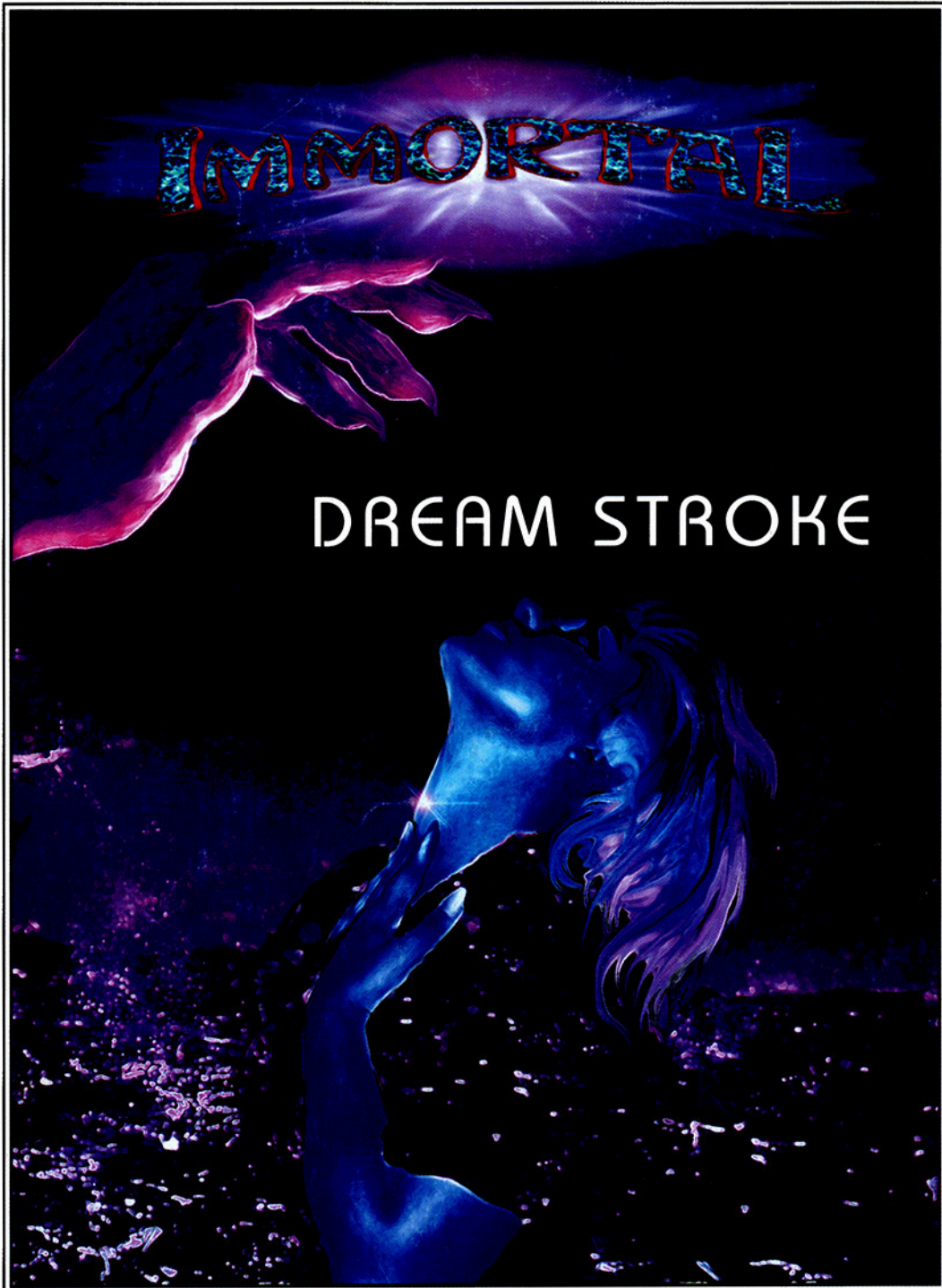


A Story of Obsession and Revenge



Narrator's Episode Script

Ackels ♦ Brown ♦ Hewitt ♦ Von Gries

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Dedicated to: Jeff and Melissa for all of your support, and to the gypsies.

IMMORTAL TM was created by Ran Ackels

IMPORTANT NOTICE: IMMORTAL is mature in its situations and themes. Parental guidance may be advisable in the case of children wishing to participate in the experience. Immortal is a work of fiction. Persons having difficulty distinguishing the boundaries between fantasy and reality are expressly discouraged from reading or taking part in the experience.



DREAM STROKE

An Episode Script for *IMMORTAL*

"The magic that fills our souls, hides us from the status quo;
in the hunts we gain our fame, the mortal heart to twist and tame."

Invisible Fingers

Adrai of the Anopheles, 9600 BC

Ife (ee-fay) n. 1. The name of any one of the first seven mantles, existing as dimensions removed from the Habitat, located somewhere in modern day Africa. Within one of the cities of Ife is said to be the resting place of the true Ark of the Conundrum, locked away from immortal influence. The other six contain false objects designed to confuse those who seek the power of the true Ark. . .

-- Logos Immortalia, The Alexandria Collection

“ . . . There I beheld the most ancient of nights and beneath it a mountain which flashed with fires of many colors. And within the fires stood a temple, which was built on a foundation of precious stones. All of these stones shone with brilliance and splendor, yet inside them was likewise the eye of the beast. Then Mercari, one of the deathless Morrigan, spoke of the beauty of the shrine and the power that beat like a heart within it. And as my illusion covered me, I believed him lost to the seduction of the stones. As I had been told, he was one of those who had fallen to the darkness of the Sanguinary.

I exclaimed: “Truly this place is pleasing to behold, and the sight of its treasures delightful!”

Then Mercari, who presided over this place, answered: “Why dost thou inquire over the treasures of this place?”

Afraid, I replied, “I am desirous of instruction.”

The eye of Mercari fell upon me as two shining coins of gold, and I felt as glass. I pulled my raiment, which was illusion, over my face.

“Dost thou know what power lies here?” Mercari replied. “Heaven is suspended from it. By its will the sun and moon are given completion to their course and the stars make their progress for ever and ever. Over the breathings of the sky this power is held, and over the blowing of the winds. The secrets of thunder are placed under it, and the splendor of lightnings. Also the treasure of frost and hail and dew and rain. By its power, this place is made strong.”

And I could not answer, for I knew my covering, which was illusion, was weak before this immortal. My eyes stared into the gold of his eyes, and I saw the pupils of the eagle and heard the fierce beating of wings inside his own raiment as his himself sought escape from the ground.

I sought to call a whirlwind to carry me away, but he withheld the breathings around me with a command. I prepared for death and the failing of my oaths to the Anopheles.

“Answer me.” Mercari said, and his voice was as the thunder from the highest air.

And a fury was kindled in my heart, so that I felt consumed with heat. So I answered him with the voice of the leopard: “There is no power here but for the corruption of our kind.”

Then did Mercari laugh, a pleasing sound to the ears and it did salute me.

“Thou art still pure.” He replied, but his voice was quieter now, as the breeze is quiet. “Let us gather our hosts and ride upon this place so that we may confer peace upon the world and make safe all of the habitations. Let us not count the length of days, but come with the power of our voice and break the Shard within this temple for ever.”

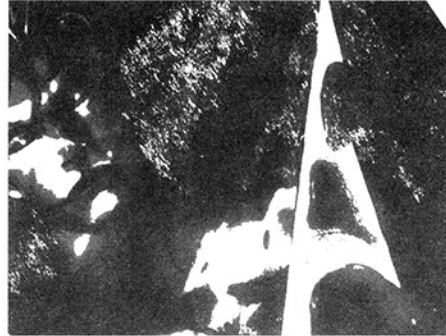
-- Excerpt from the *Book Of Shards*

388000 BC Adrai, pride Anopheles

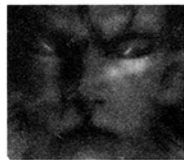
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BEGINNINGS

Dream Stroke is an episode for dramatizing the Immortal experience. It is offered as the jumping-off point for a new cadre, but can easily be incorporated into an ongoing campaign. It is intended to be viewed solely by Narrators and should not be read by anyone who intends to participate as an actor. The episode is set in the modern world where immortals exist secretly within human society and thrive in ancient countries just beyond human perception.

The purpose of this episode is to introduce a newly awakening cadre of immortals (the Narrator's group of participant actors) to the basic concepts of immortal role playing. Secondly, it will provide opportunities for both the Narrator and the personas (players) to experiment with the mechanics of the game as well as to quantify and record the abilities of each player persona. Events that occur within the episode will generate plot seeds which the Narrator may use to develop spin-off episodes of his own. In this way the events of this episode may be used to springboard into an ongoing series, the ultimate conclusion of which is entirely in the Narrator's hands.

NOTE TO EXPERIENCED ROLE PLAYERS:

Unlike most other role playing experiences, Immortal does not begin with the creation or "rolling-up" of an artificial character. The Narrator's cast will take the role of themselves in the act of remembering their true nature as immortal beings. The experience begins immediately without any prefatory dice rolling or filling out of "character sheets". It is the first task of every Narrator to assist his cast in their reawakening. As the production of this episode commences and unfolds, the unique qualities which distinguish each of the cast will be developed "off-the-cuff" by both Narrator and cast.

At the conclusion of this episode, sufficient information about each persona in the cast will have been generated for the Narrator to fill out a Persona Record Sheet for each player. These can be handed out sometime prior to the beginning of a subsequent episode. It may be useful to take a few notes as the drama unfolds, and the cast reacts, so that important facts about the personas "remembered" in the heat of the

moment can be captured on the record sheets later. The Immortal Pilot Pack contains an ample supply of record sheets for nearly any cadre, as well as a brief episode which may be staged prior to this one if desired. The main rules guide also contains a character sheet that may be photocopied.

The Narrator may also wish to schedule private cast interviews with the participants in order to put some finishing touches on their persona records, get feedback on the events of the episode and discuss personal motivations for the future direction of the series. The questionnaire provided on page 134 of the main rules guide may come in handy as a means of shedding light on the more subjective aspects of each persona. Don't worry if not all blanks on the persona record sheet are clearly established during this episode. More details relevant to each persona will emerge in subsequent dramas. In fact, the entire Immortal experience is an evolving process for defining persona. For now all that need be established are a few fundamentals. If, by the conclusion of the first episode, the following aspects of each persona have been defined, then you and your cast are well on your way:

- **Pride affiliation (Prior to entering Iethe).**
- **Himsati form.**
- **One or two known Attentions/Serenades.**
- **A few Talents.**

Further, each persona begins with a starting pool of 15 immaculum. Try to establish...

- **The relative amount of immaculum dedicated to forte in each halo color.**
- **The amount of free floating immaculum.**

Some personas will incline toward more total halo than just 15 points of immaculum. No problem. Extra immaculum will simply deduct from the total memory allocated to the initial persona (see page 93 of the main rules guide).

In addition to these, Narrators may wish to keep an eye out for opportunities to establish each persona's **Predilection** (personality type) and **Calling** (sacred career within the Perpetual Society.)

Keep in mind that some of your cast will be more outgoing and adaptive to the experience than others. Not all personas will be fleshed out to the same extent by the time this episode comes to an end. This is as it should be.

It may turn out that one actor may not know what his himsati form is, and another may be unaware of the calling to which he belongs. Let these missing details shroud such participants in an aura of mystery that will add dramatic suspense for all to enjoy. Their true nature will be revealed in a subsequent session — usually in a way that explains their former reserve as a matter of sly calculation. Such missing information can become the pivotal point about which an entire future episode turns.

STAGE DIRECTIONS

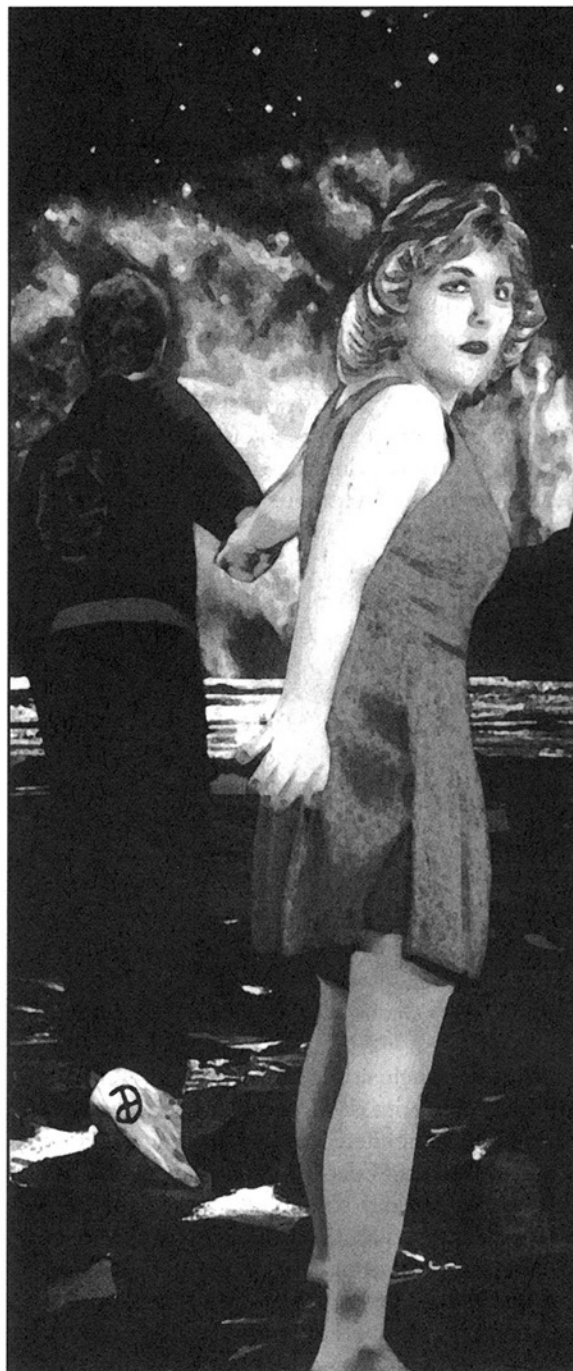
This book is a script for the staging of a dramatic production. The production might take place in your living room, at the kitchen table, sitting in a circle at a nearby park, or wherever else convenience and the imagination of the Narrator may intersect.

Prior to the production's start, you (the Narrator) will have assembled a cast at the location you have decide upon. The cast will ideally consist of four to six people, be they friends, family, acquaintances, or coworkers, each of whom is interested in enjoying a dramatic role playing experience. The cast may be smaller or larger than the "ideal" and none of the participants require any previous role playing experience, acting experience, or knowledge of Immortal. Age is not usually a factor nor are any other personal factors other than the maturity to experience the episode positively. It is the Narrator's responsibility to guide the experience and make sure each of the cast members benefits from participation.

A great deal can be done with lighting, costumes, extras, audio, video and other props to enhance the impact of this episode and your subsequent Immortal productions. However, for the sake of keeping preparation time to a minimum, nothing more than elementary stage directions have been provided. You can begin the episode with no setup and no special preparation beyond reading this script. Conversely, if you wish to put more time into your production you may wish to refer to the section titled Elements of the Experience beginning on page 245 of the main rules guide.

Stage directions are provided to assist you in creating an effective and enjoyable production. As with everything else in this script, however, feel free to alter them at will so as to realize this episode in the manner most satisfying to yourself and the cast.

Throughout the rest of this script various types of stage direction appear either boxed or in a sidebar adjacent to the main text body. Each type is distinguished by a special icon. The types of stage direction and the icons associated with them are as follows:





CENTER STAGE CUES. These directions normally point out opportunities during the production to focus the main action of the plot on a single persona with a given predilection. By bringing each persona in your cast to “center stage” at least once during each episode you will enrich the experience for the cast as a whole. In this episode (since the predilections of most cast members may be a mystery to start), center stage cues have a reverse usage, i.e., they help to establish which cast members have a certain predilection based on how each reacts to situations in the plot.



CHARACTER NOTES. These directions usually refer to the motivations, thoughts and actions of non-participant personas being dramatized by the Narrator. They often suggest courses of action for such characters or explain their behavior in a way that the Narrator may extrapolate as necessary.



MEDIA CUES. These directions refer to the use of audio, video and other media to enhance the production. There are no media cues scripted for this episode. However, you may wish to write in your own depending on your desires for the final production.



PLOT CUES. These directions often refer to action that is taking place “off stage” by personas dramatized by the Narrator. Otherwise they may refer to directions the plot may take as a result of the actor’s choices in the production, or may help guide a scene.



SETTING NOTES. This type of direction is designed to provide details that will enhance the depth of your settings. Draw upon these at will to add realism and dimension during opportune moments of the production.



SYSTEM NOTES. Usually these directions point out opportunities and methods for teaching your cast a mechanical or conceptual aspect of Immortal. Often they will be presented as pre-designed “flashbacks” to past memories which illustrate a particular idea. Sometimes they may be supplied as optional situations that can be added to the main action as a means to try out a given mechanic or rule. Sometimes a system note will appear in order to provide the Narrator with new information about an aspect of the Immortal rules or refresh his memory about the rules relevant to current action in the plot.

Guidance

To maximize the effectiveness of the material provided in this script, the Narrator should be prepared to adapt the structure of the episode to the normal routines of the personas in the cast. For example: the script calls for all the cast to be watching TV together when the program is interrupted by a “terrorist” broadcast. If one or more of your cast members normally doesn’t watch television, a rationale will need to be constructed for why they have decided to break their routine on this particular night. The closer you can make the script conform to real patterns in the lives of your cast, the easier it will be for them to suspend disbelief and be captivated by the action of your production.

For a successful launch of this episode, the Narrator will find it necessary to strongly emphasize that a warm and vitally close relationship pre-exists between the personas and **Monica Ferrar** (see the “Supporting Cast” appendix). To the personas, she must come across as someone long familiar, trustworthy and loyal despite the fact that she has not been a part of their twilight existence of the last decades. Make the point repeatedly that Monica is a member of the cast’s own cadre, a friend separated from them long ago after they had gone together into Kenya in search of the fabled Mentors. This vital relationship should be employed to lead the personas toward an attempt to rescue their comrade, and to discover what she’s been up to for the last half-century. Added to this, Monica is a beautiful, vivacious woman whose charms are not easy to dismiss, especially when she is encountered in her own dreamspace.

Your actors may feel, at times, inundated by the amount of information presented to them in this episode. After all, their personas are being pulled from out of a “normal” life and thrust into the mysteries of a world beyond all previous knowledge or experience. For this reason, the Narrator should allow the actors a lull between most scenes, ample time for them to gain their bearings and make their own plans. If the cast wants to spend a lot of time on a very small aspect of the plot, or wishes to diverge from the script for prolonged periods while exploring aspects of the episode unforeseen by the authors, so be it. This is the beauty and wonder of role playing — let it happen.

It is also important to blend as much of the mundane modern world into the fantastic as possible. This keeps the personas firmly rooted in the human world they are used to, allowing easier adaptation to the many strange concepts, sights, and events they will experience in the episode.

Personas who display an affinity with certain types of animals, or a fascination with jewels, metals, fire, water or mythological creatures may be considered to be subconsciously reflecting their true himsati identity. To add interest when a persona "remembers" his himsati, you may wish to narrate an interesting childhood memory (apparently forgotten until now) that revolves around a meeting with an animal in the wild (or even in the city). Immortals who are not tainted draw the affinity of animals similar to their own himsatis. As another example, an obsession with fire can lead to the knowledge of the persona's fiery core of existence, while sunlight, the companion of fire, may force the persona to withdraw into the night while he is tainted.

Dreams and Flashbacks

Dreams and flashbacks are integral to the success of this episode. The majority of the main concepts of the Immortal experience, as well as the entire past history of events preceding this episode, will be imparted to the cast by means of dreams and flashbacks. Everything else they learn will derive from the words and deeds of supporting cast members under the direction of the Narrator. While a number of dreams and flashbacks are delineated in the script, the Narrator should feel very comfortable with jumping into a flashback whenever he wishes to teach the cast an important point about the plot or the Immortal universe.

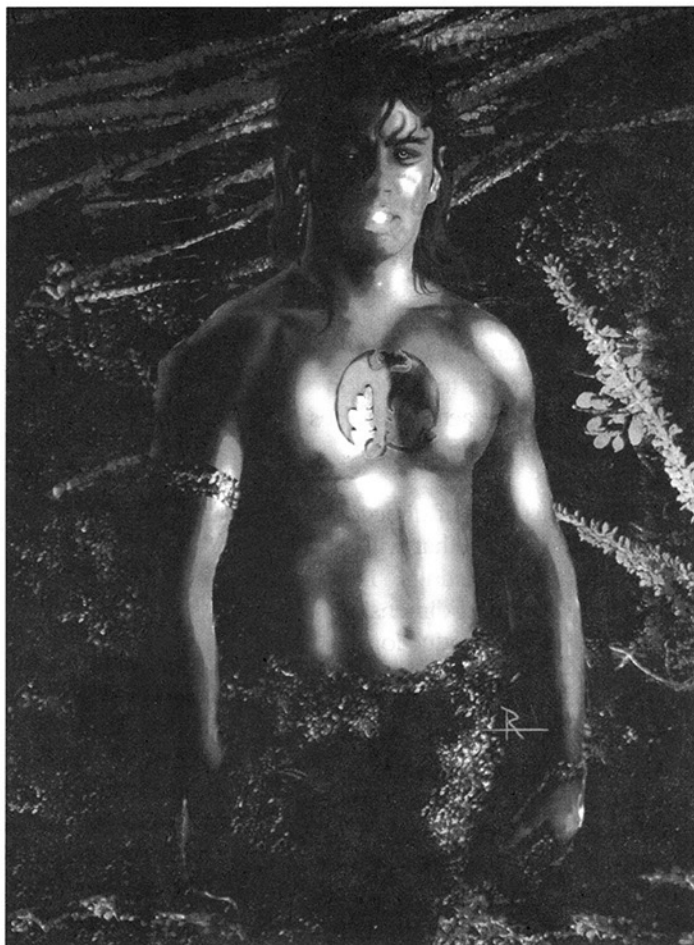
Creating flashbacks on the fly is easy once you get the hang of it. Simply focus intensely on a single member of the cast and tell him that his perception has suddenly slipped back to a

moment from his past. Choose an exciting time, place, or person drawn from history or legend and use this as the canvas upon which your point will be illustrated. Now put your cast member into the picture, either on the center stage of the moment or (as is sometimes better) involved in the action from the point of view of a secondary character. For example, your flashback might place your actor in the role of Anthony as he argues with Cleopatra just prior to the sacking of Alexandria. Essentially the same flashback can be narrated from the point of view of Anthony's personal advisor; someone who watches the argument and then discusses it with Anthony after Cleopatra storms out.

In this episode most flashbacks will reveal a basic concept (the fact that all immortals have a himsati form, the luminous nature of their halo, the workings of the Panacea, etc.) or will be

used to tell the story of those past events which drive the present episode. The complete story of these past events is provided to the Narrator herein under the section titled *Prequel*.

Still, flashbacks can also be used as a device within this episode to reveal glimpses of each persona's past lives, those unrelated to present events. It is a natural weakening of the lethe rite that



causes the cadre to remember their immortal identities after having existed for decades within the Habitat as twilights. Make each flashback as realistic as possible, as if the persona were really there. Within a flashback the Narrator has the

option of simply describing past events as they occurred, or of allowing an actor to actually role-play his flashback, adding dialogue and action throughout. This technique can give many flashbacks more of an air of personal authenticity.

Eventually the cast will come to realize that the landscape of dreams (the dreamspace) can be hazardous to fully-realized immortals. Until that moment, the cast will learn from their dreams much which concerns the main action of the plot. As the cast slowly emerges from lethe, struggling to dredge up memories of their last days as immortals, their dreams will offer up haunting visions leading ultimately to the discovery of when and why they chose to hide themselves amidst the sea of human faces. During this period the Morpheum will seem to be far more real than even the waking world of the Habitat.

The cadre for this episode entered lethe in the 1940s as a disguise assumed to escape a powerful immortal known to them only as the Shrike. Thwarted by the Ingenue in the past, the Shrike continues to search for them in the present. Following this realization, the Morpheum should lose its feeling of security for the cast and should be characterized as a dangerous landscape, the lair of the Sanguinary itself. Nevertheless, it is only in their dreams that the personas will be able to communicate with Monica, who has withdrawn entirely away from her fears that lurk in the Habitat.

One last bit of guidance. Familiarize yourself as much as possible with the mechanics of *Immortal: The Invisible War* (the main rules guide for this experience) before the episode begins. The quick-start guide included with the *Immortal Pilot Pack* may help. There is a lot to absorb, but your cast will expect to learn everything from you. To answer their questions you will want to internalize the rules to such an extent as your time and interest permits. Know also the likely goals of your actors. Their goals should form a substantial element in the implementation of the script. Finally, try to be familiar with the objectives of the supporting cast under your direction, this will help make your performance of them all the more believable.

SYNOPSIS

The first tryst, a world creating being of tremendous power, has been forever entombed by the immortals which engendered him, four beings known to legend as the Mentors. Upon these the tryst would wreak a terrible vengeance. To this end it has laid a complex trap, sprung from out of dream compulsions implanted in the mind of a singularly beautiful immortal, Monica Ferrar. However, the tryst's hand in the plot will remain veiled until the climax.



The Mentors have themselves been buried alive in a remote part of Africa. The apparent source of action in the plot will spring from their quest for freedom and vengeance upon pride Morrigan. The plot will be resolved when the Mentors and the tryst confront one another to create a climax.

The cast of this episode represents a cadre of recently awakened Ingenue. In the course of the episode the cast will:

- * Begin or continue the discovery of their true nature as immortals.
- * Remember certain facts concerning their pasts and their abilities.
- * Come into contact with an old friend and go to her aid.
- * Be drawn into the swirl of intrigue that is Perpetual Society.

- * Respond to a variety of antagonists, mortal and immortal.
- * Travel to Kenya in search of a lost artifact — the Ark of the Conundrum.
- * Either avoid or become embroiled in the plots of prides Anopheles and Terat.
- * Either resist or assist the Mentors in their attempt to re-manifest.
- * Be drawn into a mantle for a climactic encounter with the tryst who created it.

The way in which the cast responds to this series of plot points will reveal much concerning their immortal personas. It is this exploration of alternative personality that the episode is intended to arouse.

In **Chapter One** the cadre wakes from a condition of lethe (if they have not already done so in a prior episode) and regains contact with an old friend who is now in dire trouble. The cast will be drawn to her aid and consequently will become introduced to the intrigue and politics central to Perpetual Society. The chapter climaxes with a battle at the local TV station. From this conflict the cast will emerge with a friend badly wounded as well as many more questions than answers.

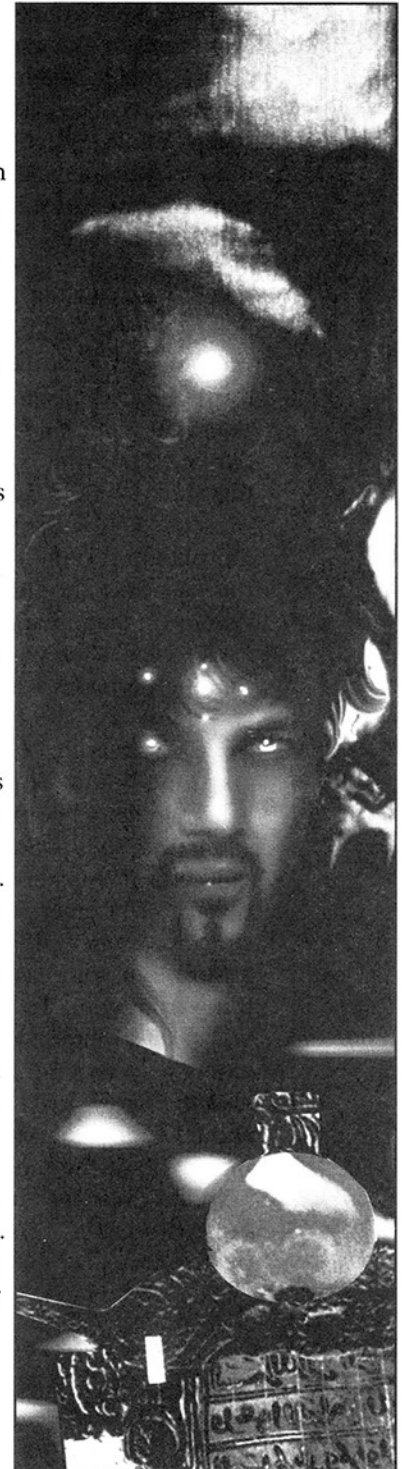
Chapter Two centers around discovery of information. The fast pace of the plot is maintained through pursuit by (and the constant threat of conflict with) a host of opposing elements, ranging from agents of the prides (especially Nimrod and Banjax), a Mentor gossamer known as the Shrike, and the insidious menace represented by the twilight order of the Apocrypha. Flashbacks and dreams will reveal the cadre's pivotal past connection with the Mentors, originating with an archeological expedition of the 1940's. The cadre will realize the necessity of mounting another expedition to Africa in a quest to find a relic called the Ark of the Conundrum and the lost city of Ife. The chapter climaxes when the cadre is assaulted by one or more of the pursuing forces (most likely either a Mentor or the Nimrod) and flees to Africa.

In **Chapter Three** the cadre arrives in Africa, where they must contend with an unfamiliar environment and uncertain politics of the stratagem. Nairobi is a stronghold of the Anopheles, and unless they take active steps, the cadre will be drawn into an Anopheles plot to count coup against the Terat. The Shrike will

attempt to have his vox brought into the vicinity of his ark, so that he may corporeally manifest. If this is not enough to keep matters interesting, the Nimrod continue their pursuit of the cadre and the Shrike. Ultimately, the cast will play a part in a confrontation between Anopheles and Terat. As the chapter reaches its climax on the slopes of Mount Elgon, a storm sweeps in heralding the opening of the Ife mantle.

Chapter Four Drawn inexorably into the Mantle of Ife, the personas find themselves scattered within an abandoned ancient city. Each persona is challenged to either cooperate with or flee from a member of the supporting cast who has played a part in the cadre's pursuit throughout the previous chapters. Each persona will confront a series of nightmare monsters that must be overcome before a final showdown with the mad tryst that sustains the mantle and guards the Ark. If the cast can destroy the tryst, the mantle will be thrown into a state of disruption, and the cadre will find themselves back in the wilds of Kenya.

The episode concludes with judgment from the Jury. Discovery of what was perhaps the oldest mantle in existence, and proof of their abilities as members of the Perpetual Society may lead the Jury to grant the actors a mote of visage. Depending on the individual acts of various cast members, the Narrator should also reward them with motes of memory. The personas will be able to work their way back to their homes, or will perhaps become embroiled in a subsequent episode outside the scope of this script.



It should be noted that this episode can easily be extended to greater length both through the addition of sub-plots generated by the Narrator or provoked by the actions of the cast, or by devoting more time to scene description, flashbacks and character dialogue. We encourage the extension of scenes where any of the personas are having a great time role playing.

It is expected that during the course of the episode many questions will arise which will remain unresolved as of the finale. Too, flashbacks and minor characters introduced by the Narrator will open up vistas of the past or future which will remain to be explored. These elements will all provide ideas for further episodes in an ongoing series. When your thoughts turn to scripting subsequent episodes, keep in mind the many different approaches that are possible (see page 242 of the main rules guide). Entire episodes can take place in the past (through the device of a flashback or serenade) or in a world quite different from the modern habitat (through the device of a mantle) or even in a surreal context of ever changing reality (through the device of the Morpheum). Only imagination will limit where you and your cast will go when this episode is over. Wherever you go — enjoy!



Settings and Approaches

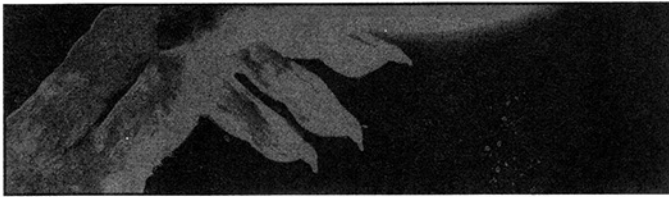
This script utilizes a variety of settings and approaches in order to give both the Narrator and the cast a taste of the wide variety possible in immortal productions. The main action of the plot will unfold in places familiar (your home town) as well as exotic (Africa and the Morpheum). The plot will advance both in real time and also by means of flashbacks dramatized to provide intensity equal to events in the present. Feel free as the Narrator to modify any or all of the settings called for in this script, especially to reflect places with which you are personally familiar. Such familiarity makes it much easier to narrate detailed sensory descriptions (sights, sounds, smells, etc.) for each setting, which in turn will make the settings seem all the more realistic to your cast. A brief overview of each setting called for in the script follows:

Anytown

The episode begins in your home town, probably in the living room of either the Narrator or one of the cast members. All of the events in Chapter One will occur in your home town. Depending on the actions chosen by the cast, much of Chapter Two may occur in the same place. A definite location for action will be in and around a local TV station facility. Homes of the cast members, nearby repositories of information (such as local schools, libraries, museums, and colleges) and the roads connecting these places are all likely to become the settings for action — depending on the choices of the cast. Be prepared with small details to describe these familiar places in ways that contrast the comfortable images of the past with the uncertainty and danger of events in this episode.

E X A M P L E

"You turn off the freeway at the 7th street exit, hang a left on Washington and soon begin to see the familiar red glow of the Channel 3 sign blinking through your windshield like the eye of an angry Cyclops. Only now the eye is awash in a luminous sea of blue; the lights of what must be a hundred police cars surround the TV station, spinning in chaotic circles that make you clench your fist with mounting tension."



The Morpheum

At the conclusion of Chapter Two, most cast members will sleep. More importantly, they will dream. At this point in the episode, keep in mind that the land of dreams, the Morpheum, is a place of wonder and terror in the mind of an immortal, even those initiated into the Sleeper calling. Here is the lair of the Sanguinary, the ultimate enemy of all immortal kind. Entrance into the Morpheum is subtle, a shifting from the waking state to the topography of dreams. In many cases, the personas will not know they are dreaming until something completely foreign to their perception presents itself. Thus, the more cleverly devised the dreamspace, the more difficult for an immortal (or twilight) to be aware that he is asleep. Only those initiated in the Sleeper Calling can pierce this deceptive illusion and realize, at all times, where they are.

The Ingenue are still leaving lethe, a process that may take them years, perhaps even a century to finally shake. While most immortals are in danger of discovery by the Sanguinary in the Morpheum, the Ingenue need not worry. Their visage is not sufficient to alert the Sanguinary to their presence. . .yet.

Any type of scene description is fair game in the Morpheum. Anything goes. A so-called Pandemonium dreamspace will generally exist in a state of constant flux (the scene will frequently change for no apparent reason). Distortions, both temporal and spatial (people might appear to move in slow motion, walls might seem to slope at impossible angles) and fluidity (mists, floating objects, and shifting patterns of light and energy) may be omnipresent. Contrasting this is the Shady, a dreamspace constructed with care to make the dreamer feel as if what occurs to him is absolutely real. Beyond these dreamspaces lie the endless expanse of the Sanguinary's realm, filled with the bubbles of other dreamspaces as a barren plain is filled with stones. And in the center of this, the dreaded Hush-hush, where the beast itself sleeps in cocoons spun out of nightmares.

Nairobi, Kenya

Beginning with Chapter Three, the action shifts to the sweeping grasslands and bustling cities of Africa. Here the exotic nature of the location can be used to heighten overall interest in the episode while hinting at tremendous past experiences known to the personas...but presently just outside of memory. Be sure to keep a steady flow of scene description and portentous clues intermixed with your narration of the action.



E x a m p l e

"As you walk through the open-aired market, the smell of rain is carried on the wind, a wind that causes the bright clothing of the local people around you to billow in clouds of fabric. The rich blend of languages, Swahili and English, share the wind with the cries of songbirds. You halt for a moment next to a market bin, hands lightly brushing over a mound of shiny beads. There is something powerful building in you. . . a sense of deja vu. You realize, as the first drops of rain fall on the stone street, that you have been here before."



The Mantle of Ife

The many spired, rune encrusted towers of Ife rise to a night-dark sky amidst a deathly silence appropriate to a tomb which has remained closed and (almost) lifeless for untold millennia. Here, the first born tryst sustains the entire reality of the mantle as a pure creation of his mind, focused by the awareness derived from an immortal parentage on one side and a powerful religarum force inherited from a twilight parent on the other. Shadows and creatures born of boredom, madness and despair stalk the silent streets of Ife. The constantly shifting layout of its ancient boulevards makes



any sense of navigation at once futile and absurd.

The action of Chapter Four takes place almost entirely within the mantle of Ife, a created reality just beyond the world of human perception, inhabited by the Ife tryst and the products which spring from its long demented imagination. Ife is a city upon which every surface has been carved with words and inscriptions that extend forever in all directions, seemingly without repetition. The city presents hues of steely gray and blue, narrow streets cobbled in polished dark ivory, and omnipresent towers and statuary that everywhere vie with one another for attention. Here and there, liquid metal statues rise up from mercurial pools. Never finished, the constant scaffolding that covers the city is a haunting reminder of this quicksilver corporeality.

P R E Q U E L

The Temple

Over six million years ago, the Sanguinary (manifesting itself in the form of the Rime, its first avatar) deceived a majority of immortals in prides Morrigan and Tautha into gathering together the conundrum, jewel-like fragments of its original shattered body. Most of the major conundrum fragments were assembled together from all corners of the earthly Habitat. These were then placed in a temple at the center of the vast deserts of Sheol. After fusing these conundrum into a single object known as the Malice Shard, the duped immortals brought the beast step-by-step closer to its terrestrial incarnation.

The last ingredient planned to be added to the relic was known as the Red Acumen Shard. This conundrum, housing the core consciousness of the Sanguinary, was kept within a sarcophagus known to immortals as the **Ark of the**

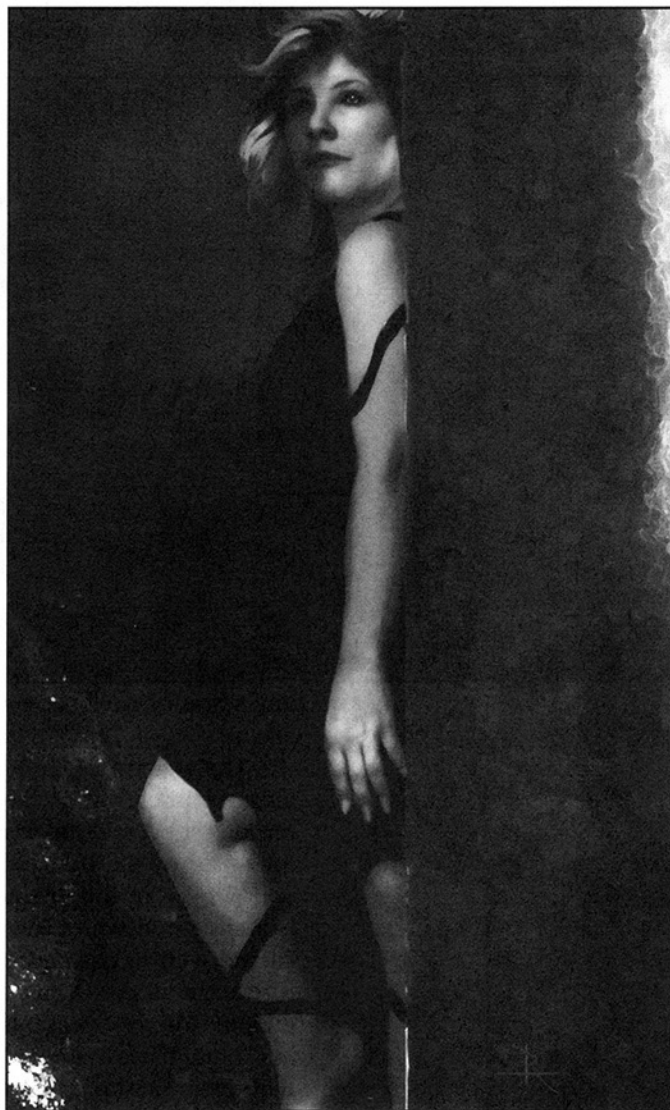
Conundrum. Over millions of years, Immaculum was infused into the Ark, enriching it to vast levels of energy which approached the point where it might allow the Sanguinary to

restore its original form. Around the Malice Shard itself, the immortals attached bones, muscles, and organs which they had procured by sacrificing the members of enemy prides upon their temple altar.

Thus a giant monstrosity composed of jewel fragments and stolen flesh waited within the temple of the Morrigan for the day when the Ark would accumulate the immaculum life-force necessary to animate the Sanguinary for all eternity.

Before the appointed day of reincarnation (an

event foretold as the Rapture), an army of Anopheles, together with those Morrigan and Tautha who had managed to escape the Sanguinary's influence, rode upon the site and destroyed the Malice Shard at great cost to their own numbers. The remnants of the shard were spread to the four corners of the Habitat. The Acumen Shard was also destroyed in the conflict, forcing the Sanguinary to anchor its consciousness elsewhere or perish. Immortal history records that it chose to insinuate itself temporarily into the consciousness of all earthly animals. From there it more selectively chose a host species to prey upon — humanity. In time, it would eventually construct as its lair a place called the Morpheum, a universe of dreams entirely sustained within an



evolving humanity's subconscious.

As for the Ark of the Conundrum, it was still intact and imbued with a perilous wealth of immaculum. Further, it had long been a repository for the Sanguinary's baleful mind. The survivors of the battle soon discovered that this Ark was a reservoir of unfathomable mysteries and madness, yet the Morrigan sought to control it.

Members of their pride chosen to create a hiding place for the relic (four immortals called the Mentors) soon came to realize that it was too powerful and dangerous to remain in anyone's hands. The Ark had become a mystic computer, housing the memories, knowledge, and experiences of the Sanguinary itself.

Desperate for a means to dispose of the relic, the Mentors could learn where to hide it only by means of prophetic serenades so profound that their realization was compelled in the very act of voicing them. Under the duress of this serenade, they were led to find a mortal animal which displayed an elevated awareness; a mammalian primate from which Homo Sapiens would, in time, evolve. From it, they sired an offspring that would become known as the Ife Tryst. In the millennia to follow, even unto the present day, trysts would be prized for their ability to create and sustain mantles; whole worlds and universes that can be unrolled like a carpet or rolled up and moved elsewhere. Indeed, the awareness of this, the first tryst, was such that it readily learned from the Mentors the techniques necessary for making mantles with its mind. Encouraged by this success, the Mentors begot and trained six more trysts. These they would use to create false trails, the better to hide the relic from their power-hungry brethren and the rest of the prides who were already preparing for war to obtain the Ark for themselves.

Empowered and sustained by the seemingly boundless energies of the Ark, yet controlled by the discipline instilled under the rigorous teachings of the Mentors, the Ife tryst vanished into a world of its own making, sealing the Ark away from all other creatures. His six kindred did likewise, each harboring a false Ark in the secret fastness of their mantles.

To answer for their treason against the Morrigan, the Mentors were buried alive in the deep caves that dot Mount Elgon in the present day nation of Kenya. A much altered version of their tale, a story of "angels" buried near the cradle of civilization, nevertheless survives as a fragment of twilight mythology as does the name of the first tryst's mantle-city, Ife.

As for the other six mantles and their trysts, little is known. Several may have since been found by seekers of the Ark. Others may have faded as their tryst reached the end of its life span. Rumors among the native peoples of the African Continent, however, indicate that one, at least, of these lesser mantles still survive.

The First Expedition

In the year 1921 AD, a group of archeologists from a small but illustrious college in the United States stumbled across an ancient city as they made their way through a rainstorm on the slopes of **Mount Elgon**, an extinct volcano on the current border of Kenya and Uganda. This site, which they deemed to be the fabled city of Ife, was older and far stranger than any which they had previously encountered. Hurriedly, they explored as much of the city as they could, given their dwindling supplies. Eventually, however, they were forced to resume their trek toward civilization, leaving behind their stupendous find to be studied in detail at a later date.

In fact, the archeologists had found the true mantle of Ife, which had been brought by its tryst creator to the very mountain where the Mentors had been buried. Bent on revenge for the vast time of its solitary confinement, a condition it blamed upon the Mentors, the tryst had brought its mantle to their resting place as a trap waiting to be sprung.

A year later, the archeologist's sponsor **Wycliffe University**, launched a costly expedition intended to re-locate Ife. This effort ended in failure. A disastrous loss of face in the academic community resulted, causing one of site's original discoverers, **Dr. Wilford Feinstein**, to commit suicide three months later. His partner, **Arnold Lee Wilkes**, fell into a dark state of depression and was committed to a sanitarium in 1925. Although subsequently listed in the sanitarium records as deceased, Wilkes was in fact rescued from the facility and cared for during much of the remainder of his life by a Tautha Highbinder named **Pashon**. Pashon unswervingly strove to penetrate his psychology in hopes of learning

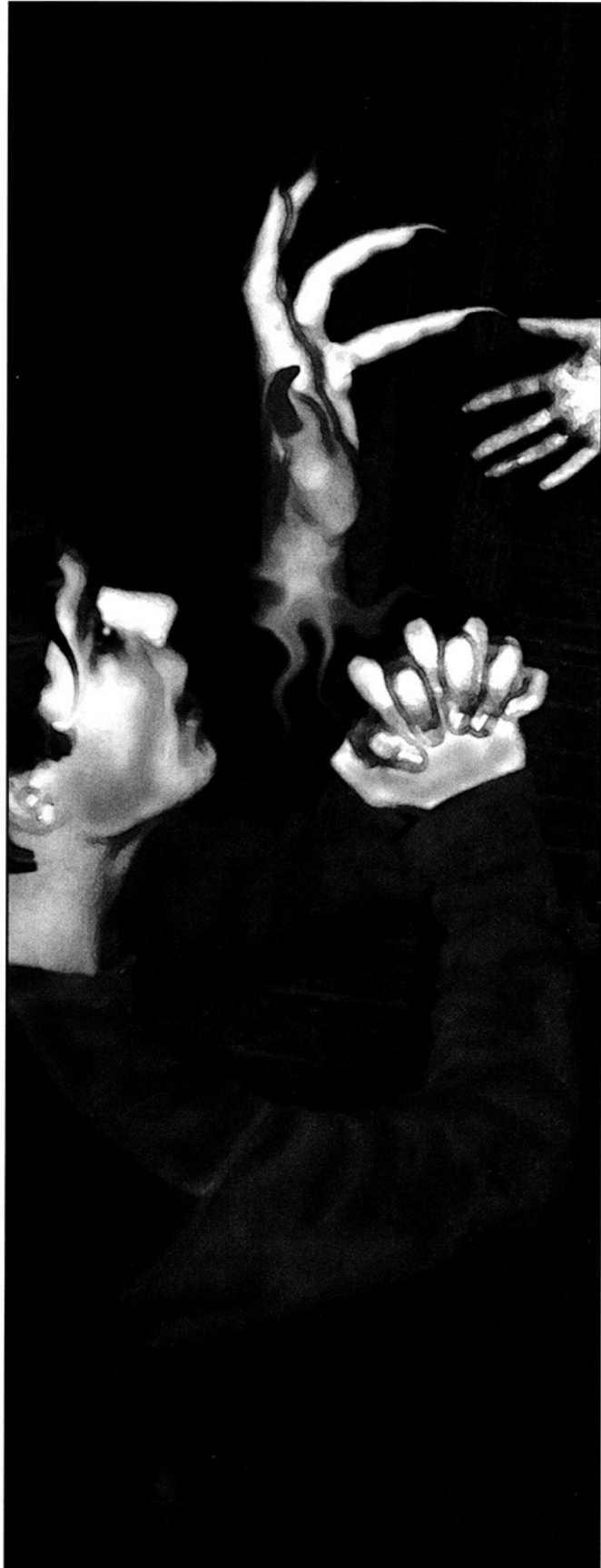
the location of the Ife mantle. Meanwhile, Wycliffe University went bankrupt, unable to repay the debts incurred as a result of their fruitless quest.

Pashon interrogated Wilkes at great length. He had been charged by his superiors in the pride (who had neither agreed nor been party to pride Morrigan's "solution" to the problems posed by the Ark) to learn all that he could without resorting to injurious means. Through the years, although he was never able to determine the exact location of the Ife mantle (where he had come to feel certain that the Ark of the Conundrum was housed), Pashon was able to ascertain from Wilkes that the expedition had been led to the city by "voices" which seemed to rise upwards from under an area of salt-encrusted rocks. Deducing that entombed Mentors had manipulated the humans into finding Ife, Pashon determined to discover the resting place of these buried immortals. He reasoned that in finding them he would gain the necessary means to then locate Ife, and thus the Ark of the Conundrum, for the benevolent usage of his pride.

Despite Pashon's sensitive treatment, in a moment of lucidity Wilkes determined to escape. This, after nearly two decades of continuous confinement. Making good on his plans, he instinctively resumed the search for Ife; and as he stumbled along the gradient toward the volcanic heights of Mount Elgon, the Mentors' voices resumed their siren call to him.

After the escape, Pashon contacted his trusted ally, another Highbinder known as **Monica** (later Monica Ferrar), to help him find and retrieve the mad twilight before another pride could get their hands on him. It was Monica who found Wilkes on Elgon, a dry husk drained of all immaculum. Next to the shriveled body was a great mound of earth, excavated with Wilkes' own bloody hands. He had unearthed one of the Mentors, a being known as the **Shrike**, who had promptly drained his miserable halo and departed in search of yet more immaculum. Monica was able to track the freed Mentor and when she found him, still gravely weakened by his long interment, she was able to drive him from the mountain, but not to either capture or destroy him.

Pashon himself was lured into a trap orchestrated by the mortal **Apocrypha** in Casablanca. There he was placed under the constraints of religarum and then sent to Versailles,



their stronghold, where he was locked within one of its many ornate mirrors. Monica never heard from him again. (This last fact represents a plot seed outside the scope of the present episode. Should the Narrator wish to, Pashon's plight and his relationship with Monica may be further developed as the basis for a subsequent production. See Pashon under *The Supporting Cast*).

Battle in the Elephant Caves

Anticipating that the Shrike would seek revenge for her attack, and failing to locate Pashon who had unaccountably vanished, Monica decided that she needed allies. Foremost, she hoped to discover the resting place of the Ark, before the revived Mentor could claim it along with its inscrutable powers. She believed that the long years spent in teaching the tryst would grant the Shrike (and other Mentors) enough insight to locate the true mantle of Ife. She also wanted to prevent the Shrike from unearthing his three companions. To this end she contacted various trustworthy immortals to help her guard the summit of Elgon, under the guise of another archaeological expedition. These immortals, who formed a cadre with her for that purpose, **are the very personas portrayed by the actors in your cast.** Also assembled were a number of twilights, to lend authenticity to the expedition, led by **Professor Jim Raxton**, from the near-defunct Wycliffe U.

Soon, Monica and Raxton began an illicit love affair.

All the while World War II raged in Europe, Monica and her cadre guarded the site of the Mentors' tombs until, one night without warning, the mantle of Ife again opened up in the midst of a storm. Astonished, the cadre entered through its cyclopean outer walls to discover a vast city, one that seemed to cover the entire mountain. As they wandered, spellbound, through the alien city, they each in turn came to sense that they were being watched by the mantle's tryst.

For several nights thereafter, the cadre camped in the open air next to steaming hot springs. Much of their time was taken up with reading the strange, and often inscrutable, hieroglyphs that covered each building of the city. On more than one occasion they scaled towers that seemed to rise to pierce the perpetual foggy night sky overhead. Disturbing at first, after a time it became almost commonplace for one member of the cadre or another to become entranced with visions stemming from millions of years ago. Soon, scenes of battle against the temple of the Conundrum came to assault them in nearly constant waves of vaporous illusion. Many of the twilights could not take this sensory overload. After sinking into inconsolable depressions, they died without any apparent physical cause.

Monica, together with the personas in her company, attempted to record the many strange hieroglyphs of the city, unaware all the while that the tryst was using the ancient carvings to penetrate past their conscious minds and to imprint a plan into the deepest levels of their subconscious. In this fashion a plot of the tryst, one designed to recapture the Mentors and lure them into the mantle, was seeded in the unknowing minds of the cadre. The tryst's initial purposes accomplished, the cadre awoke one day to find the city was gone; gone as if it had never existed.

On the evening following Ife's disappearance there was another great storm. During its height, Monica and her cadre were attacked by the Shrike. The ancient immortal had been feasting on modern humans (having found his own ark drained by an unknown thief) and was stronger for the increased brightness of his halo. Battling determinedly, the cadre nevertheless were able to mortally wound the Shrike; but not before he had summoned clawed hands of thorny wood from out the ground to impale the surviving twilights in the expedition, including Professor Raxton. The cadre beheaded the defeated Mentor and seized his vox.

The immortals buried the remains of Raxton at the site. Unwittingly acting under the compulsion of the Ife tryst, Monica now began to play out the coded instructions which had been written into her subconscious while at Ife. Insisting that any disclosure to the Perpetual Society of the secrets now in their hands would spell doom for them all, she argued that the cadre had no choice but to keep the location of Ife and the Shrike's tomb a secret. Taking the

crystalline vox of the Shrike into her hands, she made the cadre promise to enter lethe forever. Only in this way, she assured them, could they survive the burden of their knowledge. Also acting under the hidden compulsion of the Ife tryst, the cadre (the very personas set to awaken in your production) agreed, and together they entered lethe.

Monica took the Shrike's vox to Nairobi, and hid it in a safe place, telling herself that it too, would remain forever lost. She then underwent the rite of lethe herself.

The Last Expedition

Several years ago, a cabal of Apocrypha agents linked to major universities in the United States and Canada began to re-examine old archeological records, looking for possible connections and leads relevant to the Perpetual Society. As a part of their survey, they investigated any number of "super-normal" sites; checking into claims of haunted ruins, visiting ancient burial grounds, and sifting through all available data concerning so called "lost" civilizations. In the course of this meticulous new study, it was not surprising that they would come to review certain archived documents which detailed the expedition of Feinstein and Wilkes during the early part of the twentieth century. These documents were sufficiently

interesting to be sent to the attention of a special watch unit which in turn generated an operations order somewhat ambitious in scope. Not long afterwards, the Apocrypha revived the faltering Wycliffe University, this time as a correspondence school. Ever cautious, they made certain its funding was minimal to avoid any undue attention

on the part of the Magdalen.

Two years ago members of the Boston cabal struck paydirt when a routine internal memo circulated through the international liaison office

uncovered a linkage between the subject of the expedition and the prisoner Pashon who languished imprisoned in Versailles. After further interrogation to learn all that he knew concerning the Feinstein and Wilkes expedition, they began taking steps to brainwash him. Using the religarum power of their Mauls, the Apocrypha shaped Pashon into a Sleeper. They then put him into service in the Morpheum as a Mannequin working for their own order.

Now two separate chains of events were to merge, creating a situation the full irony of which would, unfortunately, be lost on most of the direct participants. Monica Ferrar, fully immersed in lethe and oblivious of her past, had by this time enjoyed a twilight career in academia sufficiently illustrious to win her the Archeology Chair at Dartmouth College. However, when it was discovered that she had stolen research from one of her students and passed it off as her own work, she was stripped of her tenure and removed in disgrace. She applied for, and was granted, a position on the staff of Wycliffe University. At the same time the Boston cabal, confident that all preliminary steps were now complete, moved to allocate funds through Wycliffe that would repeat the Feinstein/Wilkes expedition of 1921. The cabal's first task was to find a suitable project leader; someone with exceptional academic credentials but a blemished past history so that the



Character Note: The Magdalen.

Because of their obsession with literature and any hints it may provide about the Sanguinary's weakness, the Magdalen keep their finger on the pulse of the academic community. Constant battles between members of the pride and the Apocrypha rage for control of the Perpetual Society's secrets.



Plot Cue: The Tryst's Compulsion.

The Narrator should probably not allow the fact to emerge that Monica (and indeed the entire cast) entered lethe under compulsion from the Ife tryst, until the very climax of the production. When the cadre examines different areas of Ife in chapter 4, they will see legible graffiti begin to superimpose itself (in the persona's native language) all over the city walls, defacing the beauty of the mantle. Examples of what the personas read are: *DECEIVE, CAPTURE MENTORS, FORGET, LEAD THEM HERE, FORGET, COMPLY* as well as other frightening fragments of the entire subliminal message. At the moment of reading these messages, the cadre will at last understand how they were originally programmed by the hieroglyphs of the city. (At least, they will if you choose to explain...)

cabal could maintain an upper hand in the relationship. They did not have to look far. When Monica applied for a promotion at Wycliffe, the Pashon dossier identified her (despite the differences in appearance brought on by lethe) as his former ally. Within twenty-four hours the Pashon *Mannequin* was detailed to enter Monica's dreams and the Boston cabal began formulating a plan whereby she would lead them to the Ark of the Conundrum.

Strangely, Pashon became unresponsive several days after the assignment, withdrawing permanently into the Morpheum. In fact, his consciousness had fallen prisoner to the Shrike's gossamer which had by this time begun to lurk in the vicinity of Monica's dreamspace.

Ignorant of these events, or even of her true identity shed decades in the past, Monica happily accepted the assignment to lead the expedition. Traveling with a group of twilight graduate students, she began her search in eastern Africa. However, when her travels brought her into Kenya and the Rift Valley, the terrain seemed to strike a deep chord within her, releasing chaotic memories of her true identity — memories which she was neither able to integrate nor

understand. At length, she reached Nairobi and, guided by what she believed to be a "sixth sense", she "discovered" the resting place of the Shrike's vox.

Responding to the undeniable urgings of her subconscious mind, Monica could not bring herself to leave Nairobi and begin the search for the Ark as she'd been hired to do. Instead she concentrated on retrieving the Shrike's vox, which her confused mind suggested was a "talisman" of ultimate significance. Retrieving the vox would be no easy matter, buried as it was underneath a small museum behind the Nairobi train station. Too, Monica was being haunted, literally, both day and night. The gossamer form of the Shrike, desperate to recover his vox, had begun to shadow Monica both in the waking world as well as in the Morpheum.

As if this were not enough, she felt constantly overwhelmed by incredible sensations of *deja vu*. Confused images of her past life collided incessantly in her mind with an irrepressible dread she could not begin to explain. The pressure was too much. Monica snapped. Raving about immortal enemies and invisible stalkers, she convinced her students to dynamite the train station. The ensuing explosion killed several people and wounded many others. Oblivious, Monica sifted through the wreckage until the Shrike's vox was found. Then, unaware of how she was doing it, she instinctively used the Shrike's vox to enhance the playing of a Metaphor serenade. Creating enough confusion in the mortals around her to escape, she was able to flee back to the United States with her students in tow.

Desperation filled her mind. The world had to know of the truths she'd uncovered. The talisman proved everything...she would tell them all...warn everyone of the ageless dangers which lurked, waiting to devour mankind in an orgy of destruction. The Shrike followed, determined to regain his invaluable vocal chord as it began to sift through Monica's mind for information that

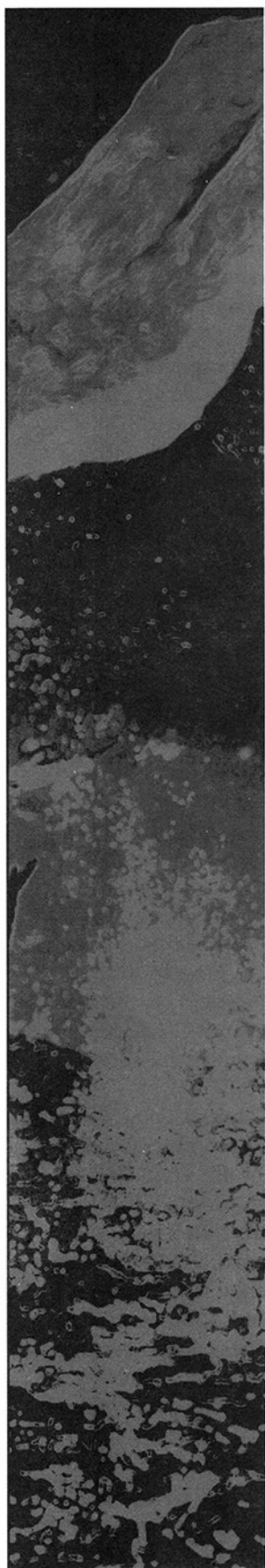
he could use against her in the Morpheum. It did not take long to uncover her love for the mortal Jim Raxton, and her crushing guilt concerning his death. Inspired, the Shrike began taking Jim's form in her dreams and, in the tradition of his newly adopted pride Anopheles, he seduced her.

Monica is trapped between the compulsions of the *Ife Tryst* and the obsessive figure of the Shrike that haunts her dreams. A master stroke of revenge is about to fall, played out upon a stage of madness and dreams. The stage is set. The production's performance may now begin.



System Note: Believers, Mauls, and Mannequins.

In the broadest sense, a *believer* is a human whose search for spiritual truth leads him into contact with immortals or other creatures of the Perpetual Society. Although many believers are benign and supportive, often finding their way into a Quiet Culture, others revile immortals. These, when discovered, are gathered by the Apocrypha. Through doctrine and teaching, their faith is reinforced, and their control over the force of *religarum* is nurtured. Eventually, these believers are sent out to battle or capture immortals. Any believer with heightened mastery of *religarum* who is working for the Apocrypha is known as a *Maul*. *Mannequins* are a form of *Sleeper* that are used by the Apocrypha essentially as passive listening devices within the Morpheum. *Mannequins* remain fixed in one location, initiating nothing, yet absorbing all that they see and hear.



CHAPTER ONE: AWAKENING

Scene 1: Foreboding

The production begins. Looking at each of the actors in turn, the Narrator should begin by informing each that their everyday lives have lately felt somehow shallow and transparent. Several of the actors will have begun to experience a re-occurring dream. For each of them the dream is the same. They are traveling with an archeological expedition. With the rest of those present for the production, they have been involved in a search for a lost city. The search always ends in blood and disaster.



Plot Cue: Building the Tension.

The Narrator should encourage his personas to describe how they react to the dreams, any steps they take, etc. However, the personas are still in *lethe* at this time, and may not have remembered any mystic abilities. Personas who decide to “jump the gun”, go on a weapons buying spree or quit their jobs might need to be brought back to reality (oh, your credit card bill has just come due!)

The Narrator may, if he wishes, play with the personas a bit; describing ordinary situations with dark overtones and then revealing the incident to be typically normal, after all. (“The shadowy figure draws closer, closer, coming around the side of the darkened building. A streetlight flickers on overhead, revealing it to be an old lady, out for a late-night stroll.”) Though the tension mounts, nothing out of the ordinary actually happens, until the Narrator is prepared for scene 2.

school or to work, coming home for dinner. Yet all of those present have lately begun to watch over their shoulders. A feeling of apprehension tells each of them that someone is watching, something is not quite right. The Narrator may devote as much or as little time working with the cast to develop an appropriate mood of suspense and foreboding as you feel is warranted. You may wish to ask the cast if and how they will respond to the increasing pressure mounting inside their awareness. No matter what preparations



System Note: Predilections.

Keep an eye out for the chance to establish possible *predilections* for each persona. If the cadre meets with a timid bureaucrat that possesses vital information, whichever cadre member seems to most enjoy putting on the pressure can be given a “bully” predilection, unless and until another more appropriate one is discovered.

Predilections are perhaps the most valuable tool given to the Narrator for role-playing his supporting cast. With a single word, the Narrator can begin to get a feel for how a cast member will react to the cadre, how he will handle any confrontation or lack of cooperation, along with his general attitude and inclinations. Predilections also allow the Narrator to tailor a scene to a specific individual, giving that person a moment to shine.

Since the time when these dreams began, each of the personas has managed to continue the daily routine of his life; waking up, going to

Plot Cue: Waking From *Lethe*.



This scene and others following it are written from the perspective of a new cast that has not yet role-played the experience of waking from *Lethe*. If you have already narrated this experience in a prior episode (for example, in the Pilot Pack episode), no problem. To adapt these scenes to your ongoing story, simply explain to the cast that waking from *Lethe* is process which may long continue. They will probably experience flashbacks and physical sensations for years to come. The waking up portions of this episode can be simply narrated as yet another wave of returning memories, experienced just when the cast is trying to sort out the thoughts and feelings exposed by the last episode.

any of the actors make, however, nothing special will happen and their feelings of trepidation will continue to rise until one evening...

Scene 2: Technical Difficulties

This scene takes place in the home of one of the personas, in the living room or elsewhere as the Narrator deems appropriate. The personas have all gathered to watch television. This might be a communal response to the sense of foreboding which all share. Or it may simply be that circumstances have arisen naturally to bring everyone together for a few hours of relaxation.

Suddenly, the program being viewed on the television is interrupted by the local news station. A very apprehensive anchorwoman shakes with fear as she stares into the camera. Nervously, she tells the viewing audience that terrorists have broken into the station, and are forcing her to read a statement. The anchorwoman is so distressed, however, that her words are unintelligible. Moments later she is shoved out of her chair and her image is replaced by that of a blond woman, perhaps 40 years old, who is pointing an Uzi 9mm at the camera operator.



System Note: Allocating Memory.

Casts that are just waking from Lethe will begin flexing their muscles at this point, and the Narrator should be prepared to note which personas have gained which powers. Each serenade and talent that a persona possesses, however, will come at a cost of memory, drawing from an initial pool of 100 points.

Each new immortal should be assumed to have at least 1 mote of free immaculum (one of their original 15 motes), at a cost of 1 memory point, since Serenades are powered by, and impossible to play, without free immaculum.

Personas may draw upon their own expertise when attempting a task; their beginning real-life talents as well as any new ones they recall during the experience will be defined as well, and will diminish the beginning memory allotment.

Serenades are quite costly in terms of memory, and Narrators are encouraged to keep their actors to perhaps

two or three serenade of low rank, at least at first. Remember, serenades are very flexible, and personas should be encouraged to adapt ones they have to many different situations.



Character Note: Monica.

At this juncture, the Narrator should emphasize how familiar the woman on the television screen is. Monica is an old friend, obviously in trouble. The personas should be subtly encouraged to go to the television station to see what is going on, or to help out.



Character Note: Unhappy Illuminati.

The Apocrypha will be extremely displeased by Monica's news broadcast. Recognizing that their plans have gone terribly awry, they will dispatch a sniper (with a single specialized "rune" bullet, capable of fatally injuring an immortal) to dispose of her. Their agents will also go on alert, carefully watching any known or suspected Ingenue in the area (including the cast). If the personas attempt to travel to the television station, one of the Apocrypha's teams of agents will attempt to slow them down.

The Personas watching this live broadcast will unaccountably recognize this woman as **Monica**. Immediately a feeling of close kinship with this woman will be felt by all of the cast. Disheveled and seeming very desperate, Monica tells the viewing audience that she has come back from Africa with proof of immortal creatures who are living among us, creatures who want to subjugate the human race. Plagued as she is by imagery from her past life, and overwhelmed by the gravity of the situation, she will certainly come off as a lunatic. After a few minutes of desperate pleading for someone, anyone, to believe her, Monica waves the Shrike's vox toward the camera, a crystalline reed infused

and glowing with a rich purple light. She tells the audience about her expedition to Africa, and claims that she and the

others (several college age men and women can be seen behind her pointing guns in all directions) are being stalked by monsters who want to capture this "talisman" (the vox) and silence them.

Then, abruptly, the television screen reverts to the standard *Experiencing Technical Difficulties* logo.

As Monica gives her speech, the personas will experience tremendous physical and

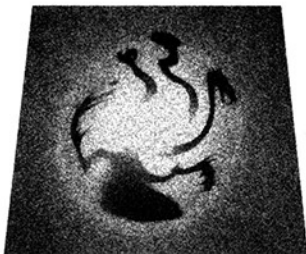
mental reactions. Their hands will tremble and shake, and each of them will be subject to flashbacks. The Narrator should have each member of the cadre in turn experience a major

flashback, keyed by Monica's remarks. As she

mentions Africa, one will have a flashback of joining Monica in Africa to guard the mountain top. When the Shrike's vox is shown, another will recall the battle with the Shrike, and blasting the Shrike with a serenade. When inhuman immortals are discussed, a third will flashback to a time when he assumed his himsati form and did battle with a squad of Roman legionnaires, and a fourth will recall Monica at Mount Elgon, talking about the Ark of the Conundrum, its fantastic endowments and its illimitable dangers. Hints of an unknown past, vast powers and forgotten talents should be dropped left and right. By the end of the scene it should be clear to all of the actors that:

- 1) They are all immortals, a cadre that has known one another for thousands of years stretching back into an unknown antiquity.
- 2) Monica, although unknown to them in their mortal guise, is herself a member of their cadre and is obviously in dire need of help.
- 3) Somehow, for reasons unknown, the cadre had all entered lethe together. All are now "waking up" together.

At the end of this scene, and indeed throughout the rest of this first chapter, the actors should be encouraged to "remember" immortal abilities that they possess. A good way to get the ball rolling is to narrate one or two members of the cast having sudden memories of abilities they have had to use in the past. Pick abilities that key off of actions of the cast. These memories can be brought out through a flashback, or not, as desired.



Just How Good Do You Think You Are?

Personas who try out a new power, or who attempt to use a talent will be asked just how confident they feel in their ability. The Talent Ranks chart on page 138 of the main rules will help personas determine what their rating is in any talent they possess, by determining the amount of time and effort they have put in to mastering the skill in real life. Of course, personas may remember more ability in a talent (or serenade) than they possess in reality; this is not only expected, it is encouraged.

Ask the persona who wishes to exercise a talent just how good he feels he is at the skill in question. Remind him that Trained, rank 2, is the equivalent of a college degree in the subject, and that Masters, rank 4, are considered to be intimately familiar with all the ins and outs of the subject. He should rank his ability from 0 (Completely untrained) to 5 (Laureate, the best of the best).

Personas will also need to begin to determine their forte and free immaculum. When attempting a task, determine which halo color is being drawn upon, and find out how much natural ability the persona feels he possesses in the relevant area. For instance, if the persona is swinging a sword, ask him how his coordination is (his Yellow halo) and determine his strength (his Orange halo). The charts on pages 84-88 of the main rules may help guide a persona in selecting his forte, the amount of immaculum permanently fixed in each halo color.

Forte (and free immaculum) is also rated on a scale of 0 through 5; 2 is human average, 1 is below average and 0 is feeble or crippled. 3 represents above-average or well-developed humans, 4 is an exceptionally gifted; genius-level intellect, or a gifted athlete able to compete in a professional sports organization. Again, 5 represents the pinnacle of human accomplishment, the absolute (mortal) supreme, the height of development both for humans and for beginning immortals.

Personas begin with 15 points of immaculum; one should be allocated to "free immaculum" (at a cost of one point of memory) and the rest should be reserved for forte. The free immaculum can be used to power serenades, or can be added to forte in any halo color, as explained in the main rules. More forte can be freed at a cost of one memory point per point of free immaculum cumulative; the first costs 1, the second mote costs 2, the third 3, and so on, up to 5. Note that motes freed in this manner are deducted from whichever halo color the persona wishes and added to the pool of free immaculum.

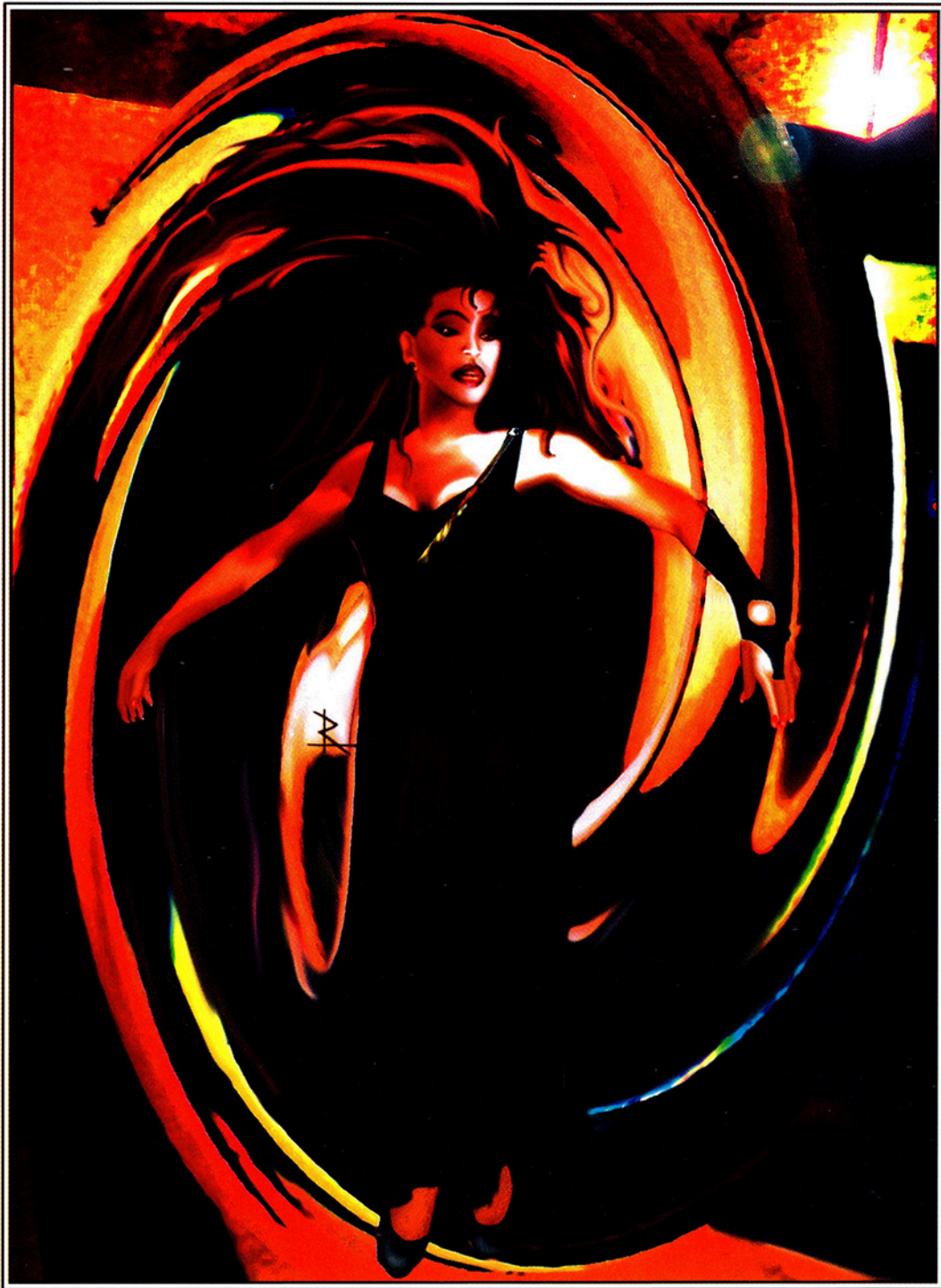
T R A N S I T I O N S



* The personas should be encouraged to find out what is going on down at the television station. How could they leave a good friend in such obvious distress without going to her aid? Give the cast a chance to discuss their options. Once someone suggests that they all go down to the TV station ask the cadre members how they wish to travel. Remember to be on the lookout for any chance to determine some serenades possessed by the cadre. If someone expresses a wish for flight, let the persona experience a flashback of playing a serenade that lets them fly, and then let him use it! If one cadre member loves his car, or seems to have a knack with machinery, have him remember an ability with the Gremlin serenade. Let him speak with his car's spirit as if with an old friend. Any chance to determine a cadre member's himsati form should be exploited. Perhaps one cast member will want to run down to the station, assuming the form of a jaguar, another may wish for a better view and transform into an eagle, able to soar high above the city.

* If the cast stubbornly refuses to go to the TV station then you will have to wing an entirely different way to bring the cadre together with a wounded Monica (a condition assumed at the start of Chapter Two). There are many antagonists you can throw at the cast; right in their own living room if that's what it takes to get them up and moving! The Apocrypha might try to kidnap the cast using drug laced dart guns and then interrogate them concerning their relationship with Monica. When the cast uses Serenades, then Jolea and her Nimrod triad might attack them in retaliation for breaking the Silence. The Banjax street gang introduced in Scene 4 below might decide to attack the cast in order to "test their mettle". One way or another the cadre needs to be prodded into movement. Monica, wounded in flight from the TV station, can be brought to just about any location that the cast decides to go by one of her students "acting on impulse".

I M M O R T A L



Lev Lines

I M M O R T A L



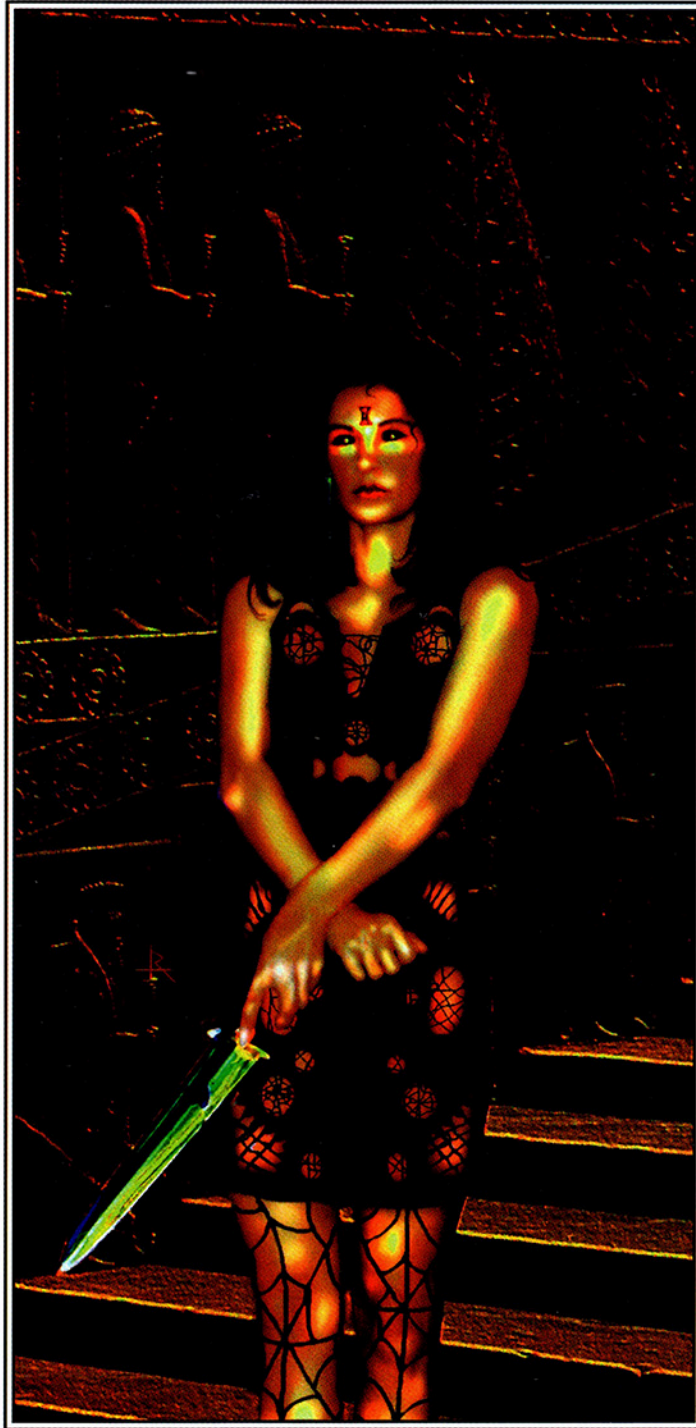
Dreamspace

I M M O R T A L



Monica's Fears.

I M M O R T A L



Flashback



Scene 3: Getting There in One Piece.

During the drive down to the TV station (assuming someone is either driving or controlling a vehicle with the Gremlin attention) one of the cadre's cars will be intentionally struck by a dark blue sedan driving at high speed. If the whole cast decides not to take a car (for example, if they all fly or travel the Ley membrane) then the blue sedan will instead jump the curb and run over some of the cast the first time they go outside onto the street. The collision will be gruesome. Metal and glass will fly everywhere, and anyone involved will feel their bones break and flesh tear. As the injured personas lie bleeding where they have been thrown

from the car (or run over on the sidewalk) they will experience a momentary panic that their life is about to end. Then, to their surprise, they will realize that they are not so badly hurt after all — even though their wounds had seemed quite serious

just seconds before.

This is the operation of the Panacea, a force which protects all immortals. After fifteen seconds, anyone injured will be completely healed, aside from a minor scar or two and perhaps some damage to clothes and possessions. After the accident, the battered sedan will fishtail and then drive off.

If any of the cast thinks to ask about it, the sedan has no license plates. The driver, glimpsed just before the crash, appeared to be wearing a suit and dark glasses.



System Note: The Panacea.

This scene reveals to the personas the power of the Panacea, a healing ability possessed by all immortals. Any damage taken by an immortal not arising from hand-

to-hand combat (in which the immortal's halos collide to suppress the Panacea), heals within only a few clashes. Only serenades and certain enchanted weapons can inflict damage at range that will not be healed by the Panacea. For example, in



System Note: The Ley Membrane.

During the discussion of how to travel to the TV station one of the personas may "remember" that they possess the Ley attention and have the ability to traverse Leylines. Conversely, the Narrator can have one of the cast use the Ley attention "by accident." The Ley Membrane surrounds and permeates the Habitat. Those who know its attention can travel nearly instantly across long distances, simply by walking the Leylines from one spot to another. Anyone using this attention must roll the Multiple Target hostile if he wishes to take others with him, as well as the Voyage hostile in order to pinpoint the place where he wishes to arrive.

Scene 4, Monica will be struck by a rare rune bullet, fired by an Apocrypha sniper, which inflicts a wound that will not immediately heal.

It is possible that the cast will manage to prevent the car from speeding away. If a persona uses a serenade to question the car itself, the car will only know that it is owned by the US government. The Apocrypha agent who caused the sedan to hit the cadre had two possible motives; one, to prove the cadre are immortals (another agent will be nearby, though out of sight, to see if the victims recover); two, to slow the cadre down so that the Apocrypha has more time to dispose of Monica.

After this interruption, the cast may resume their progress towards the TV station, arriving in its general vicinity without any further action of significance. Their progress will, however, be monitored by a second Apocrypha agent (the "watch" element of a two man operations team) who is flying a police helicopter overhead.



System Note: The Panacea Flashback.

One of the cast members injured in the hit-and-run will flashback to the days of ancient Rome. Narrate the flashback somewhat as follows:

"Staring up into the sky, your perception of the world fades away as your life blood flows out from multiple wounds. You see yourself sitting in the roman coliseum with Germanicus (whom you now remember as an advisor or confidant). Together you are watching a matched pair of Scythian gladiators fighting to the death on the sands of the coliseum floor below. 'Why is it that these mortals are so fascinated with death?' You direct this question to Germanicus, himself an immortal. 'Here they come in their thousands to watch a game in which one man lives, one man dies!'

Germanicus replies explaining that mortals are so short lived and so fragile that nearly any injury results in the extinction of their consciousness. 'Keep in mind that for them, this game is the end of ALL games!' Germanicus will laugh and then exclaim as the smaller of the combatants whirls underneath his opponent's blade to hamstringing a leg with a flash of steel to quick to follow."

At this, the persona's consciousness will fade back to the main scene of the episode. As it does he will remember that all immortals are protected by the Panacea, a power which heals any wound not inflicted by direct halo-to-halo contact (as with a sword blow), within a matter of seconds.

Scene 4: Shoot-out at the TV Station

Police cars and mobile news vans surround the television station when the personas arrive. The Police have erected manned barricades in a one block area around the building and they are attempting to clear the area of all civilians. Meanwhile, sharp-shooters are running low across the rooftops adjacent to the station building.



System Note: Free Immaculum.

Every ten clashes, personas may move their motes of free immaculum; either allocating them to one or more colors of the halo, or permitting them to "float", and thus power serenades and grant them more escapades (actions in combat). Personas are generally free to allocate their immaculum at will, and are only truly limited in flexibility when entering combat. At the start of a combat, and every ten clashes (30 seconds) after that, personas are asked to allocate their free immaculum, deciding how much of it will stay floating free, and how much will be used to enhance forte.

When not in combat, if a persona wishes to draw on his free immaculum, he need only state that he is doing so. Personas may wish to determine how their immaculum is normally allocated when not in combat or attempting a specific task. Perhaps they will enhance their Blue (perception and awareness) halo, instead of simply letting it float freely, where it causes more of a "ripple" and is less immediately useful.

Placing free immaculum in any halo color can never result in a total that exceeds the mote limit imposed by the himsati tier.

Personas should be asked how they wish to get past the police barricades. Possible solutions include:

- * Driving right through them (this will start immediate conflict with the police).
- * Manifestation of mind-control serenades.
- * Using serenades that cause invisibility or create illusions.
- * Sneaking past in himsati form.
- * Creating a distraction and slipping by.

This scene is intended to pose many challenges that will spur the cast to remember useful attentions. The Narrator may assist the process by asking questions like this. *"Does anyone think they remember something that can help them get past the barricades?"*

After the cadre gets past the barricades (assuming that their methods do not mandate an immediate explosion of hostilities) take a few minutes to build the tension of the scene.

Describe the flashing lights of police cars everywhere, scores of officers aiming weapons at the building from over the hoods of their cars, the hum of a police chopper flying overhead, its searchlight probing at the top of the TV building below... and then sweeping over the cadre...

Shortly after the personas arrive on the scene (before any of them can get past the police and into the building except for

maybe cast members with a bird himsati who think to fly in a window) a police captain will make a final demand with his bullhorn, insisting that the "terrorists" come out with their hands up "or else were gonna have to use tear gas."

Monica and her accomplices will then burst out of the door of the station, machine guns blazing. A rain of bullets will follow, one of which finds Monica's throat. A burst of red light spills from her neck as she stumbles toward the personas...

Monica will plead for help before falling unconscious. The personas are likely to be caught in the middle of a shoot-out as they try to recover her unconscious form.



System Note: Rune Bullets.

Rune bullets are standard caliber rounds which have been infused (by the power of religarum) with the necessary property to defeat the Panacea and cause real injury to an immortal being. Like all forms of faith, these empowered rounds are normally in short supply, employed by the Apocrypha only in situations of crisis.

On one side will be the police and Apocrypha agents, with armed but bewildered students-turned-terrorists on the other. Don't miss this chance to hammer home the workings of the Panacea by describing how various members of the cast "begin picking up stray lead" but their wounds heal within seconds.



System Note: Awareness Rolls.

Any member of the cast who successfully makes a rank three awareness roll will notice that the shot which took Monica in the throat was NOT fired from the ground. Rather it was fired by a sniper shooting from an adjacent building. Use this opportunity to teach the cast about awareness rolls and to clarify the amount of blue forte possessed by each of the cast. Have each of them roll a blue die (representing the halo color of awareness) and then add a number between 1 and 5 representing how "naturally aware" they think their persona is. Personas that generate a total (adding the dice roll and the amount of forte together) that is 6 or greater will be aware of the sniper. Any persona with a talent that helps awareness, like Forward Observer, will get a bonus to this roll based on the rank of their talent (1 -5). Make sure to note down how much blue forte the actors choose. This will be recorded on their persona record sheet when the episode is over. Look for opportunities throughout this script for the personas to decide their forte in other halo colors besides blue.

If the personas seem inclined to battle, more forces will shortly show up to make the melee even livelier.

At this point in the production the cast is likely to be feeling very cocky and omnipotent. Give them a few minutes to revel in their awesome powers, wiping out a few twilights as if they were bugs and enjoying the fact that they are impervious to the weapons fire of the mortal forces at the scene. Then turn the heat up. The power level of the forces in conflict will continue to escalate until even the most battle-mad cast will have no choice but to flee for their lives.

The dramatic purpose for the scene as a whole is in fact to establish the cast in a pecking order, to demonstrate that the world is filled with forces both weaker and more powerful than themselves.

First, there are several Apocrypha at the scene. A few on the ground posing as police as well as one (the sniper that shot Monica) on the roof of an adjacent building.

Though immortals recover quickly from gunshot wounds, a mortal wound can still render them unconscious, and they will be subject to red pain hostiles for any actions they attempt until the panacea heals their wounds.

Soon, other immortals who witnessed the telecast will begin to arrive on the scene and enter the conflict on no side but their own, i.e., they will attack the cadre, Apocrypha and police with equal vigor. Each will join the fray for its own reasons. First to arrive will be what appears to be a street gang (actually several members of Pride Banjax). The Banjax will appear to be wearing Egyptian amulets of all



System Note: Allies, Serenades and Echoes.

Voicing (or playing) a serenade is simple. The persona may wish to consult the desired *attention* (a specific branch of knowledge) in the main rules guide. Each attention reveals the usual halo color that it targets, an attribute that an opponent can use to "absorb" some of the resulting serenade's effect.

The attacker rolls a D10, and adds to this roll his rank in the Attention (usually a value of 1 to 5) as well as any motes of free immaculum (a minimum of 1). Since serenades are powered by free immaculum, it is suggested that a colorless (usually white) die is rolled.

An opponent may elect to resist the serenade by rolling a D10, adding his own talent rank in the Attention (usually 1-5, though a persona who is *untrained* must *subtract* 5) and the number of motes in the halo being targeted. This total is subtracted from the attacker's value to determine the rank of success (a 2 or less results in no significant effect, as a 3 is needed to achieve an effect rank of 1.)

Not all serenades target the halo of a living creature. Ember may be used directly against an opponent (targeting his halo) or may be targeted against one's surroundings. In the case where a serenade is directed against a force or inanimate object, an *ally* hostile must be rolled as well. To determine the target number for this hostile, see the main rules guide, pages 190-193. The Legacies of *Genesis*, *Proteus* or *Maleficia* may

modify this roll.

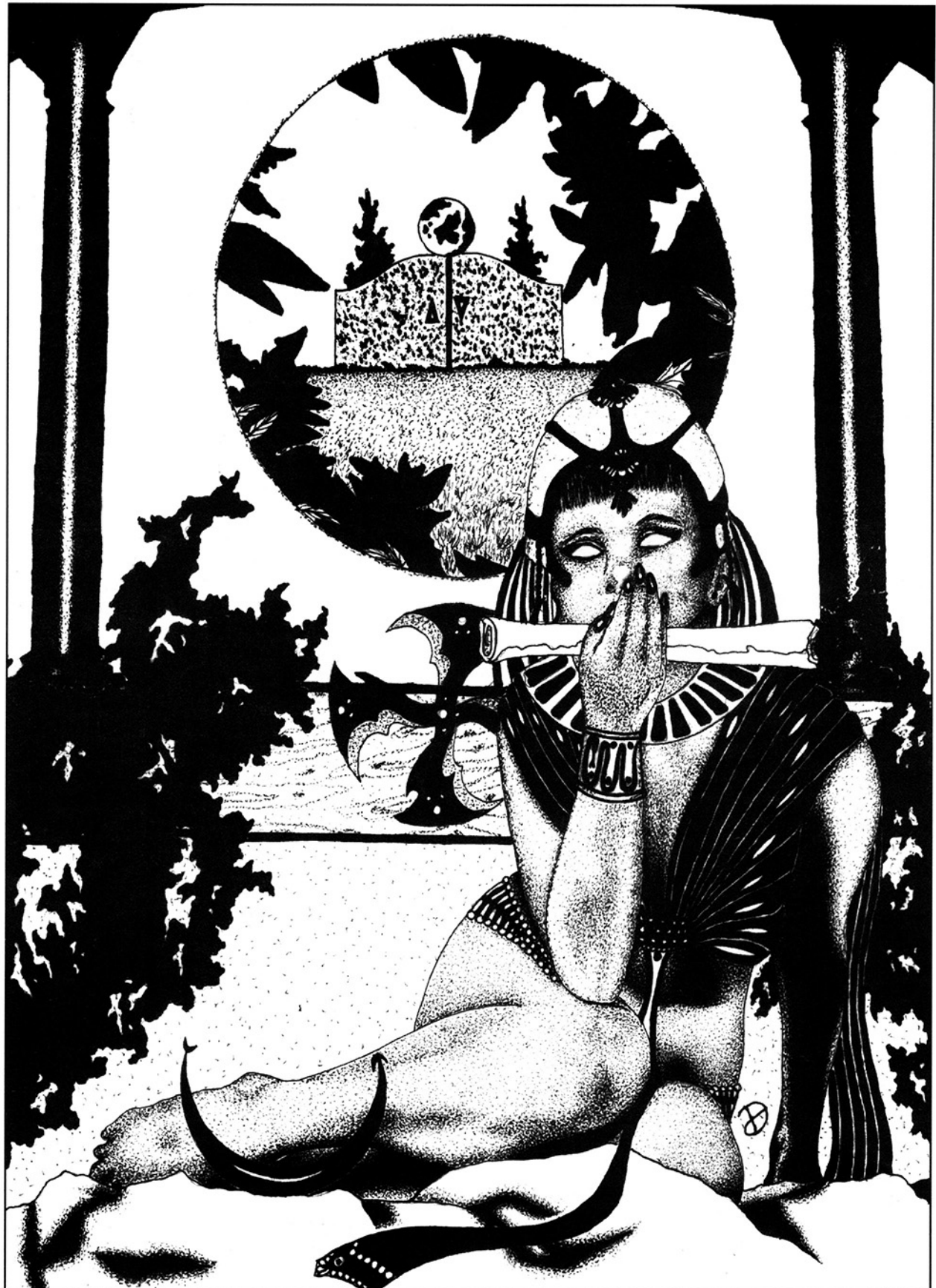
Serenades may also be targeted against a non-standard halo color. This is called an *echo*. For instance, the attention of Ember is normally targeted against an opponent's Violet halo, however an echo could be played which would target an opponent's Blue halo, in an attempt to blind and disorient him with sparks and smoke, or against his Red halo, attempting to cripple him through intense pain and heat.



Character Note: The Bad Guys.

Full descriptions of all opponents are presented in the Supporting Cast appendix at the back of this book. It is possible that the supporting cast presented there will be over or under powered for any given cadre. A small cadre just out of lethe may have difficulties taking on even one member of the Banjax street gang, while an experienced and coordinated cadre may be able to take on even the Nimrod. The supporting cast may need to be adjusted to provide the proper level of challenge for the cadre, especially for a group that has no difficulties dealing with the Banjax. If necessary, just keep bringing in more and tougher combatants until the cadre is forced from the scene. The easiest way to adjust the power levels of opponents is to alter their himsati tier and the ranks of their talents and serenades.

The narrator should feel free to adjust power levels as needed to create optimum drama in the production.



kinds over biker fashions and tattoos, but beneath the rank 1 Metaphor serenade that covers them they are actually dressed even more archaically. Like most immortals in the habitat, the Banjax constantly use Metaphor when they leave the security of their mantles. All will be carrying knives and firearms, as well as having swords sheathed on their bikes. The cadre will find it difficult to dispatch more than a few of these immortals, and it should be hinted that departure might be in their best interest. The Banjax are here mostly for the love of a good fight.

But before the cadre manages to leave (or, if necessary, to further encourage their flight) a Nimrod Triad will arrive.

Jolea, Gray and Masith will wade in, targeting as their first priority anyone who has been conspicuously playing serenades (hmm, could this be the Cadre?). The arrival of the Nimrod should be described in dread tones. Build up as much anxiety over their presence as possible. Nimrod will be used to chase the cast from place-to-place whenever the episode starts to get bogged down. To be effective they must be



Character Note: The Nimrod Triad.

Despite their threats, the Nimrod are not really interested in capturing the Ingenue. At some point they might try to recruit one or more female members of the cast to join their pride. But for now, they will be looking for long term opportunities to count coup. They are aware of the Shrike and are watching to see what will develop, who will slip up enough to be humiliated in a way that will add visage to Nimrod. They see the cast as mere tools to be used or duped as necessary to assist with their coup. For now, their object will be simply to instill in the cast an appropriate level of respect, as well as to make them think twice about using serenades on living targets within the Habitat. The confrontation with Jolea presents many interesting possibilities for role playing. One of the cast may respond boldly to her, in which case she will look at them with a dangerous smile and call out to them by name. She might say something like "Well I remember you, (person's name). Perhaps you have forgotten our long 'association' in Sheol where you languished under my 'care' for many a century. Perhaps you WOULD like to return there to experience my 'ministrations' for another millennia."

She will raise one eyebrow archly and pat the whip hanging from her belt. "I didn't realize you enjoyed it so much." You can wing it from there. A separate or additional tact you might take with a female member of your cast is to have her "remember" (secretly) that she used to be a Nimrod Emissary herself. Jolea can establish a private mental dialogue and together they can make a pact to work together and orchestrate a "big coup". The cast member's role will be to call in the Jury when Jolea lets her know that "the time is ripe". There are many other possibilities for this situation. Have fun with it.



System Note: The Silence.

The Silence is a code of conduct adopted and (sometimes) adhered to by the Perpetual Society. The theory behind it is that serenades cause ripples which can be sensed by alert mortals or servants of the Sanguinary, and thus draw enemies toward their source. In fact, if the ripple is large enough, it may wake the Sanguinary from its own nightmares to take a more active role in the destruction of immortal kind. This ripple occurs when a serenade against a living being fails in the Habitat. Serenades which augment the self or target the environment have little or no chance of causing a ripple, nor do successful rolls against a living opponent.

Because of the Lash, a hideous telepathic plague spawned from the use of Serenades during the Shouting War, immortals also fear a resurgence of sickness if the Silence is not adhered to. The Nimrod are the most ardent proponents of the Silence. They actively hunt immortals that break the code.

Of course, serenades are among the most effective tools possessed by immortals, so, though all prides pay lip service to the Silence, not all live up to the ideal. Still, most immortals are at least somewhat reluctant to play serenades which target living creatures in the Habitat.

When inside mantles, the Silence does not apply. Nimrod swept into the Mantle of Ife will be perfectly willing to use their serenades to the utmost effect.

feared and held in awe. The Nimrod are tall and powerful women. Their faces are haughty and filled with scorn for any so foolish as to stand in their way. Ravening shadows skitter and howl at the end of chains attached to each woman's waist, chains which they remove with smiles that promise anguish and pain for all enemies of Nimrod. Too, Masith's taboo will cause surges in the nearby electrical systems, even causing the streetlights to dim and brighten.

"So, children. Here to break our Silence?" Jolea will hiss in menacing tones from across the general melee. "I think it's time for you to learn just how effectively Nimrod deals with loud-mouths like yourselves."

Jolea definitely comes off as a street-wise rumbler, and she will spare no effort to intimidate and get a rise out of the personas.

After Jolea has made a number of suitably threatening remarks the Nimrod will release their shadow Himsatis to tear into the crowded conflict. They themselves will wade in behind, headed straight for the cadre. Intervening police, Banjax, and Apocrypha will begin to be torn apart.



System Note: Ingenue.

Having recently emerged from lethe, the cadre may be referred to as Ingenue. They have the potential to be extremely valuable recruits; many were once extremely powerful or well recognized immortals, who may no longer share the convictions of their old pride. The prides have many uses for these "new" immortals — both benign and malevolent. For example, some older immortals may view Ingenue as a good source of immaculum. Too, immortals emerging from lethe are fledglings with the potential to quickly grow to great power. Such immortals can be a valuable asset to any pride. As more and more ingenue awaken, the potential for a great swing in the balance of power grows. Some believe that the pride which gains the greatest number of ingenue will be able to build a sufficient power base to advance them as the Scepter pride.

Interestingly, the greatest single value of the Ingenue is their unique perspective somewhere in-between the exotic mentality of ancient immortals and that of the human condition. Many immortals who have never entered lethe fail to understand the psychology or perceptions of humans. Conversely, twilights would find these same immortals alarmingly alien. The Banjax have always claimed that, in the invention of the lethe rite, they have offered up a conduit between the two races, a link that will ultimately contribute to the survival of both. Who knows what would happen if this liaison implicit in the existence of the Ingenue were ever to be broken?

Ingenue do not evade the constraints of Lethe immediately. The forgetfulness peels away from their mind little by little, a long road of self-discovery that ends with the immortal becoming an alien-minded creature. For those immortals who do not wish to return to such a mind set, entering Lethe once again becomes very natural. This rediscovery of one's past self and exploration of the universe normally absorbs many twilight lifetimes, potentially millennia or more. Until then, the awakening is a continuing, gradual process of increased memory and reconnection to a mind older than mortal civilization.

The personas may find it wise, in the ensuing chaos, to escape with Monica. Unknown to the actors, the Shrike will follow them from the scene, disembodied and deathly quiet, but still visible. Even so, personas will have a difficult time spotting the Shrike; he is adept at stealth tactics.



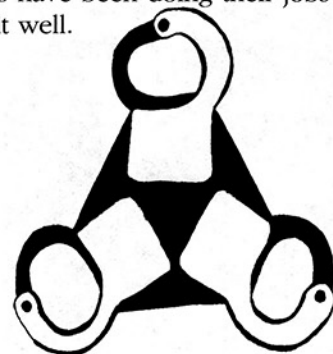
System Note: Gossamers.

Gossamers are immortal spirits that, when corporeal, had their voxes removed. They exist in a region known as the Blue Air, and can often only manifest in the Shallows, places which are charged with emotion, tragedy, or possess a reputation for being haunted. The more widespread the belief among twilights that a place is haunted, the more it accumulates an energetic property known to immortals as Weird. Weird causes a weakness between the Blue Air and all other aspects of reality it touches. The effect resembles a liquefying of the border, lending gossamers a dripping wet, radiant look whenever they emerge into the Shallows.

When a gossamer leaves the Blue Air, he becomes completely visible unless he utilizes a serenade, just as any other immortal would, to move about unseen.

Since Monica possesses the Shrike's vox, he will always be near her, and thus, near the personas. As long as the vox is not subsumed into a living creature, the Shrike will be able to sense where it is. Being a gossamer of potent ability, he is certain to keep any other gossamers or human souls away from his object of need.

Newspapers of the following day will paint a white washed description of the real events at the TV station. The battle will be described only as a shoot-out between terrorists and police. No mention of immortals or strange powers will be made, evidence that immortal jugglers have been doing their jobs and doing it well.





CHAPTER TWO: REVELATIONS

Scene 1: To Sleep, Perchance To Dream.

The cadre, after escaping with an injured and unconscious Monica, may feel lost and unable to formulate a plan as to what should be done next. Someone will probably “remember” an attention (Nostrum) that will help them heal Monica. Any cast member who has not already demonstrated many attentions can add Nostrum to his repertoire and use it to heal Monica’s physical throat wound. However, Monica will still not wake up from a trance-like stillness. None of the personas will be able to communicate with their injured friend, until they enter the dream-state of the Morpheum.

The personas should be given a chance to hole up or flee town, and perhaps to gather any equipment that they feel will be necessary (although any who go home will find that their house has been ransacked by the Apocrypha). The Narrator may wish to add plot complications here involving pursuing Apocrypha agents, Nimrod, or an investigation by any one of the prides that has so far been content to sit on the sidelines. This is a good point in the episode to start adding depth to the background of your cast by giving them individualized connections to the plot. For detailed examples see the Persona Tie-Ins which follow.

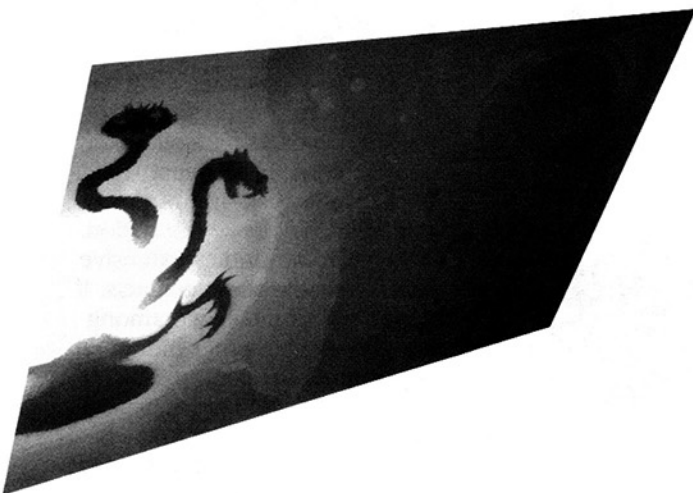


Persona Tie-Ins.

Try to give each of the cadre an individualized plot tie-in that relates to their unique past and pride affiliation. The following are examples. Feel free to use them or mix and match with your own tie-ins.

* The **Morrigan** become concerned about possible linkage between the cadre and the Ark, so they have sent a probe to investigate. The probe might contact one of the cast who is also a Morrigan (any persona who has chosen a bird himsati will be a viable candidate). The probe will intimate in secret that it would not be “good” if the Ark of the Conundrum were to come to light. Although none will come out and say this, Morrigan interests lie with the status quo. Now the scepter pride, the last thing they want is a disturbance in the balance of power. The probe will ask his contact in the cadre to keep him updated with events as they progress.

* The **Tautha** have never stopped searching for their two missing Highbinders (Pashon and Monica). This search has been conducted in utmost secrecy since admission of their loss would cause a loss of visage for their entire pride. Now that Monica has reappeared (albeit as a raving lunatic), they want to know more. A Tautha probe might seek out a contact in the cadre (someone who enjoys high fantasy, or perhaps someone who is really into nature / the environment). Or the Tautha might use a Sleeper to try and communicate with Monica and the cadre in dreams (if so, the Sleeper will be perceived in images such as a stately elm with a mysterious dryad). The Tautha are not aware of how the Morrigan disposed of the Ark, but they would sure like to know. It is their view that the item should be “out in plain sight,” the joint responsibility of all in the Perpetual Society.



* **Nimrod** curiosity has been aroused by their detection of the gossamer form of the Shrike that follows closely after Monica . They are looking for an opportunity to count coup, especially if it can be counted on the Anopheles. As suggested earlier in the script, Jolea might try to win over a member of cadre who was formerly of Nimrod herself. Or a long term hate / love relationship that began many centuries ago between Jolea and one of the cast could be brought in to add a little bit of fun. Perhaps Jolea had an affair with one of the cadre, then he broke the Silence. She was ordered to imprison him. Duty bound, she obeyed. He was never able to forgive her... You can take it from there. Although this script presumes Nimrod will try to count coup on the Anopheles, don't let that stop you from adding in other insidious plots if you want to.

* The **Anopheles** are suspicious that Nimrod might be trying to set them up for something. The gossamer member of Jolea's triad, Masith, has been seen snooping around in Anopheles business. Now Jolea seems to be intent on following the cadre. This might be enough for the pride to set a probe following both the cast and Jolea. If given an opportunity, such a probe might contact a persona of his pride in the cadre and suggest that they try to seduce Jolea, hopefully tricking her into revealing her motives. Of course, the Anopheles are also dreadfully curious as to why Monica Ferrar interrupted a television broadcast, spouting warnings about immortals all over the air. Anything they can do to learn more would be a reasonable development of the plot (see their scripted involvement beginning in Chapter 3).

* The **Magdalen**, supreme inquirers after all forms of knowledge, have been observing this plot unfold since the time when the Apocrypha bought Wycliffe university, if not before. Their Probes could be following and observing Apocrypha agents that are in turn following the cadre. The Magdalen are researching an Apocrypha project called "Looking Glass" and will keep tabs on this entire episode as a matter of course. Any Magdalen persona in the cadre could occasionally catch sight of two men observing him, but any attempt at communication would probably be ignored.

* The **Banjax** are perplexed, but delighted by the mayhem caused by the cadre at the television station. They might well decide to pick up the cast's trail after they leave the station, calling upon the pride's extensive network of reliable street contacts. If they discover one of their own among the personas, they might corner him in an alley, acting as a normal street gang. This to test the courage of the suspected Banjax persona. The Banjax would be wearing Egyptian amulets mixed with biker fashions and tattoo. If impressed by the persona's behavior they might tell him to "look us up whenever you finish with your business."

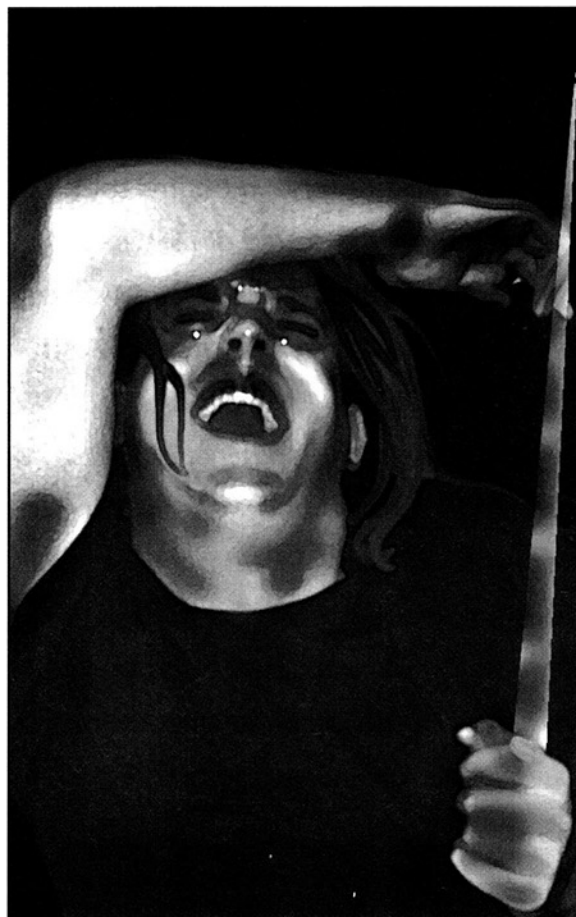


* **Other Prides.** The involvement of prides, Phoenix, Arachne, Dracul, Eremites, and Peri, if any, is left for the Narrator to detail. Pride Terat will figure more prominently in the plot during Chapters Three and Four.

* **The Apocrypha.** Any of the personas participating in this episode could be assumed to have been under the scrutiny of the Apocrypha's "Project Looking Glass" for the past ten years, or perhaps they were discovered in their dreams by Apocrypha Mannequins while they were still young children. The Narrator may wish to spice this episode with returning memories of childhood encounters with strangers who, in hindsight, must have been working for the Apocrypha. For an entire episode based upon the Apocrypha's Project Looking Glass see *IMMORTAL: Pilot Pack*.

Once the cadre settles down into a spot presumed safe (definitely not one of their homes!) inform them that it has been a very long night and that they are all very tired. When some or all of the personas attempt to sleep, at least one should "remember" being trained as a member of the Sleeper calling. They will be able to contact Monica. Monica is hiding in the Morpheum because she exists in one of the states of Ennui, one that keeps her in suspended animation until she can heal both mentally and physically. The Apocrypha rune-bullet dislodged her vox, a wound she will take time to recover from even if she receives the help of Nostrum. Further, her mind is nearly psychotic with the stress of coming out of lethe and following the compulsion of the Ife tryst's subconscious commands. Physically she will remain in this state of Ennui a number of days or perhaps even weeks.

The Sleeper(s) who make contact with Monica will feel a very compelling sense of freedom and release in the Morpheum. Afterwards they will remark that waking life in the Habitat almost feels like a straitjacket. Non-Sleepers will not feel nearly as comfortable in the Morpheum. They may visualize the Morpheum as a dark vortex, a place of uncertainty where they feel out of control. Still the experience of dreaming itself can be one of intense pleasure for immortals. Nowhere else do they feel so utterly alive as in the mysterious climate of the Morpheum.



What Happens to the Sleepers...

ENCOUNTER WITH MONICA:

...The dreamer stands atop a mountain. There is a rainstorm approaching. Lightning flashes, and the smell of ozone is heavy in the air. Tents are below, a scattered encampment. One of the tents belongs to Monica . The dreamer now stands beside the tent as the first patter of rain begins to fall from the sky. The sound of moaning is coming from within. Inside now, Monica and Jim Raxton (a twilight who came to help guard the Mentor's burial site) lie together, nude and entwined. A flash of lightning. A sense of transition. Monica begins to talk to the dreamer as she rolls Jim's now dead body off of her cot. Multiple puncture wounds gape in his corpse even though he seemed to be alive just a few moments ago...

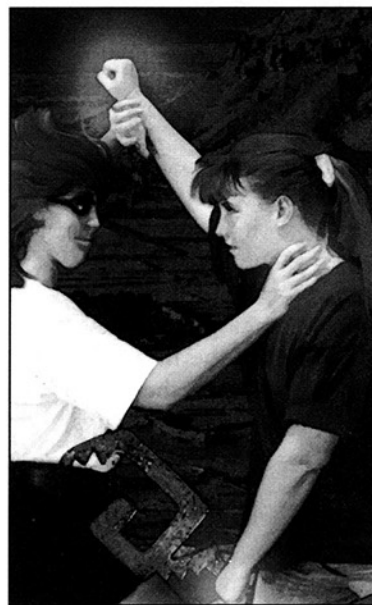
The scene while Raxton was alive is taken from the memory of the dreaming persona. Monica *did* have an affair with Raxton despite the fact that he was married to her best twilight friend (a woman named Amanda).

The scene where Raxton has been murdered exists in the dreamscape that Monica has created. It uses her tortured last memories of Jim which differ substantially from the dreamer's. The tent scene is common enough to both of them, so that its image is retained in the now collective dream-space occupied by Monica and the dreaming cast member.

At this point, the persona is in "real-time" with Monica and can question her about current

events. During the questioning, Monica frequently falls silent as Raxton continually morphs between the image of a virile living man and a lurid blue corpse. This represents the shifting control over the reality of the dreamscape that keeps changing hands between the dreamer and Monica. If the dreamer tries to exert a force of will to fix the image of Raxton in a certain form, they will be able to do so momentarily. Then Monica 's eyes will widen in horrified concentration and the image will shift back.

Monica will be astonished to meet any of the personas in her dream. The shock will force her to remember that she and the others are immortals. She will talk about being hunted by a powerful ghostly being "that you can never escape, not even in *here!*" She will inform the personas that they are all being sought by this creature, who lives invisibly among mankind. If she is asked how the cadre should proceed, she



will tell them to go to Africa, to Mount Elgon, where they can hope to find the Ark of the Conundrum. She will say that the Ark is the only power capable of ending the threat to the cadre and the world.

After some thought, she will give the personas the address of Wycliffe University, where she feels the personas can gain

more information about the true history of immortals. She encourages them to contact the University librarian, Amanda Raxton, who she hopes will take care of her while the cadre journeys to Africa. At the mention of Amanda, she will look back to the image of Raxton which will once more transform into a corpse. Monica will also tell the personas to take "the talisman" (the Shrike's vox) with them since she can't seem to wake up. They will find the vox in one of her pockets.

...and to Those Who Stayed on Watch...

Those personas who insist on staying awake and on watch should be allowed to do so. Shortly after the rest of the cadre has gone to sleep, the Narrator should ask any who take this course of action to make an awareness roll. Anyone who does not roll a null will become aware of the presence of a spiritual form; the Shrike has decided to make contact!

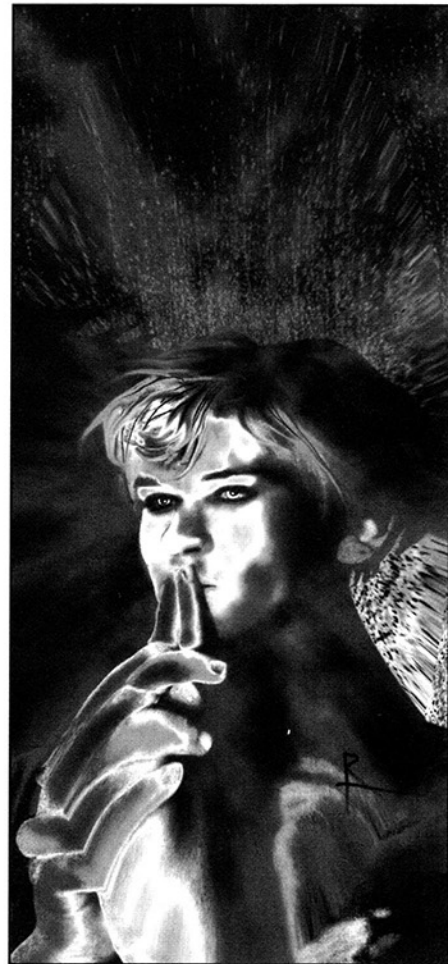
The Shrike has been following his vox. With it he will be able to rematerialize. His ark is short of immaculum, and he has no desire to bargain with a mortal to become a familiar. To the Shrike it is essential that his vox be brought into the presence of his ark. Once this happens he will once again gain a corporeal form.

The first signs of the Shrike's arrival will be the growth of thorns in the area where the personas stand on watch. The briars are black with a point of light glowing red on each thorn. Black briars, spraying a multi-hued light from their flowery crowns, will bloom suddenly around them. Standing amongst the thistles, surreally painted in the light which shines from their spiky blooms, the Shrike will first attempt to bargain with the cadre members, offering to aid them in their journey if they are willing to help him regain his body. He will make fantastic promises to any cadre member who seems willing to help him. But his wheedling veneer of friendliness is not easy to maintain for very long. If no one seems willing to immediately pack up and head to Africa, he will become enraged. Using the Marionette attention, he will hurl objects around the room or campsite in the manner of a poltergeist, before finally vanishing with promises of vengeance.

If he was unsuccessful, the Shrike will continue to plague the cadre until they journey to Africa. He will constantly attempt to influence them, both with proposals and with brute force. He will attempt to gain the confidence of anyone in the cadre that he can, and will always go after whoever he believes to be the weakest link in the chain. After listening to the personas' conversations long enough to gain a working understanding of their desires, he will approach them with a promise of fulfilling those needs. His unceasing goal will be to convince one of the personas to steal the vox and then leave the rest of the group.

If successful in gaining aid from someone in the cadre, he and his accomplice will depart and not return to haunt the remainder of the personas until later, in Chapter Three.

The Shrike will need his "ally" to take the vox to the location of his ark (located in Nairobi, Kenya, in the basement of the Jacaranda hotel) so that he can escape the shallows and remanifest corporeally in the Habitat. It should be pointed out here that the Shrike is not an evil creature, merely one whose knowledge is perhaps too dangerous for the rest of the Perpetual Society. If he is able to regain corporeal form his long term plans are simple — revive the rest of the Mentors,



retrieve the Ark of the Conundrum, then visit revenge upon those who buried him. He will not be satisfied until pride Morrigan has been utterly destroyed, but his vengeance does not extend beyond members of that pride.

...and to Those Who

Those non-members of the Sleeper calling, who nonetheless go to sleep, will each experience a dream chosen from the following list. Each is designed to help acquaint the Ingenue with the facts of their past. Dreaming is dangerous for immortals. But until this has been explained to them, the Sanguinary that lairs in the Morpheum need not be introduced into the episode.

Despite its danger, the Narrator should emphasize the ecstasy associated with the dreamstate that captivates so many immortals.

...The dreamer races through the African countryside, near present day Nairobi, looking out through the eyes of a ravenous animal. The dreamer attacks railroad workers and even drags a passenger from out of a moving train. The tremendous violence of the scene is accompanied by a feeling of being out of control...



This dream is used to foreshadow a cast member's past association with pride Terat. For a time this persona (who must have a lion Himsati) was part of a group of Terat that preyed regularly on the workers of the Mombassa - Nairobi railway line, a group then known to twilights as the "Man-eaters of Tsavo". All that a persona might infer from this dream at present is a glimpse of how it feels to be under the Sanguinary's influence while in Himsati form. No further explanation should be offered by the Narrator. See Chapter Three for more information on the Terat and tie-ins to the persona that has this dream.

...The dreamer stands before the walls of a megalithic city at the top of a mountain. Dark clouds seethe across the sky above. In the far distance, amidst gargantuan statues and temples, glowing eyes watch from inside a shadow. Now the dreamer stands before wide open glass city gates. Thin strands of wire reach down from above to wrap around the dreamer's hands and feet. With each twist and turn of the wire, the dreamer dances in pain, unable to resist its energies...

Fell to Dreaming.

This dream is a flashback of the persona's first encounter with the tryst of the mantle of Ife. The wire symbolizes the tryst's compulsion buried deep inside the persona's subconscious. However, the persona will only be aware of an overpowering atmosphere of hostility and resentment. He will awaken with his heart beating hard, face covered in sweat.

...The dreamer sits on a rock atop a mountain in the middle of the night. A giant golden full moon sits low on the horizon. Awakening to the sound of whispering voices, the dreamer rises to investigate. An encampment can be seen with tents dotting the slopes of the mountain below. As the dreamer makes a stealthy circle of the camp's perimeter, he realizes, to his horror, that the whispers are coming out of the rocks themselves from deep underground. He awakens with a feeling of being watched by ancient creatures that are filled with malice...



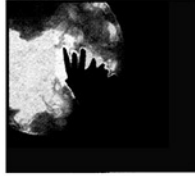
This dream is a remembrance of the expedition to Ife, recalling the voices of the Mentors that called out to the cadre from their ancient prisons under ground.

...The dreamer reads strange hieroglyphs written upon the walls of a great city. The glyphs seem to whisper into the depths of his consciousness, like echoes in a well. Only these words can be distinguished: "The bear returns to its den and the drunkard to the wine press; each seeks the source of its courage. The hunter's secret is in becoming the prey, and as prey becomes the trap..."

This dream message is from the tryst. It represents his coded commands which foretell that the Mentor's will be drawn to recover the Ark. It commands the cadre to act as bait, helping to lure the Mentors into Ife where the ancient immortals can be destroyed or imprisoned forever.

If the Narrator has more members in his cast then are accounted for by these dreams and hauntings, more dreams can be constructed from the Prequel material.

T R A N S I T I O N S



* *If the cadre as a whole decides to assist the Shrike then the cast will want to travel to Kenya by the most expeditious route. The Shrike will rage at any delay. The production can on this basis proceed from roughly the beginning of Chapter 3.*

* *If only one or a part of the cast decides to side with the Shrike, then these will go on to Africa separately where they will seek out the Shrike's Ark, watch as he reforms (see the later part of Chapter Three, Scene 2), and possibly be betrayed by the Shrike who covets their immaculum as a means to restore the rest of the Mentor's. They can escape from the Shrike and rejoin the main story line in the concluding moments of Chapter Three, or they may be asked to assist him as he attempts to revive the other Mentors.*

* *Those of the cadre (whether some or all) who decide to act on Monica 's advice and visit Wycliffe can proceed directly with Scene 2 of this chapter below.*

* *It is entirely possible that at this point in the production the cast will diverge entirely upon a tangent or a sub-plot introduced at the Narrator's discretion. If so, great! We will not presume to tell you how to reign in an experience potentially more rewarding than proceeding with the rest of the script in linear fashion. Go for it! If you and the cast ever want to make it back to the main line of the story, just use the compulsion of the life trust as a device to bring the cast back together upon the slopes of Mount Elgon. When the Shrike appears there too (remember he has up to three other Mentors to recover from tombs there), then the mantle of life will open and the episode can proceed to a climax from the beginning of Chapter Four.*

Scene 2: A Woman Once Young.

Though funded by the Apocrypha, the once prestigious Wycliffe University has an almost entirely autonomous research department. The head of the school is an independent-minded sort, who deeply resents having lost the best potential research recruit in decades (Monica Ferrar), to an ill-advised expedition cooked up by a directing board that couldn't distinguish a mezuzah from a cartouche if their lives depended on it!

Monica trusts Amanda Raxton, the now old librarian of the University. Amanda is a twilight widow. She has been associated with Wycliffe since at least the 1940's. She was, in fact, the wife of a member of Monica's expedition to Kenya, before her husband died and the cadre entered lethe. Monica, in a return visit to the dreams

of a suitable cadre member, will supply the cadre with the location of a letter Jim had written and sealed but never delivered to Amanda. She will state her belief that the unmistakable phrasing of the letter will be sufficient to win Amanda's trust

and cooperation. The cadre need only supply a suitable explanation for how the letter has come into their hands after so many intervening years.

Upon hearing the cast's explanations and requests, Amanda will invite the personas back to her house. She will not object to them leaving Monica in her care if they can offer up any sort of reasonable explanation for this being a necessity. She will then offer the personas a home-cooked meal, expressing dismay that such "nice young people" could come to be in "so much trouble". She will drift into reminiscence about the good old days with Jim and the days back before the "Big

War". The Narrator can, if he is so inclined, offer up some plot seed or flashback which foreshadows the events of a future episode during this portion of the scene. All the while, Amanda will refrain from opening up the letter, responding to any inquiry about it with a slight, sad smile. "Oh, I'll get around to it. When you're as old as I am, you just move a little slower." She will dismiss the letter and then move on to another topic.

Without much prodding or questioning Amanda will mention "a bunch of strange files" she has found in the library computer, complaining that "I just can't figure this new computer stuff out." She will state that the files seem to relate to Monica (to

her a person long gone unless the cadre has brought her into their confidence) and also about alien beings that supposedly represent some sort of danger to the world. Amanda will go on to mention that there is a spooky new exhibit in the university museum, one that she has to

walk past every day because the museum and library are in the same building. If pressed, she will exclaim that she never knew there were mummies in Kenya, and then mumble that "the nasty old thing sure looks kind of creepy."

The letter from the Forties contains an admission by Jim that he has been having an affair with Monica. It requests a divorce. For Monica, irrational and wracked by guilt at many levels, the

letter's delivery and the request to be left with Amanda represent part of the psychological healing process. Amanda, perhaps acting upon intuition, does not open the letter immediately. But at some point the draw to know will become unavoidable and she WILL open it. Naturally, if the cadre opens the letter in advance they will be able to substitute a less catastrophic replacement. Likewise there are many serenades the cadre could use to make the use of the letter to win Amanda's help altogether unnecessary. Amanda Raxton cherishes the memory of her dead husband above all other things.



Character Note: The Mummy.

The Mentor is no ordinary-looking mummy. Instead of dry linen, she is wrapped in a thin wire resembling blue glass. She is as hard as stone and appears iridescent in the light. Wound through the glass filaments are charms of various kinds, many of which bear warnings of the mummy's identity. The pride

symbol of the Morrigan is prominently inscribed on a charm on the mummy's forehead.



Character Note: Monica, Then and Now.

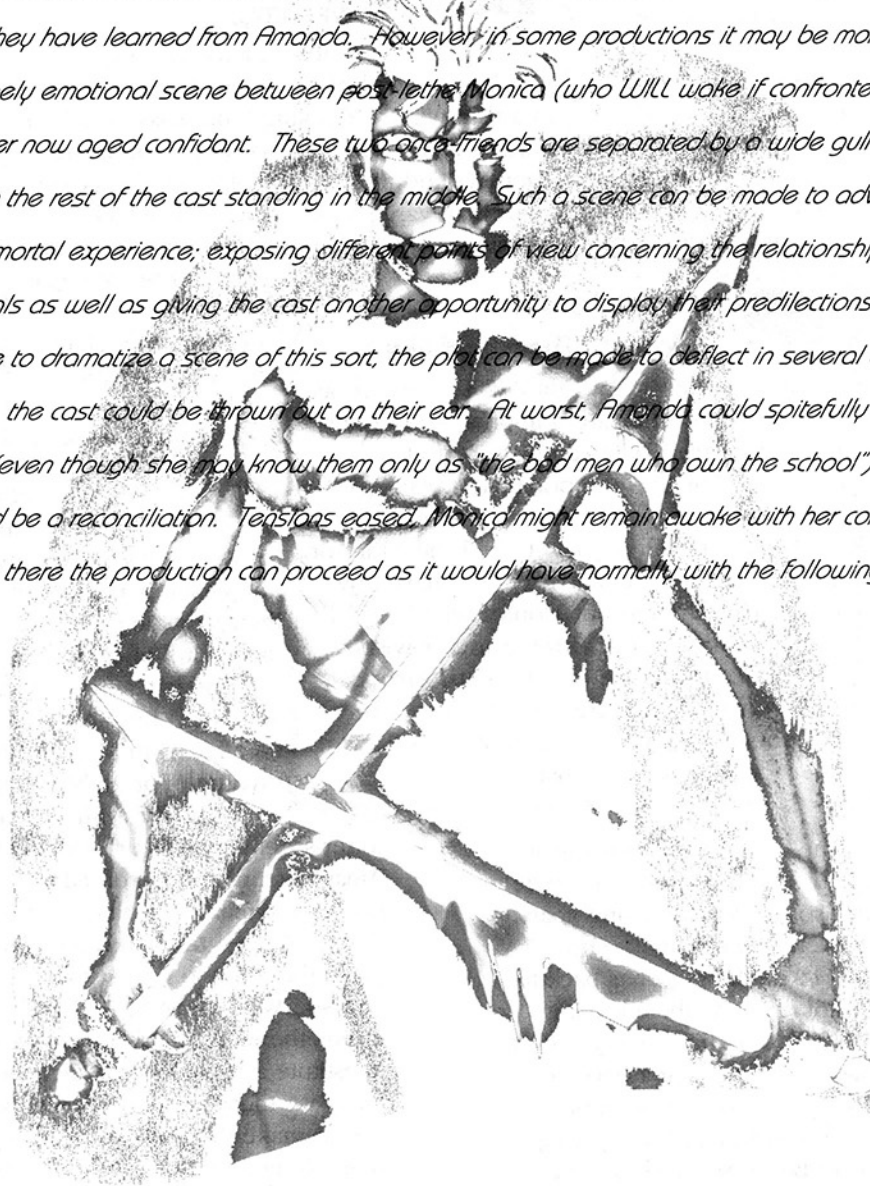
Monica knew Amanda Raxton both in her former life as an aware immortal, and in her present incarnation as an instructor at Wycliffe. This has the potential to cause some real confusion, especially if Amanda reads the letter from Jim. Unless the cadre or Monica reveal it, Amanda will not have any way to link the present Monica with her old friend from the past. If the Narrator wishes for Monica to remain unconscious, Amanda will continue to care for her, even if circumstances are such that she has thrown the cadre out of her house.

T R A N S I T I O N S



* *The most logical next step is for the cadre to head over to the museum and library to follow up on the things that they have learned from Amanda. However, in some productions it may be more interesting to first stage a hugely emotional scene between post-lethal Monica (who WILL wake if confronted directly by Amanda) and her now aged confidant. These two once-friends are separated by a wide gulf of both time and regrets with the rest of the cast standing in the middle. Such a scene can be made to advance many points of the immortal experience; exposing different points of view concerning the relationship between mortals and immortals as well as giving the cast another opportunity to display their predilections.*

If you decide to dramatize a scene of this sort, the plot can be made to deflect in several directions from there. Simplest, the cast could be thrown out on their ear. At worst, Amanda could spitefully expose them to the Apocrypha (even though she may know them only as "the bad men who own the school"). On the other hand there could be a reconciliation. Tensions eased, Monica might remain awake with her condition much improved. From there the production can proceed as it would have normally with the following Scene 3.



Scene 3:

Getting to know You.

As the personas enter the library/museum, the first thing to catch their eye will be a sign proclaiming the:

“NEW EXHIBIT! KENYAN MUMMY!”

The Library is on the floor below ground level, and the archaeological display is just across from the main stairway. The mummy, actually one of the four Mentors, is enclosed in a sarcophagus; the rest of the display includes samples of pottery as well as ancient works of art. Despite the uniqueness of the exhibit, most academicians around the world consider it a fake. Scathing papers have already been published by several Egyptologists. Still, tourists do arrive to take a look at the mummy.

The personas will need to work their way down to the library, the office of which is a small, cramped back room. Here, they can access Amanda's computer, which is tied into the main university data base. Accessing the Apocrypha's records concerning the Mentors and the Ark of the Conundrum will be extremely difficult (use Computer talent, with a rank 5 difficulty), but a serenade such as Gremlin can make the task much simpler. Amanda stumbled on the records accidentally, and she will not recall how she originally accessed them.

All the information in “The Temple” and “The First Expedition” sections of the Prequel is available in these files if the cadre can figure out how to get to them. Additional background, especially anything relating to “Battle in the Elephant Caves” can be obtained by further questioning of Monica.

Easier to access will be the Apocrypha's records on “The Second Expedition”. However, while the personas are pouring over the records (or, when they attempt to investigate the sarcophagus) the Mentor therein will rise, hungry for immaculum. She will attack the players first, using Incantation serenades.

Shortly after battle is joined, however, the Nimrod Triad will show up; they have been trailing the cadre, and more especially the Shrike. If the Shrike (and any persona with the Shrike's vox)

is not present, then Jolea will not be present for this scene, only Grayl and Masith. Jolea will already be in Africa. The Mentor will be enraged by this intrusion, and will attempt to kill the Nimrod as well.

The Narrator should feel free to play up the battle, but in the end, Grayl will chop the head off of the Mentor, and stand ready to absorb the Spill. Radiant light will pour forth from the Mentor's neck, intensifying until finally reaching a level of blinding multiple hues, many of which have never been perceived by the personas before. During its climax, it is impossible for anyone to stare at it. A sound like tinkling glass will rise up from a whisper until it reaches a warped crescendo. A wind will blow from out of nowhere in a dervish, scattering papers and loose items all about the room. Rising, the wind will begin to blow everyone back into the corners of the chamber until suddenly...

Silence. The spill is finished. A replete and satisfied Grayl will lecture the cadre about the rule against breaking the Silence along with the reasoning behind it. Meanwhile at her feet her Doberman shadow will continue to lap tendrils of light from the feet of the mummy in quiet contentment. She (and Jolea if there) will tell the cadre that Nimrod will always be watching them closely. Any tainted member of the cadre will be able to recover one point of immaculum during the spill despite the fact that they were not the closest in proximity.

In a somewhat expansive mood, the Nimrod may take this opportunity to make a recruiting pitch to any female members of the cast. “Don't be deceived by the glittering offers of other prides,” Grayl will tell the cast, “the only true pride is pride in self, pride in service. Join Nimrod and you will never have cause to question the surety of the ethical ground you are standing on.”

With that, they will encourage the cadre to take their leave of this part of the world. Troublemakers like themselves are not very welcome.

The Narrator can play out this scene rather differently if desired. Perhaps the Mentor is not nearly so violent, and the Nimrod will appear to be the aggressors. Perhaps, in fact, the cadre can accuse Grayl of wanton destruction of the Mentor (who is technically a member of pride Morrigan and, therefore, under the protection of the Stratagem.) Grayl would not only lose visage, she would be severely punished if such a point were pressed home to the Jury. A clever cadre might find in this scene the opportunity to count coup on Nimrod.

T R A N S I T I O N S



* Any Nimrod sub-plots which the Narrator has developed will potentially modify or extend the previous scene. Nevertheless, the Nimrod's plan to use the cadre as a means to "flush" out game in preparation for a coup should still be operable. The triad will be anxious for the ingenue to depart for Africa, where their activities will indeed be carefully monitored. As for the cast themselves, they will find the range for further plot development essentially limited until they take the plunge and make their way over to Kenya. Nimrod will pester them until they leave. The Apocrypha will become alarmingly dangerous once they learn of the cadre's visit to Wycliffe. (Note that Amanda's life will be worth very little if the cadre does not take some steps to protect her.) As for the Shrike, he will redouble his efforts to gain the cadre's cooperation whether willing or not. All roads point in the direction of Africa.





Setting Notes: Kenya, Africa.

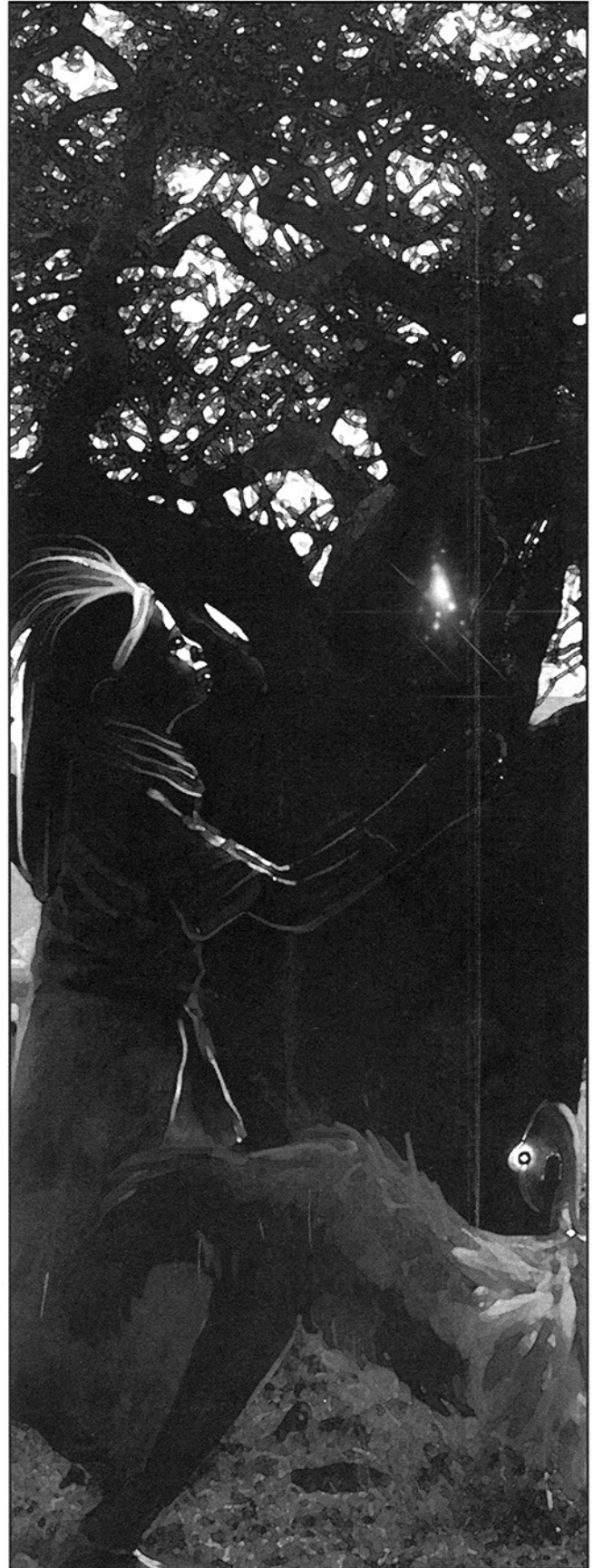
Traditional methods of travel from the US to Africa (on an airplane rather than by serenade) involve a flight from LA or New York to Nairobi, typically with stopovers in London or Paris. The cost of such a flight ranges from 800 to 1100 US dollars. Obviously, any flight originating in Europe will be cheaper. Bargain fares can be had if the personas attempt to make arrangements with independent airlines. If the personas arrive in June to September, or December to March, they will arrive during the dry season.

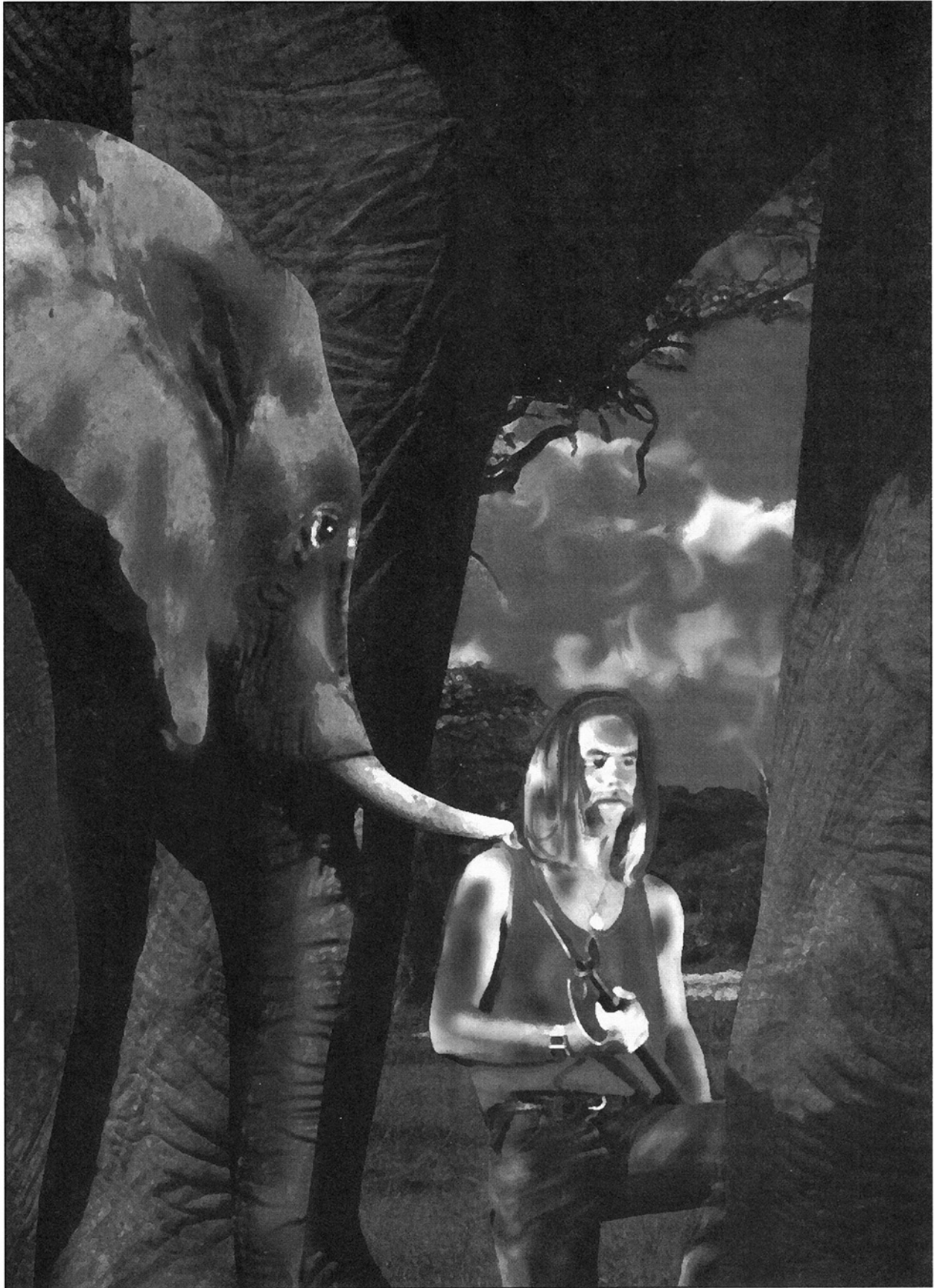
Although personas may want to rent a car for some travel in Kenya, outside of the national parks the roads are often in poor condition. They may have to walk, or use serenades to assist them in getting around. Visas are required for any nationality other than British, and an international vaccination card is required of all travelers, as well as an international driver's license. Personas can get by on about \$25 dollars a day living expenses but, due to the number of forged 100 dollar bills flooding the country, large denominations are not always accepted.

Much of the black market in Kenya is controlled by D'arcade and the solitaires that support their efforts. The black market illegally exchanges currency at a rate that is more favorable than the rate imposed by the government. It can allow the personas to live cheaper, thus conserving money. Despite the efforts of D'arcade, however, the government insinuates many plain-clothes policemen to restrict the practice. After all, it does undermine the country's foreign currency earnings. Personas who extensively utilize the black market may find themselves encountering solitaire immortals working for D'arcade or they may be investigated by government officials.

Personas who wears any kind of military clothing in Kenya are asking for trouble, especially if they are mistaken for a mercenary.

Malaria is prevalent throughout Africa, although immortals are in no danger of dying from the disease. Still, malaria symptoms (fever, shivering, headache and joint pain) can manifest and hinder action success, especially in combat. Use the Poison/Drug hostile until the symptoms diminish. Mosquitoes, ticks, blackflies and sandflies, along with the tsetse fly, are a constant nuisance, especially in wetter areas. The personas will also encounter leeches in slow-moving water.





A variety of spiders, scorpions and snakes are prevalent in Kenya. While most snakes will get out of the way, the puff adder is slow, and can be stepped on accidentally. Due to immortals' susceptibility to poison, snakes (other than those of a persona's own himsati) should be avoided at all costs.

Kenya teams with wildlife and any immortal who is tainted should be wary of companion animals which might sense and attack him. For personas with taint, roll the Companion hostile to determine companion reaction.

Animals such as wild dogs, jackals, hyenas and others may carry rabies. However, Immortals can endure this disease, just as any other, until it has run its course, usually in about ten days.

Personas doing anything considered suspicious will face official investigation and possible arrest. In most of Africa, bribes are common to secure early release from detention. Since East and Southern Africa are the haunts of the oldest Terat, flaunting the traditions of the local people or presuming the superiority of western thought will bring swift, if veiled, retribution from the pride (which loathes such attitudes). Often, anyone traveling through the country, especially hiking or backpacking, will be invited to share village life with the native people in remote areas. Personas should always ask permission of a village's chief to stay, and should accept any food and drink offered so as not to offend the people. English and Swahili are widely spoken in Africa. In cases where the personas can't understand the language, serenade forms of telepathy and other methods of communication might become necessary.

The Anopheles/Terat Rivalry. These two prides have been fighting over territory in Kenya and neighboring countries for some time now. The Anopheles have entrenched themselves in Nairobi and are constantly attempting to extend their dominance to the surrounding areas under Terat control. The core of the rivalry is actually fought between Quiet Cultures of both

prides, which mask their conflicts under the guise of rival native tribes clashing over cultural and economic differences. The atrocities of the war in Rwanda exemplify the intensity to which this conflict of Quiet Cultures can attain, extinguishing untold numbers of twilight lives.

Ever since their secret alliance with the Shrike, the

Anopheles have been trying to extend their control to Mount Elgon, where the other Mentors are still buried. Terat presence, however, is concentrated on the mountain strongly enough to

make Anopheles incursions to date both futile and expensive in terms of mortal manpower.

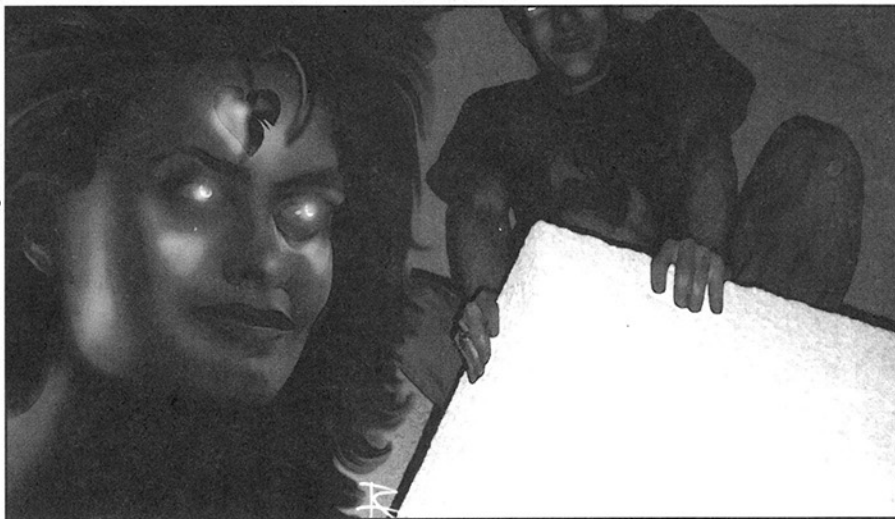
Recently, however, the Anopheles have gained ground by influencing the mortal government to grant them a permit to survey Mount Elgon as a possible source for thermal energy. By using Stefan (a bumbling Terat double-agent) as their personal liaison to the government, they have led the Terat to believe that they are trying to take over the mountain, when in reality they merely

wish to explore, excavate and remove the other Mentors from the slopes and search for a way into the Ife mantle. While Stefan wastes



Character Note: The Terat in Kenya

The Terat in this region are led by Eshu, once a Sanguinary-dominated immortal whose gang of man-eating lions plagued twilights in the area during construction of the Mombassa-Nairobi railroad. Any Terat persona in the cadre might have belonged to this group at one time, or conversely, might have been a renegade from Eshu's authority or a Slayer, Keeper or Highbinder who was set to oppose him during the time that the railroad was built. Such a persona will not be greeted with warmth.



time trying to block Anopheles assumption of power over the mountain (by alienating key members of the government to the point where they will deny the actual permit to build facilities) the Anopheles are exploring the slopes, escorted by mortal teams of survey workers. The Terat watch closely but hold back from attacking the twilight government workers, depending on Stefan to halt the presumed Anopheles takeover scheme.

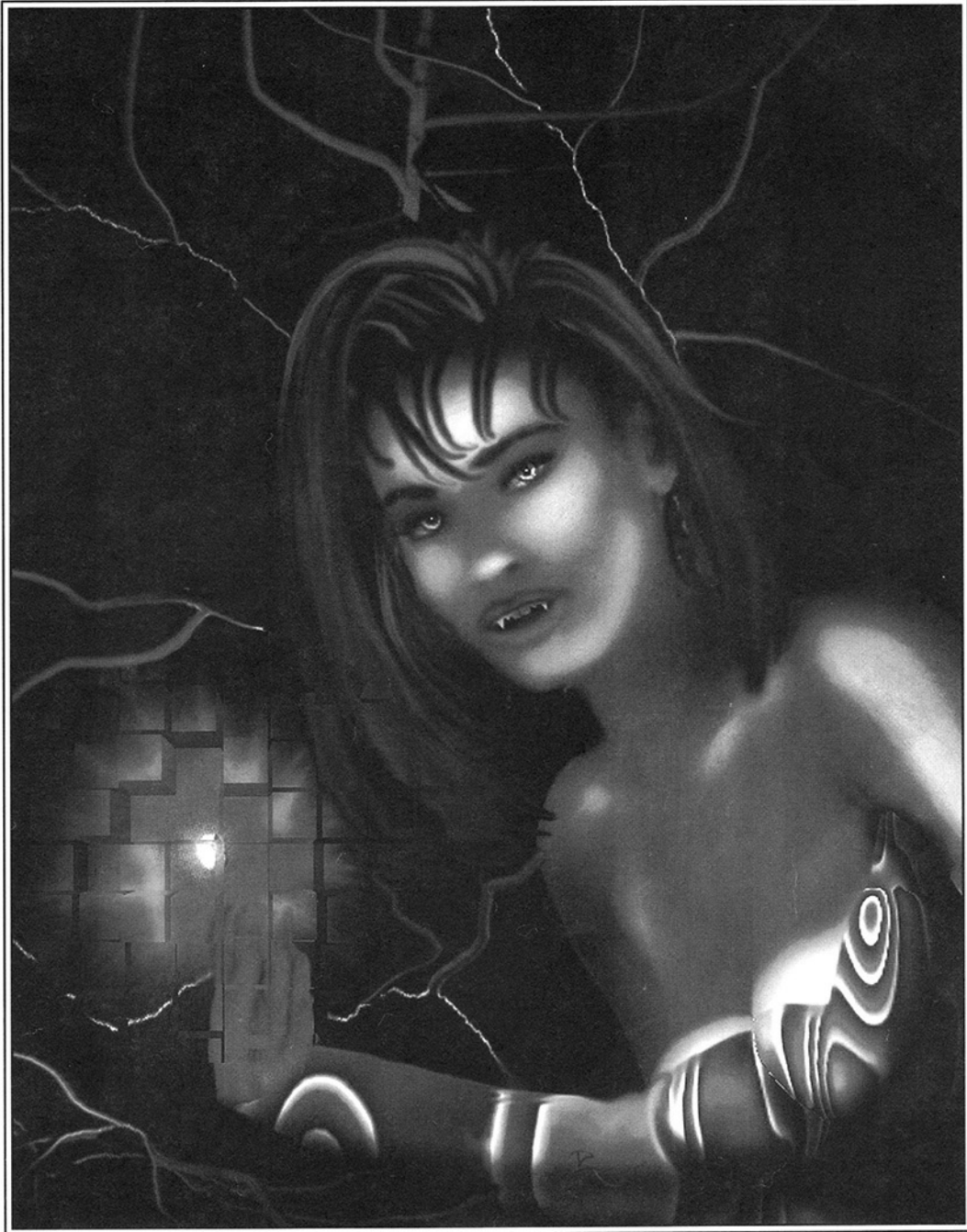
Rural Excursions.

The personas, in their travels through Kenya, will no doubt come upon various villages of native peoples, whom they will find to be generally very polite and curious. The chief of such a village will customarily ask the personas to dine with his tribe (and will be insulted if his hospitality is refused). The personas will be expected to eat whatever is offered, no matter how repugnant they may personally find it. To refuse is considered rude.

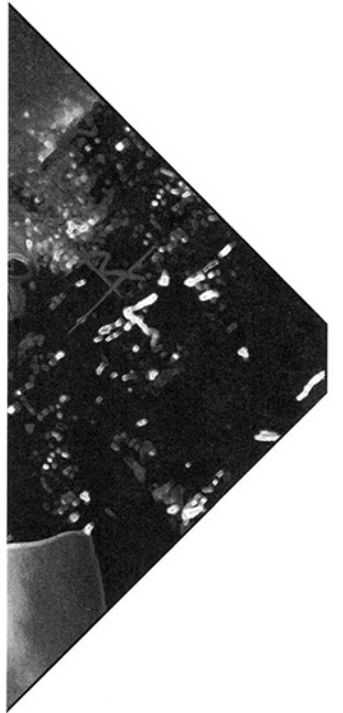
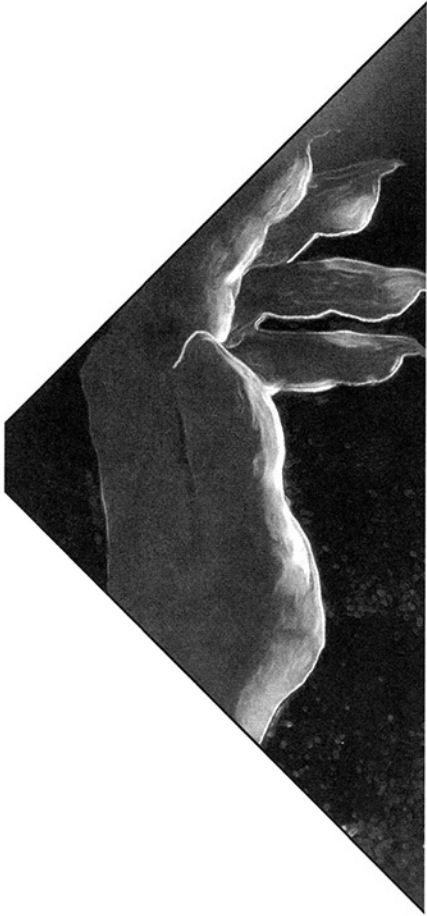
Personas will find that their privacy is often invaded as the natives watch and continually speak with them. Customarily, whoever allows the personas to stay with them should be presented with gifts when the personas leave. Wild game will be encountered all of the time.

The Narrator should highlight the majestic beauty of Africa whenever possible by the appearance of lions, buffalo, zebras and other indigenous animals. Again though any immortal that is tainted (and has a himsati similar to African wildlife) may run into trouble when Companions in the area sense him.





Quiet Cultures.



CHAPTER THREE: CONSPIRACIES

Scene 1: Nice to Meet You.

Nairobi is a high, airy city with a cool climate and wide main avenue. As soon as the personas arrive, they will feel a deep sense of familiarity with the city, although there will be a number of changes since they were last here. The latest movies, good restaurants and hotels, as well as many markets exist to entice them. The Anopheles maintain a strong influence over this city.

Thieves are sadly prevalent in Nairobi. They wield pangas, a type of sharp knife, that they use to slash purses and bags with (mostly at night). The majority of such thieves are actually controlled by Anopheles Quiet Cultures in the city, most notably the Ganymedes, whose main objective is to support the Anopheles monetarily. Others of the Ganymedes work as prostitutes trading their favors for immaculum that can be taken back to the pride's caches.

Jolea will subtly trail the cadre to Nairobi, and while they may not be aware she is following them, her approach will certainly be known to the Anopheles. Having learned that Jolea is watching a cadre of Ingenue, pride Anopheles will waste no time before attempting to contact the cast.

The Anopheles will dispatch a Highbinder,

Adrai, to retrieve the cadre shortly after they arrive. In most productions he will meet them at the airport. However, if the cast is using some other method of transport he will still contrive to

meet them, wherever and however they arrive. Adrai uses the Cassandra attention to give him an edge when he tracks someone. He will be completely familiar with the cast's travel plans and extremely difficult to shake if they try to elude him. On contact, he will welcome the cadre to Africa and offer them the hospitality of his pride. He will invite them to a party at Hotel Jacaranda, where the cast may establish a base of operations. He will make every attempt to persuade the cast, describing the party arrangements in glowing terms. If they still decline, he will trail them and attempt to determine whether or not there is more to Jolea's interest in them than a simple desire to enforce the Silence (or perhaps to recruit ingenue for Nimrod).

If the actors do not cooperate with the Anopheles, they will find Nairobi to be a hostile city: merchants will be rude

and bureaucracy will be never ending. The cast may even be imprisoned for not having their "papers" in order. Run-ins with the criminal element will also be guaranteed. The Ganymede will muster any number of gangs to plague the cadre with assault, theft, and other ills. The cast will be unable to gain a car by any legal means and if they attempt to steal one, the police will be after them.

Adrai will at some point appear

again to offer his services. He will transparently feign disappointment over the cast's difficulties suggesting that perhaps, with Anopheles aid, the cadre will find the going a little easier. Of course, the cast may still ignore his offers and leave the city.



Setting Note: Mount Elgon.

Straddling the Kenya/Uganda border, this extinct volcano reaches an elevation of 4,321 meters at its highest peak. Hail and driving sleet are common on the peak, but a caldera (crater floor) lies at a lower elevation of 3600 m. Buffalo, giant forest hogs and waterbuck are common in the area, as are black and white colobus monkeys which sail gracefully with great leaps from tree to tree.

Hidden in the valleys of the mountain are numerous caves crusted inside with salt. On rare occasions, herds of elephants enter the caves to lick the salt. Bamboo occurs above the 2600 m. mark. Some of the caves are inhabited by the El Kony people (for which the mountain was named), all of whom shun the site of the buried Mentors as evil, and may prove to be useful allies. At times, Ugandan elephant poachers might be seen with automatic weapons. These hard-bitten men brook no interference in their pursuit of ivory.

Hot springs steam in the caldera of the volcano, providing a warm bath for weary personas. Still, an ever-present feeling of familiarity and terror will weigh heavily upon the cadre when they arrive at the mountain.



Setting Note: Swahili.

Swahili is a popular native language commonly known to most who live within the borders of Kenya despite wide differences in tribe or ethnicity. The following phrases are supplied for the Narrator to use as a means of more firmly establishing the authenticity of his supporting cast of mortal Kenyans..

Good Day.

Where are you going?

Thank You.

Give me (I want).

Please help me.

Food, water.

Boss.

Circular thorn shelter.

Jambo!

Una kwenba wapi?

Asante sana.

Mimi nataka.

Tafadhali Nisaide.

Chakula Maji.

Bwana.

Boma.

T R A N S I T I O N S



* *If the cadre accepts Adrai's offer then the production can continue with scene 2.*

* *Otherwise the Narrator will have to craft another opportunity for the personas to come into contact with Stefan, an agent of the Terat (see scene 2 below). Key elements of this encounter will include Stefan mentioning Delilah, (whom he will describe as the "mistress of deceit"); and subtly feeling them out for sympathies toward the Terat (whom he will describe as "the real movers and shakers in this part of Africa"). If at all possible, the cadre should be convinced to accompany Stefan to his meeting with the Terat at mount Elgon. In this case the production can continue with Scene 3.*

* *If the Personas spurn the advances of both the Anopheles and the Terat then perhaps they will be chased to Mount Elgon by Jolea, or captured by the Shrike and taken to the caves there. The Shrike will likely plan to sacrifice them and spill their immaculum to replenish the halos of the other Mentors. One way or another, the cast must find themselves on the slopes of Elgon in time for the storm that accompanies the opening of the life mantle. They will be blown into life for the start of Chapter Four.*



Scene 2: Confections of Vice and Virtue

The Anopheles stage a wild party, encompassing the entire five-star Hotel Jacaranda. Adrai will offer to take the cadre shopping, at Anopheles expense, to acquire "suitable" clothing for the party. Otherwise, standard attire appropriate for a formal event will be provided to any persona who accepts it. (Selecting clothes provides a great opportunity for the personas to express themselves and "remember" more about their past). The atmosphere of the party will abound with unabashed decadence, in every variety.

Players will be treated to exotic dishes, drinks, and romantic partners in a setting reminiscent of a celebration in Imperial Rome.

Anyone in the cast who expresses a desire for any particular food, drink, or vice will be instantly gratified.

"Caviar? No problem. You prefer a brunette? One moment. Ah, here, meet Chris."

An Anopheles party is a spectacle the personas may not be prepared for. Temptations will fall their way with alarming accuracy and frequency. It is important for the Narrator to perform each of the supporting cast in a manner that does not make them merely

"perverse." The Anopheles have intense interests beyond simple physical gratification and are equally passionate concerning intellectual stimulus and imaginative expression. During the party the most fascinating discussions of art, literature, and philosophy will be tossed around from suite to suite, often by tremendously original creators well known to twilight history. The cast will not find the Anopheles to be "snooty" or highbrow connoisseurs of the arts. They constantly debate

the merits of every topic and accord to anyone who can change their current perspectives, a great degree of respect.

One can always tell the difference between older Anopheles and their younger members just out of Lethe. The ancient Anopheles are often part of a large sect in the pride that is fascinated by the concept of Virtue — Vice's necessary opposite. After all, constant gratification of desire ultimately removes desire, while denial likewise feeds it. Such Anopheles often practice interesting forms of self-deprivation in order to rebuild yearnings for the sensations they have come to take for granted.

Young Anopheles (those just out of Lethe) have lived a life restrained by the social customs and values of humanity. They see their awakening as a liberation from imposed morals and are often excessive in their self-gratification. While their elders do not disdain such behavior (many are, in fact, envious) retribution falls upon any "newborn" whose judgment has been clouded by desire. Anopheles that appear to be slaves to desire, rather than its master, are quickly brought into line through the ridicule and intimidation of their betters.

An Anopheles party is an event that takes months of preparation. Every sense possessed by the guests must be titillated in the least obvious manner possible. The smell of each room, the music or other background sounds, the lighting and decor, all must be brought together into a sculpture for the senses. Of course, more obvious

pleasures are made available as well.

Adrai will give the cadre room keys for suites on the eighth floor, and will introduce them to Delilah, his superior. He will then disappear to arrange for transportation and any equipment which the cadre requires for their expedition.



Center Stage Cue: Predilections.

This scene represents a chance to ease back from the plot and explore the character of each persona. The Narrator should be on his toes, alert for clues to each persona's predilection. As the party sweeps around the cadre, cast members will be able to react in many different ways, ranging from haughty indifference to complete submersion. Let the cast have fun exploring the inclinations of their new found persona.

Predilections that would benefit most from this scene are *Rake, Connoisseur, Cabalist, Boor, Confidant, Misfit, Paramour, Preternatural and Sycophant*. Any persona whose personality shows straightforwardness or especially fragile sensibilities will be treated with amused contempt. Any persona who decries the events he witnesses or attempts arguments based on morality will become a target for all guests to use as their scratching post. *Yuppies, Right-Wingers, Scoundrels, Detractors* and *Jokers* will be uncomfortable during the party and may draw attention to themselves.

Delilah will share with the cast the Anopheles' view of the Stratagem. If she feels that there are any sympathetic personas, she will attempt to recruit them into her pride. At the Narrator's discretion, she may attempt to seduce one (or more) members of the cadre; as a matter of personal habit, she flirts outrageously with cast members of either sex.

This party gives the personas a chance to interact with a group of immortals in a non-confrontational fashion. This scene will give them a chance to relax, unwind, and start to feel that they have found some trustworthy allies. This view of the situation may or may not be true, but the cast should nonetheless be encouraged to buy into the illusion of camaraderie which their hosts have been at such pains to create.

Any persona who doesn't seem to react well to the decadence of the party will eventually be drawn aside by Stefan, a member of pride Terat who has infiltrated the Anopheles and is posing as one of their

Emissaries (his actual calling is that of a Probe). Stefan is seeking allies for the Terat in their attempt to gain a foothold inside Nairobi. While the Terat dominate the surrounding Kenyan wilderness, they view the strong Anopheles hold on the capital as a threat to their long term security. Not wanting to give too much away too quickly, Stefan will simply remark that, in his calling as an Anopheles Emissary (he lies about his true pride affiliation, maintaining his cover), he has regular contact with members of other prides. From there he will try to glean whether or not the persona is anxious to connect with any specific pride and whether or

not they might be sympathetic to the Terat. If he feels confident enough, he may inform the persona that he will shortly be conducting official pride business that calls for a meeting with the Terat. He will ask if the persona would like to arrange a meeting with them as well, and will offer to convey such a desire to the Terat. Stefan seems friendly, but looks a little uncomfortable and out of place.

Stefan also plays up his newest appointment as a liaison to the Kenyan government for a survey of Mount Elgon which could grant the pride rights to construct a thermal power plant. In this regard his self-importance has been



artificially inflated by the Anopheles, who gave him the post with full knowledge of his true Terat affiliation. While he plays the game of squelching the deal, while pretending to advance it, the Anopheles gain access to Terat territory for weeks, more than enough time to excavate the remaining Mentors.

Unknown to either Stefan or the cadre, there is another less tangible guest at the party — the Shrike himself. Unlike Stefan, the Shrike is an ally of pride Anopheles, having won acceptance into their midst as a gossamer Rook. They are waiting to help him regain his lost vox and reform from his ark, which they have brought into the basement of the Jacaranda hotel.

At some point, either during or after the party, the Anopheles will make a concerted effort to get the vox of the Shrike down into the basement. There are many ways that this might be attempted; the Shrike may have convinced a cadre member to help dupe the rest of the cadre, an Anopheles agent might seduce whichever cadre member has the vox and arrange for a clandestine meeting in the basement (known as the "dungeon" for its erotic events); or perhaps some Anopheles will simply draw some of the personas aside and ask to meet in a location "just a little less noisy" than the non-stop party. If all else fails, Adrai is a Highbinder, and he will be assigned to steal the vox while the cadre rests in their rooms.

Once the vox is brought into the basement, and any member of the cast is present, the Shrike will manifest. A single red beam of light will spring forth from beneath the concrete floor. The vox itself will become white-hot, burning whatever is holding it until it falls to the ground. The floor will then erupt, and a blinding red light will spring forth. Dust thrown into the air will swirl around as thorny thistles take over the room, at last coalescing into the shape of a perfectly formed naked man. The Shrike is reborn. He will utter a scream of triumph, a sound that will quickly change pitch to match the tenor of a serenade. The Shrike will then disappear without a trace.

Any Anopheles present will appear quite smug about the whole affair (one of the true reasons that the party was staged in the first place). If asked they will intimate that the Anopheles are indeed pleased to have helped restore one of their own. One of the Anopheles will be willing to expound at length upon the relationship between arks, immaculum and voxes.

If the Shrike has arrived in Africa with only a subset of the cast, then this part of the scene can be separated from the party and run on the basis of the cast's explicit cooperation. The Shrike will be grateful for the help of the cadre. He will owe a debt to his allies, but will attempt to kidnap any detractors for sacrifices to resurrect the other Mentors. The only thing that would induce the Shrike to include true allies in this sacrifice would be his discovery that they are members of pride Morrgan.



System Note: Rebirth

Arks are objects wherein immortals deposit immaculum, building an energy reserve they can tap in the event they become tainted, or worse, slain. Upon death, an immortal becomes a gossamer. If his vox is not physically disturbed by any other living thing during the spill of his immaculum, he remains attached to it, though if his vox is touched before the spill is complete, the new gossamer will find himself thrown into the Blue Air. From these vast expanses, he must find his way back to the Shallows which allow re-entry into the Habitat.

If the ark of the vanquished immortal has at least as much immaculum as comprised his original physical form (calculated in **memory** notes) he skips the gossamer stage and is reborn within his ark complete with a new vox.

Voxes are, however, significant to rebirth of immortals as they allow them to reform at a lower than usual cost of immaculum. A gossamer who can capture his original vox, and take it back to his ark, multiplies the number of immaculum present in his ark by his himsati tier to gain a virtual total that may be applied to rebirth. This virtual total may never be used to incarnate at a himsati tier higher than that of the original form. For example, a tier 7 gossamer in possession of his original vox would only require 20 immaculum to reform, rather than the usual total of 140 motes (tier 7 times 20 provides a sufficient virtual total). Any immaculum present in an ark which exceeds the total necessary to reform receives no multiplicative benefit. Thus, in the example, an ark of 25 would expend 20 motes on reformation. The excess 5 motes would simply remain left over in the ark.

Immortals also have the option to become a familiar, should they desire to become corporal again but lack the immaculum to be reborn in their usual form.

The event of rebirth is a very visual and dramatic occurrence, accompanied by special effects unique to each individual. Such individual effects are usually colored by any taboos the persona in question may be afflicted with. Invariably though, there is a weather change to herald the rebirth of an immortal.

T R A N S I T I O N S



* *If any persona has accepted Stefan's offer to meet the Terat and informs the rest of the cadre, the production can continue directly with scene 3 below. The possibility exists that a persona approached by Stefan will, however, not wish to "involve" the rest of the cast and will try to slip away for a meeting on his own.*

This plot branch can be handled in an amusing fashion by having Adrai inform the remainder of the cast that the Anopheles are about to expose a traitor (see scene 3 below). The cast will be invited to travel with him to the site of a meeting with the Terat where the traitor's exposure will cause the Terat maximum humiliation. What cast will be able to refuse this kind of fun, especially if you fan the flames of speculation regarding what may befall the missing cast member?

* *If the cadre rejects Stefan's offer and none of the cast departs with him for the meeting, then all the cast will be invited by Adrai to witness the Anopheles counting coup on the Terat and events can proceed to scene 3 anyway.*

* *If the cast stays outside of the manipulations of both Terat and Anopheles, refusing to go with either Stefan or Adrai, then another means of getting the cast to Mount Elgon will need to be devised. Once again it may be that Jolea will catch up with the cast and chase them to the mountain, or the Shrike may capture them and take them there for sacrifice. Perhaps the cast may even get to the site in the normal course of mounting an expedition intended to re-discover the Ark of the Conundrum.*

Regardless of the path taken, the cast will ultimately wind up on the slopes of Mount Elgon arriving either at the beginning, middle, or end of scene 3 as will best serve the needs of the production.

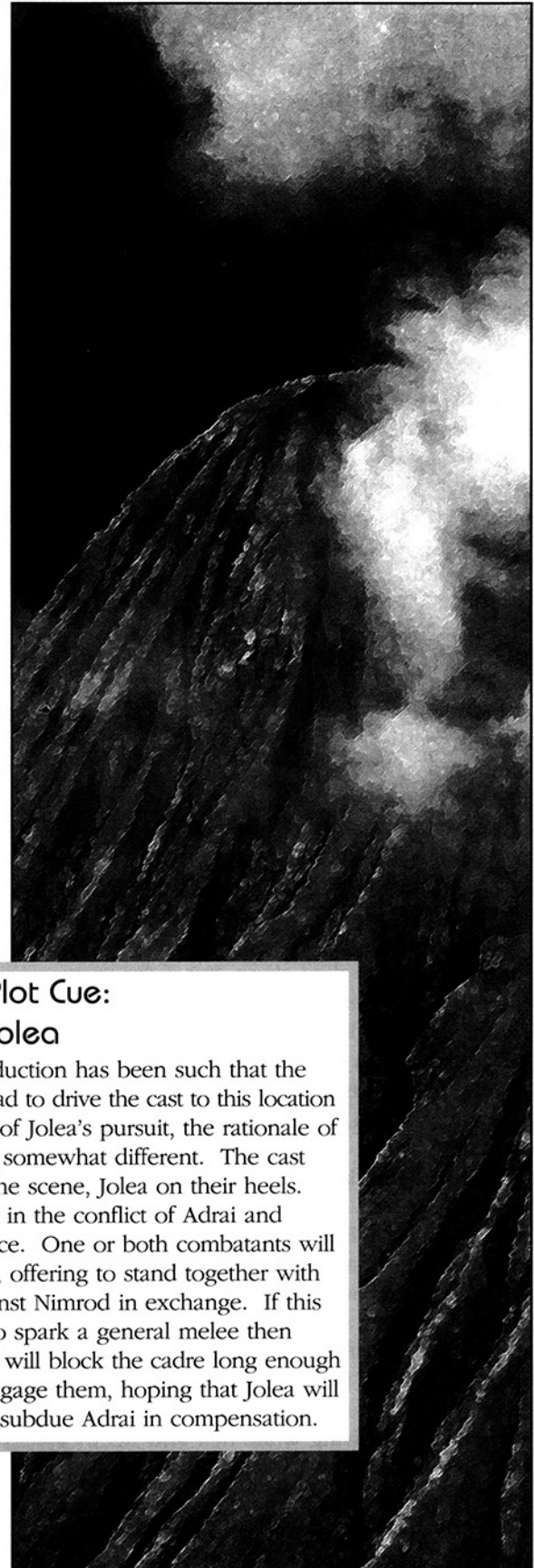
Scene 3: Denounced and Blown Away.

On reaching the slopes of Mount Elgon, the party will witness the beginning of a meeting between Stefan and an Emissary from Pride Terat. This meeting is set against the background of a rising storm. Adrai, either accompanying the cadre, or on his own, will approach the two, and denounce Stefan as a spy for the Terat.

If one or more members of the cast has gone with Stefan to be introduced to the Terat, an interlude of variable length will need to be staged before the occurrence of the confrontation.

The Terat Emissary, known locally as Eshu of Tsavo, will appear for the meeting in his himsati form, a black maned man-lion (See "The Kenya Terat"). First, he will hear the report from Stefan concerning his attempts to infiltrate and probe the Anopheles for sensitive information. He will then take time to explain the convictions of the Terat to the cast, as well as to revile the Anopheles for their fascination with human pleasures. He will mention in passing that something in the area has been taking natives for the "Lebe Dala" (literally "road of blood" a term used to describe blood sacrifices). Inevitably, discussion will then turn to ways and means in which the persona(s) can aid the Terat in their planned move against Nairobi, perhaps in exchange for assistance in finding the Ark of the Conundrum. Eshu of Tsavo will point out that Terat numbers and familiarity with the local terrain put them in an ideal position to either help or hinder the cadre. It is at this point that Adrai will appear on the scene to denounce Stefan (and smirk at any of the cast who have been caught in the midst of an "amateur's plot").

Stefan will react to his exposure by drawing a scimitar, and attacking Adrai. He will injure the Anopheles Highbinder, who will dodge to the side but still take an impairing wound. Eshu of Tsavo will immediately disclaim Stefan, and call him a fool for so easily proving Adrai's accusation. Adrai will draw a falchion, grin, and wave in the direction of a nearby cave. A shadowy figure will be visible in the cave, seemingly watching the proceedings below. At this point the cadre is free to jump into the fray on either side.



Plot Cue: Jolea

If the production has been such that the Narrator has had to drive the cast to this location by the device of Jolea's pursuit, the rationale of events will be somewhat different. The cast will arrive at the scene, Jolea on their heels. They will take in the conflict of Adrai and Stefan, at glance. One or both combatants will appeal for aid, offering to stand together with the cadre against Nimrod in exchange. If this isn't enough to spark a general melee then Eshu of Tsavo will block the cadre long enough for Jolea to engage them, hoping that Jolea will willingly help subdue Adrai in compensation.



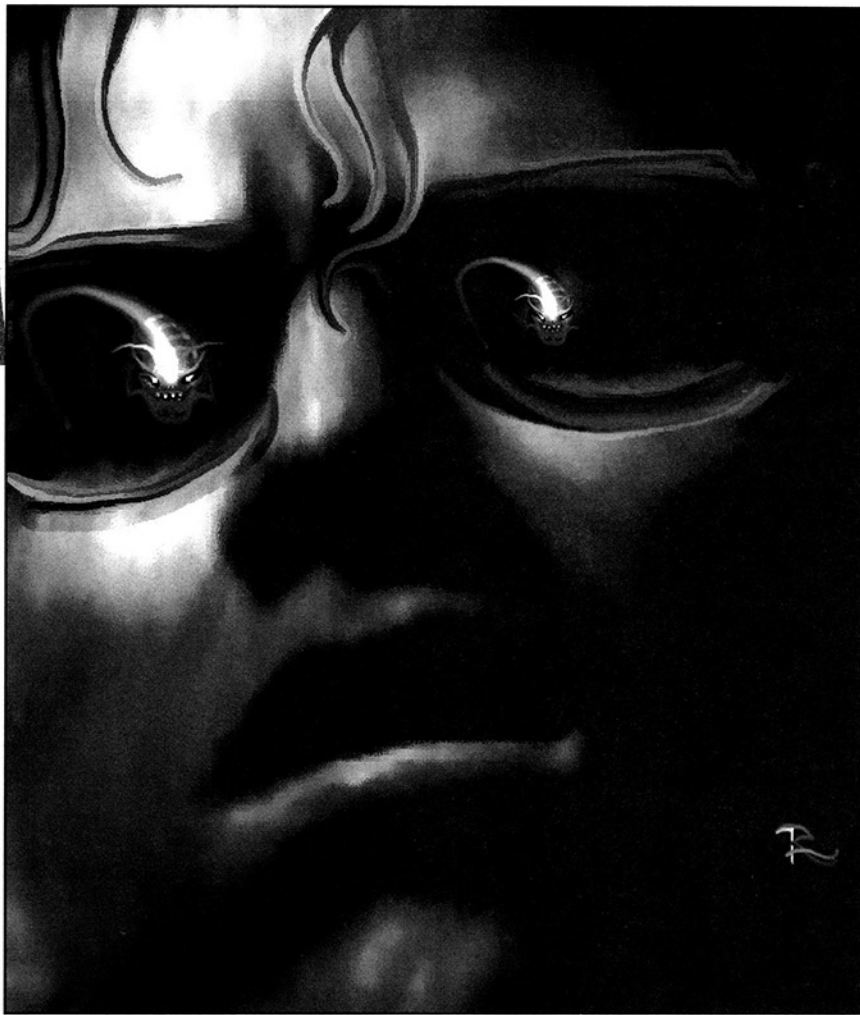
The lighting is poor, as the cloud cover is almost complete. A visibility hostile of

rank 2 (a 6 or better needed to overcome it) will apply to any actions. Just as the combat resumes, the storm will begin.

The Terat Emissary will be content to let Stefan and Adrai duel alone, but if the party intercedes on behalf of Adrai, he will play a serenade to hinder the cadre (Psychomachia) before joining in the combat himself. If things go very poorly, he will play Evensong which, successful or not, will herald the opening of the Ife mantle.

Once a serenade has been played (either by the Terat or by a cadre member) Jolea will make an appearance. Her aim will be to incapacitate everyone and maintain the Silence. She will concentrate first on whichever side seems to present more of a threat, i.e., the side that is winning.

When the battle is well and truly joined, a flash of lightning will reveal the figure approaching from the caves to be a fantastically hideous woman with flowing white hair and sleepy eyes as blue as electricity. The woman is half-wrapped in the glassy blue fibers of an immortal mummy. The Shrike is following closely behind her.

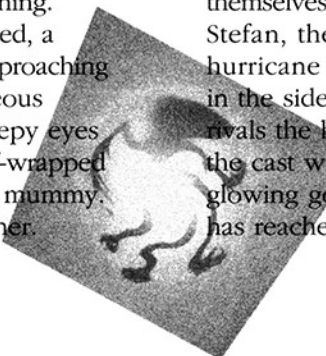


R

The Shrike has freed another Mentor, and intends to liberate some immaculum

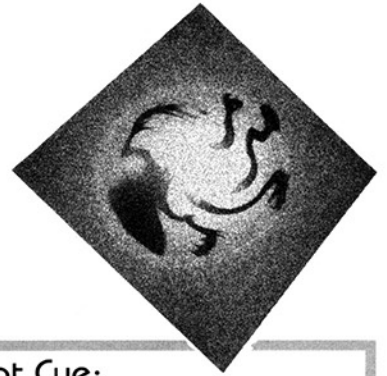
from the nearest source to complete her revival. He feels no compunction against gaining the necessary immaculum through the Spill. Stefan, Adrai and Eshu of Tsavo will be horrified; they had assumed the figure standing in the cave to be a member of the Jury, present to witness the counting of a coup. The Shrike will play a serenade causing a forest of brambles to grow up, temporarily imprisoning all the participants. At this point, the Terat will play Evensong (if he hasn't already).

The cast may break loose from the Shrike's brambles in a number of ways; Ember, for instance, could burn the brambles (rank 2 difficulty), or a strong immortal might simply pull himself free (rank 3 difficulty). As some immortals free themselves and the mummified Mentor approaches Stefan, the winds will rise in intensity to a hurricane force until suddenly a crack appears in the side of mount Elgon, with a sound that rivals the boom of thunder. Inside the fissure, the cast will see revealed step upon step of the glowing gold lights of Ife, layers of a city that has reached upward toward the very summit.



Glowing sparks seem to rain through the fissure. As the personas look up, their eyes will light upon a gushing radiance at the topmost layer of the city, the temple of the Conundrum itself!

Now irresistible winds will sweep all of the combatants into the Mantle of Ife. The immortals, friend and foe alike, will find themselves tossed like leaves through the city streets; battered against barely-glimpsed stone towers, and separated each from the other. The supernatural storm exists both inside the Ley membrane and outside of it, so none of the cadre will be able to escape using the Ley attention. The source of the storm is the tryst of Ife, a being which creates and controls all of the reality inside its mantle. The tryst, for reasons of its own, has compelled the cast to enter its domain where the final climactic action of the plot will be developed.



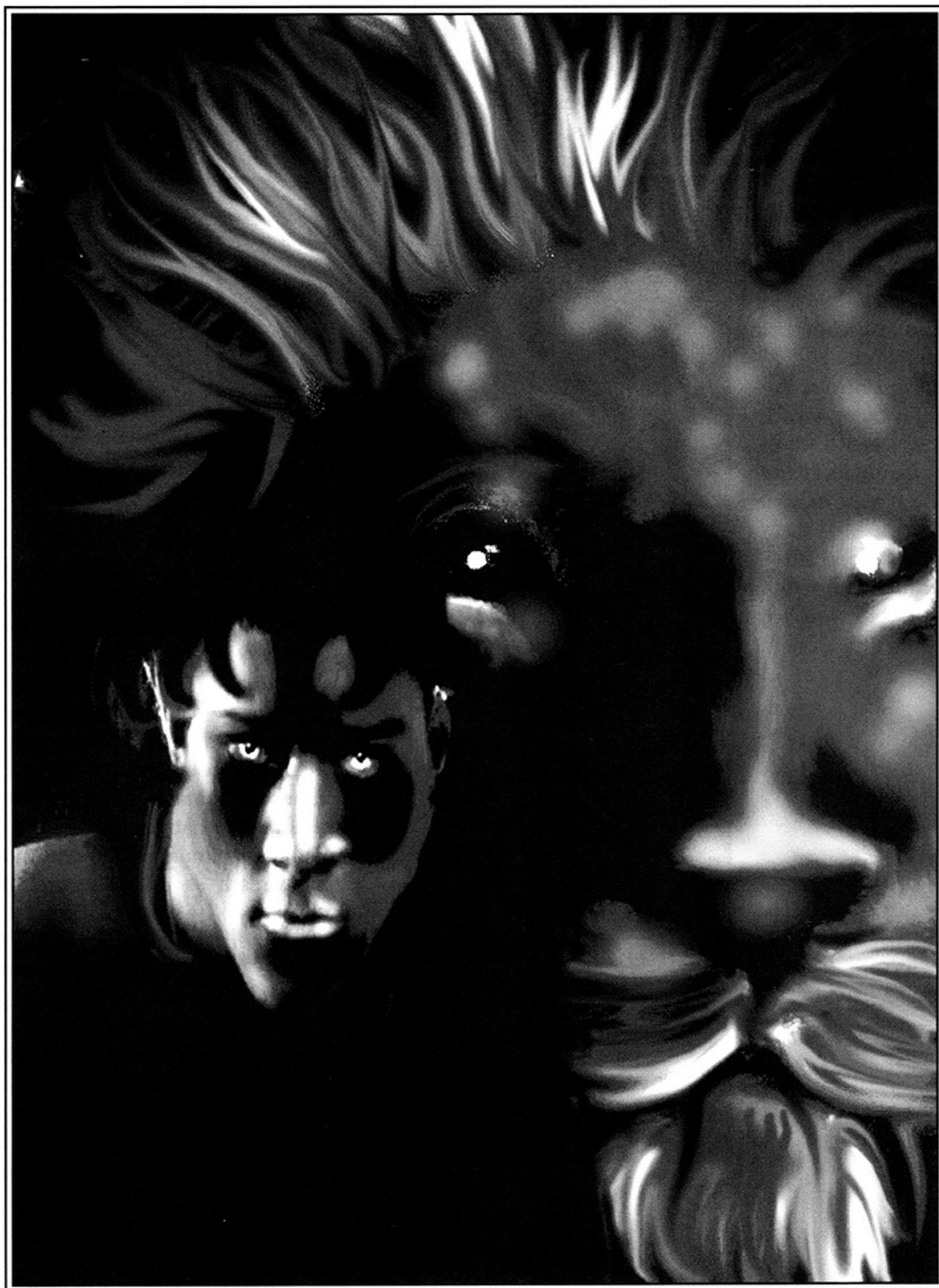
Plot Cue: The Shrike



If the production has been developed such that the cast has been imprisoned by the Shrike and taken to the caves of Mount Elgon in order to be sacrificed for immaculum, then events of the scene will occur somewhat differently. The cast will watch in fascination as the Shrike digs a Mentor out of her entombment in the salt cave and prepares to spill each of them in close proximity to the Mentor's catatonic remains. First the Shrike sacrifices one or two natives to imbue the mummy with a minimum of life and movement (he has already sacrificed several, the "Lebe Dala" referred to by Eshu of Tsavo). Events are then interrupted by the sound of combat below. Shrike and mummy are distracted and the mummified Mentor staggers to the cave mouth in order to see what's going on below. It is at this moment that the cast may be allowed to contrive their escape and flee down the mountain with both Mentors in hot pursuit. Of course, If the cast has been actively helping the Shrike, you will need to contrive another reason for the cast and Mentors to all be streaming down the mountain at this moment.

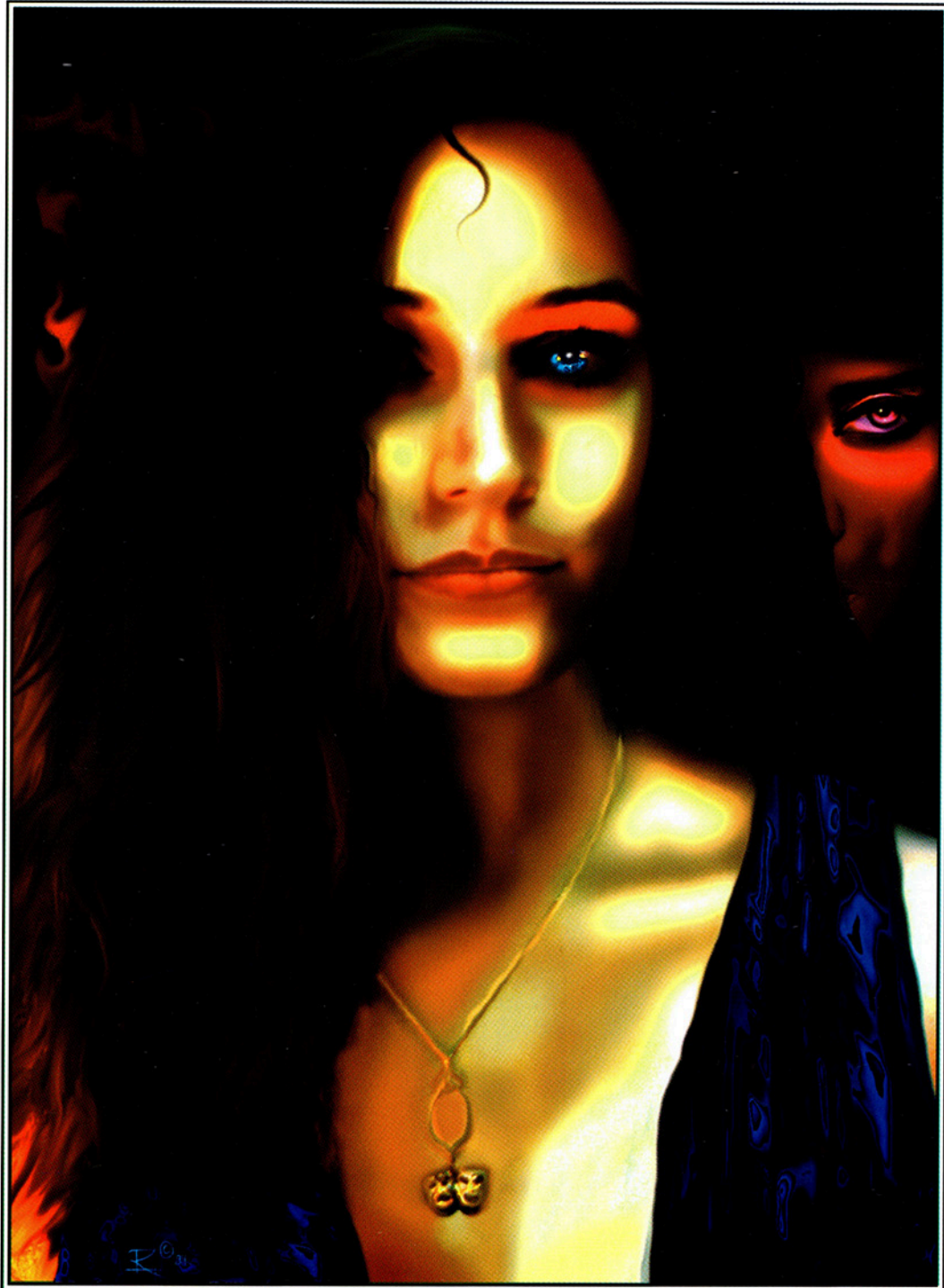
On the slopes below, Eshu of Tsavo and Stefan battle Adrai and Jolea (who had been tracking the cadre nearby when the loud sound of Eshu's serenade broke the Silence and aroused her to intervene on the side of Adrai.) The cadre will reach the general vicinity of the battle when the Shrike's serenade imprisons all in a thorny embrace.

I M M O R T A L



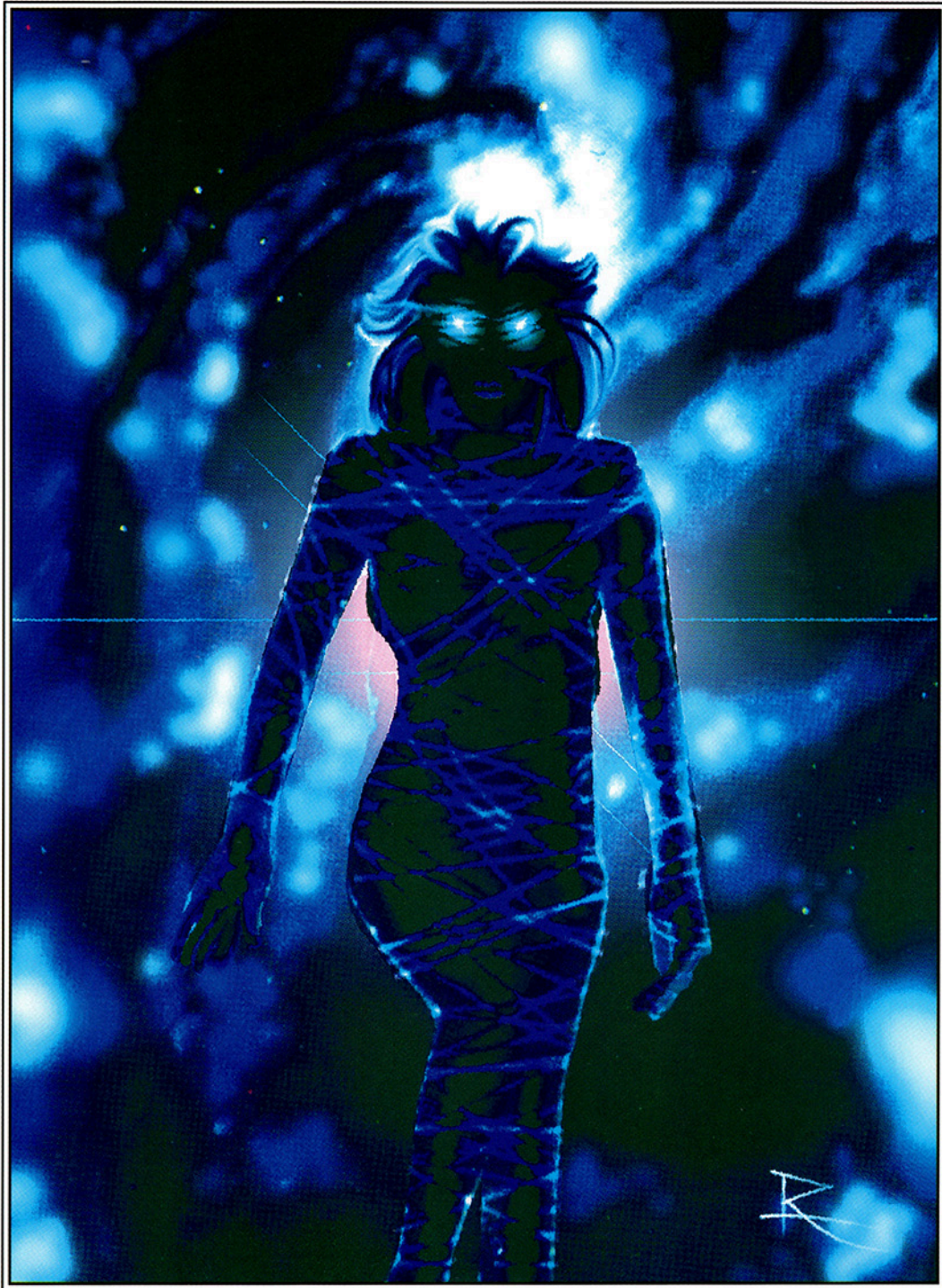
Eshu of Tsavo

I M M O R T A L



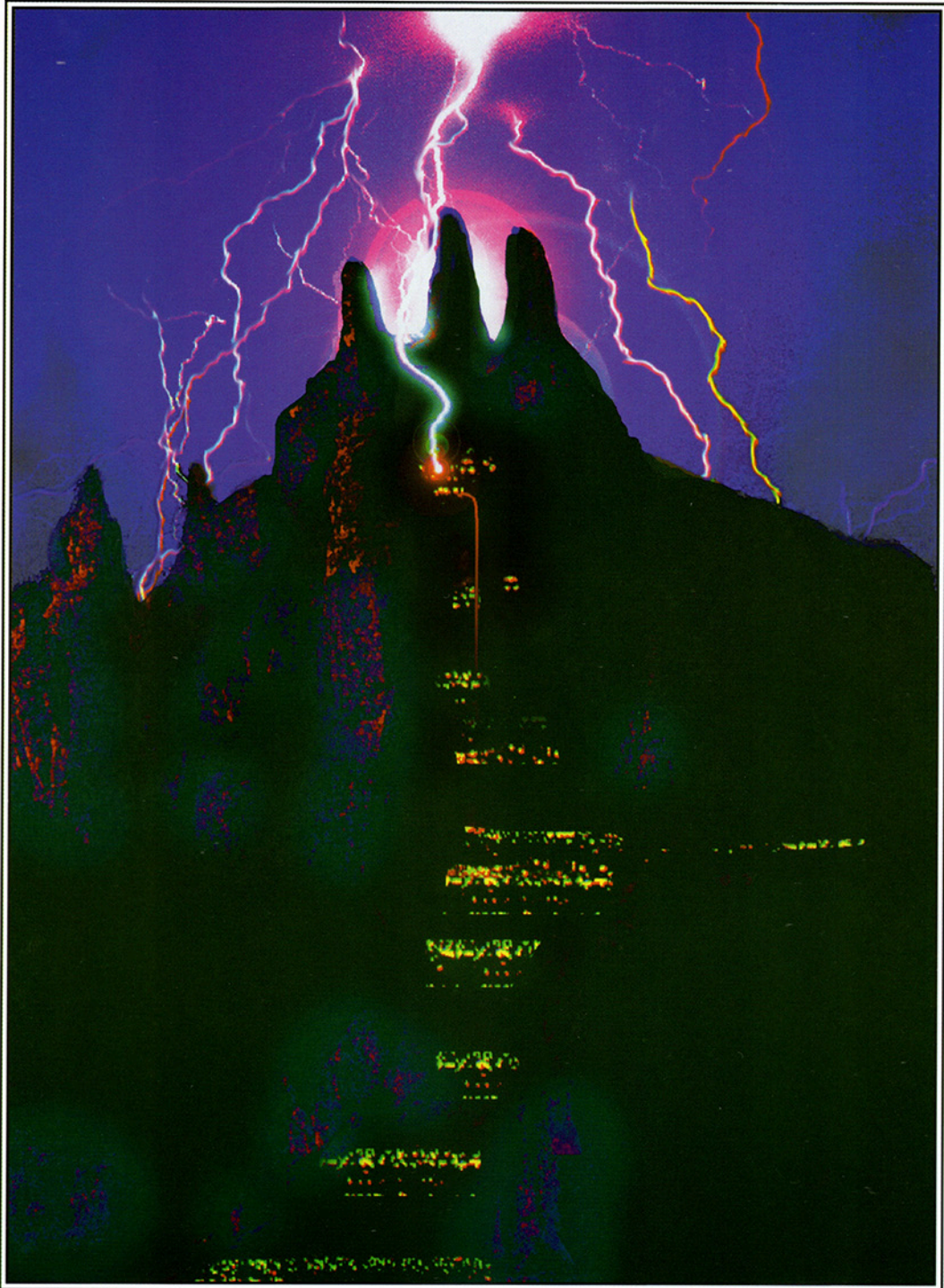
Delilah

I M M O R T A L



Mentor

I M M O R T A L



Mantle of Ife

I M M O R T A L



Tryst

CHAPTER FOUR: SECRETS

Scene 1: So, We Meet Again".

The cadre will finally come to rest, battered and bruised, but no one will be seriously injured. The Panacea will act to heal any damage sustained during the storm. Each persona in the cast now finds himself lying within a few feet of one of the supporting cast, but separated from the rest of the cadre in an alien city.

The pairings of actors with supporting cast are left to the discretion (and amusement) of the Narrator, but each persona should be given a fair chance to interact with (or at worst flee from) their "partner". Combat is not to be emphasized here. Rather let the situation illustrate that in the ever shifting currents of the Perpetual Society, yesterday's enemies are often tomorrow's allies and vice versa.

Supporting cast members available to pair with the cast include **Jolea, Stefan, Adrai, Eshu of Tsavo, the mummified Mentor and the Shrike**. All of these have been drawn into the mantle with the cadre. Further, each will be at least minimally receptive to the concept of a temporary alliance to maximize mutual chances for survival. If more supporting cast members are needed, the Narrator can readily contrive for the other two members of Jolea's triad to be present as well as the Anopheles, Delilah, simply by noting that they were lingering on the outskirts of the conflict ending Chapter 3 and thus were also swept up in the storm. Conversely, if your cast has fewer than six members, certain players can be placed within interesting groupings of three, for example with Adrai and Stefan or with Jolea and the Mentor, etc.

Ife is a vast city which seems to cover the entire interior of the mountain. Its architecture is ever shifting, never constant. As the personas explore, the city layout will alter without warning; what seemed to be east will become west; what begins as a vast thoroughfare will quickly turn into a blind alley. Retracing one's steps in the mantle of Ife is impossible unless the personas fly. Scaffolding covers everything,

as do luridly glimmering lamps that are nothing more than jewels implanted in the steely blue stone.

After a suitably dramatic period spent wandering the silent streets of the mantle, the cadre members will each be separately drawn towards large open



courtyards, where they will battle monsters out of nightmare, hideous combinations of reptiles, large carnivorous mammals and arachnids. (See the "Chameleons of Ife" in the appendix for help in running these encounters). Each time a cadre member (and his partner, if they stick together) enter such a courtyard and do battle with a creature, the sounds of combat will draw another member; the cadre will thus reform into ever larger groups until finally they find themselves all reunited. Each time the cadre fights, the opposing monsters will become yet more hideous and baleful.

Anyone who flees rather than fighting will be hunted through the streets by ghastly flying beasts that vaguely resemble squids with wings, creatures who carry their teeth on their tentacles.



The Temple



*"...There I beheld the most ancient of nights and
beneath it a mountain which flashed with fires of
many colors. And within the fires stood a temple,
which was built on a foundation of precious stones.
All of these stones shone with brillidnce and splendor
yet inside them was likewise the eye of the beast."*

R

Scene 2: "Welcome, We've Been Expecting You."

The personas will be finally reunited in a grand open square, in front of a vast structure with three wide archways. The structure stands a dozen stories high and conveys a highly organic/techno architecture that will be at once both beautiful and disturbing. A strange disk is suspended between two horns at the top of the temple, inlaid with a motif of luminous quartz and blue aquamarine crystal.

The building is layered with precious gems of all sorts and seems to bear little or no resemblance to the rest of the city's architecture. Various gargoyles are carved into niches that seam the building's uppermost crown. Huge fountains, burning with fire, ring the structure and spray light upon the temple's facade in lurid orange pallor. Tumbled stones lay at the base of the temple, as if from the remains of a great battle. These are scorched, and in some places, melted. A brisk wind can be felt blowing across the square and into the gaping maw of this building. Adrai, if he is with the cadre, or another suitable member of the supporting cast, will stare at the temple, and say, half to himself, "And within the fires stood a temple built on a foundation of precious stones." If questioned about the references, he will say that it is a quote from out of a book he once read in ancient Alexandria while he was waiting to visit the city's founder.

He will, if the personas seem willing to listen, recite the entire quotation from memory (the complete text appears at the front of this episode). He will then explain that it represents a historic account of the time when the

Anopheles destroyed the Malice Shard, seizing the Ark of the Conundrum away from the followers of the Sanguinary. He will then note that the building before them bears a striking resemblance to the fabled temple said to have housed the Malice Shard. At this point it should be hard for any in the cadre to doubt that anything other than a force of great evil lies within the structure before them. As if to reflect their thoughts, a willowy laugh will proceed out of the structure to float upon the wind.

The personas will feel something inside calling to them. The Shrike and the Mentor will start moving toward the building, appearing suddenly from an alley opening on the side of the square if they do not already accompany the cadre as "allies".

Inside, a broad, thirty foot wide stairway leads downward into darkness. After descending

for nearly a quarter of a mile, the passage opens up into a chamber, illuminated only by a brilliant red-white glow which radiates from what appears to be an altar. Twisted, distorted images are burned into the walls, as if the life-force emanating from the altar was too intense to bear.

Behind the low wall of the inner sanctum, a huge moon, invented by the mind of the tryst, burns like a purple lantern in the sky.

The cadre can feel waves of energy pouring out from the altar; any persona with taint will be immediately purified by the tremendous wash of immaculum. The Mentor will begin to bloom into a more vigorous, luminescent self as her halo absorbs the flashing glows of immaculum and she moves closer towards the altar. After some minutes her halo will begin to flutter around her like a gown of purest light. The Shrike will stand next to the other Mentor, arms outspread, absorbing the flow. One brilliant line of light will be visible, looping upwards like an umbilical chord, towards the dark mist which shrouds the ceiling.



At this point a small child floating in the center of the light encompassing the altar will become visible. The child's dark and wizened face is suffused with emotion and untold age. Once all eyes have been drawn to it, the child will unveil the plot by making an illuminating speech to clarify any remaining points of the plot that the Narrator wishes to reveal at this time. The child will then, in almost dispassionate tones, denounce the two Mentors for molding him to a life of ageless imprisonment. He will then bring out the fact that he has been unable to die, sustained forever by the immaculum of the Ark. The tryst will then ask if the Mentors are prepared to accept responsibility for the wrong they have committed. The Narrator can have the Mentors agree, in which case the scene will become a "cosmic courtroom" where the tryst first accuses and then seeks to sentence the Mentors. In the middle of such a scene, he may become overwhelmed with heart-wrenching sobs. If so, gushing emotions will sweep through the personas and profoundly move them. Perhaps the Mentors will tell the tryst that they can undo what they have done.

Perhaps they will decide to stay in Ife and share the tryst's life. Handle this final confrontation on the basis of your tastes and the sensibilities of your actors.

It is just as likely, however, that the Mentors will decide not to accept responsibility. After all, the death of the tryst is really in their best interests and they may not think to reconcile with it now (although after defeating it, they might reconsider.)

If the Mentors refuse to acknowledge any wrongdoing (or are "sentenced" for their crimes), the child will transform into a nightmare creature, a three-headed hydra, within the corona of the Ark. Without hesitation, it will pounce squarely on the Shrike from above. Pinning the Shrike with its body, its three heads will lash out at nearby targets; one at the Shrike, one at the Mentor, and one head in the direction of the

Cadre. In this fashion, the Tryst of Ife will seek revenge and perhaps a chance at death. A brilliant blue chord of light will join the body of the beast just below each of its necks to the glowing Ark of the Conundrum, like a leash.

Defeat of the tryst will require that each head be dealt a mortal wound. Unfortunately, the tryst's power to reshape reality will make a mortal wound nearly impossible to deliver. Any wound the tryst receives will be downgraded to the next lower rank (after all other modifications have been made), so mortal wounds will become crippling. Only after all its crippling wounds have been taken will the cast be able to deal the creature a mortal wound. Luckily, the tryst is only one being, and must divide his attention among the three heads. This climactic combat should end either with the death of the tryst, or with the mortal wounding of all members

of the cadre. The Shrike and the Mentor should be able to fight one head to a standoff, leaving the third to be dealt with by the cadre and any other cast members. Most of the tryst's initial attention should be focused on the two Mentors, leaving the third head to play with the

cadre. Even so, the tryst is likely to far outclass the cadre, unless they can come up with a brilliant tactic, perhaps involving the Ark of the Conundrum. Of course, should the cadre prove to be overwhelming the tryst too easily, the Narrator can decide that the Ark must be out of the tryst's presence for the creature to actually die.



I M M O R T A L



Shrike

I M M O R T A L



Jolea

WRAPPING IT UP

(Pointing Fingers)

If the cadre defeats the tryst, reality will seem to pull apart all around them. Flashes of red and green jungle, vast sky cities, gargantuan stone entities — any image or scene that the Narrator wishes to describe from the history or imagination of the past few hundred thousand years, will appear to flash by each persona's vision. Eventually, all the images will blur together and an explosion will throw each persona backward as they lose consciousness. Later, the personas will awaken somewhere in the wilds of Kenya.

If the cadre doesn't defeat the tryst (or if the plot is resolved without a fight) everyone will be swept out of the gates of Ife by an enormous storm in much the same way that they first entered.



Everyone originally swept into the mantle will be present (minus the Shrike and the Mentor if the tryst was victorious in battle). The personas will awaken to see the Jury standing around them in a foreboding circle. Also surrounding them will be representatives from almost every pride, all of whom are deadly curious concerning the events which have transpired (and about who may have acquired the Ark). Each member of the cadre will find their focus of vision drawn solely to a set of penetrating eyes that seems to be aware of each of their darkest and most closely held secrets.

The assemblage of Jurists will stand in the rising sun. Their presence is so palpable that the personas will feel as if they are standing only inches away. The Jury will say nothing, merely peering at the cast and awaiting each member to plead their case. Any member of the cadre who speaks will be interrupted by a raised hand from the Jury, who will focus their attention on Jolea.

Jolea will speak. She will point out that the Shrike was a Mentor who successfully infiltrated the Anopheles in the guise of a Rook, all without the Anopheles discovering his true nature. She will make a case for coup based on the fact that Nimrod had long been aware of the Shrike's origin and activities. At this Delilah will laugh exquisitely and, stepping forward from out of the crowd, will inform the Jury that the Anopheles have always known who the Shrike was, and that they were intent on rescuing the other Mentors, in effect giving sanctuary to skeletons in the Morrigan's old closet.

From the stones and plants around Jolea, the speech of the Jury members, too powerful to come directly from their own mouths, will emanate.

The rocks will tell Jolea that acceptance of any immortal into the ranks of the prides is a matter for the pride that accepts them, and that the Anopheles, knowing who the Shrike really was, were in a position to have led Nimrod around on a futile quest to expose a weakness which never existed. At this Adrai will laugh, clever on his feet, as if confirming that this was the Anopheles intention all along.

Adrai will speak at the next opportunity (if no actor immediately pleads his case.) Adrai will explain that he used his position as guide for the cadre (if applicable) to publicly expose Stefan and the Terat's plot to infiltrate the Anopheles. He will explain that Stefan was used as an Anopheles "carpet" into Terat territory and that his inept attempt to spy on the Anopheles had been publicly exposed at the meeting with Eshu of Tsavo — all with prior notification to the Jury. To this the Jury will nod, confirming their advance knowledge the confrontation



and exposure was going to take place.

At this point Stefan, trying to appear calm, will retort that he was sent to the meeting by Delilah to deliver a message, as was his duty in his capacity as an Anopheles Emissary. But here the Jury will merely frown at Stefan, and then motion for Adrai to continue.

Adrai will go on to point out that Stefan's reaction to the accusation of duplicity at the meeting with Eshu of Tsavo provided instant proof that the accusation was correct.

Now Stefan will glare at Adrai, while the Terat emissary, Eshu of Tsavo will look dignified but glum. The Narrator should roll a die. On a 4 or better, the Jury will agree to grant visage. "For exposing weakness within the ranks of the Terat, and for overcoming an attempt by the Terat to exploit a possible failing, you have indeed counted coup, though it is not of the most impressive nature," one member will say. Otherwise, a member will remark that "The only source of weakness you discovered was a solitaire new to the Stratagem. It is axiomatic that such a one is not to be relied upon. Convincing the Terat to rely on him and act upon false information might have been worthy of a coup, but all you have done is show that a newcomer is not completely familiar with our ways."



System Note: Visage.

If the Jury acknowledges the Anopheles coup, Stefan loses 1 visage, which, in the grand scheme of things, causes all the Terat to lose face. After all, the entire visage of a pride is determined by the combined visage of its individual members. At the moment of loss, the cast will perceive Stefan as smaller, weaker and less impressive than he was a moment ago, so much so that they will even find it hard to remember his name! As Stefan's visage lowers, his reputation and stature within the Perpetual Society will suffer. Visage is immutable to all but the Jury, whose incredible powers have created and manipulated it for thousands of years. If any of the personas gain visage (conferred upon them by the steady gaze of the Jury), others around them will suddenly perceive them as more physically imposing, and will have certain impressions of them etched into their psyche. Remember: those immortals with the highest visage are known to both the high and low of the Perpetual Society. Visage is never applied or removed from a pride as a whole. It is only the rise and fall of individual members that alters the visage of the pride and manipulates its fortunes.

The physical manifestation of visage — that is, how it takes form without various immortals — is a matter of an individual's predilection. Mourners will broadcast a dark, morose aura while a Knight will shine forth with determined light. The Narrator is encouraged to allow his cast to choose the effect of their visage when encountered by others, so long as their description is compatible with their predilection. This tangible manifestation of visage (which becomes more and more pronounced as visage rank rises) can make the predilections of individuals very evident. However, the effect of visage can also be disguised by individuals whose babblers rating has increased. More information concerning such methods will be detailed in *The Book Of Callings*.

Since Stefan and the Terat were just beginning to work out how they could set up the Anopheles, they will make no claim for visage at this time. For his part, Eshu of Tsavo will be glad

to see the end of the affair, despite any black mark which has been recorded against Pride Terat through Stefan's blunders.

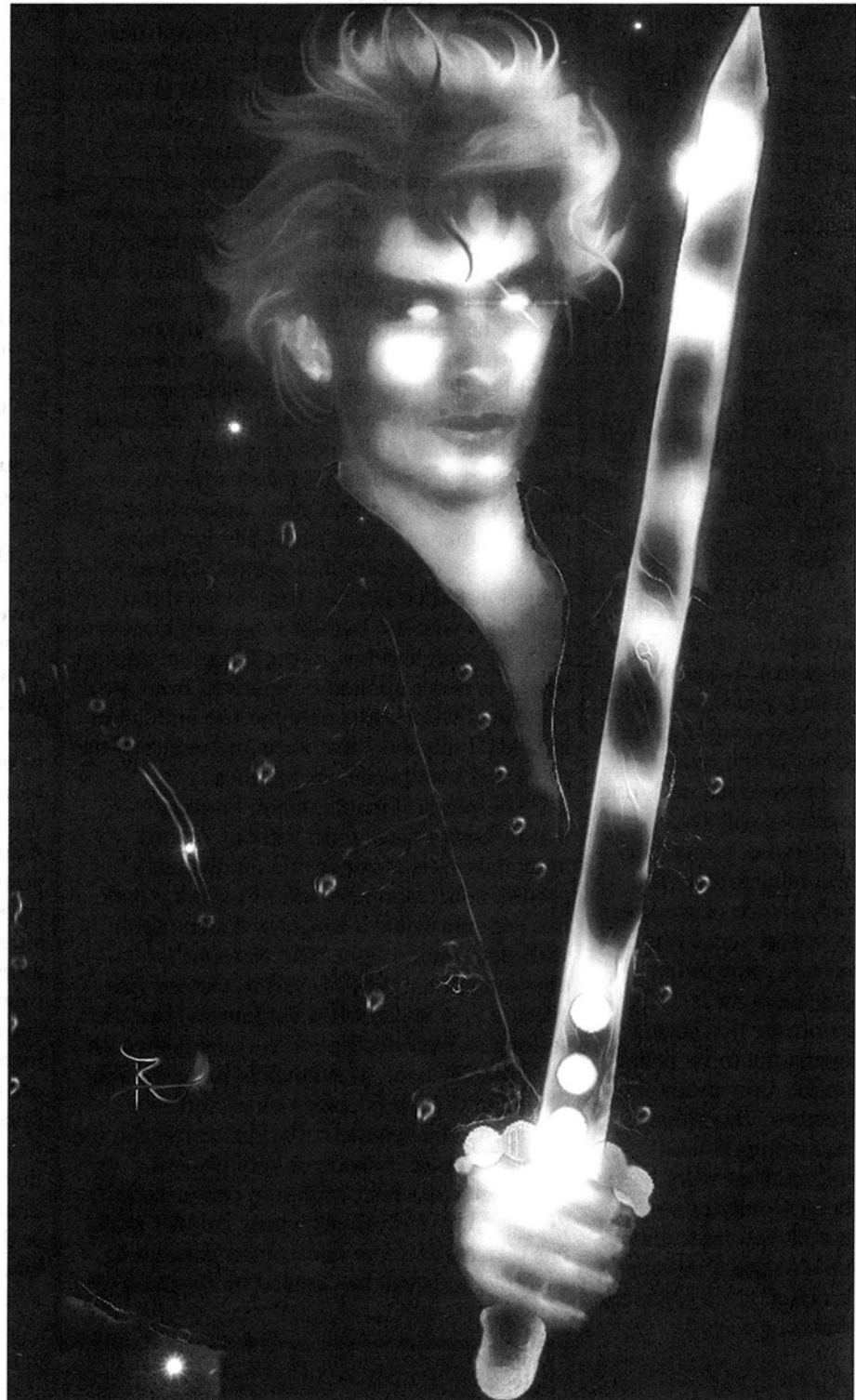
The Shrike, if present, will now claim that he was able to exploit the members of the very same cadre that originally killed him and removed his vox. By using the cadre he able to re-manifest with his original vox and use them as a lure to enter the Mantle of Ife. There he completely restored his halo and escaped from the mantle's tryst, a powerful enemy that desired his death. Though rooks do not normally gain visage, he will argue, these feats are worthy of acknowledgment.

If the Narrator does not roll a null, the Jury will agree with the Shrike's argument. "You have struggled back from imprisonment in the earth, and escaped the clutches of the one who hated you most. Though you have not exposed a weakness in others (except perhaps the Morrigan whose attempt to doom you has now come to naught), you have proven yourself to be a dangerous opponent. Your reputation will surely grow, as your visage has indeed increased." At this moment, the air of danger that surrounds the Shrike will increase as thorny plants punch out of the soil like claws from beneath. He will crouch among them with a wicked smile that holds dark portents for the future. A Morrigan representative in the crowd will at this moment take flight as a crow and speed away into the North.

Any cadre member who wishes to plead his case should be encouraged to speak up at this time, if he has not done so already. The Jury will listen to any appeal, and will judge based on the events of the episode as they have happened. If the cadre have indeed outwitted members of the various prides, or shown exceptionally ability and forethought in overcoming the obstacles which have confronted them, the Narrator should be willing to award a point of visage, as outlined on page 250 of the main rules guide.

When all cast members have had their interview with the Jury, they will depart and the episode will wind down, probably into a general discussion of the events of the episode, who counted coup upon who, etc.

While this is going on, the Narrator should award memory points to each of the cast, and perhaps work with each actor to complete parts of their persona record sheet that are now known. If it has not already been set in stone, halo should be determined or enhanced by memory. Talents and serenades should be purchased, drawing on the actors own abilities and the memory and past experiences of prior avatars. Pride, himsati and calling may be chosen if they have not already been determined, or may be left to be decided in future play. Inform the cast that a persona's past pride affiliation does not mandate one's choice of pride in the present incarnation; indeed, nearly any pride would welcome new recruits. No decisions have to be made right away, but many actors will be anxious to explore such details as an expression of their enthusiasm resulting from a satisfactory role playing experience.



É P I L O G U É

If they wish, Adrai can arrange for the cadre to be transported back to their home town or to any other location in the Habitat they wish to go. At some point while en route to their new destination, one of the cast will inevitably ask the following fateful question. “Weren’t there supposed to be FOUR Mentors?”

S P I N - O F F S

The following plot seeds are designed to help the Narrator take this particular series a little further if desired. There are many ways that an ongoing series could spin-off from here. The list below presents just a few ideas to use as a springboard into your own concepts for a series.

1. Monica’s Madness. Monica’s seduction by the Shrike, combined with her inability to accept her immortal heritage (and her guilt over the death of Jim Raxton), consumes her. She would make a fine villain in further episodes as she blames and attempts to avenge herself on the cadre for crimes that her demented mind has construed. Monica is likely to be encountered in the Morpheum in the future. As time goes on she will learn more and more about becoming a Sleeper and manipulating events from the security of dreams.

2. The Mannequin. The Apocrypha sent a Mannequin into Monica’s dreams, suspecting that she had contact with other immortals. This Mannequin, Pashon by name, subsequently vanished. Now a prisoner of the Shrike within the Morpheum, Pashon is attempting to “wake up” and return to his real-world body. Unfortunately, the Apocrypha that hold him suspect that he is catatonic and will never return. Any day now, he may be terminated. The Narrator may wish to allow the personas to go after this agent, as a possible source of information or convert for one of their prides. A chance spotting of a computer file is all it takes to get this ball rolling.

3. The Tryst’s Fate. If the Narrator decides to preserve the tryst’s life (possibly as a great menace later or perhaps as a thankful ally?), his strange connection to the Ark of the Conundrum may indeed have rendered him eternal. Possibly, he haunts the Ark. Maybe he even reconciles with the Mentors, forgiving them and aiding them in keeping the Ark away from the remainder of the Perpetual Society.

4. The Mysterious Mantle. The tryst is dead, and the Ark is missing. Surely no pride or cadre will be willing to allow this state of affairs to stand as it is? Any mantle, without a tryst, will slowly destabilize, and eventually dissolve into the Blue Air. But, having been around for millennia, the Ife mantle has a remarkable amount of inertia and could remain very stable for many human lifetimes. The main portal on Mount Elgon is sealed for now, but every pride will surely redouble its efforts to find a way in? Eventually, if any are successful, possession of the Ark could provoke a serious inter-pride conflict. More than likely, the issue of the Ife mantle will remain as a dark cloud hovering over the relations of the prides for a long time to come.

5. Argus. The Apocrypha are still not happy with the way the events of Chapter 1 evolved, and may return to cause problems for the personas. *Argus*, that part of the Apocrypha first detailed in the *IMMORTAL: Pilot Pack*, may become interested in the cadre and come calling. Or perhaps they are already out to get the cadre as the result of damage done to Project Looking Glass in the Pilot Pack episode. In such a case the events of this episode will simply add fuel to a fire that is already ablaze.

Whether your cadre follows one of these spin-offs, or further explores some development unique to your production, or strikes out on their own into wholly new plots — may your future stories be both wondrous and eternal!

THE END

A P P E N D I X

THE SUPPORTING CAST

Regarding Attentions and Talents:

Though some major attentions and talents are given here, the Narrator should assign other relevant skills as needed. Remember that immortals who have not entered lethe have a vast pool of experience to draw upon, and as such should be considered at least Familiar (rank 1) with any needed talent and many serenades. Immortals of higher tiers generally also have greater experience, and should be able to draw upon unlisted talents and attentions at higher ranks (Trained and, in some cases, above).

Legacies:

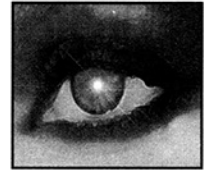
Legacies act as talents whose ranks of 1 to 5 are added to corresponding hostile rolls as a bonus to reach the target number. For example, a persona fighting within a bank of fog incurring a *Visibility* hostile would add the rank of the legacy *Oculus* (1-5) to the roll of the hostile, just as he would add a talent rank to the roll of a talent hostile. This may help him reach the appropriate target number. A persona without a given legacy does not suffer a penalty for being untrained, however. All legacies are italicized under each persona's list of major talents.

Wounds:

Unless otherwise specified, cast members may be assumed to weigh between 126-250 lb., and therefore possess a wound capacity of: 10 Minor, 3 Impairing, 2 Severe, 1 Crippling, and 1 Mortal wound.



A d r a i S h e m a y n e



Pride: Anopheles
Calling: Highbinder
Visage: 5

Himsati: Black Leopard
Predilection: Rake

Himsati Tier: 7
Forte (ROYGBV): 3/3/6/2/5/4

Free Immaculum: 8

Attentions: Bastion 4, Flux and Flow 3, Domino 4, Impulse 3, Ley 2, Nostrum 2

Talents: Tracking 2, Pickpocket 3, Swords 2, Dodge 3

Taboos: None

Adrai is a Highbinder for the Anopheles, the member of that pride the cadre will most associate with. He appears friendly and outgoing, and is a bit of a show-off. He carries a falchion for combat. His movements are reminiscent of his black leopard himsati; filled with fluid grace. His nature is easy going. He dislikes strong light.

Motivations: Adrai is currently involved in an attempt to reveal Stefan, a Terat spy, as a traitor. Secondly, he hopes to gain the confidence and loyalty of the Ingenue, preferably to draw one or more of them into pride Anopheles. He will be kind and helpful if dealt with straightforwardly, but is not above manipulation and deceit to obtain his goals.

Appearance: Adrai is a handsome man with a roguish air. he dresses in denim and coats from France's revolution of the Sixteenth century. His hair is white as snow, contrasting with his sharp, youthful face.

A m a n d a R a x t o n



Pride: None
Calling: None
Visage: 0

Himsati: None
Predilection: Custodian

Himsati Tier: 1
Forte (ROYGBV): 4/1/2/2/3/2

Free Immaculum: 0

Talents: Computers 1, History 2, Trivia 3, Gourmet 3

Taboos: None

Amanda is a grandmotherly old lady, who has been with Wycliffe University through good times and bad. As librarian, she has known and grown attached to many of the professors, past and present, including Monica Ferrar, whom she knew both in her prior existence and in her current one as a professor. She is unaware of the presence of immortals or of their influence over her life, and wouldn't believe a word of it if she were told.

Motivations: Amanda is a good friend of Monica's and will care for her if given the opportunity. She is a kind, loving soul, who will offer the cadre any help she can give — from a simple home-cooked meal to, if necessary, a loan for plane tickets.

Anopheles High Society



Pride: Anopheles

Calling: Keeper

Visage: 6

Himsati Tier: 10

Forte (ROYGBV): 6/3/6/5/7/7 and similar combinations.

Major Serenades: Allure 4, Impulse 4, Ley 3

Major Talents: Enticement 4, Pick Pocket 4, Martial Arts 4

Taboos: Varied.

Himsati: Black bat, Cat, Asp Viper, Coral Snake, Chameleon

Predilection: Bohemian, Connoisseur, Rake, Paramour, Surrealist, Thrill-Seeker

Free Immaculum: 8

The Anopheles appear as gorgeous specimens of any and all branches of humanity, of either sex. They are partying throughout the entire Hotel Jacaranda, and there is also a healthy mix of rather attractive twilights in the crowd, mostly members of several Anopheles quiet cultures. Their costumes range from cutting-edge, modern fashions to leather and spikes, to almost nothing at all.

Motivations: Most are just out to have a good time, and will be kindly disposed to any cadre members who share this ambition. They will be unwilling to put up with obnoxious personas, and if deeply offended will attempt to use *Impulse* to make the persona do something publicly humiliating in front of the rest of the guests. One or two may be assigned the task of retrieving the vox of the Shrike, either by arranging a rendezvous with cadre members, by drawing them aside for a quiet chat, or perhaps by simply stealing the vox.

Notes: The Anopheles are skilled bribers and seducers. They will make sexual advances to anyone receptive to them, use flattery or offer money for the Ingenue to use to enjoy themselves. Although apparently shallow, the Anopheles are incisively intelligent and imaginative when it comes to manipulating others through their desires. The Anopheles all know who the Shrike really is, and share his goal of rejuvenation and the abasement of pride Morrigan. They intend to count coup on the Morrigan for their cruel punishment of the Mentors. In the same stroke, they are ready to count coup on pride Terat by revealing a rather large territorial gain from the Terat that was accomplished without violence or Terat knowledge. They have been promised by Delilah that the Anopheles will gain much more influence in Kenya after this coup is counted.



Apocrypha Agents



Pride: None
Calling: None

Himsati: None
Predilection: Cabalist, Confidants,
Right-Wingers, Survivors

Visage: 0
Himsati Tier: 1
Forte (ROYGBV): 2/2/3/2/2/2 and similar combinations.
Talents: Long Arms 3
Taboos: None

Free Immaculum: 2

The agents in charge of the police at the TV station are Apocrypha. They are easily distinguished by their "FBI" jackets. They too wear kevlar, and carry an assortment of rifles and shotguns.

Motivations: The Apocrypha's motivation is the disposal of what is for them an embarrassment, Monica Ferrar and her sheep-like followers. With their loss of a well-trained Mannequin, the Apocrypha no longer see Monica as a viable tool for manipulation.

They have deployed a sniper who will take out Monica using a rune bullet. Although they will put up a fight against any other immortal forces that show up, they are unprepared for a full confrontation. The cadre should be able to beat up on these guys if they use appropriate serenades or get hold of a stray weapon.

The Apocrypha are trying to abort a mission gone wrong. Once Monica is removed from the scene, they will be investigating the aftermath, exploring for weaknesses among the immortals.

Appearance: These dress like federal agents, although there are some who walk about in civilian clothing so as not to attract attention.

Banjax Gang Members



Pride: Banjax
Calling: Various

Himsati: Various (Narrator's discretion)
Predilection: Scoundrel, Thrill-Seeker,
Bully, Detractor, Heretic

Visage: 3
Himsati Tier: 5
Forte (ROYGBV): 2/5/3/3/2/6 and similar combinations.
Attentions: Bastion 4, Gremlin 3, Inroad 2, Nostrum 2, Metaphor 3
Major Talents: Streetfighting 4, Dodge 4, other various weapons 4
Taboos: None

Free Immaculum: 6

The Banjax appear as a street gang that has come to join in the general mayhem. Riding large black motorcycles, carrying firearms (mostly Uzis and other pistols), they join the battle at the television station, and will not back down until the cadre has been driven from the scene.

Motivations: The Banjax see the broadcast from the television station, and head down to join in the fray. They will happily battle police, Apocrypha, the cadre, and anyone else who shows up, preferring to engage in a shoot-out, but fighting at close quarters as needed. They are looking for a good rumble, and may attempt to recruit any cadre members who seem to be made of the right stuff.

Notes: If any cadre member shows exceptional bravery, the Banjax may attempt to recruit him at an opportune moment later in the episode. They will prefer to corner such an individual in an alley, posing as a street gang, to again test his courage. If they are impressed, they will invite the persona to join their pride.

Appearance: The Banjax immortals will be wearing mystical amulets and trinkets of all kinds, mixed with typical biker fashions and tattoos. Some wear dark glasses to conceal their iridescent eyes.

Delilah



Pride: Anopheles

Calling: Probe

Visage: 11

Himsati Tier: 15

Forte (ROYGBV): 7/8/7/6/9/9

Attentions: the Charm 5, Impulse 4, Ichor 3, Bubastis 4, Brio 3

Talents: Knives 4, Interrogation 4, Enticement 5

Taboos: Delilah must whisper whenever she tells a lie (rank 2). Because of this unfortunate taboo, she will almost always speak in a husky, sultry voice. That way those she deals with are unable to tell the difference between her truth and falsehood.

Himsati: Black Panther

Predilection: Preternatural

Free Immaculum: 10



Delilah appears as a stunningly beautiful woman of Mediterranean complexion whose charm and wit is famous in immortal circles. In fact, she has a passionate nature and can empathize with almost anyone she meets. She is gifted with a unique tolerance for people of all types and enjoys the ability to talk to individuals of any predilection with masterful skill. Her beauty overshadows even Monica's. Constantly following her is a mysterious, silent Keeper who is rumored to be Delilah's own avatar splintered off to protect her person. This Keeper, whose name is unknown, never leaves Delilah's side, even during her erotic adventures.

Delilah has a particular fondness for rare species of orchids and favors purple mini-dresses. Her underlings have been given the task of guiding the personas and restoring the Shrike, leaving her free to relax, and to entertain the new visitors. She is an ancient immortal not easily deceived, and she is never far from a knife, her weapon of choice. She bridges the gap between the godlike Paragons and the near-human cadre. Narrators should feel free to have fun with her, and should not be afraid to go in outrageous directions. If several cadre members seem especially sympathetic to the Anopheles, she could be a recurring persona for a long time to come.

Motivations: While Delilah enjoys herself to the fullest extent, she does not allow pleasure to cloud her reasoning. She is presently assessing those within her own pride whose visage seems about to become great enough to eclipse her own. Naturally she plots their downfall and is hoping to recruit any of the cast who seem receptive to the Anopheles way of thinking.

Notes: Delilah's most useful tactic is to manipulate the self-importance of her targets, getting them to tell her things or perform actions based on a dare or from her feigning of skepticism. Of course, when all else fails, seduction is her fall-back plan.

Eshu of Tsavo



Pride: Terat
Calling: Emissary
Visage: 8
Himsati Tier: 8
Free Immaculum: 6
Forte (ROYGBV): 3/8/4/8/3/4
Attentions: Psychomachia 3, Evensong 5, Ley 2, Rave 4, Nostrum 3
Talents: Martial Arts 4, Dodge 5, Interrogation 3
Taboos: Bright light turns Eshu's eyes red (rank 3).

Eshu is an Emissary from pride Terat. He appears as a black man of heroic proportions, a form he takes frequently when moving among the native peoples of Kenya. His dark black eyes turn red when reflecting bright light. The cadre should be impressed with Eshu; his powers are great, and his mystic views are intensely loyal to African traditions.

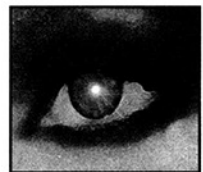
Having once fallen under the Sanguinary's control (as often happens to immortals when in himsati form) Eshu attacked workers constructing the Nairobi to Mombassa railway for reasons still unknown to him. This memory haunts him, although he has since severed the Sanguinary's link to his lionine form; he is one of the few revered Terat to have attained such a state.

If the Narrator wishes, one of the cadre members may have also been present for this incident, either as another controlled immortal, or as a big game hunter, or even one of the pride members seeking the construction of the railroad. This can provide fertile ground for spin-offs and flashbacks, as well as a direct link to the Terat.

Motivations: Eshu is meeting with Stefan, his underling who infiltrated the Anopheles. He hopes to be able to use Stefan to eventually weaken the hold of the Anopheles on the city of Nairobi. If given the opportunity, he will attempt to bring sympathetic Ingenue into his pride.

Currently he is waiting for Stefan to strip from the Anopheles an upcoming government permit to build a thermal power plant on the slopes of Mount Elgon. He doesn't realize that Stefan has become a pawn of the Anopheles and that they have no real intentions of securing Mount Elgon, but merely wish to excavate and take into their protection the remaining Mentors.

Grayl



Pride: Nimrod
Calling: Scourge
Visage: 7
Himsati Tier: 12
Free Immaculum: 9
Forte (ROYGBV): 4/7/8/5/4/8
Taint: 2 (Taint-0 and Orange-9 if she appears in Chapter 3)
Major Serenades: Inroad 3, Bastion 4, Rave 4, Metaphor 4, Gambit 3
Major Talents: Interrogation 4, Dodge 4, Martial Arts 5, Stealth 4, Shadowing 4, various weapons 4
Taboos: None

Grayl is the muscle of Jolea's Nimrod triad. Her opponents tend to underestimate her, an advantage she has been able to parlay into greater visage. She prefers to wield a claymore into battle, but is able to fall back on her Inroad serenade. She is also quite capable of relying on her wits when brute force won't work.

Motivation: Grayl is playing the heavy for the triad; where Jolea does the talking (and intimidating) Grayl is always present to back her up. If a persona makes trouble for one of the Nimrod, Grayl will use Inroad to remove the problem.

Appearance: Grayl has a female body-builder's physique, softened slightly by an attractive face, dark eyes, and a mane of blond hair. Standing 6 feet tall, she towers over the rest of her triad.

I f e ' s C h a m e l e o n s



Pride: N/A

Calling: N/A

Visage: N/A

Himsati Tier: 6

Forte (ROYGBV): 2/5/3/4/6/5

Major Serenades: None

Major Talents: Tracking 4, Dodge 3, Joust 3, Shadowing 2, Acrobatics 2, Gamut 2

Weapon: claws/spines/bite (damage 2)

Taboos: None

Himsati: N/A

Predilection: Custodian

Free Immaculum: 3

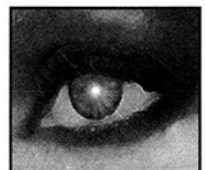
These monstrosities spring from the mind of the Ife Tryst to constantly roam his mantle. Due to the presence of the Ark of the Conundrum, they are infused with life-force and can leave the mantle for short periods of time. Many of the native people of the surrounding area know them as evil spirits. Oftentimes, one chameleon in the shape of a strangely barbed horse will serve as a mount for a more human-like rider.

The chameleons do not voice serenades since they have no voxes. They fight with claws, fangs and sharp quills that line their bodies, as well as antlers and other grotesque, sharp growths. They are not, however, fearless, and may run if they encounter too much resistance from the cadre. These creatures can move over vertical stone building faces, as if they possessed the *Flux and Flow* attention. Some have wings and are capable of gliding from building to building. Their skin changes color with their surroundings.

The Narrator should use these creatures in ways that heighten suspense. In many cases, the cadre will watch in horror as these creatures hunt one another along streets and buildings. Each of the creatures seems to have the same kind of writing carved into their reptilian flesh as the city walls around them. Thus they may easily vanish when pursued.

Inevitable encounters with the chameleons occur near any statue of the Mentors that can be found periodically to dominate a wide plaza of the Ife mantle in testimony to the tryst's training. The creatures there perform violent rituals before the statues, defacing and defiling them as a manifestation of the tryst's hatred for his instructors. Hours after such a spectacle, however, a persona who investigates the same area will find the Mentor statue standing untouched once again, to be defaced another day.

J u r y M e m b e r



A member of the Jury makes an appearance at the end of the story. He will heal any wounds the cast members have incurred, and is essentially invulnerable to them at this stage. Anyone who misbehaves will be swallowed in mist until the Jury departs, and no amount of wandering around will allow the victim of this displeasure to interrupt the proceedings. The Jury have heralds who are lesser members of their order.

J o l e a



Pride: Nimrod
Calling: Juggler
Visage: 4

Himsati Tier: 9

Forte (ROYGBV): 3/4/6/3/5/9

Attentions: Dowser 4, Nostrum 3, Bastion 4, Metaphor 2, Gulag 3

Major Talents: Tracking 5, Dodge 4, Martial Arts 4, Stealth 4, Shadowing 3, various weapons 4,

Taboos: None.

Himsati: Wolf
Predilection: Bully

Free Immaculum: 9

Jolea first appears at the battle for the television station. She and her triad will arrive and tear into both the Banjax and the Apocrypha as well as any cadre members who have yet to flee the scene. The Nimrod appear as statuesque, forbiddingly attractive ladies. Each holds on a leash shadow versions of their Himsatis.



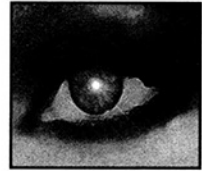
Jolea's preferred weapon is an unusual crescent of metal — tipped with teeth that glow with pale hues of purple and blue. The haft is covered with gemstones which glow with supernatural power, while the arcing blade radiates a crystalline ringing tone pleasing to the ear. Jolea uses this weapon as a Laureate (+5). Although the weapon may only be used in melee or thrown at short range, it is enchanted to inflict a damage rating of 6 in either circumstance. The weapon is one of Jolea's most prized possessions.

Motivation: Jolea is a member of a Nimrod triad which has discovered that the Shrike is not what he appears to be. While she is not certain where he actually comes from, she has learned (falsely) that the Anopheles are ignorant of the intruder. She plans to discover the Shrike's true identity and expose the weakness of the Anopheles before the Jury. Any Nimrod player persona involved in this episode could be an Emissary, planted in lethe in preparation for the capture of the Shrike and the summoning of the Jury to witness the coup. Jolea and her Triad hope to capture the Shrike alive.

Notes: Jolea is investigating the Shrike, and will subtly trail the Shrike throughout the episode. She and her Triad also have the task of enforcing the Silence, and will step in whenever the personas make heavy use of serenades, especially in Chapter Two. Jolea will even trail the Shrike to Africa; the rest of her triad will be in the vicinity, to be called upon as needed.

Appearance: Jolea is a lovely dark-maned woman with golden wolf-eyes and fangs (when angry). She wears a typical Nimrod uniform covered with gold-leather patches. She also wears a glove on the arm that handles her singular weapon.

M a s i t h



Pride: Nimrod

Calling: Probe

Visage: 6

Himsati Tier: 8

Forte (ROYGBV): 8/0/4/8/8/0

Major Serenades: Ember 4, Mystique 4, Veil 3, Ley 3, Anthropomorphis 3

Major Talents: Mythology 3, Criminology 4, Probing 4

Taboos: Whenever Masith enters an area, all electrical appliances (including lights) within her immediate line of sight begin to surge and flicker (Rank 3).

Himsati: Fox

Predilection: Surrealist

Free Immaculum: 8



Masith is a Gossamer (a spirit). She speaks only to her triad, and then only when they seem unsure of what to do next. While she is perhaps the true brains of the triad, her main day-to-day function is that of a scout. Lately she has been keeping tabs on the Shrike, aiding Jolea in tracking the other Gossamer's whereabouts.

Motivation: Masith is the Nimrod who first came across the Shrike, and did the preliminary investigation into his background. Unfortunately, she has been led to believe that the Shrike has infiltrated the Anopheles, when the truth is that the Anopheles are conspiring with him.

Appearance: Masith is a silhouetted woman bathed in a white-blue radiance with beads of light streaming continually from her closed eyes. These "tears" are really her eyes, the result of a Chorus she is able to invoke by blending together the two attentions *Iris* and *Douser*. The "eyes" of Masith will attach themselves to anyone in her range, there to remain until washed away by any form of liquid (rain, a sprinkler, spilled coffee, etc.). More information on Choruses can be found on page 194 of the main rule book. Masith tends to float in the air rather than resting on the ground.

M e n t o r s



Pride: None (formerly Morrigan)

Calling: None

Himsati: Various

Predilection: Survivor,
Builder, Teacher

Visage: 0

Himsati Tier: 14

Free Immaculum: 2 (10)

Forte (ROYGBV): 7 (9) / 5 (6) / 3 (8) / 1 (4) / 6 (7) / 7 (8)

Attentions: Chaos 3, Incantation 4, Inroad 3, Cassandra 5 (as seen from the third eye).

Talents: Streetfighting 3, All Academics 4, Blunt Weapons 4

Taboos: Various. The Narrator is invited to establish taboos for the Mentors as soon as they have drained a hapless twilight of his immaculum.

The Mentors are those immortals who first taught the trysts to make mantles. Most of their immaculum has been drained, though by the time the cadre encounters one, it will be restored to the minimal levels above. In the final battle with the Tryst, the Mentor will be able to regain its full power (numbers in parenthesis) and thus truly be a force to be reckoned with. There are four Mentors; the Shrike (discussed separately), one that will be disposed of by Grayl at Wycliffe University, one present for the final confrontation with the Tryst, and one left unaccounted for as a possible hook for future episodes.

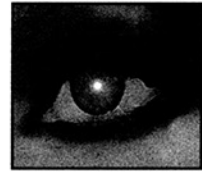
Motivation: The Mentors seek revenge against pride Morrigan for imprisoning them. They also seek to regain the power of the Ark of the Conundrum in order to keep it from the rest of the Prides. Except for their desire for revenge against the Morrigan, they intend no suffering for others. Still, any that enter the Ife mantle will decide that the tryst of Ife must die. The tryst has become far too powerful and alien-minded in the course of its long solitude with the Ark.

The Mentors follow the Shrike with silent devotion. Any cadre member opposing them may be "spilled" for his immaculum, but alliance with these ancient creatures can be just as easily forthcoming.

Appearance: The Mentors appear as mummified creatures, cloaked in darkness and wrapped in blue glassy threads. They are gaunt until they can rejuvenate themselves on immaculum. Although highly intelligent, unless inside the Mantle of Ife, where they can sense the Ark of the Conundrum, they will be unwilling to stop and bargain. Once rejuvenated, the Mentors appear as beings whose skin and eyes shine with the light of their incredible knowledge. They also possess a third eye in their foreheads, as do the trysts they trained. Unlike the tryst, whose third eye is a conundrum, the third eye of the Mentors is completely organic. Only the Shrike lacks this third eye.



M o n i c a f e r r a r

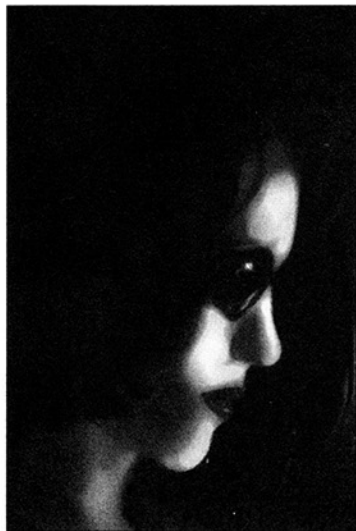


Pride: Tautha
Calling: Highbinder
Visage: 3
Himsati Tier: 1
Forté (ROYGBV): 4/1/2/1/2/2
Attentions: Metaphor 1
Talents: Pistol 1 Archaeology 4
Taboos: None

Himsati: Owl
Predilection: Confidant
Free Immaculum: 3

This beautiful woman is vivacious and outspoken; friendly almost to a fault. She tends to lavish interest and attention on most men she comes into contact with, and is easy-going and friendly with women. Her treatment of male cast members springs from the fact that she is used to being the center of their attention and she also feels a responsibility to help guide the cadre. She will always listen to the woes of her cadre with a sympathetic ear.

Monica is a Morrigan Highbinder unaware of her immortal identity. As she slips from the mental restraints of lethe (a process which has continued for some time now) she has constant visions and dreams of her past among the Perpetual Society.



Recent Events: The Apocrypha, whom Monica unwittingly serves, have recently discovered trace signs that there is an immortal in contact with her, but they have been unable to locate this mystery figure (It is the Shrike, one of the original four Mentors).

In their attempt to learn the Shrike's identity, the Apocrypha have sent a Mannequin into Monica's dreams. This Mannequin has, however, never awakened, nor can any of his colleagues reach him. The Shrike holds the Mannequin captive in the Morpheum.

Motivations: Monica is unaware of the Shrike's presence, but she feels a constant sense of foreboding. Although the Ingenue who participate in this episode may never speak to her in the waking state, the Shrike will permit them to contact her in their dreams, curious as to who the Ingenue are, and ready to weave them into its plot of vengeance against the Morrigan. Her dazzling appearance combined with her warm and genuine caring for the cadre are not to be underplayed; Monica has a way of making every member of the cast feel as if he is her dearest friend.

Monica is also the ignorant pawn of the Ife tryst, whom she and the other cadre members met in the haunted city. The ancient tryst is using her to bring the Mentors into its mantle where they can be forever imprisoned and tormented for the secrets that they forced the tryst to learn.

Monica is obsessed with the Shrike, who appears to her as Jim Raxton, a mortal she once loved and who was brutally murdered on her expedition to Kenya. She is driven by a compulsion which promises peace if she can regain the vox of the Shrike. She also believes she can bring Jim back from the dead and make him forever immortal. She does not realize that the Shrike is using her to get at its own vox and that he is not really Jim Raxton. Unfortunately, Monica is falling deeper and deeper into madness and may eventually become completely insane due to the Shrike's manipulations, which carry, more and more, the trademarks of Anopheles creativity.

Appearance: Monica is a lithe woman in excellent physical condition with short dark hair and blue eyes. She often wears fatigues in the habitat although all of her appearances in the Morpheum find her dressed in a red gown, derived from the culture of Immortals, along with a pair of sunglasses.

P a s h o n



Pride: Tautha

Calling: Sleeper (Originally Highbinder)

Visage: 6

Himsati Tier: 5

Forte (ROYGBV): 2/2/3/4/6/6

Serenades: Bastion 3, Nostrum 2, Metaphor 2, Dowser 4, Ahimsa 3

Talents: Tracking 4, Psychology 3, Dodge 3, Blunt Weapons 4, Apologetics 3

Taboos: None

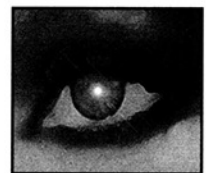
Himsati: Weasel

Predilection: Custodian

Free Immaculum: 4

Pashon was Monica 's comrade, the Tautha Highbinder originally detailed to secure and question the twilight Arnold Wilkes concerning the location of Ife. When Wilkes escaped from his care, it was Pashon who called in Monica to assist in tracking him down, thus involving her as a central figure in the chain of events leading up to the present episode. Due to the fact that Pashon was captured by the Apocrypha in Casablanca during the search for Wilkes, he does not physically appear in the current episode, having been confined inside a mirror at Versailles since the mid-1940's. Brainwashed, he has been made to serve the Apocrypha as a Mannequin until recently, when inside the dreamscape of the Morpheum, his consciousness fell into the hands of the Shrike. These facts, though not directly related to events of the present production, are offered here for their potential development in a subsequent production of the Narrator's own devising. Should the Narrator wish to introduce him to the cast, so as to foreshadow future plot development, Monica can mention his name and his disappearance when she speaks with the cadre in the Morpheum. It is also possible for the Narrator to stage scenes in the Morpheum which hint that the Shrike is active therein and suggest that he may have a prisoner.

P o l i c e O f f i c e r



Pride: None

Calling: None

Visage: 0

Himsati Tier: 1

Forte (ROYGBV): 2/3/2/3/2/2 and similar combinations.

Talents: Pistols 2

Taboos: None

Himsati: None

Predilection: Authoritarian, Knight, Cabalist, Leader

Free Immaculum: 1

These are the twilight police on the scene, some loyal to the Apocrypha, but most oblivious to the true situation at hand. The police are wearing kevlar vests (armor rank 3).

Motivations: When the gunfire starts, they will begin shooting at the students and the cadre, directed by their Apocrypha-loyal superiors, either out of fanatical loyalty or out of fear of what they believe the terrorists are capable of. Most are simply trying to uphold the law.

The Shrike



Pride: Anopheles (formerly Morrigan)

Calling: None/Rook

Visage: 1

Himsati Tier: 15

Forte (ROYGBV): 9 / 0 (7) / 8 / 5 / 6 / 0 (10)

(The Shrike is initially a gossamer. Halo numbers in parenthesis represent his abilities after he reincarnates at his Ark.)

Attentions: Somnus 4, Filament 4, Marionette 3, Cassandra 5, Impulse 3

Talents: Streetfighting 3, All Academics 4, Blunt Weapons 3

Taboos: Whenever the Shrike is seen by another persona, brambles grow up all around him. This taboo (rank 3) causes no harm to the Shrike, but makes him quite visible. Blooming flowers, shining like tiny flashlights, accompany the thorns.

Himsati: Thorns (The Shrike has a plant Himsati)

Predilection: Drifter
(Formerly Teacher)

Free Immaculum: 11

The Shrike was one of four Morrigan, known as the Mentors, who were commanded to instruct the first tryst in the creation of the mantle known to legend as Ife. Having discovered a way to tap the energy of a powerful artifact (the Ark of the Conundrum), the Morrigan intended to use its rich immaculum stores to build a center of rejuvenation, a huge Ark from which their most prominent members could be reformed at need. The Mentors task was simply this; to oversee the making of a mantle capable of hiding the new Morrigan resource from the envious eyes of the other prides.

The Mentors realized, however, that the other prides would go to violent war to take the Ark away from the Morrigan. Taking their own counsel they made a decision amongst themselves which opposed their orders. They instructed seven trysts to create seven mantles, in six of which they would put false replicas of the Ark intended to confuse any immortal who happened to find an Ife mantle. They then used Impulse serenades to force the trysts to lose themselves in the vast wilderness of Africa, to randomly settle down and to create mantles whose borders were invisible to all other beings. The Mentors then returned to their pride to face punishment for their betrayal. The Morrigan interrogated them to discover the location of the Ark of the Conundrum, but the Mentors were unable to provide the answers. Enraged, the Morrigan punished their traitors in the worst way known for a creature of the sky. . . they buried the Mentors alive on the rugged slopes of modern-day Mount Elgon. In this terrible sacrifice the Shrike and the other Mentors achieved their goal. Open war between the prides was avoided.

The Mentors were trapped within the earth for centuries; but no prison is eternal. In a meld with his weaker colleagues, the Shrike at last was able to seduce and control the timid mind of a twilight being, Arnold Wilkes. Under compulsion, the man eventually excavated the burial place of the Mentors. Unraveling the glassy fibers that bound the Shrike, Wilkes was to watch in horror as the Mentor drained him of every mote of immaculum. Barely energized, the Shrike then left the corpse and returned to his Ark in Nairobi, only to find the immaculum he had hidden there was mysteriously drained away.

The Shrike's weak form was then hunted down and slain by Monica on the slopes of Elgon. His vox was taken into her possession. The Shrike, now a gossamer, searches desperately for his ancient vox so he can become corporeal again. After his defeat on Mount Elgon, the Shrike negotiated with an agent of the Anopheles, revealed his true nature, and joined their pride. The Anopheles have agreed to help the Shrike recover his powers, and have infused his ark with enough immaculum that he may reform if his vox is brought into its proximity. Of course, given enough time and immaculum, the Shrike could actually form a new vox, but this would require more resources than even the Anopheles are willing to provide.

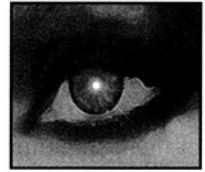
The Shrike has joined pride Anopheles as a gossamer Rook. Rooks are a group of individuals that belonging to no calling but are gaining status from their expert instruction of their pride's Quiet Cultures. As Rooks are usually overlooked in the stratagem, the Shrike's masquerade in pride Anopheles has been relatively simple to date.

Motivation: The Shrike's main objectives are to regain the vox which was taken from him fifty years ago and to reform himself in his Ark hidden in the basement of the Jacaranda hotel. He also intends to unearth the remaining Mentors and to restore their dim halos. To this end, he will attempt to gain the loyalty of members of the cadre, or, failing that, force their cooperation. After these successes, he plans to use the Ark of the Conundrum to punish the Morrigan for their transgressions. His loyalty to the Anopheles is a motivation only insofar as it does not interfere with his primary goals.

Appearance: Stripped by bands of light and shadow, the Shrike manifests in the midst of a tangle of colorful barbed foliage such as Joshua trees, cactus and nettles. His body is a midnight blue with glowing pink eyes and close-cropped black hair. The Shrike favors two fluorescent-red glass weapons which have a damage rating of 7. However, he may only use these glass blades after he remanifests in corporeal form.



S t e f a n



Pride: Terat (posing as Anopheles)
Calling: Probe (posing as Emissary)
Visage: 2
Himsati Tier: 4
Forte (ROYGBV): 2/3/3/4/4/2
Attentions: Iris 3, Ember 4, Metaphor 3
Talents: Swords 4, Dodge 2
Taboos: None

Himsati: Coyote
Predilection: Misfit
Free Immaculum: 5

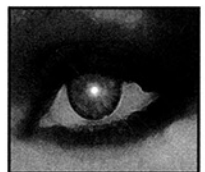
Stefan was, until recently, a little-known solitaire. He joined pride Terat, and was asked to infiltrate the Anopheles as part of his initiation. He is not exactly a bungler, but he is an amateur, far outclassed by the more experienced immortals. He has a bit of a temper, and does not quite fit in with either of his new prides.

Motivations: Stefan is preparing to make his first report to Eshu of Tsavo, his superior in the Terat pride. He will be on the lookout for possible recruits for his pride, and will attempt to persuade the Ingenue that his true pride is more noble and trustworthy than any of the others.

Notes: When not having to directly deal with the Anopheles, Stefan spends his time in his himsati form, that of a coyote. He is also attempting to master a Terat Secret serenade which allows him to take his himsati "half-way." When successfully playing this serenade, he runs along the rooftops as a werewolf. Stefan keeps a box in his room that contains, as souvenirs, the bullets of poachers who shot him and died regretting it. Unknown to Stefan, the Anopheles know who he is, and have used knowledge seduced away from him (usually when he was drunk) to acquire a large amount of Terat territory on the outskirts of Nairobi. They also use him to pass misinformation back to the Terat.

Appearance: Stefan is a dark-haired man with average looks who tries to fit into the Anopheles pride but shuns their fashions.

S t u d e n t - T e r r o r i s t



Pride: None
Calling: None
Visage: 0
Himsati Tier: 1
Forte (ROYGBV): 3/2/3/2/3/2 and similar combinations.
Talents: Long Arms 1
Taboos: None

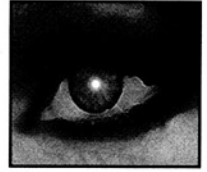
Himsati: None
Predilection: Martyr, Knight, Drifter, Custodian
Free Immaculum: 0

Monica 's loyal student terrorists. They will blaze away with AK-47s (7.62 mm) and be rather swiftly gunned down at the end of Chapter One.

Motivations: The students are completely loyal to Monica, and are willing to die for her. They believe she is a gifted psychic tormented by a supernatural world which they cannot fathom.

Appearance: The students are all young and dressed to reflect mainstream youth culture.

The Tryst of Ife



Pride: None

Calling: None

Visage: 0

Himsati Tier: 16 (Due to a unique link with the Ark of the Conundrum)

Free Immaculum: 11

Forte (ROYGBV): 9/7/7/8/8/10

Attentions: Endue 5, Impulse 4

Talents: Streetfighting 5, any others as necessary

Taboos: None

Himsati: 3-Headed Hydra

Predilection: Heretic

The tryst has complete control over the Mantle of Ife. The cadre will eventually be drawn into a final confrontation with this horrific being. The tryst will then pounce on the Shrike; one of its three heads will battle it while another will combat the Shrike's companion Mentor, and a third will seek to combat the cast. The Shrike and Mentor will be able to defeat their two heads IF the cadre can defeat the third. Due to the tryst's control over reality, any wound it takes, after all modifications, will be downgraded by one rank. So an impairing wound will become light, a mortal wound, crippling, etc. Each head weighs more than a ton, and so can withstand 2 crippling wounds before a third crippling wound becomes mortal. The tryst uses its power of Endue (body shaping) to reach out and attack a different cast member each turn.

Motivations: The Tryst is the guardian of the Ark of the Conundrum. It has kept him alive throughout the millennia and caused him to grow in power in violation of the norms associated with the himsati tier. The primary goal of the tryst is revenge upon the Mentors who opened his eyes and cursed him with knowledge so terrible that he has become a "god" sick with a soul of utter despair and anguish. The tryst continually creates creatures to assault effigies of the Mentors that line the avenues of Ife. Those being who have wandered into the mantle over the millennia have learned to either worship or flee from the tryst, who struggles with his own self-loathing. The tryst wants to die, although not before questioning the Mentors as to why they "did this to me."



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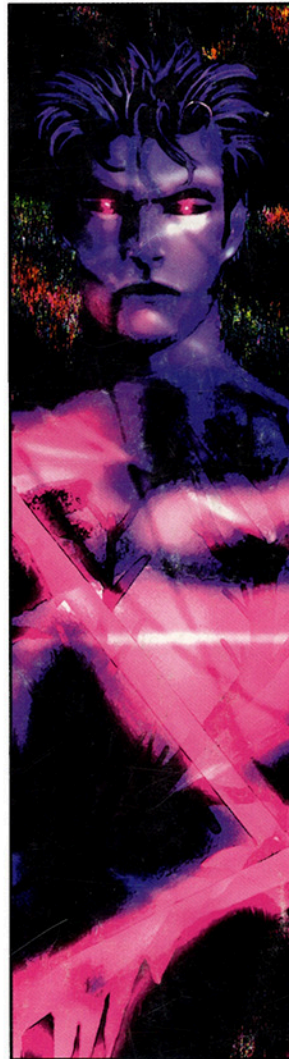
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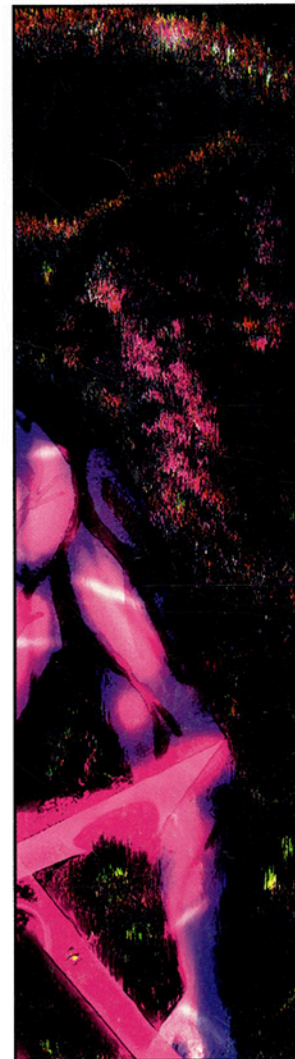
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