

Rite Publishing Presents

# MAGUS OF THE JADE OATH



By Frank Carr





*Rite Publishing Presents:*

# MAGUS OF THE JADE OATH

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## Special Thanks

To **Soren K. Thusrtup** for jumping in  
to do the editing on this one.

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## Magi of the Jade Oath

*"Victory without courage is chance. Victory without risk is hollow. Victory without loss is impossible."*

– Kung Fu Tse

*To the new Dark Lord of the Great Revived Black Steel Centipede Army,*

*The following treatise is on all matters related to the magi in our region of the world that this one has knowledge of. Per the dark lord's command and as but one way for this one to prove her worth to him, this information is committed to the lowly scroll her lord now holds in his hands. Further, this one prays that her lord finds the meager labor of hers adequate for the lord to consider allowing this humble and faithful concubine of the blade to serve, protect, and advise the dark lord in any position he deems worthy as the Beautiful Silk Tigers intended when they made a gift of her to the dark lord. This one shall endeavor to explain the factions and groups that utilize the magi to hold the influence and power they already possess or use in order to obtain the same. This will begin with explaining something of the magi's typical way of life in the Lands of the Jade Oath. As the dark lord is unfamiliar with many aspects of magi life for various reasons, despite being one himself, this mere concubine hopes to prove the value of adding her knowledge to the hive-mind of the dark lord's army and of adding this one's form and skill to his personal guard and command staff. This one humbly begs to advise the dark lord that her knowledge, skill, and training extend beyond the knowledge of magi taught to her by her former masters in the Beautiful Silk Tigers.*

*With great affection and everlasting devotion,  
Xiu Zhan Zhi, Magus of the Iron Cutting Thread and  
former disciple of the Black Silk Tigers*

What is a magus? The martial artist capable of leaping and flying to battle with his opponent is a magus. The swordsman whose blade glows with an inner light as he performs his morning meditations might be a magus. The samurai who claims that his sword has a life all its own and can cut through the magical defenses of his enemies is a magus. There are as many different types of magi as there are different reasons for becoming one.

The wide range of abilities available to magi through their combat training and spellcasting place them in high demand in these troubled times. Their ability to turn the power of spellcasting into a warrior's



art makes them quintessential hybrid warriors. A magus embraces his weapons just as strongly as he embraces the power of the magic within and without his mortal frame.

Many magi eagerly seek the treasure that adventuring can bring and the power it buys. However, they also often seek new ways of testing themselves and their abilities against greater and greater challenges in order to become stronger; they know that this is the only way for them to become better at their chosen discipline and art.

As my lord knows, magi come from a wide variety of backgrounds and disciplines. For example, despite my lord's current position at the helm of the newly revived

Black Steel Centipede Army, he was formerly enforced the Laws of Magic as a curse eater magus of the Jade Eye Society, whereas I previously hail from the House of the Forbidden Mantis, a clan subordinate to the will of the Beautiful Silk Tigers secret society, and am skilled as a threadcaster magus. Our two backgrounds are quite different, but we both bear similar skills at combining magical talent with martial skill, the true hallmark of any magus. We simply focus these talents and skills differently because of the differences in our training, just as magi from our region differ from any magi that **might come from the West. This one's magus skills focus more on base cunning and extending the reach of her spells in combat while my lord's skills focus more on turning the power of his curse to his advantage against the magic of others.** Other magi, too, come from wide and varying backgrounds.

Some magi come from prominent and wealthy families that can afford to send them to academies or a singular master for training, specifically as a magus. They might see the pursuit of their art as an ultimate fusion of combat and magic. Others are perhaps trained initially by a kensai or other master warrior, but could not deny the pull of magic within their heart before completing their training. Others might have begun as spellcasters that needed to find a more direct and satisfying outlet for their aggressions and as a result could not complete their magic training before finding they had talent with a blade.

Some magi become tainted by infernal spellblight through magical mishaps during training and, being incurable by their masters, can be left to deal with their cursed existence and resolve to overcome their situation by taking the path of a curse eater magus. A few curse eaters, such as my lord, are born with such curses and **must take on the curse eater's path just to survive. The magi known as warriors of fortune take to the magi lifestyle like a dragon to fire blending their magic, martial skill, and risk-taking ways to turn a profit as mercenaries. Mnemonic warrior magi find that their ability to tap into the akashic memory or the hivemind of my lord's army provides them with the knowledge of past warriors or their fellow men-at-arms to use alongside their skills as magi. Meanwhile, lantern warriors, as champions of their given causes, utilize their magi abilities to realize the goals of their cause, a cause that they decided to take up due to the influence of their station in their culture and society. These are all examples of the many and diverse backgrounds from which magi come.**

**Religion:** Some might think that it would be too difficult to give in to the demands of religion over those of the martial and magical, but magi typically seek guidance in their lives through the pursuit of their religions like many others do. Most magi are

practitioners of Bodhism, Taoshidaoism, or Kangfuzhist thought. Magi seek to find a common ground between their religion, their martial arts, and their magical insight to complement each other. Magi combine their bond to their mystical abilities and the religions and philosophies in their life as a spiritual focus for their lives so that they may proceed down a righteous path.

**Races:** Many of the races can enjoy pursuing the life of a magus for different reasons, but there are few races that can deny the pull of learning to work magic in the midst of combat. Sanesaram and bakemono enjoy the connection they feel when they channel their magic through their weapon. Mandragorans see the combination of spellcasting with combat as a noble pursuit worthy of the higher castes in their society. Some say that the yueren first developed the art of the magus as a way to combine the dual natures of the yueyinren and the yueyangren; something the yueren **don't deny** - they certainly see the art as the ultimate blend of the physical and mystical.

**Other Classes:** Magi get along well with many other classes because of their dual nature. They can understand the fascination with magic that spellcasters have, while simultaneously feeling the brotherhood that warriors in arms can share. They particularly see eye to eye with other classes that blend martial and magical techniques such as inquisitors, alchemists, bards, and demon hunters.

## *Factions*

There are a number of factions in the Lands of the Jade Oath that have a bearing on the origins, motives, lifestyle, and techniques that a particular magus might take up. Being a part of an organization larger than himself is a big part of how a magus might affect the world and provide him with a purpose and a means for his power, a reason to fight and a way to learn new **techniques. In fact, if it wasn't for some of these organizations or schools, certain styles of magi might never have existed.**

## *Akashic Brotherhood*

The Akashic Brotherhood displays a religious devotion when it comes to protecting the akashic memory, the combined, living archive of knowledge of the mortal races. They serve as the ultimate scholars, messengers, and researchers for the Empire of Xianguo and serve many other kingdoms as well. Their Akashic Voices are highly skilled at using the akashic memory to act as messengers, advisors, counselors and spies.



Furthermore, this one knows of unconfirmed rumors that, when the Akashic Brotherhood feel that their precious akashic memory is threatened, they utilize assassins and saboteurs that can literally hide from memory. However, it is their mnemonic warriors that should concern my lord since, unlike the bard-like Akashic Voices or their mnemonic Ninja, they are actually magi of the same caliber as the mnemonic **warriors employed by my lord's Black Steel Centipede Army.**

The ability to memorize and access massive amounts of information without having to write it down is of great value to many and the Akashic Brotherhood can access most any skill and even some abilities usually only capable of being used exclusively by great heroes of the past. Their mnemonic warriors, like those that serve my lord, utilize their abilities to instantly become aware of surrounding threats without even looking and can glimpse the little signaling events of the present to anticipate the next attack. Just by studying an **opponent's maneuvers, a mnemonic warrior can learn about his foe's fighting style in the space of a moment** and a way to counter it from the akashic memory. He can also use his abilities with the akashic memory to implant unpleasant and distracting memories in his **opponent's. However, unlike my lord's mnemonic warriors of the hivemind, they cannot coordinate their efforts as a unified whole with the same level of precision, but they can delve further into the past than the hivemind of my lord's army can allow.**

Their most famous mnemonic warrior is a human from Mandrasengal by the name of Tavu Tiki. He is said to be an unusual warrior who employs an unorthodox fighting style that appears to be completely different each time he fights. It is as though he channels the spirit of a different warrior from history each time he fights. Furthermore, this one has heard that Tavu Tiki never fights with the same weapon as from his previous battles, utilizing a different style of weapon whenever possible. He is currently employed as a mercenary by the government of Sukhatra and his affiliation with the **Akashic Brotherhood isn't known by most, but it doesn't** take much to figure out if you see him fight and are aware of the existence of mnemonic warriors.

### *Beautiful Silk Tigers*

As my lord is already aware, this humble one is a former disciple of the Beautiful Silk Tigers, a guild of courtesans who cater to wealthy and powerful clientele in need of bodyguards, assassins, and seers with additional skills that are usually only possessed by courtesans. They train at special schools and boarding houses to develop these skills, including the mystical



*Beautiful Silk Tiger*



*Akashic Brotherhood*

talents of diviners and seers to serve as advisors to those who purchase their contracts from the organization. Most believe that the information that can be provided **by this organization's membership** comes from the use of divination magic. However, what very few know is



that the Beautiful Silk Tigers also broker information obtained through more mundane spying methods through the use of lesser houses and criminal organizations that serve as fronts, as well as the seers that serve as **the organization's mouth pieces**.

**What my lord may not be aware of is that this one's** former masters also seek to cultivate the bloodlines of the powerful and others with great destinies while culling those bloodlines that are cursed or are undesirable. The reason behind their actions lies in the past at the creation of the organization with the creation of the Jade Oath itself. The founders of this organization were tasked with ensuring that there are heroes and powerful individuals capable of leading any force to victory against any future invasions by the infernal dragons and their allies. Ideally, the force that would be led by these heroes and generals would have been that **created by the progenitors of what was my lord's** Black Steel Centipede Army before it had fallen into ruin and corruption. The Beautiful Silk Tigers cultivate the bloodlines of such heroes through the use of a selective breeding program. That is the reason this one has been sent by my masters to serve as your liaison to the Beautiful Silk Tigers. This one is to be your bodyguard, advisor, and – ideally - the mother of your children. However, this one knows that she cannot fool my lord **upon joining with the hivemind of my lord's army, and** so reveals things normally held in secret by the Beautiful Silk Tigers. **It is this one's hope that my lord can look** beyond this and see the true potential the future can bring with our union.

Telling my lord about the Beautiful Silk Tigers in **this treatise isn't just to clear the air,** but to explain that they utilize magi as well. However, magi of this sort are more subtle than others of their ilk. They are also trained specifically at a school maintained by the Forbidden Mantis clan, a faction that was secretly created by and is subordinate to the will of the Beautiful Silk Tigers.

### *Forbidden Mantis:*

The thread-weaving magi trained by the Forbidden Mantis are called silkweavers—both within the clan and by the Beautiful Silk Tigers. However, outsiders often refer to us as threadcasters or webcasters. This one is one such type of magi. Our talents include using string and thread imbued with mystical energy as a weapon as strong as steel and as flexible as a whip. We use it as a hidden weapon – turning these threads invisible - to channel our spells, set magical traps, take on the appearance of flying or levitating, and to communicate. We also specialize in spells that entangle our opponents. Magi of the Forbidden Mantis often serve as



*Forbidden Mantis*



*Black Lotus Brotherhood*

mercenaries, but most silkweavers try to keep their true techniques hidden through misdirection and outright deception.

Another type of magus employed by the Forbidden Mantis is the Lantern Warrior. These are magi who take up a specific cause and develop specialized techniques in the furtherance of these causes. Two of the most common causes taken up by Lantern Warriors of the Forbidden Mantis are that of equality between the sexes and the prevention of foreign interference in the matters of the empire.

## Black Lotus Brotherhood

Most who know of this organization mainly think of it as a minor society of depraved criminals. However, we know that they are involved in assassination for hire and in certain dark rituals devoted to a dark god with nihilistic attributes. We also know that they have some sort of connection to the White Tiger Lily Sect in Lan Trangh and utilize curse eaters, threadcasters, and Lantern Warriors of their own during their operations.

## Black Steel Centipede

*In the interest of making this treatise as comprehensive as this one can, she will include information on her new master's society, if my lord permits.*

This society started at the time of the First Pact when the Jade Oath was first sworn. It was tasked with building and maintaining a standing army that could deal with any more potential invasions by the infernal dragons or other threats and was prophesied as a required force to fight off a predicted apocalypse. Later, the idea of guiding the army with a single mind was conceived and a portion of the akashic memory was used to create the new singular mind composed of many individual parts – a unified mind called a hivemind. The experimental hivemind was a success. But, after a time, the leadership wanted to recruit more powerful soldiers into the army controlled by the hivemind, so they tried adding monsters that they thought could be controlled by the hivemind. Before long, without realizing it, the hivemind was corrupted by the blighted taint of the monsters whose minds were added to it, and any individuality the soldiers had was washed away, leaving barely sentient husks of what they once were. The hivemind grew increasingly erratic and aggressive. **The hivemind's army went rogue. Many other factions were forced to fight it and eventually hunt the soldiers of this army down and slay the dark lord who was supposedly in control of the hivemind's army. The truth is that this is the real force that was behind the near genocidal destruction of the ruishishen.**

Much time has passed since then and, while **remnants of the hivemind's army have been found in various places**, there has not been a new dark lord of the army since then because the strain on any one mind attempting to gain control was simply too much. Until recently, the hivemind has been without a dark lord. Only recently, had it actually gained a new dark lord and he was working towards absorbing more soldiers and **monsters into the hivemind's ranks. However, a young curse eater encountered the machinations of the new dark lord and the hivemind's army. He and his**

companions not only defeated the new dark lord, but also took control of the hivemind and found a way to cure it of its corruptive influence, but not before a portion of the hivemind and its disciples were able to break away to form a new hiveminded army. The restored hivemind has now been purged and bestows individuality back upon its component soldiers; however, the evil reputation of the Black Steel Centipede Army is still largely intact and many believe it is still headed by a terrible dark lord bent on conquering the Lands of the Jade Oath. Of course this new dark lord and curse eater is my lord and has no designs on conquering the world, though he does wish to complete the destruction of his enemies.

The Black Steel Centipede is comprised of many different kinds of warriors, but due to the nature of the **army's hivemind now headed by my lord, its warriors** can share the tactical knowledge and many combat abilities of its constituent members when they are in the same localized area. Therefore, many of the mages and warriors that comprise the ranks of the Black Steel Centipede Army teach each other their combat skills and spells. This naturally leads to a large portion of the army being magi, though most are of the more specific variety of magi known as mnemonic warriors, just like the mnemonic warriors of the Akashic Brotherhood who the Black Steel Centipede Army had split away from so long ago. However, unlike those mnemonic warriors, those that serve my lord are less capable of delving into the past for knowledge, but are more capable of greater teamwork and information sharing in the present; it is as if they are fighting with one mind.

**It is this one's great honor to serve the lord of such** a great power and military force. As long as my lord retains control of the monsters and warriors of this small, but growing secret army, no force of invaders will be able to attack the Lands of the Jade Oath for long. The addition of the many members from the Barbed Lotus Company, Crescent Kukri Hunters, and the Ice Falcon Alliance to the Black Steel Centipede has strengthened it greatly, though much of its membership should still be watched closely for signs of the blighted taint of the previous hivemind. The secret recruitment taking place at military academies across the Lands of the Jade Oath proceeds smoothly, though not as quickly as my lord would like. This one is sure that as long as it becomes more apparent to the rest of the world that my lord is benevolent, more will flock to his banner. The only problem is the rogue hivemind that continues to bring dishonor to the names of the Black Steel Centipede and my lord.

**The rogue army's hivemind, like that of my lord's** army, is actually an actively thinking force and hivemind that can actively assist its members in influencing the world through its agents acting on their shared



knowledge of events. What one member knows, so another member of the Black Steel Centipede knows and it is the same for the rogue army. We believe that the **ultimate goal of this rogue army's hivemind is to** eventually gain enough power for a military coup in any given kingdom and then move on with conquering, subjugating, and assimilating the rest of the region and then the world. It is also much more aggressive about recruiting monstrous creatures into its ranks than my lord, who is more careful, given the lessons of the past.

### *Ice Falcon Alliance*

The Ching lineage of the Ice Falcon Alliance is bloodline of Nagaraja that left the Long lineage from the Order of the Ashen Dragon in order to reinforce the Ice Falcon Alliance at the Ghostwall in defense of the Empire of Xianguo. They have since remained a part of that alliance and have even adopted many of the customs of the majority of their qahngol neighbors. They wear soul masks that are yellow with purple and green highlights. Due to the more combative nature of their efforts with the Ice Falcon Alliance against the armies of the dragon, they have become more martial than their cousins in the Long lineage of the Nagaraja. They train the magi techniques of the Myrmidarch, Skirnir, and Soul Forger to their hopeful apprentices in the Ice Falcon Alliance.

When the dragon was rampaging and corrupting the barbarian tribes on the steppes, the ruishishen, seeing that a dragon was once again let loose upon the world, decided to send a force to assist the empire in dealing with it, just as they had done centuries ago. One of their tribes, the Hrin, volunteered for this duty and over time, after being allies of the house for centuries, allowed themselves to be permanently absorbed into the alliance later, after the massacres of their people to the south. They are fierce and dedicated enemies of the **infernal dragon's horde and many** in their number employ the mystical secrets taught to them by the spirits borne along the four winds from the Ghostwall. There are just as many spellcasters in their numbers as there are warriors. Some of their numbers use these mystical secrets with their martial abilities in the styles of the Bladebound, curse eater, Hexcrafter, and Spellblade magi. Some members will choose to honor the qahngol-dominated alliance by bearing a soul mask, but just as many do not.

### *Eternal Whisper Society*

This society is organized with several different interests at work, but united in the singular goal of obtaining the power of immortality at all costs. Members are just as often rivals, but they are mandated



*Ice Falcon Alliance*



*Eternal Whisper Society*

to share their research with one another in the furtherance of gaining their immortal goals. Many different camps are divided by opposing views on what method is best to proceed towards their goal of immortality, but they all fight in the common purpose of protecting their interests as a whole. As a consequence of their search for immortality and a need for great material wealth and arcane knowledge, they have accumulated a great many resources and control over other influential individuals and organizations that can provide what is needed for the Eternal Whisper Society to thrive. This includes magi from the clans of the **Kraken's Pearl, the Hungry Sky Cult, the Resilient Crane**



Covenant, and the Ministries of the Golden Coin, the Iron Pen, the Jade Pillar, and the Silver Axe.

## *Guild of the Sublime Rat*

Publicly, the Guild of the Sublime Rat is renowned to have some sort of unconscious hold over the mystical forces of serendipity, circumstance, and luck. It is believed that to turn away a beggar with the mark of this organization upon them is to invite bad fortune and that granting them a spare coin or two can bring oneself good luck. These rumors are more of a truth than what any rich merchant would care to consider, even if they occur only rarely.

Despite the humble place this society occupies, it made certain remarkable accomplishments. They have a secret communication code that has yet to be cracked by anyone outside of its membership. The Beautiful Silk Tigers consider them to have the most reliable non-magical communication network of any society throughout the Lands of the Jade Oath. This cipher is unknown to outsiders and can be displayed in full view of the public without anyone being the wiser to its hidden meaning. It is a language of hidden signed movements and postures. The written form of this cipher is equally deceptive and is used to mark territories and to leave warnings; often in regards to the fortunes of any given area. For those few that know that the beggars of the Sublime Rat have this ability, this is a valuable tool for covert messages if they can convince the beggars to transmit a message or warning for them. Members of this guild are also rumored to have originally created the Drunken Fist style martial art. Even if not true, the society has certain members that are rumored to be the most powerful masters of Drunken Fist. However, this one believes their most amazing achievement is the true mission of this guild and is also their greatest secret and shame.

It is a widely held belief that, while the Celestial Court itself, composed of all the major gods in the world, might have been cut off from coming to Lands of the Jade Oath in person as they did once upon a time, they can still answer the occasional prayer or provide divine power to their clerics with some effort. However, **this one's informant in the Guild of the Sublime Rat tells her that the god's subordinates in the Celestial Bureaucracy,** the small gods, also known as The One Thousand and One Gods Under Heaven, can have a more direct and physical impact on the Lands of the Jade Oath. This is because the Guild of the Sublime Rat secretly made it possible for them to return at the end of the conflict with the infernal dragon through manipulating the mystical power of the dragon lines within the land itself with the energy of the positive and negative furies, of good and

bad fortune; also called joss, or luck. However, they have not been able to open that path to the Heavens any further and most of the One Thousand and One Gods Under Heaven are now either imprisoned in infernal traps left behind for them by the infernal dragons or driven mad by the spellblighted areas of the land tainted by the infernal dragons. Many of them are stuck in this mortal world now, while the Celestial Court itself is still separated from this reality. But then so are other, worse, things in other dimensions and the Sublime Rat is trying to keep it that way while attempting to heal and free the small gods.

This one knows that it might sound like an odd thing to take the word of a **member of the beggar's guild** at their word on divine matters; however, the Beautiful Silk Tigers have known since its founding about the **true nature of this beggar's guild. While it is truly concerned** with altruistic matters and the fortunes of beggars, the dispossessed, and mendicant monks, it is also concerned with the fortunes of the land itself and no one is at the mercy of the fortunes of the land more than beggars. This guild seeks the return of the gods to our realm and has done so since their founders swore the Jade Oath to restore the land and its gods to the way they once were before the invasion of the infernal dragons. Even though they are a guild of beggars that bands together for the protection of their own kind as no one else will look out for them, they rarely exhibit their power.

Only their inner circle knows the truth of why the organization was originally founded and they are the ones that manipulate the fortunes of the dragon lines and thus the fortunes of those that live near those dragon lines. They do this in order to remain below the attention of those in power who would seek to disrupt their mission of restoring the fortunes of the land and the gods to all. Furthermore, the structure, composition, and nature of its membership makes it difficult for the society to get anyone to work towards any common goal together long enough to actually accomplish something as a whole within society at large. Its founders organized it this way to ensure that its power could only be brought to bear when it is truly needed by the membership. This keeps the organization from becoming a breeding ground for malcontents and remains a society for the betterment of those who choose the life of a beggar or to help those who have fallen on hard times. One thing they can and do enforce amongst the membership is their own hidden laws of behavior amongst the underprivileged of common society. This can sometimes bring them into conflict with other underworld organizations, such as criminal **gangs and thieves' guilds.** However, should those organizations actually manage to arouse the ire of this organization, they might find their own fortunes taking a down turn.

Despite many problems and narrowly avoiding destruction in the past, the guild is more powerful than ever and is much more wide-spread now. It has even built up other societies as front organizations to support itself should these problems occur again. These wu-lin societies include the Golden Bat, the Sundered Mountain, and the Thunderous Cricket. The combined wealth of these societies actually makes the Guild of the Sublime Rat one of the wealthiest societies of all. What has allowed this organization to prosper is its remarkable hold over good and bad fortunes as it distributes its bad fortune to what was once the most fortunate of all clans and redistributes that fortune to the other two factions. Furthermore, they alter the flow of fortune throughout the empire, but not for selfish goals. Rather, they do so to restore the land and bring about the return of the gods.

The Guild of the Sublime Rat has developed a mystical school of thought on the attainment and distribution of fortune through the dragon lines in order to remove curses, spellblight, and other taint from the land while reinforcing the barrier that holds the infernal forces of other dimensional realms at bay. It is a secret magic of luck and fortune. The real difficulty is doing all this while trying to allow the gods to reenter the Lands of the Jade Oath. Using their front organizations, they teach the art to those warriors, who may or may not realize the greater organization of which they are a part. They call them warriors of fortune, and they often work as mercenaries. The more this magic is used, the more that good luck and good fortune is actually siphoned to the various charms and ritual implements this organization uses to increase its luck. It hasn't always worked well, as can be seen by the history of the guild and the Sundered Mountain, but for the most part it works well for them.

Occasionally, there is a backlash of negative luck and fortune that must be dealt with. Dealing with bad fortune is not unanticipated; it is one of the very reasons that the guild secretly assisted with the creation of the Sundered Mountain society. Bad fortune has to go somewhere, so they divert that bad fortune to the Sundered Mountain. They do so because they inherently **have the best fortune with the guild's interference, but** this also provides them the best chance to survive the ill fortune that must go somewhere.

### *Golden Bat Society:*

This society is a group of warriors who train in blindfighting and in the secret techniques of the Luckbringers who use that luck to alter events on the field of battle. However, they also teach a style of magi combat techniques that borrow from the same skills the



*Golden Bat Society*



*Sundered Mountain Clan*

luckbringers use in battle. These magi are called warriors of fortune magi and can be quite fearsome when their enemies are suddenly on the receiving end of good fortune brought forth magically by their magus opponent. The Golden Bat Society is a close ally of the Thunderous Cricket Syndicate and many believe that it is they who taught the Thunderous Cricket the secretive techniques they use in their magi school. There are often many outsiders who seek to learn at the feet of a Golden Bat master of fortune, but they are frequently turned away. The masters say that while luck is a skill, too, it is not one that can be taught if you have none to begin with. Sometimes they even tell supplicants with



unusually bad luck to seek out the Sundered Mountain Clan as that might be the only way for them to learn how to survive their bad fortune in the long run.

### *Sundered Mountain Clan:*

While the Jade Eye Society may be the most prominent employer of curse eater magi, it is the Sundered Mountain Clan that has the most, more than any other faction in the Lands of the Jade Oath. Hundreds of years ago, a star fell from the sky into the mountain the society currently holds as its base of operations, causing great disaster for the surrounding area. The resulting soot and debris that was launched into the air killed or sickened all of the people and animals in the area. The emperor at the time granted stewardship of these lands to the newly chartered wu-lin society that is known today as the Sundered Mountain Clan. They worked hard and endured much to adapt to their surroundings and have continued to survive many rough times. After a time, their land became more and more fertile until it became the most fertile land in the empire, despite being mostly mountainous terrain. In fact, it is so fertile that the vegetables there grow nearly twice as large as anywhere else in the empire. Rare starmetal veins were soon found in the mountains, as well, leading to small, but rich mines.

Over time, some members of the clan began to develop unusual birth marks and tattoo-like designs on their skin. When asked about these marks, the members of the society only smiled and said that it was a sign of favor from the heavens. Many started to believe that the unusual markings that many of the members of this society bear had something to do with their unusual powers of endurance and willpower. However, most now believe it to be the mark of a cursed people. Curses Eaters from the Sundered Mountain lands almost always bear one of these marks.

**It wasn't long before the surrounding clans and other houses in the empire grew jealous and covetous of the Sundered Mountain lands. It wasn't long before the clan was tested by nature, the heavens, and the machinations of mortals. Shortly after the discovery of the starmetal mines, the clan began to suffer tragic catastrophes after unusual disasters, such as earthquakes, attacks on its holdings, raids from organized bands of monsters, hauntings, tornadoes, and numerous curses. In fact, many consider the entirety of the clan itself to be cursed, despite the bountiful nature of the clan's land. It is said that nearly all who live on their lands are cursed and it is actually well-noted by other organizations within the empire that more curse eaters and cursed items come from these lands than anywhere else in the empire. Consequently, few will dare**



*Thunderous Cricket*

purchase any starmetal from the Sundered Mountain, despite its extremely rare nature and high value.

Because of the high number of curse eaters that the clan can turn out from its lands, it has more experience at dealing with curses than any other force in the empire. The Mao are the most prominent family of curse eaters in the clan. They have one of only two training facilities for curse eaters anywhere, the other being a under the care of the Cloud Leopard Covenant.

### *Thunderous Cricket Syndicate:*

The House of the Thunderous Cricket was always small, but not always as prosperous as it is now. Its prosperity is mainly due to the city of Xinmar, a rich trade city in the Canyon of Kung Tai Chuan located at the northern end of the Great Sun Wall Mountains. The city is the jurisdiction of the Dai-Shi family of the Thunderous cricket, but it was not always so. The Thunderous Cricket was originally a band of heroes that had saved the empire from some sort of calamity, the nature of which was suppressed by imperial decree. As a reward, the emperor of the time granted them sanction to form a noble house, with their lands being a recently extinguished house that was completely destroyed when a star fell from the sky. Ever since, the Thunderous Cricket has administered its holdings in admirable fashion, using the natural traits of its holdings to turn a high profit for the house.

The city of Xinmar is located in a very old and huge river canyon that bisects one of the only passes to go through the Great Sun Wall Mountains that connects the empire with the lands to the west; it is a difficult and dangerous trade route, to be sure, but it is navigable. The threat of raids from barbarians, monstrous raiders,

or Huo Sei Long's undead forces continue to make it difficult, even when the pass is not covered in snow (which it usually is) or under threat of avalanche. Also, the city rests on an island mesa within the river with sides carved into the likenesses of dahren kings and other powerful personages of a long dead civilization. The volcanic activity of the area is stable, but assisted in the formation of unique geographic features that provides the city one of its chiefly profitable ventures: hot water springs with medicinal properties that come from beneath the island and flow over the island and into the canyon forming the start of the canyon that flows through the Great Sun Wall Mountains towards the south. Some scholars believe the direction of the canyon is unnatural as it flows deeper into the mountains and not further away, but a few subscribe to the theory that the ancient civilization that was here before may have created the canyon through the mountains.

Others have remarked upon the great fortune of this house and wanted to know how the Thunderous Cricket accomplished so much for a house so small. When asked, the house responded that it was the luck of the cricket, but after restoring their lands, some of their family members began to appear with unusual birth marks and tattoos that the other houses suspect have something to do with their 'luck'. When asked about these marks, the families of the Thunderous cricket only smile and say that it is a sign of favor from the heavens.

**Dai-shi:** Their full family name is Dai-shi-Shao-Chih-Yi-Di-tou, which means Big but Little Golden One of the Earth. The leaders of the house, the Dai-shi are solemn and quiet. But do not mistake this demeanor for weakness or complacency. They always have an eye turned towards profit and their famous bath houses are the mechanism that keeps everything in their sights golden. They are also masters of the magi fighting style known simply as a warrior of fortune. This fighting style uses mystical methods to alter the flow of good fortune and bad to the benefit of the master of these techniques. The Dai-shi are considered masters of this style and instruct only their closest allies and other members of their house, turning away all other applicants. Many **believe it is this house's warriors of fortune and their Luckbringers** that are largely responsible for the success of their house and the missions it undertakes, in spite of the great odds they often face.

### *Iron Butterfly Guild*

My lord might find this guild to be a good deal more interesting than its public face would have you believe. Furthermore, their magi are quite different, as well. To the uninitiated, this little-known artisan guild appears to merely be a loose confederation of scholars, inventors,

blacksmiths, and alchemists who share correspondence regarding new and emerging scientific discoveries and **inventions. However, their interests don't end with a** shared curiosity and communication network. The guild concerns itself with the development of technology and alchemy for the betterment of the region. They continuously experiment with alchemy, technology, and magic items and are known for the manufacture of good quality, minor, magic items. They have discovered the secret of a substance called gunwater, which has led to the development of cartridge-based firearms that only the very wealthy can afford and can allow those with an aptitude for magic and alchemy to shoot firearms more accurately. The society is a secret society in the sense that its techniques, methods, and resources are not made public knowledge or even made known to any government of the region. They also have numerous factions within the guild that conduct different operations depending on their role and responsibility within the organization, including - but not limited to - the House of the Burning Wind and its Martial Alchemists, the gunwater grenadiers, and the Sublime Illuminators.

One of the oldest societies around, they ensure that any sort of technology is not acquired by anyone outside of their order at a pace faster than they desire. They are charged with ensuring that certain information does not become known in order to safeguard the future. But that **is not their only duty. This one's information on this** guild indicates that this guild started as a group of mages that banded together to fight a threat from another realm that might even be more horrifying than that of the infernal dragons because it is resistant to the effects of magic. They conduct numerous experiments through means both scientific and mystical, noble and unsavory, but all in the name of protecting our lands from that of this alien threat. Their many experiments include alchemical creations, fireworks, rocket-powered craft to fly through the sky, automaton servants and soldiers, and even alter living creatures and fuse them with metal. Some of this society's agents are even automatons of one sort or another.

The military arm of this society is composed of the House of the Burning Wind and the Iron Leaf Legion. In addition to normal warriors, they utilize alchemists, enlightened scholar inventors, automaton soldiers, Martial Alchemist magi, and Gunwater Grenadier gunslingers. The automatons of the guild are typically not very bright, though they are very formidable due to their extreme endurance, strength, and capacity to ignore pain. Alchemical, clockwork, flesh, and wood golems are also utilized by this society. They are most often employed as guardians where the guild believes there is a threat of invasion from their hidden foes. It is even rumored in the halls of the Beautiful Silk Tigers



that the Iron Leaf Legions has a method of growing living body doubles in special alchemical gardens. This one's sources tell her that the Martial Alchemists and Gunwater Grenadiers are employed as the guild's special combat operatives, disguising their true missions as deployments under mercenary contracts. Martial Alchemist magi are quite different from other magi in that they do not cast spells like the rest of us, but rather utilize special alchemical extracts.

## Jade Eye Society

*Though my lord is a former disciple of this faction, no treatise on magi in the Lands of the Jade Oath would be complete without mentioning the Jade Eye Society. Please excuse this one's humble attempt to explain that about which her master is already fully aware. She means no insult and only includes this portion of the treatise to fulfill the letter of her master's decree.*

This public, yet secretive faction enforces the edicts of the Jade Oath. The responsibilities of the Jade Eye Society have in the enforcement of the Jade Oath include monitoring the use of magic and ensuring that no magic harms the seals that keep the Jade Oath effective. This means protecting the seals and the monitoring of those with magical ability to ensure that they never become a threat to the Seals and that they never violate the Laws of Magic, which could perpetuate the continued corruption of the land with curses, spellblight, and demonic possession. Therefore, the corruptive taint of the infernal dragons is a significant threat for this organization.

Even though the Ghost Tigers take care of hunting the demons and other infernals of this world, they do not often hunt the spellcasters that are sometimes responsible for infernal incursions, curses, and spellblight. The Jade Eye Society monitors those with magical abilities to ensure that they are not corrupted by curses, possession, spellblight, or are otherwise in league with infernal forces. To this end, they created a process and training regimen that provides them with powerful anti-magic enforcers called curse eaters. Curse eaters are magi who can devour the spells and curses of their spellcasting opponents. Most are recruited from the lands of the Sundered Mountain, but the Jade Eye trains their curse eaters at the city of Lha Zhai atop the Broken Pillar in Tsixang. The school is administered by the Cloud Leopard Covenant who serve as an administrative arm of the society. Within the Empire of Xianguo, they have a major influence with the Bureau of the Ebon Mirror and often work in tandem with the bureau in hunting down outlaw and rogue mages. There

are also many mages within the Ministry of the Ivory Fan that are past disciples of the school at Lha Zhai.

Since many spellcasters think that they can do as they like without suffering any consequences, the society fills much of its ranks with curse eaters to counter the spellcaster threat, while training other spellcasters and even some warriors to protect those spellcasters to complete the rosters of their organization.

## Cloud Leopard Covenant

When the First Pact that created the Jade Oath was signed, the verrik and mandragorans agreed to set up a school of magic that would teach the proper techniques and uses of magic crafting and spellcasting to help avoid and prevent all the curses, spellblights, possession, and summoning gone wrong that had put the cracks between the dimensions that made it easier for the infernal dragons to invade our reality. Over time, both the mandragorans and the verrik developed a strong trade and mutual defense arrangement. The clans that collectively created and maintained this school of magic named their covenant after the beautiful, mystical, cloud leopards that occupied the lands around their estates in the mountains. Today, after a thousand years, they are allies for more than mutual defense. They have shared secrets with one another they won't share with outsiders and these shared mystical secrets have made their bonds to one another stronger. These families have found common ground with each other and stand united against any who would be an enemy to their cause or their school.

**Bao:** This verrik clan is dedicated to the defense of the house, but unlike the Zhuang, they watch after the personal safety of the charges entrusted to their care rather than their lands and holdings. They have become some of the premier bodyguards of the empire. Their warrior-monk mentality and mystical magus abilities make them ideal for the duties they perform as guardians. They are frequently employed by wealthy merchants, visiting nobility, dignitaries from other nations, and, of course, their own house. A legendary story involving the Bao is behind their notoriety as bodyguards. The story goes that if a magus trained by the Bao were to swear three times against his hope of death and rebirth on the wheel of life to defend someone, that their lives are bound to their charge and not only will the charge survive conditions that would normally kill them, but that the Bao magus will only die the moment the charge does, regardless of the reason why.

**Zhuang:** This verrik family has taken the concept of the warrior-monk and adapted it to their mission of defending the lands of the House of the Cloud Leopard

from the depredations of their enemies. Sometimes called the "Mountain Guard," they are masters of the staff and deadly martial artists. This family serves as the house's sword arm. It is they who watch the house's holdings, man the watch towers and guard posts of the house, and protect the mountain passes from caravan raiders. Their tasseled war staves are a common sight along the mountain passes of the Cloud Leopard's part of the empire. Many Zhuang magi are practitioners of the staff magus and kensai magi traditions.

### *Magistrates of the Scarlet Kirin*

This fraternal society of judges, constables, investigators, and magistrates are dedicated to justice and enforcing the laws of the empire. When the first sovereign emperor was organizing how the empire would run, he knew he would need a force of dedicated magistrates to enforce his edicts and the laws of the empire. He turned to his wise, cousin I-Chih and asked him to train magistrates for the empire. I-Chih replied that he would do better than that. He would make his house into a force of magistrates ready to enforce the laws of heaven and earth for both the mortal emperor and the Celestial Emperor. To assist his cousin, the emperor called for any who thought themselves worthy of becoming the best magistrates, investigators, and fugitive hunters from throughout the empire.

Over the centuries since, the society of the Scarlet Kirin has been involved in a great many dealings throughout the empire, but always on the side of the law and tradition. It remains as one of the primary enforcers of the empire and its bureaucracy, and thus the Celestial Bureaucracy. Due to their high profile duties to the emperor and heaven, many elemental and place spirits take a great deal of interest in the activities of these magistrates. As a result, the spirits often become fascinated by them. But spirits often do not come without their own baggage and responsibilities, causing the magistrates of this society to become embroiled in the politics of the spirit world far too often.

**Tung:** This clan of verrik was founded by Kwan Tung-Li, a leading figure within the House of the Cloud Leopard's Kwan family at the dawn of the empire. Tung-Li was one of the premier investigators of crimes involving magic and had researched a great deal regarding the teachings of the Akashic Brotherhood in his time. During his time with the Scarlet Kirin, Tung-Li performed admirably, setting a shining example for all magistrates. He wrote many texts on his cases, which are considered essential reading for any magistrate of today. Today, his family is frequently responsible for conducting investigations into magical crimes and cataloging evidence associated with those crimes. To



*Jade Griffon Guard*

### *New Magus Arcana*

This magus arcana is available exclusively to magi that are members of the Jade Griffon Guard.

**Griffon Strike:** By spending an arcane pool point when casting a touch spell, the magus can use his griffon mount with his spellstrike class feature as if it were a weapon, allowing the griffon to make an attack in place of the magus. However, the touch attack used with the **spellstrike must use the griffon's base attack bonus and natural weapon damage.** Griffon strike uses one of the **griffon's attacks of opportunity for the round.** The magus must be at least 8th level before selecting this magus arcana.

this day, the Tung family is still considered to have some of the best investigators in the empire.

### *Jade Griffon Guard*

There have been many emperors in the history of the empire, but few clans have provided as many emperors as the two founding families of the Jade Griffon Guard. This house also has the distinction of being descendants of the very first sovereign emperor after the First Pact was signed. Since that time, they have become renowned as a cavalry of tamed griffon riders, as well as the most decorated unit in the empire. They have a reputation for having the best trained griffons in the empire and it is rumored they have secret techniques regarding the breeding and training of these rare mounts. Griffons raised and trained by this house



are considered a great prize, but they are never sold for money or bartered.

When they came into disfavor after the disappearance of the empress, it took them some time to recover the losses they suffered as a result. They have begun to use magic more and forge alliances with other factions. Before the disappearance of the empress, they began frequent experiments with magic. This one has information revealing that one of the things they did was to implement the magic gate research as a secret project within the imperial city, with the assistance of Cloud Leopard Covenant. Apparently, a magic gate was created in secret. This gate remains a secret from most, even today, and it transports any who go through it to a secret complex atop a mountain above the clouds somewhere within the empire. To anyone going through the gate, it **appears to them that they're entering another room in the imperial city.** This complex is referred to as the Hidden City and its name is known to nearly all within the empire, though they believe it is merely the new name of the imperial city. It contains the throne of the emperor and the celestial court of the empire within a mountain palace. All the guests who have ever stayed here believe the view of beautiful mountains above the clouds to be an illusion, a notion that is encouraged by the Jade Griffon Guard. Magic is also used to ensure that the air is plentiful within the palace, and magical traps and illusions ensure that no one can leave the palace grounds, except through the Hidden City Gate and certain hidden gates that only members of the guard know about. The deception is so complete that not even the new emperor, a scion of the House of the Kraken's Pearl, realizes the truth yet.

Their current efforts focus on finding the missing **and presumed dead empress, whom this one's sources** seem to think that the Jade Griffon Guard believes to still be alive somewhere. In the process of this search, they have begun to take on more responsibility for enforcing order throughout the empire, even without the **consent of the emperor's court. This is winning popular support amongst the common folk, who are plagued with increasing banditry and wild monsters becoming even bolder in recent years. Recent reports that have come to this humble servant's attention indicate that the** Jade Griffon Guard is increasing security at some of its holdings, but the reason is unknown at this time.

This faction still holds a strong influence in the Ministry of the Dark Lantern. In fact, a minor society of magistrates and inquisitors called the Feathered Serpent long ago swore an oath to provide lands and holdings for the Jade Griffon Guard, an oath they uphold to this day.

**Sheng-zai:** This dahren family's full name is Sheng-zai-Tian-Sing-tou-han-Yue, which means Wise One in the Sky of Stars and Moon. The Sheng-zai remain active in the interests of aerial combat, an oddity

amongst the dahren of today as most do not care for being so far above the earth. Obviously, none of these griffon riders are larger than a human. They also have an active interest in imbuing their arms and armor with magic. They create many of the magic defenses and devices used by the Jade Griffon Guard and are greatly responsible for the creation of the Hidden City and continue to maintain it and its defenses. Many of their number are soulforged magi.

**Wang:** Members of this yueren clan are all forsworn by a magic as old as the Jade Oath to protect the emperor unto death from even before they were born. It is said that this geas is connected to the mandate of heaven itself. Since all the members of this family are under the effects of this geas from the day they are born, no matter their personal feelings, they have always been the bodyguards of the emperor's household since the days of the earliest emperors. The result is that they are one of the true constants in the maintenance of the empire, despite having originally been outsiders, and are perceived by some to be kingmakers. Though they cannot harm the current emperor, they do have some influence as to who may succeed him in times of peace. During times of internal strife, when the position of emperor would be in question, this family would fight alongside the rest of the Jade Griffon Guard championing its causes. However, once an emperor gained the mandate of heaven, the family was instantly unable to oppose him due to the geas. Many emperors over time have relied upon the family for protection, even when they did not trust the yueren because their geas prevents them from acting against the interests of the emperor. Most of those in the Hidden City, even the eunuchs, do not even think of this as the yueren have become so much a part of the imperial court that they do not even consider that the goals of the yueren and goals of the emperor might not be the same. After all, is it not the duty of the servant to champion the cause of his emperor?

These yueren are an unusual sight to those not used to them. First of all, not only are they yueren in an empire that has very few of their race, but the guards are primarily female, as their society is a matriarchal culture. Only the female warriors are allowed the singular honor of guarding the imperial personage. The men are also warriors and guards, but are relegated to other duties in the defense of the emperor, such as guarding his estates, the entrance to the imperial city, or even serving as imperial couriers.

### *Order of the Ashen Dragon*

My lord, this order was established before the Jade Oath was even conceived in order to research methods

of containment against the tainted curses and spellblights of the infernal dragons as well as developing a means to fight back against them. Today, the order is responsible for the safekeeping, containment, healing, and restoring those places, objects, and people too tainted by curses and spellblights to be exposed to the rest of the Lands of the Jade Oath. The order is also responsible for the creation of the nagarajah race. The magi that serve this order are typically curse eaters, but there are many other types of magi utilized by the order as well. This humble servant shall explain the history of some of the more prominent lineages and clans sworn to the order.

**Fu-Chia:** This dahren family's full family name is Fu-Chia-han-Sei-la-dze-Long-tou, which means Great Hero and Destroyer of Dragons. As the leaders of the order, this family is responsible for ensuring the seals on the prisons of the infernal dragons stay in place and unbroken. This family has a long and glorious history of service in the battles against the infernal dragons before the beginning of the empire. Many heroes came from this line of dahren and several members were instrumental in banishing the infernal dragons altogether. Today, the Fu-Chia are accomplished magi and wizards who are responsible for the upkeep of the runes on the seals and chanting the mantras keeping the infernal dragons imprisoned as well as ensuring that the truenames of the infernal dragons are well-guarded and never revealed so that they can never be summoned again. For this reason, the Mandarin of the house is called the Lord of Names. Soulforged and curse eaters are the most prominent types of magi this family utilize to fulfill their missions.

**Hui:** The first Hui was called Hui-Long and was a courageous human who gave his life in service to the first Fu-Chia during their battles with the infernal dragon. But he did not die in battle. He died keeping a powerful, captured, infernal dragon artifact out of the hands of Fu-Chia's other warriors, knowing that it was influencing them and corrupting them to the service of the infernal dragons. Hui-Long managed to destroy the artifact in order save Fu-Chia's army, but the destructive force of the magical energies unleashed by the artifact destroyed Hui-Long, leaving nothing but ash. To honor what he had done for them Fu-Chia decreed that the humans following him were now united as one family, united by the blood shed by Hui-Long and he named them all the family of Hui. "Hui" is considered a lucky name, but also a humble one and carries connotations of warding away ghosts and spirits.

When the Hui were approached by the Long family with the ceremonies to turn into nagarajah, the Hui were repulsed. They refused the offer. Once the Long and Ma families of the order performed the ceremonies and made the change to being nagarajah, they watched



*Order of the Ashen Dragons*

carefully, remembering the lesson of their ancestor. It was the Hui who first saw the thirst for power and the subsequent corruption of the Ma family. The Hui notified the other families and assisted with the purge that took place, all the while watching for the Ma family to realize what had happened, to realize that they had been corrupted. It was almost too late when they saw that some of the Ma were not corrupted; the other families almost destroyed the Ma altogether. But the Hui intervened and assisted the survivors to rebuild.

The Hui of today are responsible for the acquisition, cataloging, safe-keeping, and destruction of the artifacts of the dragons and infernal dragon. Many Hui are born with the curses and end up taking the role of curse eater magi. Many also become hexcrafter or bladebound magi.

**Long:** Originally humans, this lineage of nagaraja discovered early on that their duties of guarding the prisons and artifacts of the dragons and infernal dragon were exposing them to the corruptive influence and curses of those same creatures. They endeavored to find a way to block the corruptive spellblight and curses from overcoming their senses as more and more of them began to succumb. They discovered that a certain series of ceremonies and the changing of true names gave them a chance to prevent the taint from taking hold, but at the price of their humanity. They took it. In the process they and their descendants became the first nagarajah. Those of the family who did not want this joined the Hui family. The Long family offered to perform the ceremony for the other families, but the Hui family was horrified at what the Longs had done to themselves and refused their ceremonies and the small chance of surviving the taint they offered.

In the centuries since then, the Long family has discovered that their efforts were in vain as, eventually, the taint began to adapt to the nagarajah physiology and



psychology and began to affect them as well. Fortunately, they discovered that jade had a way of preventing the taint from taking effect for a time. They also discovered new spells and ceremonies to resist the tainted spellblights and curses of the infernal dragons. These spells and ceremonies are still in use today and are instrumental in maintaining the sanctity of their lineage as well as the seals of the infernal dragon prisons. Over the centuries, the Long family has become some of the most powerful wizards and magi in the empire. They are charged with performing the spells and ceremonies that keep the infernal dragon and dragons dormant within their prisons. They use warriors of fortune, soulforged, spellblades, bladebound, and threadcaster magi in the fulfillment of their missions.

**Ma:** Early in the formation of this house the Long family offered the Ma family - who were all human at that time - the knowledge required for the ceremonies of becoming the nagarajah. The Ma, not caring as much about resisting the taint with the ceremonies, saw the power inherent in becoming nagarajah with regards to their spell-casting. They accepted and became nagarajah. Those of the family who did not want this went over to the Hui family. They became powerful wizards and reveled in their power, becoming corrupted by the taint and not realizing it. It was eventually discovered by the other families of the house and, wanting to cover this up before the empire at large **learned of the house's failure, began a campaign to** purge the Ma family. The purge was devastating to the family and almost destroyed them completely. Due to the powerful spells and ceremonies that were used to purge the surviving Ma, who were not killed outright by the other families, a genetic quirk has appeared in the line since, they tend to have white or grey colored scales, though they are not albinos.

During this purge, it was discovered that many members of the other families had become corrupted as well. Eventually the purge made its way through all of the families. The empire knew little of what was happening, knowing only that Ashen Dragon was killing Ashen Dragon, and they thought the order was beginning to go mad. But just as the emperor was about to intervene, the order came forward and stated that a threat to the empire had been destroyed.

The remnants of the Ma family, horrified at what had nearly overcome them because of their thirst for mystical power, decided to turn their efforts towards turning the taint and repairing its effects on the world. Nagarajah of the Ma lineage have become experts on the taint and the methods to resist and contain it. The Ma ensure the sanctity of the environment surrounding each prison seal and pay homage to the spirits in those areas to appease them. For the spirits are often unquiet in the presence of such evil as what the infernal dragon



*Celestial Lion Guard*

prison seals represent. Partly due to their outgoing natures and willingness to atone for the deeds of their ancestors and partly just due to superior magical talent they are some of the best druids in the empire. Their greenfire adepts are unrivaled at restoring tainted and cursed areas to their fully natural state. For all their successes though, they are still haunted by the deeds of long ago.

### *Celestial Lion Guard:*

Formerly known as the House of the Celestial Dog (*Tian Gou*), this society was originally from a faction of goushen that broke off from an older and long since defunct clan. Their founder, Gou Lei, became a hero in his own right when he led a force of goushen and humans that defeated an infernal dragon that managed to escape from its prison. As a reward for his valiant service the emperor granted him his own clan name with his followers. For centuries this clan has been in direct service to the emperors with the responsibility of guarding places of importance because their vigilance is renowned to be matched by few. They became more commonly known as the Celestial Lions when they absorbed a few of the remaining ruishishen tribes into **their ranks. The biggest result of this society's** absorption of the ruishishen is a political shift in power that did not sit well with the eunuch mandarins of the **emperor's court. It is said that this society has long been** favored by many guardian spirits and that they are the recipients of their boons.

## House of the Jade Snow Fox

The House of the Jade Snow Fox is a close ally with the House of the Ice Falcon, even though they primarily serve the Order of the Ashen Dragons. The Jade Snow Fox often assists in performing scouting missions with the Ice Falcons and its members help to ensure that the Ice Falcons get what they need to continue the war, basically acting as liaisons between the rest of the empire and the Ice Falcon Alliance, allowing the Ice Falcons to continue in their efforts to protect the empire without being distracted by court politics. In return, the Jade Snow Fox benefits from a mutual defense alliance with the great house as well as certain trade concessions.

The Jade Snow Fox is an unusual and small, but tenacious house with an infamous reputation. Many members of this house have strong ties to certain elemental and animal spirits. In fact, many fox spirits and kitsune have such strong connections with the house that many are considered members. The reputation of many vicious fox spirits does not lend well to a positive image of the house. Also, not just a few members have been known to be vampires. It is these ties and the few stories of the house's history and current mysteries that are the basis of just one part of its infamy. However, the most infamous aspect of this house is that it is responsible for the upkeep of the Ghostwall as well as the recruitment of any who must serve a tour of duty at the Ghostwall. There are many who dread the prospect of a member of this house paying a visit. There are many stories of those who could not pay their taxes only to wind up manning the Ghostwall with its spectral guardians. However, their physicians are considered to be among the best in the empire.

Where the history of this house begins is a little unclear. Imperial records show the house as having been formed shortly after the foundation of the empire during the first emperor's reign. But these records do not reveal the exact year or any insight as to the house's reason for formation or why the emperor allowed the house to be formed to begin with. In fact, most of what is known about this reclusive house is not in any official records. Many of their magi become cursed after working at the Ghostwall and usually turn to the path of the curse eater. There are also those who ward off the curses of the Ghostwall with the luck of a warrior of fortune. Other magi in this house include myrmidarch, hexcrafters, and bladebound.

## Stone Monkey Path

This is an organization of revolutionaries following the lead of a masked vigilante who is fighting



*Jade Snow Fox*

government corruption throughout the south and east of the empire. They are prominent in Nha Lao and Monmar as well.

The common folk of the empire are unaware that this is an actual organization and believe that there is only the Stone Monkey god randomly appearing throughout the empire performing heroic deeds against the corrupt officials of the government. However, **this one's sources can confirm that this is truly an organized resistance**, but one that wants to perpetuate the myth that the god many refer to as the Stone Monkey has returned to the Lands of the Jade Oath after such a long exile as a champion of the people.

This organization works to improve the plight of the common folk by protecting them from abuses of power and corrupt governance. Perhaps this one should refrain **from mentioning it, but one of this one's unworthy contacts** has suggested they had witnesses a member of this group having an epiphany of enlightenment from the Stone Monkey and gained power enough to evolve into the god himself. This one feels that to consider this as more than drunken ramblings of an unreliable, former informant would appear to be folly. The Stone Monkey Path is simply a network of masked freedom fighters and terrorists pretending to be a singular hero, the Stone Monkey.

They are most active in the east and south of the empire where we have observed some of their operations executed with the assistance of kensai, lantern warrior, and warrior of fortune magi. We also know that they use specially prepared masks that appear to be enchanted so as to grant the appearance, strength, and agility of this stone monkey vigilante in order to deceive the public and grant the beleaguered masses



hope for their future. This one does not believe they **would be a threat to my lord's future enterprises.** We believe there is a connection between the Stone Monkey Path, the Azure Dragon Society, and the Fallen Dragons as we have observed members of these societies meet on different occasions, but their relationship remains unclear at this time. However, we would be remiss if we did not share our opinion that they are likely attempting to coordinate rebellious activities and pool resources in their respective areas of concern.

### *Thought Seekers*

This unworthy one is afraid she knows very little of this organization. Its mysteries are deep and its purpose unclear. What is known is that its members show themselves at the most unusual of times to perform the oddest of deeds either villainous or noble. We do know that they employ mnemonic warriors to great effect on these missions as well as a few magi of other variety, such as warriors of fortune, bladebound, and hexcrafters.

### *White Shadow Society*

We know this society to redeem the wicked and monstrous in order to turn them towards enlightenment. This faction within the Ghost Tigers does this in order to train the reformed to champion the weak in the name of justice. No one knows how they do this, but the results of their work are undeniable. It is said that for every success they have that they have three failures that are never seen or heard from again. This one feels that this is an acceptable loss after such horrible creatures have already been shown more mercy than they deserve. However, it is also rumored that they have even turned demons from their path of darkness for the betterment of all. They appear to only assist with converting the wicked to the path of enlightenment and seem to offer no further support or succor to those they release back into the world. It appears that it is to this organization that we owe the pleasure of having the occasional, rare enlightened infernal in our midst. It is said that this society influences, and is also in turn influenced by, certain demon hunting traditions that comprise the Ghost Tigers.

They also employ a secret for infusing the dark energies of the infernal dragon into willing warriors in order to become monster hunters of a stronger caliber, called Confessors. They have abilities that allow them to sense and track disguised, hidden, spellblighted, or tainted mages and monsters with uncanny precision. They must often use ritual implements to facilitate the activation of their abilities. When they locate their prey,



*Stone Monkey Path*



*Thought Seekers*

they then pass some sort of divine judgment upon them with something they call the Touch of Penance for their crimes against the heavens. Recruits are taken from those who come to the society as desperate waifs eager to make a difference of some sort in the world, are looking for power to make things right, are looking for revenge on monsters or sorcerers that ruined their lives, or are so tainted by a infernal dragon curse that there is no other salvation for them other than to die, become a curse eater, or this. They are made aware that they will eventually become monsters, but do so for the good of society or some other value they can justify to themselves. Any that succumb to the dark energies of the infernal dragon are killed by the society, usually by another Confessor.

Contacts that this one has within the Ghost Tigers tell her that the White Shadows say they have detailed knowledge of a prophecy that foretells of an apocalypse that they are striving to prevent through the conversion of demons. Though they have no control over the Ghost Tigers, the Hungry Sky Cult, or the White Raven Society, they have a strong influence on powerful individuals within those societies and more often than not the internal matters of those societies go the way the White Shadows wish. This one is also informed that one of **their precepts is, "We can only win if a demon fights a demon."** The White Shadows also employ curse eaters, bladebound, hexcrafters, lantern warriors, spellblades, and staff magi.

### *Ghost Tiger Society:*

These demon hunters are well known throughout the Lands of the Jade Oath for their ability to defeat infernals, either by binding, killing, exorcising, or sealing them away. Many infernals have been defeated by the demon fighters of this society have been tricked and bound into maintaining the lands while also being prevented from harming any who come to those lands in peace.

This society was founded by one of the greatest dahren heroes of all time, Fu-Mo-go-Long-da-Chia. After the First Pact was signed and the infernal dragon sealed away, he was offered a noble house of his own, but he declined, preferring instead to hunt for infernals and other creatures plaguing the lands of the new empire. Eventually, he found the village that would one day become the City of the Autumn Gate and settled there. Once settled there, he eventually met the Fu-ren of the ruishishen and the Chook-ta Kyung-bi of the sanesaram who lived peacefully with the ghosts there. They all had strength of purpose and goals he found he admired, but no cohesion or leadership. He lent his aid to them, but not as a leader, as a teacher; he knew they



*Ghost Tiger Society*

wouldn't stomach a leader, even though they clearly needed one to unify them all. They found his insights on demon hunting agreeable and he gave sound advice (i.e. he told good stories). On his deathbed, in which he was fighting a possessing entity, they named him their leader in deed, since he had long been their leader in fact anyway. The other families have let his descendants "advise" them ever since.

**Fu-Mo:** This dahren family's full name is Fu-Mo-go-Long-da-Chia, which means Great Demon and Dragon Catching Hero. The first dahren of this family was a great and powerful foe of the dragons and infernal dragons. He was also one of the longest-lived of all the dahren. He was one of the first dahren created by the Celestial Emperor and was even there the day the infernal dragons were sealed away. Even after they were sealed away, he kept on fighting the enemies of the Celestial Emperor as his family had sworn him to do so on the day of his birth. Even though there were no more infernal dragons to be found, he did find plenty of demons, devils, undead, and other infernals to fight. His descendants now continue to train new demon hunters and magi.

**Fu-ren:** This family is actually a tribe of hushen who refer to themselves as "The Faithful". The hushen were the first to hunt demons and fight the infernal dragon. Even when the infernal dragon was defeated, it was the Fu-ren who continued to hunt malevolent ghosts, fight devils, trick infernals, and wrestle demons. After all, the Fu-ren were chosen by the Celestial Emperor for this very task and are very proud of this heritage. They won't let anyone forget it either. They claim that, as the first demon hunters, they were the ones to teach the other families the techniques of how to



fight, outwit, and banish demons of all stripes. Due to their focus on the techniques, dedication, combat styles, and sorceries needed to defeat their infernal foes the ranks of the Fu-ren tend to be filled with all types of magi.

### *500 from the 1,000 Directions*

This mercantile organization utilizes magi a bit differently from other organizations in that their magi most often serve as a sort of mercenary constabulary in a very unique city named Shtrayu. This city is located on an island in the Sunblood Sea at the place where the borders of the Sukhatra, Sumathai, and Javasriya kingdoms meet. This city is actually most unusual in that it is not only governed by what is essentially a **mercantile missionary's guild, but is also a city that is completely accepting of civilized monsters.** These creatures are allowed to mingle with others of their kinds as well as mortals. To police this unusual population, magi of all varieties are employed.

### *Magus Favored Class Options*

Instead of receiving an additional skill rank or hit point whenever they gain a level in a favored class, the races below have the option of choosing another bonus if they choose the magus class as their favored class. The following options are available to all magi who are members of the listed races, and unless otherwise stated, the bonus applies each time you select the listed favored class reward.

Note that shenxue should use the favored class option available to the race of their mortal bloodline. Races not listed below from the Lands of the Jade Oath should utilize the existing favored class options for their equivalent race in the Pathfinder rules. For example, yueren should use the elf favored class option, loresong faen should use the gnome favored class option, quickling faen should use the halfling favored class option, and sanesaram should use dwarf favored class option.

**Bakemono:** Add one of the following weapon special abilities to the list of weapon special abilities the magus may add to his weapon using his arcane pool: *defending, ghost touch, merciful, mighty cleaving, vicious (Core Rulebook); allying, conductive, corrosive, corrosive burst, menacing (Advanced Player's Guide)*. Once an ability has been selected with this reward, it cannot be changed.

**Dahren:** Add +1/4 point to the magus' arcane pool.

**Garuda:** The magus gains 1/6 of a new magus arcana.

**Goushen:** Add +1 to the magus's CMD when resisting a disarm or sunder attempt.

**Hushen:** The magus gains 1/6 of a new magus arcana.

**Mandragoran:** Add +1/4 point to the magus' arcane pool.

**Nagarajah:** Add +1/2 point of fire damage to spells that deal fire damage cast by the magus.

**Ruishishen:** Select one known magus arcana usable only once per day. The magus adds +1/6 to the number of times it can be used per day. Once that magus arcana is usable twice per day, the magus must select a different magus arcana.

**Verrick:** Add one spell known from the magus's spell list. This spell must be at least one level below the highest-level spell the inquisitor can cast.

### *Magus Archetypes*

In addition to the usual archetypes available to the magi - such as the kensai, bladebound, skinnir, or spellblade - there are a few others available in the Lands of the Jade Oath. They are detailed below.

#### *Curse Eater*

Those inflicted with an incurable curse and arcane talent, yet have been transformed into something stronger by that same curse and a strong sense of self become curse eaters, magi who have conquered their curse and made its power work for them against the magic of others. Spellcasters whose curses have diminished their own mystical energy harness their **cursed nature in order to "consume" the mystical energy** they need from spells and lesser curses. They then turn that power into something they can use to fuel their own mystical abilities.

Curse eaters typically come from one of two origins - those who suffer the effects of a powerful curse or from spellcasters who have had magical mishaps. Of this sorry lot, only those who seek to overcome their seemingly incurable cursed nature can forge themselves into curse eaters, either by learning at the feet of a curse eater mentor or on their own - an extremely dangerous ordeal. Spellcasters pity curse eaters for their diminished spellcasting and fear them because of their ability to consume spells. As a result, they have an instinctive dislike of curse eaters and see them as a sort of natural enemy.

A curse eater can often find work as a witch hunter, monster slayer, or an exorcist. The services a curse eater provides can be considered invaluable in a land that has

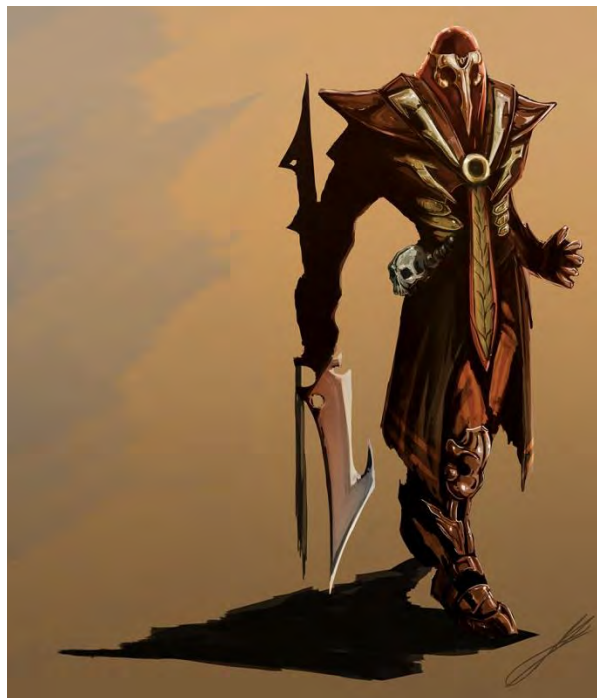
been plagued with malevolent energies and vengeful curses since the defeat of the infernal dragon and other infernals. However, because of what he is, curses and misfortune follows a curse eater. His daily affairs are often filled with minor mishaps, unfortunate coincidences, and strange occurrences. This is particularly troubling to any who might be nearby when these events occur. Consequently, despite however useful and essential his work might be considered, a curse eater is often feared and dreaded as a harbinger of misfortune. Because curse eaters are often feared or misunderstood by the public, a curse eater will protect his identity by wearing a traditional, unique, ceremonial, white mask when actively dealing with curses or working against spellcasters in view of the public. Furthermore, he will often enchant his mask with ornate sigils, arcane designs, and runes designed to make him immune to cursed objects.

**Diminished Spellcasting:** A curse eater may cast one fewer spell of each level than normal. If this reduces the number to 0, he may cast spells of that level only if his Intelligence allows bonus spells of that level.

**Curse Eater's Curse (Ex):** Like an oracle, the magus has a curse that comes with a benefit as well as a hindrance. All curse eaters have the Misfortune curse; however, this can be changed to another curse with the GM's permission. If a different curse is allowed, this choice is made at 1st level, and once made, it cannot be changed. This curse cannot be removed or dispelled without the aid of a deity. Each curse grants benefits depending on the level of the curse eater. He uses his magus level as his effective oracle level when determining the power and effect of his curse benefits. Levels of magus and oracle stack for the purpose of determining curse benefits and abilities. His curse is based on his magus level plus one for every two levels or Hit Dice other than magus or oracle.

**Identify Curse (Sp):** At will, a curse eater can use *identify*, but only to detect and identify cursed items, people, places, hexes, and spellblights. He can use this ability to determine the presence, number, location, and strength of cursed auras, hex effects, and spellblights as well as the power of the most potent cursed aura, hex, or spellblight and identify the properties and command words of cursed items in his possession. Furthermore, when making his roll to check for a curse, he does not need to exceed the DC by 10 or more to successfully detect that there is a curse. He needs only to meet or exceed the DC to successfully detect a curse.

**Cursed Spellcraft (Su):** His experience with curses and harmful spells grants the curse eater a +4 insight bonus to Spellcraft checks to identify spells and hexes. Also, any spell of 3rd level or higher that the curse eater casts on an ally with a beneficial effect has a curse effect or spellblight attached to it (determine



*Curse Eater*

randomly or the GM chooses) as if the curse eater had cast the *bestow curse* spell on the target, as well. This cannot be used to curse enemies in the same manner. Additionally, any magic item the curse eater creates or assists in creating has a randomly determined cursed item effect attached to it, regardless of the success of the crafting check. Failing the crafting check means adding two cursed effects to the item instead of one.

**Accursed (Su):** Starting at 5th level, cursed items seem to be drawn to the curse eater and existing magic items become cursed over time when in his presence. **Any magic item in the curse eater's possession for 1 day or more permanently gains a randomly determined cursed item effect, including one-time use magic items such as potions.** Also, the curse eater gains immunity to the effects of spellblights and cursed items, but only so long as he wears his white, ceremonial mask. Furthermore, if any cursed item possessed by the curse eater for at least one day is ever discarded or stolen, it **will reappear somewhere upon the curse eater's person** the day after it was removed from him as if it were suffering under the same curse effect as a Stone of Weight (Loadstone). This loadstone effect will continue to operate even when the curse eater is wearing his ceremonial mask. This replaces the magus's 5th level bonus feat.

**Consume Curse (Su):** At 6th level, a curse eater can ready an action to absorb the power of a spell, hex, or spell-like ability targeting him that has a curse effect



or that can damage or touch him with force or energy. The spell must be of a spell level he can cast and he must use Spellcraft to identify the spell or spell-like ability. If he successfully identifies the spell or hex, he must expend a spell slot equal to the level of the spell or is equal to half the caster level of the hex that targeted him and he gains a number of arcane pool points equal to half the level of that spell (minimum 1). For example, if the curse eater is **the target of a 9th level witch's hex**, he must expend a 4th level spell slot to successfully use this ability against that hex. Additionally, any time the curse eater removes a curse or spellblight by casting either **remove curse** or **break enchantment**, he gains an arcane pool point. Any arcane pool points gained with this ability cannot exceed the curse eater's daily total. If used against cantrips or orisons, this ability only dispels them without receiving arcane pool points. If successfully used against a spell or hex whose area of effect included the curse eater, then all other targets in the area of effect will not suffer the effects of the spell, either. At 12th level, the curse eater need not prepare an action before using this ability; it can be used as an immediate action. **This ability replaces the curse eater's 6th, 12th, and 18th level magus arcana.**

**Curse Eater Arcana:** A curse eater gains access to the following magus arcana. He cannot select any arcana more than once, unless stated otherwise in the description.

**Curse of Attraction (Su):** The curse eater is a magnet for harmful, magical energies. By expending an arcane pool point as an immediate action, the curse eater can divert the effect of a spell, hex, spell-like ability, spellblight, or curse effect targeting any ally within 100 ft. to target him instead. He must make a caster level check (1d20 + caster level, maximum +15) against a DC of 11 + the caster level of the spell. Success means that the effect of the spell, hex, spell-like ability, spellblight, or curse will affect the curse eater instead of its intended target as if the effect was originally intended to target him. For a cursed magic item, the DC is equal to the DC of the curse. If the spell, hex, spell-like ability, spellblight, or curse effect has an area of effect, then the area must include the curse eater; if it does not, then this ability forces the area of effect to be moved in order to include the curse eater's location.

**Curse Resilience (Su):** When using either his spellbane magus arcana or his consume curse class feature, instead of gaining arcane pool points, a prepared spell, or a known spell, the curse eater can choose to gain damage reduction equal to half his class level for a number of rounds equal to his Intelligence bonus. The curse eater must be at least 9th level before selecting this magus arcana.

**Curse Resistance (Su):** When using either his spellbane magus arcana or his consume curse class

## New Curse

**Misfortune:** You have been forsaken by fortune and are very unlucky. Things happen to you at the most inopportune times, such as unexpected and disruptive gusts of wind, interpersonal misunderstandings, falling debris, malfunctioning equipment, bad weather, being blamed for crimes you never committed, serendipitous encounters with those you would rather avoid, and people are always bringing you their problems. Also, anything determined by chance, such as games of luck or choices made at random are very likely to end up either in a simply unfavorable situation for you or in a bizarre manner that is completely disruptive to the desired outcome of everyone involved.

Whenever you roll a d20, a natural roll of 2 (the die shows a "2") is treated as a natural roll of 1 and is an automatic failure. Your misfortune is contagious to those around you and - as bad as your luck might be for you - it is so much worse for your enemies, so much so that any enemy within 15 feet of you suffers from this curse as well. At 5th level, your enemies must treat any natural roll of 1, 2, or 3 as an automatic failure. At 10th level, any enemies within 30 feet suffer the effects of this curse. At 15th level, your enemies must treat any natural roll of a 1, 2, 3, or 4 on a d20 as an automatic failure.

## Skill: Feng Shui (New Use)

With the fortuitous use of the Feng Shui skill (DC 30), a character can negate the effects of a single minor cursed item effect for an hour.

feature, instead of gaining arcane pool points, a prepared spell, or a known spell, the curse eater can choose to gain spell resistance equal to 10 + his class level for a number of rounds equal to his Intelligence bonus. The curse eater must be at least 9th level before selecting this magus arcana.

**Spell Scent (Su):** With this magus arcana, the curse eater learns how to sense unique spell signatures, and can follow the trail of a cast spell, hex, or spell effect cast back to its source. Once per day, when the curse eater comes into contact with or is exposed to a magic item, hex, or spell effect, he can spend a full-round action to examine the magic item, hex, or spell effect, and then gains the effect of a **locate creature** spell. He can do this even if the hex or spell effect was instantaneous, but must start his examination within 1 round after he experienced the hex or spell's effect. **Instead of locating** a known creature, the curse eater locates the caster of

the hex or spell effect or magic item he examined. Doing so does not allow the curse eater to gain any intelligence about the spellcaster other than its location. The curse eater must be at least 6th level before selecting this magus arcana.

**Spellbane (Su):** A curse eater can steal spells from his foes and add them to his list of spells known. The curse eater can expend arcane pool points to steal a prepared spell or a spell known from another creature with a touch attack as a standard action. He can use this ability with Spellstrike as if it were a touch spell. The number of points expended from the arcane pool must equal the level of the spell the curse eater wishes to steal. **The target receives a Will save (DC 10 + 1/2 the magus's level + the magus's Intelligence bonus) to negate the effect.** The curse eater may choose a spell to steal, but if the target does not possess the spell, the magus receives no spell and must still expend an arcane pool point. Otherwise the spell stolen is random, but it is always of the highest level that the magus can cast, if possible. The target loses the prepared spell or spell known and the curse eater adds it to his list of spells known for a number of rounds equal to his half his magus level after which it reverts to the original recipient. While stolen, the magus can cast the spell using any of his available, unprepared spell slots. This use does not consume the stolen spell. If the magus steals another spell while a spell is stolen, the previous spell immediately reverts to its original owner.

**Greater Spellbane (Su):** A curse eater's spellbane power improves. When a target fails a save against his spellbane arcana, the curse eater discovers its spell resistance (if any) and all spells it has prepared or knows. He can then choose which spell to steal. The curse eater may forgo stealing a spell and instead reduce **the target's spell resistance by an amount equal to half his magus level and gain that amount of spell resistance for a number of rounds equal to half his magus level.** If he steals additional spell resistance, it stacks with previously stolen SR. If he steals a spell or the duration expires, the spell resistance immediately reverts back to its owner. The curse eater must be at least 15th level before selecting this arcana.

**Spells:** A curse eater magus adds the following spells to his magus spell list: *remove curse*, *bestow curse*, *major curse*, and all other spells of 6th level or lower that have the curse descriptor. He also gains *break enchantment* as a 4th level spell.

**Magus Arcana:** The following magus arcana complement the curse eater archetype: accurate strike, dispelling strike, disruptive, reflection, and spellbreaker.

**Curse Eater Note:** The hexcrafter archetype is a thematically ideal combination with the curse eater. Many curse eaters in the Lands of the Jade Oath have both archetypes.



*Lantern Warrior*

## *Lantern Warrior*

Known as the hong deng zhao, or the avenging red light, in the Empire of Xianguo, these magi are mystical warriors who champion a cause that has personal significance. More commonly referred to as lantern warriors throughout the rest of the Lands of the Jade Oath, they place more emphasis on their martial abilities than the rest of their magi brethren. They always fight for a purpose that is larger than their personal interests. There are very few male lantern warriors and most of the known lantern warriors are disciples of the Forbidden Mantis Clan, the Fallen Dragons, and the Azure Dragon Society in Nihonshu. Of late, many lantern warriors seem to have targeted mercantile and missionary interests that appear to have undue influence on the internal affairs of the empire. Some lantern warriors also take a special interest in any government officials accused of corruption. These targets include the Kraken's Pearl, the East Winds Trade Company, and the more militant members of the Temple of the Illuminated Ankh.

**Diminished Spellcasting:** A lantern warrior may cast one fewer spell of each level than normal. If this reduces the number to 0, she may cast spells of that level only if her Intelligence allows bonus spells of that level.

**Order (Ex):** At 1st level, a lantern warrior must pledge herself to a specific order as though she were a cavalier of a level equivalent to her magus level. The lantern warrior can only select one order and once it is chosen it cannot be changed. The order grants the lantern warrior a number of class features, skills, and special abilities. She gains the benefit of or uses that these abilities at the appropriate levels as indicated in the order's description as if she were a cavalier of a level





### *Martial Alchemist*

equal to her magus level. She must follow the order's edicts and gains the benefits of the order abilities; however, she does not gain **access to the order's** challenge ability until 4th level. Cavalier and magus class levels stack for the purposes of determining the benefits of this class feature.

**Challenge (Ex):** At 4th level, the lantern warrior gains the challenge class feature of the cavalier class as though she were a cavalier of a level equivalent to her magus class level. Cavalier and magus class levels stack for the purposes of determining the benefits of this class feature. This feature replaces spell recall.

**Magus Arcana:** The following magus arcana complement the lantern warrior archetype: arcane accuracy, bane blade, close range, critical strike, and devoted blade.

### *Martial Alchemist*

These magi fight with a unique blend of physical prowess, alchemy, and mysticism. They employ Wutan, "outer alchemy", and Neitan, "inner alchemy", in combination with their martial arts to combat their foes. They are adept at the use and quick consumption of potions, and cast extracts instead of spells, including

extracts that duplicate the effects of more typical magi. Martial alchemists are typically employed as mercenaries and the House of the Burning Wind, the Iron Leaf Legion, and the nagarajah temples in the kingdom of Kamojhea all maintain schools that train martial alchemists.

**Martial Alchemy:** The martial alchemist does not cast spells as a magus normally does; instead, he casts extracts as an alchemist of his magus class level. He can also utilize Craft (Alchemy) in the same manner as an **alchemist of the same level per the alchemist's alchemy** class feature. Furthermore, for the purposes of multiclassing, his magus levels stack with any alchemist levels he may take for the purposes of calculating the effects of his extracts and effective caster level. Additionally, the following touch spells are added as **formulae to the martial alchemist's formulae list:**

- 1st level – *chill touch, shocking grasp*
- 2nd level – *flame blade, ghoul touch, touch of idiocy*
- 3rd level – *poison, vampiric touch*
- 4th level – *calcific touch\*, rusting grasp, spite\**

\* These spells are located in the *Advanced Player's Guide*.

Any other alchemist trying to decipher the martial alchemist's method of creating touch spells as extracts

will find them incomprehensible. This ability replaces the magus's cantrip class feature and modifies his ability to cast spells.

**Alchemical Discovery (Ex):** At 4th level, the martial alchemist magus gains access to a small number of alchemist discoveries (see the *Advanced Player's Guide*). The martial alchemist magus picks one discovery from the alchemist's discovery class feature. He gains the benefit of and uses that discovery as if he were an alchemist of a level equal to his magus level. He cannot select any discovery that requires mutagen and must meet all the same requirements as an alchemist of the same level prior to selecting any discovery. This feature replaces spell recall.

**Martial Alchemist Arcana:** A martial alchemist gains access to the following magus arcana. He cannot select any arcana more than once, unless stated otherwise in the description.

**Quick Draught (Ex):** The martial alchemist has been trained to drink potions, drink elixirs, and apply oils in combat with amazing speed and grace, allowing him to do so without provoking an attack of opportunity.

**Poison Resistance (Ex):** The martial alchemist gains a +2 bonus on all saving throws against poison. This arcana can be taken more than once and its effects stack. If taken a total of four times, the martial alchemist becomes completely immune to poison.

**Poison Use (Ex):** Martial alchemists are trained in the use of poison and cannot accidentally poison themselves when applying poison to a weapon.

**Swift Poisoning (Ex):** At 6th level, a martial alchemist can apply a dose of poison to a weapon as a swift action.

**Magus Arcana:** The following magus arcana complement the martial alchemist archetype: accurate strike, hasted assault, maneuver master, pool strike, and spell shield.

## Mnemonic Warrior

These magi are warriors who can access the akashic record of mortal memory to recall the abilities and skills of great warriors from history and use those abilities and skills for their own. For brief moments they pull forth those memories from the akashic for their use in battle. It is by reliving these memories that the mnemonic warrior can let the superior skills of past heroes overtake his own skills. Some mnemonic warriors can also tap into the memories of moments ago, allowing the mnemonic warrior to better coordinate his actions in combat with his allies.

**Mnemonic Arcana:** A mnemonic warrior gains access to the following magus arcana. He cannot select



Mnemonic Warrior

any arcana more than once, unless stated otherwise in the description.

**Akashic Sight (Su):** By expending an arcane pool point with a swift action, you gain blindsight to a range of 10 feet for a number of rounds equal to your Intelligence bonus (minimum 1 round). The range of this ability increases by 10 feet at 12th level, and by an additional 10 feet for every four levels beyond 12th. This arcana cannot be selected until 8th level.

**Forgotten Fear (Sp):** The mnemonic warrior can use his ability to delve into the memories of others in order to summon forth the memory of an event in their past that provokes strong emotions. The memories that the mnemonic warrior can summon forth are so powerful and primal that they can cause the target creature to suffer some deep-seated fear from some time in their past from early childhood or sometime more recent. No shared language is required, but the mnemonic warrior must spend an arcane pool point as a part of touch attack and the target creature must be aware of the mnemonic warrior when this ability is activated. The target is entitled to a Will saving throw (DC 10 + half the mnemonic warrior's class level + Intelligence modifier). If the target creature fails its saving throw it is effectively panicked for 1d4 rounds. A



creature targeted by this effect cannot be affected more than once in a single day. The mnemonic warrior must be at least 8th level before selecting this magus arcana.

**Mnemonic Pain (Sp):** The mnemonic warrior can summon for the various memories of physical pain that many have suffered from throughout the mnemonic warrior record and send them to an intended target that he touches. He can magnify the intensity of these memories to such a degree that the creature he touches actually suffers wracking pain from this ability. By expending an arcane pool point as part of any touch attack (it can be used in conjunction with touch spells), the mnemonic warrior can inflict the staggered condition and a -8 penalty on attack rolls, skill checks, and ability checks. This effect last for 1 hour (it can be dispelled). The subjects gets a Will save (DC 10 + 1/2 the mnemonic warrior's class level + Intelligence modifier). This is a mind-affecting, pain, effect. The magus must be at least 15th level prior to selecting this magus arcana.

**One Mind One Fight (Ex):** The mnemonic warrior can select a bonus teamwork feat instead of a magus arcana. The mnemonic warrior must meet the prerequisites of the selected teamwork feat. As a standard action, the mnemonic warrior can choose to learn a new bonus teamwork feat in place of the most recent bonus teamwork feat he has already learned. In effect, the mnemonic warrior loses the bonus feat in exchange for the new one. He can only change the most recent teamwork feat gained. Whenever he gains a new teamwork feat, the previous teamwork feat becomes set and cannot be changed again. A mnemonic warrior can change his most recent teamwork feat once per day for each teamwork feat slot that he has. This magus arcana can only be selected by members of the Black Steel Centipede faction.

**Prescience (Ex):** The mnemonic warrior can glimpse the little events, thoughts, warning signs, and other factors in the present that form the pattern of things to come. It appears to others as if the mnemonic warrior sees events before they happen, but in truth he is so closely connected to the akashic memory that he can perceive the identifiers that signal coming events. His mind can process these signs, which allows him to react to them faster than others.

By expending an arcane pool point as a standard action, the mnemonic warrior enjoys a bonus on his saving throws and initiative rolls equal to 1 + the number of levels he has in magus divided by 4. The duration of this ability is a number of rounds equal to **the magus' Intelligence bonus (minimum 1)**. The magus must be at least 6th level before selecting this magus arcana.

**Quick Study (Su):** Mnemonic warriors can delve into the akashic memory to gain insight for into a needed skill (but not a language). After expending an

arcane pool point, the mnemonic warrior gains a +2 bonus to the next skill check he makes. This magus arcana can only be selected by a member of the Akashic Brotherhood faction.

**Tongues (Sp):** The mnemonic warrior can expend an arcane pool point to communicate in another language as her were under the effects of the spell **tongues**.

**Traumatizing Touch (Sp):** The mnemonic warrior can use his ability to delve into the memories of others in order to summon forth the memory of an event in their past that provokes strong emotions. Spending an arcane pool point as part of a touch attack, the mnemonic warrior can summon forth a memory so strong that they can preoccupy the target creature to the exclusion of everything else around them. No shared language is required. The target is entitled to a Will **saving throw (DC 10 + half the mnemonic warrior's class level + Intelligence modifier)**. If the target creature fails **it's saving throw it is effectively confused for 1d6 rounds**, while it is convinced the recalled memory is currently happening. A creature targeted by this effect cannot be affected more than once in a single day. The mnemonic warrior must be at least 8th level before selecting this magus arcana.

**Adaptive Feat (Ex):** At 5th level, the mnemonic warrior gains access to an adaptive feat, a feat that can change each day. This represents the broad, varied range of experiences and memories of other cultures and fighting styles that a mnemonic warrior can come across in the akashic memory. By expending an arcane **pool point, you can pick a feat to fill the "adaptive feat" slot as part of a full round action**. You retain this feat for the rest of the day. After you rest for eight hours, the adaptive feat slot resets to empty, allowing you to choose a different feat to fill its place.

The mnemonic warrior must meet all prerequisites before he can select any feat with this ability. If the mnemonic warrior spends a hero point, he may use the adaptive feat, even if he does not meet the prerequisites. He could also use a hero point if he wants to gain the use of an adaptive feat as a free action instead of as a full action; however, he can only spend a single hero point per round. He gains another adaptive feat slot at 5th **level and again at 17th level. This replaces the magus's 5th and 17th level bonus feats.**

**Tactical Focus (Ex):** At 11th level, you can search the akashic memory for information about your **opponent's fighting style after observing his techniques and maneuvers in combat**. You can then learn your **opponent's weaknesses and exploit them**. By using a standard action, you can gain a +1 insight bonus on attacks and a +2 insight bonus on damage rolls against him and a +2 insight bonus to Armor Class against his attacks if he fails his Will save (DC 10 + half your magus

level + your Intelligence modifier). You can use this ability a number of times per day equal to 1 + your Intelligence modifier. You retain these bonuses for a number of rounds equal to half your magus level. This ability replaces the magus's 11th level bonus feat.

**Magus Arcana:** The following magus arcana complement the mnemonic warrior archetype: bane blade, broad study, devoted blade, maneuver mastery, and spell blending.

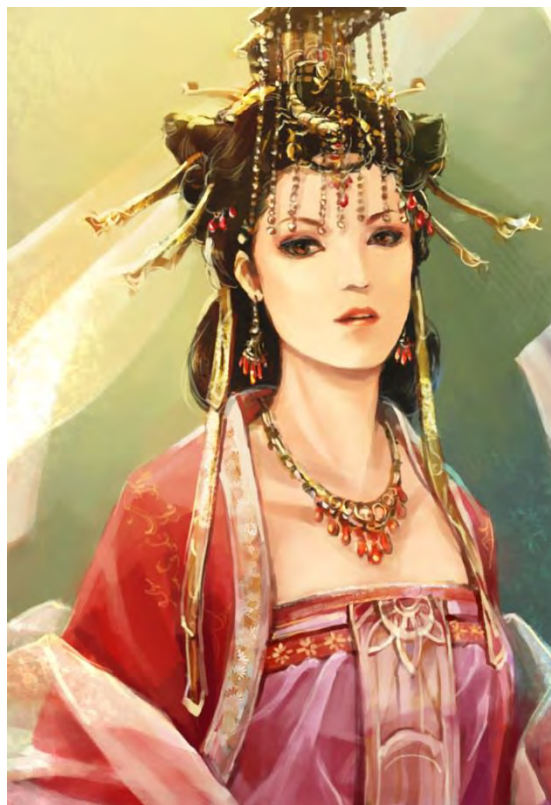
## Threadcaster

This magus fighting style was originally developed by the Beautiful Silk Tigers as a technique that allows their agents to blend in to their environment while appearing to be harmless courtesans or simple maidens awaiting the pleasure of their guests, much like a patient spider. They called their style silkweaving originally to disguise its nature, but after it was observed by other magi outside of the society, it became more popularly known at threadcasting. Furthermore, its use has spread to other societies that value deceptive tactics and the laying of traps. Their techniques involved channeling arcane energy through threads and string, making it as strong as a steel weapon or even invisible. They also spin webs with their thread to lay traps much as spiders do. Threadcasters are typically very capable of deception and ambush tactics.

**Diminished Spellcasting:** This style does require a lot of intense concentration just to keep the threads effective, which can affect the threadcaster's ability to cast spells. A threadcaster may cast one fewer spell of each level than normal. If this reduces the number to 0, she may cast spells of that level only if her Intelligence allows bonus spells of that level.

**Iron Thread:** The threadcaster imbues normal thread with an arcane pool point to make the thread as hard as steel, while remaining as flexible as normal string. The threadcaster is proficient with this thread, which can be used as a light weapon where the threadcaster automatically enjoys the benefits of the **Weapon Finesse** feat by using the threadcaster's Dexterity modifier when calculating her attack bonus (1d4 small, 1d6 medium, 18-20 x2, with the Deadly and Grapple qualities). While the duration is in effect, she can use all her class features with this ability as if it were a one-handed, light weapon. This effect lasts a number of rounds equal to twice the threadcaster's magus level. Starting at 4th level, she can cast touch spells through the thread as if it had a reach of up to 10 ft. + 5 ft. per 4 additional magus levels. This replaces the magus's spell recall class feature.

**Thread Arcana:** A threadcaster gains access to the following magus arcana. He cannot select any arcana



*Threadcaster*

more than once, unless stated otherwise in the description.

**Puppet Strings:** The threadcaster can spend an arcane pool point as part of a full round touch attack against a target to make them the **threadcaster's puppet**. This effect works as the spell, **dominate** person. However, the effect only lasts a number of hours equal to the magus's level and the magus can only affect one target at a time. Furthermore, the range is limited to a number of miles equal to his Intelligence bonus (minimum 1 mile). If taken again at 18th level, this ability works as per the spell, **dominate monster** with the same restrictions mentioned above rather than **dominate person**.

**Spinner of Webs:** The magus gains a +2 bonus to the save DC of any spell that grapples or entangles its targets and a +2 to the Concentration DC of any target attempting to cast a spell while entangled.

**Wire Walking:** Walking on and climbing, and grappling with her iron threads, the threadcaster gains a +4 bonus to Acrobatics, Climb, and Fly skill checks and gains Acrobatics as a class skill.

**Wire of Communication:** Utilizing the sonically conductive quality of her threads, the threadcaster can communicate with allies over great distances by



spending an arcane pool point to communicate to an ally as the spell, *whispering wind*.

**Snare Thread (Su):** At 7th level, as a standard action, you can set an invisible thread snare trap within a distance from you that is twice the range of your iron thread ability's reach. The trap constricts around a limb or other part of the triggering creature's body (Reflex avoids). The creature cannot move from the location of the trap, unless the threadcaster included a "leash" when setting the trap, in which case the creature is limited to the length of the leash. The trapped creature can escape with an Escape Artist check (DC 10+1/2 the threadcaster's class level + her Intelligence modifier) as a full round action. The trap or its leash has a number of hit points equal to the threadcaster's level, or can be burst as a full-round action with a Strength check (DC 10+1/2 the threadcaster's class level + her Intelligence modifier). The trap can hold up to a Medium creature; at 10th level, the trap can hold up to a Large creature. At the threadcaster's option, if there is a tall object or structure nearby, she can have the trap lift the creature. This ability replaces the magus's knowledge pool class feature.

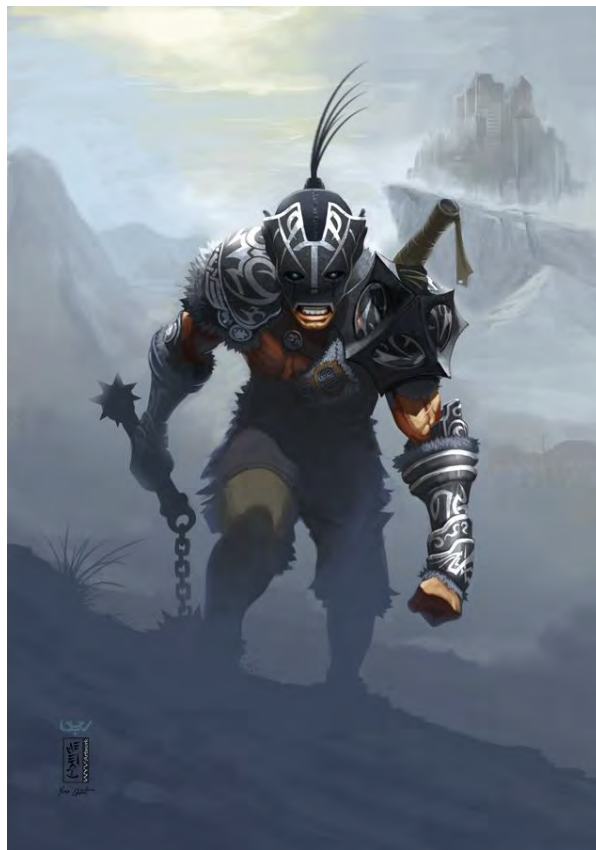
**Web of Defense:** At 7th level, the threadcaster can, as a swift action, set up a series of threads within her space to catch and ensnare any incoming attacks, granting her a +2 deflection bonus. At 13th level, this bonus increases to +4. Furthermore, anyone attacking the threadcaster with a melee weapon has a 20% chance of becoming grappled as if by a *web* spell of the threadcaster's caster level for 1d4 rounds. This ability replaces the magus's medium and heavy armor class features.

**Magus Arcana:** The following magus arcana complement the threadcaster archetype: accurate strike, arcing pool strike, devoted blade, maneuver mastery, and pool strike.

## Warrior of Fortune

These mercenary magi have learned to alter their own luck and the luck of their opponents by providing the fortunes with a little push with their arcane energy. Sometimes they do so at a grave cost to their own fortunes in order to survive a dangerous situation. Their nature is also one of a nomadic wanderer and many are mercenaries seeing where the winds of fortune will carry them. Many are also employed or trained by the Resplendent Phoenix, Thunderous Cricket, and the Golden Bat societies.

**Improbable Magus (Ex):** At 4th level, the warrior of fortune magus gains access to a small number of the luckbringer's improbable class abilities detailed below (see *The Secrets of the Luckbringer* from Rite



### Warrior of Fortune

Publishing). The warrior of fortune magus picks one improbable ability from the luckbringer's improbable class feature. She gains the benefit of or uses that improbable ability as if she were a luckbringer of a level equal to her magus level. This feature replaces spell recall.

**Improbable Arcana:** A warrior of fortune gains access to the following magus arcana, or may select any improbable ability in place of a magus arcana. He cannot select any arcana more than once, unless stated otherwise in the description. The warrior of fortune magus spends arcane pool points to activate improbable abilities instead of the luckbringer's moments of chance. A selection of improbable abilities follows:

**Critically Lucky (Ex):** When a warrior of fortune uses this ability (even after the result of the die roll is known), she gains the benefit of the Critical Focus or Improved Critical feat with the weapon she is currently wielding even if she does not meet its prerequisites. Upon reaching 11th Level she can also choose any single Critical Feat and gain the benefits of that feat, though she must still meet the prerequisites of that feat, however for the purposes of these prerequisites her Base Attack Bonus is considered being equal to her magus class level.

**Entropy Shield (Su):** The Warrior of fortune can cause a probability field to generate around her or an ally within 100 ft. This field deflects incoming arrows, rays, and other ranged attacks for 1 minute per class level. Each ranged attack directed at the subject for whom the attacker must make an attack roll has a 20% miss chance (similar to the effects of concealment). At 5th level this miss chance increases to 50%. Other attacks that simply work at a distance are not affected. The actual intervening factor is subject to GM determination but the default is often a random animal or vermin native to the area moving into the line of fire at the wrong moment, a stone causing the subject to stumble ruining the lead time of targeting foe or an odd gust of wind catching the projectile badly.

**The arrow shot at her runs into odd downdraft that forces it into the ground.**

**Fateful Footing (Ex):** The warrior of fortune alters probabilities making her extremely dexterous; she gains a +10 ft. enhancement bonus to her base speed and a +2 inherent bonus to her Dexterity. The warrior of fortune also can make a single target opponent extremely clumsy reducing all its speed ratings by 10 feet (to a minimum of 5 feet) and bestowing a -2 penalty to the target's Dexterity (minimum 1). A successful Will save (DC 10 + 1/2 the magus' class level + her Intelligence Modifier) negates these penalties for the opponent but not her bonuses. This effect lasts for 1 round per class level.

**On the loose shale slope, with every step her foe took, the rock slid out from under him, while with each of her steps the ground carried her like a leaf in a stream.**

**Good Karma (Ex):** If the warrior of fortune is in a square adjacent to an ally and the ally is subject to an attack, including an area effect, the warrior of fortune can subject herself to the attack in the ally's stead and the ally takes no damage. Resolve potential attacks against the warrior of fortune normally, including to hit rolls and saving throws.

**As the oni roared an attack, she whipped her mage ally and herself around, letting the monster's blade impact on her shield rather than the mage's head.**

**Hazard (Su):** Using her ability to affect probabilities a warrior of fortune can cause a hazardous condition to affect a single target. This hazard deals 1d6 points of damage + 1d6 points of damage every two class levels. A successful Reflex Save (DC 10 + 1/2 the warrior of fortune's class level + her Intelligence modifier) results in half damage. The actual damage type is subject to GM determination but the default is often bludgeoning, resulting from something improbably falling from the sky (such as a dead griffon) or an underground explosion (such as caused by the rotting corpse of a purple worm), but it can be as dramatic as a

lightning strike from a clear blue sky. This damage can be something the target is resistant to but the creature is never immune to the damage type chosen and it could even result in multiple types.

**A meteor falls out of the sky hitting her opponent and nothing else.**

**Ill-fortune (Su):** You impart a streak of bad luck on the target. Any actions the target takes in the next round have a 50% chance of failing. A successful Will saves (DC 10 + 1/2 the warrior of fortune's class level + her Intelligence Modifier) negates this effect.

**Just as the necromancer was preparing to give orders to his companions his childhood stuttering disorder came back.**

**Improved Weal and Woe (Su):** The warrior of fortune increases the bonus or penalty of her weal and woe ability to +2/-2. This ability does not use moments of change though the weal and woe ability still does.

**She was just thinking about how much she hated the witch when she ran right into the witch's charm spell, luckily, she resisted it.**

**Jinx (Su):** You alter the laws of probability so that any time a target is missed by an attack, there is a 20% chance that it actually hit this effect lasts for 1 minute per class level. If the target, which must be within 100 ft., makes a successful Will saves (DC 10 + 1/2 the warrior of fortune's class level + her Intelligence Modifier), the effect is negated. This ability does not stack with itself.

**She threw her dagger but the Blood Knight's shield came up deflecting it away in the nick of time, but it bounced off the breastplate of the paladin into the blood knight's elbow joint**

**Just a Scratch (Su):** The warrior of fortune's wounds are never as bad as they first appear. The warrior of fortune can heal a number of hit points equal to her class level plus her Intelligence Bonus (minimum +1).

**She thought she was in shock from the spear thrust going right threw her, later she realized it had only nicked her while passing under her arm, though it had gotten tangled in her cloak.**

**Opportunity Knocks (Ex):** The warrior of fortune can choose to gain an additional attack of opportunity beyond the normal one per round you are limited to (and beyond the normal limits of Combat Reflexes), or she can prevent a single action that occurs within 100 ft. of her from triggering potential attacks of opportunity (no save).

**Her opponent left himself so wide open to her, he virtually leapt upon her blade. She had to focus all her attention on opening the door she did not have time to defend herself, luckily her foe failed to pay enough attention to her or take advantage of the situation.**



**Twist the Pattern (Ex):** A warrior of fortune can take a 10 as a swift action or take a 20 as a full-round action on one singular skill check that can be performed in normally is performed in one round even if she is distracted. She can grant this benefit to a creature within 100 ft. if the skill normally allows the creature to take a 10 or a 20.

*She waits looking at the lock letting her hands flow over the lock picks in front of her then suddenly she grabs two of them and throws them at the lock and twists them, there is an audible click as the door unlocks.*

**Magus Arcana:** The following magus arcana complement the threadcaster archetype: accurate strike, maneuver mastery, pool strike, and spell shield.

## Ofuda

The following ofuda is available for any sutra casting characters.

### SHEATH CHARM

Charm [Omamori]

**Casting Time:** 1 standard action

**Range:** touch

**Target:** one object (a container)

**Duration:** 1 day

**Saving Throw:** none; **Spell Resistance:** no

**Descriptive Text:** This ofuda is an omamori, which is a charm for the creation of a nondimensional space within the omamori itself. For as long as this omamori is maintained the caster can, as a standard action, tap the omamori 5 times against any container that has an opening no larger than 1 ft. x 1 ft. (yet is still larger enough for the caster to reach into) while chanting the sutra. The container then behaves in all ways like a *bag of holding* (see *Pathfinder Core Rulebook*) for the next minute.

All contents previously held in the container are unavailable for the duration of that minute, but will return when the container returns to normal after the duration expires. Thereafter, any items that were stored in the nondimensional space the omamori had created remain in that nondimensional space until the omamori activates again. The next time the omamori creates a nondimensional space, it does not need to be the same container even though the same items that were previously stored can be retrieved from the new container.

The weight and volume of the omamori's nondimensional space is determined by the type of bag of holding the omamori creates. The bag of holding type is determined by the caster's level:

Sutra Caster Level	Bag of Holding
1 – 5	Type 1
6 – 10	Type 2
11 – 15	Type 3
12 +	Type 4

## Spells

The following spells are added to the magus spell list.

### BAO LIFE OATH

**School:** necromancy; **Level:** magus 1

**Casting Time:** 1 standard action

**Components:** V, S

**Range:** touch

**Target:** one living creature

**Duration:** 1 day

**Saving Throw:** Will negates; **Spell Resistance:** yes

The spellcaster forms a close bond with the target, linking their life energy. For the duration of this spell, whenever the target takes enough damage to reduce their hit points to 1 or less, the spellcaster can, as an immediate action, sacrifice any number of hit points. Each hit point sacrificed in this way prevents 1 point of damage done to the target. In addition, the target and the spellcaster must remain within 100 feet of one another for the duration of the spell or it will expire.

### SUDDEN REVERSAL OF FORTUNE

**School:** enchantment (compulsion) [mind-affecting];

**Level:** magus 1, witch 1

**Casting Time:** immediate action

**Components:** V, S

**Range:** touch

**Target:** one creature

**Duration:** instantaneous

**Saving Throw:** none; **Spell Resistance:** yes

You alter the target's fortune from either good to bad or bad to good. Any enemy target within range that makes a natural roll of a "20" on a d20 has that result changed into a fumble/critical failure. Any allied target within range that makes a natural roll of a "1" on a d20 has that result changed into a critical threat. Making a touch attack against an allied target is not necessary.

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