

PACT DICE

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Also see: [Sample Character Creation \(with 2 characters\)](#) & [WIP Essentials](#)

Note: The work contained in this document, while a more polished revision of earlier work, is still a work in progress, and is liable to be so for a long time. Go easy on the creator/author. This is a side project.

Further, no rule should be taken as gospel, and GMs should do what they see fit for their campaigns.

In Pact Dice, you'll engage with other players and/or the GM in a competitive draft of your character, determining the broad statistics and capabilities of their practitioner (or Other, or Aware) by taking five cards at a time from shuffled, 5x5 arrangements.

PUISSANCE

ACCESS

LONGEVITY

EXECUTIONS

SCHOOLS

FAMILY

Supreme
Good
Moderate
Poor
Awful
Worst
Unknown

The process of character creation is, in brief:

- Over the course of six rounds, each player will silently & simultaneously pick a row or column from each arrangement...

PUISSANCE

ACCESS

LONGEVITY

EXECUTIONS

SCHOOLS

FAMILY

Either dealing or clashing over cards desired by other players, then take the cards away, leaving gray 'unknown' cards in their place for subsequent rounds.

PUISSANCE

ACCESS

LONGEVITY

EXECUTIONS

SCHOOLS

FAMILY

And repeat, until each player has taken five cards from each table. As pickings get slimmer or in the course of deals or clashes, players will be cornered into taking more 'unknown' cards, which means drawing from a random arrangement of cards, with less desirable results on average.

- The cards a player obtains for Puissance, Access, Longevity, and Executions are distributed among their starting practices, determining how strong, easy, long lasting, and versatile those practices are. For example, a starting 'fireball' practice could get Supreme Puissance, Poor Access, Good Longevity, and Worst Executions, making it strong, but slow or expensive to cast, with lasting effect and zero versatility.



- Schools cards are used to bid for and select aspects of one's approach to practice (magic), with Supreme (gold) cards allowing first picks, Good (green) allowing second, and so on. Leftover Schools cards will be used to 'dabble' in other things or get resources.

	Conflict	Deals	Visceral	Immaterial	Divine
Conjure					
Prices					
Tools		PEDDLER			
Realms					
Interact					
Lore					
Protect					

- Family cards are used to determine personal abilities, standing, and resources.

The selections in character creation also dictate the possibilities for practices they acquire later and when creating items, among other things. Thus, every player will want the best cards.

The Pactverse, In Brief

Goblins, fae, ethereal echoes of the living and many other creatures walk the earth, collectively termed **Others**, and remain hidden from the unaware majority. Those unaware live lives almost indistinguishable from our reality, but some learn magic and step into the midst of what's going on in the background. Families pass on legacies and methods to their children, some Others teach people magic or impart gifts, and others stumble onto it accidentally. Those who do so are dubbed **practitioners**.

The Seal of Solomon was established nearly three thousand years ago and was a deal made with world-spanning implications, establishing rules and protections. Faced with a humanity that was swelling in power and presence, Others signed onto the deal to secure themselves a place in the world, whatever happened. Many things that were vague before became clarified, such as the classification and behavior of certain Others and rules of governance and law.

Innocents are the unaware majority, and are protected by the Seal. That isn't to say they're immune, but instead, those predatory Others and practitioners who would target them must be very careful. Bringing someone into the world of the practice means taking responsibility for the consequences that follow, and that includes trying to eat them and inadvertently letting them escape or showing off magic and failing to clean up after. Where possible, the abstract forces backing reality will contrive to help an innocent shed a curse or shake off a monster, if that helps them return to being unaware and puts things in order.

A primary mechanism supporting this is **Karma**, the universal adjustment of fate and fortune that rewards or punishes those who support or hamper the overarching system. Karma isn't strictly for good deeds, but instead supports those who are predictable, reliable, and who protect the Seal. Bad karma punishes those who lie, who deal with forces best left alone, or who put innocents at risk. It may be momentary or it may be lasting, a metaphysical currency accrued and spent. When one has good karma, things work out, the system supports the practitioner or Other back, and dangerous enemies may get an instinct they should steer clear. When one has bad karma, the monsters want to eat them first, practice falters, and the universe may do other things to slow them down or put them in harm's way; if they die, the system returns to equilibrium.

Before the Seal, anyone could learn a bit of magic, but it was typically out of reach and inconsistent for most. Now, those who want to become practitioners undergo a basic ritual called the **Awakening**, where they make offerings to the world of Others and pledge to keep their word. Thereafter, any lie they tell can cripple their ability to practice, twist circumstances against them by way of karma, and take days to recover from. This is called being **Gainsaid**. Calling someone out on a lie means getting some of the power they lose.

If they should break a promise or an oath, then they are **Forsworn**, stripped of all ability to practice, they are rendered utterly defenseless against hostile practices and Others, and their karma becomes irrevocably bad.

To be Forsworn means that there are no natural protections against being possessed, no natural sanctuary against an attacking Other, all practice will work on them with little to no chance of prevention and resistance, their soul is there for the taking for any who know how to take souls, and the arbiters of aging, war, sickness, and poverty hold nothing back. With karma being as bad as it is, anyone who hurts or hampers the Forsworn gets a reward of good karma. Those faced with a threat of being Forsworn may attempt to argue their case or make a claim that they could still fulfill the oath, and on the rare occasion they may appeal, but for most it is not only a death sentence, but a guarantee of the worst sort of end.

This applies to those oaths made with an explicit “I promise” or “I swear”, and to contracts. The *upside* of making these deals is that they can come with a power boost and good karma. Truth is paramount, but that does not mean that those who cannot lie cannot be deceptive.

Practice works by using this truth. Because one has made a binding claim that their word matters, forces that would normally ignore them now listen. The abstract forces backing reality, oft referred to as **Ambient Spirits** or just **The Spirits**, will judge on the spot and help manage most practice. These ambient spirits are representative forces, ranging from a spirit of the color brown in a single leaf to a spirit of all rocks in the world, with most being small and insignificant... except in aggregate. There is almost always an audience, and this audience listens to every word spoken and watches what is put to paper.

Pattern, Power, and Establishment are key principles that drive practice. Over generations, multiple practitioners using the same runes to evoke the same effects creates the repetition needed to create a *pattern*. They put *power* of some sort into it, whether blood, energy, or something symbolic, and over time, runes, diagrams, and many other approaches to practice can become *established*. Spellbooks and families help carry on these traditions.

These principles are behind a *wide* variety of practices. A practitioner lineage may make a point of creating dolls with a ritualized process, ingredients with power and meaning, and make their desired results (living dolls) clear to the spirits and the spirits will oblige. Over time, as this process gets more set in stone, the dolls become more effective and consistent.

Practitioners also have a **Sight**, a special sense for viewing the supernatural, that may have nuances or differences depending on who they are and the practices they master, and they often have some awareness of **connections**, Seeing threads or strings tying related things or people together. Many can even manipulate these connections they view with the Sight.

Eventually, Practitioners may complete one, two, or three of the fundamental practitioner rituals: the first is the taking of a **familiar**, connecting an Other to oneself and vice versa, to share power and benefits. The second is the taking of an **implement**, an item that acts as one's magical tool or badge of office, shaping the practice they do. Lastly, there is the **demesnes** (pronounced de-main), a personal place of power and sanctuary. Each has benefits and drawbacks, and each changes dramatically depending on the nuances of the choice.

Because of the importance of tradition and the legacy of knowledge and techniques, various **Practitioner Families** hold a lot of sway. They often resemble old noble families, intermarrying, conducting cutthroat politics, and hoarding wealth and power. This has only intensified with travel and information becoming so readily available, and it is possible for a family to feud with another family with a similar practice on the far side of the globe. Power begets power and virtually every part of the Seal supports those at the top.

Lords are governing forces behind the scenes, operating as allowed by the Seal. Rarely tied to any Innocent leadership positions (karma makes it hard to seize those sorts of positions with practice anyway; the worlds are kept separate), the Lords take positions in major cities and small towns, sitting until they die or are ousted, and they gather power simply by holding office, while having the ability to sway or decide the flows of the ambient spirits, karma, the outcomes of gainsayings or forswearing, and how practice and Others evolve or manifest in their territory. Bigger territories are often harder to take and harder to keep, but the benefits of holding office scale up exponentially. Many practitioner family heads end up being Lords, or the biggest and strongest Others do.

When a Lord does not hold office in a region, other ambient forces or **powers that be** may step in, as allowed by the Seal. These powers can vary wildly by region, and may call themselves Judges, pillars, or local gods. Their powers are similar to that of a Lord, and even more fundamental, but the position is more of a regent than a king or queen. Should someone take a Lordship, that precludes this other, 'by default' leadership.

Others manifest, enter, and mingle in society, with the innocence-testing (monstrous, obviously supernatural) keeping to the shadows, and the remainder leaving room for reasonable doubt, which karma helps along. Certain patterns of action among innocents may cause Others to spring into being, such as high emotion creating Echoes (ghosts), or people slipping through the cracks of reality, being transformed by the place they end up, and returning as eerie and murderous bogeymen or creatures with something missing. Some of these Others aren't bound by the Seal by default (and may thus lie), but still suffer for testing it. Lords will often set practitioners the task of cleaning things up and binding these Others to the seal or exterminating them. Some of the Others may even want the Seal, because it stabilizes them in shape and it may mean they get more time or the ability to sustain themselves somewhat by keeping to the rules of karma and innocence.

There are more realms that Others come from than can be easily tracked. These realms may be sources of power for practices, they are often populated by Others, sometimes by less innocent humans, and they may exist *adjacent to* or *overlapping* Earth's innocent reality. An adjacent space could be a god's little world accessed through a mountaintop cave, that exists as something 'tacked on' to reality, like a room added to the side of a house. Overlapping spaces are heavily tied into Earth's reality, and may be entered by ritual or soft zones. For example, in the Spirit World, the same buildings and landmarks are still there, but altered & foggy, and symbolism and meaning become tangible things.

The Draft

The following arrangements of 'cards' are shuffled in advance, keeping the same proportions of Supreme, Good, Moderate, Poor, Awful, and Worst cards, with 3, 5, 5, 5, 5, and 2, respectively.

M	A	W	S	G
G	P	P	P	A
M	G	M	A	P
G	P	M	A	A
G	M	S	S	W
 PUISSANCE 				

P	A	A	W	A
A	P	S	G	M
M	S	M	G	M
A	G	W	S	G
M	P	P	P	G
 ACCESS 				

G	A	P	G	S
P	A	P	M	A
W	M	M	W	M
G	P	G	M	S
G	A	A	S	P
 LONGEVITY 				

A	M	M	S	S
G	G	A	A	W
A	P	M	G	A
W	G	P	M	S
P	M	P	P	G
 EXECUTIONS 				

G	A	S	P	A
A	A	W	P	W
M	M	M	S	S
G	G	G	M	G
M	P	P	P	A
 SCHOOLS 				

M	A	A	A	P
W	G	W	M	G
M	P	M	S	A
S	G	P	G	P
G	P	S	M	A
 FAMILY 				

Supreme Good Moderate Poor Awful Worst Unknown

Each player will, by the end of the drafting process, have five cards from each block. Example:

					
G M M P A	G G M M A	S G M P A	S M P A W	G G G P W	M P A A A

These represent the practitioner's various strengths, weaknesses, and focuses. Cards from the first four categories will later be distributed across the character's five starting practices, with each getting one card from each of Puissance, Access, Longevity, and Executions. The results above will also represent the range of results for research. When determining the *Access* (yellow, second from the left) of a new practice, for example, a practitioner with that array above will tend to land on good or moderate, with a chance of awful, albeit adjusted for difficulty and other factors. Everyone will thus be competing for the best cards available.

The cards from Schools will help decide the practitioner's starting practice, comfort level in that practice, and ability to dabble, while the cards in Family determine who the practitioner is, where they're from, and where they stand in terms of position and resources.

Arcana Categories



The first category, ***Puissance***, reflects the practitioner's raw power. Whatever a practice is made to do, Puissance determines how effective it is at that function. If a practitioner creates a gout of flame, Puissance is how hot it is, how forceful the gout is, and how good it is at punching through barriers. If they lay a curse, this determines how heavy the curse's effects may be. It could also be the strength of a summoned Other or a cap on how strong a summoning could be.

Access determines how easy it is to use the practice and put the practice into motion. A practice with high Access will be quick to cast, or require less resources. It could occur with a word or a gesture. Rituals may be easier to cast and less demanding in the setup. Conversely, low access would mean a practice may require certain things - objects in hand, time, it may be more awkward with a set delay between uses. Rituals may have added conditions.



Longevity is the duration and resilience of practice. The most powerful curse may not matter much if it is easily refuted or cast aside, or if the duration is negligible. Especially important when binding others or setting up practices to defend oneself. With Supreme Longevity, even a broken barrier might struggle to its metaphorical feet again, resuming activity after a brief shutdown. With Worst Longevity, a practice may be fragile or fleeting.

Executions reflect the versatility of a practice. Each individual practice is a specific idea, but that idea can be taken to multiple places. With Supreme Executions, practice may have alternate uses, secondary functions, or could be split off into related rituals or bonus effects. With low Executions, the practice could be especially narrow or might even resist uses outside its very focused perspective, with a fire arrow practice intended for shooting people doing a bad job of helping start a campfire in the woods.



Schools handles the practitioner's studies and path in the practice. It provides the practitioner with priority in selecting what practice they start with, and their ability to dabble. The emphasis placed in Schools and dabbling in character creation will also heavily inform the practitioner's research and ability to tackle new material.

Family covers the practitioner's roots, wealth, and self. This is the individual behind the practice, their position in the world, within family, and their standing in terms of possessions and karma. Family has five subcategories, one of which is variable, differing depending on how the practitioner came to the practice. The practitioner will choose either House, Patron, or Discovery. House means the practitioner began with ties to a practitioner family or organization and works within that structure to some degree (gaining the associated resources and reputation if they can navigate it), Patron means they have a teacher or Other that is guiding them through things, with more freedom but less clout, and Discovery means they found the practice on their own.



In the draft, without revealing their choice to other players, players will simultaneously indicate the row or column they want to the GM, using the guidelines on the right. For example, they could look at the options above and when they submit their desired pick to the GM, write *Puissance, Row 5*.

1	M	A	W	S	G
2	G	P	P	P	A
3	M	G	M	A	P
4	G	P	M	A	A
5	G	M	S	S	W
	A	B	C	D	E

On that grid, that would get them the Good, Moderate, Supreme, Supreme, and Worst. Once those cards are picked, if nobody else wants any of the same cards, they get removed and gray ‘Unknown’ cards are put in their place for subsequent rounds of picks.

When taken, Unknown cards are exchanged for a random draw from a 20 card ‘deck’ with worse options on average:

Supreme	Good	Good	Moderate	Moderate
Moderate	Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor
Awful	Awful	Awful	Awful	Awful
Worst	Worst	Worst	Worst	Worst

The deck is refreshed after all cards are exhausted. GMs may use their own systems.

However, because players pick simultaneously, and because they are competing for the same cards, there’s a chance that one or five of the cards a player takes may be sought by another player. When this happens, the players first have an opportunity to deal before any clashes.

Deals may involve a split of the available cards, with each player then taking enough gray cards to round themselves up to five in total. Deals may also include promises relating to the game for roleplaying purposes but at GM discretion, they may not be GM-enforced in game.

Clashes occur when there is no finalized deal. Each player must then decide and privately submit to the GM whether they hold or forfeit.

The rules for five-card clashes:

Choices:			Result
5 C A R D S	Hold	Hold	One of the cards is given a black mark by the GM and things go back to a brief dealing stage before returning to the clash decision. The player that ends up with the card in question gets the black mark.
	Hold	Forfeit	Player 1 gets the cards. Player 2 gets five gray cards and chooses two of the following: ➤ Draw another gray card and discard the worst result. This option can be taken for both choices. ➤ Give Player 1 a 50% chance of a black mark. This option can be taken for both choices to raise the chance to 100%. ➤ Gain a white mark.
	Forfeit	Forfeit	Both players take gray cards and then choose one: ➤ Draw another gray card and discard the worst result. ➤ 50% chance at a white mark.

One card clashes:

Choices:			Result
1 C A R D	Hold	Hold	The card is given a black mark by the GM and things go back to a brief dealing stage before another hold/forfeit choice. On a subsequent Hold/Hold result, both players get black marks, and the players get gray cards.
	Hold	Forfeit	Player 1 gets the card. Player 2 gets a gray cards and chooses one: ➤ Draw another gray card and discard the worst result. ➤ 50% chance at a white mark.
	Forfeit	Forfeit	Both players take gray cards, and after drawing their gray card, may choose to discard it and draw another, which must be taken.

GMs should cull the number of black marks where appropriate (if everyone has one, everyone can lose one) and do the same for white marks.

◆ **Black Marks** translate to flaws, such as phobias, alcoholism, curses, critical weaknesses, and deep, dark secrets. These should be made story relevant and interesting to play, but still detrimental.

✧ **White Marks** translate to perks, advantages, allies, blessings or Aware boons.

The process of selection, possible clashes, and resolution is repeated until all players have selected five cards from each of the six arrangements.

After all players have selected five cards from each table and received their gray cards, we determine the *Schools*.

Arcana: Schools

As the next phase of the draft, we have players select their practice. They will start by selecting a row or a column, submitting to the GM in private. Eg. “I select Deals.”

	Conflict	Deals	Visceral	Immaterial	Divine
Conjure					
Prices					
Tools					
Realms					
Interaction					
Lore					
Protection					

Players submitting via. Supreme get their choices first, followed by the good, moderate, poor, awful, and worst, in that order. Because a player may have two different values of card, they may submit their two different bids at different times. In cases of contested categories with the same value, treat as five card clashes, above, but in lieu of gray cards, the player takes another row/column.

Their core practice will fall at an intersection of row & column (ex. Conflict/Interaction)

Intermission: Defining your Practice

Players will use the Schools Selection to collaborate with the GM to work out a practice fitting the categories they select. The category descriptions on the tables below and the various Others or Realms section may help inform choices.

Listed below are the columns and rows. Each has some suggested starting practices listed. A player who takes Conflict and Conjure practices will have a Sword, Breach, Empower, Soldier, and Burst practices. They could then draw inspiration from goblins and call themselves a Goblin Witch, flavoring each after goblin ideas, or draw inspiration from Echoes and be a Ghost General. There is a lot of room to develop a character or style even within one intersection point, but one could expect their practice to have a similar balance to whatever they chose. The aforementioned practitioner could expect their field of practice to be 20% attack practices, for example (from Sword/Missile).

Column:

Conflict	Practice based on direct confrontation/fighting.
◇ Sword / Missile - An attack practice ◇ Breach - A practice that alters the battlefield or environment, often destructive. ◇ Empower - A practice that grants some combat-relevant benefit to someone/something.	
Deals	Practice hinges on pre-establishing contracts & relationships.
◇ Name - Make contact, summon, or secure future ability to contact a person or Other. ◇ Contract - Lock down ties, possible rules or powers over target, possible transaction ◇ Transfer - Draw on a power source, especially effective with those you used contract on.	
Visceral	Visceral practices deal with powers & Others who are flesh and blood or materially 'real'.
◇ Battery - Establish a vessel for a specific kind of power and a means of storing/using it. ◇ Shape - Transform, craft, or mold something material/physical. ◇ Seize - Assert control or grip over something, potentially move it or claim it.	
Immaterial	Abstract practices deal with spirit, echo, emotion, incarnate, and other intangible things.
◇ Mark - Apply tag or mark to instill an effect/curse or keep an eye on something elusive. ◇ Image - Clarify something abstract into a visible image, or create a fragile illusion. ◇ Ask - Get answers by calling on the abstract, or give the abstract more of a voice.	
Divine	Divine practices deal with greater powers and the broader system of rules, laws, or the hands manipulating things. Often big powers.
◇ Pray - Call on the powers for an often inconsistent or conditional effect. Powerful. ◇ Mend - Fix something broken, as appropriate to the power you call on. ◇ Tap/Sphere - Collect or spend currency, respective to the power & brand of practice.	

Rows:

Conjure	Practice calls forces out of what is essentially thin air, manipulates them.
◇ Soldier - Calls something with sentient or sapient awareness, ability to act. ◇ Burst - A fundamental calling of something into reality, a short lived eruption/manifestation	
Prices	Practice is powerful but exacts a high cost, often from the practitioner
◇ Payment - A basic practice wherein one pays the price with their own blood, a life, etc. ◇ Venture - A school-appropriate, powerful practice with an inherent risk.	
Tools	Practice utilizes physical objects, weapons, craft, and/or magic items.
◇ Weapon - A Tools practice for self defense, empowering/creating a tool. ◇ Knickknack - A practice for obtaining or utilizing items, often of the lowest quality.	
Realms	Practice deals with a specific world, whether it's ours or another realm
◇ Door - A means of getting somewhere, either teleporting or accessing a realm. ◇ Shunt - Forcing something else somewhere, either as utility or self-defense.	
Interaction	Practice works on/is dependent on a social frame, on people, discourse.
◇ Deflect - A practice meant to deflect, manipulate connection, misdirect, or do mischief. ◇ Obscure - A practice meant for subtlety, or for hampering another's senses/capabilities	
Lore	Practice gathers and uses information to good effect.
◇ Sight - An enhanced means of seeing. ◇ Investigate - A broader means of studying or analysis, viewing the past, etc.	
Protection	Practice has a means of defending oneself, defending others.
◇ Shield - Personal protection of some sort. ◇ Seal - A means of restraining an opponent, warding an area, or both.	

Other rows and columns are possible, depending on the GM. Players and GMs are not beholden to these specifics. If something else feels suitable or if the individuals creating the starting practices struggle with one idea, they may go with an alternate one, suitable to the practice in question.

Some starting practices could come with the basic tools required to pursue the core practice. For example, a practitioner dealing with the Fae (Interaction x Deals) might get some basic know-how on avoiding Faerie traps as part of their Contract practice, because not having that would leave them very vulnerable early. A Peddler that sells cursed items would need a means of handling such. Other practices could be given as magic items, basic & easy rituals that grant a passive ongoing effect or ability after completion. For example, a magic item collector might have a knickknack practice to draw very minor magic items to them, a conflict practitioner could get natural protection from harm.

Example Selections (a four player group):

	Conflict, Roan, [G]	Deals, P.T. [P]	Visceral, Seth, [G]	Immaterial	Divine, Bryce, [G]
Conjure					
Prices, P.T. [G]		P.T.'s Contractor			
Tools, Bryce, [S]					Bryce's Penitent
Realms					
Interact, Seth, [M]			Seth's Druggist		
Lore, Roan, [S]	Roan's Oddmother				
Protection					

Seth's Druggist/Hyde	
Visceral	G
Interact	M
Field: Alchemy	

Roan's Oddmother	
Lore	S
Conflict	G
Field: Oddfolk	

P.T.'s Contractor	
Prices	G
Deals	P
Field: Binding	

Bryce's Penitent	
Tools	S
Divine	G
Field: Gods	

The players will get a bonus when working out new practices and identifying things:

Supreme	Good	Moderate	Poor	Awful	Worst
+4	+3	+2	+1	+0	-1

Applied to efforts in that row or column. Bonuses are *halved*, rounding down, (or the malus is doubled, for Worst) if the field doesn't match. This means that a character like Roan's, in the example on the last page, can be said to have a grounding in just about anything relating to Lore practices, sufficient for a +2, even if it doesn't have anything to do with Oddfolk, her specialty.

Where row and column intersect and are relevant, the character may roll each separately and take the better collection of results or the better result. For Roan, who has Good and Supreme, she could make two attempts, one with the Good bonus (+3) and one with the Supreme one (+4), hedging her bets... *provided* what she's doing fits both Conflict and Lore.

Further, so long as any card has been put in, even a Worst, there are some advantages, mitigating failure. A failed roll to identify an Other or practice will still serve to rule out or confirm the field, even if it doesn't provide information, and a die result that would produce a Worst instead allows the player to take two gray cards and take the less desirable option. This must be taken, even if it's another Worst.

Dabbling & Investment

Players will have three cards left over. They will stick these into intersections, indicating one piece of information, knowledge, power, or resources they've acquired. In brief, the options are a text with some progress in reading it, a contact with some relevant knowledge, another known practice, a magic item, or supporting resources and ingredients. The quality of the card applied will determine the quality of the selected option.

Whichever one is selected, the character is assumed to have some relevant knowledge, experience, or ability to reference details relating to that intersection. They'll gain a bonus or penalty for study and research within that specific intersection of row, column, and field, as described above, and can count it toward prerequisites.

See the Downtime:Research section for more on research and prerequisites.

Dabbling: Reading Material - *The character has a text on this other field and they've already started reading it. See Downtime: Reading for more information.*

The player will name the kind of book they want and the GM will generate a text for them. The Schools card determines both the number of positive or negative qualities for the text...

	Supreme	Good	Moderate	Poor	Awful	Worst
Qualities	2 beneficial	1 beneficial	-	1 negative	2 negative	3 negative

...and the amount of reading they get done; after the book is generated, they make a reading roll and apply a +4 (Supreme) to -1 (worst) to the result.

The player can decide the field, and the general type of book, but the beneficial and negative qualities are left to the GM.

Dabbling: Contact - *The character knows someone; an Other or an out of town practitioner, who can lend advice and assistance.*

The Schools card determines the quality of the contact. Much like books, above, contacts have positive or negative qualities...

	Supreme	Good	Moderate	Poor	Awful	Worst
Qualities	2 beneficial	1 beneficial	-	1 negative	2 negative	3 negative

...where positive qualities are things such as more powerful contacts, better advice and support when helping with research, lower costs, and better dispositions. Negative qualities might mean a high cost exacted whenever they supply help, deceptive personalities that leave details out, or intermittent availability. Typically, however, a balance should be struck; at Good, the contact may be cheap, strong, or readily available, and at Supreme it could be two of those things.

Contacts can typically supply some advice and aid for research and item creation, be a supply line for resources or trade, or be a temporary ally. This *typically* costs something, be it money, power, or a favor. Contacts maintain their own ideology, goals, and needs.

Dabbling: Starting Practice - *The character has picked up another practice, another thing they can cast or a ritual they may do.*

When picking up a dabbling practice, all prerequisites may be skipped; the practice must be of the 'easy' tier. With the +4 to -1 of the schools card applied, and the -1 from the tier, the player will make the roll with a +3 to -2, depending on the card applied.

If the result is unsatisfactory or a failure (with two worsts being an automatic failure to learn), the player may instead opt to count it as a research in progress. If they do this, they don't learn the practice, and instead leave it as an option for the future. When they take the time to resume the research, they don't need to meet the prerequisites.

Dabbling: Starting Item - *The character has a magic item, found or gifted.*

As Starting Practice, above, but generates an item, and is done with an additional -1 on the roll. The item is basic, of a relatively low power level, applicable to the chosen dabbling slot. The player specifies the sort of item they want, but does not specify the details. If unsatisfied with the offered item's details or stats, as with Starting Practice, can be left as an item in progress.

Dabbling: Supporting Resources - *A selection of raw resources and materials needed to get started with the basic practice.*

Typically paired with practices that require materials, such as an alchemist brewing potions out of raw chemicals and exotic materials or a dollmaker needing parts to put the doll together. Provides a selection of bottom-quality items, in a quantity that depends on the Schools arcana assigned. At Moderate or higher, the supply is consistent- there's a supplier or a renewable source of materials that provides a small quantity over time. This 'golden goose' may be slain for more materials, but at the cost of ending the trickle of resources.

Finalizing the Public Draft

While character creation isn't done, the part of character creation that involves the players and the GM wraps up after Schools are chosen. Dabbling can be picked on its own, without player involvement, but groups of players that intend to collaborate may wish to cover different bases or avoid overlap. Character concepts can be refined and time where the group is still around is a good time to do this.

The Family part of character customization, covered below, will help to shape things. Figuring out where the character stands in terms of resources, position, how liked their family or mentor is, or what their trajectory is as someone self-taught can provide a starting point.

Even if a player picks Dollmaking as a starting practice, the practice of making (often creepy) human shaped objects and animating them (Visceral x Tools), different families could approach the idea in different ways: one important doll per family member, sending out hordes of dolls in the quiet hours to collect shiny things, or capturing people, stuffing their organs into a canopic doll, and replacing them in reality with dolls only practitioners and the Aware can discern as non-human.

For the players: Players should communicate with the GM about intent and concept, but be understanding. As part of the creation process, each player will have five starting practices - possibly 1-3 more, depending on dabbling. If practices aren't drawn out from pre-existing writing, practice-specific handbooks, or unofficial fan work, then they have to be created wholesale.

Players should be clear about what they want, even make suggestions, and consider simply taking what the GM ends up drafting as what their family, mentor, or circumstances provided them and revising it or extrapolating out later to fit what they have in mind.

GMs: If the GM is feeling especially overloaded at this stage, they may wish to simplify things by limiting the number of extra practices and magic items added through dabbling, or even have the players pick one practice to drop out of their starting five, treating them as novices in their practice.

In the meantime, players will finalize their character concepts with Family, covered below.



The Cards for Family may be allocated to the domains of Birthright, Self, Establishment, and Affairs, and then one of House, Patron, or Discovery. In brief:

- **Birthright** determines one's resources, the value of things picked up from certain forms of dabbling, and one's assumed position relative to House/Patron/Discovery.
- **Self** is one's baseline statistics, advantageous or disadvantageous backgrounds, and overall well being.
- **Establishment** is the character's relationship with Others, karma, and the practicality of their practice relative to the local climate and Others.
- **Affairs** is the character's relationship to the ongoing scenario, and any structures that currently exist around the practitioner. *Often* this is the local Lordship and council, but it could be the magic school one attends or the challenge level of a short adventure.

In picking House, Patron, or Discovery, the player is indicating how they came to the practice.

- **House** means one was brought into the practice by a family or larger organization.
- **Patron** means one is the apprentice to a master, either a single practitioner with no blood ties to the character, or an Other.
- **Discovery** is the choice that has the character being someone who stumbled onto the practice by chance or contrivance.

With the quality of the card dictating how advantageous the situation is: if the family has lots of resources, if the mentor is helpful or someone extorting service from an apprentice, or if the circumstances of finding the practice are positive or the equivalent of being thrown to the wolves.

If the GM wishes to abstract things, ballpark, or cut the process short, they can leave it at this. The distinction between House, Patron, and Discovery is primarily that House grants more resources, but instills more responsibility, Discovery is the inverse, and Patron falls between. If a player likes one idea conceptually, they should ask the GM to see if there's a good way to mix aspects or find a middle ground (keeping the card applied to the category in mind for balance).

Note that at this stage, the game and supporting docs default to assuming that the (currently work in progress) 3.0 framework for Weaverdice/Pactdice is being used for statistics and rules. However, this document will primarily focus on the things secondary to those elements, with stats & combat rules being added to the document late in the overall design process, if at all. This system in general is meant to be able to be ported over to other systems if so desired (for example, d20), and the stats and skills from those systems can be used if the play group is most comfortable with them. GMs may indicate point buy or eschew Self entirely.

The Family categories are expanded on in more depth in [the Appendix](#), for those who wish for firmer guidelines or if some more grounding in things is needed for any particular points of contention or confusion.

Progression

Forms of progression (advancing a character) include:

- Learning new practices.
- Acquiring magic items.
- Clues, representing nonspecific knowledge, inspiration, and half-formed thoughts on a field or broader subject.
- Assets: objects, furniture, tools, and conveniences.
- Reading books
- Acquiring backgrounds.
- Milestones

Milestones

An optional rule for longer campaigns, if the GM wants something analogous to a 'level' system. More to come. TL;DR is gradual advancement for meeting personal & story goals.

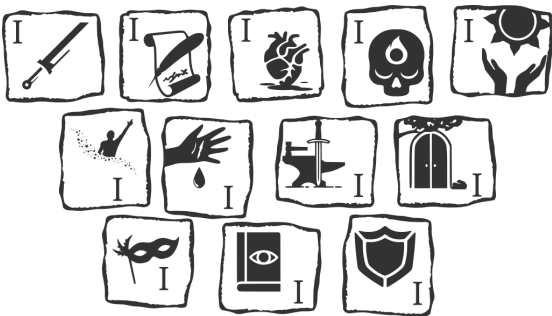


Clues

Clues are a form of progression, earned as a common reward for engaging with Others, research, from reading, and are obtainable with a bit of downtime spent musing. They represent the general ideas, half-formed thoughts, and inspiration the character has amassed with their involvement in a practice.

Clues are divided into the same general categories as the Schools things: there are clues for the various rows and columns, and there are clues for each field.

Clues also have tiers, and are awarded for simple, moderate, advanced, and epic-tier accomplishments, either as the GM deems appropriate or using tables below:



Easy Accomplishment: Roll a d6

1	2	3	4	5	6
T1, Row	T1, Row	T1, Column	T1, Column	T1, Field	T1, Field

Moderate Accomplishment: Roll a d6

1	2	3	4	5	6
T1, Row	T1, Column	T1, Field	T2, Row	T2, Column	T2, Field

Advanced Accomplishment: Roll two d6s: one for type, one for tier.

1	2	3	4	5	6
Row	Row	Column	Column	Field	Field
Tier 1	Tier 1	Tier 2	Tier 2	Tier 3	Tier 3

Epic Accomplishment: Roll two d6s: one for type, one for tier.

1	2	3	4	5	6
Row	Row	Column	Column	Field	Field
Tier 2	Tier 2	Tier 3	Tier 3	Tier 4	Tier 4

Relevant clues can contribute to research prerequisites, turned in for hints of a clue’s quality, or used to assist a knowledge check in the same way a practitioner’s schools can, confirming or ruling out an answer.

Some practices use clues as part of their mechanism, when broader information about Others or fields is utilized. An example would be a doctor of Others, translating information and clues about Others into healing of those types of Other, or an Augur collecting clues while trying to divine the location and identity of a specific Other, with clues derived from their explorations serving to confirm or deny, and/or give clearer details that Other’s nature.

Clue sets may also be used to generate backgrounds, creating features and benefits of the same sorts that are found in books. Examples might be 10x [Divine I] for one set, or [Visceral I through IV] plus [Horror I through IV] for another. Consult with the GM to determine what is workable. Once learned, can be placed into a book.



Assets

Assets represent the practitioner's tools, furniture, and conveniences that they've amassed. A primary and common asset will be their living space, whether that's a room or rented apartment. Having a computer, smartphone, and vehicle is common for adult practitioners, but different values for the [Family: Self] may mean having less or more.

Accumulating practice-related assets is one of the big ways a practitioner may advance their study and represent their overall standing. They can help with the background work going into research, with rituals, and other downtime actions. Assets have a baseline value and tend to provide small benefits. Some sample assets include:

Maĥogany Desk	Allows a reroll of any gray cards that are drawn in Research.
Blackboard	Can spend clues to free partial downtime slots during long researches.
Measvring Tools	Research prerequisites that ask for 5 or more of something now require 1 less.
Bookstand	Provides a +1 to all reading rolls. Does not stack with other asset based bonuses.
Reading Chair	When finishing an even-numbered book segment, free a partial downtime slot.
Reference Texts	Barriers to entry (translation, etc) to read books made 15% easier.
Altar	Rituals at altar have worst arcana boosted by one step. (ex. Awful to poor)
Water Feature	Chance to return 0 to 15% of expended power, resources, on ritual finish.
Big Art Piece	Raises the net value of all assets in space by 10%, where beneficial.
Big Clock	Assets with limited uses per day or per hour get 15% more uses.
Command Center	When planning a mission, first session gives options for every mission variable.
Blueprints	When planning a mission, can spend relevant clues for additional options.
Leather-Bound Ledgers	Passive effect of checking on people in organization extends to subordinates. Will suggest traitor/other issues exists among subordinates, but not which one.
Important Papers	Expands number of subordinates; ties personal fortune to the organization.
Rumor Board	Can spend clues to get more rumors when exploring & contacting sources.
Travel Supplies	Once/week, exploration or travel to another realm frees a partial downtime slot.
Tailoring Table	Gives a +1 on first craft attempts made for a given project.
Materials Station	Can spend 15% of craft project's current cost to add a crafting roll. Cumulative.

But even those assets may vary. It's possible to have higher end versions, versions that give greater boosts but only once a week, or versions specific to particular groups, realms, or crafting item types.

An individual may only have so much space for a certain number of assets, but overall, having a total value of relevant assets provides a bonus to research, some crafting, and some rituals:

\$250	\$500	\$1500	\$5000	\$15,000	\$50,000	\$150,000	\$500,000
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8

Which at the high end tends to require a dedicated workshop space or building for the assets in question, and assets specific to a field or enterprise, with inflated value. An individual may have 20 different assets, but not every one will count for every ritual or research. Specific ones...

Dark Fall Garden	Gives \$150 in resources every week to go toward <i>Fae</i> rituals or crafting ventures. Count for double their worth if Dark Fall Court. May be sellable for ½ value.
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Count for double (Fae) or triple (Dark Fall) their value, but give no bonus otherwise.

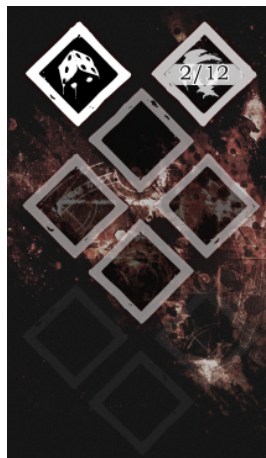
Mastery

Mastery is the process by which an individual learns to use and be comfortable with something. For an ordinary human, one's 'mastery' is in learning and developing skills. Players start with one skill per attribute they have a native +1 in, matching that attribute's type, representing natural abilities and inclinations, and then they pick another skill that they're learning, making two training rolls toward it, rolling a 1d6 and adding the skill's linked attribute(s), each time.



With the training downtime action, players may similarly choose to add a new skill they have in training (taking up the whole action), or make a training roll as described above. Players may have up to 2x their Knowledge in skills, by default.

While a skill is in training, it can be accessed for a single activity or roll, but each instance after the first between downtime sessions will cost morale, where individual losses of morale will set the maximum die result a player can manage to 6, then 5, then 4, etc. See the Morale section when it gets added later, for more detail (or see the Weaverdice 3.0 doc for a writeup).



Things other than skills require some attention, training, and upkeep, maintained on a separate track. A practitioner with a dozen magic items, three ongoing ritual effects altering how they function and operate, and a curse they are managing is not going to be on top of everything. A separate track with similar rules to skills, above, applies to ambient, ongoing magic effects and the tools one has at their disposal. Whether a player starts with some things they are comfortable with is up to the GM and the campaign. Most commonly, the player can start with rituals from their core spells slotted in.

Effects or familiarity with rituals, magic items, and curses can be put into slots here and treated as normal until such a time as training numbers reach the required value (12, by default), at which point additional effects or reduced penalties can be applied. The starting number of slots is set to 6, unchanged by stats.

Things that are not listed on this track can be assumed to be neglected. Magic items may be forgotten or left on a shelf underneath some things, spirits and practitioner both may forget a boon shielding them from harm was active, potentially making it weaker, the practitioner caught off guard and stumbling as it kicks in... if it kicks in at all. A long-running curse or other deleterious effect (sickness, ongoing price for a practice) can, if neglected, be exacerbated, or have other consequences, and consequences may depend on the item type or boon/curse.

All of the above can be trained with experience in the field; players who use a boon, skill, deal with a curse, or use a magic item can roll to increase progression after an encounter completes. To simplify things, GMs may allow only one roll (with more possible for long-running battles and huge victories), forcing the player to choose between skills and boons.

The rolls for skills use linked attributes, as previously mentioned, but items, boons, and other things may lean on GM discretion for what attribute applies (a curse might tie into Guts, as one must endure it), or have no linked attribute but have a bonus to rolls depending on how often the item is used.

As the character grows and develops (through milestones, experience, completing campaigns and continuing on to others), they can add to their number of slots. In other cases, some things may become so ubiquitous to the character that they are simply there, mastered, not requiring a slot.

At GM discretion, players could be allowed to give special emphasis to their school, after progressing a certain amount. A good rule of thumb here could be that after accruing and mastering three effects falling under one school or field, any newly added slot could be made advanced, dedicated to that school.

Some practices may have some direct affinity for this system, with specialized or customized slots representing that, without requiring the prerequisite:

Tylissa is a Fae consort, collecting boons and favors from her Fae paramours. One of her slots is modified to an epic boon slot, only special when used for Fae consort abilities, that she can master faster, with three stages of growth, and two better slots with two stages of growth each.



These schools of practice may focus on the items or boons in question, or have modified rules to accommodate practice. For example, Collectors (see the Magic Item field) tend to accrue a lot of magic items, and items included in their collector diagram may simply be counted under one slot, instead of each requiring one.

The idea in application here is that if the character has too much going on for both GM and player to keep track of, then the character may as well not be on top of it as well. GMs may wish to ignore this system altogether, if organization or boon/item bloat isn't an issue. In such a case, players wouldn't get the ability to specialize and master something for added effect, but wouldn't necessarily have the same caps or drawbacks of neglecting things.

This could also be something that is handled on a case by case basis. A GM may implement the system with its drawbacks and benefits for one player and ignore it for the others, if everyone is in agreement, or use a modified, expanded, or minimalist version of the above for those players that specifically focus on accruing boons or items.

Downtime

Players will get three actions to conduct during 'downtime', those periods between sessions or adventures, and can choose actions from the lists below to fit into those slots, representing what they do when 'offscreen'.

Most downtime actions will be major actions like research, reading, and rituals that don't need to be covered on screen for drama or plot reasons. Each of these are covered on subsequent pages...



Research

Devise practice or item



Reading

Read a relevant text.



Ritual

Prepare & initiate a ritual.



Shopping

Make purchases in person or online.



Plan

Plan for a future task.



Organize

Manage business/House.



Explore

Find places, people, rumors.



Craft

Create mundane item.

Downtime also includes half actions, which may be paired together to form a full action:



Basic First Aid - Heal a single wound & associated effects.



Keep Watch - Watch over an area/captive. Must be paired with action taken in same area.



Light Relaxation - Recover morale, chance to heal mental issues.



Skim Read - Get synopsis of reading material, light read, roll is minimum possible.



Light Socialization - Mend/sustain relationship, assess someone.



Musings - Get clues based on books available. [Know] roll up to [Wits] times maximum, clue on 4+.



Maintenance - Clean, upkeep, check wards.



Catch up on School/Work
Make up for lost time, light study.

These half actions cover many things that are automatic most of the time, but that might have been neglected prior (getting back to normal after skipping school/work to do other Downtime things) or things might warrant special attention (say, picking up the workshop after a summon gets loose and rampages through). While many of these actions are minor, they also grant a chance to find things that are wrong or unusual, such as mind controlled allies, hints that reality isn't as it should be, and hidden wards or listening devices in a cleaned space. The things that are checked are the same things that are being worked on or watched.

They don't have extensive rules and this isn't an exhaustive list. If an action can be carried out by someone while also making dinner, it can qualify as a half action. GMs may improvise, add, or remove things from this list to fit the situation.

For example, if a character's living situation is especially bad, then some half actions may be required and may be added by the GM, for things like gathering food or resources. This would apply to survival in a foreign realm, keeping things working while pinned at a location by goblins or zombies, or general life when the character is homeless.



Research

Work at creating a practice, book, or item, or revise an existing practice.

The player will use sorted (best to worst) arrangements of the arcana they got in character creation, plus one gray card to have six in total, to work out the ranges that their research can provide. The gray card is inserted between awfuls and worsts, or at the far right if the character has no worsts:

	S	G	G	P	A
	S	S	G	M	A
	M	P	A	W	W
	S	G	M	M	A

	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
	S	G	G	P	A	?	W
	S	S	G	M	A	?	W
	M	P	A	?	W	W	W
	S	G	M	M	A	?	W

Giving us a set of possible results that a d6 can provide. If the gray card is drawn, the same assortment of 20 cards is used to 'draw' the card for the player. The results of this draw are downgraded to the quality of the best arcana that player has in that category. (For example, even if P.T. drew a Supreme card for Longevity, it could never be more than a Moderate).

When finishing a research, characters will roll a d6 for each category and that will be the arcana for the practice. *However*, there are a few bonuses, penalties and prerequisites that alter this process.

First of all, the difficulty of the practice imposes a penalty:

Easy	Moderate	Advanced	Epic
-1	-2	-4	-8

Where easy is entry level and core practices, advanced practices are the heavier ones that can turn an encounter around, and moderate practices are the ones that aren't introductory nor as extreme as advanced ones. Epic practices are major, story-changing efforts. As a loose rule, assume moderate, unless a case should be made for higher or lower power levels.

This roll suffers a further -1 malus when enchanting an item, which also necessitates crafting the item to be enchanted in the first place. This in itself has its limits, and items of poor quality will impose a cap to the results and/or penalize the roll. Note that poor quality does not mean the materials are bad: rough, mangled, or 'trashy' materials may be required for crafting a goblin item, for example, or something old and decayed might suit a Bogeyman or ghoul, but putting things together into something that can house magic is a task unto itself. See Crafting for more.

There's a bonus (or malus) for having expertise in the field. If the character has arcana in the row or column, and a matching field, they get a +4 to a -1, respectively:

	Supreme	Good	Moderate	Poor	Awful	Worst
Bonus	+4 / +2	+3 / +1.5	+2 / +1	+1 / +0.5	+0*	-1* / -2

With half the benefit or double the malus (seen in gray) if the field doesn't match, rounding down; spend clues to round up instead.

If a character has both row and column and the field, they may make attempts with each and choose one. If they have any arcana, even Awful or Worst, penalties can't take the roll below 1.

Finally, there are prerequisites for researching a practice (these are dropped if a practice is learned from a text). One, two, four, or eight must be satisfied before research can be undertaken, respective to easy through epic practices:

A Specific Text	Have a text or dabbling that matches three out of three of row , column , or field .
Deeper Works	Have three texts or dabbings that match three out of three of row , column , or field .
Extensive Studies	Have seven texts or dabbings that match three out of three of row , column , or field .
Related Works	Have three texts or dabbings that match two out of three of row , column , or field .
Broader Studies	Have seven texts or dabbings that match two out of three of row , column , or field .
Collected Knowledge	Clues from prior rituals, studies, researches, and discoveries. Requires [1, 2, 4, 8, depending on tier of research]. See Progression: Clues for more.
Expenditures of Power	Spend power sufficient for a ritual of the appropriate tier, of matching field , or twice that amount of power that doesn't match the field.
An Other's Counsel	Supporting advice, attention, or notes from an intelligent Other of the appropriate expertise and field . They must be of appropriate qualification.
Relevant Resources	[1, 2, 4, or 8, depending on tier] magic items or field related assets in one's possession or workshop. Cannot be the sole prerequisite met.
A Helping Hand	A prepared individual or apprentice assists in the project, having met at least half the prerequisites themselves. Cannot be the sole prerequisite met.

The same option can't be taken twice. Resources used for one entry (such as specific texts) cannot be used for another (Deeper Texts).

Notes on the above:

- Texts, assets, and magic items are not consumed and can be used anew for the next research or project.
- Each piece of collected knowledge used is consumed on a failed Knowledge roll.
- The counsel of Others is dependent on context (a familiar that gives counsel is likely permanent or easy to negotiate with, others might be one-time or might require more negotiation.
- Power *is* consumed and the battery or other vessel will need to be refilled for further attempts.

Assets don't just count toward one prerequisite, but provide a collective bonus to research, alongside possible meta benefits. See Progression: Assets elsewhere in this document.



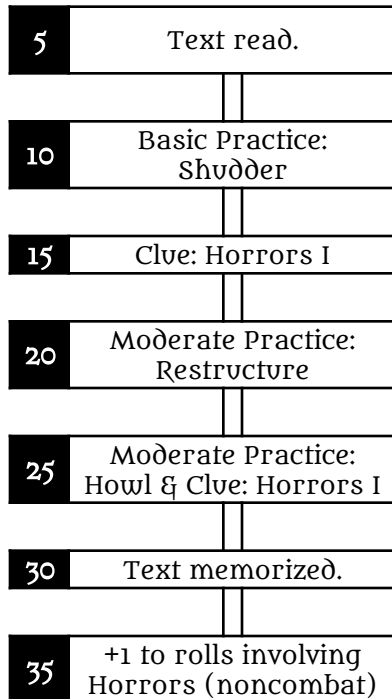
Reading

Familiarize yourself with a text.

Reading is how the practitioner engages with texts. Reading texts takes time and depending on the time invested in a text, will provide different levels of understanding. Reading is a lengthy check where the player would keep track of their progress and what they've learned.

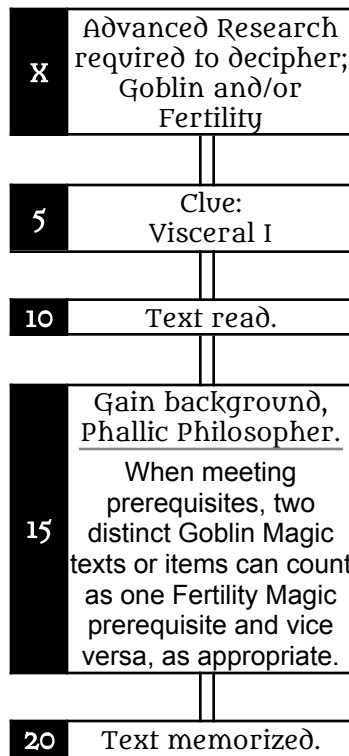
Studies in the Horrific

Foundational Text, Horrors



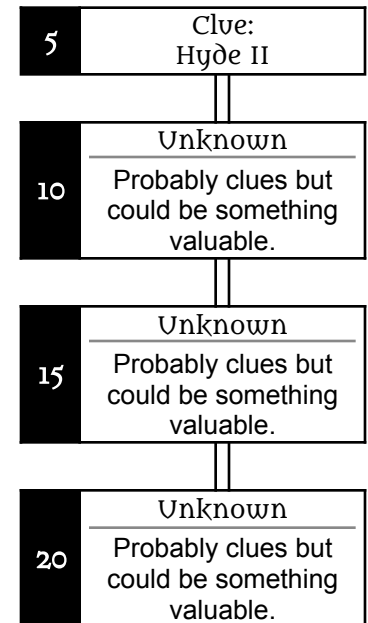
A Pondering of Phalluses

Essays, Goblin & Fertility Magics



The Last Words of Nestor Clark, Failed Hyde

Apocryphal Ramblings, Hyde



After sitting down to read, the character makes a knowledge roll and adds their dabbling score. They add to a cumulative total and when reaching the benchmarks noted (5, 10, 15, etc.) they gain the associated knowledge or abilities. Some works may have barriers to entry such as needing translation or requiring certain foundational knowledge or research before they can be read (or due to water or fire damage, may have parts that need repair or more careful reading).

When a work has been read, then the practitioner can count it among their completed studies for the purposes of meeting research prerequisites, but they'll need to keep the writings on hand for reference. Once it's memorized, they no longer need the text to get the bonus.

Primary benefits of books include:

- **Clues:** token pieces of knowledge on a field that can be spent in various ways such as recalling details, or as a resource for some practices & dynamics.
- **Practices:** Skip prerequisites to attempt to learn a practice. Roll thereafter as normal.
- **Backgrounds:** Permanent boosts or alterations to practice, unlocking options. Varied.
- **Text read/memorized:** If read, the text can be used as a prerequisite for research. If memorized, the text can be used even if lost/given away.

Book Quality, (as seen in Dabbling):

	Supreme	Good	Moderate	Poor	Awful	Worst
Quality	2 beneficial	1 beneficial	-	1 negative	2 negative	3 negative

The player will name the kind of book they want and the GM will generate a text for them.

The GM may look at the Arcana contributed and either add **beneficial effects**:

- **Brilliant** - Clues are granted at every stage. The standalone 'Clue' entries are a tier higher. Big clues bonus awarded at the final node.
- **Well Written** - The book takes less reading to get to each stage (e.g. multiples of 3.5, rounded down; 3, 7, 10, 14, 17, 20).
- **Art** - The book serves as an *asset*, with a very minor ongoing bonus as long as it is kept around and available, in addition to its usual functions.
- **Inspiring** - A knowledge check at a later point in the read gives a chance of turning an entry in the book that would give a clue into a lasting bonus instead.
- **Comprehensive** - The book is *harder* to read in contrast to Well Written, but once completed, applies to multiple fields, rows, and/or columns for prerequisites.

Negative effects:

- **Damaged** - Segments are missing and lacking in value. Requires efforts to repair or knowledge checks to understand subsequent sections without the prior knowledge. Damage can appear at the front, middle, or end.
- **Apocryphal** - The work as a whole is disorganized rambling or anecdotal. There is no guarantee there is knowledge to be gleaned; rewards for reading the text aren't known before they're unlocked, and there's a 50% chance there is no reward, with a 10% chance of a much better reward than usual.
- **Untranslated** - The book requires translation to another language. Either the language must be known, it must be laboriously translated by another, or all reading rolls are 1s.
- **Plodding** - The book takes a while to get to the point. The benefits are all put in the final entry.
- **Questionable** - The author is a little suspect, and there is a 15% chance the book is intentional sabotage, badly misinformed or misleading, or otherwise not the sort of work one wants to build a practice off of. If the book falls into that 15%, use of it in research, reference, performing listed rituals or use of the book for other purposes runs a risk of tainting the results, adding complicating factors, misfire chance, or the field could end up being something so problematic that involvement with it tanks relationships and standing; more than one may be true and the fact the work fell into that 15% may not make itself immediately apparent.

Independent of Arcana, texts vary and may be, to list a small few:

- **Beginner** - Rolls are maximized, focus on *really* basic things.
- **Practical** - Emphasizes learning more practices. Can be a workbook or list of resources.
- **Non-Academic** - Emphasize the side bonuses and backgrounds they grant.
- **Research Papers** - Various notes leading up to an advanced practice or background.
- **Inspirational** - Creative or flavor text, emphasizes clues. May finish with a background utilizing clues.



Intelligence

(Utilize Intel, Surveil, Investigate)

Dig for details on a person, place, or thing, and manage information.

The Intelligence Downtime actions abstract the process of finding and using the small details and putting in the effort to get information. Used in downtime, they can produce leads that can later be followed in actual sessions, or take the information from the sessions and codify them.

Surveil involves discreetly observing a person, place, group, or thing, often moving and sneaking around, while **Investigate** tends to happen in one's headquarters, a slower but steady study of information online and tracking down of details. These represent different approaches; Surveillance can eventually turn up the sorts of details that one might get with Investigate, and vice versa, it just takes time and effort to get there. We can represent a given target with a grid such as this one:

				MOVEMENTS
				STATUS
				PATTERNS
				HISTORY
CAPABILITIES	RELATIONSHIPS	SECRETS	DETAILS	Daniel Hodge, Chosen

These grids may be 3x3 or even 2x2 (keeping only pertinent headings), and are approached from the top left (for surveillance), or bottom right (investigate), with a certain number of spaces available for each at the outset, based on grid size. Players undertaking the appropriate action type will have the option of either spending clues to unlock a space or rolling to try to beat the target number. Each unlock provides minor information and makes orthogonally adjacent spaces available for surveillance or investigate.

2x2



3x3



4x4



4x4 with unlocks



A given target will be represented with a set of clue types, matching the row and column of their practice type or the type of Other they are. Civilian or non-Other, non-Practice subjects may have 'civilian' clues. Each target of any note (generally named, not a generic underling) can also have a clue type specific to them as a target, which can be used in place of any clue of an equivalent tier. Field or off-type clues that apply to the target due to complexity (Wraith with a dash of elemental) or practices they've dabbled in (ie. clues from an old ritual site) can be similarly substituted in, but only once per overall Downtime phase/'night'.

Surveillance requires **finding a target first**, with a long DC and a sometimes unknown target number - across multiple sessions, the player can roll Athletics and Wits (alternating) until they reach the target number. *However*, this number may drastically change depending on the target's notoriety or lack thereof, their activity level, whether they've taken steps to hide details, obfuscate, etc.

The player is looking for someone newly awakened who raided the atelier of a deceased practitioner, taking their spellbooks, who is now dabbling in practice and inadvertently hurting people. They're on the run, trying to hide out and buy time until they can figure out enough practice to resist pursuers or disappear. The GM sets the DC at 15 to start, then multiplies it by four because the target is using decoys, and an added 5 because they're lightly disguised.

The hunt to find someone by searching at random can be an arduous one - at 65, with three rolls per Downtime and average rolls, (assuming average stats and no skills), that's 6-7 full downtimes dedicated to the task. However, having information on the target works to reduce the target DC, and clues, depending on their tier, serve as a reliable way of reducing the DC, if they're relevant to the target.

Tier One	I	Tier Two	II	Tier Three	III	Tier Four	IV
20%		50%		100%		100% & unlock 1-2	

Information, when provided instead, can be compared to the clue and provide a reduction equal to that of the clue's tier.

Looping back from other errands, the player visits the people who were hurt by the new practitioner. There's a pattern to what they're doing, trying to get money to help their family, while also hurting the criminal group that had been preying on them (and employing the practitioner who owned the now-raided atelier). The player is awarded clues as is normal, but the information also helps with narrowing down the search. The GM opts to treat the former information (they're trying to help/stay in touch with family) as a tier 2 clue, halving the target DC, and the latter two details (they're targeting the criminals, the criminals employed the now-deceased practitioner) as tier one clues.

Having narrowed down where the practitioner is likely to hang out or appear, the DC of 65 is reduced by a total of 90%, to 6.5, rounded up to 7. The player spends a downtime searching, rolls terribly (1, 1, and 2), and spends a tier one clue to wrap things up.

Investigate concerns itself with different issues, working in a near-identical way with a long DC, increases and reductions, but is focused instead on first **identifying the target**. It's possible to have a target with a known identity but unknown location, such as a missing person or the errant practitioner, above. The inverse is true: if a trail of grisly bodies are being left in alleys, finding the thread on things online means trying to figure out if they have a name, identity, a pattern that started elsewhere, etc. Reaching the tail end of the long DC for investigate means you've found the likely starting point of that individual's activities, identified the general type of Other or practitioner they are, etc. If there's more to be found, it may be turned up with the grid, above.

When the player submits incorrect information in hopes of narrowing down the search or investigation, the player may reach the target number for the DC, only to have a partial setback and the GM telling them they have an incorrect assumption.

If the target is found but the thread isn't, or vice versa, Surveillance or Investigate will be locked out, respectively. For something like a missing person, the clue grid might well be the attempt to track down details about their location in the first place, with surveillance just not being possible. For investigation into a cursed item bound in one's own possession, it could be the inverse.

Once the target or the thread is found, the grid is provided by the GM, with dimensions matching the scale of the target - a 2x2 for something like a parking lot or security guard, a 3x3 for a very minor Other or practitioner, notable individual, or standard location, and a 4x4 for someone or something of note. The target is assigned an appropriate combination of clue types, with locations and non-Other, non-practitioner types often having a generalized 'civilian' disposition in addition to a possible clue type most representative of the use of the space. These are then distributed across the grid, using the suggested spreads.



Information gathering on a person will tend to be very structured. There are categories outlined, with Surveillance tending to favor the most recent movements and contacts, and observable details, while Investigate focuses on minutiae and background. The suggested labels are...

- **Movements** - Most recent movements, visited locations, activities in general.
- **Capabilities** - Powers, equipment, manpower, strengths, weaknesses.
- **Status** - Injuries, activity level, confidence, reputation.
- **Relationships** - Contacts, network, how things stand with other factions.
- **Patterns** - Observable patterns, habits, tendencies, tells.
- **Secrets** - Past deeds, addictions, hidden motivations or affiliations.
- **History** - As movements, but starting from origins and going forward, past cities, identities
- **Details** - Family line, categorization of type of practice/Other, meaning of language, symbols, etc.

Each space unlocked will uncover a detail fitting the intersection, sometimes useless, sometimes vital, potentially offering hints at places the player might go or people they might talk to, in their next in-game session for more information. Each *row* or *column* unlocked grants a passive bonus; identified weaknesses, knowing someone's schedule so you can time things so they'll be preoccupied when you act (delaying their arrival), bonuses to intelligence actions, etc.

For a **location**, the weightings for spaces and target numbers for rolls may be the same, but the rows and columns may not be explicitly labeled, instead being roughly linked to the sort of things covered in the plan downtime: security, access/egress, the people involved, with bonuses mixed in with the mission planning variables and side details (on related capes, the group) that can be uncovered.

For an **item** (particularly one with any ability to act, such as a cursed item) or an **organized group**, there may be a mingling of the two types - possibly with bonuses like resources drawn out of a magic item, or an award of scattered information on various members of the group, but also with less clear column and row headings.



Surveillance is risky but fast, and gives immediate, tangible effects, with a tendency to give more bonuses that apply to combat. The player will get a number of d6 rolls equal to their Wits score, and can roll Wits to try to beat a target number available to them (listed on the space). If they succeed, they unlock the space and get clues - usually half what's listed for that space. If they fail, they can choose to either get a strike and a tier one clue, or spend the required clues to unlock any space available to them. If they roll a number they've already rolled this session, that's a guaranteed strike, *and* the effects listed above, succeed or fail. At three strikes, usually, the target is alerted, gets information about the player (and a possible temporary bonus against them), and may change up patterns, pack up and leave, and reduce progress on the grid in the process. It could also be the start of a fight at the outset of the next session, at GM discretion.

Enemies with underlings, bound Others or bodyguards on watch and things like surveillance cameras or powers can modify or complicate things further, raising the bar, altering consequences for strikes, or reducing the required number of strikes before consequences.



Investigate is safer, and is similar, with a number of actions equal to Knowledge. The distinction is that the player can choose to roll Knowledge for a space or to gather a clue relevant to a target with a d6 roll:

1	Tier one, column
2	
3	Tier one, row
4	
5	Tier two, column
6	Tier two, row

Though safer, investigate can be blocked or confounded. False information may be sown, or a record may have a flag tied to it. It's usually clear when venturing into such territory.

For surveillance and investigate, clues can be spent any time during the action to unlock a space without taking an action, though those doing surveillance may wish to keep some in the back pocket, as it can avert a strike.



Utilize Intel is the meta skill for Intelligence, a list of options that can be undertaken for interplay with the other intelligence downtimes or the management of clues. When the player wishes to improvise or do something that the GM deems fair and suitable for using clues, that isn't covered below, this can be the downtime action used.

This can be used to upgrade, downgrade, and shuffle clues...

Upgrade	Turn 3 clues of tier 1-3 into one of a higher tier, same type.
Downgrade	Turn one clue of tier 2-4 into two of a lower tier, same type.
Shuffle	Turn one clue into one of a lower tier, random type.

It allows some actions that protect one's own information and clues, with suggested stats for any rolls:

Squash Bugs		Check a location for electronic bugs, augury, or other suspicious things.
Interrogate		Question an ally about allegiances.
Chase Tail		Check to see if you're being surveilled, hide your <i>movements</i> .
Scrub History		Guard your <i>history</i> , does not re-hide info for those who've found it, does confound those who come later.
Obfuscate		Guard your <i>details</i> , so anyone searching them gets false info.
Disguise		Change your appearance, don a mask, attempt to reset enemy surveillance. Can be found again, for a burst of revealed info for the surveilling individual(s).
Change Locations		Move your things or all/some business elsewhere. Depending on manpower and amount to be moved, takes multiple downtimes. Doubly vulnerable to being tracked in interim.

Utilize Intel can also be used to take non-intel details and suspicions and codify them.

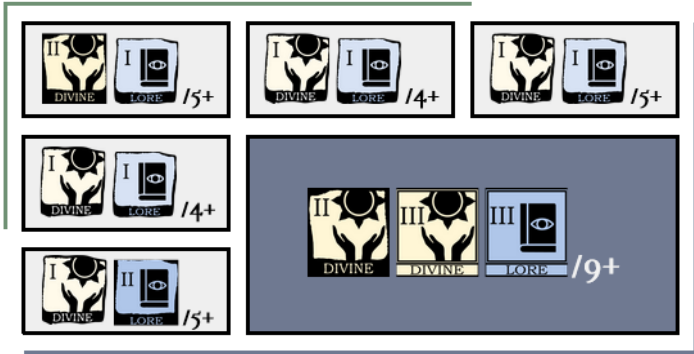
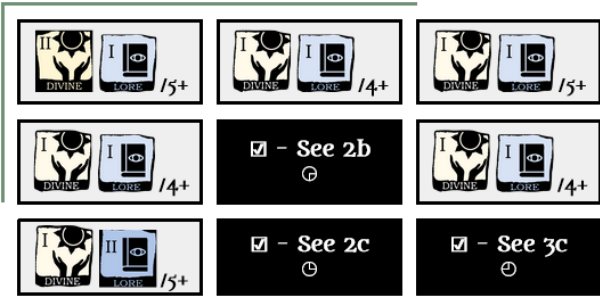
Spell it Out	Turn information into writeups that can be shared with others.
Presentation	Hold a meeting, give known unlocks to everyone present.
Note the Facts	Name known information, often what's found out in a play session. Gain intel and either unlock a relevant space or make some relevant spaces on an intel grid cheaper. If incorrect, treat as bad Working Theory, below.
Working Theory	Generate a working theory, outlining your logic, acting as Note the Facts, but without the concrete, known facts. As Note the Facts, unlock a space or make some relevant spaces on the grid cheaper. <i>However</i> , if the logic or working theory are wrong, any information generated <i>thereafter</i> has a chance of being wrong or misleading. An attempt to use a bonus based on a bad theory or to put the information to use can backfire, with the people who are being talked to getting upset or mechanical penalties instead.

Any action that isn't upgrade/downgrade/shuffle ends the Utilize Intel phase.

Intelligence, Deeper Investigations:

When uncovering something, if the GM wants to make specific and crucial details harder to access, they can be placed on a deeper 'layer' of the grid. A grid can have indicators such as the ☯, ☯, and ☯ shown right...

And when the 2x2 or 3x3 arrangement is completed, an advanced, deeper space will be unlocked, as seen below:



The information provided is always good, the bar to unlock it is high, and any bonuses from completed rows/columns get improved (sometimes doubled) if a deeper tier is completed. It's possible for an entire 4x4 grid to require multiple stages of this sort of work, unlocking a series of 2x2 spaces until a 3x3 is possible, then finally a 4x4. This could be the ultimate goal in deciphering the full functionality of a Grail, a magic item of top-tier power.

Intelligence, the Clueless:

When playing without clues as an abstracted currency/resource, the player can be given the option to instead, essentially, do a lesser 'note the facts' as described in Utilize Intel when they would normally submit a clue. They name information they haven't submitted yet for that target, and it acts as a substitute.

With this in mind, GMs will need to provide more small details, and mind that the issues of misinformation become much more prominent. GMs will want to keep close track of any bad theories and information, exaggerate the effect over time, if a player has bad information they're building an investigation or surveillance detail off of. They would keep a tracker, rated 1 out of 10, on how bad the info is, say it's a 10 if everything's perfect, but when one out of nine spaces on the clue grid is based on bad info, the quality drops to a 9, 8, or 7, depending on how off it is, with an additional -1 per space unlocked thereafter, based on bad info.

The Utilize Intel option can include an option to *check* information, as below:

Check Information

Check your notes on a target. Roll Wits and Knowledge together. If the combined value of the rolls plus any bonuses exceeds the quality of the intel on that target (rated from 1 to 10 by the GM), the information is revealed to be valid or to be misinformation (inc. the # of quality of info) -- this does not reveal what the misinformation is.

It is also possible that eventually a bonus will be relied on or a piece of misinformation will come up in conversation with the target or someone related to them, and the player will suffer a hit to reputation or a bit of disaster (with anticipated bonuses being penalties). Either way, when the thing that was misinformation is figured out or revealed, the grid gets fixed, progress may be reversed or backtracked.

Those using Clues may use Check Information or something like it as the GM sees fit.



Explore

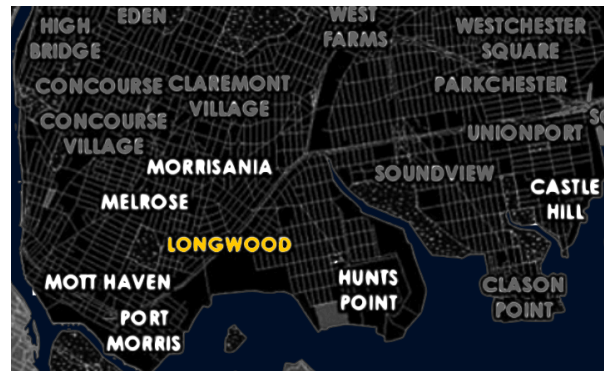
Visit and find locations.

Explore is a way to visit various areas within their town or city, and familiarize oneself with those areas. In the process of exploring, the character may find things, discover special locales, or hear rumors. Some actions, like surveilling a target or planning an effort to bind an Other can only happen if they've been found, and Exploring is a way to find things.

Players will roll on tables to see what turns up, with the table results depending on the makeup of that area. As they familiarize themselves with neighborhoods, they will get the ability to sift through the results of these rolls and target specific results. They may begin the game familiar with certain places, but not always - sometimes the character is new to town, and sometimes they were familiar with an area, but they now (especially post-awakening or after becoming Other) familiarize themselves with it in a different context.

GMs may wish to divide the accessible portions of the game's setting into 4-6 areas of interest, encompassing a town or the area of a city a person could be comfortable navigating, with more areas added as they become story relevant or as players extend their exploration outward.

After setting a campaign in the Bronx, within New York, focusing the campaign on teenagers who realize a local gang is using magic, the GM quickly decides that even the sub-area of the Bronx is too much to handle, with over fifty distinct areas. He looks up the area, and decides to set the campaign in Longwood, while also listing the surrounding areas: Morrisania, Melrose, Mott Haven, Port Morris, and Hunts Point. He rules the player characters are already familiar with Longwood.



Early on, the players discover there may be a connection to a practitioner family rooted in the richer neighborhood of Castle Hill, and that gets added onto the list, with a note that it takes a while to get there. The player characters may end up going there to keep tabs on the practitioners of Castle Hill.

There's a list of traits for areas, and a GM will want to pick two to start to define that area. Characters and players may not know what the traits are for an area. These traits can be a pairing of adjective and type, or type and type, with examples being Poor Tenements, Commercial-Industrial, or Haunted Alleys. Each trait gets its own table of results.

Players can roll a number of times equal to their Athletics score, either taking a random result from one of the two trait tables (determined by a d6), or naming a desired result and then rolling Wits, aiming for a 4+ and getting nothing on a failure. If the named result does not exist on the tables (as players may not know what's there), the attempt is wasted, but the player can cross that possibility off the list. If the GM has any special results or story elements they want to throw in, that occurs in addition to getting the results.

Players will get understanding of areas: once a player has discovered a result, rolling that result again allows a reroll, to a maximum number of rerolls equal to their Wits score. Rerolls don't earn rerolls, and turning up the same result 2+ times won't earn more than one reroll.

Common Results & Finds

Rumors allow the character to work out who or what, in terms of major individuals, threats, or groups, are active in an area. The character can either inquire about a specific example, getting specific details (or, if that individual has no association with the area, confirmation they haven't been there recently), or a general lay of the land, with information on notable figures. Grants a relevant clue.

You Overhear	The gangs 'The Graduates' and 'The King of Wands' are active here and not getting along
--------------	---

Discovered Locations are lesser locations within the area, which can be noted down and returned to or used as necessary. An individual may find themselves looking for something specific, in which case the GM may determine a likelihood of that thing being available and have the player roll. A homeless individual might need to hunt for a place to sleep, for example. Players can find 1-3 of these per area, with examples:

Shortcut	When passing through to another area, you may skip this spot without it taking time
Secluded Spot	A nice secure spot where people don't come, good for rituals or sleeping outdoors
Community Garden	\$10-35 in fruits and vegetables for crafting (cooking) on a visit. Take only what you need
Hap's Potato Bar	Can spend \$10 on a visit here for a mood boost
The Speakeasy	Randomly get 0-3 rumors here, about areas & groups around the city. Also get inebriated
Spark Pug	Electronics store. 25% discount on electronics, shop while in the area
Echo Alley	Line between reality and The Ruins is thin here. High chance of echo run-ins on a visit

Resources are materials worth an equivalent dollar amount, used for rituals, crafting, and some practices. They may be generic but small, or specific but more meaningful in equivalent dollar amounts. When specific, they are often specific to scenarios like crafting only, rituals only, a type of crafting, niche crafting, a category of fields, or a niche field.

You find \$12 in materials that can be used for just about anything.
You find \$35 in crafting resources in an abandoned dumping site. There's a chance of finding tools (assets), but you're not so lucky.
You find \$33 in materials for Visceral practices and Visceral-specific crafting.
You find \$47 in materials relevant for Fae practices.

Interactions are run-ins with specific individuals, ranging from the mundane to the dramatic. They can include simple boosts to things that aren't covered by other categories (morale, chance funds), or a 'choose A or B' with results outlined. Interactions are typically meetings with individuals who aren't obvious or notable enough to be covered in rumors, and who may as well be one-off encounters. The individual can easily be found again on a future visit to the area, if needed, though the event may not be repeated. For those who work with lesser Others that mingle with human society, this can be a way to scrounge some up, especially in areas of the city where humans are less abundant, and in the outskirts. Take note, however, there's a chance an encounter can be hostile, such as a mugger, or be important people or Others who don't have rumors about them. These encounters often happen at the start of their next session. Interactions can be human only or Other only, or a mix, depending on the area.

(These can come with unlocks on the clue grid; see Downtime: Intelligence)

Other Rules

Routing: Navigating the city on foot or on bike can be a bit time consuming. To get to some areas, you might need to pass through others, which necessitates using up a roll. In a case of getting from point A to point C, the player with three rolls total can start in A, uses one roll in B, then has two left over once they're in C. Shortcuts (see Discovered Locations) help with this.

Familiarity: Once a player has found a combination of discovered locations or rolled results adding up to 6 (in any combination: 2 discovered locations and 4 results, for example), they uncover something special. They do this again at 9 and 14 results found. This can be:

- **Special Locations** - Like discovered locations, but better. Places where city leylines meet where rituals will be more expansive and cheaper, easy access points from reality to Other realms, or an abandoned garage full of assets.
- **Contacts** - Being in an area enough can mean getting to know key people who can do useful things. If the character is friendly enough with them, they'll be an asset and a resource. The old retired craftsman who can loan tools and do simple jobs in exchange for conversation, the homeless Aware who gets portents about what's in store in the future, etc. Can easily talk to them when visiting the area.
- **Another Route** - Uncovers another trait for the area, giving more options when rolling. An area that's labeled Poor + Tenements might have a discoverable community Market.

Exploring Specific Areas: In scenarios where the game is limited to a small area with singular locations, Explore can be used to visit and search out singular spots. These spots may be narrowed down to a few areas with a lot in them, and some areas with less in them, but any given area will be exhausted. Rather than familiarity rules where getting familiar with an area gives more rolls, these areas start turning up 'nothing', instead. It's up to the player to decide when the rate of returns isn't worth it anymore. A good choice for short campaigns and games where survival and scrounging for resources is a part of the story.

In a town taken over by the Paper Bag Head bugge, the players are surviving innocents, Others, and practitioners given the option of going to the school, police station, library, grocery store, garage, and convenience store, or they can try their hands at breaking into a house, where there's a chance of running into trouble (at which point the search ends prematurely). On top of depletion of resources in an area, however, the GM also rules that there's a chance that a location becomes compromised. If so, exploring has to happen in-session and is likely to involve conflict. If an area progresses past 'compromised', searching it becomes next to impossible, so they'll have to decide what to prioritize.

Exploring Wilderness and Strange Realms: Exploration of uninhabited areas like tracts of forest, mountains, or swamp and exploration of strange realms like the shallow warrens or spirit world may be available, based on starting practice and school. Access to strange realms may be dependent on proving the area can be safely navigated in-session or securing permission. The going tends to be slow and unproductive/dangerous, but on gaining familiarity, bad results and non-results are replaced or improved, though there may always be a baseline danger, and two tracts of Warrens might be effectively merged into one, as paths and routes are found, making deeper navigation easier.

Generating an Area: To generate a location, the GM should pick or create two traits, figure out if it leans in any particular direction for types of Other (called ‘influence’), and work out in advance if they want to have any specific special locations that can be discovered (and even hinted at). Not all of this has to be done for every location, and some can be postponed until they’re rolled. Players may not even know the traits a location has. Note connected locations.

Some sample area traits (General):

Residential	
1	Rumor: Group
2	Rumor: Group or Influence
3	Discover a minor location
4	Interaction: Human
5	Interaction: Human
6	Interaction: Other

Commercial	
1	Rumor: Group or Influence
2	Discover a minor location
3	Discover a minor location
4	50% off [random item type]*
5	75% off [random item type]*
6	Interaction: Human (75%) or Other

Industrial	
1	Discover a minor location
2	\$35 in practice resource, random
3	Interaction: Human
4	\$50 in crafting resources, general
5	Interaction: Other
6	\$15 in practice resource, choose

* (% Subject to change depending on area wealth)

Dangerous-	
1	Rumor: Group (2x effectiveness)
2	Discover a minor location
3	\$25 in practice resource, random
4	Interaction: Human
5	Interaction: Other*
6	Combat (must be taken if rolled)

*(In very dangerous areas, 5s can be treated like 6s)

Gentrified-	
1	Rumor: Group or Influence
2	Discover an <i>expensive</i> location
3	Interaction: Human
4	Interaction: Snobby Human*
5	Lose familiarity, roll twice, take both
6	Shop: 2x price, but bonus quality!

*(Friendly or unfriendly encounter, based on appearance)

Run-Down-	
1	\$15 in practice resources, random
2	Discover a minor location
3	Discover two locations, choose 1.
4	Interaction: Human
5	Interaction: Other
6	Interaction: Other

Specific

Jonah Kail’s Defunct Demesnes			
1	Non-practice book.	7	Storage: Extend 1-6 with +1 find ea.
2	Two non-practice books.	8	Closet: Extend 1-6 with +1 find ea.
3	1d6 x \$20 in practice resources.	9	Penitent book: The Leper
4	Practitioner-Relevant Asset	10	Penitent book: Self-Flagellation
5	Book, bottom-tier, Divine or Tools	11	Personal notes, <i>Dramatis Personae</i>
6	Book, moderate tier, Divine or Tools	12	Jonah Kail’s body & items.
Only extensive search, with two die put together for a 2d6 roll can achieve latter 6 results. No familiarity obtained in area; results 1-6 have 50% chance of being exhausted on being found. Results 7-12 are always exhausted when taken.			

Wilderness & Strange:

Lakeside	
1	Small wildlife (mostly useless)
2	Forage, half a meal’s worth of food
3	Resources worth \$5 in crafting.
4	Discover a minor location
5	15% chance of wildlife encounter
6	50% chance of Other encounter

Caves	
1	Stone worth \$5 in crafting
2	Get lost/stuck, lose time
3	Piece of old mining equipment
4	50% chance of interaction, Other
5	50% to discover a minor location.
6	Passage: counts 3x for familiarity.

Familiarity with the caves is required to get to certain other locations: the mines, far side of the mountain.

Fleshmongled Fleshplains	
1	50%: Get mongled, small mutation.
2	25%: Discover a minor location
3	Resources worth \$15, visceral
4	50%: Fleshmongled Item*
5	Encounter (50% hostile): Other
6	Combat (must take): Other

*(Roll 4d6 for value and take worst result)



Crafting

Create a mundane item.

Crafting is an option available to everyone, but not everyone is going to be a capable craftsman. This category has several sub-options, and interacts with the *Craft* skill and *Assets*, which help with the task of putting something together. Crafting is used to create equipment, tools, assets, food, and books. When creating a magic item, if the object to be made magical is not bought, it is typically crafted.

Baseline, each period of downtime spent allows the character to take [Dexterity] actions within this skill. With three dexterity they could roll for various craft three different times, or they could craft and repair twice, in any combination they desire, working on the same or different projects. *However*, each individual project has a limited number of attempts an individual can put into it, equal to that individual's [Knowledge]. Each attempt can get individual modifiers from skills, backgrounds, and assets, while bonuses and maluses from Dexterity and Knowledge are applied at the end. Projects left unfinished in one downtime can be picked up in another.

Each project is a lengthy DC, with the following guidelines:

Low tier	Lengthy DC of 10	Materials cost 1/4th item's shelf price
Mid-tier	Lengthy DC of 15	Materials cost 1/3rd item's shelf price
High tier	Lengthy DC of 20	Materials cost 1/2 item's shelf price

Low tier items are those that the average person could put together on their own with a few glances at the internet. This could be:

- A baseball bat with nails in it. Inelegant but suffices to dish out the hurt.
- Crappy improvised armor made of sports equipment and supplementary materials.
- A decent dinner giving a chance to boost morale and relationships with those who eat it.
- An essay for a high school level class (it isn't obligatory that a player in high school be doing these, but this is the typical 'writing' production at this tier.

At this tier, assets aren't really viable, or are so poor they offer negligible bonuses.

Mid-tier items are in line with what could usually be found for sale in stores, and:

- Basic computer programs to carry out very basic tasks or hacks.
- Common drugs and medicines like those commonly for sale.
- A nice dinner that gives a guaranteed morale boost.
- A starter book.*
- A basic piece of furniture as an asset.*

*Especially lengthy projects, see below.

High-tier items are professional, luxury, or custom-tailored, and generally offer double the benefit compared to mid-tier items. Quality texts, major assets, advanced programs, etc.

The GM may wish to add their own requirements and modifiers. Some suggested ones include:

- If an item is consumable and not meant to last, -5 to DC.
- If perishable, reduce attempts by 1.
- If an item is mechanical, add +5 to the DC
- If it's beyond an average person's ability to learn in an afternoon (gunsmithing, oil painting), add 5-10 to the DC.
- There may be consequences for failure. Making meth could lead to a lab explosion if too many 1s are rolled, or a lengthy project could fail if the DC isn't consistently met.
- Some items may not reveal the results to the player until the item is used.
- For especially lengthy projects, such as creating an asset or book, or building a house the target DC can be multiplied by 1.5x to 5x.

Because the baseline DCs are too high for the average individual to meet, some combination of background, skills, and assets are likely needed to improve the results. With just the basic crafting skill, the player rolls two dice per action and keeps the best one each time, and they add a bonus at the tail end of the crafting attempt, based on their crafting skills known. For example, a crafting session might look like this (three dex, with four knowledge granting four attempts per project, painting project started in prior sessions):

Painting, 3rd of 4 attempts	Painting, Last of 4 attempts	3x Molotov Cocktail 1st of 4 attempts.
		?
+3 (total: 8)	+6 (total: 14)	Viability unknown.

The painting would get at least a +1 from the crafting skill, for a total of 15. The viability of the molotov cocktails might not be known until they are used - in a pinch, the player could opt to just take them and use them, hoping at least one met the lengthy DC of 5.

When another individual helps, they can contribute to an ongoing attempt with a roll of their own, applying their skill. This can be heavily collaborative, pooling skill and effort together to get consistently high results and create something higher-end. Assets can also provide bonuses, doing things like raising the minimum possible result of all rolls to 2, increasing the number of attempts, or providing resources.

The monetary amount required is a rough translation of whatever materials the item requires. The materials required to make an item to house something Abyssal may not be pretty or expensive, but factoring in a required age, sturdiness, and a requirement that the item have been located on the site of an important murder might raise the standards up enough that the item could reach a price tag in the thousands or tens of thousands. Materials can be acquired on their own (in this case, by going to the Abyss), but that requires time, luck, and danger, in varying amounts.

Writings, by contrast, have their own requirements...

Writings don't use conventional materials (though crafting a nice leatherbound tome with a quality to match the contents would, if the writer was so inclined), but, as far as crafting goes, require clues. Clues must be put together in sets and arrangements to meet resource qualifications, *and* they must be paired with pre-existing knowledge, practices, or backgrounds. A practitioner can't put something into a book for others to learn until they've learned it themselves. Each node in the work requires a recipe. Some example recipes include:

Tier	Recipes	Granting:
Low-tier	1x  1x  1x  3 of a kind for any  2 of:   /   /  	Book Read 1x [Clue 1] (of type matching used clues)
Mid-Tier	           	Easy practice. 1x [Clue 2] Minor background Book Memorized
High-Tier	                 	Advanced practice 1x [Clue 3] Strong background.

Where blue, red, and yellow work as substitutes for a practitioner's row, column, and field, under schools. Introducing [Clue 1] or [Clue 2] entries as nodes unto themselves allows boosting a later node. Two such nodes can improve a mid-tier node: making a later clue entry into a choice between two clues, relevant to the text, increasing or an easy practice to a moderate one, or turning a minor/negligible background into a moderate one. Four such nodes can do something similar with high tier results. Investing more clues than necessary into a given node allows a roll to get a similar, boosted result, based on the clues provided (requires a 7+, clue 1 gives +1 to the roll, clue level 2 gives a +2, etc.)

Every book must be made with at least a 'book read' and 'book memorized' node, and two other nodes. The baseline value of such a book is \$25, but this increases by 33%, cumulative, for every additional or boosted node, and is multiplied further if the book itself has any beneficial aspects (or reduced in value if they have any negative ones).

When writing a text, the writer may increase the DC by +5 to include a beneficial aspect, or reduce the target DC by 5 by including a negative aspect, to a maximum of twice. The GM should select a shortlist of qualities (say, 2-3), and allow the writer to select one. The writer may make this choice at any time.

Writings must be bound into books individually and mailed out (mailing costs will be covered, but labor won't), or sold to a publisher (who will handle the book creation if they think the book has value). These will be give returns based on interest (if the publisher even accepts something), which is GM's discretion based on book originality and breadth of appeal, giving anywhere from 10 to 1000 sales. There will also be some corresponding reputation for anyone capable of writing a text.

Crafting and Magic Items

Magic items have a rough corresponding value, that affects their power level. Item value is an overall abstraction of the item's worth. Each item is, with a quick diagnostic (or basic Sight for most Collectors) identifiable as having a particular value, measured on a track of 1-10.

At value level 1, an item might be mostly awful or worst for its puissance, access, longevity, and executions, it might have slightly better functionality but a set drawback or curse, or it might be so niche it has little relative use.

At 10, items may sit around Supreme overall, they're powerful, desirable, and are likely to be among the most impressive and defining items in a practitioner or family's collection. Only Grails are likely to exceed 10 and Grails are items of a value that means they're sought by international forces.



With respective value comes a stat curve and expectations regarding crafting:

Value:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11+
Cost	\$25	\$35	\$50	\$150	\$250	\$500	\$1.5k	\$3.5k	\$5k	\$150k	\$300k
DC	10	12	15	17	20	22	25	27	30	35	40+
Arcana	W	A	A+	P	P+	M	M+	G	G+	S	S+

After an item is crafted, there will be a certain ceiling to its value as a magic item, depending on the value of the materials put into it, the end result of the long DC check, and the research results of the item (which are themselves capped by practitioner ability).

This said, if the value of materials or power invested into the object exceeds the ceiling, it can be converted to equivalent DC and vice versa. GM discretion. Essentially, bones from a dragon that are used to craft something are worth a small fortune and are going to impart a considerable value as a magic item even if the craftsmanship is shoddy, and a box made of even mundane stone with masterwork (35+ craft result) craftsmanship is similarly going to have value as a magic item. This adjustment can be treated as a measure of steps: if materials with a value of \$150k are put in (sufficient for tier 10), but the eventual result of the craft checks was a mere 26 (sufficient for tier 7), then the 10 could be lowered to a 9, and the 7 raised to an 8. An additional nudge would go nowhere, so the item's value becomes an 8, and this sets the cap for average stats achievable with the Research downtime activity, when the item is created.

When the magical power is imparted by way of the research rolls, if the end result exceeds the average, then the numbers may be adjusted as desired, so long as the average fits.

While complicated and expensive as a process, owning a magic item is a permanent power boost and an increase in versatility. Items themselves have a market value of 2-3x the crafting cost, so this can be lucrative. Note also that Tools practitioners tend to have rituals available to them that may make crafting or resource acquisition easier.

The Pactverse, Fields

Spirits

The **Spirit World** (sometimes abbreviated to 'The Spirit') is primarily populated by spirits and spirit-adjacent Others. An overlapping space, public sentiment, dreams, imaginings, inspiration, creativity, symbolism, and any ongoing practices that use spirits (which is most) are vivid and easily observed as graffiti, art, cluttered physical objects, and spirits of varying sapience, in a foggy and shifting space. Spirits themselves are often vivid, with artistic flair; each spirit represents an idea, encompassing broader and broader concepts as they get larger. Rooted loosely in the idea of shinto's kami- many gods living in a grain of rice. The color of a lemon could be represented in a tiny lemon-shaped smear of yellow with legs, while a lordly spirit could be the spirit of all art and culture in a greater geographical region.



Spirits are ambient and everywhere, and virtually every practice can use spirits to supplement what they're doing. An elementalists can tap into fire spirits, a necromancer may draw on death spirits. The practitioner's Sight will often view the spirits of a specific type and style, representing their lens for viewing the world, and many of the first practices a practitioner learns will utilize spirits: simple fire, water splash, or object movement practices.

Specialist practitioners who focus on spirits and the spirit world are called Shamans, and they can fall comfortably on any intersection in the *Immaterial* or *Divine* tracks.

- Immaterial because spirits themselves fit the criteria for being Immaterial, being intangible and functioning by rules other than flesh and blood, life and death.
- Divine because spirits are tied heavily into the big picture, and the powers that be are sometimes spirits or heavily empowered by the spirits.

This is not exhaustive. Because Spirit is so fundamental to the setting, there are no intersections or areas on the table that would evoke a strong and firm 'no' on whether the field could fit.

Spirit practices tend to use simple, strong diagram work - bold geometric shapes (circles, triangles), simple symbols for a simple force, and very old and down-to-earth tools with strong ties to tradition. Clay, rope, beads, urns, totems, stone, effigies and ancient writing are common motifs in the practice. These can produce effects that are often a step separated from reality, but innately tied to it. Expect Spirit practices to have a lot of mention of *flow* - where one spirit goes, others follow, and a door that is opened opens the way for other spirits to follow suit. While this can lead to runaway benefits and a general ease of doing things, the suggestibility of spirits cuts both ways - where two other practices of other fields might collide, spirit practices flow sideways or back, and two opposed shamans may end up in a tug of war.

Some Spirit-field practices include:

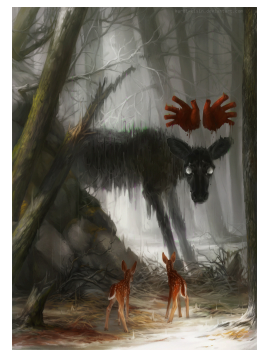
	Conflict	Deals	Visceral	Immaterial	Divine
Conjure				Spirit Breather	Psychopomp
Prices				Channeler	Sacrificial Adept
Tools				Spiritwielder	Fetishist
Realms				Astral Traveler	Dweller in Spirit
Interact				Muse	Oracle
Lore				Spirit Doctor	Umbral Consul
Protect				Tattooed	Totemist

- **Psychopomps** deal with spirits who have important functions, and involve themselves in those functions to get more leeway with the flows of spirits as a whole. Powerful Psychopomps, empowered by sorting out the universe, can blur reality and spirit around them.
- **Channelers** let the spirit world feed into and through them for brief periods, with the ability to alter reality around them by altering and manipulating the available spirits. This happens at a cost to their own Self, however, as spirits edit them too, even in passing.
- **Fetishists** create vessels that are inhabited by spirits. Effigies, dolls that carry out a spirit's will, and objects that hold spirits. Well crafted ones may become like mobile shrines, gaining worship and amassing power, while lesser ones are handy, obedient servants.
- **Astral Travelers** force their own spirit from their bodies to venture into immaterial realms, to travel, explore, spy, engage with dreams, or possess. This does leave the astral traveler intensely vulnerable, however, both in the sense their real body lies there and the spirit body has its own weaknesses.
- **Oracles** focus on big, simple events and forces, like sickness, hysteria, and war. Managing the spirits relating to these forces, they can afflict others and navigate these forces, prophesying war or deaths while walking through warzones untouched, or avoiding death - at least until Others or practice shake them or Innocence focuses too much on them.
- **Spirit Doctors** study and remove aspects from spirits, and do the same for individuals and objects, effectively putting effect before cause.
- **Totemists** condense spirits into totems and solidify them into statues that influence the flows of spirits, karmic law, and reality. A placed or summoned totem can distort the rules of enemy practice, passively ward off harm, or offer benefits like making it easier to study.

Spirit based items will, like the practices, be very simple and blunt, and a little bit bigger relative to their size/value in terms of power level. The appearance and type of the item will heavily inform its function, with similar ideas as an implement - a sword hurts and points, and so a magic item with heavy Spirit influence will most likely emphasize these ideas, burning with red hot heat or reflecting a beam of light that points directly to something. Negative effects are usually pretty minor, make the item spiritually taxing, or spirits transfer into the user.

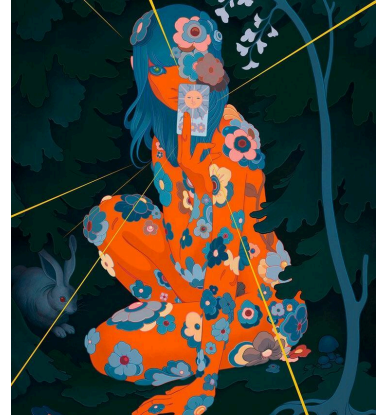
Spirit based Others are spirits. There are very few non-spirit Others in this field, and when they do appear, it's typically because of established tradition. This occurs in areas where local culture intersects spirit and the spirit world has grown more elaborate - local shrines where upkeep and worship feeds into temples in shifting spirit realms that are visited by local Others, occupied by spirits, primarily, but also a few gods, ogres, or elementals. Oftentimes, though, these Others will naturally absorb spirits and settle into a niche of purpose and/or responsibility with a bit of extra power and scale.

Simple spirits are usually fairly easy to identify with a glance, but this requires some experience; roughly half will be of the 'makes sense now that it's been named' sort. As they scale upward, they may take the appearance of humans, with altered skin, hair, decoration, or replacement body parts. A spirit of flowers could be a humanoid with a flower for a head, someone in flower body paint, or someone with



clothing brands on clear display on colorful clothes, all of which are flower related. At the upper end, spirits can be majestic, normally not viewed by anyone except Others and those with Sight, towering over mountaintops.

Typical spirits will tend to appear as though they are drawn in a different art style than 'reality', or shot in a different setting and then cut out and pasted into the scene. Symbols become literal, decorating them or the area.



Most often, variations in spirits are subtypes rather than different Others borne of the same sources, often drawing on patterns or outside sources. A non-exhaustive list:

- *Complex spirits* are a patchwork of linked immaterial/divine forces with spirits, ghosts drawing on the spiritual, spirits mingling with elemental, or gods interwoven with spiritual.
- *Petitioner spirits* reach out to the mortal world, speaking to people to appeal. They draw power directly from the engagement they get, sometimes swelling in power as a result. They usually expect specific answers or kinds of answers before getting to act if they don't get the answers they want, their function tied to the nature of the spirit (ex: poverty spirit asking where the local industry went, stripping an individual of all their wealth if they can't name a place - any place will do). May become urban legends.
- *Animus* are solid spirits, and can hew to patterns in reality: the pugilist animus that goes looking for undefeated fighters to beat down, the watcher animus who observes momentous events. They appear human, but with a specific animus-driven aesthetic.
- *Lord Spirits* or *High* spirits with Incarnation-like say over major aspects of things.

A spirit can easily be multiple of these: complex petitioner spirits drawing on an echo's unresolved question, for example.

Elemental

The elemental schools deal with the simple forces, but unlike Incarnations, they embody the physical world, not human and worldly conceits. The common elements are earth, water, fire, and air, but there are many sub-derivative elements, such as cold, lightning, light, dark, smoke, sound, and metal. They are said to be those that bridge the gap between spirit and reality, or Creation and reality.



Elemental practices and Others tend to be short lived in their manifestation. They happen in the short term, often do a lot of damage, leave the environment sharply changed (flooded, burning, ruined), and pass without remark. Innocents don't necessarily see elementals, and when they do, they tend to forget them far more easily than they do other Others. This applies broadly to most things Elemental; the 'realms' of elementals, the practices, and the systems surrounding them. With this short life, however, comes a lot of raw, accessible power.



The realms of elementals are called Storms. They manifest with one or two elements at the forefront, and tend to find their moments in natural disaster or industrial disaster. City fires, floods, storms, gas leaks in warehouses, and other events with a lot of natural elemental energies can be the sparking off points for a storm of related energies. It becomes far easier for one to manifest when

humans aren't immediately involved or can be killed by the storm, and thus fail to bring any news of Others out of the event. Storms only last for a matter of hours or days, and are violent events that few survive, where the elements move and change with almost living mentality, elemental Others manifest out of areas of peak intensity, lasting only as long as the storm does, or for hours, days or weeks after, and elemental energies and confluences run rampant, with effects like various elemental practices. They may bridge gaps between other realms, so expect there to be movements of appropriate echoes if an area with a thin barrier between reality and the Ruins has a Storm pass over it, or Abyssal bogeymen may emerge to prey on those who weren't able to get out of the way of the Storm. Others that are bound to a location by external systems and wards are likely to get free, and the power of the Storm itself may make the more malleable of Others partially elemental. These events tend to draw a lot of practitioners in, both to secure things that need securing such as escaping Others, and to capitalize on the raw power available from a Storm - items may become infused, and raw power is so abundant that any practices capable of storing energy will quickly be topped off, even less suitable ones. As far as related concepts go, lesser events may resemble Storms in some ways (micro-Storms), and some practitioners enter Alcazar-like frameworks around elemental events, called Stormside events.

Though not a true 'realm', longer-lived elemental Others dwell in the most remote, elemental locations, where humans rarely tread, such as deep mountain ranges and volcanoes.

Elemental Others come in a variety of forms. At the low and common level are Constituents, who resemble humans in silhouette, but vestigial (see Hollow) and connected by a singular elemental force, Rudiments, who take more bestial or loose forms made of elementally touched debris and wreckage (such as warped metal and shattered wood), and their various offshoots.

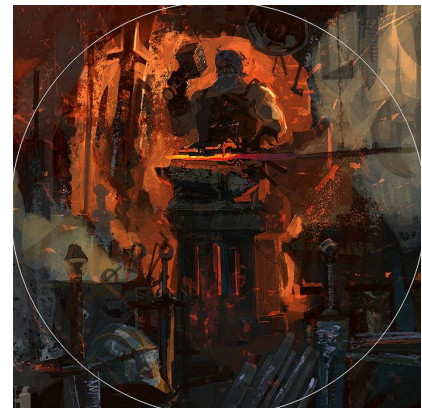


These Others are what people tend to mean when referring to 'Elementals'. They usually emerge from Storms and micro-Storm events, urban and human touched for Constituents and wild and natural for Rudiments, though not as a hard and fast rule, however; Rudiments can emerge from a disaster in the middle of a city.



These Others tend to only last as long as a Storm does, but a number ranging from one in five to one in a hundred may persist after the storm, depending on the event and the surrounding climate of Innocence. They instinctively create or perpetuate Storms or make them worse, homing in on circumstances or objects that are ready for some disaster to unfold, heating up the wrong thing, increasing water or gas pressure, or doing something else to bring events to fruition. By being close to a Storm, especially the Storm's originating point, they swiftly grow and evolve into other forms of elemental Other that are harder to deal with. In this way, a warehouse gas leak can become an explosion and building collapse, with lesser Constituents and Rudiments born from the unfolding disasters, while the ones who were there for the event rapidly evolve. At the base level, expect to see some minor elemental manipulation, and at the advanced stages, command of lesser elementals, greater intelligence and more diverse attack patterns.

There are some Others who persist for longer, or find a place in the broader systems of the world that have elemental power as a part of that. Dwarves are fairy-adjacent Others who tap into elements to create great works, often elementally aligned. Ogres are brutish creatures of the old world that consume on a vast scale, filling a void within themselves, with elemental power being a very common result. Where elementals are short lived, ogres consume enough elemental power, flesh, and other things to keep their internal storm going. For every realm, power, or other thing that can be consumed, there are subvarieties of ogre (such as Fae ogres or Abyssal ogres) - Ogres who evolve past a certain point become attuned to the flows of the world and can handily manipulate them, and are often called Ogre Magi. Dragons, by contrast, tend to come about when an confluence of energies becomes self-sustaining or starts producing a net gain of energy, building a physical form around them. Again, while these energies can be of any realm, elemental energies are the most common. Rare and diminishing in number, dragons are large, with the smallest being elephantine and the largest being as large as mountains, and they are powerhouses, with the largest being able to create Storms with an exhalation. Others of this sort tend to keep to the distant and remote realms where humans do not visit, many of those realms elementally charged.



At the 'high' end of elemental Others, which does not exclude strong dragons or ogre magi, there are djinn, jann, ghuls (not to be confused with ghouls), and other creatures that tend to be elemental confluences in forms ranging from the human to the mythological to some human-mythological hybrids. These tend to edge into the direction of tapping into other realms and fields, such as karmic law or Creation. Where a dragon can create a Storm, Others of this Elemental nature and stature can work with a Storm's energy but shape it in ways that let them Create a city while they work. Expect them to be capricious, unstable, covetous of the power they wield, and very hard to access, not only existing in remote places, but behind barriers or within Hidden Valley (see Knots) side-areas of those remote places.

Elemental Practices favor relatively simple diagrams by default, leaning in the direction of the elementary and less complex celestial diagrams, and scale up not by having the diagrams become much more complex, but by having complementary materials, vessels, power sources, and context around the practices. It's common to have an element that has no kinship to the elements being worked on, to keep the active element in bounds and for the sake of contrast. The majority of the time, this is steel or iron, with less common instances including flesh, wood, glass, or crystal; these form the 'table setting' or the tools used to guide the elemental practice.

For the columns, Elemental practices are frequently *combat* practices, because they can so easily wound and kill, alter battlefields, and change the context of things, or *visceral* practices, where they focus more on the physical matter, control and claim of environment and material. For the rows, virtually any work; elementalism is reasonably diverse, but there is a bias toward Conjunction practices, emphasizing the short-lived and powerful manifestations produced.

Similar to Shamanism, overlap between the elemental field and other practices is very common, but for very different reasons. Elemental practices form the point of contact, as either the moments things work (diagrams animate and light up), or as lasting anchors in much the same way they provide bedrock for other realms: the Abyss would have little without ground to walk on, air to breathe, heat to keep it a livable temperature, or water to drink. Moving further away from reality and deep into a realm tends to mean there's less natural elements and elemental energies in play: Abyss becomes ichorous dark, Ruins become wider and wider expanses of nothing, with only key elements and incarnate forces at play, Spirit World becomes more and more cloudy and ephemeral. In a similar fashion, Others, humans, and items tend to have natural elements to them that can be enhanced. If a divine servant can have a body temperature, it can have the waters within it enhanced to overflow and churn, with visible effects of flowing hair, clothing, tints to skin, and new depths in their eyes.

Elements of Creation are heavily related to the elements themselves, so expect to see promethean sparks, fonts of creation, breaths of life, and primordial clay to come up in various contexts, especially as high-end materials in crafts and rituals. Of course, this comes with corresponding competition between Elementalists of certain stripes and Creation practitioners, over limited supplies or key items.

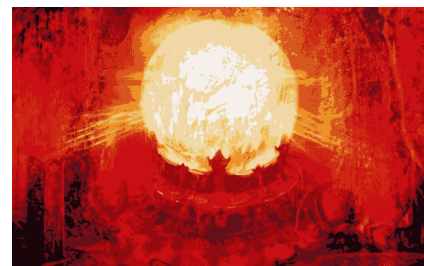
Elemental practices, more than many practices, should be considered very flexible as far as overlaps between families, schools, and approaches. A Storm Chaser that specializes in diving into Storms and collecting the valuable power within will need a means of protecting themselves from the element. In texts and handbooks, there may be a suggested approach, which for the Storm Chaser involves becoming a bit elemental for brief periods, to weather the Storm. However, they could just as easily borrow something from the Brasshearts, Rhythm Mages, or another elemental field, for drastic stylistic differences. They can be distinguished even more by their elements of specialty.

All this said, elemental practitioners (and Others, for that matter) are notable for their power, emphasis on power *management*, and their sheer impact. They lend themselves very well to overriding others, especially in the short term. When two practices are trying to work across an area, then the elemental one is liable to affect the earth the diagram is drawn on, the air the connections communicate across, or shake the spirits themselves and making them stumble. Through this, they have a way of taking precedence, at least in the initial phase, before they fade. Some elemental practices are built on this principle.



Elemental Magic Items draw on all of these characteristics. Expect some tendency toward big, powerful effects, emphasis on power requirements, power management or storage, overriding other effects, offensive output, and functionality emphasizing the *immediate* effects, tapering off quickly. Expect to see a great deal of emphasis on the framing and reinforcement, in tune with the element being braced - something finer for air, heavy for earth, etc. This takes the form of Bracing, heavy borders or decorated edges- not necessarily encircling the item, but at least holding it. These things help keep excess power in bounds, and keep the item from biting the hand that wields it.

This sort of safety feature is because Elemental items are more likely than others to misfire or release their contained energies in violent torrents. On the downside, this means that someone breaking the item as it's wielded can set the wielder afire, throw them across the room, or cause serious injury. On the *upside*, this can be used strategically, and many elemental items offer the option of being able to be broken apart for emergency power. With elemental energies being easily produced and easily translated to raw power for other purposes, this makes them something very few practitioners are disappointed to come across.



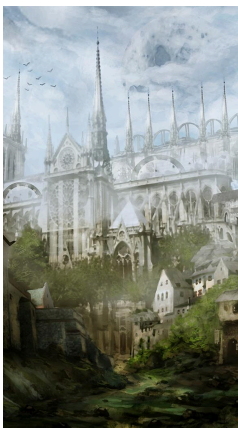
For what it's worth, elemental magic items don't tend to keep well without some attention and care. Where some magic items of other types may age like fine wine or continue operating on their own, elemental items kept in a cellar and ignored may burst into flame, cause the cellar wall to break and earth to cave in, or draw water out of nearby pipes and produce a leak. This gets to be much less of a problem with each step that the item's quality and value increases... but when a higher-tier item *does* break, the corresponding damage is exponentially greater.

Some suggested Elemental practices include:

	Conflict	Deals	Visceral	Immaterial	Divine
Conjure	8 Corner Adept	Rudite	Transfigurist	Brainstormer	Djinkissed
Prices	Brassheart		Cataclyst		
Tools	Elemental Jar		Kindler		
Realms	Storm Chaser	Mayeure	Coercere	Slip	Stormsheart
Interact	Rustbelter		Shockjack		
Lore	Greatspark		Principium		
Protect	Ogre Magi		Gaian		

- **Eight Corner Adept** - An elemental practitioner dedicated to mastering diverse and flexible combat elementalism; the eight corners refer to the four primary elements (earth, air, fire, and water) and the four greater types of Other associated with elementalism.
- **Brassheart** practitioners use an elemental item or element of Creation to fuel their physiology, reinforcing themselves with increasingly complex steampunk or forged parts to minimize the damage the practice does to their bodies. On the upside, these reinforcements make them largely invulnerable to the elements and the power source gives them elemental expressions at will. Varies depending on the element they house.
- **Elemental Jars** or Urnbearers carry vessels to produce their elements, with emphasis on big and large-scale effects, opening their jars to flood areas with poison gas, producing a flamethrower-like gout of glass shards, or writing practice on the jar before lobbing an general artillery-like shot a half-mile distance.
- **Storm Chasers** track, dive into, and capitalize on Storms, and when there are none, track, trace, and dive into other elemental events, as Stormside events; a form of Alcazar, emphasizing the elemental.
- **Rustbelters** use the overriding properties of elemental practice to pack a slew of what are effectively counterspells, means of damaging or locking down magic items with elemental corrosion (not necessarily rust), and are generally very good at countering, debilitating, and penetrating protections.
- **Greatsparks** tend to go by the name of the elemental practice they are refining; they have one heavy-duty practice they specialize and hone, such as the namesake spark that is heated to impossible temperatures and then fired like a bullet. The practice varies, but it tends to require setup and the augury, tracking, and planning tools provided by Lore practices, to make sure the very heavy investment doesn't miss.
- **Ogre Magi** or Rhythm Mages chain together elemental practices with defensive mantras and other techniques, for devastating and fluid expressions of power.
- **Rudites** summon, conjure, and work with the base elementals, not necessarily rudiments, but very commonly so. A very classic combat summoner.
- **Mayeures** (from Majeure and Mayor) secure elementals as long-term assets, favoring Constituents, venturing into elemental events, coming out with allies, and then putting them to work as soldiers or builders.

- **Transfigurists** emphasize shaping, translating, and manipulating the elements, being very good at altering terrain, turning asphalt into quicksand, or wind into brittle frost and then frost into ice bridges.
- **Cataclysts** work on the elemental disasters that can spark storms from two directions, supporting and mastering the omens and setup that allow disasters to happen, and handling the disasters after the fact. They don't just play with metaphorical fire, they play with potential warehouse explosions that level city blocks and then reap power from that unexpressed potential... or reap more power from letting the explosion happen (or flood, collapse, gas leak, etc).
- **Kindlers** foster elemental traits in items, both creating temporary elemental magic items and turning existing magic items into elemental ones, with exaggerated strengths and weaknesses of elemental items. They can also contain and carry kindling motes (of water, fire, air, cold, etc) that can be pushed or forced into things to give elemental qualities to people, places, or other things.
- **Coercere** specialize in forcing others out of their sanctuaries, realms, and safe spaces, raising the pressure steadily by forcing in weather events, temperature changes, and even micro-Storms. Once the area is abandoned, they can try to raid it before the occupants return, or target the occupants outside their protected spaces.
- **Shockjacks** combine overriding principles of Elementalism with the ability to hit hard in ways Innocents are likely to ignore. Picking their moments well, these elementalists can ambush a target in a place crowded with Innocents, with Others and practitioners not only having hands tied, but being hampered by an arsenal of practices that blind, surprise, and manipulate both people and environment.
- **Gaian** practitioners cultivate and refine the quality of elements within their own bodies, causing them to grow in stature and bulk. For the skilled, this can be height and muscle, for others it is weight around the middle, but either way, they become very strong and very durable; they are resistant to elements and other forms of harm and can extend that resistance to other things.
- **Brainstormers** emphasize the ways elements interact with the immaterial worlds; they can stir up elementally charged spirits and echoes if they get emotional or inspired enough. When they get enough momentum, they have mobs of immaterial entities pouring out of their minds or hearts, spreading elemental devastation on command.
- **Slips** access a variety of realms for very short times, by insulating themselves with elemental energies that override that realm's rules and effects.
- **Djinnkissed** tap Djinn powers to work on a very high, intricate level with very raw, rough elements, alternating between rapid, rich creation and devastation when it crumbles.
- **Stormhearts** take (or share splinters within a family) a prized core kernel of a Storm and use it to create a forever Storm that they tie to themselves, usually within a bound area, to be used as a resource.



The Faerie Courts, Faerie, or The Courts are sublime and beautiful, and widely viewed as exceptionally dangerous territories. If one wouldn't want to arm wrestle a giant, then they shouldn't want to scheme with the Fae or Faerie, who turn their immortality toward centuries-long plots and intricacies. As a realm, the Courts are very distinct from one another, each generating a certain mood and leaning into a certain kind of function. The terminology around Courts tends to change over time, but at the current moment, the accepted division is to split it into High Spring, High Summer, High Fall, Winter, Dark Spring, Dark Summer, and Dark Fall, for seven courts in total. High courts may be given other titles along the lines of Bright Spring, Noble Summer, Fall under the Sun, etc, and Dark courts may be called Spring Below, Summer Beneath, Fall in Shadow, etc.

Spring courts emphasize fine aristocracy, Summer favors adventure and nature, Fall trade and diversity, and Winter itself is the closest thing to a ruling court, with its people in a manner of stasis, while having no above/below distinction. The distinction between the courts above and the courts below is one of superficial beauty and brightness and dark cruelty, but to classify them as 'good' and 'evil' would be falling into a trap. The aristocrats of High Spring may be gilded and polite, in contrast to the barely constrained elegant sadism of Dark Spring, but they will nonetheless talk you into destroying your Self if one isn't careful.

The Faerie or Fae (interchangeable) themselves are typically striking individuals, and the dominant, namesake entities of the realm. They are beautiful, even when monstrous, as one might see in both fall courts & dark summer, and eat, breathe, shed, and manipulate glamour, a dust-like resource that can be molded to create something that the layman might call illusion. Glamour, however, extends things a step further in lying to reality, and with a skilled hand, the falsehood it paints as real can become real if left alone. This weaves into how skilled they are with words and planning; even a young Fae of the lowest station, such as the maid of a modest fae Flame seller in the Bright Fall market is not to be underestimated, and likely has a hundred involvements, alliances, social traps waiting to be sprung, guises, and roles in other grand schemes of other Fae, which in and of themselves have their own spiraling complications, traps, and sub-plots. There is, in short, a reason for her to be there, and if there weren't, then either lesser Fae would be hired, or glamour would be thrown at the problem and the cleaning would be done when nobody was looking, regardless.

Much of this scheming owes to the Fae's greatest weakness: boredom. They are immortal but over time, they start to see the patterns in things and common entertainment ceases to engage them. Thus, it must become more involved and drawn out. When the stories have all played out and they find themselves in a rut, then the Fae often either perishes or changes court to Winter, depending on if they have what it takes to contribute to that court. To a Fae, this is a kind of death, with parallels to someone paralyzed but aware, or committed to an asylum.

Lesser denizens and fauna of the courts fall into a loose and extremely varied category sometimes put under a wide umbrella called 'fairy' or fairies, with a particular spelling and the non-capitalized 'f'. These include the wizened, foot-high brownies offering their services, Changelings, Strangelings, Fetches, glamour-modified animals or fantastical creatures, otherwise called Fauna Ephemera, or the actual fairies themselves, with little butterfly, moth, dragonfly, or wasp wings. Such creatures are almost never more than pawns in the broader Fae schemes, and their interaction with glamour is singular. Strangelings (bipedal, clothed animals that insinuate themselves into households pretending to be pets, get to mischief, and set the family up for Fae or fairy predation) and Changelings (fairies or even Fae who get swapped for human babies, who are then sold in markets or raised in courts) may have a small handful of tricks with glamour, Fetches and Fauna Ephemera simply eat glamour to subsist and develop themselves, brownies use it to help with their work or position themselves, and fairies collect it from the environment and refine it when they don't have other errands.



Other, lesser entities and those from Crossroad realms may live in the Fae realms but not truly be *of* the Fae realms. Reclusive elves and dwarves exist in the background, generally avoiding humanity and maintain very limited contact with even the local Faerie, the summer courts may have satyrs, minotaurs, or sirens, alongside other half-animal species, as their rank and file troops for time of battle, the Fall courts can have high concentrations of just about everything non-Faerie described on this page, as well as humans (including slaves), dark Fall even has some goblins, goblin-adjacent things, and various other Others like undead or the occasional bogeyman. Winter, however, is very exclusive to the Faerie and visiting is often a matter of hours spent there, if that, with few surviving more than a day and night.

As a practice, Interaction and Deals lend themselves best to glamour and Fae wiles, respectively, while Conjuraton for more glamour manipulation and Realms for the Faerie Courts specifically work as lesser but valid directions to go. Overall, however, there is room for Faerie to cover any field and little is ruled out. Expect Conflict and Visceral to perhaps tap into the Summer courts, Immaterial to be relevant to Dark Spring or Dark Fall's propensity for working with curses (where Dark Summer is perhaps too direct), and it's possible to have a Winter Fae or the Winter court stand in as a higher power for something Divine.

When seen in action, Faerie practices tend to be light, airy, beautiful, and fragile. Expect to see little flower petals that blossom, changes in light, and an effort toward *art*, even when that art isn't the focus or intent; even a Faerie curse will be something that, to the right eye, looks beautiful, winding its way across flesh in patterns and styles that a tattoo artist could envy and try to emulate. Any runework will be light and delicate, with thin lines and careful script, so the Fae practitioners must practice and perfect their penmanship and brushstrokes. When manipulating glamour, every hand movement will matter, with each movement of the fingers tuning color, shade, and shape. Expect anything Fae to be vulnerable to the crude, ugly, and direct; even a loud, unexpected noise or common punch could crack most glamour.

Suggested Fae practices include:

	Conflict	Deals	Visceral	Immaterial	Divine
Conjure		Glamour Aesthete			
Prices		Beguiled			
Tools		Court Connoisseur			
Realms		Court Ambassador			
Interact	Fae Duelist	Fae Mage	Summer Child	Thistlewitch	Winter Graced
Lore		Strange Spymaster			
Protect		Court Consort			

- **Glamour Aesthetes** specifically create and use glamour with short-term uses and expertise as a focus, maintaining relationships with Faerie for their supply.
- **Beguiled** have suborned themselves to Faerie schemes, accepting they will be the victim of wry circumstance and perpetual drama, enabling Faerie (often a select one or handful) to better act in reality, through them and using them, getting graces and benefits in return.
- **Court Connoisseurs** or simply Connoisseurs collect, steal, or go to markets to buy art and items from the Fae, decorating themselves and surrounding themselves with finery, clothing, and tools that are simultaneously fragile and exceptionally good at their functions.
- **Court Ambassadors** travel between the courts, and can bring Fae or fairy through, doing their best to strike certain balances and avoid offending the Fae on the one side and allowing too much mismanaged drama to extend to the human side.
- **Fae Duelists** weave the finer expertise and finesse of Fae fighting styles with glamour and battlefield trickery. They can be so beautiful while they fight that their enemies forget to keep the rapier from piercing their hearts.
- **Strange Spymasters** work with strangelings and changelings to rogueish ends, and make a mastery out of tricks and tools that a common Fae might never even give a second thought.
- The **Summer Child** turns glamour inward, much as Summer Fae may do, creating a battery of glamour and presence tied into their successes and inveiglements of their opposition. Blunter than many glamour wielders, turning glamour to firmer ends.
- The **Thistlewitch** is the Dark Fall cursewright, combining hedge magics, tricks traded in the Dark Fall markets, and Glamour to weave and inflict curses.
- **Court Consorts** have relationships with Fae, often physical ones or as performers or artists of styles and work outside the usual Fae realms of ability/taste. In exchange for being a pet, lover, or performer, they get subtle protections and gifts.
- **Winter Graced** are those who have worked out the ability to deal with Winter Court powers, and work glamour that is much firmer and more meaningful. Where other Fae practitioners transform, they cold-forge dichotomies. Though powerful illusionists tapped into high powers, they work with a cold sword of damocles poised above their heads.

Fae Mages are the specialist practice, dabbling in some or all of the above. Successful glamour workings solidify into assets, which are tied to the practitioner, growing as they succeed, deal, and extend their schemes, breaking if they are foiled.

When the Fae interact with humanity, they tend to place themselves along the fringes, persisting in spaces where they are peripheral or where the odd and beguiling aren't challenged. When they exist on the fringes of civilization, they like to find places that are naturally beautiful and unclaimed, or create little hideaway spaces. When they exist in civilization, it's in penthouses, interacting with artists and rich eccentrics. The common Fae is simply too used to living in an environment where there is beauty and an artist's touch to even the layout of strands of grass, and the hustle and bustle of common human civilization are grating and choking.



Most often, however, they use magic items as independently operating tools or send agents to pave the way. The aforementioned strangelings and changelings are one way, but even those may have human help. Often, rather than act directly, Fae have human agents that are acquired by the Fall courts (typically), sold on the Fall markets (again, typically, but every realm has a few markets) and trained or glamour bound to gather or distribute items, set up agents, lure people back, or otherwise act in the mundane.

Fae Magic Items are often exceptional but fragile, have subtle functions, or are tied into narratives. The exceptional could include a sword that can cut through anything but that will break (permanently or temporarily) if touched by anything it is not cutting while unsheathed, or a music box that produces music that is captivating and heartbreaking, entrancing listeners. The subtle could include a ring that steals beauty bit by bit from those surrounding the wearer, while enhancing the wearer by equal amounts, or a lens that lets the person using it see what individuals dreamed about last. Narrative items tend to tell and encourage a story, and may overlap with the above: that same ring that steals beauty may also have something working in the background to raise the practitioner's position and place them where that beauty is most coveted... while also giving cause for jealousy and a fall as meteoric as their rise was. The fragile sword may contrive to break at a moment when the wielder is confident it will work, in the most important fight of their life. All to tell a story. In short, items may themselves have schemes, or may contrive to turn the user into a pawn, who'll arrive at the right place to be captured or caught up in a scheme. Fae make a lot of cursed items, to glean amusement and power that can afford them an edge in their plots.



Fae markets are a common source for lesser magic items and those trifles, potions, or consumables, but the cost is often something intangible, so expect currencies to be things like dreams and tears of a specific type and origin. The actual price is oftentimes that the items or the relationship with the seller may have factors the practitioner is not clearly aware of.

Warrens

The Warrens were a relatively minor realm until humanity began to surge, around the time of the industrial revolution. It consists of muddy tunnels extending beneath and throughout realms, filled with a variety of variant subterranean and above-ground biomes, though the above ground ones exist in caves so large one cannot easily perceive the ceiling. Dirt, mud, and other common terrain features mingle with flesh and various bodily fluids that are as common as stone and water might be elsewhere. It is dark, fetid, and loaded to bear with parasites, disease, detritus, and goblins, and linked to ideas of excess, the pushing of boundaries, waste, and the *visceral*. It adapted well enough to the spread and turn of humanity that it has become a realm with worldwide foothold.

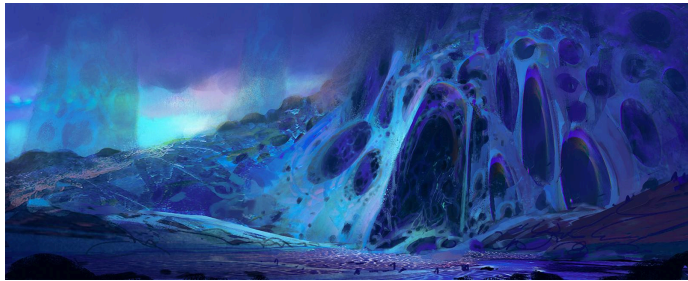
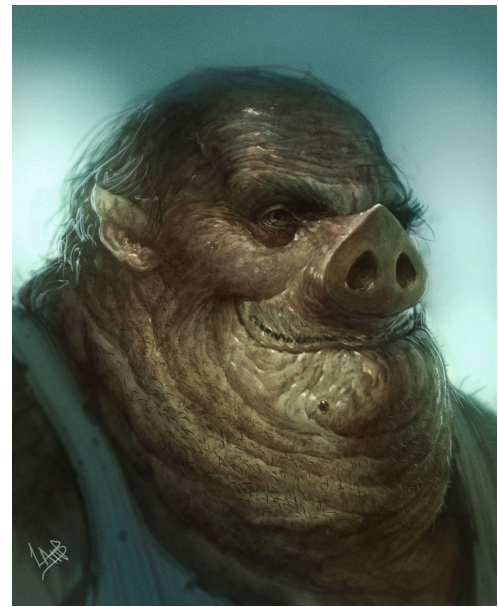


Goblins are the dominant species within the Warrens, and come in shapes and sizes from the length and width of an adult human's thumb to literal mountain-sized heaps of flesh. They may have mouths filled with fangs, toothless mouths, beaks, multiple mouths- and similar wild variation in eyes, hair, skin (sometimes scale, rarely but not never feathers), and proportions, and tend to have vulgar names like Warthole, Queeflet, Shathat, Cumpump, and Princess Pisspriss. Goblins from the same area don't have much commonality in appearance, but will most likely be within a size category of one another. Some areas are so fertile that goblins can be fished out of the mud, and others don't naturally generate goblins (though some will likely migrate there and call it home). They are numerous, childish or child-like, rude, with extreme personalities, and a frequently cavalier attitude toward their own mortality.

Many variants of goblins exist, including various least tier goblins such as the throwaway, heaplings, splotches, illions, nips, and various others, who tend to be least tier (rodent sized, dumb) and single minded in digging/building, running off somewhere before exploding, multiplying, or devouring anything food-based like locusts. At the tiers above Least are slightly more sustainable versions of the lesser tier creatures, Gremlins, who specialize in technology and craft, winged goblins (who trend more primitive and occupy the largest biomes/cavern systems), and Fomorian, said by some to be the predecessor to goblins themselves, who are gaunt, taller, reclusive, xenophobic, and among the best crafters in any realm, albeit with a violent and dark flavor running through their work. Those Fomorians who still survive today occupy the deepest and most secluded aspects of the Warrens, often with several layers of Fomorian-made traps making the trip to reach them that much harder.

In leaving the Warrens and entering human society (usually through garbage dumps and moldering trash heaps, or through tunnels in the dirt), they can really only access areas where power, water, and other resources are intermittent, and, whether intentional or not, may make life of the downtrodden in the poorest, least functional areas more poor, dysfunctional, dirty, and trodden-on.

Other creatures in the Warrens include Fleshmonglers - patchwork, asymmetrical constructions of different kinds of flesh, that 'mongle' other flesh they interact with, various parasites (giant or otherwise) that alter flesh or have dramatic effects, insects, goblin-flavored beasts (Warren dogs, warren pigs, etc.), and various monsters with a plethora of tentacles, teeth, stingers, and other natural weapons. Other visceral beings may live in the Warrens, though Fae and fairies don't tend to last long, and because of the near-unavoidable long-term effects of the available foods, medical care, and parasites, they take in something of the Warrens, and are changed. They tend to be, for lack of a better word, grittier, uglier, and wilder in appearance. Humans, for example, may get small horns or different colored eyes, unusual scars or pockmarks from parasites, bone growth, or changes in proportions, including more muscle. Some believe that some 'goblins' are actually people who have progressed along these lines, potentially helped by the same distance and disconnection that makes testing or validating the theory difficult.



The Warrens are constantly shifting, with some areas being stable, others in constant flux, and travel through it is often an endeavor, with combat or conflict being very common for all but the sneakiest and most familiar with its dark corridors. The upside for visitors is that it truncates space: one can pass into the Warrens, travel a mile down a tunnel, then emerge back to the surface of the mundane world, and be six, twelve, or fifteen miles closer to their destination.

Mostly, however, the appeal is that the Warrens in general are a wellspring for life that is alien and fantastical, and for life in general, to the extent it blurs the lines between object and living thing. There is a *wealth* of materials in the Warrens for those willing to accept a trashier, or 'kludgy' aesthetic, and many materials have that natural life energy to them that helps things work. A pipe, enough parts, and some flammable bodily fluids may be used to fashion a working gun, though it may break after a few shots. With skill and practice, one may find the components they want more easily, and build things that are more elaborate and durable.

Expect a bell curve of there being a huge amount of lower quality, high quantity assets, be those summons, power, resources, or magic items, with a lot to sift through to find gems in the rough. The things that stand tall or stand apart from this chaff are often ugly, but vicious and very strong, with an offensive lean. Ninety nine percent of what a typical Warrens practitioner does may be distraction, disruption, and attempts at overwhelming foes, while reaching for something that may prove to be the ace in the hole.



This is, to be frank, *effective*, though it is far from glamorous, and so practitioners in the Warrens field can often find their niches.

Overall, the underlying nature of the Warrens makes its denizens hard to classify. Outside of the classic goblins (which themselves vary wildly in appearance and approach, as noted above), labels, classification, and convention are *readily* tossed out the window when the Warrens are involved. Any name provided may have fifteen different variations, goblins may identify as one thing or another, then shuck that label when inconvenient.



This can also apply to the visceral nature of a thing. Where alchemy might add, subtract, or alter some specific part of a visceral thing, healing, poisoning, or changing them (among many other uses, to be clear), sufficient exposure to the warrens makes that addition, subtraction, and alteration easier. Usually. This sword has two edges, and while there may be some small percentage of flesh that becomes very hard to disturb or subtract from (including with knives, bullets, etc), that accumulates in Warrens life, the fact remains that the flesh of a Warrens denizen may be easy to change, but also easy to change *back*, so changes may not stick. Harm becomes easy to undo.

With all of this in mind, various practices may include risk or self harm, or be messy, with a lot of collateral damage. The originators of that practice -goblins and Warrens humans, among others- have the expectation that they'll be able to mend or manage the damage, and the payoff, having the raw power to permanently remove a threat, is important against the things a Warrens denizen may face.

Life here is nasty, brutish, and short, to put it simply, and it is *cheap*.

Warrens practices lean toward conflict, because it is a hostile, offensive, dangerous realm that provides hostile, offensive, and dangerous practices. This is a realm where enough flesh is provided by default that the cycle of life can support a population that is largely carnivore, scavenger, or parasite, and the things that aren't (fungi, plants, the rare herbivore) are so close to being carnivore, scavenger, or parasite that it's hardly worth arguing. This is as much a visceral realm as the Ruins are immaterial: flesh is abundant and easily shaped, definitions are blurred, and it is all very physical.

For rows, the abundance of physical material lends itself to Tools practices, and the offensive-to-the-senses side of the 'offensiveness' of the Warrens gives Interaction practices a lot of fuel. That said, Conjure, Realms, and Protection practices could just as easily have a number of practices, owing to the abundance of temporary material, the coverage of the realm itself, and the number of self-protection practices one acquires working in the Warrens.

Some suggested Warrens practices include:

	Conflict	Deals	Visceral	Immaterial	Divine
Conjure	Gang Slinger		Dumpster Divers		
Prices	Goblin Gamer		Wound Licker		
Tools	Fleshbinder	Warrens Whip	Chiurgeon Slapdash	Assclowns	Killionaire
Realms	Gore Runner		Fomorite	Bogdown Witch	
Interact	Namecaller	Brown Crowns	Warrens Runner Smellamentalist	Namecaller	Argumancer
Lore	Warrens Ranger		Weirdo		
Protect	Scarred		Nardbody		
Any	Goblin [Title]		Warrens Witch		

- **Gang Slangers** specialize in goblin crowd management and creating crowds and swarms that are unmanageable for others. A volatile practice that requires some self defense and offense, to prod the swarms and key goblins of the group. A classic ‘Goblin King’ practice, for Warrens practitioners wishing to dabble for goblin management tools.
- **Dumpster Divers** are a classic ‘five single-use-items are in reach, pick one’ improvisational school of practice, digging through trash and dreck to find options (including goblins) in the short-term, marking and augmenting favorites to keep around for the long-term. Primarily turns to trash or debris for the best option, and has practices to make a lot of trash and debris, or spread what’s already there out.
- **Goblin Gamers** are recurring participants in the goblin games, a high risk goblin reality tv/game show. Actual chances to recur in the shows are few and far between, but one will want to do well in preliminaries/primaries, represent their region, and scout other regions to figure out what’s in store. Life expectancy is short, but the glory is great, with success in even one show making one a celebrity in the eyes of most goblins.
- **Warrens Whips** are those who target, trap, and tame the beasts and more bestial goblins of the Warrens, usually binding one large one (or a pack of lesser ones), with a focus on tool use to raise, train, manage, and work alongside this creature. Outside of the Warrens, they may be prompted to burst out of suitable points of the environment.
- **Chiurgeons** are those who mix alchemy with goblin practices to work flesh. There is a strong lean into fleshmongling practices, effective use of parasites, and the development of tools and techniques to extract the right humors. If the desired end result is visceral, the chiurgeon has unique routes available to them that they can take to get there, but those routes are likely to be ugly or strange.
- **Slapdash** practitioners work with gremlins and gremlin tools. The classic mad scientists with a cackling laugh, using warrens materials for creations that shouldn’t run otherwise. Are to technomancy what Chiurgeons are to alchemy.
- **Assclowns** draw their name from the ‘pull [something] out of your ass’, focusing on hammerspace-style draws of a suite of options, weapons, and tricks, while staying out of direct conflict and engagements.

- **Killionaires** draw their inspiration from those goblins who achieved power and notoriety by some ludicrous amount of murder, or specific kinds of finishing others off - Rackspatter of the nine thousand scalps, Slaygarrrrrr Who Slavishly Slays, The Everfucked Butt, etc. They empower themselves and their weapon of choice by way of bodycount, and gain the tools to bend reality around them.
- **Gore Runners** are Warrens Runners of the wider Warrens wilderness, dealing with the beasts, threats, and environments there. Hunters and stalkers, equipped against a variety of threats, they are quick to make a battlefield their own by exponentially increasing the degree of gore involved.
- **Bogdown Witches** utilize the curses learned and picked up by the human residents of the wildest Warrens. Useful for survival and dealing with dangerous beasts, and working with the environment.
- **Namecallers** take the 'sticks and stones' approach to insults, adding literal sticks and stones to vicious insults that are loaded with goblin energies, so they come true. Humiliate, inconvenience, and distract enemies while harrying them with ranged attacks.
- **Brown Crowns**, also called slumlords or shithouse practitioners, look at the environments goblins thrive and inverse the process, signing on groups of goblins that alter an area as they spread, to control an area and skew it to the favor of Warrens practitioners. They buy loyalty by giving goblins a purchase in reality.
- **Warrens Runners** are more conventional explorers of the Warrens, and primarily deal with goblins, oftentimes building up momentum and a following that they can then bring with them when they go to other places.
- **Smellamentalists** are elementalists variants, who focus on goblin elements, such as tooth, slime, bone, meat, brown (among other trash), and yellow (among other bodily fluids). Less focused on damage than on the assault to the senses, be it pain, stink, or stickiness. Specialists in one element will often have a name specific to it, but the rough execution remains the same.
- **Argumancers** use the goblin approaches of offensiveness, unpredictability, and boundary pushing for a very unconventional and somewhat unreliable Law practice, leaning on majority rule, pigeon chess, gish gallops, and law of the loudest, etc.
- **Weirdos** are scholars and mappers of the Warrens, investigating various things such as the origins of the meat and flesh, source waters of fluids, the reasons tunnels shift, where goblins come from, etc. Invariably, such scholars end up less than okay, shell shocked, and a little disturbed, but have the ability to treat the rest of the world as if it was as malleable as Warrens mud and Warrens flesh, among other tricks.
- **Nardbodies** are a carcinization of practices and protections in the Warrens; retaliatory defenses, anticipatory self augmentations, and practices to get the most benefit and least drawbacks from Warrens herbs & wildlife just make sense, and in layering them, practitioners tend to end up in similar positions: big, scarred, with wild defenses.

Worship



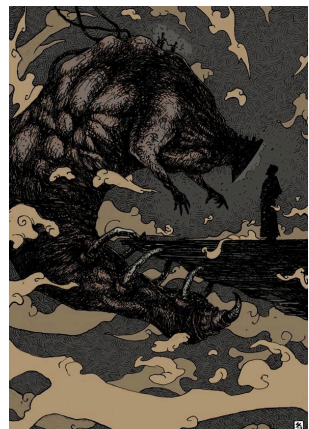
The practices of Worship are practices which work with *big* forces- gods, angels, various higher powers, and all the necessary trappings and mechanisms required to maintain a relationship with beings capable of smudging out one's existence by whim, if they prove to be that whimsical, or by accident. While much of this entry will discuss gods, it should be stressed that many of the sub-practices are fairly interchangeable, when it comes to swapping out just what exactly is being worshiped; practitioners can maintain the same toolset or approach used to draw on a god's power can be used with a winter Fae, a goblin of the greatest tiers, or a great spirit, among others. The forces being discussed here are ones where the beings being dealt with have power to an extent where they start to share a lot of capabilities, in warping reality or casually extending their reach across realms.

Most often, the road taken to reach these great heights of power is that of *godhood*. Some gods ascend naturally, starting as a spirit or human, drawing power from belief, shaping it, and then performing miracles and rewarding the belief while simultaneously foster it. Others are accidental, with various forces gathering into a confluence, capable of performing 'miracles', and then sidestep into the role of being gods. These accidental gods are often less organized and more chaotic, with traits, symbols, and areas of power that are much more random.

In addition to having the quick and narrow ramp to power, gods have some access to angels, the architects of Creation, who make themselves subordinate to higher powers - gods in particular - for direction and organization, allowing them to put as much energy as possible into Creation (see the Creation field for more on any Creation/Created stuff with a capital C). Many angels, especially lower-order ones, are somewhat mechanical in disposition, with set paths and courses of action they follow, and some practitioners who study the field speculate the reason they subordinate themselves to gods and key higher powers is that it's a safeguard, to keep them from endlessly repeating the same actions until it's not truly original Creation.

Higher powers in general have a metaphysical weight to them that creates a depression beneath them- a man standing on a wet trampoline, with the puddle forming beneath his feet, except it is custom reality, and the material at their feet is keyed to them as an entity, in theme, symbol, flavor, and type of power. This acts as a reserve of power, a measure of protection (hostile action must cross unfavorable terrain), and more of a 'power begets power' phenomenon, challenged only when a being with more metaphysical weight encroaches on that space. It's the most common 'realm' that isn't outright Created.

While not all Crossroads (see the Knots field, below) are related to places of worship, there is a tendency for these depressions/divine realms to have the boundaries and influence to foster neighboring Crossroads.



While the higher powers of the Worship field tend to have a convergent development of sorts that makes them very similar in all but theme, there is more distinction in the less powerful categories of Other that fall in the same field. Higher powers will, by way of influencing humans, or creating beings from scratch (via. Creation, which sometimes overlaps with but is distinct from Worship), have *divine servants*, Others that are frequently modeled after humans, but have behavior, theming, style, and loyalties that put them squarely in the higher power's corner. A death god with followers that are frequently interred in tombs with mummified servants and armies may have undead soldiers and servants appear in the midst or associated with great expressions of power, with a backup reserve of power in those servants, to be consumed in times of need (often by sacrifice). For another god, it could be satyrs and maenads, while for another, it could be elementally touched people with eyes and hair that blaze. Such beings often keep to their own on the fringes of humanity and foster spaces that suit the god, creating spaces much like temples, though not so strictly called that.

Other times, a higher power is more deliberate, and will allow a statue or caryatid to become lifelike and hold a backup reserve of power. These Others are called Icons and are doll-like, albeit marble or some other fine material, and may spend power as necessary to serve the higher power's will (though the higher power may never lower themselves to communicate with them directly, outside of emergencies), with that power being a finite resource that, once spent, will see the animated statue returned to inanimate status... often frozen into the position of a final meaningful act.

Others are accidental- expressions of the deity's power, but more raw. Some make the distinction between God-Begotten and Godstruck, with the former being the result of careless fornication between god and mortal, and the latter being the result of a god striking down a mortal with a terrible fate or curse. Some lump them into the category of one or the other- saying the only distinction is that the mortal gets fucked, and the question is if the consequences fall on the offspring alone (God-Begotten) or the individual and offspring (Godstruck). Such Others are often very powerful, though the power that is expressed is varied- typically monstrous physical strength combined with something such as an evil eye, fate manipulation, gargantuan size, or a road to deific level power themselves. Subsequent generations tend to stabilize and be lower power, though they may still be dramatically Other with some association to the deity and their parent. The ones who are most human-like may be called demigods.

Worship practices favor things for magic items that are solid, old, and durable, including materials like gold and marble. They lean toward vessels such as bowls, plates, grails, hollow containers, that can contain power, as well as *symbols*; statues and statuettes, holy signs and talismans, and other things meant for display, which *indicate* power. They may be ostentatious, keyed to the deity in symbol and design, and often feature standbys such as light, darkness, blood, and/or fire. Iconography and design will often lean heavily into the themes and ideas of a higher power. It's not uncommon for old magic items from Worship to hold power, or be cracked from expressions of power.

Forms of Worship practice are going to fall into one of two categories- exceedingly careful, or distant. Care will be seen with practices such as Evangelism, callers of angels, with practitioners using vows, karma, and layered protections to secure themselves against consequences if the power should strike back against them, or the angels' more rote actions catch the practitioner in their way. Seals, bindings, wards, vows, and other protective measures will reduce damage done when these metaphorical suns glow too bright in the practitioner's direction.



Distant practices will, aside from an introduction and key rituals, not engage much with the higher power, and will instead ritually signify they want the higher power's favor and power, in exchange for supplying something, with the ritual being layers of insulation to prevent direct or immediate contact. In other cases, the distance is a step of removal, use of key tools, or something *covert*- tapping into power so the higher power doesn't even know it's being accessed. When rituals are done, they'll often be done with argumentative diagrams keyed to the higher power, essentially making a pitch to the deity, with filters in place so the answering response won't blast the practitioner from existence.

Once a ritual is done, one may lean on favor, drawing power as needed, doing things that are in the deity's interest as repayment, and striving to maintain a balance, even as they lack an accounting sheet to give them a clear idea of where they stand. Best to do what one can for the deity, then, being as sure as they can that they're in the green. In other cases, it may be proving oneself as a champion, or by making oaths, scheduled sacrifice, or treated vessels used to catch siphoned power.

It should be noted that as much as individuals may access a deity's power, the relationship is two-way, and it can be said that few can wound a god's faith-based power base as much as a priest. For these reasons, gods have reason to have some distance or layers of abstraction- a wait before a prayer works, obfuscation about how much power one can draw, etc.

As a field of practice, Worship is an old one, sometimes said to be as old as Shamanism. Worship itself is an old thing, dating back to when the first men looked up at the sun and cowered from thunder, but more specifically, the arrival of the gods coincided with when men became *mankind*, said to come into true power (surpassing titans) around the same time mankind found fire, agriculture, written language, etc. It maintains a privileged relationship with Innocence, often being accepted by Innocence, to an extent, without violating it. The categories it lends itself to are Divine, because of the framing around higher powers, but also Conjunction, for the manifestations of power and mass, seemingly from nowhere, and Protection, because it coincides with the parts of the practice that need to insulate themselves against the powers they're interacting with. Expect ostentatious displays and indications of obeisance, flashy emblems, relics, and symbols... or else the opposite: masks and such to hide from a deity's eyes.

Some suggested Worship practices include:

	Conflict	Deals	Visceral	Immaterial	Divine
Conjure	Zealot	Herald	Begetter	Deceiver	Evangelist
Prices	Harbinger				Cultist
Tools					Chosen
Realms					Caller/Draoidhe
Interact					Prophets
Lore					Priest, Docent
Protect	Monk	Tender	Vessel	Mourner	Demigod

- **Zealots** serve powers of conflict and violence, making the power's mark on the world with violence and destruction. Once these marks are made, the effects of the power's presence can be bid to leak into the world. At peak momentum, they can become briefly lived avatars of that power, its champions, or related powers.
- **Monks** weave rites of worship into martial art to have offense and defense for every occasion. Deflect incoming strike by hand, incoming spirit by mantra, strike foes nearby with fist or weapon, strike foes at a distance by chanting to bid a higher power to smite them. Martial style, mantra, chant, and overall style are all shaped by the power served.
- **Heralds** ride the fine line of Innocence and Faith, conjuring miracles and fostering pockets of faithful, akin to Aware, but distinct, often drawn from different mindsets. Can be anything from community support to cult leader, but a community of practitioners and Others will view even a novice herald with wariness, given where it can so quickly lead.
- **Tenders** are custodians of a higher power's children- typically divine servants, sometimes crossroads denizens (see Knots) or the rare god-begotten. Protect, command, and empower servants, and these servants can foster temple-like areas simply by occupying them, and can ward, seal, or bind by similar mechanisms, or by being engaged in confrontation against others.
- **Begetters** offer themselves to deities, filling up on power and turning the metaphorical fireworks of time with a deity into spontaneous fireworks and manifestations. Focused on moments, spontaneous creation, and collecting bits of divinity - like the feathers of the swan the deity turned into before the, for lack of a more polite word, ritual. May ultimately lead up to raising a God-Begotten.
- **Vessels** are containers for divine power, working to shore up their bodies and skin even as their organs melt in the divine light (or whatever the deity manifests) they hold within. Harbingers (discussed elsewhere) but stable. With flesh and hair tempered to be harder than steel and a fire burning within, they can extend influence and power and ward select things behind white flames that only burn foes - or whatever suits the higher power.
- **Deceivers** mingle illusions with miracles to draw in the faithful, create false shrines and symbols with details perverted, to channel drawn faith and belief to their own ends, rather than the god. They claim sentiments, servants and gifts, then flee with a share of what they've built when the power draws close, a little better set up each time.

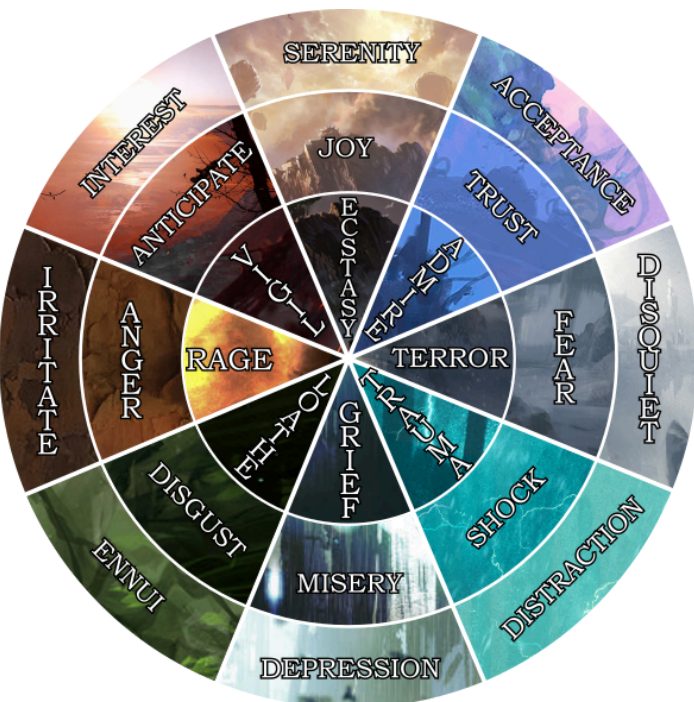
- **Mourners** are sometimes called scavengers, picking over the corpse and things left behind by a fallen higher power, for lost power, to piece fragments together into something else that they work hard to secure, but their emotional attachment to the power is often intense enough that such an appellation can be called crude. Their protection practices insulate them against divine radiation and the other, *Other* scavengers.
- **Evangelists** summon angels- powerful tools that can override and trample over practices many levels more advanced or by better practitioners- but the danger is that these tools, normally used by gods, can easily burn the hands that wield them. Vows and layers of promises to act certain ways (ie. only sit facing south), avoid certain things (ie. the color red), treat people certain ways (ie. never give mercy) insulate them against their tools.
- **Cultists** tap into divine power without the deity's knowledge, gambling that they might draw the deity's attention and ire every time they tap into power - an event that is usually dangerous for everyone in the area. At the same time, they tap into power more freely than other devout, to dramatic ends.
- **Chosen** are gifted divine relics and treasures by the deity, and can complete challenges, face trials by the deity, and otherwise show their worth to foster more power into these treasures. Emphasize quality over quantity of items, and personal boons and improvements that further elevate them.
- **Callers** (sometimes Draoidhe) call for the intervention of higher powers (more often high spirits than deities) for wide-area, sweeping changes and devastating wide-area strikes. The practitioner equivalent of calling in air strikes, at times, or otherwise inviting a lesser version of their served spirit to appear, gargantuan and powerful. Build rapport with moderate spirits to gain access to higher tier ones, exponentially greater in scale.
- **Prophets** awe and amaze and then draw on awe as a form of faith, however unwilling it may come from enemies, to work great acts. Batter senses with words that only angels are meant to speak, blind with holy light, and bring foes to their knees, before ending things with a miracle that ends a confrontation in a singular stroke.
- **Priests** are conventional practitioners of worship, as much as there are any, and foster faith by serving their deity, gauging if they have enough, and ask for miracles. The ambiguity of how much standing one may have with their deity is the only cost in a practice that offers particularly hard-hitting effects for the tier and cost. Lore practices help with gauging where one stands and deciphering holy words.
- **Docents** get closer to a higher power than most would be willing to, putting themselves subordinate to the higher power to gain knowledge, support and rewards. Mingles Creation with Worship.
- **Demigods** trace their lineage to divine parentage, involvement in key events such as the formations of gods, or something else, and then kindle trace divinity within themselves to gain personal protections and powers.

The Ruins are a primary immaterial realm that filters out echoes as its primary function, but is also the most comfortable and functional space for many forces that balance out the various wrinkles in Death (primarily) but also Time, Nature, Fate, and War, as well as the other incarnate concepts such as Dream and Nightmare, Fortune, and Innocence. This is, in effect, where the varied grim-reaper-esque agents of Death spend much of their time. Echoes that are not strong enough to materialize in the more material realms, whether that's permanently so or only some of the time, will be in the Ruins when they aren't visible or active, and thus the Ruins are heavily populated with Echoes, which are powerful emotional events pressed into existence against the spiritual background.



The Ruins overlap reality, and thus most places have some analogue in the Ruins. Echoes and those who have become immaterial in some fashion (such as astral traveling or visiting dreams) may, if harmed enough, find themselves pushed Ruins-ward, facing its hazards and inhabitants. The Ruins themselves are decayed and eroded by weather conditions, with more decay in areas that don't have a strong emotional impression (and more echoes in places that do). Each facet of the Ruins has an aspect to it, and the expert Ruins explorer can travel between them, which is easiest to do if ascending to a shallow (existential) or intermediary area, and between neighboring regions.

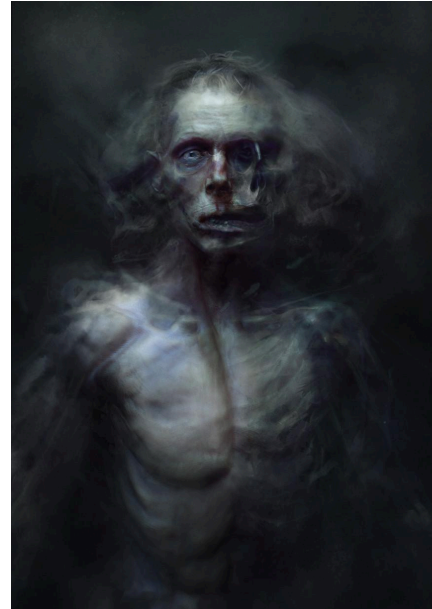
The regions have a degree of dominance and permanence tied to how likely they are to create a deep impression; lower regions especially. The Grief-depression axis is defined by downpour, darkness, and chasms, and is the typical 'default'. Otherwise:



- The Loathing-ennui axis is painted in slime, moss, and grasping vegetation.
- Trauma-distract by limited view, storms, flashes, and fleeting terrain.
- Rage-irritate is heated and prickly.
- Terror-disquiet is cold and numbing, hampering movement, with predators in the dark snows.
- Vigil-interest requires concentration, both because of tightropes and its maze-like arrangement.
- Admire-accept seduces, making the traveler comfortable, lulling them into false security.
- Ecstasy-joy arranges things into a dizzying climb, with dizzying and delirious heights.

Note that the regions aren't explicitly named as such, nor are they crisply bounded, and they have a variety of names, and may differ depending on the place they're in, and the natural associations those places have to the emotions in question. It should be stressed that the Ruins are not a realm seen across the entire world, and in many places the Ruins' functions are handled by other realms, however, the Ruins is present in virtually every modernized area, with only a partial foothold in places that are behind the times and some small amounts of ground already being lost to the hypermodern, and is the commonly accepted status quo for practitioners to talk about and work around.

Others: In addition to the environment, the heavy population of linked echoes add a constant onslaught of high-emotion responses that compound things. Echoes are the dominant Other of the Ruins, and as suggested above, are strong emotional impressions tied to memory. They tend to be blurry and act out their scenes, while pushing out some degree of associated emotions and physical sensations. They do not have to have died, but death tends to leave a very strong impression. An echo that died in a flaming car crash could (wittingly or otherwise) inflict the feelings of their crushed chest, broken leg, and even, if strong enough, set someone on fire, in addition to the general feelings of panic and helplessness. With more strength comes more sapience, with the ability to switch scenes frequently to piece together sentences from things in their script (or even deviate from the script), and more ability to affect and enter the material world, with the ability to knock things over or even make themselves briefly seen. However, they degrade over time and the Ruins plays a large part in that degradation, steadily wearing away at the echo.



Echoes may become complex, intermingling with other immaterial forces, may become so damaged they can't even follow their script, searching for something else (or a vulnerable host) to latch onto, or they may become Wraiths if they absorb enough distilled negativity- strong and violent echoes. There are also poltergeists, who connect to something in reality (often someone troubled) and use that connection to fling things or better affect reality, and ones that latch onto omens, to become complex omens or portents, bringing their script about for others. Because Echoes are akin to jigsaw pieces that can connect loosely to other puzzles, they can also attach to one another, creating knit-together conglomerations. These are given the prefix super- or added appellation 'king': superspirit, wraith king, etc. In some events they may knit together enough to become akin to weather events such as wraithstorms.



The natural fauna of the Ruins are the Typhlotic- traditionally horrific, eyeless Others, sleek and monochrome (oft black), varied in shape. These Others tend to stalk and lurk, working with the environment of the Ruins serve as cleanup, taking apart the slower moving, knit-together echoes before they can become storms, very decayed echoes, as well as guarding it against interference and visitors.

Incarnations and their derivatives are another Ruins-dwelling Other, but are distinct enough as a field to get their own subsection - the agents of Dream, of Destruction, of Hunt, of Fury, those forces near-universal to the human experience as inevitable, heavyweight forces, sometimes stepping into the human world to support out their roles. Omens are the forces tied to these Incarnations, shadowy figures that help bring about that Dream, Destruction, Hunt, etc.

Not found in the ruins but connected to the Ruins are the various naturally formed undead. Ghouls, undead zombies and Vampires are 'visceral undead', or undead with bodies. They tend to be wretched, eating to maintain their internal balance of life and death. Ghouls are clawed, fanged people who eat corpses, vampires are parasitic entities (sometimes described as the meth addicts of the practitioner world) who drink blood, and zombies eat indiscriminately. When they get too much life, their bodies become alive (and remain damaged/altered, and they can just die), and if they intake too much death, they'll start to sense or see the Ruins- much as an echo would, inching ever closer, ready to deliver oblivion.

Ruins Practitioners: Among the various human connections to the world of Others, the overriding obsession with the hereafter is right up there with basic spirituality and faith. Even though echoes are not necessarily dead (thus the push to call them echoes rather than ghosts), the Ruins are the most serviceable gateway to death and Death. At the one end, the Ruins practitioner has echoes that are easy to manipulate and supply power with and at the other end they tap into the forces of capital-D Death, oblivion, and other incarnate forces. This places the Necromancer (a default term for Ruins practitioner) at an enviable intersection where materials are intuitive and reasonably available (bones, dead stuff), power sources and the baseline Others are easy to manage (echoes), the practice is flexible, and the 'ceiling' of potential is high. The cost of this is that just about everything about necromancy has its unpleasant aspects, whether it's the emotional wear and tear of dealing with the echoes, or the stink and depravity of dealing with corpses. Undead are rarely pretty and often very grisly, lack warmth in more than one sense, and inflict horrible fates or turn the victims into more undead. All of this adds up to the Ruins practitioner's charm and appeal being slowly whittled down.

Created undead tend to have a motif of bone, but may also use Death-saturated items (even fencing, wire, dirt, tools from graveyards), have shadows or omens worked into them, or have some tortured or altered human or recently dead individual at their core. They are usually created as specific tools, be it as watchdogs, creatures that spread more necromantic influence or bad omens, and a means of attacking and terrorizing others. Expect runework to be stark, focusing more on contrasts of light and dark (white on black surfaces or vice versa), keys to items of sentimental value (particularly to the undead in question), and to draw distinctions between life and death, particularly where undead are concerned.

Ruins practices are heavily Immaterial, as it's one of the most dominant immaterial realms, and because it's a realm, there's a heavy intersection with Realms practices. Otherwise, any row fits, Conjure for echo-focused work, Tools for building undead/working with ruins items, Interact for applying echo sentiments to others or haunting them, Lore for digging into memory, etc.

Specialist Necromancers will naturally foster a Ruins influence that leaks into reality- an area where the weather is worse, decay extreme, echoes common. Learning and performing Ruins-related practices will help spread and deepen this influence, and any practices dealing specifically with the Ruins (or coming and going) will help to generate more undead or bring groupings of lesser echoes back.

Some suggested Ruins practices include:

	Conflict	Deals	Visceral	Immaterial	Divine
Conjure		Ghost Caller		Echoist	
Prices				Haunted	
Tools			Corpsestitcher	Gravedigger	Embalmer
Realms				Ruins Delver	
Interact				Shadowright	
Lore				Bygone	
Protect				Deathwarden	

- **Echoists** gather and summon echoes as their primary focus, with an emphasis on helping bring things from the echo's experience to pass in reality.
- **Haunted** place themselves at the center of a nexus of poltergeists, echoes, and omens, leaning hard into the drawback of necromancers/ruins practitioners being creepy and asocial by being really hard to be around.
- **Gravediggers** access (or create) the freshly dead for their link between the material world and the realms after, for the bones and other Death saturated parts, and for their link to the echoes of their last moments (and any who would grieve them).
- **Ruins Delvers** explore the ruins themselves, treasure hunting or searching for echoes of destroyed relics, things indigestible by the Ruins, or specific echoes with specific memories that can be used for advantages in reality.
- **Shadowrights** work with omens from the Ruins, while **Echowrights** work with echoes, but it's a rare Shadowright that eschews echoes entirely and vice versa; they wield emotional influence through captured echoes and related items, and fashion Ruins resources into nasty curses.
- The **Bygone** practitioner can visit past events, cobbled together from echostuff, to gather information, or use information gleaned about a target to cobble together a crafted personal attack- even a silver bullet of memories or captivating fantasy.
- **Deathwardens** are undead-specialist wardens, with some usual Warden protections mingled with a keen awareness of balances of life and death. Given a need, they can use this knowledge to bounce back from their own imminent death, or attempt to force it on another.

Work with echoes and forces in the upper and brighter Ruins regions tends to involve its own drawbacks, such as short time windows or specific conditions needing to be met, but mitigate the other drawbacks & unpleasantness. This is usually more difficult as a net adjustment.

Ruins-based Items tend to have a visual quality where they are either very old or at best have a polished surface level with deep degradation or darkness in the harder to reach spaces. A contrast of light and dark is usually pronounced. They may also be identified by a tendency to be a little more *active*, whether that's falling over, shifting position, whispering, or producing ambient effects - all relating to the echoes that tend to be part of them, even if echoes aren't at the core of them.



The Ruins are very good at creating magic items, by and large, for many of the same reasons the Ruins are such a convenient practice to break into. Echoes are an easy and convenient power source and they tend to look for hallows- places to dwell. When an item has a history or is charged with importance or emotion, it tends to make a receptive hallow for echo-based items, and so it's common for an item close to an important event to have something echo-related pressed into it, especially if it isn't taken possession of in some fashion after. Most of these items are very low level and may lose power or transfer power to the nearest vehicle, until the item closest to the event (such as an undiscovered murder weapon) becomes the focal point. Some echoes may find or take possession of the items within the Ruins themselves, keeping them alight with energy as one might tend to a fire, while finding an anchor within the item - a common target for Ruins delvers.

Ruins-based items may have memory as a facet of them, even to the degree that someone in possession of the item starts playing out the script of the echoes (or other entities) within. They may have animation - especially if the item is ambulatory- a toy rolls across the floor, a doll moves when not watched. They may talk or whisper. Whatever the echoes within the item can manifest, the item may be able to manifest. If a child was stabbed seventeen times, with several stabs penetrating a teddy bear the child clutched to his chest, the echo imprinted into the teddy bear may be able to indiscriminately cause knife-cuts and stabs to strike out when held out- aimlessly stabbing wall, door, foes, ceiling, etc. This usually has a high refractory period - a period of hours or days between uses, lest the item burn its last bit of energy in a double or triple strength effect and burn out permanently.

Other Ruins entities within an item have corresponding abilities. Wraiths are nastier and more focused, poltergeists have reach and anchor to the item, affecting the area. Omens tend to bring about a specific fate or work with linked forces. Typhlotic things typically focus more on oblivion, moving much more slowly and surely, preying on weakness- an example might be a hand-bell that rings when death approaches, but also makes near-death experiences near it into actual death instead; the dying see eyeless monsters lunging at them from the dark.

These items tend to be 'cursed' by default. Effective use of the items may require first calling out and working with the inhabiting forces - or venturing inside the item to do the same, by way of spirit walking or dream walking. Many of these items may interact with one another or thin the boundary between reality and the Ruins when collected together.

Incarnations

The Incarnations or **The Pillars** are the forces that govern those things that are universal to the human experience. The core incarnations are Death, Nature, Time, Fate, and War, with Fortune sometimes included as a sixth. There are subordinate incarnations of various forces such as Conquest, Instinct, and Youth, who operate in very similar ways, and are ultimately structured very similarly to spirits. More granular forces may be subordinate to broader, more important concepts, with the core forces being dominant.



What makes these forces distinct from spirits is how integral, essential, and universal they are. For something to be Incarnate, it must apply, whether it's to ten people on a deserted island or a modern city. Being as essential and worked into the human experience as they are, these forces are fairly non-negotiable, occupy their own spaces, and are sometimes called **Inevitable** forces because of how they and any practices that result from them tend to be much harder to adjust or work around. Rooted in the Ruins (a good field for any would-be Incarnate practitioner to familiarize themselves with), Incarnations and Incarnate practices are as heavyweight as echoes are diffuse and adjustable, being hard to 'kill', more unwieldy, more inflexible, and utilizing power in ways that must generally be evaded, because few forces stand directly up to them.

Incarnations themselves exist in the plural singular; Nature exists in many facets, as people that can be approached and talked to if they know how or have the fortune (or misfortune) to, wearing a variety of faces that are undeniably Nature, but at the same time, they are all the same entity. Each Incarnation of Nature will work to manage their corner of the universe and broader responsibilities, the Universe picking its host out of the most suitable, Nature-linked candidates. In some cases, a candidate may offer themselves for a favor; a woman might wish for a child, and agree to give herself up to be Nature when she's on her deathbed). The Incarnation then carries on until the rote and inflexible nature of their power starts to make them too mechanical and unable to grapple with new nuances of their realm of focus, at which point they seek out a new host and refresh themselves.

The tools available to an Incarnation include the ability to simply manipulate anything relating to their field, swaying people in the short term, or they may work something more complex, creating tests and rituals. They may animate or give out portions of their power, creating shadowy omens that act as self-contained prophecies (see a black shadowy cat/dog/figure? Get a feeling something bad's going to happen, then that happens), people may be assigned as reapers to guide the dead, working under Death, or the power could be given to Others. They may also set up contests or create items or effects: Time could create a cavern that allows people to time travel by passing through, but with strict rules about requirements that must be met lest they be consumed; enough people fail that Time gains more than they lose.



Many Others arise or are empowered by Incarnations as the universe maintains an ongoing balancing act, and others are made by those greater powers that try to manage or alter these balances. When War is incessant and taking a displaced amount of priority and focus, the Universe (or greater powers) may put witting or unwitting agents of War into play. This serves dual purposes of bleeding off the War energies in a tangible way, and forces others to reconcile with the current dynamic. War will naturally seek to create agents that spread and manage War, while other Incarnations may seek to restore balance, with Fate putting her focus into prophecy-backed heroes who might end the war, or Nature quashing the fiercest fighting in regions by working with the sub-incarnations Pestilence and Famine, creating a pause in which negotiations may happen. Every type of Incarnation approaches things in a slightly different way, and every facet of an Incarnation may have their own individual approaches.

Incarnations may appear to people or stay unseen, they tend to favor a certain color and certain motifs, with symbology and titles attached to them.

	Death	Fate	Nature	Time	War	Fortune
Forces Color Item	The Pale	The Threads	The Bough	The Hours	The Blade	-
	White/black	Blue/Purple	Green	Light Yellow	Red	Gold
	Skull	Thread	Laurel	Hourglass	Sword	Coin

Other than Incarnations, **Incarnate-based Others and Effects** have a running theme where many are dispatched or intentionally created with the idea that if they succeed in their function, there's a net gain for the Incarnation, but they can spin out of control or go in their own direction. These include Agents, which can be akin to Incarnations with lesser powers, or those given incarnate level power and responsibility over the long term - often with more free will. They may be humans or Others handed responsibility, and tend to take on Incarnate-level effects, as well as some aesthetic changes and a disconnection from the Innocent, walking among but rarely enjoying the company of those innocents. Envoys are a niche example of this, seeking out people to offer skewed, Faustian deals - granting the ability to feed the village at the cost of becoming a beast every full moon for the next year, or to bring disaster on an enemy by taking their picture and writing the disaster on the polaroid, knowing the debt will come due and the total cumulated disasters will strike them in one moment, in 30 days.

Ritual Incarnates work the same way, but are living rituals or living contests that draw people in or exist in a certain area as an urban legend, baiting people into a challenge or contest they're more likely than not to lose. Pomme Incarnates are less willful, usually spherical concentrations of Incarnate power naturally forming in the Ruins, be it an apple or orb of welded-together swords, and invite someone to gaze within or reach within. If that person can endure the onslaught of visions, experiences, or scenarios contained within the Pomme, they can come away with power.

Most practitioners who Awaken will traditionally include five objects similar to these, often with subtle tweaks to represent their intended practice, or who they are - the skull could have a number of interpretations, and a would-be technomancer might have technological equivalents of a timepiece, a bit of nature, a gun instead of a sword, etc. This is a big part of how they connect to the fabric of things.

Incarnate Practitioners work either directly with the incarnations themselves or use various mechanisms to try to influence the forces in question, either to wield them or to circumvent them. These practices tend to fall into the realm of the:

- **Immaterial** - the home of these forces, with the most practice-based access to the various levers and mechanisms by which they work.
- **Divine** - incarnate forces can count as a ‘greater power’ of the sort divine practitioners tap into.
- **Protection** - Whether wielding or attempting to circumvent the influence of an Incarnation, proper security is essential.

Other rows & columns are not uncommon, though some may be dominated by specific incarnations. War leans heavily into Conflict, for example, while Fate may like Deals, and Nature may lean Visceral. Some prominent fields and practices lean heavily on calling on an incarnation, such as Death for necromancy, Fate for augury, and Conflict for War magic. Some of these (particularly those firmly established as their own thing by history & their own approaches) can be their own subfields: Necromancy, Augury, and War Magic especially.

Some Incarnate practices include:

	Conflict	Deals	Visceral	Immaterial	Divine
Conjure				Author of Omens	Arbitrator
Prices				Yoked	Fugitive
Tools				Burdened	Tanner
Realms				Apple Eater	Pillar Climber
Interact				Emissary	Ominous
Lore				Ritual Inc. Pract’r.	Pry
Protect	Immortal Warrior	Contestant	Badge of Office	Incarnate	Inevitable

The **Incarnate Practitioner** is the Specialist among these practices, comfortably sitting at Immaterial x Protection (though it can occupy other spaces), and turn their focus toward understanding and mastering these forces, where others tend to seize on one thing to wrangle-understandable when the forces are as momentous as these. Where many of the Incarnate Practices involve consequences and effects that cut backwards as easily as they can cost the target, the Incarnate Practitioner can reduce the danger and costs to themselves for each minor aspect from the other options on this list that they get a grasp on, or if they can resolve certain wrinkles.



- **Immortal Warriors** mix combat related practices with tricks that tap an Incarnation to force and prevent outcomes, rewinding time, making a pledge to War, or sacrificing humanity temporarily to Nature, among other possibilities.
- **Contestants** deal with Incarnations by challenging them to contests or taking on challenges such as Ritual Incarnates, building up a repertoire of boons and protections. Keep Death's number to play chess with her and on a victory, secure a day's protection from dying... and then use practice to get an IOU to be called in on a specific day.
- **Badges of Office** or the Deputized have a singular item once belonging to a particular incarnation - a scythe or skull for Death, a glowing hourglass for Time, a laurel wreath for Nature, etc. The item serves as a battery and a way to approach and transform material reality in specific ways, typically charged by taking on some responsibility.
- The **Arbitrator** works with omens much as the *Author of Omens* does but tracks the balances and seeks out wrinkles, and in exchange for supporting things by smoothing out the wrinkles and correcting imbalances, gets to decide and skew when and where a death may happen, or who becomes important to Fate, and gets a store of power to alter the world briefly and in small ways. May work with one Incarnation, some, or all of them.
- **Yoked** are in the crux of an Envoy or Ritual Incarnate's grip, or were and now live with the consequence, with an ongoing or finished contest or scenario that firmly has its hooks in them. They utilize omens and can be heavyweight cursewrights, channeling those forces, while some deadline or great cost bears down on them.
- The **Fugitive of [insert Incarnation here]** has cheated Death, Fate, Justice, or another Incarnate force, and is on the run. They operate by different rules and often have to avoid reality in general, keeping to interstitial spaces, other realms, and enjoying certain loose side benefits while the Ruins and Incarnations keep bleeding into reality to dispatch forces, agents, and Incarnate practitioners to deal with them, for they are very much a wrinkle of the sort mentioned in other entries.
- **The Burdened** have one or two powerful and weighty Incarnate items, heavily tied into an Incarnate force and/or Incarnation. May be lost by, taken or stolen from an Agent. An example could be a notebook that makes two people with names written in it fall in love, or a phone that talks to someone mysterious in the future. They decipher & draw on it.
- **The Tanner** hunts and targets those Others with peripheral ties to Incarnate powers and makes clothing and tools out of their hides and bones, to get mastery over the pillar(s).
- **The Pry** tracks Agents and patterns, even provoking wrinkles or manipulating people to push them into action, to decipher and anticipate the Incarnation's modus operandi and co-opt or trap some of the power of the pillars.
- **The Inevitable** is given grand, Incarnate-level power for grand, incarnate-level protections and especially 'inevitable' powers (like being invincible on every even-handed minute), but have a grand responsibility, such as sustaining a Ritual Incarnate or bringing a great and terrible event to pass, and have some restrictions on abusing the benefits.

Key words here are responsibility, weight, and fundamental forces. The practices themselves have a tendency to be stark, with big symbols, key items and glowing symbols - the entire world seems to become more black and white, so a sword has the opportunity to be red, or a coin to be gold, or the world gets more blue-tinted and still so a Incarnate-related symbol at the center of a diagram can be light yellow and more animated, the grains of sand falling through the hourglass symbol. The practices, as one might surmise, either engage with or explicitly avoid and combat the practices in question.

Wrinkles in the Fabric of Things come up a few times and warrant some note. Typically, any practice or Other that upsets the natural rules and orders beyond what is seen in a practice-less, Other-less reality will have knock-on effects, which can also have their own ripple effects. Some Others like Nightmares may act as custodians, adjusting things by a percentage point here and there by influencing people's unconscious minds or doling out justice, but some types of Nightmare could just as easily cause more wrinkles, pursuing a vendetta.

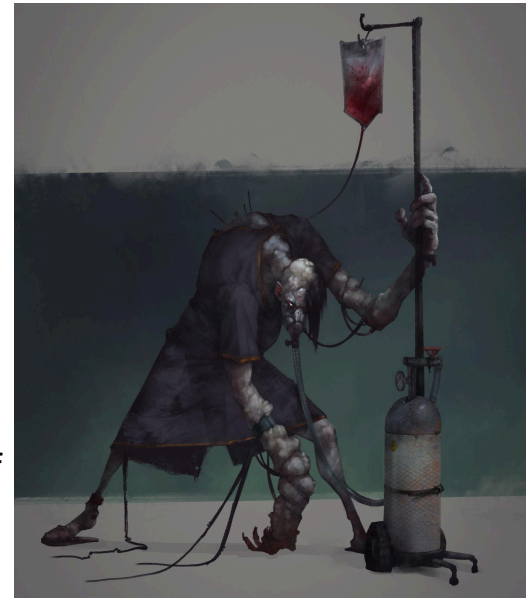
An example could include someone who was meant to die who, for whatever reason, doesn't. That person then messes up things on a small- (or even large) scale cosmological level every time they alter fate, have a child, etc. The balance could be corrected if someone dies in their place or if one force or another sees to it that they die, albeit a bit later than scheduled. Nature may handle the ecological balances, pregnancy, or sickness, Fate chooses heroes and destinies both grand and piteous, Time manages the order of events, action and consequence, and works closely with other Incarnations, and War dictates conflict, whether international or domestic. Not every instance of an Other or practice changing things will draw obvious attention from the Incarnations, their servants, or an Incarnate practitioner, but Incarnations are certainly one of several forces who may be alerted or drawn to act if someone starts gaming the system, exploiting a loophole, or if something big happens (possibly something from a force above even Incarnations, like an agent of creation).

Incarnation based Items are typically more rare and don't tend to be low-value - they simply have too much weight. This can create a dynamic where someone collecting items relevant to a specific Incarnation may have trouble filling a space in the lower end of their collection.

Incarnate items have similar hallmarks to the Ruins item, but are more patient, and can tend to be indestructible, bold, and simple. A black phone, a red knife, an old blue hardshell camera with a giant flash mounted on the top, etc. This isn't a hard rule, and they can vary, much as the lesser things. Items may themselves be implicit Envoys or Agents, inscrutable and typically silent but still acting in the same general patterns. Envoy items offer powers with implicit heavy consequence obvious from the degree of power of the item: a camera that erases anyone whose face it captures, or a phone that predicts the future: screw up in using it or fall into the inherent trap and you're a goner. Agent items will want to be used or act on their own and woe betide the individual who inadvertently finds itself in the item's way. Divining which one is thus important.

Alchemy

Alchemy has many parallels to Shamanism, in that virtually every practice can draw something from it, and there are few areas that see a hard 'no' forming when it comes to finding some use for alchemy, or use in alchemy. Being a respectable (if more introverted and scholarly than some can tolerate) practice with some fair respect afforded to any good alchemist, many practitioner families commit to it wholesale. In other cases, families at least accept the odd family member who strays from the beaten track and studies alchemy; often this takes the form of studying the intersection of the family's field of focus and alchemy as a practice, paying their family back for their tolerance by providing some new tools and admixtures. In other cases, new practitioners may find a partially built setup and stumble through replicating the old work and starting their new work, or it's a practitioner that was originally a hedge mage, learning regional and small tricks here and there, and taking alchemy as one of the (second perhaps only to shamanism) available routes toward higher-end practice.



Alchemy is somewhat unique in that it exists in a primarily *practitioner-driven* space. In a world without practitioners, there would be exceedingly little alchemy and next to no alchemical Others. The Others that exist are practitioner made, or the result of alchemical accidents - which are common when it's a space driven by some competition and desire to break new ground, and that makes for many misfires and disasters big and small. Interestingly, the resulting Others and disasters are more purely alchemical than horror.

On paper, the process is simple: essential aspects of practice can be distilled down into substances and fluids or otherwise refined down. In more extreme cases, they may have kinetic and active aspects of a practice translated into actual processes that take place through pipes and tubes, boilers and vats, fine tuning the output, or turning that output into something purely alchemical. Rather than create a ritual diagram and channeling one's own faith into the creation of new life, for example, one could instead create an arrangement of alchemical equipment and systems, utilizing faith extracted in chemical form and fury blended with heat and light to make liquid *zeal*, to help stretch that faith further and make up any difference, and funnel that into a vat where life may be spontaneously created.

In practice, the technical details get particular, and the expense of a setup is an omnipresent concern. To gather the materials (such as faith, in the above case) requires one gather certain resources or capture the Others or individuals in question first, so that the substance might be extracted in some form, by syringe or by dissolving the individual or material in such a way that the faith is preserved and can be skimmed off. This leaves the perpetual question: should one buy the material instead?

Every step of the way, there are time constraints or constraints on effort that can be cut down by better tools, better setups, better admixtures and chemicals, and by having more niche texts that explain better methods. The entry cost is moderate, with more cost in terms of time and labor, but one can always pay more for more results faster, and thus the modern alchemist with other demands -family expectations, or needing to get results that people will pay to read about- is under constant pressure.



Alchemical Others are most commonly homunculi, which may be created and grown in vats as intermediary steps to help manage a sprawling setup, being content to be fed gruel and spend twenty four hours a day to stir something, yelp if they smell burning, keep something a certain temperature, or protect the laboratory and/or practitioner. The first homunculi a practitioner will make are generally single-purpose, the sizes of a household pet, more aesthetically 'clean' and uniform than goblins, favoring 'alien sunset' and 'alien landscape' color palettes, forms that play heavily into their singular tasks, and have attitudes that are similar to an obedient dog or overly loyal and diligent (if not outright broken) child.



As noted in the prior paragraph, one can always step things up, to have bigger, smarter, more capable homunculi, until one is designing loyal life that is superior to humans... at least in principle. They may be more beautiful but uncanny or clearly nonhuman in some form (coral-like growth instead of hair, eerie pale skin, slightly odd spaced features, intelligent but very frail, etc.

Combat homunculi may be beautiful and aesthetic in their own way (or they

may be tumor-ridden beasts with tubes running through them). But in either case, *most* cases, the price for a homunculus being more intelligent, sensual, combat ready, or good at some specialized skill is going to be a sharp downturn in *other* areas. The beautiful and intelligent homunculus may well have idiosyncracies such as complete paralysis in the face of violence. The combat homunculus might have a specific and common trigger (running water, loud piercing noises) that distract or provoke a berserker rage in them. And, at the end of the day, the more specialized the homunculus, the more specialized their care and upkeep (often including a diet of specific admixtures), which tethers them to the practitioner and the general proximity to the lab.



Other Alchemical Others may be alchemical vestiges, drained of something essential to fuel some need in the lab, or the aftermath of disasters. These are often messier, and may lean toward the slimy, the translucent, or the scarred, with a propensity to leave trails of oil or other fluids in their wake. They often end up having qualities shared by elementals and horrors, with the elemental's more violent, volatile viscerality, and the horror's state of torment and struggle, *possibly* with the short lifespan of the former and/or the instability of the latter.

As much as it should be in the forefront of any Alchemist's mind, there is an inherent drawback in that it's not just about the money and expense. That pressure to thrive and succeed has *another* route, which is to take more risks, push things a little further in terms of the risks taken. But if that gamble fails, it could lead to a disaster, a loss of everything, lab a hazard site, practitioner and bystanders turned into Others of the sort in the prior paragraph.

As noted above, much of what an alchemist does is turn the esoteric elements of practice into something visceral. Different approaches will put a different emphasis on the various products of Alchemy, which can include:

- Potions and poisons- many temporary effects intended for a living target can be put into motion with practice can be distilled down into something that takes effect when imbibed, inhaled, etc.
- Reagents; minor consumables like a stone that produces a lightning strike when thrown hard enough to shatter, smoke bombs, and other, *evocative* practice effects.
- Treatments like oils and baths that transmit another effect, usually intended to be longer lasting. May be more comparable to ritual effects, used on an item or person.
- The creation of homunculi and other life, described above.
- Changing a person, object, or material into something else. Lead into gold, refining elements of creation (described in the appendix), philosopher's stones, etc.

Different approaches to practice within Alchemy will have a different bias toward or against the options above. For example, something like Hyde (described below) might lean into potions and especially transformation, but not have other consumables, oils, or homunculi. Further, each approach to alchemy practices will usually intersect some other field of practice, and that will bias the products they produce. Reagents from an alchemist drawing on elemental ideas, extracting things from elementals, etc, will deal in fire, water, lightning, ice, etc.

As virtually all things in Alchemy come from the practice Alchemy, most of the Alchemical items out in the world was produced for a task, to gather ingredients, process, store, or utilize the elements of Alchemy. Tubes, test tubes, fluids, and chemicals of various colors and luminescence may decorate these items. Metal may take on more organic shapes with fronds, bug-like segmentation, eyeholes beyond the norm, wood may grow into strange shapes. Expect metal, wood, cloth, and other materials to corrode or be tattered by trace exposure to alchemy, often with colors changing in response to exposure to trace transformative chemicals. Alchemists and their labs thus have something of an emergent aesthetic where they have a classy or elegant style (owing to the association between successful alchemists and those with money), tattered at the edges, with odd coloration around the tatters, and alien, monstrous, or strangely shaped additional elements. Belts of test tubes, aprons, and face masks to avoid breathing fumes are common, and light scarring from volatile fumes aren't *rare*.



Homunculi may be naked or dressed in the same.

Some Alchemy practices include:

	Conflict	Deals	Visceral	Immaterial	Divine
Conjure			Genesis		
Prices			Hyde		
Tools	Gallipot	Dealer	Chiurgeon	Phantasmanaut	Conceptor
Realms			Infusion		Extractor
Interact	Blighter	Maquillage	Glazier	Asphyxiant	
Lore			Classic Alchemist Principium		
Protect	Muckamuck		Lazarus		

- **Gallipot** practitioners are reagent specialists, often tied to another (often visceral) conflict heavy practice such as elementalism or goblin practices. Rarely a practice that is pursued with enthusiasm, it is often (like many other Conflict practices listed here) cobbled together by someone with limited access to alchemy knowledge. Included because it has heavy overlap with vendors and manufacturers of things like firecrackers, smoke bombs, gas canisters, elemental crystals, and so on. Toss and utilize reagents and control the battlefield, mix with conventional weapons such as guns.
- **Blighters** are another emergent practice, and are a sort of practice that goes by many names, rarely pleasant or kind; some reference or indicate war crimes. More likely to dwell in a sewer than to venture into high society; utilizes poisons, gases, influenced vermin and swarms and more to drive people out of an area. Often a prelude to looting an area or capturing people for experimentation. Less likely to *toss* reagents than to have a machine that floods an entire neighborhood with depravity inducing poison.
- **Muckamucks** are the last of the lower class alchemists in the Conflict column. Easily mistaken for a Warrens practitioner or goblin king, Muckamucks command squads, armies, or tides of *uniform* minions (homunculi), anoint themselves in oils and garb themselves in alchemy derived metals. Have something of a penchant for having a big head, partially due to the chemicals used to distill authority, and to hate being called Muckamucks, though they can't agree on another name.
- **Dealers** are effectively alchemist spellbinders, influencing people with alchemy derived drugs and/or machines to capture a population and turn them to a specific end. The name is somewhat misleading, as there's meant to be an emphasis on the *deal*, and securing someone long-term, as opposed to glaziers, described below, who are individual focused.
- **Chiurgeons** are alchemist healers, focusing on visceral manifestations of things like curses, as well as ordinary disease. They are especially good at generating and working with *parts*, and using parts to piece together new Others, including horrors, warrens creatures, dolls, and homunculi. Alchemy supports this process.
- **Infusion** practitioners tap into other realms to draw out energies that they can liquefy and instill into a subject, usually a living being but sometimes an object. Capture Others and keep them prisoner with tubes running out to harvest a steady supply of infusions.

- **Glaziers** are counterparts to Hydes (described in the Hollow field) who subject another person (a romantic interest or a child) to an alchemical regimen to change them into someone else, often to meet an ideal in mind and/or body. This change is often staggered, with the Jekyll/Hyde swings, but with each successful forced transformation leaving some permanent change behind while paving the way for the next change to be even more drastic.
- **The Classic Alchemist** is well respected, with access to the breadth of forms and types of Alchemy. The name is a bit of a misnomer, as they aren't generalist alchemists (which would most often be Tools and Visceral), but are instead the most visible and known of alchemists, arbiters of the field, leaders in research and theory, and solvers of the big problems in alchemy, as well as solvers of other problems, using alchemy.
- **Lazarus** practitioners focus on revival, and are specialists in other baths and oils to instill properties and protections in a subject. Initially haphazard, using drugs to buy a period of time where, if they should die, they come most of the way back, and recovering fully with (expensive) Baths of Bethany, they gradually refine the admixture and tune their body to become undying, or to make death something *dangerous*, reviving with brief monstrous power or other qualities.
- **Phantasmanauts** use the rigid, predictable, and harnessable elements of Alchemy and technomancy to address the immaterial world. Unlike many astral travelers, alcazarites, technomancers, or ruins delvers who adopt an astral form to visit their respective realms, Phantasmanauts remain firmly grounded in reality while addressing these things, the Phantasmanaut can steadily identify issues and gain ground or institute changes while utilizing their lab to stay at arm's length, which does have its own challenges. Technomancy Phantasmanauts may focus more on diving in or being an equal participant, while Alchemy Phantasmanauts may draw things out or drain/infuse a target area, but that's a 70-30, 30-70 distinction and they have similar tools.
- **Conceptors** are shoot-for-the-moon homunculus specialists, often trying to create or harness higher-level beings that are often out of reach for most practitioners. Grow a god in a test tube, slow the growth of a primeval spawn so it can be chemically harnessed, or research titans by growing a titanic homunculus.
- **Extractors** build massive labs, sometimes to the degree they have to have real world cover as an accredited company to mask what they do. Employees may have no idea what they really do. The name comes from the fact that many draw out energies or something specific from a realm, but a facility of any type with another realm or Otherness on a large scale used for production and alchemy used to manage things can fit, whatever the actual goal. Extract Warrens meat and alchemically subdue it, then sell it as vegan food, or tranquilize a god and put tubes into it to extract its fluids, to pump elsewhere and unwind man-made disaster.
- **Asphyxiants** distill down ambient spirits or raw power and then huff and/or intravenously feed it to elevate themselves, often literally. Gas-mask wearing, emaciated, floating

alchemists who instill awe and hallucinations with their presence, with tubes fed into their bodies, capable of practicing as easily as they, well... not *breathe*. As they will it.

Hollow

Hollow practices center or pivot on the Self, rather than any specific realm or power source; on the practitioner's own person, personality, identity, body, instincts, style, behavior, goals, dreams, and the various contextual elements that tie into those things. Using the practice, the practitioner gouges, twists, mutates, or creates a dynamic around the Self, drastically altering it. Because of the great personal sacrifice involved, and the leap of faith required of its practitioners, it tends to involve dark, extreme personalities. Many Hollow Practices have a mirror in the Rapacious practices, where the target is another individual rather than one's own Self being put on the line, but the mechanisms, powers, or tools used are similar.



As a set of practices heavily rooted in the Prices branch, the *price* here is the risk to one's Self. The gain, by roughly equal measure, is often a gain through that Self - getting sometimes tremendous amounts of power that's easily at hand, or personal growth, breaking personal limitations, or outright altering the self to capture the best aspects of being Other and being human at the same time.

Hollow practitioners can be subdivided into some subgroups, which cover most bases:

- **Heartless** practices subtract, reduce, and alter one's own humanity to eliminate weaknesses and aspects of one's own humanity, often seeking a way to become immortal. Could be a 'Portrait of Dorian Gray' style redirection of harm, aging, and death to an object, someone removing their own organs and becoming someone who can't die by normal means but now needs a practice-rooted power source to live, or someone excavating hollows in their body that they can place Immaterial Others into.
- **Halflight** practices fracture the Self into a personal Self and an alter ego, where that could be a half wolf, half-human based on certain calendar events, a person who takes a chemical to become an entirely different, idealized person, or someone accessing an empowered astral, crafted, or summoned body for increasing periods of time.
- **Channeling** practices tap into or have great power thrust upon them, at risk to the Self. Those who tap into great power with no option to turn it off, only to temporarily restrain it, those who have gods, hosts of spirits or echoes reach out through them, those who bear curses of a magnitude that warp the world around them- power ceases to be a question, and the real question becomes how to manage that power and hold onto any aspect of normalcy.

These are not mutually exclusive, and a practitioner may find it necessary to use one to shore themselves up or maximize the use of another. Becoming an Other can be a way of offloading extreme power to a different Self, removing weaknesses can ease costs of transitioning

between Selves, power from a Channeling practice can empower others, etc. Some practices may also fall between these.

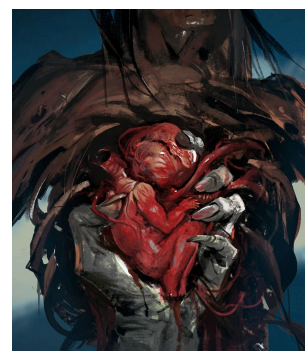
The Others of Hollow practices include Vestiges, which appear across most Prices practices- those individuals who have had something subtracted from them. Often fragile, a vestige is to a human as a broken glass is to a whole one; what is there may be used as a structure to reinforce or hold something, and the broken edges can be dangerous. Subcategories of Vestige include the Paper Men, who are the tempered remains of a person who was consumed or blown away by power, the Broken, who linger on the fringes of society and absorb energies from nearby realms and thin places, like collections of spirits, elemental, or Abyssal energies, and the Awestruck, who had their minds and Selves blasted out by a great power, while their bodies remain.



There is also a loose rule where every practice with a risk has Others that represent the end result of that risk. The Heartless who give up too much to be considered human, the Halflights who can't turn back, and the Channeling practitioners who are consumed by that which they channel. Hags are those Heartless who sustain themselves with some kind of predatory act, with subcategories including the Night Hag who preys on dreams, the Blood Hag that does so through murder, and the Drudge Hag, who utilizes captive people, beasts, and mechanisms to dredge up specific and obscure resources or treasures, sustaining themselves through the symbolic finds and the value of the toil. Virtually any means of sustaining oneself through power (or any means of gaining power) can be linked to Hagdom.

Where the final step to cease being a practitioner and becoming Other instead can be intentional, it can also be the result of a fail state. The Fraward is the Hyde alchemist who becomes the alter ego, losing the war over their Self. The Fulminate is a Harbinger or other Channeling practice who is spent, usually wholly or partially rooted to the spot they burned out, surrounded by a swathe of waste or altered reality. Where Vestiges tend to be fairly weak, these Hollow endstate Others tend to be dangerous and potent- they have immense power because power was involved in the practice that made them, they have foreknowledge of practice and more practice-like abilities because they were once practitioners, or both.

There are no realms directly associated with the Hollow Practices, but Alcazar practices can be used as a diagnostic tool, opening up one's own Self and turning into a place that may be explored. When something goes wrong or needs repair, or if a Heartless practitioner creates a void that something else tries to occupy, the Alcazar can be a means of handling that.



The Tools and Motifs of Hollow practices tend to involve the Self, and may involve human or organ shaped motifs (figurines), outlines, and decoration or markings on the body. A great deal of emphasis is put on the standard 'layout' of the Self, which assigns meaning and import to regions of the body, starting at the crown of the head and going down to the 'root' (the nethers). The practices tend to have a dark and edgy appearance; scratchy

lines, blood, dark circles, and other voids, often tied to the body or outlines of Self: big circle on skin or someone's back? A good indicator.

Prices are universal. Any given entry below will have some analogue that takes away the Hollow part of things but may use the same tools.

Some suggested Hollow practices include:

	Conflict	Deals	Visceral	Immaterial	Divine
Prices	Deathless Wolfskin Harbingers	Hosts	Deferred Hyde Abomination	Dream Thief Masque Haunted	Cloistered Penitent Cultist

- **Deathless** can't die or feel pain, though they may be disabled. Offensive Hollow practitioners, their studies let them easily inflict that which they themselves have become immune to.
- **Wolfskin** practitioners are intentional lycanthropes, wearing or assuming the skin of a great beast. Not necessarily wolves, they can remove their animal skin along with associated injuries and problems when they're done- even shucking off curses.
- **Harbingers**, often unwilling, have become vehicles for overflowing power, which takes the form of a warped 'storm', themed after whatever power is being forced through them.
- **Hosts** blend multiple Hollow practices together, carving out spaces within themselves and placing Others into the hallows that result, gaining that Other's power. Require careful binding and/or consent of those Others, or the journey will be tough.
- **Deferred** use objects to hold their injuries and more abstract consequences. A statue that has their every wound to date, their every sin inscribed.
- **Hydes** are alchemists who create an alter ego, their first dose initiating an ongoing and escalating battle with their powerful other Self, who often has what they lack.
- **Abominations** are akin to Harbingers, holding in something greater than they should be able to contain, but leak it out in the form of grotesque and cascading mutations and visceral consequences.
- **Dream Thieves** whittle down and abandon their own bodies to better borrow others.
- **Masques** don symbols to wear a different hat or assume a role, with associated skills, slipping between identities more abstract and iconic than most: the child, the doctor, etc.
- **Haunted** channel echoes and immaterial things to become a nexus of those same powers or associated emotions and ideas, often hard to be around.
- **Cloistered** actively destroy their selves with the biggest tools available, potentially rewriting existence and events.
- **Penitent** do grisly penance without having done the sins, modifying and exultifying their Self in the backswing.
- **Cultists** surreptitiously tap into and channel dangerous and divine power... much as people siphon gas from a car and risk getting some in



their mouths, they channel dangerous higher powers and risk horrible fates should that power or its owner notice their Self.

Rapacious

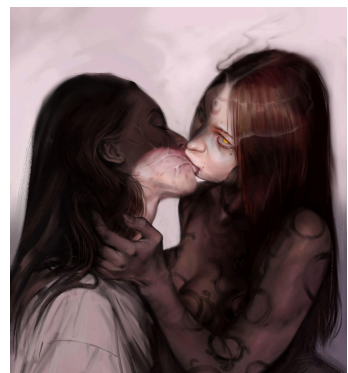


Rapacious Practices are, in short, those that prey on people, with heavy focus on the concept of claim and the Prices category of schools. The 'price', for the most Prices of these practices, is the inherent risk and requirement that there be victims to target. People, their Selves, their hopes, dreams, potential, and more becomes resources to be exploited. Often disliked but tolerated by the greater practitioner community, Rapacious practitioners often utilize various forms of claim - the principles of ownership as recognized by greater powers and by spirits, in order to get past the veil of Innocence... or at least, they have to clean up after

themselves with ginger care.

The things that can be taken from humans can vary as much as the things that humans have to offer. Various Rapacious practices will develop a modus operandi and then iterate on that and become experts in making the most out of what they take and how they take it. Families and groups using Rapacious practices may hinge on one or the other; some choose a *how* and then make it so they each are focused on a different thing they take, refining and maximizing their approach. Others choose a target substance, material, or aspect of humanity and diversify how they approach that target, often with more emphasis on refining and making the most out of whatever it is they take.

The Others of Rapacious practices mirror those of other Prices practices, but primarily because the victims are paying a price and may become Othered. Take someone's Soul, Self, emotions, or dreams from them, and they're liable to become a vestige - an Othered person with something (or a lot of somethings) missing. These vary as much as others do, and can overlap, but may have aspects that mirror the approach. If there are many victims, you may see Clotted vestiges, which are groups of semi-organized and connected vestiges that tend to find shared solace and strength in a singular motif, like having holes in their heads, tied together by shared and horrific experience. Others may exist as a backlash to hostile and detrimental practice, particularly the Indelible vestige, who exists as a stubborn vestige liable to return again and again, like a solid echo, empowered by the fact the victim was able to get some word out about what was happening, or the way they went out drew and sustains notice; for as long as a family member searches, the vestige persists, even growing stronger, more coherent, and smarter over time. By contrast, there is a whole subclass of vestiges dubbed Embered, Shatter, and Maim, among many, many others, damaged in the taking, who are more mindless and flock to similar power, self-destructing on contact. Practices that leave these things around, as one can imagine, do not engender good relationships with the rest of the practitioner community, akin to leaving heat-seeking mines on the sites of battlefields, *if* they aren't conscientious about cleaning up... and Rapacious practitioners aren't very selfless, by definition.



Non-vestige Others can include the same kinds of fail states as Hollow practices evidence, but trade off on residual practitioner-like abilities, gaining a great deal of motivation, hate, and drive against practitioners and practice in general, sometimes being empowered against such. The Hyde's analogue is the Glazier, who have the Glazed or Gazed-upon as their equivalent of the Fraward; less independent, less powerful on their own, but a Glazed that finds a kernel of their old Self or a way of triggering that Self's awareness can flip on a dime and come like a bat out of hell at the nearest viable target. The victims of a Circian practitioner who turns people into pet animals to use as tools, while claiming the humanity and potential of that life as a currency may similarly find a means of acting, and by definition or natural selection, these Circed acquire the tools to fight back and make the most of their altered existence, evading practice and binding by force of will. In brief, there *will* be survivors and exceptional people who escape, and when they do, they can be Other, and very dangerous to practitioners.

There are Others who prey on practitioners in similar manners to how Rapacious practitioners prey on humans. For every mechanism described on these pages, there's likely an Other who is using it to fight or exploit practice or exploit innocents by similar means. There are Jockeys who seek to be hosted within a practitioner's hallow and have the tools to turn the tables on the one hosting them, Shacklers seek to be made familiars or other formalized relationships and then trap the individual. Some invade dreams or lay snares, or send items into the world to harm the unwary and then bring the stolen power back. In fact, there are many rapacious practices where the line between a practitioner and Other's methodology is so fuzzy as to be nonexistent.



Rapacious practices tend to be subtle and hidden, but with a caveat. The universe likes fairness, and so generally, items and practices will have a signature *out* or means of fighting back. This can be a hint on a cursed item, mechanisms for ways out, albeit guarded and convoluted ones. Without these things, the practice may build up too much pressure, or the backlash when someone does get out may be as complete and total as the practice itself was meant to be for the victims. Thus, expect to see the innocuous mixed with weird hints and clues - words in obscure languages or ominous portents laid out alongside glittering and tempting bait.

Other times, the 'out' is given beforehand. A warning, hints about what is coming, or a testing of Innocence that invite the victim through - so they take their own degree of responsibility. A series of ever-worsening nightmares, visiting and appearing to the victim to give a cryptic hint about what is coming, or surrounding them with omens and signs such as crows or spider motifs, that increase in quantity and intensity over time. These things (unbeknownst to the victim) make them more vulnerable if they see these dangers and choose to continue without running, seeking help, or accepting they are dealing with the supernatural.

Rapacious practices are extensive and can fall at virtually any intersection, though **Prices** and **Deals** are the most common tracks. **Prices** represent the inherent risk of pursuing targets, and tend to give the practitioner the means of juggling and setting their own risk tolerances vs. the power they can bring to bear, both in the pursuit and in leveraging what it is they gain. **Deals**, by contrast, focuses on the interaction and any offers or transactional elements involved in the taking. It is very common for Deals practices to try to identify and target key individuals for a greater agenda. For example, the Peddler might target key members of a community, aiming for a champion, a leader, the wealthiest person, the scholar or teacher, and a member of the faith, and by getting representatives (and eventually top representatives) they gain influence over the community. This said, they can also be:

Visceral - For the emphasis on claim, taking and ownership, on physical items/blood/guts, and because it's easier to take the *physical*. Very hands-on, with room for exploration or dabbling in alchemy, with relatively tangible gains and resources.

Immaterial - For curses and accessing targets from odd angles, such as dreams and emotions. In contrast to the Deals column, they tend to emphasize scraps or incremental gains, over key & iconic figures. In seizing the prize (such as taking a body), it's more of a leap of faith, trusting they've gathered enough scraps or debilitated the target enough.

Divine - Emphasizes the power or scale of gains acquired by way of the taking - what is being built or set up, and the well of power that can be obtained and worked with. Overlaps with Creation practices.

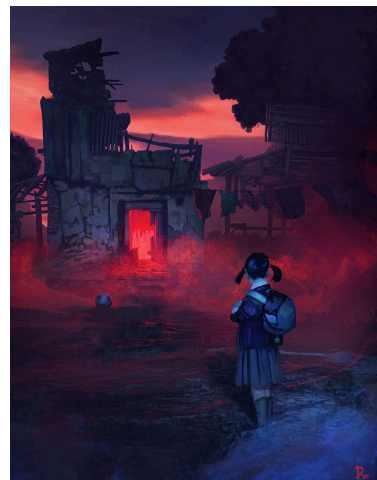
Tools - Focus on the mechanisms of taking - sometimes literally. Items become a means of collecting, and insulate the practitioner from the Innocence they're dealing with. Items may be remotely managed or controlled. Cursed items are a common item to work with. Overlaps with Magic Item practices.

Interaction - Utilize inveiglement, befuddlement, and various means of distracting or beguiling others to get one over on victims.

Conflict, Realms, and Protection are viable options, but not *common* options. Conflict can focus on the violent taking of something in the moment, and Protection can be used like Divine is above, as an end goal, with the practitioner shoring themselves up or gathering resources to ward off harm, current or future.

While not a field of practices necessarily based heavily in **realms**, the Rapacious practices may utilize realms or be rooted in realms because it's easier to manage prey when they've been captured, or when the angle of approach (and the victim's fleeing) is not earthly.

Blackforesters, for example are the classic witches with gingerbread houses, creating a place as a trap, others may penetrate and navigate dreams as a means of acquiring bodies or shaping a target, Peddlers have their shops, etc.



	Conflict	Deals	Visceral	Immaterial	Divine
Conjure		Wishmaker	Bloodied	Dream Thief	
Prices	Rapparee	Envoy Taker of Names	Ritual Killer	Proctor	Vainglory
Tools	Madcap	Peddler	Toymaker	Heartfisher/ Heartforger	Blackforester
Realms		Conductor	Keeper		
Interact	Swipe	Maquillage	Glazier	Cursewright	Deimos
Lore		Corruptor	Organ Thief		
Protect		Interloper		Phobos	

- **Wishmakers** focus on short-term manifestation and reality distortion by way of conjuration, building it step by step by granting wishes of others, reaping power by way of consequence, punishment, or sacrifice, and then reinvesting the proceeds into offering grander wishes. **Envoys, Peddlers, Conductors, and Maquillage** practitioners have a similar setup, trading things to innocents: faustian bargains with incarnate forces, cursed items, trips to other realms, and glamourised beauty, respectively.
- **Rapparee** practitioners are bandits, waylaying targets to take prizes off them. Unlike typical magical duelists who claim prizes from the defeated, the Rapparee utilizes tricks and ploys to take far more and forestall the karmic penalties and other balancing forces... sometimes by leaving their targets in a state where they can't assert their claim.
- **Ritual Killers** collect kills, killing an assortment of target types, importance, and in specific ways, with practices to help the practice while gaining benefits from the pattern.
- **Proctors** make Ritual Incarnates (see Incarnations) or latch onto dying/nascent ones to try to steer things and manage things, reaping a share of the rewards, and/or make their own 'tests' for people to fail.
- **Vainglory** practitioners set themselves up as cult or religious leaders, using practice to forcibly convert people to their way of thinking. While backlash is intense and those who slip control are empowered to deal with them, they can quickly rise in power and evidence easy divine power with soldiers and other growth as a bonus.
- **Toymakers** (sometimes darkwrights or cursesmiths) release cursed items into the world, baiting the innocent into using them, going too far or falling prey to the inbuilt curses, and then the items return to the toymaker to bring back the dividends.
- **Blackforesters** create the classic 'gingerbread house' as traps that they manage as demiurgic powers.
- **Heartfishers** capitalize on high emotion, extracting them to make magic items, at a cost to the victims.
- **Interlopers** appear in a group as a long lost family member, childhood friend, or member of a business, using social wards (denial, minimization, etc.) and protective effects to deflect and compromise key figures, leaving one untouched as the 'out'. They insinuate themselves, typically in a massive all or nothing play to take everything victims have, inheritance, business, or simply doing away with them all and translating that to power.

Security practices are the umbrella under which practices intended for defending against problems fall. The distinction of key terms is essential to grasping the practice, and primarily include *barriers*, which act as walls or bubbles against unwanted forces and influences, *seals*, which weaken and limit, and *wards*, which stop threats from trying, by distraction, discouragement, or deterrence.



When an individual threat is suppressed to the point that they can't do anything too threatening and are in the practitioner's power, they are said to be *bound*, secure under a *binding*. From there, if a practitioner then exerts control, often through extracting oaths, and allows limited action in service to the practitioner only, the threat (usually an Other, sometimes a human) may be said to be *spellbound*, though most simply use 'bound' and reserve 'spellbound' for the most precise, customized kinds of control, which lapse into other semi-related fields.

The interplay of barriers, seals, and wards is very effective. If one has a circle drawn on the ground that creates a kind of invisible wall or forcefield to keep a wraith confined within the circle's perimeter, then a seal that halves that wraith's power makes them that much less able to knock down the wall, and a ward that burns and weakens them for approaching the wall or *trying* to knock it down means an immortal wraith can't simply stand at the wall and keep hitting it for months or years until it eventually crumbles, so to speak. Because of this interplay, security practitioners may specialize heavily in one subcategory such as wards, but will get some serious benefit from even a modest investment into learning and executing seals and barriers. With this, the field is neatly arranged.

In any event, security practices are the sort of staple practice where even the most dysfunctional, chaotic council of practitioners will have one on hand or on speed dial, metaphorical or otherwise. Big threats come up, and some can't be slain outright. A naturally emergent god often cannot be slain until its last adherents are found and discouraged from the faith, but it can be locked into a hole in the ground with a barrier locking it in and a seal on the door, with wards planted around the area to keep random individuals and animals from investigating the area. Some areas, in the face of a hole to the Warrens or Ruins opening up, with the threat of a tide of goblins or echoes flowing through, will call a practitioner or practitioner family to throw up a barrier, in a similar way. Such barriers and protective measures draw continual power, though usually far less than what they're confining, and require constant maintenance - wear and tear to the environment, to any objects or papers used, and various influences coming in to change how spirits flow or gather can disrupt a balance and create weak points that the confined (or firmly excluded) can capitalize on. Many security practitioners make regular patrols and do regular checks of past bindings, some going back generations in their family.

This said, while security practitioners are often seen as *needed*, their obligations can tie them down and keep them from reaching tiers of being *respected*. When there is no problem taking up people's attention, some will wonder why they afford the security practitioners any respect or pay them, but when the problem is at large and not yet suppressed, people will wonder they should respect or pay the people who haven't handled it yet. This said, enough are drawn to this life where their practice and knowledge is in continual demand that only the more remote areas go wanting. Managing problems that would disrupt Innocents is good karma, and the same forces and influences that deter, limit, or wall off trouble can be arranged to let good influences in, so when a practitioner family or practitioner settle in an area, they can usually arrange things so that good things come their way- an intersection with Law practices that pays off in the long term. Few will deny it's a good gig... provided the practitioner can suppress the threats when they come tearing through.

Security *others* tend to come in two varieties. Some are manufactured, to supplement the management or erection of barriers, wards, and seals. Others emerge naturally, often in the course of other forces intersecting with these long-running and important practices.



Statues are common manufactured Others, intended to last for long periods of time, and carry some karmic, divine, or other positive forces through an area- they may be animated, or animate in times of need only, and make stubborn obstacles, rarely healing any damage they take, but taking very little. Variants on statues include Komainu, (lion-dog statues), Tutelary statues (statues of scholars), and others, who each bless or benefit a property they stand guard at. When alarms

will signal someone is trying to free a captive Other, a hard hitting, implacable obstacle can be invaluable. Ignis Fatuus are warding Others that can be used to lure or distract, spirits ignited with a ghostly flame that draw the eye of Innocents, luring them off track.

Some areas, especially shrines, may be designed and-or arranged to foster complex 'shrine spirits', made to have some barrier or sealing abilities, often as a stopgap. More common to sites where a shrine and/or simple temple were erected over and around a confined Other. These these intense shrine spirits in traditional clothing can emerge to patch up holes in the barrier, seal the target- or confined Other, or eliminate the intruder, depending on how they were made. They may be fostered with the right echoes, gifts, practice, or sacrifice- often of dedicated security practitioners or the especially innocent, such as children or virgins.

In the middle ground, any of these manufactured security Others can be corrupted or subverted. The wrong forces being drained out, the wrong influences leaking in to 'infect' them, bad karma, negativity in surrounding areas (war, disaster), and/or isolation can lead to a Komainu or shrine spirit going 'black', often tearing down and penetrating protections as readily as they once shored them up, and inflicting negative karma by their presence, or by some mechanism of attack (while having some themselves... though they can endure the consequences well).

Other 'middle ground' Others Others include emergent others like Trussed, often security practitioners (rarely Others) who are confined *with* something sealed, kept from dying of hunger and starvation, and remanded to solitary confinement, where they do nothing but manage the confined Other... such will eventually merge with the environment, roots growing into flesh and wall both, remaining only ambulatory enough to keep the bindings intact. Beset are similar, but locked into eternal combat with an antagonist, often evenly matched, or the Beset has eternal means of restoring themselves or returning to the fight that the target cannot counter. The situations are forced by necessity, but the fact and ways they become Other are not.

Navigators are even more accidental, and are formed when spiritual flows or outside influences (aligned echoes) start tracing the perimeter of a large-area, ongoing practice (which wards, seals, and barriers may often be), and become intelligent, inexorably linked to the practice, making it intelligent and adaptable (sometimes expanding, encompassing other targets) but also a weak spot, capable of being corrupted or manipulated. There are various other Others that are similar to Navigators, focused on smaller unattended wards and such, and may give them personality or unintended behaviors, if they don't start moving of their own accord. Such small magics that take on a life of their own are sometimes called *weirds* or *weirded spirits*, something of a half-skip and jump from the pronunciation of *wards*, because it's often minor wards and alarms that are affected so.

Individual Security practices have a tendency to use certain materials. All may use some combination of elementary and heraldic diagrams, mingling various other practices, with Barriers favoring wood and stone, Seals favoring living wood, rope, chain, and sealed impressions, and Wards favoring materials that can generate light or indicate menace, such as candles, lanterns, and skulls. Any security practice will have a tendency to work best on certain practices and Others, depending on the choices made as they are prepared. Even the choice of material to draw a diagram with, such as chalk vs. salt vs. charcoal, could make a barrier doubly effective against some Others while being up to half as effective against others. Wards may be best utilized if keyed to the weaknesses and natures of an Other- use of silver will be effective warding off most Faerie, while having little meaning to elementals. Items with ties to the history or major key points of a person, place, or thing can be used as part of a security practice oriented against them, or to strengthen a place's ability to work with barriers and wards.

Security practices don't have their own realm, but often contribute to the defense of various other realms, guarding doors to other realms against the wandering of random Innocents, or setting up the walls within which a demiurgic realm may grow. When they do touch on practices codified under 'Realms', they typically focus on the present realm, emphasizing influence over wide areas. They lean somewhat into Interaction (mostly Wards and debilitating/detering effects) and can dip into the Visceral, for more physical confinement, deterrents, and weakening effects, or Immaterial, for abstract, emotional, ghostly versions of the same. They are, as one might imagine, fairly defining as Protection practices go.

Some suggested Security practices include:

	Conflict	Deals	Visceral	Immaterial	Divine	Any
Conjure			Thornwreath			
Prices				Baskerville		
Tools			Signetory			
Realms				Banisher		
Interact	Alarum	Spellbinder	Pin	Sweven		
Lore						
Protect	Monk Realmswall	Censure	Destroyer Conservators	Chainer	Angsturm	... Knight ...

- **Alarum** often carry warding lanterns, that make staying in the fight against them distressing or unpleasant, sending out wards, curses, and omens to further drive enemies down and back. Used in some areas to herd Others (or Innocents of a hated race or creed) out of/into an area.
- **Realmswalls** are of the barriers and spaces between realms, penetrating, besieging, and erecting them. As combat practitioners, lean towards artillery effective against these barriers and spaces, and as barrier practitioners, build a catalogue of stylized barriers to quickly erect, each based off of a conquered or studied intersection of realms or barrier.
- **Spellbinders** combine barrier, ward, and seal to suppress a target until total control and mastery over them can be achieved with a specialized and secure binding. Against stronger targets, tailored measures may be required. At their strongest, they can have a bevy of Others (or spellbound Innocents, practitioners) obeying their every need, while falling back on defensive measures to keep enemies from targeting them.
- **Thornwreaths** apply the principles of many Security practices (particularly deterrent and retaliatory ones) to shorter lived conjurations and manifestations. Summon things too durable to easily fall in battle, or spike-crusted life that is more costly to swat down than they are to create. Have summonings hem in targets, then call up a thorn-crusted outgrowth to bind them.
- **Signetory** practitioners etch stone signets and symbols into stone rings, tools, and items, for its enduring symbolism. A ‘heavy’ sealing practice, where even high access will see a given symbol take a long time to recharge and become available for use again, or be usable in a shorter period of time, at the cost of a chance of breakage. At the same time, it is weighty and effective, and ties into some old, *old* practices, with effectiveness against old Others and phenomena.
- **Pin** practitioners fall under Sealing and use things like thrown needles targeting points of Self to disable capabilities and alter flows. Expect poison or poison-like effects, blindness, denial of the use of a limb, or ‘there were razor wires all along’ reveals.
- **Destroyers** use visceral attacks that double as effective attacks against greater Others (ex. taking a percentage of total health) while laying groundwork; blades that they don’t want to walk into, chains to tie them, or breaking ground to plunge them into the Abyss.

- **The Baskerville** practitioner gathers large numbers or very large omens (crows, hounds, shadow people, Buggane) that prophesize doom and ward threats away from an area. A combination of trap-layer, with omen-crows flocking around a subject as they intrude, and architect, with the arrangement of omens building up to something, they can take a hand in events, but all omens and curses can be turned back on someone, and it can do so here as an avalanche of ill intent.
- The **Banisher** often works with two or three realms, and aims to use curses and other seals to alter a threat's being and push them into another realm. A greater goblin can be turned into a middling spirit and kept in a prison in a realm it does not know or call home, neutering its capabilities, a spirit can be tied to the Ruins, etc. Tends to work with more ephemeral realms.
- The **Sweven** is a deceptive barrier practitioner, with an emphasis on layering and playing with various effects. Toss out decoys, mirrors, make doors lead a victim back to an earlier point, confuse, bewilder, and frustrate. There's always a way out, and the effects may only stack up so far, so they tend to only buy time for other measures, be those measures a devastating finisher or another sort of barrier or seal.
 - Comes in two variants; the Interact variant is more a trickster and general purpose deceptive practitioner. The Lore version focuses on finding things that specifically frustrate, disturb, and confound a given foe, potentially by digging into their psyche.
- **Chainers** are the immaterial counterpart of Destroyers and use curses and sentiment that serve those same sorts of double purposes, laying groundwork even while being immediate obstructions and harm for a target. Said groundwork helps turn an area into ground too hostile to pass through, increases numbers of echoes and wraiths that would be a problem for a given threat, and, ultimately, thin the veil enough for targets to be claimed by the Ruins.
- **Angsturm** practitioners work with higher powers, usually gods, calling in power to call down spears of light that impale and fix a target to a location, or even the hand of the higher power, to grasp a threat and hold them still. Is capable and equipped with many effects that are strong even against powerful foes, but has elements of chaos or variability that make it less effective against stronger foes, or less effective against foes that aren't as opposed to the god's interests. (That is, a god of light can shut down beings of dark and shadow, but might struggle against fire). Much of the Angsturm's progression is about improving consistency and increasing scope.
- **Knights** are a term given to practitioners that have sworn to a certain code or the safekeeping of an area. This can include Knight of Seals, Knight of Wards, Knight of the Wall, Knight of London, etc. Can be a title or modifier appended to practices that aren't contrary the protection of an area, with 'paladin'-like vows and pledges, and allegiance to a Lord buying better security and protections practices. It is fairly common for a security practitioner to be a knight, given the interplay of benefits for what they'd be doing otherwise.

Horror

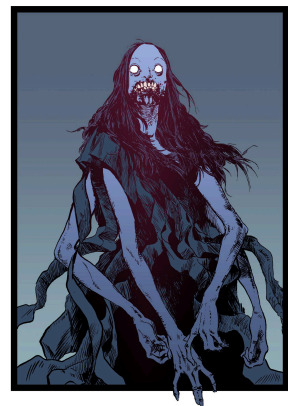
Practice sets rules, strictures, and laws- some that define or redefine form, time, space, spirit, and function. When practice or the power of an Other takes hold and then *twists*, due to misapplication, misfire, interference, or, rarely, intent, that which was stable and normal can be turned into a *horror*. Horrors are frequently tormented, twisted figures, often multi-limbed, existing in the margins of reality.



The field of horrors is, unsurprisingly, multifaceted. There are those who specialize in the prevention of, handling of, and management of horrors, and there are those who purposefully work with and use these forces. This is a relatively niche field, and the ones who focus on it, more often than not, are those who were forced to focus on it, because they or someone they cared about were horrified, faced being horrified, or were preyed on by horrors.

As a practice, studies into horrors is thus niche, but it is a curious sort of niche where other practices often can't draw a lot of substance from studies of horrors, while practitioners of horror-related things borrow heavily from other practices to inform the wide variety of realms and subtypes of Horrors that can manifest. For virtually every practice, there is something that can go wrong, though horrors *particularly* come from the alteration of realms, and practices that deal in realms are as common a source of Horrors as the remainder put together.

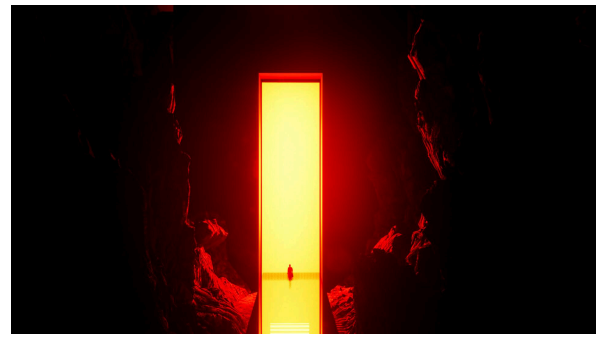
Horrors find their old selves and thought processes scrambled and put further out of reach, past contorted passages. A need to breathe might be moved to another part of their being, creating an obsession with strangulation. Final thoughts, such as those of loved ones, may drive the Horror to gravitate toward similar individuals - oftentimes terrifying them or resulting in a grisly end for the object of misplaced, warped affection. Between that and the fact they are often in constant stress or pain, they tend to act desperately and inexplicably, often confronting people with some combination of human intelligence and a cornered animal's savagery.



They may be inherently *unstable*, like Bugges, and thus one horror may, drawing on their nature as a horror, reach out with forking limbs, and may lose limbs or gain them, with a trend toward the latter. Getting too big or too reduced may put them in a critical state, often immobile and volatile if disturbed. Their inability to pass in conventional society and their ties to their old lives lead to them occupying spaces that were once lived in, though they may dislike the sorts of 'trashed' places goblins are active. Horrors can often pass through spaces that only one part of their body can fit through, such as cracks in the wall or gaps in damaged floorboards, which further incentivizes them to occupy these isolated spaces.



Past those isolated, mundane spaces, they may find their way to places realms border reality, benefitting from passive effects where the realms meet, or they, especially those horrors that multiply (a hypothetical horror that gives birth to infinite horrors) may be pushed or pulled into either the Abyss or into an interstitial space by whichever forces manage Innocence. Such interstitial spaces are gaps between realms, where there is little to nothing at all, only wasteland-like, tracts of wide indoor areas with scattered ruins or natural features (rocks, dead wood) and walls that stretch for thousands of miles up and to either side, mostly unlit. Multiplying horrors may begin to fill up this space, but will fail to do so because it is often nigh-infinite itself, or they may grow to such a size that they collapse under their own gravity and then compress down into other states. They are ubiquitous enough in these spaces that the 'realm' is often associated with horrors.



Magic Items in the horror field are split between those things that were broken and created a horror situation in the first place, and the artifacts from a horrifying event. The former are often powerful items with steep drawbacks and dangers including a chance to horrify, which many horror practices can mitigate, and which horror items (such as a dismembered limb that can activate the item on command, when the practitioner is at a safe distance) can circumvent. The latter can be mundane objects with compressed horror limbs and life within, pieces of horrors (limbs, eyeballs) that remain alive, with residual capability, including fragments of a horrified practitioner's ability to practice, or pieces of a horror that have compressed into the shape of objects, gaining aspects or extensions of those objects' function. Many hurt the user or leave lingering side effects (some resembling mental illness). Most will overlap or dip into other fields - usually recognizable as such by the fact they have a distinct influence from that outside field, but are dismembered, still-animate limbs.

The practices themselves emphasize *sealing* as protective, restraining measures (see Security practices for more on distinctions, terminology), and a lot of the iconography of Self, Soul, and Spirit, some of it hashed-together or clashing with the rest of the diagram work or practice, to protect the user. The diagram work itself, where the horror aspects are intentional, features a lot of intentionally broken, crossed, and jagged lines, or standard shapes and letters with the lines extended out so far that they form fractal-like shapes when joining with one another.



Expect a predominance of Realms practices, because most Horrors are, and the resources and information one might use are found at the accident sites and in interstitial spaces. Protection practices, because such is required to protect the user when dealing with a dangerous practice. There aren't as many Prices practices, if only because things, should they go wrong, do so suddenly and violently, without much space to claw it back. The 'feeling' of a prices practice lingers, nonetheless.

Some sample Horror practices include:

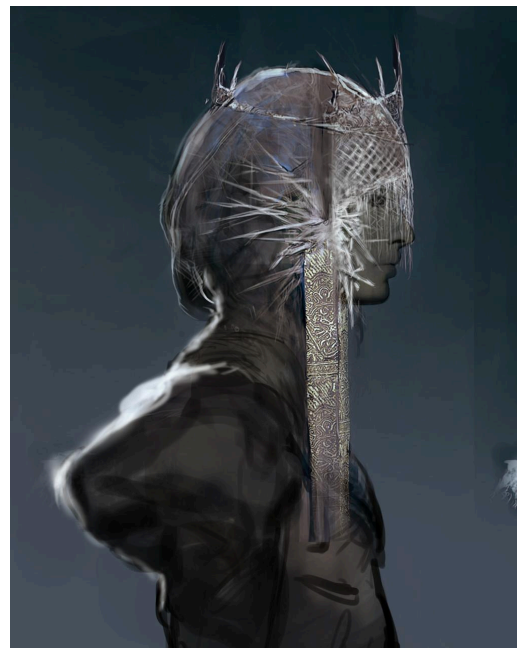
	Conflict	Deals	Visceral	Immaterial	Divine
Conjure				Choir of One	
Prices		Crossed Fingers	Wound Licker		
Tools					
Realms	Nail Biter	Right Hand Man	Shape Whipper	Tearjerkers	Upper Hand
Interact		Crossed Fingers			
Lore					
Protect	Knuckle Dragger	Buttoned Lips	Bone Picker	Living Soul	True Form

- **Nail Biters** explore the interstitial realms and places that Horrors occupy, taking careful calculations that they then use to reduce the dangers of their arsenal of horrifying practices and offensive attacks, many of which are themselves unstable, and very necessary as weapons to manage and fend off the horrors in places the best calculations can be found.
- **Knuckle Draggers** are melee specialist horror practitioners, who compress horrorfications (or, just as often, used the practice to get a handle on a moderate horror-ing) and seal them within the body. Fifteen grasping arms get bound to a set of muscle groups, which become as strong as the fifteen arms put together; and if the seal (the flesh) is breached, the limbs erupt. Often larger than average, to have space to compress the horrorfication within.
- The **Right Hand Man** is afflicted with horrorfiction or someone closely related to such (thus the moniker), who finds and studies the sites of horrorfications and places horrors were shunted by authorities, to cobble together part of a persona- a creepy man in the shadows, a woman who never lets you see her from behind. Well positioned to pick up horrors as allies, decipher them, and give them the ability to pass, albeit as enigmatic figures
- The **Crossed Fingers** practitioner is a reckless practitioner capable of accelerating through various branches and fields of practice, adopting new ones with a speed that puts most to shame. Often unbeknownst to all but a select few, this is done by being reckless, while having apprentices or Innocents contracted to them, who take the full brunt of any backlash... sometimes several times, before relegating them to summoning fodder in emergencies. If discovered, their ability to get others dwindles, so they dip into techniques to mask things.
- The **Buttoned Lips** practitioner is a specialist in the management and sealing of horrors and the spaces they inhabit, while limiting changes. Extreme body mods and accessories on their own bodies are readily translated into matching stapling, buttoning, stitching, and more on others; especially effective on horrors. Pieces of horrors can be collected and then affected in these ways to seal high-end threats, at a cost of making things much messier if they do escape.
- **Wound Lickers** are healing specialists by necessity, horrified individuals who cut away and tear out the horror aspects, then use a mingling of the rougher healing practices to patch the wounds - goblin staples, nails, and leeches, primeval surges, etc. They play with fire more than most, in how they manifest (and sever) horror traits and their other activities.

- **Shape Whippers** intentionally evoke the same effects that let some horrors create horror-like traits in those they claw at. This technique and knowledge overlaps with a breach-focused approach to realms; if one knows how to rend someone's shape, soul, and Self, they know how to break into a realm, or rip holes in walls to pass through like horrors do. An explorer of realms with a fraught, go-for-the-extremes approach.
- **Bone Pickers** were originally two different practices that married techniques: those of sealers dealing with horrors, and those who survived interstitial spaces, devising the means to endure there. Blending techniques, they restrain and kill things others would deem too problematic, gathering the pieces of horrors that remained most stable, reinforced by spirit and Self, mundane objects that remained standing, and the bones and other more solid, enduring parts of horrors that compressed down in interstitial spaces or endured in the Abyss. Frequently armor and decorate themselves in twisted bones- a sliver of the right kind of bone blown from a dart can give even gods pause.
- **The Choir of One** evokes the instability that affects horrors, creating gaps and distortion that make it easier to bring things into being, though they may be distorted themselves. This is often done with sound or song, playing recordings from a moment of horrorification, or unleashing one's own voice, after a ritual or close brush with horrorification oneself. An eerie, impossible singer who conjures varied things that have too many eyes, or limbs.
- **Tearjerkers** or **Tearjerks** evoke the heavy emotions around horrors to produce wraiths and echoes, while using wraiths, echoes, and various emotional effects (and curses) to better steer ('jerk') horrors. A rather extreme form of emotional manipulation, paired with use of extreme wraiths, and limited ability to manage horrors. Frequently horror-fy aspects of their own psyche to make emotional effects into something else, frequently a compulsion they can manage, so the emotions and wraiths don't affect them.
- **Living Souls** emphasize the integrity of the soul and self, to the point even a blade can't always turn the flesh. Effectively a barrier practice, but reaches out to the skin and soul both, at most. Purity and karmic/custodial benefits (akin to a Komainu or Tutelary spirit) further reinforce things, to the extent that when they face a horror, the degree of horrorification rebounds onto the horror and magnifies with each failed attempt. Once mastered with horrors, it can be done with others, so an attacker might shatter bones or warp muscle and never fully recover, even when attacking at range.
- **Upper Hands** deal with the compressed horrors of interstitial spaces, where they have gathered up and compressed down enough to be crude gods- power without outlets. They offer counsel and support to shape those raw powers, at massive risk.
- **True Forms** seek controlled horrorifications that leave them with a desired end result, often twisting things so many times that, by chance, it resembles something normal, then tweaking. Scary, versatile practitioners of horror practices, they have multiple nested 'lives', adopting a new shape with different capabilities when defeated.

Chronicles

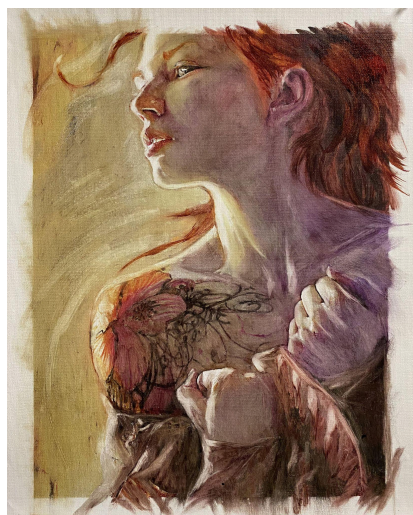
Chronicles practices are something of a midpoint of study between echoes, incarnations, and animus, tracking the key moments, movers, and workings of human history. A very 'working backwards' practice, Chronicles practices rely heavily on the impact humanity has made on the world, the cities it builds, its heroes, its written history, and the things that are built on those. A hero is not just the deeds he did, but the public perception and context surrounding him. While the original chronicles practitioners were very insistent that they were finding patterns in bloodlines, hidden intent in the building of cities, and special meaning and conspiracy within historic events, the reality is that these things were invented post-fact and then applied in retrospect.



This said, it can't be denied that enough attention, Innocent, Aware, and Wise, has been spent on these works, and Chroniclers have been active long enough to have etched out a practice that the spirits recognize.

Historical record, old maps, bloodlines, word of mouth, and the counsel of older Others are drawn on to help form enough plausible precedent that it can fill in the blanks and provide scaffolding for the emotional impressions from the oldest echoes and wraiths, and the ruts carved by Animus that represent the roles and key positions once filled. All of these things—establishment, animus, and echo, cover different ground and support one another, creating a mold which can be filled with power to create a building, individual, or item. Or, once enough of a webwork of possible lines and connection points is drawn out, something like the streets of a city can have power directed through them to form a giant, crude diagram.

Chronicles practices draw heavily on lore, because of the need for research and completing a full picture to get the most out of most projects, but also conflict, because the robust 'molds' mentioned above made for very easy conjuration of relatively robust battle summons, and is a natural extension of the same principles that let someone create a sword out of thin air. The difference is that they go a step further, to make emplacements or images of soldiers of legend to carry those swords.



Where things are more ephemeral or temporary, or are being approached from other angles, they tend to be Conjunction.

Expect a great deal of heraldic symbology and framing, and argumentative markings to call out specific families, with established colors, iconography, and more for a given group, category, or place.

Chronicles practices are not widespread unto themselves, especially given the heavy investment required to do anything big, but remain very attractive, especially to established practitioner families, because of the heavy focus on establishment and the ability to take existing establishment and give it more clout. This is a fairly tidy, simple, 'classy' practice that is thus very easy to dabble into. The Others of Chronicles practices tend to have a majesty to them, and a gravitas, with the intermediate and strong Others of these practices including proud people of old, dressed up with a bit more flair (brighter colors, attractiveness, style of dress), potentially with some echoic blurriness or effects around them when riled... but still human enough that one taken as a familiar can remain human and walk alongside their practitioner in a public setting. It not only checks all the boxes for an acceptable choice of familiar or Others to associate with, but by taking one individual as a familiar, or summoning it, it denies it to others who might want it.

In a similar fashion, historian and city magic practices study the history and layouts of a region, and it's very hard to go wrong with this, especially when one has a heavy investment in the region, be it manors or schools or anything else. Knowing the flows, points of power that are key for coup and claim, and the natural diagrams that form around a place (by landscape or by layout of streets) and potentially nudging these things or tweaking the results can have massive implications in one's control over a region, attempts to take Lordships, and more.

Because it overlaps with some principles of conflict practices, as mentioned above, there's a tendency for older and better-placed practitioner families and schools to teach basic and intermediate defense and dueling practices that serve as prerequisites or foundations for heroic practices. Put simpler, fancy schools and tutors will often teach students a Heroic 'magic arrow' or 'magic sword' basic spell to start with.

All this put together, Chronicles practices are, especially for the established, fashionable and a solid choice of dabbling where it is almost never the 'wrong' choice.

As a *downside*, there is an informational buy-in that makes it hard to break into, especially as a novice. If one is not established in the region or if they do not possess clout of their own, Chronicles Others may turn up their nose at the individual, and not give them their time. Having to thoroughly read into five hundred or more years of history about a person, group, family, thing, or place to just *start* can make the process rough, while established practitioners from established families get more of a shortcut and may get the cliff notes, access to Others that help to pare down information, and so on. While the Lore-focused aspect of things is relaxed for some kinds of Chronicles practice, one may still need to have certain influence or presence (city magic), accolades, or more. And at the tail end, most of the time, the result is that one gets Others and capabilities that are robust and noble but sometimes not to the degree it seems worth it.

The parts that are 'worth it' are up for grabs in an informational arms race. Rewriting history, powerful summons of historic figures, and tapping into momentous events requires that one gather more information and have a better argument and claim than the next family.

It should be stressed that, despite what some might insist, especially among older families, the 'history' used by Chroniclers is not the 'true' history of the world, but an assumed truth. There's a tendency for established groups to use the clout provided by chronicles practices and studies to say 'this bloodline is superior, we've found a pattern that suggests when and where that superiority appears, and with power we can tap it for powerful summons', but in reality, it's more that they've invented the pattern and studied history with a specific intent and bias, and power then fuels the result to meet the expectation. The fact that history may be written by or have the gaps filled in by those who are studying it is part of the reason why most of the biggest families will have people (usually drawn from their own family) digging into their history, bloodline, the points of power around their territories, and so on. If they don't, someone else will, and that can undercut them.

The end result is still that there are effectively powerful bloodlines, individuals, items, points of history, or locuses of power that are viciously contested, and it is tempting to say the end result is the same, but there *are* chronicles practices that approach things from another angle, targeting this mutability of history. These tend to fall into Conjunction and are fragile, fleeting, but much more flexible and less contested.

The Others of Chronicles practices include those immortal Others that have woven themselves into the fabric of things. Some Others may be tied to the iconography and power of an area, and some Hags have been underway for so long that they've carved out their own ruts, and both types gain a kind of inviolability or power that makes them hard to budge or counter.

Heroic practices (primarily the Conflict line of chronicles practices) study bloodlines and mark out Names, lower to advanced tier personalities from that bloodline. Names emerge as slightly exaggerated versions of who the person in life was, with a defined role and approach- the Butcher, the Alchemist, the Seamstress, etc. Oftentimes, these will draw thematic power from the bloodlines themselves and gain power if they meet criteria that are part of the patterns. This could be order of birth (or every X births), life events (ex. a sibling dies, go to war), be tied to calendar, or to world events. Names from a given family tend to have running themes; one might have those with an affinity for woodlands and/or thievery, another might be priests and warriors.

Heroes are a natural extension of this, appearing every few centuries, and manifest when all of the criteria are met. They are, in effect, Names at the peak of power. Heroic practitioners will narrow down patterns and try to figure out who the heroes are in the thousand+ years of a given lineage. And in cases where they already know, there is still more claim to be gotten, or one may wish to track down specific, historical items that are tied to that individual, to unlock further capabilities.

Other, related Others that could interact with Chronicles practices include those that came about from unique interactions with these lines (the last of a line, star-crossed, contradictory mixes of two lines, black sheep), and those that abuse it (cuckoos, bloodline leeches).

Some of these Others may be rooted in the practice itself, and others may be Others that operate independently and just so happen to have facility with bloodlines and corrupting or inserting themselves into them. Chroniclers are often uniquely useful in identifying and dealing with such.

Estate, City magic and Historian practices tie more to the Realms practices, and find similar patterns in the development and growth of a city, figuring out the key points and lines that form it, and the landmarks that define it, both overt and secret. But cities are alive, and the population itself, past, present, and even future, may be represented in various forms, or crystallized into Anima-like or Name-like roles that are key to the flows and power of a city.



In this, these practices overlap with some like Peddlers, Turnkeys, or Connections practices, who may try to get leverage or greater influence over a city by finding 'The Teacher' among the Innocents there, or 'The Hero'. Such individuals may be notorious, or may be subtle and symbolic. 'The Monster' could be a nascent serial killer yet to come into his own, while being a useful find for any practitioner trying to capture the essence of an area, in a map or in a literal practice-enabled coup. Through meeting them, one may find those Others that are most comfortable with the urban sprawls, be they adapted Faerie, Anima, and learned, old Others that were able to keep up with the times. The more classic city magic Others include the cities, villages, and locations themselves; any area with enough attention paid to it and enough power to it will have spiritual (or more than spirit) representatives, or symbolic ones, usually referred to as Heraldic Others, which may appear as dragons, lions, sphinxes, or more, usually depicted on the location's flags, coats of arms, or other emblems. Being tied to the city/city magic is something that can be an Other subtype (often 'City ____' or '____ of [Location]'; City Goblin, Constituent of Chicago, etc.). This affords some facility in moving around the city, knowledge about what is where, and some power, but also responsibility to the area and fluctuating wellness depending on the state of it.

Exploration, research, and finding the right people and places is vital to such practitioners, but they are rewarded with easy facility toward a place, old or current (and rarely, potential) - a bit of power can let them reinterpret the layouts of streets, or turn practice toward a wider area. Cities themselves offer many rewards and key people, and the right practice can allow for optimizing the rewards and getting more of the kinds of encounter one wants, less of the ones they do not.

These two paths are not the fullest extent of Chronicles practices, and some will deal with greater patterns, such as Death, Time, War, long-running Curses, Myth, Collections, or anything else that evolves and develops over time, that might be tracked in lore.

Some example Chronicles practices include:

	Conflict	Deals	Visceral	Immaterial	Divine
Conjure	Banner		Conspiracist	Heterodox	Apocryphal
Prices	Black Sheep				
Tools	Keepsake				
Realms	Estate	City Magic			Historian
Interact	Troupe			Crest	
Lore	Heroic	Signatory	Exhumed Excavator		Inheritor
Protect	Vigil				

- **Banner** practitioners specialize in the creation of quick and effective combat summons. Squadrons of archers who fire very real arrows, charging knights, or whatever else. Modern Banner practitioners tie in the location/historian practices by marking out points of territory to claim, gaining power and more influence over things as they can establish some claim over a given point of territory, even rewriting the entire battlefield to their liking.
- **Conspiracist** practitioners use packages of self-contained mythology to create detours, false depth, and sideways approaches to otherwise vertical bloodlines, with interactions where they intersect: so-and-so qualified for X secret society, and would have had a role in X. In recent years, this has overlapped with Technomancy. Modifying or intersecting symbols and patterns in physical records, artwork, landmarks, etc, lays groundwork for their secret church police, men in black, underground people, etc, to manifest, or for specialists (ascended Names of more power) to manifest, with custom abilities.
- **Heterodox** practitioners deal in some minor amounts of time manipulation, and use it to delve into alternate what-ifs to create Names and Heroes that are alternates of the ones in reality. Cases where a hero became a scoundrel, or the criteria for a Hero settled over a different brother. These Heroes are fragile, and are unlikely to return if shattered, but aren't usually contested by other Chronicles practitioners.
- **Apocryphal** practitioners work in the gaps where lineages and historical record don't exist, to fabricate lineages and meaning off of unclaimed evidence and records. Items of no provenance, the help of gods and long-lived Others of imperfect memory, and hard-to-decipher lineages can be strung together to create something greater in the void.
- **Black Sheep** practitioners investigate and deal with the outliers in the heroic patterns. These are cases where people stray from the established patterns of a heroic line, usually due to outside forces. They are often anti-Heroes, key players in a family's long-term fortunes (usually a lack of it) and run contrary to the family convention. Dealing with them usually means dealing with whatever dangerous force or curse set them astray.
- **Keepsakes** wield and work with the tools and relics of a family line; rather than find Heroes and get the items as a capstone or way of further enabling the Hero, they find the items tied to a family line and bring a Hero into focus by arranging them, or customize a hero by giving them something of a relative's, or a descendant's.

- **Estate** practitioners phase a past landmark into reality, along with its guards and attendants. On the battlefield, summon up ghostly ramparts and gates and shadows of armies, with the Names and Heroes to lead them. Off the battlefield, bring the Estate into reality, with all the luxuries and tools it offers.
- **Troupe** practitioners focus not on a family line, but on an organization - often one of various and constantly shuffling talents, such as a mercenary corps, circus, or thieves guild. Mingle combat trickery and traps with deceptive, versatile, or opportunistic allies to gain an edge.
- **Heroic** practitioners are the standard heroic practitioner, specializing in finding and utilizing heroes, then fighting alongside and enabling them. They find and make use of heroes much faster than their peers in the same field, and combine it with war magic conflict practices that leverage valor and victory.
- **Signatory** practitioners track deal-making Others, peddler-type rapacious practitioners, Envoys, Märchen, and the like, who have lengthy and set patterns that loop, finding the key elements, records of past victims, and use law practice to create a foe for those individuals.
- **Exhumer** practitioners find the physical remnants of dead Heroes, and create a physical body for them using necromancy, augmenting them with knowledge of various types of solid Undead, to combine undead capabilities with the heroic ones.
- **Excavators** find historical record, lore, details of the past, and key items of the past, to co-opt the historical narrative and create a time-altering ritual that will slowly expand, rewriting the past. The greater the rewrite needed, the more resistance will be raised, the longer it will take to ripple outward, and the higher the prerequisites.
- **Crest** practitioners capture the essence of a person, place, or thing, crystallizing the powers of their lineage down into emblems and accessories that carry benefits, or that can be given to allies and summoned Others to impart qualities. Akin to a curse practitioner, but focused on imparting good qualities over inflicting negative ones; victory, strength, tactics, intimidation, being unstoppable, magical qualities, etc.
- **Historian** practitioners decipher an area and reduce it down to a code, with emphasis on key locations, spiritual flows, energies, resources, key people, animus, etc, and map out the streets in such a way that it can look like a ritual circle; this doesn't necessarily follow a set layout, and a route from 200 years ago can be 'bent' by putting a person with a certain gravity in a certain place relevant to it. Effectively turn the city into a large diagram, for devastating power or, more often, the benefit of a Lord.
- **Inheritor** practitioners 'eat' Names and Heroes and become one. This may require fighting them, time, augmented by 'capturing' them by winning over the surrounding family members (ie. immediate forebearers & descendants) and/or research. This is punctuated by having to put the spirit to rest (technically the echo side of the figure to rest) with tasks, and dealing with the fates, pressures, and flows that are tied to the family - one will want to be sure the family line doesn't include a tendency to be assassinated before taking a related chunk of power and capability. Or perhaps the power granted is worth a few attempts a week.

Knots

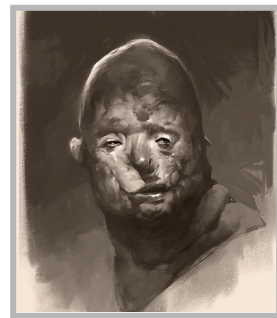
Knots are a broad and general way of referring to places, usually Earthly, that have become distorted. Where other fields sometimes refer to specific realms, the Knotted fields refer to a variety of scenarios that create their own spaces: segregated tracts, undercities, and crossroads. The fundamental idea between these remains the same: by some outside factor, the usual flows of energies, spirit, natural law or something else have been distorted. If the distortion comes from the hand of a designer, it is a Demiurgic domain, another field.



Segregated Tracts, Undercities and Crossroads are often hard to access, though it's possible for individuals (particularly the Aware) to stumble onto them. Some may only be accessed if blown by a storm (segregated), wandering or fleeing randomly due to a crisis (Undercity), or taking certain roads (Crossroads).

Their residents may be altered by the changes in the natural law or ambient forces, and this alteration becomes exponentially more pronounced over generations. The resulting population that straddles a line between human and Other, often with at least a small proportion who can easily pass as human and travel to more innocent regions, and a proportion who are too Other to ever do so.

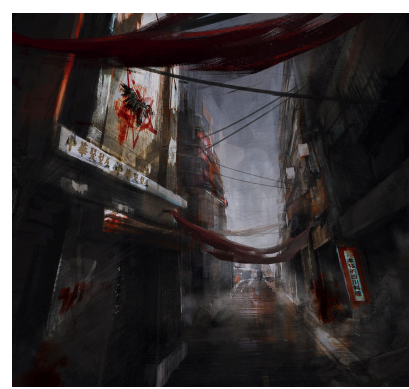
Segregated tracts are isolated enough from the world at large that the properties of the place can gradually skew and start to develop their own rules. Without the ability to reference what's going on elsewhere, the balance changes. If this is for the better of the inhabitants, it may be called a hidden valley, beyul, or shangri-la; inhabitants may cease dying of old age or be protected by a general peace and prosperity. Otherwise and far more often there's a 'knotted place' that tends to harbor unpleasant tradeoffs or solely drawbacks. Examples could be a propensity for getting sick (and being constantly sick with ulcers and boils) but having a drastically lower likelihood for dying or being debilitated by that sickness, an environment that's impossibly cold and people adapted to it, or a high rate of pregnancy and quantity of children (with triplets, quadruplets, and quintuplets being common) but a low rate of surviving to/through adulthood- a net gain, but not easy. When there's a strict drawback that worsens quality of life, it tends to either kill everyone, or a few survivors make it and adapt/pass on benefits that move back into that tradeoff zone.



The formation of a segregated space tends to require something that cuts the people of that space off from the rest of the world - weather, terrain, sickness, a particular remoteness, or those people are trapped, be it in a deep cavern or on an island where the one bridge out collapsed. Even with that, the process is slow unless there is something at play, be it an Other, ongoing practice, or some extreme distortion of natural order.

A settlement in a symmetrical valley or an isolated settlement founded on a river with a divine artifact submerged at the source could become Beyuls. Cannibalism, incest, association with darker fields/Others can skew the balance and accelerate the more negative knottings.

The dominant denizens of a knotted place are often called Oddfolk or Offspring, though older texts call them Subhuman. They are often but not always the cannibal rednecks with birth defects - they could just as easily be inbred nobles in a long lost castle or people trapped underground that quickly adapted to not need or have eyes. The dominant Others of a Beyul are sometimes called People of the Valley, often eternally young or functional despite extreme old age, healthy, wise, and very xenophobic, actually losing lifespan and health by interacting with outsiders. Most of the time, since Beyuls are relatively rare, many will simply refer to them as is appropriate for their specific settlement.



Undercities are alternate neighborhoods or cities that arise from similar imbalances, but are heavily pressured by the surrounding innocence (a barrier of sorts), they require more distinct imbalances, power sources, or dynamics, and produce bulges or inversions of the city. The power that naturally pools around very powerful Others or relics, vacuum from seals/protectations that are too 'airtight' or inflexible, or other surpluses of energies can produce the bulge or inversion.

It is rare for the Undercity to be borne or affected solely by only one of those things. Power and excess energies will naturally pool or distribute in different ways in this hard-to-reach bulge of a space, and it will be a natural place for imbalances to form and/or be resolved - whatever the original neighborhood/settlement lacks that other places nearby have will be represented (often higher crime or authoritarian powers). It will catch some excess energies and have certain manifestations in the population as a result. It is also very common for the barriers between the undercity and another realm to be very thin, with high influence from other realms.

Undercity denizens are dark reflections of other populations, often free of usual rules, including innocence, and can be impulsive and aggressive by nature. They can mingle with Others without really flinching; expect to see many Prices Others, Aware, and the victims of Rapacious practices in Undercities. The warping of undercity denizens tends to be subtler, and has to do with proportions - when the 'smarts' get handed out, so to speak, more get shortchanged and more get benefits. Roles or capabilities can get exaggerated, and other kinds of distortion can happen, depending on the nature of the undercity and how it formed. An undercity that formed out of a reflexive need for Nature could see feral features (fangs, horns) in the denizens, and one that formed out of a power imbalance could create a subset of the population with too much or too little power. It is not uncommon for the city's residents to instinctively and actively seek out means of managing or capitalizing on the balance - a ritual of feeding the weak or feeding visitors to animals for the Nature imbalance, or formalized, ongoing gang struggles to feed the city that had a War vacuum.



Crossroads are non-Earth knotted spaces (of a sort) that occur when two non-Earth realms intersect and overlap, such as the Faerie and the Ruins, or the Abyss and a stable Storm. They aren't an explicit knotting, but many of the factors that shape the other spaces are active in Crossroads, and it's a half step rather than a full step to make an adjustment from the above to talking about Crossroads. Consequences of power imbalances, reflections of nearby communities, pressures, Othered humans, and other elements described above can occur in a Crossroads.

Crossroads are often middle-ground territories between regions, hubs for trade and travel, either fought over fiercely or treated as fiercely neutral spaces where conflict is strictly forbidden and truces are enforced (or it may vary, depending on the political climate). The dynamics and forces that can happen within a Crossroads are too numerous to name, so it's necessary to generalize: when Others appear, it will be a blend, with a possibility of intermixing or bleed-over, such as a withered Faerie with empty eye sockets, glowing Echo eyes within the sockets, or an Abyss-laced goblin. When humans or other visceral Others settle for the long term in a Crossroads, they are often very much subject to the influences of the adjacent realms, and will take on a unique flavor and quality depending on the outside energies. In a Crossroads, the common population may be giants, have animal heads, or be gray skinned and mute, with changes depending on the influences.

Technology can be considered its own distinct influence - lacing through an area but rarely having a full grip on it. In many cases, however, a Crossroads will tend to be anything from a few decades in the past to something primitive in flavor, technology, and structure - though expect to still see the occasional computer or car, in well-traveled Crossroads. Crossroads don't tend to be very large, with twenty thousand individuals at most, and can be as small as an outcropping of three houses in an area acted upon by warring influences. The Crossroads inhabitants that walk the line of human and Other are often called the Crossed or even the Cross, with some making the distinction that the ones in more violent, fractured areas are the Cross.

Fitting In: There's a spectrum of those populations with the most members who can pass in innocent human society, and this does vary by the type and number of generations in a region, but generally they can be ordered with People of the Valley at the 'can pass' end of the spectrum, sometimes seeming eerie, offputting, or arrogant, and are often xenophobic enough they simply won't bother unless forced or exiled. Denizens of the undercities may come and go, but are often offputting or intimidating, with 5-15% percent who can't pass because they've become so exaggerated or twisted. Oddfolk come closer to a fifty-fifty or have even less than that who can pass, with the rest deformed or exaggerated. Finally, the Crossed tend to have omnipresent features or odd characteristics that require effort to hide, and have only five to fifteen percent who could move effortlessly into a human city and adapt there if they so desired.

Knotted Practices are primarily Realms based, drawing on the natural laws and effects of their individual spaces, and are Lore based, because often the specifics of the realms and how things have changed warrant extra consideration (and the same does go for inhabitants, and any number of other specifics). Those two facets aside, they may vary as follows:

Beyul Practices overlap heavily with various sanctuary practices, for Protection and Divine (and especially Divine x Realms), emphasizing the benefits and carrying the benefits of a Beyul out into the rest of the world, or representing the custodian of a Beyul. This is a possible direction to go if someone wants to put a spin on an existing practice or represent a practitioner with a niche: instead of a typical Warden, they could be a Warden of Tides, with a water emphasis. This is also an interesting direction to take for family dynamics, if the character's family is from a Beyul. While more distinct and harder to research, Beyul practices are also harder for opposition to come to grips with because they have been designed in isolation. Beyul-educated practitioners may know particular things about high-level horrors or Primevals due to the Beyul existing because of protective wards erected against something ancient or especially out of control, and knowledge being passed down.

Oddfolk Practices emphasize the Oddfolk and can exist as an overlap with Heroic practices, but with the 'Heroes' in this case being the stronger Oddfolk who are alive now rather than those who died decades and centuries ago. They lean harder into Conflict, because of the typically violent stylings of Oddfolk, often drawing on the knotted flows to empower themselves and others, and into Deals, for the specific relationships with certain Oddfolk. Divine is also in the cards, which would tie into the relationship between these physically twisted people and the powers that shaped them - fish-related deformities in a fishing village controlled by a greater power from the depths, for example.

Undercity Practices lean more into the direction of Prices practices. They are natural endpoints for the cursed, monstrous, Aware, and the incomplete. The Hyde who loses his struggle with his alter ego and becomes a Fraward may find human society hazardous and hard to mingle in, while their uncanny or intimidating nature would be accepted in the Undercity. Expect Denizens to also practice in this direction, with a bit of a mean streak or natural understanding of the give and take of these practices (or a casual disregard of the costs). The Undercity practices may involve exploring, exploiting, or cheating the system of prices by utilizing the knotted and imbalanced energies.

Crossroad Practices are too varied to cover in full, but those who practice with Crossroads tend to be scholars of how realms energies interact. Texts, research, and practices coming out of the Crossroads may be a means of becoming a dual-specialist, creating interesting interplay between the Fae and Ruins, for example, turning research in one to research in another. They also tend to be rich in certain energies, making finding good materials easy, and are natural points for trade to occur, to the extent that they may lend themselves to Tools practices, creating complex items. Many peddlers and item enchanters are based in the Crossroads.

The Knotted practitioners include:

	Conflict	Deals	Visceral	Immaterial	Divine
Conjure					
Prices	Shark			Deadbeat	
Tools	Knotted Stave	Crossroads Trader	Complex Craftsman	Cross Gardener	
Realms	Knotted Nomad	Undercity Thane*	Fountain Seeker*	Unraveler	Odysseiac
Interact					
Lore	Oddfather*	Friend of the Valley*	Crossbreeder	Subversive*	Warped Worshiper
Protect			Ageless		Beyul Protector

□ = This practice can be made to fit other categories with minor adjustments.

- **The Shark** rarely goes by ‘shark’ in practitioner circles, but will appear as a combat practitioner who, unbeknownst to most, games the systems of duels, sacrifice, and payments to eke out advantages and cheat the end results, using Undercity practice, warped flows, and precedents. Killing any witnesses is usually a part of the process.
- **Knotted Nomads** bring the Knotted influences home to evoke wide-area distortion of battlefields, areas, and practices, and transport themselves to the Knotted places where Oddfolk dwell. The process of traveling along knotted ways tends to transform them into something similar to Oddfolk, and if they’re clever about it, they can control the process to ideal ends, or if they’re quick (and violent), pass consequences on to defeated enemies.
- **The Oddfather** or Oddmother taps into knotted energies to enhance themselves and their group, and help or unlock untapped potential in Oddfolk. Deciphering and adjusting the Knot in the Oddfolk lets them imbue themselves with family traits and abilities, sometimes with scarification or expanding tattoos to model the knot.
- **The Undercity Thane** creates a throne, a seat at a key place of power, and cheats their way to a position by altering the realm-based flows around that throne. They go between the worlds and success in one helps to bring that power into the other, with Denizen foot soldiers in the real world and money, power, or practice in the Undercity.
- **The Friend of the Valley** makes contracts with the people of a Beyul and brings them with, as assistants and protection while they turn their focus toward utilizing the Beyul’s energies and staying out of direct confrontation.
- **The Complex Craftsman** uses Crossroad ingredients and logic to create items that draw on individual powers, often with many-layered and multiple functions and the ability to grow the item or change the item’s balances as required.
- **The Fountain Seeker** is a student of the effects of the realm on physiology and landscape, and studies the routes and flows of a Valley to find the areas where the most beneficial aspects are concentrated, and can be tapped into with alchemy or craft: the fountain of youth or immortality, for example.
- **The Subversive** can get information others can’t with practices that access spirit and augury from odd angles, and access to the thieves and information ‘extractors’ of the Undercity, and evades authority by the same measures.

Creation

Creation practices put the creation or wholesale alteration of a person, place, or thing as the ongoing and/or end goal of their practice. This *often* intersects with the sorts of capabilities greater powers and deities evidence: forging a pocket world where one can be a god, or creating new and lasting life from scratch. While the appeal is obvious and straightforward, the process of getting there tends to involve honing skills and tools. These same capabilities and the fragments of failed projects become the practitioner's go-to practices in the day to day they have to navigate between their starting point and their lofty destination.



As much as many would prefer to withdraw from all other worldly concerns and devote time and effort to the creation they wish to make, resources must be gathered, the creation must be rooted in *something*, and wherever those roots might be set down, there are forces and powers that will push back, including Lords and nearby powers, necessitating some politicking.

The process of creating worlds, things, and new life falls readily in the realm of divine practices and Others and most often gods. Gods themselves don't tend to be from actively practiced and conventional religion, or if they are, they're established and firmly locked away from conventional practice and access. More often, the gods a practitioner will interact with and find the most success with are forged by upstart groups or form naturally and are yet to find a firm foothold. In the process of establishing and securing themselves as powers, they will invest power into a space and/or creating life. As spaces, scale and function increase as the investment and skill of the god do. For the created life (and for realms, in a sense), creations are initially limited to the god's proximity and spaces, but as the god grows more powerful, they can roam further, cover more ground, and do more things - *if* that is where the god wishes to devote their power. They could just as easily invest in having grander, more monstrous Creations as guard dogs for their spaces or tests for those who would seek audience. At the far end of that spectrum, gods may seek to create life that's human or human-proximate, to the extent that life can practice. Typically this is done alongside instilling culture, quests, or other things into the human so they can spread the god's influence.

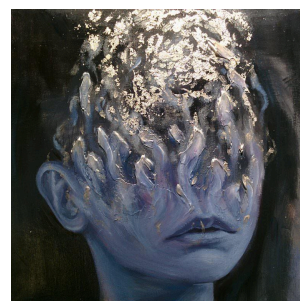
Many Others may edge into this space, especially those who have unrestrained growth or tap into power. Bugges, for example, are coincidence-reinforced entities of symbol and design that spread virally, typically taking over a space and converting it into a pocket dimension or creating derivative and subordinate Others tied to them. A very successful rapacious Other



such as a Hangmaiden may prey on enough people successfully that she has excess power, and devotes it to a web-infested pocket space she can retreat to. There's often a gamble invested in this, either as a steep initial cost that pays dividends (but could fail if the space is breached or the Creations killed) or a period where creations are a glaring weak point.

A distinction can and should be drawn between demiurgic domains and pocket worlds, though the two spaces are very similar. Both may be accessed by a specific doorway or means of access (including practice, items, convention), sometimes secured, sometimes not, or they may be accessible from multiple directions, occupying a relatively small amount of real estate in reality while being vast once entered. Demiurgic domains are linked to a higher power that tends to occupy that space most of the time and is rooted to that space's health. Should they die or be hurt, the space may be altered, and they may alter that space at their whim, with a very high claim to it. Pocket worlds are reasonably self-sustaining and are not Creation practices, though a practitioner or Other may find some overlap or use in Creation practices if they adopt or seize control of such a space. When a demiurgic domain or pocket world is sufficiently populated, there may be overlap with knotted spaces (see the Knots field) in terms of rules and features.

Gods or godlike powers may be drawn on, copied from, or emulated in Creation practices. Divine breath, primordial clay, promethean flame, and fonts of creation are common resources, as raw elements for Creation, tied to the conventional elements. They are used in varying proportions for different areas of focus, and a practitioner may initially have a seed amount that they feed power into to grow it, they may seek to create it from scratch, taking raw material and refining it through ritual and practice, they may have to consistently source it. Many will supplement them with tools to help manage them and side practices to support them, such as alchemy and homunculus-adjacent practice or sealing practices to keep growth contained to a specific space.



With a bit of the clay and a trace of breath, a practitioner can create animated life, with a quality depending on their skill level. A fair few Others exist as derivatives of this process. For example, a clay sculptor trying to create life with primordial clay may have lots of discarded and unfinished work, still alive in some capacity, and they may end up needing to practice a great deal to create something complex like wings or knees, while not wanting to expend too many resources, leading to the creation of clay pigeons- sculpted life that is simply a mass of wings or horse's legs, given one spark or breath of life to kick it into being. For a time, it was even in vogue for a sculptor to be able to show off their efforts in this way. Those dealing with promethean flames may spark off the creation of inspired elementals with the ability and inclination to develop tools and resources, those dealing with the font of creation may see vivacious and weird life spring up wherever they dispose of their wastewater and runoff.

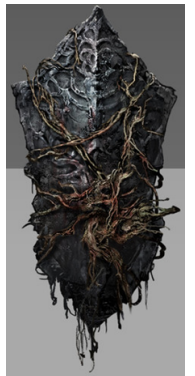
The means and tools to gather resources, refine resources, reduce costs, recycle, shape, support, and plan creations are essential and for a major project, a practitioner may have a set of practices, magic items, and workshop assets specifically customized for that project. This tends to give a singular aesthetic and type of material running through the Creation practitioner's approach. Failed and interstitial efforts are often drawn on as summonings or projections for practice, being the same but ruined or incomplete.

Lesser practices, similarly, may be evocative of a major approach, though not always the practitioner's own. If a practitioner creates a pocket world with a sapphic girl's school as the centerpiece where he can be the wise old mentor and teach 'pure' students without the interference of the outside world, he may have new students manifest in inclement weather or deeper in the gardens, wandering to be found and brought in to be cleaned up and started at the school. That same process of creating something out of sight or in the midst of nature could be the foundation for something in the Conjunction practices. If he puts it into texts and sells the texts, then there may be tropes or phrasings reminiscent of that practitioner's pocket world in the practice picked up by others. The Creation practices are thus riddled with these and because the tools or components of the practice become tied into the pattern of using those practices, they often become requirements.

While things are still in an intermediary state, there may be a scenario on the distant horizon where different types of creation practice are tied heavily into the aesthetic of dominant practices and practitioners. In the meantime, one should not be surprised if an intermediary practice calls for a lily to be held in one hand, and an instrument of rosewood in the other... or if they have to spend time disentangling a practice from its original creator and creation to unlock its full potential for what they want to do. This is a field of practice where ego, 'my way is the best way' and a lack of inter-communication is more commonplace. Creation is a practice of the obsessed and the veins of that hyper focus and styling can oft be seen in its various aspects.



Magic items in the Creation field are very often coded for a specific Creation they're tied to (and thus may have an alignment or disposition that makes them less useful in some types of Creation or another, such as being better with violence, fire, and iron and less useful for peaceful and Nature-tilted Creations), and will fall into two categories in terms of aesthetic. In the one, expect to see items that carry the motif of their maker's creation - faces, specific (and expensive or stand-out) materials, specific designs, and motifs. In the other, when the item has seen disuse, trace elements of Creation can win out as the item decays or gathers



dust, and Clay, Breath (in the form of constantly emitted smoke, fumes, or glittering dust), flame (in the form of embers within the cracks), seeping liquids, or traces of whatever was used to foster growth (ex. plants for glamour) will take over the item. Items may develop a mind of their own or increase in power or purpose over time, but will by equal measure become more unwieldy to use.

In addition to the purposes described in the last paragraph of the prior page, magic items in the Creation field may be used to manage a Creation or may be keys for a specific one. While they will always be best when used with their original intended Creation, virtually any tool will have *some* use when used in another one, and may have uses in managing things in reality. Sometimes an effect that would Create can be used to occlude, overwrite, or suppress reality or things counter to it.

A note should be made that in the various fields, Creation practitioners are often respected and deemed respectable. Some of this comes part and parcel with the fact that those practitioners with the luxury to Create are ones who were born to luxury and spare resources - upper class to begin with. There may be messes, issues, or they may stray into rapacious fields; the aforementioned headmaster of the pocket world with its school may need to periodically bring in outsiders to be a student to supply a breath of fresh air (breath of life, in a way) to the student body, restoring equilibrium and disrupting pattern enough things don't become rote. However, the process of Creation being as detail-specific, insulated, and careful as it is tends to give them more leeway. So long as they're politically savvy and bargain effectively for local Lords and major families to permit their ongoing Creation.

This is not to say all are. Some stumble onto the tools to Create and cause a lot of chaos, or take longer. There are remnants of failed or aborted Creations all over the world, and these can spin off into their own situations. An aborted or abandoned Creation left with some promethean spark inspiring it to care for and repair itself may develop its own awareness. An abandoned realm that makes its own population may be influenced by a realm and produce more and more monstrous Others.

Created life varies wildly in terms of sapience and awareness, falling on a spectrum. It will draw nourishment from and traces of animation (Breath), life (Font), solidity (Clay), and inspiration (Spark) from exposure to those elements, or people who express those concepts. Absent those things, they may resemble or even be Dolls in some fashion, or Vestiges.

Whether it is because the creator died or because they abandoned one project for another, or even if it's because there was an attack, it is very common for Others to co-opt a project. They move into pocket worlds because they're comfortable and have the same benefits as a knotted space (and often a less remote base location), they take created life as very easily molded subordinates or supporting actors that can be injected with the Other's influence (or who naturally change over time), or they may want to take the created life with less volition and a mostly whole body and occupy it. When that body has the elements of Creation in it, it may even heal over time instead of degrading. Quite the prize for such an Other.

With the investment required, expect to see practitioners choose Familiar, Implement, and Demesne to better manage their Creation.

Creation practices are often Divine, for the link to those Others most inclined to Create, higher powers with the power to fuel a Creation, and the emphasis on the building blocks of (a created) reality. They may also be Conjunction, emphasizing spontaneous and shorter term creation and efficient use of resources. For lesser but valid alternatives, Tools moves away from inspiration and art and focuses more on the steady but sure progression, Realms is a shoe-in for any Creation practice creating a place, Visceral practices may evoke an approach from the opposite direction of Divine, emphasizing the tangible end result and working backwards, and Immaterial practices are an ephemeral, house-of-cards approach that uses the intangible as building blocks for faster results but a less consistent and durable endstate.

	Conflict	Deals	Visceral	Immaterial	Divine
Conjure	Draw	Summoner	Genesis	Insufflate	Fountainhead
Prices			Promethean Spark		Usurper
Tools		Delusives	Clay Sculptor	Heartforger	Engraver
Realms			Prime Mover	Fisher King	Demiurge
Interact					Aspirant
Lore			Principium		Docent
Protect					Steward

- The **Draw** practitioner illustrates and summons complementary minions and soldiers with ease, while tuning battlefield weapons and practices to play with and enhance their short term summonings or forcibly extract elements of Creation from those hit, for both devastating effect and to get resources that can create or perpetuate longer-lasting things.
- **Summoners** call on and combine forces to manifest, forcibly combine or alter, and custom-create Others. Often masked to hide their identities from the forces they use and call on, they may have creations last for only moments to perform one action, or last indefinitely.
- **Genesis** practitioners start with seeds of vibrant life and nurture them into gardens, mixing elements of Creation with alchemy.
- **Insufflate** practitioners (also ‘spirit breathers’) are shamans with feet grounded in the real, using a trace of divine breath held within to help turn inhaled spiritual and other immaterial power into an exhalation of something real and not always temporary, be it a localized storm or spiders.
- **Fountainhead** practitioners initiate a localized entire universe where they are a proper deity and point of origin and then draw on it for resources.
- **Promethean Sparks** are those who hold traces of promethean flame within themselves or within items they keep close and carefully guarded to help inspire creation that can lapse into becoming true Creation, altering reality around it. Sometimes invention, sometimes art. But beware; flame can burn and what it creates may spread out of control as wildfire does.
- **Usurpers** are experts at taking over an unclaimed space, or co-opting it from another. While primarily focused on pocket worlds and demiurgic domains, their talents lend themselves to invading demesnes, particularly ambitious ones.
- **Delusives** fake-create *things*, sometimes copying or inventing powerful magic items, and then get key individuals and powers to buy into and validate their existence, *typically* by involving themselves and their items in plots and greater events. The more they fake, the trickier things become, so care must be taken.
- **Clay Sculptors** make life, emphasizing a use of primordial clay, with emphasis on efficient use of the clay. Even a failure can still be an Other, or it can be translated into construction or emergency practice.
- **Heartforgers** are mentioned in Rapacious practices.



- **Fisher Kings** don't create a pocket world, but instead build effects around themselves up to be able to influence the real world, often using invasive dream manipulation, bugges, or glamour. They may turn their surrounding neighborhood into another, ephemeral place, requiring Innocents to either not interfere or to fall prey to the delusions and effects.
- **Demiurges** are the centerpiece of their realm. Very much a classic 'Creation' practice, it still has a great deal of nuance; it may go with them to some extent, and it strikes a strong balance between a fast start and a high ceiling for potential, but it may be vulnerable and/or sleeping when the practitioner's focus is elsewhere.
- **Aspirants** do not emphasize creation of a person, place, or thing, but themselves, steadily and carefully raising themselves up. The base principles of Creation and what goes into it are virtually the same as they would be. Influence of others is often vital. A hard and tough road that often sees escalating opposition and attention as they progress.
- **Principium** practitioners draw on alchemy, elemental, and Creation practices to put their focus and deeper research into creating ingredients with a quality so high that they naturally create incredible Creations (and other things) when used to create. The famous 'philosopher's stone' is one conceit here. Higher-value ingredients are often self-regenerating or aren't depleted as fast (or at all) when used.
- **Docent** practitioners put themselves subordinate to a deity to draw directly on that deity's knowledge, support, and tutelage for their own Creation work.
- **Steward** practitioners obtain the rights to use or care for a greater power's space, treasure, or Created life in exchange for protecting and securing them. Often done when the greater power is indisposed or missing and what that power had stewardship over is precious. Often granted side benefits, side protections, and power, but at the cost of having to take care of something that is in itself precious and powerful, which may be disguised or disguisable as a living being, if it is not one already.

Practitioners should be aware that if they progress too fast or steeply, they may run into opposition. High-end Creation inevitably draws attention from competitors and invested parties, and in this field, one's peers are often higher powers. The moment one [player or GM] starts thinking 'this is too easy', there may be interference from other local powers, Others or greedy practitioners may be drawn to what they see as readily available power with insufficient security, or there may be oversights and flaws in the process itself. Elements of Creation can leak to disastrous effect, and creations can escape a creator's control.

Most active practitioners should expect to run into Creation practices on some level, whether it's a pocket space that used to be someone's work in progress, an Other that has its roots in a deity's efforts, or they wish to interact with practitioner high society and a friend of the local council who rarely attends meetings is one. Sometimes it will be obvious, with rough-hewn work and a clear designer's hand, other times it will be subtle and there will be no way of telling if a village's population was created by a divine hand. Some would even insist that we're *all* derived from such practices, but of course, at that point we're getting into the contentious and unverifiable.

Magic Item

Magic Item practices emphasize items that are imbued with power. While people or places may be altered or infused with power, items can do the same, by accident or intent. Magic item practices emphasize the creation, use of, or collection of items, which can be nearly as varied as the various methods by which Others may be created, used, or put to organized purpose.



Magic items have no explicit realm where they can be found, but 'Alcazar' practices may delve into an item, turning it into a place that may be explored, in much the same way Alcazars can delve into a person's inner world or dreams. Most often, items are found in other realms- in the right place or given the right conditions, items may be infused with the ambient effects and powers of the space, gaining power and qualities. This can be accidental and natural, requiring the right eye or luck to find them and divine their purpose, or it may be intentional, created by the practice of 'gardening' - preparing a space in the right spot to help shape an item's creation.

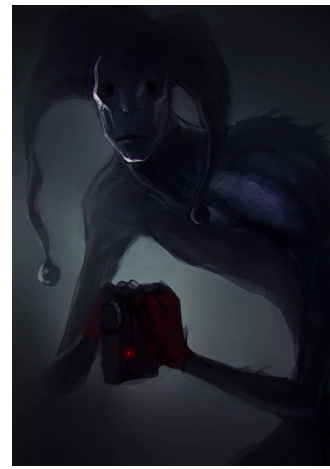
Collection and use of magic items can be a complicated affair, complicated further by the existence of cursed items: items that are more a danger to the user than a boon. This remains a nebulous term, because most items have a cost or drawback, some convoluted, or were created for one purpose and can be problematic to use outside of that purpose. But some items are made to be malign, or naturally absorb malign forces. If an item is placed in a 'garden' in the Ruins, then a wraith could circumvent protections to occupy it. An item that passes through the wrong hands could be altered by a Faerie to turn it into a trap.

Because the practitioners of any other practice are liable to create items to assist their focus, there are items out there linked to nearly every practice- and to counteract many or manage consequences. Many larger practitioner families will have someone (or multiple someones) keeping track of the family's magic items, whether fully or as part of their total set of responsibilities. Practitioner families focused on magic items may even be split into individuals or branches, with subsets acquiring items, managing them, and putting them to use, respectively. As a general but not hard and fast rule, when it's about obtaining, creating, or utilizing the items, it's often a Tools practice. When it's about modifying or capitalizing on the material things, it's Visceral.

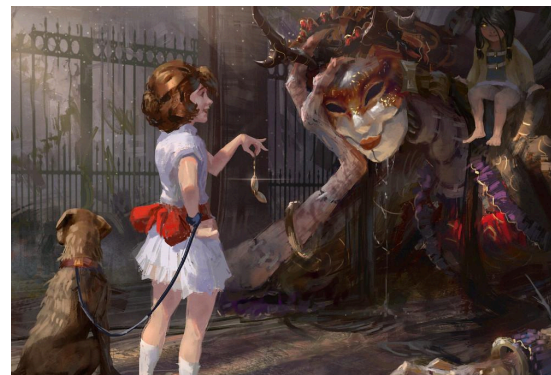


One advantage to magic items is that they aren't typically based on the practitioner's own power. This means that the gainsaid and forsworn can retain some abilities, albeit without protections and some added risks, and Innocents can use them. As such, practitioners focused on item use tend to develop practices that are complementary or contextual, such as various methods to help find items or draw out additional functionality, to go with regular item use.

The Others of magic item practices can include the intelligent items themselves, or are actually wraiths or jinn (or other immaterial Others) who might dwell or be bound in items with malign intent looking for an excuse to be used. There is a host of lesser Others, many individual to specific realms, who seek out or collect items (and are sought/targeted because it's an easy avenue to items), there are Others who dwell in items: the 'Ghend' of the Ruins that latches onto a precious item and nurtures it, the various fairies who create items to put out into the wild, usually with each having a particular slant or intent, with some making curses to lure children into the Fall courts, or others offering items with subtle traps or stories worked into them. Some subtypes of goblin find power in collecting unique items and empowering them, or collecting goblins bound into weapon forms.



Some Others exist in the ecosystem of magic item practices. Keepers are tall, narrow, gray skinned Others, wearing black suits or other fancy clothing, who each collect items of a particular type and get more and more present and problematic to deal with as magic item collections are amassed - the specifics of their operation, degree of organization, and origins are yet unknown. Keepers may be a natural pushback against some Magic Item practices, and also cogs in a system that ensures items stay in circulation instead of being locked in vaults that are then forgotten. Swordbearers are Animus, solid spirits that embody archetypal people who fulfill specific roles, and the role of a Swordbearer is to find items and bestow them on champions to empower them to complete tasks- these gifted items aren't necessarily swords. Dwarves and Formorians are species of fairy and goblin, respectively, from the early ages, who specialize in craftsmanship, on a level that surpasses most in the modern era, sometimes treading into the territory of regularly making Grail-tier items.



Lastly, fairy and Fae markets and crossroads are a common venue to find magic items for sale, some Others make and sell them as their primary stock and trade, such as Gnarled, who are twisted wooden fae-adjacent craftsmen and craftwomen, or fleshmonglers, who turn flesh and meat into objects in the Warrens field of practice, sometimes powerful ones. Among these, one must be aware, are rapacious Others, including Peddlers (see Rapacious, above), who work through these systems to put cursed or otherwise problematic items out into the world. Caveat emptor.

Any sufficiently large human settlement is liable to have a market of some sort, though the nature of this market may depend on the nature of that city or town. This may be a small fairy market that hasn't been driven away by goblin populations, a spirit world shopping district, or a small knotted offshoot of the city. They can be known to the local practitioners, or ignored by or avoidant of said practitioners, depending. Once a market gets established, Others with a penchant for making and managing items will tend to become a part of that system.

Some suggested Magic Item practices include:

	Conflict	Deals	Visceral	Immaterial	Divine	Any
Conjure			Flourish			
Prices			Irrupter Swordswallower			
Tools	Unsheathed Fleshbinder Keepsake	Hatcher Peddler Delusive	Craftsman Collector Toymaker	Suborned Heartforger	Chosen Grailseeker Dragonslayer	[Realm] Gardener
Realms			Fomorite Relic Alcazarite			
Interact			Swordbearer Vaultbreaker			
Lore			Construant			
Protect			Conservator Konchak			

- **Unsheathed** maintain the core power of magic items while twisting their shape and function, typically to turn them into weapons or tools to handle a situation.
- **Fleshbinders** draw on the same function as goblin warlords, who bind defeated goblins into weapon forms, but do so with non-goblins, defeating enemies and then turning the defeated into magic items, typically only holding a handful at a time.
- **Hatchers** pull out personality and (typically) humanoid forms from magic items, turning them into ambulatory servants, soldiers, or allies that retain their original functions and powers.
- **Craftsmen** are designers of magic items, with a variety of subspecialties and fields they can draw on or delve into, such as dwarven crafting, fomorian crafting or gnarled works. Sometimes called Enchanters, though this gets confusing with overlap with Enchantresses.
- **Collectors** seek to acquire a large number of magic items, arranging them into sets and collections that support one another and empower the Collector themselves.
- **Suborned** specifically work with cursed items, disarming them, at least for personal use, to tap them for power or translate them to alternate functions. Those who work in magic items will often dip into this school, but specialists become prized for their ability to solve problems, and benefit from a wide pool of items others don't want.
- **Chosen** are gifted a small set of powerful items by a greater power, typically with tasks and challenges laid at their feet, to unlock additional capabilities or earn their continued use of the items.
- **Grailseekers** tie themselves or are tied to powerful items, sometimes through heritage, or by taking on a quest. They draw on the item's ambient power, their own connection to it, and even emulate its powers, while seeking out the item, and when they do obtain it, they can unlock its full abilities or additional abilities quickly.
- **Gardeners** work with a specific realm or field, placing items in that realm or in proximity to power to let them naturally and passively become magic items over time.

- **Flourishes** leech power from magic items and other sources of power, including the practices of their enemies, to create short-lived scenes, figments, and improvised practices.
- **Irrupters** are those who collect magic items only to tap and break them for the power they hold and create. The better the item, the exponentially better the power granted. As the item is destroyed, they can pick out components or elements they reserve for another purpose, sometimes making another, better item, other times to sustain themselves off of energies.
- **Swordswallowers** are almost the opposite of gardeners, heartforgers, or alcazar specialists, not drawing magic items from outside, natural sources or venturing into the item, but instead drawing the item into themselves, holding it within, to shape it with internal pressures and willpower. Can have an effect on one's humanity, but eventually delivers items that meet needs and are tailored to the imbiber.
- **Fomorite** practitioners and the related but distinct Dweorg practitioners study old means of creating magic items, navigating the deepest reaches of realms for the information and resources that will let them create items in the same way magic items used to be made, when they were mostly fashioned as gifts for higher powers.
- **Swordbearers**, much like Swordswallowers, need not actually deal in swords, but gain power and influence over things from handing out items to selected champions. Some nudging and influence is sometimes required to keep those champions on course.
- **Vaultbreakers** are thieves specialized in breaking into vaults and obtaining the items owned by others. Deep knowledge of the various systems employed and techniques needed to sway guards and then penetrate or circumvent defenses is periodically rewarded with large collections of items.
- **Construants** are not always known as such, and may simply be referred to as specialists or experts. Students of magic items, they have the practices to work out the locations of items, identify them, and sometimes underrated or overlooked, they can unlock additional capabilities and added value for items with sufficient research.
- **Conservators** are item binders, taking advantage of the mostly stable and static nature of items alongside the general benefits of binding threats- karma, drawing power long-term, and more, to then have very stable factory-like setups of bound items. While dry as a practice, it is not uncommon for Lords and other powers to direct the most problematic items to Conservators at inopportune times, to be handled or quarantined.
- **Konchaks**, similar to the Conservator, use the (typically) stable and static nature of items with Hollow practice to place lifeforce in items and sometimes nest items within one another. While limiting themselves to a much smaller assortment of items to begin with, they can evade defeat or death by drawing out lifeforce from an item and 'putting it away', revealing the next item, corresponding capabilities, and a fresh burst of lifeforce and strength for the creator.

Paths

A niche practice, the Paths deal with exploring the very hazardous Alice in Wonderland type nonsense realms that exist at the very periphery of the known realms, thought to be where concepts and trace powers of the various realms coalesce around the strongest connections, forming corridors and winding roads.



Detached from meaning, a Path can be visited by two different people and have some things remain the same, such as something tall and narrow in the distance and a busy roadside, but vary wildly in aesthetic and how the blanks are filled in; that location could have a tall skyscraper in the distance and a gray urban aesthetic with the unusual Lost in suits, or it could have a pencil in the distance and aesthetics drawn from a kindergarten classroom, with crayon graffiti and bright primary colors. Even leaving and returning can see the Path change; some of the aesthetic may be drawn from something in the observer, remaining constant - often including language, frequently; a Japanese speaker is likely to find Japanese scripts and Japanese speaking Others, where an English speaker will find things in their language (or, just as often, a Path made incomprehensible will be equally incomprehensible to both). Other things are changed by metrics and reasons still unknown.

Whichever it is, Paths have their own logic and rules. Some are only navigable if the visitor can solve its inbuilt riddles to open gates, or face a series of challenges. Sometimes the things set before a practitioner are easy to work out, as if the Path wants them to, and other times there is either no logic or way to work it out, or if there is, nobody has been able to work it out. They can be brief or require a decade to cross, they can be whimsical, light and easy, or brutal and grim gauntlets that few humans could hope to endure. They can be outdoor or indoor, rests stops or logic traps, heavily populated by Others or barren of anything but the practitioner. There are simple paths with a clear single road, and there are ones which branch or have offshoots. Native Others may be set into roles that are friendly, neutral, in positions where they must do things like ask riddles, or be hostile with a firm intent to kill.

The conceits and nature of the Paths make it easy to step off a road and onto what looks like solid ground, or touch something out of place only to find oneself on another Path. When Paths can change aesthetic or when one can accidentally move onto another Path and then another, it is very easy to get lost in a strange series of landscapes with specific rules the explorer doesn't know. When a path may have set rules such as 'touching something wrapped in ribbons will compel everyone around you to murder you', it can be very hazardous. On the other hand, Paths are rife with interesting and rule-breaking Others, magic items, and *boons*, a term for the special rules and abilities laid on someone for completing Paths; example boons might be an apple appearing on the nearest flat surface before you wake up, being invincible one random second out of every minute, or being able to jump twice as far.



The Others of the Paths are termed ‘Lost’, and are oddball and mismatched. There may be ‘families’ or themes to Lost of a Path, such as playing card or chess themes, or masks, or all Lost being children, but it’s safe to say they trend very eclectic. They may have aspects like vestiges, where key things are missing, but where vestiges crumble and find some way to settle toward ‘normalcy’, Lost simply don’t have those aspects... whether it’s a

head, heart, a third dimension, or a connection to gravity. Other times, things are missing, but singular objects slot in - allowing for something like a Lost with a teapot for a head.

Occasionally it, like Path aesthetics, is tied to the eye of the beholder, so one could see a Lost with an open chest and exposed heart, where that heart is ‘something round’ or ‘something that produces heat’. Sometimes this is more abstract, and wraps around the Lost’s skin or ‘feel’.

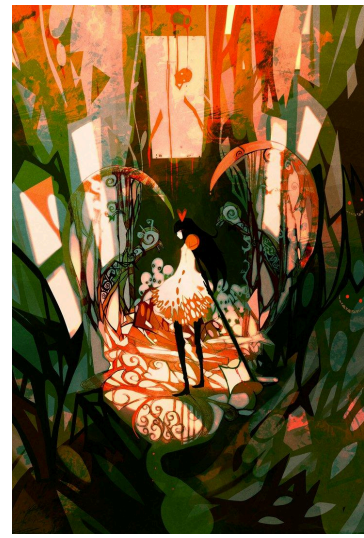
Most of these common Lost tend toward the lower end of ‘power’, sitting below average, and most do not have a great deal of combat ability, but as with many things in the Paths, it’s hard to know what one gets, and things can be very variable. If a Path typically has six random Lost one must fight, there is a (slim) chance that the visitor runs into one capable of dueling and killing war gods. Adding to the issues for the Path-exploring practitioner, there isn’t always a clear indication of a Lost’s strength. Whether there are clues that can be divined or if the person traveling the Path has tools for detecting danger can be a crapshoot.

Some Paths have a key or central figure, typically at the Path’s end. These may be set up as the final challenge, an antagonist throughout, a custodian or a leadership figure for any community. They tend to be big, but aren’t always, and usually have a driving force on the aesthetic of the Path. A ‘Queen of Swords’ Lost with a consistent theming around the sword tarot and ‘mall ninjas’ will either impart those themes onto the Lost and elements of the Path, or select for those things as the Path is built. Scholars don’t know which it is - all they know is when they stumble on the Path, it is already in place and Lost with pieces of Sword in them, ‘mall rats’ with literal rat aesthetics, and other ‘matching’ Lost that are common there - still with the characteristic mixed bag of appearances and capabilities. They are *not* generally demiurgic, and can’t shape the space beyond a limited extent, but tend to be powerful.

Other creatures found on the Paths include literally every other kind of Other. There’s a proportion who were dangerous Others or people on Earth, who were moved onto the Paths as a way of getting them out of the way, so if one wasn’t normally wary about newly encountered Others, they might want to be. Depending on how long they’ve been on the Paths, they may be partially Lost.

Again, some are locked or bound to one place (or even position), others can move freely around their Path, and yet others may appear on multiple Paths. There is a selection of Others very recognizable to the Finder community, who recur, and there are Others who are debatably ‘important’ to the Paths, referred to as ‘architects’ by some, including the antagonist ‘Wolf’ that greets most traditional Finders on their first Path and makes repeat appearances thereafter.

The Paths have a twisting history when it comes to how they've been studied and approached, and theories are often raised and debated, including the aforementioned 'architect' theory, which supposes that key, recurring, and rule-breaking figures like the Wolf (who appears as something special and specially nightmarish to different Finders; a salacious, leering man to one, a literal wolf with mangy fur to another) helped build or help maintain the Paths, but key facts are yet to be discovered. It is a shifting space that changes to match the eye of the beholder, and the Paths are separated by vast expanses of nothingness, which, because it has no liminal space within it, can be crossed in instants, causing Paths to look and feel like they are next to one another.



While the history of this study goes so far back it is hard to trace, the conventional studies and serious approach by practitioners starts with the conceit of Chaos Mages. These practitioners interpreted the Paths to be the landscape of dreams, and indeed, there is a lot of similarity between how dreams act and how Paths can hold onto conceits while also changing and shifting. Past the earliest phases, for which records are thin, earliest exploration was driven by luck and bravado. These 'Chaos Mages' take their name from both the risks they undertook and the rewards, while 'Dreamers' were the ones to maintain a slower pace. Even early on, explorers found that Paths, especially new ones that hadn't been made more traditional by repeat visits, could have *wildly* varying rewards, and it was possible to chance on magic items with power out of scale for what one would expect... or chance on utter annihilation instead. Their tools became (and remain) means of beating the odds, and can still be found and used in some older Path-running families today.

Deeper study and exploration of the Paths saw the gradual emergence of different subspecialties, including those who saw the Paths as a fine place to shunt any especially overbearing or threatening entities, 'Finders' who sought to bring Path things to reality, and Path Runners, who emphasized exploration. Tools and individual practices were refined and adapted to these approaches.

The Paths practices are rooted in Realms, Deals, and in the Immaterial:

- **Realms:** The practice is based around the exploration of and access to the Paths.
- **Deals:** Focusing largely on interaction with the strange Others of the realm.
- **Immaterial:** Taps into the eerie logic and dynamics of the Paths.

Tools, Lore, and Interaction can't be ruled out either, focusing on the Lost style of magic items, research and discovery of the Paths, and turning the weirdness and consequences of Paths against people to confound them.

The schools of practice may draw on old nomenclature from old approaches (referring to dreams or chaos), that haven't yet died. Newer versions commonly use Lost & Found terminology. To make something 'Lost' is typically a negative connotation, sending things to the Paths to get rid of them, with 'Found' or 'Finder' meaning to bring Others or items back.

Some suggested Paths practices include:

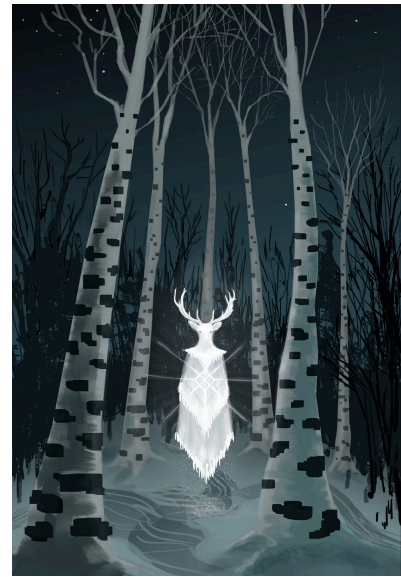
	Conflict	Deals	Visceral	Immaterial	Divine
Conjure		Dream Parade		Whimsy	
Prices		Chaos Mage		Lost Soul	
Tools		Boonkeep		Dream Gard'r	
Realms	Little Wolf	Finders	Grounded	Path Runner Receiver	Founder
Interact		'Napper		Wanders	
Lore		Seeker		The Curious	
Protect		Loser		Transient	

- **Grand Marshals of the Dream Parade** draw on the entangled nature of things on the Paths, summoning an Other or keeping a token that, when called on, summons connected Lost who summon Lost; one card themed Lost can, with technique, become a stampede of other card Lost, and a non-Paths conjuration can be a prompt that is followed with related Others, usually minor and staying for only a brief while.
- **Whimsies** bring the 'eye of the beholder' aspect of Paths to bear, painting reality with those elements to dramatic effect. This is a cloak to disguise their heavier hitting 'Ask' practices, where they unravel riddles on visits to the Paths, package those riddles up, and deploy them like metaphorical lions in the grass: traps in the dreamlike chaos they conjure. To be whimsical on the Paths is often synonymous with hidden danger.
- **Chaos Mages** as they stand today will dip into a variety of Path practices, with a heavy element of the gamble, where Path rewards can be dramatically out of line with the risk or scale of a Path, especially if unexplored. They specifically seek out the unexplored and dangerous and rush them to try for fast power or information to sell to other Finders.
- **Lost Souls** intentionally or accidentally Lose a portion of themselves to the Paths. Losing one's *soul* to the Paths means losing the blueprint to one's Self, and makes the practitioner a loose and ever-changing template that other forces can then alter. Those Lost Souls that emphasize the Paths can change their own template to become as Lost as is convenient. A difficult and dangerous line to ride.
- **Boonkeeps** are frequently apprentices to the Lost themselves, or lesser Finders who find an avenue to success. They specifically choose a Lost or specific Path that provides regular or repeatable rewards and harvest it for an arsenal of boons, frequently items, that are too narrow to be called a collection (see the Magic Item field).
- **Little Wolves** are mysterious and dangerous stalkers of Finders and Path Runners, preying on them for prizes. Tied in some way to the Wolf, even they don't arguably know the deals they made, owing to the way particulars are ritually covered up.
- **Finders** find and bring Lost and key items from the Paths in an organized manner, amassing a wealth of allies and tools. Ensuring they're brought to Earth in a way that lets them stay without being pulled back to the Paths can be tricky, but the reward is an army, arsenal, and being able to corner off sections of reality to turn Path-like.

- **Grounded** are those who, instead of bringing Paths to Earth, they bring Earth to the Paths, dulling Path-ness and circumventing obstacles. They can produce a controlled practice-resistance by enforcing 'normalcy', turning it even against other practices to constrain their flexibility.
- **Path Runners** are those who emphasize the exploration of the Paths, running Paths for boons and taking a more measured approach than the Chaos Mages (above) in trying to clear Paths, accumulating a wealth of boons and items, sometimes spending weeks or months deciphering a new and promising Path before running it.
- **Receivers** finish their first Path to find a starting ground they can enter by dreams, with seven or twelve points of access to a personalized assortment of Paths. They can have a Collector-like approach to solving each, emphasizing the rewards of their personal seven or twelve Paths while getting far less from exploration beyond those.
- **Founders** capitalize on the fact that Pathstuff that is sufficiently laden-down with mundanity can drop from the Paths and back to Earth. A powerful Lost or item dropped to Earth can create a lot of destruction or a localized realm with its own rules, the dropped Lost or item deciding the theming.
- **'Nappers** (sometimes Manic Pixie Dreamboats) involve Innocents in their work with the Paths, whether it's finding dull-as-toast mundane people to help 'ground' a Path (see Grounder, above), turning people very near to being Lost due to a disengagement with reality into custom Lost, or baiting kids to come with them to explore the 'realm of dreams', then using them as bait for traps. Trade out usual safeguards and powers for some manipulation practices.
- **Wanders** hold a very powerful Lost tool to bewilder foes and defend themselves, but their relationship to the Paths is singular - they are dropped in the midst of a Path cannot access the Paths otherwise. With practice or some prompt, they can visit the Path or any clear checkpoints they've accessed.
- **Seekers** plumb the Paths with a goal in mind - to find something that was Lost, or to get at something fundamental the Paths may be obscuring. Take *scrivening* tools that decipher, codify, and nail down fancies, mimeisthais, bugges and other forces that operate on a memetic, language, or symbolic level and use them to decipher the Paths. Arrange a deciphering setup with Others or tools at the four corners, the biggest obstacle at the center, and brute force it.
- **The Curious** internalize Pathness into their own senses and mindscapes until they can turn the 'subject to interpretation' of Paths against reality or foes by perceiving them.
- **Losers** send things to the Paths as an alternative to sealing them away, using the Paths as a disposal site. In reality, the sending can be complicated, and they may be forced to return to Paths, with the now Lost threats lurking.
- **Transients** make themselves partially Lost, becoming elusive and able to ignore the constraints of reality and mortal flesh.

Law

The practice of Law deals with those practices that administrate practice itself, among other things. They deal with the 'balance' in abstract: karma, Innocence, responsibility, the prerogatives of those with claim, the rights and powers of ruling powers over an area, gainsaying, and forswearance. These ideas are abstracted as capital-L 'Law'. Where practitioners of the Spiritual practices (see Spirits, above) tend to work from the ground up when it comes to Others, practitioners of Law tend to work from the top down, with those Others who administrate and manage Law, benefit directly from it, or, conversely, subvert points of Law. By mastering the points of Law, one can bend it to their will, call on ancient precedent, or bank up enough in the way of universal goodwill that they can call in a favor, literal or metaphorical, and bend the rules.



Law as a field is largely built off of the Seal, established by Solomon thousands of years ago. The Seal codified what was once loose and fluid, and afforded rights and responsibilities to those who support it. Enough were willing to sign on that it gained some sway, and eventually passed the tipping point, where it had enough power that the holdouts were forced to acquiesce. In addition to putting some emphasis on Innocence and protecting those who have not been Awakened, it outlines a loose structure where, at the baseline level, some Others or individuals are assigned roles as administrators and judges over points of Law, generally termed Judges. Such figures, in most areas, are largely unknown to most practitioners and Others, and work in the background. A large part of their role is filling in the gaps: Incarnations may manage imbalances between themselves, with Time cleaning up the mess left by an errant Chronomancer, but if there is no Time in office anywhere near the affected area, then it would fall to a Judge. When no Lord is around to arbitrate a point of order, a relevant Judge may. There may be three to five Judges in an area (though often four), and the delineation/definition of the judges varies from area to area. One area might have the Vermillion Bird, Azure Dragon, White Tiger, and Black Tortoise. In another area, it might simply be the seat to the North, the seat to the East, etc, dividing up the work as thematically appropriate. The Seal lays out precedent for challenging judges and taking their seats, but it is not typically a coveted position due to the responsibility and the fact it is a lifetime appointment where the only offroad is oblivion, after being replaced by someone more suitable.

Practitioners who formally and ritually lay claim to an area as Lords and beat all challengers across the three day span and any Gods who have sufficient power to have authority over an area can impose and arbitrate their own Law. Part of the reason the seat of a Judge is not desirable is that it is easily supplanted- either by being challenged and replaced, or because a Lord or God moved in and has taken on most of the responsibilities. Should this happen, the Judge manages what the Lord or God doesn't, while acting as a court of final appeals.



The Others of Law tend to take on a brighter, taller, more attractive, and/or more regal appearance, however they originally manifested. White and gold may become more evident, as may geometric patterns, auras, wreaths, or 'framing'. There is a strength and structure afforded to those who support the Seal or make things simple to execute for the ambient spirits by being ritualistic, ordered, and/or predictable - Time weighs less heavily on them with years, Nature lets them find their way to their maximum physical potential, Death doesn't find them as easily, War throws them less curveballs, Fortune helps them find what they want more easily, and Fate is kinder... all of these nudges and adjustments subtly let the Other stand straighter and grow into their best selves, if not *more*.

For this reason, whenever there are Others who can fall into various categories or iterations, there can easily be a niche that are tied into Law. This can include broad Other subtypes like Petitioners, who use a pattern of question and answer (often punishing wrong answers), Challengers who do the same with challenges or tasks given to targets, and Avengers, who exclusively or ritually target those with bad karma. It is thus possible to have a Petitioner Bogeyman like the Slit-mouthed Woman who asks if she's pretty and gives a Glasgow smile to those who give the wrong answer, fairies who give aid if a certain menial task is done each day, and Avenger goblins, who may or may not know that's what they've found themselves doing. Some whole types of Other, like Sphinxes, may be heavily tied into these sorts of roles. Some Fae of a certain caliber and age similarly become representations of Law, as a matter of course, and take on that additional aesthetic signifier. Virtually all Others will unconsciously do some of this, reacting to the subtle pressures to not hurt Innocents, violate sanctuary, etc, and receive some imperceptible benefit; only the ones who make it the core of their being or approach will become definable Others of Law, in whole or in part.

On the other side of things are Others who balance Law with the abuse of Law. Bogeymen are a classic example, frequently driven to scare, hurt, and kill people, as part of their lease out of the Abyss. This risks Innocence, but by cleaning things up by killing any would-be survivors, they tread the line. If keeping to the points of Law fosters a nobility, it's possible that the threatened breach of Law is why many Bogeymen become particularly stained, or dangerous goblins become uglier. Many Others will identify a specific niche of Law they can abuse or turn into a methodology, hammering in on it specifically. Some Others, for example, make the violation of sanctuary a key part of their approach, but work around it by needing to be invited in. They are still developing a pattern and set of rules, but defying the base philosophy of Law/the Seal. This may lead to aesthetic signifiers like a dark or bloodstained nobility, symmetry, or an ambient light or surrounding effect. They are still following a pattern and may well be Others of Law, but the association with violence taints it, leading to mixed effects: taller, 'greater', but stained, bloody, ominous.





Such can be termed corruption, or Others with such traits may be called corrupted or tainted, or it may be called being 'unlawful'. Similarly, komainu (lion dog statues), sphinxes, and other creatures of Law may be perverted to be unlawful, or may even become unlawful if they cannot find a position in the world. A lion dog statue with nothing to protect may reverse its functionality, a sphinx can turn feral, a petitioner spirit can derail and be made corrupt. The same calm, focus, and patience that psychologically defines many Others of Law gets reversed or twisted into anger and frustration.

Most Others will have some vague sense of Innocence and that Innocence should be kept, with a 'bad feeling' as they test things, and a good feeling if they keep to rules and support the Seal. These good and bad feelings come with some pressure from the universe and cooperating spirits and other forces with an eye for Law. This is termed 'karma' and in practice, someone with good karma will find that spirits flow more easily in directions they'd want, Incarnations ease things one way or another, and a passive effect where being kind to them earns *others* good karma. The inverse is true for someone who has negative karma, who will find things don't go their way, enemies come after them more often, spirits are less willing to acquiesce to their overt or subtle needs and demands, etc. This is part of why they take on a specific air, as the marginal benefits and penalties affect someone over time.

The strength of Lawful Others and Lawful practices is a totality or guarantee that takes a different shape from an Incarnate's implacability. Gods can, depending on their power, give things a shape that supercedes Death, Knots can warp Nature by altering biology but stabilize into something Mother Nature may not feel needs her attention- unless it's a wrinkle in the grand plan that spreads or threatens to have more complicated consequences down the road. Law, by contrast, is an agreed-upon standard of practices that lets one stand up to a deity in that deity's own realm and challenge how they are doing things, or look at a cursed item or Ritual Incarnate and say 'this is impossible to do, I call on the forces of Law to condemn this unless it can be proven it's possible'. When a Sphinx poses a riddle and someone gets it wrong, the Sphinx can strike True, a blow that penetrates defenses and is guaranteed to land. A lot of this will hinge on whether the Other or practice is making things easier or keeping it clear of Innocents. Impossible cursed items with no way to survive them could easily swell into something problematic and large-scale that requires more power than it's worth to deal with, a Sphinx has earned its right to strike True by having its predictability and reliability to spirits and other forces baked into its nature, with years of precedent before that, and a deity should have reasons to keep things in bounds and avoid runoff from causing problems to their neighbor.

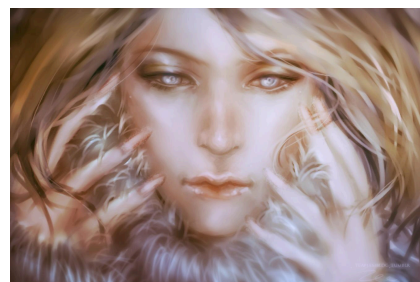
While they draw on complex amounts of precedent (and may have an instinctive knowledge of such, even the points of Law never directly crossed their paths or conscious mind), Others of Law tend to be simple in expression, with Law giving a totality, a light, and/or scale to existing abilities or giving them a simple 'light' power or other expression of Law. Of course, Law will also augment them on a base level and circumstantially, through karma, as noted above.

Magic items are similar, with items of Law often having a particular Law or prescription of action tied to them. Items that eat karma to charge a function, like a True strike, items fabricated to protect practitioners of Law until they could finish their sentence and cite a needed precedent, and tools used by auditors to ensure the fairness of a contest, now turned to other things. And of course, there are corrupted tools, or ones created in contravention of Law, ways to lie, or items with powerful capabilities that have bad karma attached, which, as with other things corrupt and unlawful, requires a keen grasp of Law's rules before those rules can be bent and broken as part of making (and sometimes wielding) the item.

While a fundamental field, Law appears fairly low on the list of fields because it is mostly a *complementary* field, useful for many other practitioners to dip into or know something about, but more niche as something to study. Security practices will find that the same things that keep bad things *out* can be filters to let good things in- and thus effectively generate good karma. Knowledge of what a bogeyman can get away with against Innocent targets is useful for a Bogeymancer, and opens up doors as to who can be targeted and where they can go. In either of these cases (and many more), practitioners and Others tend to find their way to the necessary conclusions without studying the field in depth.

As such, there is a tendency for practitioners of Law to be those who are born to families that study it, or those who have a need for, being on the wrong side of it, or needing to turn to Law as a way of dealing with forswearance, major gainsaying, curse, or other issue.

The actual practice of Law is a balance between an in-depth knowledge of the systems many take as implicit, and maximizing or manipulating returns. Rules from centuries ago can be evoked to interrupt a fraught combat with an order for an hour-long temporary truce only those with greater knowledge of Law can countermand. One can declare themselves a person in high standing with Karma, and make every action against them generate negative karma for their enemies, or a simple practice can be made inviolable and permanent with a setup of questions and challenges, provided the target can't answer them. Or one can hold a standing or obscure role that makes their acts against others carry bad karma for those acted against. Expect Law practices to have smaller arsenals or narrower toolkits for actual confrontation, with precedents and citations in their back pocket to buy them time, or as their greater focus.



Practitioners of Law are known for being able to *bend* the Law, at least in common perception, and may be able to get away with or find circumstances to dodge a gainsaying, or use their in-depth knowledge to change the consequences for a broken oath that would normally default to being forsworn- for their own sake, or a client's. It lends itself to Protection, for fairly obvious reasons, and Lore and Deals, for the contracts and points of language, contract, and label. It sometimes touches on Divine, because most Others who pay heed to Law will rise to or occupy higher stations, and vice versa, Interaction, as word and actions of others may be bound or influenced.

Some suggested Law practices include:

	Conflict	Deals	Visceral	Immaterial	Divine
Conjure		Castigator			
Prices		Ivory Mask		Deadbeat	Penitent
Tools		Icaruscean			Engraver
Realms		Manuwhiri			
Interact		Swordbearer			
Lore	Heroic (variant)	Foregone	Inculcate	Auditor	Truename
Protect	Duelists	Contestant	Vanquisher	Agents	Law Mage

- **Heroic practitioner** variants (and other Chronicle-field practitioners) can lean into Law, borrowing from precedent, turning the disorder of history into the predictable, and mapping things out in a way that draws latent power and positions figures of a bloodline that meet certain prerequisites (every fourth son dies, but every other child of that branch is raised up, every third generation a child is born who slays a king, etc.), with true ‘Heroes’ being highlighted when all established precedents intersect. Draw on Heroic power and heroic figures.
- **Duelists** focus on arena practices, setting a stage for the fight to happen within, and terms for the duel, and benefit personally from the good karma of keeping things constrained and predictable, drawing on natural benefits of Law to make them more graceful, attractive, and athletic. Ties into a variety of arena- and duel-focused combat practices.
- **Castigators** shape the bad karma of others into something manifest- summoned life and omens that harry, harass, and punish, be it birds that peck or winged babies with torture implements as weapons. Can be vigilantes growing in proportion to how crime-ridden a place is. Track wrongs and wrongdoers with one-sided contracts that get stronger as the wrongs mount up, and keep some minor edicts (orders) in their back pocket with the expectation others will breach them.
- The **Ivory Mask** practitioner flips around the forces that Security and Law practitioners often benefit from, such as Komainu and glyphs that normally make an area better. Corrupting or twisting these forces around, they taint whole regions, even customizing them for darker Others they make comfortable and loyal, while using Law to keep themselves and key areas pristine and glowing. The worse they can make everything else, the brighter they seem (and functionally are, in the eyes of Law) by contrast, as long as that distinction doesn’t violently collapse. Not usually friendly with Law-abiding neighbors.
- The **Icaruscean**, a name derived from butchered translation, is a Law practitioner who collects and uses the feathers of sphinxes, pieces of stone from edifices of Law, and so on, alongside pieces of other key, overriding (Incarnate) or ancient (Djinn) forces to create trappings, regalia, or specialized magic items that they wear. Creates multi-component magic items, often with individual, fragile segments, with difficult or stubborn forces kept in harmony with nuts and bolts made of Lawful things, and practitioner conduct/mission statements to give it a backbone of Law
- The **Manuwhiri** is a student of hospitality and the underlying assumptions and laws about Realms. While they can turn these focuses toward negotiating inter-realm issues, a younger generation has come to abuse these precedents, acting as auditors for pocket realms and dangerous areas while enjoying immunity, mandated hospitality, access to resources, and gaining access to otherwise sealed places, and parasitically borrowing powers, guards, protections, and items of others as ‘guests’ of those others, however unwanted they may be.

- The **Foregone** are fairly classic practitioners of Law who dig up and take on old titles and roles, from various different (sometimes short-lived) enforcements and emergency measures of the early Seal and pre-Seal days, gaining benefits and powers, aiming to gather new roles to have as backup or bury aspects of history before others can do their history homework and cite how certain role was canceled at one time or another, or had a drawback the Foregone conveniently didn't mention (or suffer from, until it was mentioned).
- **Inculcate** practitioners mark and track individuals or events, the same forces that mark something acting as a 'dark battery' that tracks wrongdoings, however infinitesimal (such that any action at all is likely to contribute some bad karma to this sword of damocles), with steep costs for wrongdoing. As the Seal prefers that there be heavy scrutiny with some abusing the power to scrutinize, as opposed to the inverse, the Inculcate practitioner can be 'rewarded' by taking things from those they choose to scrutinize, commensurate in value to the bad karma.
- **Vanquishers** emphasize claim as they remove and deal with tainted things, gaining access to claimed areas, that they 'brighten' with karma and law. By finding the right angles and dealing with certain problems, they can also chip away at others claim, Lordships, and others' access to channels of power. Expect a heavy focus on territory as 'light' and 'dark'.
- **Deadbeats** leverage the benefits of bad karma- both the powers and advantages they can reap by breaching hospitality, preying on certain individuals, and the fact that those with bad karma may be overlooked or spread bad karma through association (even to certain enemies). Then they leverage knotted realms, or tap overseers of Law who they know will forgive abuses of Law and bad karma for a certain payment. Doing this, they wipe their slates clean at opportune times, sometimes even with a backswing, if all is lined up right.
- **Auditors** investigate and study pacts, deals, ritual incarnates, Incarnations, cursed items, curses, rapacious Others, rapacious practices, Paths with sufficient connection to the Seal, and more, looking for cases where they are unfair or lacking in means to escape or fight back. May specialize or be broad, with each having its own advantages. While the audit is underway, they can play with scenarios, examine individual components, change variables, and pick their own sample contestants. If they can find enough issues, they can dismantle the offending principle, taking a share of proceeds. If they can't, they're bound to secrecy and noninvolvement.
- **Agents** are not called as many are, but instead themselves seek to act in the service of Judges, equipped with some tools to investigate and act as a last line of defense- some fairly absolute, backed by Judge's Law. May be immortal or protected in many fashions in the sense of their duties, with harm they would take being translated to other costs, or delayed, offset if they can carry out their duties. Tends to take on missions and tasks to smooth out the niche things that slipped through the cracks of local Lords, Incarnates, etc, but exists on the fringes, with strict limits on what they can claim, live, or leave as legacy. Much of the Agent depends on the Judge they serve.
- **Truenamers** work with points of Law and go to pre-Seal precedents and powers, with the practice's namesake being the ability to seize power over someone or something, even a deity, by identifying its original name. Old truths in ancient languages can evoke the shapes of Practice in pre-Seal days, always with *some* Law to keep things in bounds and manageable.

As a side note, virtually all practices listed here can have an unlawful or Lawful inverse.

Scrivening

Scrivening is a practice dealing with the erratic and ill-defined (sometimes literally) Others that are *memetic*, or information driven. They go by various names and fall into different categories, including imaginary friends, fancies, bugges, bugganes, mimeisthais, and urban legends. They can originate from, be spread as, and gain strength as *ideas*. Often, they are the result of *emergent* rituals or *emergent* practice, referring to the fact they spring up out of accidental rituals or Innocent actions that form strong enough patterns that they can form an unwitting and unintentional ritual or practice.



In this manner, a scary story without a clear origin or point of ownership can take a life of its own and become an urban legend, picking up traces of power, stray spirits, and gathering strength until it starts to manifest and happen in reality- either as a manifestation or by provoking people to follow its patterns. Most scrivening Others and forces don't go anywhere, and burn out on their own, but ones that pick up enough traction can quickly become emergencies; the more traction they gain, the more attention they get and the more word spreads, and the more that happens, and the stronger they get, in a feedback loop.

Different scrivening Others have different relationships to the power and memetic dynamic:

- Imaginary friends tend to latch onto vulnerable Innocents who have enough belief and access to ambient power (free spirits, some trace resources like glamour or elements of Creation) to bring them into reality. Gain stability by anchoring to & acting through them.
- Bugges (once called Storied Spirits) *proliferate*, spreading through an area and expanding their reach, all with a loose concentration of linked ideas, symbols or themes, until they've swallowed up an entire town with warped reality and hundreds or thousands of people pulled into their sway. Similar/related are...
 - Boggarts are driven by fear or intense emotion, frequently tied to the young/infirm.
 - Bogles are akin to Boggarts but stir up chaos, mischief, and unexplainable events.
 - Buggane center around a prophecy or impending doom, which they bring to pass. Rather than multiply or grow, they intensify the number of signs surrounding a key date or event.
- 'Fancies' (previously used to refer to others) are the name given to those that straddle the line between Bugges and Imaginary Friends; imaginary friends that break loose and start proliferating, or Bugges that come to anchor on to & feed off a key individual/individuals.
- Mimeisthais, by contrast, draw attention *in*, a singular motif that becomes steadily larger and more unstable, until they become gods or detonate into a shower of bugges.
- Urban Legends manifest a pattern of action, frequently violent or problematic, evolving as their story does. Sometimes they force people to act it out, sometimes they manifest.
- Fairy Tales have no direct relation to Fairies, but act like Urban Legends, with emphasis on a mythology and set of rules.





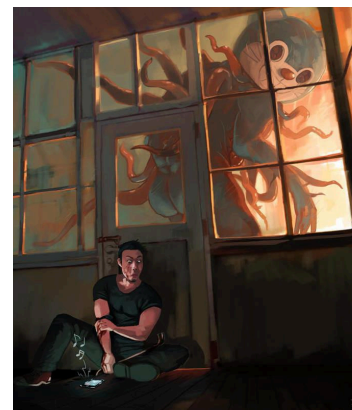
Scrivener Others tend to be a hodgepodge of different forces, consuming what they can, with the idea at their center as the core conceit and 'backbone' of things. Spirit or echo are common fuel for bugges or imaginary friends, while Abyssal or Ruins energy may feed an Urban Legend. All that said, virtually any practice can have some chance involvement with scrivening Others, each with its own alarming twists; technomancy provides an alarming swift vector for dissemination, shamanism sees spirits pulled easily into sway, glamour helps untested ideas become real, etc.

Ultimately, however, scrivening Others are symbols, memes, and ideas, and their appearance tends to reflect this. Many subtypes resemble spirits, but with some specific tells: expect to see script, symbols, and other things that stand out in a visceral way - an imaginary friend could appear with a shadowy jester hat floating above their heads, appearing to be drawn in pencil, or words peeling away from their shadow to hide under nearby furniture; an urban legend could automatically leave their calling card behind with nearby fires leaving scorch marks shaped like their motif; spirits could be pulled in to twist the surroundings into extensions of a bugge, an ever expanding pool of the bugge's motif (say, red dogs and white hot coins). The motifs don't always make a direct logical sense, and may be a seemingly random combination of colors, symbols, objects, actions, or other things.

People will tend to fall easily into their sway, so if entire crowds of people are acting strangely or losing track of reality, that is a fairly common indicator. They may be more cartoonish or childish, look more scribbled or drawn, and/or vary in size more easily than spirits, who tend to have sizes linked to their place in the spiritual hierarchy, and may be wedged into reality in a way that stands in contrast to spirits- where spirits appear to be cut and pasted out of another context and into reality, these Others can appear ordinary but with glyphs, symbols, or leakage around them that appears to fit that other context.

Such Others are largely amoral or single minded, and because self-proliferation/extending their narrative is both their strongest offense, defense, means of eating, etc, it tends to be a strong priority or drive for them. They have to keep their story going.

Scrivener magic items are not common, and most (esp. lower value ones) are tools for manipulating symbols and writing, or applying symbols with associated effects. Others may well share subtypes or closely linked types to Scrivener Others (ie. Bugges, urban legends) themselves, taking the form of inanimate or apparently inanimate objects. Such items tend to have a way of gaining and sustaining momentum, may move or act unpredictably if not kept careful track of, and on reaching a certain point in their momentum or positioning, shift in power level/value, or proliferate on some level. Like Paths items, their functionality varies and isn't always linked to their form, but there is an insistence and virality to their use that stands out. If neglected, their value may drop, making maintaining any collection a balancing act.



Example Fancy-derived Magic Item:

The Stuffy Head is the stuffed head of a random animal that can be pulled over one's own head, and despite having no apparent eyeholes, allows the user to see. The item's narrative feeds a pattern where the mask is worn and then stolen, confiscated (and then lost), or given away. Come the next major event (Christmas, 4th of July, a local festival, a big birthday party), all ex-wearers of the Stuffy Head will find themselves in possession of Old Stuffy Heads and will don them as if it's the most natural thing in the world, grouping as a silent hive mind to attempt to crash the festivities (violently stopping any attempts at stopping them) and throw a Stuffy Head parade instead.

If close to or successful in doing so, the momentum and attention results in proliferation: an increasing number of members of the Stuffy Head group get special Stuffy Head brand (not an actual in-setting brand) items, like a Stuffy Duck Hammer or a Stuffy Raccoon Flamethrower - items that, in themselves, can gain momentum and proliferate. Practitioners and Others in possession of the 'freshest' Stuffy Head may be able to invoke and control the silent mob, but start to hallucinate wildly and those without strong willpower or the ability to hold onto the primary Stuffy Head are pulled into the item's sway.

Those dealing with scrivening practices, dubbed Scriveners as a loose appellation, may do so because the periodic crisis situation requires some expert attention. Others value scrivening Others for their utility. Being as loose and fluid as they are, with their own kind of clout, it's very easy to turn them against an obstacle and alter that obstacle, or have the Bugge adapt to a problem. The counterpoint to that idea, obviously, is that scriveners are frequently the obstacle and problem that faces that clout and continual adaptation.

Understanding scrivening Others is critical to getting control over them, and with this in mind, Lore practices are very common or necessary. This is doubly true when identifying these things acts as a constraint; many scrivening Others have relatively free rein and only start to have limitations act on them once the limitations are discovered and known. Scrivening Others tend to pull spirits into their sway, converting them into spirits fitting the bugge, or into the urban legend's narrative, and this can reach the point of altering reality, karma, practice, or other fundamental forces. Once someone knows and the spirits know they know, the bar is set and things are limited. Deals practices that involve contracts and other means of categorizing things (frequently including the Contracts and Names practices one gets to start) can similarly tie a Bugge down.

Their tools include limited use of bound Scrivener Others- creating a briefly lived Bugge. They can also confound and alter effects- a safe with a combination lock can be manipulated with the same symbol altering practices that help manage Fancies, Bugges, and Mimeisthais, and becomes far easier to solve when instead of having numbers from one to one hundred, it's re-coded to have three circles, colored red, black, and silver. They can also do the same to diagrams and key Others, making for a set of unwieldy, sometimes runaway, but nonetheless effective problem solving tools.

Scrivener Practices include:

	Conflict	Deals	Visceral	Immaterial	Divine
Conjure		Scribbler			
Prices	Harbingers*	Stigma			
Tools		Insignia			
Realms		Signposter			
Interact		Memetic Pract.			
Lore	Mime	Scrivener	Cicatrix	Storytellers	Hieroglyph
Protect		Censure			

- **Scribblers** create short-lived Bugges and other Scrivener effects, for very disruptive, somewhat chaotic end results. Their focus is on the common Bugges who last for only moments, and in execution, their practice creates multipurpose graffiti or ink scribbles that create lesser manifestations at their conclusion, or lesser manifestations capable of exploding into the graffiti/ink scribbles.
- **Stigma** practitioners had a Scrivener Other get their hooks into them and are being slowly devoured, often represented by a tattoo or article of clothing, that starts at one part of their body and takes over. Catching and binding other Others (esp. other Scrivener Others) can add opposing flavors and points that slow the damage and buy time for one's own Self to accommodate and get control. The more control one gets, the more they can use the Other's natural abilities.
- **Insignia** practitioners tend to have one singular item or a handful of items that they feed Scrivener Others and other forces to. Scrivener Others add to the item's versatility, while other Others (or interesting humans) may be bound and kept where the item can feed on them when it isn't in use, adding to its power and counteracting the drawback many Scrivener items have, where they die if neglected. The items become Scrivener magic items, with a great deal of runaway power.
- **Signposters** are realms practitioners dealing with the altered spaces that Scrivener Others can form around themselves. With these spaces being relatively rare, they instead focus on capturing the essence of such realms, taking a Scrivener Other they work with and causing Bugge-ness to spread around a glyph, causing a patch of one realm (or Earth) to be altered, or bring a blotch of reality to a Scrivened space. They may call on contracted Others that leave a trail of altered realm behind them.
- **Memetic Practitioners** (sometimes just 'memetics') are illusionists and summoners of Scrivened Others who focus on the perception and behavior altering aspects of Scrivener Others, emphasizing the Innocence-altering aspect and the infectious nature of some Scrivener Others; where another practitioner might do nuanced things with perception adjustment, the Memetic can catch one person with an effect that then spreads virally to those they interact with, or spawn Bugges and other effects from drawing out certain patterns of behavior among groups or areas.



➤ **Mimes** tie themselves to a Scrivener Other -usually a mimeisthai (thus the name), pairing themselves with it in a symbiotic relationship, to have it fight for them as a larger co-combatant. The mimeisthai may mirror or follow up the practitioner's moves, flowing around or looming above and behind them, or act to defend them while the practitioner uses their analysis practices to decipher their enemies and find an opportune time to finish things.



➤ The classic **Scrivener** studies symbols and Scrivener Others, collecting captured Scrivener Others and turning them into tools to decode and brute-force diagrams and other symbols.

➤ **Censure** practitioners capture Scrivener Others and invert them in function, turning them into prohibitions against the concepts and ideas that drive the Scrivener Other. They can then be stationed as guards and keepers over an area, preventing those ideas from coming coming to pass. Sending them to bind threats, they can create weaknesses in the target, or strong aversions to one of a Scrivener Other's conceits. Or they can wear a Scrivener Other as armor.

➤ **Cicatrix** practitioners are powerful abusers of claim, applying scars, brands, and other marks to something to exert powerful ownership over an area, thing, or even practice (esp. if there are physical objects as part of that thing), even doing so remotely alongside clairvoyance. But they must assess targets carefully balance how strong the Cicatrix mark they apply is, with the fact that too much will turn the target into a Scrivener Other or Scrivener item. That is, if they don't want that to happen.

➤ **Storytellers** use dream manipulation and curse-like pinning of Others to targets and events to foster emergent rituals to create fairy tale and urban legend Others, or turn others into such, both as a means of empowering them or constraining them to certain courses of action. They can also pin forces to people to turn them into imaginary friends or fancies. These work like applied curses, but spill out into something far greater.

➤ **Hieroglyph** practitioners work with holy symbols of higher powers to the symbology of

Bugges, Urban Legends, and Mimeisthais, placing the symbols to invoke expressions of power that blaze with increasing intensity (higher powers), spread (Bugges), manifest around a central object or entity of increasing intensity (often violence; Urban Legends), or manifest a figure bound at the center that eventually blows up (Mimeisthai). Such symbols demand others deal with them, or they will become too much, but can become too much for the practitioner who inscribed them, as well. A balancing act, managed by a practitioner observing proceedings with a clairvoyant eye, far enough away to be out of immediate danger, but close enough to shut things down when necessary.



Dolls

Dolls or **Dollmaking** is a practice of creating solid dolls with hollow interiors that can be filled with essence and animated. Possible essences can be echoes, abyssal, spirit, transplanted viscera, or divine breath of life, and this is not an exhaustive list. By combining those essences with the various shapes, degrees of craftsmanship, equipment, and other practices that can go into a doll, dolls can be surprisingly versatile. Careful craft and preparation of vessels articulated for movement allows the vessels to act much as humans might, as servants, soldiers, assassins, craftsmen tools, or weapons.

There is no realm associated with Dolls. The closest thing one might find is a dollmaker's atelier, or a pocket space where there is sufficient power for dolls to make more dolls and fill that realm - often a house and surrounding property occupied by a society of dolls.



Dolls are typically hard-shelled with ball joints, but some may be cloth; specifically for the tie between thread and fate (to apply curses or to weave a specific scenario), and the common 'doll' for practice purposes is human sized, though initial work with dolls and some specific purposes will use the conventional child's doll. As a practice, it emphasizes the doll itself as a container for most of the practitioner's work, with various functions and work inlaid into the doll and their equipment. Thereafter, gestures, use of tools, or words can draw out the prepared practices and functions. Dolls may or may not be given hair and faces, and may be given clothing or items, and drawing the most out of a doll and all its related functions tends to happen by way of first crafting a fine doll, and then crafting fine accessories for that doll. When dolls pass for human, either by way of careful design and clothing to cover joints, or by way of illusion, they tend to be overly put together and refined, not a hair out of place, with high quality clothes that set them above others around them.

As a practice, Dollmaking is complementary to other existing practices, but in a peculiar fashion that marks it as very different from another broad field such as Shamanism. A player who likes the idea of a particular practice can easily transport a variety of practices to the Doll, using the doll as a container and vector for that practice. The Hyde dynamic can become the practitioner crafting their alter ego and swapping which of them is conscious flesh and which is doll, the elementalists can turn their dolls into containers for elemental energy that shatter and explode, and the cursewright can make small cloth dolls that latch onto individuals to impose curse effects as long as they can hold on. As varied as the various niches might be, they come at the cost of needing that baseline skill and tying practice to the dolls that are not indestructible, though they are tougher than most will initially assume.

Dollmaking is typically a *Tools* type practice, with a variety of options within that column. Tools emphasizes craftsmanship and the physical object of the doll.

Some Dollmaking practices include:

	Conflict	Deals	Visceral	Immaterial	Divine
Conjure					
Prices					
Tools	Battle Puppeteer	Modeler	Toymaker	Curse Moppet	Engraver
Realms					
Interact					
Lore					
Protect					

- **Battle Puppeteers** go into conflict situations with a custom-made doll loaded down with combat functions, tools, and weapons. Manipulate strings to haul oneself to the doll's location or vice versa, and utilize surprise maneuvers and a box of tricks to keep opponents on their toes.
- **Modelers** start out creating dolls for certain generic roles, such as doctor or police officer, creating their own agents, but can eventually step things up to creating doll copies of other individuals, oftentimes intending to replace them.
- **Toymakers** create dolls (or other toys) as a means of getting access to children. Loading them with cursed power, they let them naturally find their way to the hands of children and then capitalize on the position, kidnapping or undoing the child, or snaring them in a curse tied to ample warnings, to harvest power.
- **Curse Moppets** are cursewrights who utilize dolls (mostly or all cloth) to deploy the curses. The curse only persists about as long as the doll maintains a connection, but it's also possible to lay five curses on a target in an instant, as dolls leap from the shadows to grab them.
- **Engraver** put their effort into stone and draw divine power or breath of life into their targets. Akin to the clay sculptor, but their projects are more singular and refined, their 'doll' is meant to be a repository of a great deal of energy and power from a higher order, with the ability to channel that power elsewhere.

When they exist as (inanimate) magic items, dolls tend to have a connection to people and the personal, with the possible ability to animate themselves in a late stage of any practice they carry out, or an ability to hold on tight to connections, reappearing in a victim's life again and again, even as the victim tries to get rid of them. They tend to get to know their owners quite well, and may develop feelings of adoration, loyalty, jealousy and hatred, drawing power from those feelings.

Dolls themselves can be varied, ranging from fragile mannequins loaded with practice to refined individuals who are people in their own right, usually loyal to their creator. Expect hidden reserves or functions, be it a torrent of doll limbs released from hidden recesses, the ability to spew flame, or more dolls hidden within.

Oni and Oni practices stem from regions of eastern Asia where relationships to Others in practitioner families were overbearing, and higher-ranking members of practitioner families kept an entourage of multiple spellbound (see Security practices) Others as a mark of status. Other relationships to Others were often casual, even into the late 1800s, with mingling of Other and the not-uncommon Aware in regions, and even Innocents having some relationship to the Other, by token shrine visits and acceptance of local customs and festivals. There were hostile and rapacious Others, certainly, but Others dealt with them much as practitioners did.



That equilibrium was broken by the establishment of eastern Asia as a world power in the practice. New and upstart families sought to establish themselves in the same way greater families did, greater families grew in scale and power, and dominion over Others became de-facto, with a population of uncontrolled Others being seen as a sign the Lord (as Lordships became more common) was weak. Others were forced out of residential areas and into the Spirit and Ghost Kingdoms - the latter being a regional equivalent to the Ruins, where spirit and echo mingle. They later expanded out worldwide.

‘Oni’, as they are now known, arose out of those regions and treatments. Taking their name from a local subgroup of Other who were hunted and bound in near-totality, these Others earn their place as ‘Oni’ through a lengthy process and then act in counter to Practitioner establishment and sometimes humanity in general. The means and methods they employ to counter things depend heavily on the sect, as do recruitment methods and organization. Oni remain a relatively small and niche presence in the Otherverses, often spread thin, barring cases where there is a major issue at hand -protecting a base of operations or dealing with particularly egregious and difficult enemies- in which cases they organize into groups and multiple sects may work together. However, the introduction of Oni into the greater picture has had an outsized impact on Practitioners, as they introduce elements of doubt and dilemma into things that were once assured. Every oath previously thought inviolable, every barrier previously thought impenetrable, is turned around on the practitioner when Oni get involved.

The process of becoming Oni is extended and focuses on an Other eschewing prior labels and identity to add in mixed elements. A ghoulish might swallow a nugget of something elemental, undergo journeys through various knots, and undergo a horrification that is carefully controlled to reconstitute something close to their original form, before being inducted by secret rites unique to a sect and gifted items with enough history that they further cloud any ‘reads’. The label of Oni, bestowed last, carries enough weight and meaning that it helps leave the original identity, appearance, and its conventional weaknesses well behind.



Oni are, contrary to what some might imagine, not necessarily bound to the aesthetics of China, Japan, or other regions in eastern Asia- though the Oni do have their roots there, and it *is* as common as not. Flesh may be any color from the color of pure charcoal to a snow white, or be any number of sunset hues, purples, reds, and/or startling blues along the way. They *tend* to look intimidating, and as they decide their final

appearances, may emphasize fangs, glowing red eyes, etc. Oni may wear whole or partial masks, carry scroll cases or tomes, bear or wear weapon racks, have a wealth of weapons, have things floating behind or suspended around them (or carried by an immaterial extension of themselves), or any number of other decorations, with greater Oni often having *more*, with the highest-tier ones poised on palisades, small temples or shrines carried with them.

Each of these items or trophies has its meaning and cumulative effect. Many Oni, for example, may bear shackles, seals, bindings, or wards; in much the same way poisoners are (often incorrectly) said to make themselves immune to poisons by eating in increasing quantity, or being bitten or stung by venomous things, Oni inure themselves against easy binding and wards. Ten near-identical weapons carried by one Oni might each have some specific quality or use that means that, used one after the other, they can batter down any barrier that would try to adapt to them. Trophies taken from eleven defeated practitioners help them build momentum against the twelfth.

Oni are, baseline, beholden to a larger effort and ideology, and this ideology is key to being Oni: resist the establishment. From there, they are organized into sects, believed to be loosely based on the twenty-two base Implements of practitioner convention. For example, the Oni of the Six Fingers would be tied to the *ring*, its prosperity and wealth, its tendency to impart qualities, and its connection to partners and Others, including the idea of the wedding ring, etc. They include thieves, those who pretend to be magic items or secret themselves away in magic items, until they're put away with other items they could steal, and shackled, who seek out familiar relationships, only to turn out to be manipulators, or seize control over their practitioner.

Rather than categorize them neatly as thieves and shackled, though, one should look to the higher concept they embody- perverting specific commitments that a practitioner relies on. It's the same with sects loosely based on the other 21 implements: Chains, Chakrams, Chalice, Coffers, Coins, Emblems, Knives, Lanterns, Lenses, Masks, Plates, Scepter, Skulls, Staffs, Standards, Stone, Swords, Talismans, Tomes, Trumpets, and Wands.

Each then brings their individual approaches to the table when working with other sects, with larger groups & bases designing their own trick, such as once per year, killing one practitioner who makes a deal with the sect, regardless of protections or other variables.



Oni are ultimately an underdog in an unwinnable, endless war. This is part of why their attitudes are generally hostile toward the greater establishment - primarily practitioners. They may or may not dislike Innocents, and some of the more militant sects are even hostile toward Others who cooperate with practitioners. Oni tend to be independent agents or operate in cells, moving through familiar areas, leveraging any advantage they have (including long life), can find, or can fabricate, to fight on the fronts they can, against a superior foe. Sects and oni agents coordinate, and given the state of the war they are fighting in and the fact 'Oni' is an ideology as much as anything, they tend to fall in line with one another or work together more than your usual band of Others.

Most Oni or cells operate independently, without many connections to the greater body, and may have a first come, first served approach to acquiring resources or taking advantage of a situation, or terse exchange of negotiations for longer-term plans. Given the relatively small numbers (particularly compared to a body of Others like goblins, ghouls, or echoes, or compared to practitioners), they have a few isolated places they are waging an outright war, and instead have small groups or free roaming agents, floating around the fringes and prodding for weaknesses, loosely coordinating or giving each other a small hand here or there. A minimum of connections between cells reduces the chance that practitioners might defeat one oni and turn that into a chain of Oni being found and exterminated.

Much of their approach takes the form of terror campaigns, and interference. One Oni that poses as a mundane Other, agrees to a familiar deal, and then wreaks havoc on the practitioner and his peers may have a relatively small immediate impact for the risk they took, but the fear that any potential Other could be a trap slows down the traditional process of taking Others as familiars. The same is true with Demesne claims, power, finding magic items, and taking big gambles on rituals. Even something that seems safe may have some dark seeds planted, set to sprout over generations. Cells that break up, often when they finish an objective (maximizing unpredictability), tend to retreat to the Ghost and Spirit Kingdoms, where they have fortified bases that they work hard to keep secret, guarded by Oni and those becoming Oni. This is where they rest, consolidate resources, and form cells for the next move.

Every assumption becomes a potential weapon, when turned about. That Others can't lie, the rule of three, that a bound Other is a safe Other. Much of the collective ire of Oni are directed at the most established of the established, like the biggest practitioner families. Labels and the assumptions therein are given a lot of attention, with many low level and new Oni working hard to present themselves as an Other of a particular type (ghoul, goblin) while having none of the weaknesses, to the point they can step across the boundary of a binding circle to kill or capture the practitioner.

Items, like bound Others, may be well laid traps, set to go off well into the future, to change over time in ways too subtle for humans with short lifespans to notice, or to do something otherwise underhanded, with an eye to foiling practitioners. Items that don't do so overtly tend to showcase the same talents that Oni do. Both Oni and these useful items often focus on a variety of small tricks, over one devastating maneuver, often motley, colorful, and leaning somewhat on items - throwing knives, fireworks, cards, and if they do have a greater expression of power, it's the result of chaining effects together, in a series of small plays that end in a finishing move. In this, it may be like martial arts, if one purely focused on throwing knives, string, single-use fans, cards, and scrolls, instead of fists and feet.

Practitioners may barter and bid to learn these tricks, usually making deals that risk setting them against their own kind, in exchange for the learning, being set or risking being set against other practitioners unwittingly, in a long game. Frequently, the tricks and practices taught break convention or work against establishment: bypassing the rule of three, or reversing the value of establishment, and this arguably chips at the greater power. This may introduce a chance that one odd practice sees more widespread use or adoption, forcing the Lords of the region to adjust (and thus creating weak points), or reduce their power by the smallest incremental percentages. For the Oni practitioner who learns a grab bag of tricks, this can mean they have a hard time dealing with the local establishment, instead of finding traction, and for the Oni teaching the trick, introducing the weaknesses may be enough reason to let some small secrets slip.

At the extreme other end, 'Oni practitioners' are usually among the *most* established practitioners in the setting, instigators of the Oni war, dealing with and binding Oni by necessity, and using Oni against one another. These are some of the stronger families in eastern Asia, and incidentally, have their own 'rule breaking' practices, like the taking of three 'familiars', via. strong binding. When found outside their home region, they may be exiles of the family trying to redeem themselves, or agents sent out to target a specific Oni sect or faction.

There are no specific Oni practices suitable for a table, here. Instead, two entries:

- **Oni Mages with Oni patrons and those who are 'discovery' types** are the opportunists, possible pawns of the Oni, borrowing tricks, with a hard ceiling on how far they can go, and difficulty grappling with the most established of the establishment. They are functionally generalists. They trade off a great deal for their bag of odd tricks.
- **Oni Mages from the Old Families** are family practitioners and are extremely strict establishment mages, fighting, binding, and studying Oni, and focusing on exterminating them and winning the war. This includes hunting & stamping out the above group. Each such family has a unique focus [established with background], kept as a strict family secret; if it's discovered, the family may fall.

There is no middle ground; those who try to find it turn out to be pawns and self destruct, or are killed. Sticking one's head up too high loses that head.



Family's Arcana represent one's starting point, status, resources, contacts, their self and the frame in which they exist, outside of the context of practice. Players will have five Arcana from character creation, and, after arranging them from best to worst, left to right, they single out the third (the one in the middle) to represent their baseline- whenever another Arcana or rule doesn't have anything to say about the categories that fall under Family, the baseline will determine what they get.

Initial Arcana:



Sorted:



Baseline identified [G]:



Example baseline traits:

S	Starting stats have two stats at +1 and one at -1. (Stats are freely chosen by the player) Three starting skills and two backgrounds. Wealth is in the 85th percentile; couple thousand in spending money, a refresh is a call away. One <i>general</i> asset worth \$500. You have a place, computer, smartphone, transportation, and if any of these things are lost, they're easily replaced. Relations with others (practitioners, Others) is positive, with one close ally.
G	Starting stats have two stats at +1 and one at -1. (Roll three times, player picks) Two starting skills and two backgrounds. Wealth is in the 70th percentile; couple hundred in spending money, refreshed weekly. You have a place to stay, computer, smartphone, transportation. Relations with others is positive.
M	Starting stats have two stats at +1 and one at -1. (Roll twice, player picks) Two starting skills and a background. Wealth is at average for the area. ~\$100 in spending money, refreshed weekly. You have three out of the four, of reliable accommodations, computer, smartphone, transportation.
P	Starting stats have one stat at +1 and one at -1. (Roll three times, player picks) One starting skill and a background. Wealth is at the 40th percentile; ~\$50 in spending money, refreshed weekly. You have two out of the four, of reliable accommodations, computer, smartphone, car. Relations with others is negative.
A	Starting stats have one stat at +1 and one at -1. (Roll twice, player picks.) One starting skill or two backgrounds, player's choice. Wealth is at the 25th percentile; ~\$25 in spending money, 50% chance to refresh weekly. One out of the four, of a place, computer, smartphone, transportation. Relations with others is negative and you have one enemy.
W	Starting stats are a +1 to one stat, -1 to another, rolled by GM and locked in. One background. \$0 starting cash, none out of a place, computer, smartphone, transportation. Relations with others is negative and you have <i>several</i> enemies.

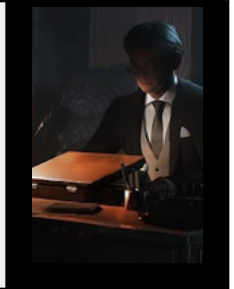
Beyond that, the remaining four (S, S, M and P in the above case) are used to buy deviations from the baseline. Many of these are simple and can reference the above table to figure out what one would be buying, taking anything on a single line ('starting stats are...') -- But there are three areas that one will likely want to invest in.

Approaches

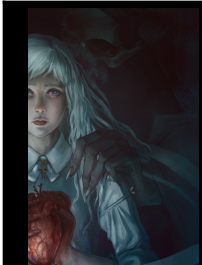
House, Patron, and Discovery are the ways one comes by practice, and are especially economical uses of one's arcana, offering a number of bonuses and boons, with some associated drawbacks. If someone doesn't have one of these three things, they won't have any practice at all, to start, with an uphill struggle once they do break into things. There may be exceptions allowing for specific scenarios a GM has in mind, or for players as Others.

In Brief (writeups on following pages) :

House is for those who are members of a practitioner family or organization. A surefire way to power and resources, especially for a dedicated field, working with others who have been refining a craft for generations, it does necessitate working with and navigating others in the same family or group, potentially a drain on one's focus and time.



The **Patron** is an Other or independent practitioner who takes the individual under their wing, offering counsel and focused attention. Working with a practitioner dedicated to their field or an Other who *is* their field is a fast route to success and power; but with ongoing expectations that they handle themselves and earn the patronage, and patrons often having little to spare, resources run thin.



Discovery is an umbrella covering those who find the practice on their own, or have no support and a great deal of independence. The circumstances of their introduction to the world mean boons of protection or convenience (sometimes lingering Innocence) or other secondary benefits, but their knowledge is liable to be incomplete and they likely have less power and practices to start.



The best (or one selected from tied best) Arcana assigned to one of the three approaches gets the full suite of bonuses, and each one selected thereafter will be reduced to picking the benefits from one bullet point (see the sub-pages below), any perks, and any flaws. Picking a *combination* of House, Mentor, or Discovery can represent middle ground.

Desmond is a scion from a family brought to ruin not long after he Awakened, his father cursed and of waxing and waning health as a result. He takes Good *Discovery*, with the idea he's effectively 'discovered' the family's remaining texts they managed to salvage as they fled the slaughter, with the boon of protection being a ritual he did before he left, to ease his way into the family practice. He then also grabs Moderate *Patron*, with his bedridden and suffering father serving in that role, as ongoing counsel and emergency assistance. The perk and flaw from Patron round out his options and the resource-taxing responsibility of having to regularly maintain his family's wards.

A combination of House/Patron, House/Discovery, Patron/Discovery, or all three are possible.



Discovery - Practitioners under the 'Discovery' umbrella are ones who found the practice on their own. They may be Aware who stepped far enough into the world of practice and Others to start figuring out their own tools, people who found or inherited a practitioner's things, those brought into practice by mentors who've since left or by Others who aren't in a position to teach, or scions of practitioner families that were mostly wiped out, starting from scratch.

Discovery practitioners, by virtue of how they got into things, or because they start the campaign at the tail end of some months or years of resource

accumulation and careful arrangement of safeguards, have resources, protections, and/or general benefits that let them move fast & loose through the world of practice. They're independent, with little tying them down outside of any connections to real life they want to maintain, and have the most freedom. As a downside, they tend to be less powerful.

Example protections and benefits might be...

- Residual Innocent karma provides low-level protections, diffuses enemy aggression and numbers, and makes things easier at the outset. Gets replaced when it expires.
- The character has a guardian angel or the shape of their Innocent karma gives them a free 'life', buying them an out from a practice or Other derived end (being horrified, being Lost, backlash from Hollow practice, taken by Faerie).
- An ex-Barney turned Goblin King receives regular gifts from their old Todd, goblin one-use drugs and alcohol, and resources for goblin practices.
- Ephemeral mice and insects who worked with a now-dead fae practitioner work to supply some fae baubles and glamour to the individual who stumbled onto the practitioner's den.
- The character is an Ex-Aware who gets plunged into the Abyss when they sleep. After Awakening, they get more control over it, still visiting the Abyss, but with control over how intense an area they visit.
- After turning the tables on a dream thief who tried to steal their connections, money, and everything else, an Aware gets most of the dream thief's books and things, becoming one themselves. Residual from that victory and their Awareness, when they lose against a target, or if they can't maintain a handhold by regularly Dream-thieving others, they avert the worst consequences and take the nearest vulnerable and available body.

These vary in strength, depending on the Arcana, and may have drawbacks, or be largely drawback. They generally change the dynamic, with a focus on resources, efficiency, and/or protections. They may be temporary or renewable, again, depending on the Arcana used here.

Discovery practitioners can get *more* dabblings, at the cost of limited starting practices. Where a player's school often has a starting package of necessary tools, the discovery practitioner lacks one and may be left limping or trying to patch or cover a weakness. To do this, they have some scattered, somewhat random items, rolled after choice of the Discovery path is made.

More Dabblings

The player, when choosing their dabblings, will get 0-2 more, allocating their 3 remaining Arcana as normal, then re-using the 2nd best (if they have +1 dabbling) and best. Once this is done, they roll 2d6 for each:

1	A smattering of resources	7	Roll 1d6 twice, get two things from the left side of this table
2	A magic item, limited uses	8	A magic item of low value
3	A book with background only, no practice, some progress	9	A book with a practice or background, some progress
4	Familiarity with an Other that acts as a resource/contact	10	Ongoing Companionship of an Other
5	A magic item, of reduced value	11	A magic item of good value relative to Arcana
6	A book with a practice at the end, no reading progress	12	A book with a practice or background, and progress

Where the type of thing depends on the intersection & declared field, and the quality of the entry depends on Arcana:

Entry	Supreme	Good	Moderate	Poor	Awful	Worst
1	\$250	\$125	\$75	\$35	\$15	\$5
2 & 5	Value 3	Value 2	Value 1	3x Consumables	2x Consumables	1x Consumables
8	Value 4	Value 3	Value 2	Value 1	3x Consumables	2x Consumables
11	Value 5	Value 4	Value 3	Value 2	Value 1	3x Consumables
3, 6, 9 & 12	2 beneficial book modifiers	1 beneficial book modifier	-	1 negative book modifier	2 negative book modifiers	3 negative book modifiers

With an Other’s stats and capabilities being relative to a human’s at moderate.

Reduced Practices

After the arrangements of puissance, access, longevity, and executions are sorted from best to worst, left to right, the Discovery practitioner is made to assign their worst arcana to one of their five starting practices. Some Arcana for starting practices (not the baseline Forever Arcana) are reduced in power, either by assigning additional Worsts (and locking out practices with at least two Worsts) or downgrading Arcana to the step below (ie. Supreme to Good).

For the designated practice and any that get at least two Worsts, advancement is limited - Assume the practitioner doesn’t have the resources to learn them effectively. Each of the five starting practices represents a direction one could take research and new practices, and until they find that base practice and re-learn it, or until they do three new researches or upgrades (ie. researching to improve arcana) in that direction, learning practices or developing magic items in that/those directions suffer from some setback, taking 33% longer.

GMs may improvise alternatives to represent other suitable gaps in knowledge.

Discovery as a Secondary

When taking Discovery, if it's not your best Arcana assigned to House, Patron, or Discovery, you get reduced effects:

- Get one of:
 - The protective/utility effect
 - The resources, at a cost of dabbings being randomized.
- Reduce commitments and responsibilities- you have some ability to go your own way.
- Get half the bonuses (🎲), rounding up, and the full (♠) penalties.

Table:

S	You found a major resource, a trove from a greater practitioner, turned your Awareness to your advantage, or a powerful Other is backing you, even if it can't be a patron (a God in a pit you can talk to once a week, etc.) ➤ Start with a strong protection or utility effect. If it is spent, lost, or rendered irrelevant (eg. losing residual Innocence), it renews or you get another (renewing) effect after a while, as GM dictates. ➤ Get \$500 in assets, consumables, or resources for the main practice, \$250 for the first dabbling, \$125 for the second, and \$75 for the third. ➤ You're situated in a prime position to begin with, with lesser Other contacts (suppliers, potential minions) or pre-established setup (eg. your predecessor had some victims lined up, unfinished crafts). ➤ You get two additional dabbings (reuse top two Schools Arcana), but dabbings are random. Get two rerolls ➤ One of your starting practices gets all of your worst possible Arcana, and advancement may be hampered (see above) ➤ Then take two points (🎲) worth of Discovery perks.
G	You found practice or figured out something key that's set you up well, with little holding you back to begin with. ➤ Start with a strong protection or utility effect; if it's removed or spent, it gets replaced with something <i>moderate</i> in strength, ongoing, and renewable thereafter, as GM dictates. ➤ Get \$250 in assets, consumables, or resources for the main practice, \$125 for the first dabbling, \$75 for the second, and \$50 for the third. ➤ You get two additional dabbings (reuse top two Schools Arcana), but dabbings are random. Get one reroll. ➤ For starting five practices, swap out one non-Worst arcana for a Worst or downgrade two arcana. Then one of your starting practices gets all of your lowest quality Arcana of the appropriate types. Advancement may be affected. ➤ Take two positive points (🎲) from the Discovery perks, with one negative point (♠), or take only the one positive point with no negative.
M	You found a decent starting stash of practice materials and things. ➤ Start with a moderate protection or utility effect; if it's removed or spent, it renews or is replaced with something equal, ongoing, and renewable thereafter, at GM discretion. ➤ Get \$125 in consumables, or resources for the main practice, \$75 for the first dabbling, \$50 for the second, and \$25 for the third. ➤ You get one additional dabbling (reuse 2nd best Schools Arcana), but dabbings are random. Get two rerolls. ➤ For starting five practices, swap out two non-Worst arcana for Worst or downgrade five Arcana. Then one of your starting practices gets all of your lowest quality Arcana of the appropriate types. Advancement may be affected. ➤ Take two positive points (🎲) from the Discovery perks, with one negative point (♠), or take only the one positive point with no negative.

P	You found a passable collection of practice materials and papers. ➤ Start with a moderate protection or utility effect; if it's removed or spent, it is replaced with a mixed (positives & negatives) one thereafter. ➤ Get \$75 in consumables, or resources for the main practice, \$50 for the first dabbling, \$25 for the second, and \$15 for the third. ➤ You get one additional dabbling (reuse 2nd best Schools Arcana), but dabbings are random. Get one reroll. ➤ For starting five practices, swap out three non-Worst arcana for Worsts or downgrade seven Arcana. Then one of your starting practices gets all of your lowest quality Arcana of the appropriate types. Advancement may be affected. ➤ Take one positive point (🔮) from the Discovery perks, with two negative points (⬇️), or take one negative (⬇️).
A	You found a low-quality collection of practice materials and papers. ➤ Start with a mixed protection or utility effect; if it's removed or spent, it renews or is replaced with something equal, ongoing, and renewable thereafter, at GM discretion. ➤ Get \$50 in resources for the main practice, \$25 for the first dabbling, \$15 for the second, and \$5 for the third. ➤ Your dabbings are random but potentially more numerous. Get two rerolls. ➤ For starting five practices, swap out four non-Worst arcana for Worsts or downgrade twelve arcana. Then one of your starting practices gets all of your lowest quality Arcana of the appropriate types. Advancement may be affected. ➤ Take two negative points (⬇️) from the list of Discovery flaws below.
W	You got into something you shouldn't have, and now it's a struggle. Why did you do this to yourself? ➤ Start with a mixed protection or utility effect; if it's removed or spent, it renews or is replaced with something mixed 1:2 for positive vs. negative aspects, at GM discretion. ➤ Get \$25 in resources for the main practice, \$15 in resources for the first dabbling, \$5 in resources for the second, and \$1 for the third. ➤ Your dabbings are random but potentially more numerous. Get one reroll. ➤ For starting five practices, swap out five non-Worst arcana for Worsts or downgrade all Arcana. Then one of your starting practices gets all of your lowest quality Arcana of the appropriate types. Progress in that direction is initially hampered. ➤ Take three negative points (⬇️) from the list of Discovery flaws below.

Discovery Bonuses & Flaws	🔮🔮 Twisting Avenues - There are a fair number of additional things (as per the dabbling table) in the trove that was discovered or given, but certain puzzles, tasks, or investigation must be worked through to access them. Arcana and quantity lies at GM discretion, to fit the campaign's pace and length. Player should discuss with the GM.
	🔮🔮 Not Alone - You weren't alone when you stumbled into magic. You have fellows, with reasonable trust in them, they have different roles and approaches than you and act as allies, research, etc. If they do betray you/die, they get replaced with a single (🔮) bonus.
	🔮🔮 Greater Locus - Among the things you discovered was a major location: someone's old Demesne, a practice-related space to retreat to and hide in, or an easy door to a realm.
	🔮 Shine - The protective or utility effect, if it can downgrade in quality when refreshing/being replaced, doesn't do so or will return to being it's best version, once. This refreshes after every milestone. When not applicable, the effect recovers/refreshes/is replaced faster.
	🔮 Anonymity - You start out hidden and off the radar of local practitioners and Others, while being aware of them. After you're discovered, gain another (🔮) bonus at half strength or reduce the severity of a (⬇️) penalty by half.

✦	Treasures - Roll a bonus 1d6+1 on the Discovery dabbings table. Use your middle Schools arcana.
✦	Voracious - Get free reading rolls on all books, based on the Arcana (3 for Supreme/Good, 2 for Moderate/Poor, 1 for Awful/Worst) to get some initial progress.
✦	Harvest - You benefit from the seeds others have planted. You get 2x the initial resources or consumables, and get more at a weekly rate (matching the # for your second dabbling)
✦	Location - Among the things you discovered was a minor location: a place to go for guidance, a market or bookstore, a place to go for resources or to get specific work or hirings done, a shrine, or a temporary, limited-use shelter.
✦	Choice - For one already rolled result for dabbings, choose any lower result. (ie. if rolling a 8, can choose any number from 1 through 7 on the table); if taking 7, must roll for results.
✦	Fragility - Your boon or utility effect is more easily lost and takes twice as long to refresh if spoiled.
✦	Obstacles - Any course of practice you have with a Worst arcana is made difficult to pursue; when assigning Arcana, must have at least two difficult practices after allocations to take this.
✦	Stalker - Your discovery came with a new enemy. They aren't strong or overly connected; they're average in power relative to the local landscape, alone, and they don't know who you are. Combines the 'enemies who'll come after you if they find you' of Stolen Things, below, with the lower power level of Bitter Nemesis, below. If they're removed, GM discretion (or 50% roll, if they wish) to see if there's a new stalker starting from scratch, with an existence hidden from the player.
✦	Bereft - You get no assets or resources for your main practice or first dabbling; if you have an Awful or Worst, resources may be over-harvested or highly competed for in the area, requiring heroic measures to find good ritual components, or you have something that requires resources and must be supplied, lest it become a severe (✦✦) penalty or two lesser (✦) ones.
✦✦	Without Protection - You get no protection or utility effect at all. You're just someone who stumbled onto practice (or took what little you could when fleeing destruction) and has scattered and incomplete knowledge to work with.
✦✦	Bedlam and Chaos - You trade away at least one additional starting practice without an allocated Worst, and get a 2d6 and 1d6 roll on the dabbling chart in its place. You may do this multiple times, at GM discretion. Use your Family baseline to determine dabbings.
✦✦	Stolen Things - What you took? It wasn't yours to take, or you have a thing people want, and they're willing to remove you once they get it, to clean up after them. Peers (typically practitioners or Others in the same field you started in) hunt you and want to eliminate you or strip away your practice and reclaim what they see as theirs.
✦✦	Bitter Nemesis - You weren't alone when you found practice, but things went bad. You divvied up what you found and the other person or people ended up going another route. As opposed to Stolen Things, the goal isn't to evade attention from a stronger peer, but to outpace people who started on the same footing as you, who know you and know that what you have is the fastest way to round out their knowledge. If concluded before things are narratively satisfying, gets replaced with a single (✦) lesser penalty, or a bonus (✦) is reduced by half.



Discovered Deadline - As part of what you took, you inherited responsibility, drew attention, or otherwise picked up a particular sort of impending doom - an Other due to be released if you can't secure the binding, a curse that will strike you down, you made an Oath and you'll be Forsworn if you can't perform it, etc. You have to get strong enough to confront what comes when the deadline hits its end, and you have to do it at a pace that hurts.



Locked Away - A share of what you should start with is initially locked away, certain puzzles, tasks, or investigation must be worked through to access them. Each one comes with a bonus 1d6 roll on the Dabblings chart; the final 'unlock' to catch up comes with a 2d6 roll and one reroll. Use your Family baseline for additional dabblings.

For those who wish to house rule out clues, some suggestions: when clues are called for as a resource, the player can instead be able to cite accomplishments, researches, and experiences in an applicable area or field. With this, we add some on-the-spot difficulty as the player is called on to remember what might apply, but allow some redundancy of individual deeds. If the citation is too recent or is being called on too often, it can be disallowed. Readings, research, experiences with certain kinds of Other, and victories can be called on as valid citations.

We can also allow players to cite accomplishments and experiences while trying to figure something out for the same sorts of benefits that a Clue grants, such as another knowledge check. Accomplishments in a particular sphere may go toward a background, with the player starting on training or learning a background and then going to the GM at a certain stage (perhaps tied to Milestones) to list the work they've done in an area, devote a downtime to bringing things together, and asking for a certain benefit.

Reading to a certain point in a book thus becomes a short-lived bonus for an upcoming knowledge roll.

Appendix: Resource, Scraps



Scraps are a resource that aligns with the echoic and vestigial; the Hollow and Rapacious fields frequently have use of them, while Cursewrights often are heavy producers and users of scraps. They are hard for Innocents to perceive, and may vary in aesthetic depending on the source, but tend to be wispy, haunting, or eerie images. They have a texture akin to holding a jellyfish, if a jellyfish were air or smoke instead of water; they hold a form but are pliable and light, and like some jellyfish, certain kinds and calibers can ‘sting’ if mishandled.

Scraps come about as a result of deleterious practices. Much like how heroic figures are a combination of spirit, Self, vestige, echo, and other things, scraps peel off of people who lose something, and can be seen as everything that was displaced as a curse or effect took hold, clumped together and made symbolic of the harm dealt. They may arise naturally in areas that are isolated, where harm is being dealt and negative sentiments are rampant, where, in essence, people are cursing one another without overt practice.

Bean Street, nicknamed what it is because of the faint human odor hanging over the area, is a run down area that other run-down areas in the city look down on. Seventy percent of the houses are unoccupied, and they don't fetch any real price due to the costs of cleanup and rebuilding. Two notorious, large-size goblins make it their home (and fight regularly over territory), there may even be an oddfolk family settled in one area, and many children are ‘off the books’ and don't go to school.

Addiction and abuse are the default here. Kids are failed so hard by the system that they mostly ignore authority and band together in groups and clusters. Practitioners of a darker stripe meet here, or collect scraps as they pass through. To an Innocent, it seems the sun doesn't shine as bright on Bean Street, but those in the know will find plenty of scraps lying in corners near crumpled up fast food wrappers, syringes, and bent spoons.

Areas where Others of the Hollow field naturally arise are also valid.

Hudson Hill is an athletic training facility for juveniles, known for being uncompromising. The students are a mix of those wanting to take their training to the next level, and those sent there by parents disappointed in their recent performance or trajectory. With brainwashing, diet control, emotional abuse, and physical abuse occurring regularly, there is a proportion of students, written off by parents, diminished, who become vestige-like or partially Hollow. Scraps abound, and are easily foraged by those who are willing to brave the ecosystem of entities that would possess or prey on the vulnerable in the institution, or collect the scraps themselves.

Collection can be done by hand, with gloves recommended, or with something woven, like a net. Many practices offer ways to easily collect scraps from everyday occurrences.

For regular use, scraps can be used to make magic items of the appropriate schools, or for power, at a cost of making the item or the expression of the item's magic more malign, insofar as it can ‘act’ on that. They can be used to shore up vestiges, for alchemy of certain kinds (especially hollow alchemy or deleterious alchemy, such as a poisoner's), and as fuel to stoke curses to greater extremes.

For use with practice, scraps usually have a theme or aesthetic reflecting their origin, and are often used as a shorthand to shape the aesthetic of other workings, like illusions; spider-shaped scrap for an illusion of a spider. Doing so makes the related practice faster, quicker, and more substantial, and/or blurring lines of reality and the immaterial to give echoes or illusions substance and the ability to act. This has the side effect of making it very easy to develop a 'brand'...

Marilyn Sellars is a dream stalker, using practices to deliver nightmares that emotionally and mentally beat and batter a target every night, until their defenses are in shambles, before she finds a weak point and, when the target is vulnerable, severs all of their connections. What innocents see is an individual who was well-to-do and successful in every respect suddenly having sleep issues, before having a very public and paranoid breakdown where a bunch of secrets come out and leave their friend group or family in shambles.

Marilyn got her start using a cursed phone to prey on classmates at her school, and even though the phone hasn't survived her encounters with various opponents and obstacles, she had scraps relating to it, that look like insubstantial pieces of broken phone with bone and black rot spilling out of the broken parts. She can use them to make auditory hallucinations of incessant phone ringing, dial tones, and other things, turn a wandering daydream of a sleep deprived target into an actual dream, or turn an actual dream into a nightmare she can connect to with her practices. Of course, when phones feature heavily in her work, as a result, she gets more scraps that are linked to phones... and so it goes.

Left unmanaged, scraps will gravitate toward one another, clump, and become omens, living curses, or feed into echoes to become wraiths.

Scraps can be loosely grouped into the same categories that many use for curses: Toils, Sicknesses, Deaths, Dooms, Pains, Discords, Fears, Ruins, Madnesses, and Disasters, with a scrap of a particular type working best in that particular field. They can also be subdivided into categories of strength.



Least



Common



Greater



Prime

Least are little more than ribbons of shadow, possibly with a tag or decoration, while prime are detailed and large enough to hold in two hands. Lesser scraps can be combined together to make greater ones (at roughly a 4:1 to 3:1 ratio, depending on the practitioner or Other's skill), and greater scraps can be subdivided, usually with some net loss in the process. For valuing, consider scraps of the 'least' tier to be single or double digit dollar value, and each step up means adding another digit. They have the same shelf life as milk.

The following page has some supplementary material for scraps.

Locations:

Hollowed-In -	
1	Random Scrap, 1 tier lower, Limited*
2	Discover a minor location
3	Interaction: Human
4	Random Scrap, Limited*
5	Interaction: Other
6	Random Scrap x2, Limited*

* Limited: diminishes each time this is taken, to minimum of 1; replenishes monthly

Cursed-	
1	Interaction: Human & Lose morale
2	Discover a minor location
3	Interaction: Human
4	Random Scrap, 1 tier lower
5	Random Scrap
6	Sacrifice morale up to 3x, gain X random scraps.

Hole of a Place	
1	Discover a minor location
2	Rumor: Group
3	Illicit things sold here.
4	Interaction: Human, Scrap Scrape*
5	Interaction; Other, Scrap Scrape*
6	Combat

* Scrap Scrape: Collect random scrap, 1 tier lower than rolled, if you have practice to collect scrap.

Roll a Scrap (d12):

1	Toil	5	Pains	9	Madnesses
2	Sickness	6	Discords	10	Disasters
3	Deaths	7	Fears	11	Typing matching that of most recently found scrap, here.
4	Dooms	8	Ruins	12	

Roll a Tier (d100):

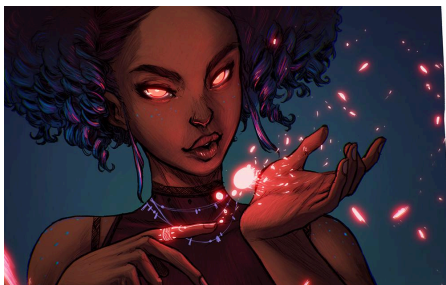
1-50	Least
51-90	Common
91-98	Greater
99-100	Prime

* Roll of 13, 26, 39, 52, 65, 78, 91, or 100 is special, see table to right.

...On multiple of 13 or roll of 100, it's special:

1	Generate bonus scraps of each lower tier
2	Dual Category (ie. Fear + Doom), 2x value
3	Triple Category, 4x value
4	Hard: 50% chance to not be consumed on use, -15% per use, 3x value
5	Crystallized: 100% chance to not be consumed on use, -5% per use, 10x value
6	Is a scrap-related asset of same value

Resource: Elements of Creation



Elements of Creation are resources heavily related to Creation itself, but also to elementalism. They tend to appear as special flames, concentrations of earth, or as dense whorls of water and air. Most often, they come in impure quantities, mingled with the others, so there is some solidity even to the fire, water, or air, and the earth is somewhat pliable. As groupings, the four types of elements of creation are primordial clays, promethean sparks, fonts

of creation, and breaths of life.

Creation practices, others, and items that incorporate elements of creation tend to already have some supposition of growth, and will draw out the power side of an element of creation...

Zayn, a fountainhead practitioner, has modeled a localized universe where he will be as a god. He has laid out the scope and boundaries of it, and laid out the extensive diagram work. It is with the addition of a pure, high grade font of creation that power surges into things and the small initial realm's birth unfolds naturally and dramatically.

On the other side of the coin, elemental practices supply power, but tend to be short lived in usage or complicated to maintain. The element of creation counters that, offering efficient growth.

Himari is a cursewright dabbling in the elemental, uniting the two with the help of her familiar, a kindled wraith of a girl who was set on fire by an abusive father. She has, in the past, created a burning darkwood branch, a magical branch that produces fire and smoke that have curse effects interwoven into the flame and smoke. It offers a handful of uses before it needs to be allowed to rest for a few days to replenish power by drawing in natural warmth. Using it more than that degrades it in power and ultimately spends it. Which is what happened to the last one. She makes another higher end version, this time adding a medium grade promethean spark. The burning darkwood branch is instead an everburning darkwood branch and with the growth of the flame within, recuperates in minutes, not days.

Other practices can use the elements of creation, drawing some power and growth, but at half to a third of the efficacy. Because elements of Creation are naturally renewing, in terms of power and material, picking one up or having one on hand is fairly desirable for practitioners of any stripe.

Elements of Creation collect naturally in natural places far from human habitation, but are especially common in knotted spaces, especially hidden valleys. When a Storm ravages an area, one of the prizes that can be found there is an element of Creation, often found in the nexus. This is less the result of them being formed and more the result of life being scoured away, and the motes of Creation within that life being collected and focused into singular points by the Storm.

Left alone, stray elements of Creation and items or practices incorporating them or drawing on them tend to leak, spread, or gradually extend their reach outward, influencing things around them. They can also spark off Storms themselves, or be the centerpiece of one emerging one, but this is more trouble than it's worth to exploit.

Elements of Creation tend to *boil forth*, and grow in quantity when manipulated. A lump of clay, that, when pulled at, produces more net clay than there was prior to the pulling. A mote of flame around a hard nugget that sheds sparks and licks of fire when moved through the air. A jellyfish-like concentration of water that is hard to hold onto, the water flowing out and down the arm of the person carrying it. A dandelion-puff like concentration of rustling, shifting air. Using and even managing these is a balancing act, requiring skilled hands, tools, and/or some prior knowledge. As concentration of one element increases, management gets harder. Bad management of the resource or attempts to stretch it out or 'grow' it too hurriedly are liable to lower its grade or purity (see below).

They come in four categories, Clay, Font, Spark, and Breath, and each will have a grade and a purity.

Grade is generally a question of whether it is common, greater, or prime. Unlike some other materials, there isn't a least-tier quality. When least-tier would manifest, the element of Creation is too small to be stable, it will create a small, localized disaster (or misfire), and damage its surrounding area. Offensive tools or practice meant to forcibly extract elements of creation that would provoke this result will instead do heavy damage to the target of that tool or practice, setting them on fire, breaking bones, drawing out heavy volumes of internal liquids, or flinging them away... among other results. This occurs roughly 50% of the time, barring efforts to raise the bar for what is being collected.

At the common tier (about 40% of results), the element is barely stable, and will gain power over the course of days. If overdrawn from, its grade will deteriorate, and it may lapse into the Least tier, at which point it just burns out quickly and then causes its localized disaster or misfire. These are generally big enough to hold in a closed hand.

At the greater tier, (about 8% of elements), the element is robust and recoups the power drawn out of it in hours. It is harder to overdraw from, but it can happen, and this reduces the grade or sees it split into multiple lower-grade ones. Such elements of Creation are difficult but possible to hold in one hand or with one arm around them, limiting use of the associated hand.

At the prime tier, (about 2%), the element tends to require both hands or one full arm. They tend to affect the person holding them, making bones rattle or shake, heat throb through them, breath pass through places that aren't lungs or airway, or make blood flow in different directions. This doesn't do harm, but can be alarming. These are the real prizes, and the things that are often used to power Created realms.

Purity, on the other hand, is a percentage scale. It is possible to have a high grade element that is hard to use because it is too impure. On the one hand, it makes them easier to handle; a font of creation with a bit of primordial clay in it may take the form of a shell or stone with the water flowing out. A promethean spark that has some breath of life in it can be buoyant, floating above an outstretched hand, with its sparks going up, instead of down onto the hand and arm that are managing it. But there is also the chance for other realm energies or forces to taint the element, especially when they can come about from harm and destruction. Ones in the midst of a Storm that drowned many people may pick up a great deal of pain, with omen-like spirits settling in as a dark vein. This impurity can taint the practices they are used with, or complicate efforts if the practitioner is trying to balance elements in something delicate.

Use as a Power Source

Use of an element of Creation to manually power a practice or ritual is tracked by intervals of time. Some examples would be:

Smoking Ember	Common (81%)	28% Ruined 15% Breath 59% Spark	4-5 downtimes. Impurity stands at 43%.
Dusty Exhalation	Common (62%)	11% Relic 11% Clay 78% Breath	2-3 downtimes. Impurity stands at 22%.
Volcanic Godswater	Greater (97%)	21% Spark 79% Font	6-7 hours. Impurity stands at 21%.
Frothing Godsloam	Prime (99%)	2% Taint 9% Spark 31% Font 58% Clay	20-30 minutes. Impurity stands at 42%

Power provided is sufficient for a instance of practice or effect of a tier *lower* than the grade of element, or the same tier (bracketed) if Elemental or Creation.

Common	Greater	Prime
Easy tier (Moderate)	Moderate tier (Advanced)	Advanced tier (Epic)

The user won't necessarily know just when it's refreshed; the owner of the smoking ember who has had four downtimes won't know if the smoking ember is ready yet. A practice or asset may help track how fast they refresh. The number depends on the purity of the power being drawn on, typically the main element, and if a facet of the element of creation is being drawn on specifically (the breath in the smoking ember, for example), it will change accordingly.

Purity	Common	Greater	Prime
0-10%	9-10 downtimes	22 to 24 hours	54-60 min.
11-20%	8-9 downtimes	19 to 22 hours	48-54 min.
21-30%	7-8 downtimes	16 to 19 hours	42-48 min.
31-40%	6-7 downtimes	14 to 16 hours	36-42 min.
41-50%	5-6 downtimes	12 to 14 hours	30-36 min.
51-60%	4-5 downtimes	9 to 12 hours	24-30 min.
61-70%	3-4 downtimes	7 to 9 hours	18-24 min.
71-80%	2-3 downtimes	5 to 7 hours	12-18 min.
81-90%	1-2 downtimes	2 to 5 hours	6-12 min.
91-100%	1 downtime	1 to 2 hours	0 to 6 min.

To stress: whether something is 81% or 89% pure, it doesn't change the numbers. Outside factors, flows of spirits, and other things will change these numbers.

Similar numbers are used if *sustaining* something with a power source: use the timing above to determine how frequently the process (of an appropriate tier, see above) is *unpowered* across a 10 downtime, 24 hour, or 1-hour span.

Example: **Tiara** is a Brassheart with the Smoking Ember above; she can have the smoking ember operating as her 'heart' for 5-6 days, with 4-5 days where the component needs to rest. She may want to play it safe and keep to using it for 5-day stretches, but circumstances may demand she stretch it and occasionally use it for 6 days, knowing she may be doing damage to the element.

If she finds herself in a situation where she needs to change settings and draw on the breath in that element of creation (counting it as 15% pure) for breath-specific power, it's going to be a lot less efficient - she'll get 1-2 days of use and need to let it be for 8-9 days.

Use as a Crafting Material

Elements of Creation self-generate, and provide additional material at roughly the same rate they provide units of power. This doesn't actually increase the intensity or power of the element of Creation- only the empowered material available to go towards Crafting. On the table above, use the pacing of Common elements. Every X downtimes (going by purity), an element will provide material equivalent in value equal to [Purity %] dollars, multiplied by:

Common Grade	Greater	Prime
½	2.5	5

...doubled if applied to elemental or Creation practices.

Thus, a material like the Dusty Exhalation on the prior page (Common, 78% breath, 22% impurities) will provide material every 2-3 downtimes, in value equal to \$39.

The Frothing Godsloam (Prime, 58% clay, 42% impurities) will provide material every 4-5 downtimes, in value equal to \$290, to go towards crafting.

A theoretical 100% pure Prime element of creation could provide \$500 in material every downtime.

This doesn't have a default value in stores - only in markets with those who have a use for such things. Beware, however, for if one produces a great deal of such material, it may draw curiosity and attention from those who would covet what they have.

Some practices (such as a Clay Shaper's ability to 'stretch' elements of creation) allow one to extend the amount of material or even subdivide one element of Creation into two, at a cost of adding impurity.

Materials that aren't collected or kept track of will eventually become impure, (ex. Primordial Clay's material becoming raw, ordinary stone, soil, or metals, with everything it produces only creating more of the same), and remain so until that stuff is cleared away.

Note: It is the practitioner's responsibility to keep track of their materials: if they aren't, they may go to use what has accrued and find it has gone fallow.

Draining an Element of Creation

If an element of creation is used when not ready, or if the owner decides to extract material from it sooner than is appropriate, it will lower in grade and purity. Roll 1d12 and subtract that from the grade %, then roll 1d100 and compare to purity: if it rolls over the impurity %, reduce purity by 1d12%, in the form of added taint and lowered purity of the primary type.

Impurities and Taint

When using an element of Creation for power, to fuel an ongoing ritual or process, or for material, impurities and Taint are introduced. As a rule of thumb, sustained or repeated use sees the purity become cumulative, with an effect every time it reaches 100%, and when a project is finished or when used for a single practice, roll a d100 against the standing %.

Tiara (mentioned above) has graduated from using the smoking ember as her power source, but has kept it to fuel practice and other components in her body. Using it as part of an empowered firebreath practice, she rolls a d100. It's 59% pure, 41% impure, and a low roll (below that 41%) is bad. She rolls a 32, checks, and it's impurity from *Breath* in the mix that screws things up, when she's calibrated for *spark*. Some hoses blow, taking her ability to speak, and hiss loudly and persistently until she can do self-repair.

Clarence has a batch of whistling clay scavenged from a pocket world that collapsed. It's *common* grade, 60% pure primordial clay, 6% breath of life, 34% with bits of detritus in it from the relics in the area when he scavenged it. In practice, even as he continually cleans it up, picks pieces out, there will be bits of porcelain, wood, stone, metal, glass, and other garbage that manifests in the oozing, whistling clay.

He wants to make a homunculus. That's a crafting job, with a long DC of 15. He can work on it four times (based on his Knowledge), to try to get the rolls that add up to 15, and can work three stints (based on his Dexterity) every downtime. The dollar value for a basic homunculus is \$250. It will also need power from primordial clay.

The Sandy Clay, being common tier and 60% purity, produces \$30 in materials every 4-5 downtime sessions, doubled to \$60 because he's working on a Creation project. Spacing things out across downtime sessions, with a workshop asset to help speed material growth along, he figures he can work across 4 days to get \$120 in materials for the homunculus, spend \$130 of his own money, and use the same clay for a dose of power.

On the first addition of materials, he introduces 6% breath and 34% detritus.

On the second addition of materials, he adds things up to 12% breath and 68% detritus.

On the use of clay for power, he adds things up to a total of 36% breath, 102% detritus.

The project finishes. The *Detritus* becomes a guaranteed handicap for the homunculus; its organs are festooned with shards of stuff, making it *fragile*, and he then rolls a d100 for the 36% breath and 2% extra Detritus: a 3 and 29. It gets influenced by the *Breath*.

Note that not all influence from other Elements of Creation is bad. Breath is a tendency to roam, put in extra effort, communicate, and do more: some good, some bad, sometimes not what the practitioner intended. *Taint* is weighted much more heavily toward bad. That *detritus* might give it a few shards with which it can cut things, but mostly it's just going to make the familiar more fragile.

Even the primary element of Creation in use is 'taint', and will infect an item it provides materials for, or a practice, expect it to add complications, growth, or other effects.

Roll an element of Creation:

1	Font of Creation
2	Primordial Clay
3	Promethean Spark
4	Breath of Life

Its Grade: (Keep this #)

1-49	(Disaster/misfire)
50-89	Common
90-98	Greater
99-100	Prime

For Purity...

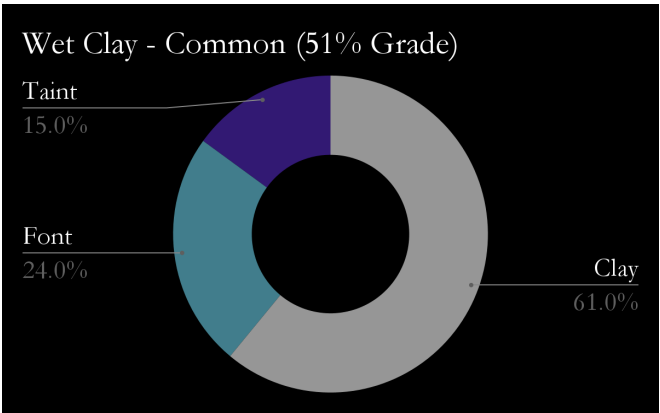
1. Roll a d100. If the result is below 50, add 50. That's your purity.
2. To fill out impurity, roll on the 'element of Creation' table above, treat a matching identity as 'taint'.
3. Roll a d100 again. If the number adds up to or exceeds the non-pure %, you're done.
4. Roll 5x and take the lowest result. This can be adjusted depending on circumstance. This is added taint, detracted from base purity.

Example:

Tess finds an element of Creation, a node of primordial clay. She rolls a 51 for grade... Common.

For determining purity, she rolls a 26, adding 50 for a total of 76% purity, 24% impurity. To determine what that impurity is, she rolls 1d4, and gets a 1. She rolls a 58... so the entirety of that 24% impurity is font of creation.

Her GM rules the area is filled with pain and blood, so she does have some impurity... not a lot, so he has her roll 5x. She gets 32, 88, 15, 61, and 69. She gets the 15% as added taint.



Taint can be something Abyssal, inspired by scraps, by Ruins elements, or just treated as a general negative tilt. While the element of creation is a renewable resource, power-wise, the taint will come with any use, which will affect things, either by accumulating over time, harming the user, or altering the end result.

Additional Notes

Players should, as hinted above, be the ones tracking their elements of creation. GMs can weigh Karma into whether something is taking 5 or 6 days to recharge.

One can imagine a 'heat' meter in play, where having a lot of renewable resources draws attention. As noted when talking about the sale of derivative materials, selling a lot or turning it into an enterprise is likely to draw attention, especially from elementals or Creators.

The complications added to a project or process will be related to the resource/type of taint. GMs are encouraged to be creative. Some suggestions:

Promethean Spark could add veins of heat or burned 'veins', native intelligence or rebelliousness, a tendency to go out of control, a tendency to work so hard it burns out fast, combustibility, added puissance or executions at a cost of longevity, or something in that vein.

Primordial Clay could add weight, bulkiness, lethargy, permanence (a practice powered by clay could just modify the ground to make the ritual circle effectively engraved there), added puissance at a heavy cost of access, added longevity at a cost of executions.

Breath of Life can add a tendency to roam, added reach or scope of design, the ability to talk or communicate intent, a higher chance of going missing, added access at a cost of longevity or puissance.

Font of Creation can make something wet or slimy, give it an appetite while making it stronger if fed, make it go through a process of aging that is stronger and more 'immature' in youth and weaker but wiser in old age, make an item, practice, or thing tend to grow over time (potentially in awkward ways if not tended to), make veins stand out, integrate vegetable matter or moss into flesh, bits of apparent flesh into stone, increase executions or longevity at a cost of puissance or access.

Resource: Souls



Souls exist for any living thing with an identity, with animals such as dogs having some, but normally it is humans and human-like beings (oddfolk, etc.) who have the necessary complexity and depth for the kinds of souls discussed in this section. Souls are the blueprint for the Self- the core of an individual that acts as both the skeleton of the immaterial forces (spirit, echo-memory) and the outline that keeps things in bounds. It is, when an individual is reduced to their constituent parts, the part of that

individual that holds the most value. Souls are a currency for many rapacious practitioners, and management and protection of one's own soul is a side focus in many hollow practices.

To explain, in the context of a person, practice-wise:

Spirits are the raw elements of the person (or of anything, for that matter), the spirit of brown hair, of courage, of 'student'.

Self is the person as they are, in terms of values (quality and quantity of what's within the person, spirits, memories, goals, personality), and often acts as an abstraction of current physical and mental health. Reflects the present moment of the person; self is spent for immediate, present-moment power, then replenishes. It can be broken down into 'departments' that process and manage things. For example, if spirit is drained for some reason, the person may seek entertainment, nourishment, or other things to replenish it. If there is a sudden, overwhelming injection (or unwanted invasion) of, for example, spirit of the moon, the departments of the Self may process it out in dreams, prioritize self-defense, or translate it into something else.

Soul is the 'blueprint', more enduring than the Self. The soul determines what a Self will grow to become, its outer limits and capacities, and, should Self be wounded or damaged, the soul guarantees that the parts (and contents) that are repaired and replaced are the same person. The soul grows and matures as a person takes in new experiences; starts out very open to the world and new experiences, then gradually hardens.

Take out spirit alone from an individual, and one gets little more than what they could obtain with some strong diagram work, a mess of spirits. A person with no spirit will be borderline black and white, listless, uninspired, slow to move, unhealthy, and weak. The Elements of Creation that exist in (often very) small quantities in any person fuel these things and will eventually bring them back, albeit worse for wear, with permanently reduced capacities.

Self is focused on the present moment and doesn't really last- extracted, often drawn out or abstractly represented in blood, sex, spit, sweat, and processed spirit, for reasonably efficient fuel and power. Being spent of Self is similar to being spent of Spirit, but one should note that the 'departments' of the Self (which different geographic regions may interpret differently, to stress), drained of blood and spirit, form hallows that other forces may attempt to invade and occupy. Drained of *all* Self, an individual dies, left as a bleached, crumbling husk.

Soul is that husk uncrumbled. It is the aforementioned guidelines, constellation-esque anchoring points for outside connections, the totality of experience, meaning, and abstracted value for that individual. If an individual is marked for great things, then that mark is made on the soul and imparts a value tied to the weight of that mark. An intact soul that is removed has its value as a currency in part because it has a unique identifier, but also because, if given spirit or raw Self, it can effectively create a (or, more specifically, *the*) person again.

Different practices (many of them rapacious) have different uses for souls. Sometimes the unique 'fingerprint' and the fact others have uses for a soul is enough. Keeping certain aspects while removing others can have their own uses.

Robin is a Little Wolf who calls the Wolf to take out a person she's trapped in a corridor with a Little Bane, a Little Wolf trick in the form of multiplying stuffed animals that fill the space and bury the target. Everything goes dark under a heavy cloud of debris as the Wolf comes through, and when the dust cleared, there is only a deeply disturbing mess left behind where the target had been, seemingly impossible for the short time things were dark. The Wolf leaves prizes behind for the Little Wolf, including the remnants of the target's mangled soul shoved into a stuffed animal. Robin doesn't have plans to make anything or do anything with a Soul, so she pawns it in a black market for darker practitioners, in barter for texts.

Alicia buys souls in the black market, and briefly comes across the one Robin brought, but it's too damaged. Alicia is a Galataean Clay Sculptor who Creates replicas of men she's attracted to, the same in every way, except madly in love and lust with her. She takes carefully removed parts and pieces of three to five souls to get 'close enough' to her target, then liquefies the remaining soulstuff for inlaying whatever's needed to fill in the gaps, correct things, or elaborate on the person before breathing life into the clay. Bystanders are often bewildered by the appearance of this new man, eerily similar to their friend (and often slightly better in every way), but wrapped around the finger of the odd, unlikable Alicia. To her, it's more ethical than kidnapping or altering the person directly. She doesn't put much thought into the source of the souls she uses in the Creation.

Cory is a Blackforester operating in the middle of a city, working with a cadre of vestiges, re-enactors, and glamour-drowned to keep a club running in a perpetual state of timelessness. Teenagers are baited in, and get caught up in a blurry night of drugs, people, dancing, and throbbing music that never gives them the mental footing to work out a timeline or think about leaving. The longer they stay, the more ensnared they get, and eventually they become pieces of the blackforest trap, the soul repurposed into a battery, filled to overflowing with the necessary elements, to the point the actual person is barely there- an alarmed and distressed voice in the back of the mind that never quite makes it to the surface. For each one he collects, his blackforest trap gets stronger.

Esther is a Deimos, fostering a culture of dread and unease in her school that she draws power from- a swingy practice that can leverage successes to foster more fear but nosedives in the face of failures and interference. On the other hand, if she can counter interference, she can quench a light in the darkness and make all the darkness deeper. She breaks the spirit of a Nancy Drew type Aware with a nightmare-in-reality where the Nancy Drew's missing brother was trafficking humans, and breaks her. Esther pulls a soul out of the wreckage. With the Investigator's Soul, she can craft a special asset.

Souls have a rough value that can seem very high at first, but reduces down to more modest numbers with some other factors in play. As a rough gauge...

$$Y * \$666 * E = \text{Soul Value}$$

Where Y is the number of years left (essentially their age - average lifespan for [demographic] in the area), and E is a multiplier (arbitrated by the GM) for experience and special values.

These include skills (with a premium for mastered ones), awareness, milestones or the major life events one has dealt with (which can taint the soul as much as they grant anything), roles (ex. someone being 'the' teacher or the iconic teacher for an area),

The tattered soul Robin got came from a practitioner (which could be as much as a 100% increase in value). In this case it's more like 30% from the mastery of practice and 10% from skills and other experiences. E has a value of 1.4.

When Alicia is making purchases, she's buying high end souls of professionals, where that professional ability and experience enriched the soul and gives E a value of 1.15, with a value as high as 1.33 for someone like a top-tier surgeon.

Cory isn't really getting very special people, except when lucky (or unlucky) enough to have someone unusual poke their heads in. Some real idiots and stunted people, some people with potential. By and large, though, E averages out to 1... but he's getting a fair few of them; one or two people a week.

The Nancy Drew Aware's soul is enriched by her Awareness. She has a special quality and a natural talent that dovetails nicely with the abilities her Awareness grants her. Or 'had', anyway. For her, her E value is 1.25 from Awareness and 10% from her investigative skills; 1.35 in total.

This provides a baseline number. The souls land at around 30k to 60k in value. *This said*, the functional value is lower. Lords and other adjudicating powers (including Judges) will tax souls by a share because rapacious practices impact Innocence. This isn't included in the calculation because it's far more arbitrary and campaign-dependent, but can range from 15% to 75%, with a good ballpark being about a 40-50% hit to functional value. Being Lord, maintaining a good relationship with the local people in charge, or having a good narrative/justification for doing what they do helps.

The other factors are going to be the integrity of the soul - how well it was extracted. This is a thing the practitioner will need to learn to master, and is mostly dictated by associated Arcana, with room for the right backgrounds, skills, and assets to help. The tattered soul Robin got as a reward will have a very low integrity. Integrity can range from 1% to 100%, and multiplies the end result by that number. Souls that aren't extracted may preserve some integrity. Souls kept for a long time (such as Cody's Blackforested ones) may degrade by 1-5% every few weeks.

Finally, there's the appropriateness of the soul. Souls naturally pick up influences from life, and a certain texture from trauma, triumph, moments of personal growth, etc.. Generally speaking, no soul is 'perfect' for a job, and this will impose a further -30% to -70% value. A true 'virgin' (never shed or drew blood), often raised to a specific task for further appropriateness may have a perfect soul for the purpose of that task, with no penalty, but is costly to raise and usually planned for and reserved for major projects.

For game purposes, the resulting value after all multipliers and reductions is treated as a component in crafting for purposes of item or practice values.

Esther extracts the Nancy Drew's soul, and with the Nancy Drew being 16, the calculation for baseline value is $(78-16)*(666)*(1.35)$, equaling \$55,744.20.

She uses a practice to extract, a dabbling, but gets a small bonus from knowing another practice that deals with souls. If she learned a third soul-relevant or soul-extraction practice, the assumed knowledge and techniques could assist her here with a further bonus. She rolls 2d100, subtracting 15 (Arcana) and gets a 16 and a 94. 79% integrity. \$44,037.92.

Then for appropriateness, well, she wants to use the Investigator's soul for an item that will warn her when someone's on her trail, an item she can have by her bedside to give warning dreams, and even details about those hunting her. She talks it out with the GM and he has her make a Knowledge roll to try to figure it out, with her Schools bonuses. She spends a clue for a boost, and figures out she's in the ballpark of 60% appropriateness. \$26,422.75.

Minus the 40% tax for the local Lord, who is only dimly aware of her, and it's \$10,569.10.

While it's gutting to see the deductions, it's still a very nice chunk of resources to go toward the creation of her item. Incorporating it gives her a very high cap for her item's potential value. She's not a very good craftsman, so that's likely to instead translate to a lower DC that she has to meet in her crafting rolls.

There's one additional cost that should be paid mind, which is that the most vicious rapacious practices will draw in hostile attention. People notice when someone disappears, and certain people have a tendency to notice or be drawn in when people lose souls.

Without a soul, a person takes on a particular quality- they've lost their ability to hold true to their Self, their fates, their fortunes. If left to their own devices, they resume their lives, but momentum will falter, physical and mental health may suffer, with a propensity for cancer, or for latent health and mental issues to rise to the surface and hit especially hard. If a limb is injured, it may be lost forever - and the same for other body parts, memory, or personality. Soulless may lose initiative in their lives, and become more follower than leader; being gullible, lost, prone to settling into the next romantic relationship regardless of quality or warning signs, or latching onto powerful and authoritative figures. Sometimes, depending on the local area, the universe may contrive to dispose of the soulless. Should certain Others come across a body without a soul, they tend to find it pliable to their purposes- a lot of Self-stuff and spirit that only holds its shape out of memory.

In effect, they become background characters in their own lives and the lives of others, with no impetus to move to the foreground, their best qualities softening at the edges until they're virtually gone. The best person, soul removed, will end up a washed out lump on a couch, maybe having survived cancer or mental episodes few times, going through the motions of life, or some equivalent.

The body will hold onto certain structures and things in the same way mud will hold a footprint; given time and outside factors, the mud will lose its shape. Those who have recently lost their souls will have a limited time window before the old impressions are lost. This is typically hampered by the circumstances or trauma that went hand in hand with the loss of the soul in the first place, but chasing down the perpetrator and recovering the soul isn't out of the question.

Resource: Tropes



Tropes are a cousin to scraps and animus, most often covered in various Scrivening and Augury practices, with some practices like fae mages and dream thieves dipping toes into these waters. At their smallest level, they can be interchangeable with scraps, but may inverse intent, or be focused on a role. For example, a reversed Ruin might be {Building}, and a role-based Ruin might be {Sunderer}.

Aesthetically, they resemble scraps, but tend to have a coherent image from even a smaller, weaker stage - an object symbolic of the role, and require a certain quality of Sight and training to interact with. As they increase in size, they become more concrete objects with multiple segments tied together, sometimes elaborate or rule-defying. If {Discord} is represented with an apple, then there could be a sword with two halves of a golden apple suspended in the air along its length, moving as the sword does.

Tropes are pieces of narrative and symbolism made solid, with a lot of connective power; one might think of them as atoms, that have a certain propensity to form molecules. A {Betrayal} trope will have two open connections, one for the betrayer, one for the betrayed. Applied to a subject, one can set them up to be betrayed (this may take a practiced hand, to avoid applying the other role). Other tropes exemplify the roles, such as king, witch, or scholar. Put together, one can create a 'the king is betrayed' trope.

1

AFFAIR

🟡 has an illicit relationship with 🟡

A heart and dagger, a dagger with a rose wound around it, or a ruby dagger.

Consumable: Bid an immaterial Other or a compromised individual* to act out an 'affair', inform an illusion, or modify an immaterial consumable.

3

OUTSIDER

▲ One who never fit in or conformed. ▲

A head or mask with no eyes, nose, nor mouth; only a scratched-out X engraved into flesh or material.

Consumable: Bid an immaterial Other or a compromised individual* to act out the role of 'Outsider'. Inform an illusion, or modify immaterial consumables.

4

EVADE

🟡 Avoids 🟡

An eclipsing moon, partially shrouded by cloud, a cloak, a cloud that echoes either moon or cloak.

Consumable: Bid an immaterial Other or a compromised individual* to 'evade' someone or something, inform an illusion, or modify immaterial consumables.

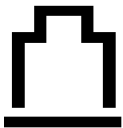
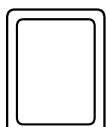
** = Glamour, illusion, connection practices, bindings, curses, and other effects can be applied to a target or placed in their vicinity, and the more there are, the better the trope is overall.*

If someone is assigned a Betrayal trope, with nothing else factoring in, the trope might count itself as resolved as soon as a friend or family member steals a french fry from their plate, or someone might assign a 'witch' trope to a target in hopes of drawing the attention of witch hunters in the area to them... only for it to be resolved as soon as the target acts a little bitchy. Once other workings that blur reality or definitions are added to the picture, the bar is raised, and the activation of the trope has to be narratively meaningful, requiring something with long-term ramifications. Long term harm, revealing a secret, or switching sides. This can also help close the gap with cases where an immaterial Other is strong enough to ignore the trope.

Tropes link to other Tropes, and this extends the effect and power of it. {Liason} can be paired with {Outsider} to become {...has a Liason with an Outsider}. These can be strung together so that multiple sequences connect; the Outsider at the tail end can become the next fragment, and so on. The use cases for this are more specific:

- Where a standard trope might make an otherwise stationary illusion act, this sequence can have them act out a sequence of events.
- Glamour can be made to grow or take on more qualities or ideas, or react to a trigger/right type of individual being nearby.
- A curse can push for a certain end result.

Tropes can be used to connect to or modify other materials or practices. Some examples include...

	Spirit consumables (docile least spirits that can be carried or put away) normally do the user's choice of one out of three things thematic to the spirit. Adding a trope upgrades the spirit by half the trope's value if they match or are close cousins (a Treasure trope and a least Money spirit), tweaks it, if appropriate, or shuffles it, if not.
Scrap consumables (see Resource: Scraps) benefit as noted in Spirit, above, if complementary, but if not, may absorb the scrap and turn the trope to something darker. [Queen] could become [Deposed Queen], which can be harder to apply, but much more effective if applied to a specific use case.	
	Keepsake consumables, normally used to manipulate the person it was from, or to generate a relevant effect in the immaterial world/in astral form, are close cousins of tropes and link up in the same way as described above, albeit far more unpredictably, with echoes or traces of the event, memory, and person tied to the keepsake. Taken to an extreme, can make a Troped target act or think as the originator of the keepsake would.
Landmark consumables are used in astral travel to return to an immaterial location or bring elements of that location elsewhere. Troped, can steer that return; a Sun trope mixed with a landmark could take one to the highest or brightest point in that area. An escape trope can take one to the outskirts.	
	Writings are normally a source for ambient, generalized lore in a language the reader can speak, and provide clues when read. Adding a trope can attempt to add another chapter of a certain type, but may destroy the reading.
Apocrypha are similar to writings but are a language one can't speak. In addition to possibly adding extra content at a risk of destroying the item, they can possibly translate (or make an apocrypha universally understood) at a cost of corrupting the apocrypha's original purpose.	

Tropes can also be used to augment and alter rituals, taking a normally rigid practice, and skewing it or making it favor a certain result. This is best and most easily done with practices that focus on the immaterial, labels, and symbols.

In general, when involving new item or ritual interactions, one should think and expect, 'if similar, combine, upgrade', and 'steer' or 'fine tune control'.

Various practices have individual uses for tropes:

- **Storytellers** are some of the biggest users of Tropes, specifically gathering them and weaving them together into Märchen.
- **Dream Thieves** can leave a trope in deep subconscious to have the target unconsciously play to the role or act out the event(s) upon waking. Done well, the target ruins their own life, making it easier to step into. For some, a 'heist' where they leave tropes behind is the entire point.
- **Toymakers** can use Tropes to create and extend narrative curses that turn an item with an advantage and a drawback (as one example) into a predictable story where each user makes similar mistakes and succumbs to the item.
 - **Shadowwrights** and anyone else who works with curses can do similar, usually without the focus on the item.
- **Beguiled** submit themselves to Fae schemes and plots, to reap the benefit of being close to the Fae. Spelling out segments with Tropes with *themselves* as an intended subject can buy them time and steer them away from trouble.

Different fields and circumstances may favor different language. Operating in an immaterial space around nature spirits may push things toward beast, hunt, traveler, woodsman, and basic descriptors of such. Fae tropes may have more turnarounds and twists in the verbs.

Resource: Parts



Parts are (usually humanoid or roughly humanoid) body parts that are discrete, transferrable, and can be connected together to form a whole individual. They are a visceral resource, common to doll practices, and semi-regularly seen in Warrens, alchemy, and horror practices. Parts of different fields may intermingle, albeit with a little bit of interference or weirdness in a finished product.

At their most basic, a part can be used as a replacement for an individual's lost body part, restoring functionality. There may be long-term effects tied to the adoption of the new part, with each field having its own unique subset of rules or tendencies that apply to the parts.

These rules include...

- Doll parts are default, easily applied, with more rules affording special abilities, qualities, skill, or protection, but are rarely more than a prosthetic.
- Warren parts are more likely to have special abilities or equipment-like properties, such as spikes, acid squirts, or gas production, but are more parasite-like and have a long recovery period, instilling a (usually physical) penalty and/or status conditions after they are installed, which is healed/adjusted to over time. They are often ugly.
- Alchemy parts are best known for their ability to heal over and ultimately replace the old part, as if it was never lost. They often have infused elements, such as a slight, potion-like benefit, along with a deleterious effect (balanced by value). Both fade over time.
- Horror parts may be more rule breaking, and are more likely to act on their own, sometimes imposing banes and mental conditions as a side effect; the old owner and their (frequently tortured) nature lives on in the body part. May attach to other parts on their own.

By default, parts are fast fixes for major and critical injuries: loss of a limb, cracked skull, disembowelment, etc. Individual items may vary and GMs may interpret things differently for high and low value parts, but application will stop the symptoms and life-threatening damage caused by the injury or event, temporarily healing half the damage done. This lasts as long as the part is attached, but if the part is removed, the old damage resumes and (especially in Innocent, medically savvy company), may even be worse post-removal.

Someone's/one's own parts may be surgically removed or prepared (flayed, for example) in anticipation of a part being attached. This usually involves ability & health damage, and not all of that is mended immediately, even with application of the part. Unskilled surgery will do more damage and take longer to recover. Having many replacement parts may impact practice.

Parts have two variables one will roll for: the slot they occupy, and the inspiration, which uses clue types for the field. There are nine possible slots, which the next page expand on, and a single part can be placed in each of those nine slots, amounting to a whole (in a sense) humanoid being. Depending on the mix of inspirations (do they belong to the same field? The same clue category?), may have differing compatibility.

Examples:

1

Ragged Silken Choker

A corset-like gathering of cloth to go around the neck, ruffled, with a ribbon draw. Some lace is still attached.

Use: Can be used to reinforce a broken or injured neck. 50% to break on application or removal. Can be connected to other parts; occupies center-left slot in 3x3 configuration.

7

Great Smashed Spine

A spine made of various vertebrae, hammered together and lashed with wire, goblin skin on either side.

Use: Replace a broken or damaged back or move skin around; suffer initial hunchback and get 3/day healing instead of death from critical bashes. Can be connected to other parts, occupies center-right slot in 3x3.

2

Rat-Filled Skull

Calcified hairless, skinless rats nestle together into a vaguely brain-like shape, ensconced in a semitransparent jar.

Use: Patch up brain/head injury, grants the Puzzler boon and the Anxiety and In Filth banes. Can be connected to other parts, occupies top-right slot in 3x3 configuration.

Doll part: Silk, Neck & Shoulder

Warren part: Hammer, Back

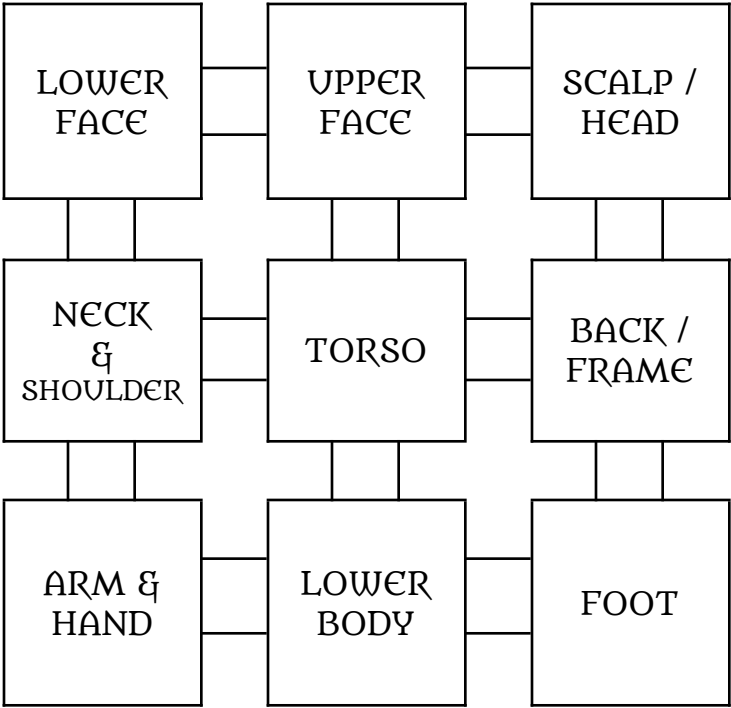
Alchemy part: Lab Rat, Head

The nine slots are relatively open to interpretation, and a being is functional with all slots filled, even if the ‘arm and hand’ slot (lower left) or eye (center top) is filled with one dismembered arm or one glass eye, the resulting being will be functional. Similar items (usually from the same line of clues) may be combined and, if the practitioner has the right skill or knowledge base, they may even choose or favor value.

Thus, a value 1 Canopic Eye could be combined with a value 3 Poppet’s Beady Eye (both being from an Effigy line of clues) and, with one successful roll, become a value 3 item, and then with another, share the label, becoming ‘Canopic Eyes’. If both rolls failed, it might become value 1 Mismatched Effigy Eyes, with less overall benefits.

(In practical terms, one would be, say, filling the poppet’s beady eye with viscera to make it canopic)

Maximizing matched parts and overall compatibility reduces the inherent drawbacks and struggles of the resulting life. If all items are attached together and given a complementary medium to help tie it together (doll clothes, warrens mud, vat of humors), the parts will readily animate into a new Other. The Other may be childlike, disoriented, or positively disposed to start, with more overall confusion if they have low compatibility between parts. If multiple fields are in evidence, then they’ll have the worst of both/all worlds, adjusted roughly (rounding up, especially with 3+ fields in evidence) to the proportions given.



The fields have a lot of influence on the resulting Other:

- Doll: created Dolls are usually obedient and helpful from the outset, but may be stubborn about the ideas and notions they do have (exacerbating drawbacks from other fields). Can be disassembled for parts later. Dolls are helpful and dutiful servants and helpers. Need repair or replacement parts if damaged, as they won't heal on their own.
- Warren: Warrens fleshcrafted likely need physical correction or a bit of confrontation before being obedient or listening. Have special capabilities and are combat ready from outset. Often strong for how cooperative they are, compared to other Warrens allies.
- Alchemy: Homunculi made in this fashion are weaker at the start, but malleable in personality/nature and in finer physical details at the start (the former requiring training, the latter requires minor alchemy). Often doll-like later, but naturally heals. More physically able than dolls (cobbled together homunculi may be kept around to move vats & furniture) and have more utility than Warrens fleshcraft (milkable for resources, or capable of tasks requiring skill, literacy, etc). Example is depicted above.
- Horrors: Horrors cobbled together in this way are *very* erratic, not helped by the fact they manifest naturally when parts are kept in close company (there is no complementary medium to tie parts together; it has a chance of happening), but once the worst behavior is past or idiosyncracies figured out, they can (being more surface-dwelling than usual horrors) usually communicate while also interpreting or communicating with other horrors and horrorfication effects. Often eager, albeit difficult (mentally ill, cryptic, erratic) company, unlike other horrors.



Finally, its worth a note, parts may also be a bartering currency, even in realms dominated by other fields (Fae markets, crossroads, Lost stalls), in the 'arm and a leg' sense. Bought, they may cost \$25-50 (converted to relevant currency) per point of value; much more if specific parts/types are sought. Sold, they rarely fetch more than \$50 (or the equivalent, in most relevant currency) each.

Some practices make use of Parts on a deeper level:

- Dollmakers may use doll parts with machine parts and magic items for a complex 3x3x3 arrangement, for very powerful, detailed constructions.
- Chiurgeons work with Warrens and alchemy-derived parts and perform the surgery to swap them in.
- Alchemy practices (particularly those that work with the *Conception* resources) can usually vat-grow and create their own parts, with the idea of eventually fabricating a higher-end homunculus.
- Horror practitioners that explore horror situations oft like a loyal horror companion.
- Necromancy has something close to parts, that don't give medical benefits.