

# SCID

SECOND EDITION



BOOK THREE  

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DEMIGOD

# SCIDY

## DEMIGOD



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## IN MEMORIAM

We dedicate this book to Charles H. Long. He was the last of a group of scholars (that included Mircea Eliade, J.Z. Smith, and Joseph Kitagawa) whose work greatly contributed to comparative religious studies in North America for the latter part of the 20th century. The students of that group were the people who taught some of Scion's writers, and their influence transmits through every page of this book. Rest in Peace and walk with the Gods.

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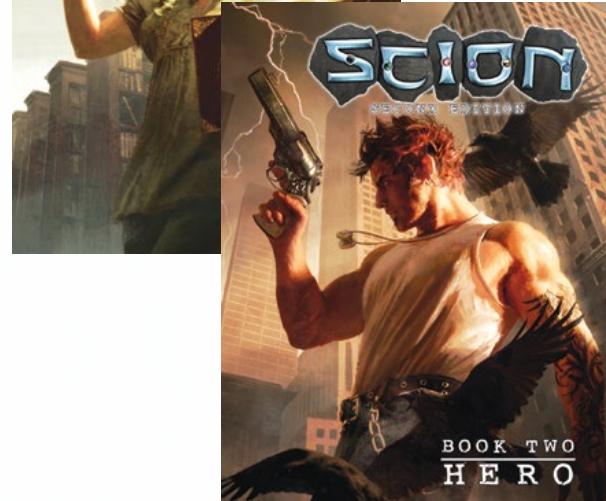
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# shibboleth

The cold had never bothered Isak Kohen, even as a child. The brutality of a New York winter on Friday nights had never elicited so much as a grunt from his father, though Isak could tell he found the cold unpleasant. They jaywalked along the streets with everyone else in Brooklyn, it seemed, no matter the weather. He'd taken to wearing a jacket more out of habit than anything else, except perhaps to not draw attention to himself. The cold was just a part of Isak, inseparable from the chill outside, and he found deep comfort in the silence of winter. The Demigod exhaled without a cloud of steam and looked up. The buildings were taller now than when he was a child, he mused, but the air itself was warmer. If he closed his eyes and listened just the right way, he could hear the whispered lamentations of the suffering — living and dying and praying in famine and heat waves in the distant corners of the World as the planet slowly burned by degrees.

The cold very much bothered Isak's first companion, a huddled mass of jackets and complaints both vocal and not named Max. He gasped a little as the wind picked up, wisps of steam coming from his mouth like spurting blood, as if a blade of ice had sliced him. The winds, unnaturally cruel for July, merely fluttered Isak's open coat a little.

The third and fourth members of their group were both far more accustomed to the chill than Max. One was Rose Aishquaykezhick-White, child of Cheeby-Aub-Oozoo. The other was a woman named Tanisha who claimed to be a daughter of Himavat and sister to Parvati; as she strolled casually in front of the group, Isak believed her claims of ancestry to have some degree of merit.

Max was definitely the odd one out, but Isak decided early in their walk to not judge him for it. They

shared a connection, deep and familial, that gave Isak some comfort even as they walked to battle. Idly, he wondered — was he comforted by the presence of a friend, or did something deep within him lie still when he was anticipating the shedding of blood? The only answer he found was the whistling wind. The four trudged forward in the deepening snows, sharing one another's misery.

Still, only Max complained.

"How can you not be cold?" Isak's whiniest companion hissed at him, shaking the silent reverie.

"I am cold," Isak replied. "Try to focus on that sentiment: I am cold. I am cold. The cold and I are indistinguishable. I fight cold with more cold." Platitudes of the sort that would annoy a mortal, but while it clearly still annoyed Max, the other Scion caught his meaning. Tanisha just laughed. She wore black jeans and a sleeveless T-shirt, and she was as unbothered by the chill as Isak.

"Easy for you to say. My father is a lie-smith who stole the name of fire. I wish my parent was a God of winter." Max shivered some more.

"They aren't," Isak replied. "Neither of my parents were."

Rose peeked beyond the cigarette poking beyond the end of her scarf, her glance skeptical, her voice bemused. "I'm sorry, but is your mother suddenly not a frost giant? Is she absent without leave from the prayers of ski instructors from Aspen to Killington?"

"My mother was flesh and blood, like yours," Isak responded. "But so was my father, unlike yours. I was born on Shabbat."

Rose blew out a cloud of cigarette smoke and shook her head, braided hair swinging gently. "I don't get it."

Isak took a deep breath, furrowing his brow as he properly sorted the precise feelings of reverence within himself. "Skaði is my patron and a second mother to me, special and powerful, it's true. She chose me. But I was chosen long before, and she is a giant first and foremost. There is only one G-d." Isak shook his head. "The fact that you phrased it that way is, hrm, a kind of shibboleth, I suppose."

"A what?" asked Max.

"Shibboleth," Isak responded, enunciating carefully. "When the soldiers of Gilead defeated the tribe of Ephraim, the survivors tried to cross the River Jordan. To tell friendly traveler from Ephramite, the soldiers made them say the word shibboleth. But they couldn't, because their dialect didn't have the right syllables, so they would say *sibboleth* instead." Isak exhaled. There was no steam in his breath. "And then they died."

Tanisha grinned. "Moral of the story: When your time comes, Max, stay frosty. Your life depends on it."

"Huh," Max said, ignoring the jibe. "They never really mention those stories in Pentecostal Sunday school."

"I guess they focused more on other things."

"Yeah, I never really paid much attention," Max muttered.

The four kept walking, their shoes making soft crunching noises on the fresh powdery snow. In the swirling flakes, through the low-hanging fog against a pitch-black sky, 9 DeKalb Avenue stood silent sentinel, lit and heated lower floors contrasted by the halation of lamps shining through a bare superstructure on the upper levels. A standing sign on the street, glowing LED screen shining through the thin layer of frost, listed a series of upcoming events. The most current one was Christmas in July.

All around them were bodies, preserved in pallid color by a thin blanket of ice — people wearing shorts, wearing business suits, people just walking their dogs. Isak knelt down beside the body of a surprised-looking man in a black suit and kippah. "Zikhrono livrakha," Isak said, quietly — may his memory be a blessing. Tanisha heard him, no doubt, but she granted him privacy by pretending not to.

"Christmas in July. Think this is it?" Max said to him, and Isak knew what the it was before he spoke. "Fimbulwinter? I've been preparing. Örvar-Odd, that old fool in the tree, he gave me the key to it all for an apple seed. I think I've..."

"No, this isn't Fimbulwinter," Isak said, standing up and cutting his friend off. It was honestly best if he didn't know the plans Max had to survive Ragnarök. Hearing the prophecy might tie him to it, and he had long ago learned to avoid such pitfalls, for the law was not in the heavens.

"Whatever it is," Rose said, exhaling a cloud, "It's been going on for a week, and this is the epicenter. Temperatures falling, snowfall, and now a deep freeze."

"At least people are saving on air conditioning," Max said.

The lobby of the skyscraper had ceilings at least 30 feet high, done in a marble temple style that would make the Theoi proud. Eleven massive columns stretched floor to ceiling in a circle in the center of the room just past the entrance. At the security desk sat a huge creature, black-furred and boar-tusked, heavy and squat. He sniffed the air blowing past the four, swung cloven feet down from the desk, planted them firmly, and stood to his full height. A stink washed over the group, animalistic and rotten. The beast gripped some sort of engraved iron rod, trailing mist and cold. Literal cold iron, Isak thought.

The beast growled in human speech. Isak wondered if it was a minotaur. "I smell you, worms," it said, in a baritone deep and rich.

"It's a kallikantzaros," Rose said, dropping the filter-less stub of her cigarette on the ground as she answered Isak's unasked question. She didn't bother to extinguish it as she pulled out a leather cigarette holder with a sticker of a turtle slapped on it. "It's a kind of big European goblin. Can't count past two, dies if it does, really likes colanders, not known for their intellect."

The kallikantzaros slammed a hoof down, sending spiderweb cracks along the stone flooring. It was, perhaps, seven-and-a-half feet tall, but it looked like it weighed maybe 600 pounds, most of it muscle. "Goblin? Who do you think you're talking to?"

Interesting that that was what offended the creature most.

"Colanders?" Isak asked.

"Colanders," Rose affirmed.

"It's snarling at us," Max said. "It sounds like it's trying to talk."

Isak turned to regard his companion. For a brief moment he thought it was a bit of trash-talk meant to deny the goblin's personhood, but he realized Max's question was genuine. "Do you not understand him? He's speaking English."

"No, I'm fucking not," yelled the kallikantzaros.

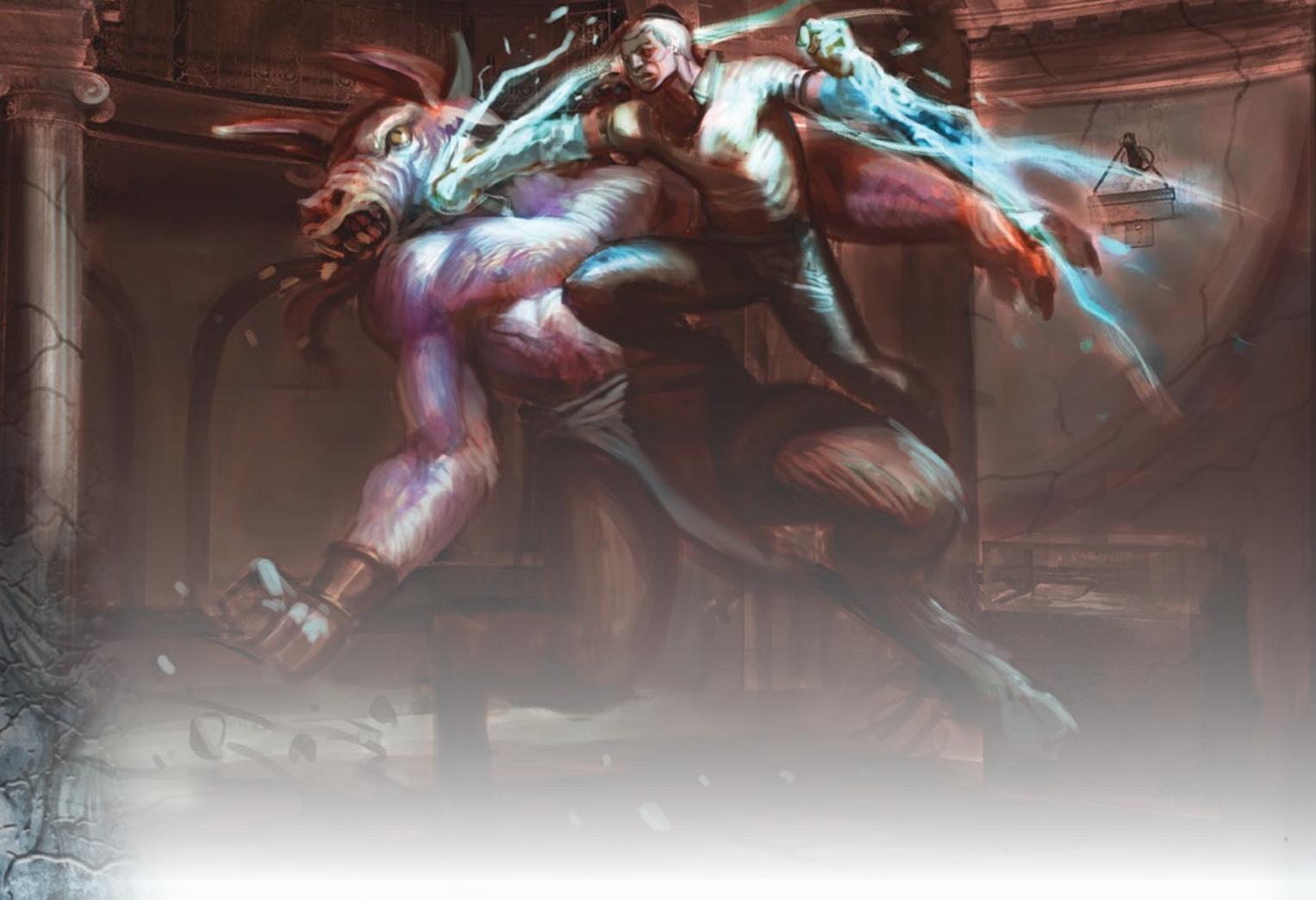
"No," said Max. "It's all snarls and growls."

Weird, Isak thought. "He's asking who we think we're talking to."

"Some naked Greek asshole," Rose said.

"A dead thing," Tanisha said.

"Someone who isn't where they're supposed to be," Isak said.



The kallikantzaros bellowed loudly and charged. The rolling thunder of hooves shook the floors, and Isak heard more coming.

"Don't look at me," Max put his hands up. "I'm just an honest thief." And then Max's hair was aflame — no, Max's hair *was* flame, a flickering crown upon his head and a wildfire crawling around his chin. He grasped a pair of shears in one hand and snapped the fingers of his other hand at the stampeding kallikantzaros. The hooved creature burst into flames, screaming and stomping past the group. Isak heard glass shattering behind him and felt the cold air rush in; he turned to risk a glance and saw the beast struggling and smoldering outside.

"Get the rod, get the rod!" Max yelled. "I've seen it before! The dead use it to measure water depth in the river Élivágar! It's gotta be the source of all this!"

Another of the goblins stomped around a corner, then came right for the Band. Isak braced himself, ice forming around his legs and rooting him to the spot. He swung hard to meet the onrushing goblin's hammer-blown punch with one of his own, ignoring the shooting pain traveling up his arm when the two connected. The ice shattered, and Isak stumbled back.

The other kallikantzaros grabbed his hand where Isak had punched it. "My hand! My hand! Aw, why are you doing this? What do you care, Israelite?"

"I'm from Brooklyn," Isak said, though the creature probably didn't care about the distinction. "Why are *you* doing this?"

"Christmas," the goblin snarled. "It only comes once a year, and it came early. Lots of oath breakers and adulterers partying upstairs. This is our time."

Four more kallikantzaros burst from a stairwell. Tanisha and Rose were in fine form; both were as strong as Isak, and he was stronger than anyone he'd ever met. Descending from a mighty spirit, a literal mountain, and a giant did wonders for one's muscle mass.

"Two by two by two by two by two by two," the kallikantzaros growled. "This is our time, and we will leave you reeling in our revelry."

That was at least 12 of the monsters, and there must be more in the building. Isak hoped that the number added up and wasn't multiplied. He took a step back and yelled over to Rose, who was putting one of the goblins through a wall. "Rose! Are you sure about that counting bit?"

Rose yelled back as a bolt of flame flew by her head. "Yeah, why?"

Isak inhaled deeply; the mist from the rod outside rolled in, surrounding him. He breathed deep the air and moisture of Hel, tasted the icy waters of the river Élivágar, felt the occult sigil that amplified the chill.

Isak *was* the cold, though; in an instant, he breathed a bubble of air out, blowing and shaping it like glass until it stood before him, huge and spherical, a shell of ice glittering in the overhead lights with the colors of the rainbow. Lightning-quick, his fingers danced over the surface, their strength and speed leaving small holes wherever they went.

All of the kallikantzaros suddenly stopped. One dropped a chair he was about to smash over Tanisha, then clomped over to the shell. The others did the same, ceasing battle with the Band. Their eyes danced obsessively from hole to hole, and they stood counting. Isak lifted a hand and shifted his perceptions; he could see the dim fire of their intellect burning deep within their skulls, like faded embers. He brought his arm down and snuffed out what remained.

Max stepped up to the goblins, who could now barely stay standing. "Count for me," he said slyly, and they complied.

"One..."

"Two..."

"Three—" and with that, they were gone. They were kallikantzaros; the counting proved it.

• • •

Winter broke over July, and snow steamed upon the ground as the battle-weary Band walked outside. News vans pulled up; above, a helicopter hovered in the now-clear sky, illuminating the Band. Isak watched the mists begin to form as the ground thawed.



# INTRODUCTION

**"It is a serious thing to live in a society of possible Gods and Goddesses.  
To remember that dullest, most uninteresting person you can talk to  
may one day be a creature which, if you saw it now,  
you would be strongly tempted to worship."**

— C.S. Lewis, *The Weight of Glory*

To be a Demigod is to redefine your people.

As a Hero, a Scion becomes a figure of myth and story, an exemplar of some virtue of their chosen society or the culture into which they're born. Sometimes, this is because a Scion openly chooses to become a guardian of the people, or a fierce warrior against the enemies of their people. Other Scions make their names by existing outside the boundaries of their culture, reinforcing societal norms by providing a sharp behavioral contrast. There are famous Heroes, and there are infamous ones, and there are inscrutable children of the Gods, but no Hero is obscure. Attempts to lead a quiet and simple life, be it in rustic splendor or suburban mundanity or urban anonymity, inevitably lead to a disproportionate response by Fate as the Scion's delayed Deeds come crashing into their living rooms. The Scions of the Gods will be loved, and they will be hated, but they can never be ignored — not even by themselves.

Even before their Visitation, the children of the Gods are a breed apart. Scion lives are full of portents, and their heritage becomes obvious to those who reflect upon the time before their Visitation in hindsight. Even Chosen Heroes led lives so indelibly linked to a God's Legend that adoption is more a formality than anything else; the Scion always belonged to that God, even if they were born to mortal bloodlines. The act of Visitation is never forced upon a Scion — they choose to enter the World of Gods and monsters, even if that choice is an unconscious one.

Yet for all their fame and supernatural puissance and strength of will, Heroes are unlikely to be radicals and even less likely to be visionaries. They are mortal, their Legend linked to that of their parent deity. A Scion of Tyr is likely to be maimed and meet his end in the jaws of a wolf. A gigantic Nemean wolf, maybe, but definitely some sort of canine. Aphrodite's daughter will find her beauty opening many doors, though many or most lead to a cruel, ironic end like the one that befell Narcissus. A Hero's life is cursed to be eternally interesting. No Hero retires, but many reach old age, and a few have even gone to their respective Underworlds within the peace of their own homes, surrounded by descendants telling stories of their famous progenitor for centuries afterward. For many, this is enough, and this last repetition of their parent's Legend continues after the grave.

Some want more than this lesser form of immortality, forever in the shadow of their parents. The golden ichor within the Scion's heart sears them from within, burning away any human frailties of the Scion and driving them toward more audacious Deeds. They seek to become truly transformational figures, leaving the World forever different in their wake. At the fifth dot of Legend, it all reaches a tipping point, where the Scion is formed more of divine ichor than mortal flesh — more immortal than mortal, a true Demigod. They have declared to the World that they will not be pawns of Fate, but players in their own right

## ALL MYTHS ARE TRUE

But not all myths are equal. In **Scion**, this phrase is descriptive in that it's an acknowledgement of real-world complexity of mythological narratives, and of the in-setting mutability of myth, rather than prescriptive — a maxim Storyguides must adhere to. We use this phrase to mean that mythic events in religion and folklore have a basis in the game's truth, and the events typically happened in the manner in which those myths and folk tales told. If someone claims they're the child of a God in our world, we usually don't believe them; in the World, it's safer just to accept the claim at face value. We don't mean it to say that all myths, regardless of timelessness or plausibility, are literally true and occurred — although you'd be surprised at what mythology encompasses. **Scion** is ultimately a game: We've done research and thought about how to incorporate the spirit of the divine into the work, but at the end of the day, feel free to go with what feels true and right at your table. You don't need to open any book but this one (and, **Origin** and **Hero**) to play **Scion** to the fullest.

**Demigod** takes this a step further. Many myths are about how epic Heroes changed the World forever. Let that be your guiding principle: Don't be afraid to leave the World permanently and drastically altered in the wake of your character's life. Make a story as large or as small as you want it to be. Destroy a city, or save it with an ambitious parks program; forge an empire, or turn the tide of imperialism back for one small group of your people; cure a scourging plague, or heal the one you love; bring peace to a nation, or just to your family.

Though your family members are probably Gods themselves.

— and the World responds. These Demigods will succeed in becoming a God, or they will die with their failure.

Everything up to this point was your prologue. Now it's time to live your myth.

## HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

**Scion: Demigod** continues down the path set by **Scion: Origin** and **Scion: Hero**, with players embodying mythic characters in the process of forging their Legends.

This game requires **Scion: Origin** and **Scion: Hero** and builds on the Storypath system by adding rules for expansive mythic Deeds and supernatural miracles. **Scion: Demigod**'s primary purpose is to expand Scion Second Edition's power level and chart the next level of power tiers for the Scions of the Gods. Demigod's design focuses on the theme of "Live the Myth," to that end, the book's main focus is on the Heroic cycle, giving Storyguides and players the tools to play through the tropes and story mechanisms of classic mythology (and whether to avert, subvert, or play straight those same tropes).

The Demigod story arc is about forging one's Legend, but this is not a haphazard thing. Rather, players will take their characters through a tightly designed yet flexible story arc that ends in apotheosis or death — either way, the character will no longer be mortal after this book. Your characters don't have to follow every Milestone with their Deeds — but they cannot run from their destiny once they've chosen to embrace it.

The time needed to complete the story arc is completely up to the players and Storyguide, however — the characters might feel rushed, but the players shouldn't be. Demigods can live for long decades, but they are not passive years, and their stories end one way. Even Herakles had many adventures after completing the Twelve Labors — and then he died.

## THE PANTHEONS

The five pantheons featured in Demigod are fully available to use at the Origin and Hero levels for parentage and association — Storyguides should feel free to incorporate them into their World and character generation regardless of level, and future books will assume they exist. Many of them are, frankly, a little more down-on-their-luck than the pantheons of Hero. They are:

- **Annuna:** The Mesopotamian Gods, proud standard-bearers of an authoritarian outlook that is startlingly effective yet dangerously out of touch with the modern World;
- **Apu:** The Incan Gods, golden and brimming with supernatural authority, calmly and methodically

working to restore their place and the place of their people within the World;

- **Atua:** The Polynesian Gods, deeply in tune with the natural ebbs and flows of the World, threatened by colonization and climate change;
- **Bogovi:** The Slavic Gods, in the winter of their power, waiting for their spring to return;
- **Tengri:** The Mongolian Gods, the spirits of the steppes and the mountains, cosmopolitan but threatened by vast changes in the World.

## WHAT THIS BOOK CONTAINS

- **Chapter One:** Storyguiding Apotheosis describes the Milestones every Demigod must undertake to achieve Apotheosis, the act of becoming a God.
- **Chapter Two:** Pantheons details the five pantheons in this book, suitable for any level of play.
- **Chapter Three:** Character Creation details new and improved Birthrights and character options at the Demigod tier of play.
- **Chapter Four:** Chasing Divinity introduces new rules and expanded powers, including Dominion Boons, to represent a Demigod's powerful association with a Purview.
- **Chapter Five:** Underworlds describes the various Underworlds of the pantheons, physical locations that a Scion may venture to.
- **Chapter Six:** Antagonists features a number of new antagonist rules and entities who can challenge a Demigod.
- **Appendix:** The Keepers describes The Keepers of the World, a group of cross-pantheon Scions who aim to become a new pantheon, to the detriment of every other God in the World.

## MEDIA

We particularly recommend the following as sources of inspiration for the content and tone of your **Scion: Demigod** stories.

### Percy Jackson & The Olympians, by Rick Riordan

Riordan's series (and every book in that universe) has demigods coming into their power and dealing with the various myths and personalities of their parents. The treatment of Greek and Roman deities is a great example of switching mantles, and the physiological effects of being a Demigod match quite well.

### City of Mists, by Son of Oak Publishing

*City of Mists* is a role-playing game that posits a modern world where fairy-tale and mythological personas are claimed by various entities. The book has a lavish noir style and intriguing gameplay, and while the power level is a

little lower than Demigod, the book posits an interesting choice between mortality and immortality.

### ***Immortals, directed by Tarsem Singh***

Featuring a surprisingly talented cast, the hardcore action film's visuals done in Renaissance style mostly hold up. *Immortals* features visuals of the Titanomachy and Demigods doing battle, Gods interacting with mortals in a variety of different guises, and an epilogue that would fit well with tales of a Demigod's Deeds.

### ***Clash of the Titans, directed by Desmond Davis***

One of the original great epic movies, this movie features some of creature animator Ray Harryhausen's best works. More important than the visuals (some of which have aged badly) is the story of the Gods influencing the lives of mortals, and how Scions might want to throw off the yoke of their forebears' Fate in order to make their own.



# CHAPTER ONE STORYGUIDING APOTHEOSIS

*"All the world will be your enemy, Prince with a Thousand Enemies, and whenever they catch you, they will kill you. But first they must catch you, digger, listener, runner, prince with the swift warning. Be cunning and full of tricks and your people shall never be destroyed."*

— Richard Adams, *Watership Down*

This is a secret of the World: Almost every God, even the ones who have existed since the creation of all things, was once a mortal Scion. The deity who receives sacrifices in modern temples may only have shed their mortality last Tuesday, but because Fate reweaves history and memory in response to Deeds, he has never been anything or anyone else, unless Apotheosis itself is a part of his Legend.

The First Visitation marks the end of an Origin and the start of a Hero and is by all accounts a transcendental and transfiguring affair. The knowledge of a Scion's parentage races through them, transforming blood and bone and soul in its wake. It's a rush to which all other addictions or joys pale in comparison, and the Scion is forever transformed after. In moments of passion or injury, they bleed golden ichor instead of red blood. They wield gifts born of myth.

But they never forget the rush.

The Second Visitation is a much quieter affair, a declaration made by the Scion to Fate. The Scion can feel that same rush of divinity again, but only for a fleeting moment. What a gambler calls *chasing it*, the feeling of victory, a Scion calls the ascent to Apotheosis.

A Demigod who decides to pursue Apotheosis has some difficult choices to make. She can follow her own path by overcoming a series of archetypal challenges that sharpen her identity to the point that Fate cannot deny her divinity. The act of becoming a Demigod is a Scion's declaration to Fate itself that they will become a God or die trying.

Perhaps one in a thousand succeeds, but all leave their mark upon the World.

## THE DEMIGOD'S JOURNEY

The Deeds of a Demigod come together to create a Mantle (see **Hero**, p. 43). A Demigod can also take up the incomplete Mantle of another Demigod who tried to rise to the ranks of the Gods but failed, and by playing out the same story up to and beyond that point of failure, turn tragedy into victory. Or she can walk in the footsteps of another God (living or dead) so perfectly, so completely, that Fate itself acknowledges that she is that God.

### THE APOTHEOSIS ROADMAP

Progress from Demigod to God involves five stages that all Scions progress through, although not necessarily in the same order. Each stage is associated with a Divine Deed, a defining task or set of tasks that the Scion must

complete successfully to advance. These Deeds act as the Milestones of Apotheosis, and a Scion cannot attempt the next Milestone in the sequence until he has increased his Legend. The choice to pursue Apotheosis becomes available at Legend 4, which means that it reaches its conclusion (if successful) at Legend 9. Until a Scion completes the first Apotheosis Milestone, she remains a Hero with regard to all rules that distinguish between Hero- and Demigod-tier characters.

The Milestones are:

- **The Second Call**, in which the Demigod reenacts an early challenge of his post-Visitation life in a new (usually more dangerous) way or becomes drawn into one of the early myths of the God he wants to emulate. The lesson of this stage is to let him reflect on his progress so far and to announce to Fate that he is ready to pursue Apotheosis. *This is always the first step and culminates in the act of gaining Legend 5, a Deed undertaken while the Scion is still a Hero.*
- **The Parting**, in which the Demigod discovers the extra burdens that Fatebinding places on Gods and glimpses similar divine restrictions on behavior in the mortal realm. Along the way, he develops a powerful Fatebond with a mortal or lesser mythic being, one that lasts beyond even death. Then, inevitably, that bond will be severed. The lesson of the Parting is that all mortal connections are, compared to the eternity of the Gods, fleeting ones.
- **The Threshold**, in which the Demigod explores her connection to her Callings to solidify her identification with them. For most Scions, it's one of the less dangerous stages, with an emphasis on playfulness, fluid identities, and change instead of the harsher lessons of responsibility. For others, it's a period of intense questioning that can lead to a total reinvention of the self. The lesson of this stage is to teach the Scion who she is on an archetypal level.
- **The Descent**, in which the Demigod starts to shed his strongest associations with the mortal World. This can mean a literal journey to an Underworld, but it can also be a period of isolation, or the loss of a loved one through death or betrayal. Whatever form it takes, its lesson is that a God must make sacrifices as well as accept them.
- **The Theophany**, in which the Demigod gathers all his resources and talents to face one myth-defining challenge. If he succeeds, he achieves Apotheosis and becomes a God. If he fails, he dies,

and his unfinished Mantle goes free until some other Demigod takes it up to try again. This stage isn't a lesson; it's the final exam. *No matter what route a character takes through the other stages, the Theophany is always last. If the Scion succeeds in this last stage, they reach a Legend score of 9 and a form of immortality.*

## PLANNING THE JOURNEY

The decision about the form that a stage of the mythic journey takes should, unless the player specifically asks otherwise, be a collaborative one. The player agrees that his Scion is going to attempt to progress through the stage, uses the guidelines in this chapter to outline the challenge or challenges to overcome, and works with the Storyguide and other players to fill in the details. For groups that have been playing together from the start of a Scion's story, some elements will present themselves organically: old enemies return until they're finally defeated, familiar Storyguide characters take on increasingly significant roles, and common themes repeat themselves until it becomes clear that they're driving forces in the entire myth. Ideally, every part of the character's journey becomes something that can be looked back on as meaningful once the whole story has played out.

Of course, playing a game doesn't work the same way as authoring a novel. No one has control over every part of it. There will always be unresolved storylines and plot tangents that don't contribute anything to the overall arc. There will be times when carefully crafted plans fall apart because of a series of bad dice rolls. But unless the narrative has moved so far away from a player's intentions that the game has stopped being enjoyable for her, there's one vital thing to keep in mind: *Nearly every historical myth that hasn't been rewritten by later generations has the same issues.* There are always episodes that read as if someone dropped them into the story without paying any attention to what was going on around them. Having the occasional splintered edge makes a character's narrative more authentic to real-world mythologies, not less so.

For this reason, there's no need to try to plan stages before a character begins them. Once she has completed one, the player and Storyguide can take time to talk about where to go next. If the gaming group has several players whose characters are progressing along their own paths, they're unlikely to reach their goals at exactly the same time, so the Storyguide probably won't have to worry about handling requests from multiple players at once. It's worth spending time to make sure that everyone is comfortable with the direction they're going, so players should be willing to be patient.

The route that a character takes to Apotheosis can describe the genre that his player wants him to play out. The basic structure given above, for example, models a **coming**

**of age** story typical of heroic narratives: awareness of the larger adult World (Second Call); the putting away of the trappings of childhood (Parting); a period of self-discovery and experimentation with identity (Threshold); the sense of loss at being cut off from the security of familiar things (Descent); and the entry into mature life (Theophany). Put in a different order, however, it lends itself to vastly different stories.

- **Comic:** The comic arc starts at a low point, then rises steadily. By putting the Descent stage at the beginning, the player is saying that she wants her character to suffer great loss at the outset, then show his ability to triumph over them.
  - **Tragic:** Starting with the heroic victory of the successfully completing the Second Call, reworking the Threshold to be about self-doubt instead of playfulness, then following with the Parting and Descent sets the Demigod on a trajectory in which things continue to get worse until they end.
  - **Redemption:** A significant mistake with regard to the Fatebound Storyguide Character (SGC) in the Parting stage can drive the Demigod to spend the rest of his journey to Apotheosis trying to make amends. If the Parting involves him betraying or causing the death of the SGC, all the better.
  - **Metamorphosis:** The Threshold represents an opportunity for the Demigod to question who she wants to be and gives her the freedom to explore her choices. At the beginning of the journey, it represents a kind of undifferentiated being that she will gradually focus into a new identity as she advances.
- Divine patrons, creators, and parents know the instant their Scion completes the first Milestone, regardless of success or failure. How they react to the news depends on their personalities, the outcome of the Milestone, and whether they believe she's going to try to replace them. Indra, for example, is famously touchy about the existence of other Indras who might take his throne. The Loas as a group, on the other hand, are completely fine with the idea of a new Ogou or Ezili arising and welcome the latest one into the Pantheon alongside the rest. Whatever the parent's reaction, it will almost certainly be accompanied by a visit to check in on their offspring. Again, depending on the personality, the tone of the visit can range from concern to encouragement to warning.

When the visit occurs, the Demigod's player has the option to exchange their current Creature, Follower, Guide, and/or Relic Birthrights for new ones, keeping the total number of dots allocated to them the same. This represents the character's divine parent "re-arming" him for the struggles ahead now that he's had a taste of what he'll have to face.

## I DON'T WANT TO GO

Not every Deed a Demigod undertakes directly relates to the Milestones, but once a Scion answers the Second Call, opportunities to undertake the other Milestones will inevitably arise until the Scion sheds their mortality one way or another. They have decreed their intentions to Fate and the World, and they *will* be answered whether they regret their intentions or not. Nobody forces them onto this path. A character is free to remain a Hero for their entire life, or never to accept the Visitation at all and stay at the level of **Origin**.

There's no fixed rules that force your character to undergo one Milestone after another, other than the general structure of them. If a character is avoiding their destiny once they've declared it, Fate will punish them by endangering Fatebound characters, destroying aspects of their mortal life, or even physically harming the Scion when the ichor increasing within them causes their blood to turn toxic. Once they make the choice to become a Demigod, the rest of their life is short and probably painful.

If a player regrets their decision, the Storyguide has a little more trouble on their hands. Hopefully, before making the move to **Demigod**, the Storyguide has discussed the ramifications of a character's choice with the players, but people are bad at gauging their own reactions to things, and regret is a fickle thing. One way to handle this is to undertake some element of troupe play, allowing the player to play a similar but different character Fatebound to another player character while their old character goes on to other storied-but-less-stressful adventures. Another is engaging in one of the alternate story arcs, allowing a gentler rise to divinity for the character than is standard.

Remember that the point of playing **Scion**, or any other roleplaying game, is to have fun, explore your emotions, and kick some titanspawn ass. No amount of fidelity to rules-as-written for a fictional character's story arc is worth distress and harm to a non-fictional living person.

## TAKING ON A MANTLE

A Demigod who wants to adopt the Mantle of an existing God is choosing a dangerous path to Apotheosis. Even the safest route can mean a loss of his personality as it becomes one aspect of a vaster being, while trying to become the dominant form of that God risks complete destruction. Still, the thought of replacing a God, gaining her power and authority, being a *better* version of her is tempting to many Scions. Some of them, coaxed along by Fate, may not even realize it's the direction they are heading until they reach the final steps. At that point, their only choices are to succeed or die forever.

## UNDERSTANDING MANTLES IN SCION

Mantles are a metaphysical reflection of a legendary being's accumulated Deeds, Fatebindings, and identity. Because they do not have any direct equivalent in real-world mythologies or religions, it's up to the Storyguide to decide how aware Demigods and Gods are of how they work. Questions for the Storyguide to answer include:

- Do Gods see Mantles as aspects of a single being or as different, yet closely related, entities?
- Are Gods consciously aware of ways to weaken and steal Mantles, or do they only know that forcing another God to go against her Fate-ordained role makes her more vulnerable to harm?

- Do Gods know the relationship between attempting to achieve Apotheosis and the creation of a Mantle, or do they only see Demigods following the course that Fate sets out for them?

The answers to these questions differ from pantheon to pantheon. Some may not think about them at all, while for others they are secrets known only to a few Gods, and for still others they are common knowledge (but perhaps believed only to apply to that pantheon). For the Storyguide, it's important at least to consider answers so that if his players' characters go looking for advice on how to usurp a Mantle, he can decide whether there's any God who can provide an answer. The search for that advice can become an adventure all its own as a Demigod tries to win an audience with the wisest member of the pantheon (and perhaps to decipher whatever cryptic answer she offers).

## USURPATION, SHARING, AND SURRENDER

There are three ways to take on an existing Mantle, two of which come with significant risks and one still effectively removes a Scion from the game, even if successful. A player needn't decide which approach to take until she reaches the last Divine Deed of Apotheosis, the Theophany. At any point before then, she can also change course completely and try to create a Mantle of her own, but the further she progresses toward Apotheosis, the more difficult it becomes to break free of the current of Fate sweeping her to her end.

## GODS AS ANTAGONISTS: THE QUICK VERSION

For the purposes of **Demigod**, a Storyguide can treat a God as an Antagonist with the Avatar archetype who rolls all dice against target number 7, can perform Marvels associated with any of his Purviews, and can apply Scale 5 (or 6 for the most powerful members of a pantheon) to any actions appropriate to his Callings or Purviews. Performing Marvels or adding Scale costs one Tension. The Storyguide can add other Flairs and Qualities as she sees fit.

Regardless of which of the three approaches a Demigod takes to adopt a Mantle, one constant element is that he must re-enact the myths of the God along the way. The descriptions of each Milestone in the Apotheosis section (pp. 15-16) include advice for players and Storyguides on how to do this. Where they differ is in the outcome.

### USURPATION

The most violent way to adopt a Mantle is to separate it from its current holder. By walking in the footsteps of a God, a Demigod gradually puts herself in a position to convince Fate itself that she is worthy of taking on that God's role, but that's the easy part of the process. She must also work to dislodge the God's Mantle by weakening his ties to it, then — directly or indirectly — kill the God.

Demigods already feel greater effects if they ignore their Fatebindings than Heroes do. If Gods go against their Fate-ordained roles, they undermine the myths that shape their entire identities, which makes them vulnerable to having their Mantle stolen. A Demigod who wants to take advantage

of this weakness must put the God into a position where she has no choice but to act against her own purpose. The first way to do this is by engineering a situation that provokes a God into suffering a Failure Deed (**Hero**, p. 191) for one or more Callings, such as by making a Guardian betray the one he's sworn to protect or making a Judge abandon her beliefs. If the Demigod can do this, the effects are immediate: The God loses access to the corresponding Knacks and Titles for the rest of the episode. If he manages to orchestrate events to cause the God to lose *all three* of her Callings in the same episode, the God can no longer add Scale to her actions when the time comes to fight for her Mantle.

The second way is by attacking the God's Fatebindings and Birthrights. It is up to the Storyguide to determine exactly what these are, but they include significant Birthrights, close relationships, sacred places, or anything else that features strongly enough in the God's myths to be a defining part of them. For every connection that the Demigod destroys, whether by literally destroying it, stealing it, or subverting it so that it's no longer associated with



its original meaning, the God loses access to one Purview for the rest of the episode. Ambitious Scions should keep in mind that some of these Fatebindings involve beings who are powerful in and of themselves: yes, it's possible to weaken Loki by killing their children, but is it worth trying to take on Jörmungandr, Fenrir, and Hel herself for that advantage?

Once the Demigod has weakened the God through either or both means, all that remains is for the God to die in the Demigod's presence. She doesn't have to be the one to perform the actual killing, but if she is not physically there, the weakened Mantle will simply be cast adrift and attach itself to someone else at a later time. If the God escapes while still alive, he will return fully restored at the beginning of the next session. The challenger will have gained nothing but the impending anger of an entire pantheon, usually followed by swift destruction and his own incomplete Mantle being set free for another to claim in the future.

While it's the Storyguide's job to make the fight between the Demigod and the God genuinely challenging, she is also encouraged to keep it reasonably fair (differences in power aside). No player wants his struggle through Apotheosis to end with Erlang putting an arrow through his heart from the other side of the planet or Ītzpāpālōtl transporting him into the night sky to be devoured by Tzitzimime while keeping a safe distance herself. Assuming that the Scion hasn't already drawn the God out to fight by attacking his Fatebindings and Birthrights, she can call him into her general area by performing a major sacrifice and issuing a challenge; he will respond within the same scene.

Some Gods, of course, will not want to fight — doing so would go against their nature. While usurping Mantles is more commonly done by Demigods who thrive on war and conflict, it's still possible to take one without violence. In that case, the Demigod *must* strip the God of all three Callings in either of the two ways described in the previous section, within a single episode (2-3 game sessions), at which point she can remove the Mantle and claim it herself. The God, meanwhile, fights back by doing the exact same thing, maneuvering the Demigod into a position where she suffers a Failure Deed for her own Callings and working to destroy or subvert her Birthrights however possible. This approach may spill less blood, but it can be just as brutal on an emotional and psychological level as both sides see parts of themselves torn away. A wounded God who feels like the Demigod is a legitimate threat will likely offer to share his Mantle instead of risking losing everything.

However the battle plays out, if the Demigod is victorious, she takes on the God's Mantle and becomes the dominant persona of that God. When mortals tell stories about the battle, the stories won't reflect what actually happened; they might not even notice immediately, although they may become aware of some sort of shift in personality afterward. What they will see instead — if they see anything — is

that some enemy rose up to challenge one of the Gods, and when the dust settled, the God was the one still standing.

As for the defeated God, loss of the Mantle does not necessarily mean that he is gone forever. The Nemetondevos escaped complete destruction, even though it's taken an exceptionally long time for them to patch together the scraps of their Mantles through several lifetimes as Scions. A God who already possesses multiple Mantles can flee into one of her other ones when the primary one is taken, losing her standing in the pantheon and having to accept a subservient role to the new Mantle-holder. Or the God could immediately be reborn as his own pre-Visitation Scion, possessing only a dim memory of who he once was, ready to begin the climb to Apotheosis all over again to take back his Mantle. This is, in fact, a prime cause of many Incarnate Scions.

## SHARING

Some Demigods (and some players) don't want to take a Mantle by force. If her relationship with her divine parent isn't antagonistic, why would she even consider it? Even if it is, the prospect of standing face to face against such formidable powers is enough to make many Demigods look for a more diplomatic solution. That's where the choice to share Mantles comes in.

A God can voluntarily give one of his Mantles to a Demigod who completes the Theophany Milestone of Apotheosis. In that case, the Deed associated with the Milestone must be one that re-creates a myth that the God considers a core part of his identity. It's up to the player and Storyguide to agree which myth that is and what steps are necessary to repeat it, but it should be one that highlights the defining qualities of the God in question. (Think of it as the story that would be included in a real-world dictionary of mythology; if a writer only has one or two paragraphs to describe a God, then this myth is the one that would be included.) If she carries out the task successfully, she earns a shared Mantle. Areius, Scion of Zeus but favored of Ares, becomes Zeus Areius.

Why would a God agree to this? In some cases, it's a strategic move to avoid being overthrown and to keep an eye on potential future challengers. Phobos and Deimos, sons of Ares, hold two of their father's lesser Mantles for now, but both still intend to reach for the name of Ares when the time is right. He knows the day will come when they're no longer content with their stations, but sharing power allows him to focus on what he considers more immediate problems.

Thor, on the other hand, chose to name the Scions who became Magni, Modī, and Thruðr as his children after they reached similar heights of power, but not out of fear for his position. He knows death will come for him, and so has been preparing all three of them to take his place. Only one will become Thor, but if he's learned one thing from Odin over the centuries, it's that it's always good to have a contingency plan.

Then there's Brigid and her sisters, who have had Mantles as God of healing, poetry, and smithcraft for over 1,000 years, all of whom are simply known as "Brigid" and none of whom may have originally been the daughter of the Dagda who stood with the Tuatha Dé Danann against the Fomorians long before that. A Demigod who wants to share power with her will become yet another Brigid, even though mortals will insist that there are only three of them at any given time.

Sharing a Mantle has the advantage of offering some flexibility to the Demigod who acquires it. He can choose to keep either one Calling or two Purviews that don't match the God's and that now represent the focus of his own role. When he later produces his own Scions, they can choose to take on those Callings and Purviews instead of the ones belonging to the dominant Mantle holder. Cults that arise to worship the God in the aspect of the shared Mantle may even become more popular than the original one if he offers something to them that the other God does not. If, for example, he keeps access to Fertility or Health Purviews, he will draw worshipers in need of those blessings. With enough time and patience, his cult may eclipse that of the original.

The main disadvantage of sharing a Mantle is that whatever has been given can be taken back. If a God decides to withdraw her Mantle from the one she's given it to, she takes his identity and history of Deeds with it, absorbing them all into herself. The World is full of temple inscriptions commemorating regional variations on Gods who have been otherwise forgotten, Gods whose myths are no longer distinct from the one whose Mantle they once shared. If anyone asks a local devotee who Apollo Epicurius is, he might remember that Apollo once did *something* there, but it was a long time ago and no one remembers exactly what it was.

## SURRENDER

Few Demigods, having gone through the challenges on the way to Apotheosis, opt for the third way to achieve it. It involves coming face to face with the God whose myths she has emulated and, instead of fighting to take a Mantle or bargaining to share it, she acknowledges that she is nothing more than one aspect of the God's greater identity and voluntarily allows herself to be absorbed into that identity. All the Deeds she has performed until then become part of the God's Mantle. When she is remembered, it is as a manifestation of the God, not an individual Hero or Demigod. It's rare, but it has happened, like with Enyalius and Ares.

So long as he has echoed the God's myth throughout his Apotheosis, there is no chance that choosing surrender as the outcome will fail. It does, however, require that the Demigod reach the Theophany with the same Callings as the God she is emulating and that she does not possess any Purviews that the God does not. If either of these is not the case, he can only try to usurp or share a Mantle.

On a character level, choosing this option represents an epiphany on the Demigod's part about a fundamental

unity of the divine and an acceptance of his place in that unity. As such, it's usually applicable to pantheons that believe that there is a single force behind all the aspects of divinity — notably the Devá, Netjer, and Teōtl, although the mystical traditions in others can lead a Demigod to the same conclusion. If the Demigod is the sort of character who repeats the myths of her divine parent as a form of deliberate devotion, surrender during the Theophany is a natural outcome.

For a player, making surrender the outcome of Apotheosis is a way to retire a character whom he feels has reached the end of her story. It's a way of avoiding the conflicts that come with the Theophany, a way of being assured of success, but at the cost of never playing that character again. On the positive side, any of her Birthrights can become associated with the God, so that another Scion of the same God can take them up in the future and other players in the game will know the reason why.

# IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF THE GODS

A Demigod who intends to take the Mantle of another God by re-enacting that God's myth follows the journey to Apotheosis in the same way as one who's building a myth of their own. At each stage, they face the same kind of Milestones, with the difference being that it's up to the player and Storyguide to find existing myths to represent the thematic challenges associated with those Milestones. That can be a challenge in and of itself, depending on how much material is readily available, so here's some advice.

**Don't Worry About Story Order:** Readers can interpret stories as parts of a human being's progress from childhood to maturity, with the Milestones as significant rites of passage along the way. They needn't be, especially given how hard it can be to work out what some Gods were doing in different phases of their lives. What did Thor do as a child? Did Huitzilopochtli have an awkward teen phase? No one knows, either because those aspects of their myths weren't considered important enough to record anywhere, or because the people recording them didn't think of their Gods growing up the way that mortals do. In the sections covering the stages, there are suggestions on how to interpret them that don't involve treating them as parts of the lifecycle.

**There Doesn't Have to Be Homework:** If a player doesn't have access to any decided research mechanisms, if he's looked but can't find enough material, if he doesn't have time, or just doesn't feel like turning a roleplaying game into a research project, *that's okay*. The descriptions of Gods and pantheons in **Scion** already have parts that the writers made up to imagine how those things would appear in the World; a few more aren't going to break anything. Instead of relying on outside sources, the player and Storyguide can have a conversation about what one of those missing myths might look like in its original cultural



context, based on what they know already. In other words, tell a new myth that *feels* like it would fit in with the existing ones and agree that it is (and has always been) part of the original God's story.

**... But There Can Be:** For some pantheons, there are extensive and readily available bodies of mythological stories for players to draw on as inspiration. For others, it can be difficult to track down more than a few paragraphs, if that. All that players need to do is to find five myths that hit the major themes of the stages. The writers of **Scion** aren't going to be disappointed if someone gets that information from online encyclopedias, but if a player has access to libraries, research databases, academics, or members of the cultures whose religious figures are depicted in the game, she should by all means take advantage of those resources.

**Watch Your Step:** There are parts of all historical mythologies that are alien to modern readers. Some of the Gods act in ways that are abusive to others. Some of them react with extreme violence to incidents that most people would shrug off as mild annoyances. Following in the footsteps of the Gods doesn't mean that players or Storyguides must revisit these same myths in the same ways, especially if they have the potential to make anyone involved uncomfortable. If there's a choice to make between fidelity to the original sources and the enjoyment of everyone at the table, enjoyment always comes first.

At the same time, when dealing with figures from religious traditions with adherents in the real world, the advice from **Hero** to treat their stories with respect still applies. While the portrayal of mythological characters can

appear inconsistent from an outsider's point of view, especially if they are grounded in an unfamiliar culture, that doesn't mean that insiders would see them the same way. They have had access to the same stories for a long time and have certainly both noticed and addressed the issues that outsiders spot. Start with the insider's perspective (or, even better, several insiders' perspectives) to understand what these sacred stories mean.

## FALLEN HEROES

Gilgamesh was two-thirds divine, ruled as a king, fought monsters, and went on a quest to achieve immortality. He did everything a Demigod must to become a God, but still failed in the end, and now his unfinished Mantle waits for others to complete his Apotheosis. He's far from the only Hero or Demigod to end their own myth by dying, but he's the best example of a Scion who nearly reached the end of their journey but never finished. Fortunately, it's possible for another Demigod to try to fix the mistakes of the past.

If a player wants her character to claim the incomplete Mantle of a Demigod, she and the Storyguide must agree that the figure in question is someone whose Deeds were sufficient to create one in the first place. The heroes of fairy and folk tales remembered for just one story probably never reached the point of developing a Mantle, no matter how otherworldly their adventures. "Jack and the Beanstalk" might *inspire* a giant-slaying Demigod, but Jack was never a Demigod himself. King Arthur as the strictly British warlord who fought monsters and gathered a court of Heroes

## IN-CHARACTER RESEARCH

A Scion deliberately trying to emulate the myths of a God during his Apotheosis needs better resources than a quick internet search. Details matter, and the most vital details typically don't make it into webpages of "Ten Awesome Stories About the Manitou." The process for gathering this information is the same as for a Procedural scene (**Origin**, p. 73-75), including the option to apply Stunts to rolls.

Use Academics for the roll if the character is using scholarly sources, historical accounts, or secondary analyses of texts. Use Occult to interpret inspired material (e.g., something revealed in a dream or announced by a prophet of the God in question) or esoteric teachings. Use Culture to represent learning about myths by participating in rituals or speaking with religious specialists. The Storyguide should apply Complications if the character does not have direct access to a substantial and reputable source for any of these, with the effect of the Complication being that the research will take much more time to accomplish.

progressed further, while the Arthur crowned emperor of Rome in *Le Morte d'Arthur* died much closer to Apotheosis.

Coming to an agreement on how close the previous Mantle holder came to achieving Apotheosis requires the player to do the same kind of research suggested for someone following the path of a God: Find resources and map significant points in the Demigod's life onto the five stages. If he can find two or three points of comparison (excluding the Theophany), it's enough. The rest remain undetermined and play out as new additions to the mythic corpus.

Following the path of a failed Demigod is the same as following that of a God, up to a point. The Scion echoes the Demigod's myth through as many stages of Apotheosis as she originally managed to complete, but when he reaches the challenge that the original failed, it's up to him to succeed. For a Demigod like Gilgamesh, that point would come very close to the end, since his voyage to the edge of the World to seek out Utnapishtim is essentially a version of the Descent stage, and there would only be one final Deed to complete.

Unless the Milestone that caused the original Demigod to fail is the Theophany, however, succeeding doesn't mean reaching Apotheosis. Instead, it means that she is now forging a myth of her own, just like a Scion who tries to form their own Mantle from the beginning. She continues through the remaining stages, but now without any guidance or restriction from the past. Because her Mantle comprised her accumulated Deeds, the coming challenges are still shaped by her past actions and therefore by the original Demigod's.

## TRUE CALLINGS

A Scion's three Callings represent aspects of their identity at an archetypal level, and on the journey to Godhood, they

become the framework upon which Demigods build their myths. While it can be tempting for a Demigod to neglect their Callings in favor of the more spectacular power offered by their Purviews, taking that route leads to becoming a Titan, not a God. Embodying the Callings is what keeps a would-be God rooted in the World and connected to mortals.

A major part of the myth-making journey of Apotheosis involves honing the Scion's identity with respect to their Callings. There is room along the way for them to be questioned and changed, but after a certain point, they're fixed in place forever. A Scion who plans to become a new Thor must, eventually, end up as a Guardian, Leader, and Warrior. He may stress different aspects in ways that another Thor does not, but that combination becomes a lasting part of who he is as a God.

Practically speaking, to embody the Callings through myths and Deeds means two things. First, it means living out stories that reveal new ideas of what it means to be attached to those Callings: A Lover's myths focus on themes of devotion, passion, and human relationships of all kinds, while a Warrior's myths are about struggle, conflict, and conquest. A Scion who is both sees her different sides play against each other, as if Fate were testing to see which one is more important to her.

Second, for three of the stages of the journey — the Second Call, Parting, and Descent — the player must choose one of his character's three Callings to be the focus, with a different focus for each stage. For the Second Call, the choice decides which of the character's titles the outcome will affect. For the Parting, it determines the Fatebinding role of the SGC involved. For the Descent, it decides the goal that the Demigod intends to carry out.

## VARIANT MANTLES

If taking on the same three Callings as an existing God feels too restrictive, remember that Gods can have many Mantles. If there's an existing mythological version of a God that seems like it would have a different Calling than one of the usual three, a player can treat it as a Mantle and choose to take it instead.

## MEANINGFUL CREATIONS

The Immortal Creator Knack, Molded from Clay (p. 149), allows a Demigod to create a new being or species with minimal effort, but it's not enough just to *make* one in order to become a God. The creature has to have a meaningful place in the World: a relationship to its environment or culture, an allegorical significance that makes it emblematic of the Creator's nature, or a part to play in the Deeds of an important Hero. Creating a flock of venomous sheep is amusing, but ultimately meaningless. Creating the Minotaur, a race of talking monkeys with their own society, or a tree whose apples grant immortality are examples of the degree of importance that a Creator should strive for.

It's worthwhile to review the general description of the Callings in **Hero**, p. 192-95, especially the parts about Failure and Adoption Deeds; those offer ready-made points at which to test a character's adherence to the concepts of their Callings. To further help players and Storyguides craft plots around a character's Callings, here are some more questions and ideas to consider for each of them:

- **Creator:** A Creator answers challenges by adding new elements to the environment rather than accepting the World as it exists. When people are hungry, he creates a new source of food. When they have no home, he makes one for them. The primary question for a Creator to answer over the course of her journey is *what can I make that no one has ever made before?* That question, in turn, can lead to others. What relationship does a Creator have to her creation? If it's something put into the hands of mortals, is she obliged to see them use it well? If it's a new species, are they her children, her pets, her playthings, or something else? If it's a place, does she treat it as sacred to her or is it the same as any other part of the World?

• **Guardian:** To be a Guardian is to decide that some parts of the World must be kept safe from whatever would harm them. Because it's a choice what to defend, it's difficult to imagine a Guardian who is completely indifferent to the thing or people under his protection, so the question to answer is: *What makes my chosen charge worth fighting for?* Why these people and not others? Why this place and not that one? Why this one ideal or value? In addition, inherent in the role is the idea that there is some constant threat to the charge's existence. What is it? Is it something that can ever truly be beaten, and if not, what sacrifices are worth making to hold it back?

• **Healer:** The role of the Healer is, like the Guardian, primarily reactive. In this case, the threat is harm, sickness, and death; the ones under her protection can include every living thing in the World. Facing obstacles through the eyes of this Calling means looking at a situation in which people are fundamentally in pain and finding a way to ease their suffering. The Healer's question is: *What ails the World and how can I heal it?* Healers face issues of theodicy



more than most other Callings: With power over life and death, why haven't they rid the World of all diseases yet? Why isn't everyone immortal? Why did they bring one person back from death but leave millions of others in their graves? How do they answer their devotees who demand answers to those questions?

- **Hunter:** Every Hunter needs prey and builds his myth either by embracing the thrill of chasing one thing after another forever or by choosing one ultimate target and taking it down. Unlike a Warrior, he defines himself by the pursuit, not the final confrontation. *What are you chasing?* Is it something that can ever even be captured, and if not, does that matter? Why is the hunt so important to him? What relationship does he have with his prey? Is it something to be respected (even though it must eventually die) or is it more like an enemy?
- **Judge:** Judges, Leaders, and Sages are figures most suited to being immortalized as the founders of religious and cultural traditions but approach the role in different ways. Judges and Leaders represent authority, but where a Leader may act as the model of a new way of living in the World, a Judge may simply enforce the rules already in place. Judges and Sages can both show mortals better ways to understand their place in the World, but it's more likely the Sage who offers a novel solution to problems. So, the question for the Judge is a dual one: *What rules are you upholding, and what gives you the authority to do that?* Overcoming challenges as a Judge, unsurprisingly, means delivering and upholding judgments that last. Is the Scion a negotiator who finds a peaceful balance that others agree to, or a strict lawgiver who enforces decisions by punishing those who ignore them? Are her judgments based on human-focused ideas of justice or on a cosmic order that mortals can never completely understand?
- **Leader:** For a Leader to lead, someone else must follow. Lone wolf Scions can never represent the Calling powerfully enough to let it carry them to Apotheosis for the simple reason that it relies on the support of others to manifest fully. At some point, a Leader must come up against an obstacle that he cannot conquer on his own, recognize that he needs others, and rally their support. *Why should anyone accept your leadership?* Have the Scion's Deeds been so inspirational that others are drawn to her? How far does her authority extend? Does she claim a group of people as her own and rule over them or is the whole World hers? What will happen if her leadership ends, and what could end it?
- **Liminal:** Fittingly, the role of a Liminal Demigod is not quite one thing, not quite another. He explores and discovers but doesn't necessarily create anything. He defies some social conventions by being on the margins but isn't trying to overthrow the entire system. If a Creator solves problems by adding new features to the World, a Liminal figure does so by creating pathways between parts that already exist. The question to answer is: *What connections can I make that no one else has?* A Liminal Demigod who is an explorer or traveler not only has to find new things but open the way for others to follow. At that point, does she guard the gate between one side and another to control what passes through, or focus on ensuring that the journey itself is safe?
- **Lover:** Overcoming hardship through the power of love is a trope so ingrained in modern media that it's become a cliché, but it's still what the Lover does. What separates a divine Lover from the protagonist of an ordinary romantic novel is that his myth represents a particular form of love to a degree that makes it the model for others to follow. *Why is your love story different from all the others that came before it?* Does the Lover's story teach mortals a way to love others that they didn't acknowledge before? Does it reinforce the norms of society or subvert them? Is it something that anyone can emulate, or is it reserved for only a few?
- **Sage:** A Sage responds to challenges by demonstrating that she knows something that others do not and can put that knowledge to use. She might be the founder of a new religious or philosophical movement that changes the course of history. She might just as easily be a keeper of secrets and prophecies who shares her wisdom only with those she considers worthy. In either case, the question for the Sage is: *What do you know that makes your wisdom so important to the World?* Is the character's purpose to be a teacher, and if so, what does he teach? In a World of Gods, why should anyone listen to him instead of someone else? Does it even matter, or is he more of a conduit for knowledge and truth in general without any interest in how it's used?
- **Trickster:** When in doubt about how to face a difficult situation, a Trickster can always break something. There doesn't have to be a plan to put anything else in its place afterward or to consider the consequences at all. The only thing that's important is to remind everyone that some significant part of the larger scheme of the World can fall to pieces at any time. For a Trickster pursuing Apotheosis, this leads naturally to the question: *What damage can I do that will change the most things around me?* Does she cheat and lie when everyone around her is honorable to remind them how fragile social bonds can be? Does she steal something from the Gods and give it to mortals to show that no one is all-powerful? Does she spoil a gift the Gods offered over willingly to teach humans not to rely on divine help for everything? Does she find some key piece of the fabric of the World itself and destroy it just to see what happens next?

- **Warrior:** For the Warrior, there is no problem that cannot be conquered through the application of enough violence. The main difference between Demigods and Gods of this Calling is not their methods, but the scope of the enemy they fight to defeat. Some of them battle Titans or world-devouring serpents while others face endless armies of lesser foes, but either way, they define themselves by their ability to win. To become a God, a Warrior must answer the question: *What will be my greatest battle?* What can he defeat that no one else can? What can he conquer that has never been conquered? And when that battle is over, is it important to him what happens next, or is it all for the sake of being able to say that he was the victor?

## FATE AND FORESHADOWING

The heroes of the *Mahabharata* go through many short adventures on their way to the epic Kurukshetra War. Small kindnesses win them the promise of help when they most need it, and mistakes or immoral actions lead to prophecies of doom. When a Demigod begins the journey to Apotheosis, Fate doesn't necessarily keep a scorecard of good and bad deeds, but it does remember what lessons she has learned along the way.

Everything on the Demigod's journey leads to the Theophany, the end of her mortal existence and final Milestone before Apotheosis. Each stage of the journey before that one comes with consequences that only manifest completely during Theophany.

## THE SECOND CALL

A Hero's first call to adventure is familiar to anyone who's watched movies or read literature that uses the Campbellian hero's journey as a model. Something happens in the Hero's otherwise ordinary life to force her, even if she resists, to step into the larger World in response. Everything after that — adventure, danger, victories, setbacks — follows from that one decision. When the story concludes, the Hero may be changed, but isn't necessarily transformed into a different kind of being. Afterward, other stories may begin, play themselves out, and end on the same relative level, over and over; or the Hero reaches a conclusion, happy or tragic, that marks his end as a force in the larger World.

The Second Call is more ambitious. In a way, it's like the sequel to an action movie: The hero of the movie is better prepared and more experienced, so her enemies and the scale of her story have to rise to an appropriate level. At the same time, a good sequel carries themes and character development from the first movie, adds depth to its setting, and introduces new twists. A Demigod's Second Call echoes the earliest one that the Demigod faced, either in her own life or in the myth of the God she's emulating. It's meant as a way for her to pause, reflect on the journey so far, and think about whether she's ready to face what lies ahead.

If the player has kept track of Long-term Deeds that she's completed through her character's history, the Milestone involves a reimagined version of that same Deed. (If she hasn't, but still remembers roughly what it was, that's good enough.) It should have the same tone and the same general parameters. If using the advice to include thematic keywords for Deeds (**Origin**, pp. 94-95), it can remain the same if the character's motivations have followed a steady trajectory so far, or it can be different to signal the ways that she's changed since he became a Hero.

Reimagining the Scion's first Deed in the form of the Second Call means more than upgrading enemies from Hero-tier to Demigod-tier. It's not a step-by-step replay of the original plot on a higher difficulty level. Instead, it uses elements of that plot to anchor it as a narrative while differing in scope and impact.

In terms of *scope*, the Second Call involves a broader part of the mortal and immortal World. By this point, a Hero has probably already encountered rival Scions and powerful Antagonists. She may have visited hidden realms or at least traveled around the World to face mundane and supernatural threats. This is the time to push her past what she's faced before and to bring her directly into contact with features of the World that have, before now, only been at the margins.

Rhiannon Jernigan, Scion of Brigid, began her Heroic life with the long-term Deed "Find out why my ex's new girlfriend disappeared and where she went." It seemed ordinary enough at first — either give her ex some closure by getting a clear answer to what happened or find a way to reunite them — but soon led to encounters with hostile Aos Sí near Boston who were abducting mortals and, eventually, to a confrontation with one of their lords, Aillén the Burner, on Samhain. Nothing Rhiannon did involved going far away from the city. The battle with Aillén took place at the gates of one of the local sídhe mounds, but she and her Band only crossed into it long enough to see her enemy's hall and free his captives.

When Rhiannon's player declares her intention for Rhiannon to pursue Apotheosis at Legend 5, she chooses *Guardian* as the Calling to be the focus for the Second Call Milestone. The Storyguide decides to bring Aillén back as the first primary antagonist, but also to add other Aos Sí and more involvement in their labyrinthine political schemes to match her increased powers. Furthermore, the player and Storyguide agree to have a divine adversary working to thwart Rhiannon's progress throughout Apotheosis, but for the Storyguide to keep the identity of this enemy secret until Rhiannon uncovers it. The Storyguide settles on Bres, who was once married to Brigid and is the father of their Fomorian-allied son, Ruadán.

The *impact* of the Second Call and the Demigod's reaction to it means its potential to change the World in a lasting way. If a Hero fails to accomplish a Deed, it's a setback that can shake his confidence in himself and that will have some consequences for those around him. If a Demigod fails, it's both a direct attack on his growing Mantle and something that leaves its mark on the World. He loses a game of chess and Cairo disappears into a Terra Incognita for 100 years. He fails to negotiate a peace treaty and becomes responsible for a war between rakshasas and yakshas that devastates a region of India.

The rules for Collateral (p. 143) and Dominion (p. 154) effects highlight how much more potential there is for altering the World when a Demigod is involved. Playing out the Second Call is the first time that those rules go into effect, which means that it's the first time for players to understand what kinds of actions their characters can take that will have massive unintended consequences.

*Like many of the Aos Sí, Aillén is fixed in his ways. He lulls people to sleep with enchanting music, steals mortals that catch his eye, and sets places on fire. He's done it for centuries and, despite being defeated occasionally, isn't about to change his ways. When he gets his hands on a Relic called the Head of Balor, though, his capability for destruction multiplies enormously. With that, so does his appetite for capturing mortals and his influence among the other Aos Sí.*

*It's not Rhiannon's ex-girlfriend who comes to her for help this time, but Áine, daughter of Manannán mac Lir. Aillén has already started to terrorize the people of the sídhe so much that they're calling him "the second Balor," and since Rhiannon was the one who stopped him most recently, Áine asks her to fight him again. Doing so will mean traveling to Ireland to find a way to overcome the power of the Head of Balor, learning its secrets by visiting the Fomorian's old home on Tory Island and the battlefield of Mag Tuiredh, and contacting a reincarnation of Fionn mac Cumhal, the Hero who first bested Aillén centuries ago. If she fails, Aillén will turn the gaze of the Head on everything Rhiannon holds dear.*

For a Scion who plans to take on the Mantle of an existing God or failed Demigod, the general form of the Milestone is the same: succeed at a Divine Deed. In this case, the Deed is one that calls back to an early myth of the Demigod or God in question, but the other advice about choosing an appropriate scope and degree of impact applies. Even if the original one was modest in terms of its importance, it's up to the Storyguide to raise the stakes appropriately.

On the evening of the day that Hermes was born, he stole Apollo's cattle, convinced the only witness not to tell anyone (unsuccessfully in some versions of the story), then

sacrificed two of them to himself. When Apollo accused him of the theft, he denied everything, agreed to help the other God find them, and eventually offered to trade the lyre (that he'd invented that morning) for them when they found the herd. On its own, it's a good story to illustrate Hermes' character and his relationship with his fellow Theoi, with the explanation for the origin of the lyre as a bonus. The greatest danger that he faces is Apollo threatening to tie him up and send him to Tartarus unless he gives back what he's stolen, and even that turns out to be fairly harmless. (Trying to tie up a God of trickery is — surprise — difficult.)

If Timothy, Demigod Scion of Hermes, wants to become the new Hermes, he doesn't necessarily have to steal Apollo's cattle, but he has to orchestrate a similarly audacious theft from the Sun God or one of his more powerful Scions. The major elements of the plot must be the same:

- Commit the theft while covering his tracks
- Persuade witnesses not to tell Apollo who's responsible (success optional)
- Offer up some of what was stolen as a sacrifice to Hermes
- Get caught and brought before the Theoi for judgment without admitting guilt
- Help Apollo retrieve the stolen goods
- Convince Apollo to trade them for something else belonging to Timothy

Timothy faces the real possibility of being dragged off to Tartarus if anything goes wrong with any phase of the plan. Even if he eventually escapes, he won't be known as the Demigod Who Stole from Apollo. He'll be known as the Demigod Who Got Caught Stealing from Apollo. His failure becomes part of his myth, making it more difficult for him to attempt anything similar in the future and complicating his efforts to walk in his father's footsteps.

## SUCCESS

The player can add an additional subject to any one of her character's Titles (**Hero**, pp. 191-92) to refer to her successful passing of the Milestone. Rhiannon, for example, could change her title of "Shelter Against Fire" to "Shelter Against Fire and Devastation." The Calling-related keywords remain the same, but the general effect of the change of title should be to expand the subjects to which they apply. Both subjects should have a clear symbolic or poetic connection. (As a rule of thumb, the second subject should be one that would fall under the same Purview as the first, so "Master of Hounds and Falcons" is fine, but "Lord of Blades and Rivers" would require some justification.)

## FAILURE

Failing the Divine Deed doesn't necessarily mean the end of a Demigod's journey. Her player can choose a new Divine Deed based on the next part of her history or devise

another one that explicitly addresses the consequences of the failure and try again.

The player must, however, qualify one of his character's existing Legendary Titles to refer to the failure. Instead of adding a second subject, he limits the application of an existing subject: Rhiannon is no longer "Shelter Against Fire," but "Shelter Against Mortal Fire," losing the ability to invoke the Title against supernatural sources.

If, on the second attempt, the character succeeds, the player can choose either to remove the qualifier or add an additional subject to a different Title.

## FORESHADOWING

The Storyguide chooses one Antagonist from the Second Call to be an enemy throughout the rest of the journey, either directly or indirectly. If a primary adversary who would fit that role is killed or otherwise removed as a threat, then it's taken up by someone of equal power — a family member, lover, devotee, or ally who is out for revenge. If the plot arc of the Second Call doesn't involve any adversarial relationships, then the new enemy is a rival whose story runs parallel to the Demigod's but will eventually lead the two to clash.

How active the fated enemy is during the rest of the Demigod's journey is up to the Storyguide, but he will always make an appearance for the Theophany.

## THE PARTING

The Second Call is an invitation for a Demigod to experience the World in a new way and with greater power. The Parting is the reminder that the World also expects much more in return for that power — more specifically, that Fate does. At this point in the journey, Demigods still have strong links to the lives of mortals but must prepare themselves for a future in which those lives are destined to play a much smaller part.

The more potent Fatebindings of Demigods (p. 146) are the instruments that Fate uses to guide Scions to this understanding. The Milestone for the Parting stage requires a character to build up a new Fatebinding to Strength 5, then resolve it. It has to be a new Fatebinding (with a role chosen from one of the Scion's Callings), but it can either be with an established SGC or with a new one introduced for the purpose. This bond doesn't count against the maximum number of Fatebindings a character can have. Each time it is Invoked, the Strength increases by one automatically at the beginning of the next session. The resolution must take a form that removes the SGC from play permanently. Finally, unlike standard Fatebindings for Demigods, the Fatebinding for the Parting Milestone is restricted to SGCs only and must involve someone of Demigod-tier or lower.

Unlike the Second Call, the Parting stage isn't structured around a set of actions that the Demigod must take to succeed. Because of the way that Fatebindings work in **Scion**, the unfolding of their progress is more reactive: A character draws upon them to respond more effectively to

some outside force, increasing their strength while relying upon the steadily growing benefits that they provide.

But even though the Storyguide can let this stage play out without designing stories specifically around it, she still has work to do to make it feel properly epic. The Fatebound SGC is the Demigod's Patroclus, his Enkidu, the character whose relationship with him will drive major decisions that he makes for the rest of his life. It must be someone with rich enough characterization to make her eventual (and inevitable) removal from play meaningful. Creating that character requires the Storyguide and player to work together, keeping these ideas in mind:

**The Double:** The Fatebound SGC in this stage is, whether he plays a helpful or adversarial role, meant to reveal who the Demigod is as a character by filling out parts of her persona. If she is reserved and calculating, he is passionate and reckless. If she is morally ambiguous, he is honest and loyal. That doesn't mean that he should be a mirror-image of the character in every respect, though. Instead, the player should think about what aspects of his character he wants to highlight, use those to shape the personality of the SGC, and let the rest either develop on their own or resemble the Demigod's.

In the case of a hostile bond (e.g., Nemesis or Rival), the Fatebound SGC's personality and motivations reflect the kind of person that the Demigod could be if her life had been only slightly different. Because the SGC isn't someone whose power matches the Demigod's, motivations like envy, jealousy, or anger that the Gods chose *her* to be a Scion instead of him are all viable choices.

SGCs whose relationships complicate the Demigod's life accidentally (e.g., Apprentice or Jinx) push him to be his best by overcoming a series of increasingly difficult obstacles. Because they tend to be magnets for trouble, they represent a lingering vulnerability in the midst of superhuman feats of strength. If he wants to pass the Milestone of this stage, he must ensure that they stay alive long enough for the Fatebinding to reach its conclusion. What sort of person would he go through that much effort for?

Bonds of devotion (e.g., Boon Companion or Paramour) work best with complementary personalities that nevertheless emphasize the Demigod's best qualities. Even though the SGC is a secondary character, he should possess traits that the Demigod can admire and respect. Although her player knows that the relationship is doomed to end, the best SGC for this relationship is one that the character could genuinely believe will be a part of his life forever.

**Calling and Role:** Each Calling in **Hero** has its associated Fatebinding roles. The kinds of people that Fate puts in the path of Demigods in the Parting stage are the ones who will test or strengthen her connection to the part of her identity that Calling represents. There are two main directions to take when deciding which Calling to draw on for the SGC's role, both based on the idea that the

resolution of the Fatebinding is going to involve a Failure Deed for that Calling.

The player can choose the Calling that his character relies on most heavily, and by doing so, decide that this part of the journey is going to be a serious test of her commitment to it. If her Boon Companion dies, does it make her reconsider whether she is truly a Warrior? If she loses her Apprentice, what does that mean for the value of the wisdom she teaches as a Sage? Even though the identity crisis that follows the Milestone doesn't necessarily mean a permanent change of Callings, selecting this option is an invitation to the Storyguide to challenge it directly.

On the other hand, if the player chooses a Calling that he doesn't feel a strong connection to for his character, this stage is an opportunity to explore different approaches that resonate better. A Demigod with the Lover Calling might realize that what she genuinely enjoys is manipulating the emotions of the people around him, so maybe she's more of a Trickster. Maybe a Judge who metes out harsh punishments is better suited as a Warrior. In this case, it's up to the Storyguide to set up situations in which new ways of solving problems can help the player decide whether the time has come to shed that part of his character's identity so that she can grow into a fuller version of herself.

*After passing the first Milestone, Rhiannon's player decides to focus on her character's Healer Calling for the Parting and chooses Canary for the Fatebinding role. After some discussion, the Storyguide introduces Dr. Vincenzo Gentile, a Boston surgeon whose altruism and confidence in his own abilities mean that he's quick to arrive on the scene in the aftermath of titanspawn attacks or that he volunteers to treat Denizens of all kinds when they are injured. Well-meaning but frankly out of his league most of the time, he and Rhiannon begin to cross paths more often.*

*Keeping Dr. Gentile alive long enough to resolve the Fatebinding at its full strength soon becomes a full-time task. Over the next several sessions of the game, he is bitten by a venomous snake intended for Rhiannon, lured away (twice!) by a charming Aos Sí, and nearly crushed when he refuses to leave a patient during an earthquake. Rhiannon wouldn't say that she grows to like him any more during these episodes, either. She develops a grudging respect for his dedication but will never let him forget that he keeps walking into the same traps.*

*All the while, she and her Band carry on with other adventures and the Fatebinding increases in strength. Eventually, during a lull in the action, Rhiannon and the doctor meet again to talk about what drives him to put himself in danger so often for others. He tells her about his life in Boston, about the brother he idolized who was brought into the hospital one evening, who he couldn't save. A moment later, there's an*

*explosion that stuns the Demigod. The next thing she sees is the absurd mortal standing up to put himself between her and a titanspawn. It's the last thing Dr. Gentile ever does, the Milestone is complete, and Rhiannon loses her Healer Calling.*

## SUCCESS

A Demigod succeeds at this stage by resolving the Fatebinding at Strength 5 in a way that removes the Fatebound SGC from play for the rest of the Demigod's career. Iolaus, nephew and charioteer of Heracles, helps him complete the Twelve Labors but has little or no involvement in his story after that point. Myths are full of lovers, companions, and enemies who simply disappear from the narrative when their chapter is over, no matter how vital they seemed to be at the time.

In addition to the usual results of resolving the Fatebinding (completing a Deed, suffering a Calling Failure Deed), successfully completing the Parting replenishes the Demigod's Legend completely. If she is already at maximum Legend, she can immediately perform a Boon or Marvel with Scale equal to half her Legend score, rounded down.

## FAILURE

If the SGC dies before the Fatebinding is properly resolved, the character is considered to have failed this stage. He suffers a Failure Deed for the appropriate Calling. If he tries the stage again, he must select a Fatebinding from a different Calling.

## FORESHADOWING

Even after the Fatebinding is complete, its lessons linger. When the Demigod enters the Theophany stage, she can Invoke the Fatebinding at Strength 5 one final time at a cost of one Legend. If the Fatebinding is one that normally requires the Fatebound SGC to be present, the Demigod can designate another character to play that part for that single action. This can even apply to other players' characters, but only if they agree to it.

## THE THRESHOLD

In traditional rites of passage, there's often a midpoint when the participants no longer belong to the social group they did when they started but haven't fully become the people they are meant to become. In this phase, they're given freedom from the rules of society to explore who they are without lasting repercussions. Mythically, it's a temporary visit to a place or state of being that exists outside the usual laws of time and space. It can be tempting to remain there indefinitely, but eventually, every Demigod must leave it behind to progress.

What it means for a character to enter the Threshold depends on where the stage falls in her journey. If it's at the start, it represents her rebirth into a World of unrestricted potential. She can do anything, be anyone, and has the



whole of her story ahead of her to decide who she's going to become. If it's nearer to the end, on the other hand, it can be an identity crisis that forces a Demigod to question the choices that he's made in his life so far and ask whether or not he can continue being the same person anymore.

At the beginning of every game session after a character enters the Threshold, he can change one of his Callings to a new one without having to complete Failure or Adoption Deeds. He begins with the same number of dots in the new Calling as he had in the old one, and if his player has spent Experience to acquire extra Knacks for that Calling, that number of Knacks is available to the new Calling as well. The player does not need to specify what Knacks her character has until he uses them in play.

This stage can be more of a challenge for the Storyguide than the player, especially if she's someone who likes to tailor stories for the abilities that a character possesses. It's a little stressful to construct an elaborate investigation plot for a Sage, only to discover that he's a Warrior today.

One way to handle situations like that is simply not to try to plan for an outcome or a definite route to that outcome. Instead, the Storyguide sets SGCs and their schemes in motion, then lets them play out naturally. If she's especially attached to some events or encounters, then she can keep the possibility open for them to be reached through a variety of means, but only if that doesn't give the player the impression that his own decisions along the way are inconsequential. If there's no significant difference between getting information from a rakshasa by charming it with flattery, seeing the truth behinds its lies, or punching it until it talks, then the player's choices feel meaningless. The consequences of the character's approach should be appropriate in each case.

Another way to tell Threshold stories is to make them more personal. Instead of focusing on enemies to overcome, they can direct the character to be more introspective:

- Have a familiar SGC notice the differences in the way the character is acting and ask what's happened

## TITANS ON THE THRESHOLD

While completing the Threshold Deed, a Demigod can choose to take on any of the Titanic Callings from **Titanomachy** as part of his progress. If he still has any of those Callings when he completes the Milestone, however, it becomes a fixed part of his character and will cause other legendary beings to treat him accordingly.

to him. Is this how he is going to be forever? Does he like the person he has become?

- Create situations that could be handled easily through one of her former Callings but is much more difficult now. If she triumphs, is it with the confidence that she isn't bound by her old habits, or does she wish she could have taken the more familiar path? If she fails, does she regret her decisions?
- Create situations that the Demigod's current Calling allows him to succeed at where he had failed with an old one, then have an SGC confront him about his past failure: "Why is it that you brought this man back to life, but you let my brother die?"

Unless the player wants it to be, the Threshold isn't necessarily all about existential angst. Its more playful aspect is the chance that it offers characters to discover new abilities and approaches to problem-solving that they hadn't considered before, with the knowledge that even if it ends up not suiting them, it's only temporary.

The idea of playfulness is something that the Storyguide can use as well, by sending the Demigod into some of the stranger corners of the World without warning. A Demigod on the Threshold is always a little disconnected from the World, so it doesn't take much for him to turn a corner and end up somewhere quite different. Scions of the Tuatha Dé Danann who travel by boat are especially prone to end up passing islands full of strange animals, quarrelsome giants, or inscrutable omens. Those of the Shén find themselves in lands whose existence is all but forgotten by Heaven's bureaucrats, usually inhabited by a single minor God and some precious treasure — a unique flower, animal, or stone — that he was once tasked to watch over. Nearly anyone who ventures far enough from cities can find the hidden places where animals talk and take on human shapes whenever they please (or where visitors turn into animals themselves).

If all the players' Demigods are passing through the Threshold stage together, any visit to an Otherworld also provides the Storyguide with the chance to play with the passage of time. They could enter a realm in which nothing has changed for hundreds or thousands of years, giving the impression that they've travelled into the past. They could stay in one for the entire duration of the stage but return to discover that only a day has passed since they left. Then again, they could emerge to find it's been seven years, even though they're sure they were only gone for a week.

*Still troubled by what she thinks of as the futility of Dr. Gentile's self-sacrifice, Rhiannon spends time questioning her own purpose and adopts the Liminal Calling in place of Healer. She drifts away from her Band and familiar relationships, preferring to go places where no one knows who she is. Everywhere she goes, she takes on new roles, trying to find one that fits her.*

*First, her player drops the Leader Calling in favor of Warrior to see if attacking the sources of her anger feels right. It doesn't, and it doesn't feel any better when she switches Warrior to Hunter to focus on tracking down mortals kidnapped by the Aos Sí. Next, she replaces Liminal with Trickster, Hunter with Judge, Judge with Sage, and Trickster with Lover, always keeping the Guardian Calling that her player thinks is most important to her. She ends by taking up the Healer Calling in place of Lover when an encounter in Mexico City reminds her that healing others in body and soul is one of her other foundations. When she emerges from her Threshold wanderings, her final Callings are Guardian, Healer, and Sage — two of the ones possessed by her mother, Brigid, and one of her own choosing. She isn't planning to emulate her mother. She knows for certain that she is going to follow her own path.*

Anyone who reads enough myths eventually notices that most stories weren't meant to be coherent or internally consistent. Gods demonstrate powers in one story that they never use again, wise ones make stupid decisions, characters appear and are never mentioned again. For a player whose Demigod is following the path of an existing God, these uncharacteristic stories are the ones to look at for inspiration in the Threshold stage. In serious mythologies, they're usually the funniest stories, or at least the most absurd.

If there aren't any myths like that available, then it's up to the player and Storyguide to create them, or at least start with a premise that they want to explore together. What if Thoth were a Warrior? What would Xipe Totēc be like as a Lover? The fact that these stories often don't exist means that even though the current Gods of those names undoubtedly went through their own Thresholds, they ended up so completely rejecting their alternate identities that none of the Deeds they performed had any impact on their Legend — which is exactly the point for the aspiring God. A Demigod who wants another God's Mantle isn't exploring other possibilities to discover her true self, but to deliberately cast aside everything that doesn't belong to the Mantle.

## SUCCESS

The Demigod passes successfully through the Threshold after changing at least two of his original Callings at least once and adopting a minimum of six new Callings before settling on the three he wants to keep. Passing the Threshold reinforces the Demigod's Callings as part of his growing Mantle: From the end of the session in which he makes his final decision until he completes Apotheosis, he cannot voluntarily change Callings. If he suffers a Failure Deed for a Calling along the way, he must succeed at an Adoption Deed to regain the same Calling.

## DEATH BEFORE THE DESCENT

A Scion who dies before beginning the Descent Milestone can still return to the World through his own actions or those of others. His spirit travels to the appropriate Underworld for his pantheon, from which escape is as easy as it is for anyone else among the dead. A Scion of the *Netjer* might require someone to resurrect her using passages from the Egyptian Book of the Dead. A Scion of the *Theoi* can try to navigate Hades to find one of its many exits, while one of the *Annuna* might have to offer up someone else to take his place.

How much of a challenge this is depends on the resources available to the Scion and his Band. Healing and Death Marvels can make the return short, and Storyguides are encouraged to allow them if players aren't interested in mounting a rescue mission to the Underworld. If they don't have strong feelings one way or the other, roll a Clash of Wills using the Legend of the character performing the resurrection against Legend 10 to represent the powers of the Underworld trying to keep their grip on the deceased.

### FAILURE

Most Demigods don't so much fail the Threshold as decide that they don't want it to end. Nothing is forcing them to complete it, after all, and if they prefer to be the mythic version of a Peter Pan, they can. The only drawback is that until a character successfully completes this stage, she cannot increase her Legend score: The threads of competing and contradictory stories are too ill-defined to allow her Mantle to develop any further. Furthermore, if she completes two Long-term Deeds before achieving this Milestone, she is considered to have failed it and must start again from the beginning, using her current Callings as the starting point.

### FORESHADOWING

A Demigod who succeeds at the Threshold can, during the Theophany stage, call on her past experiences for one use of any single Knack from any Calling that she doesn't currently have. The effect of the Knack lasts for one scene or its usual duration, whichever is less, and otherwise follows the normal rules for its use.

### THE DESCENT

The mortal body of a Demigod isn't meant to last. It's a vessel in which divine ichor incubates throughout the Heroic phase of his life, but by the time he reaches Demigod status, the body is barely capable of containing it. It's like a flimsy and overstuffed plastic bag, ready to burst at the slightest stumble, that a Scion tries to carry home intact. The Descent stage of the journey to Apotheosis marks the point at which she fully accepts that ordinary mortality can't accommodate her needs anymore.

The Descent is a Divine Deed that nearly always takes the form of a literal visit to the Underworld of the Demigod's Pantheon, specifically to whichever part of it is home to the human dead. By spending time there, she allows Fate to mark his mortal side for destruction: even when she returns (if she returns), it starts an inescapable countdown to her own death. If she has been successful in this stage, however, that death won't be her end, but the moment of metamorphosis into a God.

Even though every Demigod must complete the Descent to reach Apotheosis, few choose to visit the Underworld early in their journey. The burden of being constantly aware of impending death can cast a shadow over everything that follows. Time is always running out, and no matter the Underworld, it will keep calling to the Demigod until she finally surrenders to it.

The first thing to decide when planning the Descent-linked Deed is its purpose. In some Pantheons, it's easy to visit the Underworld. Most of them, after all, don't exist to keep people *out*, and even for a Demigod, even the forces that keep the dead from leaving freely are not an insurmountable obstacle. For the Descent, however, there must be a clear goal to the visit, and it's up to the player to name that goal.

As with other stages, the character's Callings can provide inspiration when combined with the nature of the particular Underworld. For example:

- **Ancestral Wisdom (any):** If the Underworld is home to all those who have died, the Scion travels there to learn from great figures of the past. This can help any Demigod, whether he is a Sage trying to unravel the mysteries of life and death, a Hunter who needs to learn how to slay a World-threatening dragon, or a Lover who wants to speak with her parents one last time. Unlike in myth, the Underworlds of **Scion** may also hold the mortal selves that Gods left behind during their own Apotheoses, which can offer a glimpse into the motivations of the current holders of their Mantles or insights into how to bargain with them. Gods who claim to have existed since the creation of the World hide these remnants of their human lives very carefully.
- **Humility (Guardian, Warrior):** Death is one thing that a Warrior cannot conquer, and a Guardian cannot protect against. By visiting an Underworld, he confronts this truth in the form of spirits of the dead who ignore weapons, old enemies who swarm in endless numbers to wear down his strength while feeling no pain, and the remnants of former allies he

## BUT WHAT IF...

**... there's no Underworld?** If a Demigod is part of a pantheon that doesn't have an Underworld, then the Descent is a journey to whatever realm is home to the human dead. They can also spend time in the Veil (p. 197).

**... Anubis is my dad?** Scions of Gods of the dead don't have any easier of a time in the Descent. If anything, their divine parents treat them more harshly to teach them what it means to fill that role in the World.

lost along his journey. In the realm of Hades, even Achilles is a miserable shade who can't speak without an offering of sacrificial blood; his conversation with Odysseus is a stark reminder that the reality of death is never glorious, no matter how many stories live on.

- **Theodicy (Judge, Sage):** Diyu is an immense visual lesson in the divine punishments that follow people's actions in the World. Liars and gossipers have their tongues ripped from their heads, those who oppressed others in life are ground up in mills, arsonists are chained to red-hot copper pillars, and so on. Naraka assigns different punishments but keeps to the same theme of delivering poetically appropriate justice in a very physical way. A Demigod Judge who enters these realms or those like them confronts two things: the consequences of divine law and her duty to uphold that law. A Sage, on the other hand, wants to see the Underworld to know its geography, to ask its rulers about the nature of death, or to be able to return to his mortal followers with answers to their own questions.
- **Theft (Creator, Trickster):** According to the Teōtl, all of humanity living in the present World were made from bones taken from Mictlan. Some Underworlds are treasures of the ancient past, holding not only the dead but all those things they once possessed. It makes them very tempting targets for theft by a Trickster who's willing to risk everything for bragging rights or a Creator who needs something that doesn't exist in the World anymore.
- **Escort (Liminal, Lover):** Liminal Demigods frequently take on the role of psychopomp as Gods, bringing the dead into the Underworld and carrying messages between there and the World. In the Descent stage, his goal may be to bring one very important person there, lead everyone who died in a catastrophe, or simply persuade the rulers of the realm to grant him the right to come and go as he wishes. If it's one person, the journey for a psychopomp won't be an easy one: Think of Sisyphus, whose final punishment came about because it was the only way to keep him too busy to escape Hades for the second or third time. It can be different for a Lover, who either descends into the Underworld to say farewell forever to someone she loved or to

plead with its Gods to offer a reprieve. Sometimes, a Demigod fails, as Orpheus did with Eurydice, but Dionysus not only came back with his mother, Semele, but brought her to Olympus with him.

- **Authority (Healer, Leader):** A Healer can promise immortality to those who serve him and demonstrate his power by resurrecting the dead. Eventually, though, the Gods of death will grow resentful of this constant poaching of their subjects: If anyone can come back to life through the right prayers, what power does death have at all? A Healer who wants to claim authority over death must come to an agreement with its Gods, who will ask a high price in return. They may set rules about what kind of people can return (only the most virtuous or only Scions, for example) or set limits on the kinds of deaths that the Healer can affect (only deaths from disease or childbirth, never deaths from old age, or never those killed by divine figures). A Leader, on the other hand, goes to the Underworld to declare authority over its subjects as an extension of her broader powers of rulership. As the myth of Ishtar and Ereshkigal shows, some Gods of the Underworld respond to such claims with a sharp rebuke.

The structure of the Deed associated with the Descent follows an order that resembles the Hero stories of folklore:

- The Demigod decides that he must enter the Underworld
- He searches for a supernatural guide or other source of information on how to do so
- He undertakes a long journey to reach his destination
- He comes face-to-face with the powers of death
- He escapes with new insight or treasure but knows he must return there soon

The first and last parts can be very brief. The length of the second one depends on how easy the pantheon in question makes it for anyone to enter the Underworld without dying. It may require finding a legendary figure who has made the journey before, learning a complicated ritual to open the way, or discovering a secret gateway somewhere in the World.

The third step is the most open. For Underworlds whose geography has been well charted in myths, a

Storyguide already has a map of the parts that he wants characters to explore and possibly a source for obstacles along the way, so reaching the Underworld is less important than travelling through it. For Underworlds that don't have such elaborate descriptions, he should instead put the emphasis on the problem of how to enter it to begin with. Just as importantly, he can use that journey to make the destination more ominous, such as through repeated encounters with ghosts, the deaths of minor characters along the way, or the sight of tragedies that act as reminders of how frail mortal life is.

Coming face-to-face with the powers of death means different things depending on the Demigod's purpose in visiting the Underworld and her relationship with whatever Gods have authority over it. For a Trickster who wants to steal from Mictlan, for example, it probably involves getting caught and brought before Mictecacihuatl or finding a way into her palace to persuade her to lend him some of her treasure. A Sage, on the other hand, could have a very polite conversation with Yama about the nature of death, dharma, and karma. The meeting between Scion and God can be a single scene of social interaction or it can be the start of a series of tasks that the Demigod must carry out in order to prove his worthiness. It's up to the players and Storyguide to decide how much game time they want to devote to it.

When it's finished, all that remains is to return to the World. Unless the story up to this point has resulted in someone sprinting through Hades' realm with armloads of Persephone's jewelry, the return doesn't need to be a long scene. Upon reaching the World, however, every Demigod knows at once that her mortal side is now destined to return there soon. It's the price of leaving that everyone must pay.

Rhiannon's Descent begins the growing feeling that her struggles aren't only with the Aos Sí — she's met enough by now to know they're far from united, even if some of them resent her — and a series of unanswered questions. She doesn't know how Aillén the Burner got possession of the Head of Balor, who sent the titanspawn that killed Dr. Gentile, or why, in her Threshold wanderings, she kept meeting enemies who were beautiful, shallow, and corrupt. Most of all, she wants to know why her life must be this way. Because she knows that Aillén is currently in Mag Mell, she decides to go directly to him to find answers. Her player tells the Storyguide that she's chosen the Sage Calling as her focus for this Milestone.

At first, she thinks she will have to pass through Teich Duinn and convince the God Donn to let her travel to Mag Mell, but with help from her allies, Rhiannon manages to secure passage on a ship that makes the journey directly once a year. When the day comes, she sets sail and finally reaches the flower-covered island of the contented dead. Out of courtesy, she visits

the tower of Manannán mac Lir, where she is feasted while being entertained with stories of her mother's people. When she asks him why she has to continue to struggle, why she's repeatedly caught up in battles and destruction, Manannán tells her that Mag Mell is the alternative: Everyone is peaceful, no one can change their circumstances, and no one feels strongly enough to try. The answer doesn't give her much satisfaction, but it's one that she and her player will keep in mind as they move on.

Rhiannon doesn't know how much time passes there. Before she leaves to find Aillén's hall on the island, her host tells her that because she has eaten the food of Mag Mell, a part of her will always remain there. Manannán knows she plans to return to the World, but also knows her time away will be brief.

Aillén's hall, its roof perpetually burning without giving off heat or being consumed, is not hard to find. The Burner himself feels no animosity toward her, although he casually promises to kill her if they meet again in the World. Mag Mell has dulled his emotions too much for anger, and so they talk. He tells her that Bres showed him how to find the Head of Balor and prompted him to use it against her and her home city. It has been Bres, too, whose beautiful servants keep dogging her steps. Why? Because in the battle between the Tuatha Dé Danann and the Fomorians, Brigid sided with the Tuatha even when they killed the son she shared with Bres. Aillén believes that Bres wants Brigid to feel that pain herself.

Armed with that knowledge, Rhiannon leaves Mag Mell for the World to make her final plans.

## SUCCESS

By accomplishing the Descent, a Demigod accepts that the rest of his journey to Apotheosis risks a lasting death. If he dies before achieving his final goal, he will not return, and his Mantle remains incomplete until someone else takes it up. Therefore, most Demigods leave this stage until just before the Theophany, to minimize the chance of an accidental death along the way.

If he wishes, the Demigod's player can immediately set his character's Virtue track to either extreme upon completing the Descent to reflect the dramatic change in Worldview that the lessons of the Underworld can bring about.

## FAILURE

Failing the Descent can happen in three major ways. If the Demigod never reaches the powers of death, either because he cannot pass some of its challenges or is so overwhelmed by the Underworld that he decides to retreat, he returns to the World and must find a different route to enter it again. If he meets with the Gods of the Underworld

and does something that outrages or offends them, he winds up a prisoner there and must be rescued by someone else. The same thing happens if he refuses to accept the price of success. By clinging too strongly to his mortality, he is effectively choosing to keep divine and mortal sides together indefinitely – in the Underworld itself.

None of these happen by accident. Whatever a character knows about the workings of the Underworld, the player should be fully aware that trying to kidnap Persephone is a bad idea with lasting consequences (ask Pirithous) and that setting up a situation in which her character has to be rescued by her allies is going to take that character out of play for a while. Because it also forces the rest of the group to intervene, it's best to get the agreement of the other players before doing so.

## FORESHADOWING

The Demigod's fated mortality is only a lingering consequence of the Descent.

## THEOPHANY

Long after the game is over, a Demigod's Theophany is the story to go to when someone says, "Tell me about your character." It's the culmination of a lengthy process of character development, rises, falls, plot twists, and unexpected discoveries. All of that comes together in one final story that showcases the best and truest qualities of that character. One way or another, it's an ending. Even if a player wants to continue with the same character in **God**, being a God is fundamentally different from anything he has been so far, and some people will want to use the Theophany as a way to retire their characters for good and start again with a new generation of Heroes.

The form of the Theophany depends on whether the Demigod intends to establish her own identity as a God, complete the work of a past Hero, or take on an existing God's Mantle. It always involves a World-changing action of some kind, whether as small as implementing new laws for devotees of a pantheon or as large as creating an entire species of Denizens or humans. How long it takes to accomplish is up to the players and the Storyguide: it can be a one- or two-session climax to an ongoing plot arc or its own complete narrative, whichever they prefer.

Ragnarok can act as an example of the climactic style of Theophany, with several distinct and self-contained myths all contributing to the way that a single battle unfolds. The binding and subsequent escape of Fenrir, Freyr coming to war without his sword because he gave it away in an earlier story, Loki fully siding with the Jötunn after his own punishment for the death of Baldr – all of these come together at once. Ragnarok itself takes place over an indefinite length of time, with the three years of Fimbulwinter being one sign of its beginning along with other upheavals of the natural World and human society, but those events get little attention in the texts. In terms of gameplay, they happen offstage as a narrated prelude to the focus of the game sessions that cover the battle itself.

A Storyguide who wants to use it as a model must look back at a Demigod's journey so far and decide whether a short Theophany fits naturally as a conclusion. If all of the steps leading to this point feel like parts of a coherent story and all that it needs to be complete is one chapter, then it makes sense to keep it short. If, on the other hand, they have been more like a series of distinct stories, then it may be better to make the Theophany into a new and complete arc on its own, like the final book in a multi-volume series.

In either case, the Theophany doesn't have to follow immediately after the completion of the stage before it. When playing in a group, characters will complete their journeys at different speeds, so some of them have the chance to slow down while the others catch up if they want to. Players can use that time to resolve minor plot threads that they've neglected or interact with secondary SGCs whose stories have been on the peripheries of their own as a farewell tour of significant moments from their own history. Even if the entire group is ready to begin the Theophany at the same time, there can be a jump ahead in time to acknowledge a pause and separate it from what's come before.

However much downtime a player takes before starting the Theophany, it begins when she declares that she is ready. Once the Theophany begins, the Demigod's pantheon knows it. So do his enemies, who see undeniable signs from Fate that something tremendous is about to happen, even if they don't know what. Anyone he has ever Fatebound in the past, no matter how long ago or how insignificant now, has at least an inkling of the same kind. They have dreams about him, recite spontaneous prayers, or create art that memorializes their relationship. Some of these portents will be joyous, most look more like prophecies of doom.

The Theophany must have a clear goal beyond "I'm going to become a God now." This is where a Demigod needs to answer the questions raised in the "True Callings" section above. Her player must decide how her character is going to answer them and, by doing so, show that he is ready for Apotheosis. The job of the Storyguide at this point is to encourage the player to think bigger and raise the stakes as much as possible. Neither player nor Storyguide need to work out all the details yet; they just must agree on the biggest, most epic goal to achieve.

## DESIGNING THE STORY

The setting for the Theophany stage is never somewhere familiar or comfortable to the Demigod. If there's an enemy, the final confrontation either takes place in his own territory or some place that's removed from his and the Demigod's own homes. For a story-length Theophany, travel to that place can take up the first act. For a short one, the Storyguide can put more focus on discovering where the confrontation is going to happen, then skip the details of the trip there.

Wherever it takes place, the site of the Theophany is going to become sacred in the Demigod's myth. If it's

somewhere in the World, mortals will make pilgrimages there afterward or build shrines and monuments to commemorate it. If it's outside the World, the event still leaves a permanent mark that immortalizes what happened there, like a single blasted mountain in the heart of Jötunheim or a lake in Mictlan filled with the tears of those who wept for the Demigod's death.

If possible, the Storyguide should choose a location that reflects either the personality of the Demigod's adversary or the goal of the Theophany. New laws and judgments are handed out from mountains, temples, or the hearts of cities. Armies fight on open fields, while monsters hide in their lairs. Don't worry about making symbolism excessive or too direct. Most myths aren't known for their subtlety, either.

The difficulty of the final challenge isn't always easy to determine in advance. If the Storyguide underestimates a Demigod's abilities, it can end up being a disappointment and a flat ending to an otherwise exciting story. If he overestimates them, he risks ending with the mythic version of *Bambi vs. Godzilla*, which is equally unsatisfying. Generally, he should keep in mind what resources the Demigod will have. Assuming she attempts Apotheosis at Legend 8, that means:

- 9 active Knacks from Callings
- 8 Legendary Titles that can be called on to perform actions at Scale 4
- 8 Boons

- Up to 9 Fatebindings
- Whatever additional abilities she possesses through Birthrights or Realm Birthrights
- Foreshadowing advantages gained from the Parting and Threshold stages of the journey

It's a lot to juggle, and that's only for one character. If the rest of her Band is helping her, finding the right balance of challenge becomes even more difficult. A single antagonist, while mythically appropriate, can fall quickly when attacked by several Demigods.

But unless the entire Band is attempting their Apotheosis at the same time, it's up to the character whose Theophany this is to deliver victory. Letting others do most of the work and swooping in at the end isn't the demonstration of readiness for Godhood that Fate smiles upon. It must be clearly, unmistakably the effort of one character. Others can provide support through their Knacks and Marvels, defeat lesser threats that stand between the Demigod and her ultimate challenge, or offer teamwork bonuses. What matters is that, in the end, everyone at the table agrees afterward that this particular win belongs to the character whose Theophany it is.

## SUCCESS

Most of the time, a Demigod succeeds at the Theophany by decisively accomplishing the goal that he set out to. He has changed the World, either by adding his own myth to it or by re-enacting the myth of a God who changed it in the past. He achieves Apotheosis and becomes a God.



It is possible, however, to subvert Fate by denying it the story that it wants, but still become a God. If a player declares the goal of her Theophany to be to kill a particular enemy, but she chooses to resolve the encounter peacefully instead of through violence, she still succeeds. She has still changed the World, just in a different way than expected. She won't end up being the kind of God that others expected and will now be forever bound by Fate to reconcile with enemies instead of defeating them in battle, but she will still be a God.

If the Demigod's aim were to take on the Mantle of another God and he tries to subvert Fate this way, the outcome is up to the player and Storyguide. The myths of established Gods are powerful, but there is room in them for variations. He could end up with a different name and different associations — a Mercury instead of a Hermes — or he could be retroactively adopted as a child of that God, the kind whose myths are so similar that it's hard to know where one God ends and the other begins.

Whichever way it happens, the Demigod's mortal life is over. She doesn't necessarily die (although most do), but the rest of the mortal part of her story is reduced to "and she did many other wonderful things in her life," "and she ruled wisely until her death," or "and she left her companions in that place and was never seen again."

Narratively, she is done. Unless she becomes a God.

## FAILURE

As mentioned above, a Demigod who makes a minimal contribution to the work of the Theophany fails. While the Storyguide can be generous in deciding how much effort counts as significant and shouldn't hold a series of bad die rolls against the player, the final say is up to him as to whether or not it's enough. And sometimes, it just isn't enough — but in this case, the character should die a mortal death, in an appropriately dramatic fashion.

The second, and far more common, way to fail is for the Demigod to die before completing her goal. She has already promised to surrender her mortality after the Descent, and she will not return. If she dies, her Mantle remains nearly complete, waiting for a Hero who knows her story to take it up, walk in her footsteps, and try again.

*Rhiannon's player tells her Storyguide her plan for Theophany: Although Bres has worked against her, she doesn't want to resolve the conflict through violence. Instead, thinking about how all three of her Callings fit together, she decides that she wants to reconcile Brigid and Bres by finding out from them what she can do to make restitution for the death of Ruadán.*

*Her initial thought is that she can do it by asking Goibniu, the divine smith who was wounded by Ruadán in the Second Battle of Mag Tuireadh and who retaliated by killing him, to pay the honor-price for Bres' son in traditional Irish fashion. Goibniu, however, points out that the killing happened in a time of war and that*

*Ruadán betrayed his kin among the Tuatha, so he's under no obligation to pay anything.*

*So instead, Rhiannon sings and makes sacrifices to ask for an audience with both Brigid and Bres. It's easy enough to draw the attention of her mother, but Bres only appears when she threatens to lay a Geas upon him if he refuses. He comes bearing the spear that killed his son, and after lengthy attempts on Rhiannon's part to soothe the anger between him and Brigid, agrees to make peace if Rhiannon allows him to throw the spear at her just as it was thrown at Ruadán. If she survives, she can throw it back at Bres, but in either case, the feud will end.*

*Rhiannon consults with her Bandmates and with Brigid, all of whom tell her this will almost certainly kill her, but finally accepts the terms. Bres' throw not only pierces Rhiannon's body completely but shatters a hill behind her to form a new valley. Fatally wounded, but not dead, Rhiannon crawls to the spear, picks it up, and... lays it down again. She lets go of the last of her mortal nature, completes her Theophany, and becomes God of Truces and Diplomacy among the Tuatha Dé Danann.*

## FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

The route to Apotheosis in this section doesn't represent any specific pattern of myth from any real-world culture. People have been telling mythic stories for too long for any one "hero's journey" to depict them all accurately. What it does instead is highlight elements that are common to greater or lesser degrees and give the Storyguide a way to turn them into a playable experience that uses the rules of **Scion**. It also provides a consistent set of guidelines so that players know what to expect their characters will go through, with room for them to make their own decisions along the way.

If the players and Storyguide want, they can reimagine the journey to Apotheosis in other terms, so long as they keep the bare minimum of structure the same: five Divine Deeds that must include the resolution of a powerful Fatebinding, an opportunity to explore other Callings, and the final Theophany to acquire a completed Mantle. Each step counts as a Milestone, with the Demigod having to complete one Milestone before starting the next. Unless it's appropriate earlier in the journey, assume that the drawback of completing the Descent Milestone happens after the fourth step.

Instead of focusing on Callings to provide a framework, this alternate story structure might use some of the recognized Heroic archetypes that appear in World mythologies to guide character development. For example:

- **Founder:** Founding Heroes establish societies for their communities. Some of them double as mythic ancestors to whom every royal bloodline traces its origin, while others may actually be the creators of

the mortals they go on to protect. Common major events in the myth of a founder are the establishment of his authority in the community by overcoming enemies or displaying divine favor, leading people from their old lands to a new one, making the new land safe for habitation, and building a city or temple around which the community will grow.

- **Culture Hero:** A culture hero teaches a society who to survive in the World by giving its people the tools and methods to do so. That can mean anything from proper hunting techniques to rules of etiquette to the establishment of a calendar. What's most important is that the culture Hero does these things by being the first person in the society to do them, and thereby acting as a model of behavior for those who come after. Some culture Heroes are inventive and find new ways to solve old problems. Others are Tricksters who steal the property of the Gods to give it to humanity.
- **Monster Slayer:** Monster-slaying Heroes aren't remembered for battling ordinary enemies, although they may do plenty of that in their lives. They're remembered for fighting one monster that embodies all of the things that a society fears: the physical manifestations of chaos, famine, drought, death, darkness, winter, the sea, or whatever else threatens to destroy mortal lives if left unchecked. In many cases, the monster isn't one that can ever be defeated completely, so the myth of the monster slayer is one without any real ending and the Hero becomes an immortal protector against the threat.
- **Great Teacher:** The teacher enters a community to give the people a new way to live in the World. He establishes codes of behavior where none existed before, institutes a reform of old ways, or reveals mysteries of divinity that help people understand their place in the cosmos. His myths include ones about his own discovery of the truths he will pass on to others, the gathering of followers, struggles with the current sources of authority in the society, and demonstrations of the correctness of his teachings.
- **Force of Nature:** Most Heroes tie their stories directly to human societies, but a few define themselves by being outside of them. Instead of representing the people of the World, they either become embodiments of its wilder aspects – plants, animals, or natural phenomena. They may interact with humans by establishing rules for how they must treat the natural World or they may leave humanity behind completely and perhaps even shed their human form.
- **Intermediary:** Psychopomps lead the living to the realms of the dead, and heralds deliver messages from the Gods to humanity. Intermediary Heroes take up the task of ensuring communication between the mortal and divine Worlds without giving

much thought to their own needs and desires. They often let their own stories come second in favor of being the instruments of greater powers. When they do act on their own, it's because they have their own feelings about the message they must deliver or the people they deliver it to.

## THE MYTH ENGINE

**B**eing a Demigod is the process of building a Mantle, building the being you will become when your mortal self meets its Fated end. Outside the narrative, there's a little more going on under the hood. To construct a meaningful, coherent, and enjoyable experience of Apotheosis, the Storyguide needs to lay the groundwork ahead of time. This isn't railroading, but rather preparation, with flexibility in mind, for the path that Demigod characters will take as they stretch beyond the bounds of their mortality. Fate wants certain things, yes, but it doesn't really care how it gets those things, or how its playthings go about the process, which means that the journey can take on innumerable forms, each with its own consequences for what will become of the Demigod when she transcends.

## SETTING THE STAGE

The first step to constructing a future for players' characters is to know what those players want for their characters. If this isn't clear, ask, though it's likely that players will happily tell the Storyguide all about what their plans and intentions are – and if not, the Storyguide can and should ask. It's rare that a player will have no plans or ideas, but if that's the case, the following questions can help to tease out leads for the Storyguide to follow.

*What does your character love the most?* This gives you something to feature centrally in the story, whether it's a person, place, concept, or ideal. Take whatever answer the player gives you and threaten it, obliquely at first but increasingly directly as her character's power and agency in the setting grows.

*What does your character hate the most?* As above, but instead of threatening it, make this powerful, popular, a real threat to the character. When it comes time to choose a Nemesis for the character, choose a God who best reflects the answer. Let this serve as a motif for what she is attempting to overturn in her Apotheosis.

*What would your character die for?* This is the acid test of any Heroic character, and may shed some light on how the player might like to see the final step of Apotheosis play out – how *will* this character's mortal shell die? "Nothing" is always a valid answer to this question! In such a case, the character must ultimately confront their own ego, their fear of death, to transcend their mortality. Will they make that leap of faith, or let divinity slip through their fingers?

Once you know the character's essential values, you can begin to extrapolate those outward, planning events with a reasonable expectation of how they'll react. This will, of course, vary from character to character – an

Amazon Scion of Artemis is going to have a very different take on her incipient divinity than a Scion of Ares plucked from a macho paramilitary unit, and that's just within a single pantheon. The same event might work to reinforce the beliefs of both playing on something that leaves them diametrically opposed. Be careful not to put bandmates at odds too often, though, even if the story revolves around a growing rivalry. The characters should always have more reasons to work together than to be at each other's throats.

## DIVINE DEEDS

The Deeds of Heroes are mighty and numinous, to be sure, but the Deeds of Demigods approach another order of magnitude altogether. Some of those Deeds outshine even the rest, resonating with Fate and the Demigod's future Apotheosis — these are called Divine Deeds, and they form the structure the Storyguide creates in advance to shepherd the story to its conclusion.

We explore the deeper mythic structure of Divine Deeds in *The Apotheosis Roadmap* (p. 15), but, in short, these consist of the Second Call, the Parting, the Threshold, the Descent, and the Theophany. This is the process of announcing to the World that a Hero is ready to rise above mere mortality, discovering that such a life means further burdens, experimenting with how her Callings influence her, shedding ties to mortality, and finally allowing her mortal self to die and her nascent Mantle to ascend to Godhood. As characters fulfill each Divine Deed, they'll become encoded into her Mantle, influencing the World around her — her values will be tested, and the character's cult (she has a cult at this point, don't lie) are going to demand more and more of her in that vein. Those Deeds yet unfulfilled can change this over time. Characters are sculpting the God they're becoming, and they can, to a certain extent, change who that God will be.

Throughout this process, don't neglect non-Divine Deeds. These are chosen by players, but Storyguides remain in control of the context those Deeds take place in. Lean in with the themes of the character's growing Mantle. Fate knows what it wants and isn't shy about saying so, and neither should you — if not directly. Players may lean into this, choosing Deeds for themselves that mirror an idea for a Divine Deed the Storyguide already selected, and if the character is ready to fulfill that Divine Deed, there's nothing wrong with that at all. Don't lose sight of Fate's end goal, though. While there's room for other adventures amidst the larger story of Apotheosis, Storytellers shouldn't allow more than two long-term Deeds to pass between Divine Deeds.

## FATEBINDING AND YOU

Fatebinding is the most powerful tool in your arsenal for showing the character's Mantle forcing itself increasingly into their lives, as Fate's gentle suggestions become demands. Demigod characters become Fatebound much more easily than Heroic characters, giving you more opportunities to do so. Remember, Deeds are in-setting destinies as well as sentences on a character sheet, and every

Fatebinding can ultimately become caught up in one of the character's Divine Deeds. Keep an eye on floating Divine Deeds compatible with Fatebound Storyguide characters and use those Storyguide characters to steer the narrative toward those Deeds.

Remember, too, that Fatebound characters who become bound up in a Divine Deed are being written into the Demigod's divine Mantle. Even if they survive the process (which is not guaranteed, especially if they're a Canary), they're becoming subsumed into the growing Legend of the character, a kind of Fatebinding beyond even the normal sort. This may intensify or shuffle the role Fate has in mind for them, but either way their very existence will become a motif throughout the rest of the Demigod's existence, and vice versa. Think of Scorpio, the enormous scorpion that became a constellation as Orion ascended, or of Philoctetes, who inherited Heracles' envenomed arrows and slew Paris (who himself had slain Achilles with an arrow!) at Troy. These characters become defined by their relationship to the Demigod, even after they are dead or the Demigod has ascended — they are, in effect, the ripples emanating from the Demigod's Apotheosis, as though it were a rock thrown into a pond.

## BUILDING A FUTURE: HOW TO USE DIVINE DEEDS

Once you know what your players want for their characters (and what those characters want for themselves and the World around them), you can begin to lay out the beginnings of a structured narrative leading them to those goals and beyond. Each step in this narrative is a single Divine Deed. Each Demigod character requires five Divine Deeds, mirroring the steps discussed above. These can take virtually any form, and occur in any order, save for the final one — shedding one's mortal life and ascending (or not, as the story demands).

## FORM AND FORMLESSNESS: THE STRUCTURE OF FLOATING DEEDS

Divine Deeds are not quite the same as normal Deeds. Apart from not being chosen by the player, they're also mutable, able to shift and change due to the exigencies and demands of the narrative, since they can occur in variable order. It's possible that the Storyguide will hit the nail on the head with their first draft of a character's Divine Deeds, and the player will follow them one after the other to Apotheosis — but it's not likely. *Players will often exceed your expectations.* Plan accordingly. To aid this, it's best to think of yet unrealized Divine Deeds as floating Deeds, which have yet to be crystalized and embedded in a divine Mantle by Heroic action.

Floating Deeds' mutable quality means you can plan for different iterations of the same event. Say, for example, Caesar heeds the words of the soothsayer to beware the Ides of March — he is still Fated to be betrayed and murdered by his friends, but rather than in the Senate, it might be in his home, or it might take place another day. There's

nothing inherently cursed about the Ides of March, after all (indeed, they were sacred to Jupiter). Even if the Deed is not deferred but wholly circumvented, there's still plenty of room to re-adapt it to the myth as it's now progressing. Managing this process will be one of the Storyguide's central tasks in **Demigod** play.

Rather than laying down railroad tracks, think of floating Deeds as building channels, like canals, to direct the flow of the character's destiny, or a network of roads that crisscross before reaching their destinations. They might have branches, and they might end up in some vastly different places depending on what happens in play. Floating Divine Deeds allow the Storyguide to manage these details without creating a tremendous amount of overhead — a single floating Deed and the associated ideas for how it might be handled could easily fit on a single index card.

### TITLES AS TELEOLOGY

A character's Legendary Titles — and by the time they're Demigods, they have a collection of them! — are as much a part of her divine Mantle as her Deeds. Don't ignore these when designing or foreshadowing Divine Deeds. Remember, Fate loves an encore: If a character becomes known as the "Shepherd of Knives" for seizing control of a secret society of knife-obsessed assassins, the Storyguide can lean on that to ensure that the character has a very knife-ful future, one way or another. If one of your Demigods is the "Slayer of Wicked Men," throw wicked men at them until they're all but sick of it because that's what Fate wants of them (and, if the player chose that Title, it's because that's what the player wants for her character).

Legendary Titles are also a useful source of ideas for alternate Divine Deeds, if the Storyguide is still running into trouble or the story takes an unusual turn. By this point, characters have so many Titles it's easy to lean on them without repeating themes directly, even if several Titles get used in this manner, and because Titles are player-chosen, it's a fair bet they'll be excited to see the motif played out in the game.

Over time, a character might outgrow her Titles. Even the great stories of myth, handed down since time immemorial, change in the telling. As a Demigod shifts Callings and discovers more about her own nature, it's entirely valid to adjust her Titles as well, replacing keywords as necessary. That "Shepherd of Knives," if she sheds her Guardian Calling in favor of Lover, might become "The Knife-Wed," as knives become more of a symbol than an instrument for her — her cult might ritually bleed themselves as part of marriage vows, for example, and Fate will likely offer her plenty of opportunities to bleed for love herself.

Remember that Calling Title keywords are there to serve as inspiration, not restriction. As long as the Title fits the general tenor of the Calling (as interpreted through the lens of the character's own myth), *anything* will work. This is especially true if the event being melded into the Demigod's Mantle crosses lines between Callings — if

a Demigod with Healer and Leader Callings creates a mystical disease that only becomes acute in those who speak against her, she might become known as "She Who Burns Tongues," after the symptom of the disease itself. A Warrior and Judge who forges a sword that only cuts those she pronounces guilty might be called "The Judgement-Edged." Ultimately, the only fixed criteria are that the Title is thematic and is really, really cool.

## ADJUSTING EXPECTATIONS

Things aren't going to go the way you plan. They might not even go the way the players plan. That's fine. What matters is that you tell a cool story, one that ends up becoming a myth within your circle of friends. You are engaging in the process of mythology, no different than those your ancestors did, and that process requires flexibility. The story is not always the same twice.

### REVERSING FATE

Fate is ultimately taking cues from the Demigods themselves, and then feeding it back to them. It's a positive feedback cycle, where little things grow to become big things. Turning that cycle around or deviating from it is hard, but not impossible — and as any regular Storyguide knows, players have a knack for doing the impossible, anyway.

Sometimes, of course, this is the result of a player changing her mind about where she wants her character's story to go. What sounded fun six months ago during character creation might end up feeling not so great when the time comes to play it out now that she's had time to get to know the character. If this is the case, don't fight it, but work with the player to help steer her character's destiny to a place that's more in line with what she's aiming for, or what she's comfortable with. Storypath is collaborative, and the whole point is to have fun.

Sometimes, though, these odd reversals or shifts are impulsive decisions, unanticipated even by the player. Maybe they'd make the expected choice 99 times out of 100, but this is the one time they differ. There's fun drama to be had there — does Fate notice this departure from the appointed path and steer circumstances to set things "right," or does it decide that it likes the idea of a fickle, trickster-like version of the character? Ultimately, of course, it's the Storyguide making the decision on behalf of the ongoing story, answering the question, "what's the more dramatic option?"

This is true even if future floating Deeds, predicated on this Deed turning out a certain way, are now out of the question. In a sense, the character has cleared the board, and while Fate (and the Storyguide) will steer her toward a similar set of conditions if at all possible, it's still an opportunity for the character to toy with the idea of pivoting to a new path, fighting Fate until Fate gives in and accepts the new road she walks. Just remember that the Storyguide-as-Fate is fighting the character, *not* the player.

## GRIEF FOR FICTIONAL PEOPLE

We grow attached to our characters, and to the characters of our friends at the table. We laugh along with them, quarrel with them, endure alongside them. We form bonds, and those bonds are no less real to our hearts than the bonds we have with each other as real, flesh-and-blood people. We invest ourselves into these characters, and we don't always expect it to hit so hard when we lose them.

If you're Storyguiding when a character dies, whether it's planned or not, whether or not it's the conclusion of an arc that leaves everyone thrilled and awed, be ready for that fallout. If possible, schedule things so that the climax finishes off the session or call for a break afterward if you can't so people can process their emotions. There's no shame in calling an end early and simply talking about it over a hot beverage of choice. Remember, these folks are your friends, and it's on you to be there for them, just as they'd be here for you if you were in their shoes.

### IT'S NOT YOU, IT'S ME

Not every story has a happy ending, and not every protagonist gets what they want. This is as true in **Demigod** as it is anywhere else — just because a character is reaching for divinity does not mean she'll succeed, to take her place in the pantheon of her divine parent (or to be adopted by another, or to craft one of her own making, for that matter). Every Demigod is rolling the dice when she accepts the death of her mortal form, trusting to her divine Mantle to carry on without it.

This doesn't have to be a sad moment — maybe, during the process of striving for divinity, the character comes to realize that she doesn't want what she's been led to by friends and family. Maybe something holds her back. Maybe she doesn't want to endure beyond something or someone she loves. Maybe she fears losing herself in the warp and weave of Fate. There are thousands of reasons to choose to shirk divinity, and all of them are valid from a storytelling point of view. When these moments arise, as a Storyguide, it's a chance to give the character a spotlight moment, to let the narrative hang, for just a moment, on the pathos of someone standing in the antechamber of eternity and being found wanting, or deciding that divinity is wanting.

In the aftermath, don't leave the other players out. Maybe they've ascended, or maybe they're on the verge of doing so — or maybe they're playing characters who, though mythic, are bereft of divine blood and will never ascend. All of them, though, will have thoughts and feelings about what's happened, and all of them deserve a chance to meditate upon that in-character. The character they've lost, whether to death or to refusal of the call, has left her mark on all of them.

### INVERTING DIVINITY

Fate would like to be a railroad track, set and immutable, but even if it were, that wouldn't stop things from mucking around with its plans. Remember: You can always jump from a moving train. It's dangerous, yes. Probably more than a little foolish. But if, say, the train is heading toward a cliff, it might be the lesser of two evils.

The same is true of Demigods chasing their Apotheosis. Many begin the process unaware of all that it entails, following their gut through mysteries and enlightenment, and not all may like where it leads them. Few Demigods approach their Apotheosis fully in control of their own destinies — those who do are either very lucky or planned things well in advance, and even those lucky ones sacrificed much to reach the heights. Once a Demigod passes a certain point in their progression to Apotheosis, there is no turning back. For those who approach divinity and do not like what they find waiting for them, there are essentially two options: die a mortal's death or turn against themselves.

Remember, a Demigod is both a mortal shell and a divine Mantle, and it is the divine Mantle that is subject to Fate's dictates far more than the mortal. As a mortal, the Demigod still possesses sufficient free will that she may, with great difficulty, change the course of the mighty river of destiny she's being swept along by. Doing so is *not* a spur or the moment decision, however. It is a struggle that will all but consume what remains of one's mortal life.

When a player decides her character wants to turn against or otherwise significantly change where her Fate is leading her, her path bifurcates. Her remaining floating Divine Deed (remember, the last one is always set!) becomes not a point along a preordained path, but a contest between the character and her Fate, a struggle over the character's very identity and meaning. The character's in-and-out-of-character story quite literally becomes about fighting her destiny.

Ask the player *how* her character is struggling against her Fate — specifically, how she will turn aside from what she believes her next Divine Deed will be (which, given omens and auguries, she's likely familiar with in-character). Boil the answer down to a single statement, like any other Deed. That answer becomes an alternate floating Deed, attached to the one she would next be surmounting. Like two sides of a coin, these diametrically opposed destinies await her. Fate will fight furiously to drag her to its predetermined outcome, but should she succeed, she can radically shift the nature of her divine Mantle.

What is necessary to accomplish such a feat? Turning against one's destiny *always* has a cost, beyond the simple

price of struggling against all the myriad slings and arrows Fate will bring to bear — sacrifices must be made, parts of oneself cut out or burned away. Intentionally engineering a Crisis of Calling would suffice, for example, but often these floating Divine Deeds needs must be centered around extremes of behavior, even of cruelty or betrayal. With the scales weighted heavily in Fate's favor, the Demigod must heap ever more of who she used to be on to the other side to strike the balance.

## COPING WITH FAME

You were Chosen, or maybe you made a choice. Either way, you've ended up as a Scion. Your Legend has marked you, has made you more than human. The problem with that is, where once you could blend in with everybody else, you could go about your day without anyone bothering you, you've become, well...conspicuous.

You poor sod. No Demigod gets a nice, calm happy ending.

There's a list several miles long about what player characters can't do anymore. Even the most obscure Demigod can't have a social media account without at least 15.5k followers, many of whom would probably like to take them down and show how awful the Gods really are. They can't go to their six-year-old's ballet recital, because someone will inevitably drop to their knees and beg for the Scion to act as intercessor with their God, the Scion's parent. They can't go to their favorite pub 'round the corner, because the local Irish country band has started re-writing songs about Lugh to be about them instead. (To be clear, Lugh isn't happy about that one either.)

This goes beyond mere mortal celebrity. They can't walk the dog because last time they did that, they accidentally called all the neighborhood dogs at once. Knowing how Artemis' call works is one thing, knowing how to finesse calling Lassie back to their side so every dog in hearing distance doesn't come at the same time is another. Just ask Actaeon.

Being a Scion is hard enough when you're getting used to just *being*. But in the modern World where social media can make you go viral in a split second, there's a smaller adjustment window. In past ages of myth, it used to be that a Demigod could relearn how to exist within the minds of their people, how to *just be*, with only a few mistakes. Hercules spent several years building a Mantle among the Devá; the Celtic pantheons moved their Gods around quite frequently. But now...

Welcome to being a Demigod. Your character's social life, as they once knew it, is defunct. While there are certainly strategies that one can use to minimize the change, their normal life is undeniably done and dusted. Even if they've got a little-known Legend as their patron, they are still going to change. They're still going to be *different*. How do they manage that change? Considering that the

World leaves little to privacy, your character's face could potentially be all over social media. Someone might find out where you live using the internet and a celebrity blog site — and then suddenly you're not just faced with difficulty buying a pint of milk, but a yard full of acolytes trying to get your attention. Deifans are often annoying and entitled, and spiteful when spurned. Organized religion can be a great pain, but disorganized religion is far worse.

## IMAGE AND ACTION

For Demigods who don't want to be recognized outside of a carefully crafted Legend, the threat of recognition is omnipresent, given their manifest Omens. For a Scion of Odin, someone noticing that your character's eye is missing and that you seem to be followed around by ravens will recognize them if they've got the equivalent of Occult — and if a character wants to obfuscate their Omens somehow, that's a Complication. One of the ways in which Scions deal with these issues is by simply not being obvious.

A single trip to the Underworld can change your character's perception of the World — and change them, too. When they choose to use their powers for the good of their community (or not so good for their community) they will be changed, not just in how you see yourself, but in how others see them. Scions manage this appearance in different ways. In general, covering tattoos is better with clothing, instead of with makeup (because magical tattoos tend to glow through the foundation). Giving their Creature a collar is better than not... but not all Creatures are collar friendly, and sometimes those collars and leashes vanish. Explaining some expensive jewelry is probably easy but not when there's a glowing gem set into your antique pendant, or a swirling soul at the center of the engagement ring. No, most Demigods accept that they now have a brand and a narrative, and work to craft that narrative in the World.

Most Scions stick to their chosen communities, be it neighborhood, city, or state, full of people who have reasons to stick by the Scion's chosen narrative in the face of a hostile World. Those who venture out find a host of branding management firms specifically tailored to the needs of the divine. Some are guilds (see **Origin**, p. 29) that specialize in harmonizing the Scion's Cult with the extant organized religion of the pantheon, but no few are glossy, sleek professional organizations based out of skyscrapers, ready to help shape public opinion in return for some direct divine favor.

Even with professional representation, it's a little harder to explain away some other manifestations of Demigodhood. A Scion of Persephone can't apply for family leave for six months out of the year; the United States, and most other World governments, don't recognize a change in the seasons as a reason to deny an employer the right to terminate a contract. Absences for sojourns into the Underworld aren't the only thing preventing regular social interaction via a professional relationship; it's also murder on personal relationships with those who are still breathing. People ask questions, people are inherently

## THREE FIRMS

**Queen Jane's** is a well-regarded Deifan publication going back a half-century, one of the oldest and one of the only ones to achieve mainstream popularity. Jane's takes the amateur element of Deifanhood and renders it into the highly professional, and remains a community of diehard, old-school Deifans that didn't originate online. Interviews with Scions, reports from academia about religious topics, long-form reporting on controversial events with Collateral damage — a reporter from Jane's showing up needs no introduction, and the magazine has a long reach.

**Greg Arrow** is obsessed with Demigods and Incarnations. His Godcast, called GodArrow ("Finding the Gods on Earth and Putting them Online") has millions of listeners dedicated to finding out who amongst them is a God among men. His Godcast is frankly dangerous; he makes peoples' identities public, spams the World with that information, and never apologizes for it. His social media posts are comprised mainly of bad grammar and typos, most of which are also blasphemous. A classic Cassandra, Arrow brings bad luck and ill Fate to all around him.

**Fenris Response Team** is the high-powered, high-paying arm of the international weapons manufacturer dedicated to helping young Æsir out of their predicaments. Nearly every Response Team member is a young person with a law or public relations degree wearing an expensive, tailored suit; many of them have prosthetic limbs or are veterans. Their divinely ordained mission is to ensure the preparations for Ragnarok proceed unhindered by would-be do-gooders. As a side effect, they strive to get out in front of public relations disasters for the Norse pantheon and work with governments and media outlets to make sure Demigods important to the World After Ragnarok aren't reviled by the public. It's not uncommon for an Æsir Scion to finish slaying a troll, only to find that the press release went out three hours before they started.

obnoxiously curious. If a Scion is open to educating the public about their experiences, well, bully for them. But not everyone feels warm and fuzzy about the unwashed masses. A Scion must grow used to the loss of their privacy and the loss of any semblance of a normal life and must take agency in the stories told about them.

### WHERE YOU LIVE

In addition to the "what you wear" and "how you appear" problems, there's the natural issue of where one lives. Once people know something has changed, once the news has made it through the neighborhood watch that their neighbor is really a Scion of Morrigan (which handily explains the dozen murders of crows that have moved onto the phone wires), that Scion has more problems.

The obvious solution to "protect your property" is of course to get a fence. But moats filled with snakes and alligators don't meet most city codes, and even if they did, that's a lot of upkeep. Fences don't keep out the most determined of wannabe acolytes, and unless it's eight feet tall and built of stone, a good telephoto lens can still capture pictures of you playing with your mortal children.

Some Demigods move. They choose a new house, they move somewhere with acres of land to hide in, or into apartment buildings designed to support the rich and famous; apartment buildings where the price goes to bodyguards in mirrored sunglasses and the silence of not noticing who lives in Apartment 2B. But some divine parents (like Brigid, for example) don't approve of their Scions walling themselves off from the populace. For some, the advantage of hiding away inside a corporate tower, or far in the woods is a fantasy.

As discussed, it's hard to go incognito. But it's not difficult to use the internet. Ordering your favorite Chinese food, groceries, even hiring a dog walker are all there for you to book through the magic of technology. As long as your Legend doesn't make using cell phones difficult — some relics and Purviews short out technology, drain battery life, and discombobulate Wi-Fi like nothing else. It's also not difficult to enlist some aid directly from your pantheon; many of the small servants of the Gods are happy to help a Scion for some sort of supernatural patronage.

Of course, the truly old-fashioned way to manage these problems is to talk to the mortals who you care about. Information security is at its most vulnerable when people don't know what they're allowed to say. Your character's aunt is the type to brag about her nephew, the Scion of Odin, who quite literally removed his eye so he could gain the knowledge of the World. For some reason, her pride overwhelms her complete disbelief that these things are, in fact, real. Family is the point of no return, so what does a Demigod do? Stop having a family beyond the Gods? Do they choose to cut ties or Fatebind and imperil their mortal loved ones? Or do they have the hard conversations about what they need your family to do to keep themselves safe, to keep their lives somewhat private, and to give the Scion the opportunity to live some kind of life no matter how weird it gets?

### DISABLED DEMIGODS

Humanity is how the Gods know themselves, and humanity can see themselves in the Gods. Many Godly Legends are connected with specific disabilities: Hephaestus' limp, Tyr's missing hand, Nuada's missing arm, Odin's missing eye, Horus's missing eye, Black Tezcatlipoca's missing foot,

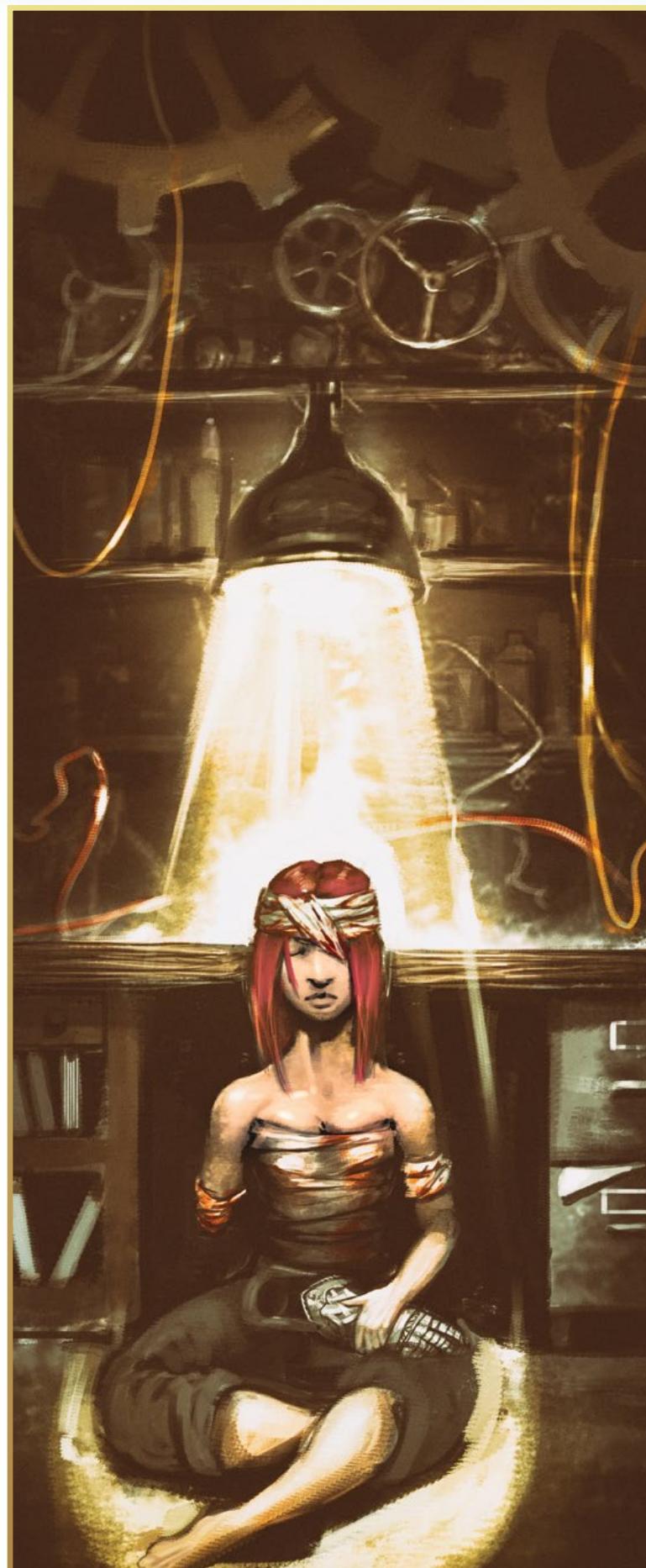
and Osiris' missing genitals are all excellent examples. Demigods are not immune to injury, but a Demigod who takes on a disabling injury in service to a Deed may find themselves inextricably bound. Playing a Demigod who has taken on this kind of a Legend relationship means that you're also taking on the idea of playing a disabled character.

Disability theory describes the concept of a disabled character so overpowered that their disability is overshadowed by their strengths — whether it be magic, athletic prowess, or something else. Unlike the blindness as punishment narratives of many mythologies and fantasy novels, this isn't a context of *disability is bad* but instead is the context of *disability gives me a different ability*. Certainly, it could be said that the trope of a blind person sensing more about their surroundings without sight could come from this concept.

Yet there's a particularly pernicious amount of mythology about blindness; many stories in many cultures reference blind people who can see the dead, who can see the future, who can see things even when they cannot see the World around them. It's tempting to imagine that having something taken away from you grants you something exceptional in return. While these stories may seem cool, they ultimately undermine what the disability is — a *lack of sight*. Having a character who can see the future after they're rendered blind is okay, but if you take nothing else from these sections, it's to be sensitive to the pain of real people. It's a trope, and an oftentimes lazy one. Don't try to make a disability cool just for the special effects.

Related to disabilities granting some superhuman capability is commentary by able-bodied people how *amazing* it is when a disabled person does something relatively ordinary. This can range from praising a blind person for crossing the street by themself or telling a wheelchair user that the fact they lift weights makes you feel like you have no excuse. Try not to put disabled people on pedestals as the best-of-the-best but treat them as real and whole people who make mistakes and live life like you do. Not just in **Scion** but in general.

These narratives suggest that if you're just good enough at *something*, or if you have the right set of powers or abilities you don't have to be disabled at all, because being disabled is a bad thing. Rather than everyone



seeing disability as a bad thing or as a mark of ugliness, sometimes that disabled person you've met is actually an Incarnate God or Demigod, and their disability is sacred by default.

## ODIN AND TYR

Take the mythology of Odin in the **Scion** setting. The God, as in our world, has always been associated with the loss of sight. In myth, Odin removed his eye in order to gain knowledge of the World; and as a result, many of his Scions either do the same deliberately as an act of devotion, or acquire blindness through another method such as an accident, disease, or simply being born with a single eye.

Traditionally, removing an eye or a hand has not been considered a sacrifice but a way to accept the knowledge of a God. That knowledge is not just about what they must give the character, but a deeply personal part of the experience of that being. In the case of Odin, that includes being able to only see out of one eye. In the case of Tyr, that means that you are one-handed for eternity. If this loss was taken in response to or in the occurrence of a Divine Deed, the Scion's maiming is part of their Mantle. The loss of one capability (sight, a hand, a perfect gait) is given back to the Scion in the form of a greater knowledge or understanding of the World.

When playing a Demigod with a disability, think a lot about how to not have them be extra effective *because of* their disability. Tyr's martial prowess isn't helped by his injury, but he's developed means to compensate.

Not all disabled people who manifest with the disability of a God are in fact a Demigod of their order. But a disabled person who lives with the same condition as a God can opt into that choice. It's a little like joining a club: You can decide your character is one of Odin's Daughters, and therefore the loss of an eye as a child counts. Or she can continue walking some other path of humanity in the setting. Odin will simply smile on her adventures from afar, sharing in her struggles and her pain through the very human notion of sympathy.

When deciding to play a Demigod who has either chosen to embrace a disability concurrent with the disability of their God, or a character who was born with a disability that they choose to adopt the patron of, it's important to get the details right. A Scion of Odin might never be able to see out of two eyes. What that means is that she won't have depth perception; she will likely wear a prosthetic eye or a scleral shell. She may choose to wear a prosthetic which hides a cataract, or she might show it to the World.

## HUMAN PROBLEMS, MAGICAL SOLUTIONS

In terms of how magic and disability intersect, certain magic powers — especially in Health or Fertility — can remove or negate Persistent Conditions that represent various forms of disability. A God's touch can regrow limbs or make infertile people able to bear children. Of course, the healing processes those Gods employ are not always pleasant. Scions or Incarnations of Asklepios have been known

to cure blindness and low vision for years — in the modern era they advertise laser eye surgery, but once you're in the offices of an Asklepios doctor, you're offered an enchanted snake instead of a laser.

Cures are tricky when talking about disabilities — it's advised to not play out cure narratives without the consent and buy in of everyone at the table. Cures are a huge part of **Scion**, and yours may be able to manifest strong healing powers, but cure narratives can affect disabled people. Traditionally, they're seen as toxic because they emphasize completeness and abled ability above all: They prioritize an able-bodied narrative over a disabled narrative, saying that it is better to be whole than broken. In a setting where claiming a disability is a sacred act, rejection of disability could be seen as profane.

Frequently these narratives also indicate that there is no cost to healing; that being disabled can disappear with a snap of a God's fingers. If your (the Storyguide's) table does choose to engage in cure narratives, find ways to undermine the stereotype of finger snap healing. Find ways for there to be a *cost* to curing a disability. If someone had their hearing restored for the first time in their life, the World isn't going to be all chirping birds and purring kittens, it's going to be a riot of overstimulation, honking car horns and screaming babies, for a person who has never experienced them before.

## SACRED AND PROFANE

What these choices boil down to is a dynamic of the sacred and profane. To cover or cure the manifestation of a disability borne by a Legend, you deny the very nature of that Legend. Do you think Tyr can't quest to grow his hand back? To do so would dishonor the sacrifice he made in binding Fenris, and possibly *un-bind* the wolf to boot. Disability is written on the body, and therefore that writing is sacred according to the Legend the character has sworn. It is possible to modify such disabilities with adaptive aids, but not with adaptive aids which circumvent the disability entirely. A white cane or a guide dog is an acceptable adaptation, but a prosthetic eye that sees with a video camera is not. A prosthetic hand like Nuada's is fine, but a regrown hand is not. A Scion must still experience the disability as a part of their life for it to count as an element of their Legend.

Disability being sacred means that the act of receiving a disability may not be a mournful moment. A person who becomes Scion of Odin won't mourn the loss of their eye, because they have other gifts. They have reasons for having made that choice. A Scion of Tyr may not miss their hand — and the prosthetic they replace it with may be a beloved artifact. Such was the case for Nuada's silver hand, even though, yeah, he later got his hand regrown. Details like prosthetics do matter when it comes to disabled Legends and Scions because they represent independent living and access to a way of life commensurate with their abled peers.

A Scion of Hephaestus may be born with a limp, or a leg injury. But there is also the possibility of a Scion or

mortal gaining a limp through dedication to the God. In some cases (like this one) it is less to do with an individual taking a newfound disability into their own hands, as with a Daughter of Odin who removes her own eye but may instead be a side effect of worship. A limp comes with a promise, in this case. You don't get to choose which leg, or how severe, it just... is.

## LANGUAGE AND DISABILITY

The language used to speak about disability is important. Broadly, there are two acceptable terms: disabled person and person with a disability. Either is acceptable, though the former is more universally preferred. Using respectful language (especially when you are an abled player playing a disabled character) is vital.

Words like “lame,” “retarded,” “crippled,” and “midg-et” should not be used in any capacity to describe a person. The appropriate language is “limp-” or “mobility-impaired,” “intellectually disabled,” “disabled,” and “little person” respectively. This matters — devaluing disabilities is counterintuitive in a game where disability can mark you as a God. These words carry hatred, an otherness that cannot be shaken. In the modern World, the disability community has sought to reclaim many of them, to take the venom out of the World and own it for themselves. If your character is disabled and self-identifies as a cripple, do research into understanding the reclamation of that word before using it. But a disabled character will likely just call themselves that: disabled. Some might identify as an amputee or a blind woman, some might call themselves a deafie (a term for deaf people). Disability is a piece of many disabled people’s identities, which is why using slurs is problematic.

## FATE AS THE FOE

The trouble with Fate is that, for all its power over the lives of Demigods, you can’t actually *strike back* at Fate, only defy its expectations (which, often, only makes one’s own life more miserable). It can be difficult to build narrative drama or tension around a conflict in which one party is a nebulous and largely ephemeral force. There are two solutions to this: Focus the conflict on the character or give Fate a face.

Since player characters are already the central focus of any game, the first part is more or less the simple option. Remember that Fate doesn’t form in a vacuum but is ultimately bound up in and clinging to past actions the character has taken. A destiny to break hearts might have started with a single bad breakup at a poorly chosen moment; a bloody and terrible war might have its origins in a conflict between friends. Decisions taken long ago, at least from the perspective of the character struggling with their aftermath, have outsized ramifications thanks to the amplifying force of Fate.

Play up those old decisions. Remind the players of them with repeated motifs, like little narrative footnotes pointing back to the original source of the Fatebinding.

Perhaps that trail of broken hearts started with a Chloe, and while not every estranged ex-partner thereafter will be a Chloe, there’ll be more than one might expect given random selection. Wounds sustained by allies in battle might mirror a scar the character still carries, the legacy of that initial conflict. In this way, the people around the Demigod, the people she cares about most, become reflections of the character’s own Fate, which bleeds into the World around her.

When it comes to giving Fate a face, the same principle applies, but in reverse. Instead of playing up the characters’ former actions, play up strange leitmotifs in the world around them. For example, in the film *The Sixth Sense*, (spoiler warning!) the color red is prominently featured in every scene in which Bruce Willis’ character, who dies at the beginning of the movie, interacts with a living person. You can do this with repeated phrases or aphorisms, recurring imagery or symbols, or Storyguide characters who, though not tied to the action, always manage to turn up in the strangest places. If you accompany your game with a soundtrack, you could tie a specific piece or style of music to certain events — players love things like this!

## FATE’S HAND ON THE SCALES

Storyguides aren’t limited merely to narrative flags when it comes to foreshadowing and influencing the course of a character’s Apotheosis. Floating Divine Deeds can be attached to a Storyguide character who is Fatebound to the character (if the Storyguide character *isn’t* Fatebound to the character, this effectively Fatebinds them without costing a Fatebinding slot, so choose an appropriate role). Doing so places them center-stage in the character’s future, so you may want to consider rebuilding them using character creation if they’re an Antagonist, but it’s not required. Characters bound up in a Divine Deed like this often end up changed as outlined in Fatebinding and You (p. 38).

When a floating Divine Deed is attached to a Storyguide character, regardless of the system used to design her, she gains a Quality or Flair emblematic of the role in Fate she will play for the character. One of the existing Qualities or Flairs can serve for this purpose, but if you feel adventurous, try your hand at creating one for yourself to fit the Deed like a glove. It doesn’t have to be anything fancy, and indeed, could be as simple as a +2 Enhancement to any action that supports her Fate-decreed role. Look over Knacks, Boons, Qualities, and Flairs to see how they interact with the Storypath system if you feel like you have writer’s block. Knacks and Qualities tend to be simple statements of fact with some associated mechanical support — they’re “always on,” so to speak — while Boons and Flairs are usually (but not always) abilities that must be activated to take effect. Remember that instead of Momentum or Legend, Storyguide characters spend Tension to fuel these abilities if necessary.

## RATCHETING UP THE TENSION

Fate doesn't like it when its pawns don't play along, and as characters grow beyond Heroes and become Demigods, the pressure heaped on them to conform to expectations only grows. Mechanically, those pressures have previously been represented, at least in part, by Tension. This is still the case, but Fate (and the Storyguide) has a new source of dramatic oomph in **Demigod** play.

If a character is presented with an opportunity to fulfill a floating Divine Deed and either refuses or circumvents the situation such that the Deed remains unfulfilled, immediately refresh the Tension pool to its normal starting value. If it already has an amount of Tension equal to or greater than its starting value, add Tension equal to the character's current Legend.

## KEEPING PLATES SPINNING

Most Storyguides aren't just keeping track of one player's character and her journey to Apotheosis — usually, they're keeping track of at least three or four! Even with the relatively straightforward and flexible structure of floating Divine Deeds, that's a lot to keep a handle on, especially if one or more of the Deeds represents a choice that might go any number of ways.

One way to help simplify matters is to diagram them with a decision tree, with each floating Deed the nexus of several likely options. This allows the Storyguide to visualize the entire arc of the character's story as a path, beginning at one side of a page and ending at the other, as the character begins mortal and ends as a God, broadly speaking. Thinking about the various permutations of choices will help when the player almost inevitably does something you didn't expect, giving you ideas to fall back on.

Remember, too, that a character's Divine Deeds are a long game, played out over entire story arcs. Even if a Storyguide is totally blindsided, the most they must do is get through a play session while keeping everything they're juggling in the air. After that, she'll presumably have downtime during which she can adjust future beats in the arc, with consultation with the player as necessary.

## EXAMPLE OF DIVINE DEEDS IN PLAY

*Hippolyta Byrne, Angela's character, was raised by the Amazons of Clan Ephos and adopted by Artemis. As a Hero, she made a name for herself as a defender of women and of the queer community in particular. Now, taking her first steps into the World as a nascent Demigod, the time has come to consider just what sort of a Goddess she might become. Sophia, the Storyguide, has a chat with Angela. Together, they come to an agreement about Hippolyta's*

*likely future — a Goddess of boundaries, and specifically a guardian of those who must transition across them.*

*Armed with this knowledge, Sophia goes to work, laying out the floating Divine Deeds that will define Hippolyta's path from mortal to Goddess. A Guardian at heart, Sophia knows that Lyta (and Angela) will need something to spur her to action. She decides that it would be appropriately thematic if it involved surmounting an artificially imposed barrier of some kind. Setting the motif early lets it resonate throughout the story, culminating in Hippolyta's final form. For an appropriate Deed, she brings back a foe Lyta faced shortly after her Visitation.*

*Next, she needs to consider an oppositional figure for Hippolyta. Given where she's going, it makes sense for her to struggle against a deity of propriety, law, or something similar. Hera could work for this, or Athena, or even Zeus himself (because despite his trickery, he's the highest authority amongst the Theoi). Sophia doesn't need to settle on this just now — eventually, Angela's choices and Hippolyta's actions will lead her down one of these roads (or a different one, for that matter, but Sophia will cross that bridge when she comes to it).*

*Once the terms of the conflict and the opponent are set, Sophia needs to define how that battle will kick into high gear. Hippolyta settled into her Callings of Guardian, Warrior, and Lover fairly early on; Sophia's going to challenge that, and she sets her sights on the Warrior Calling straight-away. Even though she was raised for war, the path Lyta's walking leads to a hugely different role in the World, protecting those who struggle against restrictions and barriers rather than tearing them down herself. Sophia plans on events calling her Warrior aspect into question, which might take the form of two opposed groups of iconoclasts or a cause she might find herself wrapped up in that rejects violence entirely.*

*She jots those ideas down, then pauses to consider. It's entirely possible that Lyta could choose to forswear her Lover Calling in the name of clinging to her Warrior Calling. That would change the nature of the Goddess Lyta's becoming in a much more proactive and rabble-rousing way, so that she'd eventually become a deity of rebellion and righteous causes, one whose name would find purchase on the lips of countless revolutionaries and activists. Sophia likes the potential drama of that choice and makes a note to the effect — it's unlikely the story will reach this point soon, but she'll be ready when it does.*

*Fatebinding plays a role in this process as well. As Lyta's mythic power matures, her Fatebindings will shift from individuals to entire groups and places and pull far more powerfully upon her. Clan Ephos is an obvious choice, but there's also the college campus where she works as a counselor, and which she's defended from more than one threat, both mundane and mythic. There's the local queer community as well, a Balm if ever Sophia's seen one. These touchstones will play a significant role in the story of Lyta's*



*death and rebirth as a Goddess as Avoidances begin to force her hand.*

*Case in point: When it comes to the shedding of mortal ties, Sophia knows exactly where to hit home. Hippolyta's family is a sprawling Amazon clan, as ready for a good fight as anyone, and many of them have accompanied her on her Heroic adventures. Thus far, they've been lucky, in no small part thanks to Lyta herself, who has fought long and hard to keep them safe, but Sophia can be cruel when she needs to be, and there's nothing that would hurt Lyta more than losing members of her family. Perhaps Telepyleia, the aged matriarch, falls in battle because of an error in Lyta's judgement; or perhaps her cousin Penthesilea, heir apparent*

*before Lyta's Visitation, finally succumbs to jealousy and turns against her, forcing Lyta to slay her closest friend or die on her blade — and perhaps visit her shade in the Underworld to seek or offer forgiveness.*

*Sophia loves that last part so much that she underlines it in her notes and decides that, if the story permits it, that's just how she wants Lyta to meet her mortal end when it comes time for the fifth and final step in the process of Apotheosis. She may never get there — five steps are a long way when it comes to a narrative arc, and a lot can change in the meantime — but it'd be a story that she (and more importantly, Angela) would never forget.*



# CHAPTER TWO PANTHEONS

*"There was an old abbot in one temple and he said something of which I think often and it was this, that when men destroy their old gods they will find new ones to take their place".*

— Pearl S. Buck

The World contains many pantheons and many Gods, some as old as history itself. This chapter refers to five of them. All of the pantheons in this chapter are marked by ancient problems; some are markedly less prevalent and potent in the modern World, and all of them have members who would be deemed Titanic by other pantheons. Still, each pantheon works to better their position in the World, and each has contributed a Creation Myth that helps to solidify natural law and anchor reality against itself.

## SCENT THE DIVINE

The Scent the Divine Knack is a character choice and optional regular feature in Hero. At the Demigod level, it becomes a regular part of the Scion's daily life (see p. 130). For the new pantheons in this book, the particular scents, sounds, and sensory feelings associated are:

**Annuna:** Baking clay; a bustling and crowded market

**Apu:** Llama wool, thin mountain air; the whistling whir of a sling

**Atua:** The salt of the sea; different seafoods cooking at once

**Bogovi:** Rich, loamy earth; the rustling of dried, cracked leaves in autumn

**Tengri:** Horseflesh and sweat, incense; throat singing

Scions know one another the way horses do: scent and sound. More medically or academically minded Scions note that even a human's comparatively poor olfactory sense can differentiate between more gradients in smells than the eye can distinguish colors and shades. Smell links more intimately with memory and emotions than any other sense; the mere whiff of soup simmering on the stove can bring back a suite of childhood memories. For Scions scenting signs of their pantheon, the memories that return are far older and deeper than the golden years of childhood. It's common for cultists to have incense or perfumes that have smells reminiscent of a pantheon's scent, but someone with the Knack can always distinguish the real thing.

## TITANIC CALLINGS

Four pantheons in this book have prominent members with Titanic Callings, aspects of their divinity that are defined more by how they relate to the World and one another than to humanity. The Annuna consider the embodiment of their authority to be paramount, which

keeps near-Titanic members in line but lends them to having an inhuman perspective. The Bogovi embody a duality within themselves, occasionally finding a polar opposite to their own humanity. The Tengri are simply cosmopolitan enough to contain Titans in their ranks. The Atua don't just reject the distinction between God and Titan — they embody that rejection. All four pantheons proudly and seriously assume roles and wield abilities other pantheons associate with their archenemies, such as the following Callings.

- An Adversary defines themselves by dedicated, aggressive opposition through violence,

### TITANIC CALLINGS IN HERO

The creation of Titanic Callings as a system topic postdates the Gods featured in the pantheons of Hero. Conceptually speaking, if you're going to let half-Titans into some pantheons, you probably have to acknowledge the ones who should already be present in the game — it's only fair.

The following isn't a complete list, but just the most obvious Gods. Any God with a monstrous countenance or deeply inhuman aspect has the potential for a Titanic Calling; Certainly, many pantheons like the Shén will have legitimate members who are Titans or possess Titanic Callings. Storyguides should feel free to treat some Gods with exceptions, however; for example, Ares' Mantles of Mars still treat his Callings as Guardian, Lover, and Warrior, while the various component Goddesses who make up the Morrigan may take turns swapping Mantles to make sure none get too monstrous.

Full rules for playing with these Callings are available in **Titanomachy**, while full rules for playing Scions with a Titanic heritage are available in **Saints and Monsters**.

**Agni:** Primeval

**Ares:** Destroyer

**Kali:** Destroyer

**Shiva:** Destroyer

**Itzpalapalotl:** Monster, Primeval

**The Morrigan:** Destroyer, Monster

**Tawiscara:** Adversary

argument, or especially deceit and corruption. An Adversary's opponent suffuses their mind and existence, present in every plot, every action, every fire they set and lie they tell.

- A Destroyer breaks the World around them. Edifices fall, cities slide into the sea, and forests snap like dry grass at their steps' impact or their staves' swing. The edges of their existence swirl with force and corrosion where they meet the World.
- A Monster's very form affronts human sensibilities. To sense them is to fear them. They write large the predator in the shadows, the horns' lowered points, and the aposematic color-flash, reminding humans of their animal hearts.
- A Primeval and their Purview are one. Gods and Titans who are not merely God of something, but are that thing fall into this category. This differs from Dominion (see p. 154) by a difference of degree, rather than a difference of kind. Gods with Dominion are joined in communion with their Purview, while Primevals possess a far more expansive definition. Gods with Dominion inhabit their Purview like an elemental mask; Titans with Primeval are a human-looking mask upon their Purview.
- A Tyrant craves power for power's sake, desiring to dominate all those around them in selfish games. They're related to and often possess the Titanic Virtue of Dominance, but this isn't a hard rule. Some Tyrants aren't related to Purviews like other Titans, and instead desire more temporal power.

None of the pantheons' Gods in this book have Titanic Virtues (see **Hero**, p. 43). They completely embody the Virtues of their pantheon but are mildly inhuman in doing so.

## GODS VERSUS TITANS, AGAIN

Among the pantheons in **Scion: Demigod**, only the Apu and the Bogovi quest to destroy titanspawn with any sense of frequency or fervor, sending their Scions to ruin cults worshipping sodden giants or to stymie the schemes of Chort. Both regard it as their duty to the World and to their worshippers. The Apu ally with the Teōtl and the K'uh to keep Titans sealed in great sacred prisons deep beneath the earth, but they also seek to lead the many smaller pantheons inhabiting the spaces between and beyond the allies in surviving the dual onslaughts of the World's modernity and the renewed Titanomachy. The Bogovi, a cosmopolitan pantheon at a crossroads of the world, find themselves battling alongside the Devá, the Theoi, and the Æsir — and, most often, playing the part of beleaguered peacemaker

between the three. They regard their modern battles as the bloody sowing before the spring's peaceful reaping. The war will forge their Scions into the Gods the pantheon needs in the days and nights to come.

The Annuna have a slightly more remote view of things, as befits their way. In many ways, they embody the oldest conception of deities — forces of nature wearing a human face. And though they do not speak of it, they recall the wild deities of the eldest pantheons, who strode the World when the eternal Annuna were themselves young. Yet unlike so many of the younger pantheons, they understand the dividing line between God and Titan, when the force stops caring which face it shows to the World. Humans are meant to be ruled over, and the modern World is merely a delay before the Annuna bring mankind to heel with thunder and floods. In the meantime, however, there must be a World left to rule over — and so the Annuna seek to preserve and defend their charges against those who would annihilate everything. Then again, they might also annihilate everything if they are defied — that dividing line is, perhaps, more subtle than they give it credit for, and other pantheons take note of the Mesopotamian Gods' stony intractability when it comes to their birthrights.

The Atua know themselves like they know their islands. Like the Òrìshà and Loa, they recognize the division between God and Titan, not as a firm line like the Annuna but as a political spectrum and an identity continuum often used to condemn one's enemies. They know they are both Titan and God, all at once. During a bad season, any God may fall to their Titanic urges, and Titans may see look to the face of humanity and suddenly see themselves once more.

The Tengri do not even recognize this division and see it as largely irrelevant. They watch the Bogovi wallow in self-pity, the Annuna scheme against other Gods more often than they battle monsters, and the Apu admire their own reflections in great mirrors of polished gold. Even the Òrìshà and the Atua sometimes seek to trick, fool, battle, or just fuck around with other Gods in their pantheon or another. Why give a different name to one's enemies, the Tengri ask rhetorically — do they not also command the sky and the sea and the earth? So what if one wears a tiger's face or causes tsunamis with their mighty tails?

The Second Titanomachy is coming; all of the pantheons can feel the World changing and know there will be a time to stand between humanity and those who would destroy or subjugate them (or, for the Annuna, subjugate them under the wrong crowns). There was such a time in the past, though it was louder or quieter for each pantheon, and each dealt with their Titans in their own ways. Was there a Titanomachy beyond the first? The Gods know many of themselves were once human, even if the Titans might not have been. When *homo neanderthalensis* and *homo naledi* walked the

World before *homo sapiens*, did those Gods too have to contend with their Titans?

It may be that the eldest Gods have left the World (**Scion: Hero** p. 45), venturing beyond even the existence of the Primordials forming the bedrocks of awareness

and cognition. But if they left, did their Titans leave with them, or were they so primeval that the distinction drawn by all but a few pantheons did not yet exist? Were those Gods even more Titanic than the Atua or the Annuna? If so, perhaps it's a blessing that they are gone, if they even existed at all.



# THE ANNUNA OF MESOPOTAMIA

"The shepherd adorns the plain with his ewes and lambs.

After the heavens had been turned upside down, after bitter lament had been imposed on Sumer, after, as houses were overwhelmed by the rivers and Enlil frowned in anger upon the land, Enlil had flooded the harvest, after Enlil had acted mightily thus, Enlil did not abandon us."

— Debate between the Hoe and the Plough

The Annuna are one of the oldest and proudest pantheons in The World. While, technically, "Annuna" originally referred only to the direct children of Anu, and the other Gods were once called Igigi, they have become a confederate pantheon and long ceased to care about specific names, so long as they are given respect.

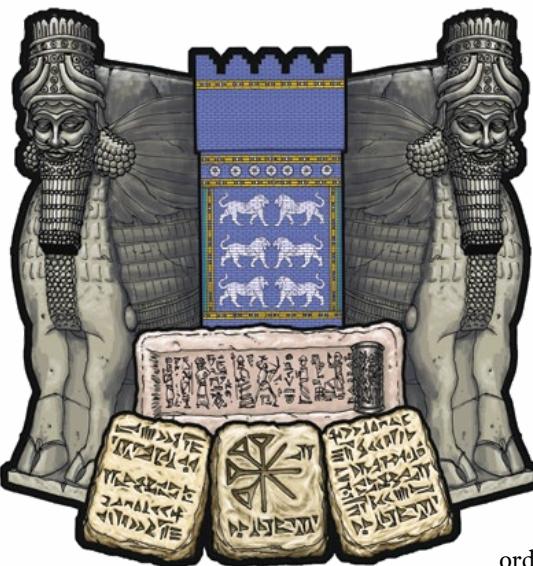
The Annuna do not agree on how The World was made. It is generally agreed that, in the earliest days, there was only Tiamat (or Nammu), the great ocean, and from her emerged Anu, the sky, and Ki, the earth. From their union was born Enlil, who separated his parents and claimed dominion over the land, while Anu ruled over the skies... unless that waited until the other Gods were born, and Enki was given rule over the waters. The lesser Gods were made to toil under their rule, leading to rebellion. To appease the rebels, Enki and Ninhursag mixed the blood of the slain Geshtu-e with clay to create the first humans, who would labor under and serve the Gods.

Unless that's wrong, because before all this happened, the union of Tiamat and the Primordial freshwaters, Apsu, birthed Lahmu and Lahamu, who birthed Anshar and Kishar, who birthed Anu, whose family caused the death of Apsu and sparked war between Tiamat and Anu, ended only when Marduk was able to slay her and use her body to create The World.

The Annuna are not concerned about their history being multiple choice, because they all agree on the important things: The Annuna are in charge, and humanity exists to

serve them and their World. The Gods must be good rulers as their duty and humans must be good servants as theirs. Their cities may have fallen, their land may be lost, but the Annuna endure. Loss is a failure on the part of their humans to live up to expectations. The Annuna are proud, and they know that they are still the greatest Gods. Their circumstances are temporary — they will regain the glories of old.

There is no room for argument.



## PRINCIPAL MEMBERS

The Annuna are a pantheon of rulers and nobles. Almost all descend, somehow, from Anu, the first of the three Gods — kings, so they are also a family. They operate in firm hierarchies, with the greater Gods in charge of the lesser ones, and humans below them, living as servants and caretakers of the World. Humans exist for their benefit, and the Gods rule them as generous lords. They are concerned, above all, with keeping order and reclaiming the glory that their past humans managed to lose.

The Gods of the Annuna include Enki (water, crafts), Enlil (rulership, wind), Ereshkigal (death), Ishtar (love, lust, war), Marduk (rulership, storms), Nanshe (water, mercy), Nergal (killing, plague), Ninlil (rulership, wind), Ninhursag (earth, motherhood), Ninurta (war, healing), Shamash (the sun, judgement), Sin (the moon, judgement), and Tammuz (fertility, livestock). Many of the Gods have holy numbers associated with them, and they inhabit those

numbers in abstract mathematical expressions of their dominance.

## ENKI, LORD OF THE PRIMORDIAL WATERS, KEEPER OF THE ME

**Aliases:** Ea, Enkig, Nudimmud, Nissiku; 40

None are more fertile than Enki, whose waters flow beneath the earth. His holy number is 40, used to refer to him and denote his divine power and status. His wife is Ninhursag, in her many names, and he is son of Anu and sometimes grandson of Abzu, the primordial freshwater sea. His are the fresh waters, which nourish life. Quite literally, for they are flowing from his mighty loins. Until Inanna stole the mes, the decrees required for civilization to exist, by getting him drunk. He was their guardian until this happened. He knows the secrets of magic, using them to confine the fresh waters underground and make them sleep.

His mighty water impregnated his wife, Ninhursag... and their daughter, Ninsar; and their daughter, Ninkurri; ending only when their daughter (or granddaughter), Uttu, convinced Ninhursag to stop this, leading to Enki impregnating himself eightfold via fruit grown with his own semen. (He had to get a fox to help convince Ninhursag to remove and birth the Gods within him, who became the great healing Gods.) The pair also worked to create humanity, and Enki has maintained a close relationship with the Apkallu, the wise, part-fish prototypes of humanity.

Of the elder Gods, Enki is probably the kindest toward humans, who entertain him. He was the one to confuse their tongues and force them to speak many languages, but he also helped save them from Enlil's flood. He and his wife are patrons of the disabled, working to find roles for them regardless of condition. With his extreme fertility, Enki has more Scions than nearly any Annuna. When he incarnates, he is a cheerful, lustful man with bronze skin and a full beard. He can be found partying, making things, and having lots of sex. His Scions are often the center of attention wherever they go and tend to have large families.

**Callings:** Creator, Lover, Trickster

**Purviews:** Artistry (Pottery, Sculpture), Beasts (Fish, Goat, Turtle), Fertility, Forge, Fortune, Prosperity, Stars, Water

## ENLIL, THE LORD OF WIND AND DESTINIES, DECREER OF FATES

**Aliases:** Ellil, Illinos, Nunamnir; 50

Enlil, firstborn son of the Primordial Anu, is the second of the great kings over the Gods. He is the wind through the World, who separated his father and mother in their mating, placing sky and earth apart. Enlil stands as a model for kings, ruling with a firm but distant hand and the advice

of his wife, Ninlil. His name is literally synonymous with ultimate authority. His number is 50. He ceded his rule and possession of the Tablet of Destinies to his nephew, Marduk, but retains power all the same, invoked to honor and grant authority to rulers.

Enlil is a wise king, but harsh. Those who rule well he is benevolent to, granting blessings. However, he has no patience for unjust rulers, and his temper is deadly. He is as quick to take back blessings as to give them, and he once sent a killing flood to wipe out humanity for waking him. He failed, but it was only the quick thinking of other Gods that convinced him not to finish the job. He commands the fates of all, and he created the mattock, assigning it its vital role in farming as easily as he assigns roles to humanity.

Enlil incarnates rarely, having little patience for most humans. He holds them to a high standard, and his Scions to an even higher one. When he appears in the mortal World, it is always as a leader or influential figure. Often he is a judge, a lawmaker, or a principal, fair but harsh with those who break rules. He expects his Scions to rise to the top, in the finest traditions of the Annuna. He is swift to reward success, but equally swift to withdraw rewards or even punish failure. While less distant than his own father, Enlil is neither patient nor accepting of excuses.

**Callings:** Creator, Judge, Leader

**Purviews:** Deception, Forge, Fortune, Order, Passion (Benevolence, Wrath), Prosperity, Sky, Stars

## ERESHKIGAL, LADY OF THE GREAT EARTH, QUEEN OF THE UNDERWORLD

**Aliases:** Erec-ki-galla, Irkalla

The Queen of the Underworld rules it with a firm hand. Of all the Gods, only Nergal approaches her authority in the lands of death, and even he must bow to her. While she rules over death, she is also honored as a Mother Goddess of the Deep Earth and Holy Virgin – the contradictions of this matter to her no more than to her sister, Inanna. She is a cold and stern ruler, but not cruel. When her passions are roused, few are as determined.

The other Gods are careful of Ereshkigal, as escape from her realm is difficult even for them. She does not judge those who come before her, but welcomes all, ruling from the great city of spirits within the Underworld. Before Nergal, she had other consorts, and none have dared to question her right to rule. Even Nergal can only claim to be co-ruler. The two are married, but they compete constantly, and their marriage was born from Nergal snubbing Ereshkigal, fearing her wrath, trying to sneak into her realm to defeat her before she could kill him, and then getting seduced and having sex for a week straight. Within Ereshkigal's realm, many secrets are hidden among the strange trees and feather-clad spirits, Gods and demons that call it home.



Ereshkigal's interest in the mortal realm is somewhat limited, as is her ability to access it directly, but she most often incarnates to learn more about mortals or to deal with problems that somehow escape her normally impregnable realm. She is found in roles that relate to death or secret knowledge, and she rarely keeps them long. She has been an archivist, a mortician, a doctor, and an executioner, finding all equally comfortable. Her Scions tend to inherit her focus, her grim exterior and her powerful intellect. She treats them kindlier than most, for she has always loved her children, but she's not particularly good at expressing emotion.

**Callings:** Liminal, Lover, Tyrant

**Purviews:** Beasts (Birds), Darkness, Death, Earth, Epic Stamina, Fertility, Health

## ISHTAR, QUEEN OF HEAVEN, GODDESS OF LOVE AND WAR

**Aliases:** Ashtar, Ashtart (Canaanite), Astarte (Greek), Eshtar, Inana, Inanna; 15

Of all the Annuna, none are more vibrant than Ishtar, also called Inanna. She is a mighty enforcer of divine justice, her fury terrifying, though she is often less concerned with justice than getting vengeance on those who harm or insult her family. She is beloved by mortals, yet also feared, for her gifts of passion drive humans to great heights and terrible depths. Her worship is widespread, and she has Mantles in several other pantheons in the Middle East.

Ishtar got Enki drunk and stole the mes, displaying them for the people. She descended into the Underworld to conquer it and steal it from her sister, and while she was thwarted and

her husband, Tammuz, died for it, she returned alive. Passion drives her above all, and she is aggressive in pursuit of it. She tried to make Gilgamesh her lover, and when he scorned her, she loosed the Bull of Heaven upon him. In her warrior aspect, she is bearded and masculine, yet still a woman.

Ishtar's refusal to accept the bonds of traditional gender have made her a beloved patron of trans people of all genders, especially trans women, who have special roles in her temples and rites. When Ishtar incarnates, she is always terrifying, beautiful, and intensely sexual in equal measure, regardless of the gender or sexual identity her form takes. She has been a sex worker, an assassin, a bounty hunter. She loves her Scions passionately, but if she is not given respect, her love turns to hate that runs just as hot. Her Scions share her vicious temper, intensity, and passion – and her reckless disregard for the consequences of their actions.

**Callings:** Lover, Trickster, Warrior

**Purviews:** Beasts (Lion), Beauty, Epic Dexterity, Epic Strength, Fertility, Passion (Anger, Love, Lust), War

## MARDUK, KING OF THE GODS, THE LORD OF LORDS

**Aliases:** Mardochaios, Marodak, Martuk, Merodach, Merodak

Marduk, son of Enki, is the third of the divine kings, inheriting the power and rights of his father and his uncle, Enlil. His coming brought an entire new creation myth to the Annuna, though they have never had trouble with



multiple pasts coexisting. He earned his right to rule by facing Tiamat and her monstrous children in battle, defeating them, and slaying the Titan, using her body to create the World, and convincing his father to create humanity.

While all of the Annuna are proud, few are as loud about it as Marduk. He never lets anyone forget his mighty deeds, nor his immense knowledge. He possesses the Tablet of Destinies, which commands ownership of the universe and control over the Fates of those within it, except when it sits in the possession of Enlil, the Titan Imdugud or Tiamat's husband, Kingu, due to the vagaries of time that follow the Annuna. Marduk is, at least, a wise ruler who treats his subjects well, but his ego is immense, and he brooks no disrespect.

Marduk is one of the more active of the Annuna. He still stings at the loss of Babylon, though he would never admit it, and he is constantly scheming to increase his own prestige and that of his fellows. He can often be found as a soldier, an urban planner, or an archaeologist, and he's more than happy to fund the trade of artifacts to get what "belongs" to him out of danger. If a king does it, after all, it isn't illegal. Marduk's ego and that of his Scions have been known to conflict, but for the most part, as long as his Scions understand that Marduk is in charge, he gives them a free hand. He is generous with gifts and praise when they succeed. It is only when they threaten his ego or what he is trying to build that his wrath is pointed at his own.

**Callings:** Leader, Sage, Warrior

**Purviews:** Beasts (Dragon, Snake), Epic Dexterity, Epic Strength, Fire, Order, Sky

## NANSHE, PROTECTOR OF ORPHANS, GODDESS OF PROPHECY AND FISHING

**Aliases:** Nance

Few Goddesses are beloved like Nanshe, one of the healing deities born after Ninhursag helped Enki recover from self-impregnation. She was born from her father's throat and her mother's womb, and when Enki divided command over the waters among his children, he gave her power over the Persian Gulf. The ocean, the mighty domain of Tiamat, could only be tamed by one so kind.

Nanshe holds sacred the birds and fish, which obey her and give up their bounty to mankind. She sits beside Shamash, moderating his judgments with mercy and speaking for the weak and the orphaned. Hers is the power of dream and prophecy, which offer humanity a merciful glimpse at the future. Hers is the care of the orphan and widow, the mercy of royalty for those who cannot support themselves. Hers is the protection of the weight and measure, the kindness of ensuring that all business is fair. Nanshe oversees all of this, kindest of Goddesses. Is it any wonder that the stock markets of the World sing her praises?

Nanshe incarnates frequently, for she loves her human servants the most. She is a minister of trade, the director of a charity for children, a fisherwoman. Always, she is beloved by her community for her wisdom and her kindness. Her Scions tend to inherit both qualities, rising to positions of leadership with easy grace. Their mother expects them

to care for those under them, because if those who lead do not, then all of society will collapse.

**Callings:** Guardian, Healer, Judge

**Purviews:** Artistry (Music), Beasts (Birds, Fish), Darkness, Health, Order, Prosperity, Water

## NERGAL, THE LORD OF KILLING AND PLAGUE, COMMANDER OF DEMONS

**Aliases:** Erra, Nerigal

When it comes to striking down mortals, no God can equal Nergal. He stands at the zenith of the sun's arc, wielding its killing heat like a lance. He commands the demons of plague and the terrors of war. He is the Burner, the Lord of Summer and Bringer of Destruction. He has even faced Marduk, tricking his king solely to have the chance to slaughter humans, mostly out of boredom. He is son of Enlil and Ninlil, husband-consort to Ereshkigal. Even so, Nergal is no less warlike with her than he is with the other Gods.

Their relationship is contentious. When the Gods offered gifts to honor Ereshkigal, who could not attend their feasts, Nergal did not rise to honor her messenger. To save himself from her fury, Nergal led a band of demons into Irkalla, where Ereshkigal was enchanted by his power and seduced him. He tricked his way out, but she demanded his return and marriage. Ever since, their relationship is marked by competition. Ereshkigal admires Nergal's audacity and he her power, but the two have never stopped showing each other up. Whoever wins, their passionate lovemaking afterward lasts days. Perhaps this is why Ereshkigal is the only God short of the great God-kings who can direct Nergal for long.

Nergal's incarnations are killers, one and all. He has been a soldier, a pirate, a biological weapons expert. He has few Scions, and those he does have tend to be, like him, wrathful and fully aware of the death that they command. Most, however, are also loyal to a cause or a people. Nergal has never betrayed the Annuna nor broken the commands of his father or wife, and that loyalty marks his Scions, most of whom are given the service of his many demons.

**Callings:** Destroyer, Liminal, Warrior

**Purviews:** Beasts (Bull, Lion), Chaos, Death, Epic Stamina, Epic Strength, Fire, Health, Passion (Wrath), Sun, War

## NINHURSAG, LADY OF THE SACRED MOUNTAIN, THE MOTHER OF MANKIND

**Aliases:** Aruru, Belet-ili, Beletili, Dingirmah, Mami, Ninhursanga, Ninmah, Nintu, Nintud, Nintur,

She has many names, but all are the Lady of the Sacred Mountain, wife of Enki and mighty Queen of the Earth.

Ninhursag, whose mastery of childbirth is so great that she birthed the children Enki seeded within his own body. Ninmah, who helped to create humanity from clay. She is mother of many Goddesses and most trusted of Enki's advisors. She knows all the secrets of the body, wielding terrifying power. When she is angry, few can calm her.

She and her husband work closely together, often playfully. While Ninhursag tends to take herself more seriously, she and Enki got drunk after inventing humans and made a game of creating disabled people and finding jobs they could perform. She is the only person who can hold back Enki's lust when it becomes too strong, for he dares not forget the day he became octuply pregnant and needed her aid.

Ninhursag is a caring mother who works to find labor for her children and followers. She tends to view humans as a sort of beloved if not bright pet. She believes strongly in rebuilding the Annuna to their former greatness, and she expects her Scions to assist, but she is generous with them... if meddlesome. Ninhursag likes to see her children marry and become rulers, after all. When she incarnates, she is an architect, a guidance counselor, a midwife. Her Scions inherit both her meddlesome nature and her authoritative demeanor, serving as den mothers to their comrades.

**Callings:** Creator, Guardian, Healer

**Purviews:** Earth, Epic Stamina, Fertility, Forge, Health

## NINLIL, QUEEN-MOTHER OF THE GODS, FOREMOST OF THE LADIES

**Aliases:** Mulitta, Mulliltu, Mullissu, Mylitta

While the Annuna have three God-kings, no one can deny that among all Goddesses, only Ninlil approaches them in authority. While Inanna may be called Queen of Heaven and Ereshkigal may rule the Underworld, even they would never think themselves above Ninlil, first among Goddesses. She is wife to Enlil, and when she speaks, it is with her own wisdom and her husband's authority backing every word. The pair are closer than any other, co-rulers who understand above all the importance of keeping the Annuna together.

While Enlil and Ninlil often entertain themselves with games of seduction while Enlil lies disguised, Ninlil spends far more time with humanity than her husband. She understands that it is no longer enough to give commands set literally in stone, and hers is the realm of back-room diplomacy, quiet deals, and mutual benefit. Where her husband shouts, Ninlil whispers. Hers is the wind that spreads rumors and influence, and the wise pay attention to which way this wind blows. In the modern era, Ninlil is invoked in the halls of power by lobbyists, activists, and counselors, hoping to call on her to influence those at the forefront.

Ninlil typically incarnates in the World to pursue her agendas and play games with her husband. She has been a model, a politician, a city councilor. Always, her charisma shines through no matter the situation, and always, she has great influence over those around her. Her Scions are no less charismatic, always surrounded by admirers and confidantes. Ninlil is not the most comforting of mothers, but she has so many children that it would be hard to dote on all of them.

**Callings:** Leader, Lover, Sage

**Purviews:** Beauty, Epic Stamina, Fortune, Health, Order, Passion (Terror, Wisdom), Sky

## NINURTA, CHAMPION OF THE GODS, GOD OF HEALING AND BATTLE

**Aliases:** Ningirsu, Nisroch

Ninurta's great fame is as a warrior, son of Enlil, champion against the demon Asag, and retriever of the stolen Tablet of Destinies from the Titan Imdugud (though Enki had to trick him into giving it back). However, he began life as a healer, driving out the demons of disease. Even at his height as a war God, demons have ever been his greatest foes, and he is still invoked to drive out disease with the aid of his famously intelligent 50-headed mace, Sharur, which is also his closest friend.

Ninurta is a patron of soldiers, though he must occasionally be reminded of his duties. Sharur serves to advise and guide him, and the two are inseparable. In the modern day, he has become a patron of combat medics, and the 50-headed mace can often be seen on unit patches. Even now, Ninurta's ambitions remain undimmed, and the elder Gods must occasionally rein him in from starting fights he cannot win. Despite this, he remains popular among the more warlike pantheons, as he's generally interested in helping to fight Titans.

Ninurta's pride and skill are both reflected in his Scions. Most find their call to battle after already mastering some other skill, but they are no less dangerous for it. He is a loving patron, free with advice and praises, but most of his Scions find themselves relying equally on Sharur's advice.

**Callings:** Healer, Hunter, Warrior

**Purviews:** Beasts (Bird, Lion, Scorpion), Epic Dexterity, Epic Strength, Health, Order, War

## SHAMASH, THE ALL-SEEING, GOD OF THE SUN, TRUTH AND JUSTICE

**Aliases:** Shamshi, Shamshu, Utu; 20

Shamash sits in judgment over all. The mighty Lord of the Sun sees all that his rays touch. He is twin brother to Inanna, and alongside her, he is an enforcer of divine justice. Unlike Inanna, however, his justice is that of high

ideals. He rides over the sky in his solar chariot each day, and at night he descends to his cave outside Irkalla, where he guides the dead into the Underworld.

Shamash is one of the Annuna who cares most about humanity. He assisted mighty Gilgamesh against Humbaba, and he has always offered the protection of his gaze to travelers and merchants. He, alongside Nanshe, is much-beloved in the field of business. He despises little more than lies and deception, and even more than business, his is the realm of the court and the law. He is a patron of literacy and numeracy, for there can be no justice and fairness without the written word and proper measures.

When Shamash incarnates, he is a bringer of truth and order. He has been an author, a judge, a negotiator. He is exacting and scrupulously fair, and his Scions share his piercing gaze and utter disdain for lies and falsehoods. He expects them to serve justice and order above all, and he can be harsh with those who disappoint him. More rarely, his Scions may have an affinity with the night and the dead, reflecting Shamash's nightly work ensuring that all mortal souls reach Irkalla.

**Callings:** Liminal, Judge, Sage

**Purviews:** Artistry (Writing), Death, Fertility, Journeys, Order, Sun

## SIN, LORD OF WISDOM, GOD OF THE MOON

**Aliases:** Dilimbabbar, Nanna, Su'en, Suen; 30

While not so famous as the God-kings or Ninlil, Sin holds nearly as much authority. He is cowherd of the Gods, the father of Shamash and Ishtar, and was the first to offer his fealty up to his father, Enlil. His massive herds and wealth are legendary, as is his wisdom and knowledge. He can ease the pangs of childbirth and is the Sealer of Oaths, the Judge of the Night while his son works in the Underworld.

Sin is the marker of the passage of time, and every new moon, the Gods gather to hear his predictions for the future. His are the great ranches that bring in vast wealth, and he has taken to modern farming and agricultural law with a fervor. He is a bringer of justice, like his son, and his eye to the future has led his cults to push for sustainable farming practices, because Sin always watches for the long term.

Sin's Incarnations are law enforcers, farmers, and scholars. His Scions inherit his great wisdom and longview, but they are not numerous. Sin generally prefers to let the younger Gods handle direct interaction with humanity. He prefers subtler work, shaping minds with wisdom rather than directly acting. What Scions he does have can look forward to excellent advice if they can decipher the many references to literature and precedent that Sin is prone to.

**Callings:** Guardian, Judge, Sage

**Purviews:** Beasts (Cattle), Fertility, Fortune, Journeys, Moon, Order, Prosperity



## TAMMUZ, THE DYING GOD, SACRED HUSBAND AND SHEPHERD, LORD OF THE SEASONS

**Aliases:** Ama-ushumgal-ana, Damu, Dumuzi, Dumuzid

Tammuz, husband to Ishtar, cannot escape being defined by his marriage. He was once merely the God of Shepherds and Exorcists, a healer of humans and beasts, and brother to Geshtinanna, a minor Goddess of Vegetation. However, he competed with the farming God Enkimdu and earned Ishtar's hand in marriage. Keeping up with her lusts was a full-time job, and when his wife went into Irkalla and died temporarily, Tammuz did not mourn her as he should have, using the time to relax.

For this crime, Ishtar named Tammuz as the death that would take her place, and the galla demons of Irkalla tried to claim him. Tammuz was aided by Shamash, whom he still owes, but it was not enough. He died, as the land dies in the killing heat of summer. When Ishtar's fury calmed, she mourned for lost Tammuz, calling for his return. Between Ishtar and Shamash, a deal was struck. Now, in summer and autumn, when the killing sun keeps the crops from growing, Tammuz is dead. He returns in winter, as the land is reborn, and stays through spring. His sister takes his place in the Underworld, and he performs her duties.

Tammuz has only half of each year in which to do anything, and he incarnates often during this time. He is a patron

of food production, as often a chef or brewer as a shepherd or farmer now. He relishes his time in the World and his time with his wife, for the rest of the year he must stay below, where he has no great authority and the demons enjoy tormenting him. His Scions are more fortunate, wielding his power over life and drawing on the cold depths of his death. Their love lives are infamous, however, and few end happily.

**Callings:** Healer, Liminal, Lover

**Purvviews:** Artistry (Food), Beasts (Livestock), Darkness, Death, Epic Stamina, Fertility, Health, Passion (Exhaustion, Fear, Grief, Hope),

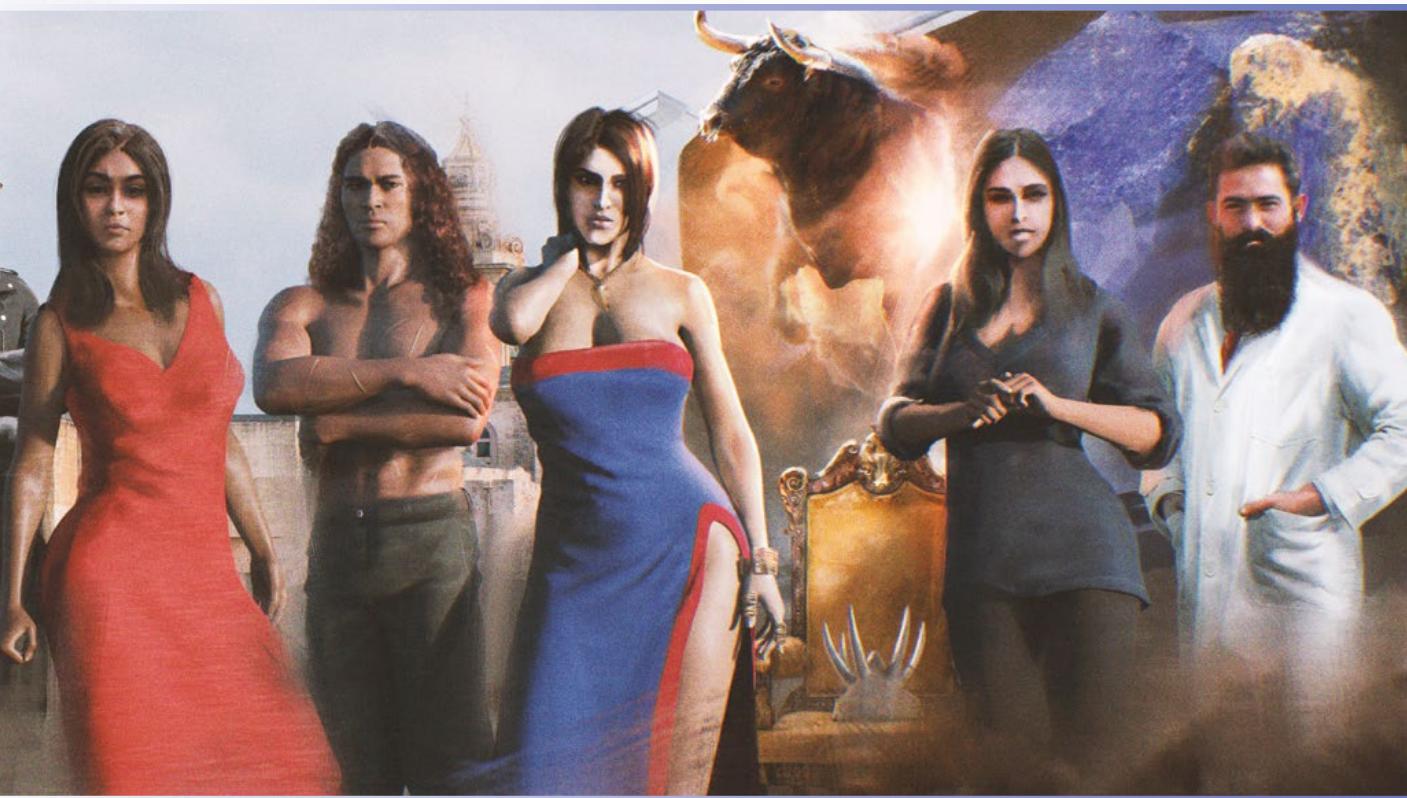
## TITANS

**T**hough half-Titan themselves, the Annuna contend with many powers great and terrible. The Annuna may be overbearing and cruel, considering humanity as fit only to serve, but their Titans are largely antithetical to human life.

## TIAMAT

**Aliases:** Namma, Nammu, Thalatta (Greek)

Tiamat predates even Anu, for she is the primordial salt ocean. She is both living and dead, between the multiple pasts of the Annuna. It is made easier by her limited authority over the Tablet of Destinies — enough that she was able to award it to her consort, the usurper Kingu, when he led her titanspawn against the Annuna (he wore it as a breastplate). Of course, that affair ended with Marduk slaying her and using her body to create the World. She holds a grudge over that. Tiamat has no particular hatred of most of the Annuna, though. Indeed, it was the lesser Gods



who convinced her to go to war against Anu, preying on her love of her first husband, the sweet-water sea Abzu, to get out of having to farm the land. While Tiamat is herself not a dragon but a massive ocean, several of her children are dragons, created to bolster the titanspawn that Kingu led.

Tiamat is related to most of the Annuna, having been either Anu's mother or grandmother, depending on history. Her status as not entirely alive means that her vengeance against Marduk is left to her titanspawn; while Tiamat is potent and clever, she cannot approach Marduk herself without being dead and is forced to act through intermediaries. It has made for something of a detente. It is not entirely clear if she's even truly realized humans exist, though several of her monstrous children enjoy preying on them. The name Namma is sometimes used to refer to her calmer self which did not die fighting Marduk, and Namma is often named and invoked, but if the two were once separate Mantles, they are now united within the Titan.

**Purview:** Water

**Virtues:** Authority, Fecundity

## IMDUGUD

**Aliases:** Anzu, Zu

Imdugud is an immense bird-creature, a demonic force that wields the wind and storms that flock around him. Sometimes he is a thundercloud shaped like an eagle, sometimes an eagle with the head of a lion, sometimes a human figure. In all forms, he is a relentless foe that seeks to steal the Tablet of Destinies. Once, he even succeeded, giving him temporary control over time and fate. Fortunately, Ninurta was able to defeat Imdugud, who was unused to wielding such power, and retrieve the Tablet.

Now, the Titan dreams of reclaiming that power and plunging the universe into storms. He has clashed with Marduk over command of storms, as well as Nergal, Inanna and Ninurta, the Annuna's warriors. Fortunately, Imdugud is a direct thinker with little conception of subtlety. Unfortunately, he is extremely destructive.

## NAMMA, TIAMAT, AND OCEAN

The Ocean Axis Mundi (**Origin**, p. 38) is easily accessible via Tiamat and her less vicious name, Namma. For the Annuna, the ocean and Tiamat are one and the same. However, they still make use of Ocean for travel, though always wary of the danger of doing so. Tiamat and Namma are the ocean in the same way Anu is the sky. However, this does not mean they are constantly causing problems for travelers in this great sea — just often. It would be wise for any Scion of the Annuna traversing Ocean to be respectful and wary, for Tiamat's titanspawn are quite at home in the Axis Mundi, even parts of it that are not necessarily their mother.

**Purview:** Sky

**Virtues:** Dominance, Rapacity

## ASSUR

**Aliases:** Ashur

Assur probably began life as a God, but at this point, no one can be sure. He was once the patron of the Assyrian city of the same name, but that is the only thing that is certain of his past. He has no family of his own, now, only that which he tries to steal, focused entirely on conquest and battle. In a bid for power, Assur attempted to steal the Mantles of Enlil, Marduk and others.

That is where it all went wrong. In trying to become more than himself, he cast aside all that made him what he had been. He carved away everything that did not fit his Fate as a perfect conqueror. Now, it is not even clear if the original Assur remains. He abandons human servitors easily, targeting any God he believes he can undermine and absorb. Assur consumes, spreads conflict and war, and represents nothing but pure conquest, without cause and without nation. He is no king — only endless hunger, and whatever he steals. The Annuna know him of old, and they know this is what it means to forget the laws. This is what it means to abandon greatness.

**Purview:** War

**Virtues:** Fecundity, Submission

## PRIMORDIAL: ANU, FATHER OF THE GODS, WHO CONTAINS THE WORLD

**Aliases:** An, Anum; 60

Anu is the furthest from humanity, and the one who grants the Annuna their name. They are the children of Anu, the granter of power, who both is and rules the sky. All power flows forth from Anu. He is of the oldest generation, the first king. He is the great one that holds right to name the roles of other Gods and allot them ranks, who confers the right of kingship upon mortals. As his firstborn, Enlil, rose into power, Anu came to share many rights with him, recognizing the nature of the divine king. Anu's name is used to refer to the status of Godhood itself, and his number is 60, the greatest and most powerful.

Anu created the universe, sometimes alone and sometimes with the aid of Ea and Enlil. He inhabits the highest of the heavens, and if he has parents, they are only the minor Primordials Anshar and Kishar. His wives and consorts are Urash, Ki, and Antu, all of whom are minor earth Goddesses, and who may well be mantles of the same Goddess. He is the father of many Gods and the creator of many demons and monsters, most of whom are still obedient. Anu leaves his children to do most of the work of ruling over the world he created, though they often approach him to solve disputes between them that have become intractable.

Anu almost never incarnates. He does not particularly like humanity, and human prayers rarely invoke him directly. When he does appear, it is in a position of authority, and it is never for long. He delivers orders and leaves for the Overworld once more. He expects what few Scions he has to be royalty, as his other children are, and fortunately they almost always inherit his regal, authoritative nature. He expects them to fight his foes, and that his orders will be obeyed, though these orders are infrequent. When they are not followed, he is quick to favor whoever punishes his wayward Scion with gifts, which encourages a strong rivalry between Scions of Anu, rare as they tend to be.

**Callings:** Creator, Leader, Primeval

**Purviews:** Beasts (Bull), Fortune, Order, Sky, Stars

## COSMOLOGY

The sky is a dome — or rather, three domes, only one of which we mortals can see. This least dome, made of jasper, is the abode of the stars. Though largely uninhabited, this dome is critical to priests and kings, for the Gods reveal their will through the natural World, and the movement of the stars are one of their greatest tools. Above the lowest dome is another of blue stone, where dwell the lesser Gods, the Annunaki. Above that is a dome of red stone where dwell the greatest Gods, the Annuna — this last dome is Anu, Who Contains the World, himself. Here, the Gods rest upon lapis lazuli thrones in palaces that rise above the celestial oceans, looking out over all those who pray to them — for though a mortal may never enter the heavens, the images of all who seek a God's favor (particularly in the presence of their idols) stand before the God's court to be judged.

The Underworld, called Irkalla, is a dark and unpleasant place, where the only food and drink is dry dust. To enter, one must cross the desert, find passage across the River Huber, and enter the land of Kur. There, one passes through seven gates, guarded by Neti, offering up clothing and fineries to pay the toll until one stands naked before Ereshkigal in the palace of Ganzir. There, she pronounces the deceased dead, their names recorded by the scribe-Goddess Geshtinanna.

For the dead, there is little respite — kings and laborers alike are equal before the Queen of the Dead, save in one respect: how they are remembered by the living. Faithful descendants will pour libations into the graves of the deceased to allow them to slake their thirst, and those who could afford it would hire musicians to further alleviate the drab conditions of Irkalla. This was once a blessing reserved for the wealthy, for priests and kings, but modern arrivals to Irkalla are all but surrounded by a halo of music, piped into their graves from recordings. This makes them popular, though some ancients have taken to grumbling about the music itself, which sounds little like the highly ordered music of Sumer.

Irkalla is also home to *gallu*, demons who pursue those who attempt to escape and drag them back to the Underworld. Sometimes, they climb to the surface to

## CITY, COVENANT, AND CULT

Gods in Mesopotamia were intimately connected with the cities they were worshiped in, where they served as direct patrons to leaders and other important figures. Avatars appeared frequently, perhaps more often than anywhere else in The World at any point in time. Consequently, virtually every Annuna possesses the Covenant and Cult Birthrights featured in **Mysteries of the World**. Scions frequently inherit these Covenants but are just as likely to form Covenants that are theirs, absent their parents' own. Rare is the Annuna Scion who doesn't have a tie to some kind of community. Scions of the Annuna often have mortal cults, as they serve as intermediaries between their divine parents and The World. Even if they don't make an effort to set up such a cult, they're likely to develop them through pure divine inertia much faster than other Scions would do so. In addition, such cults will be much more likely to seek direct orders from the Scion, expecting them to play a central role in their civic organization and operation.

torment the living or to drag them to the Underworld before their time. Despite appearances, however, gallu are not inherently evil — rather, they are evil because that is their purpose, as given by Enlil. They faithfully labor to carry out his judgement but are not above looking the other way given a good enough reason. The one thing they will absolutely not abide is a change in Irkalla's headcount, so anyone who wants to leave needs to have someone ready to take their place, and even getting the gallu to agree to this kind of scam is not easy.

## RELIGION

In ancient Mesopotamia, the Annuna were the center of all civic life. Cities were built around temples, where priests and kings interpreted the word of the Gods, the better to design a society that praised and worshiped them, as they were due. Faith was an all-consuming thing; each mortal labored not for mere survival but because it was their divinely appointed role. Even prayer, communal and private, was a part of this structure, with lesser Gods often entreated as intercessors rather than directly addressing greater Gods. Wars fought between city-states were often no more than extensions of disagreements between the Gods themselves. Even if Fate made it costly for the Annuna to personally work miracles in the World, the devoted hard work of tens of thousands of mortals is a kind of miracle all its own.

Cultic practice centered on idols, statues or objects invested with the personage of a given deity, which was treated with the same reverence and awe that the deity it represented would be, should they choose to manifest. These idols were bathed and anointed with fragrant oils, dressed in finery, and fed sumptuous meals — even when they were not remotely humanoid, as was sometimes the case. An entire class of priests and temple servants existed to fulfill these needs and to interpret the word of their deity. Kings also served this role, with an emphasis on the personal power needed to ensure that what the Gods demanded would be done. Nothing in a society belonging to the Annuna is truly secular.

Though many Annuna retain large cults in cities located in Terra Incognita, proper cults to the Annuna

are uncommon in the World these days. Partially, this is due to the relative freedom offered by virtually any other pantheon (or, for that matter, *no* pantheon); it might also have something to do with the Annuna being extreme perfectionists and accepting nothing less than the best. Cults whose dedication slips are either punished to such a degree that they might as well be wiped out, or (more often) ignored as disaffected individuals drift away. Both roads lead to only a single kind of cult, both rare and fastidious in their observances. They take direction from their Gods, tend their idols, and live in a harmoniously ordered society within a society. Sometimes, they are secretive for the sake of survival, especially when surrounded by hostile cultures, but when they can be they are as open and proud as it's possible to be, and they're always happy to take on new recruits.

Many of these cults are based in the Annuna's homelands in Mesopotamia — modern-day Iraq — and surrounding regions, descending in an unbroken line through families who have lived in more or less the same place for more than 2,000 years. A few lucky ones are close enough to the ruins of ancient cities to actually conduct their rituals in what remains of ancient temples smashed by war and time, but even the smallest village barely subsisting as farmers are a part of the heavens' order.

Many of these cults, however, were broken up or displaced during the 20th and 21st centuries, not because of conflicts between pantheons or the will of the Gods but because of human politics and hatreds. Genocides spawned diasporas, and when the faithful fled their homes, they took their faith with them. Communities of refugees set down roots in new places, new cities, and though they might be thousands of miles or more from the Tigris and the Euphrates, the sky is still the sky, and the Gods are still the Gods. Now, cults to the Annuna can be found throughout North America, Europe, and even Australia.

One of the better known Annuna cults in the modern era belongs to Inanna, famous in California for its ability to mobilize voters from marginalized communities — at least one seat on San Francisco's Board of Supervisors has been held by a priestess of Inanna since 1988, and while none have ever won a mayoral election, they've swung more

than one. The faith is popular enough in the region that the necropolis of Colma, to the south, maintains one of the few active temples to Ereshkigal, built in the old style (with allowances made for earthquake and fire codes).

## BIRTHRIGHTS

### CREATURES

A **Battle Bison** is a semi-divine descendant of an ancient being slain by Ninurta that resembles the extinct Eurasian Steppe Bison. Each stands over two meters tall at the withers, weighing in at over a ton. Their horns, thick and spanning more than a meter, can split a man in half. They are totally non-domesticable and have been known to charge and destroy vehicles belonging to hunters. Only the Scions of the Annuna, or those who gain the Annuna's favor, can tame these beasts — and even they must prove themselves to the creature first.

**Mushmahhu** are enormous snakes with lion's paws and enormous bird-like wings, on which they soar through the air. Ranging in size from small enough to ride on one's shoulder to large enough to ride on itself, their fangs course with a deadly venom. It is similar to, but distinct from, the *Mushushshu*, a serpent with the talons of an eagle (on its rearward legs) and the claws of a lion (on its foremost paws), and a long neck upon which rests a crested head with a forked tongue. These splendidous and fierce creatures are sacred to Marduk and are especially known to aid his Scions.

### FOLLOWERS

**Scorpion-men** are, like centaurs, hybrids of human and animal; unlike centaurs, their lower half resembles a gigantic scorpion. As if this weren't terrifying enough, many scorpion-men are said to radiate a fearsome power, such that even their gaze can fell a mortal. Scorpion-men can most often be found guarding sacred places, such as the Gates of Shamash, where the sun passes through the Underworld each night.

**Demons** are, paradoxically, also a common source of Followers for Annuna Scions. Despite their divine charge to do evil, not all of them obey, and many have gotten good at creatively interpreting "evil" in any case. They may aid Scions for many reasons, ranging from a hope that their divine parent will witness their deeds and grant them a new divine mission to simply having an enemy in common with the Scion. Demons take many forms, from the *lilu*, who tempt mortals, to the living stone children of Azag, who is so hideous that fish boil alive in rivers at his mere presence.

### GUIDES

**Apkallu**, meaning "the wise" or "the sages," are a group of divine advisors, seven of whom are named on the List of Kings and Sages of Uruk. Appearing as hybrids of humans and various other creatures (often fish or birds), these beings served as intermediaries for mortal (or semi-divine)

kings prior to the Deluge, and often serve the same role for Scions of the Annuna. While they may occasionally give orders (often passed to them from above), they are more likely to offer advice — or, orders in the form of advice. They are fond of the sound of their own voices, and even fonder of details and going over each and every one.

**Shulaks** are goat-headed demons of the privy. Traditionally, they would lie in wait to spread disease and pestilence, and while they still do so when they have the chance (it is their job), modern sanitation and the germ theory of disease have rendered much of their former remit obsolete in the industrialized world. On the other hand, modern plumbing (through which shulaks can travel as easily as walking down the street) and copious free time has allowed them to build a cosmopolitan culture of gossip and secret-trading. People say all sorts of things in the washroom, after all, and shulaks make an excellent source of information — if you can stand the smell.

**Lamassu** and **Shedu** are guardian deities (female and male, respectively) representing the constellations of the night sky, and appear as bulls or lions with human heads and broad wings. Enormous statues and reliefs of lamassu guarded gateways and doors in ancient Mesopotamia, and smaller images and symbols associated with them are still found in the homes of the faithful. In theory, everyone born under a given star is the responsibility of a particular lamassu, but not everyone can expect personalized attention and visitation. Scions, of course, are generally considerably higher on their priority list.

### RELICS

A **me** (pronounced "meh") is a decree from the Gods, specifically as to definitions and proper behaviors for humans, typically written in cuneiform on clay tablets, though other physical objects may suffice. In other words, mes are instruction manuals for the universe, or rather, sections thereof, which describe the correct way to do something. For every imaginable action, there is an associated me, from rulership to marriage to bread making. There are mes for negative things, too — adultery, strife, fear, and the like. Many descend from antiquity, but new mes are produced from time to time, as the World changes. Some of the newer mes concern things like hacking, car surfing, or maintaining a proper orbit around the earth. Apart from providing Enhancement, a me can also grant access to a Purview it describes. A me's motif is always "the proper method, as decreed by the Gods," as one must follow the me's instructions to gain its benefits.

**Divine nails** were traditionally fashioned of clay and used to ritually mark a building as belonging to a particular God or Goddess. These divine nails, while inscribed in a like fashion, are forged of strong copper, a mystical metal from deep within the hearts of mountains. These nails will not bend, no matter how much torque is applied to them, and will never deform regardless of what they are hammered into. A divine nail grants the Forge Purview, and when hammered into an object will

render that object indestructible for the remainder of the scene. Its motif is “a foundation to endure throughout all ages.”

The **Groovebox of Gilgamesh** is a modern drum machine, built into a gilded carrying case and, while hefty, is quite portable. The interior is inscribed in cuneiform script, a perfect reproduction of the me of the disc jockey. It’s able to synthesize bass and percussion sounds, making it an all-in-one EDM machine able to pair with remote speakers — any speaker, not just wireless ones. It grants the Artistry (Music) and War Purviews along with a +1 Enhancement to Leadership through song, and its motif is “as the beats of my drum, the tread of my army.”

## RELATIONSHIPS

The Annuna were once the patrons of empires that dominated one of the great cradles of life, feared throughout the World. That was a long time ago, and the fortunes of their faithful have fallen far. At first, the Annuna left their mortal followers to their own devices — they had fallen far before and had always risen back up. Indeed, they did, but in the process many sought out new Gods, new ways of building cities and societies. For centuries, the Annuna were all but forgotten in the mortal World, their works and faith preserved by a few diehard cults and by those few cities hidden in Terra Incognitae.

The Annuna are emerging from what seemed like quiescence but what was in truth an almost pathological degree of patience, now strained almost to its limit. In classic fashion, they are not known for restraint, and now that they are acting the World is being reminded of both their power and their refusal to brook disobedience. That they yet now withhold punishment (or, if Enlil has his way, near-annihilation) is, to them, a mark of benevolence — to others, however, it reads as weakness. Few yet wish to test the issue, regardless, just in case.

## OTHER PANTHEONS

In the view of the Annuna, the other pantheons are upstarts, little godlings who invariably descend from some forgotten tryst between mortals and one of the many Annunaki, and therefore owe their loyalty and obedience to the Annuna. Needless to say, other pantheons do not subscribe to this view of affairs. Because the Annuna are unwilling (or unable) to step down from the pedestal on which they’ve placed themselves, their relationships with other pantheons are therefore universally strained at best.

One exception is Aphrodite, of the Theoi, who is closely tied with Inanna. The two are alike in passion, if not necessarily in how they express it, and Aphrodite has steered no few of her Scions in need of a little muscle toward Inanna’s own children. Many of the Theoi’s offspring wonder if Aphrodite, eldest of the Theoi by far, isn’t simply Inanna hidden behind one of her many Mantles, but the

Dodekatheon have never dignified such rumors by even so much as acknowledging them.

## CURRENT PRIORITIES

The Annuna’s greatest stroke in the modern World was inspiring the development of the science of Assyriology, which studies all of ancient Mesopotamia and not merely ancient Assyria as the name might imply. Through this vector, their names and works have become known to new generations, driving mortals once more into the waiting arms of their mortal cults. Their greatest difficulty is the present libertine ethic of much of mortal culture, and a preoccupation with what the Annuna see as inverting the traditional hierarchy of ruler and subject — no few of the Annuna’s own Scions conflict with their parents on this point! The Annuna struggle to reconcile this with their hallmark absolutist Authority, and for the time being can at best rely on providing benefits to mortal followers while reminding them of their place in the celestial order.

## GREATEST WEAKNESS

If the Annuna have a weakness — and they would certainly not admit such — it is that they are too sure of themselves, too proud and unwilling to brook disagreement, too ready to discount others’ ideas or opinions. This has, on more than one occasion, divorced them entirely from reality. To hear the Annuna talk, the whole of the World is a part of their engine of creation, and never mind that the vast majority of humans, who they claim to have made for the sole purpose of worshiping them and maintaining the World for them, are doing neither of those things. Attempts to challenge that worldview rarely end with a happy God, regardless of how necessary it might be.

## PANTHEON PATH OF THE ANNUNA

**Asset Skills:** Culture, Leadership

**Virtues:** Authority and Benefice. The Annuna are said to be good to their faithful, but it is not because they have to be, or because the relationship is somehow reciprocal, but because the Annuna have accepted it as appropriate for the sovereigns of the universe; they offer Benefice because they have decided that it is right to do so. They do not seek to lift up those beneath them, for nothing will elevate humans to the level of the Annuna. They act with the obligations that come from being a superior, noble being. Conversely, the Annuna expect unswerving obedience from those below them, and this applies to lesser Gods as well as mortals and their half-divine children. The closer one is to Anu, the more Authority one has, and that Authority is always absolute, and from this absolutist structure of Authority arises harmony, or at least, the Annuna conception of it.

# THE APU OF THE INCA

Viracocha, Lord of the Universe.  
Whether male or female  
Anyway, commander of warmth and generation.  
Being one who  
Even with his spittle can work magic.  
Where are you?  
Would that you would not hide from this your son.  
He may be above,  
He may be below,  
Or alight in the sky,  
Where is his council seat?  
Hear me!

— Incan Festival Poem

In the beginning, there was darkness. Then Viracocha created the first humans out of stone, peopling his dark world with a race of giants. The giants became unruly, so Viracocha washed them away in a great flood, transforming those in Tiahuanaco and Pucara into stone—a cautionary tale for those that followed.

Viracocha tried anew, creating a second race of humans out of clay, painting each a different color to make them unique. He breathed life into them and placed them deep in the earth with instructions to re-emerge at the appointed time.

The world was still dark, so Viracocha created the sun and moon, watching them rise high into the sky from the islands of Lake Titicaca. Soon after, the sun and moon had children, peopling the sky with constellations composed of their virgin daughters. So united, their light banished the darkness of the prior world, creating the World of today.



Viracocha set out from Lake Titicaca with his brother-sons Imaymana and Tocapo to spread civilization. They travelled in disguise as beggars, naming the trees and plants of the World, calling forth humanity from its caves, and instructing them in the ways of agriculture and civilization. Most willingly accepted Viracocha's visions of a new world, but others scorned his teaching, forcing him to call down rivers of fire from the sky upon them until they acquiesced. The trio travelled north until they reached the coast of present-day Ecuador, looked upon their works, and judged them complete. Soon after, they walked across the sea, vanishing over the horizon to places unknown.

After Viracocha's departure, Inti and Mama Killa bore eight children on the Island of the Sun in Lake Titicaca. Inti selected Ayar Capac as their leader and admonished him to establish dominion

over the World as his favored intercessor. Ayar Capac was equipped with a golden staff that would sink into the earth when he reached the Promised Land. Ayar Capac and his siblings travelled through a series of underground tunnels to a trio of caves in a hill southeast of Cusco containing the peoples that became the core of the Inca state.

The eight emerged from the caves with their mortal allies and began their trek toward Cusco, stopping along the way to plant the golden staff in different locales to see if they had arrived. Their Band consisted of four brothers and their sister-wives, all Scions born of Inti and Mama Killa. They were Ayar Cachi, Ayar Uchu, Ayar Auca, Ayar Manco (later Manco Capac), Mama Ipacura, Mama Raua, Mama Huaco, and Mama Occho.

Ayar Manco was soon rebranded Manco Capac, and the wanderers negotiated peace with, or destroyed, the natives of the Cusco Valley and watched the golden staff sink into the earth at Cusco showing them they had arrived in the Promised Land. Manco Capac became the first Inca leader, the literal “Son of the Sun,” marrying his remaining sisters upon the death of his final brother and establishing a royal bloodline of Scions, each acting as intermediary between Inti and the World.

The Scions of Inti ruled first as kings, then “Sapa Incas,” or emperors, conquering what came to be known as Tawantinsuyu, the Realm of Four Parts: An empire divided into four suyu’s, or regions, centered on Cusco and encompassing parts of Peru, Ecuador, Chile, Bolivia, and Argentina. While ultimately conquered by outsiders, their traditions persist among the peoples of their former empire and are intimately interwoven among the cultures of western South America. Inti’s Scions and their allied Apu never abandoned their faith and simply disappeared from view among their conquerors, blending in and perpetuating Apu worship and traditions among their conquerors. As night gives way to dawn, Inti’s Scions rise yet again to take their rightful place in the World and forge Tawantinsuyu anew.

## PRINCIPAL MEMBERS

Sometimes called the *K’uh* by themselves and others, the Apu are purpose manifest, born of Viracocha’s desire to bathe a dark world in the light of civilization. All serve, or at least respect, Inti’s position as Viracocha’s intercessor, considering it their sacred duty to subdue the World in his name. Those who accept Inti as their master are welcomed to Tawantinsuyu as honored subjects under the Apu’s protection. Those who oppose the Apu are swept aside, consumed by their radiance. With few exceptions, the Apu prize order and stability, scorning chaos in all its forms as they use their superior organizational abilities to prosecute campaigns against titanspawn, rogue Scions, and their less orderly neighbors in an endless quest to keep the fires of civilization burning.

The Gods of the Apu pantheon include: Chasca (dawn, twilight, Venus), Coniraya (fertility, trickster), Illapa (thunder), Inti (sun), Kuychi (messenger, rainbow), Mama Cocha (ocean), Mama Quilla (moon), Pachacamac (creation, disaster), Pachamama (earth, fertility), Supay (death), Vichama (death, judgment), and Viracocha (creation).

### CHASCA, GODDESS OF DAWN, TWILIGHT, AND VENUS

**Aliases:** The Disheveled One

Chasca is Goddess of dawn, twilight, and Venus, an Andean Aphrodite whose beauty is suffocating to behold. She bestrides the heavens, dispensing stories of freshness and loveliness written in clouds and scatterings of morning dew shaken from her luxurious hair. Chasca takes virgins and young girls under her protection but defends love and beauty with equal vigor.

Chasca is always dressed to perfection. She often manifests as a wealthy Peruvian socialite, telenovela star, or kindly teacher. She splits her time in the World between Cusco and Lima, living in penthouse suites decorated in the warm hues of dawn. Chasca is actively involved in the lives of her Scions and mortal wards, frequently checking on them to ensure their safety, passing along warnings and guidance as needed. She operates subtly when possible, observing her charges from afar and providing just enough information to steer them out of harm’s way. When she does take to the field, she uses her stunning beauty and divine abilities to great effect.

Scions of Chasca are visions of profound loveliness selected for their beauty and strict devotion to love. Like their divine mother, they are relentless in their defense of virgins and young girls, often selected for their ability to protect them. They embody the best attributes of love and attractiveness, fanning the flames of healthy relationships through their efforts and promoting beauty in every way possible. This often involves the construction of temples, movie sets, schools, and even clothing lines that incorporate Chasca’s chosen symbols of the sun, fire, and flowers into their creation. Chasca’s Scions are models, actors, life coaches, police officers, bodyguards, relationship counselors, teachers at all-girl academies, wedding planners, romance novelists, school guidance counselors, online relationship advice coaches, and beauticians.

**Callings:** Guardian, Liminal, Lover

**Purviews:** Beauty, Passion, Sky, Stars

### CONIRAYA, GOD OF FERTILITY AND TRICKERY

**Aliases:** Cuniraya Viracocha

Coniraya is the God of trickery and fertility. Plants grow, flowers bloom, animals multiply, and humans conceive wherever he fixes his ever-wandering gaze. For all



the benefits he provides Tawantinsuyu, his mischievous nature earns Coniraya notoriety and praise in equal measure.

Cavillace was a virgin Goddess of astonishing beauty desired by most of the Apu, yet she scorned their affections. Coniraya coveted her and hatched a plan to earn her favor. He noticed Cavillace reclining under a lucuma tree and transformed his semen into a lucuma fruit, dropping it at her feet. Coniraya ate the fruit and became pregnant, giving birth to a child nine months later. She summoned the Apu to determine which one impregnated her, and they assembled in all their divine finery, except Coniraya who arrived in peasant's rags. When no God stepped forward to take responsibility, Cavillace set her baby down and it crawled straight to its father, Coniraya. Horrified at Coniraya's disheveled state, Cavillace walked into the sea and transformed herself and her child into stone in disgust.

Coniraya is a bedraggled man dressed in rags but affects divine finery when it suits him. He is far too mercurial to adopt a regular position in the World, choosing instead to wander from place-to-place as it pleases him, spreading life wherever (and with whomever) he wishes.

Scions of Coniraya are an admixture of trickery, honed words, and oblique action. They revel in travel and new experiences, eschewing the ordered dictates of Inti and his fellow Apu. They are masters of seduction, but horrible at romance, shunning responsibility in all forms, seldom choosing fight over flight. They are receptive to the prayers of others requiring their fertility-enhancing talents, and can be cajoled into helping fellow Scions, but are quick to move on when the task is complete. Coniraya's

Scions are often doctors at fertility clinics, botanists, farmers, animal husbandry specialists, prostitutes, lotharios, and tricksters of all stripes.

**Callings:** Creator, Lover, Trickster

**Purviews:** Deception, Fertility, Moon, Passion

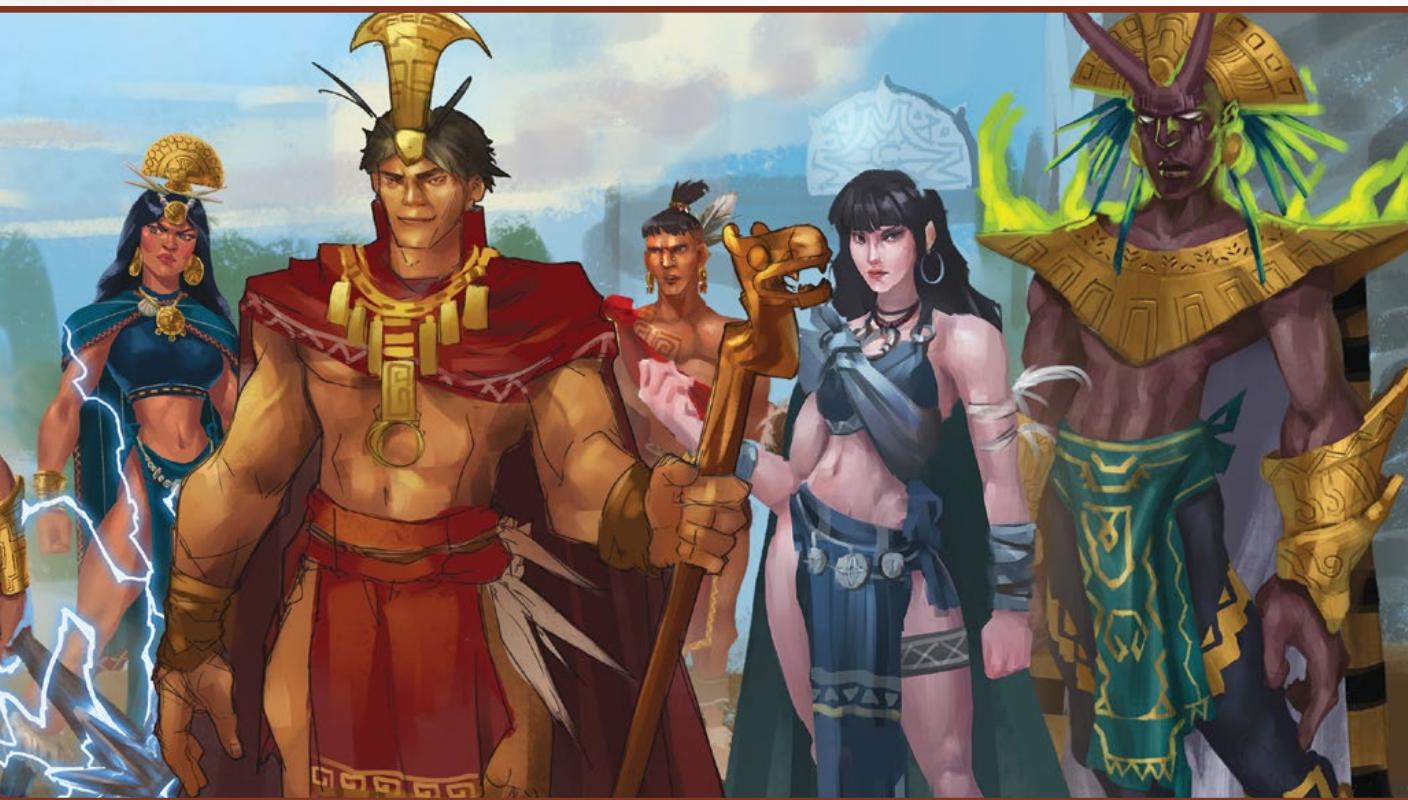
## ILLAPA, GOD OF THUNDER

**Aliases:** Apu Illapa, Ilyap'a, Katoylla

If Vichama is Inti's enforcer, Illapa is his fist. He is the foremost warrior of the Apu, God of thunder, lightning, clouds, rain, whirlwinds, and hail. He wields a great sling with unerring accuracy, its stones lightning, its crack thunder. He listens carefully to the people of Tawantinsuyu's prayers for rain and ascends skyward to find the sister he charged with holding a water jug filled with the cool waters of the Milky Way. Upon sighting her, he unlimbers his sling and casts a stone at the jar, shattering it to provide rain for the people below.

Illapa is respected by all and is a fearsome warrior, garbed in lightning, who wields the sling and war club with equal skill. His face may be veiled in clouds and thunder, but his courage and warrior spirit are unmatched. He is a trusted member of Inti's inner circle with a temple in the Coricancha and is his foremost warrior and general in the war against the Titans and all who defy the Apu. When Illapa descends to the World, he wraps himself in the garb of a soldier, law enforcement officer, or even a gang member, whatever is necessary to project his formidable might.

Like their divine parent, Scions of Illapa are seldom subtle, trending toward a core of courageous extroverts



with substantial martial prowess. They are loyal, dutiful, and abhor anarchy and disorder. They patrol Tawantinsuyu, battling rebels, titanspawn, and agents of Pachacamac in addition to bringing rain to farmers in need and defending the mortal populace of Inti's dominion. Illapa's Scions form an integral part of any group of Apu Scions and are seldom shy to voice their opinion (loudly) on any course of action. They are soldiers, warriors, law enforcement officers, gang members, meteorologists, and anyone involved in a material profession.

**Callings:** Guardian, Judge, Warrior

**Purviews:** Epic Dexterity, Epic Strength, Sky, War, Water

## INTI, GOD OF THE SUN, AND RULER OF THE APU

**Aliases:** Apu Inti, Churi Inti, Inti Huaoqui

Inti is the fiery heart of the Apu, son of Viracocha, emperor among Gods, and master of Tawantinsuyu. Inti is Viracocha's chosen intercessor between the Apu and the World, holding court from his golden palace in Hanan Pacha, or from the new Temple of the Sun in Cusco. He is attended by his loyal court, each of which has their own temple in the sacred Coricancha, and Hanan Pacha. This court consists of Viracocha, Mama Killa, Chasca, Illapa, and Kuychi. Inti's word is law among the Apu, and he brooks no defiance to his rule, using his court and others to maintain order throughout the three Pachas.

Inti's natural form alternates like the phases of the sun, appearing as Apu Inti, the "Supreme," "Lord," or

"Father" sun, Churi Inti, or "Son Inti," and Inti Huaoqui, or "Brother" Inti. Each form varies in appearance slightly from golden-skinned youth to older man and are surrounded by a golden nimbus of light. A powerful host of lions and serpents attends each aspect. Inti is a benevolent God who brings rain, fertility, protection, and order to his realm with the aid of his queen and court. It was he who established his son Manco Capac as the chosen Scion and leader of his people, and it is his Scions who lead today. He weeps tears of gold when his people suffer and solar eclipses attend his rage, but he is unflinching in his quest to bring order to Tawantinsuyu and expand his realm.

Inti's Scions are natural leaders. Many are raised with their fellow Scions to form lifelong bonds that serve them well in the future. Inti's mandate is to lead, maintain, and protect the people of Tawantinsuyu, defeat any threats to his reign like titanspawn, Pachacamac's children, or the machinations of foreign Scions, and to expand the boundaries of Tawantinsuyu. They are warriors, soldiers, oracles, astrologers, CEO's, community leaders, fertility doctors, farmers, meteorologists, astronomers, and leaders of all stripes.

**Callings:** Judge, Leader, Warrior

**Purviews:** Epic Strength, Fertility, Fire, Order, Sun, War

## KUYCHI, THE RAINBOW

**Aliases:** Coichi, Cuichu, K'uycha, K'uychi, K'uyuchiy ,

Kuychi is a noble, if somewhat mercurial, member of the Apu who is respected by God and mortal alike. He

bestrode the stage of Tawantinsuyu with unmatched flair, appearing as a brilliant rainbow to Manco Capac, showing him that the World was safe from a second flood, and that the Promised Land was near. Kuychi has been the Apu's divine messenger ever since, earning the honor of a temple in the Coricancha whose seven-colored rainbow is visible for all to see.

Kuychi scorns subtlety, appearing as a radiant young Peruvian man resplendent in an ever-changing wardrobe of diverse hue. He maintains absolute dominion over rainbows and the power they wield, using them to convey messages and create bridges between the Pacha of the Apu and other Terra Incognita. These rainbows take the form of great serpents of light that are either called down from Hanan Pacha, or roar upward from the springs of Que and Uku Pacha, before racing back down to bury their heads in a destination spring creating a bridge between realms. Kuychi hears wishes made upon his rainbows, granting or discarding them at his pleasure. He happily acts as a messenger or guide between realms, but can be capricious at times, shifting his rainbows to confound passage, or directing them to steal precious objects or inflict disease. The wise petitioner offers flattery or gifts when enlisting Kuychi's service.

Scions of Kuychi span the colors of the rainbow, hailing from lands near and far as befits their well-travelled father. They are seldom introverted, skewing toward personalities that have a certain verve, flair, and lust for life. They bear the message of the Apu, showcasing its glories through social media, television, music, and live events. They are the Apu's missionaries, messengers, and guides through the realms of this World, and beyond. They are actors, telenovela stars, telecommunications workers, bike messengers, flamboyant CEO's of media conglomerates, musicians, artists, wilderness guides, military scouts, meteorologists, and social media influencers.

**Callings:** Guardian, Liminal, Sage

**Purviews:** Fortune, Order, Sky, Water

## MAMA COCHA, GODDESS OF THE SEA

**Aliases:** Mother of Doves, Mama Qucha, Sea Mother, Urxyahuachac

Mama Cocha was born of the sea, rising from its waves in a cloud of seafoam to claim dominion over the Pacific and the creatures within. Her power has increased dramatically since those early days, expanding to encompass the rivers, lakes, and manmade waterways of Tawantinsuyu and all the creatures within. She defends sailors, fishermen, and coastal communities with great potency, acting as their guardian and patron in times of need and is always alert for the presence of aquatic Titans.

Mama Cocha is a beautiful woman swathed in the blues and greens of her watery realm. She moves with a fluid grace, her mortal form concealing the barely contained power of the sea behind a gaze that alternates between

dead calm and fury incarnate. She spends the majority of her time manifest in Que Pacha, preferring the company of sailors and mortals from coastal communities to her fellow Gods. Her temples are dressed in the colors of the sea and bedecked with offerings of shells that surround a ceremonial fish tank containing a fish that represents Mama Cocha's bounty. She is content to follow Inti's lead on most issues, but her antipathy toward Coniraya is legendary. Coniraya's crimes toward Mama Cocha include defiling her eldest daughter, forcing her friend Cavillace to turn herself and her child to stone, and destroying her fishpond. Coniraya has avoided water ever since, but it is only a matter of time before Mama Cocha gets her due.

Scions of Mama Cocha are creatures of the sea. They cling to the coasts and waterways of Tawantinsuyu, protecting sailors, coastal communities, and the environment. Their temperament ranges from the placid mountain lake to the furious hurricane. They defy all encroachment by waterborne titanspawn and watch for signs of Coniraya and his Scions. Mama Cocha's Scions are sailors, fishermen, marine biologists, navy and marine personnel, scuba enthusiasts, ocean activists, and anyone affiliated with water.

**Callings:** Guardian, Leader, Liminal

**Purviews:** Beasts (Aquatic Creatures), Health, Journeys (Water), Water

## MAMA KILLA, GODDESS OF THE MOON

**Aliases:** Mother Moon, Mama Quilla

Mama Killa is the moon to Inti's sun and empress of Tawantinsuyu. Born of Viracocha, she holds an honored position among the Apu as sister-wife of Inti and Goddess of the moon. She stands as patron and guardian over women, marriage, the menstrual cycle, and the lunar calendar. As mother of Manco Capac and Mama Oollo, she takes pride in the empire they forged and has every intention of seeing her other Scions go much, much further.

Mama Killa is a hauntingly beautiful woman clad in the silver and black of the moon, wreathed in argent light, that weeps tears of pure silver when saddened. When manifest in the World, she takes the form of a kindly doctor with a successful chain of hospitals and clinics across Tawantinsuyu. She and her Scions go to great lengths in their defense of women, protecting them as they walk home at night, easing their birth pains, and healing them of their ailments. Her hospitals, clinics, and temples are staffed exclusively by women of her choosing and always incorporate a disk of beaten silver on an onyx field into their décor.

Scions of Mama Killa are healers and guardians who bring a sense of compassion to all their endeavors. They crisscross Tawantinsuyu and beyond in search of women in need, offering their healing talents and physical protection wherever they are required. They also stand vigilant for threats to Mama Killa because Titans and their spawn in the form of darkling mountain lions and serpents often

attack her. Lunar eclipses result from these attacks, inspiring Mama Killa's mortal followers to scream and hurl stones heavenward to scare the attackers off, while her Scions battle the creatures head-to-head. The most honored of her children earn the privilege of defending Mama Killa from these attacks, for they never cease, particularly when she visits Kay Pacha. Mamma Killa's Scions are doctors, faith healers, clinicians, self-defense instructors, police officers, security guards, paramedics, and midwives.

**Callings:** Guardian, Healer, Lover

**Purviews:** Beauty, Epic Stamina, Fertility, Health, Moon

## PACHACAMAC, COASTAL CREATOR GOD

**Aliases:** Pacha Kamaq, Pachakamaq

Pachacamac is a creator God born of Inti and Mama Killa whose power rivals that of Inti on the coasts of Peru. He transformed the first humans of his region into jaguars, foxes, monkeys, and parrots, replacing them with a man and a woman of his own design, but forgot to feed them. The man died of starvation and the woman petitioned Inti for aid. He impregnated her with his rays, and she bore a son. Jealous of Inti's power, Pachacamac slew the boy, scattering the parts to become maize, yucca, and other fruits and vegetables. Inti responded by taking the boy's placenta and creating a new boy – Pachacamac's bitterest enemy, the God Vichama.

Pachacamac manifests as a wizened older man, but his visage conceals a powerful God, confined to his former seat of power at the temple of Pachacamac in the Lurin Valley by Vichama and his Scions. Pachacamac's physical mobility may be restricted, but his oracles, Scions, and divine power are not. Those who neglect their offerings or openly antagonize him are visited with earthquakes, crop failure, or the wrath of his agents.

Pachacamac chooses his Scions with an eye toward furthering his varied schemes. Some continue his rivalry with his fellow creator-God Viracocha, undermining his works and power whenever possible. Others seek to diminish Inti's power for checking Pachacamac's power through the creation of Vichama. His primary goal is to strike back at Vichama and all his allies to free himself from Vichama's eternal hatred so he can continue to further his ultimate aim of conquering Tawantinsuyu.

It is not unheard of for Pachacamac's Scions to work with those born of other Apu, but it is typically in the execution of Pachacamac's greater objectives. They are oracles, fortune tellers, soldiers and warriors of all stripes, executioners, assassins, farmers, gang members, and people of the Peruvian coast.

**Callings:** Creator, Judge, Warrior

**Purviews:** Beast (All), Earth, Epic Strength, Order, War

## PACHAMAMA, GODDESS OF NATURE

**Aliases:** Mother Earth, Mama Pacha, Mama Sara (Corn Mother), Queen Pachamama

Pachamama is the raw, untrammeled, power of nature. She has few priests, temples, or formal shrines, trading them for the majestic simplicity of open fields, soaring mountains, sacred stones, and hidden groves. She is the foremost Goddess of nature, the Incan mother earth who brings fertility to the land, holds dominion over planting and harvesting all plants and animals, and summons earthquakes to destroy her foes. She is the embodiment of nature in all its forms, eschewing the patronage of the wealthy and powerful in favor of poor farmers, herders, and common people.

Pachamama is a stunningly beautiful woman with untamed hair that embodies her free spirit. She is extremely influential among the poor of Tawantinsuyu, whose adoration of Pachamama rivals that of even Inti.

Pachamama is easily one of the most powerful Apu. She is a witch, attended by a variety of spirits and has the uncanny ability to cast enchantments and speak with the earth, trees, rocks, and natural features of the World. She is a shapeshifter with the ability to communicate with the dragons of Tawantinsuyu. She is also an oracle with a dedicated cult of female shamans who read the future in the lungs of llamas or fallen foes. She is also a berserker of unimaginable fury, tearing her enemies limb-from-limb as she charges into battle with their lungs in her teeth.

Pachamama's Scions take after their divine mother, free, unbound, and uncontrollable. They abandon the order of Inti's court in favor of Tawantinsuyu's natural places, although the wilds of the urban jungle appeal to a few. Pachamama's Scions, like their mother, respect the power of Inti and his Scions because the natural world cannot survive without light, but prefer to stay at the periphery of his power until needed. They are as varied as the aspects of their mother, but include witches, oracles, astrologers, environmentalists, farmers, herders, mountain climbers, seismologists, berserk warriors, savage gang members, and vigilantes.

**Callings:** Creator, Judge, Warrior

**Purviews:** Beast (Serpents), Earth, Fertility, Epic Stamina, War, Wild

## SUPAY, GOD OF THE UNDERWORLD

**Aliases:** Diablo

Born in darkness and shadow, Supay is the God of death and unchallenged ruler of Uku Pacha, the Incan Underworld. Supay rules the realms beneath the earth, including mines and the mineral wealth within. Attended by a race of hideous servants who bear his name, Supay strikes fear into the hearts of the people of Tawantinsuyu,



inspiring them to feats of wailing and supplication to avert his notice. Miners and anyone venturing into deep caves or mines are well aware of the prayers, cajoling, and propitiatory sacrifices necessary to purchase Supay's inaction.

Supay is a hideous, horned, creature of darkness whose monstrous aspect is rivaled only by the beasts that attend him. He has plenary power over Uku Pacha, guarding the springs and waterways leading to the other Pachas, and torments the living when they disturb anything beneath the earth without his permission. Supay keeps a keen eye on miners and spelunkers who violate his realm but turns a blind eye if they propitiate him with a series of rituals and offerings of food, alcohol, and creature comforts. Supay is not inherently malevolent but is willing to visit any number of horrors upon those who do not show him proper obeisance. His vice-like grip over the spirits of the dead in Uku Pacha is seldom loosed but does not prohibit the prayers and offerings of their family from reaching them. Supay's manifestations take the form of a wealthy South American mine owner whose face is shrouded in darkness, clad in a black-on-black business suit of superior quality with gold jewelry to match.

Scions of Supay tend to embrace his dark and unforgiving nature. They are comfortable in darkness, often taking jobs involving night or underground work and are fearsome to behold when fighting the Titans and their spawn. They punish recalcitrant miners who defy Supay's edicts, hunt down escaped spirits, and pioneer better mining techniques that are less likely to disturb Uku Pacha. They are miners, spelunkers, morticians, commodities, traders, tunnel rats, sewer workers, and jewelers.

**Callings:** Judge, Leader, Trickster

**Purviews:** Darkness, Death, Deception, Earth, Prosperity

## VICHAMA, GOD OF DEATH

**Aliases:** Villama

Vichama is the son of Inti, born of his rays and a mother created by Pachacamac. He returned from a quest to learn that Pachacamac had dismembered his mother and peopled Vichama's homeland with new humans of his own creation. Vichama gathered the remains of his mother and reassembled her body, breathing life into her anew. He then turned his attention to his half-brother, stalking Pachacamac in a haze of rage and fury until he ran him to ground in his temple. Vichama asked Inti for vengeance against Pachacamac and Inti obliged, transforming Pachacamac's people to stone before sending three eggs to Vichama that repopulated Vichama's land.

Vichama is a young man with a fighter's build and kind, but resolute, eyes. He is the God of death in Que Pacha in addition to delivering justice to all who defy his sense of honor and Inti's edicts. He acts as his father's bloodhound and enforcer, maintaining Pachacamac's captivity and battles rebels and titanspawn in equal measure. Vichama's will and sense of honor are unassailable and there is no length he will not go to when defending the Apu.

Scions of Vichama are chosen for loyalty, integrity, and honor, seeking to maintain peace in Tawantinsuyu through direct action whenever possible. They are diametrically opposed to the actions of Pachacamac's Scions and are



always skeptical of their motivations. In many ways, they represent the righteous anger of the Apu, venting their fury on the evil and unrighteous in their never-ending quest for justice. They are soldiers, police officers, private investigators, doctors, trauma counselors, wilderness guides, vigilantes, morticians, and paramedics.

**Callings:** Creator, Healer, Judge

**Purviews:** Death, Epic Stamina, Epic Strength, Health, Journeys

## COSMOLOGY

The core of Inca cosmology is the concept of Pachas, or “Worlds.” The Inca divide the universe into three Pachas, the upper World, or “Hanan Pacha;” the World, or “Kay Pacha;” and the lower World, or “Uku Pacha.” These Pachas encompass the universe from the highest heaven to the lowest depths of the Underworld.

### HANAN PACHA — THE OVERWORLD

Hanan Pacha is a beatific realm in the sky, the heavenly abode of the Apu, and seat of Inti’s power. Inti, Mama Killa, and the stars live in this realm as the sun, moon, and constellations. The sky is also part of Hanan Pacha, and frequently visited by Illapa, Chasca, Viracocha, and Kuychi. Hanan Pacha is connected to Kay Pacha via light, rainbows, lightning bolts, and the tallest mountain peaks of Kay Pacha. It is also the realm to which the noble and virtuous dead ascend to enjoy a serene afterlife.

### KAY PACHA — THE WORLD

Kay Pacha is the World, a place balanced ever so carefully on the knife-edge between Hanan and Uku Pacha. It is the domain of mortals and their Scion allies, the World of everyday reality. Kay Pacha is more mutable than Hanan and Uku Pacha and is subject to Pachakutics, or cyclical turning of the age, where the three realms slam together and part again to create a new world.

### UKU PACHA — THE UNDERWORLD

Uku Pacha is a place of darkness and terror, the abode of the spirits of the dead governed by Supay who keeps careful watch over any intrusion into his realm by surface dwellers. It is also a place of rebirth, where Pachamama summons the waters and fertility necessary to push new life to the surface. Many souls of the dead come to rest here after a harrowing journey, typically those unfit for Hanan Pacha, but many more persist in Que Pacha as revered mummies and restless spirits or advance to the heavenly splendor of Hanan Pacha.

### TEARS OF THE SUN

Tawantinsuyu is filled with half-forgotten reminders of the prior age, many of which seek to bring ruin to the Apu and their chosen wards.

Amaru are massive, two-headed, serpent-like, dragons with feet similar to a bird and large wings. They live deep underground and cross between the spirit and mortal realms with

ease. Amaru are not inherently evil but are dangerous if disturbed and hostile to outsiders unaffiliated with Pachamama and her Scions. Most give them a wide berth unless they require the trove of knowledge they possess, for few are better versed in the ways of Uku Pacha and the spirit realm than they.

**Purview:** Earth

**Virtues:** Dominance, Fecundity

Giants are remnants of the first humans created by Viracocha. Most died in Viracocha's flood, but some secreted themselves away in jungles, caves, or high mountains. Those who survived to the present hold an unrelenting hatred of Viracocha and his creations. They are extremely sensitive to sunlight, lurking in deep caves, sewers, and other dark places until the moment is right to strike. Over time, they intermingled with humanity, spawning a potent array of titanspawn ranging from particularly strong hybrids that can pass as human to skeletal nightmares with an unending hunger for human flesh. All are dedicated to destroying the Apu.

**Purview:** Epic Strength

**Virtues:** Dominance, Rapacity

Pishtaco are pale-skinned humanoids that take a variety of guises ranging from enigmatic, black-clad figures with tall boots and wide-brimmed hats, to local clergy, to innocent-looking doctors and geologists. They operate at night, creeping into graveyards to grind the bones of the dead into paralytic powder they use to subdue their victims. Once subdued, they decapitate their prey, extracting their fat for purposes unknown. Their origins are obscure, though some postulate they are inky fragments of darkness left over from the creation of the universe given sinister purpose by the collective pain of the Inca conquest. Whatever the truth, they have a malevolent sense of humor and are deadly to Scion and mortal alike, using their victim's fat to grease infernal machines or disguise it for sale to unknowing customers as chicharrones and other foods.

**Purview:** Death

**Virtues:** Rapacity, Submission

The **Serpent** and the **Mountain Lion** are deadly remnants of a prior age of darkness intent on blackening the present age. They are massive creatures of incredible power who carefully await their time to strike. Their primary target is Mama Killa, for Inti's light is too powerful to strike at directly, but hers is dim enough to endure. Mama Killa's Scions and other members of the Apu expend a great deal of energy thwarting their endless assaults but have never been able to truly defeat them. The Serpent and Mountain Lion spawn a legion of lesser titanspawn versions of themselves to assail the Scion and mortal followers of the Apu. These beings have great physical power but were born in a realm of infinite darkness and quiet, allowing them to be distracted, or even repelled by loud noises.

**Purview:** Darkness

**Virtues:** Rapacity, Submission

Wakon is a formless entity of great malevolence from the dawn of civilization that haunts Pachacamac, Pachamama, and their Scions. He is a master of deception who can appear in many guises, one of which allowed him to seduce and consume part of Pachamama, hurtling her into a great cooking pot until rescued by allies. Wakon believes he should be the dominant force of creation and nature in Tawantinsuyu and that Pachacamac and Pachamama are interlopers on his chosen domain. This also makes him firmly opposed to Inti and his court. Wakon and his spawn are everywhere and nowhere, weaving elaborate webs of seduction, manipulation, and betrayal to weaken the Apu until the time is right to sweep them from Tawantinsuyu. Until then, he patiently watches and waits in darkness, always one step ahead of his prey.

**Purview:** Deception

**Virtues:** Dominance, Rapacity

## PRIMORDIALS

### VIRACOCHA, PRIMORDIAL OF CREATION AND CIVILIZATION

**Aliases:** Atun Viracocha ("Great Creator"), Illya ("Light"), Tici ("The Beginning of Things"), Viracocha Achayachachic ("Lord, Instructor of the World")

Viracocha is the primordial force that created the universe, humanity, and all living things, yet he wields this power with great subtlety. He took a leave of absence after creating the World and bringing civilization to Tawantinsuyu but recently returned with his brother-sons from their sojourn across the sea to aid his people.

Viracocha manifests to humanity and his Scions through dreams but has a number of manifestations in the Overworld. His usual form is a shapeless force of cosmic energy inhabiting an invisible throne in the sky, but his manifestations range from elderly beggars to men in resplendent clothing, crowned with the sun. When inspired to act, Viracocha works through dreams in a variety of guises, manifesting as a helpful guide, mentor, or even a member of the Apu like Inti with just the right information to point his chosen agents in the correct direction.

Dreams are the medium through which Viracocha creates his Scions. When Viracocha Chooses a Scion, he visits them in dreams, nurturing and guiding them until the time is right. He then fans the embers of cosmic energy that flow through the mortal until they burn brighter than the sun, searing away his chosen's base mortality to reveal the Scion within.

Scions of Viracocha are a subtle breed, a collection of masks whose true purpose is seldom discerned until long after they move on. Like their progenitor, they choose to operate through other Scions and mortals, but also disguise themselves as Scions of other Apu, or even mortals, when

necessary. That said, they share Viracocha's distaste for open defiance and are more than happy to use more "direct" methods to correct such effrontery. Viracocha is concerned with the seeming return of the giants he drowned in the flood, the arrival of titanspawn in Tawantinsuyu, and Pachacamac's schemes to diminish Inti's power, sending forth his Scions to protect his creation and its people. Viracocha's Scions are teachers, warriors, intelligence agents, engineers, painters, sculptors, and anything representing a subtle, yet creative, profession.

**Callings:** Creator, Sage, Warrior

**Purviews:** Deception, Earth, Fire, Journeys, Moon, Order, Sky, Sun, Water

## RELIGION

Faith permeates every facet of the Apu's world, with Cusco as its center. The Apu and their Inca subjects are a conquering people, incorporating the beliefs and customs of their subjects into their own, establishing temples of Inti next to those of the most powerful local deities to illustrate his dominance. Viracocha is ultimately powerful, yet aloof, more of a cosmic force of nature that uses Inti as his intercessor. Inti in turn, uses his Scions, the most important of which becomes Sapa Inca, or emperor of the Inca Empire. Much was lost during the conquest, including the imperial bloodline, but Inti casts about for a Scion worthy of becoming the Sapa Inca of a reestablished Inca empire.

The Inca have a well-established religion that has adapted and synchronized with that of their conquerors, practicing in plain sight or in hidden temples for centuries. Priests and priestesses of all stripes lead prayers, provide confessions, and offer sacrifices from temples decked in gold, silver, and precious stones. The greatest temple sits at the "Navel of the Universe," the literal site where Manco Capac's golden staff sunk into the earth marking the Promised Land at Cusco. This temple is the sacred Coricancha, or "Golden Enclosure." The original was destroyed and became a convent, but a new one was built under the original and is accessible through a network of old Inca tunnels. The new temple is a mirror-image of the original, with facades of gold, gardens containing gold and silver plants, and temples dedicated to Viracocha, Inti, Mama Killa, Illapa, Chasca, and Kuychi.

Inca faith is staunchly hierarchical, with established ranks of priests and priestesses who lead their congregants in prayer, provide confessions, and offer sacrifices in the Apu's name. The high priest of the Apu is a priest of Inti known as the Willaq Umu, who is often a Scion of Inti and/or brother of the Sapa Inca. The Willaq Umu commands the entirety of the Inca priesthood and wields astonishing power. Some Gods segregate their clergy by gender like Mamma Killa's all-female priesthood, or the aclla, or "virgins of the sun."

## HUACAS

A key element of Inca worship is the "Huaca," a sacred object or place of power. Huacas are many and varied, including natural features of the landscape like piles of stones, caves, springs, and mountaintops, but also include objects visited or modified by humanity, and even the dead.

Huacas are invested with the power of the divine and take many forms. Some are small pieces of quartz that guard a single household, while others are large stones located in village centers that protect the community as a whole. Boulders, mountains, and other large natural objects contain the greatest power, harnessing the power of nature itself. Huacas are not limited to earth-bound objects because the stars contain the idealized forms of all objects and the Milky Way, or "Mayu," is the source of all water, collecting it from the ocean and redistributing it across the sky until it rains.

The mummified dead can be Huacas and retain their soul, wealth, possessions, and status, occupying positions of great honor in their former homes and temples. They are carried on litters in great parades during important feast days and attended by a pair of translators and other attendants who convey their will, feed, clothe, and protect them. The greatest of all ancestral Huacas were the mallquis, the mummified forms of the Inca emperor and empress.

Sacred lines called ceyce often connect powerful Huacas and divide the Tawantinsuyu into four quarters. Around 41 ceyce lines converge on the sacred Coricancha, uniting 328 Huacas and stations corresponding to the number of days in the lunar calendar.

## SACRIFICE

The Inca offer a wide range of sacrifices including food, alcohol, coca leaves, and other devotional objects. Animals are sacrificed to the Gods, with black llamas favored by Viracocha and white animals favored by Inti. In truly dire times, like those of famine, or upon the death of a Sapa Inca, the Gods may require the greatest sacrifice, a human life.

Inca human sacrifices are usually children or young teenagers carefully selected for talent and beauty. They are prepared and treated as nobles before they are marched to the highest mountain top or other remote location where they are drugged to experience sacred visions and feel no pain after which they are then strangled, clubbed, or abandoned to die from exposure. These sacrifices are significantly less common than those of the Teōtl and summon great power for the Apu for their followers.

Festivals are important to the Inca and have continued unabated since the conquest, seeing a great revival in recent years. Festivals were organized according to the lunar calendar; the greatest was Inti Raymi, the Sun Festival, held during the winter solstice in Cusco. Others include Coya Raymi, the feast of the moon and time of purification,

Camay Quilla in January where sacrifices were offered to Viracocha and fasting and penance were performed, and Yapaquiz in August where sacrifices to all the Gods were performed.

## BIRTHRIGHTS

The Apu are legendary for their golden relics and dedicated followers but their powerful creatures should not be underestimated.

## CREATURES

**Pururaucas:** Pururaucas are stone warriors sent by the Apu to deliver victory to Pachacuti Inca Yupanqui. They take the form of regular stones that transform into fearsome warriors at the Scion's call.

**Rainbow:** The Scion has access to one of Kuychi's rainbows in the form of a massive, multi-hued, serpent that provides a bridge between any two places in the World, or between Pachas.

## FOLLOWERS

**Priests:** The highly ritualized nature of the Apu breeds a dedicated core of clergy who tend their temples, lead prayers, and provide an unending stream of propitiatory sacrifices.

**Shamans:** While priests execute the grand rituals of the Apu, shamans serve the individual. They serve as healers, guides, sorcerers, oracles, and confessors.

## GUIDES

**Mummy:** The Scion has access to a venerable Inca mummy (perhaps an ancestor) that provides access to a treasure trove of knowledge, wealth, and/or Relics. These mummies are immobile but extremely powerful, sequestering themselves in lavish estates tended by an army of servants. They are wise, but never speak, always communicating through a pair of mediums ever at their side.

**Oracle:** The Scion has access to an oracle that will divine their future. The oracle may be a priest of Pachacamac, an angelic being, or divined from the lungs of a fallen foe. The only guarantee is that it will be as enigmatic as it is accurate.

## RELICS

**Fruit of Coniraya:** Often disguised as the fruit of the lucuma tree, these fruits are actually the disguised sperm of Coniraya, rendering all women who consume them pregnant.

**Sling of Illapa:** Slings of Illapa emulate the power of their divine parent, hurtling stones of lightning at their target with a crack like thunder that shakes the earth.

**Sun Falcon:** The sun falcon is a blindingly powerful symbol of Inti's rule, bending the will of all within sight to

follow the bearer's instructions as long as they serve Inti's design.

**Quipu Strings:** Quipu strings knotted in complex arrangements the Inca use to record a wide range of data. Apu Scions take them even further, using them as powerful pneumonic devices to capture indecipherable messages ranging from simple numeric data to complex mystical formulae that can only be deciphered by the Apu, their Scions, and professional Quipu readers.

## RELATIONSHIPS

The Apu prefer to be the dominant partners in most relationships. That said, those that are part of, or allied with, Inti's court have a great sense of duty to their Scions and mortal followers, extending their protection to all.

They have a more complicated relationship with the varied supernatural creatures of Tawantinsuyu and the three Pachas. The Apu are on good terms with the spirits of their ancestors and keep the Amaru at arm's length, but are merciless toward giants, titanspawn, and all who promote disorder.

## OTHER PANTHEONS

The Apu endured the destruction of their mortal empire better than their Teōtl cousins to the north, blending in with their conquerors. Tawantinsuyu has had a great deal of contact with foreign cultures and their Gods, some of which the Apu recognize as valuable allies, others as competitors.

The Apu share the bond of the conquered or the colonized, depending on whom you ask, with the Teōtl, K'uh, and to a lesser extent, Manitou pantheons. The Apu embrace them all with open arms in common cause against Titans and any who seek to dominate them anew. They admire the complex bureaucracy of the Shén and veneration of Amaterasu among the Kami, welcoming Scions of those pantheons in Lima with bonds of friendship. Similar bonds were formed between the Netjer and Òrìshà, with Scions of Inti acting as intermediaries and both pantheons recognizing and respecting in each other the same deep bonds of community. The Devá, Theoi, and Æsir are still foreign to Apu and while they recognize their Scions, they are skeptical of their motives and watch them closely until they are sure they do not harbor imperial ambitions.

## CURRENT PRIORITIES

The Apu intend to rebuild their empire and actively influence the cultures of the former nations of Tawantinsuyu, perpetuating modern revivals Inca rituals, preserving important Huacas, and going abroad to recover artifacts and Relics stolen during the conquest. One of their highest priorities is the recovery of any remaining mallquis, the mummies of Inca imperial line. Once they are secure in their power, they will push the boundaries

of Tawantinsuyu ever further until all of South America is under their sway.

## GREATEST WEAKNESS

For all their strength, the concept of “Pachakutic,” or the turning of an age plagues the Apu. A Pachakutic represents the death of one age and birth of another. Viracocha’s destruction of the eternally dark world and its giant inhabitants represented a Pachakutic, as does the rise of the Apu and their subsequent actions. The problem with Pachakutics is that they can be just as destructive to the Apu and their works as they were to the prior race of giants. So ingrained is the idea of Pachakutic, that they are sometimes frozen into inaction when they arrive. The Inca civil war and subsequent conquest by Spain were a confluence of events that represent a lesser Pachakutic, but one the Apu were not prepared for, losing their vast empire in the process. The Titans recognize this weakness and exploit the inborn fatalism of the Apu whenever possible, fanning the flames of rebellion and civil war within their ranks by whispering that one faction or another is harbinger of the next age or attempting to cow them into inaction by convincing them that they cannot halt the Apu’s inevitable downfall.

## PANTHEON PATH OF THE APU

**Asset Skills:** Culture, Leadership

**Virtues:** Ambition, Duty

The Apu were not called forth from the darkness to sit idly by and watch the World pass before them. They are dynamic, ambitious, and absolutely confident in their purity of purpose, emerging from the caves of origin to sweep aside their foes and build a world free from anarchy and disorder.

This ambition gave the Apu and their Scions the ability to establish the largest empire South America has ever seen. The downside of this relentless will to power is the self-destructive ambition it breeds and the attendant revolution to follow. Not every Apu is content to let Inti reign forever, pointing out that it was his Scions infighting that led to their empire’s demise. The Titans were quick to recognize this flaw and quietly whisper into the Apu and their Scions ears, always temping, always pushing them to greater feats of glory, always encouraging to reach just one rung higher on the social ladder.



# THE ATUA OF POLYNESIA

Te ope tuatahi  
No Aotearoa  
No Te Wai-pounamu;  
No nga tai e wha  
  
Ko kotou ena  
E nga rau e rima  
Te Hokowhitu toa  
A Tūmatauenga:  
  
I hinga ka Ihipa  
Ki Karipori ra ia.  
E ngau nei te aroha,  
me te mamae.

The first contingent was  
from throughout New Zealand,  
including the South Island;  
they were from the four tides.

You there  
the five hundred  
the brave Battalion  
of angry-eyed Tū.

Some of you have fallen in Egypt,  
some in Gallipoli.  
Love gnaws within us  
and pain also.

— Recruiting song of the Māori Pioneer Battalion, Sir Āpirana Ngata

The World began with love: the love of Heaven for Earth and Earth for Heaven. Papatūānuku and Ranginui, Earth and Heaven, wrapped in a dark and sweet embrace, close and perfect forever. It was fine and it was good; but their children wondered, for the first of many, many times: What if things were different? What if they were better? What if there were not only darkness, but also light?

The really controversial question, though, was: What if there were humans?

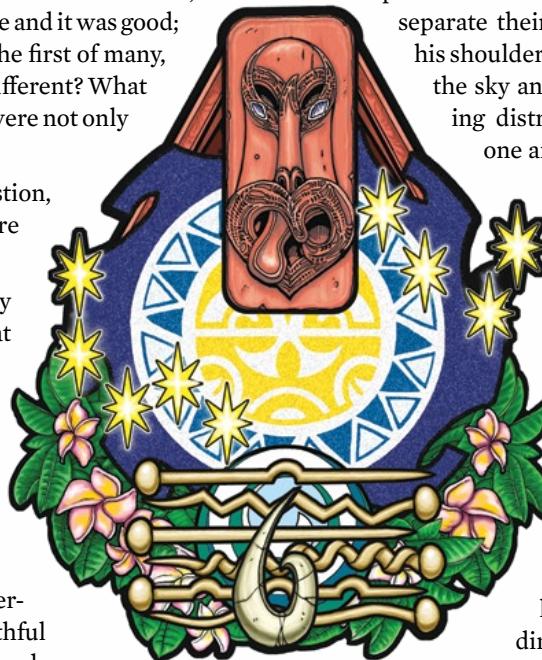
It was a risk, full of mystery and insecurity. No one knew what light might be, or even what kind of world would result from a cataclysm. Rangi and Papa's children each contained within them the promise of the World's phenomena but could not express them.

Each child suggested a different means of separation. Wrathful Tūmatauenga, straightforward as always, suggested murder. After an eternity of deliberation, Tāne Mahuta's notion to separate them instead

proved more popular. Only Tāwhirimātea, father of storms, opposed this plan as unconscionable treatment of their parents. One by one, each brother attempted to separate their parents until at last, Tāne braced his shoulders against the ground, his feet against the sky and pushed as hard as he could, tearing distraught Rangi and Papa away from one another. Light broke unto the World.

Humans, Tū's children, arose. The sky, the sea, and the islands appeared.

The Atua govern Polynesia from Aotearoa (New Zealand) in the west to Rapa Nui (Easter Island) in the east, Hawai'i in the north to Rēkohu (the Chatham Islands) in the south. Under their guidance, the islands developed distinct civilizations, art, music, academic traditions, martial arts, senses of humor, and the science of wayfinding. Some Atua maintain relatively constant identities from island to island; others adopt different mantles and identities in different places; and a few live only on specific islands.



Historically, Atua stood at odds with one another far more often than with any other Pantheon, but the pressures of colonial aggression and climate crisis have inspired them to close ranks. Figures who once infuriated one another have put aside their differences to protect a region under attack from rising sea levels and treacherous imperialists, threats born of the humans on whose behalf they took the greatest risk. But although associated with Polynesia, the Atua love to travel. In the modern day, the ancient canoes that once carried Gods and humans from island to island in the Pacific now cut the water to reach new lands, finding allies and enemies as they once did during their first voyages. The powers that be may fear the Atua's very nature, but they ignore the Atua's call at their own peril. After all, the Fate of the World is at stake.

## WHOSE ATUA?

Different regions and ethnic groups within the Polynesian triangle have different names, stories, and lists of principals for their Atua. This chapter's descriptions of the Atua draw primarily on Aotearoa's Māori myths with some reference to other islands' ideas, but this is a choice of convenience. If your table and/or your Atua player wish to emphasize a different cultural tradition or traditions, it's totally acceptable to set (for example) the Hawai'i'an Akua as your type.

## PRINCIPAL MEMBERS

**B**ehold: first were Ranginui and Papatūānuku, whose union brought forth Tūmatauenga, Tānemahuta, Tāwhirimātea, Rongomātāne, Tangaroa, Rehua, and on Hawai'i, Pele. Rangi and Papa's grandson Tamanuiterā also stars here.

### RONGOMĀTĀNE, WAR GOD OF CULTIVATED CROPS

**Aliases:** Lono (Hawai'i), Ono (Marquesan), Ro'o-toro'oro'o (Tahiti)

Rongomātāne has diverse responsibilities distributed among the Polynesian islands. On Hawai'i, as the weather-God Lono, he presides over the Makahiki festival of wrestling and other sports to commemorate his wife Kaiki-lani, whom he beat to death in misguided rage. On Tahiti, he carries Tāne's messages through the sky over the rainbow and blesses humans against disease. But Rongo also rules war. Why? Indeed, when Tāwhiri and his storm-spawn came screaming out of the sky, Rongo fled into his mother Papa's body, hiding beneath the earth. There, he found the comfort and safety he needed for his plants to grow. Afterward, Tū, annoyed that Rongo helped so little in the fight against Tāwhiri dug up Rongo's plants and cooked them in revenge, which confused Rongo a little because that was kind of the point of cultivating food plants? But it seemed to calm Tū down, so Rongo went with it and acted

## TE REO MĀORI PRONUNCIATION

### Vowels

**A** as in among, **Ā** as in jaw

**E** as in pet, **Ē** as in Fey

**I** as in skip, **Ī** as in ziti

**O** as in order, **Ō** as in blow

**U** like the "oo" in "book," **Ū** as in flu

When you're presented with a diphthong, try to pronounce both vowel sounds sequentially, but as a single long syllable.

### Consonants

Consonants mostly resemble their English equivalents. Unless followed by an i or u, in which case it gets slight sibilance, **T** lacks sibilance, sounding almost like a "d." **R** gets a slight roll. **NG** as in singer. **WH** is actually a "f" sound nowadays, though the Atua themselves are old enough that they still pronounce it as in "whisper."

disappointed and defeated. Then he went back to finding more plants for humans to grow.

Among the most important, ancient, and well-developed skills passed down from Māori generation to generation is the science of gardening. Polynesians who traveled from island to island brought crops with them: taro, yams, gourds, ti pore, aute, and especially the crop most sacred to Rongomātāne and Aotearoa: kūmara (*Ipomoea batatas*). The Māori added sand and gravel to the soil, laid down mulch, built fences and windbreaks and stood stones to protect the crops, warmed the soil with piled earth, and dug pits for preserving harvested tubers. These ancient gardeners used selection to cultivate crops from elsewhere in the South Seas to withstand Aotearoa's colder temperatures. This work required patience, strength, foresight, and advanced technique. It could only be performed when gardeners could devote considerable time and effort to their gardens: during peacetime. So Rongo is a war God, but he is specifically a God of war that brings peace, for only in peacetime can we properly tend our gardens.

Rongo represents civilization as it passes down from generation to generation through arts and sciences. If something is worth knowing, it's worth teaching. His approach to his martial responsibilities is similar; he's less concerned with encouraging tactical geniuses than with developing curricula of physical and strategic techniques simple and reliable enough to pass on to weak warriors as well as strong ones. As you might guess, he's a responsible parent. He wants you to set the table, show up on time for family dinner, talk about what you learned at school and wrestling practice that day, do all your homework, and



come help Dad in the garden. But if a bully messes with you, he'll make sure you know how to handle them.

**Callings:** Healer, Liminal, Warrior

**Purviews:** Earth, Epic Strength, Fertility, Sky, War

## REHUA, THE HEAVENLY STAR

Rehua, the gentle star, the first ever to build a fire, has the power to cure any ailment, even blindness or death. He governs the seventh, eighth, ninth, and tenth heavens in the sky. He lives in the tenth heaven, variously called Naherangi, Naiterangi, Putahi-nui-o-Rehua, or Tūwarea. His luxurious tresses are home to many birds, who feed on his divine lice. When the mortal Hero Rupe climbed to Heaven searching for his lost sister Hina, Rehua offered him these birds' flesh to eat. Rupe politely refused, as to eat such holy creatures would be unconscionable. To thank Rehua for his assistance, crafty Rupe cleaned up around Rehua's abode and even built him a new structure; but Rupe fixed one of its roof-beams poorly, so that Rehua's son Kaitangata died one day when he was playfully hanging from it and it broke. Rehua eternally mourns his son, whose blood stains the sky red some evenings.

Rehua's compassion matches any Atua's fearsomeness. Old, slow-moving, and usually busy with his important job ruling the heavens as a flaming plasma ball on the other side of the universe, Rehua rarely has time to visit Earth. When he does, though, you'll find him in the World's highest places: atop mountains or skyscraper rooftops or sitting amongst birds' nests in the canopies of trees. Wherever he goes, stars burn brighter in the night sky, piercing even through light pollution to glow in your vision. But if you

make the effort to seek him out in Heaven, health and satisfaction will be your rewards.

Rehua gets on well with Baldr, Ganesha, Guanshiyin Pusa, and other fonts of kindness surrounded by volatile and belligerent personalities. Despite his advanced age and full schedule, Rehua is also an excellent father. He calls and messages often, though some of those messages will probably read something like "how do I open this .pdf" or "Brahma sent me this email about a controversial subject and I thought I would forward it to you without checking the sources" or "I saw this meme that was old three years ago and it reminded me of you." He's always inviting you home to Heaven for festivals or meals, always remembering your favorite foods and sending cards and impeccably tasteful gifts on holidays. Rehua has little in the way of specific requirements or expectations for his children; he wants you to be who you want to be. This was the attitude that led to his grandson Tawhaki becoming a great Hero, and in fact the ruler of the heavens below Rehua's own.

**Callings:** Healer, Judge, Primeval

**Purviews:** Beasts (Birds), Fire, Health, Order, Stars

## TAMANUITERĀ, THE SUN GOD

**Aliases:** Lā (Sāmoa), Laa (Tonga), Rā, Ra'a (Tahiti)

Ranginui and Papatūānuku had a son named Haronga, who physically held up Heaven once Heaven needed such props. He and his wife Tongotongo gave birth to Marama, the moon, and Tamanuiterā, the sun. Rā is the husband of Hinetakurua and Raumati, who live in the ocean; he



visits them in summer and winter, respectively. But his true home is the sky.

Rā crosses the sky every day at a stately pace. Everything his light touches, he blesses with honesty, holiness, and propriety. Nevertheless, he has experienced his own share of indignities. The demigod Māui, wanting extra time to work and play, once caught Rā in a noose and then beat him until he agreed to move more slowly, and that is why the day lasts as long as it does.

In the tension between Respect and Wonder, Rā hews toward Respect. He has little need of human incarnation when he's right there shining in the literal sky all the time, but he's not above appearing as a luminous being whose very flesh burns with star fire. Nevertheless, he fathers many Scions, as the touch of his rays can be enough to found one; in Sāmoa, he impregnated Magamagaifatua with 'Alo'alo in this way. He is generous to his children, though: When 'Alo'alo came to him to ask for a dowry for his bride, Rā gave him a bundle of divine blessings to pass on. Rā cares for etiquette, protocol, and honesty before all. Do right by him in that way, and he'll do right by you.

**Callings:** Judge, Liminal, Primeval

**Purviews:** Beasts (Woodpecker), Order, Sky, Sun

## TĀNEMAHUTA, GOD OF LIGHT

**Aliases:** Kāne (Hawaiian), Tāne

Tānemahuta split the earth from the sky and banished the eternal darkness that blanketed the waters in the beginning, creating The World as we know it. His first action

may have been brutal and violent, but he's calmed down since then, setting himself up as the ruler of forests, birds, and beauty. When Tāwhirimatea attacked his brothers, the reptiles and the fish disagreed as to where to shelter; the reptiles suggested Tāne's trees, the fish Tangaroa's waters. Each party cursed the other to predation by humans in response to an imagined betrayal. The disagreement sowed strife between Tāne and Tangaroa. Since then, Tāne has provided humans wood for fishing gear and boats, while Tangaroa has roiled the seas to devour human fishers and wayfinders. Tāne also suffered at the attacks of Tāwhiri's storms, and at the depredations of Tū, who made Tāne's own trees into traps and snares for his beloved birds.

Tāne's greatest enemy, though, was the kiore. The little rat which traveled with humans from island to island preyed on Tāne's birds' nests, causing catastrophic extinctions. Even after the Polynesian isles were settled, European invaders' arrival ended dozens more species for good.

In the 21st century, Tāne is desperate and frustrated. As lord of land, he has always stood at odds with Tangaroa. The rising sea levels cause an unwilling Tangaroa to claim more of Tāne's domain every day, while trees fall, and birds die inland. He now exhorts his Scions most aggressively of all the Atua to make new friends and allies outside their own Pantheon. Tāne is the master carpenter or fashion designer passing his lessons down to his children and students, the falconer with his hunting partner in the forest, the activist priest, the biologist. He has already lost so much. Help him, that it might end here.

**Callings:** Creator, Hunter, Primeval

**Purviews:** Beasts (Birds), Beauty, Epic Strength, Forge, Wild

## TANGAROA, GOD OF THE SEA AND ITS UGLY DENIZENS

**Aliases:** Kanaloa (Hawaiian), Ta’aroa (Tahitian), Tagaloa (Samoan and Tongan), Takaroa (Tuamotu)

Who can define which of the many conflicting stories about Tangaroa are true facts? In Tahiti, the primordial Ta’aroa predated everything that existed, slumbering in a shell until he split it apart to make Heaven and Earth of its hemispheres. In Tonga, he governs lightning and invention, and his sons Tubo and Vaka-akau-uli are Polynesians’ and Europeans’ ancestors, respectively. On other islands, he is the God only of fish, or of squid, or merely an arsonist who set fires in Heaven. Then, there is Aotearoa’s Tangaroa, who rules the sea and all that swims.

That Tangaroa sided with Tāne in the first decision to split Rangi and Papa. When Tāwhiri attacked in retribution, Tangaroa and Tāne antagonized one another. As Tū’s children set out across the ocean in boats crafted from Tāne’s wood, Tangaroa challenges them with vaulting waves and snapping sharks, slaying those who do not respect him properly with offerings. He and Tāne have a lot in common, though: They’re both mad as hell these days. Tangaroa’s oceans are awash with trash and mercury, and his children are under attack. Overfishing and pollution deplete fish populations and leave vast dead zones only jellyfish can inhabit. Climate crisis roils the seas and causes weather phenomena over which he has no control.

Tangaroa finds many Scions, both human and otherwise. He’s not the most attentive father, and his list of mysterious Incarnations is similar to the “list of squid species” directory page on Wikipedia. The way parenting goes for him is: “I was swimming around and I saw a fine lady, so I went and stabbed her in the mantle with my hectocotylus, which she thought was romantic, and now all 700 of you are tiny translucent Demigods, some of whom I intend to eat.” He struggles sometimes to transition to the human business of remembering your name and playing catch on the beach. Still, several of his descendants have made something of themselves, including Samoan noble lineages. His most famous child, Punga, is the God of strange ugly animals, and the father of Ika-tere the lord of sea creatures and Tū-te-wehiwehi the father of reptiles. If you’re his Scion, and you’re lucky and ugly enough, you might have a bright future as the Mother of Tuataras or the Queen of Hawaiian Bobtail Squid.

**Callings:** Creator, Liminal, Primeval

**Purviews:** Beasts (Sea Creatures), Fertility, Fire, Forge, Moon, Sky, Water

## TĀWHIRIMĀTEA, THE STORM FATHER

**Aliases:** Tāwhiri

When Tū, Tāne, Rongo, Tangaroa, and Haumia together tore Rangi from Papa, only Tāwhirimātea, power of the stormy

sky, stood apart. Ah! How could he countenance undoing the union which begat him? And so, he repaid to the sky Rangi, to amass an army to avenge himself and his father unto the World and his brothers below; and this was the origin of every individual wind and storm, each one Tāwhiri’s wrathful children. They blasted Tāne’s forests and troubled Tangaroa’s seas. They sent Rongo and Haumia and their vegetable brood hiding in their mother Papa. Finally, he raged against Tū, who alone did not quail before him. Tū and Tāwhiri fought to exhaustion, and only when each one had acknowledged the other as his match did Tāwhiri’s rage subside.

The distinction between “God” and “Titan” is foreign to the Atua but, were they to classify any of their number as a Titan, it would be Tāwhiri. His children, whose identities are one with the meteorological phenomena they represent, are definitely Titans in the eyes of Devá, Theoi, and Teōtl who care about that kind of thing.

Tāwhiri and his brood are among the most directly affected by the climate crisis; storms blow off course or crop up when and where they’re not expected. Tāwhiri’s steady loss of control over his domain keeps him in uneasy alliance with his hated siblings.

Tāwhiri hates to incarnate himself as a human. Humans are Tū’s children, not his. If Tāwhiri speaks to you, he will do so with the scream of the storm. Perhaps, as you look into the stormy night, you might make out narrowed eyes and gnashing teeth. Perhaps, if you’re smarter, you’ll seek shelter. If you’re his child, you’re something strange and special: perhaps a squall he gave human shape in mockery of Tāne and Tū’s favorites. Or did he really love someone that much, that he adopted a hated form to give you life? In any case, you probably won’t hear much from him. He’s always watching, but he’ll let you do you, unless he decides to go after Tū again. In that case, prepare for war.

**Callings:** Destroyer, Liminal, Primeval

**Purviews:** Epic Stamina, Epic Strength, Passion (Rage), Sky

**Virtues:** Respect, Submission

## TŪMATAUENGA, WAR GOD OF THE ANGRY FACE

**Aliases:** Kū (Hawaiian), Tū, Tū-kanguha, Tū-kariri

The first memorable thing Tūmatauenga ever did was suggest that he and his brothers murder their parents. This idea was immediately shot down, and as time went on, Tū has lived in a state of some internal conflict as to whether his first idea was a bad one. But when Rangi, Tāwhirimātea, and Tāwhiri’s titanic children descended from above to exact revenge on the Atua, only Tū could stand up to the storm’s strength and fury, standing in defense of the other Atua until an exhausted Tāwhiri went home to the sky to sleep it off. The other Atua were eminently grateful and have remained so even after Tū went and beat them all within an inch of their lives for being so useless in fighting off one big angry God and the weather.

## MĀUI

Now, everyone knows the story of the Demigod Māui, no? Māui was cast into the ocean at his birth but returned and wormed his way back into his family's good graces through charisma and incorrigible cleverness. Through trick after trick, his sense of wonder brought islands out of the sea and length to the day. He prevailed upon his relative's sense of familial obligation to steal fire from the underworld. Finally, he attempted to crawl into the vagina of the death Goddess Hine-nui-te-pō in order to reverse the law of death. But this act of disrespect inspired a nearby fantail to laugh. Hine-nui-te-pō awoke and crushed Māui to death, bringing his apotheosis to a violent halt. Māui lived a life of great wonder and scant respect, and it got him far ... but not all the way.

Tūmatauenga isn't just God of war, though. He's also the God of humans. All humans are his children; he imbued them with his own intelligence and cunning in the hunt and in battle. He might be straightforward and bull-headed, but it's not because he isn't smart. He's just smart enough to understand that a straightforward solution almost always deserves consideration.

Now that his kids are growing up, Tū isn't the vengeful, spiteful war God he once was, driving them to violent solutions to every problem. War may form part of Tū's being, but his human children are different. He considers every human his Scion, not just those directly descended from him; and often travels abroad to meet them. He has amassed a wide network of sparring partners across the World; he goes hunting, plays wargames, or takes martial arts lessons with the likes of Karttikeya, Ògún, Odin, Bast, and Huītzilōpōchtli. These endeavors started out as a lowkey way to keep them scared of him, and they still do that; but the old soldier has begun to enjoy them legitimately as well.

**Callings:** Creator, Hunter, Warrior

**Purviews:** Beasts, Epic Stamina, Epic Strength, Fertility, War

## PELE, HAWAIIAN GODDESS OF VOLCANOES

**Callings:** Destroyer, Liminal, Lover

**Purviews:** Artistry (Dance), Beauty, Fire, Journeys, Passion

Pele is an example of an Atua — or, rather, an Akua — tied to a specific region, northern Polynesia's Hawai'ian islands. She emigrated long ago from Kahiki (or perhaps Tahiti), sailing from isle to isle to settle herself and her family. Her many sisters, some of whom represent other natural phenomena such as clouds, mists, ocean tides, or storm winds, impel this journey — though Pele's stories alternately describe them as a malevolent force she was fleeing, or beloved family for whom she wanted sanctuary. Toward her adventure's end, Pele's sister Hi'iaka invented the hula dance, which delighted Pele enough that she joined her sister as the dance's Goddesses. Soon after that, Pele fell in love with Chief Lohi'au of Kaua'i. Soon after that, Hi'iaka fell in love with Chief Lohi'au of Kaua'i. Suffice to say it ends with Pele mad as hell.

Pele now inhabits the shield volcano Kīlauea's crater on the Big Island's southeastern shore. She lives opposite her

hated sisters on Mauna Kea. Humans who meet her see either an old lady or a beautiful young woman, but her appearance usually presages a nearby volcanic eruption. She demands regular prayers, offerings, and environmental respect to avert frequent eruptions. When other deities complain, she points to her ongoing popularity in song, story, and art throughout Hawai'i and even beyond to justify her methods.

As one of the World's most aggressive Gods or Titans toward humans, Pele sparks frequent controversy. Yet her good works abound as well. She lends her name and likeness to ongoing efforts to preserve and propagate Polynesian performing arts. Her lava, while destructive, provides rich, fertile soil from which Lono's and Kāne's plants grow. Her wrath discourages developers who would build over Hawai'i's sacred and natural sanctuaries. Her Scions will find her an intense and traditional parent who encourages them to solve problems with overwhelming force or classic trickery.

## COSMOLOGY

Polynesian cosmography includes the heavens, where the Gods live; the Underworlds, where many deceased souls live under the Gods' governance; and the islands of the World.

### THE HEAVENS

Approximately 10 heavens fill the sky above Polynesia, supported by nine pillars. While spirits who permanently reside in a certain Heaven may return there by willing it, humans may only visit if they find a sufficiently tall vine to climb or they can turn into birds or something. Gods tend to be pretty impressed if you make the trip, though. From lowest to highest, the heavens and their governors (if any) are:

- Kiko-rangi, ruled by the God Tou-mau
- Waka-maru, the source of rain and sunshine
- Ngā-roto, heaven of lakes, ruled by the God Maru
- Hau-ora, where Tāne fishes newborn babies' spirits from the Living Waters
- Nga-Tauira, where low-ranking and servitor Atua live
- Ngā Atua, where the legendary Hero Tāwhaki lives
- Autoia, where human souls are created
- Aukumea, abode of spirits



- Wairua, where Atua who serve other Atua live, a sort of heavenly “downstairs”
- Naherangi, presided over by Rehua, where the principal Atua live

## COMBINATION BOON: WE KNOW THE WAY

**Cost:** Spend 1 Legend

**Duration:** 1 Journey

**Subject:** 1 canoe-sized small craft

**Range:** Close

**Action:** Reflexive

When it's time to find home, you know the way, and you may reach that location even if that's a metaphysical impossibility — you could be stranded in the arid deserts of the Duat, but if you can get your canoe over to water, you can find the way home. You remember the way to Hawaiki, the Polynesian ancestral homeland. If you're not Polynesian or affiliated with the Atua, you instead remember the way back to your own ancestral mythic homeland: A Scion of the Loa might remember the way to Ginen, or a Scion of the Teōtl the caves of the Nahua. Scions may use this Boon as a Marvel if they have the requisite Purviews (Order and Water) and may choose it as another Boon.

One of the better-known heavens is Ngā Atua, where the legendary Hero Tāwhaki lives. Tāwhaki once lived on Earth, where he fought against the light hating Ponaturi tribe to free his enslaved mother. He got together with a woman named Hāpai and had a daughter with her, but Hāpai fled back to Heaven with her daughter after Tāwhaki expressed disgust at some of the basics of childcare. Tāwhaki went on a great adventure and climbed a vine all the way to Heaven to get back to Hāpai and his daughter and was accepted as a member of Ngā Atua's community once he proved his devotion to his family once again.

## DEATH AND THE UNDERWORLDS

Similarly, 10 underworlds lie beneath the World. Since Māui failed to steal immortality from the goddess of death and darkness Hinenuitepō, deceased spirits must make an arduous journey to a jumping-off point (located, for the Māori people, at Cape Reinga) whence they leap into the net of the Underworld Goddess Miru, who brings them to their ultimate fate beneath the World. A spirit who fails this journey, or who dies from violence, instead becomes a malevolent ghost who haunts the World.

The Underworlds are, from highest to lowest:

- Tāne's meadows and forests
- Rongomātāne and Haumia-tiketike's gardens
- Te Reinga, ruled over by a Goddess of death and darkness, Hinenuitepō
- Au-Toia, where Whiro lives



- Uranga-o-te-Rā
- Hiku-Toia
- Pou-Turi, where Māui's spirit-hunter wife Rohe lives
- Pou-Turi, again – it's a big island
- Toke
- Meto (Extinction), where the Underworld Goddess Miru lives

The means by which souls are assigned to their ultimate fate is ill understood. Lawbreakers and other personae non gratae get burnt up in Miru's ovens. Particularly good or noble spirits, though, get assigned to someplace more pleasant – thought by some to be located in Hawaiki.

## HAWAIKI

**Aliases:** Avaiki (Rarotongan), Habai (Tongan), Hawaiki, Kahiki-honua-kele (Hawaiian), Savai'i (Samoan),

Polynesians and the Atua originally came from an ancestral land somewhere in the mythic northwest. As their numbers waxed, Tāne gave them materials and plans with which towright massive, ark-like canoes and cross the sea. In Aotearoa, the canoe is the oldest, largest unit of social organization; an individual's genealogy, or whakapapa, traces their ancestry to that very craft by which their ancestors emigrated from Hawaiki.

No one knows for sure what became of Hawaiki after the great exodus. Perhaps it remains an island paradise, home to every species that ever populated the Pacific before they met their extinction. Perhaps it sank beneath the

waves to become an Underworld. Some thinkers maintain that humans had to learn to leave home to meet their destinies to settle the Pacific, and so to return there would fly in Fate's face; but as sea levels rise and the climate worsens, the thought of returning to Hawaiki appeals more and more. There's only one problem: no one, from the wisest wayfinder to Tangaroa himself, remembers the way there.

Dr. Kahurangi Smith, a Scion of Tāne and noted public intellectual and adventurer, suspects that returning to Hawaiki would require one of the original canoes used to depart Hawaiki (or a near-exact replica), and a navigator with the Liminal Calling as well as mastery of Journeys, Sea, and Stars Purviews. Such an individual would gain a specialized Boon while aboard their ship.

## TITANS

The story the Apu tell is that when they first met the Atua on Rapa Nui, they asked the Atua who the Gods of the Polynesian region were. The Atua replied that they themselves were. Next, the Apu described Titans, monstrous and fearsome beings who inextricably embodied rather than merely governed their Purviews. The Atua then changed their answer, and announced they were those too, frustrating the Apu and setting the tone of all future interactions between the two Pantheons.

Whether or not it actually happened, both Atua and others often cite the story of this meeting as a way to describe the Atua. Others sometimes portray them as too simple or unsophisticated to understand the differences between Gods and Titans; the Òrìshà and Loa cite it as evidence that the Atua are more enlightened than most. The Atua themselves, though, understand it as equal parts fact

and political statement. For a long time, they have reigned over Polynesia and both augmented their own position and taught their human charges to survive a harsh world through the application of both benefits and fear.

## HAWAI'I: THE PROTECTORS OF MAUNAKEA

Rising above the Big Island of Hawai'i is the dormant volcano Maunakea ("White Mountain"). A million years old and over ten kilometers tall, it is the World's tallest mountain. Until colonists came, only ali'i were permitted to ascend to its peak, where the four Goddess-Titans Poli'ahu, Lilinoe, Waiau, and Kahoupo-o-kāne live. All that changed during the 20th century, when universities and governments began to construct scientific telescopes atop Maunakea.

In early 2019, after a court approved the resumption of construction of the Thirty Meter Telescope, the four deities decided they had had enough. They gave humans on the peak of Maunakea a day to vacate the premises, then combined their strength to blast the premises with seismic attacks and an unseasonable blizzard. Pele, whose rivalry with her sisters on Maunakea is legendary, didn't lift a finger to stop them. Since then, construction crews have been unable to approach Maunakea's peak. Only ali'i and supplicants who adequately placate the four goddesses can get through the freezing fall.

**Virtues:** Respect, Submission;

**Purviews:** Earth (Ka Houpo o Kāne), Frost (Poli'ahu), Sky (Lilinoe), Water (Waiau)

## KTORE

One creature is feared and hated above all others throughout Polynesia, more than giants or fae or sharks or dragons, Gods or Titans: The kiore. Also known as the Polynesian rat, little rat, or Pacific rat, the kiore is the World's third most widespread rat species. Kiore have spread wherever humans have spread from island to island in the Pacific. They carry disease, attack stores of grain or food, and prey on other animal species such as birds or insects, aiding in countless species' extinctions since their introduction in the late 13th century. Ordinary rats are trouble enough, but fearful reports have begun to accumulate from Pacific sources about rat kings controlling mind-linked swarms which gather into monstrous super-organisms of wriggling hate for the Atua.

**Virtues:** Fecundity, Rapacity.

**Purview:** Beasts (*Rattus exulans*).

## PRIMORDIALS: RANGINUI AND PAPATŪĀNUKU

In the beginning was the embrace of Ranginui and Papatūānuku, the sky and the earth, father and mother of all things. So dear was their love that they cleaved together so closely that no light could touch the World. Atua and humans alike were shrouded in darkness, prevented from seeing and

experiencing the World. So, the first thing that happened after creation was Tāne tearing them apart from one another.

**Callings:** Creators, Lovers, Primevals.

**Purviews:** Earth (Papatūānuku), Sky (Ranginui)

## RELIGION

Polynesian traditional religions have no specific name.

The application of a title to these practices is itself a colonial practice, a construction which only has meaning in the context of Christianity's expansion into the Pacific. After all, there's something much more important than what team you play for: where you came from. It's not where or what you are, it's how you got here; journeys matter.

Māori traditional religion does have a priesthood. A priest was one of many types of tohunga, or formally trained experts, who guided Māori society. From its earliest formation, Māori society put great stock in formal education. Not everyone went to school, especially if they didn't come from a prestigious lineage; but any expert in any craft had to have attended an institution of learning. Priests learn the stories of the Gods, sacred poetry and prayers, social leadership skills, and many other crafts which enable them to provide spiritual guidance.

## MANA

Mana is social and spiritual power and authority. An individual both inherits mana from their ancestors and accrues mana through prosocial actions. It exists in relation to community structures: You don't just have mana — you have mana in relation to the circles in which you travel. When your actions strengthen the community, when you fulfill your social obligations, when you respect your elders and educate your youngers, you get mana. The badass loner doesn't generate much mana, no matter how badass they are. The one who shows up to every meeting, who's there for others when they're in trouble, who cooks food for everyone and remembers your dietary restrictions: They've got mana, for sure. An individual with lots of mana is loved, feared, and, most of all, respected.

## MARAE

A marae is a public square bordered with stones or posts (au) and occasionally papae (terraces), used for both religious and social purposes. It was generally placed in front of a wharenui, or meeting house, and is the heart and the focus of Māori social and religious life. The iconic sacred sculptures associated with traditions of Polynesian master craftsmanship often demarcated the edges of the marae.

## WHAKAPAPA

Whakapapa is the Māori term for genealogy, an important value throughout Māori culture. Both humans and Gods maintain knowledge of whakapapa, which connects individuals to important cultural groups such as family, clan, and canoe. Ideally, one should be able to trace one's lineage back to the canoe on which one's ancestors arrived from Hawaiki at the dawn of time. The familial ties whakapapa defines are crucial to the transmission of mana, although as time goes

on, the Atua and their adherents find it easier and easier to transmit mana to “found family” as well as biological family.

## RELATIONSHIPS

The Atua’s relationships, both positive and negative, have a lot to do with their nature (mostly negative reactions) and their policy (mostly positive reactions). Their long-standing respect for scholarly credentials earned through hard work, a sacred Polynesian tradition, makes them natural allies for mortal climate protectors. Every pantheon in the World has reason to support the battle to cool the planet, although not all of them are as committed to the fight as the Atua. Nonetheless, the Atua’s position on the line between God and Titan discomfits many other pantheons. The Devá constantly press the Atua for a decisive statement that they will support the Titanomachy. The Atua, though they join the fight when it’s convenient for them, haven’t been particularly committed; and sometimes, they’ll even support Titans when, for example, Titans of the Wild want to overgrow industrial areas. Each of the two pantheons finds the other under-committed to the real cause.

The Atua’s closest allies are the Kamuy of Karput and Aynu Mosir. When the Atua began to circulate among the other pantheons of the World, this small pantheon was the first to answer their call. The Pálás, who are mostly indifferent as to individuals’ Godly or Titanic past, also support the Atua’s commitment to compassion for the natural world and for the future. The Òrìshà and Loa have many Caribbean followers who are highly vulnerable to climate crisis, but the Atua sometimes accuse the Òrìshà who love industrial and technological progress – particularly Ògún and Shàngó – of trying to find a middle ground that doesn’t exist.

However, the Atua’s oldest relationships are with the Apu, the pantheon which encountered them long before the others. The relationship between those two pantheons might best be understood as one between roommates who have lived together too long and could benefit from some space. The Apu find it distasteful at best that the Atua have embraced both sides of the God/Titan coin.

## CURRENT PRIORITIES

The Atua’s most significant large-scale priority is fighting the climate crisis. The Pacific islands which make up most of their traditional domain are particularly vulnerable to rising sea levels and erratic weather. Tāwhirimātea is particularly disturbed by the growing number of dangerous storms in the Pacific which have nothing to do with him or his children. The climate catastrophe is a Worldwide phenomenon which the Atua cannot stop on their own; their only hope to save their home islands is to get polluters in other nations to start caring about their planet.

Accordingly, their attitude toward cooperating with other pantheons is often a little mercenary. You want help fighting Titans in your country? Okay, what are your carbon emissions like? Who’s in charge of the biggest polluter? Maybe you lend us some individuals with access, and we pay the man in charge of the meatpacking conglomerate a visit, and we’ll lend you

someone who can track a Titan across the ocean. And you better hope the Titans around here didn’t make us a better offer.

As the climate situation grows more and more dire, if someone – mortal, God, or Titan – proves untrustworthy or intractable in harming the climate, the Atua aren’t afraid to bring the pain. Their Scions sabotage factories, engineer prison breaks to free activists, and lead coups against corrupt governments. They’re not out to hurt humans intentionally, but if you oppose them, they’ve decided as a pantheon that they’re okay with putting a bad guy in the hospital or worse if it means saving the damn World.

## GREATEST WEAKNESS

The Atua’s ties to the land and sea of Polynesia are a strength and a weakness. No pantheon disputes their claim over the Pacific; no pantheon even could. But the Atua aren’t too worried about other Gods. They can handle Gods. Still, the next 75 years for them are critical. If humans’ attitude toward climate crisis does not change, thousands of islands will submerge, their mantles sinking with them, forcing those Atua to retreat to Hawaiki or abscond into the sky.

## PANTHEON PATH OF THE ATUA

**Asset Skills:** Academics, Pilot

**Virtues:** Respect and Wonder.

Polynesian mythology is a story of both reverence and iconoclasm. The first story we hear about the Atua at the beginning of the World was the story of how several willful children defied their own parents’ love, the very thing which brought them into the World, out of curiosity about whether light and a new world could possibly be a good thing. Their wonder drove them to rip Rangi and Papa apart. In this conflict, Tāwhiri alone upheld Respect, flying against his brethren to punish them for daring to separate Heaven and Earth. Then Tāne lashed out against the others for failing to warrant his respect by standing by his side.

Traditions still alive today trace back to the first canoes out of Hawaiki and Kahiki through an unbroken line of genealogy. But wonder spurred those canoes forward in the first place, questing for islands whose nature no one could know for sure. In the fight against colonial pressure, imperialists tried to deny respect and dignity to Māori religion and culture. The Māori fought back with not only the mana of political organization and hard-headed resistance, but also the sense of irreverent humor enshrined in their culture and myth since Māui’s first trick, showing their oppressors that respect is a two-way street.

As a Scion of the Atua, how will you balance these priorities? Your sense of wonder will push you to invent, to quest, to ask uncomfortable questions and reach out to new allies far beyond your islands and traditions, even if you have to leave others behind to do so. Your sense of respect will call you home, tempering ego with etiquette, ambition with compassion. When you have Scions of your own, what will you teach them? Is the answer on this island, or beyond the horizon?

# THE TENGRI OF MONGOLIA

"I am tired of eating meat from my herds,  
I am missing the taste of wild game.  
I will look at the overseers of my herds,  
I will see the watchers of my horses,  
Then I will go on the hunt!"

— Khormusta Tengri, The Epic of Geser Khan

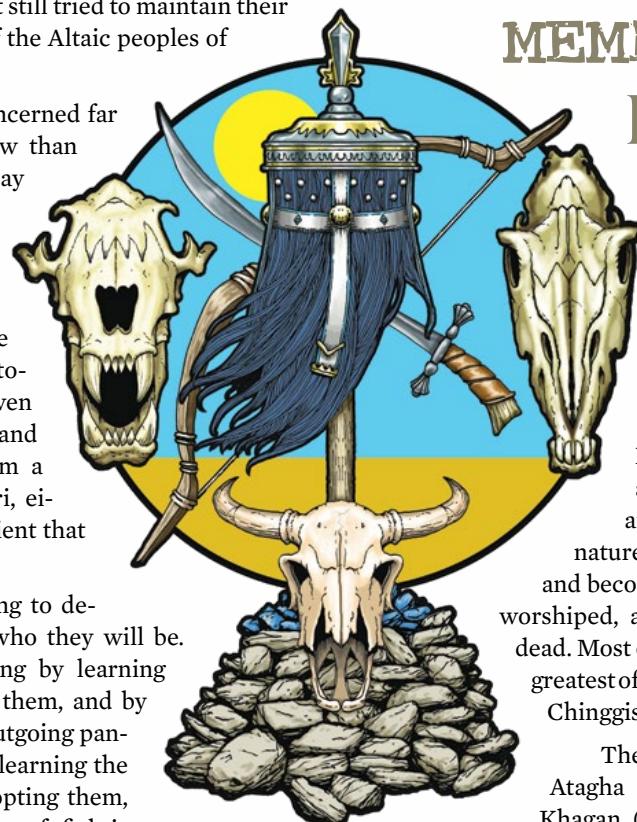
The Tengri are a proud pantheon of warriors and conquerors. They are also a pantheon that has embraced the teachings of the Buddha and the Lamas of Tibet. The contradictions that this creates for them have not always been easy. They have always had a habit of adopting the teachings and spirits of other faiths, but still tried to maintain their core as warrior-protectors of the Altaic peoples of the steppe.

They are a pantheon concerned far more with the here and now than some forgotten past. Some say the World has always existed, growing forth from Kok Mongke Tengri, the Eternal Blue Heaven of the sky, and Etugen Eke, the Mother Earth. Others tell stories of the Eternal Blue Heaven taking the form of a bird and calling the World forth from a primal ocean. For the Tengri, either would be history so ancient that it is hardly relevant.

What is relevant is trying to determine who they are and who they will be. They have survived this long by learning from others, by adapting to them, and by fighting them. They are an outgoing pantheon with a long history of learning the ways of other faiths and adopting them, and an equally long history of fighting and conquering. From their view, the two need not be separate — for struggle, fighting, and competition between ambitious leaders is natural. On the other hand — and there is always an other hand — their easy acceptance of new ways has seen their power encroached on, their old ways

sometimes lost to the teachings of the Palas and other religions. How can they preserve their ancient ways without turning their back on other Gods or their own ambitions?

## PRINCIPAL MEMBERS



In theory, there are 99 Tengri. In practice, there are considerably more than that, as no one can seem to agree on a list of which spirits, ghosts, and other beings are considered full Gods. The Tengri are organized into complex courts and tribes, most notably the Eastern and Western Tengri, once ruled by the brothers Khormusta and Atai Ulaan, but are now united under Khormusta after he slew his brother. Local nature spirits may grow in popularity and become full Tengri or at least locally worshiped, as can the souls of the mortal dead. Most often these are shamans, but the greatest of them was, of course, the warlord Chinggis Khan.

The Gods of the Tengri include Atagha (horses, storms), Chinggis Khan (Mongolia, rulership), Dayisun (war), Doluyan Ebugen (stars, fertility), Erlik Khan (war, death, disease), Geser Khan (war, herds), Gudzir Kungker (smithing, cattle), Jayaghagtsi (luck, protection), Khormusta Tengri (rulership), Manakhan (hunting), Odkhan Galakhan Eke (fire, marriage), Tsagan

## PRONUNCIATION

Mongolian words can be tricky to pronounce for English speakers. We have attempted to avoid more difficult words, but this was not always possible.

The most frequent issue that English-speakers will run into are the kh and q, which are the same sound, but Romanized differently. Khan sounds more like "han," but with a slight hardness before the h. Different words use different Romanizations due to being brought to English by different people; there isn't a standardized version. For that matter, the g in "khagan" is a practically silent version of the same sound.

The "ts" is a single sound, like the sound at the end of "fronts" or "bats."

The double-a, as in Tsagaan Ebugen's name, is a long a rather than a repeated one. It is an "aaah" sound rather than "ah-ah."

Lastly, the o-with-umlaut, found in böge and böö, is an "oh" sound.

Ebugen (earth, water), Umai (birth, earth), and Zasa Mergen Baatar (scholarship, war).

## ATAGHA, THE DESCENDER, GOD OF STORMS

**Aliases:** Red Atagha, Ataya

Atagha, whose thundering voice resounds across the World, is a giant among the Tengri. His body is like lightning, mighty and swift, and the clouds obey him as their king. His ten thousand eyes see all, and he is a mighty foe of evil spirits, often called on by shamans to protect herds and life. His love for horses is great, and many call on him for fortune in horse breeding or racing.

Atagha is lord of the spirits and Gods of thunder and lightning, who serve him as a court: seventy-seven warriors under the lord of white lightning, ninety-nine powerful Rumbler and thirteen monstrous Gods of thunder. He kneels to none but Khormusta Tengri, the Buddha and the Eternal Blue Heaven, for as ruler of the storm he bows only to the sky itself.

Atagha's incarnations in the World tend to be short. He has little time for the earthly realm, preferring to ride his storm-steeds through the sky. When he does incarnate, he cuts an impressive figure, always large and powerful. He has been a horse breeder, a storm chaser, and a military commander; in any role, he is assured, proud, and prefers to let his actions do the talking. His Scions inherit his forthright and unsubtle demeanor, tending to take direct approaches to problems and to lead by example.

**Callings:** Leader, Guardian, Warrior

**Purviews:** Beasts (Horses), Epic Strength, Epic Dexterity, Fortune, Sky

## CHINGGIS KHAGAN, THE GREAT KHAN, FATHER OF THE MONGOL EMPIRE

**Aliases:** Temujin, Khan of Khans, Genghis Khan

There has been no Scion of the Tengri more famous or more successful than Chinggis Khagan, the founder of the Mongol Empire, whom legend has it was born at the

command of Khormusta Tengri himself. In life he was a conqueror without equal who controlled much of Eurasia. Other pantheons recall his campaigns with terror and hatred, but for the Tengri, there is no ancestral figure that receives more honor. In death, he arose as a God, the patron of Mongolia, equal to any of the Tengri, and many pray to him in the hopes he will grant them supernatural prowess.

The Great Khan's legacy, however, is equally one of knowledge. He began many of the traditions of the Mongolian people, and in death as in life, he has remained interested in the cultures and religions of other peoples. He is a frequent visitor to other pantheons, and he seems to enjoy the anger and fear that he sometimes evokes among the Shén almost as much as he enjoys convincing Confucius, Guanshiyin Pusa and Laozi to get into debates. Persistent rumors say that he personally stepped in to save several artifacts at his greatest temple, the Mausoleum of Chinggis Khagan, from destruction during the Cultural Revolution.

Chinggis Khagan has never been one to ignore the World. When he incarnates, it is generally in a form similar to that which he had in life. His lineage was widespread even as a human, and as a God, he has fathered many Scions. They are, like the Khan of Khans, driven and ambitious people with a knack for leadership and, often, a streak of ruthless brutality.

**Callings:** Leader, Sage, Warrior

**Purviews:** Epic Dexterity, Epic Strength, Journeys, Order, Passion (Pride), Prosperity, War

## DAYISUN, SOVEREIGN OF THE ENEMY GODS, GOD OF WAR

**Aliases:** Dayicin Noyan, Dayisud, Sulde, Black Sulde

At once a terrifying and benevolent deity, Dayisun is simultaneously one of the most bloodthirsty Tengri and one of the most loyal Buddhists of the pantheon. In older times, his thirst for blood was sated by the sacrifice of war prisoners, but it is said that that Tibetan lamas convinced the Buddha to tame his vices and, if his warlike nature



could not be sated, at least he would be a protector against their foes. He inspires a fury into warrior and horse alike.

His other name, Sulde, is honored in the horsehair talismans and battle standards that share it. These call on Dayisun's might and those of his younger brothers, who serve him. Warriors and soldiers in and around Mongolia bear these holy talismans into battle to be granted some of the God's monstrous strength and battle luck. Some of these Sulde talismans are seen as minor Tengri in their own right, servants of Dayisun, the Black Sulde. His holy animals are the horse and the bear, and by any of his names, he is called on to grant their strength and prevent death in battle.

When Dayisun enters the World, it is always as a warrior. Sometimes he is a bodyguard, sometimes a soldier, sometimes a contract killer. While he has been made a guardian of the people and a servant of the Buddha, his viciousness in battle is no less than it has ever been. His Scions inherit his quick temper, violent nature, and faithful loyalty, making them potent allies and terrible enemies.

**Callings:** Guardian, Hunter, Warrior

**Purviews:** Artistry (Weaving), Beasts (Bears, Horses), Chaos, Epic Stamina, Epic Strength, Passion (Bloodlust), War

## DOLUYAN EBUGEN, THE SEVEN OLD MEN, GODS OF FERTILITY

**Aliases:** Sundi, Buravabadera, Azlis, Urukini, Aburad, Raradi, Molbar

Doluyan Ebogen are seven-in-one, the star Gods who are never apart. Together, they form the constellation that

the Greeks called the Great Bear, but Mongolia has never known them as anything but the Seven Old Men. They are ancient sages, great Tengri who are said to dwell on the summit of Mount Sumeru, where the immovable pole-star called the Golden Nail is fixed.

Frequently invoked, the Doluyan Ebogen bear power over all that grows. Their blessing turns one man into one hundred, one mare into one thousand, and one vegetable into ten fields. Unlike many of their fellows, they do not fight. They grant luck and wisdom, serving as advisors to Khormusta Tengri and Jayaghaghtsi, as well as being guardians of wealth and fertility.

The Seven Old Men typically incarnate as their namesake: seven old men. They are never young and rarely apart, though each is an individual. They are found playing games together, spectating on sports, debating philosophy, or arguing over meaningless details. Their Scions tend to be scholars, farmers, or advisors to others, easily able to see many points of view.

**Callings:** Judge, Sage, Healer

**Purviews:** Fertility, Fortune, Health, Prosperity, Stars

## ERLIK KHAN, THE BRILLIANT ONE, RULER OF TAMU

**Aliases:** Erlig, Erklik, Chollan

Over many centuries, Erlik has worn many hats. They began life as the shining star of the night, called Venus in the West, a warrior destined for greatness. Thus, they gained the name Chollan in Turkey and Iran, for their shining light.



They have been both male and female, like many of the spirits and Tengri of the stellar bodies, such as the sun and moon. While now most often considered male, Erlik is equally at home with any gender, and their generally inhuman form makes it hard to tell in any case, for in their true form they appear as a monstrous, hairy demon, shining with light that makes their fangs and wide eyes all the more menacing.

Erlik is often called a demon, for they have become the King of Tamu, the great hell that was adopted into the World of the Tengri due to Buddhist influence. While originally ruled by Yama, he was happy to hand over administration of that corner of the Underworld to Erlik, who took to the job with a passion matched only by their rebellious streak. Erlik has never been one to obey their betters, as shown when they disobeyed the laws set down by the Buddha and Khormusta Tengri by seizing the soul of Geser Khan's mortal mother and falsely imprisoning her in Tamu. While they have learned from that mistake, they still covet mortal souls, and their messengers of death, typically evil disease spirits, are known to steal away any soul they can catch if the proper rites are not performed.

Erlik is a troublemaker that enjoys spreading fear and disease, but is not without virtues. Their bravery and valor are unquestionable, and while their children and servants may cause trouble, the Tengri have never seen evil spirits as any less useful to know — even if they are dangerous for humans. Scions of Erlik tend to be rabble-rousers, dangerous and vicious to their foes, but like Erlik Khan, they are not pure evil. Rather, the Tengri tend to see them as wielding the tools of evil against it, for who better knows the weaknesses of an evil spirit than someone who commands

them? The trick is convincing them or their patron to be helpful today.

**Callings:** Liminal, Monster, Trickster

**Purviews:** Death, Epic Stamina, Health, Passion (Valor), Stars

## GESER KHAN, LORD OF THE TEN QUARTERS, DEFEATER OF EVIL

**Aliases:** Snotty Joro, Stinker, Uile Butugegchi, Bukhe Beligte Baatar, Geser Serbo Dongrub

While he began as the middle son of Khormusta Tengri, the Lord of the Ten Quarters is by far most famous as his great mortal incarnation, Geser Khan, the Merciful and Wise Uprooter of Evil. Geser Khan was born into the World to defeat chaos and bring peace by order of the Buddha and his divine father, wielding his mighty power against monstrous ogres, evil spirits, and rebel armies alike. Despite the efforts of his evil uncle, Cotong, he became a great hero even in youth, honored equally in Mongolia and Tibet, and he even journeyed to China to bring order a chaotic dynasty. The Shén angrily deny this could ever happen, of course.

Geser Khan is famous for his ugly body, and in youth he was known as Snotty Joro, meaning “bastard” in Tibetan, for he was born of a miracle and had no biological father. However, his immense power allowed him to defeat many foes, even from birth, when he killed a raven-demon that tore out eyes. He mastered all the arts of war, farming and leadership as a youth, and he married several wives as

a result of his heroism, including the beautiful Incarnate dakini Rogmo Goa, for whom he retrieved the Garuda's feathers, and the naga princess Aju Mergen, whom he defeated in wrestling. He made potent armor from the skin of a terrible ogre, and he even defeated the ruler of Tamu, Erlik Khan, to free the soul of his mortal mother.

The adventures of Geser Khan remain one of the most popular stories of the Mongolian and Tibetan faithful, and they have been produced into all kinds of adventure tales. When he returns to the World, Geser Khan retains his adventurous spirit, and he has been an explorer, a mercenary, a stunt rider, and an astronaut. He is never handsome, and his Scions often inherit his poor looks, his massive pride, and his knack for getting into and out of trouble.

**Callings:** Leader, Trickster, Warrior

**Purviews:** Deception, Epic Dexterity, Epic Stamina, Epic Strength, Forge, Health, Order, Sky, Wild

## GUDZIR KUNGKER, MAHAKALA SMITH, GOD OF SMITHS

**Aliases:** Makha Galan Darkhan Gujir

Sometimes called the eldest of the Tengri made by Khormusta, Gudzir Kungker is one of the most loyal of the Tengri to the Buddha, and he is given the Tibetan title Mahakala. He is the bringer of food for the herds and herdsmen of the Altaic peoples, as he is both the forger of tools and the patron of cattle. While he is old and well-respected, he is neither arrogant nor overbearing, and he cares deeply for his people.

Above all, however, he is the father of smiths, commanded to create by the Buddha himself. His great shield of cast iron was made with his golden hammer and his silver anvil, which are never silent. He rides on a blue-gray horse, and he commands the fates of weapons and tools. In the modern age, he has expanded his focus, forging the souls of horses into motorcycles and cars for the Scions of the Tengri. He eagerly watches advances in farming, and he is prayed to for protection of tractors and harvesters even more than swords and shields these days.

Gudzir Kungker is a God who prefers to get his hands dirty. When he incarnates, he labors. He is a smith, an engineer, a farmer, a mechanic. He never takes a desk job, and his hands and face are often blackened by oil and smoke. His Scions are likewise direct, forthright people that appreciate honest labor and good, solid machinery.

**Callings:** Creator, Guardian, Sage

**Purviews:** Artistry (Metalwork), Beasts (Cattle), Epic Strength, Fertility, Forge

## JAYAGHAGHTSI, ZENITH-STAR OF FATE, GOD OF GOOD FORTUNE

**Aliases:** Odun Jayagaghtsi, Jol-jayaghatsi, Emegejijayaghatsi

Jayaghaghtsi dwells at the sky's zenith, master of the fortunes of man. They have no parents, not even Khormusta Tengri, the Buddha or the Eternal Blue Heaven, but instead willed themselves into existence. Sometimes they are male, sometimes female, and in their female form they are known for blessing children. Some even say that they are prayed to by Khormusta. They are frequently prayed to by everyone else, after all, for their command of luck, fortune and fate are the greatest among all the Tengri. They are called on for herds, to bless construction, to protect the harnesses and accessories of horses and to fight evil spirits and devils. More than anything else, however, they protect from injury and illness, caring for the lives of the family.

Few Tengri are as benevolent as Jayaghaghtsi, or as busy. Everyone needs good luck and protection. They are sometimes aided by the advice of the Doluyan Ebugen, especially in the care of crops and livestock, but even these wise advisors cannot lighten Jayaghaghtsi's workload much. For this reason, offerings to them are often extravagant, favoring white horses, white sheep, many-colored cloth, and rich incense, to better gain their attention.

Because they are so busy, Jayaghaghtsi has little time to incarnate in the mortal world. They have been a gambler, a doctor, a helpful passerby — but whatever they are, they are always just in the nick of time to help someone. Often, they are gone nearly as quickly, off to some other urgent errand. Their Scions inherit their good luck for themselves and their friends, but also a strong sense of duty. They often feel compelled to help the less fortunate, and troubled people have a knack for finding them and asking them for aid.

**Callings:** Guardian, Judge, Healer

**Purviews:** Fortune, Fertility, Health, Prosperity, Sun

## KHORMUSTA TENGRI, KING OF THE GODS, LIGHTER OF THE FIRE

**Aliases:** Qormusta, Han Hormusta, Kormusda

Khormusta Tengri is the lord of all the Tengri, second only to Koke Mongke Tengri himself. It is said that when the World was made, the Buddha struck the light, but that Khormusta lit the fire, bringing heat and warmth to the World. Much of the time, he is a benevolent king, assigning prayers and labors to the other Tengri and supporting them in their duties. His generosity is vast, as a proper king's should be, and he is advised in his work by the Buddha, whom he never questions. However, Khormusta has a sharp temper and brooks no disrespect from those he considers his subjects ... which, frankly, is everyone except the Buddha, the Earth Mother, and the Eternal Heaven, the

only beings whose commands he treats with utter humility. He has created many lesser spirits and Gods, and he expects them to obey his commands.

Once, he was one of two great kings, ruling only the Eastern Tengri, but when his brother, Atai Ulaan Tengri, boasted and refused to kneel and swear fealty to him along with his Western Tengri subjects, Khormusta became enraged. The two engaged in many contests, but could not come to terms, and ultimately, in the ancient times of the World, there was war between the Gods. The sons of Khormusta and the sons of Atai Ulaan clashed, and at last, the king of the Western Tengri was slain, and Khormusta's dominance was assured. In so doing, however, he unleashed great evil on the World, which his family and subjects are still tormented by.

Khormusta's legendary wisdom and power are inherited by his Scions, who are few. Many of the Gods themselves are his children, and he spends little time among mortals, preferring to rule over his divine kingdom. Every Scion of Khormusta has a great destiny before them, for they are natural leaders, but they are also destined for great trouble, as they also inherit his temper and the enmity of those Tengri and spirits that reject their king's pride.

**Callings:** Creator, Leader, Warrior

**Purviews:** Beasts (Bull), Epic Dexterity, Epic Strength, Fire, Fortune, Order, Prosperity, Sky

## MANAKHAN, KING OF BEASTS, GOD OF HUNTING

**Aliases:** Manaqan

Manakhan, the king of wild beasts, commands the wild spirits of the steppe and the mountains and the beasts hunted by humanity. He is the hunter's friend, steadying the hand and sharpening the eye, and many local hunting spirits serve him as his court. His body is raw silver and gold, unworked and rough as if taken from the earth. His is the wealth of the wild lands, taken from the earth and the bones and skin of beasts.

Many of the mountain Gods and spirits are wild, deadly beings, just as the wild beasts that serve them are no friend to humankind if approached the wrong way. Manakhan stays their hunger for blood and their vicious natures if they are properly worshiped. While his servants and lesser Gods are feared and propitiated, the King of Beasts himself is not enemy to humanity. What he does not respect are those who cannot survive, who forget the ways of the wild and live in soft comfort.

Manakhan takes many forms when he incarnates. He has been beasts and humans alike, wilderness guides, hunters, and explorers. His Scions are as rough as he is, with strong connections to the wilderness. Often, they are environmentalists. They know humanity needs the wild lands and to remember how to survive in hostile environs. Above all, they are survivors.

**Callings:** Hunter, Leader, Liminal

**Purviews:** Beasts, Earth, Epic Dexterity, Epic Stamina, Wild

## ODKHAN GALAKHAN EKE, THE FIRE-QUEEN-MOTHER, GODDESS OF FIRE

**Aliases:** Ghal-un Eke, Od Galakhan, Fire King Miranca

While sometimes she is called the Fire King and appears as male, Odkhan Galakhan Eke is far more comfortable in her role as the Queen-Mother of the Hearth. Her smoke passes through the clouds, her heat warms the earth. She was created by the Buddha and set alight by Khormusta Tengri, arising when the sky was still flat and the earth was still small, born on the holy mountain Burkhan Ghaldun-a. Flint is her mother, iron her father, and without her, humanity would long be dead. She is given the richest of gifts – purest butter, fine meats, the fat of slaughtered animals.

As one of the eldest and most revered of the Gods, she is nearly omnipresent. Every hearth is her throne, every flame her gift. Her skin is red, in any form, and she is one of the few Gods who rides not a horse but a goat. She is an ambitious and potent deity, and she has grown to encompass more than just the hearth fire. Hers is the fire that drives the engine, the fire of the reactor, any fire that brings life and power to humanity. And still she is more than heat and flame. The hearth is the place of family, and the forming of the hearth is marriage. The Fire-Queen-Mother is the mistress of marriage and love, and her fire is also the fire of the heart. Hers is a gentle flame, who blesses children with strength and beauty and whose light shines in the face of the bride. She is the oldest and strongest part of life.

Odkhan Galakhan Eke revels in the World. Where she goes, love and warmth follow. She has been a chef, a matchmaker, a movie star, a nuclear physicist. Whatever she does, it brings warmth and light to the lives around her, and her Scions are no less vibrant. They shine with an inner light and form the heart of any community they are part of. Odkhan Galakhan Eke is a loving patron, if perhaps overeager to see her Scions marry and start families, for she sees no greater warmth than in her beloved children starting hearths of their own.

**Callings:** Guardian, Lover, Leader

**Purviews:** Artistry (Dance), Beauty, Fire, Health, Passion (Love), Prosperity

## TSAGAN EBUGEN, THE WHITE OLD MAN, LORD OF THE EARTH AND WATERS

**Aliases:** Boro Ebugen, Arghatu Ebugen

Tsagan Ebugen accepts no lord but the Eternal Heaven, no lady but the Mother Earth. He bows to no one, and even the Buddha he only calls his friend. He commands many of the protective spirits called on by prayer and shamanic power, and he carries his own shamanic staff, which has



a dragon's head mounted atop it. His are the spirits of the earth and the water, and his are the secrets of magic.

Many humorous folk tales speak of the cunning old man who escapes all danger and survives all injury, and always they are about the White Old Man, who has never been young. He protects the good by sending his servant-spirits out to be called on by shamans, and he punishes evil with a striking blow from his staff, which can curse with illness and slay cattle. He has promised the Buddha to protect the living and punish the wicked from his home on the high mountain, and some say he is a Buddha himself. His oath is often invoked in prayers to him, that he might punish the sins of humanity. He works closely with Erlik Khan to ensure that the wicked are sent to Tamu, though he has little to do with any of Erlik's more enterprising claiming of souls.

Tsagan Ebugen frequently incarnates to wander the land. He rarely stays in one place long, always traveling and seeking new people to judge and punish or reward. He is always found in the form of an old man, his skin weathered and his beard long. His Scions can come from any walk of life, but all have a strong sense of justice and a strong connection to the spiritual world. He especially favors shamans, but his Scions could as easily be lawyers, doctors, or negotiators.

**Callings:** Liminal, Judge, Sage

**Purviews:** Darkness, Earth, Fortune, Health, Order, Water

## UMAI KHATUN, EMPRESS OF THE PLACENTA, DAUGHTER OF THE EARTH MOTHER

**Aliases:** Umay

Umai Khatun is the mistress of birth and motherhood, the closest of all the Gods to Etugen Eke, the Earth Mother. She is the greatest of her sisters, and so she is honored by the spirits of earth and water equally even to their master, Tsagan Ebugen. She is called the Empress of the Placenta, for the placenta is her gift to each child, nourishing them and providing them with their soul's blood.

Where Tsagan Ebugen is a lord of the land that punishes evil, Umai Khatun is a loving queen who cares for and protects the people. Children and women are her favorites, and she grants them the strength they need. In the modern World, Umai Khatun is a patron of hospitals and women's causes, pushing strongly against the traditionally male-dominated ways of the Tengri. While she prefers not to fight, she is no less fierce than her male counterparts in defense of her charges, and she has made many allies among other pantheons with her diplomatic skill and her kind nature.

Umai Khatun's incarnations tend to be doctors, counselors, or midwives, but she has also been bodyguards, politicians, and writers, and she is equally at home in the halls of power as she is in the halls of healing. Her Scions are as caring as she is, and exclusively female (trans or cis; Umai cares only about womanhood). They are always tough, determined women who never back down from defending their beliefs — Umai would accept nothing less.



**Callings:** Guardian, Healer, Lover

**Purviews:** Artistry (Weaving, Pottery), Earth, Epic Stamina, Fertility, Health, Water

## ZASA MERGEN BAATAR, INVINCIBLE ELDEST SON, GOD OF HEROISM

**Aliases:** Amin Sakigchi, Baghataur

Eldest son of Khormusta Tengri, Zasa Mergen Baatar is a patron of heroes and scholars. His face and hair are white as snow, his body a dark tan, and he stands on the summit of warriors and sages. His power is that of a tornado, and his horse has the speed and color of a great brown hawk. He is foe to evil, poison to the poisonous. And yet, for all this, Zasa Mergen Baatar, the Tengri of Heroes, knows his limits.

As a general, he is invincible. He faced the family of Atai Ulaan Tengri in the name of his father, and he was never defeated. He defeated all challengers in wrestling and combat, earning the hand of the beautiful Seseg Nogoon in marriage – even though it enraged his uncle. His great strength and his tactical genius meant that even his cousins who fought against him could not harm him. However, when he was offered the chance to rule the people and lead them to glory, he refused, for he knew he was not a king or chief. He knew that his place was as the hero-sage, not the leader, and he surrendered that job to his brother, the God who would become Geser Khan.

Zasa Mergen Baatar embodies the ideal of the hero-sage, and he has many Scions who seek to emulate him. He has been a boxing champion, a poet, an athlete. Always,

he combines the mental and the physical skills he has into a complete whole. His Scions inherit both his genius, his competitive nature, and his fighting skill, though not all inherit his awareness of his limits. They are both scholars and warriors, forsaking neither the mind nor the body.

**Callings:** Lover, Sage, Warrior

**Purviews:** Artistry (Sports), Beauty, Epic Stamina, Epic Strength, Sky, War

## COSMOLOGY

The World is full of spirits. There is not always a clear divide between a God and a simple spirit, either. The spirits of lakes, rivers and mountains can be recognized as Tengri if they are worshiped enough, while others are merely spirits to be called on or to be fought. Nearly every major natural feature will have a spirit, as do things like weather or disease. Holy places or shrines can gain spirits or be adopted by ancestral ghosts, and the distinction there is also fluid.

Animals do not usually have spirits to represent them, but they are no less important spiritually. Nearly every tribe or clan among the Altaic peoples can trace their lineage back to animals, often wolves, bears, dragons, stags, horses, or birds. Famously, the Gokturks descended from the marriage of a blacksmith and the wolf that saved his life, and the Chinggisids also descend from wolves. Animals of great spiritual power are often able to wield mystic power. Bears are known for turning human to marry beautiful young people, while horses are living embodiments of the wind, vitally important for the survival of humanity.

## THE MANY SOULS

Human souls reside in the physical form of blood. The sharing of blood as an oath of loyalty is widespread among the Mongolians because it mingles souls together, making it dangerous and evil to break. Royalty and chieftains in particular have potent souls, and by long tradition it is forbidden to spill royal blood even when executing royalty. A person has an indeterminate number of souls, with many different traditions about how many a single person might have, and this can make death complicated.

For royalty, it's simple: Their souls transmute into birds and fly to their afterlife in the Eternal Blue Heaven, to dwell with the Gods. If they die of illness, have their blood spilled as they die or are particularly wicked, their souls may be kidnapped, either by their killer or the forces of Erlik Khan, of course. Other humans require the aid of ritual to send their soul to its proper destination. Where the souls dwell if not taken to Tamu or kidnapped and forced into captivity as ghosts is a matter of some debate. Potent shamans and leaders may choose to remain in the land as ancestral spirits, and some say those that do not go to dwell in the halls of the great Tengri, while others say they pass to a great heaven in the north.

A soul taken captive becomes a ghost and can be used for dangerous shamanic rites against relatives and foes. If freed, the ghost will still wander the land until captured again or sent on by the proper ritual. Souls can be captured from the blood of the slain or by special mystic traps.

## THE EARTH AND SKY

The Tengri themselves dwell in both the Overworld that is the great Primordial-body of Koke Mongke Tengri, and in the World proper, which they say is the body of Etugen Eke. The most famous meeting point of these two realms is Mount Otuken, a holy mountain in the steppes where a massive tree grows, connecting the earth and sky. Around the tree is a holy city which many Turkic and Mongolian tribes have claimed as their ancestral home, said to lie somewhere on the Khangan Plateau. The holy city and tree are cared for by the spirits of the earth and water, for this place is the favorite location of Etugen Eke, whom they honor even over Koke Mongke Tengri.

## TAMU, THE UNDERWORLD

Tamu, also called Tamug, is a relatively recent acquisition of the Tengri. After their encounters with Buddhism, they found need for a hell in which the sinful and wicked were punished. Erlik Khan spoke with the God Yama, who gladly gave over responsibility for part of his massive Underworld-complex over to someone else. Erlik has been rather less diligent in handling all of the paperwork involved, but has made Tamu into a place of punishment and education for the wicked...and anyone else whose soul that they get their hairy paws on. The spirits of disease are frequently found there, retrieving the souls of the dead and bringing them to their master. Erlik Khan makes the dead

labor in their realm at whatever pleases the Khan of the Dead, and allows the evil spirits to torment them. While some deserve this, many do not, and it is not unknown for great Heroes or powerful shamans to journey into the Underworld, physically or in spirit, to free those who do not belong there.

## PRIMORDIALS

Koke Mongke Tengri is the Eternal Blue Heaven, the Supreme Lord of All. Above all things, he sometimes goes by Bai Ulgan, Erketu Tengri, or Tengri Etzige. He is the sky itself, encompassing the World in his embrace, and every being must bow to him. He loves the World, and so he brought forth its wonders with the aid of the Earth Mother, Etugen Eke. His power is far beyond even that of Khormusta Tengri, perhaps even beyond the Buddha. Some pray to the Eternal Blue Heaven, but most understand that such prayers are rarely answered. The mind of the Supreme Lord of All is too vast, too focused on the entire universe. He cannot care so deeply for any one person, for any single human is no more than a speck to him. He loves the World, so he set forth the system of Gods that could be called on for aid.

Etugen Eke, Brown-Wrinkled Golden World, is the earth itself. She encompasses all beneath the sky, and every mountain, lake, and stream is hers. The many spirits of the natural world flow forth from her, as the sky-dwelling Gods flow forth from Koke Mongke Tengri. She has seventy-seven divine daughters that serve her as many of the Tengri serve Koke Mongke Tengri. Between them, the two Primordials are the source of all that exists, and Etugen Eke is the one who allows mortal lives to flourish, for her endless giving from her own body feeds all life.

## TITANS

Atai Ulaan Tengri, the Fallen Brother, Late King of the Western Tengri, is somewhat contentious as a Titan. The rest of the Tengri do not, honestly, fully understand the distinction between a Titan and a God. In life, Atai Ulaan was a God, brother to Khormusta Tengri and ruler of the Western Tengri as his brother was king of the Eastern Tengri. However, when a jealous dispute broke out over a beautiful Goddess, it led to the two brothers arguing over which was greater and Khormusta demanded that Atai Ulaan submit to him and become his vassal. The pride of the mighty Atai Ulaan Tengri would not allow this, and the two fought viciously.

The battle between the Kings of the Eastern Tengri and the Western Tengri was long and terrible. At last, however, Atai Ulaan Tengri was slain, his body torn into many parts by the might of Khormusta Tengri. Khormusta kicked his brother's severed head to the earth, where it became the monstrous Arhan Shutger, an evil Titanspawn that seeks to devour the sun and moon. Atai Ulaan's neck was dropped in a terrible desert, where it became the shapeshifting demon Gal Nurma Khan, who spreads war and battle. His right arm became the tiger-demon Orgoli that eats all, and his left arm the demon Sherem Minaata Khan, who torments

the souls of the dead. So it went, with the many body parts of Khormusta's fallen brother becoming evil disease spirits, Titanspawn and demons, for the life of such a potent God could not be snuffed out so easily.

Some of the Western Tengri believe their king could be resurrected, were all of his many parts gathered together and the proper ritual performed, and they still burn with anger against their conqueror, Khormusta Tengri. Others have accepted their lot and believe him dead for good. Many of the disease spirits born of Atai Ulaan Tengri's rotting body now serve Erlik Khan or torment the living without master, while the greater monsters roam the land and cause chaos until defeated by Tengri champions. They always return to life eventually, driven by the infinite power of a former God. If Atai Ulaan returned to life, even Khormusta would not deny his brother's divine nature as one of the Tengri — he would merely try to kill his rival again.

**Purview:** Health

**Virtues:** Identity, Dominance

## RELIGION: TENGRISM

Tengrism is not so much a single religion as a constellation of related religions, varying in what Tengri they worship and what prayers they call on based on community and location. The local Tengri of import to one community may have little to do with another — there's no point to calling on or propitiating a mountain God whose mountain is nowhere near your community, for example. Tengrist worship is communal and without hierarchy. The most common rituals and sacrifices are performed by people who need them, often led by an elder or community leader. In times past, this might be a local khan, but in the modern day it is often a respected elder or elected official.

There are many prayers and curses kept by Tengrist communities, and most are passed along by word of mouth. Especially in places like Mongolia or Siberia, several of these prayers were lost or suppressed by Soviet forces, and many more would have been lost entirely if not for the intervention of the professional shamans, called qam, böge, or böö if male and idugan or udagan if female. While most prayers are performed by normal members of the community, these professionals are called on when spiritual aid is more urgent.

Shamanic rituals vary based on a shaman's training and style. The most traditional practice black shamanism, who primarily call on the power of the Tengri directly or tap into the power of ancestral shamanic ghosts, the greatest of which may have actually become local Tengri. Other shamans integrate Buddhist ritual and practice yellow shamanism, invoking the Palas as well as the Tengri and rarely calling on ghosts or ancestral spirits. In either case, shamans intervene to guide souls home, curse foes, protect against evil ghosts and spirits or to call on the Tengri for aid in times of crisis. In older times, a distinction was made

between shamans binding evil spirits and those calling on protective ones, but in the modern day, that distinction has largely faded.

Tengrist ritual often adopts elements of other religions in the area that seem useful and compatible with shamanic rites or traditional prayers. However, some elements remain constant at the core. Shamanic rituals usually involve ecstatic spinning, drumming or the use of intoxicants to project their spirit through use of shaman's mount or wind-horse, a spiritual being residing inside the shaman's mirrors and called on with the aid of onggon talismans, drum and staff. Shamans are professionals and must be paid for their services, taking on a social role somewhere between a more traditional priest and a sorcerer.

Lay worship can take place in the home around the holy hearth-fire for smaller, more family-focused prayers and rituals. However, public prayer or larger ritual usually involve a visit to a local ovoo, a circular ritual altar or shrine made of stone. They are often built atop mountains or other high places, and popular ones often have large, elaborate complexes built around them and attended by faithful locals, becoming like the temples of other faiths. Their use was prohibited under Soviet law, but Tengrists continued to maintain their traditions in secret as best they could. The aid of ancestral spirits and of shamans not from former Soviet territories in recovering lost prayers and traditions has been invaluable.

Tengrist holidays and ritual clothing vary by tradition, but it is common for there to be a major public prayer ceremony in the end of summer to honor the Eternal Blue Heaven with sacrificial offerings, dances and feasting. The Tsaagan Sar ("White Moon") festival is celebrated at the lunar New Year to bring reconciliation and friendship. During the summer, most communities will also hold a Naadam, a competition and festival honoring martial skill and the Three Games of the Mongolian tradition: wrestling, horse racing and archery. At one point, it was used to choose the leaders of the Mongol Empires, and even today, its victors are deeply respected among Mongolian society.

## BIRTHRIGHTS CREATURES

Magical animals of all kinds are found in service to the Tengri or as ancestors of various groups. Most notably, horses are extremely important to the Tengri, and they have a lot of them. They might fly (or just be able to run on the wind and jump higher than the sun), be the size of elephants, be able to race into Overworlds or Underworlds with ease, or more. They come in a variety of colors, sizes, and levels of magical power. Raptors are also common; the hawk and eagle are symbols of bravery for the Tengri, winged warriors to be admired and emulated. Many practice falconry, and the eagles that serve them are usually excellent fighters.

## FOLLOWERS

While the **evil spirits** and **vicious ghosts** that spread disease and plague are...well, evil, they are also useful. Erlik Khan commands many of them and may grant their service, while others are tamed by shamans to wield against their foes or simple cowed by threats and made to obey.

Minor Tengri may choose to serve the Scions of greater Tengri, incarnating in the form of **human warriors**. They lack the power of the great Gods, and they seek fame and glory by tying themselves to the Legend of someone who will become greater. They tend to be excellent fighters with bows, swords, and spears, but prone to recklessness.

## GUIDES

**Ancestral Ghosts:** Many Heroes, shamans and other figures of the past who do not become full Gods still end up as powerful ghosts, bound to specific locations or tied to mystic onggon idols. Their wisdom makes them excellent advisors most of the time, especially on matters related to other spirits or to their areas of expertise in life.

While for the most part mortal humans, the **shamans** of the Tengri are professional intermediaries between Gods and humanity and relatively common users of what other pantheons would consider sorcery. They know the secrets of exorcism, spirit travel and spiritual healing, and often much more. Scions often build a close relationship with a specific shaman, either as a mentor or a follower, to help them decide where best to focus to help their mortal communities.

## RELICS

While most of the Tengri still favor living horses, Darkhan Ironworks, a semi-corporate cult run by Gudzir Kungker, produces a boutique line of custom motorcycles which instead contain the living souls of spirit-horses within their mirrors. These **Darkhan Windhorses** enliven the iron and steel, allowing them to travel as shamans do into the world of spirits and Gods.

The **Dragon-Headed Staff of Tsagan Ebogen** is the greatest tool of any shaman, and is wielded by the White Old Man himself ... most of the time. A dragon's head is mounted on it, and it can strike down evil with a blow or lay mighty curses of illness and disease. Tsagan Ebogen is choosy about how gets to use it, for its power is terrifying.

## RELATIONSHIPS

The Tengri are a pantheon of ambitious and powerful leaders, and unsurprisingly this can lead to a certain amount of internal conflict. They are quick to compete and fight over prizes, marriages, or minor disputes, but equally quick to forgive and move on. Grudges arise only when deaths become involved, and these grudges can lead to terrible things. Fortunately, the last major internal conflict among the Tengri was long ago, involving the death of Atai Ulaan Tengri. Its aftershocks are still felt, even today.

These days, the pantheon considers their chief duty to be attending to prayers and enjoying themselves. They seek to prove their skill and power, and of course any competition or chance to expand their glory will draw them out. They can often be found hunting great beasts, demons, evil spirits and Titanspawn, often nearly as much for the joy of the hunt as for the chance to assist their human worshippers. Their drive and curiosity also tend to get them involved in the affairs of other pantheons.

## OTHER PANTHEONS

The greatest allies and friends of the Tengri are the Buddhist Palas of Tibet. The Tengri have embraced Buddhist teachings with great if sometimes imperfectly understood enthusiasm. Their greatest conflict has come from the need the Tengri feel to preserve and reclaim their older traditions. The Shén, of course, are also firm allies... according to the Tengri. The mighty Chinggis Khagan proved his puissance to them and earned his place among their august ranks, did he not? The Shén find their northern neighbors intensely irritating most of the time, and many traditionalist Shén hate that they cannot deny the right several Tengri have to membership in the Bureaucracy.

The Kami and Deva are respected as worthy equals whom the Tengri do not entirely understand. They are eager to connect with these pantheons, but also eager to prove their might and power. The Mongolian yokozuna of recent years have raised some tensions with the often nationalistic Kami, who have always felt it a point of pride that they prevented the forces of Kublai Khan from successfully invading and conquering Japan.

The closest the Tengri have to a traditional enemy among their neighbors are the Bogovi after the attacks on and conquest over the Kievan Rus. These days, however, the Tengri look to them more with pity, as Gods who suffered greater losses to Soviet suppression even than the Tengri. The Yazatas, likewise, remember the depredations of the Mongol invasion on their people, though they tend to find common ground over fighting evil when Chinggis Khan is not present.

Wider afield, the Tengri rarely have much of an understanding of other pantheons. They are curious and eager to learn, though. They like to find similarities with other Gods and to try and achieve symbiotic coexistence with them. In areas where different pantheons have had trouble coexisting, they are often viewed with suspicion, and their competitive and aggressive tendencies often lead others to suspect their true intentions. (Incorrectly, as it happens, but understandably so.)

## GREATEST WEAKNESS

The combination of being incredibly competitive, fond of personal reputation and casual toward violence is easily what stands in the way of the Tengri most. The Gods of Mongolia are friendly, curious, and outgoing, but other pantheons hold them at arm's length out of fear of violence or misunderstand their competitive natures and ambitious

glory-seeking as a threat. It's not an entirely false fear, either. While the Tengri are dedicated to bettering the lives of humanity and defeating evil, while they are happy to learn and adapt to others, they hate to lose and their pride can often provoke them to acting rashly.

Scions of the Tengri are much beloved by their extended families, but they also have a heavy burden of expectation. The Tengri are an active and ambitious lot, and they have no patience for those without the drive to pursue skill or the will to lead their communities. To be Tengri is to be given a responsibility to care for and lead the World of the Eternal Blue Heaven — a fact which even the greatest Gods must not forget.

## PANTHEON PATH OF THE TENGRI

**Skills:** Culture, Pilot

**Virtues:** Identity and Syncretism. The Tengri are famously interested in other Gods and other faiths. They have studied Buddhism with the Palas, joined the Bureaucracy of the Shén through the Yuan Dynasty, adopted some of the monsters and creatures more commonly found are

the Devá (albeit usually filtered by their Tibetan friends). Despite this, they have never been absorbed as a pantheon. They have always held onto the core of who they are.

Identity, the understanding of who you are, is central to life as one of the Tengri. They create a reputation and protect it, becoming known for their greatest attributes and skills. Embracing your own nature and glorifying it is second nature to the Mongolian Gods. A wrestling champion cannot let the World forget their skills; a blacksmith cannot allow their creations to go unseen.

And yet, they are always driven to seek out and learn from others. The Tengri syncretize easily, seeing no contradiction in being Tengrist and Buddhist and Daoist and Muslim all at once, if that speaks to them. As much as they are driven to glorify themselves and assert their own identity, they seek out the ways of others and the solutions others bring. They remain vital by accepting new ideas and embracing them. For a Scion of the Tengri, the struggle to assert one's own Identity while still understanding and taking the best from others through Syncretism is never easy. They risk being looked down on if they always listen to others and never learn who they truly are, but someone who doesn't know when to ask for new ideas or when to step aside and learn is foolish at best.



# THE BOGOVI OF THE SLAVS

With a gigantic crash the idol tumbled to earth. The swaths of purple drapery which hung about the sanctuary certainly glittered, but were so rotten with decay that they could not survive being touched. The sanctum also contained the prodigious horns of wild animals, astonishing no less in themselves than in their ornamentation. A devil was seen departing from the innermost shrine in the guise of a black animal, until it disappeared abruptly from the gaze of bystanders.

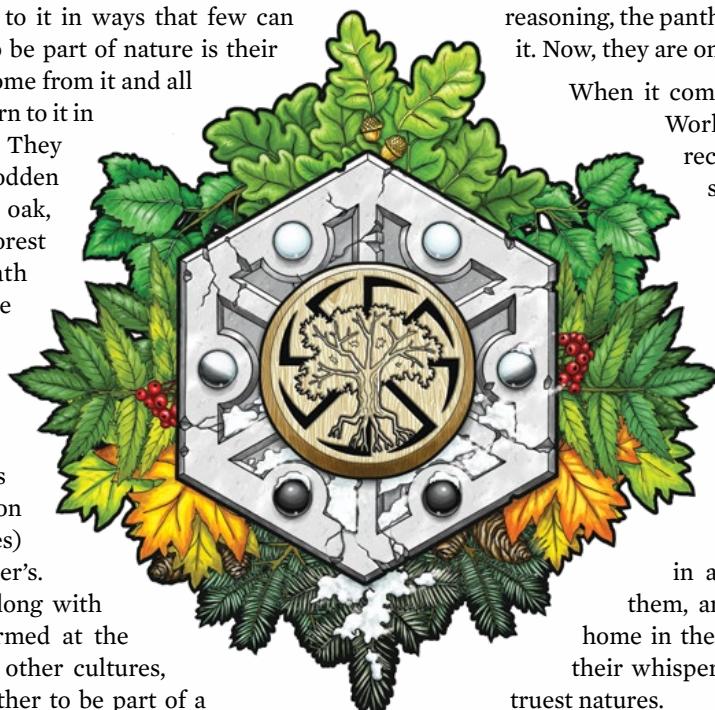
— Saxo Grammaticus

Deep within the hearts of the primeval forests that exist throughout the traditional lands of the Slavs, the Bogovi stir. This myriad collection of Gods descended from the supreme creator Rod are more closely tied to the land of their birth than most other Pantheons, intimately connected to it in ways that few can truly comprehend. To be part of nature is their nature, as all things come from it and all things eventually return to it in one form or another. They are as flexible as the trodden grass, as solid as the oak, and as dark as the forest itself — life and death ever shifting from one to the other.

The Bogovi are akin to a single blended family, where one Bog's — god's — dominion can (and often does) overlap with another's. This synchronicity, along with being a Pantheon formed at the crossroads of several other cultures, has bound them together to be part of a bigger, combined whole. What drove them to come together is a point of curious speculation. They were once separate deities, pantheons of four or two or even one alone, until they came together. Many of the Bogovi loathe one another, and many embody their opposites. Perun and Veles, Perun and Svarozhich, Belobog and Chernobog... each Bog will happily oppose their opposite, only to band together when an outside force threatens them, their

enmity forgotten. Some say this behavior is a necessity to fight against the Titanomachy and to strengthen themselves, while many saw the encroachment of foreign people with foreign Gods as the reason the Bogovi set their dualistic grudges aside with some frequency. Whatever the reasoning, the pantheon does not offer comment on it. Now, they are only Bogovi.

When it comes to the current state of The World, the Bogovi have not taken direct action one way or another, instead choosing to watch the ebb and flow and acting only when it suits their aims. The last century has seen a wavering of belief in them, due in part to cultural and political shifts in their homeland that the Bogovi have opted to err on the side of caution. Being a dominant force in The World is not their goal — it's attempting to rebuild their presence in a homeland that has forgotten them, and barring that, finding a new home in the hearts of those who will hear their whispers in the wind and follow their truest natures.



## PRINCIPAL MEMBERS

What makes the Bogovi stand apart is how controlled by their natures they are, but also the similarities a few among their number have to Gods in other Pantheons.

Despite the similarities, the pantheon has no real structure like others; there is no real chief God among the Bogovi, though Perun, Svarozhich, and Svarog have all claimed that title at times. The simple fact remains that the pantheon exists in the land of crossroads, and that makes them wholly unique unto themselves. Several distinct but overlapping groups comprise the Pantheon; their similarity to others is something they consider a strength.

## PERUN, THE GREAT PROTECTOR

**Aliases:** Perkūnas, Perkwunos

Perun stands as the foremost Bog among the Bogovi, and its most fervent protector. Cutting a figure wide as a great oak, Perun watches over the living mortal world, guarding it against the misdeeds of Veles, but mostly from the machinations of the Titanomachy. Born of Svarog, the once-Lord of the Bogovi, Perun took leadership of the Pantheon during the Titan War out of a sense of duty and a desire to protect that which he governed over at all costs. Eventually, there will be no need for a war god's leadership and his gentle son, Jarilo, will take over. As with other chief gods and Sky Fathers, Perun's chosen elements are thunder and lightning, which he wields with his mighty axe or shoots down upon the earth from his golden arrows. Having strong views on what is good and evil, Perun spares no quarter against those that seek to bring harm to the mortal world or harm the natural order of things – be they Titan, God, or even one of his own Scions. Doing the right thing and acting in accordance with one's own nature and sense of duty is more important than being theoretically right or having the last word.

These days, Perun still worries about the ongoing Second Titanomachy and is beginning to feel battle weary. Between fighting off Titans, witches, and monsters of all stripes, Perun wonders if the time will ever come when he can hang up his axe and retire to sit beside his father, Svarog, once again. To most, he appears to be a grizzled veteran with a long golden-copper beard and an eagle-emblazoned ballcap who always tells stories about the ravages of constant war. He's usually found sitting on a park bench under an ancient oak tree on overcast days, with thunder crackling in the distance. A Scion of Perun is expected to do as their conscience dictates, but to also do better for the world around them. A world of constant war makes a world for warriors, but very little else, and this protector of life would like to see a time of peace someday in the future.

**Callings:** Guardian, Judge, Warrior

**Purviews:** Beasts (Eagle, Horse), Epic Strength, Epic Dexterity, Fertility, Fire, Fortune, Order, Sky, War

## MOKOSH, THE GREAT MOTHER

**Aliases:** Makosh, Mokoš, Ognyena

Wife to Perun, and sometimes consort to Veles, Mokosh is a Goddess in total control of her own destiny and does

## PRONUNCIATION GUIDE

Baba Yaga – Ba-ba Yah-gah  
Belobog – Below-bohg  
Bog - Bohg  
Bogovi – Bo-gho-vi  
Chernobog – Chair-no-bohg  
Dazhbog – Daz-bohg  
Jarilo – Ya-ri-la  
Mokosh – Mo-kosh  
Morena – More-ena  
Nav – Na-ahv  
Peklo – Peck-low  
Perun – Pay-rune  
Prav – Pra-ahv  
Porevit – Pore-e-vit  
Radegast – Ra-dey-gast  
Raj – Razh  
Rod - Rod  
Rodnovery – Rod-no-very  
Simargl – Sim-ar-gull  
Starovéry – Straw-vey-ri  
Svarog – Sva-rog  
Svarozhich – Sva-row-vitch  
Sviatovid – Svia-tavid  
Veles – Vey-less  
Yav – Ya-ahv  
Živa – See-va

not allow for anyone to deter her from being true to her nature. She wanders the world, spinning threads of fate and weaving them into tapestries which then tell the stories of those that may come after her, offering blessings of good fortune to those that seek it and protecting women's work and destinies. Mokosh also is the protector of children, and she sees all of humanity as being as important as her own godly children.

Never one to shy away from hard work nor one afraid to get her hands dirty, Mokosh enriches the earth through her magics, increasing harvests and bounty. So, too, do her Scions work with their hands, often for causes which protect women and children. When not fundraising for women's shelters or helping grassroots campaigns for reproductive rights, this soft-bodied matron with sun-kissed skin dressed in loose garments made of natural materials can be found working in a community garden to nourish those most in need. Always warm and welcoming, Mokosh never turns down a hug if she knows it will grant someone comfort, and might even slip a few coins into their pockets for luck.



The protection of children and women are paramount. Without those who labor, there are no children, and where there are no children there is no future. With that in mind, a majority of her Scions are women — notably mothers themselves in some way or another — but she has been known to give her blessing to male Scions, as well as those who have a woman's heart within them. Mokosh does not care how her Scions go about their work in fighting against the Titanomachy, but there is absolutely one line they must never cross, lest she decide to cut the thread of their destiny short: no Scion of Mokosh can directly nor indirectly do anything which may bring harm to another woman or any child.

**Callings:** Creator, Guardian, Healer

**Purviews:** Artistry (Spinning, Weaving), Beasts (Swans), Earth, Epic Stamina, Fertility, Fortune, Health, Order, Prosperity, Water, Wild

## JARILO, THE BRIGHT SUN

**Aliases:** Iarilo, Iarovit, Gerovit, Yarilo

Bright Jarilo, the warmth of spring and youthful playfulness. The joy of his mother Mokosh and the pride of his father Perun, he shines as a beacon of hope to a Pantheon deeply entrenched in the Titan War. Twin brother to Morena, he is guardian of the pure-hearted and the harbinger of spring. Wherever Jarilo walks, life springs forth, and like the Great Mother he cultivates all aspects of creation, indulging in its pleasures without reservation. However

when autumn comes, Jarilo begins to weaken and eventually falls into a death-like slumber, allowing his sister Morena to come into her own in their yearly ritual of death and rebirth.

A summer child through and through, Jarilo hasn't known many hardships, and is singularly blessed in that he hasn't yet raised a sword against the enemies of the Bogovi. Instead, he represents the promise of new beginnings, of choosing love in all of its forms over everything else. Perun believes the time is coming when Jarilo will transition into the role of the Supreme Bog, but for now the bright shining prince is content to enjoy the spring and summer of his youth with as many young lads and lasses as he can.

Found impossibly beautiful by man and woman alike, Jarilo takes impeccable care of his appearance, and does not shy away from showing off his figure. When you are at the prime of your youth and virility, it does not do to hide it away. He expects nothing less than the same from his Scions, and charges that they do all in their power to bring beauty and joy into a world made less bright by largely unseen forces. Unlike him, however, they don't get a six month vacation to recharge and recuperate, and more than one of his Scions have burned out too brightly before achieving their fullest potential. That's okay, though. Jarilo can always father more children when spring comes around again.

**Callings:** Creator, Healer, Lover

**Purviews:** Beasts (Deer, Horses, Rams), Beauty, Earth, Epic Dexterity, Epic Stamina, Fertility, Prosperity



## MORENA, THE WHITE DEATH

**Aliases:** Kyselica, Marena, Marzanna, Morana

Dark Morena, the cold of winter and wisdom of long nights, she who watches over Jarilo as he sleeps until spring, acting as a faithful custodian and guardian. Where Jarilo is much beloved as a symbol of renewal, Morena is the bitter reminder that no one escapes from death. While she is considered the Goddess of Death, it is not she who ends a person's life, but rather guides those who have lived a Sunwise life, in accordance to nature, to the very top of the world tree to the land of Yav — the sun-filled afterlife — and grants them then eternal life. Those who lived contrary to nature, or withershins, are instead carried to Peklo, a world of eternal darkness.

Wizened by her experiences with the dead and dying, Morena sees the world through a lens less rose-colored than her beloved brother Jarilo. More pragmatic and not as driven by mundane pleasure, she uses the brief time she has while Jarilo sleeps preparing the earth and its creatures for spring, watching over them and ensuring that all is in order. Sure it's not as glamorous, but Morena understands that everyone has a role they must play in the grand scheme of things, and she has found her peace in it. Death can be beautiful in its own way, and she takes great care in making the passing from life into the great beyond an easy transition.

Despite being a goddess of winter, Morena is surprisingly warm to all whom she meets — especially those who will soon walk beside her. In modern days, she has taken to working as a case worker in palliative care and memory wards, easing families losing a loved one toward a path of healing and holding the hands of those with no family left. Many of her Scions find careers in the same vein, with some even working as medical examiners to give murder victims closure, or morticians to ensure that the dead are treated with the utmost dignity and that their souls are peaceful before passing into the next world.

**Callings:** Creator, Liminal, Sage

**Purviews:** Darkness, Death, Epic Dexterity, Epic Stamina, Fire, Frost, Water, War

## VELES, THE GUARDIAN OF THE GATES

**Aliases:** Flins, Vialies, Volos, Wols, Zembog

For every action there is an equal — and opposite — reaction, that is simply the nature of things. So, too, must every supreme God have a cunning and clever nemesis. For the Bogovi, this nemesis often takes the form of Veles: trickster, guardian of the gates of the Underworld, nature-lover, and part-time dragon (or bear) when the mood strikes him. Where Perun is as the steadfast oak, Veles is like the willow: shifting, changing, and always moving and able to

get in long-range smacks when a storm kicks up. His is the enduring wetness to Perun's angry dryness. These bouts with the other God were responsible for droughts (when Veles won) and floods (when Perun won), but usually it was Veles who got blamed for when either extreme happened.

Where other Bog tend to be content with their lot, Veles has a bit more of a maverick's personality with a reputation to match. He might steal your cattle, your child, the divine purviews of other gods, and possibly even their consorts. It's not that Veles is evil, it's just that he likes to keep others on their toes to show them that sitting around and waiting for something to happen leads to stagnation, and that you need to take things from others so they can see just what it is they have been missing. More than one Scion has been waylaid by the fact that Veles walked off with their smartphone — teaching them a lesson that the world around them should take precedence over the one on a screen. He also beat your high score on Fruit Ninja, so deal with it.

Forest animals typically follow Veles wherever he goes, which can be a bit unnerving to city dwellers, so he restricts his more public appearances in nature preserves and sanctuaries. Some days, he's Grizzly Adams, the next he's Smokey the literal bear beckoning his Scions and importuning upon them a request — usually having to do with environmental preservation, agriculture, or something off-the-wall entirely as to make them question if they are dealing with an actual god or some manner of YouTube prankster. Rare is the Scion that enjoys a visit from Veles; rarer still is the one that understands the purpose to his requests.

**Callings:** Judge, Liminal, Trickster

**Purviews:** Beasts (Bears, Wolves, Snakes, Owls), Chaos, Darkness, Death, Deception, Earth, Fertility, Water, Wild

## ŽIVA, THE MOST BEAUTIFUL.

**Aliases:** Diva, Devana, Razivja, Siva, Vesna, Ziwa, Zhibog

There is beautiful, and then there is Živa, who outshines even the sun with her radiance, and rains down her blessings upon all branches of the great world-oak from the great river of life which, too, flows from her. As Morena guides the dead to the afterlife, Živa offers the blessed departed a drink from the Chalice of Eternal Life, before sending them to the Underworld where her consort — the trickster Veles — resides. More than one god has wondered as to why one as beautiful and kind as Živa would throw in her lot with one like Veles, but she simply smiles knowingly; love is a mystery, but one she knows better than most.

The kindest of the Bogovi, Živa is perhaps the most interested in humanity and the things that they do in the name of love, both good and bad. She has the power to instill great compassion and love in the hearts of others, not just for romance, but also for the greater good. Young, adolescent girls, however, are of special note to the goddess and she often comes to their aid more than any other.

Those who would seek to break up young lovers or cause harm to maidens beware: though Živa is kind, she is not without a temper, and more than one young man has found themselves rendered impotent at her hand.

Much like Mokosh (with whom she shares a special "understanding"), Živa is liberal in her affections and indulges them without remorse. Where she goes fertility rates seem to increase near-exponentially. Those small towns with a freakishly high rate of twins and triplets? Just Živa spreading her blessings. No one enjoys small children more than she, and of the Bogovi, she likely has the most Scions, and they typically come from or have large families. Nothing is more important than family to Živa, and many a homemaker or stay-at-home dad have been counted among her Scions. Some even manage to balance the demands of a divine parent while being a semi-divine parent themselves.

**Callings:** Creator, Liminal, Lover

**Purviews:** Beauty, Death, Epic Stamina, Fertility, Health, Passion, Water

## SVAROG, THE FIRE OF CREATION

**Aliases:** Jarog, Tvarog

All Bog descend from the Heavenly Rod, but most Bog descend from one. Before Perun came thundering into power as the head of the Bogovi, there was Svarog — the supreme heavenly Bog — who breathed the fires of creation from which the great oak world tree sprung, and formed the worlds. If any understand what it means to follow one's nature, it is the Bog which created it in the first place, and who will at some point destroy it and then have to start the whole process all over again.

When not creating realms of existence, Svarog is also a divine blacksmith, having created Perun's mighty axe, which cracks like lightning when it strikes its target and Živa's chalice, which restores one's vitality if sipped from. With Perun firmly in place as the supreme lord of the Bogovi, Svarog has withdrawn and is mostly nestled in a dreamlike state — entrusting creation to Perun and the rest. By his own nature and command, he cannot directly act or interfere with the physical world to the degree that the other Bogovi can, but he does wield enormous influence through his intermediaries — be they other Gods or his Scions. If he were to take direct action and fully awaken once more, his fiery gaze would wither the whole world and render it to ashes. Needless to say, Svarog takes every care to ensure it doesn't happen too frequently. Creating whole worlds is a tiresome business, and he much prefers his naps in his old age.

Seeing as how he mostly sleeps (and one wonders how a sleeping god even begets Scions), most of them are simply manifestations of his will created through his dreams. They take on a multitude of forms, all distinct and with a purpose in mind. Sometimes they act as an extension of Svarog's will — going so far as to attempt to make contact with his divine children through their own Scions. More often than not, they end up wandering across creation, acting as Svarog's

eyes and ears while he sleeps so that next time he might be able to build a better world.

**Callings:** Creator, Judge, Sage

**Purviews:** Earth, Epic Dexterity, Epic Strength, Fire, Forge, Fortune, Order, Sky

## DAZHBOG, THE FIRE OF THE SKY

**Aliases:** Dajbog, Dažbog, Daždbog

Foremost of Svarog's children is Dazhbog, the shining and brilliant sun. Of all of the Bogovi, he is the great giver of not just life (because what is a solar deity if not a life-giver?), but also wealth and happiness. He drives his chariot daily across the sky and The World. Once, Dazhbog incarnated among humanity and became a cultural hero, and as his legend grew so did his ego. He became so beloved that he remains perhaps the most recognizable member of the Bogovi, and perhaps the most widely worshiped across all Slavic lands.

The sun rises, but the sun also sets and Dazhbog's existence mirrors that journey. At dawn, he rides his chariot full of the vigor and virility of youth. By the time his journey draws to an end as it sets, he is aged and becomes more decrepit. Unlike other gods who remain as they are, only Dazhbog has to endure the cycle of youth and old age, and as such he's become somewhat stubborn. On one occasion, he decided to stay at the peak of his power during midday in protest to his nature. Needless to say, his worshipers didn't enjoy their sunburn as much as he enjoyed his handsome reflection, but what choice do you have but to adore the sun? Other Bogovi, like Radegast and Zorya, are less inclined toward Dazhbog since his tends to impede upon their own duties.

Much like their divine parent, Dazhbog's Scions tend to be the center of attention. No matter what they do, they have that *je ne sais quoi* that attracts people to them and

grants them a great deal of influence. In the social media age, they absolutely dominate. Where they were once leaders and nobles, they are livestreamers and influencers setting the standard for everyone else to follow. They are beautiful, powerful, and absolutely aware of it. Whether it's a passion project to bring solar energy into the home of every human on the planet, or just basking in the adoration of their own followers, they live their lives to the fullest. Unlike Dazhbog, though, they might only get the one, so they better use it wisely.

**Callings:** Guardian, Judge, Leader

**Purviews:** Beasts (Wolf), Beauty, Epic Strength, Epic Stamina, Fire, Forge, Journeys, Prosperity, Sky, Sun

## SVAROZHICH, THE FIRE OF THE EARTH

**Aliases:** Ognebog

It isn't an easy thing, being the second-born of a Bog. Worse still is when you are regularly mistaken for either your father or brother, which is poor Svarozhich's lot thanks to how much they overlap with one another. Sure, you have the fire of creation and the fire of the sky, but everyone tends to forget about the fire that dwells deep within the womb of the earth – a power in its own right. Whereas Dazhbog is bright and vainglorious, Svarozhich does not both much with appearances and unlike dreaming Svarog, he acknowledges the realities facing all the Bogovi: a war that few of them are willing to fight in.

Perhaps it is Svarozhich's connection to the earth that keeps him so grounded as opposed to his head in the clouds. He doesn't have the luxury of sleeping away eternity or caring about his appearance; instead, he has taken up Svarog's forge and has become an accomplished blacksmith in his own right. Ever the vigilant pragmatist, he keeps an arsenal of weapons at hand should any Titanspawn deign to cross his path or attempts to invade the World Tree. Gruff, but not

## RADEGAST THE CITY

Radegast, the God, allows for an interesting discussion of real-world mythology's place in **Scion**. Much of the ancient Slavic faith was oral, or the written records were lost; Romanization, and later Christianization, obliterated many of the fine cultural details as practitioners syncretized old beliefs into the new faith. Many contemporary scholars don't think Radegast actually existed; the tribe of Rethra had a holy city called Radegast, where many Slavic Gods were worshiped. The Bishop of Mecklenburg was sacrificed "to Radegast" in 1066, which was misinterpreted by later writers and scholars as belonging to a separate deity from Svarozhich, to whom the sacrifice was probably directed.

Similarly, Belobog likely was never worshiped either. Many scholars in the past saw the dualism of Slavic mythology and posited that the "dark god" Chernobog must logically have an opposite, a "white god". Both deities grew in later misinterpretations, as the probably-fictional creations compounded upon themselves.

In **Scion**, we can construct a mythology for Radegast, by recasting him as a mortal ruler of the city bearing his name, a Scion of Svarozhich and grandScion of Svarog. Don't be afraid to let your player characters have temporal power and fame before their ascension to Godhood. Similarly, we can embrace Belobog as an aspect of the duality in the rest of the pantheon, and hold him up as yet another God who embodies the opposite.



unfriendly, Svarozhich has the knack for remembering every face and name he comes across — just so no one has to be mistaken for anyone other than themselves. This is especially true for his Scions; he knows each one more closely than any other Bogovi, and in return it makes them more receptive to his requests.

Fortunately for his Scions, his requests are not too difficult—he just requires them to always be in a state of readiness, in both mind and body. Physical fitness is key, and being able to endure grueling challenges is just part of the inheritance Svarozhich imparts to them — despite his own twisted leg, the rest of his body is completely ready. More than one Scion has placed highly in strongman competitions or survival challenges. It's for their own good; they'll need to be strong and prepared for when the cold war goes hot once more, and when they will inevitably stand shoulder to shoulder with Svarozhich himself.

**Callings:** Guardian, Leader, Warrior

**Purviews:** Earth, Epic Strength, Epic Stamina, Fire, Forge, War

## RADEGAST, THE HOSPITABLE COUNCILOR

**Aliases:** Riedegost, Potrembog

Other gods may burn brightly during the day, but few burn as brightly at night as Radegast, he who guides and

protects those that travel by the light of the moon and stars and ensures they arrive at their destination unmolested by brigands. The most hospitable of all the Bogovi, one can always find a place at Radegast's table. The old king's home is open to all — be they stranger or foe — as a show of honor and strength. More than that, Radegast acts as a voice of reason and wisdom among a Pantheon known for being slaves to their nature. That isn't to say that he advocates going against one's nature, but merely striking the right balance.

Don't let his hospitable nature fool you, however. Like most Bogovi, Radegast is prepared to defend those under his aegis, and he wields a two-headed axe with a ferocity that even gives Perun pause.

Once Scions of the Bogovi are found, Radegast has a tendency of following up with them—to offer his congratulations or condolences—and to help them through this transitional period. It doesn't matter if they are Perun's, Veles', or Svarog's lumbering creations, Radegast will aid them as he would his own. A divine negotiator, he prefers to talk through issues, but also isn't afraid to press the point with steel — it just depends on how the other party takes his recommendations, and whether or not they take offense to his straightforward way of speaking.

Together with Zorya, he guards the night sky and ensures that the darkness of night remains just so; Dazhbog has not quite recovered from the beating he received from the God of the Night Sky and the Morning and Dawn Star.



Humble Radegast isn't one to put on airs and tends to dress casually. It is something that many of his Scions have in common with him; they prefer function and comfort over substance, and it is easier to be a welcoming guest when one is comfortable in their own skin. Fresh-faced and honest, it is easy to tell a Scion of Radegast from other's in that they will always make space at a table, make a meal go farther, to show their hospitality to wayward travelers. Sometimes you can find them running bed and breakfasts, or at other times being part of local chambers of commerce.

**Callings:** Guardian, Liminal, Sage

**Purviews:** Beasts (Snake), Darkness, Epic Dexterity, Fortune, Journeys, Moon, Order, Sky, Stars, War

## ZORYA, THE SHINING STAR

**Aliases:** Zorya Utrennyaya, Zorya Vechernyaya

Zorya, the brightest star of them all, shines best when the night is at its darkest. A piercing ray of hope, the goddess of dawn and dusk guards the world from the unseen horrors of the hound Simargl who threatens to destroy Svarog's creation should he escape from his heavenly prison. Dazhbog's daughter, she rivals her father in both beauty and grace, but is also subject to the curse of aging throughout the day. Unlike her father, however, she knows it is merely part of the nature of being and that sure as the sun sets, she will be youthful and beautiful again.

Proving that looks are deceiving, this gentle goddess rides alongside Perun into war—shielding both god and Scion alike from death with her glittering veil and acting as a beacon of hope when the tides were against them. Even when covered in blood, there is an eerie serenity that surrounds Zorya. She is both innocent and hard-earned experience, and when Zorya draws back her starry veil, it reveals harsh truths to those that seek it. Many Bogovi acknowledge that among them, Zorya's judgment is the most balanced due to her dual nature.

Today, Zorya's incarnations have split, approaching life guidance in two distinct ways: Zorya Utrennyaya spends her time encouraging counseling and guiding the young toward paths that best suit them, whereas Zorya Vechernyaya works among the elderly and preparing them for their twilight years. Aging is one of life's harshest truths, but one can do so gracefully and with understanding that it is simply nature's way. Always understanding, she will always come to her Scions if they have need of her guidance which she gives with a maiden's enthusiasm but a mother's wisdom.

**Callings:** Guardian, Judge, Liminal

**Purviews:** Beasts (Horses), Beauty, Epic Dexterity, Fertility, Journeys, Moon, Sky, Stars, War

## THE MIDNIGHT STAR

Rumor abounds of a third incarnation of Zorya — Zorya Polunochnaya, the Midnight Star. There is little known about Polunochnaya, it is believed that she is the final form of Zorya and effectively transforming her into a triple goddess like Hecate or the Morrigan. Under this incarnation, she becomes a goddess of death, rebirth, magic, and wisdom and is rumored to be more ruthless than Utrennayaya and Verchernyaya.

**Callings:** Guardian, Liminal, Sage

**Purviews:** Darkness, Death, Epic Dexterity, Journeys, Moon, Sky, Stars

## CHERNOBOG, THE BLACK GOD

**Aliases:** Chernabog, Czernobog, Zcerneboch

On the other side of the divine coin is Chernobog — the Black God — representing death, darkness, and chaos. Standing rigidly against everything that Belobog stands for, Chernobog doesn't do it for any reason other than that he merely finds it amusing to watch his counterpart rail against each new trick he manages to devise, going so far as to even bring others into his cruel Deeds. Even Veles had to give Chernobog credit for managing to trick a trickster god into imprisoning the god of light.

Chernobog isn't the most well-regarded among the Bogovi for his more destructive tendencies, and he narrowly walks the line between God and Titan. It's not his fault, honestly — he was born this way. Someone had to be the scapegoat for all the awful things in the world, and it just happened to be him. Despite his villainous reputation, Chernobog's darkest secret is that he neither hates nor despises his brother Belobog. They are, after all, two sides of an eternal equation.

Prone to fits of pique, Chernobog's Scions often exhibit their father's chaotic nature in wildly varying ways. They are the sort of people who would help bring in an elderly woman's groceries and then moments later key their car, or to beg for forgiveness rather than seek initial permission to borrow a sports car before totaling it in an accident. The destructive instinct is so strong in his Scions that they often don't know how to stop it, usually requiring the Scions of other Bogovi to clean it up and make amends.

**Callings:** Adversary, Judge, Trickster

**Purviews:** Chaos, Darkness, Deception, Epic Dexterity, Epic Stamina, Epic Strength, Order, War

## COSMOLOGY

At the center of all the realms stands a tree — an oak as tall as the eyes can see — forming the foundation of heavens. Some call the tree Dub, or "oak", but most choose not to call it anything at all — everyone knows of what tree they speak. At its zenith, the Primordial entity Rod resides, his divine emanations giving form and order to the universe. Like its sister-tree, Yggdrasil, its various branches are homes to individual Bog, as well as the pathways to other realms of existence and being. The Bogovi often travel between the branches in order to perform their heavenly duties while Titanspawn attempt to disrupt the tree through any means available to them.

## PRAV — THE REALM OF THE BOG

The supreme realm, placed at the top of the world tree, is where the Law of Heaven is at its core. Here, Bogovi who have no current incarnations reside and watch over their chosen. Prav's divine energy, derived from the Primordial

In all things, Belobog cannot help but to be fair and even handed. He takes his role as the God of Light and an emanation of Rod seriously almost to the point where the other Bogovi swear he was born without the black sense of humor so common within the Pantheon. Morally upright Belobog is the concept of "correct action" taken to an extreme, eschewing any deviation from his path.

Unable to do much more than fight to keep Chernobog's influence at bay, Belobog is rarely seen outside of Terra Incognita. Rarer are his Scions — both born and chosen. It's not for lack of wanting Scions, but more that his duty to maintain the precarious balance of light and darkness takes a great deal of work. Still, they do exist and tend to be equipped with an unshakable sense of justice and a sense of altruism that borders on naiveté. For every villain in the world, there must be a hero who can undo the damages caused by evil and fill hearts with hope for better times.

**Callings:** Creator, Guardian, Judge

**Purviews:** Epic Dexterity, Epic Stamina, Epic Strength, Fortune, Health, Journeys, Order, Prosperity, War

Rod and guided by Svarog the divine creator, permeates and regulates all other realms of, giving them their form and purpose.

## YAV – THE REALM OF HUMANITY

If Prav is the realm of pure energy and light, Yav is the realm of matter and appearance. All things take form on Yav, and it is here that things are formed and dissolved in a never-ending cycle of creation, destruction, and rebirth.

## NAV – THE REALM OF THE SPIRITS

What happens when the light of life fades and passes away? While souls may be guided to Peklo, there are some that refuse this journey in order to stay a present force. Nav is the realm of human ancestors, those who consist of the memory of the past that can see through into the future for guidance.

## PEKLO – THE UNDERWORLD

When one mentions the Underworld, they usually think of two separate and diametrically opposed places: heaven or hell. Peklo, however, is both. How it appears to any singular spirit depends on how they carried out their lives. Those who lived in accordance to their nature and upheld their honor and duty find themselves in Raj – a warm and lush, heavenly paradise where they want for nothing. Those who failed to uphold their honor and duty, however, experience not fire and brimstone as one would equate a hellish landscape; Nav is a dreary, frozen wasteland which falls under Veles' personal dominion.

## THE THRICE-TENTH KINGDOM

Existing as both its own realm but outside of the world tree proper, the Thrice-Tenth Kingdom is a heroic plane where fairytales transpire, heroes make their mark, and gods walk elbow to elbow with mortals. Nothing is too out of the ordinary in this place, and one can easily cross over into it unwittingly and find themselves in part of a story they heard in their childhood. Deep in the forests of the Thrice-Tenth Kingdom, however, is where Baba Yaga makes her home and rules over it from her chicken-legged hut.

## TITANS

Largely coexisting with the various natural spirits and ghosts, the Bogovi aren't nearly as hindered by Titans as one might think – especially not in comparison to say their neighboring Pantheons like the Aesir, Deva, or the Theoi – but like most things, they do not do things by half-measures. Demonic creatures abound that attempt to topple the right order of nature, and attempt to cause the Bogovi to perform acts contrary to their nature in order to awaken Svarog from his slumber and force him to destroy the world.

## CHORT

An emanation of, or perhaps a cousin to Chernobog, Chort appears with horns upon his head, cloven hooved feet, and a long thin tail that acts as a whip. Not inherently evil, Chort likes to trick and make deals with unwitting mortals and Scion alike, offering them money, power, or whatever their heart desires in return for their soul. Those who take up Chort's offer eventually find themselves residing in the colder part of Peklo after they die unless they manage to out-trick a Titan who gives Veles a run for his money.

**Purview:** Darkness

**Virtues:** Dominance, Rapacity

## DZIWOZONA

Sometimes called "Mamuna" or "Boginka", the Dziwozona is a female swamp demon known for her malicious nature. Residing in thickets near rivers, streams, or lakes, she takes the form of an ugly old woman who wears a notable red hat with a fern twig tucked into its belt. Kidnapping newborns and replacing them with her own children has given rise to a growing population of foundlings – unknowing Titanspawn that go through life living as normal until they awaken and become pawns of the Swamp Witch.

**Purview:** Water

**Virtues:** Fecundity, Submission

## KALLIKANTZAROS

At the base of the World Tree, deep underground, the Kallikantzaros work day and night sawing at the roots hoping to cause the collapse of the world tree and the eventual destruction of the Earth. These goblin-like creatures manage to get close to their goal only to be distracted for twelve days in the winter, where then they go above ground and plague mortals with trickery. When they return at the end of the twelve days, the world tree has healed and they find themselves right back where they started.

**Purview:** Wild

**Virtues:** Dominance, Rapacity

## PRIMORDIALS

The Bogovi are a Pantheon founded on the concept of duality in all things, and this is no more apparent than among the primordial being that represent the cosmic forces of the universe that exist throughout everything and everyone. The origin of all things – life, death, and the universe – all emanate from one Supreme Being: Rod. In truth, all Bogovi are manifestations of Rod, but not all act as his direct representations, like in the case of Belobog and Chernobog. Together as Rod, they represent what is prav, or "orderly" – because you cannot have light without darkness, good without evil, for that is the proper order of all things. The Bogovi know this all too well.

## BABA YAGA, THE HAG

Nothing happens without a price to be paid, and those that have sought out Baba Yaga have often received more than they bargained for. A powerful sorceress in her own right, with at least three servants of Demigod stature, the Bogovi and their Scions oft go out of their way to stay in her good graces lest she turns her magic against them. If you're lucky, you may just get roughed up by one of her agents — maybe they're forgotten Scions of some other God, or they're just expressions of her power. Those who run afoul of the sorceress might just find themselves bound to her will and used to power her magic.

## RELIGION: MAT SYRA ZEMLYA

Those who worship the Bogovi tend to focus on a singular Bog to dedicate themselves to, but that does not mean that in times of need they do not make the appropriate obeisance to a different Bog who may be more beneficial for the task at hand. It also varies from region to region as Western Slavs may worship one subsect of Bogovi from the Eastern Slavs, and that is to say nothing of the Gods worshiped by the Rus. In addition, many followers also worship foreign Gods — a concept called dvoeverie, or “double-faith”. They see no contradiction in giving thanks to the spirits, the Gods, and nature itself, even as they burn sacrifices at altars to the Theoi or incense in the temples of the Devá.

Most important to volkhvs — the priests — is the emphasis on morality, especially as it pertains to family and community. Right action and upholding one's responsibilities is of the utmost importance, because it connects them not only to their community at large, but to the world around them. Being mindful of how one's actions affect others, for better or worse, reminds them that duality is everywhere: what may have been the right course of action to them may not be perceived as the right course by others, and so on and so forth. Hospitality is sacred and taken to the extreme among followers of the Slavic faiths; elaborate rituals surround the practice.

## BIRTHRIGHTS

### CREATURES

**Gamayun:** A prophetic bird with the head of a woman, the Gamayun is a symbol of wisdom and knowledge said to exist near the top of the great World Tree. Those who seek out the Gamayun are often left frustrated because it never tells a person what they want to hear — but rather what they need to hear, be it pleasant or otherwise.

**Upyr:** Appearing entirely human, the Upyr are one of a number of creatures known as the restless dead that are vampiric in nature except for the fact that they do not drink blood. They are, however, incredibly strong and prone to fits of violence and where they go, tragedy usually follows. Most live quietly alongside mortals, hiding their true nature from them.

## RELICS

**Perun's Axe:** While obviously not Perun's actual axe, it is similar in almost all ways: it cracks like thunder when it hits a target and can be summoned back to the owner's grasp at will. Many Scions of Perun wear a simulacrum of the axehead as a protective talisman.

**Cloak of Winter:** Worn by Morena to blanket winter across the land, it is also used to shield warriors from their enemies, useful in a pinch to hide one's self from any enemies — or curious bystanders.

## FOLLOWERS

**Samodiva:** Born of the World Tree, the Samodiva are woodland nymphs that appear as ethereal maidens with long, loose hair and occasionally wings. Their beauty distracts both men and women alike, and they can siphon off the life-force of their victims. Mostly, though, they spend their days dancing in the wood, gathering plants to help heal others — if asked politely to do so.

**Dola:** Dola are little luck-faeries, who assist Mokosh in weaving her tapestries of fate, but also on occasion are known to prank gods and wayward Scions alike. It is said that every mortal has a Dola that is assigned to them at their birth, and can either help or hinder depending on if regular offerings are made to the Dola.

## GUIDES

**Baba Yaga:** Deep in the forest, flying around in a stone mortar and wielding a pestle with deadly accuracy, the enigmatic and ferocious Baba Yaga lives in a traveling chicken-legged hut dispensing wisdom to those that seek her out. Most fear her, and rightfully so, because it is murmured that there is more than one Baba Yaga due to her capricious nature. Nevertheless, those who seek shelter will find it in her hut — if they can find the hut, that is.

**Firebird:** The Firebird is a large bird with majestic plumage that brilliantly glows like a roaring bonfire, whose feathers can light up rooms or dark caverns as they do not cease to emit light. A blessing to those who see one, and a harbinger of doom to those that attempt to capture it, the Firebird appears to those most in need of guidance and leads them to where they need to be before disappearing back into the sky from which it came.

# RELATIONSHIPS

Compared to other Pantheons where interpersonal squabbles are commonplace, the Bogovi are surprisingly civil to each other, even those who are diametrically opposed such as Perun and Veles, Dahzbog and Veles, or even Veles and Veles (in his dragon form, of course). Morena might sometimes find herself jealous of how everyone loves Jarilo but are less warm to her, but she is always the first to defend him. When it comes to other Pantheons, the Bogovi are also the least likely to put on airs of superiority. They recognize and admire the similarities they share rather than attempt to assert dominance. Perun and Thor compete in throwing axes, Veles finds ways to prank proud gods like Indra to knock them down a few pegs and keep them mindful that no one is perfect to any particular degree.

## OTHER PANTHEONS

The Bogovi: most likely to get along with everyone, but also totally willing to punch them in the face if it suits them. They're a rowdy bunch who usually look at pantheons like the bureaucratic Shén, arrogant Devá, and death-obsessed Netjer as being too uptight for their own good. On the other hand, the Bogovi surprisingly have a great deal in common with the Theoi, Yazata, and Aesir — some would even say there is a striking resemblance between the lot of them.

## CURRENT PRIORITIES

The current priority of the Bogovi is maintaining the status quo, as it were, but are realizing that doing so comes with a cost. They teeter on a precipice of adhering to their natures or doing what is roundly seen as the “right” thing and going against them for the sake of The World while being keenly aware that drawing too much attention to themselves and these actions may risk annihilation.

## GREATEST WEAKNESS

The Bogovi possess all the traits inherent to greatness: honor, courage, conviction and loyalty. However, they are still Gods and are a capricious sort who operated on a level that isn't always suited to consideration of mortals — after all, they serve a much higher power and have a duty to their own nature to uphold. The more they stay true to this nature, the less likely they are to awaken Svarog, but that

is not without its challenges in these modern nights. In a world that is becoming increasingly more complicated and more aware of the forces at work behind the scenes, the less likely they are to abide by that nature. Besides, what could it hurt to indulge every now and then?

## PANTHEON PATH OF THE BOGOVI

**Path Skills:** Culture, Survival

**Virtues:** Found and Wayward. The seasons and the natural world are in a constant state of flux, and so, too, are the Bogovi. Forever swinging between two extremes like a pendulum, rarely stopping in the middle for a moment of balance, they are perpetually stuck in a cycle of fiery passion followed by bouts of deep melancholy. Intensely fractious, the volatile nature of the Bogovi are often thrusts into dangerous situations of their own making. To make things worse, they are also besieged by witches and monsters who seek to trip them up and use them as means to an end. They acknowledge the part they play, nonetheless, and work to undo what one night of rowdiness inevitably brought to their doorsteps.

To be found, to greet the day, is to embrace one's nature, and to find one's self; for Jarilo, it is bringing forth the fecundity of the earth and reveling in its pleasures, while for Perun it is delivering punishment through a terrible storm. Being Found means to be bold, to be moral and upright in defense of one's community, to announce one's self and one's passions loudly, to act without dissembling. Yet when the seasons shift and the days grow dark and foreboding, so does their demeanor. The Bogovi become world-weary and melancholic, falling into a black mood that permeates their every action. To be wayward is to act against one's nature — sometimes against one's own self-interests, and sometimes against the interests of others, for selfish and destructive impulses belong to the wayward path. To cloak their light, even in necessity, means to embrace the darkness. Knowing what is at stake each time their conviction pushes them to act in the wayward way, they find themselves too often unable to do anything about it. One day, the pendulum might finally break — taking all of the Bogovi with it.



# BRIGITTE

## PART ONE

### I

Fog rolled in over the Mississippi, creeping its way along the banks and up onto the Riverwalk. In Jackson Square, tourists would be snapping photos of the cathedral in the gloom and strolling beneath mist-limned streetlights to their destinations in the Quarter. Were Donnie here, he'd strike a brooding pose and stage a picture of his silhouette in the brume for his followers to sigh over.

But Brigitte was alone tonight, settled on a bench with a view of the pier where the steamboat Natchez docked. On its wooden planks, a lone saxophonist played, his high, clear song cutting through the fog and carrying out over the river. It must have carried out over the French Quarter, too, at least until it collided with the chaotic, joyous bustle of Bourbon Street. The song drew tourists, now and then — mostly couples, who held hands as they stopped to listen, or slipped arms around one another's waists. They tossed coins and bills into the musician's open case before they moved on, and he played a little flourish as thanks.

It seemed very on-the-nose to Brigitte, the sort of thing you'd see in an ad from New Orleans' travel and tourism board: foggy night, romantic music, enchanted couples. The commercial would cut away to Mardi Gras floats, or gamblers tossing their dice at Harrah's, people *laissez les bon temps rouler*. But she was no tourist. New Orleans was home, had always been, and she'd known the man playing the sax since she was a little girl. Joseph's hair had gone white in the intervening years, and wrinkles creased his dark brown face, but his fingers were as deft on the keys

as they'd been when her mother brought her here to listen to him.

These days, he busked to supplement his retirement income, to cover the bills where Medicare and social security fell short. He attended community pot-lucks, had neighbors who checked in on him ever since his wife passed two summers back. Brigitte looked in on him herself now and then, bringing him a plate, or sitting with him while he told stories about his youth. The practice baffled some members of her Band. They had their parents' enemies to fight, a World to save. More than once, Donnie'd suggested she call Meals on Wheels, or offered to help her find a personal assistant to delegate the work to.

What he never got was that, to Brigitte, her community *was* the World. Joseph didn't go hungry when she was out of town. He had no shortage of friends who'd drive him to the grocery store on Tuesdays or to church on Sundays. They could all get along just fine without her, but they didn't have to, and that was the entire point. Eric got it, more than the others. He occasionally snagged headlines for saving people from whatever horrors had burst out of the earth. Brigitte shored her community up before they ever needed rescuing.

... but that didn't mean they *never* needed it.

She lit a cigarette, watching the smoke curl around her. Though the trickle of tourists had dried up, she and Joseph weren't alone. Spirits gathered around them, drawn by his music. Young and old alike came to listen, their clothing styles spanning more than

three centuries. Some stayed close to Brigitte, where they could inhale the sweet smell of her tobacco. Others gathered around Joseph, swaying to his song. She scanned their faces for his wife's shade but saw no sign of her. Brigitte suspected she'd been reborn at last — there'd been a spate of grandchildren and grand-nieces and nephews born since her passing.

Had Joseph's concert only been attended by the gentle dead, Brigitte may have abandoned her half-smoked cigarette on the edge of a DPW-supplied ashcan, spilled a little rum on the concrete, and been on her way. Problem was, she'd gotten word that the Night Doctors were prowling, and had set their sights on Joseph.

She'd fought them before, called the Band in to help, even. They'd shut down one of the Night Doctors' "clinics" and sent them packing, but not before the leeches harmed the people they'd kidnapped off the streets. Her tip came too late for the others to get here; Brigitte was on her own for this.

Footsteps thudded behind her. The fog muted their already-furtive pace, but Brigitte felt them through the ground beneath her boots. She stood slowly, adjusted her tall top hat, straightened her swallowtail coat. The spirits crowded behind her as she turned to face their

unwelcome guests. They gathered around Joseph, even though there was little they could do. He played on, eyes closed, lost in his song.

Two figures appeared at the edge of the fog-shrouded park. Tonight, they weren't dressed as doctors: no lab coats, no stethoscopes, no surgical masks. Truth be told, these probably weren't Night Doctors themselves but hired muscle: They carried themselves like military men and had the crew cuts to prove it. Brigitte wouldn't be surprised if they'd been some flavor of special forces, once. Maybe even still were — rumor had it the Night Doctors were at least government-funded, though that money was thoroughly laundered through shell companies and anonymous donors. Even Omolara Muhammād had run into walls trying to trace their accounts.

Brigitte glanced along the Riverwalk, but no one was coming. She wondered if they'd placed sentinels farther down, to wave off potential witnesses.

"Park's closed, ma'am," one of them said. "You'll have to move along."

"Funny," said Brigitte. "I was about to say the same to you."

## II

She took one last drag on the cigarette, then flicked the smoldering butt between them. The shorter, stockier one fell for it and turned to follow its arc. The other one recognized her distraction for what it was and remained laser-focused on Brigitte.

Which meant he didn't see her coco macaque coming until it cracked him upside the head. He staggered sideways as the stick came around for another bell-ringing, its movements guided by the ghede bound to it. He warded off the second blow with a heavily tattooed forearm and attempted to snatch the coco macaque out of the air. It danced back out of his reach, hovering just off the ground.

He shook his head and rolled his shoulders. Brigitte wasn't entirely surprised he could shrug off the hit — the Night Doctors probably paid good money for their heavies. To have one taken down by a single skull-crack was too much to hope for. "All right," he said, "we'll take you both in, then."

*Eric will be sorry he missed this.*

She closed her eyes and extended her senses into the ground beneath their feet. She felt the concrete, still holding the Louisiana sun's warmth long into the night. It carried echoes of travelers' footsteps and the far-off rumble of the streetcars. Beneath it, the soil sang with the river's rush. Brigitte's fists closed around

empty air. She raised her arms up, like a celebrant encouraging her congregation to lift their voices.

The ground rumbled, a deep bass sound resonating in eerie harmony with Joseph's song. Jagged shards of flagstone and river rock erupted at their feet, disrupting their strides. The coco macaque darted between Tattoo Guy's legs, tangling them and sending him face first into the dirt.

His stocky friend made it a few steps closer, nearly within grabbing range. Brigitte dropped her hands swiftly; a hole opened in front of him. He saw it coming, tried to juke away, but momentum won out. His foot pistoned down into the gap while his top half kept going forward. Brigitte winced at the wet snap, but she felt no pity. What their employers would do to Joseph would hurt a thousand times worse.

Fury filled her as she pictured it, as she recalled the people her Band had freed from that Night Doctors' facility, as she remembered those they'd been too late to save.

"Not another step," she said, her voice low as the earth's dire rumbling. Short-and-stocky gritted his teeth against a groan. His tattooed friend paused in regaining his feet. Brigitte spread her arms wide and grinned.

To those who knew him, Baron Samedi's smile was the one a friend wore when they welcomed you home after a long time away. It was the mouth-wide-open,



head-back guffaw that accompanied a bawdy joke, and the belly laugh that went with a story well-told.

But these two, who had no qualms about plucking an elderly Black man off the street, who'd turn him over to men that dealt in pain and fear and saw their victims as *experiments* rather than *people*, they were no friends of the Baron, or his daughter.

In Brigitte's face, they saw only the rictus grin of their own inevitable deaths.

"Get out of here," she intoned. "Tell your bosses to stay away. Tell them this city's people are off-limits." She was no child of Shango, but still the air quivered around her as though lightning might strike. "Tell them Brigitte de la Croix guards New Orleans now!"

They scrambled over each other, each vying to leave the other behind. Short-and-stocky lost that battle; he limped after his tattooed associate, casting terrified glances toward Brigitte until the fog swallowed him up.

The coco macaque returned to her, quivering with shared rage. She took hold of it and realized it wasn't the only source of the thrumming she felt. Her words still reverberated on the air. Every hair stood on end, and her blood sang in her veins, just as it had the day of her Visitation.

Somewhere, out in the city, she heard her father's laughter. He was pleased, and ... amused?

*Of course he is.*

Brigitte laughed, too, as the weight of her pronouncement settled into her bones, and the words she'd spoken bound her that much more tightly to New Orleans and the people she'd sworn to protect.

"Brigitte? Is that you?"

Sometime in the last few moments, Joseph had stopped playing. He stood at the edge of the pier, holding his saxophone and squinting into the fog. Spirits still surrounded him, smiling now. Like they'd heard the same joke Baron Samedi had. *One of them probably told him to look this way.*

"It's me, Joseph." She glanced along the Riverwalk. The fog was lifting. Streetlights that had only been spots of diffuse light were bright pinpoints again. Pedestrians drifted toward them, too, oblivious to what had just gone down.

"Everything all right? I heard shouting."

"Nothing you need to worry about." She moved closer to him. The spirits parted as she approached. "If you're packing up for the night, how about I walk you home?" He lived over on Ursulines, about a mile

away. She was certain the Night Doctors' men would be running until dawn, but she wanted to see him safely to his door, just in case.

"I can't think of better company."

### III

At first, Brigitte hardly felt anything different. A week passed, then two, then an entire month, and her days went on as they ever had. It puzzled her – in the wake of a momentous decree, shouldn't there have been more fanfare? Not that she'd expected a parade of Loa to come visit her, or the dead to come sing her name, but ... something more than her usual, at least.

Change came slow and subtle, like a summer evening. Increasingly, people stopped her on the street to chat. Sometimes it was a simple how-do-you-do, or a comment on the weather. Brigitte didn't mind. She knew them all, their families, their struggles. She knew what they needed from her: some, only a kind word or a good laugh; others, advice. Often, she stepped in, coming around to a neighbor's house to sit with their ailing sister a while, dancing along in a second line parade on a Sunday, or doing hands-on work in the Lower Ninth.

She heard from the Loas, indirectly. Ghosts carried messages to her, sending her on this errand or that for her father. Scions of Damballa and Legba bought her drinks at the bar, vying to be the first ones to get the gossip.

Of the Night Doctors, Brigitte saw no sign.

It wasn't until Yukiko's third text that she realized how busy the city had kept her. The Band hadn't needed anything urgent from her, so Brigitte hadn't torn herself away. Her calendar was full, that was all, or so she'd assumed. Every Scion went through flurries like this, where their to-do list grew longer by the day. It would even out before long. She replied to Yukiko, promising they'd get coffee soon when things got less ridiculous.

Then the river monsters rose out of the Mississippi. Two of them, two days apart. The local stations dedicated segments on the 11 o'clock news, and drive-time radio DJs argued over which Titans might have sent them forth. The one thing witness footage reliably caught was Brigitte de la Croix, standing tall in the face of the serpentine terrors and driving them away. A week after that, a son of Ares and a daughter of Takemikazuchi got into an argument after an extended pub crawl through the Quarter, and it was Brigitte who stopped them from punching one another clear through the Cabildo.

"It's not going to stop, you know."

While he tucked the sax into its case, Brigitte lit a cigarette and unscrewed the top of her flask. She took a swig, then offered it to Joseph. Arm in arm, they strolled homeward.

Brigitte startled. She was at the park again, watching the river just in case a kraken tried to drag the Natchez under in the middle of its lunchtime jazz cruise. She hadn't noticed anyone approaching, but she relaxed as a round-faced middle-aged Black woman settled in beside her. The woman wore a sundress covered in bright pink flowers. The last time Brigitte had seen her, dancing at a wedding last spring, she'd worn a younger face, but the same dress. "Erzulie Dantò. It's lovely to see you."

The Goddess held out a bakery bag and smiled as Brigitte selected a petit four from within. "And you, Brigitte." She chose a sky-blue macaron for herself and took a dainty bite. Her eyes closed with pleasure. "I hear you've had quite the month."

"That's one way to put it. What do you mean, 'It's not going to stop'?"

"You've taken your first steps on a specific path. Most of us, when we start down that road, we see how far afield it takes us." By *us*, Brigitte knew, Erzulie meant those Loa who'd once been Scions themselves. "Most of the time, it brings us home again, eventually. But if you're not going to go looking for trouble, it won't mind coming to you."

The truth be told, she'd been feeling the itch to get back on the road since Yukiko's texts. It wasn't that she wanted to flee from the responsibilities she had here, just that she knew there were other things happening in the World, and she felt a little disconnected. The Band saw each other less and less these days; everyone had their own shit to deal with. Aaron was rarely home, off saving lives in war zones. If a wolf started using the sun as a chew toy, Eric would call. But she missed the days where they were figuring all this out together, when they'd get into a knock-down, drag-out fight with something bigger than themselves, and go have a drink after, to celebrate kicking its ass.

She missed the quiet moments with them as much as the dangerous ones: Donnie pausing to sign autographs, Aaron scowling at some awful dad joke Eric told, Yukiko and Horace arguing over tactics. Yet, every time she'd thought of gassing up her stepfather's old hearse and heading out of town, or even forsaking the car and just finding a Touchstone that would transport her across the World, her phone rang, or someone knocked on her door, and those plans were shelved a little longer.

"You did *that* to yourself," said Erzulie.

"I ... what?" Had she spoken aloud?

"I know that look. Wanderlust and longing. You went and told those men you were the protector of New Orleans, and they weren't the only ones who heard you." She waved a hand, a gesture that encompassed the water, the sky, and everything in between. "We all heard you. The Loa, the city, everyone. Fate wrapped its strings around you."

"So now I can't leave, but if I stay, things are going to keep showing up to wreak havoc? And New Orleans gets caught in the middle?" She thought about Gods whose tales involved pulling a mortal companion's ass out of the fire. She knew Scions who were damned reluctant to make friends for fear of repeating their parents' fates and harming their loved ones. Had she managed to do the same thing, on a citywide scale? Brigitte suppressed a groan.

Erzulie laughed. "You're not so tightly bound, not just yet. There's still some wiggle room. Do you have your car keys on you?"

"And gas money in my pocket. My mother taught me to always have both."

"Good." Erzulie plucked one more confection from the bag and handed the rest to Brigitte. "Go get in your car and don't stop until you're out of Louisiana. This will tide you over."

Her hand on the bag, she faltered. "But, if something else comes along...."

Erzulie Dantò wasn't a tall woman, but for the moment, she towered over Brigitte. "There's more than a handful of us who've been watching over New Orleans since before you were born. It'll still be standing when you get back."

## IV

The Band always gave Eric Donner shit for the ugly old GTO he drove, often while they were riding in it. Brigitte was guilty of it, too, but she kept her ribbings gentle. She did, after all, drive a hearse that had rolled off the production line in 1941. But her car was a classic. It had style.

Getting out of New Orleans was easier than she'd anticipated. People greeted her warmly as she passed, but no one asked anything of her, not even the time. She wondered if it was some kind of magic at work, or if luck had simply provided her a lull. It was once she was on the road that worry kicked in. She kept looking in the rearview, expecting to see something massive looming over Lake Pontchartrain. But all she saw was a perfect sunny day.

Brigitte headed north, with the windows down and the radio blaring. Sometimes, the urge to turn around and go home crept in past the roaring wind and wailing guitars. She'd eyeball the upcoming exits, or think about pulling off into the breakdown lane to check her texts — had someone organized a grocery run for Joseph? Did they have enough hands at the potluck? Local lore said the shutters on the top floor of the old Ursuline convent were held shut with blessed nails to keep torpid vampires trapped inside. Wouldn't it just be Murphy's damned Law if they woke up while Brigitte was spending the night at a motel two states away?

She might have talked herself into turning around, were she alone in the car.

Fellow motorists on I-10 who glanced at the hearse the next lane over saw only Brigitte at the wheel. Maybe the keen-eyed noticed the top hat resting on

the passenger seat, or her coco macaque poking up out of the foot well. None of them saw the spirits riding in the back seat. Some had been there for years, the echoes of those long-dead whose bodies had taken their last ride in the rear. Others were newer, spirits Brigitte had aided since her Visitation. Still others were merely passing through, hitching along for a few miles as the hearse passed through their haunting grounds.

Every one of them, when they saw her wavering, when they sensed the heavy car rapidly lose momentum as she left off the gas, caught her eye in the rearview, smiled gently, and shook their head. A few reached forward and squeezed her shoulder; sometimes she even felt it. She kept driving.

The farther away from New Orleans she got, the more that gnawing worry dissipated. By the time Erzulie's gift of confections ran out and her belly rumbled for dinner, the guilt of leaving had lifted almost entirely.

The diner she stopped at was the greasiest of spoons. The décor hadn't been updated for at least four decades, and the jukebox selections about the same. The crowd here was an even mix of regulars and out-of-towners. The server was the type of old pro who didn't need an order pad, even for the little league team taking up three booths in the back that kept changing their minds on the fly. The food was amazing, and the middling coffee wasn't anything so bad a clandestine splash of rum from Brigitte's flask couldn't fix.

No one knew her here, a realization that came with both relief and a pang of homesickness.

She got a slice of apple pie for the road and was standing beside the hearse lighting one last smoke when trouble rolled in on 18 wheels.

The man who oozed out of the truck's cab had a face like a puddle of runny mayonnaise. At first glance, he seemed *too* tall — seven feet, maybe eight — but by the time he came around the bumper she revised her guess to a more reasonable six-and-a-half. The way he stalked toward the diner's entrance said he was looking for a fight. Brigitte set her pie atop the hearse's roof and eased the coco macaque out through the open passenger window.

Before she could intercept him, the diner door banged open and the server — Deb — bustled out. "Please," she said, "it's been a slow week, we're a little short. If you could see your way to —"

The trucker smiled, and Deb paled. His teeth were too small for his mouth, every one of them sharp.

Deb sucked in a slow breath. You didn't work at a place like this as long as she had without having to throw the occasional shit-stirrer out the door. "There's children inside." Her tone was the cautious *let's all*

*be reasonable, now,* you used when trying to defuse a situation already way out of hand. "We'll have you all paid up by Tuesday, and next week we'll be on time."

"I'm not sure you will," he said. "What a shame if something were to befall you. If, say, the fridges and freezers stopped working, and everything inside spoiled." As he passed the hearse, mold bloomed all over the pie in its clear plastic tin.

These weren't Brigitte's people. She'd never been to this diner before, might never pass by here again. She hadn't even talked to anyone during dinner, just listened to the conversations around her. She'd passed a pleasant hour in her cozy corner booth, and it reminded her just a touch of home.

No protection-racket assholes were going to fuck with that on her watch.

"Hey," said Brigitte. "I don't know whose kid you are, but it looks like your parents forgot to teach you manners."

"You're welcome to try," he said, and barreled towards her.

## V

It was like a mountain rumbling toward her. Brigitte had just enough time to plant her feet before he hit. The air whooshed from her lungs with his impact, and her coco macaque went skittering away — but she didn't go down. Her feet dug twin furrows in the packed dirt as he drove her backward. They traveled 20 feet, face to face, teeth gritted, before he finally stopped, confused.

"How...?" He asked, but that was as far as he got.

Brigitte's fist came up in a haymaker, just like Eric had taught her. It was a good hit, solid, the strength of the blow reverberating up her arm. She waited for his eyes to roll up in his head, for him to topple over.

He didn't.

With a roar, he lifted her up and flung her. Corrugated metal groaned as she smashed into the diner's storage shed. Brigitte pushed herself up onto her elbows as a shadow blotted out the setting sun. Dimly, she heard Deb scream. Then a car arced into her view.

*At least he didn't pick the hearse.*

It was a boxy model, an '80s-era Buick Century. Still, heavy as hell, and headed straight for her. Brigitte couldn't help but think how it resembled a coffin as it landed atop her.

It was terribly quiet in the parking lot. A crow took off from a telephone wire, shrieking, and Deb sucked

in another breath to scream. The huge man turned, intent on the diner once more.

His mistake, to think he could bury Baron Samedi's daughter so easily.

The Buick rolled off Brigitte with a pained screech of steel and scattering glass shards. Tomorrow, she'd feel every bruise and scrape, and her muscles would sing their displeasure. Right now, she had a bully to handle. Brigitte brushed dust from her coat as she placed herself between him and Deb. "You should run," she said to him. "While I'm feeling kind."

He laughed. "I'm not leaving until I get what I came here for."

Brigitte matched him stride for stride. This time, when she swung, the earth's strength filled her fists, made them hard and heavy as stone. Her first strike sent him staggering back several steps, as did her second. He wobbled as he regained his footing, dazed but not out. He bared those pointy teeth, and Brigitte grinned back.

It'd been a long while since she'd had a proper brawl. Sure, she'd kicked the river monsters' asses and got in a few good licks with the drunken Scions, but this reminded her of those first days with the Band. It was exhilarating.

By now, customers lined the diner's windows, watching the fight. The man feinted and cuffed her. Brigitte slammed an elbow into his stomach. Back and

forth they went, until they both panted with the exertion. Then he staggered, and she darted in to kick his legs out from under him.

A second too late, she realized he was faking. Momentum had her, carried her close. His clammy hand caught her by the throat, slammed her into the ground. "I'm done with you," he growled. "If you've got prayers to say, well — too fucking bad."

Stars swarmed her vision. *Not here, not in some place I barely know. Not alone.* The ground was warm beneath her, holding in the sun's heat. "Know what you don't get a lot of around here?" she rasped.

He squinted. "What?"

"Earthquakes." The pavement heaved beneath them and sent him tumbling off her. Brigitte shoved herself to her feet and punched him again.

He flew backward, stopped only by his truck's chrome grille. He shoved himself off it, but the dent was unmistakably person-shaped. For a moment, she thought he might charge her again, but instead he spat a mouthful of blood into the dirt. "This shitty little diner's not worth my trouble," he said. Then he climbed into the cab, started the vehicle with a roar, and drove off.

A moment later, Deb appeared at her side. She held the coco macaque and top hat out like offerings. "Are you all right?"

The next morning, she woke to a text from Omolara: *Is this you?* Attached was a link to blurry, shakily shot phone footage from inside the diner. One of the little leaguers had caught the second half of the fight — after the man threw the car at her, just before she lifted it off herself — and uploaded it.

*Funny story,* she replied. *I'll tell you about it in person. On my way to NYC.*

Brigitte arrived three days after the diner incident, still sore from the brawl. She probably could have made the drive in a single day, but she'd headed east a while, after Atlanta, and the weather was gorgeous all the way up the coast. No other big problems interrupted her travels, though she did deal (quietly, away from recording cell phones) with other small problems as she found them: a handful of unquiet dead here; an unintended, open gate to an Underworld there. Small fixes, all of them, issues that had gone unnoticed, or not caused enough regional upset to draw in Heroes to stop them.

But today's frayed wiring was tomorrow's house fire, and Brigitte believed strongly in taking care of the issue *before* anyone got hurt.

"Nothing a good, warm soak won't fix." She tucked the stick under her arm and knocked the dents out of her hat. "What about you? And who the hell *was* that?"

"I'm all right. He's been coming around about a year, now. Says he's the son of Crom Cruach and is here to prepare for his daddy's inevitable return." She glared down the road, where the truck was just disappearing around a bend. "The first time he made his demands, we refused to pay, and he ruined all the food inside. Broke the flat top and busted the compressor that powers the walk-ins. Insurance ... well, they don't know what to do with ... that sort of thing. It's not exactly what they mean by 'act of God.' Cleared out the savings getting everything working again. Since then, it's just been easier to pay."

"I'm sorry," said Brigitte. "Look, I can't stay, but he won't come back for a few days at least. I'm going to make some calls and get someone here for when he does. Would that be all right?"

"That would be ... I don't even know how to thank you for what you did already."

"Tell you what. My dessert was collateral damage. Cut me a new piece and we'll call it good?"

"I can do better than that."

Half an hour later, Brigitte got back on the road, an entire apple pie richer.

## VI

She felt pretty fantastic by the time she hit the New York City limits. Brigitte loved cities. None ever quite stacked up to New Orleans, but she loved the press of people on a sidewalk and how each neighborhood was a small city on its own. Eric got itchy when everyone seemed packed in so tightly, but Brigitte found comfort in the sound of music wafting from windows or laughter in a nearby apartment. She breathed in tempting aromas from street food carts. She liked streetcars and subways and buildings whose rooftops kissed the sky.

Omolara Muhammād's office was in one such building.

The daughter of Oya Iyansan met her in the lobby with a warm hug and a cup of coffee. They said little as the elevator drew them into the sky, to her company's suite above the city. Her office was all windows, the New York skyline stretching out beyond them beneath wisps of clouds. They sat on a couch placed just-so before them. Omolara waited for her to speak.

Brigitte got the sense she'd done this before, that it was how she got clients to spill their secrets.

It worked.

The story came out in one long ramble, starting with the Night Doctors' men. When she repeated Erzulie's warnings, Omolara nodded along. By the time she finished, her mouth was dry.

"So," said Omolara, filling a crystal tumbler with cool, clear water from a matching carafe and passing it to Brigitte, "what's got you second-guessing yourself?"

Brigitte paused. "Why do you think I'm second-guessing?"

"Here you are, on the path to something huge, and you're hesitating. It's written in every line of your face. If Erzulie hadn't sent you out of New Orleans, I'd say you were running away, but that's not exactly it." She frowned and tilted her head, like she was looking for the flaw in a business proposal. "I heard your name for years before we ever met. You and your Band were all over the news, kicking ass and saving the World, and it's time for you to move on to something even bigger, even if it means doing it alone. That's hard, and it's scary, and yeah, you could fuck it up. But you won't."

"No, I won't." Brigitte was well aware of her own capability, of the power she wielded, and her potential for more. But Omolara had hit on something, a line

of thought Brigitte had been shying away from and drowning out with chart-topping songs the whole way north.

*I don't want to say goodbye.*

She liked being alive, every second of it. She and her Band risked their lives to make sure other people could live out their own in peace, and she was fine with that. Long ago, she'd come to terms with the idea that she might be the one helping Donnie or Yukiko or Horace cross that last threshold if a fight went south. That was the kindness you did for the people you loved, even if it broke your heart.

She never thought she'd be the one to leave first.

"I have to tell them," she said.

Omolara didn't ask who she meant. She merely got up and went to the little bar tucked discreetly into the office's one solid wall; she kept her back turned to give Brigitte a moment to compose herself. When she came back, it was with two glasses of rum. "I can ask them to come here if you'd like. You can have a board room."

"No, but thank you," said Brigitte. "I guess my road trip's not quite done."





# CHAPTER THREE

# DEMIGOD

# CHARACTERS

The gods conceal from men the happiness of death,  
that they may endure life.

— Lucan

Demigods are regarded by their divine parents in a variety of ways, ranging the gamut from intense pride and joy at the character's accomplishments, to relief at new cannon fodder for the Second Titanomachy, to anger and fear of an ascended rival.

## READY-MADE CHARACTERS

If you want to skip the character-creation process and jump right into playing a game of **Scion: Demigod** as quickly as possible, we've upgraded the five characters from **Origin** and **Hero** to Demigods.

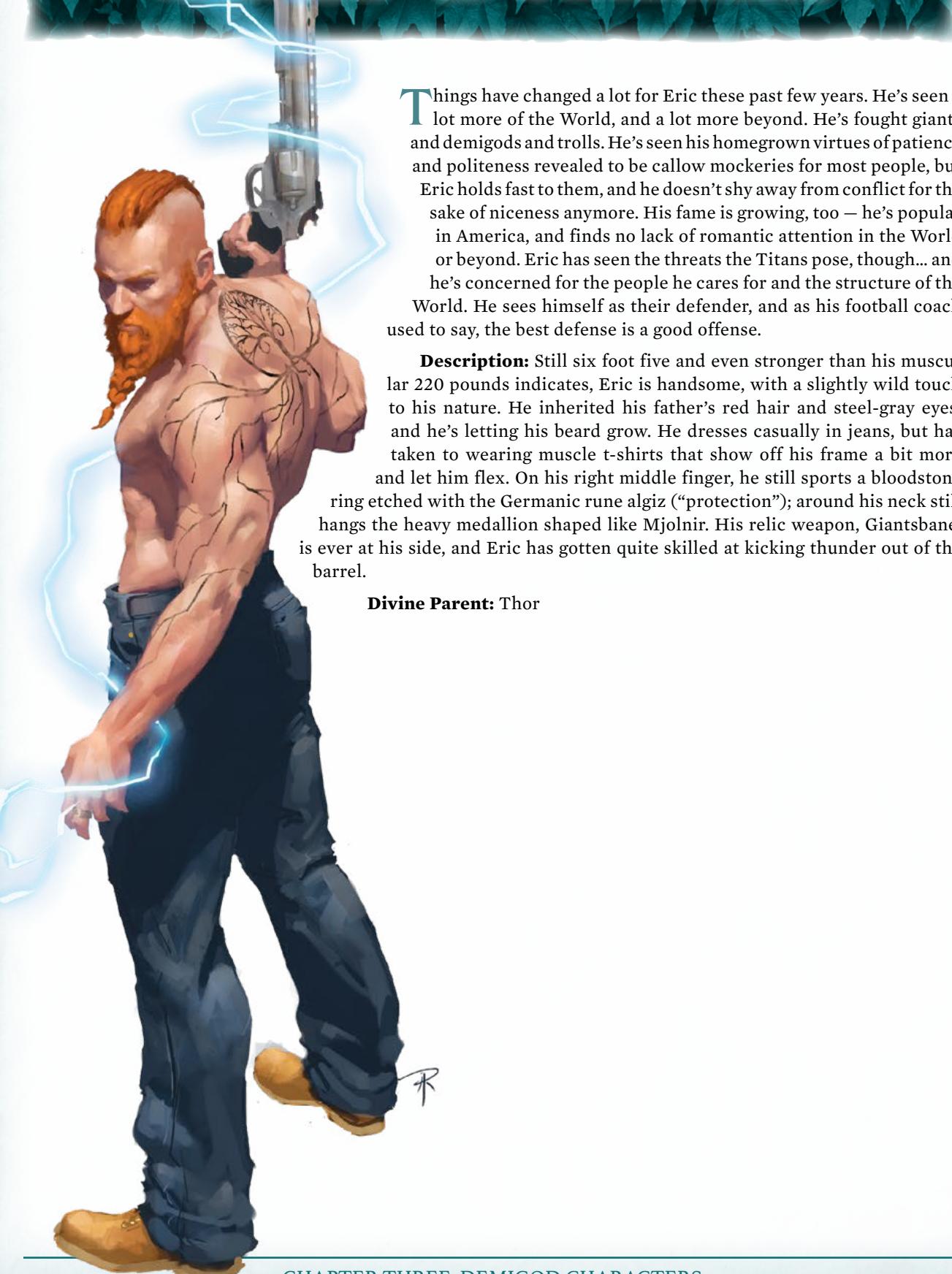
### MAKING THESE YOUR CHARACTERS

The ready-made characters on these sheets are slightly incomplete; while we've suggested contacts, we haven't provided Bonds, the characters might have additional Birthrights, we definitely don't mention Fatebindings, and the characters don't always have a full complement of Knacks. This is intentional; players should feel free to make whatever modifications to the character sheet they deem necessary or pleasing, and so we've given them the space to do so. This way, the players can define how Eric feels about Hassan given their relationships with their parents and their pantheon, or whether Emanuel's got a serious problem with his growing narcissism and sense of grandeur, or to detail Rashmi's crush on Rhiannon. The Storyguide, likewise, is free to define the particulars of Andvaranaut in Hassan's hands, and how the curse affects him and the rest of the Band.

Most of all, we've left the Deeds the Scions achieved for their individual dots of Legend incomplete, though there are some suggestions in the writeups and the pieces of fiction scattered throughout the books. These aren't meant to be a canonical straitjacket, but a framework for making the characters your own and tying them more deeply into the World. If the game is starting at the Demigod level, spend part of your first session detailing the various Bonds, Deeds for previous dots of Legend, and Fatebindings each Scion has attached to them. If you'd like some guidance, link a Bond towards a Bandmate relating to a Legendary Deed they both participated in — perhaps Rashmi combined her heavenly fire-shot with Eric's Giantsbane blast to fell a mighty giant, leaving Eric awed and grateful but feeling a little insecure, or perhaps Rhiannon helped Hassan to cure a great disease spreading through the city's refugee population by growing unique and rare herbs with magic, leaving Hassan not only grateful but curious as to her true potential.

These characters aren't canon, not really. No myths are strictly canonical. They're stories told and retold, and if you want to tell them a different way than usual, that's how the best stories come about.

# ERIC DONNER



Things have changed a lot for Eric these past few years. He's seen a lot more of the World, and a lot more beyond. He's fought giants and demigods and trolls. He's seen his homegrown virtues of patience and politeness revealed to be callow mockeries for most people, but Eric holds fast to them, and he doesn't shy away from conflict for the sake of niceness anymore. His fame is growing, too — he's popular in America, and finds no lack of romantic attention in the World or beyond. Eric has seen the threats the Titans pose, though... and he's concerned for the people he cares for and the structure of the World. He sees himself as their defender, and as his football coach used to say, the best defense is a good offense.

**Description:** Still six foot five and even stronger than his muscular 220 pounds indicates, Eric is handsome, with a slightly wild touch to his nature. He inherited his father's red hair and steel-gray eyes, and he's letting his beard grow. He dresses casually in jeans, but has taken to wearing muscle t-shirts that show off his frame a bit more and let him flex. On his right middle finger, he still sports a bloodstone ring etched with the Germanic rune algiz ("protection"); around his neck still hangs the heavy medallion shaped like Mjolnir. His relic weapon, Giantsbane, is ever at his side, and Eric has gotten quite skilled at kicking thunder out of the barrel.

**Divine Parent:** Thor

# SCION

## DEMIGOD

Eric Donner

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Player \_\_\_\_\_

Chronicle

**Thor (Born)**

Parent \_\_\_\_\_

### SKILLS

- |   |       |  |       |
|---|-------|--|-------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Academics: _____                         | OOOOO | <input type="checkbox"/> Medicine: _____                               | OOOOO |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Athletics: Feats of Strength  | ●●●●● | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occult: _____                      | ●●○○○ |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Close Combat: Rushes          | ●●●●● | <input type="checkbox"/> Persuasion: _____                             | ●○○○○ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Culture: _____                           | ●○○○○ | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Pilot: Cars                        | ●●●●● |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Empathy: _____                           | OOOOO | <input type="checkbox"/> Science: _____                                | OOOOO |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Firearms: Dwarven-Forged Arms | ●●●●● | <input type="checkbox"/> Subterfuge: _____                             | OOOOO |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Integrity: _____                         | ●●○○○ | <input type="checkbox"/> Survival: _____                               | ●○○○○ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Leadership: _____                        | ●○○○○ | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Technology: Mechanical Engineering | ●●●●● |

### ATTRIBUTES

MENTAL			PHYSICAL			SOCIAL		
POWER	Intellect	●●○○○	Might	●●●●●	Presence	●●●●●		
FINESSE	Cunning	●●○○○	Dexterity	●●○○○	Manipulation	●○○○○		
RESISTANCE	Resolve	●●○○○	Stamina	●●●●○	Composure	●●●●●		

### PATHS

- Blue-Collar Football Kind of Town   
 Muscle Car Boy Scout   
 Demigod of Thor, God of Thunder   
 Effects: Legendary Title: Guardian of Midgard  
 Birthrights: Giantsbane (Relic 4, Sky); Algiz Ring (Relic 1, +1 Scale to Epic Strength when guarding); Ghost (Guide 1)

### DEEDS

- Short \_\_\_\_\_   
 Long \_\_\_\_\_   
 Band \_\_\_\_\_

### VIRTUE

- Audacity \_\_\_\_\_ OOOOO Fatalism

### KNACKS

Mortal	Immortal
Close the Gap	Eternal Guardian
Enhanced Impact	
Tempered	
A Fortress	
Reverse Engineer	

### CONTACTS

- Grandpa's Ghost  
 Muscle Car Enthusiasts  
 Techno-Vikings

### CALLINGS

- Creator \_\_\_\_\_ ●○○○○  
 Guardian \_\_\_\_\_ ●●●○○  
 Warrior \_\_\_\_\_ ●●●○○

### MOMENTUM

- □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □

### HEALTH

- Bruised \_\_\_\_\_ +1  
 □ Bruised \_\_\_\_\_ +1  
 □ Bruised \_\_\_\_\_ +1  
 □ Injured \_\_\_\_\_ +2  
 □ Injured \_\_\_\_\_ +2  
 □ Maimed \_\_\_\_\_ +4

### DIVINITY DICE

- □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □

### LEGEND

- ● ● ● ● ○ ○ ○ ○ ○

### BOONS/PURVIEWS

- Sky (Bolt from the Blue, Flight)  
 Forge (Reclaim from Ruin)  
 (+2 additional Boons)

- Taken Out  
 Movement Dice: 10  
 Defense Roll: 4

# EMANUEL MONTERO

The reincarnation of Xiuhtechutli has changed the most among his bandmates. As he walks the path of his myth and Legend, more and more of his memories return. Emanuel disappears increasingly every day; the Turquoise Lord is who is left behind. Emanuel enlists his bandmates' help in battling his rival, an Incarnate Scion of Ometecuhtli. Despite his façade, he is worried for the first time in his life. He knows he must face his rival at the end of his life, and only one of them will ascend to Godhood. The other will be consumed and absorbed, and he does not intend for himself to be the sacrificial victim.

**Description:** Emanuel still prefers tailored suits, but has also taken to wearing the traditional garb of his people, and occasionally wields his topaz helm. He still smokes off-brand cigarettes, jokes about, and rarely if ever actually understands the value of money – he's got way too much of it to understand how it works for people who aren't him. He understands power and prestige, though, and craves more of it.

**Divine Parent:** Xiuhtechutli



# SCION

## DEMIGOD

Emanuel Montero

Name

Player

Chronicle  
Xiuhtechutli (Incarnate)

Parent

### SKILLS

<input type="checkbox"/> Academics: Aztec History	●●●●●	<input type="checkbox"/> Medicine:	○○○○○
<input type="checkbox"/> Athletics:	○○○○○	<input type="checkbox"/> Occult:	○○○○○
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Close Combat:	●○○○○	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Persuasion: Art of the Deal	●●●●●
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Culture: Mexican Politics	●●●●○	<input type="checkbox"/> Pilot:	○○○○○
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Empathy: Sympathy	●●●○○	<input type="checkbox"/> Science:	○○○○○
<input type="checkbox"/> Firearms:	○○○○○	<input type="checkbox"/> Subterfuge: Half-Truths	●●●○○
<input type="checkbox"/> Integrity:	○○○○○	<input type="checkbox"/> Survival:	○○○○○
<input type="checkbox"/> Leadership:	○○○○○	<input type="checkbox"/> Technology:	○○○○○

### ATTRIBUTES

	MENTAL	PHYSICAL	SOCIAL			
POWER	Intellect	●●●●○	Might	●●●○○	Presence	●●●●●
FINESSE	Cunning	●●●○○	Dexterity	●●○○○	Manipulation	●●●○○
RESISTANCE	Resolve	●●○○○	Stamina	●●●○○	Composure	●●●●○

### PATHS

A Life of Privilege and Service	<input type="checkbox"/>
The Leader Born, Not Made	<input type="checkbox"/>
With the Future in His Wake	<input type="checkbox"/>
Effects: Legendary Title: The Obsidian Lord Reborn	
Birthrights: Eagle Warriors (Followers 3), Obsidian Knife (Relic 2; 1e to downed foes), Elder Nahual (Guide 1)	

### KNACKS

Mortal	Immortal
Command Voice	Not Today, Friends
Reverse Engineer	They Cannot Be Touched
The Unlimited Quartermaster	

### CALLINGS

Creator	●●○○○
Guardian	●●○○○
Leader	●●●○○

### BOONS/PURVIEWS

Beasts (Leader of the Pack, +1 add'l)
Nextahualli (Flesh of the World,
Repay the Debt)
(+1 additional Boon)

### MOMENTUM



### DIVINITY DICE



### LEGEND



### HEALTH

<input type="checkbox"/> Bruised	_____	+1
<input type="checkbox"/> Bruised	_____	+1
<input type="checkbox"/> Bruised	_____	+1
<input type="checkbox"/> Injured	_____	+2
<input type="checkbox"/> Injured	_____	+2
<input type="checkbox"/> Maimed	_____	+4

Taken Out

Movement Dice: 3 \_\_\_\_\_

Defense Roll: 2 \_\_\_\_\_

# HASSAN AL-HAKIM



Once again in possession of his medical license (albeit re-obtaining it through trickery and less than legitimate means), Hassan has made a name for himself supporting rebuilding efforts in Iraq and helping other refugees and the dispossessed. Hassan has single-handedly funded his endeavors through the acquisition of Andvaranaut, and takes pride in keeping his prize while avoiding the curse through an incredibly intricate series of maneuvers and manipulations, something even his father couldn't manage. Secretly, he wonders if the curse is too subtle for him to avoid by simply passing it around, and he wonders what the long-term effects will be. If his father could manage to avoid trouble, Hassan reasons, so can he — even if he must become a God to do it.

**Description:** Hassan no longer cares if someone wonders if an Iraqi refugee has money. He still drives his cab on the weekends, although this is more an affectation and a way for him to spread the curse of Andvaranaut to the rich and wealthy while filtering the wealth to the poor and oppressed.

During the week, he's found wearing a white coat and sitting on multiple surgical boards, offering unorthodox solutions to impossible problems.

**Divine Parent:** Loki

# SCION

## DEMIGOD

Hassan al-Hakim

Name

Player

Chronicle

Loki (Born)

Parent

### SKILLS

<input type="checkbox"/> Academics:	OOOOO	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Medicine: Thoracic Surgery	●●●●●
<input type="checkbox"/> Athletics:	OOOOO	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occult:	○○○○○
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Close Combat:	●●●○○	<input type="checkbox"/> Persuasion: On Behalf of Others	●●●○○
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Culture: Refugees	●●●●○	<input type="checkbox"/> Pilot:	○○○○○
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Empathy: Bedside Manner	●●●●○	<input type="checkbox"/> Science:	○○○○○
<input type="checkbox"/> Firearms:	○○○○○	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Subterfuge: The Greater Good	●●●●●
<input type="checkbox"/> Integrity:	○○○○○	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Survival: Scrounging	●●●●○
<input type="checkbox"/> Leadership:	○○○○○	<input type="checkbox"/> Technology:	●●○○○

### ATTRIBUTES

	MENTAL	PHYSICAL	SOCIAL
POWER	Intellect	Might	Presence
FINESSE	Cunning	Dexterity	Manipulation
RESISTANCE	Resolve	Stamina	Composure

### PATHS

- War-Torn
- "Actually, I'm on the Board."
- "Make Something of Yourself."
- Effects: Legendary Title: Doctor Without Borders
- Birthrights: Sun-Eating Wolf Lighter (Relic 4; Darkness, Death)
- Hallbjorn (Guide 3)

### DEEDS

- Short
- Long
- Band

### VIRTUE

- Audacity Fatalism

### KNACKS

Mortal	Immortal
Experienced Traveler	Panacea
Flatlander	
Instant Diagnosis	
Smoke and Mirrors	
Takes One to Know One	

### CONTACTS

- Refugee Advocacy Groups
- High-Level Medical Professionals
- Anyone Who Has Ridden a Rideshare in the Past Year

### CALLINGS

Healer	
Liminal	
Trickster	

### MOMENTUM



### HEALTH

<input type="checkbox"/> Bruised	_____	+1
<input type="checkbox"/> Bruised	_____	+1
<input type="checkbox"/> Bruised	_____	+1
<input type="checkbox"/> Injured	_____	+2
<input type="checkbox"/> Injured	_____	+2
<input type="checkbox"/> Maimed	_____	+4

### BOONS/PURVIEWS

- Darkness (Night's Caress)
- Death (Unquiet Dead, Way of All Flesh)
- Deception (False History)
- (+1 Additional Boon)

### DIVINITY DICE



### LEGEND



- Taken Out
- Movement Dice: 5
- Defense Roll: 2

# RASHMI BHATTACHARYA

The daughter of Agni has moved her fire from nuclear theory to quantum engineering. When she isn't blasting an asura with heaven's fire from an impossible distance, she's at work in front of a whiteboard, solving delicate equations with practiced ease. She's sure she's close to a breakthrough in both clean energy and quantum computing, and dreams of creating life out of the fire of quarks and leptons. She's close, but she can't get there without becoming a God. If only she could stop the rakshasa from trying to steal her work...

**Description:** Rashmi dresses more conservatively these days, but she still carries her rifle, even it's been upgraded to handle the quantum fire she channels through it. Her appearance is on the cover of more than a few science and engineering magazines, and already she hears the slight murmuring of physicists asking her to look here and bless her work. She can't answer them, yet, but it's only a matter of time.



# SCION

## DEMIGOD

Rashmi Bhattacharya

Name

Chronicle  
Agni (Chosen)

Player

Parent

### SKILLS

- |   |       |   |       |
|---|-------|---|-------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Academics:          | ●●○○○ | <input type="checkbox"/> Medicine:                                  | ○○○○○ |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Athletics:          | ●○○○○ | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occult: Ranged Relics           | ●●●●○ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Close Combat:                  | ○○○○○ | <input type="checkbox"/> Persuasion:                                | ○○○○○ |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Culture: The Hindus | ●●●●○ | <input type="checkbox"/> Pilot:                                     | ○○○○○ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Empathy:                       | ○○○○○ | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Science: Quantum Theory         | ●●●●● |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Firearms: Rifles    | ●●●●● | <input type="checkbox"/> Subterfuge:                                | ○○○○○ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Integrity:                     | ○○○○○ | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Survival: Urban                 | ●●●●○ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Leadership:                    | ○○○○○ | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Technology: Nuclear Engineering | ●●●●● |

### ATTRIBUTES

	MENTAL	PHYSICAL	SOCIAL
POWER	Intellect	Might	Presence
FINESSE	Cunning	Dexterity	Manipulation
RESISTANCE	Resolve	Stamina	Composure

### PATHS

- Potemkin World   
 Physics Expert   
 Physicist-Priestess   
 Effects: Legendary Title: Hidden Javelin of Agni  
 Birthrights: Khyber Pass Replica Rifle (Relic 4, Fire)  
 iGjaller (Relic 2); Bodhisattva (Guide 1)

### DEEDS

- Short   
 Long   
 Band

### VIRTUE

- Duty Conscience

### KNACKS

Mortal	Immortal
Blockade of Reason	Eternal Genius
Master of the World	
Presence of Magic	
Step Sideways	
Wireless Interface	

### CONTACTS

- Nuclear and Quantum Engineers  
 Shinto Priesthood of Agni  
 Big-Game Hunters

### CALLINGS

- Creator   
 Liminal   
 Sage

### MOMENTUM

- 

### HEALTH

- Bruised \_\_\_\_\_ +1  
 Bruised \_\_\_\_\_ +1  
 Bruised \_\_\_\_\_ +1  
 Injured \_\_\_\_\_ +2  
 Injured \_\_\_\_\_ +2  
 Maimed \_\_\_\_\_ +4

### BOONS/PURVIEWS

- Yoga (Eyes of Knowledge)  
 Fire (Heaven's Fire, Muse of Fire)  
 (+2 Additional Boons)

### DIVINITY DICE

- 

### LEGEND

- ● ● ● ● ○ ○ ○ ○ ○

- Taken Out  
 Movement Dice: 5  
 Defense Roll: 4

# RHIANNON JERNIGAN



Captain Jernigan was never a career goal for Rhiannon, but she finds herself adapting well to the role, overseeing fire fighters and emergency medical services and caring for the people of New York whenever a divine battle gets out of hand. When necessary, though, she doesn't just work cleanup — she handles problems herself, whether it's too-beautiful Fomorians or fire giants asking for Eric. Though she's just a precinct captain, Rhiannon is a confidant of both the Fire Commissioner and the Chief of Department, and pictures of her in action adorn every firehouse in the city. It's become common for firefighters rushing to a blaze to offer up a word to Rhiannon, and she hears every one.

**Description:** It's not quite regulation, but the captain's coat is a lot more dressed-up than Rhiannon prefers. She keeps her hair short and her ears pierced, though, and has no issues dressing in her gear when she's on the job. She's more often found out in the field than behind a desk, delegating most of the paperwork to subordinates; this is quietly tolerated, as everyone recognizes her value doing things actively than managing things passively.

# SCION

## DEMIGOD

Rhiannon Jernigan

Name

Player

Chronicle  
Brigid (Born)

Parent

### SKILLS

- |  |       |  |       |
|--|-------|--|-------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Academics:                         | ●●○○○ | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Medicine: Emergencies      | ●●●●● |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Athletics:                         | ●●●○○ | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occult:                    | ●●○○○ |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Close Combat: Bareknuckle Boxing   | ●●●○○ | <input type="checkbox"/> Persuasion:                           | ○○○○○ |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Culture: Mediation Across Cultures | ●●●○○ | <input type="checkbox"/> Pilot:                                | ○○○○○ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Empathy: Calming Techniques                   | ●●●○○ | <input type="checkbox"/> Science:                              | ○○○○○ |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Firearms: Revolver                 | ●●●○○ | <input type="checkbox"/> Subterfuge:                           | ○○○○○ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Integrity:                                    | ○○○○○ | <input type="checkbox"/> Survival:                             | ○○○○○ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Leadership:                                   | ○○○○○ | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Technology: Communications | ●●●○○ |

### ATTRIBUTES

	MENTAL	PHYSICAL	SOCIAL			
POWER	Intellect	●●○○○	Might	●●●○○	Presence	●●○○○
FINESSE	Cunning	●●○○○	Dexterity	●●●○○	Manipulation	●○○○○
RESISTANCE	Resolve	●●●○○	Stamina	●●●●●	Composure	●●●●●

### PATHS

- Military Brat   
 Combat Medic   
 Flame that Marched Against the Flame   
**Effects:** Legendary Title: The Purifying Flame  
**Birthrights:** Engine Key (Relic 2; Epic Strength), Aes Sidhe Muse (Guide 4), Bronze Fae-Shot Revolver (Relic 1)

### DEEDS

- Short   
 Long   
 Band

### VIRTUE

- Honor  ○○○○○ Prowess

### KNACKS

Mortal	Immortal
Combat Medic	Army of One
Death by Teacup	Breath of Life
Unlimited Quartermaster	

### CONTACTS

- Firefighters and First Responders  
 Urban Fae  
 Upper Military Leadership

### CALLINGS

- Creator  ○○○○○  
 Healer  ●●●○○  
 Warrior  ●●●○○

### MOMENTUM

- 

### HEALTH

- Bruised  +1  
 Bruised  +1  
 Bruised  +1  
 Injured  +2  
 Injured  +2  
 Maimed  +4

### BOONS/PURVIEWS

- Geasa (Tongue of the Bard)  
 Fertility (Blessed Harvest)  
 Fire (Muse of Fire)  
 Health (Healing Hands, F. Diagnosis)

### DIVINITY DICE

- 

### LEGEND

- ● ● ● ● ○ ○ ○ ○ ○

Taken Out

Movement Dice: 6

Defense Roll: 5

# THE PRICE OF DIVINITY

Storyguides looking to increase their games to Demigod levels must be aware of several changes to characters and game rules.

## NEW AND ADJUSTED ACTION-ADVENTURE CHARACTER RULES

Demigods enjoy a host of bonuses as a result of favoring divinity over mortality. The ichor burning in their veins grants them extraordinary puissance, even when they don't directly invoke supernatural power. Minds, bodies, and souls adapt to accommodate the Demigod's challenge of apotheosis.

### GENERAL

- **Tier and Target Number:** Demigods are Tier 3 entities, and thus have a target number of 7 rather than 8. Potential effects with 8- or 9-again do not "upgrade," and remain 8- or 9-again.
- **Scent the Divine:** Permanent use of the Scent the Divine Knack becomes a feature of Demigods, without taking up a Knack slot. Any prior purchase of Scent the Divine is refunded.

### STORY

- **An Ear for Prayer:** In addition to the secondary auditory feedback of Scent the Divine, Scions hear a low susurrum of prayers directed at their pantheon. A Scion can occasionally distinctly hear particularly heartfelt or desperate prayers directed at them, at their Purviews, or by a specific worshiper while gaining a vague sense of the worshiper's location, at the Storyguide's discretion.
- **Ichor for Blood:** Chemical analysis of a Demigod's blood reveals it to be of indeterminate type, highly unstable, and deeply toxic to humans or other mammals. Demigods bleed bright red unless they're actively manifesting Omens, in which case their ichor reveals its true bright, shining, golden color. Ichor may be used for various derived magical effects, though many religions have a deep taboo against blood magic except in highly ritualized circumstances.

### DEFENSE

- **Updated Defensive Stunt:** Defend: As per the original wording, Defend generates successes which an opponent must overcome in order to inflict an injury. This total is equal to successes +2. If this roll generates no successes, the base Difficulty to hit a character is 2.

- **Increased Durability:** As their divine ichor strengthens their physical bodies, all Demigods have an additional Bruised Injury.
- **Divine Resonance:** Any Defense roll made with a pool containing Divinity Dice automatically receives the benefits of 9-again. A mortal failure cannot be the result of a Defense roll.
- **Immortal Skill:** When describing a Defense action in which Specialties may apply, add Enhancement as normal. This may also be applied as an optional rule in Hero and Origin games.

### NEW TAGS

**Defensive (3):** The weapon is intended to be used defensively, aiding with blocking techniques. Once per fight, the character may reroll a Defense roll.

**Resonant (3):** The weapon has a powerful relationship with the character and her divine power. Once per session, ignore a mortal failure.

### LEGEND

A Hero's Legend is defined by her relationship to her divine parent. Almost all her power traces back to that deity or the Birthrights they've passed down. But that changes as she crosses into Demigod: her Legend becomes the summation of her own mythic Deeds, her Legendary Titles, and the Callings she has allowed to define her. Graduating to Demigod status isn't just about "more power." It's about "my power."

Her Deeds become cultural touchstones, as her Legend progresses out of celebrity and into mythology. It leaves an indelible mark in her civilization. Social media likes are nice, but no one will remember them tomorrow. In a hundred years, New Yorkers will STILL playfully refer to a microphone as "Little Mao's Battering Ram," and they will happily tell you the story of how that term originated.

So how does a being of both Legend and flesh interact with the World? First, her Omen is always present when a Demigod's player spends Momentum or commits Legend, and any worshiper of her Pantheon who sees it gains a sense, if not the exact wording, of the Legendary Title from which it derives. Crows flock in her wake, and everyone knows "The Word of Death" has arrived. Pipe music and bird song play faintly from... somewhere, and farmers breathe easy in the presence of "Spring the Reviver."

Even when the Omen would be logically impossible, the World bends to fit it. The armor she stole suddenly has gauntlets for her extra arms. The helm reshapes to fit her stag horns. Crows glare in from the windows, even when the plane hits 40,000 feet. A Demigod may suppress these Omens, if she wishes to be anonymous or disguise herself, but this never lasts without constant concentration.

But that doesn't make her Omen immutable. The nature of her Omen should derive from her Legendary Titles, and the keywords around them. Purviews, Callings, and past Deeds can also add flavor. You can completely change

## OMENS IN HERO

Omens are implied to always be active at the character's Hero level, when the players spend Momentum or commit Legend, but if the Storyguide wants to make the differences between Hero and Demigod more stark, they can restrict Omens at the Hero level to whenever the character spends Legend. Demigods retain the original Hero rules, manifesting their Omens whenever their player spends Momentum or commits Legend, and persists for the scene. If a player works the manifestation of their Omen into a description of them using their power, the Storyguide should award the group a point of Momentum.

your Scion's Omen upon reaching Demigod level, and alter it as you like after gaining a new Legendary Title.

Example: Anjali, Incarnate Scion of Cernunnos, had an Omen of the Gods' iconic stag horns through **Scion: Hero**. But upon reaching Demigod, her player, Alex, wants her Omen to better reflect the Scion's own Legend. Looking at Anjali's Legendary Title, "The Protector of Gir Forest", Alex decides her antlers are now those of a chital, a horned animal native to her home. When local poachers see her emerge from the woods, they know they've messed up.

### LEGEND TRAIT EFFECTS

Your character continues to receive a new Boon per dot of Legend and a new Calling dot for every even-numbered dot of Legend.

•••• • **Epic:** Your adventures have become a part of your culture's history forevermore. Your face inspires urban murals and big-budget films, and communities hold festivals to commemorate your Deeds. Nonetheless, your adventures thus far are an obscure chapter in the grand history of your Pantheon. 5 Boons.

•••• • **Iconic:** You've become a permanent part of your Pantheon's mythos. Even outsiders, like Denizens of forgotten Terra Incognitae, may have heard tales of your Deeds. Your symbols adorn t-shirts and traditional jewelry. Families might make pilgrimages to see your birthplace. 6 Boons, +1 Calling dot.

•••• • **Integral:** Your adventures are commonly known across the World, Underworlds, and Overworlds. Allusions and idioms evoke your Deeds everywhere you might go. 7 Boons.

•••• **Definitive:** Your exploits are fundamental to the stories of your culture. Your adventures live alongside creation myths or prophesied end times, just after the principal members of your pantheon. 8 Boons, +1 Calling dot.

## BIRTHRIGHTS

As a Scion grows in power and fame, her Birthrights become both more impressive and more tightly tied to her Legend. Now, an iconic relic or creature isn't just a fancy tool or beloved pet, but an indelible part of the Mantle and divine identity the Demigod builds with her Deeds.

This section expands upon the four Birthrights available to Heroes, gives new examples for the pantheons detailed in this book, and introduces Sanctum: a new Birthright only available to Demigods and Gods.

### CREATURES

Demigods bestow a greater portion of their divinity onto their creature companions, allowing such beasts to flourish in power and skill.

Building creatures for Demigods differs in the following ways:

- **Divine Fortitude:** A Demigod's creature imposes a Complication (with a penalty of suffering a counter-attack) equal to the creature's dot rating to all rolls to attack it or impose supernatural effects on it.
- **Supernal Skill:** A Demigod's creature only sacrifices one die from its rating-based dice pool to add a Knack or Flair instead of two.

### LEGENDARY CREATURES

Sometimes, a Demigod's Legend comes to incorporate his creature companion as an indelible part of its burgeoning Mantle. Odin's raven servants, Huginn and Muninn, wouldn't just fly off into the wild hunting worms if he died; they would find the Scion reincarnated into his Mantle and guide him. They belong to the Legend of Odin, whichever Odin that might be.

- **Building the Legend:** A Scion who wishes to turn his creature into a Legendary one must first Fatebind it; any role that makes sense for a creature is eligible. Incorporating a Fatebound creature into his Mantle is a specific, special type of resolution that he may only do once the bond's Strength reaches 5. Upon resolution, he immediately replenishes all spent Legend, and the creature becomes a Legendary one.

- **Limitations:** Only creatures with a rating of 2+ can become Legendary, and a Demigod may only have up to (his Legend - 4) Legendary creatures.

- **For Better or Worse:** A Legendary creature no longer has the luxury of simply loping away if the Demigod mistreats or abandons it. However, if he does so, the Storyguide may declare that the creature has taken on a new, negative Fatebinding Condition, such as Nemesis or Traitor, and it loses its Legendary benefits. If that Condition resolves in a way that leads the Scion to reconcile with the

creature, it regains its Legendary status. If not, you lose the creature entirely (and may invest the dots into another Birthright, as usual).

- **Calling All Creatures:** The creature counts as an additional Calling keyword for purposes of invoking it to increase Scale on an action not covered by one of his Legendary Titles, on actions that rely on the creature's aid. If the creature dies, count its death as a Failure Deed (*Scion: Hero*, p. 191) for the Calling with which it was most closely associated.
- **Legendary Effects:** A Legendary creature gains one Knack or Flair for free, without sacrificing any dice from its pool. In addition, the Scion may spend a point of Momentum to make any attack or effect target him instead of his creature, whether by flinging himself into the line of fire or using divine magic to redirect it, if they're both present in the same scene. Finally, the Demigod can communicate effectively with the creature even without a specific power to do so.
- **Inherited Legends:** If an Incarnate Demigod comes into possession of a creature that was Legendary for a past bearer of the Mantle he's inherited, he automatically gains a Fatebinding for it with a Strength equal to the number of previous wielders for whom it was Legendary. This doesn't count against his maximum number of simultaneous Fatebindings.

## FOLLOWERS

A Demigod's followers have been through thick and thin with her. They've survived a myriad of scrapes with Titanspawn and perilous journeys to Otherworlds near and far, and now they've built up the strength to follow her to even greater heights – and help her overcome even more fearsome dangers.

Followers for Demigods differ in the following ways:

- **Versatility:** A Demigod's follower gains a number of additional tags equal to half their dot rating, rounded up.
- **Resilience:** The follower can take a Bruised, an Injured, and a Maimed Injury Condition before they're Taken Out.

At the Demigod level, followers gain the following additional tag options; each one takes up two available tags.

- **Undying Loyalty:** Your follower would stick with you even if you ordered them to take a bullet for you, and do it gladly. They would pay any price, make any deal, to reach your side when you needed them most. Whenever you would be Taken Out, you may reduce your follower's rating by one dot for the rest of the arc to resolve your most serious Injury Condition instead, even if your follower wasn't previously present in the scene; they show up by any means necessary, although afterward you may owe someone a huge favor or find they've brought enemies on their heels. You may use this ability as many times as

you like until this follower's rating reaches 0. All lost dots return at the beginning of the next arc.

- **Sidekick:** You command a more powerful supporter, who's more companion than minion; this tag is incompatible with the Group and Mob tags. If you're Taken Out, your Sidekick uses your full dice pool for actions they take for you on your turn. Once per episode, you may take two actions at once without a mixed action, even if your follower isn't with you – they act elsewhere, allowing you to effectively be in two places at once. You may spend a Momentum to allow your follower to use one of your other Birthrights as though it were their own for a scene, using one of your Attributes + Follower rating as the dice pool if rolls are required; however, they can't use anything that requires spending or imbuing Legend.

## GUIDES

Even a Demigod needs guidance occasionally. Guides for Demigod characters work just like they do for Heroes, but a Demigod can also invest in this Birthright to be a guide for someone else, purchasing her mentee as a separate Guide Birthright. This type of guide works as follows:

- **Fatebound:** When the player acquires this Birthright, her character automatically gains a Strength 1 Fatebinding for the mentee character, but doesn't regain a Legend point; this bond doesn't count against your maximum. The Apprentice role is an obvious choice, but any role can work if you and the Storyguide think it makes sense. Maybe your character goes out of her way to help her Rival despite his resentment in an attempt to win him over, or aids a Martyr in hopes that he'll reconsider his death wish. If this bond resolves in a way that removes the character from the game permanently or ends due to Peril, you may reinvest these Guide dots into another appropriate Birthright (including a different mentee, if you like).
- **Quid pro Quo:** Whenever the mentee's Role Condition is compelled, you gain 1 Momentum in addition to the usual effects. If your character suffers harm or significant setbacks in the process of acting on that compulsion, you may also invoke the mentee's Role Condition once before the end of the session without counting it as that session's one allowed Fatebinding invocation.
- **Heros ex Machina:** The Demigod can provide divine intervention on her mentee's behalf, just like her own guides can do for her. Once per arc, she may take a simple action and imbue 1 Legend to invest a measure of her power in her mentee, allowing that character to access one of her Boons and granting them +1 to one type of Scale; these effects last for a scene, during which the Demigod acts in all ways as though she were a Hero instead. In return, at the end of that scene, you immediately gain a number of

divinity dice ([p. 154](#)) equal to this Birthright's rating, regain the imbued Legend as normal, and regain one spent Legend point. For the rest of the episode, you may invoke the mentee's Role Condition once per scene without counting it as that session's one allowed Fatebinding invocation.

## EXAMPLE GUIDES

The following are example guides associated with the pantheons introduced in this book.

### Tengri Shaman (•)

Versatile and wise, a Tengri shaman mediates between Scion and spirit, between mortal and God. They lend their spiritual magic to their Scion charges to ensure the prosperity of their people and the health of the land.

#### Asset Skill: Occult

**Guide Stunt (1-3s):** Gain an Enhancement equal to successes spent to rolls to overcome dangerous or difficult terrain, as long as that terrain is part of the natural world rather than something made by human hands.

### Oracle of Pachamama (••)

Pachamama's shamanic cult of berserker warrior-women divine the future in their slain enemies' lungs or those of llamas, in a ritual similar to haruspicy. Their predictions are cryptic but always correct in the end, even if it isn't clear how they will come to pass until they already have. They're picky about the sorts of Scions they'll aid, refusing those who hoard wealth and power in favor of more down-to-earth Heroes, and they won't hesitate to rend apart any who try to control them.

#### Asset Skills: Close Combat, Occult

**Guide Stunt (1-3s):** You declare that a predicted event is coming to pass, allowing your character to better prepare; decrease the rank of one Complication on the next roll you make before the end of the session by successes spent.

### Tohunga Priest (••)

As advisors and teachers to the Māori people, priests are experts in leadership, prayer, storytelling, and the social skills necessary to effectively produce and transmit mana. They're pillars of the community for worshipers of the Atua, providing the education and spiritual guidance to train future generations, ensuring that the mana will always flow.

#### Asset Skills: Empathy, Leadership

**Guide Stunt (2s):** When you roll to assist another character with teamwork ([Scion: Origin](#), p. 65), you may forgo providing an Enhancement in favor of allowing them to use your Legendary Title instead of their own to invoke a Feat of Scale on that action.

### Apkallu (•••)

Scions of the Annuna rely on the wise apkallu for tutoring and advice in a variety of fields and arenas, as well as relaying to them the words of their Godly patrons. These divine sages are amphibious — half-fish, half-human — and a

Scion can summon one from the water to help with anything from solving a difficult puzzle to instituting a new body of laws. They especially like helping to found cults and cities.

#### Asset Skills: Academics, Culture

**Guide Stunt (1-3s):** Gain an Enhancement equal to successes spent to your next roll in the current session that's part of a complex action to build a new community, found an organization or settlement, or build upon existing such institutions. This may include actions you take toward acquiring dots of Cult ([Scion: Mysteries of the World](#), p. 23).

**Unique Knack:** Spend a Momentum while standing in or on the shore of a body of water wide and deep enough to fully submerge an adult human to summon the apkallu from its depths for the scene, no matter where they were previously.

### Firebird (•••)

These rare, legendary birds shine brilliantly and portend both blessings and curses. Even one of a firebird's feathers brings light and good fortune, and throughout history people of all walks of life have coveted these creatures. They don't take kindly to attempts to cage them, and even as guides, they prize their freedom highly and deeply resent being called upon too often.

#### Asset Skills: Athletics, Empathy

**Guide Stunt (1-5s):** Gain an Enhancement equal to successes spent to a grappling roll when your opponent is in control of the grapple; you may only spend these successes on the Break Free stunt ([Scion: Origin](#), p. 117).

#### Purviews: Fortune

### Patupaiarehe/Tūrehu (•••)

These mysterious, fairy-like spirit people live in the wild, dark places, distinguishable by their pale skin and red hair, and the otherworldly flute music they make when they wander. Various stories credit them with teaching the arts of weaving and tā moko ([see p. 136](#)) to the Māori people long ago, and with emerging at night while everyone is asleep to perform helpful tasks or play with the humans' canoes. Patupaiarehe is a general term for these spirits, while tūrehu sometimes describes a particular type who avoid the sun by living in the underworld of Te Reinga.

#### Asset Skills: Survival, Technology (crafting only)

**Guide Stunt (3s):** You may declare the automatic completion of one remaining Milestone for a Tier 1 or 2 crafting project ([Scion: Origin](#), p. 76) that your guide could conceivably have completed for your character, either in person or some other way; if it's the final Milestone, you still need to roll it to complete the project, but gain Enhancement 3 on that roll.

#### Purview: Darkness

### Ancestor Mummy (••••)

The mummified dead hold an honored place for Scions of the Apu, acting as powerful huacas and providing guidance for

the living. Inca ancestors are among the most potent of these guides, dwelling in temples or household shrines for centuries with mediums delivering their advice and wisdom to their descendants for generations and passing down their treasures. Even Scions who don't descend from the Inca Empire may inherit an ancestor mummy by virtue of Incarnation, mystical adoption, or being Born to a God associated with that ancestor. The guidance these venerable dead grant is skewed toward finishing grand ambitions the ancestors worked toward when they were alive but never fully achieved.

**Asset Skills:** Culture, Leadership

**Guide Stunt (1-3s):** The Storyguide assigns your character a task that's doable within the current scene. If you succeed at the task, gain Momentum equal to successes spent; if you try but fail, gain one extra Momentum. If you don't try at all by the end of the scene, the Storyguide adds Tension to the pool equal to successes spent.

**Calling:** Sage

**Unique Knack:** You may safely invoke this guide one additional time per session for its access connection.

**Lamassu/Shedu (••••)**

The lamassu (female) and shedu (male) are minor Gods who represent constellations and act as guardians for those born under their stars. These winged, human-headed bull or lion deities keep particular watch over the Scions who fall under their auspices, stepping in when asked — and sometimes, whenever they feel like it. They make good sentinels for a Sanctum, dwelling, or gate, too. Occasionally, when two constellations share a star, their respective lamassu fight over who gets to be a Scion's guardian; it may be flattering, but such Scions must deal with being caught between two possessive, overprotective deities.

**Asset Skills:** Integrity, Survival

**Guide Stunt (3s):** You may make an immediate Clash of Wills against any one supernatural effect currently affecting your character; if you win, it no longer affects you.

**Calling:** Guardian

**Purview:** Stars

**Baba Yaga (•••••)**

This capricious sorceress remains elusive and mysterious even once she's agreed to guide a Scion, granting aid in inscrutable ways or requiring various strange tasks before she'll cooperate. (She has, on occasion, been known to eat those who abuse her generosity.) She's not above playing guide to multiple opposing forces at the same time; several legendary conflicts between Bogovi Scions might have been significantly less chaotic (and resulted in considerably less collateral damage) had she not been helping both sides. Along with providing powerful magic and age-old wisdom, she can be convinced to lend out her mortar or pestle-club from time to time. A Demigod showing up to battle in Baba Yaga's flying stone vessel makes even the fiercest enemies think twice.

**Asset Skills:** Occult, Pilot

**Guide Stunt (4s):** Inflict a level 2 Complication on an opponent's next roll within the current scene to harm, influence, or otherwise detrimentally affect your character or an ally, as your threatening presence intimidates them. If they fail to buy it off, you may immediately and reflexively spend or imbue Legend to perform a Marvel; this doesn't count as your Marvel for the scene.

**Calling:** Trickster

**Purview:** Chaos

**Legendary Title:** The Bony One

**Umai Khatun, Empress of the Placenta (•••••)**

Like her own Scions, all of those whom Umai Khatun deigns to adopt as mentees are women. She protects and cares for them as though she were their own mother, supporting their causes and nurturing their dreams. A Scion who calls upon her power too often invites not her wrath, but her sorrow that she can't easily provide more; the tasks he must perform to win back her aid are assigned for the purpose of rejuvenating her power and presence in the World.

**Asset Skills:** Empathy, Medicine

**Guide Stunt (2s):** Gain soft armor for a number of rounds equal to your Legend; this stacks with other sources of soft armor.

**Calling:** Healer

**Purview:** Fertility

**Legendary Title:** Daughter of the Earth Mother

## RELICS

Demigods acquire and rely on relics in all the same ways Heroes do (see **Scion: Hero**, p. 209), but in a Demigod's hands, objects of power and wonder shine more brightly. Unlike Heroes, Demigods are capable of forging their own relics, too; one may craft a sword that embodies his own Legend and wield it against his foes, while another weaves a cloak from dreams and spider silk to bestow upon his favorite student or mortal lover.

Relics work differently for Demigods in the following ways:

- **Deed:** Demigods enjoy Enhancement 2 whenever they use or flaunt the relic while interacting with someone who knows about its associated Deed. If the relic is a Legendary one, this Enhancement stacks with the relic's usual Enhancement up to a maximum of +5 instead of +3.
- **Perks of Power:** Demigods awaken new abilities in their relics as their Legends grow; they get more bang for their buck when designing relics (see **Scion: Hero**, p. 212). All relics belonging to Scions of Legend 5-8 gain a number of bonus dots' worth of new effects equal to half their actual dot rating, rounded up. A Demigod's Legendary relic adds one additional bonus dot of effect. For instance, a 3-dot relic gains two additional dots' worth of effects; if it's a Legendary

relic, it gains three instead. However, each effect's usual maximum still applies; general Enhancements still can't exceed +3, for instance. Effects added this way should be thematically appropriate for the character's evolving Legendary Title.

- **Elevating the Mundane:** A Demigod who uses a mundane object to perform a great Deed or miracle may choose to Fatebind it (p. 146) in an attempt to turn it into a relic. Doing so is a specific, special type of resolution that she may only do once the bond's Strength reaches 5. Upon resolution, the item becomes a 1-dot relic; see **Scion: Hero**, p. 212 for designing new relics, and **Mysteries of The World**, p. 99 for increasing an existing relic's rating.
- **Borrowed Treasures:** A Demigod who has an active Fatebinding for a Hero's relic adds additional dots' worth of effects to it as above while he wields it, and if he has one for another Demigod's relic, he keeps the additional effects the original owner unlocked. Borrowing a God's relic doesn't allow access to its additional God-level effects unless the borrower is another God.
- **New Flaws:** Just as a relic's power reflects a Demigod's heightened divinity, its flaws may reflect their stronger connection to Fate. When designing or crafting a relic, a Demigod gains the following additional options for flaws: The relic's effects are untamed and catastrophic, adding one die to the Collateral pool whenever it's used (3 dots); the relic is tied to dire Fates that punish hubris, making all failures on rolls to use the relic that contain divinity dice mortal failures, even if some of the dice show successes (3 dots).

## LEGENDARY RELICS

A Scion might possess a full panoply of relics, but one or two can become so essential to her Legend that one can hardly be spoken of without the other. Thor and Mjolnir, Shàngó and his oshe, Māui and his fishhook — these are not just storied relics wielded by heroes, but relics that cemented their unshakeable place as part of those heroes' very Mantles.

- **Building the Legend:** As with creatures, a Scion who wishes to turn one of her relics into a Legendary relic must first Fatebind it; see p. 148 for Fatebinding objects. Incorporating a Fatebound relic into her Mantle is a specific, special type of resolution that she may only do once the bond's Strength reaches 5. Upon resolution, she immediately replenishes all spent Legend, and the relic becomes a Legendary one.
- **Limitations:** Only relics with a rating of 2+ can become Legendary, and a Demigod may only have up to (her Legend - 4) Legendary relics.
- **Unique vs. General:** Usually, a Legendary relic is one that starts out unique from the get-go, rather

than a general or mass-produced one (see **Scion: Hero**, p. 209). It is possible to incorporate a general relic of rating 2+ into a character's Mantle, but doing so makes it unique. Like Amaterasu's Yasakani no Magatama, what was one of multiple identical relics gains individuality and new powers; such a relic replaces at least one dot's worth of its effects with new ones of your choice, and may replace up to half its rating's worth of effects (rounded down).

- **Legendary Effects:** As noted above, a Legendary relic increases the cap to +5 when stacking its ordinary Enhancement with one associated with its Deed, and gains an additional dot's worth of bonus effects. In addition, if the relic has a motif (and thus, grants at least one Purview), that motif acts like a Calling keyword for purposes of invoking it to increase Scale on an action not covered by one of her Legendary Titles. If the relic is destroyed, count its destruction as a Failure Deed (**Scion: Hero**, p. 191) for the Calling with which it was most strongly associated.
- **Inherited Legends:** This works just like inherited Legendary creatures (p. 131).
- **Borrowed Treasures Redux:** A Demigod's Legendary relic is harder for others to steal or borrow. In addition to the usual Momentum cost, using a Legendary relic that isn't the Scion's own requires a special prerequisite that differs for each relic, based on the Demigod's Legendary Title, pantheon Virtues, and the relic's own motif if it has one. For example, a Legendary sword belonging to a Demigod of the Tuatha Dé Danann with the Legendary Title "The Heartsworn Warrior" might only allow one who has never betrayed a lover's trust to wield it.
- **Fatebinding a Legend:** If another character wants to Fatebind a Demigod's Legendary relic to make it his own (**Scion: Hero**, p. 210), he must increase the Strength of its bond to an effective rating equal to (relic's dot rating + 3), and all invocations that contribute to increasing its Strength beyond the relic's dot rating must align with his Legendary Title. Effective Strength beyond the relic's rating doesn't contribute to any Fatebinding rolls or other mechanical effects that take Strength into account.

## EXAMPLE RELICS

The following are example relics associated with the pantheons introduced in this book. These relics are presented with the abilities and effects they would possess when wielded by a Hero; in a Demigod's hands, they gain additional powers based on the character's Legendary Title, as normal.

### Cloak of Winter (•)

Modeled after the cloak of the White Death, this long, white cloak has a voluminous hood and soft fur trim, and is always pristine even if its wearer drags it through the mud or spills coffee on it. A Scion who wears it becomes

a harbinger of winter, always giving off a faint chill; she is as unobtrusive as footsteps on snow, hiding herself from anyone whose notice she wishes to escape.

The wearer of this cloak may use the Boon Flash Freeze (**Scion: Hero**, p. 253), even if she can't access the Frost Purview. If she can access it, gain Enhancement 2 on the Boon's attack roll.

**Knack:** Gain access to the Perfect Camouflage Knack (**Scion: Hero**, p. 228); you must choose one target, and cannot change it until the current scene ends.

**Flaws:** The wearer increases the Difficulty of any roll she makes to defend herself against fire, whether it's an attack, dangerous terrain, or another source.

## Me (••)

**Enhancement:** 1 when performing the specific task it describes

**Purview:** variable; see below

**Motif:** The proper method, as the Gods decree.

A me (pronounced “meh”) is a decree from the Annuna, originally written in cuneiform on clay tablets, but nowadays found as anything from a magazine with colorful photographs to a tablet computer that can only show one file. Mes are instruction manuals for human behavior and action; each one describes the correct way to do a particular thing. For every imaginable action, there is an associated me, from rulership to marriage to bread-making; from adultery to causing strife or fear. Many descend from antiquity, but the Gods produce new mes from time to time as the World changes. Some of the newer mes concern things like hacking, car surfing, or maintaining a proper orbit around the Earth.

When you acquire a me, choose one type of action (comparable to a Skill specialty) and an appropriate Purview to go with it, to which this relic grants access.

**Flaw:** Using a me requires taking a simple action to follow its instructions to the letter, activating the relic for the scene.

## Quipu (••)

A quipu is a series of strings in multifarious colors attached to a frame, knotted at intervals to record and convey information. An ordinary quipu's knots represent quantitative values that, when taken together with the strings' colors and deciphered, document information of all kinds, from tax records to supply inventories to calendar dates. A relic quipu can do all that and more. A Scion's Legendary power can coax deftly hidden secrets and even the most complex magical formulae from its strings, neatly arranged in arrays of knots that speak volumes — but only to those who know how to read them.

**Knack:** Gain access to the Overworld Knowledge Knack (**Scion: Hero**, p. 233) as long as you have at least a few minutes to read the quipu.

**Knack:** The Scion can dismiss the quipu into thin air as a simple action, and can summon it to hand again the same way.

**Flaw:** If the user's Intellect is less than 5, he suffers a Complication on all rolls using the quipu with a rank equal to (5 – his Intellect). If not bought off, the Storyguide provides one extra piece of information that you didn't ask for, but one of the answers is false and the Storyguide doesn't tell you which one. This Complication doesn't apply to characters with at least one dot in the Sage Calling.

## Tā Moko (••)

**Enhancement:** 1 when taking an action that fulfills an expected social obligation

As the traditional tattoos of the Māori people, ordinary tā moko are celebrations of their culture, indications of a person's mana, and works of art. Scions with relic tā moko can also use them to more directly strengthen communities, uplift others, and set a good example.

**Knack:** Gain access to the Perfect Partner Knack (**Scion: Hero**, p. 232).

**Knack:** As a permanent addition to the Scion's body, this relic can't be stolen or destroyed short of killing the Scion or powerful magic, nor can bandmates borrow it. However, by touching another character with a Legend trait when you acquire a new Fatebinding to any individual or group, you may give that character the Legend point you would have regained.

**Flaw:** Whenever you resolve a Fatebinding Condition in a way that has negative consequences for the Fatebound character, increase the Difficulty of all rolls you make to influence or lead others by 1 for the rest of the session.

## Bolt of Perun (•••)

**Purview:** Sky

**Motif:** Fight for peace and the protection of life.

Any thrown weapon can be forged as a bolt of Perun, the mighty storm God of the Bogovi, though those made of stone or metal are most traditional. These bolts zoom through the air with a thunderous crack and come back to the Scion's hand when called, no matter how far they fly. Perun himself wields a thundering axe, so many Scions follow suit, but these relics can be found as throwing knives, darts, javelins, boomerangs, and any number of other weapons thrown by hand. A weapon must have the Thrown tag to be a bolt of Perun.

**Knack:** Upon hitting a target, the weapon emits a deafening peal of thunder, granting access to the Deafen stunt: for 3s, everyone within medium range of the target increases the Difficulty of Defense rolls by one and can't hear anything until the end of the Scion's next turn; this may cause Complications for other actions at the Storyguide's discretion.

**Knack:** The weapon gains the Returning tag.

**Flaws:** The weapon gains the Loud tag.

## **Darkhan Windhorse (•••)**

**Enhancement:** 1

**Purview:** Journeys

**Motif:** Freedom is a steed faster than the wind.

No Tengri should be without a horse for long — so say the traditionalists, at least. Fortunately for Scions who live in areas where stables aren't common, not all horses are flesh. The great God Gudzir Kungker breeds a line of spirit-horses that he houses in specially made motorcycle mirrors and chroming, fitting them to expertly crafted machines of steel made by his cultists at Darkhan Ironworks. These motorcycles have the souls of horses if not their bodies, and their riders find it easy to travel deep into the lands of spirit and God alike.

**Knack:** Gain access to the Pierce the Veil Knack (**Scion: Hero**, p. 231). If you're traveling to a place you've been before, reduce all Complications directly related to your journey by 1.

**Flaws:** Once per arc, Gudzir Kungker requires repayment for his skill and herds; gain the Paying Tribute Condition (**Scion: Hero**, p. 204). The relic also requires regular care and feeding. To activate it for the scene, you must take a simple action to feed hay or other horse treats into the bike's gas tank, brush and polish its chrome, or otherwise bond with and care for it like the horse it is.

## **Dragon-Headed Staff (••••)**

**Enhancement:** 2 when used to protect the innocent

The dragon-headed staff of Tsagan Ebugen is a shaman's staff, calling upon spirits to smite evil with disease and protect others against the wicked with its powerful blows. The God never lends his staff out lightly, choosing only the most trustworthy and upright of Scions to wield it, and even then, only in times of great need.

The staff's wielder gains access to the Master of Disease Boon (**Scion: Hero**, p. 254) even if he can't access the Health Purview. If he can access it, its range is Long instead. Either way, in addition to its usual effects, the Boon can target all trivial characters or all mundane animals of one type (such as cattle or insects) within range instead of a single non-trivial character.

**Tags:** Bashing, Brutal, Melee, Reach, Stun

## **Sun Falcon Cap (••••)**

**Enhancement:** 1 when instructing or leading others to perform a task that would move you toward your Duty Virtue

**Purview:** Order

**Motif:** All must follow Inti's design.

Scions who wear this baseball cap with the symbol of the sun falcon emblazoned on it in shining gold radiate authority just as Inti does. It's popular with those who lead structured groups that must follow rules but can still easily dress down, like sports team coaches or construction crew managers. It's

not too uncommon to see army commanders, project managers, and teachers wearing it, either; once they don it, no one would dare tell them it goes against the dress code.

**Knack:** Trivial characters must follow any instruction or order you give.

## **Waka Canoe (••••)**

**Enhancement:** 2 when navigating the Ocean Axis Mundi

**Purview:** Journeys

**Motif:** A true voyager always seeks the next new horizon.

Despite the relic's name, a waka canoe can be any kind of vessel or vehicle: actual canoes, cars, yachts, tanks, or even bicycles. In the distant past, the Polynesian people and their Gods came from the island of Hawaiki in enormous, elaborately decorated canoes with sails. Drawing on the Legends of those vessels, a waka canoe relic rewards both a yearning for home and the spirit of adventure.

## **Sharur, Smasher of Thousands (•••••)**

**Purview:** Epic Strength, Sky

**Motif:** For love of Ninurta, I smash your enemies!

**Enhancement:** 1 when invoking Feats of Scale in combat

Ninurta rarely entrusts his sapient mace bearing 50 lion heads to Scions, as it's the God's best friend as well as his weapon. When he does, it's a sign that either Ninurta really likes you, or is extremely desperate. Sometimes, though, Sharur advises its master to let one of his children wield it, deeming it a necessary tactical move for some inscrutable purpose. It can fly with its own wings, carry messages to and fro, perform surveillance, and give fantastic hugs. Beyond that, it boasts of feats ranging from summoning storms and setting mountains on fire to tearing out the entrails of its wielder's foes. When it's in a good mood, it likes to sing its wielder's praises; when it isn't, it's snarky and recalcitrant.

**Tags:** Bashing, Brutal, Loud, Melee, Pushing

**Knack:** Sharur is also a 3-dot follower with the Heavy archetype and the following **tags:** Knack (The Biggest Threat; **Scion: Hero**, p. 235), Knack (Master of the World; **Scion: Hero**, p. 233), Unruly. Spend a Momentum to allow Sharur to act independently, with its own spot in the initiative roster, for the scene; its actions no longer take up your turn.

**Knack:** Spend a Momentum to create one dangerous terrain feature in the Field where Sharur currently is, which lasts for the scene.

**Flaw:** Whenever Sharur is in the Scion's presence, she suffers a rank 2 "Talkative" Complication on any action that she doesn't want to draw attention to, as the mace will not shut up. If you don't buy it off, it draws unwanted attention to her.

**Flaw:** At the beginning of each arc, gain the Mind of Its Own Condition. It has no effects on its own, but you may resolve it at

any time for Sharur to do something that significantly inconveniences the Scion or her band, like blurt out a secret at the wrong time or smash something that should not have been smashed.

### Māui's Fishhook (••••)

**Purviews:** Epic Strength, Water

**Motif:** With my boasting, I catch what I seek.

The legendary fishhook of the Demigod Mantle Māui takes many forms and comes to Scion hands in many ways, all of which are inextricably tied to the Mantle's Fate. See p. 81 for more information about this hero and his famous relic.

**Tags:** Grappling, Lethal, Returning, Thrown, Versatile

**Knack:** By imbuing a Legend, the Scion may create a special kind of Sanctum by pulling a Midrealm up from the bottom of the ocean and tethering it to his Fate; he must be on (or in) a large body of saltwater at least a few miles from shore to use this Knack. Unlike other Sancta, this one-dot Sanctum begins as a Midrealm instead of a physical location, with a gate to which the key is performing a simple action to open it with the fishhook itself. It can also be reached through the Ocean Axis Mundi. As long as the Legend point remains imbued, the Scion can perform Deeds to tether it more closely to the mortal World. If he reclaims the Legend point early, the Sanctum ceases to exist. Once it becomes a permanent part of the physical World — or if its Fatebinding resolves in such a way that it leaves play — the imbued Legend returns automatically.

**Flaw:** Whenever the wielder takes an action with the fishhook, it takes an influence action against him using his own traits; if successful, it urges him to do something absurdly reckless and ambitious toward the goal of “solving” a basic tenet of reality, like “crawl inside a Goddess to end death” or “fly into space to travel back in time.” If he succumbs to the urge, gain a Momentum.

## NEW BIRTHRIGHT: SANCTUM

A Demigod is closer to her divine ideal than she was as a Hero, gaining the ability to extend her power into the World itself and beyond. A Sanctum is a place her Legend inhabits. It starts off as a physical place within the World, but she can expand it to encompass Terra Incognita and even metaphorical representations of her Mantle. As her Sanctum grows, a Demigod may be able to roam the World and Otherworlds at her whim, or be there in spirit — or even in person — wherever mortals perform acts of devotion to her Legend.

Acquiring a Sanctum is a ritual process. If the Scion creates a new one for herself, she must sanctify the physical location as a complex action requiring one Milestone at Sanctum 1, with an interval of one hour and a Difficulty of 1, consisting of ceremonies, prayers, and ritual Marvels appropriate to her pantheon. Each time she increases her Sanctum rating, she must perform a similar ritual, requiring a number of Milestones equal to the new dot rating she wishes to acquire and a Difficulty of the same. You gain a

cumulative +1 Enhancement to this roll per 4 Legend dots your character possesses.

Like other Birthrights, Sanctum is rated from 1-5 dots. A Scion can have more than one Sanctum, but her total Sanctum rating can't exceed 5 dots, so she must split her dots between her Sancta.

### SANCTUM BASICS

Possessing a Sanctum grants the character a place sacred to her, where she can receive prayers and sacrifices, recharge her metaphorical batteries, and flaunt her power to impress the masses.

- **Fatebound:** When the player acquires this Birthright, her character automatically gains a Strength 1 Fatebinding for the Sanctum's physical location in the World, but doesn't regain a Legend point; see p. 149 for Fatebinding places. This bond doesn't count against your maximum. If this bond resolves in a way that passes it on to someone else or removes it from the game permanently, or ends due to Peril, you may reinvest these Sanctum dots into another appropriate Birthright (including a different Sanctum, if you like).
- **Dominion:** Reduce the success cost of all of the character's Dominion stunts within the Sanctum by one (to a minimum of 1); she can swap out one Dominion stunt in a Purview with another as a reflexive action once per round. Performing a Dominion stunt against a non-trivial character inside her Sanctum earns the character a divinity die (p. 154).
- **Supplication:** Once per session, whenever a lower-tier character offers an appropriate sacrifice (**Scion: Hero**, p. 188) or at least an hour's worth of ritual prayer and devotion to the Demigod inside her Sanctum, she receives benefits as though she had performed a sacrifice to her pantheon herself, no matter where she is at the time. Likewise, if she's inside her Sanctum and someone performs such a sacrifice or prayer to her elsewhere, she knows and may witness it from afar to receive the benefits, but doing so counts as her supplication benefit for the session.
- **Recovery:** Once per episode, if the Demigod spends at least one full scene inside her Sanctum, she heals her most severe Injury Condition and regains one point of Legend.
- **Traversing Sancta:** The character may spend 1 Legend to teleport directly between any two locations that count as part of her Sanctum, including a Midrealm, Otherworld, or symbolic situation (see options below). The departure and arrival each take one simple action. She may bring other characters with her by taking one additional simple action per additional character on both departure and arrival. Teleporting in action-adventure timing requires a

successful disengage action (**Scion: Origin**, p. 72) first if you're in close combat with an opponent.

## SANCTUM OPTIONS

As you increase your Sanctum rating, you "spend" the dots on various options depending on how you want to access and use the Sanctum, as follows:

- **First Dot:** The first dot of Sanctum encompasses one physical location within the World, up to the size of a large building (like a temple) or a clearly delineated outdoor space (like a public park).
- **+1 dot:** include one pantheon-appropriate strange place or Touchstone (**Scion: Origin**, pp. 35-38) in the Sanctum's Worldly location(s). Purchasable only once.
- **+1 dot:** increase the number of physical, Worldly locations that count as your character's Sanctum to either (her Legend) specific places, or all of a narrow category of places, like "temples erected in my name," "breweries in cold climates," or "public parks containing oak groves." Purchasable multiple times; if purchased as the fourth or fifth dot, the former option increases the number of specific places by (her Legend x 2) instead; the latter option expands the Sanctum to all of a broader category of places, like "temples erected to me, my pantheon as a whole, or my divine parent," "any brewery," or "any public park."
- **+1 dot:** connect your character's Sanctum to an Axis Mundi appropriate to her pantheon. This can be a curse as well as a blessing, but some Scions value ease of access and opening their Sanctum to more worshipers over security and privacy. Purchasable multiple times, for a different Axis Mundi each time.
- **+1 dot:** extend your character's Sanctum from its physical locations into a Midrealm that counts as her personal Godsrealm (**Scion: Origin**, p. 34). The Sanctum's physical locations each contain a gate she may pass through without a key; determine the key for others based on the character's Purviews, Callings, Legendary Title, and pantheon. Purchasable only once.
- **+1 dot (fourth or fifth dot only):** extend your character's Sanctum from its physical locations into an Otherworld that counts as her personal Godsrealm; access works just like a Midrealm Sanctum, above. If she purchases both, the Midrealm contains an additional gate to the Otherworld that works the same way, but often has an even more esoteric or convoluted key. Purchasable only once.
- **+1 dot (fourth or fifth dot only):** extend your character's Sanctum to count a specific type of situation or event appropriate to her Purviews, Callings, Legendary Title, and pantheon as physical locations that are part of her Sanctum; these are known as acts of devotion to her Legend. For instance, if Hassan al-Hakim's (**Scion: Hero**, pp. 76-77) Sanctum encompasses deathbeds and morgues, this extension

## SANCTUM AND THE NEMETONDEVOS

Scions of the Nemetondevos (**Scion: Mysteries of the World**, p. 38) have nemetons — gateway shrines that lead to divine Sancta. At the Hero tier, these Scions don't have access to the Sanctum Birthright; their nemetons lead to their pantheons' Godsrealms instead. Demigods of the Nemetondevos get one free dot of Sanctum at Legend 5, and Gods get another one at Legend 9; these free dots must pertain to one of the character's nemetons. A Gaulish Scion who invests heavily in Sanctum is truly a master of their Signature Purview.

might make any thoracic surgery in progress an act of devotion to him. Thus, any such surgery for which he's present would count as being inside his Sanctum, and he could teleport to and from any such surgery as though it were a deathbed or morgue. If the character doesn't know about any instance of her chosen act of devotion going on at a given time, she can simply teleport with the intent of finding one and the Storyguide determines where she ends up. Purchasable multiple times, for a different type of situation/event each time.

## REALMS

When a Scion spends a great deal of time in one Terra Incognita or another, they find that the location's Fate begins to wind into their own. It only takes a few trips to Duat along the Iteru and the Scion finds that her own Fate becomes intertwined with that of the Underworld. Having your Fate bound to that of a Terra Incognita can feel like a lot of responsibility, and it is, but with that binding comes a great deal of power and benefit.

A player may choose to gain a Fatebinding to a Terra Incognita as a locational Fatebinding (see p. 149) and when she does, she gains access to specific benefits depending on the location. Once Fatebound, the location with all its benefits and requirements is referred to as a Realm.

## REALM FATEBINDINGS

Realm Fatebindings work like all other locational Fatebindings giving the location the Fatebound Condition and allowing it to gain the Imperiled Condition if the Realm is under an external threat. Scions Fatebound to Realms may take on any of the normal Fatebound Role Conditions applying their effects to the Realm rather than a single person. Some of these may seem strange; a Boon Companion isn't a literal friend, but the Realm may have a deep trust for the Scion literally coming to her aid when she is in trouble in the form of using its Marvels or Knacks. And a Nemesis isn't any one person so much as the Realm itself making

the Scion's life difficult by sending denizens after her or twisting her benefits at the worst of times.

The following are some additional Role Conditions specific to Realms.

## TOUCHSTONE

The Fatebound Realm embodies an emotional event for the Scion, flooding her with memories for good or ill.

**Invoke:** The Touchstone gives the Scion strength in the face of adversity, bolstering her with memories of strength and power. The Demigod can take an action within the Realm as a Feat of Scale without invoking her Legendary Title or spending a Legend.

**Compel:** The Touchstone's memories flood the Scion at the worst time. The Demigod gains 1 Legend and a rival, nemesis, or opponent the character is currently engaged with gains Enhancement equal to the Fatebinding's strength to Intrigue actions to rile her up or break her resolve for the rest of the scene.

**Avoidance:** If the Demigod ignores her memories bound to the Touchstone, she loses her ability to relate to those around her. Count the Fatebinding's strength as a negative Atmosphere that only affects her for the rest of the scene.

**Resolve:** The events that spark the Touchstone's memories resolve in a way that brings catharsis to the Demigod. The Demigod may resolve any one negative Condition they suffer from (including an Injury Condition) and add Momentum to the pool equal to the Fatebinding's strength. The Scion's player then chooses one of the following options:

- The Touchstone passes to someone else, and the Demigod gains an Apprentice of the same Fatebinding Strength.
- The Touchstone feels like home now, changing the Fatebinding to a Balm.

## LODESTONE

The Fatebound Realm has a physical tether on the Scion, drawing her back to it time and time again.

**Invoke:** The Lodestone beckons the Scion to come back. The Demigod may take an action that brings her closer to the Realm or frees her movement as a Feat of Scale without invoking her Legendary Title or spending a point of Legend.

**Compel:** The Lodestone's binding is like a stretched rubber-band, ready to spring back when pulled too far sometimes at the worst of times. Compel this Condition to force the Demigod to return to the Realm, no matter where she is in the World (or outside it). She gains 1 Legend and is immediately teleported to the Lodestone.

**Avoidance:** If the Demigod resists the lure of her Lodestone, she becomes heavy with the weight of its draw. For each scene in which the demigod neglects her

Lodestone, she suffers a +1 cumulative Difficulty to all actions involving movement.

**Resolve:** The threads holding the Demigod to the Lodestone snap with a reverberating force. The Scion makes her next action at a Scale rating equal to the Fatebinding's strength. The Scion's player then chooses one of the following options:

- With her connection broken, the Realm is lost to her. The Demigod fulfills a Deed, and suffers a Failure Deed for an appropriate Calling.
- The Lodestone passes to someone else, and the Demigod gains an Apprentice of the same Fatebinding Strength.

## BENEFITS

Realms offer a variety of benefits, detailed in specific after each one starting on p. 176. But in general, Realms all have certain benefits that come with the Fatebinding as well as a requirement to maintaining your good standing to accept new benefits.

- **Birthrights:** Realms may have specific Relics or Followers that are unique to the location and can only be purchased if you are Fatebound to the location. Characters can gain any Pantheon Birthright from an associated Realm, or the Realm may have generic items the Scion could turn into a Relic.
- **Motif:** A set of actions, utterances, or descriptors that represent how the Scion interacts with her benefits from the Realm while not in the Realm. The character may use the Realm's Motif for her own Purviews instead of her Pantheon's if she chooses.
- **Realm Birthrights:** Realms have a specific set of Birthrights that do not fit into the normal Birthright categories. These are called Realm Birthrights and are rated 1 to 5 depending on the benefit they confer.
- **Realm Knacks:** Realms have Knacks associated with them that are different from Calling Knacks. These Knacks embody the location rather than the Scion's Calling.
- **Temporary Benefits:** When a Scion is Fatebound to an area, she gains access to the Knacks, Birthrights, and even associated Purviews while she is in that location even if she hasn't purchased the benefit with Experiences. Each time she accesses one of these benefits, it increases character's locational Fatebinding Condition rating by 1.
- **Requirement:** Realms have a requirement for maintaining the Scion's connection to it. This Requirement is often defined by the Fatebinding Condition the Scion has with the location, but can also include regular visits or spending a prescribed amount of time within the location.

## REALM KNACKS

Realms grant access to Knacks that are specific and separate from Calling Knacks. These Realm Knacks are subject to the rule that a character can only have as many active Knacks as she has Calling dots. A Realm Knack can be slotted into any Calling. All Realm Knacks are considered Heroic Knacks and only take up a single Knack slot.

## REALM BIRTHRIGHTS

A Scion may find that she is not just embroiled in the Fate of a location, so much as she comes to embody that location the more time she spends there. She may find that the biting cold of Hel has come with her the last time she left, utilizing its unnatural cold now everywhere she goes. These slight changes are represented as Realm Birthrights. They are not normal Birthrights in the sense that they are not creatures, or even physical items the Scion has in her possession. Instead, they are more akin to having a Purview over the Realm itself, or a Knack that she can always use with the Realm being her Calling.

She comes to embody the Realm, and as she does so, she carries the power and magic of that place as a part of her wherever she goes. She can always tap into those powers while she is within the Realm, but to take it with her, she must purchase the power as a Birthright.

### BENEFITS

Realm Birthrights are specific and unique to the Realm they originate from. They often mimic Purviews associated with the Realm in a limited way, maybe allowing the Scion to perform Marvels associated with the Realm or grant her access to a Boon. This does not give the character the ability to channel a specific Purview the way a Relic does, but instead gives her that Boon to use as though she purchased it, bypassing her normal Legend limit to how many Boons she knows. Utilizing Boons or Marvels through a Realm Birthright requires the Scion to use the Realm's Motif.

Realm Birthrights may also resemble Knacks in that the power is something more innate to her being. As these are Birthrights and not Knacks, this ability does not take up a Knack slot.

Realm Birthrights often enhance a Scion's normal ability to take an action, granting her Enhancement or Scale to certain actions that are in theme with the Realm. For example, a Scion with ties to Hel or Niflheim might have Scale to remain calm or resist fire that isn't supernaturally caused by another pantheon.

Realm Birthrights all have a dot rating associated with them, and may have any of the other list traits.

- **Boons:** The Realm Birthright may give access to a specific Boon. This Boon may exceed the normal limit of how many boons a Scion knows. Some Realm Birthrights may reduce the cost of using this Boon in Legend spent either making it free or requiring an imbued Legend instead of a spent Legend.
- **Dot Rating:** Each Realm Birthright is rated from 1-5 dots. Its rating informs how powerful and/or versatile the ability it grants.

• **Knack:** A special Knack, or Calling Knack, that the Birthright confers to the Scion. This Knack is not attached to a Calling and can exceed the number of Knacks a Scion is normally allowed to have active based on her Calling rating.

• **Marvels:** Specific Marvels and the Purview from which the Marvel is associated. If a Realm Birthright gives access to a Marvel that costs a Legend to use normally, the Scion can enact the Marvel for free.

• **Special Mechanic:** A special mechanic conferred by the Birthright. This could increase the Scion's Scale for a certain action, confer Enhancement to an action, or provide some other benefit not covered by a Purview or Knack.

### DESIGNING A REALM BIRTHRIGHT

A player can work with her Storyguide to create a new Birthright for her Realm outside the scope of normal Birthrights rather than using the ones provided. Use the following guidelines to design a new Realm Birthright. Storyguides should be sure to monitor how many Realm Birthrights a specific Terra Incognita is providing. Realm Birthrights should create a single effect, though it may confer built in Enhancement or Scale to achieve the effect. But a single Birthright would not both provide a Boon and a Knack to the Scion, nor would it provide the ability to use a Marvel and an increase in Scale to a specific action unless that Scale was for adjudicating the Marvel.

- **Boons:** Adding a Boon effect is a one-dot ability. A Realm Birthright may only have a single Boon effect.
- **Enhancements:** Providing a +1 Enhancement which applies to only certain situations is a one-dot ability. Making that Enhancement more versatile and ubiquitous increases it to two-dots. Each additional dot of Enhancement is an addition dot rating to a maximum of +3 Enhancement.
- **Knack:** Adding an already existing Heroic Calling or Realm Knack effect to a Realm Birthright is a two-dot ability. If you add an Immortal Calling Knack, increase it to a three-dot ability.
- **Marvels:** Providing access to up to two Marvels from a specific Purview is a one-dot ability. Each additional Marvel or Purview with which the Marvels can be used is an additional one dot.
- **Scale:** Birthrights with three or more dots can provide Scale. Providing +1 Scale to specific actions is a one-dot ability. Each additional point of Scale added increases the dot rating by one, to a maximum of +3 Scale.
- **Special Effects:** Special effects outside of Boon or Knack effects are one-dot effects as a baseline. Abilities that augment a Boon or Knack or have similar effects to Boons or Knacks fall into the baseline range. Effects that don't have an activation cost are two-dots.



# CHAPTER FOUR CHASING DIVINITY

In those days the World teemed, the people multiplied, the World bellowed like a wild bull, and the great god was aroused by the clamor. Enlil heard the clamor and he said to the gods in council, "The uproar of mankind is intolerable and sleep is no longer possible by reason of the babel." So the gods agreed to exterminate mankind.

— Anonymous, *The Epic of Gilgamesh*

Demigods are possessed of myriad powers beyond Heroes, though these are often manifold and diverse miracles that broaden the capabilities of the former Hero, rather than overt displays of power. They do have overt displays of power — what else could one call Dominion over a Purview? — but much of what they're now capable of, and how the World treats them, is more subtle and all-encompassing. The game uses Scale to describe Demigods' awesome powersets and we've broken those down into seven categories: Durability, Leadership, Mental, Might, Power, Size, and Speed.

## SCALE REVISITED

At the Demigod level, Scale becomes more readily available to characters. This requires a stricter quantification of Scale from the systems presented in *Scion: Origin* (pp. 65-67). That book describes four types of Scale (Size, Force, Speed, and Leadership). However, multiple traits can involve Scale, and the Immortal Knacks featured in this book add Scale on a more ready basis. As defined in *Origin*, Scale is both an objective measurement of power or magnitude and a comparative measure (in that Scale cancels out across types).

Just because a Scale level is deemed “supernatural” or “godly” doesn’t mean that only the supernatural can cause it; instead, it’s a descriptive term meant to measure the level of a Scion’s Scale that would confer similar benefits. A military general (at least, one who isn’t an Incarnate God) doesn’t have particularly supernatural sway over huge swaths of an army, but they have an undeniably potent authority — akin to potent Heroes who use Immortal Knacks and Purviews to reinforce their charisma and leadership roles. However, the general has situational Scale that can be applied by the Storyguide to deal with a player character’s Leadership challenges.

The Storyguide should take a character’s dice pools and apply their actual power to the Scale table in order to determine what Scale their action “should” be at. Use these as rough benchmarks for whether an action is possible within a granted degree of Scale.

Some things, such as The World or other planets in a cosmology, may be beyond Scale 6 in terms of Size or other attributes, or a Primordial’s world-ending Might. In such cases, the Storyteller should feel free to extrapolate the ranges of upper Scales and their sizes — The World might well be Scale 9, for example.

### THE LIMITS OF SCALE

Where it would apply, sources of Scale can only stack to a maximum of 6. Anything beyond that is wasted. If the Scale comes from two or more of the same sources, these do not stack; instead, take the greater value. Scale granted from multiple sources do stack with one another, however. The different sources are as follows:

- **Knacks**
- **Stunts**
- **Equipment**
- **Boons**
- **Feats of Scale**

### THE COLLATERAL POOL

In games of enormous power and massive effect, there’s some expectation that buildings will crumble, crowds will scatter, and havoc will be wreaked on a huge scale. As characters ascend to new, untold levels of power, their ability to contain collateral damage lessens. Demigods are no longer merely heroic mortals, but beings halfway between mortal and god and their power matches. At the

## MYSTERIES OF THE WORLD

Demigods have easier access to supernatural feats. **Mysteries of the World** features several mechanisms for adjusting the tone, focus, and overall power level of your game via systems called Myth Levels. While the default Genre level for Scion as a line is Bronze, or rather a degree of mythic “pulp action,” Storyguides should feel free to increase the Genre fluidly to include greater access to Scale as a function of Silver (fantastic) and Gold (high fantastic) Genre levels. As an optional rule, or for those who don’t have **Mysteries of the World**, Storyguides may keep Genre at the Bronze level and implement the following Stunt:

*Epic Attribute (3s):* When taking an action in line with keywords derived from Legendary Titles, a Scion may spend a point of Momentum to increase the Scale of the action by 1. This Stunt may be purchased twice per action, stacking with itself and any other relevant sources of Scale to the maximum.

SCALE LEVEL	DURABILITY	LEADERSHIP	MENTAL	POWER	MIGHT	SIZE	SPEED
0. Standard	Basic clothing	Your neighbor, a few followers	Normal person	An amateur athlete	A knife or handgun	Person-sized	A decent sprinter
1. Elite	Kevlar armor	Upper management, church leader, dozens of followers	Chess grandmaster	Gorilla	Anti-personnel rifle	Horse or deer	Cheetah, car
2. Supernatural	Reinforced steel	CEO or city leader, hundreds of followers	Adaptive learning or self-aware AI	Industrial forklift, throwing cars	Main battle tank	Blue whale	Race car, small plane
3. Incredible	Titanium or armored vault	Military general or small nation leader, thousands of followers	AI with emotional capability	Lifting tractor-trailers with ease	Next-generation hovertank	Statue of Liberty	Airliner, fast plane
4. Godly	Diamond, reinforced carbon	World leader, hundreds of thousands of followers	Probability-calculating prophet of future events	Smashing tanks clean in half	Small earthquake, volcanic eruption	The World's tallest buildings	Supersonic fighter jet
5. Supernal	Magical metals such as adamant	Global super-power leader, millions of followers	Hypertech-building genius	Lifting an aircraft carrier from the water	Major earthquake, tactical nuclear device	Large metroplex	Hypersonic glider
6. Titanic	Exotic matter not of this universe	Important God in a pantheon, billions of followers	Omniscient intellects	Moving a tectonic plate	Strategic thermonuclear device	Megalopolis (Bos-Wash Corridor)	Speed of light

Demigod level, Storyguides should include the collateral pool to represent the high stakes dangers of throwing around true divine power. For playing Hero games, this can present an interesting way to provide increasing stakes and add a level of tension to a game.

## BUILDING THE POOL

At the start of any ongoing campaign or a one-shot, the collateral pool begins with zero dice. Whenever the players' characters take any of the following actions, add one die to the pool for each applicable action.

- Performing marvels
- Performing Feats of Scale
- Making any roll enhanced by Scale
- Rolling a pool with divinity dice
- Failing to buy off applicable Complications
- Certain stunts (this will be noted)
- Special Flairs or Antagonist abilities

The pool builds until it reaches 10 dice, and the number of dice in the pool roll over from session to session until it hits 10. Once it has been filled, any actions that would add additional dice instead add Enhancement.

At the end of any round in combat or after all player characters have taken their actions outside of it, the player whose action caused the pool to fill then rolls all ten dice and the Storyguide chooses from the following stunts:

**Echo (3s):** Alter the Field with an aspect of the rolling player's Purviews. A building might sprout flowers, a road turn into a river, trees turn to metal sculptures, and so on. These changes persist until the end of the scene.

**Harm (2s vs trivial targets/any successes over Defense):** Either a major character is hurt by an environmental disaster caused by the characters' actions or the power unleashed causes injury (or death) to any number of trivial bystanders.

**Incite (2s):** Onlookers turn against the characters, furious with them for their wanton destruction. The triggering character has +1 Difficulty to social interactions for the rest of the session for each time this Stunt is chosen, to a maximum of +3.

**Pin (2s vs trivial targets/any successes over Defense):** A massive piece of rubble falls either on a major character in the scene, or on any number of trivial bystanders, trapping them until they break free or are rescued.

**Raze (Successes equal to Size):** Destroy an object established in the Field such as a building, the getaway car, an armored vehicle, etc.

**Rift (5s):** An aspect of an Overworld, Underworld, Terra Incognita, or other cosmological place associated with the rolling character appears, subsuming part of the Field and displacing its reality. Threats from this other-world may appear, if dramatically appropriate. Reality reasserts itself at the end of the scene.

**Scatter (2s):** All trivial or non-magical targets (including Followers and mooks) flee the area, out of terror or self-preservation. Even well-drilled military units will run. This is a fear effect for the purposes of Knacks and Boons.

Once the pool has been rolled, it resets to zero, and resumes filling back up as normal. If the collateral pool is rolled before it reaches 10, reset the value to zero unless otherwise stated. Some actions may cause the collateral pool to be rolled immediately. If so, the triggering player rolls it right away and the Storyguide chooses the Stunts, as normal.

Some actions, Powers, Flairs, etc. may specify that the Storyguide must choose certain Collateral Stunts. When they apply, this is not optional, and the Storyguide must spend successes on the mandated Stunts first, before choosing any others.

Players may engage with the collateral pool in the following ways:

**Unchecked Abandon:** When a character makes any action with unchecked abandon, she may declare before she rolls any number of Enhancement, up to +5. The Storyguide adds an equal number of dice to the pool instantly, which may cause the pool to empty.

**Devil's Bargain:** Once per session, a character may take a devil's bargain, and any collateral they would add to the pool during that action is instead given to the Storyguide as Tension.

*Example of play: At the start of a fight sequence, the collateral pool is empty. During play, Monica, playing*

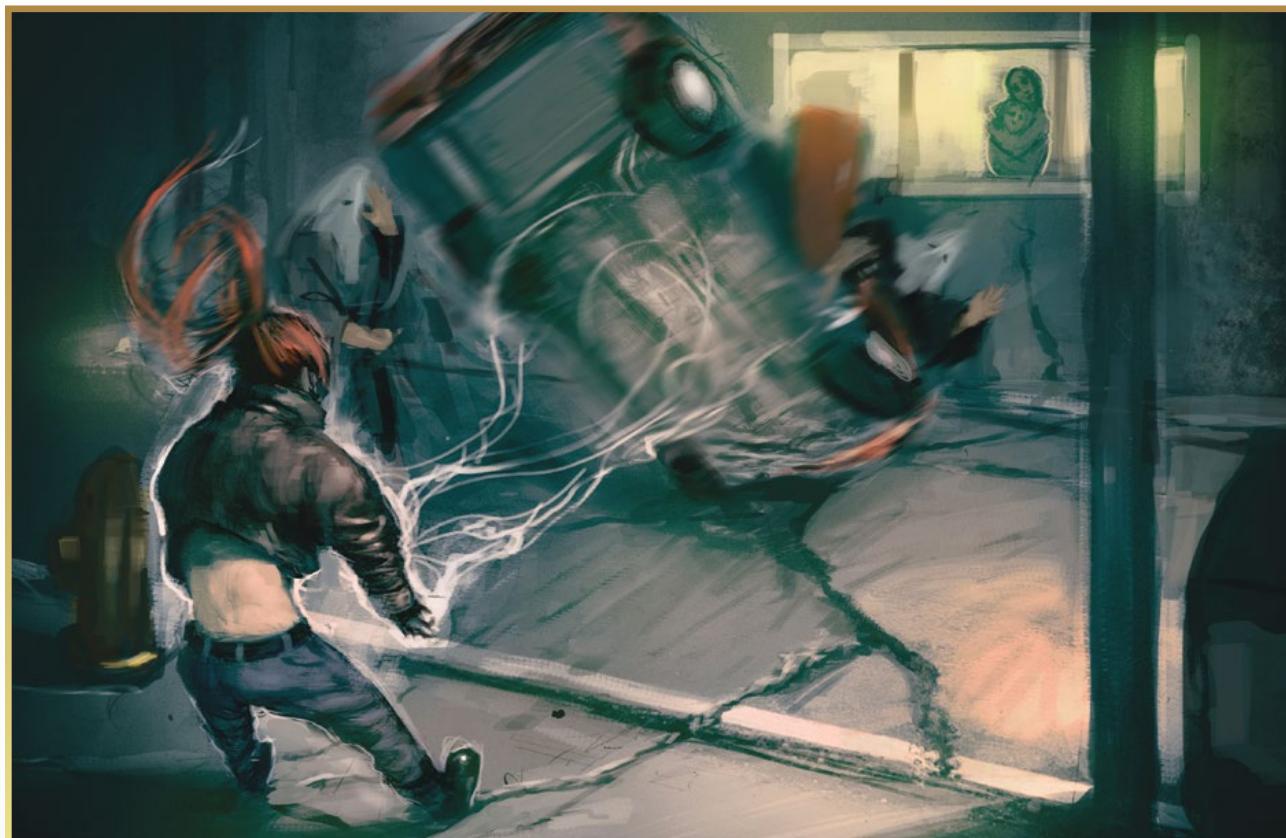
*Sigrun, chooses to perform a marvel. This adds a die to the pool. Josiah, playing Eric, has gained two divinity dice, so for each of his Close Combat rolls made during this scene, he adds a die to the pool. There are two other players also taking advantage of readily available marvels, as well as building up divinity dice, and within a few turns, 10 dice have been added to the pool.*

*Josiah was the last player whose actions caused a die to be added to the pool so Vera, the Storyteller, hands him 10 dice to roll. He rolls 3 successes, and Vera decides that since he has the Sky Purview, the Echo result seems the most appropriate, and a mighty and terrible storm suddenly sweeps the battlefield with a heavy rain.*

## WHO GETS HURT?

Many of the collateral stunts give Storyguides the choice to affect trivial targets or major characters. The gist of Collateral is for bad things to happen — the obvious target for collateral stunts are the characters' allies, Guides, Followers, and Creatures (and even sometimes Relics). Some groups might thrive off the drama of their loved ones put into peril, while others might find that deeply upsetting. Some groups might get resentful and feel like the Storyguide is trying to "take away their toys" if Birthrights become the target too often, while others might have moral issue with innocent bystanders being threatened.

Have a conversation with the players about what your group's expectations are before the Storyguide puts beloved characters at risk or makes their players uncomfortable. If the players aren't okay with the possibility of



harm to innocents or their friends, then Storyguides are encouraged to make liberal use of the Echo, Incite, Pin, and Scatter stunts.

## FATEBINDING

**A**s a Demigod, Fatebinding becomes much harder to avoid and the consequences for stepping outside these Fatebound roles increase in severity. A Demigod cannot simply ignore the pull of Fate the same way a mortal Hero can. Perhaps equally important, a Demigod is no longer limited by the restrictions of Tier when it comes to who (or what) she can be Fatebound to as the fate of The World pulls her into its weave.

For the most part, the rules of Fatebinding as laid out in **Scion: Hero** (p. 195) have not changed. This section details how being a Demigod adjusts and changes each Condition and role. If no changes have been made to the Invoke, Compel, or Resolve for each role, assume it functions the same.

### BASICS

- **Legend Limit:** Demigods are more easily bound. A Demigod cannot have more Fatebindings than their Legend+1.
- **Storyguide Characters Only:** The rule of thumb to never Fatebind other player characters remains. However, there is no limit on the Tier of the character, though higher Tier characters are rarely Disciples, Doomed, or Worshipers.
- **Acquiring Fatebindings:** In addition to the rules established in Hero, Demigods may become Fatebound through performing casual miracles (p. 155), performing marvels, or achieving a catastrophic success/mortal failure (p. 154).
- **Avoidance:** Demigods cannot avoid their fate. Once entangled to a person, place, or thing by Fatebinding, the Demigod must pursue any compel, and must adhere to the narrative impulses of the binding or suffer severe consequences. Each Fatebinding role and condition now includes an Avoidance, which explains what happens when a Demigod dares to ignore her fate. If at least one Fatebinding affecting a character is not invoked or compelled at least once during the session, then the Avoidance for the uninvoked/compelled Fatebinding triggers at the start of any scene during the next session.

### BIGGER SCALE

Fatebinding affects Demigods on a much larger Scale. Besides allowing for any Tier character to be bound to the Scion, entire societies, communities, and even things and places to be caught up in her Legend due to increased Leadership Scale. This can become increasingly problematic when a whole community becomes Fatebound as Canaries or a God becomes Fatebound as Nemesis.

## FATEBINDING CONDITIONS AND ROLES

This section details the updated versions of the Fatebinding Conditions and roles, and includes a variety of examples for how the Storyguide can apply bigger scale Fatebindings in their Scion games.

### IMPERILED

Something has put the Fatebound character, community, or society at risk. Whenever a Demigod causes a mortal failure, in addition to the rules established in Hero, this Condition may be applied to a character present in the scene. Rolling the Collateral pool can also cause the Imperiled condition to come into play.

**Compel:** The stakes of the Peril get higher. The asuras might drag Steve into Lanka or Fomorians demand fifty barrels of mead or they'll kill your contacts. It's fine if the bigger scale Peril takes more than one scene but shouldn't take up more than two episodes.

**Avoidance:** If the character fails to address the Peril, (not tries and fails — that's still heeding the call of Fate) besides the Peril coming to pass also add the Fatebinding's rating to the Collateral Pool and increase the stakes. If the character persists in ignoring this increased Peril, the imperiled character becomes a Nemesis with an equal Fatebinding strength.

### DISCIPLES (APPRENTICE)

The Demigod's display of power attracts those who wish to learn from her. Unlike mortals of the Hero tier, these students are called disciples and they desire the keys to power. Demigods attract sorcerers, Heroes, Heirs (the Scions of Dragons) and Legendary Creatures. A group of people can also choose to sit at the feet of the Scion and learn what she has to teach.

**Compel:** Demigod apprentices dabble in powerful things. When they toy with powers beyond their ken, the Scion gains 1 Legend and add the Fatebinding strength in dice to the Collateral Pool. If this would cause the pool to empty, the Storyguide must choose the Echo or Rift results, if able.

**Avoidance:** A Demigod who does not attend to her disciples and avoids her Fatebinding role as teacher finds herself responsible for great damages done to reality. Her next roll is made entirely with divinity dice but does not gain the benefits of Flooding the Pool.

### BALM

The Fatebound keeps the Scion centered, but this no longer needs to be a single person. A Demigod may find a balm in a community or society drawn to them by their miracles.

**Invoke:** In addition to its default effects, the Scion may ignore one catastrophic success or mortal failure (making it a normal success or failure) when she uses a Virtue to add dice.

**Avoidance:** If the Scion avoids her Balm, refuses their help, or gives into the extremes of her Virtue, she resolves the Fatebinding as per Hero but also transforms a number of dice equal to the Fatebinding strength into divinity dice.

## BOON COMPANION

Demigods attract grand company, and the personages who might become her friend extend to great heroes and even the gods themselves. Beyond that, a society or organization smiles favorably upon the Demigod, offering her aid and support in return for a favor here and there.

**Invoke:** In addition to its default benefits, invoking the aid of an organization counts them as Followers (or a Creature, type of organization depending) with a rating equal to the Fatebinding's strength for the duration of the scene.

**Compel:** Remember that organizations are just as likely to ask a favor, and that the needs of one are more varied and challenging than the needs of individuals.

**Avoidance:** If the Demigod refuses to assist her Boon Companion in their time of need, Fate conspires to turn other friends away, decreasing all Attitudes toward the Scion by 1 and imposing +1 Difficulty to all social rolls until the end of the episode.

## DOOMED (CANARY/MARTYR)

Canaries or Martyrs take on much the same roles as they do in Hero, and at the Demigod level can still be mortals willing to sacrifice themselves for the Scion or the unfortunate victims of happenstance. When Demigods attract the sacrifices of stronger folk, those become doomed, powerful allies, friends, or even lovers who are doomed to the same fate as a canary or martyr, to give up their life (even if temporarily) for the sake of the Scion.

**Invoke:** In addition to its default benefits, the Demigod may also reroll a mortal failure or catastrophic success, counting the pool as though it had no divinity dice.

**Compel:** This can be compelled on a mortal failure in addition to the Fatebound character gaining the Imperiled condition. Roll the Collateral pool, no matter its rating. Do not reset it.

**Avoidance:** When the Demigod does not give the doomed/canary/martyr the opportunity to sacrifice themselves for the Scion, immediately add the Fatebinding's strength as Enhancement to the next Collateral Pool roll. Any stunts chosen by the Storyguide on this roll do not target the doomed but must target something else of equal importance to the Scion.

## JINX

Mere bad luck is not enough to hinder a Demigod. A jinx at Demigod tier is a true curse or doom – intentionally inflicted on the Scion by a powerful foe, the enmity of a large group of people, or the Scion's own reckless actions.

**Invoke:** The Scion's next action gains a complication relevant to the curse. She still gains Momentum as default.

Failure to buy off the Complication spells misfortune for the Scion.

**Resolve:** This can also be resolved by breaking the curse. Shattering some sort of powerful supernatural curse often brings the ire of something else equally powerful. In addition to its other effects, the Scion may also gain a Nemesis of equal strength.

**Avoidance:** Trying to find loopholes or weaseling out of the curse brings the repercussions of Fate upon the Scion. Other Storyguide characters are drawn to the Scion to one-up, challenge, fight, or otherwise interfere with the Scion. These interfering characters appear in a number of scenes equal to the Fatebinding's strength, and gain an equal amount of Enhancement to all interference rolls.

## NEMESIS

The Demigod attracts the ire of a powerful enemy. While they certainly may contend with mortals looking to bring about their downfall, Demigods face the wrath of gods and Titans alike. The Demigod's miracles and unchecked power attract mighty foes with ease.

**Invoke:** In addition to its default benefits, the Scion may also choose to attribute a catastrophic success or mortal failure to the actions of her Nemesis, rather than the outward spiral of her own power.

**Resolve:** If the Nemesis is of the same Tier or higher, also add the Fatebinding's strength to the Collateral pool.

**Avoidance:** When the character avoids confrontation with her Nemesis (flees a battle, backs away from an argument, won't answer their calls, etc.) they work against the character in secret, causing one of the Demigod's other Fatebindings to become Imperiled.

## PARAMOUR

Like the Nemesis, the Demigod attracts especially powerful bedfellows. Any kind of powerful creature capable of consent can turn its eyes toward the Demigod – for better or worse. Titans by their nature are incapable of human empathy and therefore also of true love, but a Titan Paramour may still develop an infatuation with the Demigod and prioritize her above other things... and have dangerous disregard for the rest of the character's life.

**Invoke:** If the Paramour is the same Tier or higher, the Lover Knack can be of any power level, regardless of the Fatebinding's strength.

**Compel:** When the Paramour gains the Imperiled condition this is relevant to the Tier and status of the Paramour. A godly lover needs far different things than a brave mortal or a legendary creature, while a Titan lover might quibble over things the Scion doesn't even begin to comprehend.

**Resolve:** At the Demigod level, some Paramours are greater threats than others and may also become Nemeses upon resolution.

**Avoidance:** When avoiding, ignoring, or otherwise neglecting the Paramour, the Demigod's divine nature yearns for its partner. Gain an additional divinity die per scene the Demigod spends away from their Paramour, until they roll a full pool of divinity dice. Flooding the Pool does not stop this accumulation.

## RIVAL

Rivals at the Demigod level are still driven by the desire to compete with the character (and win, of course!). Unfortunately for the Demigod, this Rival is no longer limited to mortals and they can find themselves in direct competition with heroes of legend and jealous gods.

**Invoke:** If the Rival is of the same Tier or higher, the Scion does not have to spend or invoke Legend to perform a Feat of Scale to one-up her Rival.

**Compel:** If the Rival is of the same Tier or higher, the Rival may also perform a Feat of Scale at the cost of 1 Tension to one-up the Scion.

**Resolve:** In addition, when a rival resolves they may also become a Balm or a Nemesis.

**Avoidance:** If the Scion ignores the Rival, dodges their attempts to compete with them, or otherwise doesn't rise to the jabs of her enemy, Fate conspires to ensure the Scion can't avoid them. All Social rolls for the rest of the episode are made with a Complication equal to the Fatebinding's strength. If the character fails to buy off the Complication, their friends, contacts, etc., just can't stop talking about the Rival and bringing up how great and successful and accomplished they are.

## TRAITOR

As with all greater-Tier effects, the Traitor can become any other big scale Fatebinding, allowing for betrayal by truly fearsome personages. It follows the same default rules and guidelines as the apparent Fatebinding.

**Avoidance:** Follow the guidelines for the apparent Fatebinding.

## SAPIENT THINGS

Sometimes, in a Demigod's journey, they might encounter something that isn't strictly a person but definitely has sapience and is capable of consent. This might be a magical sword that has been granted intelligence, or a sentient place given higher thought by its genius loci, or an intelligent tree. They can even be Terra Incognita, for example: Tartarus is both a place and a malevolent deity.

When a Scion becomes Fatebound to something sentient but not a person, the intelligent thing can take on any appropriate Fatebound role. Sometimes, this takes the form of Realm Birthrights (see p. 141).

## WORSHIPERS/UNREQUITED PARAMOUR

Rather than a single, obsessive worshiper, at the Demigod level a worshiper becomes worshipers as a whole community or society attaches themselves to the Scion and her deeds. A Demigod who performs a marvel, Feat of Scale, or a number of casual miracles before a large group of people can become Fatebound to worshipers, who then wish to see more of the same miraculous power from the Scion. The unrequited paramour remains the same, but is again not limited to mortals.

**Invoke:** The Scion can gain 1 Legend from the loyalty and adoration of their Worshipers.

**Compel:** Worshipers do not become jealous of the Scion's other relationships — Instead of becoming Imperiled themselves as they devote themselves entirely to the Scion. An Unrequited Paramour still works as noted in Hero. Keep in mind this can, of course, include Titans and Titanspawn.

**Avoidance:** Avoiding thwarted love or the call of worship tugs at the divine nature of the Scion. For each scene in which the Demigod neglects their worshipers or dodges their unrequited paramour, convert one die to a divinity die until the pool is full. Flooding the Pool does not stop the accumulation.

## BECOMING OTHERWISE BOUND

Heroes only know the misfortune of having their Fate inadvertently tangled with another human being. This is benefit of staying mortal and never crossing over onto the road to divinity. Many Scions see the oncoming change and turn away from it, choosing to live out the rest of their lives as superpowers and celebrities; to be their own person, free of the entanglements that come with walking the path to godhood.

Demigods are in a period of transition, with one foot in the World and one above. Their Fate is less sticky than that of a God's, so they can continue to live their life in the World without risk of being wholly changed by contact with admirers and worshipers. Similarly, their Fate is more readily entangled with the World. The rest of this section details how a Demigod's Fate can become entangled with things that are not people including: items, places, and projects.

## ITEMS

Demigods become Fatebound to items or objects when said things are used to perform miracles, marvels, or great deeds. A Demigod eating dinner with a fork and knife does not imbue those objects with grand importance simply because she's using them; if she kills a Titan with her steak knife, then it might take on a legend of its own as a Titan-killer and therefore become a Relic. For characters who use a signature weapon or become well-known for carrying a particular object, existing Relics can also have their Fate entangled with the object or weapon.

The following are common Fatebound roles that items often take on:

**Boon Companion:** While perhaps not literally friends (see the sidebar about objects with sentience, however) the Demigod places a lot of trust and fellowship in her favored item. It does not ask for a favor when compelled, though instead needs some other kind of attention or becomes in another kind of peril.

**Jinx:** The item is cursed or wicked, dooming its owner to strife and misfortune. These cruel things often look innocuous or desirable, and tempt the powerful to use them.

**Martyr:** The object is destined to save the Scion at the cost of its destruction. It might be a holy shield, a well-made suit of armor, or a lucky amulet kept just over the Scion's heart.

**Special Resolve:** Being Fatebound with an Item can either resolve as the apparent Fatebinding, or in one of these unique ways:

- A non-sentient item becomes sapient, taking on any positive Fatebinding role as though it were a person with a strength equal to the current Fatebinding.
- The Demigod passes the item onto someone else. If it is a gift to an equal, gain a Boon Companion with a Fatebinding equal to this Fatebinding's strength. If it is handed off to a student, gain an Apprentice of equal Fatebinding strength.

## PLACES

A physical place can become entangled with the Demigod a variety of ways. Most easily, a Scion simply spends an extended amount of time in a place, investing in its infrastructure and people. With enough time, the Scion becomes Fatebound. Any place in which a Scion has performed numerous miracles, marvels, or Feats of Scale can also find its Fate linked with the Scion. Lastly, if a Scion causes the Echo or Rift Collateral stunts, they can become Fatebound with a place immediately.

The following are common Fatebound roles that places often take on:

**Balm:** Being at home in a place brings calm and inner peace to the Demigod. It is invoked and compelled as per the apparent Fatebinding.

**Canary:** The place is in a position of danger and brings all sorts of trouble for the Demigod. It is invoked and compelled as per the apparent Fatebinding.

**Jinx:** The Demigod has attached themselves to a place cursed to bring about their downfall, intentionally or otherwise. It is invoked and compelled as per the apparent Fatebinding.

**Special Resolve:** The Demigod passes stewardship onto someone else, gaining an Apprentice of the same Fatebinding strength.

## PROJECTS

Any large-scale project can become entangled with the Demigod when they start performing Feats of Scale and marvels while doing it, as well as the usual way in which Fatebindings are acquired. A Fatebound project is always long-term, and sometimes extends well past the length of time the Scion was anticipating.

The following are common Fatebound roles that projects often take on:

**Balm:** The project soothes and calms the Demigod, giving them something to focus on when they're in a downward spiral. It is invoked and compelled as per the apparent Fatebinding.

**Canary:** Dangerous things may happen to the project, causing its eventual unraveling. It is invoked and compelled as per the apparent Fatebinding.

**Jinx:** The project is a source of never-ending strife for the Scion, but they can't avoid it. It is invoked and compelled as per the apparent Fatebinding.

**Special Resolve:** When the project is finally complete, remove it from the story and the Demigod fulfills a Deed.

## IMMORTAL KNACKS

As your character progresses from Hero to Demigod, their Callings and Legendary Titles become true forces of nature. A Demigod can throw the weight of their divinity around to influence the World just as a giant might utilize their size. A wider variety of Knacks are available that allow you to Imbue for Scale: when you invoke your Legendary Title as a Feat of Scale, you may imbue one Legend rather than spend it. This can make a Warrior's sword as deadly as a hurricane, or a Judge's decree as unyielding as a mountain. To reiterate, Imbuing for Scale utilizes your Legendary Title, and the Feat in question must harken to that. The Sentinel of the Gates of Heaven could probably benefit from the Knack Alarm Beacon. The Silent Recorder of Secrets, not so much. If a Knack is limited to one use per scene, it may be repeated for 1 momentum each use.

### CREATOR

**Redefine the World:** The World is whatever you say it is. Imbue for Scale to reshape the geography of an area or alter its natural phenomena (moving a mountain, slowing a hurricane).

**Talecrafter:** A ballad that captures the hearts of a nation. An epic poem that shows the World who the real hero was. A meme that makes a public figure a laughingstock. Imbue for Scale to spread a story (true or false) through your art.

**Molded from Clay:** You are able to make a living being from inanimate matter. Creating an animal or plant requires a crafting roll at Tier 3, with an additional Milestone

for each dot of Birthright Creature you are constructing. Giving the being human intelligence pushes the project up to Tier 4. In either case, they become Fatebound to you or someone you've created it for, with an archetype of your choosing and a strength equal to your dots in Creator. For one additional Milestone, you can make enough individuals to start a community of this new species (though only one of them is Fatebound).

**The Birth of Legends:** If a new being is brought into creation (newborn human, a new species Molded from Clay, etc.), you may permanently bestow upon them access to any Knack, or to any Boon from a Purview that you have access to yourself. Using multiple times on the same subject requires a point of momentum for each Knack or Boon after the first.

**Mythic Feast:** Prepare a meal before battle. Spend a scene breaking bread with your bandmates, any of their creatures or followers, and up to (your Legend) other allies. Everyone partaking feels powerful and nourished, gaining an extra level of Soft Armor for the rest of the session.

**Teotl-Specific: The New Fire:** At the end of the 52-year cycle, all flames must be extinguished, and a new fire rekindled five days later. You have access to a fire that has been burning since the last such cycle and can use it as part of a complex crafting action. Doing so gives the item you craft a +1 Enhancement to all rolls.

## GUARDIAN

**Rescue Mission:** Once per scene, Imbue for Scale when saving someone who is imprisoned or hopelessly lost in a way that no mortal could ever escape (kidnapped by a god, trapped in a labyrinth, dead and rotting in the Underworld).

**Alarm Beacon:** When attempting to warn masses about an imminent danger (an approaching Titanspawn, climate change, Ragnarök), you may spend one momentum to Imbue for Scale.

**Champion of the Community:** Spend one Momentum. For a scene, you may declare everyone in one local community as your charge (**Scion: Hero**, p. 225) for the purposes of relevant Guardian Knacks.

**Just Do What I Do:** For one scene per session, you may give your charge access to a Knack you possess. Their use of it counts against your maximum number of simultaneous Knacks active, and any Momentum or Legend is spent from your total.

**Divine Layup:** Once per session, you may Imbue to lend Scale to a single action made by your charge to defend themselves. This does not stack with any other supernatural sources of Scale they might have.

**Kami-Specific: The Greater Kami:** Young, weak kami are loath to harm you. Spend a point of Momentum; for the remainder of the scene any mundane weapons newer than 100 years are at +2 Difficulty to injure you or your charge.

**Devá-Specific: Matsya's Promise:** You declare your charge to be under your dharmic protection. You may Imbue for Scale to protect your charge, or to give Scale to their actions to avoid harm. This does not benefit rolls to attack, even in self-defense, nor does it stack with other magical sources of Scale. If they have a Legend rating, they may, one time ever, do the same to repay you, after which they are no longer your charge.

## HEALER

**Healer of Souls:** Imbue for Scale when attempting to heal the hearts of an entire group or culture. This might mean setting aside past prejudices, or moving forward after a national tragedy, or inspiring the hope needed to survive an ongoing crisis.

**Disaster Relief:** Imbue for Scale when attempting to halt the loss of life after a massive violent event, such as a battle or a natural disaster.

**Cleanse the Land:** You are able to heal the environment itself, out to Long Range. You fix damage to structures or flora and remove any pollutants or contagions found in the area or its wildlife. This can also be used to add or remove up to three points of Enhancements or Complications to the field. Supernatural blights require a Clash of Wills.

**That Which Was Broken:** If you are rebuilding something that was once destroyed, you may add your Healer dots as an Enhancement to all rolls in the complex crafting action.

**Remember Them:** With a touch, you are able to restore anyone's lost memories, from dementia patients to Underworld Shades. The permanence of this effect is up to you. Memories specifically stolen or occluded require a Clash of Wills.

## HUNTER

**Crying Wolf:** You quarry cannot get help, because no one believes they're being hunted. Once per scene, you may Imbue for Scale to terrorize them out of credibility or to convince their allies that they are in no real danger.

**They're Digging in the Wrong Place:** Imbue for Scale when attempting to find something that was lost to history (a forgotten relic, an ancient secret, or a single, centuries-old soul bound in the vast expanses of an Underworld).

**Oubliette:** Once you have caught your quarry, spend one momentum to trap them. The field around them transforms into a cage or labyrinth of your design. Beings of lower Tier are trapped, while others must attempt a Clash of Wills to escape. You may enter or exit at will.

**Trophy Room:** You've caught beasts across the globe. You may, at will, produce a trophy of your off-screen exploits: any item that could reasonably have been harvested from the body of any mundane animal, common Denizen, or a monster of lower Tier. Further, once per session you can use such a trophy to grant your dots in the Hunter Calling as an Enhancement, either to an intimidation roll or a crafting roll utilizing the item in question.

**To Extinction:** You may declare any organized group of foes as your quarry for the purposes of relevant Knacks. If you have the Knack “Always There” (**Scion: Hero**, p. 228), and the targets are of lower Tier, you may immediately jump to the scene of catching the last one.

**Manitou-Specific: Hunting Party:** When you lead a hunt for a specific species of animal or Titanspawn, you may use your dots in the Hunter Calling as an enhancement to all rolls toward finding the location of the creatures.

## JUDGE

**Inescapable Judgement:** Imbue for Scale when punishing the guilty on a massive scope (capturing every member of an international criminal enterprise, guillotining a cruel aristocracy, binding a Titan).

**Divine Mercy:** When someone has been unfairly punished or given an excessive sentence, you may Imbue for Scale to release them. This may involve sundering chains, burning a slave labor camp to the ground, or pulling someone out of a tormenting afterlife (to place them in a more benevolent Underworld realm; this Knack alone cannot undo a death sentence). Doing so is seen as a lawful act in the eyes of any Boons or Knacks that make that distinction.

**Oathbinder:** You can sanctify oaths with the force of your divinity. Any character of a lower Tier attempting to break such an oath cannot do so, and others must make a Clash of Wills against you. You know immediately if such an oath is successfully broken.

**The Good and Bad Places:** Whenever you or your bandmates take the life of any being of Lower Tier, you may declare the Underworld to which that Shade is sent. Beings of equal or greater Tier require a Clash of Wills. The Shade must still undergo any necessary afterlife trials, and the ruler of that realm has final say over the soul’s specific placement, but they will take your judgement into account. If they vehemently disagree with your assessment, they will likely let you know out of professional courtesy.

**Name the Executioner:** If you declare someone guilty of a transgression, you may proclaim a single ally as the executioner of their punishment. Once per session, you may Imbue for Scale to modify a single roll made by the executioner to punish the transgressor. This does not stack with any other supernatural sources of Scale.

**Netjer-Specific: Read the Ib:** The heart is the record of all deeds, good or ill. By simply looking at any being of Lower Tier, you literally see their beating heart in their chest, and can assess their most severe, recent unjust act. Beings of equal or greater Tier require one Momentum and a Clash of Wills.

**Shén-Specific: The Proper Forms:** You can instantly sense whether someone has acted without following proper bureaucratic procedures (such as driving without a license or leaving Diyu without the permission of the royal

judges). If they are of lower Tier, you can command them to immediately make steps to rectify this error.

## LEADER

**Be the Example:** You lead by showing others how it’s done. Once per scene, when you are taking action with the specific purpose of inspiring others or setting an example, you may Imbue for Scale. The Scale applies to the action itself, though extra successes can be spent on Stunts to rally those who follow you. This could mean taking the first swing against an army of rakshasas, or refusing to give in to temptation when the sirens are calling your name.

**Power Grab:** Your rise to power will be legendary. Once per scene, Imbue for Scale when attempting to usurp someone’s leadership role. This can be through direct force, charisma, or even assassination.

**“To Me!”:** You can get a crowd of people to heed your call at a moment’s notice. Once per session, you may make a Knack Skill roll to call forth a group to aid you in the following scene. This group acts as your Followers, as per the Birthright, with a ranking equal to your successes (to a maximum five dots, with relevant tags of your choice). The group disbands after the scene ends.

**Signature Crew:** At the beginning of the session, choose a group of Birthright Followers to be your favored compatriots. These followers gain an additional Follower tag for each dot of the Leader Calling you have. This affects the Followers capabilities, but doesn’t change the actual makeup of the group. For instance, your three kitsune backup singers can control a crowd as if they had the Mob tag, without actually increasing in number.

**Living Will:** Even if you should fall, your followers fight on. If you are Taken Out in a fight, you may continue to roll to lead your followers, with all of your normal knacks and enhancements to do so, until they too are Taken Out.

## LIMINAL

**Traillblaze:** Imbue for Scale when creating a path, doorway, or passage that others can cross. This might be a road that leads to another realm, a literal door through an impenetrable wall, or a gate big enough for a Titan.

**Divine Mediator:** As an outsider, you are able to see both sides of even the bitterest feuds. When you enter an antagonistic conversation, even beings who have made war since the creation of the cosmos start to see from the others’ perspective. When you do this, Imbue for Scale to bring those conflicts to peaceful resolution.

**Rise From Your Grave:** Once per story, you can choose to be killed in combat, returning from the grave unharmed at a dramatically appropriate moment (usually within the same session, but the choice is yours). Your current long-term Deed is considered “unfinished business,” and all rolls toward finishing it gain a +1 Enhancement.

**Outsider’s Immunity:** You may ignore local laws or customs when abroad. Relatively universal laws, like “don’t murder people” will still apply, but the unique

rules of specific foreign countries, terrae incognitae, or Underworlds just don't apply to you. Boons or Knacks involving the law do not see these actions as criminal, nor can a being of Lower Tier hassle you about them.

**The Watcher of the Road:** You may declare one route (a road, a doorway, a magical portal, a sea route between two cities) to be under your watch. Wherever you are, you automatically know everything and everyone passing through: their name, their cargo, what they do along the way. Magical or divine disguises require a Clash of Wills to see through.

## LOVER

**Lasso the Moon:** Once per scene, you may Imbue for Scale on a single roll toward seizing an impossible-to-acquire object (a star, a philosophical concept, a god's personal relic) for the purpose of gifting it to a loved one.

**Romantic Reckoning:** You are a divine avenger for the broken hearted. Once per scene, Imbue for Scale when getting revenge for a romantic betrayal. The victim could be yourself, a friend, a bandmate, or a total stranger.

**Token of Affection:** You give your loved one a small, wearable object as a token of your love. So long as they wear it, you can reflexively see what they are doing, no matter how far, and are automatically alerted should they come into danger. This is explained to them when the gift is given, and they can take it off for privacy at any time. Should they come into danger, you may, once per session, cast a Marvel at no cost to protect them, regardless of distance.

**No Mountain High Enough:** Once per scene, you may Imbue for Scale to overcome obstacles that physically prevent you from being near your love. This can include a combat action, but only if the fight is solely about whether or not you can pass through to reach your love.

**Matchmaker:** You see the roots of potential love and you can twist fate to make that love blossom. Once per scene, you are able to Fatebind two characters of a lower Tier to each other as Paramours, at a strength equal to your dots of the Lover Calling. This cannot be used on other player characters, and does not alter the subjects' free will. While you, the player, are changing the narrative of their story, in the World the characters discover or admit a feeling that was always there.

## SAGE

**"False!"**: Imbue for Scale when stamping out a widespread falsehood, a common misconception, or a massive illusion.

**A Consult:** Even if you don't know the answer, you know who does. When trying to find information, you gain an innate sense of who can help you, and you may Imbue for Scale to reach them and/or implore their aid.

**I Know Your Bane:** You wield knowledge like a weapon. Once per session, this knowledge can give you a lead (**Scion: Origin**, p. 73) to begin a complex investigation action to find a creature's supernatural bane. Whenever they

take an injury condition from that source, they also take an additional condition of the same severity. This can apply to a specific opponent or an entire race of denizens. In the case of the latter, the bane should be significantly harder to come by (and require more Milestones to uncover): a rare plant that is poisonous to satyrs, or a unique sword that burns away an oni's flesh.

**Loremaster:** You immediately know the Legendary Titles of anyone you meet. Further, by spending a point of Momentum, you may use your dots in the Sage Calling as an Enhancement to any social roll against them that evokes one of those Titles. If their identity is disguised in any way, this requires a Clash of Wills.

**Don't You Know Who This Is?**: Your word is trusted, and when you extol someone's accomplishments, people listen. Once per session, you may Imbue for Scale to enhance a social roll made by an ally. This requires you to briefly glorify them by praising one of their past Deeds. This does not stack with any other supernatural sources of Scale.

## TRICKSTER

**Ain't I a Stinker:** When you lie to a Storyguide character, convincing them to do something they otherwise never would, Imbue for Scale, which applies to their action once per scene. This does not stack with any other supernatural sources of Scale.

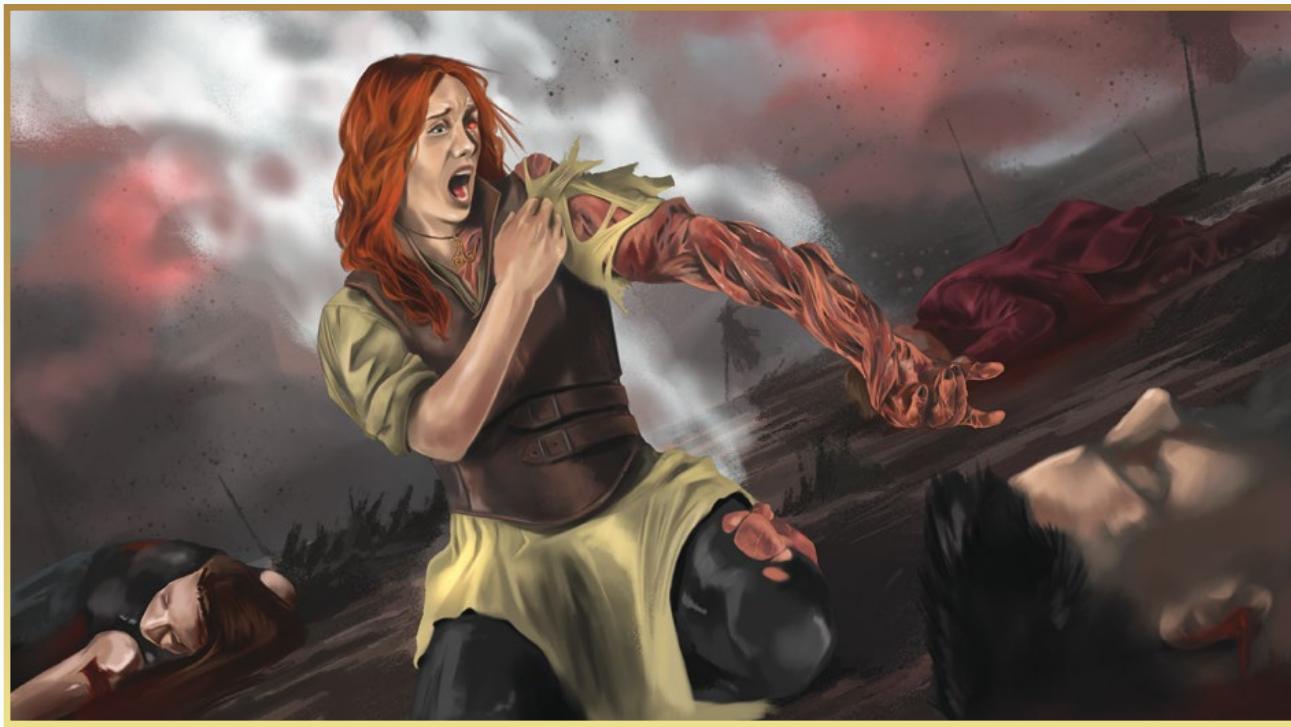
**Escape Artist:** Standard prisons or manacles cannot contain you, and you may Imbue for Scale to get out of any confinement: a supermax prison, a labyrinth, the confines of an Underworld.

**Disguised to Onlookers:** Beings of a Lower Tier cannot see through your disguises, and you may choose whether your Omen presents itself. If you choose not to show it, it will return to witnesses' memories (or appear in their dreams) after your trickery has unfolded.

**Disguised to the World:** Beyond simple illusion, your disguises alter reality itself. Once per session, you may completely change your face, sex, race, even species down to a biological level. You may temporarily shift your dots in physical attributes as you like. You also gain their other biological properties; such as a certain Norse Trickster disguised as a horse becoming impregnated by one. However, you are limited to mundane, biological differences.

**Disguised to The Overworld:** While the preceding Knack disguises your biological makeup down to your DNA, this one affects how you appear to magic itself. Once per session, if you disguise yourself as a Denizen of the World, you may access one of their Knacks for the scene, though you also take any banes or Conditions inherent to that race.

**Disguised to Fate:** (Prerequisite: Any two of the previous three "Disguised to" Knacks) Once per session, if you are disguised as a specific figure, you may call upon their Legendary Title as if it were your own. The figure in question does not immediately become aware of this, but



will likely hear about the great Deeds they don't remember taking part in.

**Theoi-Specific: Gift Horse:** A shirt poisoned in centaur blood. Flammable golden robes. A jar filled with all the horrors and pains of humanity. Once per session, you may use a Marvel at no cost to menace someone who has accepted a gift from you.

**Loa-Specific: Devil at the Crossroads:** To survive, sometimes even the divine must adapt. When worship of your Pantheon is forbidden, maybe it's time to look like a different one. When this Knack is activated, you appear to all senses (including "Scent the Divine") as a different Pantheon than your own. You can even mimic the Omen of a specific Legendary figure, chosen when you purchase this Knack. Further, once per session you may Imbue, rather than Spend Legend, to mimic their Pantheon Specific Purview with a Marvel.

Scions with this knack may even find their Mantle growing to look like the figure they are emulating. Players and Storyguides are encouraged to make this happen (see "The Myth Engine," p. 37), as Fate puts them on another's path, and the character chooses between creating their own Legend or syncretizing into someone else's.

## WARRIOR

**Divine Duel:** Once per scene, you may Imbue for Scale to fight a single opponent in a one-on-one battle. While bandmates and allies can offer magical help, for this Knack to be applicable any direct attacks must be limited to the two combatants.

**Deterrence Policy:** Sometimes, the better you are at violence the less you need to use it, especially when your legendary reputation comes into play. Once per scene,

Imbue for Scale to intimidate any opponent into backing down from a physical altercation.

**Punch the Problem:** Whether shooting a traffic light, solving a complex knot by cutting it in half, or punching a jukebox to play your lover's favorite song, you are able to solve a non-violent problem with violence. Once per session, you may substitute any dice roll with your favorite attack roll, along with any of its usual Enhancements.

**Good Fight!:** Legendary friendships are forged in heated battles. Once per arc, if you win a one-on-one battle where you take at least two injury conditions, you may choose to Fatebind your opponent as a Boon Companion. Only one character may be Fatebound as such at a time, but they do not count against your maximum number of Fatebinding conditions. The strength of the Fatebinding is equal to your dots in the Warrior Calling, and this companion alone may be invoked twice in a session for aid.

**Size Them Up:** This isn't your first rodeo. Once per session, you may look at a single antagonist and immediately know their Qualities, Flairs, and what abilities constitute their pools.

**Tengri-Specific: Your Fate Is Sealed:** When a warrior of the Tengri truly needs to kill their enemy, they pronounce the fate of a weapon's blow. They might tell an arrow that its Fate is to pierce the enemy's brain, tell their sword that its Fate is to slay or even inform their fists that their Fate is to seize the heart of the foe. You may call on this power whenever you would gain Legend from a Fatebinding. Instead of gaining that Legend, you may select a single foe present in the scene and pronounce their Fate to your weapons. For the rest of the scene, that foe cannot get any defensive benefits from Tension spending whatsoever.

## CONDITION: RIASTRADH

Your body warps into a nightmarish mass of muscle and sinew, like something from a horror film: Eyes pop, joints invert, hairs become daggers. You can barely distinguish friend from foe; and once you've eliminated the latter, you continue to fight the former.

**System:** All of your intimidation rolls or strength-based attacks gain Scale as if you'd invoked your Legendary Title, along with the Shockwave tag. Any time this causes harm to your allies, gain a point of momentum. This does not stack with other supernatural sources of Scale.

**Resolve:** You are immersed completely in cold water. Alternatively, you can wear yourself out in a massive act of destruction damaging something of similar Scale (e.g. a car, a building, or a mountain).

**Tuatha-Specific: The Riastradh:** Like Cuchulain, you have mastered the horrifying "warp spasm." Once per session, you may imbue a Legend point to frenzy yourself into the Riadstradh Condition as a Simple action. If you break a geis under the Condition, it resolves immediately and the legend becomes spent.

**Æsir-Specific: Not Like This:** If an attack would give you a Maimed-or-higher Injury Condition, but does not line up with your destined fate, spend a point of Momentum to ignore the damage. However, whether this Knack is activated or not, the first time in an arc when an attack does fall under your fate, take the injury as a persistent condition and add one point to the Tension pool. This injury condition does not count toward your health boxes.

## DOMINION

Once a character crosses the threshold of Legend 5, she becomes a Demigod and begins the journey to true divinity. As she crosses this threshold to true power, her proficiency over divine magic reaches untold new heights. Paths unforetold open to her; miracles come as easy as breathing; her mere presence brings the magic of her Purviews into the very material of the World. This ascendancy from Hero to Demigod is achieving Dominion and these new powers reflect a Demigod's greater relationship with divine power. Dominion comes at the price of two Purview Boons; instead of two Boons, the Scion gains a single Dominion Boon over that Purview.

## DIVINITY DICE

As a reflection of their divine strength and growing godlike nature, all Demigods gain access to divinity dice. Rolling these dice alter the outcomes of her successes and failures, turning positive outcomes into explosive, immense

results (often giving the Scion more than she asked for) and imploding failures into terrible dooms. Besides altering the narrative framework of success and failure, a character can also flood the pool, or intentionally supercharge any action with pure divine power. When she floods the pool, a number of new, powerful stunts become available to her.

The number of divinity dice a character may have at any time is 10. These persist from session to session, and replace an equal number of dice in any Skill or Defense roll. For example: If a player has 4 divinity dice accumulated and makes a Skill roll with a pool containing 8 dice, she replaces 4 of those with divinity dice. If she later makes a Skill roll with a pool containing 6 dice, she still replaces 4 of those with divinity dice. This continues until she rolls a pool containing nothing but divinity dice, and then the count resets.

To represent divinity dice, players are encouraged to use a different color set of dice. We recommend something sparkly or flashy, or in a color scheme that best suits the character's Purviews. No matter how a player chooses to represent their divinity dice, it should be something that stands out. If using electronic dice, such as a dice roller online, or a mobile app, it is recommended to roll a separate pool of divinity dice, then the remaining Skill dice, and tally successes.

### GAINING DIVINITY DICE

A character's dice pools slowly become consumed by divinity dice as the take any of the following actions, replacing one die in their pools for each of the following actions taken:

- Performing marvels
- Performing Feats of Scale
- Resolving a Deed
- Using a Virtue

The number of divinity dice resets to zero once the player makes any roll consisting entirely of divinity dice, including flooding the pool.

Rolling a pool containing divinity dice creates catastrophic successes and mortal failures which are shaped by the rolling character's Purviews. Storyguides and players decide which of Purviews is the most appropriate at the time of rolling. A Storyguide may always choose to Fatebind the character as a result of success or failure.

Catastrophic successes happen when a player rolls a pool containing divinity dice and succeeds with any of the divinity dice showing successes. The action succeeds beyond the character's wildest dreams, always granting more than the character wished for.

Mortal failures cause the character's divine nature to falter. If the roll fails and any of the divinity dice are not successes, it provokes a mortal failure. Beyond the roll failing, something relevant to the rolling character's Purviews goes wildly out of control.

If a roll succeeds and no divinity dice show successes, or if a roll fails and some divinity dice show successes, nothing spectacular happens. It is a success or failure as normal.

Whenever a character uses a Virtue to add dice to a Momentum expenditure, these Virtue dice are automatically divinity dice.

## FLOODING THE POOL

Once per session, a character with three or more divinity dice may choose to flood the pool, spending a Basic Action (which may not be part of a Mixed action) to fill herself with pure divine power. The next roll she makes is made entirely with divinity dice, and grants her access to any of the following stunts:

**Divine Effort (1 Scale per 3s):** Gain +1 Scale to the action for every three successes spent on this Stunt, which stacks with any other sources of Scale to max of +5.

**Divine Revelation (1s):** For each success spent on this stunt, reveal one clue per success in this or any future Procedural scenes. Add 1 die to the Collateral pool.

**Wave of Power (1s):** Add the Shockwave tag to any attack enhanced by this Stunt. If it already has the Shockwave tag, it gains Brutal instead. Add 1 die to the Collateral pool.

**Wonder and Awe (variable successes):** People or creatures observing you become enthralled by your display of might. They become temporary Followers or Creatures with a rating equal to the successes spent on this Stunt. This effect ends at the end of the story. If this roll would also result in a Fatebinding, these people or creatures are excellent targets.

## FONT OF MIRACLES

Demigods don't struggle to perform miracles after they have achieved a Dominion Boon. With casual effort, a Demigod manipulates the inherent magic of the World with an ease that reflects the divine being she might become. Characters can perform any minor or cosmetic miracle relevant to their Purviews without needing to roll or imbue Legend, and may do so without limiting themselves to the once-per-scene nature of Marvels. For example, a Demigod with the Water Purview could fill a canteen full of drinking water, while a Demigod with the Passion Purview can brighten the mood of those around her just by being present. These casual miracles draw the attention of onlookers and stir the hearts of mortals. Where appropriate, a Demigod performing little miracles may be subject to immediate Fatebinding.

## THE EASE OF POWER

Any character with Dominion attains mastery over her Purview, able to perform greater miracles with ease. The Gods themselves contest each other in their areas of Dominion, but even Demigods enjoy a steady font of divine power. Casual miracles apply only to Dominion Boons.

## MARVELS

Characters may perform marvels with any of their Dominion Purviews by imbuing a Legend, rather than spending it. In cases where the marvel already calls for

imbuing a Legend, the player may instead choose to substitute its Legend cost for gaining divinity dice. Likewise with casual miracles, onlookers (including magical beings and creatures) may be drawn into Fatebinding when dramatically appropriate.

## PERFORMING CASUAL MIRACLES

Casual miracles are always minor effects, tiny impossible feats performed with ease. These are meant to showcase the Demigod's magic and bring a sense of wonder of the game. Players who use casual miracles to "spam" a potentially useful minor effect, or use them to argue that the World "doesn't make sense" are acting in bad faith, and should be gently reminded Scion's goal is always leniency and delight.

Mechanically, casual miracles do not need stats, call for rolls, or require concrete effects. If it says a character can conjure drinking water, they do, no questions asked. Where appropriate, a Storyguide can assign a casual miracle up to +3 Enhancement to any relevant rolls, or apply up to +3 Difficulty to opposed rolls.

Some of the casual miracle examples may read like small marvels, or like things that could also be treated as Feats of Scale. It's acceptable to use this section as a metric for adjudicating those as well but remember at the Demigod level the intention is to reflect the characters as effortlessly powerful. Feats of Scale reflect brute force effort, a Scion pushing themselves to make great things happen. It makes sense that a Scion without the Epic Strength purview should have to perform a Feat of Scale to bench press a giant, but if a Demigod with that Purview is showing off, that can simply be a casual miracle. If it requires mechanical heft and would make a huge impact on the story, or if the possibility of failure would be interesting, then it is not a casual miracle.

## CASUAL MIRACLES AND MORTAL FAILURES

In some instances, the result of a mortal failure may read like something that can simply be dismissed by an application of a casual miracle. When this is in question, casual miracles do not ever override the result of a mortal

## IT STILL SUCKS TO BE TRIVIAL

Like in Hero, any effect applied to a trivial target (or trivial targets) automatically becomes a casual miracle, costing the Scion nothing. This applies to the outcomes of Dominion Boons as well as using any other Boon the Scion might have access to.

Remember — using this to try to cheat out of spending in-game resources on powers shouldn't award any discount.

## WHO CAN USE DOMINION STUNTS?

Divinity dice are not dependent on achieving Dominion, and assuming a Dominion Boon is an optional choice for the character. The directions note that “All player characters and allied characters present in the scene may use the chosen Stunts.” What does “allied characters” mean? For the purposes of using Dominion Stunts, Followers, Creatures, Guides, or any other Birthright character are expressly “allied” characters. Storyguides and players should come to an agreement about which Storyguide characters assisting the players’ characters count. For the most part, lean toward yes — that’s the point of having dominion, after all.

failure. If a Scion with the Sky Purview causes a tempest to rip through her office building as a result of her mortal failure, she may not also quell it with a stern look. Mortal failures are godly power gone out of control, and are not so easily dismissed.

### POWER AND THE MYTH LEVEL

The Myth Levels of **Mysteries of the World** (p. 9) require some adjustment for divinity dice and collateral at the Demigod level.

**Iron:** At the Iron level, remove any two conditions for divinity dice and collateral. This is the least mythic level, so characters bursting with divine power and causing trouble does not fit its themes. Storyguides should be stricter about what they consider qualifying for a casual miracle as well. Consider retaining the restrictions on marvels from Hero.

**Heroic:** Like the Iron level, reduce the conditions for divinity dice and collateral. Casual miracles may still be performed, though perhaps not as frequently. The tug of war between mortal and divine remains important, but largely through internal struggle, rather than external.

**Bronze:** Close to the default mechanical assumption, a Bronze level game requires little adjustment. Encourage players to use their powers, to indulge in Feats of Scale and marvels, and watch the collateral rack up.

**Silver:** Allow characters to fling around their power with impunity. Consider waiving the cost of marvels entirely. By doing this, collateral will also build up quickly, so consider whether marvels should trigger adding a die to the pool.

**Gold:** At the most extreme, Storyguides can do away with the cost of abilities entirely and just allow Demigods to go hog wild. Increase collateral only when a character’s actions might cause genuine harm. Treat every roll as though it were a full pool of divinity dice.

## DOMINION BOONS

Divine magic comes easily to Demigods and its abundance uplifts those around them. Rather than dozens of discrete powers with ever-increasing Legend costs, the strength of Dominion transforms the Scion into a nexus of power from which she and her allies find strength. Dominion “Boons” instead confer stunts that can be accessed by all members of the Band and allied SGCs, such as Followers, Guides, and Creatures.

### USING DOMINION STUNTS

At the start of any scene, before any characters take actions, or when determining Initiative Slots in combat, each player chooses one or more Dominion Stunts from any of the Purviews their characters can access to apply as active for the duration the scene. The active stunt can be swapped with another by spending a Simple action to do so — rolling any Pantheon Asset Skill at the default difficulty of 1 (which may be part of a Mixed action). Only one of each Stunt may be active in a Band at a time, and there is no additional benefit from having it be active in multiple instances. However, if two (or more) Scions have the same Purview, add 1 Enhancement per character (to a max of +3) to apply any Dominion Stunt in that Purview.

#### BASICS

- Choose the Stunts at the start of any scene, or during initiative.
- Players pick one Stunt from any/all of the Purviews they can access.
- If characters have one or more of the same Purview, +1 Enhancement per overlapping player to apply Dominion Stunts of that Purview, to a max of +3.
- Switching selected Stunts is a Simple action, which may be Mixed. Use Pantheon Asset Skill during Mixed action.
- All player characters and allied characters present in the scene may use the chosen Stunts.

#### ENFORCING THE ROLL

If a character swaps her active Stunt and is not making it part of a Mixed Action, Storyguides are encouraged to forego the specified roll and allow the character to exchange her power at the cost of an action. When the action is Mixed, lean into potential mortal failure consequences for the result of failing to realign the flows of divine energy.

#### GENERAL

Regardless of the character’s chosen Purviews, any Demigod has access to this general Dominion stunt.

**Gift of Power (2s):** Apply to any Path, Pantheon, or Knack Skill roll. Grant one target within your perceptions of the same Tier or lower who does not share a Purview with you the benefits of any of your Innate Abilities. This gift of power lasts until the end of the scene.

## ARTISTRY

The Demigod subsumes art itself into every aspect of her being, and enlightens the World with the artistry of her presence. She is never not making something more beautiful, more creative, more sublime, and merely her existence inspires the fires of creativity into others.

### CASUAL MIRACLES

Demigods with the Artistry Purview might perform any of the following miracles:

- Change the color of any physical object by touching it.
- Create a small piece of art of outstanding quality (a quick sketch, a small sculpture, a freestyle rap) in a matter of moments and without needing to roll.
- Make an existing piece of art better by looking at it, touching it, or signing your name to it.
- Create pigment, ink, clay, or any other art supply from nothing – enough to make a small work of art.
- Always understand the intention and meaning of any art piece you perceive.
- Understand the feelings of anyone you observe admiring a piece of art.

### CATASTROPHIC SUCCESS AND MORTAL FAILURE

**Catastrophic success:** Your Motif and artistic aesthetic starts changing everything around you. This might cause images to appear, sculptures to be made, or music to start playing from nowhere. The spontaneous art always furthers your goals, but always reveals your nature as a Divine being and puts you at risk of Fatebinding.

**Mortal failure:** Artwork and creative pursuits become befouled in your presence; your artwork animates and behaves aggressively to show its displeasure. All the vibrancy leeches out of everything around you.

### DOMINION STUNTS

**Lasting Record (2s):** By applying the Demigod's art, the using character recreates some or all of an investigative scene. This allows the character to pause or suspend a complex investigation and return to it at any point in time later, without having to worry about clues or leads deteriorating due to time constraints.

**Swelling Crescendo (Variable):** Vibrant abstract art or beautiful resonant sound surrounds you, encouraging your allies to work harder and fight better. Each success spent on this stunt creates a Teamwork enhancement to one type of action of your choosing (attack rolls, crafting rolls, etc.).

**Visible Choir (3s):** Create a condition of Glorious Art on yourself or another character, representing them weaving song, poesy, or oration as you act, turning the scene into a growing work of living art. Characters of lower Tier

cannot interfere in any way with characters in the grips of Glorious Art, any attempts to do so result in the character breaking down into tears of awe or similar acts of helplessness in the face of divine majesty. If all the characters in your Band have this Condition, they may choose to resolve it by consensus, regaining 1 Legend if they do so. Otherwise, it resolves at the end of the Scene or when they choose to stop performing.

## BEASTS

Animals answer to the Demigod's divine presence. All aspects of living things obey her, and where she walks, she shares the feral power of all beasts with her friends and allies.

### CASUAL MIRACLES

Demigods with the Beasts Purview might perform any of the following casual miracles:

- Tame and ride any beast of appropriate size.
- Grant beasts the ability to speak like humans.
- Grant other humans the ability to speak like beasts.
- Pacify any aggressive animal in your presence.
- Enable safe and easy animal husbandry.
- Know every kind of animal present in a Field.

### CATASTROPHIC SUCCESS AND MORTAL FAILURE

**Catastrophic Success:** You become a beacon for all animals to come pay tribute or assist with your actions. The more successes you achieve on a roll the bigger and more dangerous the animals are. If the action took place in a Terra incognita, Underworld, or Overworld these can be monsters native to that locale. They are not aggressive or harmful to anyone but can be in the way and only obey you.

**Mortal Failure:** Everything around you takes on an uncontrollable bestial aspect. Trivial targets transform into your associated animal. Wild animals become ferocious and aggressive. Domesticated creatures become feral.

### DOMINION STUNTS

**Fluid Form (1s or 3s):** If the user of the stunt is a Scion with the Beasts Purview, they may use this stunt to add an additional trait with Animal Aspect (**Scion: Hero**, pg. 241). For 3s, any other allied character may use this stunt in place of the Boon, taking on animal traits as noted.

**The World's Army (variable):** Summon a Creature (as per the birthright) with a dot rating equal to the number of successes spent on this stunt. The summoned Creature aids you for the rest of the scene. If the same scion invokes this Stunt again, any Creatures previously summoned by this stunt leave. Any other characters in the scene using this Stunt summon additional Creatures.

**Wild Whispers (1s):** During Procedural play, for the rest of the scene characters apply this stunt to use the Extra

Clue and Q&A stunts on animals, who should be treated as any other witness or information.

## BEAUTY

Transcending mortal conventions, the Demigod is beautiful beyond compare — no matter the culture or ethnicity of any onlookers. Her breathtaking radiance brightens the miens of those around her.

### CASUAL MIRACLES

Demigods with the Beauty Purview might perform any of the following casual miracles:

- Draw the eye of everything in the Field.
- Immediately identify the most desirable person or thing in a room.
- Create divine mood lighting.
- Instantly highlight the ideal features (or imperfections) of a target the same Tier or lower.
- Instantly change a willing target's style and grooming.
- Automatically know someone's aesthetics and taste at a glance.

### CATASTROPHIC SUCCESS AND MORTAL FAILURE

**Catastrophic Success:** Everything around you is filled with transcendental radiance as its inner beauty is revealed. You become impossible to behold or an ideal being, likely to immediately provoke Fatebinding.

**Mortal Failure:** Objects you find ugly are immediately destroyed. Items and scenery weep out of envy for your beauty. Suck all the appeal out of an object or out of a target's outfit, etc. You become so beautiful it's frightening.

### DOMINION STUNTS

**Enthralling Appearance (3s):** The Scion may impart their love of a target's beauteous qualities onto a target (usually the target of an attack action or a social action.) The target gains the Shocked by Praise Complication, equal to the stunt value. If the target does not buy off Shocked by Praise, they cannot attack the Scion who applied it without spending Tension, and counts as being +1 Attitude toward the character. If the target is afflicted with this condition from multiple sources, add +1 to the Complication's value; they are not cumulative.

**Fast Friends (2s):** Characters using this Stunt rapidly forge relationships with others who are drawn to their compelling beauty. Following any Social action, characters utilizing this stunt create a temporary (positive or negative) Bond with a rating equal to the stunt cost simply by interacting with them. The Bond lasts until the end of the session or until the benefits are resolved, whichever comes first.

**Skin Deep (2s):** When resisting an Encourage Behavior or Encourage Belief roll, the using character may

apply this Stunt to ignore any Complications that may be penalizing the roll. This does not buy off the Complication, simply ignores its negative effects temporarily.

## CHAOS

Natural and supernatural order suspend themselves in the Demigod's presence. Where she dares to tread, disaster and disorder follow. Her chaotic nature extends to others, spreading wild revelry wherever she goes.

### CASUAL MIRACLES

Demigods with the Chaos Purview might perform any of the following casual miracles:

- Disrupt a natural pattern such as waves, the breeze, or ripples on an immediately local level.
- Disrupt immediately local social patterns such as background conversation, traffic, trivial targets waiting in line, etc.
- Scramble a written or recorded message: either one delivered to you or by you, or one you have intercepted.
- Negate the structure or power of a single mechanical or electronic device (making batteries fail, or a lock fall apart).
- Cause immediately local luck to go haywire.

### CATASTROPHIC SUCCESS AND MORTAL FAILURE

**Catastrophic Success:** Where the destruction of order would benefit you, trivial targets and targets of lower Tier stop obeying human laws and behave in aggressive and disorderly ways. Impossible things happen around you as probability ceases to function. Chaos celebrates you, upending the ordered way of things: pigs fly, fish breathe air, machines come to life, etc.

**Mortal Failure:** Processes and design stop working: internal combustion stops, electricity ceases its flow, glass becomes opaque, mirrors cease reflecting, and so on. Chaos rejects your efforts and seeks to teach you a lesson.

### DOMINION STUNTS

**Bacchanal (3s):** Apply this stunt to any Encourage Behavior roll to convince any target of the same Tier or lower to upset the norms of mores of their society and behave in a wild, chaotic, and rebellious manner. As long as this stunt is applied to the action, the Difficulty is treated as 0, unless the target has innate protection from violent, chaotic, or wild emotions, in which case it defaults to a Clash of Wills. If the character using this Stunt is a Demigod, the Tier restriction does not apply.

**Chaotic Revelry (1s):** Apply to any action. You may spend dice to supplement this action from the Collateral pool as if you had spent Momentum. This does not remove the dice from the pool. Then, roll the current value of Collateral Pool immediately after this action resolves.

**Endless Vexation (3s):** After an attack or social roll, inflict the target with 1c “Endlessly Vexed.” Any character who doesn’t buy off Endlessly Vexed suffers it as a condition, and is mired in a thousand petty entropies that increases the Difficulty of all rolled actions by 1 until they resolve it by using a Simple action to shake free of the chaotic influence.

**Ruinous Wake (1s):** After resolving a Movement action, leave gratuitous destruction and confusion in your wake: destroy a mundane object you passed by, despoil a mortal place, embarrassingly disable a character of a Tier lower than you, etc.

## DARKNESS

The Demigod controls shadow and light levels, banishing sight and obscuring anything they wish to be hidden. Those around them find themselves accustomed to darkness and do not fear what might be within it.

### CASUAL MIRACLES

Demigods with the Darkness Purview might perform any of the following casual miracles:

- Snuff out all light sources in an immediate area (such as the room you’re standing in).
- Dim or suppress all local light sources.
- Obscure the perceptions of observers outside of Close range.
- Manipulate shadows.
- Identify anything concealed by mundane darkness.
- Banish the fear of the dark from others by your presence.

### CATASTROPHIC SUCCESS AND MORTAL FAILURE

**Catastrophic Success:** To the benefit of your success, darkness celebrates you, snuffing out unwanted light around you. If it would enhance your result, the dreams of others manifest around you. These manifested dreams may provoke Fatebinding.

**Mortal Failure:** Darkness consumes everything unchecked, obscuring all perception and completely cutting trivial targets off from sensory perceptions. Darkness consumes your perception as the Primal force of darkness turns on you. The dreams animated by the result become aggressive and attack.

### DOMINION STUNTS

**Dream Thief (2s):** Target an enemy with an attack. Steal a bit of the target’s last dream, and wrap it around yourself like a cloak. While in combat, gain the benefit of Heavy (1) Armor, which does not stack with any other armor.

**Dreamlike Atmosphere (2s):** Transform the field around you with a mystifying, dreamlike quality. Apply to any Intrigue action and increase or decrease the

Atmosphere of the scene by up to 2, as it clouds current emotions with dreamlike threads.

**From the Weft of Dreams (2s or 4s):** During Procedural play, the character using this Stunt may touch a target and sift through their dreams to investigate hidden information. For 2s, the character may always use the Additional Clue or Interpretation stunts to access information that could only come from the target’s subconscious. For 4s, this extends to complex investigations, allowing characters to interpret data from dreams in instants, rather than over long periods of time.

**Shadow Puppets (3s):** When making any complex action, summon animated constructs from the shadows of people or things around you. These Shadow Puppets assist with whatever task you are attempting, regardless of the area of action. They count as Followers (4) with the following tags: Entourage or Consultant; Archetype (choose one other type), Group, Helpful, Defensive. These puppets last until the end of the session or until the complex action is complete, whichever happens first.

## DEATH

Upon achieving dominion, the Demigod controls total power over death itself. Their friends and allies, too, no longer fear the call of death.

### CASUAL MIRACLES

Demigods with the Death Purview might perform any of the following casual miracles:

- Know the moment a person or animal has died in a local area.
- Grant a suffering person or animal a peaceful and painless death.
- Know which character is fated to die next.
- Extend a dying person or animal’s life by your Legend in days.
- Kill anything trivial, instantly.
- Protect the vulnerable from untimely death (children, elderly, terminally ill, immunocompromised).

### CATASTROPHIC SUCCESS AND MORTAL FAILURE

**Catastrophic Success:** Shades, undead, ghosts, and other spectres arrive to celebrate or assist with your result. This is utterly terrifying to any non-magical person who can perceive it. These unquiet dead cannot be banished by a death power, but leave at the end of the scene.

**Mortal Failure:** Small animals, insects, and/or trivial targets drop dead. All the dead in the area awaken to judge you for your failure. They cannot be banished but resume their eternal sleep at the end of the scene. The unquiet dead bring anything recently deceased to you as a macabre tribute.



## DOMINION STUNTS

**Bring Them All Back to Life (3 or 5s):** Apply this Stunt to any Occult roll. If the character using this stunt is the Demigod with the Death purview or a Bandmate, it costs 3s. If the character is an allied SGC, this costs 5s. Instantly reanimate any and all corpses of trivial targets in the same range band. They rise from their graves as obedient undead Followers with the following tags: Heavy, Mob, Tough. If the Stunt user does not have the Death Purview, they also gain Unruly but do not benefit from an increased Follower rating. The Followers persist until the end of the session, at which point they return to their eternal sleep.

**Chains of Damnation (3s):** Apply to any Encourage Behavior roll. The target gains the complication Haunted by the Past with a rating equal to the user's Tier+1. Any time the target attempts to block Influence and does not buy off this Complication, they must give into the encouraged behavior, or be haunted by the disapproving and furious spirits of their past.

**Energizing Aura (2s or 4s):** Apply to any attack action. The target gains the Energized condition. While they have this condition, all attacks targeting the character are treated as though they have the Brutal tag. For 4s, the condition worsens, preventing the character from healing until the condition resolves. Resolve Energized when the character is Taken Out or takes damage from a Critical Hit stunt.

**The Reaper Smiles (3s):** The Scion creates a Smiling Death condition on themselves. In combat, they may

resolve this after defending. Force the enemy to resolve their attack action as a mixed action, using the lower of Integrity or Occult, as the target must overcome their fear of death. In Procedural play, they may resolve it when they discover the identity of a killer, a murder weapon used, or similar terminal information and regain 1 Legend.

## DECEPTION

Demigods with dominion over Deception command the concept of truth and lies. They bless their allies with gifted, silver tongues, and alter meaning simply by being present.

## CASUAL MIRACLES

Demigods with the Deception Purview might perform any of the following casual miracles:

- Create distracting sensations (illusions, phantom sounds, distracting smells, etc.)
- Cause sensory disturbances (a constant background hum; a barely perceptible vibration, etc.)
- Flawlessly lie to any trivial target.
- Instantly forge a document, just by claiming it is what you say it is.
- Tell lies so thorough they become real to anyone of a lower Tier.
- Make a target of lower Tier believe that you're telling a lie, no matter what you're saying.

## CATASTROPHIC SUCCESS AND MORTAL FAILURE

**Catastrophic Success:** All onlookers perceive your phenomenal success as something entirely different than what they witnessed, resulting in wild rumors spreading about your “deeds.” The Storyguide is encouraged to offer a randomly-generated Fatebinding to the character.

**Mortal Failure:** Your deceptions, lies, and other alternate identities go haywire, shifting and manifesting around you as you become a mercurial creature of half-truth. It requires extra effort to convince people of who you are.

### DOMINION STUNTS

**Decoy (variable):** This stunt may be used as a placeholder for any other Stunt, allowing the player (or the Storyguide) to declare “Decoy” instead. Spend a number of successes on this Stunt equal to the copied Stunt’s cost. Decoyed stunts may be activated at any point in time later, as long as this Dominion Boon is active. Each character with access to this boon may only Decoy one stunt at a time. Storyguides may veto a decoy on any stunt they feel would ruin the clarity of play. A player cannot be coy about declaring Inflict Injury, for example, but could use Decoy to delay damaging an enemy until after the fight is over.

**Liar’s Eye (1s):** Until the end of the scene, characters using this stunt during Procedural play may apply the Q&A stunts and the Interpretation stunts to always recognizes attempts to disguise or conceal evidence. While this Dominion stunt is active, Storyguides should include these possibilities in any answer to questions posed with those stunts.

**Many-Faced Deceiver (2+s):** The character using this stunt refuses to adhere to the truth of a single identity, sowing confusion and bewilderment when interacting with them. During any Intrigue roll, reset a character’s Attitude toward them to 0. This Stunt’s cost increases by 1 for every time it has been applied during the same scene.

**That Was Never Always Me (3s):** The stunt user bends the truth around them, deflecting attention. As a Defense stunt, enemies cannot target or affect the character without spending 1 Tension until the start of their next Turn.

## EARTH

Reigning supreme over stones, dirt, and ore, the Demigod rules the dominion of Earth. Their overwhelming earthen power empowers their friends and compatriots, hardening skin and shaping majestic works from clay.

### CASUAL MIRACLES

Demigods with the Earth Purview might perform any of these casual miracles:

- Calcify a handheld object.
- Cause tremors within Close range.

- Know the mineral composition of anything you touch.
- Grow crystals from a small sample of rock.
- Produce up to a bucketful of soil, sand, pebbles, and stones.
- Command rocks or a single large boulder to move.

## CATASTROPHIC SUCCESS AND MORTAL FAILURE

**Catastrophic Success:** The earth quakes and rejoices in your success which does not harm anything serious (unless the roll causes the collateral pool to empty) and furthers the result of your roll. The ground craters around you or crystals-pillars erupt nearby — these further your success if applicable but otherwise do not appear in places that would cause harm.

**Mortal Failure:** Inanimate objects in the area turn to stone until the end of the scene. Metals revert to ore. Glass crumbles into sand. An earthquake destroys something nearby even if the collateral pool did not empty.

### DOMINION STUNTS

**Lingering Footsteps (1s):** Apply this stunt to any Procedural roll. Until the end of the scene, the using character may apply the Interpretation and Q&A stunts by picking up trace information left behind in dust, dirt, grass, mud, sand, etc. — even if the characters involved did not come into contact with anything directly earthen, they still leave behind similar forensic evidence so long as this Stunt is in play.

**People Made of Stone (1s or 3s):** As a Defensive Stunt in combat, characters may spend 1s to give themselves Soft (1) Armor if they do not already have a source of Armor against a single attack. Outside of combat, characters may spend 3s to automatically resolve any disease-related Complication as though they had successfully bought off the Complication.

**Raise the Earthen Barrier (3s):** After any Defense roll, the Scion can create Cover for themselves or anyone else in their range band. This may be Heavy Cover for a single target, or Light for multiple.

**Shaped from Clay (3s):** When making a roll to aid with a crafting project using earth, stone, or metal this stunt adds a free milestone. Any ally may take advantage of this free milestone, though it may only apply once per scene.

## EPIC DEXTERITY

With expert control over their body’s movements, a Demigod with dominion over Epic Dexterity moves faster than lightning and lighter than the wind itself. They spread this fleetness to their friends and allies.

### CASUAL MIRACLES

Demigods with the Epic Dexterity Purview might perform any of these casual miracles:

- Pluck motes of dust from the air.
- Pull an object from underwater without causing ripples.
- Dig up and re-plant a flower without disturbing any blossoms.
- Walk across barbed wire without risk of injury.
- Use a shard of glass to shave.
- Assemble a scale model with your feet.

## CATASTROPHIC SUCCESS AND MORTAL FAILURE

**Catastrophic Success:** Your extreme speed and accuracy encourages inanimate objects or environmental things to compete with you. Where it would further the success, everything else (including Birthright and Fatebound characters and trivial targets) speeds up too.

**Mortal Failure:** You move so fast it causes knockback, turning things around you into dangerous projectiles, or causing objects around you to ricochet in hazardous directions. The objects or environmental things inspired to race you win the contest, and revel in their victories.

## DOMINION STUNTS

**Appealing Grace (1s):** Apply this stunt to any Encourage Behavior or Encourage Belief roll, allowing the using character to retroactively express what they wish to communicate exclusively through graceful, evocative body movements (such as feats of acrobatics or dancing, etc.).

**Faster Than Yourself (3s):** The character's supernal speed allows them to doublecheck and readjust their own progress on the fly. In action-adventure scenes, they may use this stunt to reduce any one Complication affecting a ranged attack, movement action, or chase action by 2, to a minimum of 0, for the duration of the scene. This does not count as buying off the Complication, but suppresses the result of failing to do so when this stunt is applied. When this stunt is applied to a Complex Action, they may negate a previously failed Interval.

**Untouchable Opponent (4s):** As a defensive Stunt, after spending the successes, the using character declares themselves out of range of a single attack, regardless of its ranged Tags, and may appear anywhere within Medium range of their starting position. Characters who do not have the Epic Dexterity Purview may only use this Stunt once per fight.

## EPIC STAMINA

With dominion over Epic Stamina, the Demigod ascends to a new level of durability. She spreads her unstoppable vigor to her allies, granting her friends nigh invulnerability.

## CASUAL MIRACLES

Demigods with the Epic Stamina Purview might perform any of these casual miracles:

- Eat gravel, lightbulbs, or dirt; drink gasoline, paint thinner, or bleach.
- Swim across an ocean.
- Warm your hands by holding hot coals.
- Use a blowtorch to dry your hair.
- Survive depressurization.
- Climb a mountain unprepared.

## CATASTROPHIC SUCCESS AND MORTAL FAILURE

**Catastrophic Success:** Your extreme durability causes impossible success, leading targets more fragile than you to be inspired to do dangerous deeds, putting themselves at risk in order to further your success. Just because you can weather anything thrown at you does not mean everyone else can.

**Mortal Failure:** Cause damage to the scenery because your body was knocked through a building unharmed, smashed clean through several floors of a twenty-story building, struck by a moving train, or the like. Attract unwanted supernatural attention because of how tough you are. Other things break out of envy toward your invulnerability.

## DOMINION STUNTS

**Adamantine Flesh (3s):** As a defensive stunt, the Scion shakes off damage and suffering on a truly impressive level, or grants similar invulnerability to her allies. For the remainder of the round in which this Stunt is applied, the difficulty of your opponent's Inflict Damage and Critical stunts increases by 3, which stacks with any armor or existing Defense bonuses.

**Impossible Vitality (2s):** During any Complex Action, you may use this Stunt to resolve an Injury condition.

**Untiring (2s):** During any extended Complex Action including crafting projects or procedurals, any character applying this stunt does not suffer increased Difficulty or Complications from continuing the action no matter how much in-game time passes and can do so without sleeping, eating, or resting.

**Unstoppable Chatter (4s):** You talk without ceasing, giving your social opponent no room to get a word in edge-wise. Apply this Stunt when you block Influence against one Encourage Behavior or Encourage Belief action targeting you. That roll counts as having 0 successes.

## EPIC STRENGTH

There's nothing a Demigod the dominion of Epic Strength can't lift, break, or throw. Her epic might inspires those around her to similar, impossible feats.

## CASUAL MIRACLES

Demigods with the Epic Strength Purview might perform any of these casual miracles:

- Crush coal into a diamond with your hands.

- Sleep while doing pull-ups.
- Do power cleans with a city bus.
- Throw a touchdown pass to a stadium one city over.
- Kick through an armored car.
- Punt a soccer ball into space.

## CATASTROPHIC SUCCESS AND MORTAL FAILURE

**Catastrophic Success:** Other things including trivial targets attempt Feats of Strength to further your goal and impress you. If it would further your goal, you shatter any objects you are holding or are nearby.

**Mortal Failure:** If it would hinder you, you destroy an object in the scene or that you're holding. An equal and opposite reaction happens and your use of force sends you flying. Other creatures and heroes appear to challenge your might.

## DOMINION STUNTS

**Applied Force (1s):** When making an Encourage Behavior or Encourage Belief roll, until the end of the Scene characters applying this stunt may make both those actions with aggressive, forceful, or violent physical actions without any need to use their words. This applied force can be figurative or literal, as the player decides.

**Outta Here (3s):** When you hit things, they don't stick around. Apply this stunt after any thrown or close combat attack action. Move a target up to Medium range away.

**Fastball Special (2s):** In a Chase after any Skill roll, your opponent loses a successful Lap as they are knocked back or you toss a comrade closer to them.

**Wrestle the Truth (1s):** For the duration the scene, characters utilizing this Stunt can apply the Additional Clue and Interpretation Stunts during any Procedural action in which they have physically clashed with the result – anything from physically prying information from a tome, or wrestling with an online scholarly journal, etc.

## FERTILITY

The undisputed master of life and growth, a Demigod with the Fertility Dominion changes the outcome of lives with a thought and a gesture. Her allies, too, gain the ability to command what thrives and what dies.

## CASUAL MIRACLES

Demigods with the Fertility Purview might perform any of these casual miracles:

- Make nearby plant bear fruit, regardless of season.
- Know familial relationships and lineages of a person at a glance.
- Bless anyone who wishes it with a child.
- Hybridize the traits of any plants, so long as you have samples.

- Prevent unwanted reproduction from domesticated or wild animals.
- Conjure fresh fruit and vegetables or purify any imperfections from meat with a touch.

## CATASTROPHIC SUCCESS AND MORTAL FAILURE

**Catastrophic Success:** Cause spontaneous blossoming and fruit on plants nearby or wild growth of plants/maturation of animals, if any of these would further your goals rather than hinder them. Trivial targets or animals swarm you, begging for your blessing.

**Mortal Failure:** Suck all the life out of plants nearby. Domesticated animals become the sterile. Cause wild, spontaneous, unchecked growth of everything around you.

## DOMINION STUNTS

**Blossoming Connection (0s):** When spending a role-play scene establishing or fueling a Bond, by spending the success on this stunt, the characters may increase the final success total by 1.

**The Ripe and Ruin (1s):** During Procedural Play, whenever the character uses the Extra Clue or Q&A stunts during Analysis or Survey actions to determine clues or information pertaining to a target's life (relatives, lineage, overall health, etc.) or death, they gain two additional clues or may ask two additional questions.

**Withering Curse (3s):** Apply this stunt after any attack or social action. An opponent or enemy suffers a Withering Curse complication (1c) on all actions that oppose you. If they fail to buy it off, they lose a health box, and gain an additional Condition as well. You may choose to resolve this Condition on any enemies affected this way at any time.

## FIRE

The Demigod burns with unchecked passion and heat, searing through everything around them. Their fires rage within their allies, transforming them into devastating forces of nature.

## CASUAL MIRACLES

Demigods with the Fire Purview might perform any of these casual miracles:

- Conjure up to a campfire-sized flame.
- Warm the temperature of a room by several degrees.
- Manipulate and move existing flame.
- Amplify or suppress an existing fire.
- Create a halo or aura of flame around your person.
- Superheat a single part of your body.

## CATASTROPHIC SUCCESS AND MORTAL FAILURE

**Catastrophic Success:** Where it would further your goal ignite, melt, or superheat anything present in the

scene. Ignite the fires of passion or creativity in onlookers, inspiring them to help you further your goal (and likely provoke a Fatebinding).

**Mortal Failure:** Where it would cause setback, ignite, melt, or superheat something in the scene. Mundane Flames come to life, and to seek to spread and destroy. Provoke intense feelings of anger in onlookers and bystanders.

## DOMINION STUNTS

**Blazing Trail (3s):** You move trailing glorious fire. This stunt may be applied to any close combat attack following a Rush action. Your attack gains the Arcing, Aggravated, and Brutal tags.

**Burnout (3s):** This stunt may apply to any Chase roll. Immediately create a Hazard (5c) your opponents must deal with.

**Excessive Heat (3s):** When blocking Influence, character may use this stunt to work themselves into a passionate frenzy and ignore the effects of a single Encourage Behavior or Encourage Belief action. They must, however, follow this by acting to fiery extremes. Characters without the Fire Purview may only use this Stunt once per Scene.

## FORGE

Master of physical creations and metals, a Demigod with Forge dominion creates wonders from scraps. Their presence transforms rank amateurs into peerless craftspeople.

### CASUAL MIRACLES

Demigods with the Forge Purview might perform any of these casual miracles:

- Instantly perform simple repairs on an object.
- Transmute a handheld amount of metal from one type to another.
- Create a simple machine from minimal parts.
- Conjure metal scraps or tools, enough to start a small project.
- Bend, shape or manipulate any handheld metal.
- Understand the composition of any object just by holding it.

### CATASTROPHIC SUCCESS AND MORTAL FAILURE

**Catastrophic Success:** Optimize or mechanize the entire field; all items in the field repair and self-improve. If it would further your goals, an object you are holding transforms into another object of equal size. Their functions do not need to be similar. For example: a knife could transform into a wrench, a spoon, an envelope, etc.

**Mortal Failure:** Mechanical functions cease, electronic devices short out, objects take on undesirable functions mid use, and tools rebel against their users. Made objects animate long enough to spurn you, and show distaste for your failure.

## DOMINION STUNTS

**Instant Armory (3s):** In combat, after any relevant combat roll (including Initiative) produce and equip yourself or an ally with any mundane weapon, armor, or useful material good. If the weapon doesn't feature Scale (Such as an anti-material rifle for shooting a Rok) it gains an additional 1 Enhancement.

**Incomparable Gift (3s):** When making any Social roll, you produce a gift for another character; if they accept it, their Attitude toward you immediately moves two steps more positive. If they reject it, regain a point of Legend.

**Precise Calculations (1s):** For the duration the scene, characters utilizing this Stunt can apply the Extra Clue and Player Inspiration Stunts without cost during any Procedural action in which they have observed a physical object(s), or applied mathematical calculations to determine the outcome of a situation.

## FORTUNE

Possessed with incomparable luck, Demigods with dominion over Fortune make their own fate. Those around them are blessed with consistent good luck or cursed with dreadful misfortune.

- Win at any game of chance against a trivial target or target of lower Tier.
- Find miscellaneous but useful items in a pocket, glove compartment, garbage bin, etc.
- Never get caught in any red lights while driving.
- Curse a trivial target or target of lower Tier to always hit every red light while driving.
- Sense bad luck about to befall another character.
- Bless a target with minor good fortune or curse a target with petty inconveniences.

### CATASTROPHIC SUCCESS AND MORTAL FAILURE

**Catastrophic Success:** Cause Rippling waves of good luck. Everyone in the field find themselves benefiting from good fortune: finding just the right amount of money in their pockets, reconnecting with old friends and lovers, or randomly finding long lost objects and so on.

**Mortal Failure:** Bad luck ripples through the field, causing dozens of minor accidents: things going missing, relationships turning sour, etc. Or, all characters in the field have premonitions of a dark fate as they witness every misfortune that may come to pass.

## DOMINION STUNT

**Fool's Gambit (variable):** Willingly fail the roll. Add 1 Momentum to the pool for every success you would have gotten, to a maximum of the Momentum pool max (twice the number of players). You do not gain Momentum as an additional Consolation for this failure. This failure

cannot be a Botch. This stunt may not be used while the Momentum pool is full.

**Swimming Uphill (3s):** After any Asset Skill roll targeting another character, apply the Anchor of Fate Condition to the target. For each time the target gains Anchor of Fate, the target number for their next roll increases by 1 to a maximum of TN 9. Anchor of Fate resolves once the target makes a roll with the increased TN.

**Theft of Luck (3s):** After any Asset Skill roll targeting another character, impose the Dreadful Misfortune Condition on the target. At any time after applying this condition, the player who applied it may choose to resolve it, and then target fails the next roll they make automatically, granting the character the successes that were rolled as Enhancement to their next action. Characters may not use this to target other friendly characters, or themselves. The Condition lasts until resolved or until the end of the session, whichever comes first.

## FROST

Sovereign of cold and snow, the Demigod rules supreme over subzero temperatures. Her friends and allies need not fear the breath of winter.

### CASUAL MIRACLES

Demigods with the Frost Purview might perform any of these casual miracles:

- Flash-freeze something you're holding.
- Cool the temperature of a room by a few degrees.
- Conjure ice, a snowball, or a gust of cold wind.
- Redirect the path of a snowstorm.
- Create a nimbus of hoarfrost around your body.
- Supercool a part of your body.

### CATASTROPHIC SUCCESS AND MORTAL FAILURE

**Catastrophic Success:** Everything around you freezes. If it would further your success, flash freeze one item you're holding. Trivial Targets in all other living things of lower Tier become sluggish and chilled; all activity dies away.

**Mortal Failure:** If it would hinder you, you flash freeze an object you're holding. Rapidly freeze moisture in the air, causing damage. Freeze over plants and animal life around you. Freeze trivial Targets in place.

### DOMINION STUNTS

**Cold as Ice (2s):** Too cold to feel anything, the character using this stunt may ignore the effects of any Shift Attitude action, or may use this Stunt to reset their Attitude to 0.

**Girded in Winter (3s):** As a defensive Stunt, gain Hard (3) Armor of ice and cold. When an enemy attack fills the last Injury that can be absorbed by the frost armor, the

attacking enemy suffers Difficulty 2 on their next action as they're frostbitten and slowed.

**Frozen Path (variable):** During a Chase, use this stunt to ignore any Hazards with a rating of equal to or lower than the number of successes spent on this Stunt.

## HEALTH

Neither disease nor poison finds any quarter in the presence of the Demigod. Their friends and allies receive equal protection from bodily ailments.

### CASUAL MIRACLES

- Cure any minor, inconvenient, or non-life-threatening ailment instantly.
- Inflict the same on any target you touch.
- Soothe pain and other discomforts by simply being present.
- Speed up mundane medical treatment.
- No mundane infections or medical complications can happen in your presence.
- Purge all health problems from a trivial target with a touch.

### CATASTROPHIC SUCCESS AND MORTAL FAILURE

**Catastrophic Success:** You purge all minor maladies suffered within perception of you. Suddenly and violently cure all ailments suffered by a single target in the Field, including perfectly healing injuries long since set.

**Mortal Failure:** All characters in the field become acutely aware of every single bodily function, provoking panic in lower Tier targets and discomfort in anything the same Tier or greater. Blight a target or an area.

### DOMINION STUNTS

**Blood and Sweat (3s):** The character utilizing this stunt pours some of their own vitality into their work. During a craft project, use this stunt on any applicable roll to gain an additional completed milestone.

**Shared Vitality (3 or 5s):** Remove an Injury Condition from a friendly character in return for placing a Bruised Condition on yourself. As Stunt 5, place the Bruised Condition on an enemy character in the same range band as you instead.

**Soothing Words (3s):** Heal all ailments and maladies afflicting a target with nothing but words. If the target has a negative Attitude toward the character, set it to 0. If the target has a positive Attitude, increase it by 1.

## JOURNEYS

The Demigod knows the destination no matter what pathways she treads. Her wayfinding guides those around her, who never lose their way.

## CASUAL MIRACLES

Demigods with the Journeys word might perform any of these casual miracles:

- Always have the right supplies for any trip.
- Drive or pilot any vehicle, no matter how unusual or how much training it might require.
- Know someone's homeland from nothing but a glance.
- Always get a ride somewhere, no matter where you are (even if you're in an Underworld or Overworld).
- Avoid all mundane inconveniences while traveling.
- Automatically know the location of shortcuts, footpaths, and secret passages.

## CATASTROPHIC SUCCESS AND MORTAL FAILURE

**Catastrophic Success:** All Pathways open to you, even if there were no Pathways present. If it would further your success, a new pathway creates itself before you: like a spontaneous pontoon bridge across a lake, or a walking bridge opening over an eight-lane highway.

**Mortal Failure:** Any journeying or traveling goes haywire around you: vehicles crash, mundane conveyances swerve wildly off course, and navigation systems fail, etc.

## DOMINION STUNTS

**Calling Shotgun (2s):** When making a movement action, rather than move as normal instead instantly move to any range band along with one consenting character in the current Field, whisked away by passing illusory vehicles.

**Rendezvous (2s):** At any time while the character is making a journey, following any applicable roll she may use this stunt to allow any number of Bandmates or allied characters to join her mid-trip, even if it's geographically or physically unlikely.

**Take the Wheel (1s):** When using an Encourage Behavior action to convince a target to partake on a journey or to take control, ownership, or leadership of something, the target cannot gain Enhancement to their opposed dice pool higher than +1.

## MOON

Demigods with dominion over the Moon purview command the pale, shifting light of the moon, illuminating dark places and controlling the movement of light and shadow. Their allies are driven to shift and change like the moon itself.

## CASUAL MIRACLES

Demigods with the Moon Purview might perform any of these casual miracles:

- Reveal something not hidden by magic.
- Inspire change in a mortal.

- Illuminate an immediate area with moonlight.

- Grant others the ability to see in darkness.

- Fade in and out of the perceptions of trivial targets.

## CATASTROPHIC SUCCESS AND MORTAL FAILURE

**Catastrophic Success:** Soak everything in shifting light and shadow, casting the field into a moonlit night. If it would further your success, hidden things become visible and things in the open become concealed.

**Mortal Failure:** Cause sudden uncontrollable change around you. People suddenly wear clothes for the wrong season, outfits transform into fashions from the wrong era, belongings on trivial targets become vacation, holiday, or offseason paraphernalia.

## DOMINION STUNTS

**Full and Bright (4s):** This Stunt may be applied following any Social roll. Attitudes toward the Scion cannot be shifted negatively for the rest of the scene.

**Lunar Revelation (1 or 3s):** Apply this stunt to any Read Attitude roll. By utilizing this stunt, exchange the cost of the Stunt for the Difficulty of the action; if the action would have a Difficulty less than 3, the cost is 1 instead.

**Penumbral Shift (2s or 4s):** As a defensive stunt, the Scion becomes wrapped in moon shadow and shifting lights, a lunar cocoon making their foes sight and intentions slide off of them. At 2s, all rush actions targeting the Scion are considered automatically contested and at 4s, ranged attacks treat the Scion as one range band further away until the start of their next action.

## ORDER

The Demigod commands law and order, from those of nations to those of physics. Their upright and just behavior inspires their friends and allies to behave in the same structured way.

## CASUAL MIRACLES

Demigods with the Order Purview might perform any of these casual miracles:

- Make liars, cheats, and thieves uncomfortable in your presence.
- Make a trivial target obey your commands (though they will not act without self-preservation).
- Perceive a loophole in a law or rule with a sensory tell (a strong smell, a visual cue, etc.).
- Increase bureaucratic efficiency by being present.
- Cease political corruption while in your presence.
- Impel animals to obey human laws (squirrels obey traffic Do Not Walk signs, rats vacate a building after closing time, etc.), so long as it would not harm their survival.

## CATASTROPHIC SUCCESS AND MORTAL FAILURE

**Catastrophic Success:** If it would further your success, characters of lower Tier and trivial targets accept you as an authority and show deference. Members of organized groups acting under your auspices (law enforcement, park rangers, bureaucrats, etc.) appear to assist with your goals.

**Mortal Failure:** The grief of broken laws weighs upon all targets in the scene with a severity based on the crime and the Tier of the character. Gods must violate the laws of physics before they feel any discomfort, while Tier 1 thieves feel as though they're carrying a heavy burden, etc.

## DOMINION STUNTS

**Cooler Heads (2s):** During a social scene, characters utilizing this Stunt can reset any Attitude to 0 or apply this Stunt to negate any single increase or decrease in Attitude.

**Controlled Chaos (variable):** For each success spent on this stunt, reduce the number of dice added to the collateral pool this Turn, one for one, to a minimum of 1.

**Hierarchy of Need (5s):** Apply to any roll. An ally of your choice may benefit from any Scale and Enhancement bonuses you possess for their next action.

**Speed Limit (2s):** During any Chase sequence, apply this stunt to any applicable roll, placing a 2c Complication of "Enforced Speed" on the opponent. The target cannot speed up or make wild maneuvers without buying off the Complication. If they do not, they must forfeit the lap or take an Injury.

## PASSION

Emotions and feelings dance to the Demigod's words. Her followers and allies, too, gain full control over their passions.

### CASUAL MIRACLES

Demigods with the Passion Purview might perform any of these casual miracles:

- Brighten or dampen someone's mood.
- Identify a person in a crowd capable of the most social turmoil.
- Hype up a crowd for literally anything.
- Manipulate the emotions of a trivial target.
- Allow two willing people to experience each other's emotions.
- Distract a target with extreme emotion.

## CATASTROPHIC SUCCESS AND MORTAL FAILURE

**Catastrophic Success:** The World leaps up to empathize with your feelings: animals, objects, and trivial targets behave in ways aligned with your current mood. If it would further your success, this mood shift drives these targets to you to assist with your goals.

**Mortal Failure:** As the success, but the sudden mood shift causes chaos and disruption as the targets around you act in line with your mood. For example: a happy ally might decide right then and there to leave on vacation without warning, etc.

## DOMINION STUNTS

**Distracting Provocation (2s):** As an attack stunt, the stunt user spits taunts and mocking phrases at the target, giving it the Provoked condition. While the target has the condition, it suffers +1 Difficulty to apply attack stunts as well as combat actions that might require focus. This resolves when the Provoked character inflicts an Injury upon the character who gave them the condition, or at the end of the scene, whichever comes first. The Difficulty increases for each instance of this Condition inflicted on the character, to a max of +3.

**Rousing Passion (2s):** Until the end of the scene, the Scion gains the Roused condition. Whenever they spend successes from a Bond, they double the amount of enhancement they gain from it. The condition resolves at the end of the scene.

**The Root of Fury (3s):** For the duration of the scene, the Q&A or Extra Clue stunts (chosen when this Dominion Stunt is put into play) have a cost of 0s so long as the clues and the questions asked pertain to the emotional states of characters involved in the scene, mystery, or investigation.

## PROSPERITY

Material wealth and currency multiply in the hands of a Demigod with dominion over Prosperity. The material fortunes of her friends and allies also find their monetary gains increased.

### CASUAL MIRACLES

Demigods with the Prosperity Purview might perform any of these casual miracles:

- Pull any amount of petty cash from your pocket/wallet/purse, etc.
- Always have the right currency no matter where you are.
- Always be able to track where an item was purchased, and to whom it has been sold.
- Bless or curse an establishment with success or penury.
- Turn cheap goods into high quality items.
- Know exactly where to purchase any good or service.

## CATASTROPHIC SUCCESS AND MORTAL FAILURE

**Catastrophic Success:** If it would benefit your success, everyone nearby finds their pockets, wallets, purses, or bags filled with local currency. Cause money to literally grow on trees, or to blossom out of flowers.

**Mortal Failure:** Local businesses grow hostile to you and your companions, refusing to do business with you and actively interfering with whatever you're doing. If there are no local businesses, they immediately form from nearby citizens organizing a co-op, nearby animals, or nearby now-animate objects if needed.

## DOMINION STUNTS

**Free Shipping! (4s):** After any applicable Asset Skill roll, conjure forth any mortal good or service you might conceivably purchase with money, regardless of location or circumstances. If in a situation where mortal accoutrements are not useful, gain Momentum.

**Payday! (2s):** As a defensive stunt, the character using this stunt makes a display of wealth to tempt their enemies away, inflicting the Distracted by Money Complication with a rating of 2c. After any attack action in which an enemy does not buy off the complication, they must choose to use a non-damage Stunt against you.

**Solve the Problem with Money (2s):** Apply this stunt to any Encourage Behavior roll. You generate exactly enough money or valuable goods to bribe or persuade a target, adding your Tier in Enhancement, regardless of how dangerous the request might be.

## SKY

Controlling the wind and clouds, the Demigod rules the skies. With her presence, she allows her allies to command storms and rain.

### CASUAL MIRACLES

Demigods with the Sky Purview might perform any of these casual miracles:

- Make local weather pleasant.
- Summon a small storm, dust devil, downpour, etc.
- Quell a storm with a glance.
- Target and identify anything flying in the sky.
- Make anyone or anything falling drift gently to the ground.
- Protect yourself, others, and/or equipment from the hazards of weather.

### CATASTROPHIC SUCCESS AND MORTAL FAILURE

**Catastrophic Success:** The localized sky becomes in tune with your actions and emotional state; lightning crackles as you strike, rain pours with cathartic emotional displays, all is clear and impossibly blue and bright for an impassioned rousing speech, even if you are indoors.

**Mortal Failure:** Cause uncontrollable storms, high winds, and other weather hazards to build as the weather responds violently to your emotional state. Cause the weather to become volatile and unpredictable. Any of these effects can happen even if you are indoors or in an otherwise climate-controlled environment.

## DOMINION STUNTS

**Defying Gravity (0 or 1s):** When making a Movement action, the character may take flight, allowing them to make the movement vertical (which can ignore the effects of hazardous or severe terrain). If the Movement action is not contested or rolled, this Stunt has a cost of 0.

**Loosed Thunderbolts (1s):** Apply to any attack roll. The attack gains the Ranged (Short) and Arcing tags as characters hurl bits of storm and sky at their opponents.

**Ominous Horizon (2s):** After any social roll, set the Atmosphere to any value equal to or less than your Tier.

## STARS

Glittering with the light of the night sky, a Demigod with Dominion over Stars sees the World from above and grants revelations and visions to their friends and followers.

### CASUAL MIRACLES

Demigods with the Stars Purview might perform any of these casual miracles:

- Give a target of lesser Tier flawless directions.
- Encode a message in a constellation
- Fill an immediate area with starlight.
- Bestow a fully accuracy prophecy upon a trivial target.
- Always know exactly where you are, even if outside the World.
- Create a beacon that perfectly guides people to it.

### CATASTROPHIC SUCCESS AND MORTAL FAILURE

**Catastrophic Success:** Lights arch down from above, outlining and liming all the Legendary characters, creatures, and things in the field, as their Fates call down cosmic radiance upon them.

**Mortal Failure:** You lose your perspective, which is torn away to the whirling view of the stars above. Your eyes become starlight portals when this occurs, terrifying all trivial targets who behold it. For all other targets, this behavior registers as notably abnormal.

## DOMINION STUNTS

**Postcognition (3s):** For the duration of the scene, the Q&A or Player Interpretation stunts (chosen when this Dominion Stunt is put into play) have a cost of 0s so long as the interpretations and the questions asked pertain to events that happened in the past, rather than the scene unfolding in the present.

**Sidereal Revelation (3s):** Reveal celestial maps of all nearby enemies, as if sketched from above. This stunt may be applied after any combat roll. Until the end of the Turn, enemies cannot benefit from cover, mundane concealment, or stealth.



**The Stars Align (variable):** After making an Encourage Belief or Shift Attitude action, choose another character present in the scene. They find themselves inexorably confronted with the argument: treat the new target as though they were the target of the original action with a number of successes equal to the successes spent on this stunt.

## SUN

Radiant and scorching, none shine brighter than a Demigod with dominion over the Sun Purview. By her presence alone, her friends and compatriots also shine with piercing inner light.

### CASUAL MIRACLES

Demigods with the Sun Purview might perform any of these casual miracles:

- Flood an immediately local area with sunlight.
- Always know the time of day in any location under a sun.
- Strike a trivial target blind.
- Clear all the clouds from the sky over a local area.
- Control the light levels in your immediate area.
- Make all plants face you as you walk by.

### CATASTROPHIC SUCCESS AND MORTAL FAILURE

**Catastrophic Success:** You shine with sunlight that serves as a beacon for your allies; they can notice you even through barriers and obstructions clearly, while enemies must divert their gaze.

**Mortal Failure:** Your radiance burns uncontrollably throughout the area, making it impossible for you to hide, and striking all trivial targets to behold you blind, while simultaneously leaving things sunburnt, bleached, and smoldering.

### DOMINION STUNTS

**Midday Heat (3s):** This is a Defensive Stunt, creating Complication 3. Enemies who don't buy off this complication and must make a Survival roll (or appropriate enemy pool roll) to avoid passing out; this may be done as part of a mixed action.

**Noonday Glare (3s):** In Intrigue, create Complication 3 on the opposed pools for the Encourage Behavior and Encourage Belief actions. Failing to buy off this Complication results in enemies averting their gaze and leaving your unbearable presence.

**Solar Retrocognition (3s):** For the duration of the scene, the Q&A or Extra Clue stunts (chosen when this Dominion Stunt is put into play) have a cost of 0s so long as the clues and the questions asked pertain to reviewing the past as relevant to the position of the sun at the time of

events. For example, a player could ask “What happened at 3 p.m. here?” and receive an answer, typically in the form of a vision.

## WAR

Sovereign of the battlefield and planning table, Demigods with dominion over War are peerless generals and commanders. Followers and allies obey their orders with flawless execution.

### CASUAL MIRACLES

Demigods with the War Purview might perform any of these casual miracles:

- Always know the winner of a fight between targets of lesser Tier.
- Produce any Concealable weapon from nowhere.
- Drive a trivial target to violence.
- Always know what someone is armed with unless their weaponry is magically concealed.
- Provoke a fight between two targets of lesser Tier.
- Convince a target of lower Tier to fight on your behalf.

### CATASTROPHIC SUCCESS AND MORTAL FAILURE

**Catastrophic Success:** Regimentation and martial attitude infuses the area and people around you. Trivial targets become disciplined and brave, ready to defend themselves with everyday objects and job tools. Buildings and vehicles are suddenly militarized and hardened. Animals march in formation.

**Mortal Failure:** The terrible nature of war pollutes the World; houses are turned into cold bunkers, barbed wire trenches replace sidewalks, food trucks become battering rams. Broken and rusted weapons replace things of value; the scent of death and conflict drive off all animals.

### DOMINION STUNTS

**Only War (3s):** As an Intrigue stunt, gain +1 Scale for attempts to Shift Atmosphere to make violent conflict the only outcome or Encourage Behavior to encourage warfare, violence, and unprovoked bloodshed.

**Peacekeeping (3s):** As an Intrigue stunt, gain +1 Scale for attempts to Shift Atmosphere to make violent conflict less desirable or Encourage Behavior to encourage the end of bloodshed or similar ends.

**Violent Opportunist (2s):** When applied to an attack roll, this stunt allows any enemy in the current Field to count as being in range of the supplemented attack, regardless of the distance between you, allowing you to take out a sniper with your sword or use a rocket launcher on a minotaur grappling you.

## WATER

Fluid and changing, Demigods with dominion over Water shift and flow like their namesake power. Those around them receive the ocean’s blessing by virtue of the Demigod’s presence.

### CASUAL MIRACLES

Demigods with the Water Purview might perform any of these casual miracles:

- Manipulate water in your presence.
- Change the state of any water you touch (from ice to steam, etc.)
- Conjure a bucketful of clean drinking water.
- Convert any liquid to potable water.
- Purify a water source by touching it.
- Always know the nearest source of running water.

### CATASTROPHIC SUCCESS AND MORTAL FAILURE

**Catastrophic Success:** The Field floods with constant moving tides; where it would benefit your success, they buoy you and your allies, pushing things into position where you’d find them useful and pushing against your enemies or battering unattended things around.

**Mortal Failure:** The local field fills with stagnant salt water, smelling of brine and decaying sea life. Ruined materials, electronics, and encroaching rust rapidly follow.

### DOMINION STUNTS

**Douse for Secrets (2s):** Rivulets of water seek out and expose secrets, in a Complex investigation, immediately resolve an additional milestone.

**Inexorable Tide (2s):** Apply to any attack roll. The targeted enemy reduces its Defense by 2.

**Washed Out (3s):** Make a number of 3c Water Hazard complications equal to the using character’s Legend. Unresolved Water Hazard complications increase the targets next Chase rolls difficulty by 1 for each unresolved Water Hazard. Alternatively, create the same number of Water Hazards, which count as Field Complications with the same rating that count as severe terrain if not bought off. If the using character does not have a Legend rating, treat it as though it were 1.

## WILD

Primal and untamed, the Demigod controls with wilderness with godlike ease. Her friends and compatriots need not fear the hazards of nature or deprivation so long as she is present.

### CASUAL MIRACLES

Demigods with the Wild Purview might perform any of these casual miracles:

- Destroy concrete/pavement/asphalt with sudden overgrowth.
- Allow wild animals to survive in an urbanized area.
- Stimulate or suppress the growth of a plant or crops.
- Find the quickest path through the wilderness.
- Always be able to survive off the land.
- Infest a habitation of a target the same Tier or lower with vermin or insects.

## CATASTROPHIC SUCCESS AND MORTAL FAILURE

**Catastrophic Success:** Where it would benefit your success, the World rises up beneath and around you, plant life rapidly growing and spreading while animals return and resettle with supernatural speed. Crops and fruit-bearing trees spontaneously sprout and blossom, offering their bounty to characters in the scene.

**Mortal Failure:** The wild's pain makes itself manifest. It seeks revenge, unchecked growth shattering through paved roads, ripping through buildings, and tearing down human-made constructions. Wild animals frenzy and attack trivial targets present in the scene.

## DOMINION STUNTS

**Base Instinct (2s):** Apply to any Procedural roll. Until the end of the Scene, the target gains an Animal Instinct condition with a rating equal to your Tier. On any action in which they do not buy off the complication, they cannot give into the duplicitousness of human nature, and furthers a Procedural as if they had been targeted with the Extra Clue or Interpretation stunts.

**Dandelion Banquet (3s):** You feed yourself, your band, and any other allied characters with you on local edible foliage, which grows if none is present. This gives you enough sustenance for a day, and heals any Bruised Injury conditions you may have, but each character may only benefit from the use of Dandelion Banquet once per session.

**Lower Thought (2s):** Apply to any Intrigue action. The target gains the Wild Mind condition. While under the effects of this condition, the target acts purely on reflex and instinct, granting +1 enhancement to all rolls to Encourage Behavior and Encourage Belief, as they cannot apply powerful reason. This Stunt may only target enemies of equal or lesser Tier. The condition resolves once the target has performed the encouraged behavior or believes whatever they have been told.

## SIGNATURE PURVIEW: SHUILÁ

**Motif:** The decrees of the Annuna are universal, and their pronouncement miraculous.

In ancient Mesopotamia, there were many kinds of prayer, but all were highly structured, weaving praise and laments with entreaties and thanksgiving. Whether written or incanted, these prayers call upon the authority

of the god or goddess to whom they are directed, and it is no different for Scions, as they too are part of the heavenly hierarchy. Elevated above mortals, they are empowered to call directly upon the divine Authority of the Annuna, and as they climb that hierarchy may even gain the right to make those pronouncements themselves.

This is particularly true of the machineries of civilization – not bureaucracies per se, which the Annuna do not trust, but in the reciprocity of power, privilege, and duty, the interaction of superior and inferior. All authority, after all, ultimately derives from the divine Authority of the Annuna, allowing their Scions to seize it for themselves as though they were born to it (which they were).

**Innate Power:** When speaking or issuing instructions from a position of authority (which need not be official or even acknowledged by the Scion), Trivial characters cannot offer offense or leave without being given permission to do so, nor can their Attitude go negative within your presence. In addition, when giving an order to an underling (someone who acknowledges the divine Authority of the Scion), the underling gains that Order as a Short-Term Deed, and +1 Enhancement towards carrying out that order. The Scion will know when the order has been carried out.

## TAKE THE REINS

**Cost:** Imbue 1 Legend

**Duration:** One Scene

**Subject:** An organization, formal or otherwise

**Clash:** Presence + Legend vs. Resolve + Legend

**Action:** Simple

You take control of an organization, displacing its immediate leader in its hierarchy — if it has no defined leader, you take control outright. All members of the organization acknowledge your authority and follow your directions as appropriate for the organization: the staff of a bank won't spontaneously become an army at your direction, for example, but you could certainly order security to remove someone from the premises. This Boon does not function on player characters without their player's permission.

## ME OF THE DEED

**Cost:** Imbue 1 Legend

**Duration:** Indefinite

**Subject:** Self

**Action:** Simple

All possible actions have a physical me, recording the precise and proper way of doing things. By linking her understanding of individual me together in sequence, an Annuna may intuit a perfect method with an assured chance of success. So long as an Annuna has planned out actions in support of a Deed and has generated successes on an information-gathering challenge, she may purchase enhance stunts in support of the Deed (**Origin** p. 67) that affect the same

Skill and Attribute combination that generated the threshold successes, with an additional success, up to the standard soft and hard caps on Enhancements. If an Annuna fails at a roll crucial to the success of the Deed, she may accept a Consolation of success at a cost of future Complications to related rolls.

## SIGNATURE PURVIEW: MANA

**Motif:** Through the magic inherent in relationships or the intercession of the Atua, mana may be transmitted and natural miracles performed.

Mana is the cultivated and possessed authority, honor, control, influence, prestige, and power inherent within binding physical and social ties. It's a spiritual energy that resides in all people and things in nature and can be gained and lost by an individual's Deeds and the Deeds of others. Mana is also the recognized ability to perform an action, as an expression of spiritual and social strength. It's related to yet distinct from Legend — and as a descendant of a God, the focus of a community, and the performer of great Deeds, a Demigod's mana is invariably potent.

**Innate Power:** You gain Enhancement 2 on any roll to scrutinize or reveal Bonds and determine the social standing of a group, or on rolls to gauge the power, scope, and causal relationships of a natural event or weather phenomenon. If an action or location is tapu or otherwise socially forbidden in another culture, you recognize it immediately and know the corresponding required noa. You may also intuit Bonds and relationships towards actors who are not present, such as the sorcerer causing an earthquake via a ritual, or the lingering respect and fear a family feels towards an overbearing patriarch. Once per session, when you acknowledge these relationships aloud, add two Momentum to the pool. You may only acknowledge a given Bond once per story.

### KUMARA'S SWEETNESS

**Cost:** Free

**Duration:** Instant

**Subject:** Self

**Action:** Reflexive

Through righteous actions, you may gain mana, and recognize it within others. Once per session, whenever you successfully complete a Deed, or when you perform a scene-long action that falls within the conceptual scope of the Fertility or War Purviews, you may choose to either regain one point of Legend or add four Momentum to the pool. Completion of a Failure Deed, even a successful completion, does not award these benefits.

### PONO

**Cost:** Special

**Duration:** Indefinite or One scene

**Subject:** Self or one vehicle

**Action:** Simple

Pono is synonymous with righteousness and balance, and an Atua Scion may empower others through this sense of balance. This Boon activates when a Scion resolves the Virtuous Condition and confers the following benefits for the rest of the scene:

- The Collateral Pool loses up to three dice. This effect only occurs once per scene.
- The character may choose another character with whom they have a Bond and "share" one of their Legendary Titles; by imbuing 1 Legend, actions taken in line with the Legendary Title may benefit from the Atua Scion's Scale. Either the Atua Scion or the beneficiary may pay this Legend cost.
- As a final benefit, while under the effects of this Boon, your player may grant two Momentum per turn to another player per turn rather than one.

## SIGNATURE PURVIEW: QUT

**Motif:** Spirits, ghosts and luck can be beckoned and commanded by invocation of the Tengri and use of drums, mirrors and specially prepared talismans, called onggong.

The power of Qut is central to the Tengri conception of leadership, ambition and power. It is a hard word to translate, encompassing the concepts of spiritual power, divine force and charisma. Those who wield strong Qut find The World opens before them. Their foes cannot stand against them, their words find open ears, their lands are blessed with prosperity. Fate itself bends to ensure they rise to power. Of course, this also means Fate places enemies in their path to face them, pushes them ever greater ambition and makes conquest seem all too tempting.

Scions of the Tengri can draw on their Qut to bring forth miracles. The spirits of the world obey their orders, out of respect or fear. By calling to the world in the manner of shamans and kings, the Tengri ensure their desires are made real. The exact manner in which that desire is realized may vary, but often it manifests in the actions of natural spirits, ghosts, mortal human followers or simple luck. Those with strong Qut are beloved by their subjects and allies, feared by their foes, and can rely on their gambles paying off.

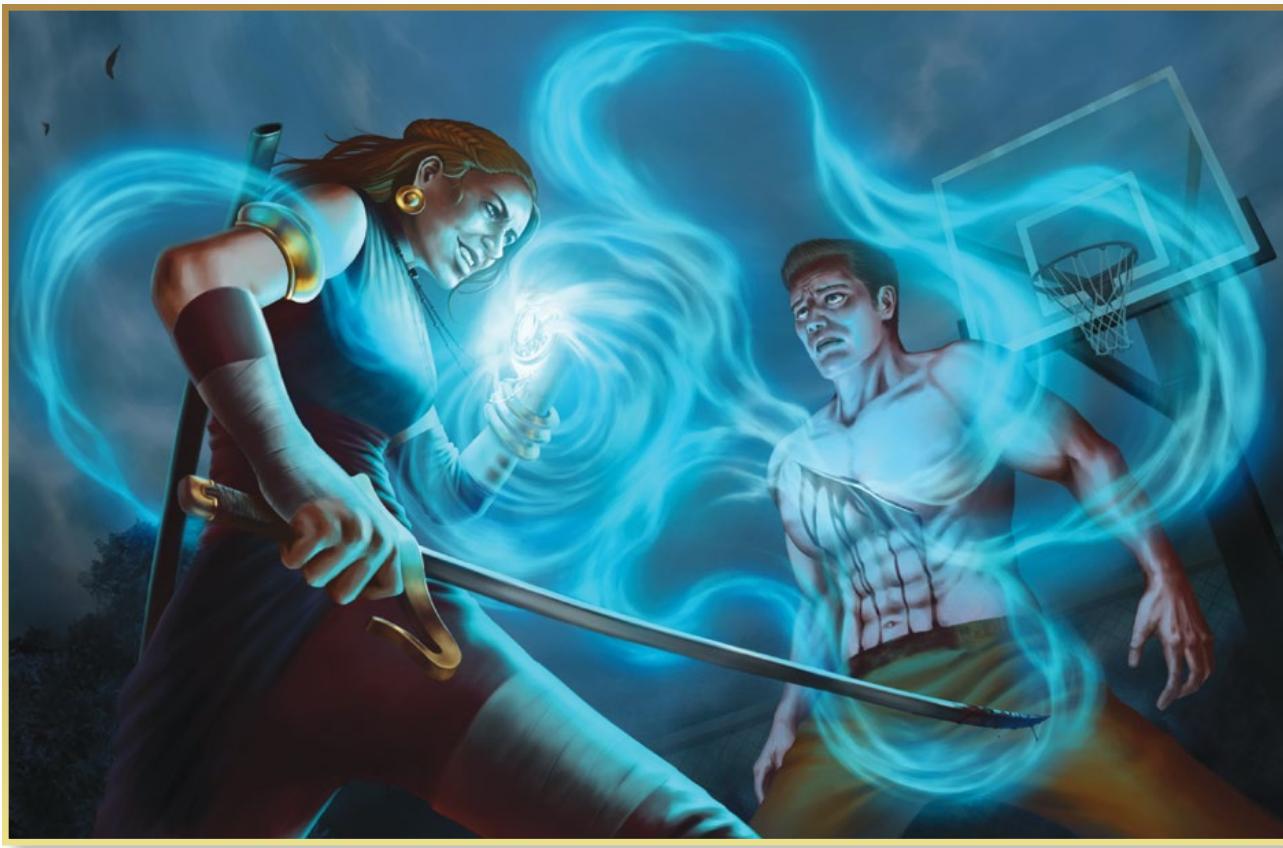
**Innate Power:** Qut empowers the will of great leaders, ensuring that Fate brings them and their allies glory. Once per scene, when the Scion's player spends Momentum to boost the roll of another character or other players spend Momentum to boost the Scion's roll, the Scion may invoke their Qut. When this happens, each point of Momentum spent on the roll by anyone counts twice.

### SOUL'S RANSOM

**Cost:** Imbue 1 Legend

**Duration:** Indefinite (Special)

**Subject:** A person you have drawn blood from this scene



**Range:** Close

**Action:** Simple

You may seize the souls within blood you have spilled, trapping them and gaining power of your foes. The souls are placed inside an onggon talisman (which you are assumed to have on your person already). The target gains the Soulbound condition at an equal level to their current highest Injury Condition.

You may choose to release the target's soul at any time, ending the victim's Soulbound condition without resolving it. However, regardless of how the Soulbound condition ends, you do not regain your imbued Legend until the end of the story in which it happens.

This Boon is not the only way that someone's souls can be stolen. Shamans and sorcerers wielding the magic of the Tengri are able to perform similar feats, given access to someone's blood or ghost – it just generally takes them longer and more effort, especially if they lack Legend. In these cases, the Soulbound condition inflicts Complication 2 by default.

If someone dies while their souls remain trapped, their souls are not freed. They still need to be rescued. Similarly, a ghost can be trapped and bound into an onggon to force it into servitude. Tengri Heroes are often called on to rescue late family members held prisoner in this way. It should also be noted that because the Tengri say you have multiple souls in your blood, having part of your souls trapped this way does not make you soulless.

## AVARGA

**Cost:** Imbue 1 Legend

**Duration:** One scene

**Subject:** Self

**Action:** Simple

The Avarga is the champion of a wrestling tournament, and it is a title that many of the Tengri aspire to. Competition is at the heart of who they are – and no matter who they face, an Avarga puts up a fight. You may use this only in a formal competition, such as a formal duel, wrestling contest, race, speedrunning competition or similar. You have relevant Scale equal

## SOULBOUND: IT'S IN THE BLOOD

The Soulbound condition provides Complication equal to the Injury Condition it was drawn from, applied to any actions that go directly against the orders of the person who possesses the victim's soul, bound in the onggon talisman. It may be resolved by the Soulbound victim retrieving and breaking the onggon. "If someone else breaks the talisman or the Complication is not bought off, the Condition ends without resolving, and the trapped soul may become a wandering spirit, attempting to return to the victim as best they can, at the SG's option."

to that of your opponent in the contest. (If there are multiple opponents, you have Scale equal to the highest relevant Scale among them.) This can never increase your Scale to higher than your opponent's.

## SIGNATURE PURVIEW: DVOEVERIE

**Motif:** Through acting in accordance with one's true nature, one may wield the power of Rod and work miracles.

For ages, the Bogovi have stood at the crossroads of civilization, enduring endless trespasses by enemy Gods, conquerors, and foreign explorers. Dvoeverie, literally meaning double-faith, represents the pantheon's ability to not only adapt to these foreign ideas while remaining true to themselves, but to reconcile their own dualistic nature and the extremes of personality that they endure.

**Innate Power:** You may communicate with virtually anyone or anything, regardless of linguistic barriers; the character only suffers Complication 1 on any resulting rolls. This even applies to inanimate objects of an organic nature, such as plant life, though they will only have an opinion on topics of import to them (i.e. a tree could communicate concern about a Scion with Fire Dominion in the forest, or how much sun it's been getting, but couldn't answer questions of a temporal nature or the details of a search party in the forest). In addition, you may immediately scrutinize the Virtues of other beings once their divine nature has been revealed to you, and the innate meaning and conflict inherent to those Virtues. When you resolve the Virtuous Condition, regain a point of Legend.

### VOLEVOI

**Cost:** Spend 1 Legend

**Duration:** One scene or until ended

**Subject:** One character or multiple trivial characters

**Range:** Medium

**Action:** Simple

**Description:** When in the presence of a Bog with the strongest convictions, others find themselves blistering against their strength of purpose. You radiate an aura causing one character or multiple trivial characters to be unable to look at you. An affected character suffers a 3-point Complication on any action that can bring you physical harm; this also applies to Clash rolls, as it's difficult to work miracles in the face of the Bog's unnerving certitude. If you are in the Virtuous Condition, this effect adds +1 defensive Scale instead. Should you attack an affected target, the effect ends immediately.

### MNOGOVERIE

**Cost:** Imbue 1 Legend

**Duration:** One Scene or until ended

**Subject:** Self and one divine or Titanic target

**Action:** Simple

**Description:** The Bogovi are masters of adaptation, adept at reconciling their faith and magics with those of a foreign bent. Choose a Scion, God, Titan, or other entity possessing a Virtue trait. By imbuing Legend, you may adopt a single foreign Virtue from that entity for the scene regardless of your current Virtue score; the chosen Virtue replaces your Wayward Virtue. This acts in all ways as if it were a standard Virtue.

If you are in the Virtuous Condition for your foreign Virtue, you may replace this Boon with a Boon from the modeled pantheon's Specific Purview, benefitting from the Boon, the PSP motif, and the innate power of the Purview. Resolving the Virtuous Condition on the foreign Virtue ends this Boon's effects.

## SIGNATURE PURVIEW: PACHAKUTIC

**Motif:** By calling upon the cosmic energies flowing through huacas, ceyce lines, mountains, their follower's sacrifices, and the stars themselves, the Apu fuel their prodigious powers.

The Apu and their Scions summon fire to warm mortal followers or turn it upon their foes. Lightning heralds much-needed rain for crops or is woven into clothing. Earth is summoned to reduce opposing strongholds to dust or drawn into the Apu's very being to make them hard as stone. The Apu feel the energies flowing through every stone, tree, mountain vista, and star, changing and being changed by the Apu in an endless cycle of birth, death, and renewal.

**Innate Power:** You may sense huacas, or sacred sites, within (Legend) miles. These sites include Touchstones, sacred spaces of another pantheon or shrines to other Scions or Gods, but also a general awareness situational Sanctums and an understanding of the conditions necessary to generate those Sanctums. You may also sense the flow of energies through the earth and sky, allowing you to perfectly determine the weather. When in the presence of the sacred and making an appropriate sacrifice (Hero p. 188; this Purview grants you intuitive knowledge of what an appropriate sacrifice entails), you may benefit from minor sacrifices once per short-term Deed rather than once per story arc. This innate power will not reveal gates or axes mundi.

### KALLPA

**Cost:** Imbue 1 Legend (special)

**Duration:** One scene

**Subject:** One huaca

**Range:** Self

**Action:** Simple

**Description:** By attuning to the divine energies within the huaca, you may wield miraculous power. When performing a sacrificial ritual, you may choose to use the huaca itself as a Relic locale, allowing you the use of a single Purview (typically Earth, Sky, Water, Sun, or Fire, though stranger Purviews are possible

depending on the site's nature at the Storyguide's discretion). This grants access to the innate powers of the Purview as normal and allows for channeling marvels through the Pachakutic motif within the confines of the huaca's sacred space.

If the huaca is particularly sacred to you (a Sanctum), you may work with the Storyguide to devise appropriate Realm Birthrights, even if the site is within The World and not a Terra Incognita. These Birthrights are purchased normally and may be tailored to the player's preferences, remaining accessible so long as Legend remains imbued in this Boon. If you stop imbuing Legend, you must return to the huaca to re-attune.

## CHURAY

**Cost:** Free (special)

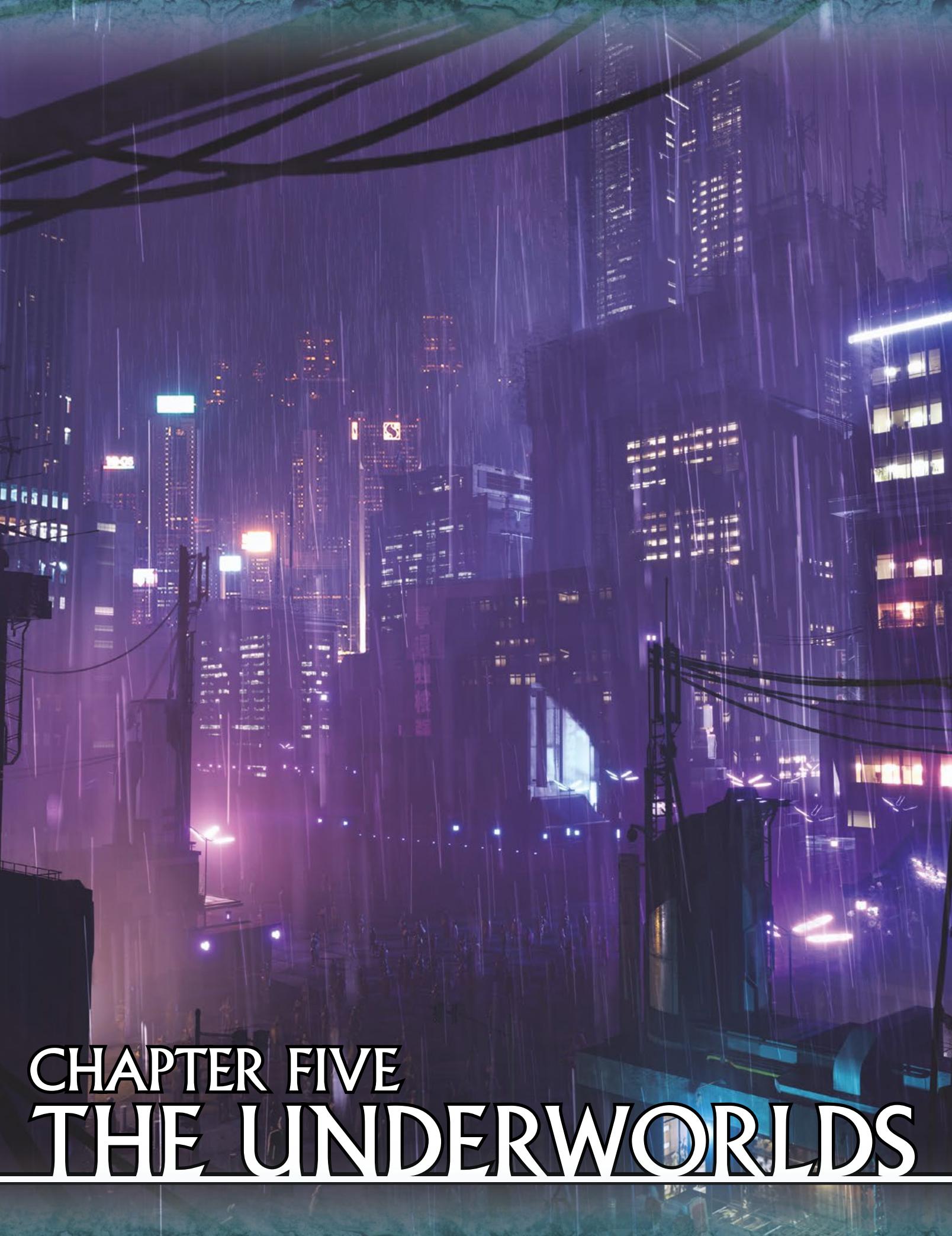
**Duration:** Indefinite

**Subject:** Self

**Action:** Simple

**Description:** Energies collect and reside within huaca; through practice, you may channel and contribute to sacred power. Upon performing an appropriate sacrifice at a huaca, you may regain an additional point of Legend. You may infuse the huaca with that point of Legend, allowing you and only you to later withdraw the point from that site without performing a sacrifice. You may even do this after performing a sacrifice at another pantheon's sacred site, although it allows any member of the other pantheon with a Legend trait to withdraw the point.

If your huaca is also your Sanctum, you may infuse points of Legend up to the Sanctum's rating and withdraw them at will from anywhere in The World (though not within a Terra Incognita or otherworld). If you also possess the Kallpa Boon, you may choose to imbue one of the infused points of Legend to maintain access to natural Purviews and Realm Birthrights.

The background of the image is a dense, futuristic city skyline at night, viewed from a low angle looking up. The sky is filled with vertical streaks of light rain. In the distance, tall skyscrapers are illuminated with various colors of neon lights, including blues, reds, and yellows. Closer to the viewer, there are several utility poles with multiple wires crisscrossing between them. One pole in the foreground has a small, glowing blue sign that appears to read "S". The overall mood is mysterious and moody.

# CHAPTER FIVE

# THE UNDERWORLDS

**"I mean, they say you die twice. One time when you stop breathing and a second time, a bit later on, when somebody says your name for the last time."**

Banksy, Wall and Piece

**A**s described in **Scion: Origin**, when a follower of a pantheon dies, their spirit – sometimes a soul, sometimes a Shade, sometimes component souls or mere fragments of what they once were – is rendered from their mortal flesh and transported to a specially-prepared Terra Incognita, created and maintained by the various Death Gods of the pantheon. This transportation is often instantaneous, but many pantheons have the job of psychopomp – minor or major Gods whose entire purpose is to transport the souls of the faithful dead from their corpse to a final resting place – deeply engrained within the particular metaphysics of their Underworld.

Perhaps because they're all resting places for souls, each Underworld is connected to one another on a particular supernatural "frequency" in a way that Overworlds simply aren't. The process of preparing a Terra Incognita to host human souls for the long term attunes a mythical land to this frequency, linking it to all others.

The prospect of apotheosis demands a Demigod descend into the Underworld to confront their mortality. Storyguides may find those lands below.

## ÆSIR

**T**he Underworlds of the Norse Gods are traditionally split up by how those residing within died, though there are several caveats and loopholes to the supposedly strict separations. Gods, Goddesses, and other creatures follow the letter and spirit of the rules differently. All four Underworlds are accessible from Yggdrasil, though many may be entered directly from the World.

## HEL

### Abode of the Doomed, Helheim

Few choose to end up in Hel. It is the residence of those who died ignominiously, whether from illness, cowardice, or old age. Murderers and other "impure" people are also sent to Hel after death, but they are thrown in a river of venom to be washed down to the roots of Yggdrasil, where Níðhöggr breaks from gnawing the great tree's roots to chew on their souls.

Hel is a grim place to spend eternity, despite the sumptuous feasts Hel lays out for Baldr; they are merely another constant in the face of an unbroken night spent in perpetual monotony. Though souls can be found singing, drinking, and generally appearing merry, time wears on, both meaningless to the dead and the only thing on which to focus. They make their homes in ramshackle huts made from the iron-leaved trees that grow in the forest surrounding Elvidner, which regenerate each night. New souls who pass through the gates – and any Scions who end up here by punishment or trickery – will inevitably be the subject of much curiosity.

Getting to Helheim may seem straightforward: nine days and nights descending ever downward through dangerous valleys on a precarious trail until one comes to Gjallarbrú. State your name and business to Móðguðr, and then cross the river Gjöll and pass through the gates to Hel. Truly, it is that simple – if you're already dead. Though spirits who belong in Hel are set on the path immediately following their demise, Scions looking for the entrance must find the cleft between mountains far to the north to even begin their journey. Móðguðr must be bargained with,

## AN UNDERWORLD FOR ATHEISTS

People who don't believe in the Gods, or who do not acknowledge their primacy in The World, or who simply don't believe a bunch of supernatural yahoos are deserving of devotion, don't go to a pantheon's Underworld when they die. To be fair, a competent psychopomp could probably drag a soul down regardless of belief, but few self-respecting shepherds of the dead would be so petty and vindictive – and besides, they'd have to answer to their pantheon's Gods of death. Most determined atheists in The World manifest as Souls or Ghosts (**Origin**, p. 31) for an indeterminate period, and eventually migrate down to the Veil. The exact process is different for each person, and some simply appear in the Veil as a Shade after their death, but typically involves wandering near another Underworld and finding a path to the grand city of the dead instead. Some freelance psychopomps exist for precisely this purpose, and others in the pantheons – especially those with easily available routes to the Veil – take it upon themselves to shepherd atheists as a side hustle.

Misotheists, by contrast, typically spend their afterlives in whatever part of their pantheon's belief system specifically deals with those who transgress against the divine. The Gods can tolerate a lack of belief, but they will not tolerate disrespect.

## ENTERING HEL

A traditional Norse story speaks of a woman who, upon reaching the gate of Hel, tore the head off a cock and threw it over the wall. Upon landing, it came to life and crowed, allowing her to follow with its body. Though characters may certainly bring with them a dead chicken if they choose this route, anything living and sacrificed as passage may suffice: a bloom ripped from a living plant, for example. Other heroes of legend have scaled the walls to get in.

Móðguðr is enigmatic; she does her duty well but has her own reasons regarding whom she will let cross Gjallarbrú. It's said that those who seek Baldr may be allowed inside as an acceptable desire, but the Jötunn also cares deeply about deference and courageousness from the party requesting access.

tricked, or defeated, and the Jötunn has held her post for millennia; she's not to be underestimated. The gate to Hel only allows the dead through, leaving the living forever trapped on the other side unless they know either a secret entrance or the proper ritual.

### ELVIDNER

The Goddess Hel's estate is guarded by both wall and Garmr, the bloodstained hound that dwells in Gnipa, a nearby cave, but rushes out snarling and slavering at the first sign of intruders. The only way to appease Garmr is to offer it a Hel-cake, which is any cake, biscuit, or bread that includes cardamom as an ingredient.

The estate itself is wreathed in snowstorms and the sound of glaciers breaking and reforming, a cacophony of cracks and eerie groans that assaults the ears. It is not uncommon to see Hel herself in the distant dark, riding across the vast-snow-covered ground on her three-legged horse, off to reap the dead.

### GARMR AND MÓÐGUÐR

The two main obstacles in Helheim are its primary guardians: the hound that protects Elvidner's gates and the Jötunn who watches its bridge. Both can be appeased by nonviolent means, but both are also prepared to fight for their domain.

### HEL

#### BIRTHRIGHT

##### Iron Leaf (Relic) ••

A leaf from the trees found in the forest of Elvidner. These leaves carry the essence of monotony and the dol-drums lives of the Shades trapped in Hel.

**Knack:** While carrying the leaf, you appear less important than you truly are. The Scent the Divine Knack fails to register you as divine, and once per day you can ignore the Avoidance effect of a single Fatebinding.

### Knack

**Make Way:** Ignore all Complications from actions to cross between realms. Additionally, if you must perform a specific deed or need a particular item to cross into a realm, you are considered to have accomplished all necessary requirements to enter.

### Realm Effects

**Motif:** Flat tones of monotonous music.

**Requirement:** The Scion must spend one day out of every three months in Hel.

## HELGAFJELL

### The Holy Mountain

Any whose lives are cut short, not in battle or by disease or age, but through misfortune and circumstance, awaken as Shades on Helgafjell. Jutting upward from the spot where the path to Hel begins its descent, Helgafjell is a vast, craggy mountain unable to be seen by living eyes. It's undeniably there, a physical object in the World that is neither invisible nor transparent, but mortals' eyes seem to just slide off of it if they look in its direction. Likewise, airplane pilots and infrastructure planners just avoid paths that lead through or over it, though they don't realize why.

About a mile up from Helgafjell's titanic base lies an impenetrable, perpetual layer of mist, shrouding all that towers above it. Below the ring of fog, the mountain is largely barren save for some scrub and a few adventurous goats. Above, the mountain is as lush as any idyllic Alpine town, green and vibrant, with lovely, modern homes and buildings dotting the mountainside.

Here, the inhabitants know their threads were cut, sundered before their lives' tapestries were complete. The Shades on Helgafjall exist in a state of contentment, but never true happiness. They know they had more to do in the World before their untimely deaths. For some, this becomes too much, and they choose to descend through the mists to be reincarnated in their family line in the modern day.

Scions who end up on Helgafjell may be surprised by the genial, kind nature of most Shades who live there. The biggest danger associated with the Holy Mountain is in its ascent, not from anything that is a resident of the mountain itself. Frustration may also be found when looking for a particular item or Shade there, too; most Shades give only vague directions or help, gesturing lazily at the miles of green landscape with no sense of urgency.

## CLIMBING HELGAFJELL

If characters wish to ascend Helgafjell, they must first ascertain its location and then confront the mind-bending prospect of covering ground on a mountain they can feel, but not see until they emerge above the mists. However, do the legends say, “living eyes” or “mortal eyes,” and are a Demigod’s eyes truly mortal any longer?

## HELGAFJELL

### BIRTHRIGHT

#### Mists of Helgafjell (Realm) •••

You have passed through the mists surrounding Helgafjell which now cling to you. Their obscuring properties are now yours to command.

**Boon:** Walk Unnoticed (Deception)

**Marvels:** Complicate, Impose Condition (Deception)

**Scale:** +1 When taking actions to impersonate someone, pass through a space completely unnoticed, or convince someone to do something they shouldn’t.

### Knack

**Second Chances:** When you take damage that would fill your Taken Out box, you can spend a Momentum to negate the damage and ignore all damage from that source for the rest of the round.

### Realm Effects

**Motif:** A warm breeze on a sun-kissed day.

**Requirement:** You must assist Shades who seek a fulfilled life to pass through the mists to reincarnate.

## SESSRÚMNIR

### Hall of Seats

Freya’s domain is located in the field of Fólkvangr and takes the form of a great Nordic feasting hall surrounded by “stone ships,” slabs of upright rock placed in the shape of a ship to mark gravesites. The field itself is verdant, though worn, as in tribute to the many battles fought to get to Sessrúmnir. Fólkvangr is surrounded on three sides by a golden mountain range, and on the fourth by a shining, calm lake. Traditionally, Freya chooses noble people and half of fallen warriors to reside here instead of Valhalla, preferring those also versed in rhetoric and philosophy. In truth, the definition of “warrior” is looser than many believe, and Freya has been known to take in those who died fighting disease as both doctor and patient, or those who died standing up for a worthy cause in which they fervently believed.

The hall itself looks large, but acceptably so, to Scions or Shades viewing it from without, but within the hall stretches endlessly into the distance, and grows as new Shades arrive, a chair appearing for each one. The upper levels of the hall contain innumerable libraries with seating for hundreds and fireplaces, and out behind it is a vast training ground. In the sprawling complex’ basement, Chthonian servants forge and store armor and weapons for Freya’s Shade army, and neither the training nor the feasting ever comes to an end. It is eternally a golden summer evening there, as though no sun shines in the sky, neither may any shadow be cast in Freya’s domain.

### THE DISIR

Sessrúmnir is both guarded and assisted by Freya’s personal disir, the souls of women Freya chose to retain permanently as servants and guards in her hall. They oversee training, much like the Valkyries of Valhalla, but also ride their black or white horses into the World to reap souls Freya chooses and bring their Shades back to Fólkvangr. They are invisible to the living unless they are pursuing one; if Scions trespass in Fólkvangr without good reason, they may see a battalion of disir riding toward them from the hall.

## SESSRÚMNIR

### BIRTHRIGHTS

#### Disir (Guide) •••

Freya’s chosen, the Disir ride on pitch black or pure white horses and harvest souls to bring to Sessrúmnir. They train those who they have pledged loyalty in the ways of war, helping prepare those Freya deems worthy for their own part in Ragnarök.

**Asset Skills:** Close Combat, Leadership

**Guide Stunt (2 successes):** This Stunt can only be used when making an attack while mounted. You trample your opponent. You move a single range band away and take your opponent with you, knocking them prone in the process.

**Calling:** Warrior

## APPROACHING SESSRÚMNIR

Storyguides may choose to place Sessrúmnir in a variety of locations to suit their game. For some, this might mean sailing across a particular lake at the correct time of the day or year. For others, it may be accessible only from the Axis Mundi that is the Veil (p. 197). It is firmly located on a different plane of existence from the World, however, and thus any means of traveling to it should be appropriately mystical in nature.



### Tranquil Waters (Realm) •

The gentle and peaceful life of Sessrúmnir, filled with comradery and stories, permeates you. Wars are fought and won, and yet those who battle are given a joyful reprieve, you too can extend this reprieve to others.

**Marvel:** Blessings, Resolve Condition (Health)

### Realm Effects

**Motif:** Through measured thought and speech, wars are won.

**Requirement:** The Scion must spend the Summer Solstice feasting in the Hall of Seats.

## VALHALLA

### Hall of the Fallen

The einherjar, the mighty who were slain in battle, are the Shades of Odin's domain of Valhalla. Though Odin himself is rarely in attendance, Valhalla bustles with Valkyries and Shades. As in Freya's domain, the spirit of "slain in battle" is more important to Valkyries and Odin than the literal meaning. While Valkyries do reap souls from battlefields across the World, they also bring back people for whom the mere act of existing was a daily battle against society. They bring, too, the Shades of people killed in retaliation for standing up to a dictatorial regime or a corrupt police officer. As long as a soul is faithful to the Æsir and slain in conflict while their cause is deemed righteous, that soul ends up a Shade in Valhalla.

This means Valhalla is far more diverse than ancient poems and texts paint it. Though it still a massive hall thatched with golden shields and spears, its inhabitants range from the burly Viking warriors of old, to genderfluid

youths with purple hair, to black and Middle Eastern protesters from various eras. All in Valhalla know that to get there, one must have a warrior's heart, and so the old Shades don't question Odin's or the Valkyries' wisdom in bringing this influx of new soldiers.

Shades pass their time in Valhalla training and feasting, as is tradition, but they also study politics, tactics, and philosophy, to help them better understand why and how to fight. Though all know of Valhalla's great mead hall, fewer speak of its libraries or its newer addition – its computer

## ON VALKYRIES' WINGS

Aside from literally dying and being brought to Valhalla by the Valkyries, how does one get to Valhalla? Scions may make their way there overland from Ásgarð if they wish, which is accessible by the rainbow bridge Bifröst. This can be perilous to the wrong Scions, though, as Bifröst is guarded directly by Heimdall, the God of perception. As another Underworld located on a different plane from the World, the journey to Valhalla should never be easy. Scions will have to convince both Valkyries and warrior Shades they either need or deserve to be there, and it will be doubly hard if a band holds no Scions of the Æsir.

Storyguides should present the way to Valhalla as either through a pitched battlefield of its Shades found through a location in the Veil (p. 197) or via Ásgarð and Bifröst, though either presentation may be altered to suit their players' and game's needs.

room. Just outside the doors of Valhalla, in its isolated corner of Ásgarð, stands Glasir, a heartbreakingly beautiful tree with golden-red leaves. It's not uncommon to see a Shade sitting propped against its trunk, a horn of mead beside them and a book propped open on their lap while the clash of metal sword against shield rings in the distance from Valhalla's training grounds. After all, Ragnarök may need tacticians and diplomats, too.

## VALKYRIES

Though the Valkyries' main objective and duty is to reap souls Odin desires for Valhalla, they also protect the hall itself, along with its Shades, from incursions. The shields and spears that make up the great hall are powerful artifacts, and Valhalla's inhabitants guard them jealously. Just because the spirits that reside in Valhalla might slay each other each day to be resurrected the next, doesn't mean outsiders, especially from other pantheons, are welcome to do the same. A killing blow against a Shade from one who isn't meant to be in Valhalla is permanent, sending the soul to Hel instead.

## VALHALLA

### BIRTHRIGHTS

#### Spear of Valhalla (Relic) ...

Valhalla's mead hall is crafted from thousands of spears and shields of the fallen through the ages. These weapons have been blessed by Odin and each one is a powerful artifact in its own right.

**Enhancement:** +1 for melee attacks

**Purview:** War

**Motif:** Through the glory of righteous battle.

**Tags:** Melee, Reach, Versatile

#### Valkyrie (Guide) ....

The Valkyrie serve Odin and Valhalla first and foremost bringing the souls of the worthy to eternal feast and keeping the warriors there in eternal fighting form, running through daily training routines. They rarely deign to assist anyone not in Valhalla, though they are potent mentors if you can prove your loyalty.

**Asset Skills:** Close Combat, Medicine

**Guide Stunt (Variable successes):** This Stunt can be purchased with Clue Enhancements. When creating a plan of attack, deciding on a tactic, or enacting a plan, use the successes spent on this Stunt to negate any Complications that arise from unforeseen issues, or missing steps in the plan.

**Purview:** War

**Legendary Title:** Chooser of the Fallen

### Realm Effects

**Motif:** A warrior's heart and a quick mind.

**Requirement:** The Scion must share a story of righteous battle and glory within the mead hall once a season.

## TO MEIDO, JIGOKU, AND YOMI

Meido may be accessed in the World via Osorezan (Fear Mountain) in Japan. Long regarded as a sacred place and the entrance to the Underworld, this volcanic caldera includes a brook that runs into Lake Usori, which is the World's version of the Sanzu River. By ritually crossing the World's Sanzu, characters attempting to get to Meido find themselves face to face with a crevasse in the stone through which they may descend. It is impossible to get to Meido by accident; only the dead and those attempting to go there may do so.

From Meido, characters might access Jigoku or Yomi; they may only go to Tengoku upon the summons of a Kami. No one knows what happens if a mortal passes through the reincarnation torii.

Other entrances to Jigoku may be found in hot springs and volcanic area across Japan and other parts of the World, and Yomi is sealed away under Yomotsu Hirasaka in Japan, where characters might step between two stones after an appropriate prayer or meditation and find themselves in that dark land. Unsealing Yomi entirely would be unwise.

## KAMI

The dual Underworld of the Kami is still only recently joined, as far as the Gods are concerned. Though Buddhism has been a facet of Japanese life for over a millennium, the Kami have longer memories by far, and still consider Jigoku, the Buddhist Underworld, the "new afterlife" compared to their original land of the dead, Yomi.

## MEIDO

### The Dark Way

For most, getting to Yomi or Jigoku requires they first pass through Meido. Aside from those who were perfectly good or exceptionally evil during their lives in the World, souls of the Kami's devotees go to Meido, where the Judges of the Dead test their lives before sending them to their final destination: the Gods' realm of Tengoku, where Takamagahara is located, or the Underworlds of Jigoku or Yomi. After their trials, souls are directed to one of three elaborate torii arches, one for each land. Three smaller arches denote those who pass through will be reincarnated as a person, animal, or yokai. If a soul decides to make a break for Tengoku, there they face the Kami's wrath, and are usually marched straight to Emma-O himself.

Though Meido is, for all intents and purposes, neutral ground, it is still dark and foreboding, and the journey to

the judges is buffeted by strong winds and demonic birds who assault the souls, screaming at them to hurry. Oni escort the dead up a mountain made of their own greed, which grew taller for every time they coveted someone else's possessions or status in life. They face a new trial and judge every week for seven weeks, and each of the judges has the power to send the soul to Jigoku should they be found wanting. They must cross the Sanzu River, ford a boiling lake, and endure rain of red-hot iron. Only the truly determined souls make it through the last trial and on to Tengoku or reincarnation; many are sent to Yomi or Jigoku in large part because they gave up.

## MEIDO

### BIRTHRIGHTS

#### Iron Inferno (Relic) •

Molten metal rains from the skies in Meido as part of the trials for a Shade heading toward reincarnation. These raindrops can be used as bullets in most firearms, and once you have a few, they seem to be ever present.

**Enhancement:** +1 to Firearms attacks. This stacks with the Enhancement provided by the Firearms Tag.

**Tags:** Add the Aggravated and Returning tags to any weapon used to fire the bullets.

#### Tempest (Realm) ••••

Weathering the buffeting winds, fierce birds, fiery rain, and various other trials in Meido has hardened you. You wield those same trials against others.

**Marvels:** Complicate, Resolve Condition (Darkness, Fire, Wind)

**Special:** You gain an additional Bruised Injury Condition slot permanently.

## REALM EFFECTS

**Motif:** Howling wind and desolate landscapes.

**Requirement:** As per the Fatebound Condition.

## JIGOKU

### The Sixteen Hells

If one gets to pick to which of the Kami's Underworlds they'll be sent on a mission or after death, they'd do better to choose Yomi than Jigoku. The Buddhist Underworld is divided into at least 16 levels of hell, eight cold and eight hot, and to which a soul is sent depends on the number and type of sins they committed while alive in the World. The uppermost eight levels are the cold hells, those of blisters, lamentations, and freezing solid among others, while the lower eight are the hot hells, which include those of crushing, screaming, burning, and unending suffering.

Along with the main 16 hells, there are nearly uncountable "lesser hells" in Jigoku, such as the Hell of Foxes and Wolves and the Hell of Endless Thirst. If a Kami's worshiper dies with certain stains on their soul and conscience, and does not seek redemption, atonement, or mercy before death, they are sent to Jigoku's capital city, where Emma-O rules from a massive temple complex in its center. There, he judges the dead from a massive registry listing their sins



and assigns them to a specific hell. The yokai who live in the capital, Oni-no-machi, then escort the Shade to their new life of torture until they are considered redeemed or their living family appeals on their behalf, no fewer than 100 days after death.

## ONI-NO-MACHI

Literally “the city of demons,” Oni-no-machi is home to Emma-O and his Underworld temple. Standing apart from the many torture realms in Jigoku, Oni-no-machi is a thriving, if horrific, city built in traditional Japanese style. Instead of wood and paper, the buildings are constructed from bone and translucent flesh, and the paving stones are infused with souls undergoing a particular sort of punishment. Lanterns float above the structures, illuminating both paths and ceiling of the underground chamber with a sickly green cast, and all manner of yokai, oni, tengu, and kasha dwell here, along with countless other types of demons who assist in the torture of souls resigned to the hells.

## THE HELLS OF JIGOKU

Traditionally, the 16 hells of Jigoku are as follows, in descending order. Each hell includes the torments of the one above it.

### The Cold Hells

- **The Blister Hell:** Cold plain surrounded by mountains and covered in snow; here you develop blisters all over.
- **The Burst Blister Hell:** The blisters burst open.
- **The Shivering Hell:** You uncontrollably shake with cold, making involuntary sounds.
- **The Lamentation Hell:** Colder still, and you can't help but cry out in pain at the cold.
- **The Chattering Teeth Hell:** In this level, your teeth chatter and crack.
- **The Blue Hell:** Your skin turns blue with extreme cold, and you are covered in frost.
- **The Lotus Hell:** Snowstorms cause your flesh to freeze and crack open like a lotus blossom, leaving you bloody.
- **The Great Lotus Hell:** As above, but you crack into pieces and internal organs are exposed, which also crack open.

### The Hot Hells

- **The Reviving Hell:** The ground is made of hot iron and demons attack until you lose consciousness, then you are revived to do it again.
- **The Black Thread Hell:** Guards lay black thread all over, which they use as a guide to cut you open with axes and knives.
- **The Crushing Hell:** You are smashed to a pulp between massive rocks.

- **The Screaming Hell:** Beings in this hell run around, looking for refuge from the hot ground. Once they are inside a cave or hut, it traps them inside and burns them.

- **The Great Screaming Hell:** As above, but animalistic demons devour you alive while you burn.

- **The Heating Hell:** You are impaled on a spear and heated until flames come out of your mouth and nose.

- **The Great Heating Hell:** As above, but you are also pierced with sharp objects while being heated.

- **The Uninterrupted Hell:** Roasted in an oven for eternity.

## JIGOKU

### BIRTHRIGHTS

#### *Yokai (Guide) •••*

Yokai work for Emma-O to guide spirits to the various hells in Jigoku, judging the Shades by their deeds and picking just the right hell for them to reside in. As guides, they instruct on judgement and interrogation techniques, though they do have a natural eye for torture.

**Asset Skills:** Integrity, Leadership

**Guide Stunt (1 success):** Use this Stunt when exerting influence over another character. Negate any Attitude shifts that might result from the method you use to encourage behavior or encourage belief.

**Calling:** Judge

#### *Burning Ice (Realm) •••*

Jigoku is a realm of opposites, its hells either blazing infernos or unbearable frozen wastes. You embody both these aspects calling forth one or the other depending on the situation.

**Marvels:** Complication, Impose Condition (Fire, Frost)

**Special:** You are immune to Complications or negative effects from extreme heat or extreme cold.

### Realm Effects

**Motif:** Frozen winds chill to the bone. A raging inferno burns to ashes.

**Requirement:** As per the Fatebound Condition.

## YOMI

### The Dark World

The first land of the dead over which the Kami presided, Yomi, is deep underground; it's a dusty, cold place that appears as a decaying continuation of the World itself. Though for years Yomi appeared as a sprawling, traditionally Japanese village, in recent decades it's transfigured itself into a medium-sized city leading into rural areas on

## SCIONS OF IZANAGI AND IZANAMI

After giving birth to the islands upon which their people reside, as well as many of the Kami, Izanami died in childbirth and ended up in Yomi. When Izanagi went to find her, he was terrified at what she had become, having eaten the Underworld's food. While Izanagi escaped and remains on the run or in hiding to this day, watching over his descendants from the shadows, both he and Izanami will on rare occasion create Scions of their own.

For Izanagi, this means he tends to be an absent parent, mired in his own desires and needs as well as searching for a way to return Izanami to her former glory, which he hopes will also call off the lightning kami and terrible hag still chasing him. Despite the anger and vengefulness he feels toward Izanami, he clings to the memory of his former partner in creation. Many of his Scions start as mortals he believes are unfairly persecuted.

### Izanagi, He Who Invites

**Callings:** Creator, Lover, Trickster

**Purviews:** Earth, Deception, Fertility, Journeys, Passion (all), Sky

In Izanami's case, she is trapped in Yomi, ashamed of her own visage and lashing out at any who dare look upon her. Her Scions are rare, as she chooses them by proxy of her hags, and they also complete Visitations on her behalf. Izanami prefers the hags choose people who have been wronged or done some grave injustice as her Scions, and her first task is nearly always for the fledgling Scion to help seek out Izanagi or his children and Scions for revenge.

### Izanami, She Who Invites

**Callings:** Creator, Liminal, Lover

**Purviews:** Chaos, Death, Earth, Fertility, Passion (Vengeance), Water

the outskirts. Whether it's the nature of the place to reflect the World or whether Izanami, Yomi's overseer, has something to do with this is unknown, but Shades who reside here largely speculate it must be Yomi itself changing, as Izanami is trapped and cannot know what changes have taken place over the past few centuries.

Plants and other wildlife appear much as they do in the World, but in Yomi they're stripped of color and life, so decaying or skeletal rabbits and mice hop along gardens of shriveled, gray vegetables. Any who eat the food here may not leave, as the original curse that bound Izanami to this place is still in effect. To make it worse, the peach tree from which she ate stands in the center of her personal garden, the only thing vibrant and touched with life. The peaches hanging from its branches are plump and juicy, and they would tempt even one who just ate a massive feast to sink her teeth into their succulent flesh.

The streets and buildings in Yomi are in disrepair. Cold breezes blow through screens and across tatami; any attempts by Shades to repair their city are undone as soon as they awaken. There is no light here on Izanami's orders, as it was Izanagi seeing her in the full light of his burning comb that doomed her to this place. Any source of light kindled in Yomi reveals its inhabitants as rotting corpses going about their routines without pain, but also without purpose.

Those sent here didn't commit any egregious sin, but neither did they live justly enough to be sent to Tengoku or reincarnation. The only time they seem pleased at all is when gazing across the river that separates Yomi from

Jigoku; they can just make out the edges of the demon city, but the screams carrying faintly over the broad, viscous river plant in Yomi's shades a sense of relief they weren't sent to a far-worse fate.

## YOMOTSU-HISAME

The eight hags Izanami sent after Izanagi when he fled her terrible visage in Yomi are known collectively as Yomotsu-hisame, or Shikome. He escaped them by throwing down various items that turned into things to slow the hags, such as his headdress turning into a bunch of grapes they were compelled to devour, or his comb becoming bamboo, which they also had to eat. Now, they guard Izanami against light, and any who would look upon her. Any Scions who get too close to the beautiful peach tree or Izanami herself, or who light torches or flashlights near enough for Izanami or the Yomotsu-hisame to notice, are set upon by these hideous oni. They can be distracted, as in Izanagi's tale, by food or drink, and they cannot find those who stay perfectly still among the dead, though the need to breathe might still give a mortal away.

## YOMI

### BIRTHRIGHT

### Binding Curse (Realm) •••

Those who eat the fruits and foods of the underworld are bound to it for eternity, a lesson hard learned by Izanami. You too are bound to Yomi, and you can use its intrinsic properties of binding and cursing to your advantage.

**Boon:** The Way of All Flesh (Death)

**Special:** You can place a binding on a single target. They gain the Bound Condition to a specific person, place, or object. If the Bound character leaves the vicinity of the binding (within Medium Range) she suffers an Injury Condition each time she successfully takes an action, and incurs a +2 Difficulty to take actions other than returning to her binding. The Condition resolves when the character spends a full day of unbroken time to the thing to which she is bound.

## Knack

**Bag of Tricks:** When attempting to disengage a combatant or run away during a chase, roll your Knack Skill. You can apply successes as a Complication to your opponent. If not bought off, they must use their successes on an unrelated action, such as eating, adjusting their clothing, or chasing someone else.

## Realm Effect

**Motif:** Dark and still as death.

**Requirement:** The Scion must eat from the peach tree in the center of Yomi once a month.

# NARAKA, UNDERWORLD OF THE DEVÁ

Below our world is Patala, which is an Underworld only by that definition. Even its lowest level, the Serpent level, is home to the nāgas, powerful, serpentine beings, but still very much alive. The King of Death makes his home even lower (or South, depending on how you look at it). This is Naraka, the realm of King Yama, and the lowest loka before the great Garbhodaka Sea that comprises the base of our universe.

Yamaraja serves as King of Naraka as well as one of the ten royal judges of Diyu, the Shén Underworld. Eternally busy, he oversees the placement of four pantheons worth of Shades, making sure to send them to exactly the right afterlife with appropriate sufferings or rewards. This monumental undertaking is assisted by the other nine royal judges; his assistants, the Yamadutas; and his loyal record keeper, Chitragupta. He sends the virtuous followers of the Devá to Svarga, a blissful Overworld realm ruled over by Indra himself, to await reincarnation. The rest he sends to one of Naraka's numerous hells, to suffer for their actions before they, too, reincarnate in a new life of Yamaraja's choosing.

Even though the Shades' stay isn't permanent, mortals have still tried to stop the dead from passing. Most famous was Savitri, who begged King Yama to return her husband to life. She extolled the King of Death and the virtues of the Devá, and he promised her any boon, save her husband's return. She asked for her husband to father a hundred sons, and Yamaraja relented, returning him to the living. Scions

hoping to pull a similar trick should know that it wasn't about King Yama falling victim to a clever loophole, but rather how impressed he was with Savitri's devotion.

## THE HELL'S OF NARAKA

Numerous hells have been tailored for appropriate sufferings. Only King Yama, his attendees, or his Scions, could say how many exactly, but there are a few that Scions or their allies might be more likely to encounter. King Yama would send someone who took innocent life to Sulaputra, where the Yamadutas will impale them on a trident and deny them food or water. Those who used magic against another must eat insects in the realm of Krimisha. The realm of Sukaramukham sees to the pummeling and crushing of oppressive kings and rulers who ignored their duties.

## THE BUDDHIST NARAKAS

Like many Pantheons, the Devá had to reorganize their Underworlds to accommodate the growth of Buddhism, and the expectations of Buddhist mortals. Yamaraja sends these Shades to the Buddhist hells known as "the Eight Cold Narakas and the Eight Hot Narakas" or as the Kami call them, Jigoku (p. 182). The Kami Emma-O handles the sorting of Japanese Buddhists here, while the rest fall under Yama's adjudication. Similarly, Yama handed over the keys to Tamu, another Buddhist Underworld, to Erlik Khan of the Tengri, as Buddhist thought spread among their worshipers as well. Shades suffer in these hells for incalculable eons, though how much time passes in the World can be the blink of an eye.

## THE YAMADUTAS

King Yama's servants collect the dead, bringing them to Naraka and facilitating the necessary rewarding or suffering. The living who have behaved in a particularly virtuous manner (such as the Brahmin Ajamila) can see them in the World, carrying away the deceased, invisible to all other eyes. Frightening, hideous, and merciless, they are nonetheless eternally loyal to Yamaraja, and their service is necessary in the cycle of reincarnation (and they may even be tasked to serve Scions of the King of Death). They cannot be swayed from their tasks, but the servants of Krishna have physically repelled them in order to bring a chosen soul to their king.

## NARAKA

### BIRTHRIGHT

#### Yamaduta (Guide) ••

These terrifying servants are loyal only to Yamaraja, though they are willing to serve as guides to those who have won their trust. They mostly care about the dead and dying, though they are known to teach wisdom on occasion.

**Asset Skills:** Occult, Medicine

**Guide Stunt (1 success):** The Storyteller reveals the location of a single dead body, spirit, or Shade that is hidden or out of sight in the scene.

## Knack

**Determine Unworthy:** You declare a single target as judged unworthy. Make a Knack Skill roll, and apply the successes as a Complication on your target's social actions for the rest of the scene. If the target fails to buy off the Complication, you can choose to make them leave the scene, reduce the Attitude of everyone else in the scene toward them by -1, or they reveal a single secret they are trying to hide.

## Realm Effects

**Motif:** Suffering is only temporary and just.

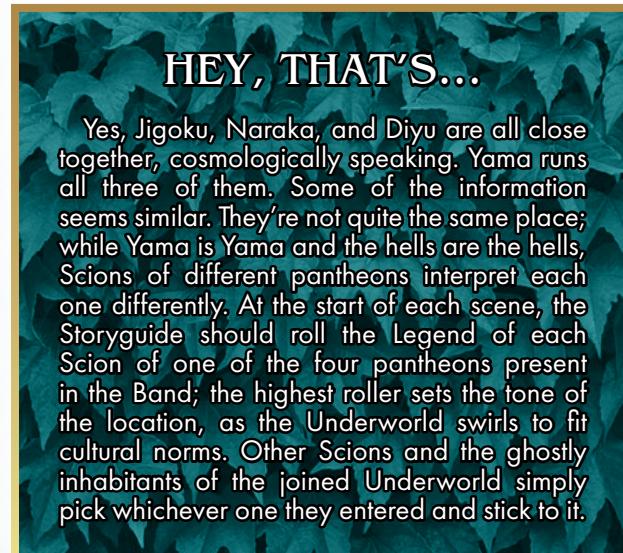
**Requirement:** As per the Fatebound role.

# SHÉN

Harmonious order is terribly important to the Shén where everything must be in its proper place as part of one giant Celestial Bureaucracy. Their underworld is no different and considering their emphasis on quality they went for the absolute best when it comes to underworld management. Hired by the Jade Emperor, Yama rules over Diyu, the “Earth Prison”, as a section of his vast underworld estate and it is particularly labyrinthine in comparison to his other infernal charges. Here, everyone has their proper place and they atone all in their own rather specific ways as has been stamped and approved by the right divine functionaries.

## DIYU, THE EARTH PRISON

Diyu is layer after endless layer of temporary punishment preparing mortal souls for their eventual reincarnations. This is accomplished through rather specific and Shén-approved purification processes that would make a government black site seem like an all-inclusive vacation in comparison. Exactly 96,816 hells make up Diyu: eight dark hells; eight cold hells, 12,800 hells beneath the earth; and 84,000 hells, each with their own unique themes, existing right at the absolute edge of reality. Yama, however, is drawing plans for a major expansion and reorganization, as



modern problems require modern punishments. The dead are not meant to stay here forever and are allowed to reincarnate once they've been purified accordingly with proper divine paperwork filled and signed, which allows reopened space for the endless queues of the dead. Yama, being the efficient hellmaster he is, has organized Diyu into an impossibly streamlined system that involves direct oversight by 10 Courts each with its own king chosen by Yama to keep things working as they always should.

Diyu is quite the lively place despite being full of dead people. After being escorted in by the aptly-named Ox-Head and Horse-Face or Heibai Wuchang (depending on who's working that day), the mortal dead are brought to Youdu, the Dark Capital, and put into the appropriate queues. From there, they are directed toward one of the 10 Courts, where the Court Kings and their functionaries will make sure the newly-departed make it to their correct hell. The enterprising dead would do well to keep their living relatives and friends burning and therefore sending them a constant supply of “hell money,” which can be used in Diyu as legal tender. Like any well run bureaucracy, hell money could be used to grease a few palms here and there to make sure the whole process goes better and quicker for the deceased. However, expediency doesn't immediately mean anything good in Diyu. Infernal reforms made during the Tang Dynasty to streamline the purification process of souls places many of them in one of the Eighteen Levels, of which punishments include but are not limited to the following:

- Thrown off a mountain of knives
- Cauldron frying
- Randomized dismemberment
- Being ground into pulp
- Burning
- Being cooked
- Drinking boiling liquid
- Violent removal of random body parts
- Being frozen
- Hung by hooks
- Drowning in blood
- Randomized torture by animals

Reaching Diyu from the World isn't all that terribly difficult if you have the right paperwork and seals from both mortal bureaucrats and divine functionaries. The most popular entrances to Diyu in modern China include climbing Holy Mount Tai to enter the appropriate temple, visiting the Temple of the Eastern Peak in Beijing and making the right offerings at each shrine, and going through the motions of the processing of the dead at the Fengdu Ghost City. The latter option will see the Scion relegated to wait until a space opens among the dead, where then they will have to cross the Bridge of Helplessness where the demons at guard will either allow or deny passage depending on the

## WHEN THE TREE FALLS, THE MONKEYS SCATTER

The endlessly nightmarish levels of Diyu are popular, beloved, and approved by the Shén and their mortal followers as a concept and for its efficiency, but not everyone is on board with the torturous realms. In fact, Dizang, one of the most well-known bodhisattvas and a respected deity, will not rest and denies himself Buddhahood until all Diyu is emptied. Dizang resides on Mount JiuHua, which houses 300 temples, most of which are dedicated to him as protector and liberator of those suffering in the hell realms. No one is quite sure what exactly this dedicated deified master does on Mount JiuHua, but all signs point toward some sort of great and elaborate plan to destroy Diyu once and for all, ushering in the coming of the Maitreya and a purified world.

Monks, priests, warriors, hermits, and other such sorts have been arriving in steady numbers for centuries now with no clear purpose and some have never been heard from again. Pilgrims to Mount JiuHua are restricted to only a third of the temples, where they are instructed in certain intense prayers and rituals concentrating on the mysterious hell realm of Avici, where the worst of the worst sinners are sent for unknown and exceedingly long punishments. The spiritual work of the pilgrims has been noted to have a visual effect on the mountain itself. Could Dizang be building a spiritual weapon? Planning an invasion of Diyu? Something far more mysterious and mystical? Whatever it is, representatives of Dizang are viewed with great suspicion in Diyu and Yama is known to not be fond of the infamously kind bodhisattva. A Scion up for solving the mystery could see themselves caught in quite the cosmic web, but surely, either someone will provide them great boons for any information acquired or the Scion themselves might want to join the cause.

Scion's moral worth. Crossing this bridge successfully will allow them to meet Yama, or one of his bureaucrats if he's busy, at the Ghost-Torturing Pass where the Scion will be judged as to whether they can enter Diyu. It is here that they must make a full account of their deeds up until this moment to be judged in full to ascertain the worthiness of the Scion and their purity. Low purity levels will require purification in Diyu while high purity levels mean an easier entrance and a visitor's pass of sorts. If they succeed at this stage, the Scion enters Tianzi Palace, where another queue awaits them to stand on a very particular stone on one foot for the span of three minutes. If the Scion doesn't fall off the stone, congratulations to them in entering Diyu, the Earth Prison!

Scions not keen on travels and trials can usually enter as part of celestial embassies and on divine missions, especially if they have a scroll of passage provided to them by their respective divine patron. Various divinities visit Diyu often and many live in Youdu, one of the most bustling cities under the divine purview of the Shén, so it's not like a Scion can't find someone already on their way there or living there currently to let them in. However, the implications here are obvious as the aforementioned seals and scrolls must be had, and no doubt favors must be granted to further increase the likelihood of acceptance. If the Shén aren't keen on the Scion's request, perhaps one of the other pantheons that employs Yama would be willing to put in a good word?

### YOU DU: THE DARK CAPITAL

Visitors to Diyu are familiar with Youdu, as the Ten Courts are stationed here along with various other sub-courts and offices of Diyu's vast infernal apparatus. Youdu,

as with most of Diyu, is surrounded by stifling darkness yet is the most well-lit section of Diyu despite its moniker as the Dark Capital. As Yama is far too busy to call any one place "home," Youdu is ruled on his behalf by Houtu, the divine and noticeably genderqueer Queen of the Deep Earth, as a reward from the Shén for having created the Yellow River Map. Youdu, which looks like a vast and well-organized mishmash of every Chinese capital ancient and modern, is home to countless functionaries, many deities and dead alike, its own demonic police force, and any sort of ordinary establishment one can imagine. The City of Innocent Deaths is the largest quarter of the Youdu, where those who have died with as of yet unresolved grievances in the mortal realm await the verdict of the infernal and divine courts in regards to their concerns. This, however, can take centuries or even millennia depending on the grievance.

Scions in Youdu are usually amazed at how well-organized, clean, and so much like any large Chinese city it is like. The countless palaces, endless back-alleys, and towering governmental offices (including representatives from the CPC) might throw a foreigner off, but any Scion who has visited a city in the World like Beijing would feel right at home. It is a populous and popular place and it is not uncommon to run across visitors from other underworlds and pantheons there for some sort of official business or even just for a bit of infernal tourism. A visiting Scion would do well, however, to register with the proper authorities in Youdu and keep their head down. Despite things running quite smoothly in the Dark Capital, it is like any other large city with its own dangerous alleyways and mysterious neighborhoods but this time they are supernatural.

## DIYU

### BIRTHRIGHTS

#### Hell Wallet (Relic) ••

Hell money is the official currency used in Diyū. A Hell Wallet is a special artifact that breaks the metaphysics of where hell money comes from creates a direct connection making it always full.

**Enhancement:** +1 for actions in which hell money would be useful

**Purview:** Prosperity

**Motif:** A bottomless well of hell money.

#### Infernal Functionary (Guide) ••

Infernal functionaries run the day to day aspects of Diyū's bureaucracy. They know all the ins and outs of the realm, and are willing to help those who are good at following instructions.

**Asset Skills:** Academics, Technology

**Guide Stunt (1 success):** You find a loophole in the situation and exploit it. Reduce the difficulty of your next action in this scene by 1. If this would reduce the Difficulty below 1, you automatically succeed.

**Calling:** Judge

### Realm Effects

**Motif:** Follow the rules or have a good enough forgery.

**Requirement:** As per the Fatebinding Condition.

## ANNUNA

For the Annuna and their multi-domed reality, all they can see is filled with beautiful stones and thrones of lapis-lazuli upon which they sit and reign. For mortals, however,

they only see one dome and it is that of the stars, from which they try to interpret the will of the gods. It is not their place to see the glorious thrones and realms of the divine; instead what waits for them after death is an unpleasant realm ruled over by Lady Ereshkigal from her terrible palace of Ganzir.

## IRKALLA

**AKA:** Arali, Ersetu, Kigal, Kukku, Kur

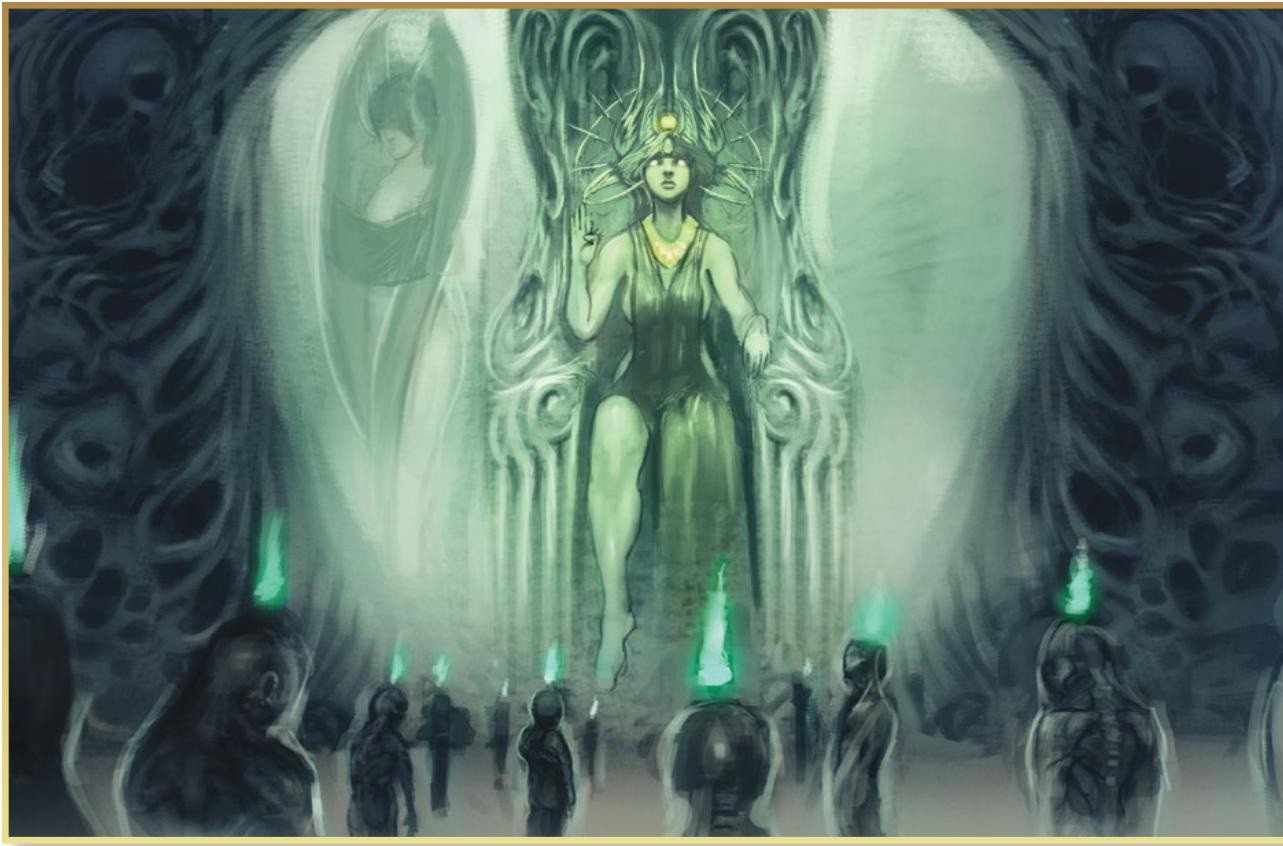
Of the nicer things that can be said about Irkalla is that is a place with shade and cool, a reprieve of sorts from the blazing sun and desert life of Mesopotamia. However, even that compliment goes too far, for Irkalla is not a welcoming place, being dark, dreary, and desolate. Here, the dead come to live pale and ghostly imitations of their lives on Earth, able only to feast and drink upon dry dust with little reprieve and not much change in scenery. Also, any attempt to leave will be met with swift fury by the demonic Gallu, who will mercilessly hunt you down and drag you back to your shadow-life and bowls of dust porridge.

Irkalla, to say the least, is a truly dismal place. There, the naked dead stand awaiting processing before Ereshkigal at her dark palace, an endless stream of new arrivals awaiting the recording of their names by the scribe-goddess Geshtinanna in the infernal records. Once all such matters are settled, things don't get any better unless you've got friends "up-top" who haven't forgotten you. If your descendants are kind and loving toward your memory, they'll pour their finest wines onto your graves to help you out and maybe even bury some food. If they're particularly fond of you, your favorite music will reach you in Irkalla either when musicians are hired or if you're lucky enough to have descendants wealthy enough to purchase a permanent in-grave music streaming service. Her Ladyship of the Dead does not mind those under her purview to have such alleviations, but jealousy does still exist even in the afterlife and those who have such blessed memories in the mortal realm will find themselves popular, in both good and bad

## SNEAKING IN THE SHADOWS

Sometimes, a Scion can't be bothered making the trek required to reach Irkalla only to be turned away at the seven gates due to some minor technicalities like not having the right gifts or just being alive. One of the most common ways around such difficulties is the fact that Irkalla seems to be a travel destination for many of the Annuna's divinities. Some merely pass through and are some of the best guides, like Shamash, while others like Tammuz and Ishtar stay for months on end and take up residence in Ganzir. If a Scion is in with the right deity and can put on the proper charm, a place in their travel entourage could be assured. This would bypass all of the infernal bureaucracy involved in entering Irkalla, but not without guaranteeing it with some tribute or perhaps a couple of important errands.

If a Scion is not in the good graces of the Annuna, the demonic route could also work. There are many demons who call Irkalla home; some of them even travel for business. For example, a Scion could head in with Lamashu, the demonic daughter of Anu, for the small price of a few currently-breastfeeding delicious human babies. There's also Pazuzu, the eternal rival of Lamashu, who would gladly help a Scion into Irkalla if they were willing to do something that would give Lamashu a terrible time. Either of these situations, however, would likely be a terrible experience for the Scion as well. All in all, if a Scion needed a way in and they were a bit shaky on the ethics of it all, they could enter regally with one of the Annuna or despicably with one of the demon lords. A ride's a ride, right?



ways. There is particular contention between the old dead and new dead of Irkalla, with the former in a state of constant groaning and eye-rolling at what their more modern counterparts have become in comparison to their glorious, perfectly-ordered harmonious empires and culture which are now but ruins and folktales.

If for some reason you wanted a sojourn to Irkalla, it would be best if someone drew you a map. First, you must cross a vast and burning desert heading toward somewhere near where the Zagros Mountains are, which some swear changes in distance during their time in the desert. If you show up at night, Shamash will be around to happily guide you the rest of the way, light shining through the darkness to help out the dead and other travelers. Solar guide or not, you then ascend down a particularly long flight of stairs through the Abzu, a vast underground pure water reservoir, so be prepared to hold your breath and don't deviate from the stairs. Once you make it past the Abzu, you must cross the River Hubur by ferry or otherwise, and then basically give everything you own to Neti, who guards the seven gates of Irkalla that lead to Ganzir. In crossing the seven gates, every gate will require a toll until you are left with nothing, naked and desolate, shameful before all and especially to those outside of Irkalla. Once you're past the gates, you stand in line until you're authorized to enter the dismal underworld of the Annuana. Some Scions have been known to take unmarked shortcuts mentioned in epic tales and whispered as rumors in marketplaces, but they're quite fraught with danger. Also, visiting the realm of the dead while alive isn't exactly a welcome proposition and it is highly unlikely that Ereshkigal will abide unmarked

trespassers, which the Gallu are only more than happy to violently escort out.

### THE PALACE OF GANZIR

Ganzir, the vast palatial and terrifying home of Ereshkigal and her husband Nergal, is the first port of call for anyone entering Irkalla in an authorized fashion. Various gods call the sprawling multi-chambered citadel home, including but not limited to Neti, Namtar, Ninazu, and Ningishzida, who are permanent residents. Regular visitors are quite common to Ganzir, however, and Shamash, Tammuz (the most unhappy of the visitors), and Ishtar are some of the most notable to take up residence. The Gallu and other demons, along with the dead denizens of Irkalla, are strictly not allowed inside the halls of the palace without an invitation and the Gallu are known to hang out outside the walls of Ganzir in ghostly and demonic shanty-towns ready for some dead upstart to try and break in so they can alleviate their boredom with some torture for a few days. Scions visiting Ganzir will not find the place quite welcoming and will always feel as if they're being watched but unsure really by who. The noises don't particularly help, what with the groaning of the dead outside and the near-endless screams of violent lovemaking coming from Ereshkigal and Nergal's royal bedchambers keeping the less-accustomed on edge. Exploring the palace is also a feat for the foolish, with hallways that seem to go nowhere and doors that open back into the main chambers or back into the same hallway the Scion was just in. If in Ganzir, a Scion will want to get on the good graces of the Queen of the Dead and ask for a guide to be assigned to them or they

might find themselves as a new resident of Ganzir, wandering the palace halls forever.

## IRKALLA

### BIRTHRIGHT

#### Gallu (Creature)

The Gallu are demonic entities which drag souls to Irkalla. They are intelligent beings and are loyal to only themselves and Irkalla itself. Being on the wrong side of their ire is dangerous indeed, but those who earn their trust find them useful beyond pale.

#### Knack

**Melodic Balm:** You play music for a crowd and make a Knack Skill roll. Each success changes the current Atmosphere by +1 and creates a feeling of Calm.

#### Realm Effects

**Motif:** A thirst with no reprieve.

**Requirement:** As per the Fatebinding Condition.

## MANITOU

The Manitou have only one Underworld, which they consider to be literally a world under the World itself. There are no negative connotations associated with it, and it is considered the home of both Shades of dead people and myriad Manitou that most mortals never get to meet.

## THE UNDERWORLD

### The Land of Spirits

“Beneath the World is the Underworld” may seem a perfectly obvious statement to most, but for the Manitou’s Scions and worshipers, “obvious” in this case doesn’t mean “false” or “silly.” It’s merely a statement of fact that the underground land of the dead is an inverse, largely benevolent version of the land on which mortals tread. Its forests, lakes, villages, and even cities are bathed in perpetual soft twilight, punctuated occasionally by fireflies and the sound of insects and animals. The cities and larger towns occasionally found in the Underworld are harmonious, built in and among the trees, rivers, and mountains to showcase nature, rather than destroy it. There are few thus far, but things are changing.

Most who enter the Underworld are deposited next to one of several shining, indigo lakes, the homes of underwater panthers and also the places from which one exits the Veil (p. 197). In the Underworld, keeping a destination in mind is key to navigating, as it shifts and changes in dreamlike fashion. The Manitou Underworld is tied tightly to dreams and meditative states, and Manitou scholars, Scions, and adherents will tell you it’s far easier to visit a place in the Underworld they’ve already visited in their dreams, as they’ve been there before.

## VISITING BELOW

There are hundreds of entrances to the Manitou Underworld scattered across the northeastern United States, though they are difficult to recognize, being mostly tiny crevasses or caves, occasionally marked by upright stones at their entrances. It’s also possible to get there by swimming through caverns deep in certain lakes, or by entering in dreams.

No matter how a character gets there, they always emerge next to a lake, the edge of a forest, and a small cave. From there they must navigate via thought and instinct, keeping the Shade or place that is their destination at the fore of their mind.

Many villages in the Manitou Underworld are outwardly built in the traditional style of their peoples, but stepping with the dwelling reveals ultramodern technology, including computers and gaming equipment. This is due to Cheeby-aub-oozoo’s influence, as he’s watched how his Scions interact with the Manitou and thinks it appropriate to respond in kind. Thus, the Manitou influence not only the dreams of sleeping people, but also the waking hours of some in virtual spaces, as well. Shades and benevolent Manitou alike use the technology, though convincing ordinary mortals they’re not trolling teenagers is another matter entirely.

Both Cheeby-aub-oozoo and Tawiscara make their homes in the Underworld, but where Cheeby-aub-oozoo likes to wander from village to city to wilderness, keeping an eye on things and answering questions, Tawiscara prefers his isolation when he’s not out causing strife, living atop a barren mountain or deep under a frozen lake depending on the season. He surrounds himself with bats, snakes, rats, and cockroaches who carry messages when he needs, and watches his reality-show reruns in the dark. However, he also recently discovered certain internet forums, and he’s not sure he’ll need to leave the Underworld ever again.

The Shades who reside here are content to wander or not as they please and many pass the time either interacting with the spreading technology or out in the wilderness enjoying the scenery, the fishing, and the silence. There is no need to eat or drink here, but some do, tasting ripe Underworld berries or the day’s catch. Shades enjoy telling stories and vie to seek out some of the rarer or more dangerous Manitou to feed their tales. They don’t attempt to catch them, but a mere glimpse of an underwater panther or great horned serpent is enough to feed tales for an eternity, which is what they have.

### OTHER MANITOU

The Underworld is home to many Manitou, from the mischievous, forest-dwelling pukwudgies, who are only



harmful to those who disrespect them, to the makiawisug, their water-spirit counterparts. Both may help those who bring them gifts.

Less-benevolent Manitou reside here, too, and don't appreciate mortals attempting to unlock their secrets or powers. The underwater panthers, or gichi-anami'e-bizhiw ("the greatly revered lynx"), are creatures with the bodies of great cats covered in scales, prehensile tails, and the horns of a bison or antlers of a deer. They live in the lakes of the Underworld and are said to drown unsuspecting swimmers and cause storms, but may be placated with a gift of copper. The great horned serpents, or mishiginebig, also live in lakes and rivers, and while they don't bother underwater panthers, they eat humans and are the sworn enemies of the thunderbirds. Thunderbirds, or binesi, are extremely powerful. Their wings' beating causes thunderclaps, but they generally don't bother humans aside from startling them.

## MANITOU UNDERWORLD

### BIRTHRIGHT

#### Dreaming Mind (Realm) ••

The Manitou's underworld reflects the World and is a space between dreams. You exist in a state of semi-dreaming, and can use dreams to manipulate your own reality.

**Boon:** Dream Weaver (Darkness)

**Special:** You can create a physical representation of a dream you created using the Dream Weaver Boon. Instead of sending the dream to a sleeping person, you manifest the dream into the World. The dream then seeks out the intended target and interacts with them as though it were real.

### Knack

**Dream Walk:** You can travel from one part of the World to another while dreaming. As long as the dream you are experiencing includes a journey, when you awake, you are at your destination, no matter how long you were asleep or how long it would have taken to travel otherwise. For those watching, you seem to simply disappear in one location and reappear in the other.

### Realm Effects

**Motif:** Imperfect reflection of the World.

**Requirement:** As per the Fatebinding Condition.

## ÒRÌSHÀ

Most Òrìshà prefer to live in and explore the World itself, which is why their Underworld isn't technically one at all. Ilé-Ifè is a real place in southwestern Nigeria and is always ruled by a Scion of Odùduwà.

## ILÉ-IFÈ

### The Land of Expansion

When Obàtálá landed in the World, he called that place "Ilé," or "land," and in the Òrìshà's mythology, all land expanded — "Ifè" means "expand" — from that place, creating land as we know it today. Ilé-Ifè is located in Osun State today. As the Òrìshà generally reincarnate, rather than dwell in the Underworld forever, the city expands with every death while retracting incrementally during more than a few births. This is because Ilé-Ifè occupies the same space in life as it does in death.

The Underworld version of Ilé-Ifè is rendered, to a Shade, as a translucent overlay of the real-World, bustling

city whose name it shares. If a Scion or some other medium walking along the street in Ilé-Ifè can see Shades, traversing the city looks like afterimages caught on camera, as Shades of varying ages, historical dress, and genders wander through and around mortal pedestrians. Though the modern-seeming ones tend to avoid walking through anyone mortal, those who've been dead longer are cavalier about where their steps fall, sauntering through entire groups of tourists and schoolchildren. Occasionally, one of the humans a Shade passes through shivers as they feel the brief chill of death's touch.

Shades in Ilé-Ifè also try to pick into whom they're reincarnated. They almost always pick one of their own descendants but will occasionally join a family they couldn't the first time around — especially if their direct line no longer exists for one reason or another and no other Shade is trying to reincarnate into that family. It's not uncommon to see a few Shades gathered outside where one of their children or great-grandchildren is giving birth, arguing about which of them gets to reincarnate in a particular offspring. If one doesn't manage to shout the others down, the Shades have been known to take the fight to contests of wit or speed, as strength and dexterity no longer come to them easily.

The Òrìshà's followers believe that though part of them reincarnates into their descendants, becoming a Guardian Ori to that child, they also believe that some part of them stays in Ikole Orun, the spirit realm, of which Ilé-Ifè is only a part.

#### OBOFEMI AWOLOWO UNIVERSITY

The city's major university is also home to its largest concentration of Shades. Many pass their time here, whiling away the hours attending lectures on culture and modern affairs, so they keep their minds sharp for their next reincarnation. Though memories are lost upon rebirth, they flood back the next time a Shade enters Ilé-Ifè, and the

## THE ROAD TO REINCARNATION

The fastest way to Ilé-Ifè is, of course, to die while worshiping the Òrìshà. Additionally, one may pass through the Veil and into the Underworld version of Ilé-Ifè or enter via a hidden gate at Odùduwà Shrine, paying the way with a pocketful of handmade glass beads.

Fair warning, though, the Shades in Ilé-Ifè are some of the savviest in any Underworld, with their lifetimes of memories and knowledge, and are sure to see a Demigod for what they are. If they suspect for even a moment a Scion is attempting to horn in on their reincarnation targets or access forbidden knowledge, they will do all within their power to make the Scion's visit an unpleasant one.

oldest Shades present at any given time have accumulated centuries of historical, artistic, and philosophical knowledge they may impart on visitors to their Underworld.

## ILÉ-IFE

### BIRTHRIGHTS

#### Return Home (Realm) ...

Ilé-Ifè is the beginning of all life and the home everyone returns to at death. You have been to your home, and know it inherently; it is imprinted on you and you can always travel to it regardless of distance.

**Marvels:** Blessings, Resolve Condition (Journeys)

**Special:** During a scene, you can take a single step and arrive at Ilé-Ifè, no matter where you are coming from. This allows you to transcend through realms, leave seemingly impossible to escape prisons, and even escape death. You cannot take anyone with you when you do so, though others Fatebound to Ilé-Ifè could certainly join you.

### Knack

**Renewal:** You can clear an ally's Taken Out condition. When you do so, make a Knack Skill roll. Each success is an Enhancement your target can use on her next action to attack the character who inflicted the Taken Out condition on her.

### Realm Effects

**Motif:** In death, return to your place of origin.

**Requirement:** The Scion must visit Ilé-Ifè once a season.

## THEOI

There are two main Underworlds to which the Theoi's worshipers are sent, the Kingdom of Hades and Tartarus. The Kingdom of Hades, while mostly a dreary place, encompasses all of the afterlife of the Theoi —both god and bad — while Tartarus is a realm of suffering closer to a stereotypical “hell.”

## THE KINGDOM OF HADES

### The Afterlife

The entrance to the Theoi Underworld is a dreary, barren place, located entirely underground in caves and caverns, bounded and crossed by five rivers and illuminated only by occasional flickering sconces and the River Phlegethon's flames. If a Shade follows the River Phlegethon to its terminus, they see it join with the Cocytus — the River of Lamentation — to form the mighty Acheron, River of Woe.

Upon arrival, souls must pay Charon, the ferryman, to be taken across the River Styx and into Hades proper. This is most often achieved by placing a coin beneath the tongue of the deceased, which travels with them to the Underworld, but occasionally Charon accepts a secret

never told or a story that makes him laugh as payment instead. Once across, any who make it this far are confronted by Kerberos, the three-headed dog, and the gates to the Underworld proper.

Through the gate is an antechamber where the three Judges of Hades — Aiakos, Minôs, and Rhadamanthys — reside and pass their verdicts. Though the truly virtuous or malevolent may be sent straight to Elysium or Tartarus, typically by a God's hand, these judges are charged with deciding whether each soul they greet belongs in one of those realms or in the Asphodel Meadows. If they cannot reach an agreement, the soul is sent straight to the Asphodel Meadows as a matter of course.

### THE ASPHODEL MEADOWS

As drab and unappealing as the entrance to Hades' kingdom, the Asphodel Meadows are so named for the fields of colorless asphodel flowers that coat their length. Those who lived mediocre lives are sent here, after being forced to drink from the River Lethe, which removes both their memories and personalities. The Shades here are like nothing more than empty automata and may only be given a brief spark of personality and memory by feeding them blood, human, animal, or otherwise, though the effects may differ with its potency.

Any who enter the fields having not drank of Lethe attract the dead within like a beacon, who crowd around the person or Shade — not harming them but impeding progress with grasping arms and clawing fingers. The Meadows are a place of utter neutrality, overall, and neither joy nor pains are felt there. If a mortal stays too long, they find their emotions muted, as all the color drains from their life.

### ELYSIUM

Elysium is the afterlife of the virtuous and heroic. Slain Scions of the Theoi are likely to end up here, along with figures such as Orpheus and Hector. It's possible to choose reincarnation from Elysium, but few Shades who enter ever want to leave. The domain has its own sun, moon, and stars, and afterlife here is indulgent and blessed. There are groves of fruit and crystal-clear streams by which to lie idly, and myriad entertainments exist should a Shade wish to avail itself of them. Though life is still preferable to death, Elysium is one of the best places to wind up after death.

The Shades that dwell in Elysium are mostly genial and jovial, but don't look kindly on anyone bringing bad

## THE PATH OF ORPHEUS

There have always been multiple ways for mortals to sneak into the Kingdom of Hades: a cavern near Cape Matapan, through the depths of Lake Avernus or the Alcyonian Lake at Lerna, down a small stone well in Rome's ancient Forum — the ways in are well documented. If you try to bring a Shade back with you, though, the number-one rule is to never look back.

Storyguides can shift or change these locations or add new ones as necessary. For Hades' kingdom, the difficult part isn't so much getting there as it is appeasing Charon and making it past Kerberos and the judges — not to mention Hades and Persephone.

news or negativity. They are best spoken to gently, with any ill reports or tough questions sandwiched between lively thoughts and compliments. If too distressed, they'll call for one of the judges, Kerberos, or Hades himself to remove the offending party. If that party is lucky, Persephone will arrive in Hades' stead, but she still won't be happy at the interruption to her limited quality time with her husband.

### THE KINGDOM'S OBSTACLES

Charon is likely the first stumbling block anyone trying to enter Hades' kingdom will encounter. Silent and gaunt with eyes that burn from within, he ferries souls across the river to the gates, but rarely brings anyone back with him. He can be paid by a silver coin to silently ferry souls across the Styx, but has been known to turn away anyone who didn't receive a proper burial, leaving souls trapped in the Underworld's vestibule for eternity or until said burial happens. If left there long enough, most Shades prefer to drink from the Lethe than continue that most meaningless of existences.

Kerberos is a massive, three-headed hound who answers only to Persephone and Hades. He's a bit more lenient when it comes to allowing people into the Underworld's gates but sneaking past him or forcing him to let anything leave is the difficult part. He can be fought, but if ever killed, the wrath of the Underworld would be brought against his slayer.

The judges do their job, weighing the lives of everyone who stands before them, living or dead. Their judgment determines on which road the gate from their antechamber open to. If the road is flat, it's the Asphodel Meadows, if it slopes up toward light, it's Elysium, and if it leads down at a harsh angle into inky blackness, it will take one straight to Tartarus. The judges are reasonable, though, and have seen mortals through before. They may be tricked by wily Scions, but they prefer philosophical debate to being made into fools.

## THE FIVE RIVERS

- Acheron: The River of Woe
- Cocytus: The River of Lamentation
- Lethe: The River of Memory
- Phlegethon: The River of Flame
- Styx: The River of Hate

# THE KINGDOM OF HADES

## BIRTHRIGHT

### Endless Journey (Realm) \*\*\*

Within the Kingdom of Hades exists a vast bleak landscape with no apparent end in sight. And yet, those who learn to traverse its dark crevices find that they can travel anywhere with darkness as their guide.

**Marvels:** Blessings, Offscreen Action (Darkness)

**Knack:** The Long Road to Anywhere (Immortal Liminal)

### Knack

**Water of Lethe:** With a moist touch, you can remove a single memory from a character. You must know what kind of memory you are taking, but you don't need to know the exact details. A "recent happy memory" serves just as well as "the memory of meeting me."

### Realm Effects

**Motif:** A bleak and emotionless void.

**Requirement:** As per the Fatebinding Condition.

## TARTARUS

### The Abyss

The place where the wickedest of the wicked arrive to be punished, Tartarus is said to be as far below the Kingdom of Hades as the Kingdom of Hades is below the heavens. Various Titans are imprisoned here, along with Ixion on his wheel ([at least, he used to be there; see p. 214](#)) and Sisyphus with his boulder. The River Phlegethon flows down into Tartarus, ending in a fiery lake. More a prison for the worst sinners and divine rebels than a true afterlife, Tartarus' Fields of Punishment are staffed by all manner of Chthonian creatures, who perform inventive tortures on its residents — some mandated by the Gods and others of their own devising, steered only by the malevolence of Tartarus itself, the personification of the Pit of Despair.

The road into Tartarus takes days to travel, and each Shade condemned to its depths is assigned a demon, or imp-like figure, to harass and prod the Shade with sharpened, hot implements as they walk alongside the searing Phlegethon. These Chthonians are bits and pieces of

### FOLLOWING IXION

Though most ways to Tartarus require one to pass through Hades, there is a site in Pamukkale in Turkey, which used to be Hierapolis, containing the Ploutonion, or temple to Pluto. By submerging oneself in the hot springs there as long as is bearable, one might pass through to Tartarus without all the walking.

## TARTARUS AS A FIELD

As Scion defines Fields ([Scion: Origin](#), p. 67), Tartarus could be considered a single, large Field with a slew of messy, deadly Complications to overcome, but the easiest way to represent it or any other large, dangerous location is to split it into smaller Fields that are simpler to manage. Otherwise, Tartarus quickly turns into a Field with such a laundry list of Complications that most actions are nigh-impossible.

The first chamber might be wreathed in scorching flames, while a group of condemned murderers waits in the next to ambush the Scions and try to take their places on the way out. Any Underworld torment the Storyguide wants to throw at the Band is likely present in Tartarus and Complications can range from spiked pits to mischievous imps to fallen Heroes begging the Demigods to end their miserable existence. If players are insistent on venturing into Tartarus, they will almost certainly get exactly what they asked for.

Tartarus' own psyche, and they delight in both the torture and the false promises that if the Shade just does exactly what they say, it won't be so bad at the end. Though the entrance to Tartarus is technically in Hades' kingdom, he finds the lesser demons insufferable and crass, another reason he largely leaves Tartarus up to its own devices.

### PRIMORDIAL DANGERS

When traveling to Tartarus, the better question is "what isn't dangerous?" In a realm of flaming lakes, eternal torment, Titans, and the worst criminals the Theoi have punished, in the heart of a malevolent Primordial, terror lies around every corner. Scions who travel to Tartarus should be both prepared and exceedingly cautious.

## TARTARUS

### BIRTHRIGHT

### Chthonian (Follower)

Chthonians are vicious pieces of Tartarus itself, born to perform tasks of torture and punishment. They are not wise enough on their own to be Guides, but they take orders well, making them excellent Followers. They are keen on adapting to new situations and performing their stated tasks under varying circumstances. Chthonians generally have the Heavy Archetype and some of the following **tags**: Access, Helpful, Tough, Resilience, and Undying Loyalty.

### Knack

**Forged in Fire:** You are particularly resistant to pain and fear, having experienced plenty of it before. When you take an Injury Condition that increases due to not having the appropriate Injury Condition box available,

do not increase the Difficulty to actions you suffer from that Condition. For example, if you take another Bruised Condition and it would fill to an Injured Condition box, you still only suffer a +1 Difficulty due to the Injury.

## Realm Effects

**Motif:** Judge the unworthy through their own guilt.

**Requirement:** As per the Fatebinding Condition.

# TUATHA DÉ DANANN

Though the Tuatha have several Otherworlds and Terra Incognitae under their purview, only two are true Underworlds, as in where the dead may be found.

## MAG MELL

### Land of Many Flowers

One of the many mystical islands upon the sea off Ireland's coast, Mag Mell is the realm of Manannán mac Lir, and also of certain heroes and glorious dead. A riot of varicolored flowers covers its lush meadows, dotted with cottages and a solitary stone tower. Shades cavort in the sunshine and under the moonlight, dancing and carousing, and the flowers stir occasionally with the passing of invisible steeds without riders. Though both island and tower seem small from the sea, once one steps foot on the land that is Mag Mell, the horizon stretches, and what seemed a short walk may take hours or even days.

The Shades on the island, and indeed any Scions or other mortals who stumble upon this Underworld, pay this no mind. To reside in Mag Mell is to want for nothing. While this may sound like a paradise, a veritable Eden, it can be an insidious thing. The Shades of Mag Mell are free from negative emotion, from sin, and thus they don't know how to react when a Scion barges in, trying to settle the score with a dead hero or even Manannán himself. It's paradoxically distressing and not, which agitates the dead who still have some repressed memories of feeling pain, rage, and frustration, even if they no longer know how to name those emotions nor react to them meaningfully. At their core, some part of them knows feeling vaguely content, even elated, all the time is wrong but they have no recourse to regain their lost sensations.

If anyone who isn't dead stays too long, they, too, will be infected with the languorous joy suffusing everyone around them and, bit by bit, they will start to lose their sense of urgency, then their memories, then their very personalities, as conflict, anxiety, sorrow, and anger are driven out in equal measure. They will bleed back in once the person so affected leaves Mag Mell, but for hours or days afterward, they are like a junkie coming off a high, or a child learning the World isn't always the kind place his parents told him it was.

Though the plains of Mag Mell are vibrant and green, idyllic in their rustic simplicity, once inside one of the infrequent dwellings, perception shifts again, and each "cottage" is a small town unto itself, boring down into the ground. Levels of feast halls, opulent salons, and musicians' wings all stack atop one another, a veritable labyrinth of delights underground. Not all are allowed in Mag Mell, but this is where the Shades of the Tuatha's heroes go to rest, along with anyone else Manannán personally invites or brings along, though he tends to favor those who attained some special glory or achievement in life.

### MANANNÁN'S TOWER

The single stone tower is Manannán mac Lir's Mag Mell residence, when he chooses to stay for a while. It is the only place on the island where the dulling effects are nullified, and if mortals petition him, he may let them stay there a time, especially his own Scions or those of his allies — Shades aren't allowed within, for obvious reasons. Inside is a stately library, a feast hall, and several chambers of varying uses. Like the residences, the tower is much larger inside than it appears without, as fae mounds are wont to be.

### THE PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS

The biggest concern when visiting Mag Mell is, of course, contentment. It's likely one who spends even an hour there will begin to lose their sense of urgency, of desire. Whether they are trying to find a specific Shade or seeking out Manannán to ask a favor, some will find themselves forgetting their mission within a day. Of course, questioning or threatening Mag Mell's Shades is also a risky and tricky prospect, as even realizing they've forgotten something is stressful, but stress isn't allowed. What then, happens, when a soul is forced to feel things they can't? In addition, sometimes the invisible horses stampede — they'll go right through a Shade, but a human? Well...

## MAG MELL

### BIRTHRIGHT

### Euphoria (Realm) ...

The contented and joyful atmosphere of Mag Mell permeates anyone who spends any time there. You're not

## THE PATH OF PETALS

Though it is possible to simply sail to Mag Mell, the island will not be where it's supposed to unless Manannán is comfortable with it being found. When Bran came across it in his travels, Manannán told him what seemed to Bran to be sea was actually a plain of flowers, so it was hidden even as Bran sailed upon it. A Scion of Manannán can always find the island if their Godly parent is in residence, and there's always a way through the Veil (p. 197).

only suffused with it, but you bring it with you when you leave, the intoxicating euphoria oozing off you as you walk.

**Boon:** Tugging at Heartstrings (Passion)

**Marvels:** Impose Condition, Resolve Condition (Passion)

**Special:** Imbue a Legend to place a target into a state of euphoria, giving them the Euphoric Condition. While under the effects of this Condition, the target forgets all their stress and worries, and have a +2 Difficulty to take actions that require passion or urgency. If another magical effect would cause the target to feel an urgent emotion, it provokes a Clash of Wills. This condition ends when the character next sleeps, or you reclaim your Legend.

### Knack

**Infectious Joy:** Whenever you attempt to exert influence over someone, or someone attempts to exert influence over you, gain a +1 Enhancement to your action. You can spend successes from the roll on the Contentment Stunt.

**Contentment (1 success):** You end an argument, distract from the original situation, or talk circles around your target. Whatever the means, you leave them feeling content that the conversation ended the way they wanted it to and agreeable to you until the end of the scene.

### Realm Effects

**Motif:** The vibrancy of unbridled joy.

**Requirement:** The Scion must bring any new species of flowers you find to Mag Mell regularly.

## TEACH DUINN

### The House of Donn

A few scant miles off the coast of Ireland lies Bull Rock, which appears as nothing more than a small island with a narrow sea passage bored through its base and an uninhabited lighthouse atop its rocks. Sail around and through — or figure out the way through the strangely-secure lighthouse, an Axis Mundi — and one finds themselves in the realm of Donn, the Tuatha's shepherd of the dead. Teach Duinn is both Underworld and way stop, a final destination for some souls, but for others, merely a place to rest and regroup

## WHERE NIGHT TOUCHES SAND

As with Mag Mell, sailing to Teach Duinn is the simplest way to journey there. There are many paths characters might take, from knowing the correct route to sail through the stone and flip over to the Underworld, so entering through the automated, sealed-up lighthouse. Will Donn, however, decide their arrival means he must judge them? What happened when Shades see the characters can use the sailing vessels lining the shore?

before moving onward to their final destination. Whether that is one of the other lands of Tír na nÓg or to a reincarnation is up to the Shade, Donn, and the Tuatha who hold and reside in those Otherworlds.

Once in Teach Duinn, and not on its Worldly counterpart, perspective shifts: the sea immediately surrounding the island becomes gray fields of hillocks, gently stretching into shores battered by silver waves. Barely visible on the horizon are the other islands of the Tuatha Otherworlds; the sun shines on them alone. While the whole of Teach Duinn is always shrouded in darkness, strange constellations wheel through the endless sky above, illuminating the Underworld in subdued starlight. Where the lighthouse stood is instead Donn's manor, an imposing structure of driftwood and stone, blotting out the stars where it rises.

Inside, Donn takes audiences with the Shades who arrive there, pronouncing them either allowed to seek out a different Otherworld, or sentencing them to a fate as sluagh. Donn is a gracious host, but a petty one, prone to outbursts and brooding. As a result of his centuries-long grudge against the rest of his pantheon, he is more likely to listen to the Scions of other pantheons than he is to any Tuatha Scion who isn't his own.

Teach Duinn's Shades are often restless, eager to get to their next, or final, destination. If they think they can travel with anyone else leaving to the island, they will try to do so, regardless of Donn's verdict on their fate. Light boats and skiffs dot the black-sand coast, but until Donn gives a Shade leave to follow Manannán's path, the boats remain insubstantial to them alone.

### DONN'S MANOR

While most of the manor is warm and inviting, if harsh, the expansive, damp cellar of Donn's estate holds both a triumph and a secret shame: his three brothers who died after him have never been allowed to leave Teach Duinn. Though two were kings of Ireland and the third a judge and druid, Donn refuses to pass their judgments, leaving them to bicker and fester in a sealed chamber. He remains jealous to this day that they are remembered as kings and sages, while he was tethered to this land.

## TEACH DUINN

### BIRTHRIGHTS

**Starlight (Realm) •••**

The darkness that encompasses Teach Duinn seeps into the soul and the starlight washes everything into shades of gray. You can command both these elements as though they are part of you.

**Marvels:** Upheaval, Blessings, Complication (Darkness, Stars)

### Knack

**Judge's Eye:** With just a look at someone, you can tell if they have committed a crime. You don't know what crime they committed, or against whom. The crime doesn't have

to be specifically legal, it could be a moral or social crime as long as that person feels that they violated a code of conduct. For the rest of the scene, gain +2 Enhancement to bring that person to justice. You need not know the crime to judge the unworthy.

## Realm Effects

**Motif:** Darkness only lit by pale starlight.

**Requirement:** The Scion must spend thirty minutes in starlight each night.

# THE VEIL

The Afterlife, Beyond, The Crossroads, The City

Though every person in the World is aware of the existence of Gods, Goddesses, and Scions, not everyone worships one pantheon in particular, nor adheres to the tenets of a specific pantheon's "religion." These souls, in addition to any who do not pass — or don't want to pass — trials connected with reaching their pantheon's Underworld, end up in the Veil, a "neutral" plane of existence, Underworld, and Terra Incognita that lies far underground.

A vast, sprawling urban city is at the heart of the Veil. As the sun, stars, and moon never shine there, the city is illuminated by neon signs, streetlights, and the ambient light of windows and doorways. The entirety of the urban sprawl is shrouded in thick mist cut by the occasional rainstorm, rendering all in the diffuse glow of muted neon. Skyscrapers, if indeed there is a sky up there, stretch impossibly high into the void, lost to the fog after the first few stories. Lightning flashes across a vast emptiness. Millions of people roam the streets, dressed in muted shades of gray, brown, and black, in fashions that range from Roman Republic-era togas and traditional Korean hanboks to the jeans-and-sweatshirt uniform of college kids. Nothing is branded, embellished, or otherwise unique; even fine-cut suits are colored charcoal.

They are people, still, on some level. Inhabitants of the Veil may be technically Souls or Shades, but they are solid; they can choose to eat, drink, love, or breathe, if they wish. The only thing they cannot do is harm each other, as they feel no pain and are indestructible and immortal. They can be found dancing in clubs and ballrooms, eating meals at grand restaurants and hole-in-the-wall noodle or taco shops, or simply reading or passing the time under streetlights and in their homes. When one dies without a defined path to a specific Underworld, they wake up here, usually in a small apartment in one of the high-rises filled with things to which they held deep attachments in life — photographs, books, stuffed animals, but nothing that was ever living — and a closetful of nondescript clothing, but then they never sleep again.

There is no economy here; things just materialize when they're actually needed. A restaurant always has a stocked kitchen, and the library usually has the book for which one is searching. "Needed," however, seems to abide by arbitrary rules governing the place; one can't will things

## GODS IN THE VEIL

Gods don't typically go to the Veil, finding it distasteful and threatening to their own native immortality. However, several Gods watch over the Veil, keeping the millions of extant souls safe from interlopers, whether divine or Titanic. Eshu and Hermes are the foremost of them, and infrequent visitors of the city (and it's a rare splash of color when they do), but almost every Liminal deity feels an innate need to preserve the independence of the realm. Often, they task their Scions with covert missions of defense.

Everyone needs a place, even those who don't believe.

into existence. Most Shades who work do so out of boredom rather than necessity — eternity, after all, is a long time.

Architecture in the Veil is a jumble of mismatched building styles from every era the World has seen. It shifts and changes over time as technology advances; if a new resident finds an older Shade with whom to speak, they'll often mention the night the electric lights blinked on across the city, astonishing and delighting its inhabitants. The city is gargantuan, dwarfing any city in the World by orders of magnitude. It's roughly divided into neighborhoods by culture or historical era, though any may go where they wish.

Inside the city are ancient Greek temples, 1920s speakeasies, and ultra-modern libraries, all rammed up against each other in a strange sort of discordant harmony. Every building, no matter the style, seems carved from smooth, charcoal-colored stone, the only real embellishments the reflection of lights and shadows across their cold faces. Toward the edges of the city, the buildings are smaller and older, and eventually the streets just cut into a vast plain of nothingness, a starless, cold desert stretching away to an unseen horizon.

The Veil also functions as a crossroads Underworld of sorts. Inhabitants who choose to attempt to "cross over" to a specific pantheon's Underworld can usually find a way to do so from here. Perhaps the back door of an elegant tea shop in Chinatown leads into a vast, ceremonial garden, where there exists a hidden trap door that leads to Diyu. A skyscraper's locked roof entrance has engraved on the lock a tiny rune, indicating that above lies a series of spidery metal catwalks which, after nine days' walk accompanied by only the sound of rushing water, end at Gjallarbrú and Hel beyond. The Manitou's Underworld, among other underwater realms, is accessed by walking out into the desert until you reach the edge of a calm, black lake; if you don't dive in at the correct point, though, you may not like where you end up. Some inhabitants dedicate their time to figuring out every route to each Underworld; they are useful both to Scions attempting to get from one to the other, and Shades who decide they've spent enough time in the Veil and would like to pass on.

## ENTERING THE VEIL

As a living Scion, entering the Veil is tricky, but not impossible by any stretch. The Storyguide should feel free to make a game-appropriate entrance to the Veil specific for their game's location in the World or for any Underworld in which the characters find themselves. Below are some ideas for ways the SG can get their players' characters into the Veil, but do not consider this a complete list, and of course the SG may either alter one of the ideas below or come up with their own.

- In an abandoned building that never seems to get torn down for some reason, there is a still-working elevator. By inserting the correct key into the elevator's control panel and pressing the button that appears, characters arrive in one of the Veil's many high rises after an hour-long harrowing, shaky ride.
- On the coast there is a tiny cave, a fissure really, from which cold winds and mist emerge under a full moon. By walking through at the stroke of midnight without once looking back, characters find themselves on a glass-smooth road, but see the Veil's lights in the distance through the fog.
- In a metropolis' congested alleys, among bustling food shops and dingy bars, there's an old temple that few ever enter. If the characters walk around the building clockwise, a side door appears that wasn't there before. It exits into an alley that mirrors the one they left, but where no breeze stirs.
- Deep in the forest under a centuries-old oak lies a weathered hatch. By climbing the ladder within down for what feels like a day, but by watch is merely half an hour, characters drop to the ground finally in the Library of Alexandria's archives — or the Shade of it, at least.

Few residents stay in the Veil forever. Aside from those who are perfectly happy to have an existence of reading or writing, most decide to leave after a few decades or millennia to break up the monotony. Some will seek out a specific pantheon's Underworld, hoping to be taken in as a permanent resident. Some simply walk out into the desert and are never seen again; if there are other communities or afterlives to be found out there; no one can say. Some bolster their beliefs after all those years in the Veil and choose to finally undergo the trials they shunned before to get to Duat or Mictlan. In this way, the Veil is both a permanent, evolving Underworld and a massive Axis Mundi, allowing those who seek it out to use it as a crossroads to other Underworlds.

For Scions, this means that with the right preparation, they might venture from Garö-Demänæ to Jigoku to Tartarus, using the Veil as a way stop and Axis Mundi each time. This means figuring out how to sustain oneself, as the Veil's food and drink does nothing for a mortal's constitution or nutrition. Appropriate preparation also means dressing to blend in; in a gray and misty world, a crimson shirt or sky-blue backpack is enough to flag someone as an outsider, and just because the Veil's residents cannot "die," the same does not apply to mortals who visit without truly crossing over.

### ADVERSARIES

Though the most numerous of the Veil's inhabitants are regular Shades or souls of mortals, the enigmatic Chthonian Cullers reside there as well, and they're not fond of trespassers. Additionally, some Shades in the Veil resent those who are able to leave with apparent ease, and no few others are curious and intrigued by any who arrive by unconventional means — in short, any who aren't dead.

If a Band chooses to venture across the black desert, either to find a specific Underworld or for curiosity's sake alone, it might encounter any number of monsters or beings, whether an eldritch horror escaped from a neighboring Underworld, or a denizen of the Veil hitherto unknown to them. After all, where do such creatures go when they die?

### THE VEIL

#### BIRTHRIGHTS

#### At the Crossroads (Realm) •••

The Veil serves as a crossroads to all Underworlds, existing as both a place between and a place for those who live their life in between. The nature of such a transient place allows you to pass through places with ease.

**Boon:** Unbarred Passage (Journeys)

**Knack:** Pierce the Veil (Immortal Liminal)

#### As Needed (Realm) •••

The Veil meets the needs of its inhabitants, though rarely cares for their wants. You find that when the need arises, the Veil delivers, regardless of how specific the need.

**Marvels:** Upheaval, Resolve Condition (Prosperity)

**Special:** When you need an item or object, it appears before you. When you finish using the item, it goes away. The item can be specific to a use, but cannot be unique. This means you might need a way to open a lock, but instead of getting the unique key for the purpose, you receive lock-picks. Work with your Storyguide to determine what item you receive.

## Realm Effects

**Motif:** Memories of a life, long past.

**Requirement:** The Scion must open a door to the Veil and enter it once a month.

## NETJER

The Netjer view their underworld as a place literally under the World, with the sky above and Duat below. The Netjer don't just view Duat as an underworld though it fits the literal description. Many Gods call it home along with plenty of unique denizens.

### THE DUAT

Duat is not just a place where souls go. It is a proving ground for the dead, a waypoint between the homes of the Gods and the World, and a battleground against the Titans. In its purest essence, Duat embodies the Netjer concept of balance, existing as a multipurpose realm filled with dualities. Duat is split into twelve distinct areas separated by gates. Duat looks much like the World, though a darker and more sinister version. While there are mountains, trees, and valleys, there are also lakes of fire, turquoise trees, and iron walls making up the bizarre landscape. Built almost like a maze, Duat is separated into twelve distinct areas. Running through the center of Duat is the river, Iteru, and along its banks are the homes of the Gods.

Wesir is the ruler of Duat, one of the only permanent Gods stationed there, and he controls the whole of the souls, spirits, and denizens that make up Duat. The rest of the Gods have homes there, though they don't always spend time there. For twelve hours a day, during the night-time, Re holds court while floating along the Iteru, and most of the Gods attend him and fight battles against Apep. Souls do not spend a great deal of time in Duat as once they pass the trials they leave — or fail them and die.

When the dead enter Duat, they must pass through each of the twelve gates, harried by spirits, Gods, and denizens of Duat as they attempt to pass the trials put forth to them by the guardians of the gates. If they can pass through all twelve gates, they find themselves in front of Anpu in the Hall of Two Truths. They must sit upon the scale and have their heart weighed against the Feather of Ma'at. Those who pass proceed to A'aru becoming an akh, and those who fail are eaten by Ammut. Shades who haven't yet passed all their trials have opportunities to serve both Anpu and Wesir outside Duat in return for balancing their heart's ledger for when they weigh against the feather. While the twelve areas and their gates are unchanging features within Duat, the trials and the gatekeepers are not. The job is viewed as a great honor bestowed by Wesir, and the denizens vie for the position. This means though, that the trials are ever changing, and even those well-equipped with death scrolls to get through the trials risk finding a replacement gatekeeper along their journey.

## EVERYWHERE A DOOR

Duat is an open place, not only for the dead, but for the living. Scions have multiple avenues for entrance. They can die and have the correct rites performed, which opens a gateway between the tomb and Duat, though they don't have to be dead for the rites to work and open a gateway. They could also hitch a ride with Re as he rides the Iteru into the western sky at sunset, though doing so would require a large favor owed the God, or for the Scion to be one of his own. Though if the Scion takes that route, they are expected to help protect Re against Apep as they enter Duat, and failure to do so could lead to dire consequences.

Mortal practitioners entreat Anpu for word of who guards the gates, which he sends word of regularly. Faithful with the means are buried with maps, scrolls, spells, and detailed instructions including the names of the gate guards to make passage through the trials a breeze. Less fortunate dead must blunder through the trials in hopes they'll make it to the Hall of Two Truths on their own wit.

### ITERU

The river in which Re rides traverses all the twelve areas of Duat and serves as the primary battleground against Apep. During the day, the river is peaceful and tranquil, but when Re rides through at night, the river, and all the surrounding areas become a battleground of immense proportions. Nearing the river at night will get you swept up in the fighting, and Shades who pass through know to keep their distance from the river as it could turn into a fight at any moment. And while the Shades are technically dead, if they can't make it to the Hall of Two Truths, they will never enter A'aru, or they could suffer obliteration from a stray God-strike.

### HALL OF TWO TRUTHS

While not technically its own location within Duat, the Hall of Two Truths lies behind the twelfth gate in Duat and it is the home of Anpu and his denizens. Less a simple hall, and more a lavishly appointed home, the Hall of Two Truths is frequented by more than just Anpu as he performs his duty. Wesir also lives here, and is visited frequently by Aset and sometimes Set during the day. Wesir rarely leaves his stately home, and if you want to entreat the God, find his closest servants, or even just find a place that won't be beset by fighting when Re and his entourage arrives, this is the place to go.

### A'ARU

A'aru is the only place of true rest in Duat. Here is the final resting place of those who lived balanced and just lives. And here is where spirits and Shades finally stop their journey to spend eternity. A'aru is a vast plain of lush fields

spotted by homesteads and communities. The souls who live here are happy beyond belief and content, rarely opting to leave like the Shades in Duat to serve the Gods. If you want to find someone who has passed through, you must enter through the Hall of Two Truths, and you must weigh your heart against the Feather of Ma'at. Some Gods find they can enter without the ritual, but few do so for long.

## DUAT

### BIRTHRIGHT

#### Opposing Forces (Realm) ••••

For half the day, Duat is a place of relative peace where souls are judged, and Shades pass through trials. The other half the day it is embroiled in battles and court politics. Despite this constant shift, things in Duat stay mostly the same, weathering the changes with steadfast resolve. You embody both sides and are able to call upon either as suits your needs.

**Marvels:** Complication, Upheaval, Equipment (Order, War)

Scale: +1 leadership Scale when attempting to calm a situation or rile people up.

**Special:** Imbue a Legend to change the Attitudes of all targets in the Field toward you either up or down by a number of ranks equal to half your Legend rating for the rest of the scene. Remember that Attitudes cannot be ranked higher than +/- 3. This is free when used against trivial targets.

## Knack

**Inner Peace:** You are unphased by chaos or turmoil around you. Ignore all Complications associated with chaotic environments such as battlefields, riots, noisy rooms, or intense emotional Atmospheres. Gain a +1 Enhancement to resist social influence to act in a rash manner.

## Realm Effects

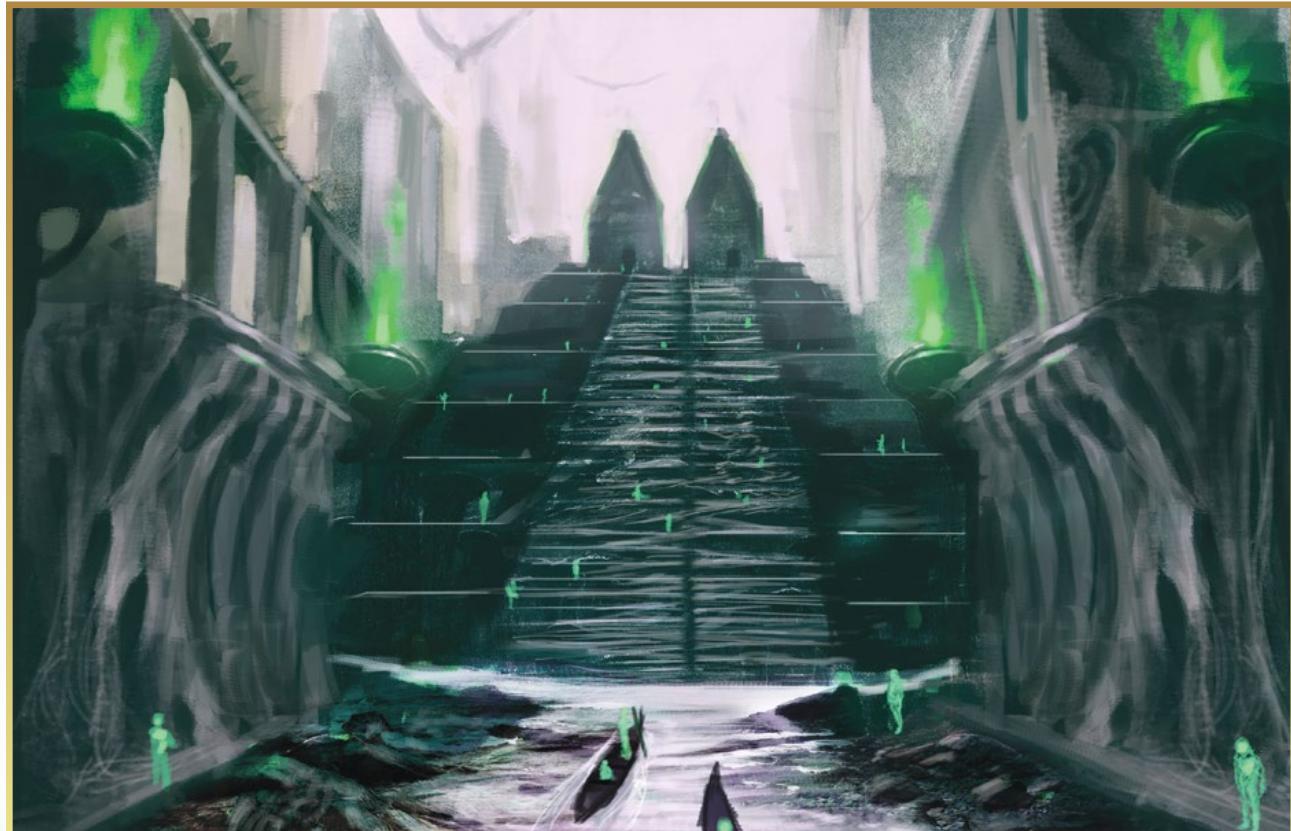
**Motif:** A world of opposites and complimentary dualities.

**Requirement:** As per the Fatebinding Condition.

## MICTLAN, UNDERWORLD OF THE TEŌTL

To those who worship the Teōtl, one's afterlife destination is decided by their manner of death. Those who drown or are struck by lightning have been chosen by Tlaloc to reside in his Overworld, Tlalocan, a place of lush vegetation. Those who are sacrificed to the gods, fall in battle, or die in childbirth go to the land of Nanahuatzin, the fifth sun, becoming hummingbirds to sip on the flowers of both heaven and Earth. The rest must go to Mictlan.

The nine realms of Mictlan are treacherous terrain, taking four years to successfully navigate. Dogs serve as guides on this journey, and kind dog owners will be happy to see old friends for their journey. Cruel dog owners,



however, may find themselves misled by the animals they mistreated, never reaching final rest. The truly lucky are led by Xolotl himself, the divine canine psychopomp who leads the sun through the Underworld each night and accompanied Quetzalcoatl when he brought back the bones of humanity. This is Itzcuintlan, the Land of Dogs and first level of Mictlan, where the dogs help the dead to cross the river Apanohuaia.

The second level is Tepectli Monamictlan, the Land of Hills Coming Together, where the souls of the dead must perfectly time their journey between two mountains that occasionally smash into one another. The third is Iztepetl, a mountain of jagged rocks, and the fourth is Itzehecayan, a blizzarding mountain of ice and obsidian. The dead then reach Paniecatacoyan, where they are blown about at the mercy of the winds. If they can find their footing, they journey through Timiminaloayan, where they are beset with arrows that were lost in the World and never recovered. In Teocoyohuehualoyan, jaguars devour the hearts of the dead. Then the Shades pass to the eighth level, Izmictlan Apochcalolca, where they must cross the river Apanhuiayo, and escape the jaws of the Titanic lizard, Xochitonal.

Having done all the above, in a journey that takes about four years, the Shades may reach the ninth level, Chiconamictlan.

## CHICONAMICTLAN, THE ABODE OF MICTECACIHUATL AND MICTLANTECUHTLI

Cold, bleak, and dark, Chiconamictlan is nonetheless a respite from the trials that came before. And while the Lady and Lord of Death expect nothing but obedience from their subjects (with no compunction about tearing their very souls asunder), they are not utterly cruel. They permit the dead to visit their families once a year, on the Día de los Muertos, and to keep the grave goods offered on their ofrendas.

The city of death is a windowless necropolis rising out of the nine rivers of Chiconauhapan. Water gives way to stone in this chthonic mirror of Tenochtitlan on Lake Texcoco. There, the dead are mostly free to look after themselves, with the God and Goddess served by their own bats, owls, and spiders.

Central to the city is the Lord and Lady's palace, a windowless stone temple surrounding a pit of bones. This is where Quetzalcoatl tripped when he stole the bones of previous races of humans, and the Lord and Lady of Death have used it to keep this race's remains. Over the centuries, they have built their stone palace around the pit of bones, where the deities guard the remains fiercely. Anyone attempting to return a Shade to the living would need their bones to do so, and the Lady and Lord of Death will not permit that to happen again.

## MICTLAN

### BIRTHRIGHTS

#### Xoloitzcuintle (Guide) •••

The dogs found in Itzcuintlan help the dead get to their final destinations. These affable creatures help Scions traverse not only the realms of the dead, but any other place they might want to get to.

**Asset Skills:** Pilot, Survival

**Guide Stunt (1-3 successes):** Gain Enhancement equal to successes spent to the next action you make involving movement.

**Calling:** Liminal

#### Tempered by Trials (Realm) •••

You have passed through the nine realms of Mictlan and learned to tame the elements and make them your own.

**Boon:** Skin Like Stone (Earth)

**Marvel:** Complication, Upheaval (Wind, Earth)

### Realm Effects

**Motif:** Here your bones reside until the end of time.

**Requirement:** Once each moon cycle you must visit Itzcuintlan and shower praise on the dogs there.

## YAZATA

The Yazata see existence as being two distinct realms: Getig, the material realm that humans perceive the World in, and Menog, the spiritual realm with all its multifaceted layers and occupants. The underworlds of the Yazata all exist within Menog, but just as all conscious beings are the intersections between the spiritual and material, there exist various intersections and openings available in the World that allow passage to the three known underworlds of the Yazata.

## GARÖ-DEMÁNÆ

### The House of Song

Anyone who is blessed with being able to perceive Garö-Demánæ, the House of Song, is quickly reminded why the word paradise is Persian in origin. Here reside the not just the glorious Yazata, but also the idealized Fravashi and the ineffable creator Ahura Mazda. Garö-Demánæ is also the abode of the righteous, where the Ashavans who have chosen toward goodness and mastered the Threefold Path of Asha reside once crossing the Chinvat Bridge.

Garö-Demánæ is melodious and harmonious, a perfectly ordered divine symphony that delights beyond what the mortal senses are even capable of perceiving. Here, within this fourfold realm of wonders, the honorable departed are united with the very essence of Ahura Mazda and become Fravashi once more, their souls united with their higher natures to be rewarded with divinity. They take their place among the Yazata as best befits how they

## DEMÁNÆ DREAMIN'

For some Scions, climbing impossibly high mountains, jumping on cosmic rainbows, and answering the seemingly random questions of magical men guarding important bridges is just too much to deal with to check out the spiritual realm. Enter Arda Wiraz, an early medieval Zoroastrian mystic who figured out the right mix of Persian wines, Haoma, and — some believe — a healthy dose of the local psychedelics available at the time to put him in the right dream-state to explore Menog unhindered and without the endless ritualization and trials usually required to get there. The recipe for this divine concoction has been thought lost to time or purposefully destroyed by some fravashi who didn't like being spied on at home, but the clues as to its ingredients and creation exist in the Book of Arda Wiraz, which mystics have long claimed has hidden chapters with this potion and moreso described guarded by Zoroastrian hermits in the mountains of modern day Central Asia.

Should a Scion prove successful in replicating the recipe, they should expect to be out of commission as their soul travels Menog for days or even weeks on end, depending on how long they want to or can handle being an uninvited guest. Arda Wiraz ended up being welcomed on his astral vacation to the realm due to his righteousness, but not every visitor may prove so lucky. Arda Wiraz was able to travel to all the realms of Menog, but made sure to not outstay his welcome, especially in the House of Lies. Also, due to the nature of the drink, expect a wild hangover and possible side effects, which may include, nausea, dizziness, headaches, paranoia, and shifting in and out of spirit and material realms at random.

lived their lives in Getig in one of the fourfold heavenly citadels. Those whose thinking exemplified righteousness reside in the House of Good Thoughts, those who spoke the finest words call the House of Good Words home, and those whose actions contributed toward cosmic good are now in the House of Good Deeds. For those who are beyond even our highest praises, there is the House of Eternal Light, the very residence of Ahura Mazda where they become as one with the Wise Lord. No house is considered lower than the other, though all aspire to be one with the creator in the House of Eternal Light, but even just to be a Yazata is a beautiful and wondrous honor, raised to high divinity to join in the cosmic battle against Evil.

The only entrance to Garö-Demánæ is through the Chinvat Bridge, guarded by the Yazata Mithra, Rashnu, and Sraosha with a watchful pair of four-eyed dogs. The dead are able to enter through the correct and exceedingly elaborate rites and rituals performed on their behalf at death and the days following it involving, among other matters, a "four-eyed" dog, hours of manthra-chanting in ancient Avestan, careful disposal of the body so as to not pollute the earth, and moreso. Scions wishing to enter Garö-Demánæ must either die and have the rituals performed for them, climb to the peak of Hara Berezaiti while also conducting the proper rituals, or await sight of one of the natural signs such as a rainbow or the Milky Way that allows them to channel themselves to the Chinvat Bridge while, you guessed it, making sure you do the right rituals. The wrong rituals and attempts at forced entry will meet terrible failure or, worse, result in being cast down to Druj-Demánæ, the House of Lies, the dark home of Angra Mainyu.

### THE CHINVAT BRIDGE

Any who reach the Chinvat Bridge, the Bridge of Choice, will be subject to the most scrutinous judgement. Mithra, Sraosha, and Rashnu are not known to cut travelers, dead or alive, any slack whatsoever if they wish to enter

the House of Song. A Scion who knows that they may not have what it takes to pass such tests must be quite crafty to avoid or trick Yazatas described as having a thousand eyes, the ability to know your thoughts and feelings, and can tell whether you've been naughty or nice on a whim, not to mention their quadri-ocular canine friends. This is not to say it's impossible to pull a fast one, but the odds are not one a betting man in any realm would take. Also, be careful while crossing, as one wrong move might just have you tumbling into Hamistagan or, worse, the House of Lies and you'll find that the bridge narrows to a knife's edge if you haven't shown up with the best intentions.

## GARÖ-DEMÁNÆ

### BIRTHRIGHTS

#### Four-Eyed Dog (Creature)

A pair of four-eyed dogs guard the Chinvat Bridge leading to Garö-Demánæ, and while those two are loyal to Mithra, Rashnu, and Sraosha, but many other four-eyed dogs traverse the underworld and run errands for the Yazata, specifically to fetch lost souls. These powerful magical beings are unseen when in the World, but make excellent companions.

#### Fravashi (Followers)

The Fravashi populate Garö-Demánæ, as the main residents of the realm. These are the souls made divine after reuniting with the souls of the righteous and good. Fravashi rarely leave the realm, though they may be persuaded for the right cause. They commonly have the Entourage or Consultant Archetypes (some having both) and some or all of the following tags: Access, Smooth, Knack, or Sidekick.

### Realm Effects

**Motif:** From harmonious melody comes wisdom.

**Requirement:** The Scion must perform a cleansing ritual reminiscent of that performed for the dead once a month.

## DRUJ-DEMÁNÆ

### The House of Lies

If the welcoming committee found you wanting or you took a bad tumble (perhaps on purpose) from the Chinvat Bridge, you'll find yourself in Druj-Demánæ, the House of Lies. This horror-show of darkness and confusion is the putrid and decaying fortress of the Daevas and their evil master, the terrible Angra Mainyu. Druj-Demánæ is where all those who have chosen to side with the forces of evil, consciously or not, end up and plot confusedly in choking claustrophobic darkness against the Yazata and to be tormented by all sorts of terrors beyond the worst nightmares of any mortal.

Druj-Demánæ is lonely, isolated, chaotic, and cold. There is no respite from terror here, no break from the unseen terrors in the supernatural pit of total night, no escape from what seems to be the pulsating walls and their unending vomitous stench. This fourfold realm of unimaginable madness may not be eternal, but to its terrified and undying residents, it definitely seems that way, as the screams of the tormented and laughter of the Daevas echo endlessly at ear-shattering pitches over and over again. The foulest claw their way into the ranks of Angra Mainyu's favored and argue endlessly over broken strategies and means of corruption and revenge in one of the four horrible dungeons where evil rules. Those whose thinking exemplified evil reside in the House of Bad Thoughts, those who spoke the worst words call the House of Bad Words home, and those whose actions contributed toward cosmic evil are now in the House of Bad Deeds. In this infernal hierarchy the House of Eternal Darkness reigns supreme as the throne of the despicable Angra Mainyu, the Destructive Spirit, who has become all evil past, present, and future. All in Druj-Demánæ serve Angra Mainyu through fear and terror, even those who plot against the Destructive Spirit, for the darkness that comes from the House of Eternal Darkness is all-consuming and if Angra Mainyu has its way, it will consume all the World.

Entering the House of Lies is rather simple: Be evil and, if possible, be dead. In fact, doing all the death rituals wrong, saying the wrong mantras, polluting the earth as much as possible, and angering the guardians at the Chinvat Bridge will guarantee you a quick trip to Druj-Demánæ. Living Scions wanting to visit Druj-Demánæ can climb to the peak of Hara Berezaiti while conducting bastardized rituals at night and jump right off the peak to fall painfully past the bridge into the House of Lies right past Hamistagan. Alternatively, you can do everything the right way, get to the Chinvat Bridge, be welcomed with open arms, and confuse the guardians utterly by taking a sharp turn right off the bridge before reaching Garö-Demánæ. Of course, if you do everything right but the guardians still think you're unworthy, they'll throw you down themselves,

but if you're neither particularly good nor bad or only just a slight bit bad, you might end up in Hamistagan instead and not make it to the House of Lies.

## DRUJ-DEMÁNÆ

### BIRTHRIGHT

#### Endless Terrors (Realm) ...

The chaotic terrors that fill Druj-Demánæ leave a lasting impression. You can harness that chaos and turn it outward, letting it flow through you without touching you.

**Boon:** Overwhelming Chaos (Chaos)

**Marvels:** Attacking, Complication (Chaos, Darkness)

### Knack

**Unyielding:** You are particularly resistant to chaotic forces in your life. You seem to avoid strange happenstances, and you gain +2 Enhancement when you make a Clash of Wills against something that would introduce uncertainty, random circumstance, or chaos into your life.

### Realm Effects

**Motif:** Chaos reigns eternal.

**Requirement:** As per the Fatebinding Condition.

## HAMISTAGAN

### The House in Between

Between a realm of unspeakable darkness and one of light beyond beauty lies a land that seems to the immediate observer suspiciously normal. The denizens go about their everyday business living their lives, but they do so repeatedly until they get it just right. Each resident of Hamistagan, the House in Between, lives in their own pocket world that resembles exactly their lives as they lived it in Getig so that

## IN THE MIDST OF BLACK SEAS OF INFINITY

Exploring Druj-Demánæ is going to be near impossible unless a Scion has some source of light that can penetrate an all-consuming darkness so thick that one can disgustingly taste and choke on it. Otherwise, the Scion might be stuck in there until the Frashokereti itself and become just another one of the disembodied wretched groans that permeate the House of Lies. Should the Scion find some sort of illumination capable of working in such an unholy place, they should prepare themselves for the indescribable horrors that they will now doubt be witness to and how this may affect their continuing sanity in future sessions of the campaign.

## IT'S COLD OUT THERE EVERY DAY

Storyguides will find that Hamistagan provides not just endless possibilities of who their players could meet in the House in Between, but also a unique opportunity to put the Scions through the emotional ringer. A Scion stuck in Hamistagan could find themselves reliving the same day continuously until they figure out what's wrong and become better versions of themselves. Particularly cruel Scions, however, will see this boot camp for the soul as a repeatedly frustrating prison to throw their adversaries into.

they may try as many times as it takes to be the good people that deep down they knew they could be. This is the home of those who were neither particularly good nor evil and needed a second (or third, fourth, fifth...) chance to prove themselves by mastering the Threefold Path of Asha and see the good within.

Hamistagan is seemingly endless, an infinite array of pocket worlds as far as the eye can see sharing only a coursing river of molten metal throughout the whole of Hamistagan. To get here, one must usually be among the neutral dead. However, should a Scion need to pay a visit to the House in Between, the right methods for reaching the Chinvat Bridge will suffice and all the Scion needs to do is ask for passage or to take a leap of faith filled with the best intentions. Wrong intentions may just land you instead in the dreaded Druj-Demánae, so the Scion must arrive with a desire to either better themselves or others or with just the right balance of thoughts, words, and deeds, which is harder than it seems.

### AYANGHA KHSHUSHTA

The river of molten metal that flows through every part of Hamistagan, Ayangha Khshushta, serves to purify the souls of those who have finally lived their best lives and after crossing the painful river emerge purified and renewed. Afterward, they rise into Garö-Demánae to take their place among the righteous or they may choose to stay and aid others until the Frashokereti. At this moment, the final renovation and perfection of existence, Ayangha Khshushta will overflow and purify everyone not just in Hamistagan, but also in Druj-Demánae and all the World, bringing about universal salvation except for Angra Mainyu, who will finally be defeated but not destroyed, cast into a hole that will be plugged with the river itself, which will then harden into the most unbreakable of metals. A Scion able to withstand crossing the river through feats of epic stamina and the like will find themselves basically reborn and purified, which the Storyguide can interpret as they see fit.

## HAMISTAGAN

### BIRTHRIGHT

#### Molten Purification (Realm) •••

The molten river, Ayangha Khshushta, touches all of Hamistagan and influences everyone who steps foot there. Just as its metal purifies those who brave its painful depths, you have learned to use that fire to purify others.

**Boon:** Healing Hands (Health)

**Marvels:** Resolve Condition, Offscreen Action (Fire, Health)

**Special:** You may cleanse someone of sin, through the same methods as those used in Hamistagan. Your target takes an appropriate Injury Condition for touching molten metal, and is cleansed of any magical or mundane illness, poison, disease, and chronic injury.

#### Reminisce (Realm) •

Hamistagan has a way of slowing down the world around you and giving you all the time in the world to re-live a single day or moment of your life. Similarly, you can create a place where time moves at a relatively fast pace to that of the rest of the world, allowing for multiple hours to pass in no time at all.

**Special:** Imbue a Legend to slow time outside of the Field you are currently in. Time seems to move normally for you and anyone (or anything) within the Field, but outside the Field, time seems to stand still. The effect lasts until you reclaim your Legend. Anyone inside the Field can make a Clash of Wills to leave it, though they cannot re-enter once gone.

#### Realm Effects

**Motif:** A life lived repeatedly to gain perfection.

**Requirement:** As per the Fatebinding Condition.

## RAROHENGA, THE UNDERWORLD OF THE ATUA

When the dead leave Te Ao Tūroa (the World), they travel into Pō, the night that existed before even Rangi or Papa. It was there Hine-titama, “Hine, the Maid of Dawn,” fled when she realized that her husband, Tane, was also her father. There she became the goddess of death, ruling as Hine-nui-te-Pō, “Hine, Great Lady of the Night,” one of three goddesses of Rarohenga.

Rarohenga, the Underworld located in Pō, has ten realms. Miru, queen of the reptile gods, witchcraft, and a multitude of evil deities, rules three of them. They include Tatau-o-te-Pō, “The Door of Night,” which is the first place the dead reach upon their journey to Hine. It can be reached by death or by a hidden river outside of Auckland

in Aotearoa. Miru is cruel, but unrivaled in her magical knowledge.

Rohe, a cruel Atua and the wife of Māui, rules over another three realms. Her ugly husband used a magical incantation to compel Rohe into swapping her beautiful face for his. She fled in fury and horror to Rarohenga, where the now-hideous goddess attempts to destroy any spirits who pass through her realms.

Hine herself rules four realms. Despite the indignities she has endured at the hands of Tane and Maui, Hine is the kindest of the three rulers of Rarohenga, and looks after the Shades of the dead in the lands of night. Though her realm is eternally dark, Hine protects her charges from the other two goddesses. She does not usually permit the dead to leave, though one Scion succeeded in trading his relic mere (club) made of solid pounamu greenstone in exchange for his lover. It is now one of the Great Lady of the Night's proudest possessions, though she may offer it should one of her Scions makes her particularly proud.

## TATAU-O-TE-PŌ, “THE DOOR OF NIGHT”

The Tahekeroa River, outside of Auckland, is said to have a small tributary that can lead into the lands of night. With the proper incantations and a sturdy boat, a Scion may reach Tatau-o-te-Pō, the boundary of the realms of the dead. The river comes to an end at Miru’s pa, or fortress, where she sends Shades who lived a good life, or have exceptional mana, on their way to Hine. The others she sends through Rohe’s realms, gives to her underlings, or destroys herself.

While removing the dead has rarely been successful, there have been other reasons to venture into Rarohenga: knowledge. The Underworld beings called tūrehu know many arts that mortals do not. Uetonga, a ruler among the tūrehu and a Scion of the Volcano Atua, Rūaumoko, laughed at his mortal son in law who ventured there, wiping the paint from the young man’s face. Uetonga then held the man down violently, and showed him the painful process of tā moko, permanent tattoos.

But even the tūrehu are not as knowledgeable as Miru, the death goddess who resides at Tatau-o-te-Pō. She knows karakia, magical incantations, that the other Atua could never offer. The Atua Rongomai learned valuable magic from Miru, but at a price: she demanded, and got, the lives of two of his companions on the journey.

## RAROHENGA BIRTHRIGHTS Tūrehu (Guide) ••

Tūrehu live in Rarohenga, but travel to the World regularly to dance and play music among the waves. They hold a great deal of magical knowledge, and will teach any who have earned their favor.

**Asset Skills:** Academics, Occult

**Guide Stunt (1 success):** You positively identify the use of a supernatural effect, even if it is something you are unfamiliar with or have never seen before. Gain +1 Enhancement on your next roll to deal with or affect the source of the effect.

### Pō (Realm) •••

Rarohenga’s eternal night has permeated you. You can call upon it to assist in all endeavors, though like calls to like, and working in darkness brings stronger effects.

**Boon:** Blinding Veil (Darkness)

**Marvel:** Complication, Impose Condition (Darkness)

**Enhancement:** +1 to actions taken in total darkness

### Realm Effects

**Motif:** From eternal darkness comes life.

**Requirement:** You must spend 12 hours of your day in darkness, or return to Tatua-o-te-Pō once a month.

## ROOTOS, UNDERWORLD OF THE NEMETONDEVOS OF GAUL

Surrounding the World is Rotos, the Great Wheel. This massive wooden wagon wheel extends across the sky, where Taranis gives the stars and sun his permission to ride through his realm. Meanwhile, the lower half plunges deep below the earth, and the dead souls of ancient Gaul are carried through to their reincarnation. The memories of these Shades power the Wheel, weighing down one end where Belenos waits at the bottom to wash away any recollections of their lives. Purged of their pasts, the souls are light enough to ride the Wheel back up to the World and be reborn.

When the Theoi slew the gods of Gaul, the Wheel ground to a halt, stuck for millennia. The gods, including Belenos himself, were trapped in darkness. But now Rotos is turning again, and the Nemetondevos are waking up. (Details about the Nemetondevos, and their return, can be found in **Scion: Mysteries of the World**.)

Inside the Wheel waits Orgos, death itself. Orgos is stagnation, spiritual paralysis, a death without end. He would see all Shades bound to him, unable to reincarnate. The woodsman and carpenter Esos built the Wheel to bind him, but the Titan of Death is far from powerless inside. His minions, the cruel Ankou, have been stealing the Shades of Gaul for centuries, unchecked by the forgotten Gods.

While other Pantheons may tear their hair and gnash their teeth when someone dies, the Nemetondevos know they will reunite in the future. Fate sees that we reconnect again and again with the people who define our lives. But should a Shade be taken by an Ankou, that soul is out of the

## MAKING A COMEBACK

While many of the Underworlds are eternal resting places, several Pantheons see their worshipers reincarnate after death. The details vary from one Pantheon to another:

Hel is one of the less-forgiving Underworld deities, but when you tell a Scion of the Æsir that something is impossible, they'll likely take it as a challenge. Thus, reincarnation is rare, but not unheard of, and always within the family line. King Olaf the Holy of Norway was famously the reincarnation of his own ancestor, Olaf the Elf of Geirstad.

Yamaraja oversees the reincarnation of those who follow the Devá, with the support of his judges and the clerical assistance of Chitragupta. Once the dead have endured any necessary sufferings, they may be placed back into the World where King Yama sees fit for them. The Shén, Kami, and Palas believe similarly, though to varying degrees of Buddhist influence upon their thought.

To the Nemetondevos, all beings reincarnate. Their memories power Rotos, the Wheel, as they return to life anew. Belenos, Keeper of the Wheel, decides where and when they'll come back. Unlike other, merit-based reincarnation systems, Belenos' reasoning for who reincarnates where is a mystery to anyone but him, and only he retains the knowledge of anyone's past lives.

Worshippers of the Netjer famously plan for their eternity in Duat, but returning to a new life is not completely unheard of. Those who serve Re aboard Mesektet are sometimes permitted to return to the World for a time, and in extremely rare cases those who go above and beyond in their service can be permitted another life.

For a worshiper of the Órìshà, the égún, or immortal spirit of the soul, will reincarnate many times, frequently within their own family line, before becoming a revered ancestor. Similarly, the Loa see their mortals reincarnate up to thirteen times before they become one with the godhead.

Reincarnation is rare among the Theoi, reserved as an option for those who are allowed into Elysium. If you are permitted into Elysium three times in total, your soul may be allowed into the Isles of the Blessed, the rarest of afterlives. For this reason, giving life another shot is a popular option for the few permitted it.

Mortals among the Tuatha Dé Danann don't reincarnate (aside from one unlucky woman who was turned into a fly for a millennium, swallowed, and reborn), though the gods themselves are frequently brought back to life by various magical means after being slain. It's not impossible someone might "borrow" the Dagda's club, using it to bring back a long-dead friend.

That's by no means a comprehensive list, but a Scion from any of those Pantheons could be a reincarnated mortal from myth or history. This would be reflected in their Society Path at as an Incarnate Scion during character creation, e.g., "The Reincarnation of Brennus." Fate usually puts them in a position to have the same divine parent, and certainly not a different one; Aphrodite isn't going to give birth to the reincarnation of Perseus. Fate doesn't put up with such shenanigans. On the other hand, Perseus could certainly reincarnate in Jaipur, finding himself a practicing Hindu.

Such a Scion, should they wish to remember their past selves, might perform a PSP Marvel to mimic the Nemetondevos Boon "Past Life Skills," (**Scion: Mysteries of the World**, p. 48). This would allow them to recall some of who they were, utilize skills they once had, and even discover their ancient relationships with the mortals they are once again Fatebound to.

cycle. They are lost. Only a Scion would be crazy enough to mount a post-mortem rescue mission.

## THE GREAT WHEEL

The Wheel is decorated with the stars themselves, and they light the way down to Rotos. Throughout the journey, a traveler can barely make out the massive wooden gears like clockwork creaking in the Wheel around them. At the bottom, Shades meet Belenos, the Sun and Reviver. There, he bathes them in a massive barrel, letting the memories of their old lives wash away.

The Wheel is accessible from many points on its journey. Scions capable of reaching the sky may beg Taranis' permission to climb onboard, but the thunder god is vain

and temperamental, and will likely ask for favors in return. Otherwise, a ritual burial with a wheeled vehicle (an ox-cart, a hay wagon, a BMW Z4) can take a spirit, or Scion, to Rotos. On the next holy day, the now-spectral vehicle rides to a shrine of Belenos, where a druid commits the passengers onto the Great Wheel. Reaching the center of the wheel is even more dangerous. It would involve climbing the incomprehensible wooden workings of Rotos, where a trespasser could get lost, crushed, beset by Ankou, or even run afoul of Orgos himself.

## ANKOU

Skeletons with scythes and wide-brimmed hats, the Ankou bind lost souls into their wagons and bring them to Orgos at the center of the wheel, each life increasing his

power. Few things anger the Gaulish gods so much as how the Ankou have been able to flourish during their absence.

However, a wily Scion might take advantage of the Ankou's journey. Shade heists might involve Scions allowing themselves to be captured, or following an Ankou from a distance, or even stealing an Ankou's wagon to enter the Titanic realm in disguise.

As dangerous as such a journey would be, success would mean the salvation of not just the souls in question, but all Gauls. More spirits released from the Titan's grasp weakens his power and keeps him from his ultimate goal: shattering the wheel. Further, more lives back in the cycle of reincarnation mean more memories turn the wheel, which will bring more of the Nemetondevos back to their people.

## ROTOS

### BIRTHRIGHTS

#### Ankou Wagon (Relic) •••

All who enter Rotos do so through a wagon, often bound to it by the Orgos's skeletal servitors, the Ankou. Their wagons allow travel between all realms.

**Purview:** Journeys

**Motif:** A long journey over a bumpy and uncertain road.

**Knack:** You can use the Ankou Wagon to cross through to any realm regardless of if you are at an entrance or using the proper travel route. When doing so, you still suffer any Complications that may occur from traveling to a specific realm, though you bypass any entrance requirements.

#### The Turning Wheel (Realm) •••

You have been upon the wheel and know its secrets. Ways are open to you, you follow patterns and cycles, and you can call upon the wheel to guide your way.

**Boon:** Starry Path (Stars)

**Marvel:** Blessings, Attacking (Forge, Stars)

#### Realm Effects

**Motif:** The wheel turns, and the journey does not end.

**Requirement:** As per the Fatebound role.



# CHAPTER SIX

# ANTAGONISTS

*"At your battle-cry, my lady, the foreign lands bow low. When humanity comes before you in awed silence at the terrifying radiance and tempest, you grasp the most terrible of all the divine powers. Because of you, the threshold of tears is opened, and people walk along the path of the house of great lamentations. In the van of battle, all is struck down before you. With your strength, my lady, teeth can crush flint."*

— The Exaltation of Inanna, Enheduanna

**D**emigods face an entirely different class of villain than Heroes do, from rival Demigods chasing their own divinity to greater varieties of Titanspawn that eclipse their smaller and weaker cousins. The following updates to the Antagonist system exist to model these foes, with new Archetypes, Qualities, and Flairs. We'll also discuss the Goliath system, which models things too big to fight with one's fists alone, and an updated and more robust version of the Segment rules that allows for complex multi-part Antagonists. Following that are further examples of how to use the Antagonist system, with premade Antagonists ready for use in a **Demigod** game.

## NEW ANTAGONIST ARCHETYPES

**T**he villains who threaten Demigods are of an entirely different caliber than those who threaten Heroes, much less the ordinary folk of the World. The following Archetypes reflect that difference.

### PARAGON

Paragons are the finest and most accomplished that humanity has to offer. In any field, they're the final authority, mortals whom Fate has chosen to brave the heights of what it is to be human in a World where gods walk among them.

To you, they are as wheat before the scythe.

**Primary:** 8

**Secondary:** 6

**Desperation:** 5

**Health:** 1

**Defense:** 3

**Initiative:** 4

**Extras:** Paragons are Tier 1, and so roll against a target number of 8 rather than 7.

### MYTHIC

A Demigod's true rivals are those who share their mythic nature, be it the parentage and patronage of a god or descent from ancient and nonhuman peoples with magic of their own. The greatest and most powerful of beasts may also pose such a threat.

**Primary:** 8

**Secondary:** 6

**Desperation:** 5

**Health:** 4

**Defense:** 4

**Initiative:** 5

**Extras:** Typically Mythic antagonists have a variety of Qualities and Flairs that replicate certain Boons.

### TRANSCENDENT

All who walk the path of the Demigod know that a choice is coming, a singular moment when mortality and divinity weigh in the balance. Some linger at that juncture for longer than others, and to those who would raise arms against them, beware, for they are what you might, one day, become. Transcendent enemies are those for whom mortality is a quickly-vanishing memory, or those who never tasted of mortality in the first place.

**Primary:** 9

**Secondary:** 7

**Desperation:** 5

## THE COLD HARD NUMBERS

**Scion: Origin** and **Scion: Hero** focus on Tier 1 and 2 characters, who roll dice against a target number of 8. In **Scion: Demigod**, however, many enemy characters are Tier 2, meaning their target number is now 7. This seems like a minor change, but in terms of statistics, it's a mammoth difference. That extra 10% chance of a success adds up rapidly, more than doubling the odds of getting 5 successes on ten dice.

Consequently, while it may seem strange, Demigod-scale Antagonists don't get the exceptionally large pools of Monster or Titanspawn Antagonists, who needed a couple fistfuls to dice to reliably hit player characters. This is a problem that Tier 3-4 Antagonists just don't have.

## USING QUALITIES AND FLAIRS FROM OTHER BOOKS

**Scion: Origin** and **Scion: Hero** has Antagonist Qualities and Flairs designed to emulate specific sorts of creatures. Most, however, are designed to be used against mortals or Heroes, not Demigods. Does this mean that they're not useful in a Demigod game?

Not at all! Apart from the fact that Demigods are far from immune to beings of lesser tiers, these Qualities and Flairs are easily modified for a higher tier. For example, the Vengeful Blood Quality, which produces Foes to join their parent in battle at the Heroic tier, could just as easily birth Paragons at the Demigod tier if it belonged to a Transcendent or Avatar Antagonist.

**Health:** 5

**Defense:** 5

**Initiative:** 6

**Extras:** As Mythic antagonists, and they are also typically accompanied by Birthrights.

### AVATAR

The World knows the Gods are real, and it knows that monsters lurk in the shadows. Demigods do not have the luxury of shutting those fears away and going to work a nine-to-five. When gods send down Avatars full of malign intent, or when the Titans give birth to the greatest among their spawn, even a band of Demigods may be hard-pressed – but if they don't fight, who will?

**Primary:** 10

**Secondary:** 8

**Desperation:** 6

**Health:** 6

**Defense:** 5

**Initiative:** 5

**Extras:** As Transcendent antagonists, and whatever the Storyguide deems appropriate for manifest Gods.

## NEW QUALITIES

The following Qualities reflect the strange and mythic sorts of enemies Demigods frequently encounter. However, any of these Qualities could be used on lower-tier Antagonists to make them seem strange, otherworldly, or otherwise highlight them within the narrative.

### ASTRIDE THE WORLD

Many semi-divine beings possess a sense of power and size wildly out of step with their true shape. They may seem to fill a room despite being no larger than a mortal, so tall that their head scrapes the very vault of the heavens – but nonetheless, they can pass through a normal door like anyone else. Antagonists with this Quality gain Narrative Scale against trivial characters and surroundings. This Quality may be purchased multiple times, each granting a level of Scale.

### DOMINION

The Antagonist has attained Dominion over a specific Purview. She may gain Divinity Dice by taking action that either strengthens or resonates with the Purview, and may use those Divine Dice in the same manner as player characters. She may create marvels of the Purview as a Simple Action without spending Tension to do so.

### IMMORTAL-ish

The Antagonist can be killed, but will inevitably return to life, whether by reanimating their body, reincarnating, or whatever method is appropriate. Choose a source of damage (fire, arrows, drowning, etc.) that can permanently kill the Antagonist, preferably something thematic such as antivenom for a venomous or otherwise toxic Antagonist.

This Quality does not apply if the Antagonist was slain by a being of greater Tier, or if the Antagonist has completed the Descent Deed of Apotheosis.

### INDESTRUCTIBLE

Choose a source of damage. This source of damage is the only one the Antagonist marks Health boxes from suffering. Storyguides should resist the urge to make Antagonists, even ones that are load-bearing for the ongoing story, vulnerable only to things that are practically impossible to get, like weapons-grade nuclear material or the atmosphere of Saturn.

### INTERFERENCE

The Antagonist possesses a powerful Fate. At the Storyguide's discretion, she can Fatebind other Storyguide characters who are not already Fatebound to a player character, replenishing one Tension if she does so. Fate is warped in the Antagonist's immediate presence, reducing the strength of other Fatebindings by 1 for the duration unless the character to whom the Storyguide character is Fatebound has a Legend higher than the Antagonist's Desperation Pool.

### LOAD-BEARING VILLAIN

A structure (preferably but not always the one the confrontation is taking place in) is inextricably bound up with the Antagonist. The Antagonist is aware of what happens inside the structure, gaining a +2 Enhancement for tracking, perception, and associated rolls. When the Antagonist suffers Health damage, the structure begins to shake itself

apart or is otherwise compromised; if the Antagonist dies, the structure collapses or is otherwise destroyed.

## OMNI-ORACULAR

The Antagonist is gifted with an on-demand prophetic sense; regardless of how she does so, she is able to do it reliably, even amid combat. As long as the Antagonist is able to communicate with her allies, those allies gain a general +2 Enhancement.

## PHYSIOLOGICAL VOID

The Antagonist is only embodied in the most tenuous of senses, and does not depend upon her flesh and blood to sustain her existence, much less to remain active. The cost of the Inflict Damage stunt is raised by 1 success for all physical attacks (spiritual or magical attacks, including those made with relics, pay the normal rate) made against the Antagonist, and she does not suffer Injury Conditions.

## NEW FLAIRS

The following Flairs represent discrete powers or abilities that are commonly found at the level Demigod characters find themselves. Like the above Qualities, giving these Flairs to lower-tier Antagonists will mark them as particularly unusual.

### CAUSE AND EFFECT

**Cost:** Variable

**Duration:** One Scene

**Action:** Reflexive

**Clash:** Variable vs. Desperation

**Cooldown:** The scene ends; or the effect is triggered.

The Antagonist sets a specific taboo and the consequences to apply when the taboo is violated. She need not share the details of the taboo, but may halve the amount of Tension needed to invoke the taboo (round up, minimum one) if she does so. She never has to share the consequences, but if the taboo is violated, even accidentally, the details will rapidly become apparent.

The taboo and complication take the form of a Boolean if/then statement. For example, "If you cross this line, then you'll burst into flame." Consequences are paid for in advance with Tension; if the effect is not triggered, the spent Tension returns to the Tension Pool at the end of the scene. Injury Conditions cost 1 Tension for the first, 2 for the second, etc.

The dice pool for Clashing against Cause and Effect is variable; the Storyguide will choose an appropriate Attribute to combine with Legend.

### DEATH CURSE

**Cost:** Variable

**Duration:** Variable

**Action:** Reflexive

**Clash:** Resolve + Legend vs. Primary

The Antagonist uses the disturbance their death causes in Fate to lay a powerful death curse, taking the form of a Persistent Complication hanging over the target. When laying the curse, the Storyguide names a situation (i.e., "taking up swords against blood relations") and may spend Tension up to the Antagonist's Desperation Pool on her behalf. For each Tension spent, the Complication will occur once, at a point of the Storyguide's choosing, and at a strength equal to the amount of Tension spent. For example, if the Storyguide spent three Tension, the target would suffer Complication 3 three times in the future, in a situation resonant with the situation named at the time of the Antagonist's death. Player characters will likely attempt to avoid such circumstances; naturally, Fate (and the Storyguide) conspire to steer the character toward such circumstances.

This Flair may only be used if the Antagonist is really, truly dead and has no intention of staging a grand comeback. If, for some reason, the Antagonist is restored to life, the curse is immediately lifted.

### DIVINE COMMAND

**Cost:** None

**Duration:** One Scene

**Action:** Simple

**Clash:** Presence + Legend vs. Desperation

**Cooldown:** The scene ends; or targets released from Divine Command's effects attack the Antagonist

The Antagonist is charged by divine authority, and can command mortals and creatures of a similar tier. Divine Command can target individuals or groups. Targets are compelled to carry out the commands of the Antagonist unless the effect is successfully Clashed, which can take place at any time Divine Command is active. This requires an impassioned plea, forceful declaration, or similar action on the part of a Demigod.

### DREAD-ER GAZE

**Cost:** 3 Tension

**Duration:** One Scene

**Action:** Simple

**Clash:** Stamina + Legend vs. Desperation

**Cooldown:** The scene ends; or the Antagonist kills another character through normal means.

The Antagonist's gaze is a potent weapon, able to slay with a look. To use this Flair, the Antagonist must make eye contact, which may necessitate a roll if the target is aware of the Antagonist's power. Trivial targets instantly die when eye contact is made; player characters suffer a Complication 5 of "Dead," which applies to any actions

she takes; failure to buy off the Complication leads to automatic failure as she is a flopping corpse. Each turn, she may attempt to Clash against Dread-er Gaze again; if she is successful, she is no longer “Dead.” Conversely, the player may choose to accept her character’s death, if for example it served her Apotheosis.

## HALL OF MIRRORS

**Cost:** 1 Tension

**Duration:** One Scene

**Action:** Simple

**Cooldown:** The scene ends; or a number of rounds equal to the Antagonist’s Desperation Pool pass after all clones have been destroyed.

The Antagonist is able to duplicate herself, spreading herself out across a number of clones equal to her Desperation Pool. All these clones are material and share the same Traits as the original, save for Health — the clones have only a single Health box.

## INVOCATION

**Cost:** 3 Tension (1 Tension for Avatars)

**Duration:** One turn

**Action:** Simple

**Clash:** Presence + Legend vs. Desperation

The Antagonist calls upon a divine link to a God, effectively incarnating them in the scene for an instant and allowing their influence to be felt. The effects are always powerful and numinous beyond even the marvels of Heroes or Demigods, and may have wide-reaching effects that linger beyond the presence of the deity in question. In combat, this can be used as an attack against all foes on the field — roll the Antagonist’s Primary Pool once, and apply it to all allied characters.

Trivial characters exposed to an Invocation are likely to be Fatebound to the invoked God, but this is left to Storyguide discretion — generally speaking, don’t poach a player’s Fatebound companions.

## KEY TO THE BIFRÖST

**Cost:** 1 Tension

**Duration:** Instant

**Action:** Simple

**Cooldown:** The scene ends; or the Antagonist suffers more than one Health damage in a single attack.

The Antagonist is able to travel instantaneously between the World and a given Terra Incognita. She can return just as easily, and can thus effectively use it as a teleport. If the Antagonist uses Key to the Bifrost, she vanishes for the duration of the next turn. On her initiative the following round (during which time she is crossing the intervening space in Terra Incognita), she

returns to the World. Crossing longer distances require more time spent in Terra Incognita.

## PLAYER OF GAMES

**Cost:** Variable

**Duration:** Variable

**Action:** Simple

**Cooldown:** The scene ends; or the Antagonist is victorious in the game.

This Flair allows the Antagonist to temporarily Fatebind others into a contest, which may be as simple as a riddle or as complex as a lengthy game of strategy and subtlety — all that matters is that the game has a win condition that is possible for both parties to achieve. Within the context of the game, there is nothing to prevent cheating, and most Antagonists with this Flair are experts at stacking the deck (literally and metaphorically) against their opponents. The Antagonist always outlines the conditions of the game, but she may be as evasive as she likes when describing the consequences (including the fact that the game will be bound by Fate).

Games may be played out as a simple or complex action, depending on the depth of the game in question. In either case, the Storyguide will choose the appropriate dice pool for the player character (which may vary between intervals, if the action is complex), while the Antagonist rolls her Primary Pool. Antagonists with this Flair always choose a game they’re highly skilled at. Additional rolls may be required if, for example, the player wishes to cheat (assume that if the Antagonist is cheating it’s factored into their Primary Pool), or to otherwise establish some sort of advantage within the game. Such external advantages grant Enhancement.

In simple contests, the objective is simply to roll the most successes. In complex contests, the Storyguide will choose an appropriate number of Milestones for both the player character and the Antagonist to pass, and characters may spend successes to cancel out the successes of their opponents.

The consequences of the game may vary, but Antagonists will usually choose a single consequence to be visited upon the loser (such as the Sphinx’s riddle, for example). This consequence must be paid for in advance by the Storyguide in Tension, wagered on the outcome, at a discounted rate of two-for-one (rounding up, minimum one). Injury Conditions wagered on the game cost 1 Tension for the first, 2 for the second, etc.

If the Antagonist wins the contest, the terms she outlined happen immediately, targeting whoever lost the game.

## SANCTIFICATION

**Cost:** 2 Tension

**Duration:** One Scene

**Action:** Simple

**Clash:** Intellect + Legend vs. Desperation

**Cooldown:** The scene ends; or after a successful Clash of Wills by another character.

The Antagonist sanctifies the terrain, charging it with mystical energy through their Dominion. Choose a Purview over which the Antagonist has Dominion when creating the Antagonist. For the remainder of the scene, any expression of divine magic in tune with the Sanctified Purview (fire attacks in an area under Fire Sanctification, for example) gain +2 Enhancement. Furthermore, opposing elements (for instance, water in the aforementioned example) suffer +3 Complication, with a penalty of reduced effect or damage to the surrounding area.

Storyguides may spend additional Tension to apply specific Dominion Stunts on a one-for-one basis, subject to the normal limitations of Dominion Stunts. These stunts are available both to Antagonists and player characters.

While Sanctification is most obvious when applied to basic elemental Purviews such as Fire, Water, etc., there's no reason it couldn't be applied to any Purview, given sufficient imagination. Artistry (Music) Sanctification, for example, could drag the field of battle into a musical number, and anyone not in-step with the music would suffer the Complication.

## SHADOW-STRIKE

**Cost:** 1 Tension

**Duration:** Instant

**Action:** Instant

**Cooldown:** The scene ends; or the Antagonist deals Health damage to a target normally.

The Antagonist can attack others through their shadows, wounds appearing seemingly from nowhere. If the Antagonist uses Shadow-Strike to grapple, Shadow-Strike lasts the duration of the grapple.

## TRANSFORMATION

**Cost:** 3 Tension

**Duration:** Instant

**Action:** Simple

**Clash:** Stamina + Legend vs. Desperation

**Cooldown:** The scene ends; or a number of turns equal to Desperation after the Transformed Antagonist is defeated.

The Antagonist transforms a being of lesser Tier, granting them an Archetype Promotion in the process (the cost of which is paid for with this Flair). The transformed being is under the Antagonist's control, and the transformation is generally irreversible (for exceptions, see below). In addition to the Archetype Promotion, assign relevant Qualities or Flairs to the transformed Antagonist as appropriate.

Generally speaking, player character allies should not be targeted, with the following exceptions: If the target is a Fatebound Canary, and if the target's transformation would help catalyze a Divine Deed. If a potential target qualifies for both, definitely use them. Reversing the transformation, if the players decide to do so, should be difficult, but not impossible; this can make an excellent seed for an appropriate Divine Deed.

# GOLIATHS

A Goliath is any target that, reasonably speaking, a character could not disable or destroy within a scene with normal attacks or divine powers. This may include hardened targets, targets that are too large or dispersed to meaningfully destroy within the time frame, targets capable of annihilating the character with little to no effort, or targets that are otherwise unassailable. This also includes targets that are physically or metaphysically not vulnerable to violence on an interpersonal scale, and can even be used to model things like elections or heists that have little or nothing to do with combat at all. In such cases, Threat represents the degree to which opponents work to undo progress or achieve their own victory, detect or capture the player characters, etc. It can also be used to model conflict between armies or even entire states, with the player characters taking a leading role in the action.

Characters opposing a Goliath must pass a given number of Milestones, equal to the Goliath's relative Size + Legend + Threat, to destroy it. The difficulty of each Milestone is equal to the Goliath's Scale, and represents minutes equal to the Goliath's Size. Failure on Milestones may inflict Conditions; Complications on Milestones may include increasing the Goliath's awareness of the characters (and therefore its Threat; if this would exceed 5, the Goliath is enraged, with suitable consequences). Success on a Milestone represents focused but significant damage done to the Goliath or actions that successfully impede the Goliath in some manner.

When all Milestones are passed, the Goliath is effectively destroyed, even if its physical form is intact.

Use the following template for Goliaths:

**Threat:** Threat represents the Goliath's willingness or ability to directly attack the player characters, rated from 0-5; 0 represents a Goliath that is unaware of the characters' actions, while 5 represents a Goliath that is both highly aware of and actively trying to harm the characters. If the Goliath takes an action, roll its Threat as a dice pool and apply Scale (Dramatic against Heroes, Demigods, and similar mythic beings; Narrative against anything else).

**Legend:** If the Goliath is divine (likely, but not required), it has a Legend rating.

**Size:** The size (in terms of Scale) of the Goliath relative to the attackers; if Sizes vary, use the smallest Size in the group and apply Enhancements relative to that Scale. If the Goliath is essentially a collective (such as an army or a population at large), the Size models their number.

**Narrative Scale:** This represents the Goliaths destructive powers relative to the characters and environment.

**Extras:** If the Goliath has any particularly unusual abilities, list them here.

Goliaths are most useful, in a storytelling sense, as a way to include conflict without that conflict necessarily revolving around interpersonal violence (though it can also serve as a big cinematic boss-fight system, as well).

## INDEPENDENT SEGMENTS

Some Antagonists have clearly defined subsystems or parts that pose a threat on their own. Consider a gigantic scorpion, which pinches and cleaves with its razor-sharp claws while its venomous tail rains down blows from above – dealing with one might not end the threat from the other, in the short term or otherwise. The Independent Segments rules model complex opponents like this.

Regardless of how many Segments a creature possesses, all those Segments use the creature's overall Traits, with the following caveat – each Segment has its own Health track, Defense, and Initiative; and Qualities and Flairs are assigned to a specific Segment. For example, if we wanted to build the giant scorpion from above, with a tail that could be chopped off or otherwise incapacitated before the main body, it might look something like this:

### SCORPIO'S BROOD (TRANSCENDENT)

**Primary:** 9

**Secondary:** 7

**Desperation:** 5

**Health:** 5 (Body), 3 (Tail)

**Defense:** 5 (Body), 4 (Tail)

**Initiative:** 6 (Body), 4 (Tail)

**Extras:** Natural Weapon (Body), Heavily Armored (Body), Baleful Touch (Tail)

This system can be applied to Goliaths as well. Since Goliaths don't have the same Traits as Antagonists, or interact with player characters in quite the same way, this isn't a matter of splitting Qualities or Flairs between Segments, but of distributing the milestones in a narrative fashion. Instead, we split the milestones (Threat + Legend + Size) between the segments. When a Segment is destroyed, if appropriate, the Storyguide may lower the Threat or Size by 1 or remove an Extra, to reflect a general lessening of capacity.

Consider a greater Titanspawn of Yamata no Orochi, the Eight-Headed Serpent: eight independent heads, any one of which an existential threat to anything around it, but legendarily vulnerable to the influence of alcohol. Let's model this as a single Goliath with eight Segments, each of which has two milestones: "Get the head drunk," followed by "Cut it off (or otherwise kill it)." That's sixteen total milestones – a lot, to be sure, but this is a greater Titanspawn!

### OROCHI'S OFFSPRING

**Threat:** 5

**Legend:** 8

**Size:** 3

**Segments:** Head (x8; Get the head drunk, kill the head)

**Extras:** Apocalyptic Presence (All)

If we wanted to model an asymmetrical Goliath – that is, a Goliath whose Segments are not more or less carbon copies of one another – we can simply do this by assigning a differing number of milestones to a given Segment, reflecting their overall importance. If you don't wish to assign specific milestone goals, you don't have to – players will find creative ways of fulfilling the mere numerical requirements! For example, if we wanted to model a particularly large Jotun out for a stroll in an inconveniently metropolitan area, it might look something like this:

### PERAMBULATING JOTUN

**Threat:** 1

**Legend:** 6

**Size:** 4

**Scale:** 4

**Segments:** Legs (x2; 3 milestones each), Arms (x2; 2 milestones each), Body (3 milestones), Head (3 milestones)

**Extras:** Miasmic Presence (Cold; Body), Collateral Damage (Arms), Making Space (Legs)

### IXION, ESTRANGED SCION OF ARES

Ixion, the former "mad" King of the Lapiths, is beyond tired of the Gods. Their schemes and machinations led him to lose his kingdom, be banished from Mount Olympus, and caused him to be chained for millennia to a fast-spinning burning cosmic wheel. Thousands and thousands of years being scorched and spun among the stars gave him a lot of time to think about his past and especially his future. So what if he killed his father-in-law and violated Xenia by becoming the first kinslayer? The guy was an extortionist who stole his horses! Also, Hera came on to him, not the other way around, and yet Zeus – of all the Theoi – has the gall to trick him into copulating with the cloud nymph Nephelē as revenge and then kick him right out of Olympus with a scarring thunderbolt?! No, none of what he'd done was his fault, and the Gods could not be trusted with their own divinity, which only meant he had to do whatever he could to take it all away from them. The Gods had cursed him, and he would definitely do anything to return the favor.

When his wheel-prison came to rest in Tartarus and Orpheus came to play songs, Ixion noticed that his wheel stopped in tune to the beat, and bided his time. He worked

magics to trick pipers and musicians of all sorts into the Theoi Underworld so that he could make the wheel stop long enough to break free. Now, unleashed and burning with vengeance, has sworn an eternal blood oath to overthrow the Gods, starting with the Theoi and moving onward, liberating the World from the daft machinations of these dread lords. Having rebranded himself as leading a divine revolution on behalf of everyone, Ixion remains as much of an egomaniac as he was all those thousands of years ago. This inter-realm terrorist/freedom fighter (depending on who you ask) is rumored to have fielded quite the rebel rag-tag army with a large percentage of them being his own bastard grandchildren, the Centaurs. It's not uncommon to see sleek recruitment videos online encouraging the disenchanted and cursed to join the Swords of Ixion. The symbol of the organization — a man screaming on a burning wheel — has been found left behind at the sites of terrorist attacks on popular temples and homes of prominent Scions. Ixion doesn't care who he hurts along the way to his revenge, or even upholding any of the ideals he may claim to his followers, since, after all, he's always been right and now he'll show everyone just how right he is.

He is, weirdly enough, a patron of the arts in the Veil and in the World. His fondness and gratitude toward musicians has never abated.

**Archetype:** Mythic

**Qualities:** Baleful Touch, By Divine Right, Interference, Super Soldier, Tough as Nails, Vengeful Blood, Willful

**Flairs:** Armor Piercing, Divine Command, I Have Friends, Mastermind, Molon Labe, Rage of Herakles, Second Wind, Seeing Red, Shadow Step

**Drive:** To thwart the plans of the Gods and to overthrow them.

**Primary Pool (8):** Leadership, Deception, Guerilla Combat

**Secondary Pool (6):** Athletics, Resilience, Propaganda

**Desperation Pool:** 5

**Health:** 4

**Defense:** 4

**Initiative:** 5

## LAMASHTU

If any being exemplifies monstrosity, it is Lamashtu. Daughter of the Annuana sky god Anu, she has the head of a lioness, donkey teeth and ears, long grotesque fingers with matching fingernails, and bird feet with the sharpest talons imaginable. A true demon, she is unique in that she does not act so evil on the behest of any divinity, but because she actually loves being a monster. Her particular meal of choice is babies (especially if they've just started breastfeeding) with a chaser of innocent men and her favorite activities

## WAIT A SECOND

Ixion is a Demigod and long ago decreed his intention to Fate to become a God. He failed miserably and descended to the Underworld by being bodily thrown down there on a burning wheel. Why isn't he really truly dead? How has he persisted this long? Why does he still have a Mantle?

Ixion is atypical of a Demigod (but by no means unique), who remains living even after his final failure. His binding to and Realm Birthrights from Tartarus keep him alive, but unable to achieve apotheosis. It's possible that killing him won't even result in him staying fully dead; he's walked out of Hades before, he'll do it again. Eventually, though, Fate has decreed he'll shed his mortality, and nobody can avoid that forever.

include harming and cursing mothers in a myriad of twisted ways and causing everything and everyone around her to get sick and die, but not for a while so she can enjoy it as it happens.

Lamashtu resides in Irkalla, the Annuana underworld, but she loves taking nightmare-inducing strolls among the mortals in the darkness of night whenever she can. She views no one as being her equal or even being a threat to her, but her archenemy Pazuzu would do absolutely anything to stop her malicious ways and he's not opposed to hiring Scions to help him. Fighting a terror such as Lamashtu would be a nightmarish feat of its own, but there are various rumors of strong rituals and amulets that help protect against her evil desires that any Scion would be wise to find before confronting Lamashtu. However, should a Scion instead desire Lamashtu as an ally, it is advisable to keep a constant stream of babies flowing in her direction.

**Archetype:** Mythic

**Qualities:** Apocalyptic Presence, Baleful Touch, Miasmic Presence (Nightmares and Sickness), Natural Weapons (Long Fingernails and Talons), Shroud, Unnatural Hunger (Babies), Wall Walker

**Flairs:** Curse, Dread Gaze, Eye of the Swarm, Illusion, Long Arm, Petrifying Gaze, Plague Touch, Shadow Step, Shadow Strike

**Drive:** Eat Babies, Harm Mothers, Pollute the World

**Primary Pool (8):** Chasing, Clawing, Cursing

**Secondary Pool (6):** Inducing Fright, Causing Nightmares

**Desperation Pool:** 5

**Health:** 4

**Defense:** 4

**Initiative:** 5



## ❖ SIMURGH, QUEEN OF THE BIRDS

The greatest of all rulers throughout history was never any sort of human. In fact, if one just took the time to ask their local pigeon, they'd sing you the praises of Simurgh, she who was chosen by their congress so many eons ago to lead them. She is supremely wise, having all the knowledge in the world and always wanting to learn more, and she is the epitome of nurturing and healing, bestowing her blessings on any who want them. Gigantic enough to carry off a whale in her talons, their eternal and loving queen has a human head known for its beauty, the body of a bird with feathers that shine like copper, and the sharp claws of a lioness. Having lived long enough to see the world be destroyed three times over, Simurgh stays fresh by plunging herself into sacred flames every 1,700 years from which she arises young and renewed. A trusted friend and ally of the Yazata Haoma, Simurgh takes up residence in the Gaokerena, Haoma's cherished tree whose fruit grants the eater immortality and perfect welfare, and helps to guard it against all intruders. Simurgh likes to spend her time flying around the World, tending to the needs and concerns of her avian subjects, and blessing the lands and water she flies over with purity and fertility. She especially loves spending time at academic conferences, meetings of tribal shamans, and volunteering with Doctors Without Borders to heal and protect those in need no matter who they may be. If she runs across an abandoned or estranged Scion, she's prone to take them into her care and nurture them, just like she did with the albino Prince Zal after he was abandoned by his royal family. It's not uncommon for Scions who don't get along well with

their actual divine parents speak of Simurgh affectionately as if she were their mother and a Scion wishing to learn something no one else could teach them would be wise to seek out Simurgh's educational tutelage.

**Archetype:** Transcendent

**Qualities:** A Cage of Words, Apocalyptic Presence, Dominion (Beasts: Birds), Flight, Honor Bound, Immortal-ish, Natural Weapon (Claws), Regeneration, Unstoppable

**Flairs:** Divine Command, Eye of the Swarm, Molon Labe, Sanctification, Selfless Shield, Share and Share Alike, Touch of Asclepius, World Shaking

**Drive:** To Heal, Learn, Protect, and Teach.

**Primary Pool (9):** Flight, Healing, Teaching, Wisdom

**Secondary Pool (7):** Biting, Clawing

**Desperation Pool:** 5

**Health:** 5

**Defense:** 5

**Initiative:** 6

## ❖ BUSHYASTA, DAEVA OF SLOTH

In all the inevitable things in life, entropy is one of them. The eventual slow-down and decay of all systems into chaos, Bushyasta delights in bringing about this decomposition in the laziest ways possible. Sloth made manifest, she

is a gaunt yet golden and kindly-looking old woman who unwilling to act on her own volition and prefers instead to use her powers to make her enemies just simply give up and take a nap with her. However, such a nap would be an eternal one as she has made Heroes simply lie down and sleep until death, surrounding her with mounds of peaceful-looking skeletons curled up in pleasant sleep. She seduces all with thoughts of sleep, of deep and dreamless slumbers, where no harm and no pain exist. No righteousness, prayer, or worship exists in dreamless sleeps either and her form of combat is praised among the Daevas with Bushyasta easily becoming one of Angra Mainyu's favorites.

Bushyasta exists anywhere darkness fills the sky, where night reigns and dawn is but a distant thought. She'll sometimes be seen with lesser Daeva carrying her from place to place, unwilling to just simply walk to wherever she wishes to go. Her kindly and wrinkled appearance can be seductive in a welcoming and grandmotherly sort of way, happy to provide you with the proverbial milk and cookies so you'll just doze off and forget everything. She particularly loves taking up residence in heroin dens (she misses the old Victorian opium dens a lot), university libraries, prison guardhouses, and factory workfloors, where some of the best results in her eyes can come from an unexpected nap. Bushyasta loves seeing people just simply give up and she loves whispering that it doesn't take that much effort to fall, to starve, to stop breathing, to not seek treatment, to die. More than a few Scions have run across her and never returned which has sparked rumors that there may be some still living and sleeping Scions underneath all those skeletons, having possibly slept for centuries and kept under the spell of the Daeva of Sloth.

**Archetype:** Avatar

**Qualities:** Life Drain, Miasmic Presence (Sloth and Decomposition), Physiological Void, Slothful Resilience

**Flairs:** Curse, Dread Gaze, Hypnotic Charm, I Have Friends, Illusions, Immobilize, Knockout, Long Arm, Mirror Mirror, Plague Touch, Shadow-Strike

**Drive:** To stop everyone from pursuing theirs.

**Primary Pool (10):** Causing Despair, Effortless Actions, Seduction

**Secondary Pool (8):** Blocking, Confusion, Surprise Actions

**Desperation Pool:** 6

**Health:** 6

**Defense:** 5

**Initiative:** 5

## PERI

To a Peri, it's not all that easy being good. Sure, they try the best they can, wanting to see the House of Eternal Light someday, but there's always something pulling at them to just be a

little naughty. The Peri are exquisitely beautiful with wide and gorgeous wings spreading from their humanoid forms. However, they didn't always used to be this way, having all once been hideous Daevas who have worked hard not just on their beauty, but also on discarding their evil past. Even though their brethren haunt and hunt them, viewing them as weak and foolish for having abandoned Angra Mainyu's rebellion, the Yazata still regard them with suspicion and bar them from their holy realms until they have truly proven themselves. As such, the Peri wander the World, seeking honorable deeds to do and ways to use their innate mischievousness toward righteous ends and gain the favor of the divines. That is easier said than done, though, and having a Peri in the passenger's seat means it's going to be a bumpy ride.

The Peri are widespread, from the largest cities to the most desolate of deserts, all well organized into their own clans and courts which work as a sort of anachronistic imitation of the societies they live in full of ceremony and pomp and arcane rites. These groups all answer to the great Shahdom of Paristan, a hidden kingdom of the Peris somewhere in the Caucasus Mountains, and the Peri have the magical ability to travel to Paristan at will. Their attempts to do good see them punishing whoever they perceive as wicked, which can include hunters who waste their kills, people who answer their cellphones at the cinema, unrepentant murderers who think they've gotten away with it, and even children who steal cookies from their parents' jars. They also love to collect strange and ephemeral things like the sigh of a dying maiden still in love with a soldier missing in action or the dreams of a child on a transatlantic flight and will happily pay if someone else can add them to their collections. A social and some would say annoyingly extroverted bunch, the Peri still have trouble figuring out what makes something good or evil and are actually well-known for kidnapping random mortals for their festivals and shindigs and sometimes forgetting to return them. They're all amazing sorcerers and capable warriors, having been called into battle by Heroes and leaders of yore, and do not shy away from bragging about their deeds and glory. Most of the time, it is a Peri that attaches itself to a Scion and not the other way around and what may start out as an annoying companion will quickly prove itself the Scion's most capable ally. The Peri are willing to go to seemingly impossible lengths to prove themselves good and worthy, which has been to the advantage of more than one Scion on their quests. Strong friendships have been forged between the Peri and Scions past and present and Peri-Scion bloodlines are not too uncommon with such odd couples being the progenitors of powerful wizards and glorious Heroes.

**Archetype:** Mythic

**Qualities:** A Cage of Words, A Thousand Ships, Flight, Helpless Fascination, Honor Bound, Mystic Arsenal (Peri-forged Weapons/Armor), Obligation, Perfected Soldier, Twitchy

**Flairs:** Curse, Hail Eris!, Illusions, Key to the Bifrost, Mastermind, Player of Games, Red Herring, Retcon, Share and Share Alike, Sorcery, Selfless Shield, Touch of Asclepius

**Drive:** To be as good as they can be with an emphasis on "as they can be."

**Primary Pool (8):** Deception, Magic, Melee

**Secondary Pool (6):** Games, Investigation, Seduction

**Desperation Pool:** 5

**Health:** 4

**Defense:** 4

**Initiative:** 5

## Omukade

Imagine the grossest centipede you have ever had the misfortune to come across and now imagine it large and monstrous enough to encircle a mountain seven times over at its smallest size. That is the Omukade, gigantic centipedes with bright orange heads, dark bodies, and some draconic features. Their origins, or even size limits are unknown, but they all seem unified by their sheer hatred for anything involving dragons and by how delicious humans seem to taste. They're usually found in mountainous regions and deep caves, with many simply calling any damp and dark space large enough to hold them home. While rare, having an Omukade in the area is a recipe for monstrous disaster – if the insatiable hunger for people doesn't become an issue, having anything even slightly draconic in the area will bring their wrath further, and they tend to provoke the wrath of.

Omukade are exceedingly venomous and nigh-indestructible as they are incapable of being hurt by any weaponry or other mundane means due to their strong and magical exoskeletons. However, they do have one peculiar weakness involving anything soaked in human saliva, which will cut through them like a poisonous knife through butter. Human saliva has roughly the same effect as a corrosive acid would have on normal mortal beings and it remains the only known way to truly harm an Omukade. They are solitary creatures of nominal intelligence who have probably never met another one of their kind before. Something in their biology draws them toward wherever dragons, their friends, or followers may be found and hell hath no fury like an Omukade facing a dragon. They have been known to devour entire dragon families, decimate their homes, and cause them to flee in hiding. Omukade have no mercy for the draconic kind and if Scions are protecting them, they face a formidable enemy. They cannot be conversed with or convinced and to stop them they must be slain. However, Scions have shared stories about some wild Demigod they know that domesticated an Omukade and rides the beast into battles, but no one has confirmed such a tale as of yet.

**Archetype:** Goliath

**Threat:** 5

**Legend:** N/A

**Size:** 6

**Narrative Scale:** 5 (x200)

**Extras:** Apocalyptic Presence, Natural Weapon (Fangs, Legs), Unstoppable, Venomous, can only be defeated by weapons soaked in human saliva

## ANIMIKII

The Animikii, also known as Thunderbirds, are the source of raging storms. The most booming thunder comes from when they flap their wings and lighting is said to strike whenever an Animikii blinks. As such, a flock of these massive birds flying over a village is not only terrifying, but has the potential to be utterly devastating. It is not their fault, however, considering the Animikii are not particularly intelligent and they also have little desire to bother humans. It is their migration patterns, through no fault of their own, that brings them above human settlements and causes the terrible destruction they are capable of. They tend to look like giant hawks with sharply curved beaks, dangerously clawed feet, and shining electrified feathers. Like hawks, they hunt down snakes and other similar prey, though of course they prefer the larger versions found in the World.

The Animikii are venerated and respected thanks to their efforts in hunting down Mishipeshu, the underwater panther, and all other sorts of dangerous creatures that troubled mortals in the early days of existence. Sweat lodges are modeled after their nests and gifts are left out for them on high peaks both as thanks and in hopes of appeasing them to bring the rains forward to dry lands or to not fly with such fury. Though they are not particularly intelligent, they seem to enjoy and understand certain dances which have been used throughout the ages to communicate with the Animikii. Scions are advised caution when approaching the Animikii, especially their nests, as they are not used to direct contact with other creatures they are not hunting and may be prone to attack if they sense even the slightest danger. To tame one would be an incredible feat, though the constant worry of electric shock has put off even the most foolhardy of Scions from attempting it.

**Archetype:** Mythic

**Qualities:** Apocalyptic Presence, Armor Piercing, Baleful Touch (Electricity), Dominion (Sky), Flight, Natural Weapon (Claws), Unstoppable

**Flairs:** Here I Come, I Have Friends, Making Space, Weather Tyrant, World Shaking

**Drive:** To bring the thunder.

**Primary Pool (8):** Flight, Hunting, Lightning Strike

**Secondary Pool (6):** Biting, Clawing

**Desperation Pool:** 5

**Health:** 4

**Defense:** 4

**Initiative:** 5

## RIGFENNID

The Fianna, legendary free-roaming bands of warrior-poets, are some of the most respected and feared battle groups in history. Known for rushing into expected defeat and absolute horror yet emerging victorious and glorious, the tradition of the Fianna continues into modern day in the World, with many being some of the most sought-after soldiers of fortune around. A member of a Fiann is known as Fennid and while they are forces to be reckoned with on their own, none can match the strategic genius, ferocious warrior skill, and wonderfully charismatic attraction of the Rigfennid. They are the leaders of the Fianna, each one leading their own Fiann into hell and back, with their Fennid being loyal and devoted to levels unmatched by other warrior bands. Among the ranks of the Rigfennid stand such glorious names such as Fionn mac Cumhaill, the warrior princess Ness, the nefarious druid Cathbad, and many other Heroes and figures of legend.

Anyone can become a Rigfennid who proves themselves as being unmatched in battle, bardic performance, and leadership. They come from all sorts of backgrounds and only how great they can prove themselves to be matters and woe be unto any that would challenge an established Rigfennid, especially in front of their Fiann. Many Rigfennid have been Scions, but even those who are not are an unstoppable force and worthy adversary when given their mission or, worse, when they are crossed and betrayed. Legends attest to the brutality of the Rigfennid against their enemies and no divine bloodline is going to protect their target from their cunning and wrath. They're capable of living off the land with their Fiann for as long as it takes and can survive in near any landscape, so if a Rigfennid is hunting a Scion, there's few places where they can hide anywhere in the World and many are familiar with Terra Incognita and have divine and magical allies to help them on their hunt.

**Archetype:** Paragon

**Qualities:** Cross-Training, Group Tactics, Honor Bound, Perfected Soldier, Tough as Nails, Willful

**Flairs:** I Have Friends, Inspiration, Invocation, Molon Labe, On Your Feet, Seeing Red, Under Pressure

**Drive:** To have their names echo in legend.

**Primary Pool (8):** Athletics, Combat, Tactics

**Secondary Pool (6):** Leadership, Performance, Survival

**Desperation Pool:** 5

**Health:** 1

**Defense:** 3

**Initiative:** 4

**Extras:** Paragons are Tier 1, and so roll against a target number of 8 rather than 7.

## IYAMI AJE

Reaching a ripe old age is a sign of wisdom and perseverance in countless cultures around the World, but if you're an Iyami Aje, it is a marker of supernatural power. Iyami translates from Yoruban as "mysterious mothers" and Aje is a magical and spiritual force that encapsulates the raw power of feminine divinity. The Iyami Aje have in their old age mastered this force to unforeseeable levels and are highly respected by their communities. They are healers of the sick and troubled, granters of fertility and easy childbirth, necromancers who can raise the dead to name their own murderers, and fountains of mundane and oracular wisdom. Iyami Aje are both beloved and feared for their magical prowess, but to call one a witch is not only insulting, it is dangerous. There are bands of men who belong to ancient societies of witch hunters who seek to find the Iyami Aje and claim their power for themselves, stopping at nothing until the old women are brought to heel. To protect them and give them their due reverence, many of the mysterious mothers are surrounded by the Gelede, devoted cults of warrior-dancers wearing elaborate enchanted outfits and who are dedicated to Yemoja. They fight against the witch hunters and bring tribute and protection to the Iyami Aje as their main purposes in life.

Inclined to separate themselves from the community by living alone and usually in homes away from their brethren, the Iyami Aje are nonetheless crucially integrated into their communities. In some cases, entire villages and neighborhoods revolve around them as the wise women who can handle any problem the community may have for them or as the mysterious crone at the end of the block above the bodega who gets weekly visits from detectives and some even say they've seen intelligence spooks wheel in dead bodies into the building's elevator. They do not tend to be Scions or even associate with them unless they're locals or have something to offer, but they come from powerful bloodlines where every woman in their family has the Aje in them and has the potential to become an Iyami Aje if they so wish it. Scions tend to seek them out for their oracular abilities and unmatched healing powers, though their ability to talk to animals and fluency of the language of birds is highly respected. To have an Iyami Aje on a Scion's side is an immensely powerful resource but to cross one or even to hunt one will bring the Scion into a battle against divine femininity itself as the Iyami Aje, the Gelede, and possibly even sympathetic deities such as Yemoja all turn against the Scion with a fury beyond that of a woman scorned.

**Archetype:** Paragon

**Qualities:** Dominion (Fertility), Omni-Oracular, Shroud, Willful

**Flairs:** Cause and Effect, Curse, Death Curse, Divine Command, Eye of the Swarm, I Have Friends, Illusions, Invocation, Possession, Sorcery, Touch of Asclepius

**Drive:** To heal, protect, and nurture.



**Primary Pool (8):** Healing, Magic, Protection

**Secondary Pool (6):** Animal Communication, Necromancy, Prophecy

**Desperation Pool:** 5

**Health:** 1

**Defense:** 3

**Initiative:** 4

**Extras:** Paragons are Tier 1, and so roll against a target number of 8 rather than 7.

## 💀 MOKKURKALFI

The great and most-powerful Jotun Hrungnir, in his fights against mighty Thor, needed some sort of unstoppable weapon to truly get the upper hand against the God of Thunder. Approaching his brethren in Grjotunagard, they set to work devising and planning what they believed would be something so massive and destructive that even Thor would fall before its power. The result was Mokkurkalfi, a humongous clay giant capable of crushing entire towns beneath his feet. Truly colossal, the giant measures nine miles high and three miles wide when its arms are extended to their full span. Finding a heart for Mokkurkalfi was a difficult quest but they settled on the large heart of a mare encased in its clay torso so that the giant would be able to finally live. However, the clay colossus was defeated at least once before by Thor's swift-footed servant Pjalfi, hacked to all its constituent pieces in rapid succession. In this matter

Mokkurkalfi laid scattered, the pieces of the giant spread across the World, for eons on end.

Recently, and no one is quite sure who took the initiative, it's clear that someone has reassembled Mokkurkalfi and provided it with some rather impressive upgrades. Still at core a massive and lumbering clay monstrosity of a superweapon, it has received some interior mechanical upgrades allowing it to jump higher, punch harder, run faster, and even devour victims if it wanted. Mokkurkalfi's heart has also received an upgrade and is now cybernetically enhanced as the core of a circuit system that now operates through the whole giant and is protected by more than just clay, making the giant far more difficult to end for good. Scions facing Mokkurkalfi stand against an unspeakably large hybrid terror whose every footstep is as destructive as an atomic bomb and capable of changing the landscape forever. Combat with the giant anywhere near civilization will result in countless deaths and wanton destruction, not to mention the collateral damage of its defeat as its pieces rain down upon unsuspecting villages and other locales. Destruction of the heart, however, will power down Mokkurkalfi for good but this will be quite a feat to achieve considering how well protected now the cybernetic mare's heart is.

**Archetype:** Goliath

**Threat:** 5

**Legend:** 7

**Size:** 6

## **Narrative Scale:** 5 (x200)

**Segments:** Head (x1, 3 milestones), Arms (x2, 2 milestones each), Legs (x2, 2 milestones each), Body (x1, 3 milestones), Heart (x1, 4 milestones, removing the heart kills Mokkurkalfi instantly)

**Extras:** Apocalyptic Presence, Unstoppable, World Shaking

### **WILD MINOTAURS**

Born out of the strange union of mundane mortals and magical bulls, Minotaurs are fearsome creatures to behold. Tall, broad, and muscular with the head and tail of a bull and the body of a human, they have never been able to fit into human society and have been shunned, imprisoned, and even hunted throughout history. The most famous of all minotaurs, the Minotaur of King Minos from which all its brethren get their names, was the first Minotaur in recorded history — though markings and totems from traditional minotaur sites indicate that they may in fact be far older. While minotaurs are solitary creatures by nature, some have gathered in packs with their own language and culture. They have a preference to wanderlust, especially in the open countryside, and have a natural inclination against being confined and made to engage in puzzling settings.

Minotaurs are rageful creatures, prone to attacking anyone they consider a threat on sight and are strong enough to barrel even through thick walls. They are natural hunters and carnivores that can feast on anything, but they do prefer humans whenever they run across them. Those

who have run across a minotaur know to just run and if they happen to be in a pack to run even faster. They have little learning, but keen senses; while they have difficulty communicating with other creatures, they can communicate fine with one another. Skilled hunters and pack leaders are usually identified by the bone jewelry they wear and the ceremonial paints and blood that covers them, usually from a fresh hunt. A Scion running across a minotaur will not be able to find an ally unless they somehow figure out how to relate to them. Otherwise, to the minotaur, you're not just the bullfighter, you're also the red cape they're being taunted with — and probably dinner.

**Archetype:** Rival

**Qualities:** Apocalyptic Presence, Armor Piercing, Imperfect Disguise, Natural Weapon (Horns), Stand Tall, Sure Footed, Tough as Nails, Unnatural Hunger (Humans), Unstoppable

**Flairs:** Knockout, Making Space, Penetrator, Second Wind, Seeing Red

**Drive:** To roam free and feast.

**Primary Pool (9):** Charging, Grappling, Hunting

**Secondary Pool (7):** Brawl, Rending, Survival

**Desperation Pool:** 5

**Health:** 3

**Defense:** 3

**Initiative:** 6

**Extras:** +2 Enhancement for Stunts other than Inflict Damage



# BRIGITTE

## PART TWO

### VII

It took her a month to see them all. These days, everyone was wrapped up in their own worries, and nothing short of monsters destroying a city was going to get them all in the same place at one time. Brigitte preferred it this way, these individual farewells. If she'd had to face them all together, they might have said something to make her stay. This way, she could take her time, say everything she needed to say.

She met Donnie in Athens, and he whisked her off to Olympus' slopes. They drank ambrosia in his mother's palace and scrolled through years of the photos he'd taken of the Band. Donnie'd never met a camera he didn't like (or a photographer he couldn't charm), but people wrongly assumed it was all vanity. His mother, after all, had been the one to punish Narcissus. His pictures framed the Band lovingly, showing them each at their best. Yukiko, radiant and defiant; Eric, laughing with his arm slung around Horace's shoulders; Aaron, holding forth, eyes alight with knowledge he wanted to share; Brigitte herself, watching them all and smiling. They spent hours reminiscing and laughing. Donnie bade a nymph to snap one last picture of them, one he saved for himself rather than shared with his millions of followers.

She joined Dr. Tigrillo on a quest to retrieve a grimoire from a forgotten temple. He spoke of history – the Band's, his pantheon's, the World's – and told her secrets of Mictlan she was sure he wasn't supposed to share. He seemed on the verge of apologizing for something, but Brigitte stopped him when he tried. Their divine parents had all put pressure on them at first, given them tasks that might have driven wedges between a lesser Band.

Whatever Tezcatlipoca had asked, Aaron was his own man, now. That was all that mattered.

She parked the hearse for a week and rode pillion behind Yukiko on her motorcycle down the southern California coast. They sped along twisty highways and stopped for breathtaking views, and each insisted the tears in their eyes were from the wind. On a quiet stretch of beach, they swam out farther than was wise and let the waves carry them back to shore. Every meal was the best Brigitte had ever eaten. If it were anyone else, she'd have thought they were trying to show her reasons to stay. But it was Yukiko's way of giving her permission to go.

How she spent that final week with Horace is no one's business but theirs.

Eric was the last. Her return trip took her through Kansas, where he was currently staying. They stayed up late, passing her flask back and forth and talking about old times.

"You scared?" he asked when they were both good and sauced.

"I'd be a fool not to be." No shame in admitting it.

"Do you want me to come with you? There's gotta be something I can do, some way I can help."

"You can help by taking care of the rest of them. I imagine it won't really hit them until after."

"Yeah. Okay." He ducked his head, struggling for composure. They'd already cried on each other once tonight and had promised that part was done. Eric kept his promises. He took one more swig from the flask and handed it back to Brigitte, but she waved it off.



"That's yours, now," she said. "Have a drink for me when you're all together. And don't you dare fill it with shitty booze. I *will* find out." That got him laughing, which got her going. It was a fine way to say farewell.

• • •

She came home to a funeral.

The neighbors told her in reverent tones that Joseph had passed in his sleep, that he'd gone quickly and naturally, and hadn't he lived a good long life?

Brigitte excused herself, claiming she needed to freshen up and she'd be right along; so many people had come out to see him off, the procession stretched for blocks. The brass band's tune carried through her open windows while Brigitte sank down at her kitchen table and sobbed. She'd bought him these extra months, she knew. Denying him to the Night Doctors meant he'd gone on his own terms, surrounded by love. But oh, it stung that she'd spent all this time bidding her friends adieu and hadn't been here to say goodbye to him.

Except.

Except this was his body's last trip around the town, but his spirit had a few stops left to make. Brigitte threw her head back and laughed, joy and relief and purpose all rolled into one long guffaw. She dried her eyes and changed her clothes, hurried out to dance with the second line.

Joseph's spirit was easy to find. He was up at the head, dancing alongside his own coffin, clapping for members of his family as they celebrated his life. Brigitte stayed back a ways; she knew how important goodbyes were. When it was done, when the prayers had been said and Joseph's praises sung, and everyone had gone their separate ways, she approached him.

"Brigitte!" he said. "It's so good to see you home again. Wasn't this a wonderful day?"

"It was. I'm glad I got to be here for it." She held out her elbow. "Walk with me a while?"

Joseph took it, beaming, and together they turned their steps toward the First Gate of Guinee.

She led him along secret paths, to the city's sacred places. At each gate, a Loa waited: Baron LaCroix, Guede Nibo, Guede Plumaj, Baron Cimitiere, Guede Babaco, Baron Kriminel. What they discussed with Joseph Brigitte couldn't hear; it wasn't for her to know. But each of them regarded her as she approached, their eyes full of knowing.

At the last gate, her father waited.

Baron Samedi welcomed Joseph with arms spread wide. He smiled while the old man gave Brigitte a final peck on the cheek, then guided him beyond, talking like they were old, old friends. Before they disappeared, he turned. "I'll see you again soon, Brigitte."

# VIII

A week later, she got wind of the witch.

Brigitte had spent the days getting reacquainted with New Orleans, checking up on her neighbors, settling back in. She'd gone looking for where trouble might be brewing and let people know they could come to her with rumors. Thus far, the Night Doctors hadn't returned, but the worry they were planning something never went away.

Then people got sick, and no one knew why. It wasn't something in the water. It wasn't an outbreak of chicken pox or norovirus or anything so easily explained. In fact, the hospitals all thought they were unrelated cases: a bad meal, a nasty cold, adverse reactions to medication. But Brigitte visited the recovering victims, and she knew the cold smell of magic surrounding them. It buzzed like tinfoil on her teeth and stuck in the back of her throat like a pill she couldn't swallow.

It didn't originate from any magicians she knew. Harmful spells weren't anything the priests and practitioners in her community would cast. It had the reek of cowardice about it, of someone who preferred to do their violence from afar — where they wouldn't get dirt on their hands or blood on their hems. Where deniability was perfectly plausible.

Tracing its source was a matter of waiting for another strike, which came quickly enough. The witch lashed out in the dead of night, that hour when even Bourbon Street's crowd had given up their partying for a couple hours' nap. The spell left an ozone-tinged afterimage on the senses of anyone who knew to look for it and pointed Brigitte toward a location in the Central Business District.

Rented office space, posh building, round-the-clock private security. She wasn't the least bit surprised when a little sniffing around named the lessee as one of the Night Doctors' shell companies.

*Cowards.*

Offers of help came rolling in: people who could hook her up with fake IDs and keycards, a group of kids willing to start trouble and distract the authorities. She turned them all down — what would stop the Night Doctors from laying claim to anyone who got arrested, or found to be one of her accomplices?

The only team she brought with her consisted of the already dead.

Leaked security footage would later show the siege's progression: the men at the main desk fleeing in fear and abandoning their posts, the guards pouring down from the 32nd floor into a mass of fighters who refused to fall to their gunshots, the woman in the top hat and sunglasses (one lens missing), who glided past them all with a pool cue tucked beneath her arm. The cameras followed

her progress to the offices of Keene & Bradshaw, LLC, then lost her.

Inside, a white woman stood alone behind a massive mahogany desk. A wall-mounted monitor displayed a spreadsheet full of names Brigitte recognized. The color-coding split them into two groups. She didn't need to decipher the coded headers to know they were current victims and potential ones.

A bolt of white-hot pain bloomed in Brigitte's chest as the woman muttered a spell. The World fuzzed out for a moment, and when it came back into focus she swore the Cathedral bells were ringing.

"You don't get to do this," Brigitte said. "I told your associates this city's under my protection." They'd keep coming, she knew. She could easily spend a lifetime tracking down these diseased little branches of the Night Doctors' operations, and there'll always be someone else in their pockets, waiting to move in.

The woman knew it, too. She came around the desk to gloat over Brigitte, though she wisely stayed out of the coco macaque's reach. "Nothing you do here will matter," she said. "Why don't you run home and wait for something you *can* fight to come along?"

But that was the whole point, wasn't it? Save who you could today, it mattered to *them*. Brigitte reached a hand toward the window. The witch's gaze flicked toward it, as though reinforcements might be waiting outside. Who hadn't seen that footage of Donnie swooping around on his golden wings, or Omolara rising into the sky atop a tornado?

But no one was out there.

"See?" the witch said, laughing shakily. "Nobody's coming to help—" She trailed off as every hair on her body stood on end. "What...?"

Lightning stabbed in through the window, past the women, and into the laptop on the desk. The monitors fritzed out. You didn't hang around with the likes of Omolara Muhammād and Eric Donner without picking up a trick or two.

"It's all in the cloud." The woman was grinning, triumphant. "So you fried a computer. So what?"

But the pain in Brigitte's chest was gone. She could move again, without her heart seizing and her lungs burning. Too late, the witch realized her mistake. Brigitte lunged forward and grabbed her upper arm in an iron grip. "Do you believe in Hell?" she asked the woman, and by the way the witch's eyes widened, she knew the answer was "yes."

Still, the witch tried to recover. "But your Underworld is ... I've heard stories about it. It's not fire and brimstone at all."

"Ah," said Brigitte, "but I know of some that are. Let's find the one best suited to *you*. I'm sure you have plenty to tell me about your friends while we're exploring."

Some Gods didn't appreciate intruders in their realms. She had no way of knowing whether she could find her way out once she stepped through the portals she knew she could open. But she had a full pack of cigarettes and her father's charming smile, and the rest would come to her along the way.

She raised the coco macaque, brought it down to strike the cold marble floor, and they were gone.

• • •

Omolara strolled through the French Quarter, past the tourist-choked streets of Bourbon and Royal, east past Esplanade and into the Treme. Business had brought her to the city, but curiosity set her wandering.

No one had heard from Brigitte de la Croix since the incident in the CBD. Police found an empty office and a burnt laptop — the data was (they said) unrecoverable. Keene & Bradshaw's PR person only said the matter was under investigation. They denied hiring any security personnel beyond that which building management provided and had no further comment.

As no bodies were recovered from the stairwell, many came to believe the whole thing was a hoax — using leftover footage from some Tulane film student's zombie movie, maybe, or some other, utterly boring explanation.

But the strange illnesses had stopped that night as well, and though the Night Doctors were certainly still in operation, they were being extremely cautious for now.

A cluster of people blocked Omolara's progress along the sidewalk. They stood in front of a little yellow house whose steps and tiny porch were covered in offerings: flowers, candles, stuffed animals, a bottle of rum. Crouching in the middle of the crowd, ignoring the other onlookers, a young man drew a complicated symbol in white chalk.

"Whose veve is that?" Omolara asked, to no one in particular. She knew many of the Loa's symbols, but she'd never seen one like this.

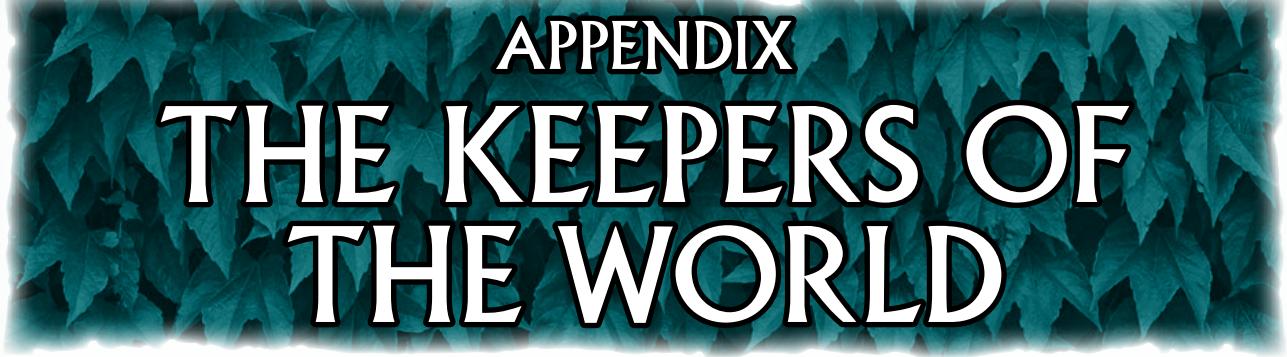
A woman in a flower-covered sundress beamed up at her. "That's Baronne Brigitte's."

The young man finished and stepped back to survey his work. Some people in the crowd snapped pictures with their phones. The artist passed around his box of chalk, inviting anyone who wanted to draw the veve in other places around the city to take a piece. Several people did.

Omolara waited until the crowd dispersed a bit. She approached the porch and saw letters and pictures tucked under some of the items: children's drawings of Brigitte, cards thanking her for her protection, slips of paper asking her to intercede on a loved one's behalf.

"Well done, Baronne Brigitte," she said, and set a pack of cigarettes down among the other offerings.





# APPENDIX

# THE KEEPERS OF

# THE WORLD

**Take care not to make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land that you are to enter; lest they become a snare among you. Tear down their altars; smash their sacred stones, and cut down their asherahs. You shall not bow down to any other god, for the LORD — “Jealous” (is) his name — is a jealous God.**

— Exodus 34:12-14

The Keepers of the World are an unusual and secretive cross-pantheon alliance of Gods who share a common goal: protecting the World not only from Titans and their spawn, but also from the capricious Gods of their pantheons. Several are powerful Scions who rose to apotheosis in a mature pantheon, but some have existed since their pantheon's mythology was laid down, and others might've lived before their pantheon existed. Yet each also has powerful reasons to resent or fear their pantheon, and to be concerned about the pernicious effects of the Second Titanomachy on the World.

The Keepers are neither solipsistic Titans nor self-aggrandizing monotheist Gods. Having observed the dark side of divine existence for centuries (and millennia, for some), the Keepers have agreed on a daring and reckless plan to free the World. Forging themselves into a pantheon via shared Deeds and followers, they will weave a uniquely powerful Creation Myth into Fate, one that sunders every Gate and Touchstone and Axis Mundi from the Over- and Underworlds, leaving only the World. Above it, only sky. Below it, only rock. And over it, only one pantheon.

By eliminating all sympathetic connections between the realms, the Titans and Gods will be unable to reach the World, though the underlying strata of Primordials should still function to give existence shape. Should the Keepers succeed, the sun will not rise...instead, a mere ball of flaming gas will illuminate the planet. More importantly, the actions of the Titans will no longer affect the fundamental physical laws that maintain the World's stability. It's an ambitious plan, and one that could conceivably work, if some weren't more concerned about being the only Gods left over.

## PRINCIPAL MEMBERS

Forged in secret, the Keepers are not a pantheon — yet — but instead hold various positions in their respective pantheons, secretly suborning their cults and working toward their goals. Each was once a prominent Scion who experienced the fury and curses of the divine in their mortal days. They are: Imhotep (Netjer), Herakles (Theoi), Takeminakata (Kami), Meng Po (Shén), Wayland Smith (Æsir), Dorje Shugden (Palas), Tolui (Tengri), Tlazólteötł (Teötł), Karna (Devá), and Zalmoxis (no pantheon). They are joined by Amergain mac Míl, who is not a God but instead a strangely powerful Saint capable of bringing the divine down to Earth. Their ranks include divinities enraged over the injustices done to them by their fellow Gods and those compassionately desiring a better World. No deities are explicitly forces for Chaos, for Imhotep would not allow their entry without his express permission, though Dorje Shugden and Karna both lay claim to some element of settled disorder within their Legends.

### IMHOTEP, THE ONE WHO COMES IN PEACE

**Aliases:** Imouthes

Scion of Ptah, high priest of Ra, chancellor to the pharaoh Djoser, architect of a grand pyramid, a peerless physician by repute if not by Deed — Imhotep is one of the only non-royal Egyptians recognized as a deity, and all agree he earned the honor several times over. Such was his fame that

the Greeks and Romans inscribed their temples with praise of his benevolence and excellence in the art of healing. Before Imhotep, the greatest kings of Egypt buried their forebears in elaborate mastabas; after Imhotep, Egyptians buried their rulers in pyramids, a symbol that has endured as his legacy in the World. From the beginning, Imhotep approached being a Hero and a Demigod as he did the building of colossal monuments: creating plans and refining them endlessly until he was certain enough to commit them to stone. After his death and deification, Imhotep guided his descendants, Scions, and worshipers to building the “true” pyramids of Giza in accordance with his divine plans.

That wasn’t the end, either — under a variety of Incarnations and divine inspirations, Imhotep guided others to create the Great Pyramids, the Hanging Gardens of Babylon, the Lighthouse at Alexandria, the Hagia Sophia and even the Hoover Dam. The great architect was endlessly fascinated with the works of human beings. Creation was easy for the Gods; human beings had to work for every brick they put in place. Mindful of his humanity and his past in a way that many of the Gods denied, Imhotep constantly sought ways to make work easier while pushing human architects and builders to ever-greater heights. He wondered what the World would be like if the Gods focused more on gentle and hidden guidance and inspiration of humanity than their own capricious whims or personal grudges toward other pantheons. When he met Wayland the Smith, a discussion about whether it would be possible to separate out the World from the Over- and Underworlds led to the formation of the Keepers.

Imhotep is the guiding vision of the Keepers, the divine architect laying down the occult framework for sunning of the World and the creation of a new World in its place. He recognizes that many deities of many pantheons are themselves fulfillments of his vision of shepherding and caring for humanity, but he cannot find a way to fully separate the good from the bad, and the only means he has of realizing his grand plan — the Keepers — means associating with deities who have less-than-idealistic reasons for their support. His Incarnations match his idealism — architects, doctors, and judges. His Scions follow these pursuits, and he guides them with a gentle hand, like any good parent.

**Callings:** Creator, Judge, Sage

**Purviews:** Artistry (architecture, stonework), Health, Order

## HERAKLES, GOD OF STRENGTH

**Aliases:** Hercules, Bahram, Vajrapāni

In many ways, Herakles defines what it meant to be a demigod, and young Heroes and Demigods look up to him as a paragon of masculinity, strength, and virtue. Yes, he killed his music teacher Linus with the man’s own lyre, and countless others in great fits of berserk anger, but what of it? Thousands of years after the fact, the son of Zeus’ Deeds are bywords for great feats of heroism, his name revered

as a synonym for strength. Often lost in these retellings is the reason for those Deeds: Cursed by his stepmother, Herakles murdered his entire family in a rage, and did his Twelve Labors in service to Eurystheus, the king of Tiryns and Mycenae. Years later, she compelled him to rage once more, resulting in the demigod hurling his friend Iphitus over the city wall to his death — and once again, Herakles submitted to three years of humiliating labor.

Herakles went on to perform many, many more Deeds in service to the Gods, but his mortal death eventually resulted from his wife suspecting him of infidelity — the crime so hated by Hera. Herakles never suspended his suspicions of the Goddess’ role in his mortal death, and he never forgot the reason for his many acts of servitude. He never forgot, and he never forgave the elder Goddess, even after his marriage to Hebe, handmaiden of Hera. His unease at the way the Theoi treated humanity did not abate when he joined their ranks. He and Imhotep form the core of the Keepers — if Imhotep is the brains of the operation, Herakles is the heart. He’s no dumb brute, however; Herakles is quick to remind mouthy Scions that he won many of his victories through guile, a reminder swiftly followed by a lesson in pankration, a sport he invented.

Herakles traveled far and wide in his mortal life, often following the path of Alexander. He visited Ireland (and wrestled most of the Tuatha), Persia (who also treats his name as byword for strength) and India (where he acted as a muscular protector of the Buddha). Curiously, it’s this trait that his Scions most often inherit; he’s seemingly more defined by wanderlust and restlessness than immense strength. His Incarnations are almost always laborers — contractors, construction workers, carpenters, hunters. He’s a distant but loving father, and his demeanor is generally kind and jovial, despite his Passion Purview. His intimate and nuanced view toward the anger he feels will be visited upon the World soon enough.

**Callings:** Hunter, Trickster, Warrior

**Purviews:** Epic Stamina, Epic Strength, Passion (Rage), Stars, War

## KARNA, BETWEEN DHARMA AND ADHARMA

Hail Karna, heir of royalty, peerless warrior, son of Surya, steadfast friend to those who do not love him. Who was he, abandoned by his regal mother on the banks of the river Ashvanadi, given the name Vasushena by those who raised him? What is the character of the man who studied the arts martial under the sages Drona, Kripa, and Parashurama, avatar of Lord Vishnu? Who is Arjuna’s equal and peer, friend to Duryodhana, ally to the Kauravas, and staunch enemy of his brothers the Pandavas, who disrespected him? Through Karna, we learn that no act is wholly good or wholly evil, and that the hardest choice for good men is not between dharma and adharma, but between conflicting dharmas.



From his mortal days, Karna was a revolutionary figure, a magnificently talented rebel frustrated by circumstances of birth and the lack of respect the World showed him. His mortal life was defined by charity and deep hunger for recognition, pursuing dharma by merit; he gave up immortality as a free gift to Indra, and used the boon he received in return to save his friend and companions rather than kill his rival. Upon his death in the climactic battles of the Mahabharata War, none was more surprised than he to awaken upon Mount Meru as a minor God and portion of Surya, having followed in the footsteps of his father for his entire life. This only served to infuriate him further; his Deeds were not wholly his own, but a reflection of his father's.

Karna never wanted to join the Keepers, not truly – but as with so many other things, once he swore friendship to Herakles after a wrestling match, he felt joining with his friend was his duty. He staunchly denies any appeal of being a powerful deity in a new pantheon. He stresses performing a task for the best of reasons, no matter what means those ends justify, and he makes sure his Scions remember the value of loyalty. Karna is the rival, the staunch and steadfast foe you must respect and compromise yourself to beat. His Incarnations follow an adversarial path to the powerful, though his rivalry brings out the best and the worst in people. Without Karna, you would never be inspired to reach the heights you do.

**Callings:** Adversary, Guardian, Warrior

**Purviews:** Epic Dexterity, Epic Stamina, Epic Strength, Passion (Loyalty)

## MENG PO, THE OLD LADY, GODDESS OF FORGETFULNESS

**Aliases:** Meng Jiang

At the entrance to Fengdu, on the Nai He Bridge (known as the Bridge of Forgetfulness), stands an old lady. She collects herbs and stream water to make her Five Flavored Tea of Forgetfulness, a broth that cleanses the soul of all memory, so no reincarnation remembers its past life or its time in the Chinese hells. In life, she was Lady Meng Jiang, unable herself to forget the pain of her husband's passing and thus unable to reincarnate; she brews her tea to show others how to forget and allow them to pass on to their next life without shame or pain. It's this tea that gives her the Legendary Title Goddess of Forgetfulness.

Meng Jiang's husband was a conscript in an army, who died fleeing agents of the wicked Emperor. Those agents built his body into the foundations of a mighty fortification, later claimed to be a part of the Great Wall. When the Wolf of Qin saw her beauty, he begged her to marry him. She asked for three things: a festival in honor of her husband, the presence of the Emperor and officials at her husband's burial, and a mighty terrace on the bank of a river, suitable for a sacrifice to her husband. The Emperor complied with her wishes, only for her to sacrifice herself. In death, she became Meng Po, and served in the hells for centuries, never letting go of her pain. How could she forget the Mandate of Heaven that led to her husband's death, and made his erstwhile Emperor a God? Meng Po's compassion kept her bound to her pain, and led her to cleave to Imhotep's plan



for a divine order that didn't empower monsters or lead mortals into horror by chasing the favor of Heaven.

An ancient woman of striking beauty still, Meng Po conveys sadness and grief with a single sharp look. Her knowledge of shades is surpassed by few, and by none for its intimacy. Herakles recruited her with his own tale of injustice, although Meng Po ventured to Hades to interrogate his mortal shade as to the God's sincerity. Whatever Herakles' mortal shade told her, it was enough for her to trust the Theoi God implicitly, and seek to build a cycle of reincarnation into the Keepers' theology. Meng Po never makes Scions, but she occasionally Incarnates as one. Her tea doesn't work on her, unfortunately; in every Incarnation, she is bound to experience the same heartbreak in similar circumstances.

**Callings:** Guardian, Healer, Liminal

**Purviews:** Artistry (Culinary), Beauty, Darkness, Deception, Death, Health

## DORJE SHUGDEN, THE EYE OF THE STORM

**Aliases:** Dolgyal, Gyalchen Shugden

Witness Dorje Shugden, enlightened gyapo, protector god. Fear Dorje Shugden, demon, destroyer, punisher of Gelugpa monks who have lost their way. A Buddha of wisdom, a wise protector, a hungry ghost in human form, a vicious demon — Dorje Shugden embodies these dualities, reveling in their ability to polarize opinion. In life, Shugden was a monk and Buddhist practitioner; in death, they

became a minor protector of the Sakya school as one of the Three Gyalpo Kings (Shugden, Setrap, and Tsu Marpo).

Only later did he vow to protect Je Tsongkhapa's lineage in the Gelug school. His round yellow hat and flaming wreath symbolize a touchstone for Gelugpa purity, and his countenance is gleefully malicious. They seek to maintain purity in the Gelugpa lineage, no matter the cost. Angry and vengeful, the erstwhile Pala sees themselves as a punisher of the wicked in a new pantheon, eager to shed the trappings of their past and the controversy that surrounds them. Dorje Shugden's cult reveres them as deity and protector. The Dalai Lama discourages the practice, advising his followers that Dorje Shugden is a malevolent spirit; as consequence or cause, Shugden has a decidedly antagonistic relationship with the rest of the Palas.

Takeminakata recruited Dorje Shugden, as one of the Kami's mantles was a devoted Buddhist king. In the Keepers, they see a way to maintain the purity of the Gelugpa philosophy forever by ensconcing it within the new theology and social order of the Keepers' World. In Shugden, the Keepers see a being of eternal controversy, a force for purity and vitality without simultaneously being a force for Chaos. Their Scions are rare, but they frequently choose leaders who demand purity and are fierce in their convictions.

**Callings:** Destroyer, Guardian, Sage

**Purviews:** Epic Strength, Fertility, Fortune, Passion (Wrath), Prosperity

## **TAKEMINAKATA- NO- MIKOTO, PRINCE OF THE EARTH**

**Aliases:** Minakatatomi-no-Kami, Takeminakatatomi-no-Mikoto, Suwa Myōjin, Suwa Daimyōjin, Ugajin

God of Izumo, Lord of Ashihara no Nakatsukuni, son of Ōkuninushi, Takeminakata was concerned with little more than wise and just rulership of his land and his people. Yet when the gods of Takamagahara sent the God Takemikazuchi to demand that Ōkuninushi relinquish his authority over Japan to the progeny of the sun goddess Amaterasu, Takeminakata urged his father to fight. A brief fight ensued, deemed by many to be the first match of sumo. Takeminakata lost the bout handily. He was caught and beaten again on the shore of lake Suwa, and his yielding marked the submission of the earthly Kami to the Amatsukami.

Takeminakata attempted to go back to his role of local deity, but he was never the same. He was excluded from Izumo due to appearing as a vast and frightening dragon, but contented himself with founding the Suwa clan. He views the modern World with increasing disdain, as the God has seen the final ruler of the Suwa clan perish without heirs and his favorite practice of traveling across ice in winter to see his wife has been greatly hampered by global warming. Herakles hunted with him, commiserated with him, and recruited him.

Politically, Takeminakata is perhaps the most troublesome Keeper. His style of direct rulership, an urge he's keen to fulfill, doesn't precisely fit with Imhotep's vision of the Keeper's World. Yet Takeminakata argues that only direct divine intervention, if only for a little while, is necessary to save the World from ruin. His Incarnations take a similar direct, hands-on approach, from farming magnates to a CEO's heir to sumo wrestlers who never quite reach yokozuna rank. His Scions are similarly ambitious, constantly reminded of their birthrights and encouraged to chase after them.

**Callings:** Creator, Hunter, Warrior

**Purviews:** Animal (dragon, snake), Epic Strength, Fertility, Frost, Sky, War, Water

## **TLAZOLTEÖTL, GODDESS OF FILTH AND PURIFICATION**

**Aliases:** Ixcuina, Tetoinnan, Tlaelquarni, Toci

She who eats sin and excrement, goddess of cotton, the death caused by lust; Tlazolteötl is these three things above all, though she is more. A being of sin and unlawful love, she is also a force for purification; while she encourages immoral behavior and visits great torments upon those who indulge, she also helps to purify their souls when they repent. Those who were close to death, the old and the ill, would be encouraged to confess their sins to her and she would devour all that was unclean, purifying those who prayed to her and preparing them for the afterlife. Tlazolteötl also presided over childbirth and midwifery,

as her connection to corruption and decay was symbolic of the death needed to birth new life.

Despite quite literally eating shit for thousands of years, Tlazolteötl doesn't seem to loathe her fellow Teotl, making her membership in the Keepers is something of a mystery. The Keepers' World needed a judge of sin, Imhotep argued — and both an outlet for immoral behavior and a means of forgiveness. He also argued that the World and divinity itself was corrupt, and only a regeneration would save it. These arguments seemed to have swayed She of the Black Lips, in keeping with her role as provoker and pardoner — but she keeps her own counsel.

In the World, Tlazolteötl has been a plumber, a midwife, an OB-GYN, and a nun. Her Incarnations frequently wear black lipstick, and have an undeniably forbidden sexual appeal, while her Scions are sometimes embarrassed by their mother's activities but secretly grateful for her intervention in the World. She is a vital, active force; guardian and punisher of the secret pleasures.

**Callings:** Creator, Healer, Judge

**Purviews:** Artistry (Weaving), Earth, Fertility, Fortune, Health, Moon, Passion (Lust)

## **TOLUI KHAGAN, ODCHIGIN YOUNGEST SON, GOD OF FAMILY**

**Aliases:** Tului, Renshang Jingxiang, Ruizong

The youngest son of Chinggis Khagan and Borte Khatun, Tolui refused to claim the title Khagan in life, though he was a loyal servant of his father and briefly ran the Empire until his brother Ogedei Khan could be installed as the second Great Khan. He was a mighty warrior, helping greatly in the conquest of the Jin Dynasty of China, the Tangut Empire, and the Kharezmid Empire. It was given to him in death by his son Mongke, much as his imperial name and temple name were granted by his grandson, Kublai, during the establishment of the Yuan Dynasty.

In life, Tolui wanted nothing more than to serve his family. He worked closely with his Christian wife, Sorghaghtani Beki, to shape the administration of the Mongol Empire and rule over the homeland of eastern Mongolia as the Odchigin, the Prince of the Hearth Fire. However, Ogedei Khan, fell sick, the shamans and diviners determined that there was only one possible cure. No sacrifice or ritual would be enough, save for the death of one of Ogedei's own family members. Tului followed his promise to his father to always support and guide his elder brother. He willingly chose to die, that Ogedei might live.

Now, Tolui and Sorghaghtani are honored in the Lord's Enclosure alongside Chinggis Khagan himself. And yet, Tolui is unsatisfied. He saw what his death did to the empire, how the spirits of the land and the Tengri had demanded his life to save his brother but, in doing so, took away his ability to mediate and guide his family. It was painful and difficult to break from his father and to oppose

## AMERGIN MAC MIL, OLLAMH ÉRENN

**Aliases:** Amergin Glúngel ("white knees"), Amergin Glúnmar ("big knee")

**Callings:** Judge, Saint, Sorcerer

When the three Scion kings of the Tuatha Dé Danann killed his great-uncle Íth, the greatest bard and judge of the Milesian people led an army to conquer Ireland. He negotiated with the Tuatha for battle terms, and in victory he and the Milesians became the ancestors of the Irish people while the Tuatha retreated to their Overworlds and became Gods and patrons.

The Ollamh Érenn — "Greatest Chief" of Ireland — is not, himself, supernatural or superhuman in any way beyond a sorcerous proficiency in the bardic arts and herbal-based longevity. Amergin's special set of Knacks, Beyond the Ninth Wave, are the result of both advanced Saint Knacks and Realm Birthrights. They allow him, among a host of other benefits, to interfere with Marvels by spending from the Tension pool. Amergin may also cancel any Scale directly applied to him. He cannot outrun a motorcycle, for example, but he can shrug off the mighty blow of a War God as if it were a punch of a merely-strong mortal, and he can cancel the defensive Scale of a God. Amergin treats the nuclear blast of a Deva astra as a hand grenade, or the shot of a tank-busting anti-material rifle as a simple rifle bullet — both are dangerous, to be sure, but survivable with proper toughness and preparation beforehand.

Herakles recruited Amergin while visiting Ireland. The ancient bard had long protected Ireland from a host of supernatural threats while studiously ignoring the Tuatha's attempts to do the same, but Herakles offered him the chance to help protect the World forever. The great bard often acts as Guide to Scions of the Keepers, allowing them access to some of his Knacks. He also aids the Keepers in battle, setting terms of engagement that both sides must adhere to.

the Tengri, but Tolui has done it. He has dedicated himself to a simple goal: that no family should ever again be torn apart by the whims of Fate and the Gods. It pains him that his own father cannot understand his decision, and the two argue whenever they meet now.

Tolui Incarnates into the World relatively frequently. He cares deeply for his Scions and takes an active role in teaching and guiding them, making sure they understand the cruelties of Fate and the importance of family. He has been a bartender, a warlord, an administrator and more, but he always makes time for his kin. He is frequently found drinking, and his love of alcohol has persisted well beyond his mortal life. There is nothing in the World that he would not do to protect his family.

**Callings:** Guardian, Lover, Warrior

**Purviews:** Death, Epic Strength, Health, Passion (Familial Love), War

## WAYLAND, THE SMITH

**Aliases:** Völundr, Weland, Galand

The weird and malicious craftsman, Wayland, was in life a Scion — he does not speak of his parentage, but occasionally implies it was a giant named Wade or a nameless alfar — and an indomitable force at the forge. Talented from the start, he apprenticed to two dwarves, who taught him everything they knew. Unlucky in love, his first wife left him, leaving only her wedding ring. When the king heard of Wayland's talent at the forge, he ordered the Hero hamstrung and chained to the forge, so he could produce wonders for the king. And so he did — Wayland's revenge was as wondrous as it was inhuman. Laughing at the king's horrified misery, Wayland took flight on a flying contraption

he had fashioned, sailing high into the sky. His deeds since then include the forging of various magic swords and shields that feature prominently in Norse mythology.

Wayland is not a kind God or even a necessary evil; his sense of cruelty is quite banal, even if the torments he devises are as ingenious as his creations. For all that, he is an eminently human evil, and wears his distaste and hate for happy deities on his sleeve. He did not find a kindred spirit in Imhotep, but he did foresee and truly intricate piece of magic in the breaking of the Gods' grip upon the World.

His Incarnations are always smiths, but even there is great variety — from Renaissance festival novelty producing battle-ready blades, to a steelworker manning the vast industrial vats, to a factory owner creating the latest technologies in a virtual design. His Scions tend to be warriors, as Wayland gifts his progeny with weapons and expects them to be put to use. He knows the battle for the World will eventually begin, and he intends to be loaded for bear.

**Callings:** Creator, Leader, Sage

**Purviews:** Epic Stamina, Fire, Forge

## ZALMOXIS, GOD OF BLOOD

**Aliases:** Gebeleizis

The Geto-Dacian people are gone from the World, but their God remains: the immortal Zalmoxis, sage and wonder-worker, chthonic deity, and patron of vampires. In life, he founded a mystery cult dedicated to blood magic; in deification, he instructed the Getae in all things, and gave them their laws. He was not of the Theoi, but was adjacent to them, though his people acknowledged no Gods but him; the Geto-Dacians eventually took Hestia as another deity, to Zalmoxis' consternation.

This began a conflict that escalated until the Theoi went to war against Zalmoxis, while the Roman Empire conquered and enslaved many of his people. Since then, the God has only tended to a small number of worshipers, though he survived the Christianization of Romania with his cult intact.

A God of death and immortality, Zalmoxis is single-handedly responsible for a number of vampires in the World, and is friendly even toward foreign undead — he regards them with a mixture of fascination and manipulative interest. A particularly famous Scion of his, a hero of the Romanian people, made many sacrifices to Zalmoxis in the traditional manner: impaling on vast stakes, so that the blood would run into the earth. A God of the sky, Zalmoxis is fond of storms, announcing his presence with dramatic thunder and lightning followed by torrential rain. His personal motif is simply “Blood is life,” while his Virtues are Occultation and Epiphany.

A fervent enemy of the Theoi even now, Herakles sought out Zalmoxis. After wrestling the other God for weeks on end, Herakles told him of the Keepers’ plans. Now, Zalmoxis marshals divine might from sources Imhotep would rather not touch. His Scions are marked by cruelty, but also by greatness, and they would fervently argue that the true manifestation of one is not possible without the other. At times, a Scion will ask Zalmoxis who the chief God of the new pantheon will be. At that question he smiles grimly, blood limning his teeth.

**Callings:** Healer, Leader, Sage

**Purviews:** Death, Earth, Epic Stamina, Health, Order, Prosperity, Sky

## POTENTIAL KEEPERS

Imhotep and Herakles approached several other deities about their plans, essentially inviting them to tie their Legend into the new pantheon. The following turned him down, even if they remain somewhat sympathetic to the aims of the Keepers. They could, presumably, change their minds at some point. Other deities have been considered for membership; any who view their chief duty as guiding humanity rather than punishing it or fulfilling their own selfish desires, and who might remain quiet, will likely receive a covert invitation.

- Confucius really doesn’t like being a God. Seriously, he does not like it one bit. Imhotep thought this would make him more sympathetic, but Confucius elegantly argued that disrespecting the elder Gods could not set the universe aright — and if he didn’t like being a God in his own pantheon, why would he want to be a God in another?
- Persephone did not choose Godhood on her terms, not precisely, even if she did make the choice to become a Demigod and consented to marrying Hades. Herakles recognized this commonality, pointing to the murder of his family and the various trials he was forced to endure. Yet Persephone’s love for her husband was genuine, and when Herakles promised Hades a place in their pantheon, she was savvy

## THE SWORD OF IXION

You’d think that the Keepers and the Sword of Ixion would be natural allies. You’d think that, and on some level many of their members honestly think that too. The cults of the Keepers incestuously intertwine with the Sword of Ixion, and a few lay members hew to both groups simultaneously. These interactions decline precipitously as you climb the ranks, however. Ixion remembers Herakles getting in a lick or two while they both lived on Olympus, and besides, the other Keepers are Gods too, albeit foreign ones. On the other side, Imhotep thinks Ixion is a violent madman. More to the point, Ixion’s goal is to sunder and kill all divinities out of a need for revenge for his mistreatment, while the Keepers want to ensconce themselves atop the World to protect it from Gods and monsters alike. Ixion’s goal is more honest and less pure; the Keepers’ goals are more pure but less honest.

enough to realize the Lord of Erebus would never go against his brothers. She declined, but told Herakles she’d keep his secrets.

- Herakles also approached (and fought with) Marinette, the Loa of Power and Violence, the mambo who sacrificed the black pig to start the Haitian Revolution — the only successful slave revolt in the history of the World. Marinette represents freedom from bondage secured by violence, and Herakles knew blood would have to be shed to free the World. But Marinette turned him down flat, taking a chunk out of Herakles’ pectoral with her cleaver. She didn’t view the expressions of the Gods to be bondage, even while she acknowledged the Annuna were a thing in divine politics.
- Amatsu-Mikaboshi, the August Star of Morning, is more Titan than God — but his defining Callings (Adversary and Liminal) require him to define Shinto by embodying an opposite. He’s aware of the irony of his role, thanks much, and simply doesn’t see a place for himself in the Keepers’ World. Imhotep tried to anchor the Keepers’ creation myth with a great chaotic adversary, but was unable to entreat Amatsu-Mikaboshi to fill this role.
- Imhotep implored Savitar, the Lord of Motion, to join the Keepers, but the elder Deva (and sometimes-asura) demurred. The idea of a God dedicated to change and renewal, and puissant enough to keep all the natural laws of the World functioning, would have made for an ideal Keeper. Yet Savitar was one of the first Vedic Gods, and older than many of the popular Deva. He never gave a real reason beyond longevity, but in truth, he’s too fond of the World and his fellow Gods to change for change’s sake.

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# SCION

## DEMIGOD

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Chronicle \_\_\_\_\_

Player \_\_\_\_\_

Parent \_\_\_\_\_

### SKILLS

- |  |       |                                      |       |
|--|-------|--------------------------------------|-------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Academics:    | OOOOO | <input type="checkbox"/> Medicine:   | OOOOO |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Athletics:    | OOOOO | <input type="checkbox"/> Occult:     | OOOOO |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Close Combat: | OOOOO | <input type="checkbox"/> Persuasion: | OOOOO |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Culture:      | OOOOO | <input type="checkbox"/> Pilot:      | OOOOO |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Empathy:      | OOOOO | <input type="checkbox"/> Science:    | OOOOO |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Firearms:     | OOOOO | <input type="checkbox"/> Subterfuge: | OOOOO |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Integrity:    | OOOOO | <input type="checkbox"/> Survival:   | OOOOO |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Leadership:   | OOOOO | <input type="checkbox"/> Technology: | OOOOO |

### ATTRIBUTES

	MENTAL	PHYSICAL	SOCIAL
POWER	Intellect _____ ●OOOO	Might _____ ●OOOO	Presence _____ ●OOOO
FINESSE	Cunning _____ ●OOOO	Dexterity _____ ●OOOO	Manipulation _____ ●OOOO
RESISTANCE	Resolve _____ ●OOOO	Stamina _____ ●OOOO	Composure _____ ●OOOO

### PATHS

- Short \_\_\_\_\_   
 Long \_\_\_\_\_   
 Band \_\_\_\_\_

Effects: \_\_\_\_\_

### DEEDS

### VIRTUE

OOOOO

### KNACKS

Mortal	Immortal
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

### CONTACTS

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

### CALLINGS

OOOOO  
OOOOO  
OOOOO

### MOMENTUM

□ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □

### HEALTH

- Bruised \_\_\_\_\_ +1  
 Bruised \_\_\_\_\_ +1  
 Bruised \_\_\_\_\_ +1  
 Injured \_\_\_\_\_ +2  
 Injured \_\_\_\_\_ +2  
 Maimed \_\_\_\_\_ +4

Taken Out

### BOONS/PURVIEWS

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

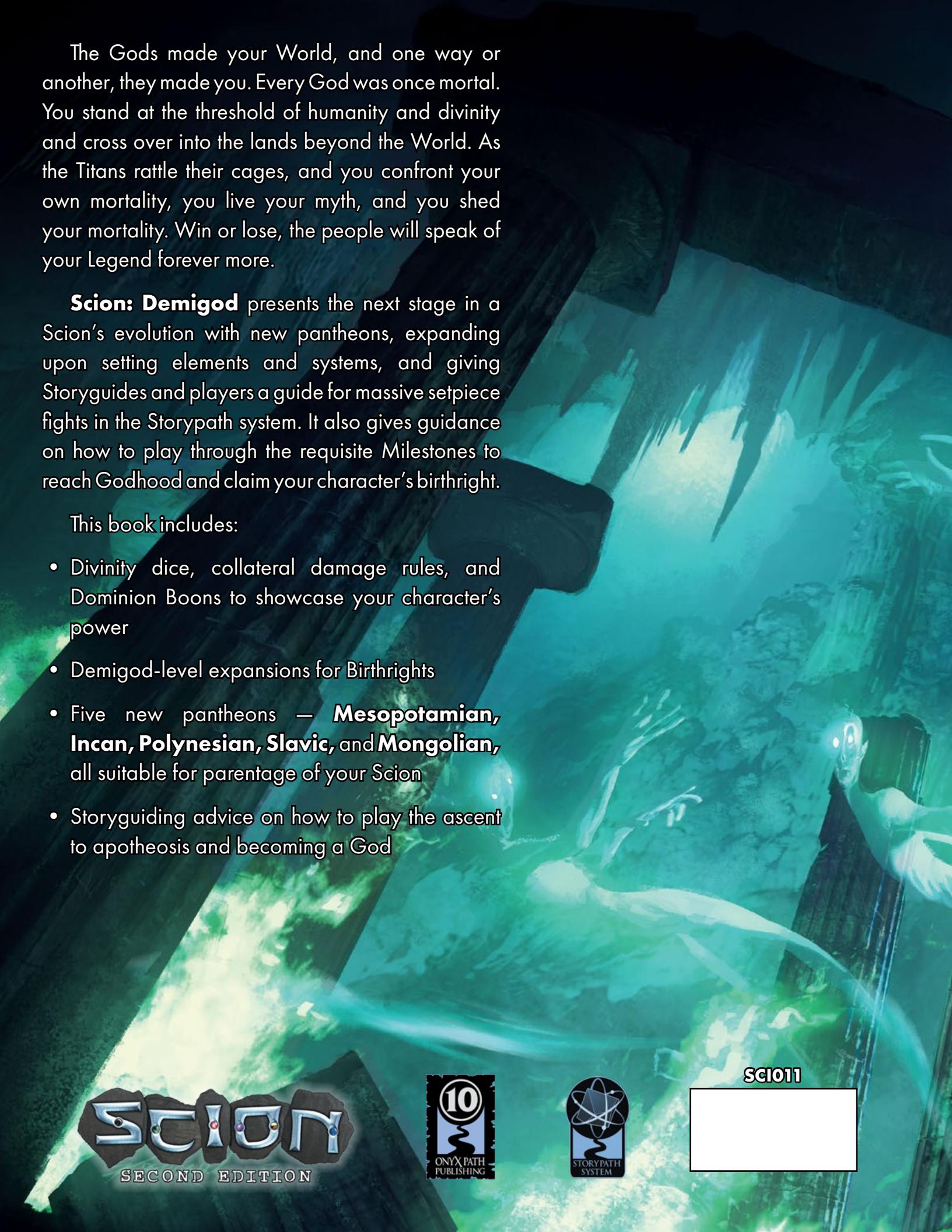
### DIVINITY DICE

□ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □

### LEGEND

● ● ● ● ○ ○ ○ ○  
□ □ □ □ □ □ □ □

Movement Dice: \_\_\_\_\_  
Defense Roll: \_\_\_\_\_



The Gods made your World, and one way or another, they made you. Every God was once mortal. You stand at the threshold of humanity and divinity and cross over into the lands beyond the World. As the Titans rattle their cages, and you confront your own mortality, you live your myth, and you shed your mortality. Win or lose, the people will speak of your Legend forever more.

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