Mage 5e

by EnterElysium
as seen on Roll4It and EnterElysium

Intro to Mage 5e

Mage 5th edition is a while away, but the world of Mage in the World of Darkness setting is one of the most compelling and its free-form magic is an absolute blast. Given the updated game mechanics Vampire the Masquerade 5th edition brought to the World of Darkness line-up and that M20 Revised is over 650 pages long (not including the supplemental spell guide) it is in dire need some a simplification and modernisation is the vein that V5 brought to VTM. That's where these M5 rules home in.

These M5 Homebrew rules are an attempt to simplify and update the core M20 premise with the core elements of the V5 mechanic updates along with some minor tweaks to keep up with the general metaplot.

Intentionally these rules do not duplicate the rules in V5 or the lore and basic concepts beyond a general keyword list from M20, World of Darkness has some great publications and these rules are a love letter to them – I don't want to caught copyright ire by invalidating either.

Game Design Aims
■ Update Mage V20 to the VTM 5e system
■ Limit multiple tables and nested dice rolls
■ Balance the Sphere system a little
■ Define the Sphere system a little for easier use on the fly

■ Tailor the Sphere system so each one brings something different
■ Avoid excessive bookkeeping

General Concepts

Mages are people who channel energy to fuel spells. These spells are governed by spheres which are the areas and components of magic. Each mage is invested their powers by a particular entity that allows the mage to harness these abilities.

Terms

Mage: A human who uses magic thanks to the mystic connection with their *Avatar* to create spells. They have the ability learn any *Sphere* and adapt their magic to fit the situation.

Sphere: The 9 areas of magic. Each one covers a different building block of magical application and theory.

Avatar: The portion of the mage's soul which grants them the ability to perform magic. Many experience their avatar as a separate entity.

Awakened: An individual or group who are aware of magic or the supernatural are considered to be *awakened* and are no longer part of, or considered, *Sleepers.*

Sleepers: All human mortals who are unaware of the supernatural are *Sleepers.* These sleepers subconsciously influence and possible even sustain our reality with the shared *Consensus.*

Consensus: The collectively belief about reality that all *Sleepers* share.

Anything that violates the shared understanding of the unawakened *Sleepers* goes against the *Consensus* and may generate *Paradox.* This typically happens when a mage exerts their will upon reality to cast spells counter to the *Consensus* belief. Notable local variations in the *Consensus* do exist in that what people believe in one area and another.

Paradox: When a mage exerts their will against the *Consensus* in order to change reality to cast spells they may generate *Paradox. Paradox* is the difference between what the *Consensus* expect and what the mage made happen and it builds up around the mage until it either dissipates over time or 'grounds' through the mage via what is known as a *backlash.*

Backlash: Backlash is what happens when a mage pushes *Paradox* too far and reality catches up with them. This can range from being merely damaging to the mage, to debilitating, to banishment to a *Paradox Realm,* or even result in manifestations of *Paradox.* Generally, backlash will go the simplest route to undo or balance the scales the mage has tipped. A mage throwing lightning might be wracked by electrical energy, a mage trying to view the future might be struck blind, and a mage trying to reverse time might be stuck in Groundhog Day.

Burn: Direct damage caused by *Backlash.*

Spell: The combination of a mage's powers in a *Sphere* or *Spheres* empowered by their *Aréte* to inflict their will upon reality.

Arête: A measure of the mage's enlightenment and connection to their Avatar.

Quintessence: The raw material of reality from which everything is created and sustained.

Quiet: Quiet is a magical delusion that distorts afflicted mages' views of reality. Each is associated with one particular type of Resonance, and indicates a mage has too closely associated with one particular branch of the Metaphysic Trinity.

Disassociation: The risk a mage runs when reality conflicts with their will, can result in them gaining Quiet.

Essence: Each Avatar has an Essence. These describe the Avatar's nature, as well as the way in which the Avatar seeks Ascension. An Avatar's Essence usually, though not always, complements the mage's own desires and outlook on magic and life.

Resonance: The type of Quiet a mage suffers.

Rules

There are some additional rules that hybridise the core mechanics from V5 and the more Mage specific mechanics of M20. This section will go over those and some of the stats that are new to V5 – nearly all of the Vampire specific mechanics and stats have been replaced with Mage ones or removed.

New Stats

There are several new stats that are equivalent to stats from V5 mechanically, and some that only share aspects while staying true to M20.

Arête is a measure of your enlightenment and raw magical strength. *Similar to Blood Potency in V5, although acts directly as a dice pool in it's own right.*

Paradox is a measure of the mage's current paradox count. It is rated from 0 upwards and is mostly gained when casting spells. *Sharing aspects of humanity and hunger, Paradox increasing causes increasing risk on casting but also a risk to your characters Quiet.*

Quintessence is a measure how much quintessence you have stored. This is the raw fabric of creation and can be used to empower or counter spells. Typically you can hold up to your Arête value in quintessence and it can only be regenerated by meditating at a Node. Meditating and magically absorbing more from a Node can allow you to hold up to twice your Arête instead (this would require a Prime spell). Quintessence is the polar opposite of Paradox and as such as your Par-

adox count increases your Quintessence starts to be neutralised by it. If your Paradox score increases to higher than 10 minus your Quintessence it starts to remove Quintessence on a 1 for 1 basis. So if you had 3 Quintessence your Paradox could rise as high as 7 without effect but an increase to 8 would reduce your Quintessence to 2. You also may not raise your Quintessence beyond 10 minus your Paradox by any means. *Also tracked on the Paradox meter, this has no direct comparator in V5.*

Quiet is how well your character is managing to differentiate the real world from their ability to influence it. As it gets higher your characters smallest thoughts start to affect the world around them in terrible ways. *Used directly in dice pools as Hunger is in V5, it also acts similar to Humanity for long term character viability. Once a Mage reaches 6 Quiet that's it, they're an unplayable NPC much like when Humanity gets too low in V5.*

Spellcasting

Highest Sphere + Arête [Difficulty]
Spells are cast using a dice pool consisting of the highest sphere involved and your arête, plus or minus any modifiers.

Range

Unless using correspondence to extend the range spells can be *directly* created only where you can perceive significant detail of the target with normal human sense range. This distance varies for each object; some examples are where 20/20 eyesight can perceive a person's eye colour, building number, or a car license plate. This does not apply to *indirect* spells as they are created near the target.

Direct Spells

Direct spells are spells created on a target and affecting that target. They use a simple spell casting roll.

Indirect Spells

Indirect spells are those which launch a mundane projectile to have an effect and so rely on the spell casters ability to get the projectile to the target. Classic examples include creating and throwing an arc of lightning to the target. Unlike direct spells a target can usually dodge such attacks in a mundane manner and cover factors into the hit roll, however extra successes on the hit roll often result in additional damage. This means that indirect spells are generally harder to hit with but do additional damage and do not suffer the range limitations of direct spells.

Spell Maintenance

When maintaining an ongoing spell the caster takes a -1 to all casting attempts for every two full spells they have cast that are still in effect.

Multi-Casting

Mages may combine their spheres together to cast spells that require spheres that no one mage has. To do this the spell must not be quick cast as the coordination takes time and precision. Participants in multi-cast spells must all follow a broadly similar tradition (technocrats and traditional mages for instance would be unable to co-cast) and all spells cast use the dice-pool of the lowest ranked sphere involved and the arête of the person with the highest arête.

Multi-Casting	Dice Penalty
Intimately Familiar with Co-Casters (life partners, etc.)	0
Very Familiar with Co-Casters (good friends, etc.)	-1
Known (vague colleague, etc.)	-2
Acquaintance	-3
Unfamiliar	Impossible
Different Tradition, Same Group (stacks)	-1
Radically Different Tradition	Impossible

Artifacts

WIP

Tools

Every mage starts off needing tools and crutches to help shape the world around them. For some these are wands, pendants, or Latin chanting. For other's this can be new age NLP techniques, sonic screwdrivers, or sprinkles of metal powders.

Every mage must use or have free usage of a number of personalised tools equal to 7 minus at amount dependant on their arête, generally this drops after arête 7 until they no longer need focuses. As they gain in power they need fewer and fewer magical crutches to focus their power.

Arete	Focuses Required
1-2	5
3	4
4	3
5-6	2
7-8	1
9+	0

Some examples for traditionally inclined mages include hand gestures, chanting in a dead language, wands, staffs, and pendants or similar. These should all be personal to the mage (such as a staff carved from an ancient tree by the mage) and must be displayed or active in some way (tattoos being displayed, wand being manipulated, words being spoken etc. Generally this only affects gameplay when the mage is restricted from using them (chanting by gagging, hand gestures by being bound, wands by having them taken away, etc.).

A mage who does not have access to one of their tools is at a -1 to all casting rolls for each tool they lack the use of. They are magical crutches, not necessary but very helpful.

Counterspelling

To counterspell a spell you are aware of being cast or affecting someone or something in your vicinity you roll and reduce the successes of the spell by your number of successes by siphoning power away from the caster. This can reduce the spell's duration or number of targets as appropriate. To do so you must have at least one of the sphere's being used in the spell and then roll a dice pool consisting of your arête plus one of the sphere's being used in the spell

You can try gain bonuses to counterspelling as you normally do with spells but counterspelling does not normally generate paradox unless it is a messy failure.

Reactive Casting

Similar to counterspell this allows instant reaction to an event in a split second but by shaping a spell instead of directly disrupting a spell and can also be used to react to other circumstances such as gunfire or falling. This can only be used against threat that you can perceive and allows you to instantly try and cast a spell outside of your normal turn or turns worth of casting time (although it comes at a penalty).

The restriction is that it has to be directly targeted at preventing the damage in some way and cannot be offensive.

Paradox

When spells are cast a Mage courts gaining Paradox, something which can be decidedly unhealthy for them as reality rebels against the Mage's attempt to bend it against the consensus.

Paradox Generation

When you cast a spell roll a number of dice depending on whether it is Coincidental, Vulgar, Vulgar with Witnesses, or Messy Failure. Add the number of successes to your paradox track, if you exceed 10 you immediately backlash. Spells succeed or fail their roll regardless of the paradox generation roll.

Situation	Dice Pool
Coincidental	0
Vulgar	1
Vulgar with Witnesses	2
Messy Failure Coincidental	Highest Sphere
Messy Failure Vulgar	Highest Sphere+1
Messy Failure Vulgar with Witnesses	2x Highest Sphere +2

Paradox Backlash

Whenever you get a Messy Success or Messy Failure on a casting roll, or your Paradox exceeds 10 it immediately backlashes. This can take many

BACKLASH ROLL	PARADOX DISCHARGED AND BURN
Botch	All paradox (except for permanent ones) discharged harmlessly.
No Successes	No effect, no paradox discharged.
Any Successes	One point of paradox discharged per success. Character takes non-lethal damage (unless the character had more than 5 paradox, in which case it is lethal) equal to the number of successes not spent on other options by the Storyteller.

forms, although the most common is physical damage as reality reacts against you. When this happens roll dice equal to your paradox (if you exceed 10 then add the number by which you exceeded 10 as automatic successes).

The number of successes indicates how much

paradox is backlashing; immediately reduce your paradox by that amount (as such it will always reduce to 10 or lower). The backlash score is then spent by the GM in a number of ways (although if this gives a permanent flaw to the character best to do this with player agreement). In addition if the backlash is caused when paradox was over 5 then any burn damage will be lethal instead of superficial. Consult the table on paradox backlash for other ways the Storyteller may spend the backlash. Note that when consulting the table for paradox backlashing after exceeding 10, automatic successes are added to the test, therefore Botches and No Successes are not possible results.

BACKLASH MITIGATION Characters can choose to mitigate burn during backlash in several ways.
If a character wishes, they may turn all lethal burn damage into non-lethal, or negate all non-lethal burn dam
age entirely by voluntarily taking a point of Quiet. A character can choose to take 2 points of Quiet and take both options.

They may also reduce burn damage (of either type) by 2 by taking a point of permanent paradox. This can only be chosen once per backlash.

PARADOX DELAY When you trigger backlash you can delay the backlash until the end of the scene by spending willpower. This keeps your paradox at the level it is *even if it currently exceeds 10*. If you trigger backlash again this scene it cannot be delayed again this way and backlashes *all* your paradox without rolling dice, each is treated as a success.

PARADOX DISCHARGE Every day the

mage does not use magic (other than tier 1 sensory abilities) they may roll one dice. For each success they lose a point of paradox.

Disassociation and Quiet

In Mage 5e Quiet takes the place of Hunger in dice rolls, it is a pool that goes from 0 to 5 and which can only be reduced under the most exceptional of conditions. Although it replaces dice in dice pools like Hunger it changes much like Humanity from VtM. It represents the Mage becoming twisted and disassociated with reality around them as paradox warps their perception.

All Mages have an Essence; this is the broad category that their Avatars fall under and the general drive. Dynamic, Pattern, Primordial, or Questing. These all tend to but not always evolve a Quiet related to their nature, Madness,

Denial, Morbidity, or in the case of Questing, any one of the three, called a Resonance.

As quiet goes up there are additional knock-on effects depending on the Resonance of the Quiet.

BACKLASH ROLL SUCCESSES	OPTIONAL BACKLASH EFFECTS
1-5	▪ Up to 2 success may be spent to increase a character a temporary Echoes Flaw by 1 or give them Echoes 1 if they did not already have it. ▪ Up to 2 success may be spent to increase a character a temporary Curse Flaw by 1 or give them Curse 1 if they did not already have it. ▪ An amount up to the Storyteller may be spent to cause a paradox flaw that is relatively minor.
6-10	▪ An amount up to the Storyteller may be spent to cause a paradox flaw that is moderate in nature. ▪ 3 successes may be spent to give the character a point of permanent paradox.
11+	▪ 3 successes may be spent to give the character a point of permanent paradox, or 5 may be spent for 2. ▪ The character can be banished to a paradox realm for a period – this costs a number of successes determined by the duration (use the Casting Duration table as a guide). ▪ An amount up to the Storyteller may be spent to cause a paradox flaw that is severe.

Regardless of the type, once Quiet hits 6 the character becomes a marauder, wholly given over to their quiet and unsuitable to being a player character anymore. They become an NPC under the storyteller's control.

Gaining Quiet Characters can gain quiet in a couple of ways. The first is that all characters must make a Disassociation roll, which they do at the end of every chapter. This is done by rolling a dice for every square on the paradox tracker that is not filled by paradox. If any successes are rolled, the character passes and there is no effect. If the character fails their Quiet immediately increases by 1. Living with a high paradox can warp a person's mind.

   The other way is during backlash as detailed in the Paradox Backlash Mitigation section.

Instability and Messy Success
Instability is the equivalent of Bestial Failure, and Messy Successes are the same.

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QUIET	ALL	MADNESS (DYNAMIC)	DENIAL (STATIC)	MORBIDITY (ENTROPIC)
Instability	None.	The character over reacts to a small stimulus and reacts as if something new has been introduced and which occupies their attention. For the remainder of the scene they take a penalty to all rolls equal to their Quiet to interact with anything other than the hallucination.	The character refuses to acknowledge something in the scene as existing. For the remainder of the scene they treat the target as if it didn't. When directly confronted by knowledge that the subject of their denial is real they must make a willpower roll with a difficulty equal to their Quiet to acknowledge it.	The characters failures are taken out on sleepers nearby. Missed shots hit onlookers, driving checks end up with them ploughing into pedestrians, and social interactions end up with them insulting or attacking the recipient.
Messy Success	None.	The characters success comes with a side effect as the character changes the world around them. The character might use the crafting tools as part of the design; the characters drive might leave flaming skid marks making them easy to follow.	The characters success comes with a side effect as the character see's details and designs in their success that entrance them. They become unresponsive to new stimuli and do not process any new. The mage cannot voluntarily spend willpower for the remainder of the scene. Additional instances cause willpower damage.	The characters success comes with a side effect as the characters callousness comes to the fore. Attempting to knock out an enemy kills them; taking a drive short cut hits pedestrians on the pavement; medicine involves an unwilling donor.
1 Faint	None.	The mage revels in changing their appearance and routine often.	The mage set into certain patterns. Getting quite irritable when interrupted.	The mages appearance takes on a morbid air.
2 Subtle	Roll 1 less dice for backlash (to a minimum of 1).	The character takes a penalty to all Awareness, Investigation, and Insight rolls as you imagine clues that aren't there. However you gain a bonus on all craft, and performance rolls. The amount equals half your Quiet rounded up.	You become entirely forgettable. Good for passing unnoticed but bad for making an impression. You suffer a negative penalty to social checks but a bonus to pass through an area unseen, unrecognised or leave no trace against sleepers or mundane security (security tapes mysterious fuzz, people's mind draw a blank, etc.). The amount equals half your Quiet rounded up.	The character's morbid fascination and gaunt appearance startle those around. You get a negative penalty on all non-intimidation social checks but bonus to all rolls related to corpses, ghosts, torture or intimidation. The amount equals half your Quiet rounded up.
3 Noticeable	None.	You gain Echoes 1, or increase your existing Echoes by 1, as patterns tend to shift around you.	You gain Curse 1, or increase your existing Curse by 1, as lifts fail to respond to your touch, taxis fail to notice you to stop, etc.	You gain Echoes 1, or increase your existing Echoes by 1, as milk sours in your presence, plants wither, and fruit rots.
4 Strong	Roll 1 additional dice for spellcasting.	The effects if the character's Instability become manifest. The hallucination becomes real for the scene as if cast by a spell at a magnitude roughly equal to the character's Arête.	The effects if the character's Instability become manifest. The subject of their denial becomes real for the scene as if cast by a spell at a magnitude roughly equal to the character's Arête.	The effect of the character's Instability becomes needless and wanton death and destruction. The destruction caused is wider ranging and more deliberately callous, leaving Jhor taint behind.
5 Overwhelming	You now roll 2 less dice for backlash (to a minimum of 1).	Add +2 to the magnitude of their Strong Quiet.	Add +2 to the magnitude of their Strong Quiet.	The character can no longer use Quintessence gained without the sacrifice of a living being. They permanently lose 1 point from their health tracker.
6+	No longer a player character.	Marauder	Drone	Jhor-Tainted

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Spheres

Spheres are what Mages call the areas, domains, or branches of magic. Each one is a distinct and specific area that allows a Mage to influence anything under that spheres purview.

Sphere Basics

Spheres govern what can be effected and how with your magic (what 'sphere' it operates on). Spheres, like Disciplines, are rated 1-5 (or 0 if you do not possess that sphere), where each rank means a certain level of interaction, awareness and control. Unlike VTM 5e each level does not gain you a specific ability or power, instead it changes what you can do with your Sphere – what you specifically do is up to you!

Sphere Magnitude Rating

1	Awareness
2	Manipulation
3	Limited scale and unfocused control
4	Large scale or intricate control
5	Vast scale and masterful control

Example 1: Let's say Jaime wants Joe (and Joe's gun) to shoot Josh. Jaime has the Mind sphere, if Jaime had Mind 2 he could coax and manipulate Joe to shoot but because he can only manipulate not control Jaime wouldn't be able to magically demand Joe shoot Josh – he wouldn't be able to create a new thought that wasn't there. Also if the thought to shoot someone was there but Joe

strongly considered Josh a friend, Joe's push to shoot might result in him shooting someone else. Manipulation does not create a new 'thing' and it cannot work at intricate levels, it's more greasing a path...

However if Jaime had Mind 3 he could yank on the thought directly or place his own, limited, thought to shoot Josh. Now the human mind is complex, so to give Joe a direct command he would follow immediately would need intricate (Mind 4) control (note that if it were a sheep holding that gun, maybe with hands given to it by a powerful Life mage, Mind 3 might be enough to directly command the sheep). Mind 3 is capable of only unfocused control so Jaime could place a suggestion to shoot Josh and strongly push him to. Obviously such commands are much more persuasive when Joe already has a reason to want to shoot Josh. If, though, Jaime had Mind 4 suddenly Jaime can make an intricate command that blends in to the complex human mind and can command Joe to shoot Josh right now. With excess successes Joe might even have a fuzzy feeling that it was his decision and not an outside thought.

Mind 5 though would allow Jaime to command Joe and Josh and all their friends to shoot at each other (vast scale) while making them rationalise it as their choice and desire (masterful control). Admittedly Jaime might need a lot of successes to pull this off – but it's within their Sphere!

Example 2: Dom has Force 1, he can feel the electrical grid around him. Dick has Force 2, he can cause the power grid to spark and overload and (with a few successes) manipu-

late it to surge out in arcs of electricity.

Diana has Force 3, she can create limited bolts of lightning from her hand (note that although she is creating electricity the energy still has to come from somewhere, typically she'll be using Force to drain it from somewhere else such as room temperature).

Diva has Force 4, she can create bursts or lightning capable of leaping between multiple people or doing some serious very damage.

David has Force 5, he can cause multiple lightning strikes to smash into the same point or blast multiple people with focused streams of electricity. David isn't subtle.

Nine Known Spheres

There are nine known spheres, and a long sought and theorised 'Tenth' sphere. The nature of which is hotly debated and a core part of the Mage metaplot.

Prime

Prime is the only foundational sphere known – it is the sphere governing the building blocks of the patterns around us and everything built upon them, *Reality*. Often referred to as The Tapestry it is the weave that defines the world around us, the specific weave and pattern of that tapestry defines the world around is and other worlds on top of us. To use a computing metaphor the Tapestry is your computer, it stores your data which both contains information such as *Patterns* (a blue car), locations (50m above you), forces acting on them (gravity) and far more. Without the Tapestry everything would be both in the same place (which would be nowhere since space wouldn't exist)

and would not exist (since there would be no Tapestry to store the patterns).

Prime is the control and focus of this tapestry, it can be used to solidify pattern locks (otherwise they tend to 'slide off' since they aren't attached in the tapestry), damage patterns on a fundamental level (or even remove them at Prime 5!) or create raw energy or matter where there was none (when combined allowing pattern spheres to not have to gather their building blocks from anywhere at all!).

Some see Prime as the foundation of every sphere and while the Tapestry does control everything, simply because you have the Prime Sphere does not mean you can build a car from the Tapestry. You would need the appropriate Matter Sphere (just because you are really good are refining silicon does not mean you know anything about the software running on the computer chip made from that silicon). Matter, Life, Force (and to an extent Mind and Spirit) are the *Pattern* Spheres – they govern structures. They control things that, to a greater or lesser extent, exist in the world. In some cases there are physical things you can touch, as in Matter, Life and sometimes Spirit; feel as in Force and sometimes Spirit and Mind; or have given rise to things of the world, such as Spirit and Mind. They describe a definitive instance of something, for want of a better word.

They can also be used as vectors to tie or *lock* other spheres to them by *pattern locking*. This allows spells to attach or connect with these *patterns*. For instance you might attach a luck boost locked to a car – Entropy *pattern locked* to Matter). Otherwise the spell merely flings some luck out without a

proper connection with the car as it has no way of attaching to the pattern.

Matter

Matter covers the sphere of physical, tangible inanimate objects - cars, rain, lampposts, rocks and that sort of thing.

Life

Life covers anything that is currently alive plants, sheep, people, bacteria and things of that nature.

Force

Force covers forces such as the classical fire and wind (earth and water are Matter Sphere) but also gravity, electricity, radiation (although high level Entropy might manage similar effects), and even light.

Mind

Mind is not typically seen as a Pattern Sphere but functions similarly in that it can be used to tie other spells to a mind (note however that big changes of mind or personality changes may render the pattern different enough for the pattern lock to fail). Mind covers anything with a higher level of reasoning above that of a plant – generally anything that possesses a physical brain. The Mind is a construction of that brain and while some might consider Mind to be a highly specialised subset of the Life Sphere it is vast enough, powerful enough, and widely enough practiced that it can be considered its own sphere.

Spirit

Spirit affects the spirit world, ghosts and even to an extent the reflection of complex enough beings in the spirit world that some people know as 'souls'. A Pattern Sphere that can

be used to bind other spheres this doesn't work on the vast majority of 'souls' as they are too weak a reflection and too flexible to lock a spell to.

Time, Correspondence and Entropy are known to some as the *meta-pattern* spheres. They generally deal with information about patterns stored in The Tapestry such as its time and place.

Time

Time has caused headaches down (and up) the ages, and in many cases far, far worse. Time governs the 4th dimension, the forwards-backwards of time's flow, and as with most flows it is far easier to go downstream than it is to swim against the current. Time can (and I stress 'can'!) allow a Mage to go forwards in time, backwards in time, slow down or even speed up time. A common combination is to use time to set 'triggers' or 'timers' to spells allowing them to go off on a delay or once a certain input (within the spell's Spheres) has been met.

Correspondence

Also called Space, Connection, Locality or Location. Correspondence governs placement of patterns on the Tapestry. It can allow teleportation or even warping of distances by changing the placement or space involved.

Entropy

The strangest and least well defined of the Spheres. It governs probability. While everything is a consequence of every other interaction entropy allows a mage to, in effect, pull on the tapestry and makes certain outcomes more likely.

Entropy might be able to influence a coin toss but wouldn't

be able to make your lost house keys appear in front of you (at least not without a very powerful spell) – it could however make you likely to find them by influence subtle events to make you stumble across them. Counter-intuitively in this last example, the harder you look for your car keys the less likely you would be to find them as the Entropy Sphere cannot violate your free will, only subtly guide you. So if they are in the kitchen and you decide to look in the living room a weak Entropy spell would have no effect whereas the same spell with more successes might cause you to accidentally knock over a glass of water... and when you hurry to the kitchen for a cloth you would find them.

In essence Entropy cannot affect violate free will, it cannot affect the inner workings of one pattern (by itself) and it is very difficult to use it to impose change on one big singular event or object immediately. However it excels at swaying many little things which can lead to the desired outcome. Application of high level spheres of Entropy can force more and more unlikely single events to happen sooner ranging from manipulating the probability of a coin toss, to almost completely controlling the outcome of the coin toss, to having a tree happen to fall over on someone right now (which may require a lot of successes).

Entropy is also the root of a lot of classical curses or bindings, curses of misfortune are obvious whereas curses that inflict every first born member of a family with blindness by age 21 would also normally be done with Entropy. Entropy spells are best utilised where you have time for them to happen and/or you are unspecific. For instance a spell on someone's gun for

the bullets to miss you could happen now but you don't really care where the bullets end up, whereas every single other sphere requires a concrete specific action or target. And this is the unique part of Entropy, it can make decisions.

Every other sphere the caster knows their ideal outcome and directs their magic as specifically as possible to make that outcome (for a Mind example: I want *that* driver to *drive that car* and *stop in front of me* right *now*), Entropy is the opposite. Entropy specifically works better when you give it the least specific mandate and the widest remit (I want *any* car to *stop in front of anyone on this street* in the next *minute*). It is theorised by some Hermetic mages that this is because the sleepers unconsciously choose the final steps to the outcome for the mage, bridging the gap between the mages wishes and the outcome via the path of least resistance. This leads to the last surprising thing about Entropy: It is capable of binding, recognising and enforcing *Oaths*.

Sphere Guide

This is a rough guide for common uses and powers at each sphere rank it is **not** a definitive list by any means. Mage powers are limited by the scope of your sphere rank and by the creativity of your mind... And by the successes on your dice roll. Consider this more a list to inspire your imagination.

Prime

Prime Energy: Mages skilled in the prime sphere (anything of rank 2 or above) can be easier to spot by mystic means as their connection to the

Tapestry is unique and more easily picked up on.

Limits: Although Prime is a powerful sphere it relies on other spheres to shape things into being.

Rank 1
Etheric Sense: The mage can perceive quintessential energy, and can perceive when someone uses magic in their vicinity.

Consecration: Allows the mage to enchant an object with their own resonance making it shape change with them or always count as within immediate perception for them.

Rank 2
Primal Force: Allows disruption of patterns to cause damage on a primal level to the target.

Enchant Patterns: Allows a mage to tap into an object's quintessence, allowing it to interact with spirits and affect other objects enchanted with prime.

Create Simple Pattern: Allows a mage to create a simple pattern from nowhere, however each use or turn costs one quintessence unless it is made real by imbuing it with another appropriate sphere (such as creating a rock using Matter 3).

Rank 3
Capture Quintessence: Allows the mage to hold additional quintessence or even store it in an object.

Activate Quintessential Life: Allows a mage to create a living pattern from nowhere, however each use or turn costs one quintessence unless it is made real by imbuing it with another appropriate sphere (such as creating a rabbit using Life 3).

Enchant Life: Allows a mage to tap into a living being's quintessence, allowing them to interact with spirits and affect other beings enchanted with prime.

Rank 4

Expel Quintessence: Allows the mage to drain quintessence from other patterns collapsing them and gaining quintessence from some.

Resonance Lock: Allows the mage to see the unique resonance of each and every pattern and differentiate between them and the imprints they leave.

Alter Fundamental Properties: The mage can now alter the fundamental properties of patterns and materials making water that isn't wet, iron that isn't magnetic, or making wood that doesn't burn.

Rank 5

Infuse Quintessence: Store quintessence in living beings.

Nullify Paradox: Remove temporary paradox.

Quintessential Permanence: Make enchantments permanent.

Create Node: Create a permanent node.

Matter

Radioactive Science: Due to the current consensus, radioactive materials are outside the scope of low rank matter spheres.

Rank 1

Matter Sense: The mage knows information about material objects and may be treated as a specialist in

their design or may recreate them using higher rank matter spells.

Rank 2

Basic Transmutation: Allows the mage to change one homogenous substance into another without affecting its shape, temperature, or basic state. Stone to iron is possibly, stone to gold harder, stone to fog impossible.

Rank 3

Reshape: You can reshape objects as you will although they must still generally be one piece or homogenous.

State Change: You can change the nature of the object turning it into a homogenous number of similar pieces allowing you to turn stone into fine grains or even atoms, briefly turning it to fog before the density would cause it to collapse (combined with prime to alter the mass you could make a fog of stone).

Rank 4

Complex Transformation: Shape objects into ones with multiple different pieces and materials or visa-versa.

Rank 5

Alter Properties: By bending the limits of what materials are capable of you can make materials only possible by magic and beyond the scope of modern science. Incredibly atom-perfect polymers and alloys without a single flaw and materials hardened by interwoven layers of elements of different states and structures.

Radioactive: At matter 5 you can also control and transmute radioactive substances.

Life

Intimate Knowledge: Generally effects that can be done to other people can be done to the mage by themselves at 1 sphere rank lower than usual due to their innate knowledge of their own pattern and self.

Rank 1

Sense Life: The mage can sense the potency of a Life Pattern, measuring its relative health and well-being, as well as basic information (age, sex etc.)

Rank 2

Alter Simple Patterns: The mage can influence simple life forms, like fungi, invertebrates, or plants.

Heal Self: The mage can fix damage to their Pattern at a cost of 1 success per superficial damage and 2 per aggravated.

Boost Self: You may alter your physique adding or subtracting up to 1 dot of any physical attributes.

Rank 3

Alter Self: The mage can alter their Pattern in small ways. They may change the colour of their hair, enhance their eyesight, grow claw-like fingernails or suspend their need to breathe oxygen for several hours. They may add even dots to physical attributes.

Transform Simple Patterns: The mage can transform simple life forms into others, transforming i.e. a snail into a turnip.

Heal Others: The mage can fix damage in other Life Patterns.

Rank 4

Alter Complex Patterns: The mage can alter complex Life Patterns of vertebrates, possibly inflicting serious damages or enhancing their natural capabilities.

Transform Self: The mage can transform their own pattern, allowing them to assume the shape of an animal of similar size or mass or transform their physical features to resemble another human.

Rank 5

Transform Complex Patterns: The mage can transform complex life forms into a simpler form, transforming i.e. an attacking human into a frog.

Perfect Metamorphosis: The mage can alter their own Pattern according to their wishes. They may assume any form they wish, free themselves from corporeal needs like hunger and become immune to all known diseases.

Force

Tempest: Force damage always an additional 1 extra damage on a success due to the incredibly damaging nature of forces.

Rank 1

Perceive Forces: The mage becomes privy to Force patterns around them, transcending the limits of human sensory organs.

Rank 2

Control Minor Forces: The mage can alter existing forces within sensory range. Applications are varied and allow a mage to warp light to make things invisible, change their colours by altering the spectrum of localized light, render them silent by bending sound waves in their vicinity, and manipulate currents of electricity, make fires dance according to specific images and spread.

Rank 3

Transmute Minor Forces: The mage can manipulate Patterns of Forces, allowing them to convert forces into other types, or even shift their intensity radically.

Rank 4

Control Major Forces: The mage can manipulate Force patterns on a wider scale, allowing them to use former effect on more than one Pattern. This allows them to change the weather, insulate a whole building or area of forest from fire and electricity, divert light into a series of rooms, banish all sounds from a huge cavern, or render a Chantry invisible to normal sight.

Rank 5

Transmute Major Forces: The mage can use their power on nearly all Force Patterns within their surroundings, summoning storms of fire, massive charges or electricity, shadows that blot out entire city blocks, and typhoons even in the midst of a calm day.

Mind

Examining the Cause: All mind powers performed with spheres under rank 5 to subvert a targets freewill leave evidence of a targets altered consciousness. These differences between conscious and subconscious, or micro fractures in their memories and rationalisations can be detected by a skilled mind mage. At rank 5 in mind however the target can be reshaped to rationalise their actions as their own and the memories are entirely replaced instead of being papered-over.

Intimate Knowledge: Generally effects that can be done to other people can be done to the mage by themselves at 1 sphere rank lower than usual due to their innate knowledge of their own pattern and self.

Rank 1

Sense Emotions: You can read the surface or strong emotions of a target. You can also use this more crudely to detect consciousness nearby allowing you to sense people nearby via any strong emotions.

Mind Shield: You can bolster your defences against mental attacks or manipulation.

Empower Mind: You can empower you mind increasing the speed at which you process mental tasks or even allowing you to add 1 dot in any 1 mental attribute.

Rank 2

Read Surface Thoughts: Allows a mage to skim the surface contents of another's mind.

Push Emotions: You can push and stoke emotions present in another to try and influence them and their feelings.

Tie Emotions: Establish a link between people allowing them to share basic strong emotions.

Fortify Mental Shield: You can strengthen your mental defences making it harder for Mind effects to be used on you.

Rank 3

Mental Link: Allows a link that can transfer ideas and images in raw form between two targets.

Dream Control: Allows the mage to control their dreams and those of others.

Illusions of the Mind: Allows the mage to force a person's mind to perceive things that aren't real. In effect this makes an illusion for the target only.

Psychic Anguish: The mage can attack a person's mind and force them to experience emotions, thoughts, ideas and torment. This causes the target to take willpower damage.

Rank 4

Control Mind: The mage may order and control another human to do actions. With enough successes the person might even rationalise it as their own choice as they 'own' the action to resist the concept that their mind was under someone else's control.

Alter Mind: The mage may alter the targets memories by overwriting them and can also plant suggestions and commands.

Astral Projection: The mage may divorce their minds from their body and roam freely.

Shred Mind: The mage can attack a person's mind directly, shredding their very concept of self and identity.

Rank 5

Control Subconscious: The mage can rewrite the person's psyche, beliefs, personality as well as rewriting existing memories or removing them.

Untether: You can now untether your mind from your body allowing limitless projection.

Forge Mind: You can create a mind from nowhere, although you would still need other spheres to anchor and instantiate it.

Spirit

Rank 1

Spirit Sense: You can peek into the other side of the Gauntlet.

Feel Walls: You can sense strong impressions left in a place from powerful emotional events.

Rank 2

Touch Spirit: The mage can affect small things on the other side of the Gauntlet.

Thicken Spiritual Walls: You can thicken the walls of reality making it harder for entities on one side to perceive, effect, or cross over to the other.

Essence Sense: You can sense powerful emotions associated with objects.

Rank 3

Step Into The Gauntlet: You can step from one side of the Gauntlet to the Gauntlet or back.

Rouse and Lull Spirit: You can rouse or lull the spirits of objects and places.

Damage Spirit: You can directly damage spirits at this rank.

Rank 4

Unknit/Reknit Gauntlet: You can make rifts into and out of the Gauntlet or collapse them.

Bind Spirit: You can summon and compel spirits.

Rank 5

Ectoplasm Forging: The mage can summon and shape the material of the spirit realm as they see fit creating new realms or healing spirits.

Outward Journeys: The mage can cross the Outer Horizon.

Gilgul: The mage can effect and attack other mage's avatars.

Soul Summoning: Souls can be created or altered which can then be used for living things created from other spheres.

Time

Reversing the Flow: Going against the flow of time is far harder than going with it, and any attempt to actually reverse time increases by 3 difficulty.

Time Paradox: When going back in time any paradox you gained or lost during the intervening time is not undone, paradox follows you since it is a product of the Tapestry and is outside our mortal Space-Time.

Memory: Just remember that if you rewind time you also undo the memories of people affected, including your own if you are affected! Mind 2 combined would allow you to avoid having your memories altered.

Rank 1

Time Sense: You always know what time it is exactly and are aware of distortions of local time.

Rank 2
Pre/Post-Cognition: Allows you to see backwards and forwards in time. The impressions are hazy, not entirely accurate, and bound by the limitations of the time and place (what a bystander could perceive under the circumstances).

Thicken Time Walls: You may thicken the walls of time making it harder for time to be manipulated in the vicinity.

Rank 3
Time Contraction or Dilation: Allows the mage to slow or speed up the flow of time compared to the normal world.

Loop Time: Allows the mage to create short loops of time that repeat.

Rewind Time: Allows the mage to rewind time up to the duration of a scene.

Rank 4
Stop Time: Allows a mage to stop time in its tracks.

Trigger Effect: Allows the mage to generate a paused spell that can be triggered based on an input under the purview of a sphere.

Anchor Point: Allow the mage to create an anchor point in time allowing them to find their way back to 'their' present with much more ease.

Rank 5
Time Travel: The mage can travel in time.

Time Immunity: The mage can become immune to time allowing them to step in and out of time's flow.

Correspondence

Combining: When using correspondence combined with other spheres as a means of extending the range of those spheres effects the rank of the mage's correspondence acts as a limit to the maximum rank of any other sphere being utilised in the spell. You cannot conjure fire at a distance if you only have correspondence 2 as *conjuring* is a rank 3 effect, at best you could *manipulate* fire at rank 2.

Pattern Effects: Correspondence can only affect whole patterns, not parts of patterns (unless another sphere is combined that can provide that effect).

Physical Proximity: When using Correspondence to teleport the mage can teleport objects and beings they are physically touching without restriction but to do it at a distance they need the appropriate sphere for the pattern.

Rank 1
Immediate Spatial Perception: Basic spatial understanding allows a mage to sense things in her immediate vicinity even if she can't perceive them with her normal senses such as warps, anomalies, wormholes, etc. – especially the ones caused by other Correspondence Effects.

Rank 2
Extend Sense: Allows the mage extend to their senses beyond their current location.

Distort Space: Allows the mage to slightly distort space throwing people off balance, making targets harder to hit with firearms or similar.

Reach Through Space: With adjacent Spheres of Life or Matter, they can draw small lifeforms or objects through space.

Thicken Walls of Space: You may thicken the walls of space making it harder for space to be manipulated.

Rank 3
Co-Locality Perception: You can split your senses over multiple locations allowing you to perceive multiple locations. However without Mind 1 or possibly 2 (or similar) perceiving all at once would overwhelm a normal mind.

Teleport: You can now teleport yourself and small loads and items through space. With pattern spheres you may teleport small loads and items from a distance. You can teleport up to a few hundred miles.

Rank 4
Spatial Gate: Make openings between one place and another by connecting space allowing travel between locations. More success can make the opening bigger or last longer.

Co-Locate Self: You can now be in multiple places at once or more precisely multiple places are the one you are in. Bear in mind that similar to Co-Locate Perception you may need other spheres to perceive all locations at once without issue. In addition all locations of you do the same actions as it is just one of 'you',

however with Life 3 you could make them act independently.

Greater Teleport: You can now teleport yourself, other people, large vehicles and huge loads through space – similarly to Teleport. You can teleport up to a few thousand miles.

Seal Space: Create small pockets of space divorced from normal space. These eventually merge back but can be used with auxiliary spheres to seal patterns into their own realms.

Rank 5

Master Teleport: You can now teleport yourself and huge objects including buildings and city blocks – similarly to Teleport. You can teleport anywhere in the globe.

Warp Space: The mage can now bend and warp reality allowing space to be stretched increasing distances or shortened. The mage can twist space upon itself making cities hang upside down over oceans or roads appear to be loops.

Co-Locate Space: The mage can now merge chunks of space together allowing buildings be in multiple places at once or overlaying one city upon another. This creates all sorts of issues.

Entropy

Sleepers and Pattern Locks:
Sleepers are especially vulnerable to disorder and order and do not have the innate protection that mages and many supernatural creatures gain from their awareness of the world. Most entropy spells used on sleepers or objects, events, or items that are not innately magical do not

need a pattern sphere to lock to. This means that Entropy 4 could cause a person to be curse to stand on rakes forever without needing Life to 'lock' it to the person.

Rank 1

Sense Probability: You know the exact odds of obvious chance games (card games etc.) and the approximate odds of more esoteric events (such as a yellow car passing by in the next minute).

Rank 2

Influence Probability: The mage can now control the probability of simple games of chance and slightly influence single actions with a large luck component (allowing them to bestow a +1 or -1 automatic success on non-casting rolls). The difficulty of the roll should reflect the time taken for the event to happen, instant events being more difficult. As you can perceive the probability of actions this action may be taken immediately after a roll to represent your knowledge of the probability of the outcome, although the difficulty should be increased.

Rank 3

Control Probability: The mage is now able to strongly influence probability allowing them to push or pull events to suit their needs within reason. They can also guarantee the outcomes of games of chance.

Create and Remove Entropy: At this level you can increase of remove entropy from predictable patterns such as making a car never break down, or break down constantly.

Rank 4

Arrange Fate: You can attempt to arrange for events to happen. The likelihood of the event should represent the base difficulty and the wider the scope and longer the time given for the affect should make it easier, and the inverse harder.

Improved Create and Remove Entropy: An improved form of the Rank 3 ability, this now allows you to introduce disorder or order for a unpredictable pattern such as a living being. Making it possible for that person to be plagued with stubbing their toe or more nefarious ends.

Rank 5

Oath: Fates are now capable of creating and binding oaths to people as triggers for spells. As part of a spell you may use an oath as a trigger. If someone, knowingly makes an oath or gives you their word, knowing they are making an Oath then they are considering bound and breaking that oath (from the standpoint of an informed, reasoned, average person's viewpoint in the local consensus) will cause the spell to take effect. Oaths accepted without knowing the result if they break it increase the difficulty by 1.

Bind Fates: The mage can tie the fates of people, objects, or events together. Making it possible for people to repeatedly meet, never manage to get rid of an item, or similar.

Charac-ter Cre-ation

T he basics of character creation stays the same in M5 as it does in V5, when creating a character follow the creation process and refer to this document for the changes. The majority of attribute and skill selection is the same, however clan and predator type have been replaced.

Important Changes with Mage 5e

ATTRIBUTES AND SKILLS: These stay the same from 5e.

SKILL SPECIALISATIONS (and Skill Requirements): Because of the nature of many Spheres and the way they can be used on a microscopic level on mass an optional rule is that to do intricate powers the mage must have a specialisation related to that field.

Example 1: Jane wants to make Joe angry, but she only has Life rather than the Mind sphere. Now Life cannot directly make him angry but it could flood his system with hormones 'suggesting' or 'swaying' him towards anger.

However since this requires knowledge of human biology to know which hormones to push and where the Storyteller may rule Jane needs either a sufficiently high Medicine skill (probably only 1 or 2 since anger is a simple hormonal

emotion to push) or a specialisation in Endocrinology.

Example 2: This time Jane wants to interfere more directly with Joe and wants him to fire the gun he is holding. Using Life she can either try and flip the reflex in his brain to pull the trigger with his finger (needing a Medicine of 3 or 4 or a 2+ with an appropriate specialisation) or go into the nerves system between the brain and the finger direct and fire a nerve (requiring a similar Medicine score but using a different specialisation).

Example 3: Alternately if Jodie wanted to do the same without Life or Mind but with Force instead she COULD simply will an electrical impulse down Joe's nerves to his finger. This however would require a very high medicine, a specialisation and a failure to meet those requirements might cause nothing to happen, the wrong finger to move, the entire arm to convulse or physical damage.

Example 4: Jake has Matter and wants to create a F-22 fighter jet. A state-of-the-art modern military jet would be complex enough that Jake would definitely need a high skill and probably a specialisation too in order to just conjure one on the fly. Example 4 (Work-Around): Matter 1 gives a detailed awareness of an object for a short time. If Jake could get close enough and used Matter 1 to become innately aware of a F-22's matter pattern he would be treated as having perfect knowledge of the matter properties of the F-22 and could then duplicate one without having to have any applicable skills or specialties. However without Force that F-22 wouldn't have any electricity in it.

DISCIPLINES: All Disciplines are removed and replaced with Spheres as you might expect. The Spheres are Matter, Life, Force, Mind, Spirit, Prime, Time, Correspondence, Entropy.

Character Creation

BASICS AND IMPROVEMENT

■ Since there are no predator types, the equivalent benefits of these have been collapsed into the creation process.

■ Arête is treated similar to Blood Potency, 10xp time new rank per dot.

■ Spheres cost 7xp time new rank per dot.

Step by Step Guide

ATTRIBUTE ALLOCATION 1 attribute at 4pt, 3 at 3pt, 4 at 2pt, and 1 at 1pt.

SKILL POINT ALLOCATION Pick one of the following and allocate the skills points as you wish:
■ Jack of All Trades: 1 at 3pt, 8 at 2pt, and 10 at 1pt.
■ Balanced: 3 at 3pt, 5 at 2pt, and 7 at 1pt.
■ Specialist: 1 at 4pt, 3 at 3pt, 3 at 2pt, 3 at 1pt.

Gain a free **speciality** in each of Academics, Craft, Performance, and Science skills if you have them.

Gain one free **speciality** in any skill.

ARETE Gain an **Arête** of 2 and a Quiet of 1.

PARADIGM Pick your allegiance to a tradition of magic (see Mage Groups). Your gain a dot in one sphere in their affinity, in addition

to the listed advantages, flaws, and specialisations.

SPHERES Allocate 3pts between any number of **spheres**, although none my start at more than your Arête.

MERITS Several new advantages and flaws have been added (see Merits later in this document) for M5, and several of the V5 merits are not applicable (including all Loresheets from V5). The ones that are relevant are listed later.

Pick 7pts worth of **advantages**, only 1 of which may be more than 3pts.

Pick 3 pts worth of **flaws**.

FINISHING TOUCHES Gain any **equipment** you and your storyteller feel appropriate to your character and their background (and resources merit).

Write a **backstory** and character description.

Option: Recently Awakened

To play as a mage recently awakened, instead start with Arete of 1, a Quiet of 0, and choose only 2 dots in spheres. If you have already joined a tradition then tick a paradigm as normal, otherwise wait until your initial integration is complete before gaining the bonuses from your tradition.

Merits
Valid V5 Merits
- Illiterate
- Looks (All)
- Archaic (All)
- Allies (and Enemies, All)
- Contact (All)
- Fame (and Infamy, and Dark Secret, All)
- Influence (All)
- Haven (All but Warding)
- Mask (All but Flaws)
- Malwa (and Adversary, All – named '**Mentor**')
- Resources (All)
- Retainer (All)
- Status (All)

New Merits for M5
TRADITION PARADIGMS
- **Flaw: (•) Divergent Tradition (*Technocracy or Traditions).* The** individual's tradition uses techniques similar to either the Technocracy or the Traditions, allowing them to Multi-cast with the group (treat 'Radically Different Tradition' as just 'Different Tradition'). However, their techniques have diverged from most mainstream traditions. Any multi-cast with other traditions they are part of takes a -1 penalty. Cannot be bought by non-Disparate traditions.

- **Branch Tradition (*Specific Tradition).*** This individual's tradition is incredibly similar to a specific tradition with whom they are currently considered as 'Different'. Treat them as part of that tradition for the purposes of multi-casting penalties. Cannot be bought by non-Disparate traditions.

- •• **Compatible Tradition.** This individual's tradition is compatible in its methods with a certain group outside of its own. Treat them as 'Different' instead of 'Radically Different' with the selected tradition group. Cannot be

bought by non-Disparate traditions.

CURIOSITY
- **Flaw: (•) Curiosity.** Your curiosity overrides your common sense. Resisting temptation requires a successful Wits + Resolve (2) check.

PARADOX MERITS
- **Flaw: (•• or •••••)Permanent Paradox.** You've caused some serious backlash in the past and you have 1 (2 dot flaw) or 2 (5 dot flaw) points of paradox that can never be removed for any reason.

- **Flaw: (••)Painful Paradox.** Regardless of the reason, burn damage you cause due to backlash is always physical.

- •• **Paradox Magnet.** Whenever someone gains Paradox nearby you may spend a number of Willpower points to gain that many Paradox instead of the target. You may use this a maximum of once per story.

- •• **Paradoxical Dispersal.** Whenever you lose Paradox without *Backlashing* you lose an extra point of paradox for each 10 and 1 rolled. However, you take a penalty on your next Disassociation check this chapter equal to the number of 1s rolled.

- ••• **Blank Slate.** You are initially resistant to Paradox. Whenever you gain Paradox and are at 0 Paradox currently you may spend a point of Willpower to re-roll a dice in your paradox pool. You may

not use or acquire this if you have any Permanent Paradox.

- ••• **Feel The Burn.** Whenever someone suffers *Burn* nearby you may spend a number of Willpower points to take that much *Burn* instead of the target. You may use this a maximum of once per story.

Lifesaver

- ■ **Flaw: (•••) Lifesaver.** You refuse to kill under even the most significant or dire of circumstances, or work directly with people who do. When you or your allies kill another human or partly human, being permanently lose 1 point of Willpower until the end of the chronicle. The storyteller may rule that excessive torture or similar will count for this too.

Pain and Suffering

- ■ **Flaw: (••) Bloodthirsty.** You enjoy killing. Whenever you are faced with the chance to kill someone you must succeed on a Willpower (2) roll not to.

- ■ **Flaw: (•) Masochist.** Take -1 to all rolls when you have no physical damage and +1 when you have half your health left (rounded up) or less.

Avatar Capacity

- ■ **Flaw: (••) Limited Avatar.** Your Avatar is poor at holding Quintessence. Your capacity for holding Quintessence is equal to one less than normal.

- •• **Capacious Avatar.** Your Avatar is unusually good at holding Quintessence. Your capacity for holding Quintessence is equal to one more

than normal.

- •••• **Mighty Avatar.** Your Avatar is especially good at holding Quintessence. Your capacity for holding Quintessence is equal to two more than normal.

Territorial

- ■ **Flaw: (•) Insular.** You rarely leave your domain (no larger than a half dozen city blocks). Roll one less die anytime you roll for any test related to local knowledge.

- • **Stomping Ground.** You know your domain (no more than a half dozen city blocks) like the back of your hand. Roll one more die anytime you roll for any test related to local knowledge.

- ••• **My City.** Cab drivers come to you for directions. In your domain (up to the size of a major city) you gain an automatic success in addition to your roll anytime you roll for a test related to local knowledge.

Will

- ■ **Flaw: (•) Weak Willed.** You permanently have a point of aggravated willpower damage that may not be removed under any circumstance.

- ••••• **Iron Will.** When rolling Willpower tests you do so ignoring superficial willpower damage.

Memory

- •• **Eidetic Memory.** Your memory is picture perfect. You roll all memory checks at

up to plus 3 depending on visual element and may remember forgettable visual details.

Beast Affinity Animals are unusually drawn to you, although you can't speak to them you can communicate on a limited level based on body language and tone.

- • **Beast Affinity.** One specific type of animal is affected (i.e. Crows).

- •• **Beast Kinship.** One specific group of animals is affected (i.e. Birds).

- ••• **Beast Mastery.** All natural animals are affected.

- ••••• **Unnatural Beast Mastery.** Even supernatural animals are affected by your aura, although it only covers nonsapient creatures.

Bard's Tongue

- ■ **Flaw: (•) Bard's Tongue.** Things you say sometime become true in unfortunate ways. The Storyteller should use this to hamper your character with ill fortune but not necessarily directly imperil you.

Love

- ■ **Flaw: (•) Love.** There is someone you would do anything to protect. You must spend willpower to roll Willpower (3) to resist protecting or defending them via the most direct means possible.

Enemy

- ■ **Flaw: (•) Bound** *(to be taken with an enemy).* Your enemy is bound to you somehow and will always

Haunted

- **Flaw: (●●●) Haunted.** A wraith plagues you for some reason and makes your life hell. It can possess you or people you know, slam doors, twist your dreams, and throw things around.

Haven

- **Occult Library** *(1 to 3 dot advantage).* You own or have access to a repository of arcane books and information. You may add the number of dots in this merit when roll for an appropriate occult test and you have access to your library.

- **Nightclub.** Your haven is actually a nightclub with great cover for meeting people, gossiping, soliciting information, private meeting rooms and even staff. While they work for you they only will help out as much as nightclub employees are meant to and interfering too much with the day-to-day running of the club might cause problems.

Sight

- ●●● **Umbral Sight.** You instinctively recognise spirits from the Umbral, you gain an additional 3 to your dice pool when rolling to recognise spirits from the Umbra and you may make awareness tests to pierce their veils and deceit even when you would normal require the Spirit sphere to do so.

Echoes

Typically, this will be associated with your Affinity Sphere.

- **Flaw: (●●●) Major Echoes.** Even sleepers notice how you stand out. Your shadow moves of its own accord, you don't cast reflections, cold winds follow you, or people feel nauseous in your presence. People who know folklore might know the precautions to take (Int + Occult may be used to counterspell against you, Resolve + Occult vs your Willpower may be used to keep you at bay physically).

- **Flaw: (●●) Noticeable Echoes.** People who know what to look for recognise you on sight. Flowers bloom or wither in your presence or music echoes through the air. Holy or unholy symbols repulse you and might force you to make a willpower check.

- **Flaw: (●) Slight Echoes.** Animals shy away from you, milks sours in your presence, a strange smell appropriate to your nature follows and proceeds you or similar. Sensitive people might get odd feelings around you. Typically this will be associated with your Affinity Sphere.

Phylactery

- **Flaw: (●●●)Phylactery.** Your avatar is trapped and sealed in an object for some reason. You may only cast spells when this object is on your immediate person.

Quickening

- ●●● **Quickening.** You can maintain 1 extra spell per penalty over normal before increasing your penalty.

Avatar Strength

- **Flaw: (●●●) Subtle Avatar.** You lose -1 Arête for all rolls. However rolls to counterspell you always lose 1 dice.

- ●●●●● **Brutal Avatar.** You gain +1 to your Arête for all rolls. All rolls to counterspell your magic gain 2 dice provided they are capable of counterspelling.

Avatar Strength

- ●● or **Avatar Resonance.** Your
- ●●●● resonance is especially in tune with your dominant emotion. Whether it is kindness, hate, anger, sadness, or curiosity. When you pick this merit pick an emotion, typically one tied to your Essence. When you are in severely affected by this emotion you may choose to gain a bonus of +1 (for the 1 dot) or +2 (for the two dot) on any casting rolls, however after you do this you must immediately make a disassociation roll with a penalty equal to the number of times you have used this this chapter as the paradox and your emotion mix.

Folklore Bane

- **Flaw: (●●●) Fire.** Fire burns you more than most. When using mystical methods to avoid, reduce, or otherwise diminish flames you roll 1 less dice and all flame-based attacks deal 1 extra point of lethal damage against you.

- **Flaw: (● to ●●●) Threshold.** When crossing into private property where someone lives you lose between 1 and 3 arete

while there (corresponding to the number of dot in the flaw) unless explicitly invited by someone who lives there.

- ■ **Flaw: (••) Running Water.** Standing over bodies of water causes your magic to seep away in proportion to the volume and speed at which it is flowing. In game terms you take a penalty to your Arête: around 1 for a small stream, heavy rain or sewers, 2 for a small sedate river, torrential rain or deep lake, 4 for a major rushing river or deep ocean and 5 for Niagara Falls. If this penalty reduces your arete to 0 or below you may not cast and any ongoing spells you are maintaining end.

- ■ **Flaw: (••) Sleeper Bane.** Mundane humans are your downfall. Sleepers count as having rolled 1 success more with any successful attack against you and your mystical methods of reducing the damage reduce it by 1 less.

CURSED

- ■ **Flaw: (•••) Severe Curse.** Accidents happen frequent to you, your bank account and internet accounts are frequently hacked, you keep getting your wallet and phone stolen, and driving anywhere is a risk.

- ■ **Flaw: (••) Moderate Curse.** Your car breaks down when you need it, your expensive clothes end up stained, and tools break when you use them.

- ■ **Flaw: (•) Slight Curse.** Tech fails around you, traffic jams occur whenever you drive, tires go flat.

HEALTH

••• **True Grit.** You refuse to go down in a fight extends beyond the limits of normal human bodies. You may take a point of aggravated willpower damage to temporarily gain 3 health boxes that disappear at the end of the scene. Any damage in them is shifted to your remaining health when they are removed, this can result in superficial converting to aggravated, and can cause you to keel over and die when the fighting ends.

FAITH

••••• **True Faith.** You have a burning faith in something divine. This faith protects and fills you. You start with 1 dot of True Faith.
You gain a number of advantages:
When attacking anything deemed truly evil or tainted a number of your damage points equal to your True Faith may not be reduced by armour or innate abilities belonging to the creature in any way.
You have a number of additional points of armour that count against direct mystic attacks, torture, or other thematic sources of damage equal to your True Faith.
True Faith may be *spent* for the same benefits as a point of willpower.
True faith can be *spent* to act as though you had the Life Sphere (equal to your current True Faith value) for the purposes of benevolent healing of good creatures.
However True Faith also

demands a very strict adherence to a very inflexible moral code and those who act against people not covered by their code or who act outside of the code find their True Faith abilities temporarily or permanently disappear.

Mage Groups

Mages are split roughly in three different factions. The Traditions, the Technocracy, and the Disparate. This doesn't include the Nephandi, or the individualistic Marauders as both are unsuited for player characters. This document will focus on the core Traditions and some of the Disparate groups.

Traditions

The Traditions are a collection of magical traditions united by a common theory of magical Spheres, as well as a common purpose: the defence of magic and myth against the oppressive, static and safe Technocratic paradigm of predictability and control.

Akashic Brotherhood
Mystical martial artists whose meditations grant them insight.

AFFINITY SPHERES: Mind, Life.

ADVANTAGES: Two of Status 1 (Akashic Brotherhood), Status 1 (Ahl-i-Batin), Hidden Armoury 1 (requires a Haven), Ally 1 (Any), Mentor 1, or Mask 1.

FLAW: No Haven, Curse 1, Destitute, or Bound (requires Enemy).

SPECIALISATION: Law (Academics), First Aid (Medicine), or Any (Brawl), Tenth Sphere (Occult)

Celestial Chorus

United by their efforts to touch the Divine as well as their belief in the One and Prime from which all things originate.

AFFINITY SPHERES: Prime, Forces, Spirit.

ADVANTAGES: Status 1 (Celestial Chorus), Influence 1 (Any Local Political or Religious Body), Resources 1, or Retainer 1.

FLAW: None inherent.

SPECIALISATION: Traditions (Politics), and either of Any One Supernatural (Occult), or Singing (Performance).

Cult of Ecstasy
Seers who transcend boundaries and limitations through sacred experience.

AFFINITY SPHERES: Time, Life, Mind.

ADVANTAGES: Either one of: Fame 2, Looks 2; or any two of: Mask 1, High Functioning Addict, Location 1 (requires a Haven), Nightclub (requires a Haven), or Luxury 1 (requires a Haven).

FLAW: Masochist, Love, or Bard's Tongue.

SPECIALISATION: Dance (Performance), Seduction (Subterfuge), Desires (Insight), or Drugs (Streetwise).

Dreamspeakers
Individuals who practice shamanism, communing with spirits as part of their magic and existing as intermediaries between the Mortal World and the Spirit World.

AFFINITY SPHERES: Spirit, Life, Matter.

ADVANTAGES: Beast Affinity 1, or Stomping Ground.

FLAW: None inherent.

SPECIALISATION: Oratory (Leadership), Any (Animal Ken), Knives (Melee), or Shelters (Survival).

Euthanatoi
Intimately devoted to the forces of death, rebirth, destiny, and karma in the world. They represent a collection of thanatotic cultists, necromancers, priests of fate, assassins, scholars, gamblers and healers.

AFFINITY SPHERES: Entropy, Life, Spirit.

ADVANTAGES: Either three of: Influence 1 (Local Mortuaries), Surgery 1 (requires a Haven), Hidden Armoury 1 (requires a Haven), Cell 1 (requires a Haven); or one of: Umbral Sight, or True Grit.

FLAW: Either two of: Suspect (Ahl-i-Batin), Slight Echoes, or Dark Secret 1; or one of: Bloodthirsty, or Infamy.

SPECIALISATION: Weapon Smithing (Craft), Law (Academics), Poisons (Science), or Any (Melee).

Order of Hermes
They draw upon a potent fundus of magical knowledge and has shaped occult history to great deals.

AFFINITY SPHERES: Forces.

ADVANTAGES: Either: Occult Library 2 (requires a Haven), Eidetic Memory, or Resources 2; or two of: Status 1 (Order of Hermes), Occult

Library 1, Resources 1, Influence (Local University).

Flaw: Insular, or Curiosity.

Specialisation: Any (Occult), or Traditions (Politics).

Sons of Ether

Originally part of the Technocracy, they abandoned their former compatriots. Since then, the Sons have adopted several outdated technologies and incorporated them into their Paradigm.

Affinity Spheres: Matter, Forces, Prime.

Advantages: Either one of: Laboratory 2 (requires a Haven), Contact 2 (Any Engineer, Scientist, or similar), Eidetic Memory, or Resources 2; and one of: Status 1 (Sons of Ether), Status 1 (Virtual Adepts), or Laboratory 1 (requires a Haven).

Flaw: Divergent Tradition (Technocracy), and either of: Suspect (Technocracy), or Adversary 1 (Technocracy mage).

Specialisation: *Any* (Science), or Research (Academics).

Verbena

Dedicated to preserving the ancient crafts and wisdom passed down over the ages by witches and warlocks, druids and druidesses, shamans, mystics, and priests and priestesses of the Old Gods.

Affinity Spheres: Life, Forces.

Advantages: Either: Beast Affinity 2; or two of: Territorial 1, Retainer 1 (animal familiar), Beast Affinity 1.

Flaw: Curse 1, Destitute, No Haven, or Echoes 1.

Specialisation: Gardening (Craft), Wilderness (Awareness), or Veterinary (Medicine).

Virtual Adepts

The youngest members of the Traditions and former members of the Technocracy. Focused on the Digital Web, the Adepts search for a way to reach the singularity, the point where mankind can transcend into something posthuman.

Affinity Spheres: Correspondence, Forces.

Advantages: Choose one of: Eidetic Memory, Resources 2, Security Systems 2 (requires a Haven), or Blank Slate; and one of: Resources 1, or Security Systems 1 (requires a Haven).

Flaw: Divergent Tradition (Technocracy), and one of: Insular, Suspect (Technocracy), Adversary 1 (Technocracy mage).

Specialisation: *Any* (Technology), Mathematics (Science), or Physics (Mathematics).

Disparate

The Disparate Alliance is a newly created network of independent Crafts that have chosen to take the matters of the Ascension War into their own hands, independently from the Technocratic Union or the Council of Nine Mystick Traditions.

Hollow Ones

A group of mages who have either been orphaned or rejected the Traditions, but refused to join forces with the Technocracy. Instead, they take what they like from every tradition and fuse it together. As a result, they have no dominant Sphere.

Affinity Spheres: *Any.*

Advantages: Compatible Tradition (Either), or Mask 2.

Flaw: Choose one of Suspect (Traditions), Suspect (Technocracy), Divergent Tradition (Either).

Specialisation: *Any (Any).*

Ahl-i-Batin

Arabian mages that mainly practice magic with a strong focus on subtlety. A founding member of the Council of Nine, they withdrew their membership due to apathy in face of the Technocratic onslaught.

Affinity Spheres: Correspondence, **Mind.**

Advantages: Compatible Tradition (Traditions); and one dot of either Mask, Allies, Contacts, or Stomping Ground.

Flaw: Either: Shunned (Technocracy); two dot Adversary (Technocracy or Nephandi); or suspect (Technocracy) and one dot Adversary (Technocracy or Nephandi).

Specialisation: *Any* (Leadership); *Any* (Stealth); Nephandi or Tenth Sphere (Occult).

Taftâni

Spirit-binders and consensus-floaters, the Taftâni are the true masters of the Solomnic Code. The mages reject the coincidental magick of their peeps, employing bound djinn and vulgar magick to suit their whims, ranging from magical duels to ostentatious buffets. A blaze of glory is at least glorious, right?.

Affinity Spheres: Spirit, Matter, Prime**.**

ADVANTAGES: Resources (3 dots) or Umbral Sight.

FLAW: Either Permanent Paradox (2 dots); Enemy (1 dot) and Bound

(that enemy, a Djinn); or Bard's Tongue and Archaic (1 dot).

SPECIALISATION: *Any* (Performance); Bargaining (Persuasion); or Djinn (Occult).

Casting Tables

CASTING BONUS SITUATION

CASTING BONUS SITUATION	BONUS
Point of Quintessence Used	+1
Casting Duration 1 Step Higher than Needed	+1
Casting Duration 2 Steps Higher than Needed	+2
Casting Duration 3 Steps Higher than Needed or More	+3
Cast on Node (Depending on Node Strength)	+1 to +3
Sympathetic Link (Depending on item/part)	+1 to +3

CASTING PENALTY SITUATION	PENALTY
Reactive Spellcasting	-2
Counterspell	-2
Mage distracted	-1 to -3

MAGICAL FEAT MAGNITUDE	TARGET
Standard: Enhanced Perception, lighting a candle, changing hair colour, shielding your mind, healing yourself, conjuring a small fire, altering your shape, influencing someone's mood.	1
Difficult: Healing lethal damage, conjuring a fireball, transforming yourself into something radically different, reading or affecting someone's mind.	2
Impressive: Growing or regenerating limbs, conjuring a firestorm, transforming someone else's shape, controlling someone else's mind.	3
Mighty: Creating lifeforms, conjuring strange entities.	4-8
Outlandish: Creating complex lifeforms, blowing up buildings, summoning otherworldly creatures.	8-14
Godlike: Rewriting your own pattern permanently, incinerating cities, conjuring monstrous creatures, enslaving hundreds of people.	15+

EXTRA SUCCESSES SPEND

EXTRA SUCCESSES SPEND	
Duration	Increased as successes for duration table
Targets	+1 per extra target
Area	Increased as per area effect table
Damage	+2 damage

CASTING DURATION	MODIFIER
Reactive	-2
Instant/Only This Turn	0
1 Scene/Hour	+1
1 Day	+2
1 Week	+3
1 Month	+4
1 Year	+5

SPELL EFFECT DURATION	TARGET
Instant/Only This Turn	0
1 Scene/Hour or Permanent when spending Quintessence	+1
1 Day	+2
1 Week	+3
1 Month	+4
1 Year	+5
Permanent (Maintained)	+6

CORRESPONDENCE FAMILIARITY	TARGET
Within immediate perception	1
Very familiar (home, etc.)	2
Familiar/saw recently in person	3
Visited briefly/ saw recently via recorded medium	4
Heard or saw it described	5
Totally blind	6+

CORRESPONDENCE CONNECTION (INC. BONUS FOR SYMPATHETIC LINK)	TARGET
Body Sample	1
Close Possession or Companion	2
Possession or Friend	3
Object Used or Passing Friend	4
Briefly Touched or Briefly Met	5
No Connection	6+

ILLUSION SUCCESSES	TARGET
Simple	+1
Complex	+2
Moving	+1
Moving and Interactive	+2
One Sensation	+0
Two Sensations	+1
Multiple Sensations	+2

MOVING FORWARD/BACKWARD IN TIME	TARGET
Within the scene	1
Within the day	2
Within the month	3
Within the year	4
Within 10yrs	5
Within 50yrs	6
Within 500yrs	8
Within 1000yrs	10
More than 1000yrs	12

AREA EFFECTED	MODIFIER
Single Target/Point Target	0
Car-Sized	+1
Bus/Shack	+2
Flat/Small Building	+3
Medium Building	+4
Large Building	+5
City Block	+6
City District	+8
City	+10<