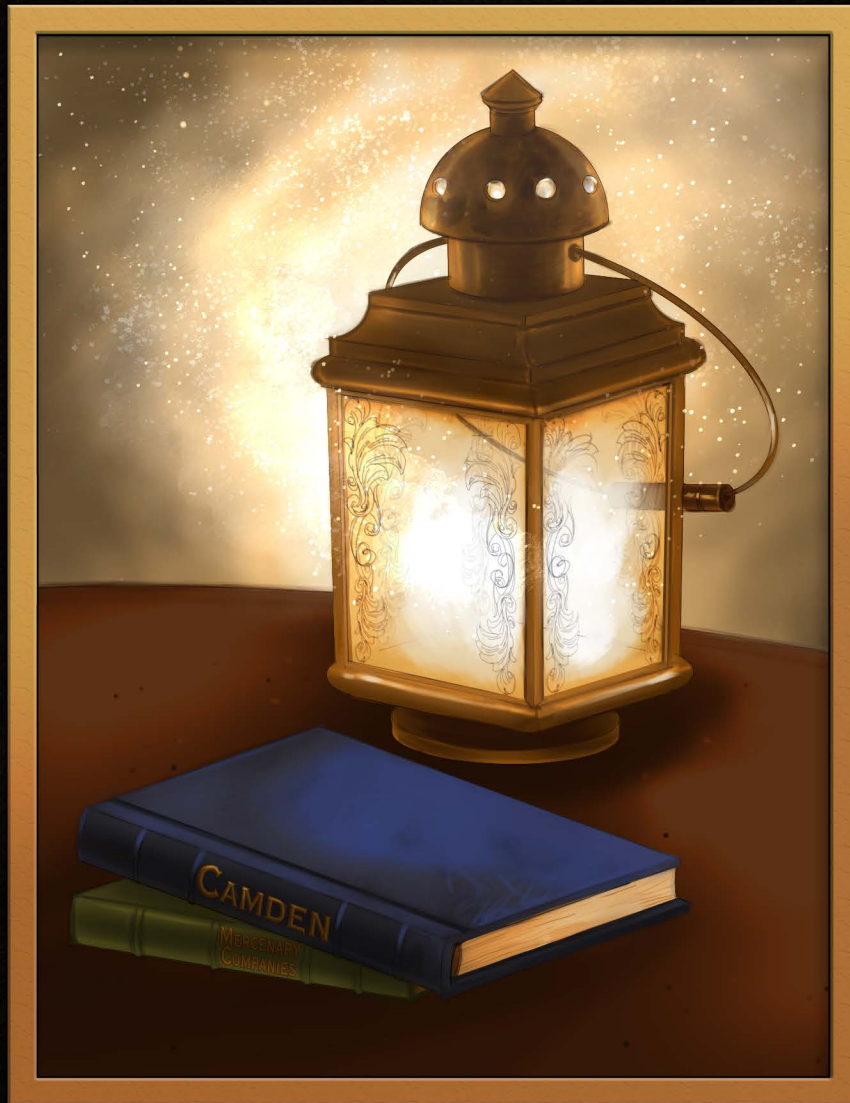


EPIC HIGH FANTASY

Shardar



BLACK LANTERN REPORT



ORIGINS OF THE SOCIETY

BLACK LANTERN REPORT: ORIGINS OF THE SOCIETY

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INTRODUCTION

“Novice, you show potential, you have served with distinction on several Rim affairs and have been recommended by two senior Brothers. We know your faults, your dreams, and have looked into your heart. But know this: once you speak the vows, your life will change forever. You will be called on to succeed at tasks you will not fully understand, often with no more resources than your wits and your training and those you can convince to go in the direction you point. The Secret War was being waged long before you were born and it will continue long after your bones have turned to dust. You are but a single tile in the grand mosaic, and even with the other tiles of which you are aware, you do not, and cannot, know the full sweep of the work. Can you accept this?”

You will lie to your family and friends, but never to a Brother. You will die before you reveal the mysteries you will be entrusted with, not only to protect the order, but all those you hold dear. In secret, we build heroes, because heroes bring hope to the people. And hope is the true enemy of evil. When good men are without hope, they do not act, or worse, succumb to the Darkness and the Flame.

So, your best work will be attributed to others. Your failures may leave you bleeding in a ditch far from home. It is thankless work that we do, Novice... But it is the only work that is truly worth doing. The Brotherhood stands in the shadows to battle the Darkness, so unmarked, we do not wither before the Flame. Do you choose to stand with us? Then speak the vow together with me:

I am now and forever a Brother of the Order of the Black Lantern. Its mysteries and secrets I hold with my life. I speak only truth to the King of the East...”

~ By Brother Iron Quill, Beginning of the Initiation Ritual of the of the First Spoke, 3114

“The Benevolent Society of the Bearer of the Black Lantern is a members-only social club that is dedicated to philanthropic works throughout the Southern Kingdoms. Its core pillars of belief are Fellowship, Relief, and Truth. We have chapter houses in most cities throughout the Southern Kingdoms and a few beyond; we helped establish the Royal Mail service and to this day, we continue to hold a Royal contract to maintain many of the relay stations. The work we are proudest of are the orphanages; the

vocational retraining for war refugees (this designed to keep them off a path of poverty and crime); the sponsorships of public works; and a patron of arts, arranging displays and plays that travel the Southern Kingdoms for the enrichment of the populace.

Yes, we have secret handshakes and pass phrases. Yes, the initiation rituals are secret. But for a venerable body nearly as old as Shaintar itself, it is one of the most forward thinking. Class, guild affiliation, race, and sex are no barrier to entry. Only: you must have a good heart, an honest job, and the sponsorship of three existing members. True, members do business with one another preferentially. True, we each pay dues commensurate with our occupation to support the good works our society does. True, we cannot speak about what is discussed in chambers to non-members. But the preposterous rumors that the Society has far reaching political ambitions, and somehow secretly influences events in the Kingdom and beyond... this is patently absurd. Just last week there was a puppet show in the town square about a group of ‘well known heroes’ led by ‘a mysterious Black Lantern’ battling the ‘evil’ Red Store villains and saving the kingdom. If only membership in the Society were half so interesting.”

~ By Ondra Steadyhand, Guild of Paper Makers, Member of the Society in good standing, City of Gryphon, Galea

THE LANTERN SOCIETY - AN OVERVIEW

Over the centuries the Order of the Black Lantern has had many names: The Raven’s Meddlers; The Kings Shadow; The Southern Sword of Truth, and a host of many less pleasant appellations. But in the forest of truth, you are likely to lose your way because the trees look very different depending on where you stand.

How can you have a secret society when so many would want to be members? This is the core of the deception that would make the Black Lantern so useful to the various Crowns - if they knew it existed. The Society members, like thousands of others, work to the ends of the Order, not realizing that they are helping in ways both large and small to protect the Southern Kingdoms. Hiding in plain sight, adding

scores of eyes and ears to their ranks, while having excuses to move about the countryside and select new members with a burning hatred of the enemies of the kingdoms or looking for a path to redemption after committing atrocities in the endless border wars. Not to diminish any good work that the Society does, but in the end, it is all an elaborate cover for the Order's real work: Fighting the Secret War of espionage and intelligence that keeps the Southern Kingdoms safe. And in truth, doing so out of the sight of men of power, who might be affronted that commoners wield power outside of the law.

The Order has the remarkable knack for being on the scene just a tiny bit before it's needed and while normally under-manned and under-resourced, the Brotherhood are skilled in using their training to appeal to and direct others to fight evil in its many forms. The Three Pillars that every member of the Order adheres to are Autonomy, Purpose, and Mastery. There may be only a single Brother on the scene to execute the orders of the Directorate. As a rule, the mission goal will be clear, but the reasons may well not be. A Lantern has wide flexibility on how to achieve the goal set before him, and he quickly learns to make use of the resources he has and not the resources he wished he had. A successful agent also learns how to bargain for what is needed, while keeping his identity a secret. A Black Lantern with a "torn cover" is in grave danger, because the Order has made many powerful enemies while in service to the Crown of Galea.

"I speak only truth to the King of the East." This is the traditional first line of each Black Lantern Oath. In practice, you would think this makes them solid functionaries of the King of Galea. And while they do work to protect the Southern Kingdoms and sow confusion to their enemies, the Society acts in many ways that cannot be connected to the Crown at all. And so, while they serve the Kings and the Lords of the South, they are loyal only to the Lantern. Kings may come and kings may go, but the Secret War is eternal and so, therefore, must be the Order. It is often said when working in the field "The sky is high and the King is far away".

People take up the Lantern for many reasons. Redemption, revenge, to repay a kindness, or to do good deeds in a dark world even when your eyes aren't keen or your arm is not mighty. In the Order, each has a role to play.

THE FOUNDER'S TALE

Every Brother hears the same story about the founding of the Black Lantern Society. And as one of the Founders is still alive today, his version is usually accepted as the unvarnished truth. The Iron Eight were simple people from widely varied walks of life, not one of them a hero. Each was taken by a vivid dream sent by the Patron, who, for want of a better name, has come to be called "Our Lady of Inspiration". This dream so took each of them that they left their lives behind and began going east. When in ones and twos, they encountered each other along the byways, they were unsurprised, as these were the folk they expected. The reasoning was unclear but they all knew it was vitally important.

They passed directly through the small Kalinesh army of the Warlord Volg the Bear who had pinned an upstart youth playing at being a warlord up against Fallon Peaks. The non-threatening travelers were given leave to pass after drinking to the Great Bear's success on the morning to come. This battle would be no more than a lark for the men of the Great Bear. Walking through the less-drunk opposite lines was harder, but guided by their dream, the Iron Eight approached the leader's camp table, bold as brass.

The table was surrounded by shouting veterans, a well formed youth bearing a silver unicorn badge, and the famous mage Cyria Eridor, all bent over and alternately swearing or pointing at a map by the light of a single black camp lantern. Brother Sly, as the men had realized they were brothers on their strange journey, procured a cloak and draped it over Brother Jingle's shoulders, as he approached the group to refill the young warlord's wine cup. "May we be of assistance?" was all Brother Jingles had time to say before several of the men had drawn steel in surprise. The warlord had both a cooler head and bigger problems, so he calmly asked why the band of brothers had joined his war council, on this of all nights.

Brother Quill spoke up, "Because you asked for help with your true heart and your plea was heard, O King of the East."

This sent a ripple through the gruff fighting men and left the young warlord puzzled. Quickly whispered words from Cyria Eridor brought him

around, as the Raven had used that exact title for the young Vol Al'Daya. Recovering quickly and in a voice of command, the warlord demanded the size of the army they had brought. Brother Chitty countered with "It is victory Your Majesty has ordered and we are here to deliver it."

The swords were put aside and the eight were bade forward, and as they did, tiny drops of lamp oil leaked across the map. "Well", demanded a grizzled captain named Harlow, "we are trapped against the mountains and out manned two to one. It will be a slaughter by midday."

"Then", said Brother Quill, "We shall meet them at dawn. What say you, Brother Oxhide?"

Brother Oxhide pointed at the map. "The trail is marked on the map as clear as day, Brother Quill."

Captain Harlow snorted, "Are you blind boy? That is nothing but lamp oil!"

"Kind sir", said Brother Oxhide, "I was raised in these mountains and that which you see marks a game trail I can go over in my sleep. If we could have but one hundred men..." Brother Crutch coughed and held up two fingers "Errr... two hundred men." Brother Oxhide amended. "We could be in position before dawn and strike at the drunken sots from behind."

"There will be guards posted...", Harlow pointed out in a restrained tone.

"To protect them from who, exactly?", said Brother Blade. "We are penned in here like netted fish and from what I saw as we came through the camp, they may well sleep past sun up!"

Vol Al'Daya, being no fool, knew nothing comes for free. "What is the price for this victory?", he asked.

And as one, the Iron Eight took a knee and said, "To serve. We may only speak truth to the King of the East."

Sex and the Black Lantern

Please note, it is believed that current Brotherhood membership runs nearly 40% female. By long-standing tradition, all members are referred to as Brothers and use the male pronouns. Over time, this has engendered a number of truly awful jokes.

"Well," said Brother Jingles, "there is one small thing..."

"Name it.", the young war lord said flatly.

Jingles pointed at the leaking camp lantern. "We will be taking your lantern. We were brought to your side, but it provided the answer we needed."

Vol Al'Daya looked flummoxed. "This, this is your reward?" The brothers smiled beatifically back at him. "Then rise. And if we see live to see tomorrow's sunset together, then you shall be, now and forever, my Brothers of the Black Lantern."

ACCEPTANCE INTO THE ORDER

"The unlikely Brothers who stand against Flame and Darkness, the invisible hand of justice, the heroes without faces, the Black Lanterns."

~ Brother Sable, Second Company of the Silver Unicorn

There is a tradition to testing for membership in the Brotherhood and then going on to learn the mysteries of the Order. First you must have skills or knowledge the Brotherhood values and show an aptitude for at least two of three pillars all Black Lanterns value. Second, you must impress a Brother enough to put you forth for testing. Third, you must convince two different Brothers (often, but not always, from different spokes) that you are worthy of testing and have potential as great as your sponsor reported.

There are three primary points of entry into the Black Lantern. The most common experience for people is that of a "Rim Agent". Whether you know it or not, you and your group are being aimed towards the Lantern's goals. If you have learned that someone you know or work for serves the Brotherhood, then the tests have begun. Sometimes it's by accident, other times it's by design or desperation. A Brother's cover is his life and he will not give it up without a compelling reason. Being a Rim Agent means you have friends in interesting places. There can be great benefit in keeping the Brotherhood's secrets and working for the common good. Often this comes in

the form of more detailed information than the hero can find out on his own. Or having the path smoothed for him in ways he didn't expect.

The first test as a Rim Agent is what you do with that knowledge. The second is how you profit by it. If the hero proves trustworthy and is found of value, then he may one day be tested. Once accepted, an abbreviated form of training takes place to fill in any gaps in the Brother's skill set to his new Spoke.

The second method is a scaled down version used in the Malakar Dominion. Under a number of different Guild and trade house names, the Brotherhood sponsors vocational schools for orphans near the war zone borders. The young and desperate, when given a chance to better themselves, often prove to be very loyal to the Southern Kingdoms and most are rescued from grinding poverty and prevented from falling directly into the criminal element. Besides trade skills and uplifting life skills, quiet tests of aptitude and problem solving are given during the course of study, and the best are funneled off for close mentoring. Here they are taught the skills the Brotherhood feels it will need in the future to see if they excel. Much like the Schozim, a handful of young men and women from across the length and breadth of Shaintar are tested and a smaller number become junior Brothers. Unlike the Schozim, students who fail the testing are not killed but are pointed towards becoming Rim Agents. The Black Lantern cannot afford to waste any assets. The stakes of the Secret War are simply too high.

The last and rarest method is through legacy. Within certain families, taking up the mantle of a Brother is expected as a matter of family honor. Some Brothers let their covers slip with their loved ones and treat them as Rim Agents or see great promise in their child and mentor them directly while not revealing the mysteries of their spoke. Normally, a Brother not related by blood or marriage must view and test the Legacy to nominate him for a test for membership. Often a Legacy will have certain advantages in facing some of the traditional tests, so "Legacy Testing" should be more difficult.

Author's Note on Play

While a very few groups of players will try out an "All Black Lantern" cloak and dagger campaign (a fantasy pastiche of the TV shows Mission Impossible or Leverage, or any of the Bond movies), the vast majority of groups will either have Lantern Society members as NPC contacts, quest-givers, or one player in the group may be a prospective or full member. To that end, instead of focusing solely on the daring swashbuckling end of skullduggery, a good portion of this book is given over to how the Society supports groups of heroes across the length and breadth of Shaintar. Consider the Brotherhood to be a small, wealthy independent kingdom that is considerably over extended. They are well informed, but locally understaffed and under-resourced with an organization spread over too large an area. This puts the heroes out front in the thick of the plot by design. The Brotherhood is a very good group to be on the correct side of, and will reward heroes by indirectly smoothing their path to things their fighting prowess may not be able to win them. The hardest thing in play as a Black Lantern character is keeping secrets from your fellow players while trying to convince them to do the right thing. Bend the truth, because admitting you are in the Brotherhood to people you do not trust with your very life is extremely dangerous for you, them, and the Order.

It's said that when you enter the Order you leave your old life behind. What is more often true is that you learn to lead a double life. After your vows, you are given a new name by which you will be known inside the Order, a so-called "shadow name". This shadow name protects your old life and adds a layer of protection for the men and women you work with. While you may earn honors and nicknames from your Brothers, and adopt different identities in the course of your work, the shadow name the order gives you is unique, attached to all reports and mission briefings and will not be reassigned as long as you are alive to bear it. It is a sign of great promise if the Order gives you a reclaimed name. Only the names of heroes are reused so they are not forgotten and continue to accrue honor. It is rumored that the only exception to this rule is ascendancy to the Directorate. Such a Brother abandons his shadow name and takes the name of the original "Iron Eight" that he is replacing. The Founder's names will live as long as the Order.

THE STRUCTURE OF THE ORDER

"It is all on the wheel. It spins from the center out. It turns eternally."

~ **Brother Hightower, Keeper of the King's Keys, Galea**

Power radiates from the center out. Each Spoke has its own separate mission, service to the order, training methods, traditions and practices. Only the Hub, home of the Directorate, truly knows the extent of the organization. The rest must rely on signs, message drops, assigned contacts, 3-5 man cells and their own contacts to do their work. Beyond a Brother's own cell, he is only introduced to new contacts when they need-to-know or during cross-training. It means if a Brother is captured and broken, he can only give up his own cell. Shadow names are all; double lives are standard. Most Brothers live normal lives in positions of opportunity, filing mundane reports and serving the operations of their Spoke. When a call comes, they "go on pilgrimage", "travel to recover their failing health", or "go to claim a legacy from a distant relation". They go on the assigned mission by whatever means necessary, pass off what they have learned so it will return to the Hub and then return to their normal lives if possible until it is time to take up the light again.

THE RIM

There is never enough help to do all the work that needs doing across the face of Shaintar. Like the vast majority of the membership of the Society of the Black Lantern, most people who help the Order, are completely unaware they have been a part of the Secret War. Fundamentally, they can't reveal secrets they don't know. While most toil in ignorance or misplaced belief, to officially be part of The Rim, you need to have a reliable method to contact one member of the Order. This may be a player contact, a message drop revealed during play; you may have had a member of your group reveal himself during a game (openly, which is an enormous sign of trust, or by accident by not covering his tracks enough or not wishing to lie to his sword brothers). It is often said that it is better to know a Black Lantern than to


be one. You will be asked to do tasks without fully understanding the why of it. You may be troubled that your contact may have little more information than you do, or chooses not to share it. But as a member of The Rim, you have a high level of trust for someone that has not sworn to the Order and find advantages in your career as a result of your service. Good things come the way of The Rim. Often not what you might want, but generally what you need.

THE SPOKES

The grand structure of the Brotherhood is a mystery to most agents. Each Spoke uses different training methods, demands the use of shadow names to protect the cover identities of the agents in the field and keeps the number of agents known to any member small. To say a Brother is "worth his ink" means he is deserving of his membership tattoo.

(FIRST SPOKE) THE SCRIBBLERS: THE MARKED SPOKE

Based from ancient times out of their hidden library, the Scriptorium, in the capital of Galadrea. The First Spoke are the heart and soul of the Brotherhood and have the largest concentration of Brothers and Rim Agents in all of Shaintar. This is the bureaucratic center of the Order, where messages are decoded, field reports are assessed and analysis is done for the Directorate. The Scribblers are the keepers of the Order's budgets, paymasters, librarians, and caretakers for centuries of records, reports, position papers, royal proclamations, maps, and blackmail material. Parts of the papers and the actual complex are under "Garnet Tower Seal" and are only accessible with the explicit permission of the Directorate. Working at the capital is as close to a normal life as a Brother is as likely to get and the hardest part of the job is making scrupulous use of his double life by keeping his clerk's job on Paper Street as bland and uninteresting as possible to friends and family. Traditionally, field agents are surveyors or observers sent to file firsthand accounts of events due to their training, precision, and general knowledge of detail. The embarrassing Brother Mantlet has brought recent attention to the First Spoke's field work and as a "reward" has been permanently assigned to field work and cross training with other Spokes. Senior Brother Quill is the head of The Scribblers.



Defining Interests: Cartography, Surveying, Codes and Cyphers, Mathematics, Astronomy

Professional skills: Accountant, Analyst, Librarian, Lawyer.

(SECOND SPOKE) THE TARRY KNOTS: THE SWIFT SPOKE

The Tarry Knots are the messengers and couriers of the Order, delivering information and orders as quickly as possible. The often huge geographic distances in Shaintar make rapid communication difficult but the success of missions often hinge on speed. The responsibility of this Spoke is to close that time gap in any way possible. If it moves, they can run, ride, sail, drive, or fly it faster than anyone. They helped develop the Royal Mail as a cover to move reports to the Scriptorium and distribute orders. They have been supporters of, and helped improve the safety and speed of, The Bank of Lanthor Courier Service over the last fourteen decades. Besides foot couriers, express riders, and rapid river boats, the Swift Spoke uses some Aevakar and Dregordian couriers for priority orders. In addition, the Second

Spoke runs the Raven Messenger service and manages standing contracts with the Farspeakers Guild at key locations for short, extremely rapid coded messages. Senior Brother Oxhide leads the Tarry Knots.

Defining Interests: Animal husbandry, Cartography, Surveying, Weather/Meteorology

Professional skills: Dressage, Navigation, Trick Riding, Sailmaster

(THIRD SPOKE) THE THEATER OF THE UNSEEN: THE BEAUTIFUL SPOKE

While nearly all training in the Third Spoke comes from mentoring in the field by senior Brothers, the City of Four Corners in the Wildlands is where this spoke is run from. The Society launches its charitable theater and art projects each year, bound for the far corners of the land and where the artists return each winter. Embedded within these ranks are the Theater Unseen, Brothers trained to hide in plain sight, who are specialists at information gathering, false identities and the art of deep cover. It's said among the members of The Beautiful Spoke that "accents

are the clothes your words wear”, and it is a poor Brother who is not master of several languages and their regional dialects. Listening to an Olan dwarf sing a love song in a perfectly rendered Nazatirian patois is a performance not to be missed.

The core training of The Third Spoke is observation of others, along with impersonation and all the soft interpersonal skills. A good Brother is also able to befriend anyone. Their general covers are the theater troupes, cavalcades, or circuses that travel the length and breadth of the Southern Kingdoms and often beyond. Single minstrels are not unheard of. This Spoke of the Order is charged with controlling the public awareness, building the reputations of heroes and others while hiding the Order by presenting songs, puppet shows, and plays showing the Order in a farcical or mythical light. The Beautiful Spoke train in multiple versions of the traditional plays and ballads: “The Fall of Vainar” in the south, and “The Glory of Vainar” in Shaya’Nor and the Empire, as well as “The Seduction of Ceynara” with both traditional slants. Traditional Theater Unseen wisdom is “Knowing one’s place is more important than the place itself”.

Senior Brother Jingles, a Faelakar, is the Director of this Spoke. Brother Jingles is the only remaining member of the original Iron Eight and was well acquainted with Cyria Eridor.

Defining Interests: Surveillance, Seduction, Music, Dialects, Art, Cooking, Languages

Professional skills: Raconteur, Actor, Artist, Singer, cover book builder, Courtesan,

(FOURTH SPOKE) THE GUILD OF THE NIGHT ROAD: THE STURDY SPOKE

The Night Road base is mobile and pioneered the techniques for the traveling road show that is the Ruling Council every year. This Spoke is responsible for logistics, smuggling people and goods by water, road, and air. They use merchant house riverboats and caravans as covers, and provide large cash infusions for the trade goods they buy and sell to hide the important smuggled goods. The new Senior Brother Chitty has just been installed on the Directorate, so there is a bit of confusion from above, but new orders and direction are expected shortly within the Spoke.

Defining Interests: Valuation, Taxes, Animal husbandry, Accounting

Professional skills: Bribery, Smuggling, Trade, Roaming Blacksmith

(FIFTH SPOKE) THE ACADEMY OF SEVEN STARS: THE SILENT SPOKE

Also known as The Lifters, The Silent Spoke is based in The Academy of Seven Stars which shifts periodically between cities. The Fifth Spoke’s school has several competent business covers; blacksmith, chimney sweep, roof repairs, or locksmith, giving Brothers practice training in burglary, property trap removal, and the cutting of purses. Balance, climbing, moving silently in the darkness, memorizing building layouts and planning escapes are drilled into students, as well as how to hold your tongue in a crisis. This Spoke of the Order is responsible for acquisition of secrets, special items, eavesdropping, and hidden observation. Senior Brother Sly represents is the Director of The Silent Spoke.

Defining Interests: Infiltration, Memorization, Security, Surveillance, Traps

Professional skills: Distraction, Pickpocketing, Chimney Sweep, Blacksmith

(SIXTH SPOKE) THE CLOCKWORKS: THE TOOLED SPOKE

The Observationists and their magical and physic kin are the technical backbone of Order. Its best and brightest are based out of the Mechanarium with others working singly or in small teams in workshops throughout the Society’s holdings. These are the visionaries and mad tinkers who come up with the theories and the tools: potions and one-time, simple to use, magic “poppers” that give the Brothers in the field the edge they need to come out ahead in the Secret War.

Because the Sixth Spoke never heeded the Raven’s mandate to destroy all ancient magic and technology from the before times, they proudly boast of having the oldest school for Observational Scholars in the whole of the Kingdoms. In addition, this is the Spoke of crafters and thinkers. It is chock full of Scholars, Alchemists, Sorcerers, Adepts, and the occasional Druid, who spend one day in five working on personal projects to impress their fellow Brothers at a yearly

Clockworks conference. In the greater world, ideas advance one funeral at a time, but within the Spoke they are three for a copper and something new is discussed nearly every day. It also concentrates some of the best builders, engineers, and craftsmen the Order has to offer. Generally a Sixth Spoke craftsman will be in charge of Rim workers building a secure facility. Senior Brother Handy leads this spoke.

Defining Interests: Arcfire, Research, Magical constructs, Potions, Herbs, Technology (ancient)

Professional skills: Observational Scholar, Alchemy, Engineering, Architecture

Language skill: Builder

(SEVENTH SPOKE) THE FLICKERS: THE SPLINTERED SPOKE

Members of the Order who miraculously age out, or can't keep up with field work, handle the scouting, early recruiting and basic training missions, because the Order lets nothing go to waste. Many of the Royal Mail refit stations are headed by The Flickers, as well as other key jobs, like tavern keepers, dock masters and other long term cover positions. They are also tasked with running the Society's frontier orphanages and trade schools for the poor. It is known that one volunteer is worth ten pressed men and so the brotherhood will never turn away offered help on principal, but may apply it in unexpected ways.

The day is dark when the Order requires a Flicker to step back into active service, but many become mentors to junior members and are consulted for the specialized knowledge they often possess. Most of them long for the adrenaline of the field and would try, and probably fail, at going back into active service. *"A real Brother dies with his boots on, not in bed like some wizened old fossil!"* Senior Brother Crutch leads The Flickers.

Defining Interests: Any, but the extra time available allows Brothers to delve deeply into these interests. Expert knowledge is valued.

Professional skills: Teacher, Shopkeeper, Hostler, Innkeeper, Orphanage Director, Librarian, Scribe

(EIGHTH SPOKE) THE FAR REACH: THE SECURE SPOKE

Once the military arm of the Brotherhood, the Eighth Spoke's power was gutted for what was seen by the Directorate as great ambition, against the need to remain in the shadows. This nearly broke the spirit of the elite fighting force, but by distributing its members around to be absorbed by the other Spokes, the safety, security, and combat readiness of the entire wheel was improved.

More brothers could use all three core pillars of training in the field. Officially, the Eighth Spoke is now the internal police, diplomatic security, and the trained swords that can fight for the Order or in Foreign Service. Unofficially, these are the best the Order has to offer. These are the Brothers with an open warrant to kill, the "special" Brothers who handle the toughest affairs. These live in the shadows and carry out assassinations of internal traitors and those who follow the Red Store. No Brother ever starts in this Spoke. It is an honor that has to be earned. Internally, they are known as The Rectifiers. Senior Brother Blade leads The Far Reach.

Defining Interests: Assassination, Counter-espionage, Poison, Red Store Operations, Surveillance

Professional skills: Manhunter, Lawyer, Sword mastery

(NINTH SPOKE) THE GREY LANTERNS: THE INVISIBLE SPOKE

No one starts as a Grey Lantern, all "Greys" cross-train into the position and quietly bring what other skills they have to the Grey Rangers to make them more effective. This is the hardest position there is in the Brotherhood because a Brother is constantly being asked to serve two masters and must navigate between them to keep the Order first. You would think that the Black Lantern Society would have been involved with Grayson's Grey Rangers since its founding, but in fact, any open assistance would have gone against the Order's secret compact in the Great Charter of 2726 that formed the shape of the first Council of Rulers.

Under the Great Charter, the Black Lanterns were allowed an advisory role in all royal lands, chartered cities, and domains in the Southern Kingdoms and its protectorates. They are subject to many local laws, but are to be treated as emissaries of the King of the East and exempt from a great number of such laws (and are, of course, punished for any misuse of this privilege). The cost of these boons was to disband the Eighth Spoke and never again to have a military arm. The fear of some of the Northern Dukes (perhaps from Malakar influence) was that the King of Galea should not have a private army as the Kal Emperor had built with the Tor Mastak, his “Sword of Truth”. It was carried by the Overlord of Lanthor who feared the influence these advisors had on the King and wanted them defanged.

The Betrayal War stretched the resources of the Black Lanterns to its absolute limits, and while bound by royal charter and tradition, a new answer had to be found to be able to mobilize volumes of trained military-grade troops the next time disaster breaks out. With agonizing slowness, and with great urging of the Brotherhood and certain of their key high-ranking allies, the Centenium Council was finally formed in 3097 to begin preparations should the armies of Flame again scourge the land, and one of the first quiet orders made by the Council was to create an exception to the Great Charter to allow Black Lantern observers to be embedded within the ranks of the Grey Rangers to facilitate rapid information gathering should signs of Darkness or Flame return. In practice, this allows any ranger commander access to a larger body of intelligence and the Brotherhood now has a trained fighting force to scramble in time of need. The position of the Grey Lantern is secret within a ranger squad. Only the commander knows for sure.

Senior Brother Ghost Leads the Greys.

Defining Interests: Field analysis, Adaptability, Military Command, Grayson’s Gray Rangers (Lore)

Professional skills: Field combat, Sword master

THE HUB

At the center of the wheel, sit the nine heads of the Spokes, forming the Directorate. Only Senior Brother Jingles, a truly ancient Faelakar, remains of the original “Iron Eight”. He remembers the powerful Dream that brought the Founders together to form the Brotherhood. Only the dark times facing Shaintar keep him in this plane. Each of the other Directorate Brothers have come up through the ranks of the Order, given up their shadow name and replaced a founder as head of their Spoke. Senior Brother Chitty has just recently taken his seat to run the Guild of the Night Road and he has some particular ideas on how to improve service. It would seem the center of the wheel is empty. The Grand meeting chamber in the Scriptorium has been empty for a hundred years. There is no central location where the Directorate meets like the Grand Council, nor can they use the Farspeakers Guild for day to day coordination without someone noticing.

Even within the Order, how the Directorate works is a great mystery. For the few who know, it is whispered that the Directorate meets regularly in a secret place referred to as the Garnet Tower. It’s commonly understood that some Directors don’t leave their strongholds (specifically, the Scriptorium and the Mechanarium) while others move about in the field. It’s believed that they use Adepts to communicate or the Directorate Brothers may be powerful Adepts themselves, though this seems less likely. The location of the Garnet Tower is unknown, though coordination of information and work between the Spokes is startlingly efficient, especially considering the distances that reports and orders must cross. This bolsters the myth that while any single brother has a small slice, the Directorate can see the whole pie. This maintains the sometimes blind obedience required on some cryptic affairs. Brothers are occasionally asked to carry out. The two things every brother takes for true: the Directorate *does* know more than you do and when you least expect it, they’ll reach out to you in your dreams.

DATES OF INTEREST FROM THE SECRET WAR

Long before the Spire fell, the Patron had a plan. A stronghold was built in secret. A plan to communicate with the Chosen, independent of the Spire, was put in place. Unlike many of the Scions, the Patron chose indirect ways to help the chosen side in a war that would outlast the Starfather himself. The Patron waited as the Spire fell, the Veil covered the world and empires rose and fell. Unmoved by the Dragons, she nearly acted to prevent the fall of Vainar but knew the time was not right, and shed tears of shame after. With the powers of Darkness and Flame on the rise and the Corruption of the Two Ascended, the Patron slowly began to put her plan in motion.

- **2410** - The Founders, the Iron Eight, present themselves to Vol Al'Daya and Cyria Eridor at Fallon Peaks, interrupting a war council with a plan for victory against high odds. They named Vol Al'Daya "King of the East" to gain support from Cyria Eridor and thus occurred the miracle of the Black Lantern.
- **2438** - The Battle of Oresshield is over and several likely recruits from the Goblinesh, the Malakar Dominion and even three Kalinesh are found worthy to test and recruit into the Order.
- **2446** - The founding of the City of Galadrea. A large block of land is granted to the Order by the king and construction begins on an underground store house to consolidate the growing supply of references maps and reports the order has been amassing. Buildings for making paper and binding books are added, then taverns and residences, a hospice and an orphanage are included in the complex to hide and secure the storehouse and library known as the Scriptorium. The Benevolent Society of the Bearer of the Black Lantern is founded to act as cover organization for this enormous construction.
- **2577** - The first public evidence that the Black Lantern is anything more than an advisor to the king comes to light. A Black Lantern member was instrumental in the overthrow of the powerful shade who had replaced the king and assumed the throne. Try as he might, Nicodemus Flint could not avoid being named to the First Company of the Silver Unicorn.

The Secret War

The Great Game of the Secret War is played on many levels at once. What almost no one realizes (except the Ascended, a few great heroes, certain kings and beings of power and the Directorate themselves) is that fragments of the Spire War go on to this day. Twisted plans like the Merchants' Gambit could have destroyed most of the life on Shaintar to achieve that Scion's goal of global domination. He's never actually been stopped, just delayed, perhaps another hundred years, perhaps less. With the fraying of the Raven's Cloak and the receding of the Veil, untold wonders and deadly dangers abound, allowing for more opportunities for the balance of power to go pear shaped. Worse, with evidence found after the Godstrike Tempest, it has been determined that there are things even more horrible than Darkness and Flame somewhere beyond the night sky. The Order is charged to find, forge, and focus heroes to protect the land and keep the light of hope alive. It is a thankless job, but someone has to do it, in secret, in the middle of multiple purely human-scale wars.

- **2695** - The Malakar Dominion organizes after the Farmer's Rebellion. The Patron sends dreams to the Iron Eight to organize a long distance expedition to a lonely mountaintop in the Eternal Desert to reclaim what was held in trust for the Chosen.
- **2700** - The Brightstar affair is concluded, when an Empire-sponsored imposter pretends to become Raz'Dash returned and rally the tribes to overthrow the Emir of A'Davar. After witnessing the final leg of the "Ride of Glory", the expedition returned with a land lease from the Emir within the sound of the Dawn Bell in A'Davar and twenty fine desert horses for breeding in the east for services rendered. They recovered the box of Dream Crystals and trunks of mechanical devices that had lain in wait for them on a mountain top for centuries as the Patron foretold.
- **2726** - Evan Argorn becomes King of Galea and forms the Council of Rulers. The Order is given right of council to all the Southern Kingdoms at the expense of demilitarization, so the Brotherhood can never serve as a Galean Tor Mastak. The Seventh Spoke is disbanded, most Brothers reassigned to other Spokes and reformed as a small internal security force to police its own members and carry out important assassinations. This is how many of the service Spokes got their first field agents.

- **2827** - Sable becomes the most famous Black Lantern when the adventures of the Second Company of the Silver Unicorn is sung throughout the Freelands, as they helped political prisoners and refugees from Camden. The Order's experiments in manipulating public opinion over large areas started here.
- **2901** - The kidnapping and replacement of Baron Gaige Fortune and his family, in order to take his place as the Assistant Dock Warden of City of High Port.
- **3021** - The Massacre at Rhion during the Open Hand Peace Conference is the greatest shame of the current Directorate. It was inconceivable that the powers of Flame and Darkness could work together and the Order was unprepared. This tragedy left fourteen Brothers dead and nine no longer fit for field work. All evidence pointed to the forces of Flame attempting to reopen the Cauldrons to move armies from the Abyss. A desperate plan was affected in the form of the "Shoemaker's Children", a volunteer team to infiltrate Norcan Darr while the gate was thrown open on the island of Og m'Drakar.
- **3022** - During the end of the Betrayal War, when the Gates of Hell cracked open a second time, the Shoemaker's Children were ready. A member of what was left of the team guided three disaffected Builders and one translator from a tribe in the Hard Lands in the heart of the Chaos. The remaining members of the team stayed in Norcan Darr in an attempt to organize a resistance among the Forsaken and gather primary intelligence on the Demon Lords. Brother Hardy died from a fever after turning over his refugees and the team's journal to Brother Patience, the Ogre Station master of the Og m'Drakar Observers hidden in the gathers. The journal, now under Garnet Tower Seal, contained all the Shoemaker's Children learned during that difficult year. The refugees were sent to the Mechanarium to make rapid progress on acquired Builder devices claimed over the years. The Gates of Hell remained closed for 100 years. All of the Shoemakers Children are presumed dead but should have left a wealth of information if the journals can ever be recovered.
- **3123** - Rebuilding and improved breeding of the Messenger Raven program begins in the wake of the destruction caused by the disaster commonly known as the Godstrike Tempest. A full one-third of the birds were destroyed trying to move information in the chaos. After a deep search of the full Scriptorium Archives, including those under Garnet Tower Seal, and scouring select libraries to unearth any additional information, the suspected source of the Godstrike Tempest disaster is a city, or kingdom, known only as "the Suzerain". This investigation is ongoing.
- **3123** - The Shining Tower located atop the ruins of Castle Hispan in the Defiant Lands is brought down, the Crystal Tyrant is slain and the Merchants Gambit is effectively dismantled. A treaty with Master Builder Alojzy turns the Isle of Norvos into a sanctuary for Builders seeking other service than the Merchant and his Red Store. Brother Mantlet tried to stay out of the spotlight and put forth the true heroes as the Sixth Company of the Silver Unicorn, but with the blood of the Seamstress on his hands, he may have brought a bitter enmity upon the Brotherhood from certain factions of the Red Store. The Merchant is unwilling to hold the Red Store in check while he positions for his next plot for world conquest. The single surviving Node runner, a great flying machine, is used to transport strategic reserves of crysarium and Builder companies to the Isle of Norvos and the Mechanarium. The Tinker now uses this air ship to gather dangerous Builder devices and delivers them to the Mechanarium, but with great stealth and care as this is currently no way to replace it.
- **3125** - One survivor and five dead men are found in the wreckage of a large ship by fishermen off the coast of Deridius. The surviving man speaks no known language and he and his fellows have facial features unrecorded in the Southern Kingdoms. His entire demeanor is foreign and the technique used to forge his blade is completely unknown to our smiths. This survivor, what little of his gear that survived and some unusual trophies scavenged from the wreck by the fishermen have all been sent to the Scriptorium in Galadrea in the hopes of finding a common language to see if this stranger is from beyond the Veil.

IMPORTANT LOCATIONS

THE HOUSE OF WISDOM CHAPTERHOUSE OF THE SOCIETY, A'DAVAR

Within the sound of the Bell of Dawn, where, by tradition, soldiers of the Emir do not enter uninvited, this once scholarly district now attracts runaways, criminals and characters of all kinds to join the free-speaking teachers. It is a place of peace and knowledge, where you can say anything and the first to raise a hand against one will have all others raised against them. Occasional bouts of violence make for very strange temporary alliances and the malcontents are thrown over “The Ring”, a set of yellow bricks officially defining the range of the Bell of Dawn to the Emir’s guards who often loiter around the food stalls just outside.

The House of Wisdom is a lush salon secretly, Black Lantern Society chapter house, given as a land grant by a long dead Emir. It’s within full view of the main square and the Alabaster Tower where the bell sounds each dawn. Here, between lectures and the reading aloud of letters, proclamations from other kingdoms and a strangely printed “news paper” delivered all the way from Sog, Brothers of the Order can take a breath, relax a bit and trade information and goods with members of the “loyal” opposition. Only those fanatics of the Prelacy will not honor the truce of the Dawn Bell. It’s an oddity to see a Tor Mastak having tea with a Brother of the Order, with both telling jokes at a Red Store agent’s expense, but if it can happen anywhere on Shaintar, this is the place. Walking home alone drunk is still dangerous, and once outside The Ring, pleasant dinner companions may well be at each other’s throats. But this is the place fighters in the Secret War bond, toast to fallen friends, trade tidbits of gossip and congratulate the opposition on clever moves in the Great Game.

“To the Grey Ghost and Little Fingers, to the Shoemaker’s Children, and the Iron Eight. May they stiffen our spines when we walk through the Darkness.”

Brother Breeze, raising a glass to fallen comrades, heroes of the Order, and, as ever and always, the Founders



As with many Brotherhood traditions, the opening toast of an evening serves multiple purposes: spreading the word on lost Brothers and also on heroes who should never be forgotten.

THE MECHANARIUM

Built in secret, deep beneath an ancient and complex Builder Citadel, the Mechanarium remains one of the most secret and protected facilities within the Southern Kingdoms. It lies within the Wildlands, somewhere between the Korg Humps and Kythros. The exact location is known only to a few besides those stationed there. Security and management is provided by the Sixth Spoke, with assistance from loyal Builders, Tinker’s Collectors and a small council whose names are not known to the Rangers. When it began and its exact size are a matter of speculation. What the Black Lantern does know is that the Mechanarium is the storehouse, laboratory, and testing ground for the most powerful devices. Headed up by the mysterious Tinker, the Mechanarium stands at the forefront of our understanding for Arcfire and Arcmancy.

The complex should be treated as a small hidden castle with the best defenses layered one atop another. “Master of the Gate” is one of the top honors granted to a Brother because he heads the security detail in the most secret facility on Shaintar. The Mechanarium also holds the Brotherhood’s main records on Alchemical experiments, notes on variations of magic, and in the bowels of the complex lurks “The Barn”, a vast storehouse for things thought too dangerous or unusual to research right now. The Directorate maintains a Dream Crystal at this location with Dream Scribes constantly on duty to move information in and out through the Garnet Tower.

THE SCRIPTORIUM

This first chapter house of the Society has grown into a sprawling complex of hostels, shops, and a central square (which is as likely to have a public play as it is to assemble a short wagon train for sending out goods from the capital). It combines the best of trade and recreation with places to stay for members who are far from home and some of the best chicken pies in Galadrea. At least, that is what the public sees. This Block Square complex was started during the founding of the capital with hidden vaults below the street, secret passages and tunnels below leading from the shops and chapter house, and nearly every living soul between Paper Road and The Hero’s Way are, at the very least, Rim Agents. This is the home of the First Spoke. It has the largest concentration of Brothers in the kingdom who are the bureaucrats, accountants, scribes, and analysts. There are small branches of other spokes here and it is the heart of the Brotherhood. It is hard to keep this a secret with the traffic, so they occasionally have to stop a small leak. The Directorate maintains a Dream Crystal at this location.

THE ROAD SHOW

Each year, the meeting place of the Council of the Southern Kingdoms changes so emissaries who speak with the voice of their lord or on rare occasion visiting kings must follow. One year it’s Lanthor, the next it’s Galadrea. The Brotherhood has a presence at each council to provide intelligence and quietly supplement local security forces without diplomatic incidents. This task falls mainly to the Fourth Spoke, shifting and setting up portable stations for

the other Brothers to use. This same set of skills is used to establish temporary bases for complex deep operations. The efficiency and “pop-up” nature of their work is one of the things The Guild of the Night Road is proudest of. For the Road Show, the Spoke draws a single Dream Crystal and Dream Scribe, so the council can have the most current information from the Scriptorium for their deliberations.

ISLE OF NORVOS

Recently revealed as the mists receded, the Isle of Norvos is located well off shore of Galea, closest to Aradar. After the last Merchants Gambit and some rather rough and tumble field diplomacy by the Sixth Company of the Silver Unicorn, the Shining Tower in Hispan was dismantled, strategic stores of crysarium were shipped off to the Crowns of the Southern Kingdoms, the Mechanarium, and the Isle of Norvos. For this, Master Builder Alojzy now is allowed and encouraged to begin rebuilding the ancient Builder stronghold left in shambles on the island, and offers sanctuary to any Builder wishing to turn his craft to productive use. The Isle is now under the protection of the Crown of Galea, with ongoing diplomatic discussions with the Great Council. The Order helps transport (or smuggle) Builders seeking the freedom of Norvos. The location of the island is on no public charts, and every effort is being made to keep its precise location secret.

SUBSTATION 9, ECHER’NAUGHT

Beneath the streets of Echer’Naught lies Substation 9, a secret location for Black Lantern operations in the city and surrounding area. The former hidden lab of a Flame-touched madman, the security of this hidden building beneath “Creel and Sons” blacksmith shop has the best Dwarven reinforced secret doors, locks, and security traps the Brotherhood could offer at the time of the refit. It was the home of Senior Brother Rogue, a legend among the Lifters until he moved to Sog and joined the Ninth Spoke to expand Grey Ranger communications.

The current station master is Brother Hardy, who bears a reclaimed name. He is a veteran member of the Sturdy Spoke and a specialist in moving supplies and information without attracting attention. As warfare along the borders changed and the Rangers began to capture unique and dangerous enemy artifacts, Hardy

adapted his tactics, creating and secretly improving and expanding an underground facility to concentrate and warehouse dangerous goods to more easily and quietly ship them to the Mechanarium. Of course, he and his team can hardly resist the chance to research these devices while waiting to ship these devices.

ALLIES

The Brotherhood has low friends in high places and high friends in low places. They trade in the rightness of their cause, favors, and occasional blackmail, as the stakes are too high to play by the rules. As such, enemies in your campaign may owe the Order a favor and become an ally when fighting mutual foes. Other groups that should be natural allies, like the Order of the Golden Torch, are sometimes at odds in the field; their goals are different. The scholar knights desire information to be freely dispersed while the Brotherhood wants to keep things men were not meant to know secret.

Do not let the list below limit your idea of allies. Many Wardens from Olara, lesser nobles from the Dominion, and those of the Church of Light deal with the Society for their own reasons.

DAME JENNIFER, KNIGHT COMMANDER OF THE ORDER OF THE CRIMSON ROSE, 6TH COMPANY OF THE SILVER UNICORN

Born humbly, Dame Jennifer rose from obscurity to become one of the greatest heroes of Shaintar. Her mother died shortly after giving birth to her and of her father - only the Ascended know. She was taken in by a local village and raised as a commoner, though she was far from common. Her adoptive parents, owners of the local Inn she was born at knew that this orphan girl was destined for greater things.

At the tender age of 12 she gathered every bit of money she had managed to scrimp and save and left the village to become a squire of the Virtuous Order of the Silver Rose, an order that accepted the low born, but only in the lowest capacity. Still, the young girl gained a mentor in Dame Lorrie Drawnel, a knight past her prime, but a warrior true. Unlike many of the poor souls squired to the knights of the order, Jennifer was treated not unkindly if harshly. Under the watchful eye of Dame Drawnel the young girl learned the ways of a warrior.

This training would serve her well. A month after her 16th birthday, her company set out on campaign, a small action to be sure. It would change her life forever because in very first skirmish Dame Drawnel took an arrow to the throat and died instantly. She was not alone. The knights of the order faced almost total annihilation were it not for the peasant girl who took up her sword and led them. Perhaps not to victory but she saved many lives and got the company out of danger.

For this, she was elevated to knighthood with honors in the hall of the Order back in Deridius; honored by some. Yet most knights simply couldn't accept a knight of common blood, so she departed their company...

...and joined the 6th Company of the Silver Unicorn. The rest is, as they say, history.

A friend and companion of Erasmus Flint, Dame Jennifer has allowed a hidden Lantern Station to be placed behind and below the tack room of her garrison in the village of Thorn in the Freelands. Information on the Prelacy is passed to her directly. It is said she has a personal interest in the return of the monarchy to Camon. In return for intelligence, assistance of a military nature may be called upon when dealing with agents of Darkness, Flame, or the Red Store in the Wildlands.

Dame Jennifer of Thornwood (circa 3123)

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d10**, Vigor d12*

Skills: Climbing d6, Fighting d12, Healing d6, Intimidation d8, Knowledge (Battle) d8, Notice d8, Riding d8, Shooting d8

Languages: Glean

Pace: 8 (d10 "run") **Parry:** 13 (3) **Toughness:** 15 (8)

Hindrances: Code of Honor, Loyal, Stubborn

Edges: Advanced Form, Arcfire Trained, Common-Bond, Counterattack, Elan, Fleet-Footed, Improved Block, Improved Frenzy, Improved First Strike, Improved Soul Bonded, One Against Many, Paladin, Sidekick (Chartran Valois), South-Born (Robust*), Student of Forms (Swordfighting), Trademark Weapon (Commander's Blade), Training

Gear: Commander's Blade (Str+d8+2, +2 Fighting, AP 3, Command, First Among Equals, Hold the Line, Quickness, White Silver), Dwarven Crossbow (2d6+2, Range 25/50/100, AP 2, 8 shots before reload), Arcfire Plate (+7, -6 Coverage, +1 Strength**), Large Shield (+2 Parry, +2 Armor versus ranged shots that hit), White Silver Ring (Sense Flame/Darkness or +2 if you already possess ability, +2 resists Puppet, Mind Reading, Fear, Taunt, and Intimidate)

Special Abilities:

- *Advanced Form*
- *Blessings of Archanon*
- *Chosen of the Horn*
- *Lightbringer*
- *Order of the Silver Uniform*

ERASMUS FLINT "MANTLET", SENIOR BROTHER OF THE ORDER THE BLACK LANTERNS

Erasmus Flint of the Lanthor Flints is the firstborn and inherited a now defunct Trading House in the free cities. Such failure is common enough in the speculative trade, but it is rare that a venerable name closes its doors. Being a man of letters, if no longer means, he has taken a post at the Academy in Galea, as a junior archivist and tutor to the sons of lesser merchants on comportment at court. Jocular and quick of wit, Erasmus turns up in the strangest places. Obviously well-travelled and conversant on many topics, it is equally likely to find him in the stacks or in the ale houses near the porters. Erasmus is of average height and weight, fair complexion, and prefers moderate dress. In most ways he is very much unlike the boys he tutors, but not much older in years.

At the least that is what is commonly believed. In truth, Master Flint has been a Brother of the Order for 23 of his 28 years. Over his lengthy career he has graduated both the School of 7 bell and the Theater of the Unseen. He has travelled far and wide with the Tarry Nots and the Guild of the Night road. As a Legacy of many generations of Brothers, Erasmus Flint carries on the mission while harboring deeper secrets than perhaps the Order is aware.

Erasmus Flint (circa 3123)

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d12, Spirit d10, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Alchemy d8+1, Climbing d6+2, Fighting d8, Healing d6+1, Investigation d12+3, Knowledge (History) d10+1, Knowledge (Politics) d6+1, Knowledge (All Else) d4+1, Lockpicking d6+2, Notice d8+1, Persuasion d10, Shooting d12, Stealth d8+2, Streetwise d8+3, Throwing d4

Languages: Galean, Olanar, Aradish, Fae, Gobliness, Red Store Cant, Malakaran, Camonere, Kaliness, Shaye, Childer, Black Lantern Finger Speech, Dwarvish, Builder (Proper), Old Imperial (Empire of Golden Sun).

Pace: 8 (d10 "run") **Parry:** 11 (5) **Toughness:** 10 (5)

Hindrances: Curiosity (Major), Loyal (Minor), Overconfident (Minor), Enemies: Everywhere (Major), Vow: Brotherhood of the Black Lantern (Major), Obligations: Black Lantern (Major), Vow to the King of the East (Major)

Edges: Arcfire Trained, Alchemist, Black Lantern Tattoo: Black Lantern Mystery, Black Lantern Training: Black Lantern Mystery, Compensatory Genius, Fast Talker, Fast Learner, Fleet-Footed, Investigator, Jack-of-All-Trades, Linguist, Lucid Dreaming: Black Lantern Mystery, Marksman, Resilient, Scrounger, South Born, Training

Gear: Arch-Fyre Hand Cannon (1-3d6*, Range 10/20/40, +2 Shooting within Close Range, Double Barrel [RoF 1 or 2], 1 action to reload), Arcfire Handcaster (Range 12/24/48, 2d8, AP 2, 4 shots before reload), Enhanced Arcfire Blade (+2 Fighting, Str+d8+2, AP 3), Dantaran Combat Whip (Str+d4, -1 Parry, Reach 2, on Raise Target suffers -2 Parry until next Action or Strength vs. Agility to throw target Prone), Arcfire Enhanced Shay'Von Leather (+5, -5 Coverage, +2 Soak rolls), Enchanted Arcfire Bracers (+3 Parry), White Silver Ring (Sense Flame/Darkness or +2 if you already possess ability, +2 resists Puppet, Mind Reading, Fear, Taunt, and Intimidate)

**A Hand Cannon does 1d6 at Long range, 2d6 at Medium range, and 3d6 at Close range*

Formulae (5 Essence each): Healing, Disguise, Intangibility, Quickness

Special Abilities:

- *Chosen of the Feather*
- *Order of the Silver Unicorn*

BARON GAIGE FORTUNE, ASSISTANT DOCK WARDEN, CITY OF HIGH PORT

Baron Gaige Fortune, a country noble known to be loyal to the Church of Archanon, was appointed to the job of Assistant Dock Warden in the City of High Port, by the Prelate himself during the bloody Iron Hand. The rank is a glorified clerk functionary position with a very modest chance for bribery. The family, of a cadet branch of the House of Rhodes, has held the post for three generations and is the oldest and long running deep cover assignment the Lanterns have ever had. During the chaos of the Iron Hand, the original Baron and his family were kidnapped on their way to High Port and replaced with a team of Black Lanterns to impersonate them, watch, and report on troop and supply movements through the Prelacy's main sea port. After all the years of this ruse (along with a several accidents to new nobles eyeing the title for one of their sons), the undistinguished Baron Gaige Fortune the Third is fully integrated into the Prelacy and above reproach. He provides information and very round-about help to the Cavaliers. The position is too valuable to be compromised and is the primary source on activities inside the Prelacy.

Baron Gaige (circa 3125)

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d10, Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d6, Intimidation d6, Gambling d4+1, Investigation d12+3, Knowledge (History) d8+1, Knowledge (Politics) d10+1, Lockpicking d4, Notice d8+3, Persuasion d8, Riding d4, Stealth d8, Streetwise d10+3, Tracking d6+1

Cha: +2 Pace: 6 Parry: 5 Toughness: 5

Gear: Short sword (Str+d6), Clothing, High Formal (+2 Cha), Lockpicks, Master Quality (+2 Lockpicking)

Edges: Alertness, Black Lantern Tattoo: Black Lantern Mystery, Black Lantern Training: Black Lantern Mystery, Command, Cover Identity: Black Lantern Mystery, Danger Sense, Investigator, Noble, Training

THE STARWATCHERS

In the lands of Shaya'Nor, those uncorrupted by Darkness are few. But the Starwatchers have set to the long, hard task of knocking the De'lears from their lofty throne to make their homeland a more honorable place. The Order is not fully aligned with the goals of the Starwatchers, but both sides exchange information and aid the other's agents.

This ruling came down under the Garnet Tower Seal close to 40 years ago and been standing orders ever since. Current requests for information involve a movement in the south called the Rising Darkness and the scaremongering rumor that the Necrolords have pulled Vainar back from the Void. The call has gone out to the Starwatchers for any information they can find in the Shaya'Nor archives on the Dark Plague that decimated the Elven race centuries ago, as rumors of a strange new illness are slowly breaking out in the disparate places along the borders of the Empire, Camon, and even deep in the Southern Kingdoms.

Something is brewing in the nation of Shaya'Nor. There are forces at work that are not aligned in the usual way. The De'Lears, in particular, seem to be taking their cues from a source not born of the Shadowlands. The destiny of a land given to Darkness is being determined by wills other than those of Vainar and the Thirteen. Word is often passed using the Kriaheim, the chosen of fortune who trade outside of the boundaries of Shaya'Nor. The Starwatchers are the best hope of finding out what's coming.

See Starwatchers entry in *Shaya'Nor* p.17-18

THE USUAL SUSPECTS

THE TOR MASTAK OF THE KAL EMPIRE

The Swords of the Emperor normally work within the confines of the Kal Empire and the Defiant Lands but in rare instances they venture further afield. Their solutions to problems are brutal and short, and their interpretations about threats to the Empire are liberal. Best to avoid them, if possible, or strike first if your paths are bound to cross. They work intimately with Adept-trained agents and can break a Brother if given time. Remember, they travel in packs, there is never just one Tor Mastak on the scene. Stats for basic Tor Mastak agent can be found in *Legends Arise* pg. 170 & *Legends Unleashed* pg. 128

THE SCHOZIM OF THE MALAKAR DOMINION

The Schozim are professionals who rival our own Rectifiers. Thankfully, they stay in the Dominion dealing with political turmoil among the houses. When on a mission inside the Dominion, remember that the Schozim are as skilled with poison as they are with a blade. However, if openly approached by one, hear him out. If he wanted you dead, he wouldn't be talking to you and unless you spotted him first, you probably would be. The Schozim are known for making common cause with foreigners, as many are allied directly with houses and cannot take action without permission. Strangely, a Schozim's word is as good as gold.

(Race: Alakar)

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d8, Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d10, Notice d6, Climbing d6+1, Lockpicking d6+1, Stealth d10, Streetwise d6, Throwing d6, Tracking d4

Cha: +1 **Pace:** 6 **Parry:** 9 (1) **Toughness:** 8 (2)

Edges: Acrobat, Close Fighting, Extraction, Martial Artist, Schozim

Gear: Assassin's Knife (Throwing: range 4/8/16; Str+d6, reduces Bypass armor penalty by 1), Burglar Leathers (+2, -5 Coverage; +1 Climbing, +1 Lockpicking), Bracers (+1 Parry), Lockpicks

THE PALADINS OF THE PRELACY

The Prelacy Paladins are barking mad. They believe in an imaginary (maybe) God and his divinely inspired power. The Theater Unseen has studied the Prelacy for decades and it makes any campaign of misinformation the Brotherhood has staged seem amateurish and gauche. While you will see no magic from them, their fighting ability is driven by a fierce fanaticism. They have also begun experimenting with Builder weaponry purchased from the Red Store because that does not violate their religious taboos. See: *Legends Arise* pg. 174 & *Legends Unleashed* pg. 132

THE RED STORE

The Red Store are the opposite of Order as if seen through a twisted mirror. Established by a mysterious powerful patron, The Merchant, trained in an array of useful tradecraft, and broken into specialty branches that work with a complex command and control structure, the Red Store is our natural enemy. The independent nature for profit making among some of its members means that upon rare occasions, the Brotherhood has needed to buy hard to find supplies from the Red Store. Don't for a moment think that their word is good or that they can be trusted beyond your sight. Even they fight the Secret War in their own way so membership itself is not a death sentence. They just tend to end up on the wrong side of the board most of the time, and with violent outcomes more often than not. See: *Legends Arise* pg. 174-176 & *Legends Unleashed* pg. 132-134

KNIGHTS OF THE GOLDEN TORCH

As an order of Galaen knighthood you would think that the Knights of the Golden Torch and the Brotherhood would be in perfect alignment. In practice, however, they have been in competition for the same ancient secrets. The knights intend to return with these secrets to the Crown for the better understanding of pre-history. The Brotherhood more often wants that same secrets destroyed or at the very least placed under a Garnet Tower Seal. Relations have at times been strained.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d8, Vigor d8



Skills: Fighting d10, Healing d6, Knowledge (Battle) d8+2, Knowledge (History) d8+2, Notice d6, Riding d6

Pace: 6 **Parry:** 9 (2) **Toughness:** 12 (5)

Edges: Brawny, Knight's Valor, Noble, Scholar (Kn: Battle, History)

Gear: Long Sword (Str+d8), Full Plate Armor (+5, -4 Coverage), Large Shield (+2 Parry, +2 Armor vs. ranged shots that hit), War Horse, Saddle: Fine Quality (+1 Riding)

THE SHAYAKAR NIGHTGUARD

If there is honor to be found among the opposition it is here among the Shayakar Nightguard. Their combination of magic and martial skills make them fearful opponents and they have the best gear in Shaya'Nor. That said, if you can best them in combat or foil their mission, you will have earned their respect. It is said that a Nightguard will take death over failure, but in several recorded cases, Brothers have bested them and turned them loose as is due a worthy opponent and when that Brothers least expected it, mysterious help arrived in or near the borders of Shaya'Nor. See: *Legends Arise* pg. 176-177 & *Legends Unleashed* pg. 134-135

LANGUAGES

BLACK LANTERN MISSION SIGN: BLACK LANTERN MYSTERY (I LANGUAGE SLOT)

This is a speedy set of combat hand gestures and specialty words and phrases. While some are lifted directly from the combat sign the Grey Rangers use, other gestures have entered into this visual patois from as diverse places as dock cranes, the backstage of theaters, auction trading and managing long wagon trains. Mission Sign, of course, draws the best from the Snakes Den alley sign. While it is impossible to have deep conversations, key points can be quickly expressed in absolute silence. Also some key gestures can be done clandestinely to warn or draw attention to a person or thing. **Requires line of sight and sufficient light to see the gestures.**

BLACK LANTERN FINGER SPEECH: BLACK LANTERN MYSTERY (I LANGUAGE SLOT)

Requirements: Black Lantern Mission Sign

This is a slower and more complex set of hand gestures generally requiring both hands free to

properly express a thought. The gestures are phonetic and therefore any language the Brother can speak can be “finger spoken”. The first large gesture between two Brothers finger speaking is the Mission sign for the choice of language. It is considered polite in a group of Brothers to use a language they all understand. This is not as fast as speech and even in combination with Mission Sign as a short hand, complex ideas take time to express. But it can be done in absolute silence. Requires line of sight and sufficient light to see the gestures.

BUILDER (1 LANGUAGE SLOT)

For nearly a century, the Order has had native speakers to teach the Builder language, but due to the exiled nature of the teachers, the pronunciation and grammar tend to cause an initial -1 on reaction roles to native speakers. Most Brothers speak it like a lowbrow foreigner.

PROPER BUILDER (1 LANGUAGE SLOTS)

Requirements: Builder

It is possible to speak proper Builder, and a number of high-ranked Brothers do so, but it requires additional study.

HINDRANCES

DAMAGED TATTOO - MINOR OR MAJOR

See Black Lantern Tattoo under Edges.

Occasionally, burning, scarring or wounds will cross the Lantern tattoo and damage it. If Minor, the Brother cannot use the Tattoo abilities, but can still be found by other members of the Order. If Major, the Tattoo is completely non-functional, and will have to be reapplied. The Major Hindrance may be removed by taking the Edge Black Lantern Tattoo: Black Lantern Mystery.

LEGACY - MINOR

A Legacy Brother will need to work harder than most to earn the respect of his fellow Brothers because he got his place by birth. Successes will be attributed to special training from kin and failures will be “because he is soft”. In actual practice, Brothers with this Hindrance suffer a -1 Cha during appropriate social situations (GM discretion).

EDGES

ARCFIRE DRILLED: BLACK LANTERN MYSTERY

Requirements: Seasoned, Smarts d6, Agility d6, Arcfire Trained

Since the unraveling of the Raven’s Cloak and the reemergence of crysarium, the Mechanarium has for decades been the key home of study for a large variety of scavenged Builder devices. The Brotherhood tried to study such things against the wishes of The Raven since the founding of the Order, normally disastrous results. The Black Lantern gains a +2 bonus on Repair checks for hotwiring a device to destroy it in a spectacular fashion or to use it in a related one-shot way that burns it out. A little knowledge is a dangerous thing. On a successful Repair check the Brother may cause an Arcfire Weapon a Painful Malfunction or an Arcfire device a Major Malfunction on its next use. On a Raise, the Arcfire Weapon has a Deadly Malfunction. GMs should apply negative modifiers as appropriate for the situation.

- **Deadly Malfunction:** The item explodes, doing 3d6 to the wielder and 2d6 to anyone within a Large Burst Template. It is utterly destroyed.
- **Painful Malfunction:** The item gives off a powerful discharge, causing a stun effect over a Small Burst Template. The wielder makes a Vigor check at -2 to avoid being shaken; everyone else affected rolls a straight Vigor check. The item needs a Repair roll at -4 (1d4 hours) to fix.
- **Major Malfunction:** The item ceases to work properly, requiring a Repair roll at -2 and 2d6 rounds to fix.

BLACK LANTERN TATTOO: BLACK LANTERN MYSTERY

Requirements: Seasoned, Spirit d6

Ground into the ink of the tiny black coach lantern tattoo is the crystal dust of some of the original Dream Crystals (see Gear). The location of the tattoo on the body is different in the traditions of each spoke, but it is small and easily hidden with clothing or hair. With training and a successful Spirit roll, a Brother can detect other Brothers within Spirit range. Nevertheless, Brothers normally use the standard Black Lantern identification sign, as the

tattoo detection is a closely guarded secret. A gentle blue vibe comes across the short distance of the Aether. A red vibe means “on a mission and not to be contacted”. Stories say there is another color for a broken vow, but none of the Brothers know what the color is. Legend also has it that the Directorate can change the Aetherial vibration of a tattoo at a distance.

BLACK LANTERN TRAINING: BLACK LANTERN MYSTERY

Requirements: Novice

Hindrances: Vow: Brotherhood of the Black Lantern (Major), Obligations: Black Lantern (Major), Vow to the King of the East (Major)

Each Spoke trains differently and emphasizes skills to suit their specialty. For some, it is supervised field work, for others it is study under knowledgeable scholars. The Brotherhood has room for all manner of specialists. Each is a shining piece in the Directorates mosaic.

Includes knowledge of the “secret handshake”, a standard greeting between Brothers and a visible identification. This is a short bow with both hands held at the level of the floating ribs. The number of digits extended indicates spoke assignment. Two closed fists indicates “we are being watched”. All fingers spread indicates “we are in immediate danger”.

Characters with this edge first gains three Hindrances (which do not count as towards the usual Hindrances that may be taken for benefits in building a Savage Worlds character)- Vow: Brotherhood of the Black Lantern (Major), Vow: King of the East (Minor), and Obligations: Black Lantern (Major). Obeying many masters is exceedingly difficult, but such is the lot of Brothers of the Order.

Second, the character may gain *either* five more skill points to spend on the same Skills named in Education (Healing, Investigation, and Knowledge Skills), as well as, a +1 on any Smarts-linked Skill and Common Knowledge rolls) appropriate to their specific Spoke (GM approval),

-or-

An Edge from the following list based on Spoke: 1st Spoke (Scholar), 2nd Spoke (Fleet-footed or Fast Flier), 3rd Spoke (Linguist), 4th Spoke

Black Lantern Mysteries

All Languages, Hindrances, Edges, and Gear tagged as Black Lantern Mysteries are only taught within the Order, so a non-Black Lantern player would need express permission from his GM and a clever justification to learn them.

(Connections), 5th Spoke (Thief), 6th Spoke (Arcfire Trained), 7th Spoke (Jack-of-All-Trades), 8th Spoke (Assassin), 9th Spoke (Training), though they must meet all Requirements.

Lastly, the character gains the Language: Black Lantern Finger Speech and any three additional Defining Interests drawn from the list of the same Spoke as above.

COMPENSATORY GENIUS

Requirements: Novice, Smarts d8

A trained Brother makes the people around him better. It is the leading question, the odd bit of knowledge or a snatch of an old poetry that makes the difference. A Brother’s comments can spur thought and as such, he may share his Bennies with anyone making a non-combat Skill rolls. Characters with this Edge gain the benefits of Common Bond for non-combat Skill tests. Bennies shared with this Edge also gain the +2 effects of Elan.

COVER IDENTITY: BLACK LANTERN MYSTERY

Requirements: Seasoned, Smarts d6, Spirit d6

You have a new identity with deep background research, collaborating forged documents as necessary, symbols of office and suggestions on wardrobe, hair style and accent. A distinct list of traits and quirks and humorous stories from earlier in your constructed life to make you more believable and let you blend into your new life seamlessly. Properly handled, you may take up this new life and be able to fit in or bluff most situations that do not include someone who knows you from your old life and suspects a fraud. As Senior Brother Jingles is fond of saying, “*You seldom meet a lonely lie.*”

Anyone having reason to question the ruse must make a Notice check at -4 to see something “off” about you, but may not understand why. An Investigation check would be required, also at a -4, to determine the forged nature of your identity. In most

situations this might simply result in being detained for questioning. In more extreme circumstances, having a cover blown may result in lethal situation. GMs are encouraged to be creative.

INSIDE MAN

Requirements: Novice

The Brotherhood has reach and friends in many unusual places. Once per session, the Black Lantern may offer up a Bennie to the GM and a short explanation on how his off-camera friend has helped him overcome a single challenge. Examples: A sketch map of a manor house on the back of a napkin, a key to a locked door above the lintel, a coil of rope on the roof to make good an escape. The Game Master should feel free to add elements of dramatic timing or refuse the Benny if it doesn't make sense at the time. Not all things go as planned.

LUCID DREAMING: BLACK LANTERN MYSTERY

Requirements: Seasoned, Smarts d8, Spirit d6

A set of repetitive mental exercises to allow your subconscious to reorganize information while you sleep to make intuitive leaps or unexpected connections upon awaking. "Our Lady of Inspiration" is used as a focal anchor and, in very rare cases, a Brother may have his report taken or a short message delivered by a famous Brother who has passed on. Characters may gain a +2 on any one Smarts or Spirit based Skill checks after a full night's sleep (6 hours). When a Brother suggests he sleep on it, it may well help him with an answer the following day.

THE MASK: BLACK LANTERN MYSTERY

Requirements: Novice, Notice d8+, Third Spoke membership

You learn and exhaustively practice the observation of other people's body language and mastering your own. You have, at need, the quintessential "card face": the inscrutable damping down of automatic facial expressions and the ability to gain information from the observations of the general "tells" everyone possesses.

Characters with this Edge gain the benefits of the Dominion Born Edge without needing to meet all the **Requirements:** +1 on any trait roll to see through or resist deception and manipulation. This

includes opposing Persuasion and Taunt checks, as well as resisting Powers like Illusion and Phantasm. Such a character may also make a Notice check at +2 (usually vs Persuasion) to determine if someone is lying to them. Such an attempt may only be made once per a conversation (scene).

RESUPPLY: BLACK LANTERN MYSTERY

Requirements: Seasoned, Will not supply anything you can reasonably make yourself

For a sanctioned affair, a Brother can draw from central stores and have delivered in the field up to 5 Essence of Alchemical potions to use on the mission. The Supplies can only be replaced in context of the story or in the planning of the next affair. Unlike spells, this Essence does not regenerate game after game but only at the completion of the story arc. Alternatively, a Brother can draw equipment of equivalent value (GM approval).

RESUPPLY (PRIORITY): BLACK LANTERN MYSTERY

Requirements: Veteran, Resupply, Will not supply anything you can reasonably make yourself

For a sanctioned affair, a Brother can draw double the amount of the Resupply edge from central stores and have delivered in the field of Alchemical potions or single use magic items. The Supplies can only be replaced in context of the story or in the planning of the next affair. Unlike spells, these Essenes do not regenerate game after game but only at the completion of the story arc. Alternatively, a Brother can draw equipment of equivalent value (GM approval).

GEAR

While much of the gear, poisons and potions are available in *Crossbows*, *Crafting*, and *Ka-ZOT!* (<http://bit.ly/2bK5XRC>) and sections of other published books, are available from the Order's craftsmen or through certain commercial vendors (yes, the Brothers have been known to buy from the Red Store), there are several items that are unique to the Orders' Observationists and Alchemists.

BRANDING POTION

In a world where tattoos and brands are used to mark ownership as well as affiliation, the Mechanarium has two variations on a branding potion. One potion will apply dark tattooed ink to the user's skin that will not smudge, or wash off until the second part of the potion is used to release the ink. The solvent does nothing for true tattoos but with proper application (acting or artist skill) the Branding potion can fool modest inspection and then be removed so you can pass unnoticed. The other variation works in a similar fashion to push up false scarring as produced by keloid wounds, whip marks or heat branding. The potion does not work across sharp bends in the flesh, as it will not bend quite right, and application will leave the pigment of the area lighter colored for a couple of days after removal. The potion draws some pigment from the skin to get the color match right. It will not work over hair or fur unless shaved back first. Results on Dregordians are unclear, as none were willing to test the potion.

Cost: 500, **Value:** -2, **Availability:** -6, **Weight:** n/a

DREAM CRYSTALS: BLACK LANTERN MYSTERY

Requirements: Black Lantern Tattoo, Lucid Dreaming, Spirit d8

Made by a Master Builder long before the Fall of the Spire, a box of 49 focus crystals tuned to the Aether to enhance the power of the holder's dreaming and act as an anchor for the dream self to travel to a single location in Corelisia. Tiva, the Dream Walker, commissioned these and several other great works, and had them sealed away on a mountain top, in what is now the Eternal Desert for her Chosen when the time was right.

This secure communication method, while limited in scope, is how the order stays ahead of the many forces of strife in Shaintar. This is the greatest secret the Brotherhood possesses and only the Directorate, very senior Brothers and the Dream Scribes know of their existence at all. To use a Crystal, you must be skilled at Lucid Dreaming and have a Black Lantern tattoo which the crystal uses to locate your physical form for the release and rejoining of your dream form. If your tattoo is damaged, or the crystal is removed from your body while dreaming, your dream self will be lost in Corelisia with no way to guide you back.



Currently, nine crystals are possessed by the current heads of each spoke so they can hold meetings inside the Garnet Tower in Corelisia. This is how the Hub meets and exchanges information so quickly across such a large organization. Another nine crystals are in possession of the spoke secretaries. The Dream Scribes ensure that one is always asleep at each key location and their dream self stays at the Garnet Tower to pass information to the Directorate or recite notes and reports to the scribes who guard them while they sleep and take dictation from the Hub Meetings for the Scriptorium, the Mechanarium and the temporary review of the Southern council. Fifteen have been ground up, and bits of the dust are mixed with the ritual ink used for each Black Lantern tattoo. With practice and proper training, a crystal user can locate and deliver or receive short messages while the target Black Lantern uses Lucid Dreaming to organize his mind while he sleeps.

Five crystals have been destroyed to prevent them from falling into enemy hands. No more than 1-3 are ever deployed in the field and then only for the most important missions. The remaining crystals are held in reserve to replace future losses.

ECLIPSE MEDALLION: BLACK LANTERN MYSTERY

This was the Mechanarium's failed attempt at duplicating the Empire's negation chains occasionally used by the Emperor's "Sword of Truth" to drag back Mages and Adepts for judgement. The shackles effectively disrupt the flow of essence so they cannot use their gifts while chained.

While the mastery of this artifact was beyond the Brotherhood, a lesser enchantment was discovered. Life and Light magic can be dampened and made more difficult to detect. For each -2 detection, a -1 spell casting penalty occurs. This medallion has been used to smuggle Druids and Priests of Light across the Camon border, Southern Shaya'Nor and deep within the Kal Empire. Of course, an Eclipse Medallion must be destroyed before allowed to fall into unauthorized hands.

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

MICHAEL O'HALLORAN, "DAINTY," VETERAN MEMBER OF THE 3RD SPOKE

Michael is the eldest son of the famous (notorious?) O'Halloran family of the Freelands, and the only one of thirteen children to never develop any arcane or mystical powers of any kind. Many, however, consider his gift for charm, deceit, and performance to magical in its own right, which he's put to exceptional use all across the land as a member of the Theater of the Unseen. Though his training and earlier experiences placed him primarily in the role of information gatherer and disinformation specialist, his yearning (and gift) for high-risk assignments takes him well outside the usual 3rd Spoke duties these days.

Michael has command of a great many languages: Aradish, Camonere, Galean, Gobliness, Kaliness, Malakaran, and Nazatir. He's incredibly accomplished with many dialects. He's also skilled with Black Lantern Finger Speech. His Defining Interests include Acting, Dance, Dialects, Disguise, Singing, Seduction, and Surveillance

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Climbing d6, Fighting d8, Investigation d8, Knowledge (History) d6, Knowledge (Politics) d6, Lockpicking d6, Notice d8, Persuasion d8, Stealth d8, Streetwise d6, Taunt d8, Throwing d6

Cha: +6 **Pace:** 6 **Parry:** 10 (3) **Toughness:** 9 (4)

Hindrances: Heroic, Loyal, Obligations (Major, Black Lantern), Phobia (Minor, Storms), Vow (Major, Brotherhood of the Black Lantern), Vow (Minor, King of the East)

Edges: Acrobat, Ambidextrous, Attractive, Bard, Black Lantern Training, Black Lantern Tattoo, Charismatic, Fast Talker, First Strike, Glib, Linguist, The Mask, Thief, Two-Fisted

Gear: Enchanted Elvish Longsword (Str+d8+1, +1 Fighting, +1 Parry, AP 1, White Silver), Elvish Rapier (Str+d6, +2 Parry, AP 1, White Silver), Enchanted Shayakar Night Chain (+4, +2 Stealth in shadows), Bracers (+1 Parry), Backpack, Bedroll, Lockpicks, Disguise Kit, Travel Clothing, Performance Clothing, Fancy Clothing

JULIETTE LEFLEUR, "BREEZE," SEASONED MEMBER OF THE 8TH SPOKE

An accomplished fencer, stunning beauty, and the walking embodiment of everything the Prelacy despises, Juliette Lefleur is the granddaughter (on her father's side) of a Shayakar Starwatcher and the Prelacy soldier who fell in love with her, helped wipe out his entire unit, and ran away with her. Her mother's mother was a wanted Cavalier who abandoned her high-ranking Church official husband to fight for Camon's freedom; he had her hunted and killed, which forever cemented Juliette's hatred of the Church. Born of conflict, betrayal, and rebellion, Juliette was a natural fit for the Far Reach when she sought out a means to strike back.

Juliette has command of the languages of Galean, Camonere, and Shayae, as well as Black Lantern Mission Sign and Black Lantern Finger Speech. She has the Defining Interests of Camonere Politics, Cooking, Counterespionage, Disguise, Poison, Red Store Operations, and Weapon Craftsmanship.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d8, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Climbing d6, Fighting d8, Investigation d6, Knowledge (Politics) d4, Lockpicking d6, Notice d6, Persuasion d6, Shooting d6, Stealth d8, Streetwise d4, Taunt d4

Cha: +2 **Pace:** 6 **Parry:** 9 (3) **Toughness:** 8 (3)

Hindrances: Enemy (Major, Bishop Armand Lefleur), Loyal, Obligations (Major, Black Lantern), Overconfident, Vow (Major, Brotherhood of the Black Lantern), Vow (Minor, King of the East)

Edges: Assassin, Attractive, Black Lantern Training, Black Lantern Tattoo, Counterstrike, Fast Learner, Fencer, Heirloom (Cavalier Saber), Florentine, First Strike, Lunge, Thief

Gear: Cavalier Saber (Str+d6, White Silver), Cavalier Parrying Dirk (Str+d4, +1 Parry), Crossbow (Range 15/30/60, 2d6, AP 2, 1 action reload), Partial Chain Armor (+3, -2 Coverage), Bracers (+1 Parry), Backpack, Bedroll, Travel Clothing, Flint & Steel, Whetstone, Lockpicks, Rope

RIM AGENT

Anyone who aids the Order in its mission can be considered a Rim agent, whether they are aware of their affiliation or not. Soldiers, politicians, criminals, and paupers all have a role to play in the ceaseless Secret War.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d8, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Climbing d6+2, Fighting d8, Healing d6, Investigation d6, Lockpicking d6+2, Notice d6, Riding d4, Shooting d6, Stealth d8+2, Streetwise d6, Survival d6, Tracking d6

Pace: 6 **Parry:** 7 **Toughness:** 6 (1)

Edges: Danger Sense, Thief, Training

Gear: Dagger/Knife (Str+d4) or Club (Str+d4), Bow (Range 12/24/48, 2d6), Full Leather (+1, Coverage-4), Bracers (+1 Parry), Backpack, Bedroll, Clothing (Travel), Grappling Hook (+2 Climbing), Lockpicks, Horse (Pace 10, "Run" d8), Saddle

CREATURES

BLACK LANTERN HORSES

Almost three hundred years ago, a great gift was received from the Emir of A'Davar as a reward for certain assistance in a delicate manner. Along with a property grant along the Plaza of Dawn in A'Davar came a herd of wild horses. Through cross breeding and training, two distinct lines have been deployed for Black Lantern service. Neither breed is much to look at, unlike their magnificent ancestors, but they fill distinct and valuable needs for the Terry Knots.

BLACK LANTERN ZEPHYR HORSES

The Zephyr is one of the fastest horses alive at a dead run. They are only used between Black Lantern way stations, because they require a rich diet. What they gain in speed, they lack in endurance, and while it is possible to ride one to death, no Lantern would ever willingly do that to such a magnificent athlete. They are generally deployed in series, with a rider going from station to station to change horses. The message moves swiftly along developed chains and the horse gets proper care after heroic effort.

Attributes: Agility d10, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d12, Vigor d10

Skills: Fighting d6, Notice d8

Pace: 12 **Parry:** 4 **Toughness:** 8

Special Abilities:

- *Fleet-Footed:* d12+1 when running instead of a d6
- *Kick:* Str
- *Size* +2
- Requires high-end fodder

BLACK LANTERN FIELD HORSES

The field horse is a different creature entirely. The breed is an indifferent runner, has a hearty spirit, a stomach of iron, and the ability to conserve water from its desert forbears. This horse is prized for long range travel, as it can forage nearly all of what it needs from any plant including those that are inedible. It can be ridden for twice as long as most mounts and can be pushed, but beyond a certain

point, there is a risk of damaging the animal. Not large enough to pull wagons, the field horse can still ride double for extended periods before fatigue sets in. As these horses are prized by agents deep in the field, a small Black Lantern brand is placed at the line of the neck generally covered by the mane. Someone who claims to own a field horse outside the Brotherhood is asking for trouble.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d10, Strength d12+2, Vigor d12

Skills: Fighting d8, Notice d8

Pace: 8, **Parry:** 4, **Toughness:** 10

Special Abilities:

- *Fleet-Footed:* d8 when running instead of a d6
- *Kick:* Str
- *Size +2*
- Can forage

BLACK LANTERN RAVENS

BLACK LANTERN MESSENGER RAVENS (STANDARD)

Messenger Ravens are used to communicate between distant stations in rough terrain or to send a report from the field to get it in the station system and on its way to the Scriptorium for deep analysis. After the decimation of the flock during the Godstrike Tempest, strong efforts have begun to improve breeding stock with the help of druids within the Order.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d4, Vigor d4

Skills: Fighting d4, Notice d6, Stealth d6

Pace Walk 4, Fly 10 (d8 Run) **Parry** 4 **Toughness** 2

Special Abilities:

- *Bite:* Str
- *Draft Rider:* as Aevakar Racial Edge
- *Homing Sense:* These ravens know a small handful of locations and how to reach them from almost anywhere.
- *Size -2, Small:* Attacks against them suffer -2 to hit.

BLACK LANTERN MESSENGER RAVENS (SOULBRIGHT BLOODLINE)

Used for the most vital missions, and very sparingly.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d4, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d8, Knowledge (Navigation) d6, Notice d8+2, Stealth d8, Survival d6

Edges: Alertness (+2 Notice), Dirty Fighter, Fast Flier

Pace Walk 4, Fly 13 (d10 Run); **Parry** 6; **Toughness** 5

Special Abilities:

- *Bite:* (Str+d4, AP 1)
- *Draft Rider:* as Aevakar Racial Edge
- *Homing Sense:* These ravens know a small handful of locations and how to reach them from almost anywhere.
- *Size -2, Small:* Attacks against them suffer -2 to hit.

ADVENTURE SEEDS

OLIVER'S ARMY

"Our man in Camden, Oliver O'Brian, has sounded the alarm. Children are going missing within days of the dark moon at full, and have not been found in brothels or at the slave traders. Suspected Red Store agents have been making exotic purchases on the black market and rumors of an abomination seen by several eye witnesses through the evening mist along the docks. Singly, they may mean nothing; together they smell of Necromancy well outside the borders of Shaya'Nor. Our man cannot move on this without tearing his cover; so he needs outside assistance. Bring your team to Low Town and take lodging at The Empty Cart road house. The team of Rim Agents will be contacted in the usual way."

In your investigation, you will face Thugs in the slave trade (S:LA Bandits and Bandit Prince, p 148), have a possible encounter with a member of the House of the Bleeding Tree on whose turf the kidnappings are taking place, and run across a Troll stealing

children near the docks in the night (S:LA, p163). When trying to save the children during the dark ritual, you will face eight Zombies and one Greater Zombie (S:LA, p 181) and the Necromancer (S:LA, p 173), attempting a summoning of a foul creature of darkness. His aim: to strike at the Meeting of the Seven Houses in order to sow chaos in Camden and double his personal power.

A LONG RIDE IN THE COUNTRY

“Proceed to Echer’Naught and see the station master there. He will deliver into your care a priest of Light, Father Hamlin, the book bag he carries and a complement of field horses and one Eclipse Medallion. You are to escort this irascible old scholar to the Great King’s Seat in Kar’Olnas in the lands of the Northern Tribes. Rumor has it that High King Ladislav, Lord of the Everwall has placed before his wise men the question of belief in the ancient ways before the dominance of Darkness and Flame that has consumed his neighbors. Father Hamlin has some far-fetched ideas on the similarities between the pre-fall worship of Ceynara and principles unearthed during the Brightstar affair with the worship of Raz’Dash during the ancient Empire of the Golden Sun. It’s a longshot, but if you can deliver him and he is allowed to make his argument before the high throne, the Church of Light may gain an ally in the north. Rely on your three pillars of training. You must insist the priest wear the Eclipse Medallion to disguise him from Childer packs along the border of the Empire or, should you chose, the other side of the river Shanais, the Dark watchers of Shaya’Nor. Of course, if your team is captured or killed, you will be expected to destroy the Eclipse Medallion. Good luck Brother, I hope to see you back this way again.”

This is a travel log adventure testing many urban and outdoor skills. Your charge will have all the self-righteous, prickly traits of the worst priests of Light presented in stage comedies. He is a man of deep faith and while he will begrudgingly wear the “blasphemous medallion that impedes his connection with the true power of the Light”, he will not tolerate sneaking quietly when he sees injustice and will demand his guides take action or he will feebly try himself. This is bound to cause troubles on a journey this long. Should you survive to get through the Northern Gathers and the Empire, you will find that Imperial agents in the court of High King Ladislav

will make an attempt on Father Hamlin’s life once his mission is fully understood. They intend that the High King will see the error of his ways and bend a knee to the Demon Queen. Or, in the fullness of time, his first son will.

There are many ways to get there, but for interest, going onward to Rhion where the fallout of the Open Hand Conference Massacre can still be felt, up the Shanais River to Sog (where you can find adventure seeds from the *Justice and Life Campaign* at shaintar.com) and further up river avoiding the Evershade Forest in the Northern Gathers. The Shaintar Guidebook: Goblinesh Gathers will give you plenty of fodder if your players insist on cutting straight across and skirting the Defiant Lands. The group can avoid the Empire completely if they lay a path lays through the Shaya’Nor (see Shaintar guidebook: Shaya’Nor for details about the likely pearls.)

Besides the harsh environment and the long distance to travel, some troubles you are likely to encounter: a) Father Hamlin demanding you intervene in an obvious shakedown of simple peasants leaving a market day (Legends Arise, p 168), by an Enforcer and several Thugs (Legends Arise pp 167-168); b) Avoiding a large band of Ratzin and Ratzin Scouts (Legends Arise, pp 155,157) patrolling the Empire’s borders looking for runaway slaves; Deeper into the empire near the Northern kingdoms you may run into c) a Kal battle Leader and several Kal warriors (Legends Arise, p 170) patrolling the frontier; d) Hillmen of the Northern Tribes who may not know if you are friend or foe, use Experienced Soldier for the tribal elder and Soldiers for the rest (Legends Arise, p 177) and if befriended they will escort you all the way to the gates of Kar’Olnas.

Strangers are welcome in the court of the High King, but language and customs barriers may provide some problems and as soon as the mission of good Father Hamlin is known, the Tor Mastak group leader using the name of Istvan with his faux war band (including a Tor Mastak Adept and two Tor Mastak) embedded in the outer court of High King Ladislav, currying favor with his first son, Prince Isak, will attempt an assassination of the foreigner.

THE GREAT SECRET - GM's EYES ONLY

"What we need is a plan so simple no one has ever thought of it before. Our Lady of Inspiration, please don't fail me now."

~ Brother Mantlet , Battle of Eagle Watch

Long before Landra became the Soulfinder, her home was a castle, deep within the Vaiwood Forest, east of the Howling River. The foundation of the castle was set with the aid of Fierda the Architect, at the request of Landra's mother, Tiva the Dreamer. A great, naturally shaped, sonically alive, crysarium vault was constructed deep in the foundations for what later become known as the Castle of the Lady. Tiva was one of only two of the Starfather's children given the power of prophecy, and unlike her fellow Scion, Thrall the Seer, who had Jerek the Merchant whispering aspirations of power in his ear, she kept what she saw to herself. She inspired her own children through dreams to try to save what they could of the Starfather's creation in the war to come. She constructed special gifts for her Chosen, who would be picked from the survivors of the war, and went into hiding within her vault, dreaming her dreams and traveling the length and breadth of the Land of Dreams, Corelisia, where her spirit wanders free, learning, listening, and inspiring the dreamers of the world. She understood that many of the Scions and their offspring would continue naked grabs for power that would destroy the Star Empire, the Starfather and the Spire. She chose instead to quietly aid her children, Vainar the Fallen, Saiderin the Raven, and Landra the Soulfinder. She played her part in the Travelers Enigma and waited until she was needed most. When she finally stirred, it went unnoticed, protected, and almost forgotten below the castle by Landra and the Spirits of the Eternal Forest. Only the righteous can find their way to her gates. It was the safest place Tiva could dream of.

It was an open secret that someone was directly opposing Jerek the Merchant's machinations, and the Raven was the obvious candidate. The Brotherhood played along, and all below the rank of Senior Brother believed it to be a living fact. But in her quiet way, Tiva sent subtle dreams out to many people to

grant them what their hearts called for, trying to show them what they needed most. She filled dreams with hope and of a better world. She could give them the glimpses of the future but then she would be no better the Thrall. And so the Secret War rages time out of mind. Members of the Order come and go, receiving guidance in their dreams while reporting the tiny bits of the mosaic they uncover. While Tiva cannot grant mortals her powers, she always finds ways for her Chosen to use Corelisia to their advantage.

With training, dedication, and a Dream Crystal, the dream self of a Brother can unerringly find its way to a place they call the Garnet Tower, anchored to Shaintar through Tiva's crystal cavern: a shared dream and metaphysical meeting place of the Directorate. The Dream Scribes discuss and disperse information through the Spokes during Lucid Dreaming or, very rarely, to take reports or send short messages to individual members in the field. This is the central mystery of the Senior Brotherhood and all would die before revealing it. The Order would collapse were it known. Using the Dream Aether for communication is completely unknown outside of the Senior Brothers, and any research along those lines is placed under a Garnet Tower Seal and forbidden at the Mechanarium.

The final secret of the Garnet Tower, or the Dream Castle, as it is known to its residents, dead Black Lanterns who have chosen not give up the fight and move past the Veil. It is they who take the reports for our Lady of Inspiration and turn them into the Garnet Tower for the use of the Directorate during Lucid Dreaming in the field. Within the Dream Castle, the dead are as real as the living and it's the perfect place, where memories are stored and where dreams become reality. Use the Honored Dead stats for Lantern Spirits (S:LA, p 152)

Once Senior Brother Jingles was asked how the Brotherhood was expected to overcome so much evil in the world. It is said he returned a rictus smile to the novice and spoke in a low voice, "We cheat, dear boy... and we hope that that will be enough".

