without a cost. You decide to go ahead with it anyway, giving it a free invoke for an opponent. Later in the scene, your enemy uses the **Illusory Deep Leaf Litter** to help her hide from one of your allies.*

You can sustain a single static illusion without concentrating, letting you take actions normally. You can make your illusion dynamic if you're in the same or a neighboring zone, but if you do this, then any other action you do that doesn't use Illusion faces opposition with a +2 bonus until the end of the exchange. A master Illusionist can maintain a dynamic illusion without effort and without the +2 bonus to opposition added to non-Illusion actions.

*Example: An enemy starts to move through your **Illusory Deep Leaf Litter**. Because you're in the neighboring zone, you can choose to make the leaves move as he walks through them, but if you do then any other action you take this exchange will face opposition with a +2 bonus.*

Someone can detect your illusion by overcoming with Notice opposed by your Illusion. Static illusions are easier to detect due to their unnatural stillness, giving the investigator a +2 bonus to their roll.

The magic sustaining your illusion is fragile. If someone detects an illusion, it's immediately destroyed.



Attack: You need a stunt to attack with Illusion, but you can create an illusion that makes it more likely for someone to be hurt by environmental hazards such as pit traps, spikes, and fire. When someone is about to be hurt by a hazard you concealed with an illusion, roll Illusion defended by their Notice and add your shifts to the hazard's attack skill. This technique always destroys your illusion and counts as you making an attack for the purposes of the outcome's benefits or consequences.

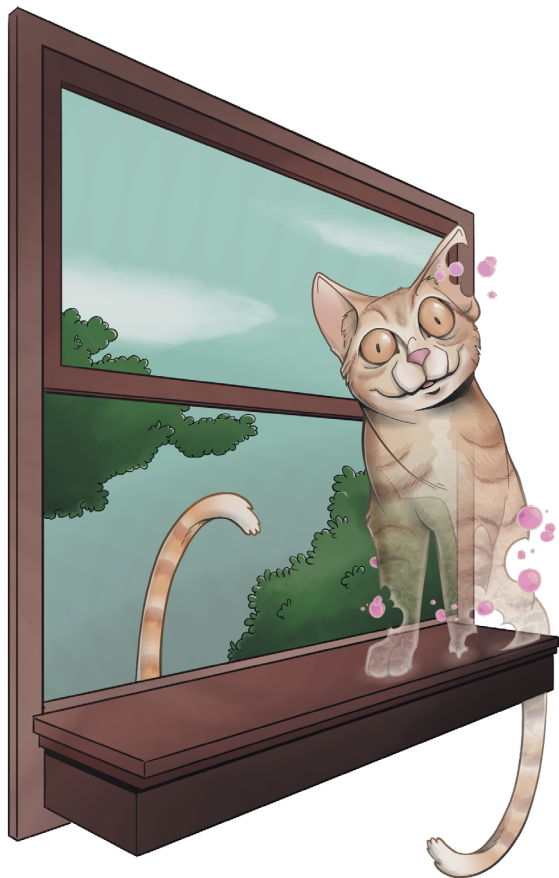
*Example: You've made a pit trap full of spikes to deal with a wild boar that has been rampaging around the woods and killing campers. You throw an illusion of **Forest Leaves** over the pit. When the boar charges into the pit, you roll with your Illusion for a Great (+4) result, and it rolls Notice for a Fair (+2) result. You*

add these two shifts to the Good (+3) attack rating of the pit, giving it a skill of Superb (+5) to attack the boar.



Defend: You can use this skill to defend against attempts to create advantages and attacks that rely on illusion.

Illusion Stunts



Copy Cat: You can make a convincing illusion of yourself or, if you know their True Name, another cat. The illusion feels real to all senses, but it can't physically interact with its surroundings and vanishes if it takes any stress. Otherwise, it lasts until the end of the scene. Normally, your illusion will spend the scene napping, but when you create it you can give it a repeating set of instructions to perform. If these instructions are interrupted, such as by a Burden picking up the illusion, it will pretend to fall asleep for the rest of the scene.

To create a **Copy Cat** illusion, roll against opposition that starts at Fair (+2) and increases by one rank for each instruction in the set you want the illusion to perform.

*Example: Your Burden is determined to keep you indoors today, but you need to go to an important meeting. You want to create a **Copy Cat** of yourself that will:*

1. Go sit at the window to watch the birds for half an hour.
2. Go to your water bowl and pretend to drink.
3. Go to your bed and lie down for an hour.

Your Illusion roll faces Superb (+5) opposition.

Fearmonger: You're good at making terrifying illusions. You can erect a scary tableau for a victim that lets you attack them mentally with your Illusion skill. To use this stunt, you must have done enough research on the victim to know what sort of things they find disturbing.

Illusory Disguise: You can roll Illusion against Great (+4) opposition to cloak yourself in an illusory disguise that stays attached to you wherever you go. The illusion replicates your facial expressions and other movements, and it requires no concentration to maintain. You can disguise yourself as anything near your size, whether that's another cat or a game console. If you disguise yourself as an inanimate object, it's best to stay still!

Phantasms: You can create fantastic illusions, full of dynamic color and action, which obviously aren't real—like magical holograms. You can use them for social, entertainment, and communication purposes, letting you roll Illusion to create emotional advantages on a zone as you might with Rapport or Provoke. Most Parliaments frown heavily upon the use of this stunt around humans.

Exclusive Illusion Stunts

Anchored Illusion: You are now a powerful enough Illusionist to surround an object or living thing with an anchored illusion. This is typically used to make a subject look like something other than what it is—for example, making a goblin look like a dog so it doesn't freak out any humans who see it. The illusion continues to surround the anchor wherever it goes, but you must be in the same or a neighboring zone to make the illusion act dynamically. If you try to anchor your illusion to a sapient being, they can oppose your Illusion roll with their Will to stop you from making it at all. If you successfully surround a living being with an anchored illusion, they can see through it as a hazy gauze of light—this doesn't break the illusion for anyone else.

Dual Illusion: You can maintain two illusions at once. If you make both of them act dynamically, add +2 to the opposition against your action this exchange if it doesn't use Illusion.

False Reality: Your illusions are so powerful that you can make one real for a time. By spending a fate point, you can make one of your illusions behave as if it were completely real until the end of the exchange. You can crush someone under an illusory rock or stop them dead in their tracks with an illusory wall.

Permanence: By sacrificing a small animal, you can make an illusion that you've already created much more robust. An illusion you've empowered with this stunt will last until it's taken out. It has three stress boxes that never clear. At the end of any scene in which someone detected your illusion, you must check off one stress box.

Reactive Illusion: You key an illusion to someone else's thoughts, rather than your own. Whisper their True Name to your illusion, and it will change dynamically to meet their expectations. If they know it's an illusion in advance, they can dynamically change it at will. While they exert voluntary control over the illusion, give a +2 bonus to the opposition against any of their actions not using Illusion this exchange. Once you key an illusion to someone else, you can't change it yourself except to dispel it completely.

Selective Illusion: When you create an illusion, you can whisper any number of True Names to it, and choose whether those individuals are the only ones who can sense it or can't. You can't change who's affected without dispelling the illusion and starting again.

Chapter 4: New Magical Stunts

“You already know much about the four traditional schools of magic—Warding, Naming, Shaping, and Seeking. You have learned of the most common techniques used in these schools, and know some of what a master of each school can achieve.

“Each cat puts her own pawprint on the schools she learns, however, and the applications developed for each school are as many and as varied as the cats in the Parliament. Let us review some of the less commonly known techniques.”

Warding

Distort: You can manipulate the space inside an area you’ve warded, doing nauseatingly strange things to the distances inside. Roll Warding opposed by Good (+3) passive opposition or the Warding of anyone inside the warded area who wants to interfere with you, whichever is higher. If you succeed, you split a zone into two or merge two adjacent zones into one. When you merge zones, all of their situation aspects affect the merged zone—that means people can end up drowning and burning at the same time if you merge a zone that’s **On Fire** with one that’s **Flooded**. When you split a zone with anything alive inside, they get to choose which of the two zones they end up in; if you’re in the splitting zone, you choose last. Your spatial distortion lasts until your next turn.

Entrap: You know how to build an inverted ward that keeps any named targets *in* rather than *out*. To make one, roll to create a ward as normal (*The Secrets of Cats*, page 14). When a named target is about to enter the warded area, they roll Notice opposed by your Warding to see if they detect the trap. Once they are inside and try to leave, you can actively oppose them with your Warding. If they manage to find your sacrifice inside the warded area and completely destroy it—for example, by swallowing it or burning it—your ward will collapse immediately. This vulnerability is one reason why cats often dismember their sacrifices and leave the parts hidden in various places around an area.

Hover Cat (Exclusive): By advancing your mastery of wards against yourself, you can now control them finely after they’ve been created. This means you can manifest a disc of force beneath yourself that you can then move in any direction, giving you the power of flight. While using this power outside, you count as being in an aerial zone and can only be affected by those who can fly or use ranged effects. You don’t need to be able to move physically to use this power, so you can start hovering as long as you can whisper your True Name to the air as normal. While you’re hovering, you can use Warding in place of Athletics, including to defend against physical attacks. To take this stunt, you must have Cat Walk (*The Secrets of Cats*, page 16).

Instant Karma (Exclusive): Whenever you mark a stress box or consequence because you absorbed an attack meant for your ally, you get the aspect **Karma for [Attacker's Name]** with a free invoke; if you already have the **Karma** aspect for the named attacker, it gains a free invoke. When you attack or directly oppose the named attacker, the harm you absorbed lashes back against them and causes them bad luck or injury, allowing you to use any number of free invokes built up on the **Karma** aspect. If you already have a **Karma** aspect and could gain a **Karma** aspect for a new attacker, you can choose whether to keep your existing **Karma** aspect or replace it with the new one. A new **Karma** aspect always starts with one free invoke. To take this stunt, you must have Absorb (*The Secrets of Cats*, page 16).

Naming

Does everyone have a True Name?

The simple answer is yes. For non-sapient animals, though, that name is not related to their inner nature but rather a name imposed on them by others. A wild rat has the True Name of "Rat" while a pet dog uses the name their master calls most often as their True Name.

You will note that most humans use a name given by their parents as their True Name. The implications of this to the sapience of humans are left for you to consider at your leisure.

Anonymize: You sacrifice a small animal and anoint its blood on an inanimate object as you whisper your True Name. This transfers your True Name to the object until the next sunrise or sunset, making you anonymous. While you are anonymous, you can roll Naming to defend against any Seeking attempt to find you or your True Name. If you are a Namer, any Seeking attempt to find you or your True Name automatically fails. When you stymie a Seeking attempt with this stunt, your opponent finds the inanimate object instead of you or your name. Unfortunately, while you are anonymous, no power that requires the use of your True Name will work—even your own powers like Control and Animate. You can touch the object and take back your name if you need it before this power runs out. If the object with your name is completely destroyed, your name returns to you, but the shock gives you a mental consequence that fills your lowest available slot.

Familiarity (Exclusive): You've unlocked the deeper secrets of Naming, allowing you to use a target's common name to perform magic of any school as if you knew their True Name. There are some conditions:

1. The target must freely and without coercion give you permission to use the specific intended effect on them.
2. This is a form of magical workaround, and your tampering with the target's True Name leaves them **Susceptible to Magic** until the end of the scene or the permitted effect, whichever is longer. This aspect has a free invoke that can be used by an enemy of the target.

You don't have to warn your target about the susceptibility to magic they'll experience while under the effects of this power, and it isn't noticeable until someone uses magic on them.

Gestalt (Exclusive): Your ability to animate and control objects has grown to the extent that you can now magically assemble and animate a gestalt form made up of multiple objects. For example, you could make a gestalt out of mud, pebbles, or a pile of discarded mannequin parts. This power works identically to Animate except:

- The opposition to your roll starts at Average (+1) for a cat-sized gestalt and increases by one rank per rung on the scale ladder (*The Secrets of Cats*, page 20).
- You get to choose the form your gestalt takes, giving it an aspect related to its shape. For example, you could create a **Humanoid** gestalt out of maggots, or a **Rolling Ball** of mud.
- You can only animate one gestalt at a time, but if you have the Multitasking stunt (*The Secrets of Cats*, page 19) you can animate a normal object and a gestalt at the same time.

To take this stunt, you must have Animate (*The Secrets of Cats*, page 18).

Jinx: Whether you're black or not, you're a cat of ill omen.

When you use Naming to create a curse related to bad luck (*The Secrets of Cats*, page 17), you can walk in front of the victim with your back arched, hissing and spitting to make the curse more potent. Whenever the victim fails a roll by a margin of three or more shifts, you gain a free invoke on the curse aspect. If you were defending against their roll and therefore succeeded with style, this free invoke is an additional benefit beyond any you get for succeeding with style. The curse aspect can have up to three free invokes banked at a time.



Maneki-Neko: You're particularly good at blessing your allies with luck. When you use Naming to create a blessing related to luck or good fortune (*The Secrets of Cats*, page 17), you can stand up and beckon to the recipient with your paws to make the blessing more potent. When the beneficiary succeeds with style on any roll, they gain a free invoke on the luck aspect in addition to whatever benefit they get for succeeding with style. The blessing aspect can have up to three free invokes banked at a time.

Transference (Exclusive): Once you've taken out an opponent whose True Name you know, either through defeating them in a physical fight or in a mental conflict with Control, you can permanently transfer your spirit from your body to theirs or vice versa. Switching spirits completely changes your character—you rebuild yourself with your same number of skill ranks and refresh, but using the new body's Physique and gaining any of its appropriate physical aspects and stunts, spending refresh for new stunts as normal—and the character who now inhabits your body, in the same way. In some cases, switching spirits can produce hybridized aspects—if both of your troubles still apply, for example. You can also use Transference to inhabit an inanimate object that you're directly controlling with Animate. If you do so, your original body lies in a coma until it dies of natural causes. One limitation of this power is that you can never transfer back into a vessel that you left voluntarily. If you change your mind and want your own body back, you're going to have to find someone with Transference who's willing to facilitate that process for you, through a series of swaps that ultimately puts you and them back in your own bodies—and they can only do it once! To take this stunt, you must have either Control or Animate (*The Secrets of Cats*, pages 18–19).

Shaping

Anthropomorphize (Exclusive): This stunt builds off and requires the Change Size stunt and is significantly more useful if you have the Disguise stunt (both on *The Secrets of Cats*, page 21). You've learned how to transform your body into a **Human Form**. Roll Shaping against Fantastic (+6) opposition to adopt an anthropomorphized form of your own body until the end of the scene. If you succeed at a cost, you'll retain a tail, cat ears, or another giveaway tell as to your true nature. You can now use Disguise to duplicate a human rather than a cat, but can't use Disguise or other Shaping tricks to hide any feline tells. It's tough acting like anything other than a cat, so interacting with humans is extremely difficult. You also struggle with anything that involves using opposable thumbs or that requires special human knowledge.

Permanence: One of the changes you make to your body is permanent. You can give up this stunt or switch to a different permanent change at a minor milestone.

Template: This stunt requires you to take the A Knack for Change stunt at least once (*The Secrets of Cats*, page 21). Once you've grown proficient with Shaping, you'll find that you use particular combinations of features over and over again. Practice a given combination for long enough and you can imprint it on your being as an alternative body template.

When you buy this stunt, pick two or more Shaping aspects to go into the template, up to the number permitted by your purchases of A Knack for Change.

You can now shape all of these aspects as a single action against the highest opposition among the features plus one rank for each aspect beyond the first in the template. If you fail, you gain the aspects in the template and a boost, but you also gain a deleterious mutation aspect for the rest of the scene. If you succeed, you get a free invoke on the template, and if you succeed with style, you get two free invokes on it. Free invokes on a template can be used to invoke any of its aspects.

You can change or add a Shaping aspect in the template at a minor milestone, and you can completely change the template for another one at a significant milestone. If you're a Shaper, you can buy this stunt multiple times to hold more available templates.

*Example: You have the A Knack for Change stunt twice, so you can maintain three Shaping aspects at the same time. You want a form that's good at fighting, so you build a template that contains the Shaping aspects **Razor Claws**, **Musclebound**, and **Unnaturally Tough**. The opposition is set to Good (+3) for **Musclebound** and increases by one rank for each of the other two features, for a total of Superb (+5) opposition.*

Quick Change: You specialize in changing your body quickly rather than accurately. At any time, you can accept success at a cost on any Shaping roll to make the change instantaneously and without taking an action. However, you can only use this stunt once per exchange. If the Shaping effect you're using doesn't list a result for success at a cost, you also gain a deleterious mutation aspect and your opponents get its free invoke.

Twin (Exclusive): This use of Shaping isn't forbidden, but a lot of cats find it highly disturbing. In a rather gross process, you sacrifice a small animal and use the energy released by its death to split yourself into two identical copies. It's wise to be well fed when you use this power; if you're not, both copies end up being **Frail**. Your selves are linked by magic and can communicate telepathically. Not only do you get to be in two places at once, but your selves can help each other with teamwork (*Fate Core*, page 174). Your twin lasts indefinitely, but after a few days the two of you begin to diverge mentally, until by the end of a week you're as alike

as identical twins but don't have a mental link. While twinned, you can't use this power again until you and your twin merge or one of you dies.

If you merge, you keep both sets of memories, which can be extremely disorienting if you spent a lot of time apart. If you've spent less than a few hours apart, you merge without event. If you've been apart any longer, roll Will against Fair (+2) opposition, adding one rank for each rung higher on the time ladder (*Fate Core*, page 197) your time apart is than "a few hours." If you fail, you gain **Confused Memories** that last until the next significant milestone.

Example: You spawned a twin a month ago, but he decided he wanted to live independently from you and left town after just a week. You finally track him down and find that he's gotten you into all kinds of trouble with the cats of the town he's been visiting, but he won't tell you a thing! You decide to merge with him to get his memories, but you've spent a few weeks apart, increasing the base opposition of Fair (+2) by seven ranks to +9. You'll almost surely find the mixture of memories very confusing.

Seeking

Augur (Exclusive): You sacrifice a small animal and play with it for a while until its entrails, organs, and other body parts fall into a pleasing arrangement. You



can then read the remains to find out about current events, someone's plans, or whatever else takes your fancy. Roll Seeking against passive opposition based on the obscurity of the subject, or active opposition from the Will or Seeking of the target you're researching. If you succeed, the information you receive may or may not be an aspect, but it will always be useful.

Beckon: Maybe you're arrogant and refuse to go anywhere to find what you seek, or maybe you're just lazy. Either way, you've mastered the trick of bringing what you're looking for to you rather than having to go to it yourself. Roll Seeking to find a person or object as usual. If you succeed, then rather than getting a sense of their location and distance (and possibly vice versa), you can choose to set in motion a sequence of apparently random events that lead to the subject arriving

wherever you are at an unknown time in the near future. If you spend a fate point, the subject turns up at a convenient moment later in the session, or if you accept a compel, the subject turns up at a time or place or in a way that complicates your life. This stunt only works on characters and portable objects, and there's a chance you won't actually recognize the target when it shows up.



Inviolable Self: Once a day, you can spend a nap meditating on your own nature and use the magic of Seeking to find yourself. Roll to create an advantage with Seeking against Fair (+2) opposition, adding +1 for each consequence and mental or physical situation aspect currently attached to you. Success gives you the **Inviolable Self** aspect with a free invoke, and every two shifts beyond success with style gives you another free invoke.

*Example: You have the situation aspect **Hungry**, so you're rolling Seeking against Good (+3) opposition. You roll Legendary (+8) for a total of five shifts. You get **Inviolable Self** with two free invokes for succeeding with style, and the last two shifts grant you another free invoke, for a total of three.*

When defending against any effect trying to change your mind or body against your will, you can spend a free invoke of ***Inviolable Self*** to succeed without rolling. This doesn't work on mundane physical attacks. While this aspect is in effect, though, you're very stubborn and fixed in your ways, so resisting a compel on your high concept or trouble costs two fate points. The aspect disappears once you've used the last free invoke on it, and you can't add any free invokes to it once it's created.

Leverage: You can use your magic to discover how to persuade, browbeat, cajole, or otherwise get what you want from someone in an imminent social encounter. Nap and think about someone, an encounter you expect to have with them in the near future, and your desired outcome. You wake up with knowledge of one of their aspects—or an aspect reflecting a relevant fact—that will help you to get what you want from the encounter. If you know the subject's True Name, the aspect comes with two free invokes.

Mirror Walk (Exclusive): If you know a living being's True Name, you can step into a mirror and walk out of a mirror near your target. To do so, sacrifice a small animal and offer it up before a mirror—which must be intended for use as a mirror, so reflective metal won't work—and then roll Seeking, actively opposed by the target's Will or Seeking. Also, the distance to the target provides passive opposition, from Average (+1) if they're a block away to Fantastic (+6) if they're on the opposite side of the world. If the target doesn't roll to actively oppose, or rolls below the passive opposition set by the distance, use the passive opposition instead of active opposition.

If you succeed, you emerge from the mirror that's nearest to the target. A tie means you emerge from a mirror within a few hundred yards, but one that's less convenient. If you fail, you must absorb the shifts by which you failed as a mental attack, and you're spat back out of the mirror you climbed into.

You can attempt to use this power if you only know the target's given name, but it's risky. You roll as described before, but your opposition increases by +4. If you tie, you must absorb the shifts by which you failed as a mental attack. If you fail, you must absorb the shifts you failed by as a mental attack *and* you get ejected into a dangerous situation from a random mirror anywhere in the world.



Chapter 5: Mingled Magic

“Some of us are specialists who learn only one school of magic, but most of us eventually develop techniques from two or more schools. With our natural curiosity and tendency toward experimentation, it is no surprise that we cats have developed ways to merge the magic from multiple schools to produce unique and powerful results.”

Using Mingled Magic

All of the example stunts given here combine two schools of magic, but in theory you could merge techniques from three or even more schools.

When you use mingled magic, roll your magical skill of *lowest* rating among those listed in the stunt. For example, if you have Good (+3) Seeking and Fair (+2) Shaping, then you’ll roll Shaping to activate the Reify stunt (page 31).

Evil cats who’ve mastered all of the schools used by a mingled stunt roll their magical skill of *highest* rating among those listed in the stunt. You’ll find more about evil cats in *The Secrets of Cats: Animals & Threats* (page 31).

Assimilate (Shaping, Alchemy): You swallow an inorganic material such as silver and assimilate it into your body. Your roll is passively opposed by your own Physique. You might give yourself metallic armor plating or silver claws that you can use to attack werewolves. You shed the inanimate material at the end of the scene unless you have the Permanence stunt (page 18). You can assimilate material up to about a tenth of your own mass.



Disguise Resize (Exclusive Shaping, Illusion): You simultaneously change size and erect an illusory disguise that makes it look as if you haven't changed size at all. The opposition to your roll starts at Mediocre (+0) and increases by two steps per step on the scale ladder, as in *Change Size* (*The Secrets of Cats*, page 21). To take this stunt, you must have *Change Size* and *Illusory Disguise* (page 18).

Personalized Potion (Naming, Alchemy): When you produce a potion, you can infuse it with one or more True Names of those whom you allow to use the potion. If anyone else tries to use your potion, you roll to create advantage, defended against with their Physique. If you succeed, then the potion works as a **Lethal Poison** for them regardless of its original effect. It attacks the drinker on their turn during each exchange with your Alchemy defended by their Physique; if they succeed with style on their defense, they eliminate the poison instead of gaining a boost.

Placebo (Alchemy, Illusion): You can brew a potion in a day that looks like a normal potion but does absolutely nothing. However, because of the illusion magic you infuse into potion, its user *believes* that it works normally. Hilarity ensues. If something happens to draw the user's attention to the fact that the potion did nothing, they must overcome with Notice defended by the lower of your Alchemy and Illusion to realize they've been fooled.

Regression (Naming, Seeking): Once per session, when you're dreaming or using Dreamwalking to be inside someone else's dream, you can use Seeking to uncover memories of one of the dreamer's past lives. When you begin a Regression session, come up with a historical period, a location, and a dramatic scene that the dream will be about. The group will then play out the scene in detail, with the other players portraying NPCs inside the memory or helping you as fellow Dreamwalkers.

During the dream you can learn about a character in the past life, giving you the opportunity to discover facts about them or their aspects *at the time* with your normal skills. Unless it has already been established that the dreamer met this character in a past life, it costs the dreamer a fate point to declare this story detail.

At the end of the dream, the dreamer can use their next minor milestone immediately rather than at the end of the session, as they remember skills or abilities they had in the past life.

In *The Secrets of Cats*, sapient beings always reincarnate as the same species.

To take this stunt, you must have *Dreamwalking* (*The Secrets of Cats*, page 23).

Example: Your town has recently been plagued by a shambling mummy that's been strangling people with its bandages. You want to gain insight into the mummy's nature, but it can only moan, so you decide to seek in your dreams

whether you met it in a prior incarnation. You spend a fate point to declare that you met him when he was still alive in ancient Egypt, and that the scene will be about the events that took place immediately before his mummification.

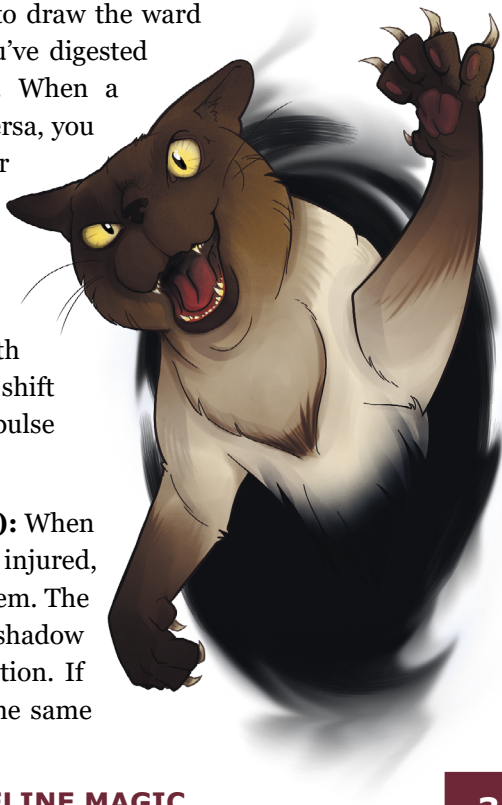
Reify (Exclusive Shaping, Seeking): While you're inside someone's dream, you can manifest an object or character from the dream in the real world. Your roll is opposed by:

- For inanimate objects: Fair (+2) plus one rank for each step on the scale ladder it is bigger than a rat.
- For creatures and animate objects: Great (+4) plus one rank for each step on the scale ladder it is bigger than a rat.

Just by using this power, you take stress, equal in shifts to the steps on the scale ladder the target is bigger than a rat. If you tie, you succeed at a cost, so you must fill your lowest available physical consequence slot as you draw the extra energy from your own body. If you fail, you succeed at a major cost, so you must fill your lowest available physical consequence slot, and the thing you reified gains a flaw aspect with a free invoke for your enemies. Reified things are wholly real and exist until destroyed or killed. To take this stunt, you must have Dreamwalking (*The Secrets of Cats*, page 23).

Repulse (Shaping, Warding): You can sacrifice a small animal and create a ward, then eat the sacrifice to draw the ward into your body. This effect lasts until you've digested the sacrifice, which takes about a day. When a subject of the ward touches you, or vice versa, you roll, actively opposed by the target's Will or Warding. If you succeed, the subject is repulsed into a neighboring zone. If you attack a subject of the ward and succeed, you can sacrifice a shift to repulse them into a neighboring zone. If you succeed with style on your attack, you can sacrifice a shift to gain a boost *and* sacrifice a shift to repulse them.

Rescue (Exclusive Warding, Seeking): When an ally you're protecting with Absorb is injured, you can use this power to quickly get to them. The moment they're injured, you step into a shadow and roll to overcome Superb (+5) opposition. If you succeed, you arrive in a shadow in the same



zone as your ally. If you succeed at a cost, you gain a situation aspect reflecting mental trauma you experienced while traveling through the shadow realm. When you use this power, you can take a turn again beginning on the next exchange; as such, if you use Rescue before your turn on an exchange, you miss that turn. This power doesn't work if there are no shadows in your zone of departure or arrival. To take this stunt, you must have Absorb (*The Secrets of Cats*, page 16).

Safestore (Alchemy, Warding): Using your knowledge of Warding, you brew a special potion that contains the principles of aversion and invisibility. When you anoint a small bounded area with the potion—cats typically choose closets and mats—it protects anything you leave there from discovery. Whenever anyone would discover one of your safestores, you can oppose them by rolling the lower of Alchemy and Warding. If they fail, they simply cannot see the contents of your safestore and are subconsciously averted from tampering with them. This power explains why cat owners are sometimes blind to the piles of cat “vomit” that have semi-dried on their closet floor next to a few decapitated mice. You can create a safestore inside a warded area—in fact, putting the sacrifice that's anchoring a ward inside a safestore is a good way to protect it.

Sidestep (Illusion, Warding): You use your combined knowledge of illusion and protection to hide an ally and project an illusion of them that copies their movements exactly, only one step to the left or the right. To conjure and maintain this effect, you must keep a portion of the subject's body—such as fur or a whisker—on you at all times. The first non-area attack against the person you're protecting automatically fails. Any subsequent attacks made against them face passive opposition of the lower of your Warding or your Illusion.

Simulacrum (Illusion, Exclusive Naming): You learn how to use Animate to imbue an illusion with the semblance of life. This works exactly like the Animate stunt, except that it doesn't require a sacrifice and must be used on an illusion rather than a real object. Simulacra do not count against the number of objects or characters you can control with Naming. To take this stunt, you must have Animate (*The Secrets of Cats*, page 18).

Taste Memory (Alchemy, Seeking): You have an uncanny memory for the things that you've tasted. You count as having a **Strong Link** (*The Secrets of Cats*, page 22) when you're using Seeking to find anything or anyone you've licked.

This Is Not the Cat You're Looking For (Seeking, Illusion): When you have an active Copy Cat illusion of yourself and someone tries to find you with Seeking, you defend with the *higher* of your Seeking and Illusion. If they fail, they find your Copy Cat instead of you. To take this stunt, you must have Copy Cat (page 17).

Transmogrify (Shaping, Naming): You can use Shaping and its stunts on other beings if you know their True Name. If this is against their will, they can oppose you with the highest of their Naming, Shaping, and Physique.

Walking Ward (Exclusive Naming, Warding): You sacrifice a small animal to create a ward and animate the sacrifice at the same time. The ward you create is a wall centered on the sacrifice that moves with it. To create the **Walking Ward**, roll against Fair (+2) opposition plus one rank for each general or specific threat to be blocked by the ward. If you know a threat's True Name, adding them to the ward won't increase the opposition. Once created, the ward extends from one side of a zone to the other and rotates and moves when the sacrifice does. You can oppose any attempts to cross the ward with your Warding. This power is less subtle than a normal ward, and all threats encounter a **Walking Ward** as an invisible barrier. In contrast to the normal rules for Warding (*The Secrets of Cats*, page 14), a **Walking Ward** can enter an area protected by another ward. If the animating magic is destroyed, then the **Walking Ward** is immediately terminated as well. To take this stunt, you must have Animate (*The Secrets of Cats*, page 18).



Chapter 6: Forbidden Magic

“I am going to close your lesson for today with a discussion of forbidden magic.”

Jezzabella pauses for effect and looks at each of you in turn. By her side, Sable stands up and stretches, arching his back and kneading the ground with his claws. A quiet murmur of excitement ripples through the audience. After a few moments, Jezzabella speaks again.

“What is it that draws some cats to forbidden magic? In most cases, it is a belief that the end justifies the means. Faced with a terrible situation, even a good cat can turn to forbidden magic to snatch victory from the jaws of defeat. But once evil is planted inside you, it grows and grows until there is nothing left of you and only the evil remains.

“There is a human saying that ‘power corrupts’—showing that they are not entirely stupid. Cats who succumb to the temptation to learn forbidden techniques rarely begin with evil in mind, but they quickly come to rely on the vast power unlocked by sapient sacrifice. As their power grows, so does their corruption, and even one who began with the best of intentions will ultimately become a threat to all.”

Forbidden Stunts

“Some say we should keep young cats like you ignorant of the feats that are possible with forbidden magic so you aren’t tempted, but I say you need to know so you can be vigilant for signs of corruption in your fellow cats in your everyday life.”

The systems and costs for forbidden magic are in *The Secrets of Cats: Animals & Threats* (“**Evil Cats**” starting on page 31).

The following stunts will give you some idea of what’s possible with the massive amount of magical energy unleashed with a sapient sacrifice. Players, these are primarily intended for antagonists to use, but if you want one, you can buy it if the group agrees. Learning forbidden magic usually requires a teacher—whether that’s an evil cat, a sorcerer, or an evil book (the Nekonomicon, maybe?)—but sometimes a cat will develop such a stunt on their own.

I Know His Name (Exclusive Naming): This stunt is forbidden by most Parliaments of Cats, but it does not *require* a sapient sacrifice and therefore does not automatically corrupt the feline who uses it. Without a sapient sacrifice, though, using it carries significant risks. Once you sacrifice an animal to activate this power, you must roll Naming defended by Will or Naming whenever you first see a new sapient being. The power lasts until the end of the scene.

If you fail, they magically learn your True Name and get a free invoke on it.

- If you tie, they magically learn your True Name, but you get the free invoke on it.
- If you succeed, you magically learn their True Name with a free invoke, but they also learn your True Name without a free invoke.
- If you succeed with style, you magically learn their True Name with a free invoke.

If you sacrificed a sapient being to activate this power—with all of the corrupting effects that come along with it (*The Secrets of Cats: Animals & Threats*, page 31)—then anyone who would get your True Name gets the True Name of the sacrifice instead.

Illusory Reality (Exclusive Illusion): You can sacrifice a sapient being in the presence of your target—whose True Name you must know—to create a personalized illusion for them that replaces everything they experience until the next new moon. You can set up an illusory overlay that makes them see reality differently—for example, surrounding everything with fire and flames as if they were literally in Hell—or you can make them experience anything you want as long as you can see them. Doing this requires an action but no roll. The victim can create an advantage with Illusion or Notice, actively opposed by your Illusion, to get momentary *Glimpses of Reality*, allowing them to experience the real world whenever they invoke it. To take this stunt, you must have Selective Illusion (page 19).

Liquid Form (Exclusive Shaping): It's a common joke that cats are a liquid, but in your case it's true. You can sacrifice a sapient being and use the energy released to radically alter your internal structure, becoming a living liquid that can change form at will until the next sunrise or sunset. In this form you can completely change your shape, letting you even flow through small holes, and you're immune to physical trauma except for being burned with fire or acid. As a puddle of liquid you can move up to one zone per exchange—including up vertical walls—or you can maintain an apparently normal form. People can chop off parts of you by creating advantages, but you can re-assimilate the missing parts by touching them. Your dismembered parts will turn into puddles and try to flow to wherever the biggest mass of you is. While you're in this form, you can use Shaping once per turn without using an action, but if you want to use Shaping and take an action on your turn, roll with the higher of Shaping and the other skill and split your result between the two actions.

Example: You want to grow bigger and to attack on your turn, and you roll ☹☹☹☹. Your Shaping is Great (+4) and your Fight is Good (+3). Your Shaping is higher, so you use that for a total result of Superb (+5). Growing one size step

with the Shaping roll encounters Fair (+2) opposition, and your opponent will actively defend against your attack. You decide to prioritize growing in size, so you allocate a result of Good (+3) to the Shaping roll, leaving the Fair (+2) result for your attack.



Permanent Potion (Exclusive Alchemy): You use the sacrificed soul of a sapient being as an ingredient in one of your alchemical potions. The resulting potion is supremely potent and its effects are permanent. You can make a poison that will never stop attacking its victim, permanently give a drinker the ability to breathe fire, and so on. It is possible for a master Alchemist to brew a potion to counteract one of your permanent potions, but this requires very rare and exotic ingredients that are themselves worthy of a story.

That's Not How It Happened (Exclusive Seeking): Rather than a cryptic message about the future, you can gain a true and accurate vision. To do so, you must sacrifice a sapient being and draw in their essence just before you sleep, then roll Seeking against Fair (+2) opposition. If you succeed, you gain a **Future Vision** of a dramatic encounter that lies ahead. You can use this vision to aid you during a future conflict or contest that you decide is the scene you witnessed in your dream. During this scene, you can invoke **Future Vision** at any point during an exchange to rewind the exchange to the beginning and start it all over again. This undoes everything that happened in the exchange, representing the fact that you're using your vision of the future to change what happens. When the exchange unfolds for the second time, you must take a different action than you did the first time. You can only rewind any given exchange once, and once you run out

of fate points the vision's usefulness is at an end. To take this stunt, you must have Prognostication (*The Secrets of Cats*, page 24).

Time Ward (Exclusive Warding): You can sacrifice a sapient being and use the energy released by their death to fortify your body, mind, and soul against the ravages of time. From the moment you activate this stunt, your body stops aging. This makes you immortal, but the magic must be refreshed with a new sapient sacrifice once every hundred years. If you fail to refresh the Time Ward, then all your years crash in on you at once. Because the ward freezes your body in time, you don't have to eat and you're immune to poisons and diseases. The downside of this is that your wounds don't heal normally—after all, healing takes time. Your physical consequences recover normally for the purposes of stress absorption, but leave permanent and unusually livid scars.

“Of course, this is just a small sample of the terrible things that cats who turn to evil can accomplish with their magic. There are always new and more horrendous effects to watch out for, and it is vital that you stay alert and informed.”

The Path to Redemption

“It is possible for a cat who has corrupted himself through the use of forbidden magic to find redemption, but it is a difficult path to walk. First, he must want to redeem himself. This is no simple matter when the use of forbidden magic has twisted his True Name and his very being into something dark. It takes a very great trauma for an evil cat to find the motivation to change, such as realizing that he has murdered everyone he holds dear or done something truly heinous to serve nobody but himself.”

If the group agrees that an evil cat—one who has sacrificed a sapient being and used their life energy for magic at least once—has experienced a traumatic enough life event that it makes them re-evaluate their pursuit of power, they can begin a redemption arc.

Also, if you take out an evil cat in a mental conflict, you can inflict an extreme consequence that starts them on their path to redemption.

To complete their redemption, the contrite cat must never again use forbidden magic and make amends to those they've harmed with their actions in pursuit and use of forbidden magic.

If they succeed in doing this, at their next major milestone they can delete the **Power-Addicted** keyword from their high concept or trouble. At the next major milestone after that, if they have continued to refrain from using forbidden magic and to make amends, they can change their True Name to something new that reflects their redemption, and can exchange any or all of their forbidden magic stunts for points of refresh.

A cat who has sacrificed other felines has a much longer road to redemption. They must do each of these in turn at a major milestone during their redemption arc:

Untwist one of their aspects that has been turned toward evil by sacrificing a feline, repeating this process until all have been cleansed.

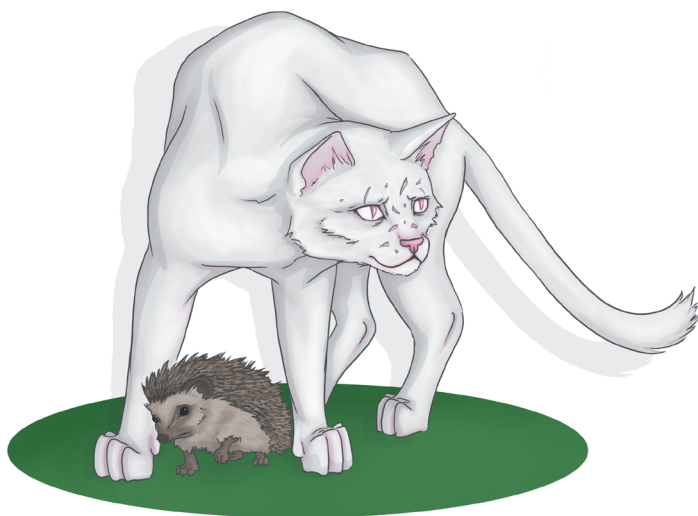
Reduce the **Power-Mad** keyword in their high concept or trouble to **Power-Addicted**.

Change their True Name from something truly evil to something merely twisted.

Delete the **Power-Addicted** keyword from their high concept or trouble.

Change their True Name to something new that reflects their redemption. They can now exchange any or all of their forbidden magic stunts for points of refresh. If they had become a Master of multiple schools of magic by sacrificing other cats, they maintain this mastery.

Coda



“But now we come to the main purpose of your lesson...to see how we deal with a cat who knows rather more about forbidden magic than he should...isn’t that right, Sable?”

As Jezzabella speaks, a trio of cats jump down and surround Sable, an entrap ward flaring to life around him.

“What...what is this?” he asks, his eyes widening in alarm.

“This,” Jezzabella purrs, as one of the newly arrived cats drops a squirming mouse with crippled back legs at her feet, “is an intervention.”