



BREAKING POINT

Suit of Roses

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What is this?

Breaking Point: Suit of Roses is the thirteenth 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?

TAROTICA

This release presents ideas based on the Suit of Roses. 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.

ROSES

The rose is a symbol of Passion, the blinding desire that binds or liberates us. It relates to our sexuality. It is strongly connected to the primal forces of Gaia.

1. Gaia

The illusion cannot mask it anymore, it's perceptible how Gaia utilizes the player-character's madness to invade Elysium. Wherever she is, daily life is continuously disrupted by nature, even if at a slower pace where the veil is at its strongest. Packs of rabid dogs are seen trashing cars, birds flock to the building's windows and block the view, rats chew on cables and cause energy blackouts, stray cats leave dead critters at people's doorsteps and on the laps of strangers.

Huge trees can be seen in the horizon wearing skyscrapers for armor, cables dangling from the buildings fight for space against vines, bushes and flowers sprout through tiny cracks in the concrete and asphalt. So long the PC hides in one place, it will eventually turn into a den for strange fauna and flora. Worse than that, the urban landscape itself might begin to feel alien and unwelcoming to her. When seeking shelter from society, retreating into these nests further ravages her sanity... leaving even more tears in the Illusion for Gaia to flow through.

Despite having access to secure places, being dragged into the Borderlands of Gaia isn't all that safe. If her madness is left unchecked and she accepts the deep wilderness into her reality, the alluring qualities of this damned new world will diminish and give space to terror and aggressiveness. Wild creatures fight her for food, water turns to poison, sewer tunnels become caves sheltering bloodthirsty gods. If she's lucky and able to endure Gaia's cruelties, maybe she will grow her own weapons and fight back. Or maybe she'll be preyed upon for eons to come.

Advantage: *Animal Speaker* (KDL, p107).

Disadvantage: *Harassed* (KDL, p98). To fight her presence, the machinery of the Illusion evokes mindless hate in the hearts of Sleepers.

2. Birth

The player-character's madness overwhelms not only herself, but the world around her, infecting others with corrupted images of the PC. Soon after Breaking it will be clear to her that humanity's perception of her is vastly different than what she perceives as "herself", which in turn is likely to be the opposite of what she actually is. These shards of clarity, both hers and the others', coalesce with all delusions and misrepresentations of herself to form a new being: a perfected version of her.

She witnesses her reflection crawl out of a mirror leaving a vacant space behind. For better or worse, the copy reflects what the PC wishes she would be. Weaker or stronger, alluring or repulsive, it doesn't matter what as long as it is better at being so. There is no duality in it either. The copy isn't a being of its own, and as such it cannot have desires that contradict the PC... unless these come from dormant areas inside the PC's own mind — areas that have yet to be discovered and explored.

In reality, the copy lives solely in the PC's mind's eye. It's a twisted way of delving into her own mindscape to better reflect her divine self. Both the PC and her copy live in synergy, each capable of deciphering each other's thoughts and wishes. Ultimately, as an expression of the PC's lost divinity, the copy aims to subdue the PC and take complete hold of her actions. Soon, only one of them shall rule this mortal coil.

Despite the copy being locked to the PC's perception of the world, it is very much present in Elysium. The Illusion masks her actions as a ghostly or demonic entity that cannot be perceived by human senses, or as Freudian slips by the PC herself in case the copy needs to communicate something to the world. Other mad PCs and NPCs might glimpse the copy's presence by *Seeing Through the Veil*, but may never really understand it completely.

Advantage: *Divine* (KDL, p114).

Disadvantage: *Haunted* (KDL, p98). The copy needs the PC to be distracted or weakened to take complete control.

3. Survival

The player-character senses the potential danger in everything, everywhere, at all times, from people and situations to creatures and objects. These threats, be they real or not, crush her under killing waves of anxiety. She is constantly forced into fight or flight responses, and most of her decisions are made on pure instinct. When uncertainty is long passed and the danger is proven to be real, panic sets in and her blood boils as she's prompted into action.

In reality, her slumbering divine powers are scrambling her thoughts. Her buried divine conscience is well aware of the dangers of the Illusion, and it triggers primal responses within her mind to avoid anything that would further trap her in Elysium. She may only find liberation from these thoughts on the other side of the veil, where she's almost free to establish bridges to her inner power and pick up the shards of divinity that are cutting way too deep.

Advantage: *Vigilant* (KDL, p108).

Disadvantage: *Phobia*: uncertainty (KDL, p98). Optionally, consider ignoring the broad "uncertainty" subject for this and treat Phobia as Generalized Anxiety and Panic Disorder as written in KDL, p246.

4. Growth

Madness and Passion converge rapidly and explosevily, transforming the player-character's body and mind into a monstrosity that reflects her most wicked desires. Flapping and dripping fleshy genitalia that must be pleased appear across her body, multiple holes through which she smells the scene open in her neck and chest, new sets of black beads for eyes are hidden in her mouth and rectum. Limbs and fingers grow to better touch and feel the world. She senses everything better, harder, easier.

These monstrosities aid her in the pursuit of what her heart most desires, except it must now serve a higher purpose than simple possession and understanding.

She must also consume, quench, absorb, and/or merge with what she most desires. Knowledge must be displayed on skin and flesh, objects are locked within her entrails, love affairs must be swallowed whole, the world must be a part of her. The player-character is (and needs) too much. At all times. Soon, the Illusion won't be able to conceal her identity and infirmities will strike her mortal shell as a way to stop her from tearing the veil. However, once the body dies... what will be of her conscience?

Advantage: The player picks something that would help the PC to conquer an obsession. The gamemaster should reflect the new Move in the PC's appearance.

Disadvantage: *Victim of Passion* (KDL, p101) or, alternatively, *Infirm* (KDL, p98) if applicable.

5. Predator

She embodies the uncaring, ruthless, and vile aspects of Gaia. If the deep wilderness is life and death unto itself, then the player-character must play a part in the latter... and death has many faces. She needs to prey on the weak, victimize others, perpetuate terror and agony especially if it was once inflicted upon her. This is neither arrogance nor a god complex. This is her soul fighting to have power again — to possess, to dominate, to control. It is difficult to understand the true extent of her actions while she remains *Broken*, as there is nothing but actual power running through her veins. And this power wants out — and soon it shall be free. Violently so, if necessary.

In reality, constant exposure to evil has reignited memories long forgotten of a time when she was divine. Although it's hard to process such emotions, they are clear in intent: it's good to hold another's life in your hands. She doesn't have to be a killer to tear others apart. No, she brings the bad news with a smile. She willingly establishes weird competitions to assert dominance. She is to be seen and feared.

Advantage: *Intimidating* (KDL, p117).

Disadvantage: *Marked* (KDL, p99). Although engaging in violence isn't necessary to sate her newly woken divine memories, it does feel good (and rather corrupting) to step up against those stronger than her.



6. Swarm

The player-character's awareness is widened as she breaks into the collectives' hiveminds. When navigating a large crowd, she feels the emotions and thoughts shared by everyone surrounding her. This feeling is a mix of flashing imagery, desires, and bodily sensations. Like an insect, she simply knows how to decipher what others want from her and, in turn, silently communicates to them what she needs. It's automatic, natural, safe. And it's a good thing that more often than not everyone wants the same thing as her.

On the other hand, isolation becomes crippling. She cannot fathom the idea of remaining alone for long periods of time. She craves shared spaces so much that paranoid delusions threaten her wellbeing at all times — someone, somewhere is out to get her and all they need is to single her out.

In reality, her senses are jammed. The machinery of the Illusion has found a way to make her believe that connecting to a crowd of Sleepers (and mimicking their behavior) is the only way to feel safe. However, the divine spark within her has begun to thwart this lie too, and soon she will understand that crowds are meant to be used by her to further expand her power, and not blindly followed around.

Advantage: *Character Actor* (KDL, p107) or *Voice of Insanity* (KDL, p116).

Disadvantage: *Stalker* (KDL, p101). Something (for example, a Lictor) has sensed her potential to Awaken and sent people to stop this from happening.

7. Prey

Passion is not restricted to mindless pursuit of an obsession. Rather, it can also be a desire to be victimized. This is exactly what happens to the player-character, who (knowingly or not) puts herself in dangerous situations that will inevitably end badly for her. Murderous love affairs, shady deals, death drives, and more. She is the perpetual victim, the weak link, the defenseless, and will inevitably be exposed to abusers time and again.

She finds herself facing people that want to prey on her at every turn. And even when the danger is a delusion, she can't help but feel left behind, used, discarded. Once the threats (real or not) completely occupy her mind, they may manifest into reality, seeking to abuse her best intentions. These often are creatures of Passion that appear human to Illusion-clouded senses — or seedlings of evil that sprout within a potential abuser's mind.

Advantage: *Jaded* (KDL, p120).

Disadvantage: *Object of Desire* (KDL, p100).

8. Obsession

At last, the player-character's obsession is strong enough to breathe life into dormant Passion spirits nesting deep within her mindscape. Now that she is *Broken*, the spirits will be able to follow ripples in the Illusion that inevitably lead them into Elysium. Once they breach through the veil, the spirits will infect the minds of dear friends, family, and the people standing between the PC and her obsession. These victims will become enablers and helpers in the PC's quest to quench her thirst for whatever she's obsessed with. They're there when she needs to cry and be remembered about her quest. They're there when she needs money after being fired. They're there when she needs sacrifices for a ritual.

Although obviously useful, it is crystal clear to her that everyone in her life has been infected by an entity that's aiding her. More than that, she knows that this entity is evil and won't stop after she's got to the bottom of the first obsession. It will feed more twisted desires into her brain... and guide her in the downward spiral of Passion. Problem is, it might be too late when she recognizes the damage it's doing.

In reality, these Passion spirits are a reflection of the PC's lost divinity. They are sparks of divine power; one that bends and breaks the minds of others. She's got an innate ability to sway humanity, and will keep doing so unknowingly. In turn, the Illusion will continuously mask this power as "demonic entities controlling the people around her" as a way to disconnect her conscience from her power.

Advantage: *Forked Tongue* (KDL, p103). Optionally, you might want to roll *Soul* instead of *Charisma* to better reflect the PC's lost divinity.

Disadvantage: *Obsession* (KDL, p100).

9. Love

Love is the judge, jury, and executor. A weapon for the player-character to wield, the only real ruler of her soul, a whip that cracks incessantly on her back... and it hurts. And she loves to be hurt by it. She's a willing vessel for the ultimate expression of Illusion-defying bonds that transcend Time & Space. Here, love acts as a connection to hers and others' lost divinity, enabling everyone to tap into greater sources of power of unfathomable euphoria.

The love she feels and bends is a double-edged blade, however. One that cuts deep and gorges on the blood it draws. She is able to trap others in such emotion, but cannot really contain the love that flows from within her through the cracks in her mind. New heart-deep connections are made and she obsesses over the most minute details. Truly in love with the world, people, and creatures around her, she's become a victim of Passion.

Advantage: *Seducer* (KDL, p104).

Disadvantage: *Victim of Passion* (KDL, p101). The subjects of her obsession are likely to be her Relations. It changes whenever the subject has become dull or unable to generate dangerous situations in the story.