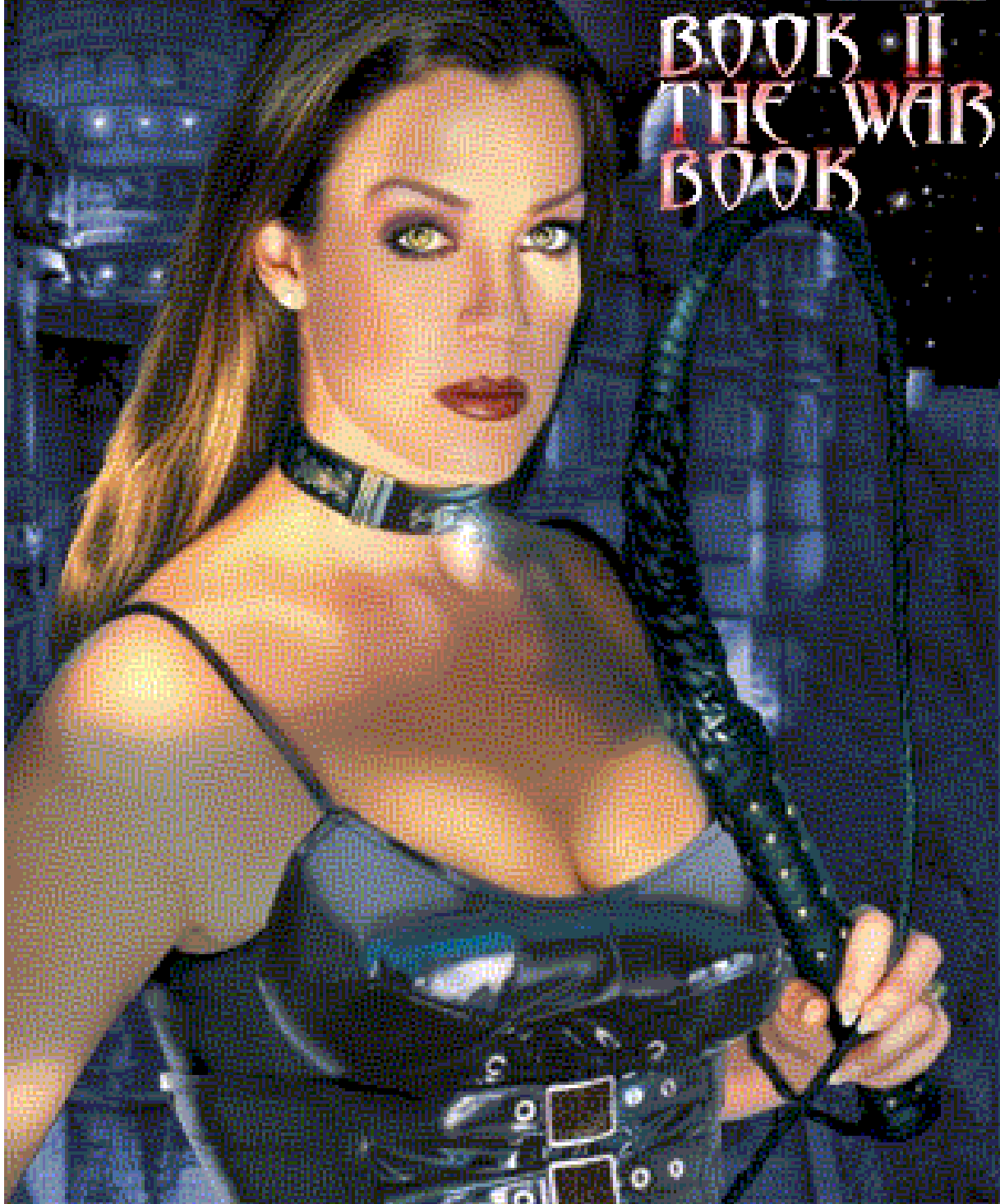


IMMORTAL

MILLENNIUM



BOOK II THE WAR BOOK



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

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Legend is Time's way to keep track of Our lives

-- Solitaire Inscription marring the Genocide Wall.

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Gold

“The power of mercy is that sometimes it is not given.”

--Abzulim Proverb

The pain. So hot, searing through me, running like fire through my veins. I scream for a third time, this time hearing it and realizing that I am now awake. His grinning face is still there, floating disembodied in front of my pupils as if I had just been staring at the sun. I claw at the crooked smile, the eyes filled with hatred and sadistic joy, feel that familiar tremor jerk my stomach.

I hate to vomit, I hate it almost as much as I hate him. Then again, the two are inextricably linked. The collar I wear, branding me an exile from my people and silencing my mystic voice, only expedites the coming spasms.

I am shivering in the frigid air of my hiding place as I feel the pain uncoil like a snake and move from my stomach toward my throat. Spasms follow it, serpentine undulations as the gorge rises into my throat, burning with a white heat. I gag. I retch. I fall on hands and knees and open my mouth, disgorging a hot yellow stream that hisses, also snakelike, as it hits the stone. I start crying, only to be choked off by the next spasm and another gush out of my mouth. I see it glow dimly in the dark, then fade as the cold breaths on it. As the third tremor comes, I scream in agony, adding more of this hot matter to the cobbled floor.

A blast of dank air freezes the last bit of it into a pale twisted sculpture as the pain in me subsides. I close my eyes and focus on the aftershocks in my stomach, calming the aching muscles, taking deep cold breaths. When I am certain that the episode has passed (and this takes me long minutes) I open my eyes and stare at the soiled floor.

The sun has risen during the time my eyes were closed. Fingers of light stroke the floor through broken wood slats, edging toward me and the discharge betwixt my hands. I wipe my mouth with the back of my hand, spitting frozen droplets onto the floor and watch the sunlight's fascination with the stain on the floor and as the light creeps over it, the matter gleams with raw metallic beauty.

He's here, I realize. My enemy is here, his presence calling the tremors out of my body. And close too. He's very close.

I reach for a bowie knife from my flak jacket and start prying the cooled gold off of the floor, rolling the precious metal into a single tube as it casts handfuls of refracted sunlight into my eyes.

How close is he? Does he sense me or has he forgotten after all these years the horrible curse he put on me, to spew gold, to bleed gold, to perspire tiny drops of incorruptible metal, to shed fragile strands of gold wire from my scalp?

Bastard. I thought you were dead! You are not one of us. You were mortal. Mortal.

Standing up at last I warm my arms with a quick rubbing of my hands. Gold dust sprays from my skin and dances in the morning light like sparks off a fire.

Fire. It's everywhere. It's as if someone stole the sun and hurled it into the middle of the courtyard. The scream of terrified horses is mutely heard from their stalls as the fire jumps like a living thing and starts eating the wood. I stand there in its midst, frozen in apprehension and yes, some guilt. A Knight in red armor urges his men forward. Swords seem to catch fire as they reflect the conflagration and shadows jump about in a wild frenzy. Shadows bow and twist with love, hate and fear of the fire, for fire has a power over them. Fire brings them to life.

Slashing. Cutting. Stabbing. One of the nobleman's wives screams as she runs in front of me. Her hair is on fire, evaporating. A soldier emerges from behind her, throwing a dirty rag over her head, quenching the fire. Ah the illusion of chivalry is then quickly broken. She does not even seem to be aware as he rapes her. She turns a dazed face toward the front gates of the castle as the soldier lowers himself on her and watches incomprehensibly as the rest of the invaders boil through the front gates.

“Kill all the French,” they yell madly.

I look down at the key in my hand. It shines like gold in the firelight.

Gold.

The shower feels so good. A warm touch. The closest thing to a lover I have known in centuries. A lover that caresses my body without violating it. A lover who withdraws gracefully, laughing down the drain, leaving me clean instead of feeling soiled.

Gold dust sparkles in the black mildew that has taken over the rotted shower curtain. I shove tattered fabric aside, walk across the freezing floor and stand in front of the mirror.

The third most hateful thing to me is my beauty. An Immortal sensual body, accentuated by the hateful curse of gold. I move my hair, tawny brown with golden streaks as the curse is taking over the natural hue. Between my breasts, a single gold coin, suspended on a gold chain. I pick up the chain and swing the coin out of its nesting place. The face of Caligula stares indifferently, stamped into the soft metal thousands of years ago. Time has worn the predatory features of the mad fool, but is unable to corrupt the metal. Gold is Immortal, even as we are. It endures forever, like pieces of the sun.

My lips, glossed in a generous dusting of gold tremble. All of it is so subtle that humans never even notice. All they know is that I am beautiful. That's all they care about. But they would be frightened if they really could see what I am. An ancient creature who looks like the daughter of King Midas, trapped somewhere between transformation from little girl to a statue of cold, unyielding----

Gold. I watch it being carried out of the treasury room, past heaps of dead bodies. The French rebels who were unable to die in combat are trussed up like game, hanging from poles. They suffer and stare at me as they lead me, a terrible realization dawning on their faces. One in particular gapes at me, devastated. His hazel eyes are wet from the smoke, or is it something else. He calls out to me.

I stop in front of him. The soldiers leading me sense some sport and release my arms.

"Sir." I say, haughtily.

"I know you." He whispers, seeing through the shadows painted on me, the illusion of a plain peasant woman created in strokes of a dark brush. I am delighted that he knows who I really am, and that I have had my revenge against him for throwing me away.

"I am no longer your whore, Sir." I say, words searing like molten---

"They don't know what you are!" He shouts. He looks over to the soldiers. "She's a witch! An Immortal witch! She'll lead you to ruin. . .as she did lead us. "

The soldiers laugh and take my arms again. One of them strikes him across the face with a fist. Another turns to his comrade.

"This is the best Knight in the world?" he asks mockingly

My former lover's mouth tightens as he ignores the jibe, then draws up a smile.

"You are always, eternally, a whore." He laughs. "A whore of shadows."

Rage! Churning like melted metal in a cauldron. I long to use the powers of my voice, but they are at the mercy of mortals such as this, like the old lenses Merlin showed me, created by the ancient dragons to peer into the dark heart of the universe.

Even so, I slap him. The soldiers laugh at the both of us, then restrain me. They were strong, these King's Men. Bright Blood pulses in them, weakening me, sapping my supernatural strength. I struggle and am carried away from a man whose laughter is climbing the stairs of madness. Madness has always been his companion--madness and tormenting lust for a woman he can never have.

"Make way for the King." Yells a man. I cease struggling and feel a chill.

He had arrived at last. I see his armor gleam dully in the bonfires where the dead were being burned. Noble women reach their hands imploringly out of the crow cages in which they are suspended. They plead like trapped songbirds for his attention.

They will die in those cages before reinforcements reach this old forgotten castle. If reinforcements even come. I can see a glimpse of the future as I look at these tittering women. Their destiny is to become bones clinging to bars.

He passes them, unmoved by their wailing. His spirit is so bright it blazes before my Immortal eyes, leaping about like sparks off a forge. His prisoners, even in their hatred, gaze at him in awe as his black horse pushes aside a bank of smoke with a loud sputter of its nostrils. He pulls up short and regards me. I smile and bow in respect. It's a false respect, but I want my money. Money pays mercenaries, and I will need many of them to challenge my half-brother and his mystic mentor. I want my. . .

. . .gold leaves spiral to the ground as I walk out of my sanctuary, disoriented. A car horn yells as I stop in the middle of the street, get my bearings and continue walking. The sun is feeble now, overcome with clouds as evening speeds toward Los Angeles like an angel. The smoky scent of autumn reeks in

the chilly air as I wrap my scarf around the collar that traps my throat. Imbedded in its metal is my vox, my magic voice disembodied. Sometimes I long to have a mortal whose spirit is strong enough to unlock my potential. I could alter the face of the world if I could find such a man.

Or woman.

Or child.

Small tremors in my stomach. I feel terrified that the gold maybe is coming up again, but it is just a stirring in the air of his presence. He was mortal and that was half a millennium ago. He must be dead. He must be!

It occurs to me as I walk down Sepulveda that I am sensing a ghost, a human soul that has returned to this dominion, tormenting me. Perhaps drawn by my hatred of him. Ghosts can smell us. It's the one sense left to them. They wander around blind to what the world really looks like, but they can smell our life and our emotions. Some can smell our thoughts. I imagine every one of the them like Tantalus, standing in a pool of water that shrinks away when he tries to drink and grasping for branches laden with plump ripe fruit he cannot reach. Ghosts are like this tormented wretch. Hungry and never filled.

I feel like that sometimes. All this power in me, and I cannot call on it except by the wish of a human being strong enough to be my lens.

Night's children, the shadows, emerge as the sun shivers away below the horizon like a frail old man, dimmed and florid with age. Now the Whispers come. If only mortals understood the true nature of what a shadow is, they would perk their ears and learn of all the mistakes they made, all the sorrow they caused. One such man caused sorrow to me, hiding lies behind eyes made of liquid. . .

"Gold. . . is important to you, isn't it Traitor?" The King asks from on top of his dark horse. Its eyes are also black, black polished stones plugging sockets in its skull. I get the sensation that it's more than what it seems. That it, like its rider, studies me. I feel an urge to pluck the black stones out and see what supernatural creature comes spilling out.

Traitor. The word pricks me. I ignore it. "My lord, I have fulfilled your wish. The castle is yours. The rebels yours. I give them to you and ask only to continue serving you."

He laughs, throwing his head back. The horse is not startled by his outburst. It just watches.

"You remove potential allies from the High King and gain a lot of money to pay a mercenary army against him," the king says. "You have done far more for yourself than for me, and I know it. Perhaps one day, after his defeat, you will think to challenge *me*."

I really hate this worm of a Man. All that power and no nobility. Looking at him, I feel only contempt. He is dwarfed by his own armor, like a child dreaming to one day be a knight. I smile as a thought occurs to me. This man will never be great. He will die and the men who swore fealty to him will forget him inside a season. And worse than the fact that history will forget him, an honest mistake--legend will ignore him. He will not live on in the racial memory of his people.

"I would never challenge you, my lord." I declare. My eyes flick a glance at a large bag sagging from the saddle of his young squire. I whisper to the shadows inside that bag to identify its contents, and they tell me it gleams.

"Sensuous little beast," he laughs. "My blood tells me that is not the case. Still, you will have your reward. I am a man of my word, even to traitors. You will have all the gold. . .

". . . I promised you," Seriadoe says, sitting across the café table from me, taking a sip of espresso. I close my eyes and wipe the image of the past off my retina with a sweep of lashes.

"You didn't hear a word I said, did you?" she asks, peering over the glass.

"I'm sorry."

"The man is dead, sister. I killed him as I promised you. I found a witch to wish his stomach full of worms and sent 20 ravens to pluck them all out." Don't you remember our gathering in Castle Chariot when I presented his head?"

I nod, looking down at my fingernails. Thin wafers of yellow metal are flaking off, revealing shiny metal below.

"I think it's the millennium thing," she says, leaning back and blinking her dark raven eyes. "The background ambiance of human faith is getting stronger, despite the efforts of the scientific community. There's a growing concern that humanity is reaching a technological stall, that they are reverting back to superstition."

"Their lives are empty," I say.

"That's because they live apart from our kind," Seriede says with a crisp gesture of her slender hands. "Mortals need to worship us in order to be free and know true joy."

"You're preaching to the choir," I remark.

"Look." Seriede puts down the cup and taps the checkered tablecloth for emphasis. "This is exactly why we need to take back the world from them. Annihilate the Sanguinary in those who have no Bright Blood and exorcise the ancient bastard out of the rest. The Age of Myth was a great time to live. I remember it. Everybody was happy. Us, them, the earth itself. Magic flowed everywhere."

"Stop calling it magic." I snap.

"You know what I mean." She leans forward. "Your problem is you want the power, you want to be a god again, but you don't want to work for it. You want the universe to somehow set things to right."

I cast her a wry look, staring down at a plate of uneaten, cold food. Mortals are sitting all around us, talking, laughing. But if you look around them, at the shadows formed from the refuse of their thoughts, you hear only anger, greed, envy, lust and all the rest of these sins. They crunch and scatter like dead leaves when you walk through them.

"Humans are liars." I say, pushing the plate away.

"Darling, we're *all* liars," Seriede laughs. She cleans her holographic sunglasses, then catches sight of her watch and spits half her mouthful of coffee back into the cup. "I have GOT to run. I want to pierce the mystery of who this *Phoenix* really is. He or she is a very illusive character."

I nod, and look up at the clear October sky. She departs so subtly that her shadow lingers for moments, smiling at me, before it flies after. I sigh, look up at the harvest moon sinking through, like a gold. . .

"Coin!" The King snaps, landing on his feet. His dismount is a long fall of the strange black horse, and not very graceful. Hurriedly his squire opens the bag on the saddle and retrieves a Roman *aureus* and offers it to the King. The king strides up to me holding the coin. I wonder if he's noticing that I'm taller than he is.

I look at the coin.

"Go ahead, take it. Inspect it." He says with an encouraging smile. "I want you to verify your payment."

"I trust you my lord," I say, taking my eyes away from him. Mortals like to see submission. It reminds them of themselves, and of course, they hate each other most of the time.

"I insist." He says, still smiling.

Something is wrong here.

I take the coin. It's heavy in my hand. And cold. Undoubtedly genuine. I close my hand on it, nod approvingly. I offer it back, but he gestures for me to keep it. He makes another gesture and the squire hefts the bag with more coins and sets it on the ground at my feet, untying the cloth, spreading the small hoard out. All of the coins are identical to the one in my hand. Each one looks polished with care. And there are too many. This thought fills me with more unease.

"Well?" He inquires,

"I am satisfied, my lord." I say. "You are most generous, this is more than we agreed on."

"There's more where that came from," he laughs. "Interested?"

Ah! Relief floods me. He has another proposition.

"Extremely, my lord." I smile.

He smiles with exquisite satisfaction, walking over to his black mount, which continues to stare at me. He strokes its cheek.

"Wonderful." He swings around and onto the horse's back. He makes a gesture and suddenly I am surrounded with men and grappled roughly.

"Take the traitor to the Blacksmith." He orders.

"My lord!" I call in terror. I am surrounded by Bright Bloods. The force of their auras press in on me. My legs weaken.

He leans forward in his saddle.

"Did you really think I would trust a traitor who caused the downfall of her own lover?"

"Let go of me!" I scream. "You have no idea of the forces you affront!"

He laughs and leans forward even more, stroking his mounts mane. He blows a kiss on the wind toward me. The shadows of my disguise tremble and melt, revealing my true appearance to him. His men let out cries of consternation as I grow from a plain mortal into a preternatural beauty.

"Lancelot was right," the King mutters as the last of his willpower sweeps past with the tattered remnants of my disguise. "You are nothing but a whore painted up in. . ."

Shadows. They grow deeper as I walk down the beach. The ocean, the symbol of eternity, licks the shore in relentless hunger. The pier is deserted against the night sky, where chilly fog is dancing on the wind currents. The dim glow of houses, falling inexorably into the sea as the cliffs are eaten away, float like will-o-the-wisps in the gathering murk. The moon hides her face.

The pain has been growing sever. I'm using it to find him, to get nearer to him. If he's alive, I'll kill him. If he's dead, I'll. . .

He's not dead.

Fog feels like another kind of shadow, but it doesn't speak. It eats sound even as the sea that spawns it eats rock and spits it back out as sand. I feel dizzy. As I start to stagger I feel the surf wash over my feet. A sudden stab of pain punches through my stomach. I double over. I retch. Gold surges out of my throat and hisses as it sinks into the cold water. I cry out and fall to my knees. Wave after wave after wave of agony pounds through my body, like this relentless ocean. I clench my jaws closed. I clench my teeth so hard a pain springs up from between my eyes. . .

"Open your mouth, whore!" the blacksmith mutters, grimacing as he pinches both sides of my jaw. I fight to keep them clenched, blood running down my cheek. To the side I hear a screaming of a man laying on the ground, his hands covering the bloody spot where his manhood used to be.

The King stands by, his eyes gleaming with amusement. His white teeth shine in the firelight. Perfect teeth, so rare for this age. The Bright Blood courses through his whole being.

Another forceful slap causes my ears to ring. Now the Blacksmith is fumbling for a tool to pry my mouth open. "My lord," he snarls. "I'll smash out her teeth and then open it." "Not necessary." The King smiles. He walk over and touches my throat where a necklace containing my vox is suspended. I struggle all the more as his fingers caress the hard crystalline reed. I feel that touch through my whole being. There are a hundred hands stroking me, inside and out, but all are just a single hand touching the core of Me. The vox. The part of Me I most hate and most love.

"I wish. . ." he whispers, gripping the vox between his thumb and index finger, massaging it.

"NO!" I scream, feeling the vox respond to him, feeling my innate power creeping up out of me and spinning around his arm.

"I wish for you to open your mouth as wide as you can, and keep it open until the sun rises," he intones.

Silence falls.

There is a pause as reality takes a breath. Then, the power responds. My mouth opens, expanding to its furthest limits. My muscles relax. I am paralyzed by his symbiosis with me, his control of my power.

"Bring her reward," he motions, tracing a finger around my lips.

I see them coming. It takes three of them to heft the cauldron. I feel its heat as it grows closer, see molten gold slop over the edge as one of them stumbles. Terror rises in me. Voices scream in my mind, other parts of me buried in this new identity.

"A woman, Immortal or no, should know how to keep her place," he says in a conversational tone. "Not you. Dabbler in enchantments and treachery. You tried to own the heart of the High King and failed. You couldn't even win the heart of the King's servant."

"You want your gold? Let it not be said my word is not good to even the lowest whore in the land. My word, like my justice, will outlive me."

"You are a little man," I hiss back in a caricature of a voice, tongue lolling. "Nothing about you will outlive you. You'll die with no legacy. No one will remember you. No songs sung. No tales told. You already never existed."

His fury ignites in his eyes. He stands and gestures to the blacksmith, who dips a metal ladle into the cauldron.

"Make sure she gets all of her payment!"

I cannot forget the site of the gold. Bright, flowing, gold as the blood of the sun pouring into my throat, down into my stomach."

"Curse you, witch." He murmurs. "Curse you to the hell of your own greed."

It pours.

It pours.

It
P
O
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R
S

"Miss?"

I cough and look up from the sand.

He stands there in a pair of cotton pants and a windbreaker, a baseball cap pulled over his head.

The same short frame, the same intense eyes. But something is missing.

Something is different.

"Are you alright? He asks in a timid voice. "I'll go call an ambulance."

I clench my hands in the wet sand and stare up at him, shaking my head.

An expression passes over his face, wide-eyed, amazed. The look of recognition. The look I am waiting for.

"You?" He murmurs, completely stunned.

"This is between us!" I snarl, and launch myself at him.

He's taken completely by surprise and falls to the ground, dazed. I land on top of him and here the whoosh as air is pumped out of his lungs. He gasps for breath.

I move my face close to his and stare into his eyes with hatred. I want him to see that hatred. I want him to understand that I will outlive him. His eyes lock with mine in terror.

"You're even smaller than when we last met!" I spit.

He gasps as I cover his mouth with mine, forcing it open with my tongue, letting the stream of gold rise up out of me and into his throat. His scream is burnt up. Gold breaks through his fragile neck, through his cheeks. I hear his brain start to boil.

He is dead too soon.

I love L.A. People there live in a fantasy world, a world of dreams and images. For the most part, it is the refuge of people who live their lives as illusions because they fear the judgement of others. They worship everything from underwear billboards to crystals, to Hollywood movie stars. And of course, they worship money. Great vaults of it printed against the value of shining metal dug out of the ground. They don't realize a war is coming and that none of these gods will save them from it.

L.A. has been a comfort to me since the night I killed that man and gave his body to the Pacific. Despite what you might think about me, I do feel guilt when I take an innocent life. These days, it doesn't seem like our kind can avoid it. But we do try. We know humans are victims of the darkness within.

I reflect on the shadows that gathered around the young man, his last thoughts spilling out as light, then bruising, dimming, growing black.

His name was Carl Piper. He was an actor. He wanted to make it big and to be remembered for all time. He knew me from pictures in his family's archives, from old wives tales passed down each generation in his family. Like all of the males in his family line, he dreamed of me.

He was not responsible for the curse his ancestor placed on me. That was his last dying thought, after he realized how real those wives tales were. He was the last of an only child.

He had no idea that the curse died with him. At least I think it did.

I buried the boy's body with the gold coin and a pile of rocks into the ocean.

I have to admit that King whose money I took made a good effort to overcome my prophecy. He was never remembered, but he passed his Bright Blood on and became Immortal.

At least, for a little while.

Prophecies

“Every form of refuge comes with it’s own price”

--Cutter, the Court of Making

**Welcome to Sanctuary. Vocalize password clearly.
Password and voice carrier frequency recognized.
Verifying. . .
Sanctuary password verified. Interface 2006 ready for inquiry.
Beginning Newsgroup Download. . .complete.
Input keyword for search <key>
Options: 1: Follow Thread 2: Browse threads <2>
Number of days to browse: 7
Browsing. . .**

**Encryption: [cipher]
Return Locus: <Weaver at Sanctuary>
Received By: <Trapdoor at Paradox at Sanctuary>
Language: Oneness (dialect)
Subject: Mysteries
Summary: I need Moriarty.
Keyword Search: Moriarty, artifact, Stigmata, Abzuli's, Shadowen, prophecy
Date: Year of the Pale**

Message As Follows:

Trapdoor:

This situation is inexcusable. The artifact is still missing and we have been unable to sense it, which means an Immortal is in possession of it. Even more worrisome, the one we have foreseen may be in possession of it. We wish you to allow Moriarty to emerge. Of your avatars, he has the most experience with the artifact and with dealing with Stigmata, who MUST be returned to his cage before his mad ramblings neutralize our bargaining chips. For some reason, his mind is wandering toward the part of the prophecy we do not know yet. We certainly do not wish this information posted on the net.

We find it interesting that Shade is implicated to have stood by the Abzuli's side when HE died. Look into this. Does she indeed know the full prophecy? If so, we must bring her into the fold and quickly. I find it hard to believe the Shadowen would turn one of their own into exile with such valuable information, so this is probably a delusion of Stigmata's considering his carnal obsession with her.

Phoenix: Who is this Immortal? I've done some checking and no one I know has ever seen him in the flesh, but have instead encountered various intermediaries, such as Emissaries. Do some digging and try to meet with him. While I do not wish to openly accuse him of being corrupted, we must verify if he is indeed a member of the Sanguinary's legions.

Weaver

**Encryption: [cipher]
Return Locus: <Weaver at Sanctuary>
Received By: <Weaver at Sanctuary>
Language: Oneness (dialect)
Subject: re: Mysteries
Summary: Moriarty is a risk.
Keyword Search: suppressed
Date: Year of the Pale
Message As Follows:**

Weaver

I understand Stigmata's danger to the Oneness. However, I also understand that Moriarty, while adequately skilled, is a risk to the operation. As you know, I was forced to submerge him because of a certain obsession about sensitive information above his classified access. The Fifth Prophecy, for example. Stigmata may know of the Fifth and Moriarty may compromise the Court in his search for information about it. Stigmata is obviously mad, but Moriarty is more than capable of injuring us if he learns the truth.

That said, I understand why you should choose Moriarty. He is a perfect candidate, especially considering his knowledge about the Drovers. In any event, I will naturally obey your directive. Just be warned of the potential problems that may arise. I understand Moriarty is loyal to the Court, but his insatiable curiosity could turn him to other loyalties. Certainly in this case, Stigmata's madness will work in our favor.

We should never have meddled with the future with conception of the Fifth. We may have doomed our own race on this audacious prophecy. Already, I see a pattern emerging that suggests that it is already spiraling into areas we did not anticipate. If it does, the Transcendants themselves will not have the power to preserve us.

In service,

Trapdoor.

Chapter I: Battleground: Earth

“Fear not your enemy, for the worse he can do is kill you. Fear not your friend, the worse they can do is betray you. Instead fear the stranger; his indifference allows the presence of the others.”

-- Blood, the Court of War

Encryption: [5]
Return Locus: [Sneaking at Sanctuary]
Received By: <Emissary: Talitha at Sanctuary>
Language: English
Subject: Telepath Chip
Summary: The Singularity Group has become a greater threat.
Keyword Search: Singularity Group, Empath Chip, Singapore
Date: Year Of The Pale
Warning: This transmission is hard coded.
Message As Follows:

The Singularity Group is using our voxes to create computer processors they call the Telepath Chip. I have seen them myself. I don't think I will get out of here with this information, since I am in their fortress and surrounded. I urge whoever gets this transmission to seek out and find these chips. I know there are 13 of them, and that they were smuggled out of Singapore. Their destinations are included in this message in a download. I don't have much t

... Transmission ended at source. ...

The Near Future. . .

The setting of Immortal is a world in transition. The normalcy that everyone (at least mortals) is used to will slowly erode. At first, there will be a number of strange sightings and disturbances that will make their way into the Internet and tabloids. Documentaries of the war between the Immortals and the Sanguinary will be made as conspiracy-oriented mortals capture open battles on videocam. Despite vows that such documentaries are “real” most people will scoff and view them as science fiction. Thus begins the early 21st century.

As time passes, the dark fairytale world of the Immortals will advance on human civilizations. Enchanted woods will encroach in the presence of the Abzulim, breaking any technology sent against them with their roots. Air traffic controllers will see blips on their screens of flying things they cannot identify. UFO reports will glut the airwaves. Those who pay attention will realize these ships are sometimes winged and alive or unlike the popular concepts of the flying saucer. The ancient mythical world will

seep out, carrying with it strange creatures allied with the Immortals and dedicated to the destruction of the Sanguinary. In the streets, mythical gods will fight the dark foes Man has named demons.

Eventually, the sightings cannot be ignored. The cover-up by the government and the Men-in-Black who already know of the Immortals will fail. Hysteria will grip the world and people will question everything they thought their real world was founded on. And still the war will escalate.

Finally, the war will be unconfined. There will be no secrecy. Human civilization will crash and only those strong enough will survive. This Apocalyptic world will not be a wasteland leveled by nuclear holocaust, but instead be a dangerous paradise reclaimed by magic and the struggles of the ancient gods. In this final setting, the final war with the Sanguinary will be waged.

Mortal Man . . .

Humans, at least in their own perception, rule the world. Their civilization covers the planet and most of them cannot conceive the fact that the entire human race has been manipulated by a race much older than itself. Ignorance is bliss, but ignorance will not last forever, nor for much longer.

Immortals predate humans by millions of years and have watched the mortal species through their whole history. Yet they do not possess a deep understanding of mankind. The foremost reason for this failing is the fact that humanity's subconscious is invaded by the Sanguinary, an entity so alien as to be practically unfathomable. This makes the human mind a deadly landscape for Immortals to explore.

And then there is the enigmatic origin of mankind. While the firstborn Abzulim created

most animal species surviving today, as well as the Immortals themselves, they did not create mankind. Darwinism aside, human origins are a mystery that continues to intrigue Immortals to this day.

The Masses

The world's population is divided against itself. Most of humanity has become dull-eyed and nearly comatose, victims of the Sanguinary's control measures. Quick-fix personality seminars have become the replacement for deeply rooted principles. Organized religions are under the influence of the very forces that they teach are the enemy.

In collective despair, the weight of the Sanguinary in its dreams, humanity feels the tug toward self-destruction.

Much of humanity has been drained of its life essence by the Sanguinary, most often through their dreams. The Sanguinary has milked every drop of spirit from these mortals by destroying their faith, not only in a higher power, but also in themselves. Those who merely exist in the world, without a spirit aura, are known as the **Soulless**. They are under the thrall of both Progeny and the Immortals themselves. The soulless do not make good soldiers, but left unchallenged and hidden, can do a lot of damage as robots of destruction.

Controlling the Soulless

Soulless have no spirit aura. Anyone can take possession of their body with a roll of 6 or better. If an Immortal and his opponent both try to control a Soulless, the lowest roll between both SPIRIT dice succeeds. For game mechanics, a Soulless can be controlled for the duration of the scene, after which another character may attempt to wrest control from the current controller. Left without a challenge to his control, a character can influence a Soulless indefinitely.

Human Civilization

The mortal world of IMMORTAL looks on its surface very much like the modern world. People have jobs, live in houses and apartments, go to church, fall in love, get sick and die, pay bills, watch television, surf the Net, and so on.

It is not until you pull away the veil of normalcy that the end of the world becomes apparent. Crime is skyrocketing (but hidden from view by the authorities and media), government is utterly corrupt and under the watchful guidance of inhuman forces, technology has completely invaded all privacy, and the church doesn't mention God much any more. In a short time from now, human civilization will undergo a transformation, reaching a zenith of technological haughtiness.

Cities

In the wake of a strong technology-driven economy, cities continue to develop into the new millennium. The suburbs constantly expand the city's boundaries as the population grows by leaps, prosperous citizens breeding a new baby boom faster than ever. Improved networking technology allows businesses to operate anywhere, so why not at home, or at least somewhere nicer than downtown?

Meanwhile, the urban core of many cities has aged and become a dangerous battleground where skirmishes, both mundane and supernatural are fought with greater frequency. Gangs have become huge and extremely well financed. Businesses and denizens flock out of the core toward the prosperous suburbs, leaving behind under-valued, run-down properties. More and more, the inner cities are becoming apocalyptic landscapes.

Violence and gang warfare is the primary concern of most city-dwellers that cannot afford to leave the collapsing metropolitan core. In many cases, families cannot safely get their children to school so they home-school them instead, or don't school them at all. A new generation of violent illiterates has been born.

Very few people realize that so much of this violence revolves around a war that has been fought since before the first human city was ever built; a war between Immortals that has so far been invisible. In the years to come that will change.

Wilderness

Untamed wilderness is becoming an increasingly scarce resource. In North America, there is no spot of wilderness more than 10

miles away from a road. Most of the rain forests of South America and Asia have already been plowed under for industrial development. Even the deep wildernesses of Russia and Africa are being explored, planned, and subdivided.

Industry, under the iron control of the Sanguinary's forces, is consuming the wild with a voracious appetite, even as humanity consumes its products with the same hunger. Humanity remains absorbed in objects of gratification while outside the Sanguinary strives to silence the last mysterious places of power that could serve as a bastion for the defenders of light. The Earth's own aura lay weakened by the forces of the Sanguinary.

At least when the wilderness is all gone there will still be nature documentaries.

The Third World

While wealth continues to gather in the great cities of the Western world, the impoverished nations of the Third World continue to fall behind. Disease is rampant, poverty is the only way of life, and the strong prey on the weak. Many nations are resorting to terrorism to escape the predications of more powerful neighbors.

Amid this environment, the war between Immortals and their enemies is the most exposed, but no one watches unless their national interests are at risk. Even then, observers who stumble on the conflicts between Immortals rarely survive to spread the news.

The Lost City

Mexico City is the undisputed largest metropolis in the world. A melting pot of 20 million people, it was the cultural center of Central America.

Soon it will vanish and no one will notice. There will be no records of it, no connections of any kind to the world. Relatives of its vanished denizens will not remember their loved ones. There will be no literature, no records, no camcorder videos. . . Retroactively through history, Mexico City will cease to exist, and the fabric of reality so changed that no one will miss it.

Well, almost no one. . .

There are a few among the Immortals and among humans themselves who are immune to the forces used to wipe the Lost City from the minds of an entire species. Considered mad when they voice their knowledge, they will be locked away.

Those who bear this knowledge in silence will send expeditions to explore the vanishing and will become accustomed to these expeditions vanishing as well. Rumors will rise of a person, identity obscure, who has seen Mexico City after the vanishing. . .

. . . and has returned. Prophecy will call this person a Messiah. History will prove prophecy a liar.

Technology

Technology has progressed at a fair pace into the modern age. Much of this technological progress has been guided and financed by the Sanguinary, although mortal innovators have been busy too with their own alternate technologies.

Sanguinary technology--that is to say, most of the consumer and corporate technology in the world--can be characterized by its seductive hold over the user. This technology is addictive, targeting a new generation of humans who are to become soldiers for an inhuman master. As time passes, wars will be fought at the console of video games, and casualties will be racked up as points in contests of hand/eye coordination.

No one will know until it's too late that each point was a living, breathing person.

Information

Computers have become smaller, cheaper, and more powerful. Microprocessors are as cheap as plastic and are integrated into nearly every consumer product. The stated reason for the ubiquity of cheap processors is convenience, but the real reason, of course, is data collection.

The science of demographics has become more exact as a result of this constant data collection and new analysis techniques. The Sanguinary's minions can now guess with very close accuracy how the masses will react to ideas and products.

The Telepath Chip is the newest craze. It has a built in artificial intelligence that makes

computing a breeze. In a few short years mankind will make a quantum leap in technology as previously imagined only in science fiction, but at what price?

Eyz

The new era cell phone combines computer and communication technology into one neat little package--eyeglasses and sunglasses. Each unit is sufficiently powerful to generate a small submersible VR space (a "room") for meetings and other interactions. Eye movements, augmented with voice commands make these units very user friendly. They say contact lenses will have the same abilities in the not-so-distant-future. They're wrong of course. The civilization needed to make a contact-lens version, as well as a consumer base to sell it to, will soon no longer exist.

The Net

Net access is a public utility provided at a flat monthly fee that jacks into monitors, virtual rooms and the Eyz unit. Creativity gives birth to VR spaces of visionary wonder. In a short time, programmers will reshape the world in VR space. More and more people will flee there and live within the grand, if hollow cyber architecture. Outside, the real world will crumble with neglect.

Anyone accessing the net needs a *face*: a representation of himself in virtual net space. Because faces can be so easily customized, few people choose to present their own face in virtual world. Custom faces are available for a nominal monthly fee. Few people with net access and a VR suite choose to physically meet any more. Even the sex is better.

The Net might be a real battleground if not for the fact that it lacks substance. It is most valuable as a control measure rather than an information highway. By seeming to connect each person to the world of people, it only connects to invented "faces".

As one can imagine, the immanent withdrawal from the Net will be painful for humanity as it evaporates into electron haze during the last war. Man will be confronted by an alien stranger-himself.

Media

The Media is, above all, a distraction. It focuses mortal attention where it can do little harm to the

Sanguinary's web of control. Rationalist emphasis is king in the media, making leaks of supernatural events even more unlikely. But the day is coming, before the cameras all shut off, that some things will simply be impossible to ignore.

Cameras

Video cameras are so small and cheap that they can be installed anywhere for very little cost. These are usually connected to Eyz, and other sensitive computers. Every public space is suffused with micro-cameras accessible to law enforcement. Perpetrators record their crimes in detail, selling the data to networks for primetime broadcast. Victims' rights are threatened in the name of the public good.

The Ley . . .

The Ley is a web of dimensional gateways, once connecting every habitable world in the universe, but destroyed during the Shouting War, (a war of power between the Immortals during the last days of the Age of Myth). Members of the Court of Life have studied this mysterious web of green energy and have come to a startling conclusion.

The Ley, they urge us, is a measureless mind, the mind of the universe itself--neural passages reaching from one part of the mind (a world) to another. They believe this mental web emanates from the very minds of the Transcendants. Some have suggested that this web forms a single, super intelligence that guides the actions of the Transcendants against the Sanguinary. Once connecting all the universe, the Ley was "tangled" in the Shouting War and cut off from the Earth, leaving our world isolated and alone.

On earth, the remaining energy of the Ley that coats the world expresses itself in paths called Ley Lines. Anyone setting foot on a Ley Line is transported to another point at the end of the line, sometimes instantaneously. Travelling a Ley line is an amazing experience. One hears music that fills the mind: a music so beautiful and precisely ordered that it must be the very thoughts of the Transcendants themselves, communicating with one another on much higher planes of perception.

Unfortunately, for now, this travel is confined to the Earth. Should the Ley lines be reconnected

to the Dominions, travel to the universe would once again be possible. Consequently, if the war with the Sanguinary is not contained on Earth, it will spread into the stars and last for eons. Any character who wants to walk the Ley must possess the Boon Ley Walking, or use a *Travel* serenade with a focus, *Ley*.

The Morpheum . . .

When mortals sleep, their minds instantly and automatically contribute to the formation of an infinitely vast, shared dream realm commonly called the *Morpheum*. While Immortals can dream, they are interlopers within this lair of the Sanguinary and are often quickly identified and hunted when they trespass. Only very well trained Immortals dare enter the world of dreams.

The Morpheum is not a quasi-reality like mantles. Like the Ley, it is a state of mind, a telepathic web confined to, and joining most human minds through the presence of the Sanguinary within them. Humans with a high degree of faith (d8 SPIRIT or superior) are cut off from the Morpheum. Immortals must consciously enter the Morpheum, otherwise they sleep within their own minds, viewing images of their own past. This is one reason why Immortals are often anachronistic, missing a large portion of the creativity and mental renewal that comes with dreaming. It is also the reason why mortals are so wondrous in the eyes of most Immortals, whether they wish to admit it or not.

Being the lair of the Sanguinary, the Morpheum itself resembles a huge intricate web of tattered translucency: beautiful cobwebs dancing and blowing in the omnipresent breeze of human emotion. Writhing cocoons, holding dreamers in their own dream spaces, sway from strong, permanent web-like cables known as *anchors*. Standing outside a dream, the viewer is both dazzled by the dark beauty of this seemingly infinite construct, and chilled to the bone, for somewhere in the web sits the Sanguinary itself, more horrible in visage than any mere spider.

Somewhere in the telepathic layers of the Morpheum is the center of the web. Here the Sanguinary, attended by its servants, lies. Immortals call this the Hush-Hush. On strands spun from their Master's power, the servitors of

the Sanguinary continually enter its vile presence, feeding it with Immaculum and SPIRIT stolen from helpless human dreamers. Worse, they carry Immortals captured in the Morpheum to unspeakable fates.

The Morpheum is a well-protected location, immune to the meddling of most Immortals except those who have devoted their very long lives to plumbing its mysteries.

Dreaming

When a mortal falls asleep, he enters the Morpheum. As he sinks into slumber, he experiences the sensation of being wrapped up in a soft, luxuriant blanket. A dream is spun up around the dreamer, the cocoon suspended from the anchors slicing through the void. While the sinuous cocoon seems to be of finite size, its interior can be of any size necessary to contain the character's dream. Grandma's house, complete with all the smells of baking, a twisted dark forest, or a beach under a warm tropical sun; all of these subjective realities are contained inside the sheath of the dreamer for as long as he sleeps. When a dreamer awakens, his sheath stops moving, hanging like an empty sack in the Morpheum's winds.

Dreams usually remain far apart from one another, but sometimes a dream can break free from its anchor and drift through the web, sometimes sticking to another dream, merging the two into one and placing characters together.

Most mortal creativity begins in the Morpheum. Every experience and memory has an associated dew-like particle that rolls like glowing perspiration down the outside of each dream, collecting like drops of dew on the filaments of web spun between the anchors by the Sanguinary's dark servants. Sometimes these drops move due to traffic on the anchors. They mingle, growing larger until their weight causes them to fall like a drop of rain into the void. Sometimes this drop will strike a sheath containing a dream in progress, entering the mind of the dreamer inside. A creative thought, made of mingled memories, is born.

Sometimes, a volatile mixture is formed by the glistening drops of human thought. Then, falling into the void it strikes and ignites a cocoon in its

power. The dreamer often awakens either insane or the recipient of psionic gifts.

All mortals can dream. While dreaming, the mortal's MIND aura enters his dreamspace, creating a transitory reality inside. Sometimes he will find his way out of the dream and onto the construct of the Morpheum itself. Within the dream, time and space are fluid. The reality of the dream is so all encompassing that the vast majority of dreamers do not even realize it has boundaries. When a mortal awakens, his MIND aura leaves and enters his terrestrial body.

Immortal Dreaming

Immortals dream, but can easily keep themselves from doing so when they go to sleep. Nightmares and other servants of the Sanguinary easily distinguish an Immortal by the appearance of his dream's exterior sheath, glistening with power, which are harvested and taken to the Sanguinary. Most Immortals, if they enter the Morpheum, do not enter a dream, but instead appear on the anchors. If spotted in this place, an Immortal is instantly attacked. The sensitive feet of the Doves who travel along the web feel his treading, heavy with the weight of his own power.

Doves are always at a disadvantage when fighting on an anchor. They are encumbered by a +1 to all attack rolls against an Immortal who is uncorrupted by their darkness. Immortals with the *Sleeper* boon gain certain advantages when in the Morpheum. This allows them to actually awaken in the Morpheum and not be suspended within a cocoon, among other benefits.

In the world of the Morpheum, an Immortal is susceptible to the winds of faith projected by the irrational impulses (and terrors) of human dreams. In the harshest form, it buffets the Immortal, transforming his mind to such an extent that he may awaken as an entirely new personality, perhaps inhabiting a different body. Such is the power of human faith.

Such changes are for the Narrator to use as plot devices for his game. If he desires, the Narrator may assign a target number for a player character to overcome with an unopposed MIND roll. Or be subjected to changes based on the dreamer encountered.

Waking

An Immortal dreamer can awaken at any time he wishes as long as he is not engaged in combat or being otherwise pursued. If a character is in combat, he must roll a critical success to awaken in his body.

Sleep Deprivation

There are a number of effects sleep deprivation has on the human mind. Judgement is impaired, mental processing of stimuli is both distorted and slowed, hallucinations are experienced. Most mortal scientists would agree that sleep deprivation is dangerous to a person's well being.

In the world of IMMORTAL sleep deprivation often causes a human to see into the world of the Immortals, making his mind more alert to their presence while at the same time weakening his link to the Sanguinary. Some become beings known as the Dreamless.

The Dreamless

The Dreamless are rare and mysterious beings: humans who have somehow severed their own link to the Morpheum. Never sleeping, they now see the world as it truly is, without illusions. For the most part, they can see the Immortals, the borders of mantles, the Ley, and even the quicksilver, serpentine coils that tether humanity to the Morpheum. The Dreamless can even see thoughts as they fly out of the minds of wakened humans.

Despairing because of the naked glare of the world they see, the Dreamless usually develop a wisdom that Immortals find precious. They are sought like jewels among humanity as mentors to Immortals and it is usually the Dreamless who help Immortals through the elusive stretches of the path toward transcendence. Some of the Dreamless have come to hate the world for all its sharp edges and actively work to destroy it. These are prime recruits for the Sanguinary or the Abzulim.

Dreamless is a boon that human characters in Immortal may buy to become one of these despondent beings.

Anchors

These cables are permanent structures, the exoskeleton of the Morpheum on which many dreams are formed. While these lines are no wider than a tightrope, to step on one is to step into a greater, permanent dream created by the collective will of the human faithful. Some anchors are the sanctuaries and strongholds of Bright-bloods or Immortals.

Most anchors are indestructible, forged by the minds of the faithful on earth. Each Anchor also provides dominance for its dreamers (see Book I) within the Anchor. To destroy them, the Sanguinary's minions must leave the world of dreams and seek out these dreamers, killing their bodies in the waking world and weakening the anchor the dreamer reinforced, even while he is awake.

In the quicksilver void of the Morpheum, any permanent structure is a constraint to the Sanguinary, keeping it from escaping. Its servants tirelessly seek the destruction of the anchors, opening the way for the Sanguinary to leave the Morpheum, destroying the construct in its terrible wake.

The strongest anchor is also invisible, unseen in the Morpheum due to the inscrutable power of the Court of Dreams. Known as the Dreamtime, its other end merges with the reality of the real world, allowing members of that Court to walk the Morpheum at will. While inside the Dreamtime, all Mystics gain +1 dominance in all situations.

Walking the Morpheum

Most dreamers enter the Morpheum cloaked in the cocoon of their own selfish dreams. Others can leave their cocoons and walk the anchors and filaments and enter other cocoons, other dreams. The spaces outside dreams are dangerous, patrolled by the Sanguinary's Drovers. Humans who walk or climb through the web tread lightly, barely disturbing it. These are mostly ignored by the denizens of the web, for the void outside is as vast and dark as the primal fears of a collective humanity can make it.

Characters with a potent spirit, such as Bright Bloods and Immortals are heavier on the web. Their walking shakes the filaments (although the anchors do not move under the weight of all but

the most powerful Immortals). These tremors draw unwanted attention to the traveler. Traveling the anchors is relatively safe, although chance encounters can always occur. The safest havens are inside the anchors themselves, or inside the dreams suspended there.

Droves are not the only foes an Immortal faces while walking the anchors. The endless breeze, human emotion, emanates out of dreams. Sometimes this breeze can become a storm or a hurricane, sweeping hapless travelers into the void far away from their own dream-space, trapping them in the Morpheum until they can reach their own dreamspace again and a doorway to the waking world. Like lightning, human fear and superstition occasionally strike a character, transforming him into a monster, the reflection of those fears.

Skills and Abilities in the Morpheum

Within the Morpheum all MIND skills function normally. BODY skills do not work within the Morpheum. Instead, the MIND die is used (by itself without the skill) to represent BODY skills within the Morpheum. Should an Immortal become trapped and shaped by the dreams of a mortal, they may use BODY skills (and utilize the MIND die instead of BODY die for focused skills) that are "effectively" given to them while they are present in that mortal's dream.

The minions of the Sanguinary, and those possessing the Sleeper Boon may ignore the rule concerning the use of BODY skills, and may always use their own BODY skills, in addition to any skills "given" to them while in the dream of a mortal. They still use their MIND die in place of BODY for any focused skills however.

Natures are not normally usable except by minions of the Sanguinary and those who possess the Incubus Boon.

Finding and Entering Another's Dreams

It is difficult to find a specific dream (and therefore, a specific dreamer) in the Morpheum. Even Drovers have difficulty, since all dreams on the outside look practically identical. A character searching for a specific dream must have a mental link (boon) with its inhabitant to do so. If the character is in the physical presence (in the waking world) of the individual whose dream

they wish to enter this is obviously not an issue, though the Immortal must first enter the Morpheum on his own before proceeding into the dream of another. If the Immortal is not in the physical presence of the dreamer, then the dreamer must be sought out via the Immortal physically traveling the Morpheum, away from his or her own dreamspace. The dimensions of the Morpheum do not exactly fit to the geography of the waking world, so this in itself is dangerous.

To enter the dream of another, a character must make an opposed MIND roll with the occupant of the dream. If successful, he enters the dream, transformed into some character in the current running drama of the dreamspace. His abilities are those granted to him by the occupant of the dream, although his MIND remains the same. In most cases, entering another character's dream puts a character at risk, since he must conform to the expected "script" of the dream. Some Immortals, even after leaving the dream, find that they are changed permanently by the occupant. Such are the consequences of invading the dreams of another.

Immortals with the Sleeper boon retain all their skills and other powers while entering the dream of another.

Conflict in the Morpheum

The Morpheum is fraught with peril. Its greatest threat is those who guard and patrol it. The Sanguinary's minions are the jailers of this telepathic world, and their eyes are everywhere. With exceptions, physical conflict within the Morpheum is a metaphor for conflicts in the mind. No matter how many blows are struck, and with what seeming force, a character remains physically unharmed wherever his body sleeps. His MIND aura is instead damaged. All characters in the Morpheum use their MIND die to resolve all actions, including combat.

All damage done in the Morpheum shifts the target's MIND to inferior ranks until it reaches a rank below d20. Such a "damaged" character enters a comatose state. This damage heals normally. It is usually during this comatose state that many mortals are found in the waking world and slain by the minions of the Sanguinary.

Some characters, possessing the Incubus boon, can cause damage to a dreamer's physical

body. This is a mystical form of combat, detailed under the boon's description.

Dream Pursuit and Escape

Dream travelers can follow other dreamers in the Morpheum if they ever leave their own dreams and travel the other spaces. Immortals may want to pursue-or escape-beings in the Morpheum. Pursuit and escape in the dream realm are both resolved with opposed MIND aura rolls. Both dreamers roll their MINDs. The roller of the lower number escapes or catches the other character. Dream pursuit can be an exciting part of an adventure as the quarry ducks into dreams nearby to escape detection, arming himself with whatever lies in the dreams should he be caught. Many Immortals purposely duck into such dreams in order to gain potent BODY skills necessary to defeat minions of the Sanguinary that pursue them into said dreams.

The Narrator may require several successful roles for a character to elude pursuit or to find the hiding place of his quarry. He may also decide when the trail is cold and the character is unable to find his quarry (or his pursuer has given up).

Immaculum and the Morpheum

Carrying Immaculum in the Morpheum is extremely dangerous. Immaculum adds a weight to the character that resonates along the Morpheum's endless strands. For each point of Immaculum a character carries, all beings in proximity to him deduct 1 from MIND rolls to perceive him. Sleepers may bear Immaculum points equal to their MIND rank in Immaculum before this effect begins to take place. For example, an Immortal with the Sleeper boon and a d6 MIND (Rank 5) can hold 5 Immaculum without notice. The 6th Immaculum will allow other characters (including Doves) to deduct 1, the 7th two, and so on from the MIND rolls.

Succubi

A Succubus begins as a human dreamer that has had its body killed in the real world while sleeping. Its MIND remains locked in the dream world, feeding off the thoughts of dreamers that seep off their dream sheaths. As it matures, a Succubus is no longer sustained on the perspiration of dreams. Entering a chrysalis stage, it emerges with wings and a voracious appetite for Immaculum.

These elder Succubi fly through the Morpheum, searching for dreams weak enough to trespass, seducing dreamers with expert sensuality. Succubi all possess the Incubus boon, but instead of harming their victims (which only destroys the precious aura energy they crave) the Succubus drink the BODY aura of a human.

A Succubus can invade a dream, like any other dream denizen, by making an opposed MIND roll against the dream's creator. Once inside, it seduces the victim, who surrenders his life force if he fails to make an opposed MIND roll against the Succubus a second time. Each time the victim fails causes his BODY die to shift to one inferior rank until eventually the entire aura is consumed. A human who falls below a d20 BODY die has a chance (on the roll of a 20 on the d20) to become a Succubus himself. If a Succubus fails in its MIND roll, it is ejected from the dream and may not come back until the next time the dreamer returns to the Morpheum.

A Succubus can change its appearance at will into any human shape of any gender. The longer a Succubus is able to survive in the Morpheum, the more powerful it becomes. If it is unable to find weak enough humans whose dreams it can invade, it starves to death. The goal of every Succubus is to leave the dream world, which they can do once they accumulate enough life force to create a body in the real world. A Succubus can be harmed by anyone with the Incubus boon.

Because Succubi are thieves of life force, both Immortals and the minions of the Sanguinary hunt them. Constantly on the run, they often choose a series of "nests": dreams whose creators they have seduced to allow them sanctuary. Usually dreamers have no idea what creatures they are dealing with, as the Succubi take on forms of dead relatives, fantasy lovers or anything else the dreamer would protect. This symbiotic relationship often ends when the Succubus, ravenous with hunger from failed hunts, turns on her own benefactor.

The rare Succubus who gets powerful enough from hoarded life force can be reborn in the real world. The infant, fully possessed of the creatures' thoughts and desires, becomes an Immaculum vampire that preys on the weak of the waking world.

The Mystics and the Court of Dreams

This calling is the most adept at entering the world of dreams and coming out whole again. All members of this calling pay only 5 memory for the *Sleeper Boon*. Members of the Court of Dreams receive this Boon free. It costs 2 points of Immaculum for a Mystic using the *Sleeper boon* to enter the Morpheum. It costs 1 point for a member of the Court of Dreams. Anyone else must pay 10 memory for the boon and spend 10 Immaculum to activate it.

The goal of most Mystics is being awarded the "third eye", a Transcendent boon that gives them the power to transform the dreams of others to suit their own will. In this way they seek to one day cage the Sanguinary in a few demented minds. These remaining carriers of the Sanguinary "plague" can then be exterminated, or used to the benefit of the world. Opinions on the Sanguinary's final fate are divided. Therefore members of the Mystic Calling and members of the Court of Dreams openly hunt the minions of the Sanguinary known as the Furies.

While the vast majority of Mystics belong to the Court of Dreams, there are those in other courts that possess specialized skills and deeper knowledge of various forces of nature and how these relate to humankind. A Mystic from the Court of Desire, for example, uses temptation to manipulate dreamers while one from the Court of Death may use the fear of mortality to influence them.



The Fringe

The Fringe is a group of Immortal Mystics exploring the outer limits of consciousness and sanity. They spend most of their time in the Morpheum studying the dreams of insane and drug-addled mortals with the intent milking their dreams of volatile elixirs which they hope can be used as weapons against the Sanguinary. These are by far the strangest, most alien of the Mystic Calling, tinged with the surreal human madness they constantly immerse themselves in.

Mantles . . .

Mantles are worlds created within parallel dimensions, existing outside the normal framework of reality. Immortals live in these alternate dimensions, whose appearance and physical laws are entirely subject to the will and imagination of the mantle's Maker. Within these mystical worlds survive the last remnants of Immortals and their worshippers, islands of magic and wonder hidden from the harsh glare of neon-lit human civilization.

Each Court maintains a mantle that serves as their stronghold. Individual members of each Court, if they are lucky enough to spawn a half-human Maker capable of creating a mantle, have their own private sanctuaries as well.

Information regarding Makers can be found in Chapter 2.

The Rules of Mantle Reality

Mantles can be built on any reality the Maker can imagine. Usually the rules are more or less the same: Gravity pulls down, the sun travels over the sky, the air is breathable, etc. However, particularly brilliant or mad Makers may alter the rules of reality to suit their whim. Some, like those who made Atlantis, were so focused that even after their deaths, parts of the mantle continued to exist with a life of its own.

Nothing created in a mantle can be removed from that mantle, even if moved through a gateway directly into another mantle. These objects or beings are, after all, only thoughts given form by the Maker.

CREATING A MANTLE

To create a mantle, the Maker must have a SPIRIT rating of d8 or superior, and must have one mortal and one Immortal parent. "Pure" Bright Bloods, always mortal and born from two mortal parents, can never be Makers.

A Maker must possess a "virgin" shard of the Sanguinary, one that has never invaded a host, and it must be of a good size. Such a relic is an incredibly rare find. The shard is affixed to the forehead, and known as a "third eye". Because shards are adversely affected by faith, they avoid invading any creature with powerful faith. It is this forced contact between Maker and the shard that stimulates the shard to alter reality according to the will (faith) of the Maker. This control over the shard is constant as long as there is physical contact between the two.

The complexity of the mantle created by the Maker depends on his or her Spirit rank.

Rank/ Creations

D8	A small reality up to the size of a large estate, with flora and weather
D6	A region up to the size of a city, with flora, fauna and weather
D4	A mantle up to the size of a planet, flora, fauna, intelligent beings capable of independent interaction with themselves and outsiders.

At the edge of the Maker's range, the mantle joins the real world so subtly that walking from one to the other usually gives no warning. The Maker can make barriers that keep people out of the Mantle or trapped inside.

Maintenance

Once created a mantle must be maintained by a Maker. They need not be the same Makers as those who created the mantle in the first place, but those who take over must have a thorough understanding of the mantle's physical laws and aesthetics or they will unwittingly change the mantle.

If a mantle is left without a Maker—usually because of his death or escape—the mantle's reality will usually only be sustained for only a short time. Every session without a Maker causes the mantle to shrink one rank. The presence of humans with faith, however has been known to stall a mantle's disintegration for reasons unknown to Immortals.

The synergy that makes a mantle is an intelligent extension of its Maker, who does not need to concentrate to give it ongoing life and "personality". Any living thing created by the Maker will act according to its original concept, as if the Maker weren't in view of it. The Maker must, however, concentrate to change a component of the mantle.

In almost all cases, as the mantle shrinks, all *real* living things not created in the original matrix are thrust beyond the dwindling border into the real world. All other components, from created beings to architecture, landscape and such, vanish into oblivion.

Multiple Makers

Makers can work together to create even more lavish mantles. They can also maintain a more unique reality each Maker supervising a large region for himself. Makers sometimes pass the time by competing with one another in the mantle, each creating a more complex and interesting reality. This can lead to problems when the competition becomes too serious and divisions in the mantle's reality occur.

Arks

Within most mantles are the sanctuaries of Immortals. Arks often take the form of statues, altars, crypts, mausoleums and the like. Immortals invest the ark with Immaculum (life energy), creating a battery which they can siphon energy from in times of need.

The ark also serves as a place for an Immortal, if slain, to reincarnate within, bypassing the spirit

realm which draws slain mortals into its depths for a time. By investing the ark with Immaculum, the Immortal is prepared to return to the land of the living immediately.

Arks have been the centerpieces of Immortal temples for millennia, a receptacle for the worship of their followers. As holy relics, they have been fought over by rivals lusting over the energy contained within them. Immortals can have an ark at the start of the game by purchasing the Ark Boon, or they must go through the process of creating one during game play.

Forgotten Mantles

Sometimes mantles get forgotten, especially if the Immortal owner slips into Lethe. The Maker population within either dies, escapes, or if large enough continues to breed and grow within the mantle. Without training, these later generation Makers sustain reality of the mantle through instinct, making it dangerous and unpredictable.

Immortals sometimes go looking for forgotten mantles. Each mantle is a valuable asset, especially if the Maker population within can be convinced to extend their allegiance to the Immortal who finds it. Makers cannot, while in their own mantles, be mystically or mentally controlled. They can be coerced, assuming they have a dependency or are unsure of the boundaries of their own power.

Atlantis

The greatest mantle ever known to exist was Atlantis, created as a place for Immortals to come together, set aside their differences and live in peace following a war that almost destroyed them and an imprisonment that nearly broke their spirits.

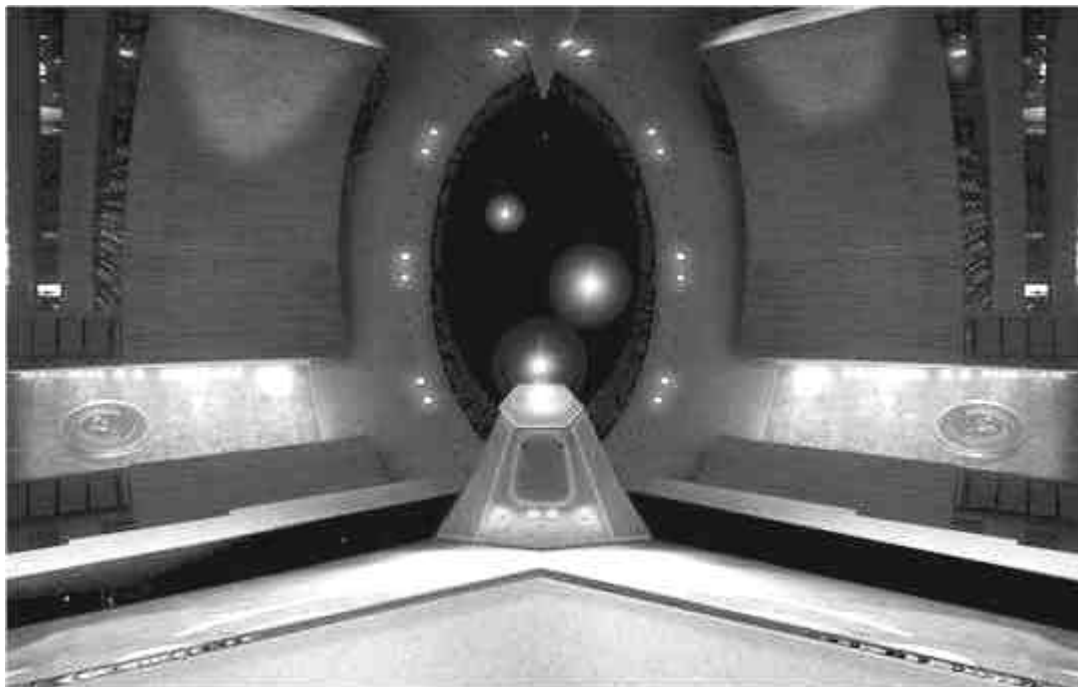
While many legends about Atlantis exist, these legends provide but the barest glimpse of its magnificence. Atlantis' geographical location was only a tiny island in the real Atlantic ocean, but its dimensional spaces covered much of the Western Hemisphere in size, with gateways that reached everywhere, including Europe, the Middle and Far East, Africa and beyond.

A cataclysm caused by internal strife brought about the death of Atlantis' Makers and the realm was ultimately destroyed. Parts of it still exist, however, spread across the world and

accessible by portals that, though very difficult to pinpoint, still continue to function.

Dominions . . .

Dotting the near-infinite expanse of the universe exist the Dominions, worlds capable of sustaining life of many kinds and once the crown jewels of immense empires built by the Abzulim, the first Immortal race. Once connected to the Earth via the Ley, the Dominions are now cut off after the Shouting War tangled the lines, isolating and stranding Earth. To travel into the Dominions is to travel into the ancient past, when the Immortals knew no boundaries and mankind was not even in existence. Only through special serenades, unknown to the majority of Immortals, and through special powerful Mystech devices can one even hope to begin reaching the far-flung Dominions. More on the Dominions and reaching them will be provided in Book 4.



Chapter II: Allies

“Don’t dazzle me with your arrogance and strength, or the power you suppose you possess. I am the creature you always dreamt of being but were afraid to dare.”

--Shade of the Court of Shadows, at her trial.

Encryption: [cipher]
Return Locus: <Epiphany at Sanctuary>
Received By: <Joker at Sanctuary>
Language: Voxtongue
Subject: Pandora’s Vox
Summary: I have made the exchange
Keyword Search: Moon, Babylon, Shade, Twins, Pandora’s Vox, Phoenix
Date: [suppressed]
Message As Follows:
Brother--
As per the plan, I made a successful rendezvous with the Maker calling herself Moon in the mantle of Babylon. She entrusted the artifact into my hands and received a false one from me. I know that Shade and the Twins will certainly make their way into the mantle, and it will certainly fall, but Pandora’s Vox is safe for now. I don’t mind telling you that this is the heaviest burden I have ever borne. I can hear voices from the artifact and see strange lights and music. It seems to be aware of me. I can’t wait until I put it in Phoenix’s hands. Tell him I will rendezvous at the third hiding place by sundown. Victory!
Epiphany

synonymous with “technology” in the modern era. Likewise, “secrets” is equally identified with knowledge. By creating their slaves attuned to these forces, the Abzulim believed they harnessed nature itself.

Despite the mistakes that cost them their dominion, the Abzulim’s methods did create an efficient system. Immortals of death explored the mysteries of mortality, Immortals of secrets were archivists and Immortals of desire were used to beguile and manipulate their enemies. Of course, there were also those who were used in the Abzulim’s favorite pastime--war.

The Prides & The Stratagem

Immortals broke free from their servitude through mutual cooperation. They formed large, organized pantheons they called Prides. These extended alliances, each containing Immortals centered in one of the various forces of nature, formed the first cohesive Immortal society. This diversity seemed to strengthen Immortals, but in reality they were unable to overcome their differences from one another for most of their history.

Eventually, the Prides became political entities concerned with status, power and competition. Having gone to war and nearly destroyed one another several times, they created a bloodless conflict, the Stratagem.

This political “game” allowed members of the various Prides to reveal weaknesses in their rivals, ostensibly allowing the embarrassed rivals to perceive a weakness in themselves and thus be more difficult to exploit by the Sanguinary. It made perfect sense that such an exercise would create a force of wise and superbly trained warriors capable of confronting the Sanguinary in the final war.

In reality, the differences between Immortals fostered constant mistrust and continued to

Perpetual Society . . .

At the time of its arrival to our world, the Sanguinary’s shattered body infected the dominant species on the planet, the dinosaurs. These Abzulim became sentient, intelligent, warlike and eventually paranoid. They created slave races, the current Immortals, to manage their swelling empires.

The Immortals were created with function in mind. Even millions of years ago, the Abzulim were aware of forces of nature that were essentially permanent and largely unchangeable. They created their slave races according to these essential paradigms in order to run their empires more efficiently.

The first recognized forces of nature that tug at all sentient creatures were identified: death, desire, fate, life, making, secrets, and war. Dreams and the power of shadow would be identified later. “Making” would become

inflate egos. The Perpetual Society, as the Prides collectively called themselves, came to believe its own propaganda. They had become the penultimate warriors, invulnerable to the Sanguinary's best machinations. Proof of this came from a lull in attacks by the Sanguinary's minions, which the Prides perceived as a growing fear of their own power.

Too late, they learned the truth of their folly.

The Great Betrayal

Arrogance blinded the Prides to the danger they were in. Their organizations had been infiltrated by a number of Sanguinary agents, turncoats who worked to undermine the solidarity of the Perpetual Society. Some Prides, such as the pleasure-seeking Anopheles had their entire leadership subsumed by agents of the Sanguinary.

The Prides were attacked by hordes of the Drones in the year 1999 and obliterated with a scattering of survivors. This event was known as the Great Betrayal since a number of key Immortals were involved, traitors who orchestrated the downfall of their own people. The Drones were led by a living relic, the head of the Dark Lady (the *Femme Darkle*), whose enormous powers cut with surgical precision through the defenses of the Prides and their strongholds.

Those Immortals who fell were carried screaming back to the Sanguinary's dark capital, there to be merged with the growing embryonic body of the monster. Far away, their brothers and sisters sensed their lights go out. Death had come to much of the Immortal race.

Some Immortals, maddened by eternal existence, found solace in the thought of true death. They marched willingly into the custody of the Drones. The Stratagem and the Prides were dead.

The Courts . . .

Survivors of the attack of the Dark Lady regrouped deep within their protected territories, the mantles. Here they realigned themselves into the same paradigms the Abzulim had created for them to function with utmost

efficiency. These organizations are now known as the Courts.

There are nine Courts in existence, each a political division, but with a focus on harnessing the full potential of its members. Because the members of a specific Court have powers and aptitudes similar to others in the group, there is a deeper understanding between members.

This enhanced sensitivity has a number of advantages. The first is the relative difficulty of enemy forces to infiltrate the similarity inherent in the group. The second is a refined spirit of cooperation based on clear understanding of the objectives. Members of the Court understand the nature of what they are, the powers that influence them (and that they influence themselves) and where these influences need to be applied.

Basic Court Structure

The Immortal Courts are quite feudal in their makeup. Those who have achieved the highest levels toward ultimate enlightenment and transcendence dominate the pecking order. These individuals are known by the Transcendent natures they possess and by a reputation for wisdom and thoughtfulness. Those lower on the hierarchy are generally submissive to the will of those above them. Because those with Transcendent natures tend to emanate the True Light of the Transcendents, such adoration is usually genuine. To the typical Immortal, those in the society who are achieving transcendence (a work in progress) represent the light at the end of a seemingly infinitely dark tunnel. These beings are the only Immortals allowed to hold discourse with the Paragon, the Master of the entire Court on the verge of complete transcendence.

The enlightened members of the Court sponsor individuals or even whole pantheons, acting as mentors and providing them tutelage. Being "connected" to the True Light allows them to transmit the True Light to those who show an unshakable will against the forces of darkness. The sponsoring member is often known by the title of Lord. Individual members benefiting from their patronage are known as "Sons" and "Daughters".

There are those who seem bestowed with the True Light, yet are secretly in the employ of the

Sanguinary. Although the Transcendants are very powerful and wise, they are neither omnipresent, omnipotent nor omniscient. Such moles, while very rare, are clever enough to avoid detection. Many are hermits, cutting themselves off from the rest of the society. It is the solemn duty of all Immortals to detect these traitors, for the Lords exist in an atmosphere of trust and unity. To act otherwise would undermine the fabric of the Path.

Whenever an Immortal presents him/herself to a Lord, strict formal protocol is often expected. While the protocol can vary, there are threads of similarity in every Court.

All non-Lord members of the Court must observe a policy of never looking a Lord in the eyes without permission. The eyes of a Lord shine, in various degrees, with the True Light and to view them often creates a feeling of euphoria, joy and wonder in the viewer. Thus, a glimpse of the True Light is a gift bestowed on an Immortal who has been judged a true walker of the Path. Once an Immortal sees the True Light in the eyes of a Lord that light ignites in his own eyes and his connection to the Transcendants is established.

The Jury

During the time of the Stratagem, the most powerful Immortals set themselves aside as its judges. In truth these Immortals, while not loyal to the Abzulim, were loyal to the teachings of the forces of nature that the Abzulim gave them. In direct service to the Transcendants, these Immortals gathered followers, and after the Great Betrayal, different sects of the Jury came together with the remaining Pride members. The former members of the Jury form the majority of the core of the Lords of the Courts.

COURT OF DEATH

Paragon: Osiris

Primary Mantle: *Mythic Egypt*

The Egyptian mantle recreates the entire Nile valley, a dimension in perpetual twilight where the glories of the New Kingdom rise from the sand in polished limestone and black basalt. Not an exact duplicate of that bygone era, the mantle nonetheless is a dazzling preservation complete with perfect white pyramids, lush gardens, magnificent floating ships cruising over a pure Nile river, or sailing over surrounding dunes. Monuments without count and the true form of the living Sphinx as yet unseen by the eyes of man are the centerpieces of this mystical realm. It is said the main entrance to this can be found within Egypt itself, near the Giza Pyramid.

History

Early on the Abzulim became aware of the existence of the One Soul, a massive pool of Immaculum that lies beyond both the physical and spiritual worlds. They noted most mortal creatures, from animals to man, are imbued of a spirit aura. They also learned these spirits, once released from the mortal body, travel to and merge with the One Soul. The Abzulim lusted over such a seemingly endless resource of life

force, but attempts to tap it were futile and always hazardous.

Unable to accept defeat, they created a slave race of Immortals ingrained with a fascination with mortal death to study and pierce the mysteries of the One Soul. This experiment bore no fruit, mostly because the death-obsessed Immortals were silent about what they learned. After the fall of the Abzulim, these Immortals scattered, calling themselves the Banjax. Increasingly protective of the One Soul, the Banjax opposed any force that tried to exploit it. They eventually settled in Egypt where their obsession with Death created an empire that endured for millennia.

Purpose

The Court of Death continues to probe the mysteries of death. They are drawn to places where death, violent or peaceful, occurs. Among their duties is the task of convincing mortal spirits who cling to the physical world to pass beyond and merge with the One Soul. Those that resist this journey can become targets for the Immortal creatures that seek to devour their Immaculum, ultimately diminishing the One Soul.

The Court also attempts to rescue the souls that have been taken from the still living and claimed by the Sanguinary and her forces. In elaborate

rituals they have contest of wills with the malevolent force of the Sanguinary within the soulless mortal, driving it out and allowing the true soul of the mortal to reunite with the other auras. Just as often that it is thought the Courts of Life and Death might oppose one another, they also work together in situations such as these.

The Court maintains extensive reach in the more gothic cultures, but this is, by far, not the only place they can be found. Many of the world's oldest cities have a large history and their fill of the wandering dead. Here the Court keeps a watchful eye on the many Shallows, places of hauntings and lost souls (including some Immortal souls that have not yet returned to physical form), that tend to exist in these larger older cities and places.

Dominance

Immortals from the Court of Death gain +1 superior shift to any skill used while in a cemetery, funeral, hospital or other place where death is reverently observed. During festivals or holidays dedicated to the observance of death or the dearly departed, the character gains 1 dominance for the whole day while near to observers of the event.

COURT OF DESIRE

Paragon: *Aphrodite*

Primary Mantle: *Xanadu*

The mantle of Xanadu gleams like a forbidden jewel beneath the real places of Hong Kong and other cities where the desires and emotions of mortals run strong and wild. The entrance is not a place, but a scent; poppies bearing a special perfume that, when inhaled, transports one to Xanadu. The mantle is a glittering metropolis of neon, marble, erotic monuments, glass streets, huge fountains and silk, which shimmers everywhere like water. Every object, every surface brings a unique emotion, desire, or sensation to the mind, both pleasant and sometimes painful. Beautiful mortals of every nationality can be found wandering the streets, intermingled with philosophers and poets who endlessly discuss the nature of Man and what drives him.

History

The Abzulim made these Immortals out of cats, serpents and other sensual creatures as gifts to

those who served them well. Instinctively knowledgeable in all forms of art and eroticism, they served to entertain a growing decadence in the Abzulim empire. A special group of these Immortals, the Anopheles, were created with the voxes of slain Abzulim to give them power to tempt the Abzulim rivals of their masters. The Anopheles were further instilled with a bloodlust of monstrous proportions. This made them superb shock troops and assassins who killed for--and through--pleasure.

The Anopheles gained leadership over the other Immortals of desire after the fall of the Abzulim. A significant number of those Immortals were never found however, and were rumored to have escaped bodily into the world of spirits, the Blue Air. The Cadre Raga remained the ruling body within the Anopheles for eons, until they betrayed the Pantheon to the Sanguinary during the Great Betrayal. Those who escaped the destruction slowly filtered into Xanadu to regroup with some of the more ancient Immortals of desire and emotion.

Purpose

Today, the Court of Desire is concerned with the endless study of the desires and emotions that obsess mortals. By understanding the nature of these, the Court hopes to seduce the Sanguinary itself to its doom, overloading it with the totality of mortal desires and emotions, rending it apart with intense pleasure and pain. They call this eventual weapon the Stroke. Each member of the Court is encouraged to find their own special weapon to join the others, sometimes specializing in a specific emotion or obsession.

Members of the Court seek out and tempt mortal allies to their cause, while working to break addictions created by the Sanguinary within individuals who might cause harm to the Perpetual Society. Many a small war has been fought between Progeny and the Court of Desire over the life of single powerful mortal, pulling at desires at either end.

Others, more daring, make it their duty to break addictions within the Immortal minions of the Sanguinary, although success in this area has been severely limited. The Sanguinary's use of the temptations of greed, lust, avarice, etc. in its evil plans has given it a strong hold on its servants.

Dominance

Immortals from the Court of Desire gain +1 superior shift to any skill involving the manipulation of desires and emotions used while in a place that cultivates them, such as dance clubs, intimate vacation spots, fine restaurants, and casinos. San Francisco, New Orleans and Las Vegas are their major North American holdings.

COURT OF DREAMS

Paragon: *Julunggul*

Primary Mantle: *The Dreamtime ("Alchera")*

This huge mantle reflects the deserts of the Australian outback, occasionally dotted with lush and green oasis. It is a world of visions, illusions, talking stones and animals, singing water and surreal landscapes. At the epicenter of the Dreamtime lies Uluru, known in the human world as Ayer's Rock. This red sandstone monument is pitted with caves that allow entry into the sanctuary of the Court of Dreams. Carved into this rock by the rain is, according to members of this court, the true history of the Morpheum, the world of dreams and the Dreamtime itself exists simultaneously in that world as well. Here the true Rainbow Serpent, Julunggul, presides over the Court of Dreams.

History

The original members of this court were known as the Terat: monstrous nightmares created by the Sanguinary to control its new lair in the dream world as well to capture any other Immortal that ventured into it. Branded with rings of power as symbols of their elite status, the Terat eventually broke away from the Sanguinary and joined the fight against It.

The Terat were almost completely annihilated with only a handful of members surviving the onslaught known as the Great Betrayal. Immortals which embrace their himsati forms despite the constant terror of control by the Sanguinary, they have also completely abandoned the real world for the mercurial landscapes of the dream world. Actively hunted by the Doves, the Court of Dreams is few in numbers.

Purpose

The Court of Dreams, built around the surviving Terat core, is dedicated to warfare against the Sanguinary within its own lair, the Morpheum.

Here, where humans face the constant onslaught of alien, psychological forces, the Dreamers are rescuers, teachers, defenders and companions to those whom reality has forsaken.

These dreamers understand the nature of the world of dream, and the fact the Sanguinary's spirit moves through the subconscious of the human race. By teaching humans to dream of their mantle, the Dreamtime, the Immortals increase the size of their domain and shrink the domain of the Sanguinary. Once the Sanguinary exists in only a small number of minds, they hope to destroy this small, insane population and thus destroy their enemy. See *The Furies*, page 36.

The Dreamtime is connected physically to the Morpheum. In fact, this mantle is an anchored point that the Sanguinary no longer controls, invisible to Its eyes. The Court hopes to extend the Dreamtime's borders to cover the entire world of dreams, thereby forcing the Sanguinary into a smaller and smaller prison within a few disturbed minds.

The majority of members of the Mystic Calling are also members of this court.

Dominance

Immortals from the Court of Dreams gain +1 superior shift to any skill used while in the dream world itself, or within a quiet place where people are sleeping. However, they do not get dominance in or during nightmares since the Sanguinary or its followers cause the majority of these.



Mortals and the mantle of the World Wide Web

Mortals surfing the more mundane landscaping of the Web sometimes stumble into the deeper incomprehensible levels, and without a guide, may lose consciousness. When they leave they often have flash glimpses of the future which may in time either fade or lead to apparent madness.

COURT OF FATE

Paragon: *Akasha*

Primary Mantle: *The World Wide Web*

The Court of Fate maintains a mantle within the flowing electron tides of the Internet, and their mantle is growing all the time. A dark cyber space, it is filled with strands of vibrant color, radiant pixel storms and temple-like architectures so mathematically complex that only the most advanced computer monitors (mostly of Immortal design) can see it. Those who travel into the Internet may see these and other monuments in all their stunning glory. In the center of this maze rules the paragon of the Court, aided by her three advisors.

History

The first slave race of the Abzulim were known as the Arachne. These were made from various insects and arachnids and were the builders of the intricate monuments of the Abzulim Empire. When the Abzulim fell, the Arachne split into two groups. One continued with the name of Arachne and held most of the more predatory insects and arachnids, while the other came to be known as the Hive. Wars between these two groups continued on for eons.

Their sensitivity to time and logic allowed the Arachne to escape with the least casualties from the Great Betrayal which damned many of their contemporaries. They were able to establish a mantle in the World Wide Web, based on the work done by a very small Pantheon known as the Solas (the first to fall in the Great Betrayal). Along with the Arachne, a number of wishgiving Immortals from the Pride known as the Phoenix joined them.

Purpose

The Court is fascinated with time -- past, present and future. Though travel through time is not possible, the Court learns about the possible future from the permutations of the past, and the divergences of the present. They actually exert their own forces to change the possible outcomes of the future. Their overall purpose is

to change the future, through the fulfillment of their own prophecies, to one where the Sanguinary is no longer a threat.

The Court is the heart of a prophecy that guides the whole of Immortal Society. This prophecy, which is self-created, concerns the rise of the Sanguinary and the final war that will take place in the real world. They wish to change the future, not predict it. The Court wields mystical control over probability and chance, and are fascinated by luck and study it tirelessly as well. They are unable to often resist the temptation of participating in games of chance.

The Courts war with the Hive may or may not continue, but this seems to be something they do not make public to the rest of the Perpetual Society.

Dominance

Immortals from this Court gain a +1 superior skill shift whenever they use a skill to influence chance or probability directly. This situation occurs quite frequently with any kind of gambling, where the legends of the Courts of Fate and Desire playing for the fate of something or someone very important sprang from.

COURT OF LIFE

Paragon: *The Immortal Celebrant*

Primary Mantle: *Tir Nan Og*

Somewhere in the Pacific Ocean sits a small coral reef. Those who step upon the reef find themselves in a far larger reef, adjoined by a ring of fantastic islands. Collectively, these islands form Tir Nan Og, the Isle of the Young. Tir Nan Og is an eternal paradise made up of forests, grasslands and soaring mountain spires. It is a fairytale land of unparalleled beauty where summer exists forever. In the center of this enchanted isle is the magnificent city-fortress of the mysterious Paragon of the Court and its mysterious advisors, the Amaranth.

History

The Abzulim at one point found many new Immortals running through the primeval forests of earth, animals infested with shards of the Sanguinary. A number of plants were similarly infested. Though they had not created them, the Abzulim took many of these as slaves, but the Court of Life still takes pride in the fact that they emerged into the Immortal world through providence, not as a calculated experiment of saurian taskmasters.

These Immortals were divided into three groups: the Tuatha of the Land, the Morrigan of the Air, and the Roane of the Water. Their love of life caused them at one point to nearly finish the creation of a new body for the Sanguinary, acting as its unwitting dupes. Fortunately, they were defeated and the creation destroyed. The groups were long rivals through the years until the Great Betrayal. After its conclusion, the defeated and surviving ranks of these once powerful Prides came together to form the Court of Life and set aside their age old differences.

Purpose

The Court of Life's purpose is basic--the preservation of all life and the destruction of all forces which threaten life. Most prized in their eyes is the life of the Innocent, which they preserve with fanatical fervor. The Cur, a special sect of Guardians, are solely dedicated to protecting innocent human life. While the Court understands that life does end, the taking of life before its time is something that they abhor.

They are also obsessed with having more Bright Bloods born into the human race to increase the race's resistance to the Sanguinary. They often arrange marriages or "chance" meetings between individuals of the Bright Blood in hopes of producing offspring that can pass on the blood. The Court of Life will not hesitate to intervene to save a life, even if it's a suicide, and on occasion, has come into conflict with the Court of Death whose knowledge of individuals and their relation to death are clearer.

The Court of Life is less philosophically opposed to technology than they are to industry, which often neglects the environment and the health of the creatures therein. Because of this fact, they sabotage industry constantly. Their work in bringing about more Bright Bloods has attracted

the attention of various groups within the Court of Making, who are intrigued by this concept.

Dominance

Immortals from the Court of Life gain a +1 superior shift of all skill dice when in places where birth or renewal flourishes, including maternity wards in hospitals, completely unspoiled wilderness, preservation parks, etc.

COURT OF MAKING

Paragon: *Vulcan*

Primary Mantle: *The Walk*

The Walk is an underground city spanning many miles, perhaps circling the globe. Technologically brilliant beyond human understanding, the Walk still conveys a feeling of ancient architecture and simplicity. Gems, crystals, rare metals and polished stone adorn this mantle with elegance rather than opulence: the influence of the many elemental creatures that call this place home. Entrances to the Walk are found in many catacombs beneath the modern cities of mankind. The vast majority of the Walk is deserted and dark, the victim of wars to possess it. Dark creatures lurk in its deserted bulk, where ancient machines sleep, waiting to be reactivated.

History

The elementals, originally created to be the building blocks of Abzulim technology and architecture, were one of the first races to revolt against their masters. They were freed from their entrapment during the fall of the Abzulim. More alien than the animal and plant himsatis (the "naturals"), the Elementals remained secluded in the wide deserts, underground, and within the deep seas. Alone and shunned by humanity, they created simulated worlds with artificial creatures. Technology was the natural outgrowth of these creations, giving mortals who dared to traffic with the Elementals an advantage at first in warfare, but eventually in all aspects of civilization.

Eventually some of the descendants of these Elementals, the Phoenix (fire) and the Peri (earth) joined in with the rest of the Prides in the Stratagem. After the great betrayal, several members of these two Prides, along with several members of the Pride Eremite (Immortal humans who seek to protect and strengthen humanity) formed the Court of Making. A

number of innovators from other Prides and a small handful of the remaining Arachne joined them as well.

Purpose

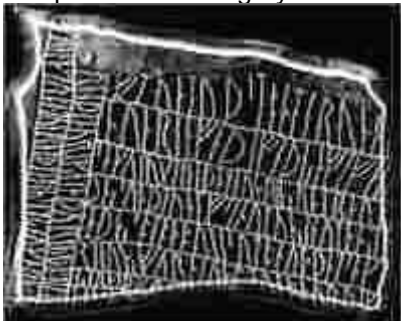
The Court of Making is devoted to the destruction of weakness and the perfection of form. To this end it seeks to rid the world of any weaknesses which the Sanguinary might try to exploit during the final war. One way is through the wishgiving ability of the Elemental members, focused by the faith of mortals. Making wishes come true and opening the mind to real possibilities is a large part of what the Court is all about. They rescue people from despair and empower them to become mighty warriors for the human race. They inspire.

The Court is also very focused upon technology and the ways it can be made to serve mankind and Immortal alike. From the Foundry, deep in their mantle of the Walk, they create the majority of modern Mystech items and weapons in preparation for the final war with the Sanguinary. Many still seek to understand the complex workings of the technologies created by the Abzulim and actively study them.

Some of their living technology is designed to integrate biologically with humans and increase their perfection. Many want humans to abandon natural organic systems in preference for superior techno-organic android forms and perhaps reject the Sanguinary's presence in the meantime. Many of this Court have come to closely inspect the Bright Bloods as well, noting how they have organically began passing the limits and weaknesses of most other humans.

Dominance

Immortals from the Court of Making gain a +1 superior shift of all skill dice when in places where building and design are in full swing, especially if the project is particularly inspired. Places of mundane toil, such as factories, do not count as part of this category.



COURT OF SECRETS

Paragon: ???

Perhaps the best kept secret, even to most of its own members

Primary Mantle: *Jerimia*

The mantle-city of Jerimia is a tranquil one, monastic and beautifully wrought with reflecting pools, whispering fountains, grassy amphitheaters and more grand temples. It lies somewhere in the Himalayan Mountains, but it can be accessed from many libraries all around the world. The look of the whole is a fusion of Buddhist and classic Greeks architecture. Within the city is Athenaeum, an immense interdimensional library that contains, in its vaults, every book ever written. Filled with works from the first cuneiform tablets, to Egyptian texts, occult writings and more mundane technical manuals of today, the shelves of the library soar endlessly into vaulted ceilings. One must always prove oneself worthy of access to the Court's knowledge.

History

The Court of Secrets emerged primarily from the Pride Magdalen, a powerful intellectual Pantheon. The Magdalen (a sister pride to the Eremites) were the only Immortal race that had no real contact with the Abzulim. This is a fact that galls them considering the amount of Abzulim works that remain scattered throughout the universe. Their work with attempting to unlock the mysteries of human faith brought the rise of the Apocrypha, a mistake which the Pride would come later to regret as their former mortal servants began to attack all Immortals.

During the Shouting War of the Immortals, the Magdalen remained hidden away in the very mantle that serves as the primary mantle for the Court. The Magdalen were responsible for the Hellenic civilization and brought it to its peak, but later destroyed it out of a fierce internal struggle within their ranks, and partially with their brethren in the Eremites. After the Great Betrayal, the Magdalen and a few members of the Pride Arachne, formed the Court of Secrets. Having cast aside old mistakes, the Court's purpose is powerful.

Purpose

The Court investigates all the creative works of man, art, literature, media, etc. The writer, the artist, the filmmaker, all in committing their prose

or brush, unwittingly reveal information about themselves. Within these are patterns which the Court discovered long ago. Because the Sanguinary exists in the dreams of humans, and because creative works are derived from the imagination, often inspired by dreams, these patterns have been found to partially originate from the Sanguinary herself.

By careful study and comparison, the Court hopes that it can devise the ultimate weapon against the Beast . . . its true name. With this name they hope to gain absolute power over it, breaking its tyranny for all time and using it as a force for good, or if this is not possible, destroy it. Day to day activities revolve around collecting and studying books, art and other recordings and media for possible plans of the Sanguinary and its minions. When they find out about these plans, they attempt to divert those plans and foil them.

Objects which inspire humans often contain residual imbedded Immaculum. The Court seeks to keep such objects out of the hands of other Immortals who would just as soon drain the relics of their life force than preserve them. Often the Court offers Immaculum from its own coffers in order to acquire these masterworks. To this end they scour the planet looking for original works, and now possess the largest art and literature collection in existence.

Dominance

Immortals from the Court of Secrets gain a +1 superior shift of all skill dice when in places where knowledge is sought, including libraries, universities and other epicenters of academia.

COURT OF SHADOWS

(The Shadowen)

Paragon: *Hippolyta*

Primary Mantle: *Midnight*

Midnight is a realm of perpetual night, an endless grassy plain sprawling beneath a star-studded sky. The grasses of these rolling hills shimmer with bioluminescent points of light shining from velvety stems and tassels as fine as human hair. In the center of these hills is a dark mountain, completely carved into a fantastic dark city. Doors opening to this mantle occur only in the dead of night--midnight--and cannot exist in any lit place. The mantle is a dark

and yet, peaceful place. A fact that surprises some of those who visit it for the first time.

History

The Shadowen were created by the Abzulim's supreme lord, Samiel, as spies to watch his enemies. Merging and traveling through shadows, these beings were effective, undoubtedly securing information that allowed Samiel to rule supreme until his death. After this death, these same spies contributed to the downfall of the Abzulim as well, sharing secrets they had learned with the various Immortal slave races. Once the rebellion succeeded, the Shadowen simply vanished from history.

They would be seen again as attendants to the mysterious being known as the Horned Lord. Rumors say he had found them hidden within a pocket of the Maelstrom, birthplace of the Primals. Through the Horned Lord, the hunter known as Nimrod was born, and became the leader of the Shadowen, and they took his name as their own. However, over time, dissenters within the Pride eventually poisoned the Horned Lord, Nimrod, and the other male members, burying them alive in agony on the shadowy island of Talos. Only the Horned Lord escaped to go on to bring about the Pride known as Phoenix.

When the Shouting War occurred, the Nimrod (as the Shadowen continued to call themselves) somehow imprisoned all other Immortals in a place called Sheol. When these Immortals escaped the Nimrod were regarded as enemies, but later came to a truce with the Immortals. During the Great Betrayal, nearly a third of the Nimrod defected to the service of their former Abzulim masters. The remainder once again took the name of Shadowen and like the other Prides, joined with members of the Jury to form the Court of Shadow. The Court is still known as the Shadowen to many.

Purpose

The Court of Shadows, above all, are police for the Society. They enforce the law known as the Silence, which prohibits Immortals from revealing themselves to the general mortal population in any way. The Court keeps humans and Immortals separated from one another and watches closely when an Immortal begins to bring a Bright Blood or other Believer into their confidence. Too often trusted mortals have

turned out to be unwitting servants of the Sanguinary, and many an Immortal has been taken by the Sanguinary, from misplaced trust.

By keeping humanity ignorant of the Immortals, the Court believes this will give them an advantage in the final war. They have also come to understand that shadows, which spill from humans, are dark thought from the psyche that spill into the outer world. The Court sifts through these trying to understand the Sanguinary for a means to more easily defeat it. In the shadows is inspiration of many terrible thoughts within the human race.

The Court of Shadows fears that the human race may be doomed because of its symbiotic relationship with the Sanguinary. Humans that are deemed too powerful with the ability and knowledge to spread the secrets of, or challenge the security of the Perpetual Society, are considered a danger. Unless a member of another Court can quickly find a way to salvage the situation, the human is hunted down and slain by triads (The Shadowen tend to operate in teams of three) within the Court. This has brought them, on occasion, into philosophical conflict with the other Courts.

Dominance

Immortals from the Court of Shadows gain a +1 superior shift of all skill dice when in places of extreme darkness, very dim or with a complete absence of light. This makes them especially powerful at night when there is heavy cloud cover, or no moon, or in windowless buildings.

COURT OF WAR

Paragon: *Thor*

Primary Mantle: *Valhalla*

Valhalla is one of the most famous mantles in the world, a great city with endless corridors adjoining armories, staging areas, gymnasiums, training halls, motorpools, feasting halls and living quarters. Valhalla's colors are hot: reds, golds and coppers. Existing in the sky on a floating island, Valhalla is perpetually surrounded by storms and paved with the shields of its occupants. It is capable of sailing like a ship, and is known to be the only mobile mantle in existence.

History

The Court of War was formed from many groups of Immortals. During the Great Betrayal, many members of the ancient pantheons of the Morrigan, Peri, Eremites, and a number of the Phoenix and Banjax, gathered together to fight back the forces of the Sanguinary's minions and traitors to the Society, the Progeny. They are the primary reason the number of Immortals having survived the attack is not fewer.

Having come together chaotically during those final days of the Stratagem, they began to organize under the leadership of a group of the Jury and formed the Court of War. The Court is a conglomerate, not based solely off any of the ancient Prides in any way, but completely its own new entity.

Purpose

The Court of War's purpose is clear. One of the goals of the Sanguinary is the destruction of the human soul. To this end the Sanguinary fosters many of the human conflicts of today, from wars to gang violence. The Courts goal is to intervene and stop the Sanguinary from turning humanity into one large soulless army against the Immortals. The Court exists as the front line against the Sanguinary, sacrificing themselves fanatically for the good of all Immortals.

Whenever a minion of the Sanguinary is revealed, these Immortals race to intercept and destroy it. The Court are all fighters with a deep love of freedom and feel that humanity has no right to be enslaved by the Sanguinary or even other Immortals. To this end you can find the members of this Court involved in all aspects of human conflict, from Third World Countries at war, to guerilla warfare, vigilantes against gang violence, and even the war on drugs.

This Court dominates the soldier callings such as the Slayers, Scourges and Guardians. But a large number of their members are of the other Callings, covering up their involvement, gathering intelligence, etc. The Court tends to take extreme measure when necessary, only rivaled by the Court of Shadows in how far they are willing to go to stop the corrupted.

Dominance

Immortals from the Court of War gain a +1 superior shift of all skill dice when in places where highly emotional conflict, a struggle for life

and death against an enemy, comes into play. However, they do not gain dominance in conflict they instrument or during conflicts that have little impact (such as two children fighting in a playground). This makes them effective as long as the conflict is clearly physical.

Makers . . .

Makers are children born of mortal and Immortals. They are Bright Bloods and automatically have all those traits and abilities. But they are something more. The ability that sets Makers apart from all other beings is the form their particular form of faith takes. At the lowest level, Maker faith can create a dimensional rift into a small reality limited only by their imagination. At the highest level, this dimensional space can have almost limitless boundaries. These abilities are discussed in the section on Mantles.

Makers are as long-lived as their Bright Blood brethren. They can also breed with one another, or a Bright Blood, and create other Makers. Some Immortals to far removed from the mortal experience to even consider mortal humans a civilized species, imprison and forcibly breed new generations of Makers to maintain their precious mantles. Maker revolutions are woefully common among these enslaved populations. Once they realize they have absolute control over the reality of the mantle, it can no longer hold them. If they escape, they usually die in a few years in the mortal world, unable to adapt to an inflexible reality.

Recruiting Makers

A Maker population is the vital key to creating and maintaining a mantle. Unless an Immortal creates a sincere relationship with a mortal and they willingly mate to create a Maker child, this step inevitably requires some distasteful coordination: Enslavement of Makers in the mortal world or rape of a mortal. The latter option is distasteful to almost all Immortals, mainly because a child born of such a union invariably has psychological problems that insinuate themselves into the reality matrix of the mantles they create. The very best means of gaining a viable Maker is for he or she to be born out of a consenting, loving union. Such a child, guided to his or her duties from birth can form stable, brilliant realities vital for the survival of Immortals.

The Shadowen stipulate that only worshippers of Immortals should become the parents of Makers, and that the “mundane” population never be involved. This stance is often challenged by Immortals who claim that fanatical followers have preconceived ideas which limit the vision of their children. The matter, unresolved, leads to constant conflicts between the Shadowen and Immortals who break their prohibition of cohabitation with humans.

Immortals and pantheons can also liberate a Maker population from another mantle, either currently occupied or long forgotten by its owner in a previous incarnation. Badly treated Makers are easier to enlist; smart Immortals know to continue treating them well.

The Believers . . .

In such a world of shadows, reflections and superficial veneers, there is still a real Light. It burns in the hearts and veins of those who have not yet bowed to the darkness. Aware of the darkness, Believers battle it each day, encouraging and empowering their offspring to do the same. They make alliances with one another and with the supernatural forces of Light. Most are friends of the Immortals.

Believers are growing in numbers. They are preparing for the last war, shedding dependence on technology and the trappings of civilization. They depend instead on one another.

You can find Believers anywhere. They are in every strata of society, within every national boundary, age group and race. They are often outsiders, persecuted for being different from “everybody else”. Many of them stand out in a crowd and make people around them nervous.

Even as they sense the darkness, the darkness senses them. Those who are identified are pursued and destroyed by the Sanguinary’s many agents, for the Believers represent a very real threat to its future. Worse yet are those that are seduced by the Sanguinary and her minions, carrying intimate knowledge of the Immortals they once assisted.

Bright Bloods

All Believers are driven by their ideals, but most can only countermeasure the mundane, mortal

forces of the Sanguinary. There are others however, who have a power in them, the same Light that beckons an Immortal toward transcendence or burns agonizingly in the mind of the Sanguinary and its servants. These special humans are known as the Bright Bloods.

Bright Bloods are spiritual people, whether they realize it or not. Their faith is powerful, investing them with supernatural powers. Their faith is a fire that scorches the minions of the Sanguinary. Their blood can melt a shard into nothingness. The spark in their eyes causes pain to dark

creatures and remolds the bodies of Immortals who venture, as moths to a flame, too close. Like their human brethren the Bright Bloods are a mystery to the Immortals, their origin and future uncertain. They are wild cards that will inevitably be played out in the final war.

Playing a Bright Blood

Players may wish to stay on the human side of things, playing characters who are Bright Bloods and not Immortal at all. The rules for playing such a character are presented in Appendix B.

Bright Blood Organizations

There are a few known organizations Bright Bloods have congregated to during the passing millennia. Each group's goal (at least outwardly) is the protection of its members. Hidden in each, however, are old and well-crafted agendas.

Pax Novum ("New Peace") is an organization dedicated to bridging the wide gap existing between human being and Immortal. By reconciling these races, they hope to bring the Earth into a new age of prosperity and enlightenment. Even the minions of the Sanguinary are tolerated by members of this order, as Pax Novum is made up of rationalists who do not believe in the concept of incarnate good or evil. Members of Pax Novum use Immortal technology extensively, and have been mistaken throughout history as wizards.

Quiet Cultures are sects of humans, usually led by Bright Bloods, who serve the interests of Immortals--in fact, worship them. Members of these sects provide sanctuary for an Immortal character including food, companionship, or life force used to heal their god of injuries, or to power his or her artifacts. In return Immortals go to great lengths to see to the prosperity of their Quiet Cultures and their members.

Bright Blood characters may start out the game as members of one of these organizations for a cost of 10 memory points.



Chapter III: Enemies

**“A dream is a truth that never is true.
In the dark it is easy to pretend that the truth is what it ought to be.”**
--Epiphany, Empath of the Court of Dreams.

Encryption: [cipher] Return Locus: <Phoenix at Sanctuary] Received By: <Joker at Sanctuary>
Language: Voxtongue Subject: Epiphany Summary: She missed the rendezvous Keyword Search: Epiphany, Trapdoor Date: [suppressed] Message As Follows:
Joker-- Epiphany did not make it to our rendezvous. You and the others must confirm whether she was captured by anyone. We must recover the artifact before Trapdoor and his agents do. EVERYTHING depends upon her safe return.
Phoenix.

The Sanguinary and the Corrupted . . .

The origins of the Sanguinary are ambiguous to Immortals. Records left behind, particularly of the mad ravings of Samiel the Abzulim, are lost, and remembered only by a secretive few.

The Sanguinary was exiled from another dimension known as the Crucible. This realm, composed entirely of thought, is believed by many Immortal scholars to be the wellspring of human faith. The Crucible is “that invisible place from which all visible things proceed.” It is the loom of creation itself, home of the Transcendents.

The reason for the Sanguinary’s exile from this powerful place is speculative. Perhaps the Sanguinary tried to reshape creation with its lust of power. Some say the Sanguinary was a Transcendent construct, an aberrant thought made real and deadly. Others say the Sanguinary was once a Transcendent itself.

The Sanguinary smashed into the Earth 65 million years ago. Some think this collision was simply chance, while others believe the Sanguinary guided itself here, perhaps finding it

a perfect breeding ground to increase its power. If the Crucible is the source of faith, and humans can channel faith, the implication is clear that the Sanguinary intends to use mortals to conquer the heart of creation itself.

Immortals do not know what the Sanguinary looked like before its fall to earth, though Abzulim legend holds that it was unbearably beautiful and sparkled like a million gems set on fire. A famous raving of Samiel:

“When I saw its thoughts glistening on the floor and the walls of the Labyrinth, my mind begged my claws to rip out my eyes, for my heart was crying out that it was breaking.”

Whatever its primary form, after shattering, the Sanguinary’s consciousness was scattered through all the shards of its body. The shards were vessels of instinct. The Sanguinary’s id was trapped in a single shard, known as the Red Shard. This shard later formed a seed around which the first attempt to reincarnate the Sanguinary was made. The resulting embryo, the Malice Shard, was found by Immortals before it could awaken, and smashed under the guidance of a Transcendent known only as *Sharakai the Dragon*.

This would have annihilated the Sanguinary if its consciousness had not interfaced with the minds of proto-humans of the time. Little more than a vague nightmare itself, it floated, greatly weakened. As time passed and its consciousness began to coalesce, humanity became more industrious. Human civilization was born. All the while the Immortals thought the Sanguinary had been destroyed completely.

For most of human civilization, the Sanguinary remained little more than a force rather than a clearly defined personality. Human aggression, greed and other “dark” personality traits were exacerbated by its presence in the dream state. Its servants sensed its presence and were driven to accomplish the goals of the Shards

without real contact with the Sanguinary itself. All toiled for its eventual rebirth of mind and body.

The Furies

These mortals are telepaths, among the most powerful in the world. Once Bright Bloods, they have been seduced by the Sanguinary in the most intimate of dreams and warped by a lust for power. Megalomaniacs in the extreme, they hide from the world as they plot its downfall. Ever since the foundation of their order in the primordial past, they have used their telepathic abilities to influence politics and probe the secrets of Immortals while maintaining a safe distance.

The Furies are a tantalizing foe to Immortals. They are the physical vessels in which the Sanguinary's core consciousness resides. Their telepathic gifts enable them to endure the malignance of the entity directly within their conscious minds. They are, collectively, the Sanguinary: a brain trust that organizes the

legions of dark minions. Despite their limitations, including their few numbers and the high degree of insanity (and burnout) that comes from hosting the Sanguinary's core consciousness the Furies are a very formidable force.

The belief that the Sanguinary's inner self can be destroyed after the death of every one of the Furies encourages constant pogroms against them from Immortals. Telepaths everywhere are threatened during these hunts, straining (or shattering) relationships between Immortals and Bright Bloods. The Furies continue to survive through elaborate security, isolation and guile. Their key resources are money, their supernatural powers and a telepathic link to the legions of fanatical followers that will lay down their life at a Fury's whim. To the servitors of the Sanguinary, the Furies are the Holy Mothers who transmit the divine presence of the Sanguinary to them. They are also the bearers of the most powerful of the servitors, the Sanguine Avatars.

System Note:

The Auras of the Furies, except for MIND, are confined to d10s. They possess an inexhaustible amount of skills at high ranks. This makes them easily the most skilled mortals in the game. The Narrator should feel free to give them any and all skills he desires in preparing them for an encounter with the players.

Each member of the Furies is beautiful in the extreme, chosen not only for her psionic gifts, but for her ability to seduce others. Because the Sanguinary's core MIND resides in her, a Fury's MIND can reach d4 status. Such an individual, even among the Furies, would be rare; it takes a special mind to be capable of sustaining such a powerful amount of the Sanguinary's presence. As a Fury becomes insane, cracking under the strain of the Sanguinary's presence, her MIND drops to inferior levels until she enters a state of mental shutdown. She remains in this catatonia until she dies, punctuated by violent outbursts as she attempts to rend her own flesh and release the Sanguinary essence from its prison.

When a Fury is destroyed, goes insane or dies in childbirth (a common occurrence) another, already groomed as a replacement, takes her place. All Immortals sense the death of a Fury, who telepathically transmits the essence of the Sanguinary to one of her sisters before she dies. If she fails to do so, the essence seeks the nearest life form incapable of resisting it and possesses that creature. The possessed being then returns to the other sisters for transference of the Sanguinary consciousness. Such a transfer is a strain on any member of the Furies, who would rather transmit the consciousness to a prepared replacement. Such a death is always a cause for rejoicing among Immortals,

traditionally leading to an impromptu and uplifting festival.

The Furies never speak, but communicate only via mind to mind. This telepathic dependency is created by the presence of the Sanguinary and is a key means for outsiders to identify individual members. Immortals believe this weakness is inherited from the Sanguinary, a telepathic being which they believe is confused by the concept of language. All the Furies can effectively wield the Xenoglossia Serenade with a focus in Telepathy (but cannot wield serenades normally except for this one equivalent), and all Furies have the Mental Link Boon with one another

automatically. It is impossible to kill one without alerting the others to her death. The Furies also can possess certain natures, which are usually Beauty (or Terrible Countenance), Estrus and Flight.

The Sanguine Avatars

As if the danger represented by the Furies is not enough, they present a more physical threat. Occasionally one of them bears a child that is born with a telepathic link to its mother, allowing her to transmit the consciousness of the Sanguinary to it. Imbedded with elemental materials, a large number of shards, and the voxes from fallen Immortals, the child is groomed to become one of the most feared warriors of the Sanguinary, a Sanguine Avatar.

There have been 3 known Sanguine Avatars through history. Each one has had power so great that it changed the face of the real world while he or she existed. The first one, the Rime, was born millions of years ago. Her power locked the world in glaciers, giving birth to ice ages until her eventual destruction.

She was succeeded by the Dust, which came as a plague, infecting thousands with his taint and eventually bringing the Black Death to Europe that killed millions. The Dust perished in London in the year 1666 when it was attacked by a coalition of Immortals and trapped in the burning city.

The Silhouette, an elemental creature of darkness, emerged during World War II, the product of the Furies use of the Nazi eugenics programs. A creature with power over weather, the Silhouette is easily the most powerful of the Sanguine Avatars and is still existing in the modern day. It manifests as terrible storms such as tornadoes and hurricanes. At the close of the Millennium, the Silhouette continues to attack Immortals, mindlessly devastating mortals in its path as it culls the herd that contains its consciousness. Population explosions give the Sanguinary more freedom to move about, but also spreads its secondary essence too far, causing its control to slip more and more.

Another Sanguine Avatar, the Crone, is prophesied to come as the herald of the final war with the Sanguinary. Some say she has already existed, the true identity of the Dark Lady, a sorceress weaned on the sacrificial

blood of the Inca and Aztec empires. Whether this is true or not, the Perpetual Society searches for the sign this Sanguine Avatar is in existence.

The Sanguine Avatars are difficult to control, even by the Furies. The malice of the Sanguinary, its raw power and need to destroy drives these beings. Separated from the core essence of the Sanguinary residing in the Furies, the Avatars act out of instinct rather than deliberation. Immortal themselves, they are difficult to kill, even by armies of Immortals.

No statistics are listed for the Sanguine Avatars. It is up to the Narrator to craft their auras and abilities to the needs of his or her game. Indeed, they should be nearly godlike to other Immortals, and no single Immortal should wield enough power to destroy such a being.

Blood Dancers

When the Furies want someone dead, they call upon the terrifying Blood Dancers to do the job. Blood Dancers are Immortal, created by merging a shard with 13 gallons of a mystical liquid known as Aqua Regia, a universal solvent used by ancient alchemists to transform one form of liquid into another. Because of this origin, in their himsati state a Blood Dancer it is made out of living, flowing blood that can transform itself into virtually any other form of liquid, from water to acid, even gasoline or oil.

Blood Dancers generally prefer to kill by being ingested somehow into the bodies of their targets. They may pose as a glass of water or wine, or may hide inside a plasma bag at a hospital, ready to be intravenously inserted into their victim. Once inside, they form themselves into a horrid creature that rips its way slowly out of the victim.

If they cannot kill in this manner, they will appear as something that can cover their victim's skin (such as oil, bath water, sunblock, perfume, etc.). Once on the body they transform into a caustic acid and dissolve their victim.

Sometimes a Blood Dancer will simply lie within a living thing, flowing through its blood and hiding, allowing itself to be transported to a place where it can spy on the Sanguinary's enemies. Generally it keeps itself healthy by draining the blood of the victim. This process is

identical to sinning, with any penalty that may apply. The BODY aura is always the target.

In human form Blood Dancers dress in blood red uniforms and are always found guarding the Furies when not on an assassin's errand. The Blood Dancers have no SPIRIT Aura and typically do not have beyond a D8 in MIND or BODY. They also tend to have the following Himsati Natures: Aquatic, Body Compressing, Blood Drain, Discorporate Form, Poison, Spew. They may have other abilities and natures as deemed by the Narrator.

The Progeny

In the dim past, a new generation of beings, mostly human, became infected with more of the Sanguinary's shards. Without aeons of strength and experience to protect them against the Sanguinary, these individuals quickly came fully under the Sanguinary's spell.

Today, these Progeny are a powerful force in mortal civilization, the strong-arm under the iron rule of the Furies. They act as lieutenants in control of the ravenous Drones who, left without strong leadership, would destroy themselves.

The Progeny are known by their whispering. Any progeny who speaks out loud carries the resonance of lost and stolen souls, alerting Immortals to its corruption.

The Progeny are Immortals in all respects but one--they have given up their SPIRITs in sacrifice to the Sanguinary. Only by draining the SPIRIT auras of humans can the Progeny replenish this SPIRIT. They act as vessels of SPIRIT Immaculum, stealing it and taking it to the secret stronghold of the Sanguinary, finally storing it in its embryonic pupae. As long as a member of the Progeny contains this stolen SPIRIT, he can create a Serenade (though his true nature is revealed when this occurs).

Because they rape mortals for their SPIRIT, the Progeny are usually horribly cursed beyond belief. Bizarre and horrible occurrences or inhumane or sociopathic behavior in a city are often the sign that a Progeny has entered it.

Because the Progeny are individuals, their statistics are not provided here. They can be of any power level, social strata or description. They are the worst enemies to Immortals

because they are so much like them. Many Immortals, succumbing to the Sanguinary's temptations, turned traitor in the end of the 20th Century and causing the Great Betrayal. These are also among the ranks of the Progeny, and known as the Penitents. Progeny cannot obtain Transcendent Natures (see Book 3, the Book of Banes).

Becoming A Progeny

The Progeny grow their ranks through birth and adoption.

"Birth" refers to infecting a promising human with a shard of the Sanguinary. Once the shard takes hold and the Sanguinary thoroughly drains the SPIRIT of the newborn, the new member is considered a Progeny. The process takes about a week.

"Adoption" is the Progeny's policy of recruiting Immortals into the family from the Perpetual Society. Their targets are usually Immortals who fear the final war. Or who are so tired of life they are willing to give up the struggle against the Sanguinary for the promise of eventual oblivion. Still others are seduced with promises of power in the new world order of the Sanguinary that is to come. A Progeny takes full responsibility for the adopted. A potential adopted must be entirely free of all entanglements with the Perpetual Society and can have no ties with any pantheon. Once selected, the adopted's give up his or her SPIRIT aura to the Progeny, who in turn feeds it to the Sanguinary. The adoption process is excruciatingly painful and difficult and can take months. Immortals adopted in this way are known as the Penitents.

The vast majority of Progeny have human himsatis, but can possess natures borrowed from other types as well. These are bestowed on the Penitent during the adoption process.

If the Progeny belongs to a larger family (see Drones, below), he shares a perfect telepathic link with higher-ranking Progeny in the same family. There is no range or limit to this link, and the lower-ranking Progeny can hide nothing from his superiors.

Devourers

The Sanguinary's ultimate goal is assimilation of its body back into itself. Over the millennia, the Sanguinary has found itself to be much more powerful when it assimilated shards with imprinted life experience on voxes. This is why it

does not simply assimilate raw shards of itself. By implanting a shard into a living thing, then absorbing that thing, it will become infinitely more powerful with the sum total of other essences.

Among the Progeny exist a special, horrific group of monsters known as the Devourers. These creatures are created through the implantation of a shard into a creature genetically constructed by the Furies and imbued with an assortment of himsati natures. The result is a super-predator possessing the best traits of all predators combined. Through special lore known only to the Furies, the creature is given a special power as well-the ability to assimilate another Immortal into itself.

Any Devourer can attempt to assimilate an opponent. If the opponent is cursed he makes his roll at +1 per curse he has. Thus, cursed Immortals are easier to assimilate than the rest.

First the Devourer must grapple the Immortal. Then each turn the Devourer and prey engage in an opposed SPIRIT roll. Each turn the Devourer wins the contest, it assimilates one rank of any aura (Narrator's choice) from its prey. When all of the opponent Immortal's auras are reduced below d20, his vox is drawn into the Devourer to join with its own. The Devourer will, in turn, eventually allow itself to be assimilated into the Sanguinary with its store of stolen Immortal lives.

The process of assimilation is irreversible as long as the Devourer is alive. If it is ever slain, the voxes of Immortals it has devoured are freed and may begin the process of reincarnating.

Immortals who are fully tainted, but not yet Progeny themselves, can be completely devoured in this manner. If all of an Immortal's aura ranks are tainted, at the end of the assimilation the Devourer may extract the Immortal's vox and introduce it to his own body (eating is most common, although any sort of insertion will work); this adds all the Immortal's natures to the Devourer's himsati. The Immortal is then finally and completely dead. If the Immortal ever wins the contest, the grapple is broken and the assimilation stops. Any ranks of taint lost up to that point still belong to the Progeny.

Devourers typically have auras no greater than d8's.

The Droves

As the Progeny are the supernatural servants of the Sanguinary, the Droves are the Progeny's faithful mortal servants who have had himsati natures inflicted on them to turn them into beasts. Driven by hunger, the droves attack and devour any living thing they can and are the hoards making up the bulk of the Sanguinary's armies.

Droves would be more effective if they could ignore their own burning hunger, but this disability often supplants their reasoning capability. Droves make excellent shock troops but can rarely operate in more subtle areas of the war, such as espionage and assassination. All droves have, as a distinguishing feature, eyes which glow red under bright light. Otherwise, they come in an infinite variety of forms, with no two looking alike.

Immortals hunt and slay droves without mercy.

A drove can possess any himsati nature (see Book I). Their life expectancy, even without being hunted, is short due to their ravenous hunger and lust. This hunger either burns them out or causes them to fearlessly throw themselves against opponents. Others who maintain a spark of humanity often kill themselves. Still others have been known to actually devour their own bodies until they die from loss of blood. The typical lifespan of a drove is measured in a handful of years.

Droves will always be found under the domination of a Progeny, hiding in the wilderness or the wastelands of the inner cities.

There are Greater Droves, creatures whose will is great enough to control their hunger. These creatures survive for decades, growing stronger as more and more himsati natures are heaped upon their twisted bodies. They are deadly opponents who have learned how to fight superbly. The Progeny hold them in special reserve not only to control the lesser droves, but also to carry out special missions of terror or massacre.

A Greater Drove will normally have MIND and BODY auras up to a d8. Lesser Droves usually

have MIND and BODY auras up to a d10. Drones have no SPIRIT aura. Their natures can surpass these die levels in strength however. Keep in mind that drones are not limited to mortal humans. They exist everywhere in the universe as numberless armies of alien species and even common earthly animals.

The Grey

These humans are servants of the Sanguinary whose intelligence and influence in the temporal world of human civilization is more valuable than their transformation into a drone. They are leaders of corporations, churches, cults and military units. Their name is derived from the fact that they constantly bleed their SPIRIT aura as tithe to the Sanguinary in exchange for power and the supernatural aid of the Progeny and drones.

Return of the Dragons . . .

Encryption: [7]
Return Locus: <Stigmata at Sanctuary> [Hacker Alias]
Received By: <Emissary; Talitha at Sanctuary>
Language: English
Subject: The Prophecy
Summary: Why oh why doesn't anyone listen
Keyword Search:
Date: Year of the Pale
Message As Follows:

I was looking at a lizard's skeleton trapped between two panes of glass the other day and I realized that that's me, right, like I am that lizard do you know what I mean probably not because you can't see through the world on both sides because you were not there at the beginning when Shade and I stood in HIS presence and listened to HIS prophecy and watched as he bit himself to death with fangs taller than us it wasn't pretty I can tell you but I am telling you the court of fate is looking for me because they want me to tell them the whole prophecy but you know what they are not strong enough to hear it so I am hiding out here in the world--Miami is nice this time of year.

I know I know I really do know I should not be writing this down but its in my head clawing to get out so what would you do in my circumstances, go [probable expletive] crazy that's what! Shade heard the whole thing just like me and she's going to try to silence me because she wants to find him herself and all that power but umm I forgot what I wanted to say so I think I need to go watch TV the Golden Girls is on and I love that show because its very cool to see people on the verge of death heading toward the one soul. Ice cream makes me think of what heaven must be like, cold and fluffy and melting oh I don't know.

Stigmata

The Abzulim

Few Immortals, save the original slaves, have ever met an Abzulim. The Abzulim were the original Immortals, the first generation created from the Sanguinary's shards before it attained/regained/discovered consciousness. They are still regarded as fantastical by most Immortals, bogeymen designed by the *ancient regime* (the eldest Immortals) to scare young Immortals into submission. Many of those who may have once fought with, or served, the Abzulim have either entered eternal madness, fallen to the Progeny, or have Transcended.

Those who care to dig deep enough can find physical proof of the Abzulim, their twisted forms and the ruins of their empires. The most ancient Immortals remember them all too well. Mostly they remember the cruelty, the eyes utterly devoid of emotion and empathy, and incredible alien power. These cruel masters are returning, slowly, to Earth to regain their birthplace and the seat of their ancient empire.

By all accounts, only nine Abzulim survived the slave revolts and the resulting collapse of their empire. This is probably untrue, since the universe is a vast place and there are Abzulim who, despite their air of superiority, prepared for every contingency. Other servants of the Abzulim, mostly races from distant dominions or Mystech constructs, followed their nine masters into the far reaches of the Dominions.

For the past several thousand years, the Abzulim have lurked at the edge of the Earth. The nine survivors-called the *Deepwalkers* by those who remember them-have rarely set foot on Earth in that time. They prefer to work through mortal and Immortal agents, whom they reward very well indeed.

The Soul of an Abzulim

As a race, the Abzulim overcame the limits of their own flesh long ago. They were, and still are, masters of genetics and of their own faith. Unlike the Immortals, who are victims of faith, the Abzulim use their own belief to warp themselves into useful and deadly forms. They are the epitome of arrogance and conceit.

Few traces of the Abzulim's dinosaur origins remain. They appear at turns reptilian, crystalline, elemental, mammalian, insectoid, perhaps even human. Usually they make

themselves look like all these forms at once. Most are so dark that light itself dies as tiny scintillating sparks on their skin.

The defining characteristic, and perhaps the greatest weakness, of the Abzulim is their utter contempt for cooperation with others. The Abzulim define themselves as unrelated individuals, each creating itself from anonymous origins and excelling with only its own force of will. Abzulim have not bred for countless millions of years. The last newborn Abzulim emerged from its shell on a continent that has long since vanished under the ocean, and none know the fate of that being still.

Another characteristic of the Abzulim is their unshakeable need to enslave weaker races. Slavery, the imposition of will upon a weaker being, is the ultimate expression of power. And power is the only thing an Abzulim respects.

Despite their failure to enslave the first (and last) of their Immortal creations, the Abzulim have continued their practice among the lost dominions for millions of years.

The Abzulim do not know emotions. Indeed, emotions were created by the Abzulim to better control their slave races both on Earth and in the dominions. They are calculating and logical, but their value system is built entirely around a might-makes-right ethic. Despite their unemotional mindset and brutal ideologies, the Abzulim are far from stupid. They are still the oldest beings in the universe, save the Transcendants themselves. What they may lack in quick cunning they more than make up for with patience. They have waited a million years to return to their birthplace. They are willing to devote millennia, if necessary, to re-conquer earth.

Biotechnology and Patterning

Abzulim personally disdain physical technology of any kind. They consider tool using a sign of weakness, a pathetic effort to improve oneself with toys. Their only weapons, the *Kai Ra*, were the first—and last—tools they ever forged, and even these were living creatures. The effort took the resources of an entire mantle, later known as The Forge, and since taken over by the Court of Making.

The Abzulim's version of approved technology does not use metal or wood or plastic, but flesh and genetics. Nearly all the species on Earth exist because the Abzulim created them, and instilled the capacity to adapt to the environment over many generations. The Abzulim also created races throughout their dominions, enslaving indigenous beings and divining their genetic data for use elsewhere in the empire. Abzulim biotechnology knows no ethical or technical limits.

Patterning, developed by the Abzulim and seldom duplicated successfully, allows them to transform physical objects into energy patterns which are then inscribed as tattoos on their hides. With this power, the great Abzulim warlords may literally cover themselves with entire planets and all the things living there. They would absorb the best of all the worlds they visited and carry whole empires engraved on their skins as they traveled deeper into the unknown.

Immortal legend speaks of a trove of Abzulim skins, taken from the defeated dragons at the end of the rebellion against them, and locked in some mantle on Earth. Searches for this hoard, and the unimaginable treasure contained on them, have been in vain. It is said the guardian of the Vault of Skins has not been seen since the days the vault was closed.

Predators

The Abzulim are immensely powerful, but their reach is not unlimited. The various beings the Abzulim are assembling, either created from alien gene material or enslaved from indigenous races, for their invasion of Earth are collectively

called *predators* by Immortals who have fought such beings endlessly.

There are also servants of the Abzulim within the Immortal race, drawn to promises of power or hopeless to stand against the ancient dragons. Some of these exist in the Perpetual

Society as spies. Others have formed their own groups. A third of the Court of Shadow defected to the cause of returning the Abzulim to power during the Great Betrayal.

Control: Emotions

When the Abzulim created their slave races on Earth, they instilled in them a near perfect control mechanism: Emotions.

Emotions are the Abzulim's key to controlling their slave races. All the Immortal races on Earth have them, as do the Warlords' more recent Serpent creations. Emotions began as a set of programmed responses to simple stimuli from

the Abzulim masters: a flick of a tail or slight nod might induce fear, a raised eyebrow or stern look, obedience.

The Abzulim themselves have perfect emotional control over most other Immortals except each other, because they themselves have no emotions (at least the kind implanted in the hearts of the created races). Young Immortals, born after the supremacy of the Abzulim, are immune to this control, having never been indoctrinated. The Deepwalkers do train their agents and most trusted servants in the subtle arts of this control.

Abzulim Special Nature: The Beckoning

All Abzulim have this Nature, and may also grant it to their servants for brief periods as well. The nature is always active regardless of the Abzulim's shape, though some Predators may only be able to use it in certain shapes. When it is used, the controller and the intended target make an opposed MIND conflict. If the target rolls higher than there is no effect. If the attacker rolls lower, than the target obeys the impulse given to him by the nuances of body language. Only if the controller rolls a 1 will his target do something that might endanger his own life. To get the target to harm himself is a target number zero.

If an actual Abzulim is using this nature, the target makes his MIND roll at one shift inferior to represent the sheer power and long-term use the Abzulim have had with the Beckoning. While the Abzulim as a race invented most of the himsati natures making up animals in the dominions, the nine Deepwalkers together invented the Beckoning nature. Truly one of the only things they have ever done together.

This nature doesn't just cause obedience. The Abzulim routinely trigger other types of responses in their targets, including fear, lust, anger, lassitude, greed, hunger and the like. These are all known as dialects of the Beckoning.

It's important to note that this nature triggers responses, it does not inspire true emotions. To be effective, it needs to be used in the presence of its target. Once the target leaves the presence of the Abzulim, the responses wind down and vanish, leaving the target feeling used and frightened. A target who is controlled constantly by this nature eventually becomes immune to it, as the Abzulim found when their slaves rose up against them.

The Deepwalkers

The nine Abzulim Warlords who survived the slave revolt that brought an end to their empire now lurk in the dominions nearest Earth. True to Abzulim philosophy, each is completely independent from the others. Each rules its own fortress, each commands its own forces, and each has its own plan to recapture Earth from the upstart Immortals.

At this point in the slow assault, Immortals do not directly deal with the Deepwalkers. Rather, they will face the Deepwalker's servants and agents (for now). The abilities and resources available to an Abzulim agent varies from warlord to warlord. No Deepwalker has any aura worse than a d8. Usually they are all d6.

Alu, the Swallower

Known as Apep by the ancient Egyptians, Alu (a huge snakelike monster) lives deep in the Nile river where he births hoards of snakes to the

world. They continuously crawl from out of his flesh to move on a long dark journey throughout the world. Only the various species of cobra are free of this creature's beckoning and feel a compulsion to attack this Abzuli. Any Immortal with a cobra himsati is similarly immune to Alu's beckoning. Alu resides in a mantle underneath the Nile, a dark dry land whose sky is the flowing river. His fortress is known as Tuat.

Alu's contribution to The Beckoning was sluggishness. Immobilizing enemies through laziness and a complete lack of interest in anything is the core of Alu and his servant's power. In ancient Egypt, the goddess Bast of the Court of Desire continuously fought him when he set out to bring idleness upon the industrious Egyptian people. This ability to steal the creativity and activity from beings allows Alu to move in and swallow them whole, feeding his enormous appetite.

Asps

These are the leaders of secret Alu sects all over the world. Immense snakes, they communicate telepathically with the Alu cultists they lead and normally remain hidden within their temples. The humanoid shape of an Asp is bloated and slow moving, wheezing with the expenditure of energy and tired-looking. The Asps are always attacked, on sight, by cobras of any species.

Asps can use The Beckoning with greater chances of success on any being who is predisposed to slothfulness. Asps must be in their humanoid form in order to use the sluggishness dialect of the Beckoning. Lazy individuals take one inferior shift to their MIND die when rolling to resist, and driven individuals receive one superior shift to their MIND die. Those who succumb to this Beckoning take a single inferior shift penalty of the BODY and any BODY skills as fatigue overcomes them. This lasts while they are in the Asp's presence. If in its presence for prolonged periods of time (months, years), the penalty begins to increase until the target goes beyond d20. At this point the target lies in torpid state immobilized. Mortals in this state starve to death in a short time.

Auras: BODY d12, MIND d8, SPIRIT d12
Natures: Natural weaponry, poison, coils, swell, spew (poison), The Beckoning (sluggishness)

Viper Bodyguards

Viper bodyguards travel in teams of three to eight with individual Asps. They cannot shapeshift, so they must travel hidden and emerge only when an Asp is in trouble. Vipers are exactly that: horned poisonous snakes. They are, however, much larger than the normal variety, able to stand six to eight feet high on average (which means their total length often approaches 30 feet).

Auras: BODY d8, MIND d12, SPIRIT d20
Natures: Camouflage, hibernation, poison, natural weaponry, coils, swell, terrible countenance

Benatu of the Barbed Lips

Benatu plans her return to Earth by way of the Morpheum. Benatu herself, and her mortal servants, dream of the Earth as it appeared during the Abzulim's' reign. These dreams become anchors, and the anchors join one another. Benatu's realm now stretches across thousands of dreams and dreamers, beckoning others to join her effort. Her plans are most strongly opposed by the Court of Dreams and their Paragon Jujungull, the true Rainbow Serpent.

Benatu's plan is deep and terribly slow. By directing the dreams of her mortal servants, she in turn manipulates their faith in the waking world. Immortals subjected to the faith of Benatu's dreamers become susceptible to her assaults. Benatu's appellation comes from the thorns on her lips which inject a poison to cause extreme drowsiness. The target must make the standard Beckoning test against her. Otherwise the target falls into a deep slumber within which he is vulnerable to manipulation of his dream state.

Rainbow Serpents

Rainbow serpents are Benatu's servants that live in the Morpheum, once servants of Julunggul herself. They slither through the dreams of mortals and between their dreams. Rainbow serpents also lurk in and around anchors, both Benatu's visions of pre-human Earth and the anchored realms of mortals. The rainbow serpents mostly spy, but they also protect the dream servitors (below) who guide the dreams on Benatu's behalf. All Rainbow Serpents are able to use all abilities in the Morpheum obviously. Thus they would use their

MIND die along with Natural Weaponry for example.

Auras: BODY N/A, MIND d10 SPIRIT N/A

Natures: Coils, Natural Weaponry, Poison, Spew, Beauty, *Mottle*

System Note: Mottle

A rainbow serpent's skin can cycle through a number of beautiful colors in a way that is hypnotic. The effect of the ability causes the character to see these intense colors for hours afterward, dazzling him until he wakes up to the world's natural muted colors. The end of this psychedelic trip is usually followed by depression as the victim sees the world in monotone. It takes days to shake off this despair. Attacks made with the mottle nature target the MIND of the dreamer and are resisted by a lower roll than the rainbow serpent makes.

Doradoth, the Eye-taker

Also called *Hubur* in various mortal sources, this Abzulim is believed to be responsible for most of his race's last biotechnology achievements. Doradoth has spent the last several million years not in passive repose in a defenseless dominion, but walking among the Abzulim ruins in search of new genetic materials and worthy warrior races. He gathers genes by harvesting the eyes of subjects, hence the name.

Doradoth's hubris is his continued efforts to create Immortal slave races. He freely grants Immortality to his biotech creations from an apparently limitless store of unimprinted shards. These Immortals constantly attempt to infiltrate the Perpetual Society and even attain high ranks in the Courts, oblivious to their own Abzulim origins. The most ancient Immortals fear Abzulim servants among their ranks, awaiting some unknown signal to reawaken their allegiance to their Warlord.

Monad

One of Doradoth's most perfect creations intended to infiltrate the Perpetual Society, monads are utterly devoid of their own himsati but capable of taking any shape. Monads have great control over the appearance of their form, but their great weakness is that they only *look* like the thing they imitate. They will not bleed, breathe, or exhibit any other living characteristics. Monads are, in fact, amalgams of all five elements that blend the five forces within themselves to create the appearance of life.

Auras: BODY d20, MIND d12, SPIRIT d20

Natures: Any, but all possess mimicry and a special version of Synthesis

Special Abilities: Monads can shapeshift into any himsati form and any species. If they appear as an Immortal, they will be equipped with a dueling weapon suitable to the persona. The monad can heal using *any* element: Earth, air, fire, water, or shadow.

The Tetra

Doradoth has gone through several generations of warrior-creatures, each one coming closer to the Abzulim's vision of the perfect warrior. Because of the Abzulim ego and views on perfection, this of course means creating a creature in Doradoth's own image. Three generations failed to produce the proper warrior. The fourth one was surpassingly successful.

A Tetrad is a simulacrum drawn from the genetic material of Doradoth's personal eye collection. They are created with human and Abzulim genetics. Doradoth donated one of his own eyes to their creation.

In himsati form, the Tetra look like the Abzulim did just before they exceeded the limits of their own flesh: dinosaur-like, but with great intelligence and the first signs of post-physical existence. They can freely grow vicious claws and blades from their bodies, grow new limbs as needed, seal themselves within chitinous armor, and otherwise transform themselves into the Abzulim's elite fighting force. They also can assume humanoid forms of exotic beauty. All Tetrads possess reptilian eyes.

Possessing Abzulim genetics causes the Tetrad to pay a high price, for its body constantly mutates. At the times when a Tetrad undergoes mutation, it feels the need to breed and seeks out a human, which it injects with genetic material and transforms the host into a unique Tetrad. The new Tetrad exists without memories of its previous life. Immortals consider these offspring a prize because they can "smell" others of their kind. In the times before the Great Betrayal, a number of these were killed, with the Immortals who destroyed them believing them to be actual Abzulim. A grave mistake.

Auras: BODY d8, MIND d10, SPIRIT d20

Natures: Natural weaponry, terrible countenance, poison, multiple limbs (x2), armor

Special abilities: Tetrads recover one wounded aura rank each time they inflict a mortal wound on an enemy.

Etrosk, the Fanged

Etrosk, also known as the dragon Fafnir, is a hoarding Abzulim Warlord, sending constructs and servants into the world to recover the last of the Abzulim greater weapons (the *Wonders*). His dominion is already the greatest cache of Wonders and spectacular treasures gathered in one: an entire world made up of gold-sand deserts, crystal towers and gems scattered about as commonly as stones.

Etrosk's contribution to The Beckoning was the dialect of greed. Creating a desire for money and other valuable things is the core of Etrosk and his servant's power. The fever of this greed has burned up many a mortal and Immortal alike and fueled wars between nations. Any object that has been handled by Etrosk emits an aura of intense value, despite its real appearance. Anyone in the presence of such an item must make the standard Beckoning resistance just as if the object were a Predator of Etrosk. Failure causes him to desire the object above all other things, and possibly kill to possess it.

Etrosk has a form that brings to mind a sinuous, serpentine T-Rex glittering with gems imbedded in every scale. He loves to gamble. Etrosk has no use for servants other than Immortals he may manipulate for long-term goals. Otherwise, he is very much a loner.

Ingadia, the Vile

Ingadia the Vile has also been known as the Tempter by Immortals who have encountered him/her. The Abzulim is a hermaphrodite, containing the known male/female gender and a number of alien genders unfathomable to humans as well. The creature can seed and bear its own young.

Ingadia is, in fact, a corrupter by way of temptation. He/she is the most "civilized" and approachable of the Abzulim, and is in fact sought out by mortal cultists who freely offer themselves to his service in return for the satiation of sexual desires or perversions. It is a self-supporting loop: as more join Ingadia's ranks, Ingadia can grant more favors to new members. Ingadia's memory, like all Abzulim, is perfect and infinitely deep. He/she can recall favors owed him and other members that are millennia old.

Ingadia's contribution to the Beckoning was the dialect of lust. Creating sexual desire is the core of this Deepwalker's power, and a power it passes on to its servants. Anyone seeing Ingadia's scintillating, sensual skin must succeed in an opposed MIND roll or be drawn into a sexual liaison with him/her. The target, if failing the roll, will see Ingadia as the most desirable member of the gender preferred by his or her orientation. Ingadia will often bear (or seed) a child from such a union. The child quickly grows into the perfect sexual match for the mother or father, and is used by Ingadia to keep the target forever under control.

Ingadia's servants can be found in virtually all metropolitan areas, mostly among the rich and indolent whose want for nothing creates boredom and a search toward sexual excesses. The Abzuli campaign to take control of the sadomasochist community has been met with fierce resistance from the Bright Bloods in that scene. This subculture has given the Court of Desire a welcomed foothold and staging area in which to counter Ingadia's plots. Ingadia continually attempts to steal a mighty relic from them, a relic known as Baphomet.

Cultists

Ingadia has many mortal cultists, who are given wearable artifacts created from Ingadia's molted black leathery skin. Such artifacts appear as fetish items such as boots, harnesses, corsets, whips, restraints, hoods, caps, gags, uniforms, dusters and the like. The Court of Desire seeks out these artifacts for their own use.

Anyone wearing one of these fetish artifacts emanates a sexual aura when they spill blood on the leather to temporarily revitalizes its power. Anyone viewing it in this state must make a MIND roll against the MIND roll of the cultist. The lowest number wins. If the target fails his or her roll, they react according to a strong sexual attraction to the cultist. This stimulation lasts for the scene.

Auras: BODY d12, MIND d20, SPIRIT d12

Artifacts: various

Demons

These servants of Ingadia are created from humans and elemental Immortal voxes. The resulting hybrid is a wishgiver, though not a true elemental being. They, like all Immortals, appear

human on the surface. When fully shapeshifted, they appear much as the demons portrayed by European artists: winged, horned, and massively muscled humanoids. Ingadia sends demons into the world to do his bidding. They seek out anyone who might seek a favor in Ingadia's name, and in turn repay one through a wish.

Auras: BODY d10, MIND d12, SPIRIT Variable

Natures: Natural weaponry (claws, horns), Estrus, Beauty, Warped Wishgiving

System Note: Warped Wish-giving

This works the same as the Elemental Nature presented in Book I. However, the wish always twists on the mortal wish maker, bringing him misery even as it brings gratification.

Melheyon the All-Eater

Melheyon, also known as Tiamat, was once a Princess: an adopted daughter of Samiel, the monarch of all Abzulim. Known as a sorceress of unparalleled cleverness, she served her Lord and trained two Shadowen apprentices in the art of spying. While one apprentice was slain, the second one is believed to still exist. No one knows this apprentice's identity.

Melheyon created the Beckoning dialect of gluttony. The presence of her or her most fanatical servants engenders horrific hunger in a character. He must succeed in a standard Beckoning roll. Failure causes the character to eat as if famished until he or she is stuffed and ill, and still the hunger persists for days afterwards. Humans who are persistently haunted by Melheyon's spirits of hunger become addicted to food. At the Narrator's discretion, those influenced by Melheyon herself through this dialect of the Beckoning will even see living flesh as palatable.

Melheyon hates her own race, whom she considers stupid and beneath the mysteries her exploration of the universe has revealed. The other Deepwalkers have sought to remove her from their number for many millennia. Their plots succeeded shortly before the Great Betrayal when they, unprecedentedly, manipulated a group of young Immortals to slay her with an artifact of True Light known as a Sunedron Arrow.

Melheyon exists now in a spirit form, still rebuilding her powerful body through the collection of human Immaculum. She has vowed

revenge against the rest of the Deepwalkers especially Ingadia, who led her downfall.

As a spirit, Melheyon has amazing control over other spirits. Her force of will can dispatch them to the four corners of the earth and beyond, usually to deliver messages or gather information. She also consumes spirits whom she perceives as a danger to her. These spirits, still existing within her being, will never be free until Melheyon is utterly destroyed.

Because of her encounter with the True Light, Melheyon is terrified of light of every kind and she will only manifest in extremely dark places. To control a character spirit, Melheyon must make a SPIRIT roll lower than that of the character. The control lasts the duration of the scene at least, or as decided by the Narrator for purposes of the story.

Hunger Spirits

These spirits are nothing but hunger impulses. They manifest in a house and cause one or more people living there to become consumed with hunger if they fail their Beckoning Roll. Being spirits who hunger to be alive themselves, they are often twisted, malicious creatures who enjoy the personal destruction they wreak. The hunger can lead to eating disorders of many kinds.

Auras: BODY N/A, MIND d10, SPIRIT Varies

Shiakata the Raker

Also known as Abraxas, this Warlord appears as hundreds of beasts of all kinds. Shiakata has not rejoined itself since first splitting into more than one of itself. It may only rejoin itself into a composite being during the final gamble of the Deepwalkers to overthrow the Immortals although it is possible it no longer remembers how.

This Warlord has no dominion of its own, instead spreading its copies among the other Warlords' dominions and offering its services. Whichever Warlord attains dominion over Earth, Shiakata wants to be on its side. Each of this Warlord's copies, collectively known as *Nagas*, is a terrifying warrior. Rumors of Shiakata sightings on Earth are widespread among the ancient Immortals, who learned to fear the Raker's prowess during the slave revolts.

Before splitting into numerous beings, Shiakata contributed rage to the Beckoning, capable of causing unreasoning anger in anyone who looks upon its countenance. Whenever a character looks on Shiakata in a composite form, they must succeed in a Beckoning test or fly into a rage, attacking the first thing (other than Shiakata) they see and fighting until subdued or the target is dead. Since all Nagas are technically part of Shiakata, the same inferior shift to the MIND die applies to anyone resisting a Naga using the Beckoning of Rage against them.

Despite the fact all these creatures make up the one Warlord, they are not in telepathic communion with one another. Shiakata only learns what its other parts discover through verbal association. Some parts of Shiakata have forgotten about others, making it possible that a player character could have a Naga avatar without knowing it.

Nagas

Nagas are perhaps the most powerful of all the Abzulim servants-after all, they are each a copy of a true and living Abzulim Warlord. The longer they remain separate from one another, the more independent the Nagas become. Because of the lack of unity with one another (the premier Abzulim foible) Nagas sometimes plot against one another in the service of other Warlords. Each time a Naga shatters itself, its copies are more distant in appearance and ability from the original.

Nagas appear as half animal, half human, usually with a fair human head and upper body and an animal lower body. Many appear reptilian and all possess reptile eyes and forked tongues.

Auras: BODY d8, MIND d8, SPIRIT d8

Natures: Armor, coils, camouflage, natural weaponry

Special abilities: A Naga can spend one action to split into smaller versions of itself. Each split reduces its aura dice to the next inferior rank. An aura rank cannot be shifted beyond d20 by splitting. The copies can use *sinning* (draining aura ranks from mortals) to raise their aura ranks back to the ranks of the original creature.

Tormad the Relentless

Tormad stands apart from her brothers and sisters as probably the most insane of the Deepwalkers. Evolved from a carnivorous

dinosaur, probably similar to a Velociraptor, she retained the voracious appetite and fierce joy of stalking prey.

Tormad loves to stalk beings that are especially overconfident: feeding off their terror at the moment they realize that nothing they can do will save them from dying on her claws. She hunts for sport and will set up elaborate scenarios into which she leads prideful victims. She always seeks proud, confident prey, ignoring weak or incompetent ones as poor sport.

Her contribution to the Beckoning was overconfidence. Seeing Tormad requires succeeding on a Beckoning roll, or the target will see Tormad as weak and an easy target. She might seem wounded or especially vulnerable in some way as she leads her pursuer deeper into his doom. She will assume various shapes when appearing to her target prey to facilitate their stalking of her.

Tormad has no minions, nor ever will. She is a complete loner who believes the way to rule the world is to hunt down every creature that could possibly threaten her supremacy. One day she plans to hunt the other Deepwalkers.

Unamal the Flayer

Unamal was the original creator of the Elementals used by the Abzulim as building blocks of their technology and architecture. He identifies with these creations so much that he has added many elemental himsati natures to himself and has managed to nearly become one. He searches for a relic known as the Philosopher's Stone, whose power will complete his transformation and give him the power to grant wishes. Unfortunately, the ancient Abzulim artifact, once in Unamal's possession, is lost with many other such Wonders.

Also called Huehueteotl, the "old, old deity" worshiped as a fire god by ancient mortals, Unamal the Flayer has appeared before mortals as pillars of fire and other pyrotechnic forms. It has also been a water and storm god and a dragon the size and shape of a mountain.

Unamal has many servants among the elemental Immortals of the world, mostly those created or awakened long after the rule of the Abzulim. The original slaves know Unamal's

interest in them for what it truly is: scholarly and abstract, not empathic.

Elemental Agent

Elemental agents are solitary Immortals in service to Unamal. They believe they serve their true creator, an elemental god of sorts. Unamal's agents actively promote Unamal-worship among the disenfranchised Elementals of the solitary community. They also groom individual mortals to join their cause as guides to the agents' wishgiving abilities. Elemental agents are strictly pacifists and will not use physical force even to defend themselves. However, an agent will direct its mortal "master" to wish ill upon enemies.

Auras: Variable

Natures: Wishgiving, any four other elemental natures

Salamander

Salamanders are remnants of the Age of Myth, thought to be long vanished with the end of that Age. They are Unamal's guards, protecting the gateways in lava flows and volcanoes to his realms.

Salamanders appear as massive, sinewy, molten lizards. They are not particularly intelligent.

Auras: BODY d8, MIND d20, SPIRIT d12

Natures: Armor, burning essence, spew, natural weaponry (teeth and claws)



The Apocrypha . . .

Probably the most fearsome of Bright Bloods known to the Immortals, it is an organization dedicated to the eradication of all Immortals everywhere. Each member of this well-financed terrorist organization must take the Vow of Humanity, a promise to never succumb to the temptations of becoming Immortal. The organization is ruled by a secret council known as the Illuminati: a quasi-religious, monastic group, the Apocrypha whips the faith of its members into powerful weapons against "demonic" Immortals. The Apocrypha's presence is being felt more with each passing day. Though other organizations of Bright Bloods exist which oppose the Immortals, none are as powerful as the Apocrypha.

Chapter IV: The Arsenal

"Everything that deceives may be said to enchant."

--Plato

Encryption: [7]

Return Locus: <Shade at Sanctuary>

Received By: <Emissary; Talitha at Sanctuary>

Language: English

Subject: Never Send A Boy to do A Man's Job

Summary: Scruffpup had a little accident

Keyword Search:

Date: Year of the Pale

Message As Follows:

For those of you who haven't heard from Scruffpup lately, he had a little accident trying to get vengeance against me. You'll find him, if you bring a big enough search team with enough plastic bags, in Barcelona.

I would like to thank everyone who stepped forward and bravely volunteered to be my champions to find the murderer of my sister. The rings you wear are marks of honor and esteem. The powers of the Regime will be with you.

I would also thank the Arbiter for allowing me to claim what was rightly mine from the body of my departed friend. The ring of the Labyrinth should ever be in the custody of the Shadowen, who have guarded its dark gates for so long.

Shade

Faith: The Double Edged Sword . . .

Bright Bloods, whatever their lineage, are a distinctly different mortal creature. They have interbred with the mortal population and spread their power in tiny veins through the body of the human race. Rumors abound of their origins, but they remain a mystery to the Immortal race.

Their bright auras are tantalizing to Immortals. When a Bright Blood reveals her spirit it is a dazzling hypnotic display. In past ages, before those with the Blood were persecuted and destroyed out of fear, their worship of the Immortals invested Immortals with immense power to fight the Sanguinary. It is an unfortunate fact of history that Immortals chose to use this power instead to fight one another in holy wars that were little more than exercises in self-importance.

Now keenly aware of the Sanguinary's plans to destroy all reality (and using them as tools to do so) Immortals now cultivate the worship of Bright

Bloods in the modern era to regain the ancient powers only faith can bestow. In the best cases, this worship is neither blind nor superstitious. It is a symbiosis that allows an Immortal to use the power generated by his worshipper, and in turn, protect and nurture that worshipper.

Bright Bloods often have shrines set secretly aside in their homes where they can commune and meditate with their Immortal patrons. In the modern era where ancient artifacts are the ultimate objects d'art, it is much easier to conceal their holy places from the prying eyes of the Sanguinary's enforcers. While the force of darkness tries to objectify and demystify all the arts, the Immortals toil relentlessly to maintain their mystique.

Worship takes many forms, from prayer to rituals to specific thoughts made in the conscious mind. The fruit of worship is known as *Immaculum*. Because the SPIRIT aura in humans is the source of faith, and because faith creates *Immaculum*, the more superior a human's SPIRIT rank, the more powerful the effects of faith becomes (and the more *Immaculum* can be "harvested" from him). Spiritual leaders likely have SPIRIT auras of a d6 or even the rare d4 rank.

Faith is a double-edged sword to Immortals. It can grant them *Immaculum*, or can harm them in innumerable ways. This weakness is inherited from the Sanguinary, whose self and servants are also vulnerable to faith. A shard of the Sanguinary cannot invade any mortal creature with a faith of d8 or superior. Mortals of d4 SPIRIT are capable of destroying a shard by touching it. Any Immortal slain by a Bright Blood with a d4 SPIRIT is irrevocably destroyed.

Gaining and Using Immaculum

Though Immortals can heal by usurping the aura ranks of any living creature with the appropriate aura, only Bright Bloods can provide the spirit substance known as Immaculum. When a Bright Blood finds a worthy object of his worship, he surrenders his life force to the worthy object in the practice of worship. This surrender is ecstatic and profound, releasing part of the SPIRIT aura into an object, artifact or directly into the hands of an Immortal. In system terms, when a Bright Blood surrenders Immaculum, he shifts his SPIRIT die to an inferior rank (never below a d20). The Immortal now has a number of Immaculum (units based on the number of shifts of the SPIRIT of the mortal) he can use.

Once Immaculum leaves a worshipper, it is visible as a radiant blue light that can be seen and sensed for as long as it remains revealed. Only by investing it into an object, place or person does it become invisible and undetectable. For this reason, Immortals are loathed to carry too much of this power around with them as it may draw unwanted attention from beings that have the ability to sense it. Violence and aggression aimed at possessing this essence of worship is commonplace, even in the civilized courts of Immortals.

Following surrender of Immaculum, a worshipper invariably falls into a state of physical and mental bliss, known as the lullaby, for hours afterward. His SPIRIT die, throughout a continuing cycle, gains strength until restored to its previous superior rank. This process is quickened by religious festivals such as the solstices, equinoxes and other semi-annual or annual holidays during which there is a general ambient feeling of good will among humans.

Sinning and Taint

Immaculum can be harvested with the willing surrender from a human being, but it can also be harvested by force. This is a brutal, spiritual rape that inevitably causes terror, pain, and sometimes insanity in the victim. Immortals call this the Sinning, for it is the most abhorrent action an Immortal can commit.

While spiritual energies surrendered in worship renew themselves, Immaculum ripped from victims during sinning does not. The victim grows weaker. If his spirit is completely depleted, he becomes an empty vessel of the Sanguinary. It is from such soulless creatures that the most dangerous enemies of the Immortals arise.

The risk to all Immortals for an individual's sin is great in the long run, but there are more immediate consequences to the individual as well. The profound terror of a mortal being raped in this way often causes his Immaculum to become tainted with his terror. The Immortal absorbs this tainted Immaculum (or simply "taint" into himself with dire results).

Tainted Immaculum is a destructive, damaging energy. Suffused with psychic residue, it warps and twists the Immortal in supernatural ways,

afflicting him with a *curse*. A curse is an enduring reminder of the ordeal that plagues an Immortal with a supernatural malady, sometimes for the rest of his existence. More information on Taint and Curses will be provided in Book 3, the Book of Banes.

Mystech . . .

Life force is the universal currency among Immortals and the energy source that powers their technology known as *Mystech*.

Immortals routinely use Immaculum to power *Mystech*, items ranging from great mysterious ships and weapons of every description, to living citadels and automatons. Items created and powered by taint ALWAYS have a curse associated with them and will always turn its user toward the darkness of the Sanguinary. Normally an Immortal must simply expend or "burn" the necessary number of motes of Immaculum into the *Mystech* in order for it to function as needed.

Characters may get involved in a number of plots which involve acquiring (or destroying) raw caches of Immaculum and taint intended to power new Immortal technology. Creating and

using Mystech will be discussed more fully in Book III or IV.

Serenades, The Spirit Skills . . .

When a shard of the Sanguinary invades a living thing, it enters a chrysalis stage and emerges as a reed-like organism, crystalline in form and indestructible. This is called a vox. In the case of living things (naturals) the shard becomes a vocal chord the newly emerging Immortal can use to create mystic effects, a voice of power. Non-organic Immortals (Elementals) can resonate their vox from a distance since it remains always apart from them. It takes more effort for an Elemental to use their mystic voice.

By resonating the vox, an Immortal can create a variety of effects, by mimicking the very resonance given off by reality itself. With this an Immortal can move objects without touching them, cause objects to burst into flames, turn invisible, or a host of other possible effects. Mortal man called this power magic, Immortals call them the songs, the voices, and the more specialized applications of them, the serenades. For the most part, the term serenade and song are interchangeable to most Immortals.

Serenades are grouped by songs, each song providing a variety of effects and abilities that the Immortal can achieve with them. Serenades are used just like any skill, though foci are viewed slightly differently in their feel, they are mechanics-wise handled the same way as foci of normal skills, allowing the Immortal to roll his SPIRIT die along with the Serenade skill die and pick the lowest of the two.

Motifs and Special Effects

A motif is a theme under which all the special effects that an Immortal uses in his or her serenades, should relate to. An Immortal with a motif of fire might have flames rise up around him to turn him invisible. While one with a motif of ice may sing the same song (known as Metaphor) turning his visage to a sheet of ice and shatter, leaving no trace of his image behind. An Immortal with a motif of the storm god may hurl lightning bolts at his opponents, while one with a motif of a dark forest god may cause spikes of dark thorny wood to erupt from

the ground near him and hurl themselves at his opponents. Both are still the song of Abbadon.

The Narrator should take note of just how general he will allow the motifs in his game to be. In some campaigns a motif as simple as the season of Spring would be appropriate, but in others it may need to be more restrictive, something like spring flower blossoms or even just roses. The more restrictive a motif, the smaller the range of special effects that an individual can use with their serenades without penalties.

There are certain advantages and disadvantages to motifs within a game. Whenever the motif of an Immortal is naturally occurring in their immediate vicinity (not created by supernatural means), the Immortal gains a -1 personal dominance on all their serenade rolls, so long as they continue to use their motif in their special effects. The Immortal would do well to draw on the naturally occurring motif as part of their effects, and good use should grant the Immortal perhaps an additional -1 or even a superior die shift on the serenade skill die.

Whenever the antithesis of an Immortal's motif is naturally occurring in their immediate vicinity (such as an Immortal with a fire motif submerged under water) the Immortal suffers a +1 to all serenade rolls when attempting to use their motif in their special effects.

When an Immortal creates a special effect using her motif, that is beneficial to the situation, the Narrator should feel free to also provide a bonus to the actual effect role. An Immortal with a winter motif first uses wind to put the fire out, then stops and uses snow (which is water after all) and creates a blizzard around the fire. The Narrator deems a -1 to the effect role since water does tend to stop fire fairly well. These bonuses are entirely at the Narrator's whim and not something the players should ask for.

If an Immortal does begin creating special effects not related to their motif, they take one inferior shift to their skill die, cumulative with any other penalties they may be facing. They also may not roll their SPIRIT die along with the serenade's skill die, even if using a focus (see foci below). This is meant to assist Narrators with helping players stay in their character concept and not just start using whatever special effect is most convenient. Motifs provide

characters with effects that they should be good at and ones they should be weak at.

All Immortals start the game with one motif. Others can be gained through the Motif boon. Obviously an Immortal with more than one motif has a distinct advantage over those that do not. But it should be noted that without special permission from the Narrator (usually to further the storyline) an Immortal cannot have two motifs that oppose each other (such as having both fire and water).

Foci

Serenades have foci just like other skills. In fact, the specialized use of a Song (through having a foci for it) is what most Immortals refer to as a serenade. An Immortal can (just like normal skills) have more than one foci for a particular song. And by that same token, an Immortal does **not** have to have a foci for a song if she does not wish to. Foci for serenades work just like foci for any other skill, allowing the character to roll her SPIRIT along with the serenade's skill die and picking the lower of the two rolls. Most Immortals give a specific name to the combination of song and foci.

As an example, a character with a focus of love in the song of Brio may call this serenade Cupid's Touch. Whenever she uses Brio to influence the feeling of love in a target she is playing the Cupid's Touch serenade, and may roll her SPIRIT die along with her Brio skill die.

Just like motifs, a Narrator must decide if a focus is too narrow or too broad for a particular serenade application. While in some serenades the Narrator may feel (within his own campaign) that the focus of "animals" works well, in other serenades, the Narrator may require something more definitive like "mammals" or "horses". Foci should also take into account the motif of the character, and also to some extent the Court, the Calling, and the Himsati as well. This makes for a good overall character concept.

Serenade Limits

Serenades cannot allow one to travel back in time or change history. They also do not allow one to create living material/beings from nothing (there must be a source material). It is rumored that some very powerful Immortals were capable of this before the Great Betrayal, but with the

Earth's aura weakened, this is no longer possible.

Targeting a Serenade/Resistance

Serenades target the SPIRIT aura of anything that has one. If the target does not have a SPIRIT aura, then a "base resistance" of 12 is applied. This base resistance represents the fact that the Earth itself has a living aura that serenades must get through in order to reach their intended target, albeit much weaker than in ages past. In some areas the Narrator can adjust this base resistance up or down depending on circumstances.

If the attacker does not roll lower than the SPIRIT roll of the defender, or does not roll lower than the base resistance, the serenade fails. If the serenade fails critically, "taint" invades the attacker's SPIRIT aura and causes it to shift one rank inferior. This invariably draws the attention of the minions of the Sanguinary. The only way to remove this taint is to "wash" it clean by preying on the SPIRIT auras of weaker beings (see page 29, Book I). Taint cannot be "healed" in any way: it is not actual damage. Instead the taint washes away from the Immortal and invades the mortal that the Immortal preyed upon. This doubles the effective power of any curses the Immortal might receive from the mortal. If an Immortal "taints" his SPIRIT beyond a d20, he can no longer play serenades until he can remove enough taint to bring it back to a d20 or better. Taint is cumulative with actual SPIRIT damage.

Sentient beings with a SPIRIT die may opt to not resist the serenade and therefore not roll their SPIRIT die as resistance. If this is so, a base resistance is used, equal to the highest value on their SPIRIT die currently (taking into account any inferior/superior shifts currently in effect). If the current SPIRIT die of the defender were a d10, then 10 would be the base resistance. Unconscious and non-sentient creatures/items with a SPIRIT die **always** resist: there is no choice in the matter. The choice to not resist is a conscious choice that must be made willingly, though it is possible to trick or impair a being's judgement to get it to not resist.

If the target of a serenade also possesses the same song, they gain a -1 to their resistance roll. If they possess the same serenade (song AND

focus) they may roll the serenade skill die along with their SPIRIT die to resist (but they do not get the -1, instead they are getting two die rolls to pick from)

Serenade Effects / Defense

Once a Serenade has successfully hit the target, the effects of the serenade must be determined. This is done similar to figuring damage using the advanced damage rules from Book I. If the target has the appropriate aura to defend with, than the target may roll that aura as a means of defense. If the target does not have the appropriate aura, than the inanimate, complexity and/or esoteric tables are used to calculate a modifier. This modifier is subtracted from 12 to get the base defense that the attackers effect roll must be lower than in order for the Primary Effect to work.

There are two types of Effects, Primary and Secondary. Primary Effects are based upon the difference between the effect roll and the defense roll/value. Secondary Effects are based upon the difference between the serenade skill roll and the resistance roll/value. If a serenade has any Secondary Effects which normally apply, they will be stated in its description.

Narrators should feel free to chose alternate Primary and Secondary Effects from those listed for a serenade if they fit the particular song/foci that a player has come up with, or if circumstances dictate that an alternative effect would be better used. Sometimes it is better to generate a target number rather than a die value. And for many NPCs it is easier to just use Influence rather than coming up with a target number that must be rolled against every time the NPC does something.

Primary/Secondary Effects

There are generally 7 types of effects created by a serenade as primary or secondary: Rank, Base Resistance, Influence, Distance, Time, Die Value, Die Shift.

Rank (Rk.) = A Rank is a comparative term. This is the base measure used to determine levels of effect and how well a Primary or Secondary effect did in general terms

Base Resistance (B.R.) = Some Serenades create a target number that must be beat in order to overcome the serenade in some way.

Influence (Inf.) = Same as Influence in Book I.

Distance (Dis.) = Same as Distance in Book I.

Time (Time) = Same as Time in Book I.

Die Value (Die) = Some serenades create something that must be given a die value (especially those which simulate auras when manipulating inanimate objects). This tells what the die value should be.

Die Shifts (Shifts) = Some serenade cause penalties (inferior die shifts) such as damaging serenades, while others cause superior die shifts (as in the song of Nostrum for healing). This gives the die shift that would take place.

Primary/Secondary Effects Table

DIFF	Effects Possible (based on serenade)						
	Rk	B.R.	Inf.	Dis.	Time	Die	Shifts
1	Cosmetic, No Real Effect						
2	1	12	Trivial	Touch	Action	D20	1 inf./sup.
3	2	10	Minor	Weapon	Turn	D12	1 inf./sup.
4	3	8	Significant	LOS	Scene	D10	2 inf./sup.
5	4	6	Major	Region	Session	D08	2 inf./sup.
6	5	4	Mythic	Indefinite	Indefinite	D06	3 inf./sup.
7	5	4	Mythic	Indefinite	Indefinite	D06	3 inf./sup.
or more*	6	2	Godlike	Infinite	Infinite	D04	4 inf./sup.

* If the difference is 7 or more, check for critical success. If critical success is achieved, increase the Rank from 5 to 6 and use the **bolded** values instead.

Time, Influence and Distance with Serenades

A Narrator should be careful how much they attribute to indefinite/infinite times and distances and to godlike influences. We suggest a guideline that indefinite time usually lasts a few sessions or a storyline. An infinite time will usually have the player or Narrator pick a set of circumstances that will end the serenade (like the princess kissing the frog to return him to the prince). An indefinite distance will usually cover a state or province, and an infinite distance will usually cover the distance of the Earth itself. Godlike influences should receive the appropriate reactions. Players should be allowed to have secondary effects manifest at a lower level than rolled should they choose, and this is encouraged, less the player bring down the wrath of the Courts or the Progeny upon them for making such drastic changes in the world around them.

Inanime Defense

Since inanimate objects do not have auras, you must calculate their defense against any primary effects. Simply choose what level the inanime is and subtract the modifier from the Earth's aura value in that area (usually a 12). The two things that determine the modifier are how complex the inanimate object is and what kind of power source (if any) courses through it. For example, a personal computer is normally a modifier of a 6, but if it were running on nuclear power (instead of normal electricity) that might increase the modifier to a 8. Oversized versions of some items may also change the modifier. It is possible that under some conditions the modifier will cause the defense value to go down all the way to zero. This makes the task impossible unless some form of dominance comes into play.

Inanime Table

Mod.	Examples of type of Inanime
0	Bicycles, padlocks, simple levers/pulleys, windows, simple items with few/no working parts.
2	Wind-up clocks, toasters, flashlights, combination locks.
4	Electric clocks, ceiling fans, microwaves, electronic keypad locks
6	Personal computers, ATM machines, fax machines, security cameras
8	Eyz units, standard cars/trucks/motorcycles (multiple internal systems in those)
10	Aircraft carrier, ocean liner, most Mystech, nuclear missile with tracking/targeting system.

Complexity Defense

Some serenades (and specific uses of others) don't really target anything, but create an effect that others must interact with (illusions, obstructions, etc.). In order to determine the defense of these we must calculate how far beyond the normal bounds the Earth's aura must adjust to accommodate for these. The modifiers below are subtracted from 12 just like for the Inanime Table. Serenades that create illusions or inanimate objects normally use this table.

To illustrate static/mobile/interactive effects one could use the song of Obstruct. A small rock to trip someone appearing on the floor would be minor and static. A boulder would be major and static. If the boulder rolled down the hallway it would become mobile. Something is considered interactive if it can change its responses based on what the target does. If the boulder starts moving in around non-linear fashion, stopping and starting, changing directions, based on what the target does, it becomes interactive.

Complexity Table

Mod.	Complexity Examples
0	Minor static: creating something sensed by a single sense (a smell, a sight, or a sound)
2	Moderate static/minor mobile: creating something sensed by two senses (a smell and a sound)
4	Major static/moderate mobile: something sensed by three senses simultaneously
6	Major mobile/minor interactive: something sensed by four senses simultaneously.
8	Moderately interactive: something sensed by five senses simultaneously
10	Fully interactive immersive environ: (like Virtual Reality) which also affects all senses too.

Esoteric Defense

Some serenades affect things which are not standard physical objects but still have a palpable presence on Earth. These are known as *esoterics*, and also include the five elements of air, water, earth, fire and shadow. Sometimes the esoterics can add additional defense against a serenade by their presence (if they are manipulated as part of the serenades primary effect), while other serenades may directly target an esoteric. Please note that an illusion which might mask or alter a sound/scent/etc. as others **perceive** it would not use this table, but a serenade that truly alters it in reality would.

Esoteric Resistance Table

Mod.	Examples
0	Dust, light scents, faint coloration
2	Smoke, fog, heavy scents, quiet sounds (like whispering), flavor
4	Normal/loud sounds, light, shadows, air (as in the air around you that you breathe)
6	Heat, cold, water (as in a body of water)
8	Fire and electricity (warp and alter the shape of them perhaps, alter their flow or current), mass
10	Gravity, magnetism, radiation, earth (as in transmuting the ground around you)

Resolving SPIRIT Combat - Summary

Serenade combat works very much the same way as physical combat. The attacker and defender have an opposed roll with the attacker rolling his skill die (and SPIRIT if focus is in play) and the defender rolls his SPIRIT die. If the attacker rolls **lower** than the defender the attacker proceeds to determine the effect (similar to damage in physical combat). The attacker rolls his SPIRIT die and the defender rolls the targeted aura. The difference is compared to the effects chart.

To summarize:

1) ATTACK PHASE

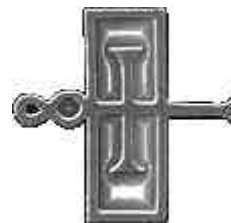
- A Attacker rolls serenade skill die (and SPIRIT if the character has and is using a focus purchased for that song).
- B Defender rolls/calculates resistance:
 - i) If the defender has a SPIRIT die, roll it if the defender chooses to resist. If the defender chooses not to resist, use the highest value on the SPIRIT die as a base resistance.
 - ii) If the defender does not, use a base resistance of the Earth's aura (usually 12).

2) SECONDARY EFFECT PHASE

- A If the attacker rolled lower than the defender's roll/base resistance continue, otherwise the song failed.
- B Compare the two rolls to the Effects Chart and apply any secondary effects.

3) PRIMARY EFFECT PHASE

- A Attacker now rolls his SPIRIT die
- B Defender rolls/calculates defense:
 - i) If defender has the appropriate targeted aura (SPIRIT, BODY, MIND), roll it.
 - ii) If not, use the appropriate chart for inanime, complexity, and/or esoteric to find the appropriate modifier(s) and subtract from 12 to get the base defense
- C Compare the two rolls
 - i) If attacker was lower, compare to the effects chart for Primary Effect
 - ii) If not, the serenade has cosmetic effect that has no real affect on game play



Special Serenade Defense Rules

Soulless

Soulless mortals use the standard base resistance values of Earth's aura, but defend with their own BODY/MIND dice. If a Soulless is possessed by a being with a SPIRIT, than the Soulless may roll that beings SPIRIT, if the controlling being allows it. Any Primary Effects that would target the SPIRIT aura however, transfer to the controller and do not affect the Soulless while under possession.

Set Areas of Effect (AOE)

Some serenades have an automatic base area of effect (AOE) as part of them, while others have the area as the primary or secondary effect. If no AOE is listed, than it normally only affects a single target or is part of the primary/secondary effects.

If a player wishes to make a serenade affect a larger area than normal, he takes a one shift penalty to the serenade skill roll for each level beyond the normal area he wishes to affect. The suggested levels are: Single Target, 10x10x10 cube or 10 ft. diameter sphere alternatively -- i.e. weapon reach, a large building or city block, an entire city or region, indefinite, infinite -- i.e. the whole planet.

Set Durations

Many serenades have a set duration (such as the Scene). If an Immortal wishes to increase this, he or she takes a one inferior shift penalty to the effect roll for each level beyond the stated duration. Durations should be judged based on the standard duration in the effect table.

Other "Dimensions"

It should also be noted that attempting to target anything in another dimensional space other than the one you are currently in (Mantles, physically in the Morpheum, the Ley, the Maelstrom, etc.) requires a 0 on the serenade skill roll in order to work. This is regardless of the standard resistance or defender's resistance roll. Attempting to play a serenade on someone outside the bounds of Earth (in the Dominions) requires a -1. Both of these mean dominance must be achieved first.

Countering a Serenade

Rather than ending it early, a character could use a serenade that generates a counter effect, rolling off against the original serenade's Primary Effect roll. If the counter rolls lower on its Primary Effect, the original is countered.

Multiple Serenades of the same Song

If a serenade is already affecting a target and the same song is song (even if with a different focus), that new song either does not work or cancels out the existing song and replaces it. This means one could not use Endue on themselves to have both armor and weapons at the same time. If the effect roll of the new serenade is lower than the old it replaces it.

Purchasing Serenades

Serenades can be bought with memory or experience, but cost twice as much as normal skills. This means a serenade costs 10 memory or 50 experience instead of the normal 5 memory/25 experience for standard BODY/MIND skills. Foci for serenades cost the normal 5 points per however. One serenade can have many more applications than a standard

BODY/MIND skill if used creatively. We recommend if a Narrator is going to start his game allowing his players to purchase serenades that an additional 25 memory is added to the starting memory as stated in the Errata for Book I (this is enough to buy two serenades and one foci or multiple foci with one serenade). Otherwise, the Narrator should just allow the player to pick one serenade and one

foci that he or she will discover early in the game.

Serenades Listing -- see Appendix C

Appendix C is an alphabetical listing of the serenades. Narrators should feel free to make up more. In this listing are the Court Serenades. Just like the members of the Callings receive certain skills for free, members of the Courts each receive one Court "Voice" as they are known, for free, in addition to any other serenades they may buy or are given by the Narrator. These serenades are very specific focused applications of songs that cannot be duplicated exactly by other serenades.

For each serenade, we list the name, the general primary effect (including AOE if necessary), what generally is targeted (what aura would be rolled for defense, etc.), any secondary effects, duration, etc. We then give a description of the serenade, followed by some sample foci. Narrator's should always feel free to adjust AOE's, standard durations, etc. based on their game and circumstances at the time of playing the serenade.

The Faithful and Boons. . .

Most Immortals would agree the most powerful force on Earth is the faith resident in members of the human race and the Bright Blood that flows in these mortal's veins. When harnessed, human faith resonates with such majestic power that it can alter Immortals in profound ways.

In the Mythic Age, Immortals were truly godlike in their power. In addition to physical, mental and supernatural strengths inherent in the race, they gained powers from faith: abilities that manifested in them as long as they possessed enough followers to generate the ability. As Quiet Cultures attached to certain Immortals died out, or were actively expunged by rival cults, the powers they generated for their "god" dissipated.

Boons are dynamic telepathic constructions from the minds of the Faithful given real force.

Boon Costs / Categories

These abilities represent an advanced and optional system that Narrators can use to add more detail to their campaigns. Boons are not

necessary for the full enjoyment of the Immortal experience

This book deals primarily with two categories of boons, mundane and mystical. Mundane Boons, once bought, usually function with no special preparation. Mystic Boons require an Immortal to spend Immaculum to activate them. During the Age of Myth and even into the present day, Immaculum flowed freely as the force of worship, and Boons worked easily. These days, the power of Boons has waned even more, as disenchanting mortals withdraw their faith into a shell of cynicism as well as being preyed upon by the Sanguinary.

All Mystical Boons have two numbers listed, the first being the memory cost to obtain it, and the second being the amount of Immaculum needed to activate it. Mundane Boons only have the memory cost listed, there is no Immaculum necessary to use them. In order to obtain a boon with experience, simply multiply the memory cost by 5.

Some boons can be bought more than once to increase their effectiveness in a character. These are noted below. In the case a boon is bought more than once, it acquires a rank. Players must pay a recurring cost for additional ranks of the boon.

A Narrator may award a boon to a character in game, with no cost, if doing so serves his story. Usually this occurs at the end of a rather dramatic memory flashback of the character's ancient and forgotten past.

Duration of each boon's activation is noted in its description.

It is assumed that any character who buys a mystic boon has worshippers somewhere in the world whose sacred traditions make this power manifest. It is also assumed that the character does not know the identity of his worshippers unless he buys the mundane boon *Quiet Culture*.

In general, Boons cost a player an amount of points and give a character Immortal some form of advantage within a particular set of circumstances. Some boons (including all mystic ones) require Immaculum expenditure to enact, so are reserved by most Immortals for times of

real need where serenades are impractical or ineffectual.

Court Boons

The interaction of the Court as a whole with the True Light of the Transcendants and the Immaculum of mortal worshippers generate these boons. All members of a Court automatically gain its boon. Each Court has one Boon described within this book. These boons

can be purchased with points, but at a much higher cost. Your character must belong to the Court from which they emanate if you wish to receive it free.

Examples include the Shadowen ability to listen to discarded thoughts (shadows) and the Court of Death's ability to rekindle spirits in soulless mortals through a contest of wills with the Sanguinary.

Solitaires and Boons

Somehow, the mysterious Solitaires, outcasts of Immortal society, have learned to draw on their own willpower to grant themselves boons. Whenever a Solitaire's aura increases, he gains one boon of his choice as long as its cost is equal to, or lower than his current aura rank. This ability is available only to Solitaires..

Example: Savedra's BODY is increased to a d6. A d6 is a rank 5 aura, therefore Savedra may pick any boon that costs 5 or less memory points and receive it for free.

Sanguinary Boons

Just as the Transcendants can bestow these gifts upon the Perpetual Society through the power of the True Light, so can the Sanguinary. Through its constant contact with the collected soul energy of humanity and the tithes from its Progeny, the Sanguinary can direct these same abilities to its followers. This is done usually by temporary possession of the follower, or through the Furies, via the tainted soul energies and connection to the Sanguinary in the Morpheum.

Boon Listing

The full listing of Boons appears in Appendix A. Some boons strictly only work for Bright Bloods (see Appendix B for rules on playing one of these characters) and are listed as **Mortal** next to the name. Others are strictly for Immortals and are listed as **Immortal**. Still others are known as Dark Boons which only function when the Immortal is tainted and are listed as **Dark**. Overall, the Narrator should use good judgement when allowing which boons various characters can have.



Appendix A: Boons

Mundane Boons

Mundane boons are incarnate abilities which require no Immaculum expenditure. They are always active. Their source can be said to derive from the collective human spirit, an intangible force that shapes the destiny of the entire race.

Alert 3

You deduct 1 from initiative rolls

Ally 1 - 3

You have a contact or an ally who will aid you in some way. The player must describe who this ally is and it must be approved by the Narrator. For one point you have a mortal contact. For two points you have an Immortal contact, or influential mortal contact. For three points you have an Immortal Ally (usually a Lord of the Courts or Outlander) who will aid you at times (usually through agents of theirs).

Ambidextrous 2

You take no penalties for doing things with your offhand. This is especially useful in combat when a character's weapon hand is crippled and he must switch to the other.

Calling Status 3 (Immortal)

You are known and respected within your Calling. You enjoy fine accommodations when visiting the strongholds of your Callings. Your advice is occasionally sought out, and the occasional minor mistake can be overlooked from time to time.

Contortion 3

You deduct 1 from your roll when attempting to escape from being tied up, held, grappled, or otherwise restrained.

Court Status 5 (Immortal)

You are known and respected within your Court. You are always given fine accommodations when visiting the strongholds of your Court. Your advice is sought out. Only Lords and others of your station speak before you in gatherings. Occasional mistakes are overlooked as long as they are made up for. You have free reign in pursuing your activities unlike many other Immortals. This is not the same as being a Lord of your Court, which is only possible through Transcendence.

Debt 3 per

Another Immortal or mortal owes you for some past deed of yours or an avatar. This will take some time for them to repay the debt to you. Once repaid, you lose the points spent.

Dexterous 2

You deduct 1 from all rolls involving athletic feats (jumping, acrobatics, climbing, etc.)

Dominion Lore 3

Either you, or more likely one of your avatars, has traveled beyond the Earth and into the reaches of space and the Dominions. The Narrator can give you information about the ancient star-spanning empire of the ancient Immortals or you can contribute to the mythology yourself.

Eidetic Memory 2

You deduct 1 from any roll during which you must quickly recall facts and figures. The Narrator will provide you with knowledge you may have forgotten from previous game episodes.

Fleetfooted 2

You deduct 1 from all rolls involving running away from or chasing someone, or any races.

Guru (Lord/Outlander) 5

A powerful Lord within one of the Courts has taken a personal interest in you and seeks to see you trained and taught various things. This may be done directly or through agents. Or, perhaps one of the mysterious Solitaire Outlanders, whose power rivals that of the Lords of the Courts, has taken an interest in you and seeks to train and teach you. This is more powerful than just having one as an Ally.

Iron Will 4

You deduct 1 from any roll when resisting forms of mental control by another character. This could include seduction, torture, serenades, natures, etc

Legendary Beauty 5

You are possessed of a singularly significant beauty unrivaled by lesser beings. Artists of all kinds seek you out to somehow capture that beauty, and images of it proliferate the artistic world. However, this does tend to attract a lot of attention to you, and if not careful, could backfire on you.

Light-footed 2

You deduct 1 from all rolls involving stealth

Light Sleeper 3

You are allowed to make a standard surprise roll should someone or something attempt to surprise you while asleep. If you succeed, you immediately awake with no penalty. If you critically succeed then you have surprised your attacker instead.

Mighty 5

You have mythical strength. Each time you buy this boon, you gain an additional rank of a new die based on your might to roll during tests of strength and dealing damage. This die is rolled simultaneously with your BODY die. Consult the chart below:

<i>COST</i>	<i>Mighty die</i>
5	d12
10	d10
15	d8
20	d6
25	d4

Multi-Motif 8 per (Immortal)

Each time this is purchased, you have another motif that you can use with your serenades.

Quick Block 2 (Mortal)

Each time you purchase this boon, you may block/parry/dodge an additional attack without penalty. Immortals already may block/parry/dodge as many as they like without penalty.

Quickdraw 2

You can draw a weapon without spending an action

Quiet Culture 2 (Immortal)

You can unerringly identify a member of your own Quiet Culture on sight. Any of your senses will identify the worshipper.

Sacred Sanctuary 5 (Immortal)

You have a sanctuary on sacred ground, steeped in human belief and superstition. It's dominance is 2.

Sanctuary 4 (Immortal)

You have a safe haven where you can heal and hide. Its location is usually secret except to you and possibly your Quiet Culture. It has a 1 dominance against anything that attempts to invade or harm it, and you gain that dominance while there. If multiple Immortals share a Sanctuary, they may share the cost.

Secret Knowledge 3

You know a piece of information unknown to any other Immortal. This is a free-form boon, which requires the Narrator's permission and cooperation to be effective.

Sharp Sense 3

You deduct 1 from rolls made with your MIND to perceive things, with a particular sense (picked when you first take this boon). This boon does not augment the enhanced senses himsati nature. You can buy the boon for each sense.

Slow Aging 2 (Mortal)

You double your life span each time you buy this boon. Base life span is considered 80 years. The Narrator's permission is required to buy this more than once.

Solitaire 5 (Immortal)

You are generally unknown to the masses of the Perpetual Society and the minions of the Sanguinary, so far. You have no allegiance to the Courts. No one from either side bothers you. You can move undetected amongst the Immortal realms to some extent, in so far as socially no one knows (or cares) who you are.

Resilient 5

Once per combat, you can ignore a single shift of your BODY aura when damaged.

Sweep 3

Each time you purchase this boon, you may attack an additional character with one attack roll. (IE - if you purchase this twice (6 points), you may attack 3 characters total with one punch or kick or swing of your sword).

Temporal Power 2-7

You have a ranking or station in the mortal world of influence (political or military office, owner of corporation, local authority [police], leader of a large public religious or other organization, etc.). The amount of influence is based on the Influence Chart in Book I. Divide the points spent in half (round up) and compare to the chart to get an idea of the influence the Immortal can exert in the mortal world. Remember that this can bring unwanted attention as well.

Temporal Resources 2 - 5, (Possibly Higher)

You have access to money and equipment on a regular basis. The more points you spend the more you have. The following are guidelines: 2 = \$1000 per week; 3 = \$2,000; 4 = \$5,000; 5 = \$10,000 per week, etc. This is not all necessary in liquidated cash and the Narrator can limit this for sake of story.

Mystical Boons

These are the abilities gained from the faith of your own worshippers, rather than the ambience of the human spirit that generates mundane boons. Mystical boons cost Immaculum to activate, and usually have a specific duration during which they operate. Normal mortals never have these except through special circumstances. Bright Blooded mortals (who product Immaculum) may have some of these. But the vast majority are designed for Immortals only.

Animal Lord 7/1

You feared and loved by all the animal kingdom. No animal will, of its own will, attack you if you expend 1 Immaculum in its presence. This effect is permanent per animal, You cannot control animals, but merely walk among even the most dangerous ones without fear. This ability does not influence Immortal himsati forms.

Anonymity 4/2

Anytime someone attempts to track you, find you through paperwork, etc., you can feel it and may spend 2 Immaculum to give them a one shift penalty in skills used to search for you for the remainder of the episode. This does not affect serenades or other mystic means of searching for you.

Ark 7/1

You have an object which you may store aura dice in for future use to heal or gather Immaculum from. The object is usually as large as, or larger than yourself, and usually is within your Sanctuary if you have one. If injured or killed, you may enter your ark to heal or rejuvenate your physical body by drawing dice ranks from the ark itself.

Any aura dice gained by sinning corrupts the ark. Each time you use the Ark to heal you must spend one Immaculum to activate its ability. Rejuvenation usually breaks the Ark and you need to build a new one.

Avatar Control 5/1 (Optional)

You possess the ability to draw out an avatar and to use it to help you for the cost of 1 Immaculum. You can ask the avatar a single question. This allows players to get clues and hints from the Narrator as to important events in the plot of his game.

If you buy the boon a second time, eliminate one fugue. However, it will now cost 2 Immaculum to draw the avatar out (this keeps the fugue point from returning)

If you buy the boon a third time, you can call also upon the avatar to help you out of extremely tight, possibly life-threatening situations. Once invoked, your character becomes a non-player character until the avatar completes its task of its (and your) self-preservation. This costs 3 Immaculum.

Ch'i 3/1

Deduct 1 from your final damage roll when fighting hand to hand, without a weapon.

Chimera 10 (No Immaculum Cost)(Immortals)

You can ignore the rules and restrictions on which himsati natures you can buy and take any himsati nature, regardless of the kingdom it comes from.

Dragon Dance 4/1

You can dodge unlimited physical attacks with one roll. You compare your one roll to ALL attack rolls made against you in the round.

Dreamless 5/1 (Mortals)

Your MIND die shifts to the next superior one when making any rolls to perceive something. It costs 1 Immaculum to activate this die, after which it reverts back to its original value. You are automatically able to see Immaculum, are never surprised, and can see a Ley Line or Mantle border on the roll of 1 on your MIND.

Dream Vault 10/5

(Prerequisite: Sleeper Boon)

You bring a dream object into the real world, where it becomes physical and capable of functioning in the same way as in the world of dreams. Any power requirements, such as additional Immaculum, must be paid in addition to allow functionality for enchanted items.

Faith Morph 10/3

Where most members of your race are at the mercy of human faith, you use it to your own advantage, able to assume an aesthetically pleasing form with whomever you interact with, including personality traits, gender, slang and other factors. The transformation is very subtle. Cost is 3 per change. The ability does not grant skills not already possessed by the Morph.

Enchanted Item 5/1

An enchanted item usually never breaks unless countered by a superior enchanted item. These items allow you to deduct 1 from any roll in which they are involved. Armor would allow you to deduct 1 from your resistance roll, a Weapon would let you deduct 1 from your damage roll, a wand might deduct 1 from any serenade using movement.

Energize 5/1

Your presence allows machines to function without any other means of power. Candles will even light if you expend 1 Immaculum. The expenditure of Immaculum covers only one machine at a time.

Evolved 3/2 (Immortal)

Deduct 1 from all rolls when attempting to shapeshift back to human and/or avoid the Sanguinary from influencing you directly.

Faith 10/2 (Bright Bloods Receive This At 0 / 1 Automatically) (Optional)

When you activate this boon, make a contested SPIRIT roll against your Immortal opponent. If successful, choose a change to his physical or mental state. This lasts for the remainder of the scene (and can be permanent if the Narrator so deems).

Mental examples of changes include amnesia, loss of specific memories, creating delusions, an emotion, a feeling, a want or need, a phobia, hallucinations. Physical examples of changes include gender, appearance, health, even himsati species.

A Narrator must approve the purchase of this boon for an Immortal character, as it is **extremely** rare amongst the Immortal race. The Bright Blood rules in Appendix B give other options for uses of this Boon by Bright Blood characters.

Faith Resistance 10/5 (Optional)

Spend 5 Immaculum to negate faith used against you. The Narrator must approve this purchase for an Immortal character as it is **extremely** rare amongst the Immortal race.

Fertility 5/1

Your touch and the touch of your personal property, brings fertility to all living things. The field you walk through yields bumper crops, the animal you pet bears many fertile young. Wilting things are refreshed, faded colors restored. Your touch is enough to erase fertility problems in humans, regardless of age, and often causes them to produce magnificent children.

The Forgery 10/10 (Immortal)

(0/1 for members of the Court of Making, 5/2 for Chameleons)

Make a contested SPIRIT roll against a mortal. A success allows you to transform some feature of the human (eye color, hair color/texture/length, skin pigmentation, bone structure, height, even apparent age). The change lasts for 24 hours unless you pay 5x Immaculum, in which case it becomes permanent.

The end result of this boon can not be identified as unnatural by any serenade or other mystical ability. The aura ranks of the target are unaffected.

Fortitude 3/1

You pick one type of circumstance that you can withstand for a long period of time (sleep deprivation, fasting, extreme environments [hot, cold], holding breath. etc. You then deduct 1 from any roll during that circumstance.

Hot Blood 5/1

Your blood is as flammable as gasoline, is corrosive as acid, heals, transforms into a specific object (such as a flower, for example) when spilled. Pay 1 Immaculum for its property to manifest. Choose any effect as long as the Narrator approves it. He may require a higher point cost for blood transforming into dangerous objects.

Immerse 10/10 (Immortal)

(0/1 for members of the Court of Secrets, 5/2 for Emissaries and Guardians)

Spend Immaculum, meditate for 24 hours and choose a thought, memory, fact, skill and bury it so deeply in your mind that no one can detect it, even with mind-reading skills or serenades. The thought is programmed to reappear at a time of your choosing.

Immunities 3/1

You deduct 1 from any roll to resist general mortal toxins, diseases and illnesses. (Pick one when purchasing, this can be bought multiple times).

Incubus 5/1 (Human/Dark)

Incubi are humans (or more rarely, Immortals) who have the ability to cause physical damage to a dreamer's body while he is asleep and resident in the Morpheum and can in fact kill human dreamers, leaving little trace of their attacks. This boon also automatically allows you to use himsati natures inside the Morpheum. Many Doves possess this boon, granted to them by their dark master.

The Incubus boon allows you to attack the absent BODY of your adversary (wherever it reposes) after the victim's MIND die has shifted beyond a d20. Subsequent attacks now shift the BODY to inferior ranks. It costs 1 Immaculum per turn to activate this ability. Shifting a target's BODY die beyond d20 kills the character in his sleep, leaving a symmetrical pattern of enlarged blood vessels as the only evidence of the true cause of death. Immortals attacked by incubi do not die, but are rendered incapacitated until they can heal. Healing from Incubus damage occurs normally.

Intense Flashback 5/2

You may gain an extra memory point during a flashback with the Narrator's permission

Legacy 1-5/1

For every point you spend on this boon, you shift a penalty (that you choose when taking this boon initially) one shift inferior against you. For example if you had Legacy: Encumbrance 3, and the Narrator gave you a 4-shift penalty due to encumbrance, you would only take a 1 shift inferior penalty because the Legacy at 3 would cancel out 3 shifts.

Ley Walk 5/1

You can make a SPIRIT roll to travel the Ley. Without the song of Portal, using the *Ley* focus, you cannot always come out at exact point you wish, constrained by the direction of the Ley Lines themselves. The cost to enter the Ley is 1 Immaculum.

In order to arrive where you wish, you must roll against the chart below. You may only travel to places known to you. If you miss the target number by 1, you come out somewhere nearby the intended arrival

point (Narrator's discretion). If you miss by more than 1, than the Narrator can choose to have you wind up anywhere the Narrator wishes.

T# Arrival Point

- 9 The character has traveled to often, usually his own sanctuaries
- 7 The character has traveled to on a steady basis (a favorite city, restaurant, etc).
- 5 The character has been to occasionally, such as a vacation spot, or an unfamiliar part of town.
- 3 The character has never been to, but has seen through media.
- 1 The character has never been and has never seen, but has heard of.

Lucky 10/10 (Immortal)

(0/1 for members of the Court of Fate, 5/2 for Tacticians and Merchants)

Once per game session, reroll any single roll to gain a better outcome as you manipulate probability.

Mental Link 1 per link/1

You and a willing target establish a mental link. You sense when the other is in danger. Mind to mind communication occurs at any time, although you cannot read thoughts your target deliberately keeps from you. It costs 1 Immaculum to send thoughts to a link. The conversation can last the entire scene.

This boon became a liability to some Immortals in the distant past who, out of paranoia, bound themselves to their entire flock of worshippers to keep tabs on them. Incessant prayers echoed through these Immortal's minds, driving them mad. In the modern era, most Immortals are more careful with the number of mental links they establish.

Mercurial 4/1 (Immortal)

You activate himself natures without spending an action.

Mortal Strike 10/10 (Immortal)

(0/1 for members of the Court of War, 5/2 for Slayers and Scourges)

Add your SPIRIT die to any damage roll once per combat in a focused strike. The lowest roll is the damage result.

Necromancy 10/10 (Immortal)

(0/1 for members of the Court of Death, 5/2 for Profilers)

After sitting vigil for 24 hours with a dead human, make an uncontested MIND roll against a target number based on how long the person has been dead. If successful, the human's soul returns to its body. If desiccated, the body can be healed to healthy flesh, but cremated bodies cannot be resurrected by this boon. This boon only restores mortal creatures, not Immortals.

Time dead	T#
Centuries or more	0
Decades	1
A few years	2
Less than a year	4
Less than a month	6
Less than a week	8
Less than a day	10
Within the scene	12

Pabulum 10/10 (Immortal)

(0/1 for members of the Court of Life, 5/2 for Mentors)

Temporarily sacrifice one rank of your SPIRIT aura and give it to a mortal by touching him. His MIND, BODY or SPIRIT increases to 1 superior rank. This is done in the same way as the normal rules for healing oneself with a high SPIRIT, except you can do this anytime to the wounded mortal.

Panacea 5/1 per aura rank healed (Immortal)

You automatically heal, at will, 1 aura rank of damage, shifting that aura's die 1 superior rank for every one Immaculum you spend, up to your maximum aura value.

Perfect Tone 5/1

Deduct 1 from any serenade skill roll

Personal Dominance 10-20/1 (Optional)

You are attuned to certain places, persons, creatures or times, gaining dominance just for yourself under special circumstances. This does not have to be related to your Court or Calling. The more general the circumstance (day/night) the higher the cost. The more specific (during an eclipse) the lower the cost. The Narrator determines how much this boon will cost you. It can be bought multiple times. The dominance lasts for the rest of the scene from the time it is activated. The Narrator should be careful with what characters use as their personal dominance. The character spends 1 Immaculum in order for the boon to activate and gain the dominance as long as the circumstance lasts.

Plunder Skill 10/Variable (Optional)

Spend 1 Immaculum per rank, in place of experience points, to duplicate any skill known by a character you touch. You cannot plunder a higher rank than your target's highest rank. Use of the skill lasts for the scene, then fades.

Cost in Immaculum	Skill rank
5	D12
10	D10
15	D8
20	D6
25	D4

Poison Resistance 4/1

You are immune to all poisons not himsati-based. Spend 1 Immaculum any time you are poisoned and it is neutralized.

Reaper's Denial 5/1

You can prolong the demise of a mortal character as long as you remain in his presence, no matter how severe his injuries. The cost is 1 Immaculum per day.

Sanguine Hunger 5/0 (Dark)

Deduct 1 from any attempt to drain auras (must be tainted for this boon to operate)

Scanning 4/1

Roll any one aura die against the same aura of someone you wish to scan. This is an opposed roll. If successful, you can perceive the rank die of the aura. Each aura scan must be bought separately.

Shadowform 10/10 (Immortal)

(0/1 for members of the Shadowen, 5/2 for Explorers)

You transform your shadow into a beast. It fights for you (possessing all himsati natures and your aura ranks). Any damage it takes are taken by you, but you can fight alongside it. The Shadowform can also

track down anyone whose possessions you allow it to sniff. Only mystical protection will foil the Shadowform.

Sensitive 1/1

You are sensitive to some otherworldly force (Shallows, Gossamers, Mantles, etc.) and you tend to tune in on them and be able to sense them when near them. Deduct 1 from any roll where you may perceive this otherworldly force. Pick the force when the boon is purchased.

Shadow Veil 4/2 (Immortal)

Make a resisted MIND vs. MIND roll against an opponent to hide the fact that it was you who used a serenade or faith power on him.

Sleeper 10/10 (Immortal)

(0/1 for members of the Court of Dreams 5/2 for Mystics)

This boon allows you to immediately fall asleep and enter into the Morpheum as if you were a human. It costs 2 Immaculum to do so, and lasts until you wake up.

Your power is concealed, so your weight on the Morpheum's filaments, spun by minions of the Sanguinary, is negligible. Seeing you, denizens of the dream world will normally believe you to be human as long as your actions are not suspicious (and spies watch the filaments everywhere).

What's more, You can enter the dreams suspended around you at will. You maintain all of your abilities despite the wishes of the dream's creator, although your appearance is still determined by the "script" of the dream.

The Sleeper can use any kind of skill at its waking rank. Along with the Progeny, Sleepers are the only characters who can use serenades inside the Morpheum. This gives them a distinct weapon in the lair of the Sanguinary. The Sleeper must be careful. The use of these abilities is dangerous and can quickly draw the attention of Doves and other denizens of the Morpheum. Using serenades, in particular, sets up a resonance that can be felt all along the web. Some Doves are capable of tracking an Immortal back to his physical body by sniffing out the supernatural trail left by the use of serenades. This is resolved by opposing SPIRIT rolls of the Immortal and the Dove tracking him.

Characters possessed of this boon can conceal a number of Immaculum carried to and from the Morpheum equal to their MIND die rank (for example, a d6 (rank 5 die) can conceal 5 Immaculum while in the Morpheum.

Sleepers add their MIND die to resolve rolls on *any* skill focus, even those attached to BODY
This boon allows a character to immediately fall asleep and enter the Morpheum in one action.

Soulmate (Living Ark) 10/10 (Immortal)

You have (or will meet) a Bright Blooded human who can serve as a vessel to store your spirit should you die and who can help give rebirth to you. The Immaculum must be spent to attune yourself to the Bright Blood. The Immaculum that you use cannot come from your Soulmate. Each time the Soulmate rebirths you, you must spend another 10 Immaculum.

The biggest benefit of the Soulmate is that your character is reborn with a different appearance (based on the soulmate's own) that allows you to return to the Immortal world with greater anonymity. Unlike a normal ark, the Soulmate is not destroyed upon your rebirth. The Soulmate does not give actual childbirth to you, but instead your SPIRIT coalesces out of the Soulmate and into a new physical form with some traits of your Soulmate apparent.

Species Loyalty 4/2 (Immortal)

Creatures of the same species as your hirsati are loyal to you. They will obey your commands as long as it does not endanger their lives.

Stroke 10/10 (Immortal)**(0/1 for members of the Court of Desire, 5/2 for Empaths)**

Requires meditation for 24 hours. By paying 5 Immaculum and making a successful opposed SPIRIT roll against the target, cause them to be overloaded with extreme pleasure (not necessarily sexual in nature, but any sort of exhilaration, desire or need). The target is considered stunned for 3 turns each time you are successful. When entering your presence forever afterward, the target must make the same roll if you pay the Immaculum cost. If the target ever makes a roll of a 1, the boon's power ceases. This is a very minor version of what your Court plans for the Sanguinary.

Syrinx 5/2

The voice of some Immortals is so beautiful that, when heard, inspires awe or passion in those who hear it. You gain a +1 shift to the next superior die in any one appropriate focus within the *performance*, *persuasion* or *society* skills when you pay 2 Immaculum and are speaking each time you use the focus.

If you have singing as a focus and use this boon, listeners must make a successful opposed SPIRIT roll against you, or fall into a state of bliss. The MIND of the target shifts 1 inferior rank for the remainder of the scene.

Attacking a character so charmed immediately breaks the bewitching spell of this boon.

Time Flux 5/2

Time flows slightly faster or slower in your presence. Gain a second initiative roll by paying 2 Immaculum.

Vigil 4/1

When you purchase this you pick one weapon, item, etc. to bond with. In combat, spend a point of Immaculum and negate a single penalty against you while using the item.

Weak Avatar 3 / 1

Deduct 1 from your roll whenever attempting to keep a hostile avatar from emerging.

Appendix B: Bright Blood Rules

The following presents the rules necessary to play a Bright Blood in the Immortal Millennium game.

Incarnations

Bright Bloods continually reincarnate when they die, and in the next life can remember who they once were, even become that person again. Eventually the Bright Blood (much like an Immortal) awakens to the fact that he was once such a person, and now is again. The process tends to strip away much of the current personality and skills of the existing character as he slowly makes his way towards being who he once was. This process is gauged by a rating known as incarnations.

Incarnation points function exactly the same way that Fugue does for an Immortal. Bright Bloods have incarnation triggers just like Immortals have fugue triggers. The standard rules as per the Book I errata on Fugue apply in using incarnation points with two very large exceptions.

When a Bright Blood critically fails on an incarnation check (same as a Fugue check) they gain another incarnation point. Along with this one of rank of skill that the character possesses is converted into a rank of skill from their previous incarnation (that the current incarnation does not possess already). The character may spend memory or experience to buy back the lost skill rank. Simply put, each time the Bright Blood touches upon his previous incarnation, it encroaches on his new self, slowly wiping it out. If the incarnation points ever reach 20, any remaining skill ranks that the previous incarnation did not have are reduced to rank one each (d12) and those are added into any skills that the current incarnation doesn't have but the previous one did. The current incarnation ceases to exist and the previous incarnation is once again alive, but with vague memories of the incarnation he just supplanted and a few skills.

Another important note. For every 3 critical failures, the Bright Blood gains another aura rank in one of his auras as he gets closer to his last incarnation and his full potential.

For example:

Tom was once the great knight Sir Geoffrey. Tom is now a carpenter with a d8 in carpentry and a d10 in computers. Tom has 12 incarnations points right now. Tom sees something that acts as a fugue trigger (incarnation trigger to be exact) and critically fails his incarnation check. Tom's d8 in carpentry goes down to a d10 and suddenly he now picks up close combat at a d12 (which he never had before but Sir Geoffrey did). This process continues with various skills Tom has as he fails his incarnation checks. If Tom reaches the 20th incarnation point, any skills he possesses that Geoffrey didn't are reduced to d12 and those skill ranks taken away are used to buy up skills that Geoffrey had. Geoffrey awakens in a world that he is and yet is not familiar with. He remembers his life as Tom, and has some of Tom's skills at base level, but many details are a bit fuzzy. Welcome to the modern world Geoffrey!

Determining and Skipping Incarnations

The process of remembering previous incarnations usually begins around puberty, and may or may not complete during the person's lifetime. If not, then the life just lived is discarded. Using the example above. If Tom does not reach his 20th incarnation point and he dies, when he is next reborn, Geoffrey still counts as the previous incarnation, not Tom. Tom is lost in the annals of time.

However, it is possible that Tom may not have gained any incarnation points at all really. If a character dies with fewer than 10 incarnation points, that character becomes the new incarnation. If Tom had fewer than 10 points when he died, then Geoffrey is lost to the annals of time and Tom becomes the previous incarnation for whoever he is born as next.

Creating a Bright Blood Character

Bright Blood characters start with one d12 and two d10's for their initial stats assigned any way they please. A Bright Blood begins the game with 20 memory and 1 incarnation points. For every incarnation point beyond that the Bright Blood takes, he gains another 10 memory. If the Narrator is giving out the extra 25 points for serenades, than the Bright Blood should also get this, to use for his special abilities as outlined below.

Bright Bloods can buy skills and pay the normal cost for them, but cannot normally buy natures and/or serenades.

Bright Blood Abilities

Bright Bloods do not normally have himsatis, nor do they play serenades. But what they do have is Faith. As stated in Chapter 4, Bright Bloods can give up one rank of their SPIRIT aura in the form of Immaculum. This can be taken by an Immortal, placed in an object, etc. However, this can also be held by the Bright Blood, himself. Any SPIRIT aura given up this way heals after one night of full rest. This means the Bright Blood has a point of Immaculum that he or she can spend on boons. A Bright Blood may hold within his own auras, a number of Immaculum equal to the total of his aura ranks minus 1. Any more than this just leaks out. If the Bright Blood has a d10, a d10 and a d8, than he has 10 effective ranks of stats (see Book I for the Rank Table). This means he can hold 9 Immaculum (if he lowers his SPIRIT aura to collect the 10th, he now only has 9 ranks and no place to put the 10th Immaculum). Of course, if he is smart he will lower his SPIRIT aura only one rank per day and build up the Immaculum slowly.

All Bright Bloods can go beyond the normal human maximum in BODY and MIND and reach a d8 in these. And like any being with a SPIRIT aura, there is no limit on what level the SPIRIT aura can reach.

Bright Bloods have a number of special abilities they can purchase with their memory and experience (all costs are listed in memory). Each also requires a number of Immaculum to make function:

Faith-Shape 10/2

The Bright Blood can effectively assume a himsati form for the remainder of the scene. The himsati form must be chosen when the power is taken, and cannot be changed. This can be taken more than one time to allow the Bright Blood to change into more than one shape. He is not truly the animal he shapeshifts into and others of that kind will realize this. The Bright Blood also chooses 5 himsati natures that go along with the form he assumes. These also must be chosen when the power is first taken and cannot be changed afterwards. The himsati form chosen must be of a normal animal: no obviously supernatural natures can be taken. The Bright Blood keeps his own aura values while in this form however.

Immaculum Fount 10/0

Instead of gaining one aura rank while sleeping, the Bright Blood produces pure Immaculum while sleeping. He produces a number of Immaculum equal to his SPIRIT rank. If he is already holding as many Immaculum as his auras allow, then he produces none. If he does not get a full rest, he only produces a portion of the Immaculum, based on how long he rested.

Immaculum Collector 5/0

The Bright Blood may collect (by beating an object's resistance with a SPIRIT roll) one point of Immaculum from an object each time he uses this ability.

Religarum 20/1

Religarum allows a Bright Blood to purchase serenades and foci. This allows the Bright Blood to further enhance the abilities present in the Faith boon that all Bright Bloods get. Once this is purchased, the Bright Blood can buy a serenade and foci (he **must** purchase a foci, he cannot have a serenade without a foci) and use them normally. However, once the serenade is bought with its foci, he cannot buy another foci for that same serenade, and he is limited to using the specific foci with the serenade. When the

Religarum ability is first bought, the Bright Blood gains one serenade/foci combo of his choice. All other serenade/foci combinations must be paid for separately.

For Example

Tom has paid 10 memory for the Religarum Ability. He purchases Abbadon with the focus of lightning (15 points). He can not buy any other foci for Abbadon, and he can **only** use Abbadon with the focus of lightning.

When taking the Religarum ability, the Bright Blood must also now have a motif just like an Immortal. The most common motifs are faith in a certain religion (wiccan, voodoo, etc.), magic (sorcerers of old), etc. This forms a spiritual compass by which the Bright Blood should pattern all of his abilities. In order to play the serenades and foci that the Bright Blood has, it requires the expenditure of 1 Immaculum.

Aura Defense 5 per aura/1 per use

This ability allows a Bright Blood to pick an aura and for 5 memory give it one rank of permanent armor, only against mystical effects targeting it. For example Aura (BODY) Armor would provide the Bright Blood with one rank of armor against any mystical effects targeting his BODY aura. It will not protect him against someone attacking him with a sword, even if the sword was mystical. It would protect against the Abbadon serenade if it was being targeted against his BODY aura though.

Immortal Only Boons

These can be bought for an increased cost

- Court Status** - One of the Courts know who you are, and respect you for your service to them (usually bought by leaders of Quiet Cultures) -- 8 points instead of 5.
- Shadow Veil** - People cannot tell it was you that used Religarum against them -- 8 points instead of 4, and it still costs 2 Immaculum to activate.

Playing a Bright Blood

A player can handle a Bright Blood character in much the same way as an Immortal character. The Bright Blood may be just starting out, finding out for the first time about the world of Immortals, or the Bright Blood could be a few decades old (especially if the Slow Aging boon is taken) having worked within the Immortal society for some time.

Bright Bloods see Immortals as objects of worship just like other believers, gods if you will. But some Bright Bloods develop close ties and friendships with these gods, knowing that they are something more than mortal themselves. A few rare Bright Bloods so impress their Immortal counterparts that they are made Immortal themselves. Others turn down this offer, preferring to find the long road of life the mortal way.

Bright Bloods stand out in a crowd. Most Bright Bloods have trouble (especially in the beginning) accepting that they are different, so are shunned by society. There are some however, which manage to turn their special talents to the benefit of themselves and, hopefully, those around them. These can rise up to become very powerful and important people. Others prefer the quiet of anonymity, working for their Immortal masters.

Entire games can be based around the characters all being Bright Bloods, realizing just what is happening to the world, and their place in it as they come to know these alien Immortal creatures and pick and choose their own sides in this three-way war over humanity.

Appendix C: Serenade Listing

Abbadon

Hurls destructive energies at a target

Target Defense = Any, depends on what is being targeted

Secondary Effect = None

Foci = Lightning bolts, fireballs, legions of insects, spontaneous combustion, hoards of animals, etc.

The Immortal can hurl damaging energies at an opponent's BODY or MIND, or at an inanimate object. The shape and form of this energy is dependent on the motif and/or the focus (if the Immortal has one). The primary effect is applied as damage. If the Immortal attempts to directly harm the SPIRIT through this, the effect roll takes one inferior shift.

Allure

Creates illusions

Target Defense = 12 - Complexity modifier

Secondary Effects = Duration

Foci = Specific Types of Illusions

The Immortal can create a variety of phantasmal effects that do not truly exist. This cannot be used to illusion an aura in any way. The primary effect creates a base resistance that must be overcome with a MIND roll in order to perceive past the illusion. The secondary effect determines how long the illusion lasts. AOE = Weapon reach (10x10x10 cube or 10 ft. diameter sphere)

Anthropomorphis

Empower inanimate without changing its form

Target Defense = 12 - Inanimate modifier (occasionally Esoteric modifier)

Duration = Scene

Foci = "Talking Mirrors", Storing himsati natures, "The Walls have ears", "Talking Fire", etc.

This serenade allows an inanimate object to have various abilities it would not normally have, without changing its standard form or function. The primary effect varies. If one enabled a business card to project a hologram, the primary effect would be influence (how clear the hologram is). If one enabled a mirror to display what has transpired around it, the primary effect would be time (how far back the mirror can display). If one enabled a sword to hold the himsati nature of poison, it would generate an effective damage die. If one attempts to use this on an esoteric, there is a one inferior shift penalty to the effect roll.

But remember, the basic form and function of the item remains the same and this does not grant sentience or any other form of ability save the very specific one given it by the serenade. An Immortal cannot give something like a himsati nature unless the Immortal himself possesses said nature. Natures which would change the objects look or basic function do not work with this serenade.

Brio

Alter/influence moods, emotions, feelings, etc.

Target Defense = MIND

Secondary Effects = Duration

Foci = Despair, hope, joy, love, fear, anger, jealousy, hate, happiness, sadness, greed, etc.

The primary effect depends on the Immortal's goal. Usually this creates a base resistance the target must beat on a MIND roll to ignore the new or altered feeling the Immortal has given him. For NPCs it is much easier just to check for the Influence level and use that. Advanced players may also want to use the Influence level to keep dice rolling to a minimum.

An option within Brio is the trigger. If a trigger is used, the new/altered feeling only comes into play when the specific circumstances are set off (a certain scent, sight, place, etc.). If this is done, then the effect roll is made with one superior shift on the die value. The trigger should not be too common.

Cantabile

Serenade counters

Target Defense = SPIRIT

Duration = Scene

Foci = Deflection, reflection, negation, aura shifting, etc.

This serenade is used in place of the standard resistance roll. With it the Immortal can attempt stop a serenade from affecting her. When a serenade is played against the character, this is used in place of the resistance roll, as if the defender were parrying the attacker's serenade.

If a focus such as Negation or Aura Shifting are taken, then rolling lower than the attacker's incoming serenade skill roll is all that need be done.

If a focus such as Deflection is taken, then both the attacker and the defending character roll their SPIRIT dice. If the defender rolls lower, it hits a target (other than the attacker) of the defender's choosing. If the attacker wins, the attacker chooses the target (other than the defending character). The defender's SPIRIT roll is now used to determine the reflected serenade's primary effect.

If a focus like Reflection is taken, and the defender wins, the serenade now targets the original player of the serenade, with the defender's SPIRIT roll determining primary effect. If the attacker wins the serenade still hits the defender, with **no** defense roll allowed.

Come-Hither

Summons creatures or objects to you

Target Defense = SPIRIT or 12 - Inanimate Modifier

Secondary Effects = Distance object may come into play, Duration (*special, see below*)

Foci = Lions, humans, mammals, cars, swords, computers, a specific item, a specific person

The primary effect determines the amount of influence the Immortal has over the summoned entity/object. Therefore the summoned target is not necessarily under the complete control of the Immortal. The secondary effect determines how close the object will get before the Immortal can use whatever influence from the primary roll he has gained. If summoning a lion and the secondary effect lists region and the influence (primary effect) is listed as mythic, than as soon as the lion enters the city the Immortal may exert influence upon the lion. This way the lion does not have to come all the way to the Immortal before becoming useful. With inanimate objects, this distance can provide the Immortal with a way of having the object summoned to a certain place within a distance from the Immortal.

The drawback of this serenade is that the amount of time it takes for an object to appear is variable and up to the Narrator. It is suggested that the Immortal be able to trade distance for duration. If the Narrator deems the target will take the full scene, and the distance from the secondary effect is region, the Immortal could trade that down to weapon reach and speed up the time. Who knows? Perhaps it just conveniently drops out of a low flying plane and lands at the Immortal's feet? The higher the influence and shorter the time, the more mystical the facts surrounding the object/entity's appearance.

Endue

Change body parts into inanimate forms

Target Defense = BODY

Duration = Scene

Foci = Armor, weapons, specific weapons, tools, snowshoes, wheels, etc.

The Immortal can alter aspects of her body into inanimate forms. This could turn a limb into a weapon, grow an inanimate object (like wheels) from her feet, etc. The primary effect is variable, depending on what is actually made. If armor were made, it would cause inferior shifts to an opponent's damage dice. If, for example, a weapon were made, it would create a die value for that weapon.

Flux and Flow

Grants/controls movement abilities

Target Defense = BODY

Duration = Scene

Foci = Flight, Ride in the Wake of a moving object, teleportation, tunneling, walk on air, clinging, telekinesis upon another character, etc.

The primary effect usually generates a die value to be rolled alongside the BODY die during any kind of pursuit or evasion, or any other rolls affected by the new movement ability. Otherwise the Immortal may travel about at a rate best suited for the method chosen. Please note that teleportation is usually not instant unless the Narrator wants to use a secondary effect roll (reversing the time chart from the effects table) and compare to that to see just how fast the teleport works. If this were played on an unwilling character, than it becomes an effect versus target BODY roll, and the primary effect becomes the distance that the target can be forced to move over the course of the scene.

Galatea

Alter Inanimate objects and Esoteric properties

Target Defense = 12 - Inanimate/Esoteric modifier

Secondary Effect = Level of influence (if necessary)

Duration = Scene

Foci = lead to gold, command elements to move and attack, allow objects to move about with their own base instinct.

Where anthropomorphis gives an item abilities without changing its form; Galatea gives an item an inkling of life and allows the warping of its form to give it abilities based on how it is warped. This serenade alternatively allows one to alter the properties of an item such as its heat, mass, radiance hardness, etc. With this the Immortal could command a rope or a campfire to animate and attack someone. The Immortal could cause a diamond to shine like a torch or be as hot as lava. Lead could be turned into gold. A stool could be given the ability to move about on its own with its legs receiving joints.

Any item given an inkling of life still has no SPIRIT aura, but does have an effective BODY aura based on the primary effect roll. The MIND aura of these items is always a d20. The secondary effect determines how much influence the Immortal has in commanding the item. Without commands, the object will move about (if it has been gifted with changes to its form that allow movement) much like a nearly mindless animal, defending itself if attacked, etc. Please note that this does not allow shapeshifting of the item, just warping of its normal form to allow for things such as movement, etc.

For an item that has its properties changed, the primary effect role either determines how much change is possible (influence) or generates a die value (such as a diamond made so hot that it burns, doing damage to those touching it).

Gambit

Summons circumstances and/or esoterics

Target Defense = 12 - Esoteric/Complexity modifier

Secondary Effect = Distance effect can come into play, Duration (*special, see below*)

Duration = Scene

Foci = Storms, good/bad luck, fog, shadow, sounds, earthquakes, other types of weather/environmental conditions, etc.

This serenade works the same way as Come-Hither, with the Immortal summoning an effect into the area. The primary roll determines how much influence the Immortal has over the effect (which is good so you don't get hit by the lightning from your own storm for example). The secondary effect determines how far away it can come into effect (which is nice so the storm starts on the other side of the city rather than drenching you). AOE = depends on what is summoned

Again, like Come-Hither, the duration (time it takes to come into play) is variable and up to the Narrator. We do again suggest that levels of distance achieved over what the character feels he needs should be traded in to speed up how long it takes for the effect to come into play.

Gemetria

Duplication

Target Defense = Varies

Duration = Scene

Foci = Books, Himsatis, specific types of people or animals, clothes, weapons, etc.

This creates one or more duplicates of the target being or object. The primary effect is compared to the rank chart to see how many duplicates are created. If the effect roll was a 2 and the defense roll (for a living being as an example) was a 7, the difference is 5. A 5 on the effect table is a rank 4 which indicates 4 duplicates are created. To create duplicates of very small items (paper clips, simple insects) the Rank should be an indication of the amount (ie - how big a pile of paper clips, rather than an exact amount).

Gremlin

Control Inanime

Target Defense = 12 - Inanime modifier

Duration = Scene

Foci = computers, cars, ATM machines, bicycles, phones, locks, lights, cameras, doors, windows, etc.

With this the Immortal takes control of an inanimate object and forces it to do his bidding. The Immortal must consciously control this effect, using an action to force the inanime to perform actions or (in the case of machines) to cause them to change actions. A bicycle could be made to go down the street on its own, or a microwave could suddenly turn on and activate at different temperatures. A television set could turn on and flip channels by itself. A computer could access the internet by itself and browse web pages and send email, just by the Immortal thinking about it. A lock could lock and unlock by mere thought. Ropes could untie themselves.

Unlike Galatea or Anthropomorphis, objects under the control of Gremlin have no life of their own and can only function in ways they are meant to, so the Immortal must consciously direct the item. Items also cannot be forced to do things that their form and function don't normally allow. A toaster could not be used as a television set. Broken items can be made to work normally, (hence the strange view of a car going down the road on only 3 wheels but reacting as if it had all 4).

Ichor

BODY/Object transferal

Target Defense = 12 - Inanime modifier

Duration = Permanent until used

Foci = Tattoos, wound levels, make it nearly impossible to disarm your weapon, etc.

The Immortal may bond himself (or another willing being) to an object in various ways. This could include taking an object and placing it onto your skin in the form of a tattoo, or allowing and redirecting damage done to you over to an object instead. In the example of transferring wounds, the primary effect roll would determine how many wound ranks would transfer before the serenade effectively "ended". In terms of something such as Tattoo (placing an object into your skin), the primary effect roll would determine how many (via the Rank achieved) objects you could place into a single tattoo. If terms of bonding a weapon to your hand during battle, it would generate a die value that could roll against any disarming attempts.

Special Note: Tattoo

The Tattoo serenade (focus) was created by the Immortal Celebrant and used extensively by a sect in the Court of Making known as the Infernum. It is very similar to Abzulim Patterning. It is rumored the Celebrant and its advisors, the Amaranth, can carry living beings, even entire tracts of land in their tattoos. Attempting to place large objects (more than half the Immortal's size) into a tattoo will result in the effect roll taking on inferior shifts at the Narrator's discretion. Only very powerful Immortals should be able to place things like entire buildings into a tattoo. And remember, the inhabitants of the building won't go in, the building would vanish around them. This could be bad for people on the 4th floor when the floor goes away.

Impulse

Mental deceit

Target Defense = MIND

Duration = Scene

Foci = Confuse action choices (initiative penalty), mistaken identity, the feeling of something crawling on the skin, seeing "things" out of the corner of the eye, mental distractions, random thoughts, etc.

The Immortal befuddles the mind directly, causing general states of confusion to achieve a particular result. This typically tricks the target into believing something that isn't true for a brief period of time, or acting on information which is actually false. This does not directly alter thoughts as Memoir does, nor does it directly change emotions as Brio does. Usually the Immortal may have to play along in order to get the Impulse to work correctly.

The primary effect depends on the deceit. If someone were to accidentally mistake you as some kind of authority figure or even a long lost relative, the primary effect would generate a die value that you would roll opposing the opponent's MIND roll each time you did something uncharacteristic of the imagined person. If someone saw things out of the corner of their eye that constantly distracted them the effect might generate a "base resistance" that the person had to overcome each turn to stop from looking to see what is there.

Iris

Sense transferal

Target Defense = MIND or 12 - Complexity (number of senses involved usually)

Duration = Scene

Foci = Clairvoyance, see through another's eyes, leaving behind your sight to watch a place, etc.

This allows an Immortal to work with senses other than their own. It does not create new ones, but simply borrows them from another being or object. This can also be used by an Immortal to "leave" a number of senses in a location. The primary effect of this serenade determines the distance it will effectively operate at.

Malekin

Spirit control

Target Defense = SPIRIT

Secondary Effects = Influence Level

Duration = Scene

Foci = Possessing certain types of creatures, forcing spirits to manifest, link an enemy's spirit to a personal object they own (which grants you a bonus over them in some form of conflict), force the spirit's die value to switch places with another of the auras' die values.

Through this serenade the Immortal can control and command a free spirit, or even take control of a soulless being. The benefit of using this serenade to control a soulless is that it does not set up the mental link that allows another character to affect your own spirit through the soulless. The primary effect is typically a base resistance the SPIRIT must overcome in order to not obey the Immortal. In the case of gaining a bonus over someone by holding onto an object they are linked to spiritually, the primary effect generates a die value that you may roll alongside a certain skill or effect of your choosing (one shot die roll).

Memoir

Alter thoughts

Target Defense = MIND

Secondary Effects = Duration

Foci = Amnesia, mind control, revelations, specific types of thoughts (loved ones, favorite things) or of specific things (animals, women, children, humans, cats, cars, etc.)

This serenade allows in Immortal to create, change, delete, or control thoughts. This does not control emotional reactions to those thoughts, nor feelings in any way. Whenever the thoughts altered involve a character's focus within Memoir (whether adding, altering, or deleting thoughts thereof) the focus is counted. However, this serenade does not control the reaction to the new or changed thought. If someone's favorite color is red and the Immortal changes it to blue. The target will have some amount of confusion why he suddenly has decided his favorite color is blue. The primary effect generates either a die value that is rolled against the opponent's MIND whenever control needs to be established (to force them to do your bidding for example). Alternatively it could generate a base resistance to be overcome, for the target to realize that something is seriously amiss about the thoughts they are having.

Mein

Alter physical appearance

Target Defense = BODY

Duration = Scene

Foci = Specific changes: weight, sex, race, hair color, eye color, build, height, muscle tone, etc.

The primary effect determines how much change (influence) is possible. Trivial influence would only change partially the eye color, or the way the hair lays across the head. At Mythic influence, multiple changes could be done, including changing height, weight, race and sex. If a critical success is made, the player can choose to make these changes permanent.

Metaphor

Aura illusions

Target Defense = SPIRIT

Secondary Effects = Duration

Foci = Invisibility, anonymity, "Don't notice the large sword I'm carrying and just ignore it", dim one's aura while in the Morpheum, etc.

Working similarly to Allure, but instead working on living auras. The primary effect generates a base resistance number that must be beaten by rolling the viewer rolling their MIND die and rolling lower. Unlike Allure, this fools the MIND directly by having the SPIRIT aura generate the "illusion" around the target. This means that Metaphor is mobile and travels with the target automatically. Complexity modifiers are not necessary for this song. Metaphor with a focus to keep people from noticing the strange clothing and items an Immortal carries, is one of the most popular serenades of the Immortals.

Minutia

Sense enhancement/addition

Target Defense = MIND

Duration = Scene

Foci = Specific senses, or specific things that can be sensed (invisible things, x-rays, infrared sight, etc.)

Creates new senses or enhances existing ones. If creating a new sense, the primary effect creates a die value that the Immortal rolls when attempting to use it. If enhancing an existing sense, it creates a superior die shift to that sense. This serenade could also be used to assist in identifying what a device is or how it works by enhancing the senses used to examine a device (a focus known as Syndrome to many). In this case it would create a new sense specifically to examine a device and determine its functions. The applications are limitless. AOE = Line of Sight (anything the character can perceive in the range of the given sense)

Special Note: Tracking

Known as Dowser, this specific focus allows one to track the wakes left in the Earth's aura by the passage of a being or object. In order to use Minutia to track something the Dowser focus **must** be purchased.

Nostrum

Healing

Target Defense = Damaged Aura or 12 - Inanimate modifier

Duration = Special

Foci = Animals, plants, humans, cars, dogs, computers, specific auras, etc.

This enables an Immortal to heal damage done to a creature or object. If played upon an object, the primary effect creates a number of effective "superior shifts" that the object regains in operational ability. If played upon a living being with a SPIRIT, the primary effect creates a die value. That die value is rolled alongside the being's own SPIRIT and the lower of the two rolls is compared to the effects chart. The being receives that many superior shifts back in wounded aura ranks. If the being has no SPIRIT than just the created die is used. The effects of Nostrum are permanent (though the character can take damage again later), but it takes approximately one hour to perform this serenade. At the end of the hour the healing roll is made.

Nostrum cannot raise a damaged aura beyond its normal value. Immortals with Nostrum and foci in inanimate objects are the ultimate quick-fixer-upper artists.

Obstruct

Creates hindrances, bindings, blockades, etc.

Target Defense = 12 - Complexity of Obstruction or BODY

Secondary Effect = Duration

Foci = Stone walls, rings of fire, webbing, telekinetic bubbles, boulders, fearsome types of creatures

This hinders the target in some way. If creating an external effect which will affect anyone that attempts to get by it, the Target Defense is the complexity modifier subtracted from 12. If creating an effect upon a single person (snakes made of shadow that bind the target) than the Target Defense is the target's BODY. Primary effect generates a base resistance to overcome in order to get by the obstacle for static obstacles, and a die value that must be beaten in the case of mobile or interactive ones.

Orisha

Present Warnings, Future Portents

Target Defense = Character's own SPIRIT

Secondary Effect = How far into the future (Time)

Foci = Question an Avatar, see the future, warnings on a course of action, etc.

This allows an Immortal to gain knowledge from possible the possible future. It is said this serenade reaches into the Immortal's own SPIRIT and through it accesses the Blue Air where the Transcendents sometimes watch the war on Earth. The primary effect generates influence, which determines how much knowledge is gained. The secondary effect (for serenades played to determine events in the future) will determine how far into the future this information is precisely accurate. Any information concerning events/issues after that amount of time are unsure and not specific.

Portal

Allows passage into other realms

Target Defense = Special, see below

Secondary Effect = Extra beings that can be taken along (by Rank)

Foci = Mantles, Maelstrom, Dominions, Ley, Blue Air, Labyrinth

Portal is a rare serenade, and one that Narrators should keep a careful watch on in their game. This serenade allows one to open passage into other "dimensions". As well as sense openings into those dimensions nearby and analyze them. A focus **must** be purchased for each dimension that the song of Portal will be used on. If one has the focus of mantles, than he cannot use portal to go into the Maelstrom unless purchasing that focus too.

The primary effect determines the amount of influence (in this case knowledge) the character can glean about what is on the other side of the portal that he is about to open. Based on this, the character can more accurately open the portal in the safest area possible. That does require the character moving about a bit sometimes. The portal will open in the target realm closest to the point that the character is on Earth. The secondary effect determines how many others can be taken along. Note that once there, this does not provide any means of movement or transportation.

If used to access a mantle, the character can automatically gain entry once he knows it is there, unless the mantle is somehow barred by the Maker. If so, the Maker rolls her SPIRIT against the effect roll of the character, and if the Maker rolls equal or lower, the character is still barred from entering.

If used to access the Ley, this grants the character Ley Walking temporarily, with a -1 to their role. If used to access the Labyrinth, the character winds up in a random spot in that dark and mysterious maze. If used to access the Maelstrom, the character will need appropriate protections for travel in the elemental realm of the Primals. If used to access the Dominions (which is nearly impossible with Earth being cut off), the character will be shunted to a nearby dominion-world, and will have to manually travel back to Earth. If used to access the Blue Air. . . . physical things usually die quickly in a realm of pure thought. The character had best have the appropriate survival skill for work in the last few of these realms.

In order to successfully get through the portal, the character must make both is attack roll and his effect roll against the target numbers in the table below, instead of using the standard numbers:

Realm	Target Number
Mantle	8
Ley	6
The Labyrinth	4
Maelstrom	2
Dominions	0
Blue Air	-1

Primal

Granting elemental abilities and forms

Target Defense = BODY or MIND

Duration = Scene

Foci = Specific forms (mist, fire, earth, stone, rain, water, air, fog), specific abilities (light up on fire, no need to breathe, etc. -- see the Natures Section of Book I for more ideas)

This shapeshifts the target into an elemental form, or can duplicate to some extent various elemental abilities. (It **can not** grant the Wishgiving nature for example). The primary effect either generates a die value that the ability operates at (how much damage the flames do from lighting up on fire). Alternatively it could generate a base resistance that must be overcome to get by an elemental effect (in order to hit someone that has turned to air for example). Immortals with elemental himsatis cannot take this serenade.

Xenoglossia

Alternate communications

Target Defense = MIND

Duration = Scene

Foci = Mind scanning, telepathy, thought projection, knowledge stealing, dream working (when in their physical presence), communication in foreign languages, etc.

This allows an Immortal to communicate in ways not normally possible and receive information using the power of her MIND. The primary effect usually generates a die value which is either rolled against the target's MIND or (in the case of stealing skills or knowledge) is used as a stolen skill. When speaking in languages foreign to the Immortal, it generates an influence level of how much of the language the Immortal can understand for the duration of the serenade. For dream working it allows the sending and

receiving of thoughts into a dream, as long as the Immortal is in the presence of the dreamer. This will not affect someone dreaming in an anchor or if another supernatural presence is in the person's dream in the Morpheum. This way is most often used to spy on people's dreams and innermost thoughts and desires. Another valuable use is for an Immortal to play the "conscience" of the target via telepathy.

Zoas

Granting animal abilities and forms

Target Defense = BODY/MIND

Duration = Scene

Foci = Specific types of animals, specific abilities (wings, horns, etc.)

This allows an Immortal to shapeshift the target into a creature, or give it creature-like abilities (usually only those possessed by the Immortal). It can also be used to allow the Immortal to copy other creatures' abilities for herself. This will also allow an Immortal to shapeshift the general appearance of an animal (turn a fox's red fur gray for example). On a critical success these changes can be made permanent.

Court "Voices"

These are optional serenades that Narrators can use in their campaigns and give free to all members of the appropriate Court. Each of the Courts has perfected a particular offshoot of a certain serenade above. Each of these was once a special focus known only to members of that Court, which has over time developed into its own serenade. Narrators should not allow these serenades to be duplicated with other serenades, merely get similar results, but not exact.

If members of other Courts wish to purchase these, they must pay an additional 5 points beyond the standard 10 for these.

In order to use any of these serenades, the character must expend a point of Immaculum. If the character playing the serenade is a member of the appropriate Court, she may **always** roll her SPIRIT die just as if she had a focus in the serenade. Otherwise, these serenades do **not** have foci, so members outside of the appropriate Court can never get the benefit of such.

Allegory - Court of Secrets (Galatea)

Bringing art to life

Target Defense = 12 - Inanime modifier + number of Immaculum present in object

Duration = Scene

This will bring an object to life for a brief period. Characters from paintings will leap off the painting and become three dimensional, statues will animate with a full personality all their own. The creations' personality is based partially off the thing it was to represent (person, animal, etc.) and partially off of the personality of the Immortal who played the serenade.

The primary effect roll generates a die value that is used as either the MIND or BODY aura. Whichever one of the two is not picked receives a d12 value. There is no SPIRIT aura. The drawback of this serenade is that it also takes one point from the object in addition to the point spent by the character.

This serenade only works on objects that have Immaculum invested in them. It is usually reserved for working with items that are mystical in nature. If an item loses its Immaculum through this process it loses its mystical qualities permanently.

Ambrosia - Court of Life (Nostrum)

Restore youth

Target Defense = BODY, MIND or SPIRIT

Duration = Indefinite

This can restore an aura level lost due to aging instead of damage. Where Nostrum only heals up to current normal levels, this serenade can restore levels beyond that were once normal when the creature was younger. It is rumored that this voice was learned from studying long lives of the Bright Bloods and that through large expenditures of Immaculum, some of the higher Lords of the Court of life have made

their mortal servants eternally young, though not truly Immortal. It takes one hour to perform this serenade.

Ars Moriendi - Court of Death (Malekin)

Capture spirits in objects

Target Defense = SPIRIT

Duration = Permanent until spirit is released or escapes

If successful the target spirit is trapped in an object of the player's choosing. The primary effect roll forms the resistance the spirit must beat to break out. Any Immaculum present in the object is a +1 against the spirit's rolls to break free. The player may then use any abilities the spirit has that can be used through the item (forcing the spirit to use those abilities on behalf of the player). However, each time this is done the spirit may make another attempt to break free at a one shift superior on its SPIRIT die.

Coda - Court of Shadow (Cantabile)

Weaken all serenades in an area

Target Defense = Earth's Aura (normally 12)

Secondary Effect = Area of Effect (Distance from location played)

Duration = Scene

Coda's primary effect roll creates an inferior shift to all serenade skills and serenade primary effect rolls made in the area. All objects in the area of effect get grayish hues and lose an amount of color while Code is in effect. The Shadowen learned this from their former lord Nimrod, who could silence all serenades around him but with a shadowed whisper.

Intaglio - Court of Making (Galatea)

Shapeshift inanimate objects in any way

Target Defense = 12 - Inanimate modifier

Duration = Scene

The player may completely shapeshift an object while retaining its normal properties. A boulder could be turned into a cave, or a car into a truck. The level of change (influence) is determined by the primary effect roll. The Peri, earthen Elementals who were once caretakers of the Abzulim Forge, learned this serenade from one of the Kai Ra known as the Solitaire.

Kismet - Court of Fate (Brio)

Forces the hand of destiny

Target Defense = SPIRIT

Duration = Permanent until quest completed

This allows the character to place a geas on a target of their choosing. While this does not physically force the target to go on the quest, the primary effect roll determines the amount of influence the target receives to go on the quest. This manifests in symbolic forms in their daily life. At lower levels of influence the target will receive subtle reminders and hints (songs on the radio, billboards, etc.) that the target cannot seem to convince anyone of their significance. As the level of influence moves up, dreams and nightmares begin to plague the target, full of symbols concerning the quest and the Immortals' voice and image. Finally, at the highest levels, it will interfere with the daily life interacting with the target's own fears and phobias as a means of getting the target to go on the quest (mythic level influence).

Phantasm - Court of Dreams (Xenoglossia)

Links a waking person to the Morpheum

Target Defense = MIND

Duration = Scene

The player to forces a target to effectively dream while awake, allowing the member of the Court to enter into the Morpheum and interact with the person from their, while they are awake. Many members of the Court use this to mimic voices in the head, or the voice of a person's conscience. Targets affected this way do not fully manifest within the Morpheum and tend to go unnoticed by the various Droles and minions of the Sanguinary there. The primary effect role determines how much influence the player has on the waking person's mind through the daydream. This serenade has been called Somnus in the past.

Syrinx - Court of Desire (Impulse)

Create an obsession

Target Defense = MIND

Secondary Effect = Duration

Named after the boon for which it was partially patterned, the player may force a target to become obsessed with most anything. It causes the target to do whatever he or she can to possess or be near the object of the obsession, and it will affect judgement. The object of the obsession can be any object, substance, or even a trait (like anyone with a dimple on their left cheek, or anyone that laughs in a certain way, or anything of a certain color) that is possessed by a being or object.

The primary effect role determines how strong the obsession's influence is upon the target. It can be used to create a base resistance the target must overcome in order to avoid chasing after the object/person/place/thing of his or her desire whenever the opportunity arises.

Valkyrie - Court of War (Iris)

Sensing Conflicts

Target Defense = Earth's Aura (normally 12)

Secondary Effect = Distance

Ever vigilante, the Court of War can sense the disturbances in the Earth's aura caused by the heightened emotions of true conflict. The primary effect roll determines the amount of knowledge (influence) the character gleans about the conflict. If two conflicts are occurring in the same area being searched out by this serenade, the one that has the most potential significance to the Immortal is the one which will be sensed.

Appendix D: Eternal City

The characters find themselves stranded in Babylon, a mantle under attack by mysterious forces. By the hour, Babylon becomes more separated from reality and drawn into a dark dimension where the Sanguinary lairs like a spider in a web. Lost in a world both familiar and yet alien, they come to realize their true natures as Immortals and become the targets of a cat-and-mouse hunt that seeks to prevent their escape with the truth.

Beginnings . . .

This adventure is designed for a beginning group of players who know next to nothing about Immortal or its backdrop. It should take anywhere from one to three sessions to play out, depending on the length of your typical game. By its end, your players will understand that they are much more than human and they will start to unravel the mystery of the world and all the illusions that protect the truth from the prying eyes of humanity. Players who base their characters on themselves are living a normal, work-a-day life until drawn into this plot. It is a good starting point for any Immortal game.

Moods and Cues

We suggest you create a unique mood for this game. Great ways of doing this are the use of low lighting (or candlelight), the presence of great mood music from your favorite band or movie soundtrack, and any small props you can assemble. You can play this in the comfort of your own home, or as a live-action theatrical type of game. Keep in mind that if you choose the latter, to observe the rules for live action in the first *Immortal* book. Remember there are people who may see such a performance and not realize what it is. Always treat “mundanes” with extra care and inform them in the friendliest way possible that this is only a game.

The use of music, props, and the like is what we call “cues.” The text makes cue suggestions at appropriate points. Feel free to substitute wherever you like.

The Setting

The world of *Immortal* is very much like our own real world of the near future, with one very important distinction: there are hidden worlds, dimensions beyond the perception of mankind, where dwells an ancient race of Immortal beings. These worlds are called mantles. In most cases mantles are entered through cleverly

hidden doorways, created by the will of a half-human, half-Immortal hybrid known as a *Maker*. Using her telepathic communion with a mystical shard, a Maker refocuses reality into a shape of her own choosing.

A Maker is the ally of Immortals who live in her mantle and are protected by its artificial reality. Ancient temples, fortresses, cities, and other marvels are preserved here from the cruel march of time. The famed cities of old, such as Atlantis, Babylon, Olympus, Knossos, Camelot, Heliopolis, Ife, Alexandria, Sodom and Gomorrah, Carthage, and ancient Rome exist in all their stately glory, even as the ruins of their earthly counterparts are picked over by archeologists in the real world. Collectively, the mantles form a greater Ur-nation known as Sanctuary.

Sanctuary lies at the border of the real world. Sometimes a person can stumble into it through one of its gates. A gate can exist anywhere: a rock, a black cat, a waterfall, even a trash dumpster can provide entry into a mantle once it is touched.

While a Maker is alive (they live for many, many human lifetimes) the mantle she creates thrives. As she ages and grows senile, a replacement is rigorously trained to take over the control of the reality. If a Maker is killed before a replacement can be fully trained, the reality of the mantle breaks down and bleeds out into the real world. In the last few centuries such exposure has been carefully avoided through the vigilance of the Immortals, who send guardians to protect the Makers.

The Sanguinary’s Attack on Sanctuary

The Sanguinary, trapped in the collective mind of humanity, lives as a malevolent personality in the world of dreams, moving from mind to sleeping mind, elusive and invisible. As it does

this, it seeps away the life force of those with no will to resist it, or those tempted with power or other carnal pleasures of the world. One by one, humans become empty vessels, and when the last of their spirit is given up in ecstatic worship of the Sanguinary, the Beast or its minions control their bodies. Only mortals with a powerful Spirit can resist this invasion.

The Sanguinary wants to assimilate all Immortals into itself, creating a new body of incalculable power which will allow it to leave its disembodied state. Once free, it will consume all living things.

Sanctuary is a hunting ground for the Sanguinary. Its servants endlessly toil to expose gates and to get at the Makers of the various mantles. When the Sanguinary successfully captures a Maker, the reality of the mantle the Maker controls shifts to favor the Beast and its servants. All Immortals living in the mantle are trapped and become the prey of the Sanguinary. Thus, a dark world, Sheol, grows like a cancer within the mythical world of Sanctuary. Somewhere in Sheol is the new, growing, embryonic body of the Sanguinary, waxing more powerful with each Immortal sacrificed to it.

What's Going On in This Story . . .

The dark minions of the Sanguinary have made a strike on Babylon, a mantle which has one of its gates hidden within the PCs' home city. The Maker of the mantle, a young woman named Moon, is running for her life, staying just ahead of her hunters, but is wounded to such an extent that her control over her mantle is tenuous at best. All of her guardians are dead. Without her controlling the mantle, Moon's hunters are influencing its now malleable nature, creating a labyrinth around Babylon from which she cannot escape.

Moon

The choice of this mantle for invasion is no accident. In this case it is Moon herself that is the prize, and the invaders want her alive at all costs. Having stolen an artifact known as Pandora's Vox from the other Immortals, Moon has merged physically with this vox, an action forbidden by Immortal law, and has inherited its powers and the wonders it contains. She is now

Immortal. The invaders of the Mantle of Babylon want to possess Moon and the vox within her throat.

Pandora's Vox

Long ago, during the age of myth when humankind and Immortals lived side by side, when the world was filled with magic and wonders beyond description, Pandora was created. She was a perfect human female who was chosen by the Court of Fate to go on a very sacred task. They joined a large, powerful shard to her flesh and made her Immortal.

Pandora's mission was one of utmost secrecy. A consummate thief, her anonymity was protected by the Court of Fate at a great expenditure of power, resources, and fanatical mortal priests. Her alias, Thief of Wonders, was well earned, considering her theft of precious objects, people, even mantles she stealthily entered. The Thief of Wonders became the most hunted Immortal in all history.

Pandora was eventually caught and quietly slain by the very Court that made her. Her vox was kept in a vault, filled with the Wonders she stole through her long career which exist as patterns of energy ready to reform into solid matter. This priceless artifact was surrounded with incredible security by the Court of Fate.

Aided by a member within the Court known as Phoenix, Moon penetrated the defenses surrounding the vox and stole it. Because of Phoenix's arcane power, the prescient seers of the Court were tricked and did not foresee Moon's coming. They were thus unprepared to prevent the theft.

Joker

Only one of Moon's guardians escaped the genocide at Babylon. He fled rather than face the fatal odds. He has managed to elude capture thus far and is hiding inside the razed temple. The characters are unlikely to meet him in this story, but he will watch them from afar. Later, he will return to Phoenix and report to him about the characters and their performance in this crisis.

The Others

Moon has allies who she is friendly with, particularly a mysterious figure known as Phoenix who orchestrated her successful theft of

Pandora's vox and who leads the pantheon Joker is a member of. Noting that Joker has not reported in, Phoenix has dispatched a Slayer from the Court of War named Cutter to see to Moon's safety. Phoenix wants to preserve Moon at all costs--she is vital to his future plans. The statistics for Cutter, Moon, and Joker appear at the end of the story.

The "Villain"

Leading this assault into the mantle is Shade, a bitter Immortal who was exiled from her people, the Shadowen, and was collared with a mystical artifact that prevents her from using the power of her voice. Shade has found a way around this inconvenience by allying herself with the Sanguinary, who has promised her greater power if she successfully captures Moon. She wears the Skinwalker, the skin of the Sanguinary itself that gives her mystical power. The Skinwalker's abilities are detailed in the section dealing with Shade's characteristics.

Shade is a clever and strong-willed villain, motivated by hatred and a deep-seated feeling of betrayal by her own people. Her glaring flaw, exploited by the Sanguinary, is her lust for power. Through her mysterious servants, the Twins, Shade has learned that Moon possesses Pandora's vox, and she knows well the history of the Thief of Wonders and the priceless hoard of power contained inside the vox. She secretly plans to betray the Sanguinary when she is in possession of the vox and its Wonders.

The Twins

Exiled with Shade are her two "sisters," the Twins. Members of her Shadowen triad, they share her dishonor, banishment, and hatred of Sanctuary and all its inhabitants. The Twins are inhuman, silent and patient stalkers, unmoved by mercy or remorse. They believe in Shade's cause and are unswervingly loyal to her.

Scenes . . .

These scenes are created in a linear fashion to help you keep PCs on track, but the order of some of them can be switched around to provide more flexibility for your game.

Scene 1: The Opening of the Gate

The last remaining gate into Babylon is found in a movie theater near the PCs. In fact, on this particular night the PCs happen to be at this theater watching a highly anticipated film. Before feature films, a trailer of other upcoming attractions are run to whet the appetites of the audience. Many trailers are poorly done these days, showing all of the plot points in the film and leaving very few surprises.

Four trailers are shown before the start of the feature. The last and final one, promoting a film called "Eternal City," is different in many ways. It is exciting, fast-paced, and full of visual effects that defy imagination. The PCs will find it riveting to the point that it overpowers their anticipation for the movie they came to see.

In fact, the trailer for Eternal City is a gateway into the mantle of Babylon. As long as the trailer shines on the movie screen, the gate is open and anyone can walk through the screen into the hidden dimension.

The characters witness a boy, appearing about 13 years of age, enter the theater during the previews and walk up to the movie screen, dressed as a mystic commando, carrying a leather satchel. He checks his gear during the first three trailers. The other patrons in the theater do not seem to notice him, but to the PCs, he is clearly revealed by the moving images on the screen.

When the final trailer comes on, the boy (Cutter) stands up, hoists the gear, and steps into the screen, leaving a rippling effect of blue energy cresting across it. The characters, if they don't follow him by the ending of the trailer, will have to wait another three hours for the main feature to end and for the trailer to come up in the next showing of the film. This is when the gate opens again. There is only one more showing of the film and the Eternal City trailer tonight at 9:20. The trailer does not appear tomorrow when this film shows again, for Babylon will have been conquered by then without the PCs intervention.

The Movie Trailer

The trailer is not only a gateway, but an oracle of sorts. It shows the future of what could occur in the mantle of Babylon in the next 24 hours. This means the PCs will see themselves as the characters in the trailer, exhibited in flashy

cutaways (small scenes). Read the entire adventure and get a feel for what happens. It will help you fill in the pieces of what the trailer looks like.

An example description of the trailer:

(a sweeping shot of Babylon on a stormy night: techno-archaic skyscrapers, towering temples and statues while a voice-over utters: "There is a world hidden from human eyes, a city protected from time itself. It has stood for ten thousand years, a haven for the last of an Immortal race. . .")

(The camera pans in, revealing bodies sprawled everywhere, many of which died gruesomely.)
"Tonight it will be invaded by the servants of darkness. . ."

(image of the Twins walking hand in hand, dressed in black, wearing sunglasses, while in the background, monstrous creatures scuttle along the vertical walls of the buildings. The shadows of the twins precede them, black growling beasts on leashes held by the twins..)
". . . and destroyed by a creature whose lust for power can never be quenched."

(The silhouetted image of Shade standing on a hill, arms thrown wide, hair and luminescent gown fluttering in the wind as, in the background, a massive explosion rocks the city and fires burn out of control.)

"For the few brave enough to oppose her. . ."

(An image of all the PCs looking around the deserted, haunted city.)

". . . time is running out."

(An explosive montage of quick, dramatic cutaway scenes follows, emphasized by quick-paced music. It shows the characters exploring the city, witnessing the chase of the Maker by the doves through the bus. We see the battle with the twins, scenes of the frozen people in the hanging gardens of Babylon. An image of one of the PCs screaming as she inadvertently uses her vox to produce a serenade. We see the force of the serenade ripple through the scene, tearing the drove apart, flipping cars over, electrifying the rain as the PC stands there, screaming.)

"This summer, Babylon Pictures presents a film that will make you question what is real and take you to a world where dreams can kill."

(Close up on a drove, all fangs, glowing spines and eyes, and rending claws. It charges the viewer until its gaping fanged maw fills the scene, into its dark throat we go until the screen goes utterly black.)

(We wait a few tense seconds, and the logo for IMMORTAL BABYLON is revealed as searchlights probe through the darkness. Out of this darkness, as the logo fades, the beautiful face of Shade emerges, staring into the eyes of the viewers.)

"Come and get me." She whispers with a sexy, defiant smile.

Scene 2: The Razed Temple

(Note: Even if the characters followed Cutter through the screen, he will not be present in the razed temple when the players arrive. He has raced ahead and will encounter the PCs later.)

On the other side of the movie screen is the interior of a huge, razed temple. The characters emerge from a wall, coincidentally the size of the movie screen, painted with a mural. The mural is defiled, blackened with fire, and appears to have been blasted with heavy artillery. The only visible detail is part of a beatific face with glowing eyes, painted in a luminescent tincture that smiles sadly from the ruin. The angelic face seems to stare at the PCs with a pleading expression. One of the characters hears, telepathically in her mind, "Help me." It seems to be the voice of a young girl and seemed to emanate from the mural. The plea is not repeated.

In front of them are the shattered remains of the temple's main atrium. There are tall pillars, statues of hawk-headed gods and clusters of once-decorative trees, all burnt. The roof has fallen in, the huge marble slabs lying on a number of crushed people, all human, all dead. Those who did not die immediately appear to have been finished off by having their throats bitten out.

There is a huge statue of Semiramis, the famed queen of Babylon. The statue has been toppled and is covered with viscous, oily saliva. The saliva is slowly transforming the stature into a hideous parody of the beautiful queen. Within hours it will assume the spidery shape of one of the lesser aspects of the Sanguinary.

The main altar in this atrium has a number of people clinging to it, as if in desperation. Their heads look to have been bitten off. A raven, the only living thing other than the characters, hops from slab to slab, watching them. This is Joker in his himsati form.

The rest of the temple is composed of meditation chambers, beds where the sacred prostitutes of the temple shared their bodies for donations to the temple, and a number of pools and saunas. There are dead people everywhere: on the beds, floating in the water, lying on the stairs. The brutality of this scene is acute.

One of the sacred prostitutes of the Temple, devotee to the ancient goddess Ishtar, is found dancing in one of the rooms. Human and dazed with madness, she offers her body to any PC willing to have her, hoping in her dementia that this sacrifice will restore her temple to its former security. Her name is Nirani and she is very beautiful. Any PC who wishes to drain her life force (shifting one of her auras down to raise theirs back to its allowed maximum) finds her willing.

Nirani constantly says that Ishtar and her Moon have fallen from the sky.

Nirani, Sacred Priestess of Ishtar

Auras: Mind d10, Body d12, Spirit d10

Skills: Seduction (d10), Music (d12), Artist (d10)

Scene 3: Blood Fountain

Outside the razed temple is a number of smaller shrines. They are roofless, open-air platforms with altars and fountains. All been similarly razed. One fountain in particular dominates the scene, shooting water 50 feet into the air. The water is red from the blood of several people who made a stand here and were massacred. Their bodies, however, are gone. Only the blood remains. This is because the defenders were Immortals. Once overcome, their voices were torn from their throats, disintegrating their bodies. The fight was so mystically powerful that the images of it, along with the blood of the fallen, are permanently burned onto the surface of the rippling pool. If the Babylonian mantle is saved, this fountain will become a cherished monument.

Visions in the Blood Fountain

Immortals defended the shrines and the humans who came here beseeching their aid. Their last stand is recorded in the red waters of the fountain. They move with amazing strength and animal grace, unfettered by gravity or the clumsiness of muscles. Their combat is a dance that is both beautiful and terrifying to watch. A few Immortals actually run up the side of the falling water of the fountain, diving over the top and falling on a dove wading in the other side. One Immortal moves her hand to touch, with a single finger, the forehead of a dove in a gentle caress, and when the tip of her finger brushes it, snaps the monster's head back as if from a brutal blow. Despite the elegance of this fight, the doves are too numerous. The characters will see each of the defenders brought down.

Surrounding the temple district are a number of houses similar to those you would see in a modern suburb, although the architectural style is more archaic, with an emphasis on step-pyramids incorporated into the overall design. A few cars are parked on the street or in driveways, smoldering. Some have drivers hanging out of them, also charred. The houses themselves have obviously been invaded by troops. Many are smoking ruins. Dogs lay dead in the yards, slain while trying to defend their masters' houses. All of the bodies have been looted.

Scene 4: Charnel Houses

Inside the houses, the characters will find strange webbing strung everywhere, with corpses of humans cocooned inside, drained of

all fluid. The web, when touched, fluoresces a sickly green, sending luminescent tremors along the greater structure of the web, warning Shade and her forces of the character's presence. The web and gruesome deaths are the work of the Twins, who exist in the form of two large, translucent, black spiders. Having sensed the tremor of the web, the Twins will stalk the characters from a distance to ascertain their power level.

Scene 5: Downtown

Eventually the characters find a street that takes them toward a beautiful city skyline. It looks very modern, but as they get closer they see that the buildings are not at all familiar. Skyscrapers and hospitals soar among columnar temples and huge statues of Babylonian sphinxes, bearded

men with lion bodies, bull legs, and folded wings. The scene makes the most modern city in the real world look crude by comparison, and juxtaposed with this sleek technological look is an archaic style that personifies ancient Babylon. The sidewalks are white instead of concrete gray and beautifully inscribed with cuneiform that is inlaid with glowing blue glass. The cars are sleek and stylish and of makes the PCs have never seen. Many of the cars are stopped on the road, some are crashed into one another as if there was a panicky exodus. There are bodies scattered about here as well, fresher than those in the outskirts.

As the characters move through these areas, explain that they can't escape the feeling that objects such as statues, car headlights, carved friezes, mosaics imbedded in the plazas, traffic lights, etc, are all staring at them.

Nestled among the temples are malls whose roofs are open to the sky. Pillars line the

entrances. Inside were a variety of shops selling food, jewelry, clothes and anything else you might expect. There was also a weapon shop filled with everything from firearms to bows, swords, daggers, and some odd weapons that look more biological than technological. The biological weapons pulse, their shiny metallic skins changing color like a chameleon's. Unfortunately, they only respond to the touch of their owners and have not been calibrated to the characters; they require the roll of a 1 (on a d20) to activate. Once activated, each can fire up to 1d10 rounds, one per combat round.

Among all of this splendor is silence. The traffic lights continue to change, but there is no sound: no radio, no television, nothing. Many of the shops have been looted. The characters will find, in a particular café, bodies trapped in the same fluorescent webs found in the subdivision. The webs disappear down the drain of a sink in the kitchen like micro-thin fiber-optic cabling. This conduit leads to the Hanging Gardens.

Himsati Guns

The strange Court of Making made these organic weapons. They fire claws out their muzzles that spin through the air and embed in the target, causing d10 damage. Immortals cannot heal instantly from wounds caused by a talon gun because they are, in a sense, alive. These weapons appear as pistols. Other types of these weapons can contain other himsati natures from every animal imaginable. More advanced himsati guns (and bows, swords, daggers, etc.) have numerous settings to exploit.

Scene 6: The Theater

There are many dead people here, sitting in their seats. The place reeks of stale popcorn and is so cold the characters will see their breath and frost drifting on the air. The projection room is barricaded, but the barricade is shattered. There is a dried husk of a man lying with a scream frozen on his once-youthful face.

Eerily, there is a movie playing on the screen during the character's exploration of the theater. Choose a real-life movie that your players would find interesting and unsettling. I suggest something dark and forbidding, a slasher or monster film.

Scene 7: The Billboard

There is a huge video billboard dominating the downtown area. On it is a highly disturbing music video, its music broadcast from loud, clean-sounding speakers. (The song used in playtesting was *Silence* from the Karma album

by Delirium. You can use whatever song you like.) The performers in the video are the Twins, singing in high, sweet voices.

The video opens with a cathedral. Monks are chanting around a statue of the Virgin Mary that has two faces, one peering from either side of the head, but only a single body. A single chanter emerges and sings to the statue. He is followed by a melodic chorus of nuns. Suddenly the candles blow out and darkness fills the screen. Slowly the statue becomes visible, glowing with green light. We watch as the statue moves, then separates into the Twins, who step down from the pedestal. They move about, blasphemously stroking and kissing the assembled monks, who are in a state of complete ecstasy. We see the monks shrivel up, their life force drawn into the beautiful lips of the Twins as they sing. The Twins alternate between looking at the camera and clinging sensuously to one another as they harmonize.

At the end of the video, they walk out of the cathedral, which is now covered in dust, pushing down the skeletal remains of the monks like candles that have burned out.

The video replays after its conclusion. The Narrator may wish to allow the PCs a MIND conflict roll (target #5) to realize that these two Succubi are actually watching them. In fact, the billboard is the eyes of the Twins in this particular area. Now, the feeling of being watched by cars, lampposts, mosaics and the like increases the paranoia of the characters.

Scene 8: The Watcher

The characters will see a woman standing on the very top of a traffic light hanging at one of the central intersections of downtown Babylon. This is Shade, who watches the PCs. Before they get a clear look at her face, she takes a single small step away and is seen standing on the top of the next light, and then the next until she moves out of view. Her dress and long hair billows in the wind in a most tantalizing way. Even without seeing the details of her face and form, all the PCs (females included) find her mesmerizing.

Scene 9: Drove Attack

The eerie quiet of the area is shattered by a woman's scream. The characters see Moon dart out of an alleyway, pursued by dark creatures that are at once beautiful and bestial. All are black and glowing with luminescent spines, eyes, horns, claws, and fur. They look like a melding between mythological beast and bio-organic technology. Three of these creatures, leaping from wall to wall of the alley with supernatural agility, pursue the Maker as she runs. In front of her is parked a city bus. She heads for it, holding her hands crossed in front of her face as if she is going to slam into the vehicle, but instead the side of the bus seems to liquefy. She bursts through the watery walls of the bus, spraying water out the opposite side.

The PCs notice that the water, as it hits the ground, becomes pieces of very shiny metal. This startling effect closes behind her, causing the pursuing Drovers to crash headlong into the bus, leaving large dents and shattering every window in the bus with their frustrated screams. Only momentarily deterred, they leap high into the air onto the top of the bus and peer around, suspended in the air almost in slow motion. Quickly they catch sight of Moon and drop at accelerated speed back down to the ground. By this time, Moon has reached the PCs, limping from a bad wound that stretches from her waist down her right leg.

The characters are almost certain to be drawn into battle with the Drovers. The monsters are charging headlong toward the characters at fantastic speed and are nearly impossible to evade or escape. The battle should start badly and quickly get worse as characters get injured. When things look really bleak, Cutter shows up and joins the fray. Use as many droves as you need to give your PCs a real challenge.

Using Skills in Combat: This is the primary scene in which the Narrator can allow certain combat skills and mystical powers to manifest in the PCs as their true forms, jolted by supernatural events, begin to emerge from their false mortality. Needless to say, the characters will probably startle themselves. Once a power has been used, mark it down on the character sheet and assign a die value of d12 to it. This can increase through buying the skill up, or by other role-playing opportunities presented by the Narrator.

Droves (Ragers)

Auras: Body d10, MIND d12, Spirit n/a
Weapons: Claws (D10 -1), Bite (d8), Poison (shifts opponent's Body 1 inferior for remainder of the day if the creature bites and does damage to a PC)

Droves

Mortal creatures that serve the Sanguinary. Their Spirit is drained to nothing, and they thus burn with a tiny spark of the Sanguinary's immense consciousness. They are always in a himsati form that shares the attributes of many creatures. No two are identical, although there are numerous subgroups. This makes them look alien and contributes to their deadliness. The Narrator can assign additional himsati natures to customize these dangerous foes

Scene 10: Helping The Maker

Moon is a lovely woman with a distinct trait: her entire body is covered with pale, subtle tattoos. She does not give her name but will beg the characters to get her to her sanctuary, which lies within the Hanging Gardens. Once in her sanctuary, she is safe. She can heal herself and turn the tide on this invasion. She leads the way.

Moon should be injured quite badly after the fight, and characters may consider her more of a liability than an asset. Cutter is a balancing element. The Narrator can adjust his power to whatever level is necessary to keep events in synch. He, too, should be injured after the fight with the droves.

At one point, Moon will use the power resident in her tattoos. She lifts up her shirt to reveal her bare stomach. Glowing around her pierced navel is a sun tattoo. The light from this tattoo shines out into the eyes of the Drovers, blinding them. This allows the characters an extra action against their foes.

When Moon activates the tattoo, the characters actually feel as if they are looking at the light from an ancient sun from a long lost age, trapped in this Immortal woman's skin. In the radiance they see mist, hear the sound of a waterfall, singing birds, and something large and beautiful flapping through the air, probably a Pegasus. They feel they have glimpsed, through her navel, into another world. Any questions about this amazing experience are ignored, as Moon quickly urges the characters to help her move on.

Scene 11: The Park

Finally the characters find a park. It is lush and green and filled with streetlights. A light mist swims through the air. As they go further into the park, they find that it becomes more and more a garden. The garden becomes even more spectacular the further the characters move into it. Now there are huge statues, pools on the ground like mirrors, and the scent of flowers thick in the air. In the center of the park is the Hanging Garden of Babylon.

In the park the characters encounter a man, dressed in tattered black street clothes. He is badly wounded. A huge bite, in fact, has been taken out of his stomach. He stumbles through the park in stark terror, screams when he sees the characters, and falls dead from heart failure.

This is one of the Babylonian police, a key-keeper of the imperial palace. He has identification (a badge with a moving, 3-d image sliding across its glassy surface), a himsati gun (depleted), two extra magazines of "bullets" for the gun (10 per clip), and a key that opens secret entrances in the palace. The Key-keeper also carries a locket around his neck with a picture of Moon inside it.

This policeman died of heart failure because he fled his comrade's last stand at the palace. Seeing Moon injured, his guilt crushes him to death.

Scene 12: The Hanging Gardens

The park leads to the Hanging Gardens, a monolithic step-pyramid built of white marble inscribed with glass-filled cuneiform writing. The structure covers an entire city block and soars 20 stories. The ziggurat is a mixture of flawless ancient architecture and technology so elegant that it does not detract from the mythical feeling of the place. Large crystals thrust from the surrounding grounds, shining like spotlights on the white marble.

The characters will see, before reaching the structure, Drovers crowded around it, and will hear the sound of furious fighting. Babylon's mortal police, sleek heroes dressed in black like the clothes worn by the dead man in the park are fighting with martial arts and rifles that shoot bullets inscribed with glowing runes, leaving tracer trails flashing through the air. A few individuals, who look even more impressive (like apocalyptic FBI agents) hold strange weapons similar to those encountered by the PCs downtown.

Scene 13: Encounter With the Twins

The Twins, who have been stalking the characters, use this moment to strike. It is important to note that the Twins would slaughter the characters easily if the PCs actually fight them. This is an opportunity for the Narrator to show the PCs how powerful the Twins are. Let them get knocked around and inflict some negligible damage to the Twins. The Twins are in beautiful female forms, dressed erotically in black leather and lace. Only their shadows, amorphous and seething, give a hint of their monstrous, spider-like natures.

This confrontation is much different from those with the Doves and the Babylon police. It involves the Twins shaping reality against the characters while the Maker counters with her own powers. Here are a few special effects to employ to describe this interplay:

- 1) The grass sprouts needles, gleaming like syringes in the light of the garden.
- 2) One of the combatants kicks her feet through a puddle of water that changes into shattered glass spinning toward her opponent. The opponent holds her arms out and the glass flutters past as transparent rose petals.
- 3) A rock is nudged with a foot and becomes a snarling, rolling thing with fanged mouth and teeth that shatters with a scream against the opponent's foot.
- 4) One of the Twins slashes her own wrist with a fingernail, causing shadow to flow out of the wound and transform into a swarm of biting flies. They freeze around the Maker and drop to the ground, trapped in amber.
- 5) A combatant spits up into the wind, and the globule spins itself out into a black thunderhead that sends lightning ripping through the sod. The opponent grabs the bolt and yanks the cloud down from the sky; it falls around the characters like cotton candy before dissolving away.

The Maker barely holds her own in this fight and ultimately fails, getting blasted unconscious by the Twins. Cutter takes this moment to step forward, throwing himself at the Twins and yelling for the PCs to get the Maker into the palace. The police, seeing their precious Maker, redouble their ferocious defense of the Hanging Gardens. The characters will blast their way through until they enter the palace. The last thing the characters see as they enter the palace is Cutter being wrapped up in a glowing green cocoon.

The Twins

The twins appear as identical giant spiders in this story. In human form both are very beautiful and are always dressed in black fabric created from their own shadows. They wear sunglasses (also made from hardened shadow) to cover up their frightening eyes. The characters will not see their eyes under any circumstances during this story.

Auras: Body d8, MIND d8, Spirit d10

Skills: Martial arts (D8 – 1), Sword (d8), and others as deemed necessary by the Narrator
Weapons: Sword (d8)

Powers: The Twins can travel through any shadow. Their normal method is to rise up out of shadows on the ground, trapping their prey. They cast shadows which can congeal into animal forms and fight for them, spiders biting with a d10. Their martial arts are ruthlessly efficient.

Scene 14: The Wilting.

Once the Maker is inside the Hanging Gardens, she comes conscious and begins to heal at an accelerated rate. The interior of the palace is lofty, rich, and elegant, with vegetation so alive it is radiant. The sound of combat is heard elsewhere in the palace, the sound of gunfire, the screams of the inhuman doves, and the mystic shouts of serenades.

Suddenly the temperature in the area of the characters begins to plummet. Soon their breath can be seen, and the shiny white marble floor clouds over with sparkling frost. The plants frost over, turn black, and wilt with cries that the characters can hear in their minds, a melancholy, musical sound. Rich tapestries on the windows become starved, thinning out before the character's eyes until they are gauzy pale things moving against the broken windows like ghosts. In fact, gaunt, dark, angelic indentations emerge from them to challenge the characters, but the drapes are easily destroyed.

Scene 14: The Questors

The characters make their way toward the throne room, fighting their way through the occasional dove that rears its head out of huge vases or from the ceiling on which they cling. Their tranquil cooing noises chill the characters, reminding them of deep-seated memories of being held, as infants, by their mothers. Engaging them in combat turns this tranquilizing effect into a nerve-shattering roar that shatters rigid objects.

Most of the doves here, the Questors, are weaker than what will confront the characters later in their careers as Immortals. Little more than animals, they lack the deviousness of their greater brethren.

Droves (Questors)

Questors are less exotic looking than their many horned, barbed, alien superiors, looking more like normal animals with a few incongruous traits. They can be any color.

Auras: Body d12, MIND d20, Spirit n/a
Weapons: Claws (D12), Bite (D12-1), Poison (shifts opponents' Body 1 inferior for remainder of the day if the creature bites and does damage to a PC)

Scene 15: Encountering Shade

The throne room is quiet and covered in frost. Everything sparkles like a fairy-tale winter. Huge crystal chandeliers hang from the ceiling, set with candles and icicles. The flames of the candles are still visible but are frozen solid as ice. So are the candles on freestanding sconces around the room. Still giving dim light, they nevertheless shatter into slush if touched.

The throne is occupied by a dark figure, silhouetted. Her shadow paces catlike along the floor in front of the throne, cast by the candlelight.

She leans forward and speaks. This is Shade, and each time she speaks, a golden gem affixed in a collar encircling her throat glows dully, as if capturing the power of her voice. She welcomes the characters and tells them how impressed she is with them. There is, in fact, room in her organization for them if they wish to join her, and boundless rewards of money and power to be had. Anyone that takes her up on this must demonstrate loyalty by handing over Moon to Shade.

Play Shade as sexy, charming, intelligent, and sympathetic. She is not some dark, gloating villain perched on the throne. She will tell the characters that they are special, Immortal, and being used by the other Immortals, just as she was. Now she's a free spirit and in control of her own fate. So why not join her? The Maker, of course, will counter that Shade is psychotic, that she was banished for abusing her power, and that the collar she wears is a punishment for crimes too bizarre to describe.

Moon must sit on the throne to finish healing and regain full power over the mantle of Babylon. This means someone must drag Shade off of the throne. Doing so is going to be surprisingly easy if the characters can get through the Twins

who arrive to defend her in their shadowy spider forms. Her collar binds Shade's powers, and she really has only her wits, her skills, agility, and seductive powers to rely on.

The characters will have a real chance to fight the twins now. Because they are in the sanctuary of the Maker, they gain a -1 to all rolls, which should even the odds a bit. The Twins cannot control the interior reality of the palace, so they must rely on brute force.

Shade is delighted to see Moon here. Given the opportunity, she will trace her fingernails seductively across Moon's tattoos with a look of absolute greed in her eyes. "Such power, such mysteries and wonders! I will have a gown made of this magical skin!" she breathes.

Shade

Shade is a beautiful woman with red hair and mismatched eyes (one is blue, the other green). She wears a Collar of Silence to stop her powers, but she makes up for this liability with cleverness and protection by the Twins.

Auras: Body d10, MIND d6, Spirit d10

Skills: Persuasion/seduction (d8) and others as deemed necessary by the Narrator

Weapons: The Sanguinary's Fang (dagger)

Items: The Skinwalker—This creature is made from the skin of the Sanguinary. Seven of them exist, each one with great power over one of the deadly sins (sloth, greed, envy, lust, gluttony, anger and pride). This Skinwalker commands the power of lust, allowing Shade to seduce anyone she desires. Among its many abilities, the Skinwalker gives Shade an extra die (a d10) to roll when using her seduction skill.

Success causes the MIND of her opponent to drop 1 inferior rank.

Scene 16: Resolving the Battle

Dominance, given to the characters by the Maker in the form of a -1 on every roll, will make them tougher to deal with. The Twins will fight until one is badly injured.

If the characters get past the Twins and subdue Shade, the Maker becomes the trump card when she ascends the throne, healing completely and having complete power over the Babylonian mantle. At this point, Shade and the Twins are weakened to the point where the characters can subdue them.

If the Twins are killed, they will return in the future. If the Twins are captured, the Maker asks the PCs to hand them over to the Immortals outside the mantle. She gives the PCs an email address to contact. She promises to put in a good word for the help of characters.

Another possible ending is that Shade, in the midst of the battle between the Twins and the characters, produces a dagger and buries it in the throat of Moon. The dagger growls and the sound of sucking blood is heard in the throat of the Maker. The dagger actually extracts the vox of the Maker and when it finishes, she disintegrates in a spray of red light. Anyone watching the dagger sees the stolen vox slowly emerge on the blade as a gemlike barb. The dagger now contains the wonders of Pandora's vox. The characters will have other chances to steal this artifact back from Shade.

Moon is the primary target of Shade, but she will also take the mantle for her master, the Sanguinary, joining it to the dark dreamy realm of the Sanguinary's stalking spirit. Whether the characters opposed her or not Shade calls for them to be subdued and prepared for sacrifice. She leaves to prepare herself for the summons of an avatar of the Sanguinary to enter this mantle. The characters escape their fate by the arrival of Joker, who frees them from their prison. He's been watching them. He also frees Cutter, who seems to know and dislike him. They return to the razed temple.

Scene 17: An Ominous Prophecy

When the characters return to the razed temple, they see the statue of Semiramis, coated with the viscous saliva of the doves, has undergone its complete transformation into a scorpion-spider-serpent-mantis thing. As the characters prepare to depart through the burnt mural, the statue moves, turning its head. In a soft voice, so overpoweringly beautiful that the characters must make a Spirit roll against a target number of 1 to avoid weeping, it says:

“You run away from your true destiny, my children, from the tender embrace of your mother, your father, your one true god. But there is still redemption even for those such as you. Sooner or later, you will return to the womb of your creator and rest forever in the warm, silent arms of oblivion.”

Scene 18: Wrapping Things Up

No matter what happens, the PCs should escape. They arrive back in the same theater that provided the gate. Cutter thanks them for their help. He tells the PCs that Phoenix will send for them when the time is right, if they are not afraid of fighting the one true evil known as the Sanguinary. All arrive in the same movie theater in the real world. All walk out into a deserted parking lot. The world is normal. It is 3 a.m. They watch as a dark sedan pulls up. Cutter gets in. The PCs think they see other people sitting in the car, watching them. They think they see glowing eyes as the door that admitted Cutter closes.

Their final impression is that Cutter changed into something as he entered the dark car, something shiny and deadly. Unfortunately, the PCs don't get a clear look. The car drives away. Even if followed, it loses them.

The Sanguinary's Fang

This deadly d10 –1 dagger will drain the Body of anyone else it touches, one rank per round, until the aura has fallen below a d20. Five rounds after that, the vox of the victim is sucked out through the area touching it, traveling the entire length of the body if necessary. The vox is added to the dagger, increasing its power. If the dagger kills Moon, it inherits the wonders of Pandora's vox and retrieving it in the future becomes vital. The powers of the Fang are unusable by any PCs.

The Collar of Silence

The Shadowen, enforcers of the law of the Silence which forbids Immortals to use their powers in the world of man (and thus alert the Sanguinary) created these artifacts to effectively mute an Immortal's vox, cutting them off from their powers until the collar is removed. Only a Scourge of the Court of Shadow can remove these items once they are placed on the throat of an Immortal.

The collars appear like Victorian dog collars with a protruding ring inset in a shard of dark stone known as Darkle.

Appendix E: Book I Errata

Most of the Errata presented here are clarifications. A good deal of the corrections are to the section on the Natures, the wrong edition of which was inserted in for the final copy.

Page 25 - Table of Memory and Fugue Points

The Table is incorrect. You start with 10 memory and 1 fugue point (1 avatar). You gain 10 memory and 1 fugue for each avatar/incarnation you take after the first. The max fugue you can have is 19, beware, the roll for Fugue means you lose every time if you take a fugue this high.

Page 26 - Skill Costs vs. Memory and Experience

This page lists the correct costs (in memory) for all things in Book 1. To determine how many experience points you'll have to spend for these same things, just multiple the cost by 5.

Page 35 - Ranks

There are SIX Standard Ranks, not FIVE. The additional two ranks listed on page 33 in the table are not normally used except in the most extreme of cases.

Page 38 - Skill Cost (paragraph two)

Ignore this. Use the Errata for page 26 above

Page 38 - Knives (under Close Combat)

Knives is NOT part of Brawling, but instead is its own focus.

Page 50 - Elementals and voxes vs. items

Clarification - Items which inhibit serenade use by physically restricting the Immortal also still restrict an Elemental's vox equally as well. (Example: Shade has an elemental himsati, but the Collar of Silence works upon her still).

Page 50 - Special Himsatis

Unlike the book says, there are not TWO special himsatis listed. Only ONE (at least in Book 1 for now)

Page 51 - Elemental Travel page number missing

The page number to refer to for Using Dice as noted in the Elemental Travel Section is page 33

Page 53/54 - Natures Listings

If a nature is not listed for a particular himsati here, but a particular himsati is listed under the nature's specific description, or on the Appendix for Natures, than that himsati can be assumed to have it as part of their normal natures. (Example: Synthesis is not listed for Fire Elementals, but *all* elementals are listed in the description of Synthesis).

Also, if a nature makes sense for a himsati to have (a Puffer fish should be able to swell), but it is not listed for that type of himsati, the Narrator should feel free to allow it as normal.

Page 53/54 - Natures not appearing in Book 1

There are two natures listed that do not actually appear in Book 1. Should you choose to use them, here are their statistics:

STARTLE:

You emit a loud roar, shriek, cry, or otherwise cause your opponent to be taken aback. Those whom you startle must make an opposed MIND roll and if you roll lower, they lose their next action while recovering from being startled. If a critical failure occurs on their roll, they may not attempt to actively defend themselves in any way (parry, dodge, etc.)

Upgradable -- Default = D20

Himsati Forms: Bird, Mammal, Fire Elemental

BLUR:

Anyone trying to fight you suffers a 1 shift penalty to their appropriate attack die as you begin to blur and your form loses definition, making it harder to hit you. Those fighting without the aid of sight already suffer no penalty.

Himsati Forms: Shadow Elemental, Air Elemental, Water Elemental

Page 54 - Quick Start Dice for Shadow/Water Elementals:

The values are wrong, the correct values are:

Shadow = BODY D10, MIND D10, SPIRIT D8

Water = BODY D10, MIND D8, SPIRIT D10

Page 54 - (X) Markings by Natures

Those natures marked this way that tell you to roll two dice, you only take the lowest roll

Page 54 - Natures marked with an asterisk --> *

If a nature marked with an asterisk (*) does not have a die value, you use the Immortal's SPIRIT (shifted on level inferior) to determine duration

Page 54 -- Natures Appendix page number missing

The page number should read "95"

Page 55 - Armor Nature

You do NOT roll the die for the Armor nature, it works just like regular armor. Each upgrade is an additional one shift penalty against the attacker's damage roll. The die value just helps you keep track of how many shifts the attacker should take.

Page 55 - Blood Drain default die

The default die is D12, and you do NOT roll your BODY die with it.

Page 56 - Deep Lungs default die

The default is D12, not D20

Page 57 - Enhanced Senses

To clarify, the sense to be enhanced must be picked when the nature is first gained and cannot be changed afterwards. You do NOT pick a different sense to enhance each time you use it. If you want other senses enhanced, you must acquire this nature once for each sense you want enhanced.

Page 57 - Growth Nature incorrect

The correct version appears below:

GROWTH (X)

With this nature the character becomes physically larger. The character can increase his size to any point up to his maximum die level. The growth nature can be rolled along with any die roll where the Narrator agrees that the mass will benefit (i.e. damage, resistance, etc.). The character receives a one shift penalty to his BODY die for dodging whenever the Growth nature is active.

Upgradable -- Default = D12

Himsati Forms: Potentially any depending on himsati's normal size

Narrators can ignore this nature based on the information presented on Page 52, or they can instead *require* this nature for any himsati that wishes to be sized differently from average sizes (say larger than an average horse). Or they can keep it like other natures, optional. This is left to the Narrator's discretion. Suggested levels for the power are (if you have lots of elephants and/or whales in your campaign, you may want to adjust these):

D12 = 1.25 x increase in size/weight

D10 = 1.50 x increase

D08 = 2.00 x increase

D06 = 5.00 x increase

D04 = Narrator's discretion

Page 58 - Leap Correction

There should be an (X) next to the Leap nature.

Page 58 - Multiple Limbs Corrected

Below appears the correct version of Multiple Limbs

MULTIPLE LIMBS:

Upon acquiring this nature, non-multi-limbed creatures are able to sprout an extra pair of limbs when shapeshifting. If the himsati already has extra limbs (spider, scorpion, centipede, etc.) those limbs become more combat capable. The nature's die is rolled along with BODY for any close combat attacks, if the himsati is human the character may also roll an appropriate combat skill as well (such as sword). The character also gains one extra action per turn that this nature is activated during.

This nature can be purchased multiple times, each time granting the character an additional extra action per turn and allowing an additional die to be rolled during the attack phase. However, each additional use of this nature shifts the BODY die one inferior as the power of the BODY begins to spread out into the multiple limbs and is now less concentrated. This additional purchased natures must be upgraded separately.

If these limbs are tentacles, the character can attack at weapon range reach without a weapon. If a character rolls a 1, than that grants yet an additional action as per normal, on top of the already granted actions from this nature.

Upgradable -- Default = D20

Himsati Forms: Insect/Arachnid, marine animal, all elementals, human

Page 58 - Infection Clarification

Unlike Poison, the infection does not stop until the infected wound is completely healed. However, with proper care the wound will heal normally.

Page 59 - Natural Weaponry Clarification

The default die is D20 and is upgradable

Page 59 - Poison Clarification

Unlike Infection, the Poison nature works against ALL forms of healing, including the use of medicine, but has a limited duration.

Page 59 - Regrowth

Though the missing limb regrows, it is still fairly unusable until the wounds associated with it are healed. The character will continue to take the appropriate BODY die shifts until the wound is healed. But he/she will have limited use of the regrown body part (a regrown hand could open doors, but swinging a sword in the heat of battle can be a different story)

Page 59 - Shrink Corrected

Below is the correct version of Shrink

SHRINK (X)

With this nature the character becomes physically smaller. The character can decrease his size to any point up to his maximum die level. The shrink nature can be rolled along with any die roll where the Narrator agrees that the decreased size and mass will benefit (i.e. stealth, dodging, grapple escape, etc.). The character receives a one shift penalty to his BODY die for resisting damage whenever the Shrink nature is active.

Upgradable -- Default = D12

Himsati Forms: Potentially any depending on himsati's normal size

Narrators can ignore this nature based on the information presented on Page 52, or they can instead *require* this nature for any himsati that wishes to be sized differently from average sizes (say smaller than an average dog). Or they can keep it like other natures, optional. This is left to the Narrator's discretion. Suggested levels for the power are (if you have lots of insects in your campaign, you may want to adjust these):

D12 = .75 x increase in size/weight

D10 = .50 x increase

D08 = .25 x increase

D06 = .10 x increase

D04 = Narrator's discretion

Page 60 - Tail Clarification

If a character does not have the tail nature, the character's himsati may still physically have a tail if the himsati's type deems so. However, the tail will not be usable in combat in any way.

Page 64 - Critical Failure/Success - Clarification

The character must FAIL the roll by rolling the highest possible value. A character with a D4 BODY making a BODY roll with a target number of 4 does not fail by rolling the 4. He/she still succeeds. If the target number had been 3 (which is an extremely hard task as it is) and a 4 was rolled, then the critical failure check would take place. When people with very superior dice need to even roll, it usually means a very difficult task, at which any failure has a greater chance of disaster than those tasks of lesser consequence. Hence the odds of people with very superior dice making critical successes being far greater as well.

Page 66 - Surprise and Enhances Senses - Clarification

Should read that the character can add a die for enhanced senses, only if the enhanced sense possessed will aid the character in overcoming the surprise.

Page 70 - Contact Range

Can also be thought of as grappling range. Right up in someone's face, far too close to swing a large sword or other weapon of that size.

Page 71 - Dodging

The effect of taking a one shift penalty on dodge/parry/block applies to Mortals, not Immortals

Page 72 - Damage Table

The numbers at the end of the damage descriptions refer to the numbered notes after the table

Page 74 - Mortal Wounds and Critical Failures

If an Immortal makes a Critical Failure when making a mortal wound check, he or she can accidentally enter Lethe (at the Narrator's discretion). See page 79 of Book 1 for more information on Lethe and rebirth

Page 74 - Gossamers

Gossamers and their recovering of BODY die will be detailed in a later book. Becoming a Gossamer and entering Lethe are two different things entirely.

Page 78 - Death and Healing - clarification

Immortals naturally heal at the same rate as humans do, one wound rank per session. This healing in Immortals and in mortals can be sped up using the medicine skill as outlined on page 78. healing can also be obtained via a nature (such as Synthesis) and serenades. A final way that Immortals can heal is by sinning (see page 29 of Book 1). However, the Immortal can only regain up to his/her normal die value in that aura through sinning, just as through any other type of healing. Sinning will not increase die values to a level superior than what they normally are when the Immortal is not wounded.

Page 79 - Fugue Check

The fugue check listed on page 79 is incorrect. A fugue check is an unopposed MIND roll using a d20 die (since there is no skill for Fugue Checks, therefore the Immortal is unskilled), against a target number equal to 20 minus his/her current Fugue Rating. Example: If the Immortal has 11 Fugue Points then the target number is 9 ($20 - 11 = 9$).