

Mnemosyne Genre Packet



*An OWbN Guide to the
Cult of the Mnemosyne*

Credits

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-Kevin O'Connor, Malkavian Coordinator 2017



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"I cannot tell you the naked fear I feel, putting down these words for once and for all. Perhaps I will regret them. Perhaps they will never see print. Yet, it is my nature to report this. It is, as they say, in the blood."

-Aristotle de Laurent

Introduction

"If you tell a story to two different people, then individually ask each of those two people to tell that story back to you, you will now have three unique versions of the story. The first person's version, the second person's version, and of course, your version. Which of these versions is true? You're probably thinking that your version is the true one. It's your story after all, right?

But that's the funny thing about memories. Like the River that always flows and is never the same water twice, memories are fickle and ever-changing. If you are keeping them solely in your mind, then they are in a constant state of flux. Mankind recognized this weakness a very long time ago and began to carve their memories into the earth and place this mental burden upon the physical reality around them. But even stone succumbs to the River's flow eventually. The entropy of time erodes all things...

Except for us. We, the static creatures of the night who never age and only know hunger. We drink not from the River, but from the veins of mortals. The same mortals who cannot remember what they ate for breakfast last Tuesday. But we remember everything we eat, don't we? We remember because it becomes a part of us. Mortals say "you are what you eat", but I say that we are *who* we eat.

That is our purpose, my Seekers. That is our goal. Some may say it is to uncover our lost history. Some others may say it is to collect all



forgotten knowledge. But our ultimate goal, above all else, is to *be everyone*. Because when three people tell three stories, the River diverges into three smaller streams.

The Truth...the Truth will be revealed only when all the streams merge back into one. One story, one Truth, one River.

We are that River. We are the Mnemosyne."

-A speech given by Deacon Janus at a Mystai promotion ceremony in the Paris Secret Library, March 1955


History of the Mnemosyne

"Would you believe me if I said that nobody here really seems to remember when the Cult started exactly? I mean, maybe the Deacon remembers, but she is kind of...well, you know, kind of all over the place with her stories. Hard to tell who she thinks she is half of the time. But hey, I can tell you all that I remember about the Cult. My stories may not be as interesting as the

Deacon's, but at least they are easier to follow, right?



From what I remember, we used to be the same Cult as those reckless ignoramuses that call themselves the "Jocastians". Back then, we were just a bunch of Malkavians trying to survive a time that some Cainites are now calling the "Dark Ages". We were considered a "Low Clan" back then and we weren't taken very seriously.



A few gibbering and drooling maniacs here and there really ruined the reputation for the rest of us. But that's besides the point. The point is that the more "rational" among us became quite insular and withdrawn from our fellow Cainites. We used our collective minds to study the nature of the Cainite condition and to solve the puzzles of reality itself. Wait...no, that's not right. I was...we were trying to learn something else. What was it? It's right at the tip of my tongue...something about demons...

Well anyway, that doesn't matter. We weren't the Mnemosyne at that point, I think. We became the Mnemosyne later on. But that's how it started. From unity with our fellow Clanmates. Always remember that, Initiate. The power of Malkavians when gathered together for a singular purpose is nearly incomprehensible in scope and should never, ever be underestimated. It is from that power that the Mnemosyne were born.

But keep in mind the key part of what I just mentioned. "For a singular purpose". That is what brought us together and that is what split us apart. Our singular purpose back then was to discover the true nature of our fellow Cainites. To discover the truth behind the myths and the lies and the...what they are calling it now? "Fake News"? Yes, that is what we are trying to look past. The Fake News. But where is the truth to be found? In old and dusty tomes? Sure, maybe, those are a good starting point at least. But we know for a fact that what is written can be unreliable and is always dependent upon the memories and honesty of the author. And so, like good journalists, we go straight to the source. Find the author, search their mind, find the truth that I are hiding from the world and from themselves.

Back in the day, we didn't have the art of Meminisse to do this. We used more, well, vulgar methods to obtain the memories of our victims. Through the Amaranth, we learned how to extract the Truth from another's heart's blood. We were thirsty for such knowledge, as I still are of course, but now we have learned how to temper that thirst with caution and logic. Back then, well, we think some of us became addicted to it. I remember, back from when I was a Setite in


London a couple hundred years ago, that he noticed some mortals were more prone to addiction than others. I think it's the same with Cainites. Some of them just couldn't handle the high that came with the Truth's enlightenment. And so we had to develop a different method of extraction. But the addicts, they didn't like that...

I remember toiling endlessly as a few of our researchers at the time. I remember working with myself on how to get the Truth straight from the mind instead of the soul. But the mind is complex and even mortal brains have natural resistances and defensive mechanisms to such mental manipulation. The key, I discovered with a couple other me's, was to replace the stolen



memory with another one of equal time. Do you remember that movie with Harrison Ford as the archeologist adventurer? Oh, right, Indiana Jones. Well, remember when he picks up that statue and puts down a bag of sand in its place so as to bypass the trap mechanism? I think that's where my inspiration came from. Wait, no, that can't be right, that talkie is fairly recently, isn't it? I...we...did this before the talkies...movies, I mean. "It belongs in a museum!" Remember that line? That should be our motto, yes? "It belongs in the Mnemosyne!" I'll have to recommend that to the Deacon.

Anyway, where was I? Oh, right, well the diablerie addicts didn't care much for Meminisse. It didn't give them that intense rush that you get from the Amaranth. It didn't have that "sweet nectar" they kept prattling on about. A few of I tried to explain the benefits: The subject didn't have to be destroyed, they could get longer and more precise memories without all that personality baggage that came along with it, and best of all, I wouldn't have to sacrifice ourselves to the Cult for our knowledge to be passed on to their students. For some reason, we think they saw all of those benefits as drawbacks. Especially the "no destruction" benefit. As



we recall, most of our targets for Truth extraction were actually other Malkavians outside of the Cult. Do you remember why we deserved it? I think it's because we exposed their past relationship with the Baali and hunted down their friends. That's why they ate our souls. Revenge...it is a sour taste that is impossible to rinse from your mouth once you've sipped of it...

Um, sorry, a bit of a tangent there! Getting back on track...the history of the Mnemosyne. Our history, yes. Well, those addicts I mentioned, we were upset and we argued constantly with us about it. It was putting me at risk to keep destroying us like that and eating my souls. But through all that arguing I realized that there was a bigger rift in my numbers than we thought. The philosophical differences were beyond just about the Amaranth rituals. It was about the purpose of the Cult itself. What were we searching for in all these memories? What did I need? What was his name? What are I going to do with all these secrets we're collecting? What does it all mean? Those kinds of questions and more were asked and our Deacon at the time did not have satisfactory answers for those loudmouth nectar-addicts. They wanted to spread the secrets to the world and shed light on the machinations of the Ancients. But even a night-old Nosferatu fresh from whatever trash can that birthed it knows not to give secrets away like that without proper compensation in return. It's the whole concept of Meminisse. You give and you take. Throwing off the balance is dangerous. Especially in the nights we live in now. If you attract too much attention, well...then you'll probably end up disappearing in a puff of smoke...

Right, so the loudmouths split away from us and they tried to call themselves the Mnemosyne as well and so there were two Mnemosyne, and I think they tried calling us the Lethe at one point but that didn't really catch on so they just adopted their own name instead. They named themselves after Jocasta of Thebes, who I think they think was a Malkavian of great importance to their cause. Or still is? I don't know, we think she goes by a lot of names. I all do. She has to. Or else.

But yeah, now they are the Jocastians and they are still out there, getting high and photocopying all of our hard work to the masses like a bunch of delusional Marxist poseurs who think they

understand the world after taking a couple college courses. It's pathetic, but also quite disruptive and needs to stop. That one called Aiysha was taken care of, but there will be more Aiyshas in the coming nights. Much more. Don't ever forget, Initiate, what to do when you find one of them. You bring them to we, and I'll show you the Truth hidden in their filthy black veins! We'll drink them all dry and see how they like it for a change!

Revenge...it is sour taste. Best served cold, they say. That's fine, it's how I prefer it. It's the one thing that they can't seem to forget. A memory that persists beyond all others, despite my best efforts. When all else is forgotten...all they can remember is their Fury."

-A one-sided conversation overheard recently of Deacon Jane speaking to herself in the mirror, May 2017

Cult Hierarchy

There are three ranks within the Cult of the Mnemosyne. Only the first two, **Initiates** and **Mystai**, are playable by PCs. The third rank, **Deacon**, is NPC-only at this time. They are the sole leader of the Cult and they are the one who guides the direction of the Cult and makes the final decision on who can be Initiated into the Cult and who can be promoted to Mystai. The following are these ranks described in greater detail along with their mechanical Advantages and Disadvantages.



Initiate - A vampire wishing to join the Cult of the Mnemosyne must first gain the attention of one of its Mystai members for sponsorship. This Mystai will then test the prospect in various ways before finally recommending them for Initiation. The Initiation Ceremony is performed by

the Deacon and is uniquely tailored to each individual prospect but they are always an intense and insightful experience for this newcomer. If they survive the Initiation, they are considered


Initiates and will continue their training under the Mystai who sponsored them until the Deacon decides they are ready for advancement.

Initiate Advantages:

- A teacher for the unique Mnemosyne Discipline known as *Meminisse* up to the third level called *Change their Mind*.
- Access to the various and hidden Secret Libraries of the Mnemosyne scattered across the world, which may provide knowledge to purchase the following Abilities (pending your local ST approval and the appropriate Coordinator(s) approval): *Mnemosyne Lore 3*, *Noddist Lore 3*, *True Enochian 1* and *Babel 1*. Other Lores up to level 3 could also be requested and approved on a case-by-case basis with proper justification. You never know what you're going to find in all those old books...
- A teacher to learn the Combination Discipline *Remember Me?*.

Initiate Disadvantages:

- The Flaws "**Dark Secret: Mnemosyne**" (1 point) and "**Enemy: Jocastians**" (3 points) which can never be bought off for as long as you are in the Cult. The reason why Mnemosyne receive the Enemy Flaw should be obvious, but the Dark Secret Flaw is because most Mnemosyne tend not to advertise their membership. While it's not forbidden to do so, most other vampires do not trust the Mnemosyne. They are completely unheard of in the Sabbat, where the Jocastians seem to be hiding. In the Camarilla and Anarch Movement they can sometimes be tolerated based upon the temperament of the local authority, but they usually are eventually chased out of town simply for knowing too much. Many Elders of the Camarilla still remember when the Mnemosyne used to be ritual diablerists like the Jocastians, and the Noddist literature that they study makes




them targets for the Josians as well. Mnemosyne tend to remain Independent of the Sects more often than most Malkavians and normally do not disclose their Cult membership unless it benefits them in some way. The Flaw represents the inherent risk of doing so, though it should not be considered an automatic death sentence in all cases when exposed.

- The tests leading up to you joining and the Initiation Ceremony itself left you shattered in some way or another. There are pieces missing. Choose one of the following **Derangements**, which like a Malkavian's primary derangement, can never be permanently removed as long as you are a member of the Cult: ***Dissociative Fugue***, ***Obsessive/Compulsive***, or ***Sanguinary Animism***. If you already have one of these Derangements, you may not choose it as your Mnemosyne Derangement. If you already have all three, one of them must be chosen to be made permanent during your Cult membership and it should be altered to fit with the Mnemosyne themes of dissociative identity issues that stem from experiencing too many different foreign memories or from being obsessed with studying Noddist Lore and having compulsions to seek out the Truth at all costs.

Mystai When an Initiate has proven to their sponsorship mentor and to the Deacon that they are ready for advancement, they will undergo a special test called a Threshold to test the limits of the Initiate's mind. If the Initiate does not go insane to the point of becoming dysfunctional to the Cult's purpose, then they will be inducted into the ranks of the Mystai. The Mystai are the ones entrusted with the *true* libraries of the Mnemosyne, which are the minds of their fellow Mystai and the Deacon themselves. The memories that the collective Mystai possess are more than any amount of physical libraries could ever hold with books.

The Mystai are divided into two distinct roles: **Memory-Seekers** and **Memory-Collectors**. All PCs who advance to the rank of Mystai will be chosen to be Memory-Seekers, as being a Memory-Collector is not a fulfilling player experience. The **Memory-Seekers** are given the



freedom to venture out into the world to collect more memories for the Cult and to return to deposit particularly valuable memories into the Collectors and sometimes into the Deacon himself. Most members of the Mystai fall into this rank, including notable ones such as Aristotle de Laurent, whose contributions to the collective have been truly remarkable.

Some Mystai, however, are found to have an extraordinary amount of “storage space” in their minds and are kept safely in a secret and secure location with the Deacon for deposits and extractions as needed. These are the **Memory-Collectors**, who serve as the Cult’s main depository for all of its most valuable knowledge and secrets.

Mystai Advantages:

- A teacher for the fourth and fifth levels of the unique Mnemosyne Discipline known as *Meminsse* which are called *Exchange of Things Past* and *Thief of Minds*.
- Opportunity to earn access to the stored memories and secrets of the Memory-Collectors, which may provide knowledge to purchase the following Abilities (pending your local ST approval and the appropriate Coordinator(s) approval): *Mnemosyne Lore 5, Noddist Lore 5, True Enochian 3, and Babel 3*. Most other Abilities could also be purchased up to Level 5 pending the aforementioned approvals through the many various experiences the Collectors have in their storage. However, none of these Abilities are guaranteed at this rank and they all **must be earned** through research, field work, and depositing valuable memories into the Collectors.
- A teacher for the Combination Discipline *Learn From Their Mistakes*.

Bloodline or Cult?

Many occult scholars outside of the Cult have debated whether or not the Mnemosyne is actually a Bloodline or just a Malkavian Cult. The answer is that it is both a Malkavian Bloodline

and a Cult. You must be Embraced into the Bloodline to be a Mnemosyne by blood, but anyone could theoretically join the Cult. Mortals who have not already been Embraced are sometimes noticed and tested for Initiation in the same way that Embraced vampires can be. The Initiation Ceremony for a mortal just happens to include a particularly traumatizing/eye-opening ritualistic Embrace as well and typically have a lot more to catch up on in their studies as they are welcomed into the secret supernatural world for the first time.

Vampires who join the Cult already Embraced are taught *Memnisse* at Out-of-Clan XP costs and can never teach it to others (not even to their fellow Mnemosyne).

Mortals who join the Cult and become Embraced by a member of the **Mnemosyne Bloodline** are



considered Mnemosyne as their Clan. This Clan functions identically to the Malkavian Clan with the following exceptions:

In-Clan Disciplines: *Auspex, Obfuscate, Memnisse*

Clan Advantage: Instead of a free level of *Awareness*, they receive a free level of *Enigmas*. They are still connected to the Malkavian Madness Network and may purchase the *Malkavian Time* Ability as normal Malkavians do.

Clan Disadvantage: Their permanent Derangement must be chosen from the list of Mnemosyne Derangements found in the Initiate Disadvantages section. They do not have to choose a second Derangement when becoming an Initiate, as this is the Derangement that the Initiate Disadvantage refers to. Just like a Malkavian, their primary Derangement may shift over time, but at least one of their Derangements must always be one of those three listed.

Members of the Mnemosyne Bloodline have the same access to Malkavian Merits and Flaws that normal Malkavians do, but they **do not have Dementia In-Clan** and thus cannot naturally purchase anything that requires *Dementia*, including most Malkavian Combination Disciplines, without a teacher and Malkavian Coordinator Approval.

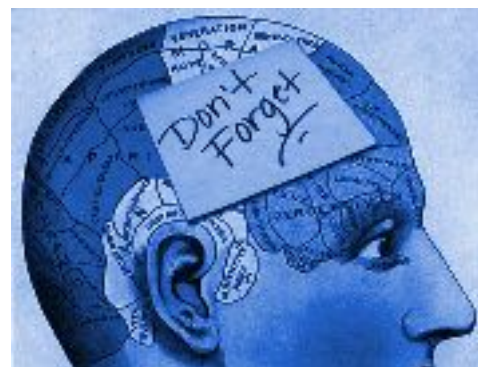
However, any PC Embraced into the Mnemosyne Bloodline is capable of developing the entire *Meminisse* Discipline on their own without waiting to rank up to Mystai, and they are also capable of teaching *Meminisse* to others even outside of the Cult. Doing so, however, is grounds for a “Total Memory Extraction” procedure and subsequent destruction if caught by the Deacon.

Creating a PC or NPC Embraced into the **Mnemosyne Bloodline** and teaching *Meminisse* to someone else both require **Malkavian Coordinator Approval**.

Meminisse


(Pronounced: Mem-in-ees)

The Discipline of *Meminisse* (the Latin infinitive: “Remembering”) allows the Mnemosyne to perfect their minds ability to recall past experiences and even draw memories directly from the mind of another. All uses of *Meminisse* retest with the *Enigmas* Ability for both offensive and defensive purposes. Some uses of *Meminisse* require physical contact with the target’s forehead. This does not need to be skin contact and so covering one’s forehead with clothing or even a helmet should not be considered a defense against those powers.



1 - Mnemonic Devices

Before a Mnemosyne can learn to control the memories of others, they first must learn to master their own memory. This power grants the user a perfect memory and functions identically to the “Eidetic Memory” Merit. This effect is passive and is considered always active and has no greater effect if the user already possesses the




“Eidetic Memory” Merit. In addition, the user may spend a temporary Mental Trait in order to receive a *Mnemonic Device* retest in all challenges that involve the Disciplines known as *Forgetful Mind* (Dominate) and *Telepathy* (Auspex). This retest may not be used more than once per challenge.

2 - Refresh my Memory

A Mnemosyne must keep their minds fresh and sharp at all times in order to absorb as much knowledge and history as possible. To this end, the Mnemosyne have developed a quick mental technique to help stimulate their minds and the minds of others. Once per night, a Mnemosyne may restore all of their temporarily lost Mental Traits at no cost as a free action. They may also spend a temporary Willpower to restore another individual's temporarily lost Mental Traits by placing their hand on the target's forehead for one full round. This effect can be used in addition to the normal Willpower expenditure that everyone can use to refresh a Trait category once per night. No single individual, including the user of this power, can be affected by this same power more than once per night, even if it comes from a different source.

3 - Change their Mind

The Mnemosyne understand the disorientation of multiple perspectives and viewpoints more than most. They know that one's past experiences are crucial in shaping their opinions and beliefs. Therefore, they have developed a tool in which to directly change the core beliefs and behaviors of another by implanting random bits of foreign memories into their subconscious mind. While the target cannot not actively recall these random micro-memories, their behavior and viewpoints become subtly reprogrammed temporarily until their subconscious mind can get a full eight hour sleep and filter them all out to discard them like fragments of a strange dream.





System: Engage in an opposed Mental Challenge with any target in line of sight. If successful, the target's Nature is switched to another random Nature for the rest of the night. The user is unable to choose this new random Nature but they are aware of which Nature was randomly chosen if successful. It is recommended to use a small deck of cards with Natures from the books pre-written on them, similar to a *Total Insanity* (Dementation) deck. If the Nature randomly selected is the same Nature the target already possesses, you may redraw until a different one is drawn.

4 - Exchange of Things Past

A Mnemosyne uses this power to permanently exchange a memory (which must be no longer than a scene or hour) with a target, but for every memory he or she exchanges, the Mnemosyne must sacrifice a memory of equal length as a replacement. The Mnemosyne can choose to sacrifice any memory they currently possess, even ones they have stolen from others. But to steal a specific memory from another, they first must be aware of the memory's existence, which may require uses of *Telepathy* (Auspex). Even if the target's memory has been repressed with *Forgetful Mind* (Dominate), as long as the Mnemosyne know it is there, they can steal it. If they are wrong about the memory's existence (for example, if they heard a false rumor that the target witnessed a Masquerade breach that they actually did not) and they attempt this power, it is considered automatically failed.

In order to make this exchange, the Mnemosyne must briefly touch their target's forehead (which may require a Physical Challenge) and then must spend a temporary Mental trait and engage in a contested Mental Challenge with the target. The target may not relent to this Mental Challenge, as the Mnemosyne must fight against the target's natural subconscious defense mechanisms. If successful, both the Mnemosyne and the target are aware that the exchanged memory is not theirs, but neither will remember



what the memory was that was lost, only that they have lost a memory. Targets who lose memories of personal significance or who gain exceptionally painful memories may, at ST discretion, gain a Derangement.

It is rumored that some Mnemosyne Elders have a version of this power which can copy the entire memory of a target to be deposited into the vast mental repositories of the Memory-Collectors.

5 - Thief of Minds

The Mnemosyne have perfected the art of exchanging memories to the point where they can turn it into an attack. This power costs a Temporary Willpower and requires the Mnemosyne to succeed in a contested Mental Challenge with any target in line of sight. If successful, the target gains the 2-Trait Flaw: Amnesia for the rest of the scene or hour (whichever is shorter). The Mnemosyne may expend an additional temporary Willpower in order to extend this to the rest of the night.

Victims of this power lose all memory of who he or she is and was even though they retain the use of their abilities, supernatural powers and other such Traits. Victims may become confused quickly and are easy targets for suggestion and persuasion, suffering a -2 Trait penalty to any challenge involving being manipulated.

It is rumored that some Mnemosyne Elders possess a version of this power which can destroy an individual's entire memory permanently.

Combination Disciplines

Remember Me? (Obfuscate 3, Meminisse 3)

Initiate Level Rarity

The Mnemosyne often have to quickly gain the trust of others outside of the Cult in order to infiltrate into places where they do not belong and learn forbidden secrets they are not supposed to know. With this Combination Discipline, a Mnemosyne can fool someone into thinking they remember them vaguely. It does not supernaturally charm the individual, put instead gives the target enough sense of recognition to see the Mnemosyne as an acquaintance whose name they cannot quite remember but with a feeling that they have seen them before somewhere. The awkward embarrassment of recognizing someone and not quite remembering who they are often makes them more susceptible to manipulation and disarming their suspicion of why you are somewhere you should not be.



System: This power functions like *Mask of a Thousand Faces* (Obfuscate) for all mechanical purposes, including spending the temporary Mental Trait to assume a specific form even though you are not technically appearing any different than usual. The only difference is that you use the *Enigmas* Ability as a retest instead of *Stealth*. The defender still uses Investigation when seeing through it with *Auspex*, though if they are given a sufficient reason to suspect a ruse (ST discretion applies) by something the Mnemosyne says or does, they may make an opposed Mental Challenge without the use of *Auspex* with *Enigmas* being the only Ability retest available for both sides.



Learn From Their Mistakes (Auspex 4, Meminisse 4)

Mystai Level Rarity

The power of Meminisse to steal memories can often be a long and arduous process if a Mnemosyne is trying to steal all of the knowledge or training that another individual has learned about a specific subject. With this Combination Discipline, a Mnemosyne can take only the important bits of knowledge they are seeking from an individual without all of the unimportant memories and details about their learning process. The transfer is more temporary than when stealing entire memories, but the knowledge that the Mnemosyne becomes exposed to is often easier to retain afterwards.



System: Spend anywhere from one to five temporary Mental traits, choose any one Ability, and then engage in an opposed Mental Challenge with any target in line of sight. If the target does not have any permanent levels in the Ability selected, this power automatically fails. If successful, you may then steal one temporary level of that Ability from the target per Mental trait expended for the next scene or hour. If more Mental traits were spent than the target's Ability rating maximum, then the user receives all of the target's Ability levels but the extra Mental traits are still spent. These temporary levels can be spent as normal (mostly for retests, though some Abilities have other types of temporary expenditures such as Etiquette and Politics), even if you have already used your maximum amount of temporary levels for that Ability. If your target's maximum rating in that Ability was higher than your own before this power was used, then your Ability rating's maximum can be raised with each level stolen up to



the target's maximum (beyond Generation cap if stealing from an Elder) for the duration of this power. After this power has worn off, the temporary levels return to the original owner (unless they were spent by the user) and the maximum ratings of the affected Ability for the user and the target go back to their original values. The Mnemosyne may spend XP during downtime to raise this Ability up to the new maximum they were exposed to (though limited to Generation cap) with ST discretion and relevant Coordinator approval if necessary.

Example: Marty the Mnemosyne spends two Mental traits and uses *Learn From Their Mistakes* on Bobby the Brujah and selects the Brawl Ability. Before using this power, Marty had a maximum Brawl rating of 2 and Bobby had a maximum Brawl rating of 5. Marty was successful in the Mental Challenge and so Bobby's maximum Brawl rating goes down to 3 and Marty's goes up to 4. Bobby had already gotten into a fight earlier that night and had spent three out of his five temporary Brawl levels for retests. Because he still has two more temporary levels of Brawl, he loses the two he has left and they go to Marty. Marty also had to get into a fight earlier and was completely out of temporary Brawl retests, but now he has two stolen ones he can use against Bobby if need be. If Marty uses these stolen temporary Brawl levels for retests in the next hour, they will be considered spent even after they return to Bobby. If Bobby had used up all five of his temporary Brawl levels as retests before this power was used on him, the maximum ratings would still change for the duration of the power but no temporary uses would be transferred. After the power expires, Marty's Brawl rating goes back to 2 but he remembers what it was like to be able to fight better and he is able to train himself back up to that point without a teacher. Marty's peers in the Cult are wondering why he did not instead steal some Occult knowledge or an obscure Lore from Teddy the Tremere instead...