



BREAKING POINT

Suit of Hourglasses

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What is this?

Breaking Point: Suit of Hourglasses is the nineteenth monthly small release for **KULT: Divinity Lost**.

This release features nine changes a **Broken** player-character could experience, all of which are based on the KULT Tarot. As the Gamemaster, you are invited to change and adapt them to better fit your story, as well as attach any other effects relevant to what caused the PC to break. Other suits will be released in the near future.



Characters, locations and incidents are portrayed from the metaphorical viewpoint of the **KULT: Divinity Lost** setting.



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VISIONS AND NEEDS

How long does “Brokenness” last? What are its consequences? How will the PCs change? Is this forgettable and/or treatable? The truth of the matter is that these and many more questions have answers unique to each game. It all depends on context, GMing style, campaign themes, the Horror Contract, etcetera.

A splatterpunk themed game might have the player-characters peak momentary madness and frenzy, while a story about altered conscience might require that they remain *Broken* for long periods of time. One is sudden, chaotic, and hyper-violent. The other is calm and surreal. Some groups will gladly delve into the depths of the human mind to explore philosophical questions. Others want nothing but Hollywoodian meltdowns. Maybe you want to experience *Broken* for the sheer power it brings (Enlightenment through Madness), or maybe you’re seeking the discussions about mental health that it sparks (*Broken* as a mental illness). Either way, it is up to each group to define what it looks like in their own campaign.

With that said, here are some questions to help you shape what *Broken* means and looks like. If breaking is meant to be a big part of your story, consider using these questions to expand the Horror Contract before the game begins. This is not a definitive list, so remember to expand on the answers and allow more questions to emerge as needed.

- ◆ What are the main themes of the campaign? How could a *Broken* PC enhance them?
- ◆ How is *Brokenness* experienced under these themes? And for how long?
- ◆ Are there any lingering effects?
- ◆ Is it possible to ever be normal again after breaking?
- ◆ Which additional systems would benefit the story? Maybe additional Player Moves, maybe bonuses or penalties to Attributes, or perhaps none are needed.
- ◆ Which “glimpses of the Truth” could be experienced?
- ◆ Does the Horror Contract limit an aspect of being *Broken*? If so, which aspects and how?

+TAROT+ICA

This release presents ideas based on the Suit of Hourglasses. These are not the only effects of these cards. Rather, see them as a starting point to develop your own vision. You are of course invited to grab the Tarot Guide (available for free on our website) and brainstorm while reading this document.

Each idea is followed by a suggestion of a new Advantage and Disadvantage the PCs might have access to while *Broken*. It is up to you to determine if they should retain these Moves after “unbreaking”. As a rule of thumb, if you wish to avoid dealing with too many Advantages, it’s wise to ask the Player to erase one of her own before gaining access to the new one. Alternatively, if the player-characters are supposed to remain *Broken* for a short period of time and won’t change dramatically after that, you may want to avoid erasing any Moves. Instead, you could simply keep them locked until the “benefits” of being *Broken* have disappeared. The same applies to Disadvantages.

These changes may or may not happen in conjunction with the GM Moves suggested in the corebook. As per the corebook writing, you don’t have to hand new Advantages to the characters, but it does help to better illustrate what it feels like to Break.

Known Homebrew

Some GMs like to simply activate Disadvantages as if the Player rolled -9 whenever needed. Others, not so much. Some don’t think *Broken* characters are capable of *Keeping it Together*... and, again, others disagree. Truly, *Broken* is a plot device for you to explore KULT’s cosmology more deeply and without restraints. However, if you’d rather have some sort of system to guide you, a widely used homebrew is to maintain the mechanics of Critical Stress whilst *Broken* (penalties to *Keep it Together* and Disadvantage rolls and bonus to *See Through the Illusion*). If these modifiers fit your vision and needs, it would be wise to keep them.

HOURLASSES

The hourglass represents Time and Space, the prison binding us in the Illusion, but it also carries the hope of breaking the shackles and waking up. The hourglass also reproduces the Labyrinth that all cities are built from. It has a strong connection to Achlys and the Underworld.

1. Achlys

Achlys calls, manifesting itself in the player-character's perceived reality just beyond dark corners and corridors, deep shadows, and tunnels. In the labyrinth of the PC's mind, madness rages on and brings about more darkness into the real world — all of it are manifestations of a larger being's incomprehensible expansive presence; Achlys. Soon, her world will be drowned in shadows cast by alien structures invisible to the human eye. These shadows, all part of a growing void spawning from within the player-character, will whisper things. Secrets. Obscure, destructive knowledge that draws her closer to the edge of oblivion, where she will meet her fate: utter annihilation. Of thought, of body, of soul.

Despite seemingly happening only within the player-character's mindscape, these manifestations can become extreme and even attract and kidnap unwitting humans and animals so long the PC refuses (or fails) to tame her Madness. She witnesses coworkers walking down obscured aisles and never coming back, their only Elysian remains being a faint memory of what they once might have looked like. Animals disappear after dumpster-diving, silence overwhelms the room as everyone suddenly stops talking, a crowded location is quickly emptied leaving the PC alone, and apathy reigns over every interaction. As the world fades into darkness, will she answer the call and walk herself into the darkness?

Advantage: *Contagious Insanity* (KDL, p113).

Disadvantage: *Depression* (KDL, p97) to represent an urge for self-destruction that comes from within.

2. Future

The passage of time, deciphered through the cracks of a splintered mind, is experienced differently by the player-character. She becomes fixated on consequences, and the consequences of said consequences. A myriad of possibilities play in her mind's eye after each action, readjusting and reprocessing thoughts (old and new) as soon as the next spontaneous thought joins the maddening orchestra. The cascading imagery grows exponentially until it becomes unbearable to think of everything, all of the time. And then she perceives her final destination in this journey.

If you have no ideas as to what her fate is or looks like, draw another card and expand on its meaning using the original Tarot rules booklet. Ideally, even if it is a desirable fate, it will come only with great sacrifices.

Advantage: *Sixth Sense* (KDL, p116)

Disadvantage: *Condemned* (KDL, p97) as per her vision.

3. Past

Just as the player-character's soul echoes trauma from all of her past lives, rampant Madness sends her back in time. Briefly, she sees the world deconstruct and rebuild itself to another era,

taking to the trash bin of Time all of the useful contemporary knowledge she had access to due to the time of its discovery. Remade into a proper citizen from the era she's now forced to experience, the only bit of Truth she is certain is that she's shifted in Time.

In reality, that's the only Truth that matters, but it alone unfortunately won't take her far without the proper aid of Time & Space magic. So long the strands of time don't get tangled around her neck for one final strangulation attempt, she may use her faint memories of the future to channel strong magical feats and finally become Enlightened. Or, like the many that came before, she will die trying.

Advantage: *Dabbler in the Occult* (KDL, p114) for the moment she comes in contact with proper Time Magic rituals.

Disadvantage: *Mental Compulsion*: memorizing (KDL, p99).

4. Space

The character's spatial awareness is skewed by the perception of paths to worlds hidden behind the veil. She senses tremors, spots of extreme cold and heat, alien noises, and even doors that exist to her and her only. Twisted roads that take distracted wanderers into inhospitable worlds.

Damaged by the sight of a world that no longer makes sense, she cannot bear to be still. She must move, always. She walks fast and talks loud, gesticulates aggressively, and suffers greatly with nervous tics. She must fight for the Space she inhabits, lest she be drowned by the kaleidoscopic nightmare that her surroundings have become.

In reality, the illusion of Space has begun to deteriorate within her mindscape. If she doesn't wander out of Elysium and into the Borderlands out of her own will or curiosity, something will push her to do that — a Lictor and its henchmen, most likely.

Advantage: *Wayfinder* (KDL, p116).

Disadvantage: *Stalker* (KDL, p101).

5. Borderland

The character is shifted to the Borderlands and meets countless obstacles when trying to leave it, no matter to which side she wants to escape to. Choose an appropriate bordering reality (Inferno, Limbo, Metropolis, Gaia, or the Underworld) and decide what happens to the player-character's body in Elysium. For example, it could be that she disappears from Elysium to the point of the Illusion blocking memories from her existence. Or, if she's in the Borderlands of Limbo, she could fall into a coma.

When she understands what is going on, you might want to allow her to become Enlightened, either being turned into an Abomination or a Revenant, depending on what happens with her. You can find the Enlightened Archetypes on KDL, p350.

There are no suggested Moves for this card.

6. Hidden

The character is swallowed whole by the Illusion. She is a stranger to the eyes of lovers, friends and family. Pictures that once featured her now have a vacant space only she can notice, videos of her existence have her face blurred and voice drowning in white noise. Official records, if they happen to exist, trace back to a person that although similar in appearance, has been dead for decades now. If she's lucky, complete and total erasure affect her bank accounts and profiles on social media that now belong to the same dead person. Worrisome, but still usable. If not, those also vanish completely. While *Broken*, the character feels the world around her changing like sand running through her fingers.

In reality, the machinery of the illusion is pushing the player-character out of the Sleeper's lives. Even though incongruencies remain and these people remember her on occasion, they are doomed to forget her. Or, worse, remember her differently. Soon, she will have no option but to flee into another world and make a life for herself there.

Advantage: *Shadow* (KDL, p109).

Disadvantage: *Cursed* (KDL, p97).

7. Labyrinth

The world becomes a labyrinth. From thoughts to Space itself, nothing makes sense. Entrances and exits are shuffled, turning a street corner is always a surprise, and she never knows when her own house will turn on her. Trapped in an absurdist reality, the mind relies on obsessive-compulsive behavior (KDL, p244) to stay afloat this madness. Elaborate, weird rites have to be employed for things to remain bearable and predictable. Otherwise, she will be forever lost.

In reality, so long the player-character remains *Broken*, the illusion of Space will further deteriorate and become meaningless. The only way to create predictability is to come up with rituals that seemingly manipulate the world. Checking where a door leads to before leaving it closed ensures its path will not change. Turning the lights on and off guarantees the room will not be different tomorrow morning. And so on, and so forth. Except that, at times, these rituals are done to exhaustion. When ignored, confusion can become so great that it dazes the player-character. Life is unbearable without such control.

Advantage: *Keen-eyed* (KDL, p109).

Disadvantage: *Mental Compulsion*: checking things multiple times and other elaborate rituals (KDL, p99).

8. Crossroad

Here, Madness is both a liberation and a curse. Badly equipped to deal with the erosion of many lies, the player-character's mind has to improvise solutions. The illusions of Time & Space, life and death, and the mysteries of Passion and flesh will begin to take new form. And the player-character has to choose whether to stay and live this new life... or close her eyes and sleep. When this card is drawn, the player-character faces a crossroad. A point

of no return. The decision is final for this lifetime unless a new, and more powerful event, forces her to Break again.

She has to either accept madness and become Enlightened and live a dangerous life unwanted by many, or retreat to slumber and forget all the evils she's experienced, likely to end up much safer than she would have ever been. If she becomes a Sleeper, the people in her life will be protected not only from the chaos her Madness would cause, but also all the other dangers it could attract. Many of her deeds would be forgotten and reshaped. Life would be easy and safe.

If she becomes Enlightened, the many lies come crashing down on her, turning her into a Child of Madness (KDL, p351), translated to gameplay as being transformed into an Abomination (KDL, p352). Follow the instructions of *Advance your character to an Enlightened Archetype* found on KDL, p137.

There are no suggested Moves for this card.

9. Gate

In the throes of her mental anguish, the player-character learns how to open gates to another dimension. The player-character is able to perceive where the veil is at its weakest and may cross back and forth into and out of otherworlds. These gates, conjured by her Madness and found by chance, require a sacrifice to be crossed — even if it is to be made automatically in ways that are unknown to the PC. Maybe blood has to be drawn, a memory is forgotten, a memento is destroyed, a *Relation* is decreased, a *Dramatic Hook* is transformed to something vile or destructive, or else.

Advantage: *Enhanced Awareness* (KDL, p114).

Disadvantage: *Schizophrenia* (KDL, p101).

