

1. Timeline

a. Pre-Humanity

i. ??? :: Knowledge Forgotten within Time

1. At the end of an old universe, an unknown fraternity of individuals gathered, bickering over what had gone wrong
 - a. One asserted that there were not enough sharp objects, and Evolution became shaped into a Bladedrill, rather than its previously-tolerated "doughy softness"
 - i. They unanimously agreed, many years later, that its prior shape had been a mistake, and that the world was much less boring when it was dynamic
2. As the discussion has died down, the Ritual sprang over all of them, enveloping them, any residual expressions faded. A brief pause, then each member began to gaze into the eyes of every other, in turn. The time had finally come. They evaluated each of their eternal peers, the individuals who represented the sum total of each category of experience.
 - a. This is where they will convene upon the Conditions for the next Cycle of the timeline
 - b. Each type judges every other type, seeing the memories reflected as individual experiences buried in their eyes; these are the moments which will inform the Parameters, which are Conditions given Form, meaning that they become enshrined as universal laws--the metaphysical substrate within which the next Cycle will begin
3. The Conditions met, they flow to clasp hands with one another, forming a perfect circle; from overhead, it appears as though time is rewound about a circular gathering of figures--pieces, people, are spread across a room (a nightclub rooftop: splayed across furniture; an uneven plateau illuminated by moonlight: some lie in exhaustion, others rest seated upon round stones, and others walk as they talk and gesture animatedly , etc.)
 - a. Author Note: Some join with more haste than others, while their conjunction remains in perfect unison; those closer to the circle move more slowly (cherishing or mourning the sum of their own experiences--infinite time in the course of mere moments as they join)
4. Final words are said, each in turn.
 - a. "This time, we will grant them ephemeral strength."
 - b. "This time, we will act individually, and each who follows will await their turn with eager patience."
 - c. "This time, Underlying Conditions will be consistent, no matter which of our Hands acts as The Head."

- d. “This time, we will respect Divine Proximity--whoever acts within a particular space, designated as their own, will be respected. Period.” This one winks, and it makes all the others uncomfortable.
 - i. They each make a mental note, which none of them will remember across an eternity of time--evidenced by the fact that they’d tried to do this last time and don’t even remember it--to kick this particular member out of their club for future “outings.”
 - e. [More Terms are spoken, here]
 - 5. The Terms intoned, the circle of individuals began to become incorporeal, as one. Each meets the eyes of the others’--more briefly, as time was now limited--then fades away. Their clothing falls to the floor at once, as though gravity realized its negligence.
 - 6. And then, things are no more.
 - ii. Formation
 - 1. A nearly endless period of time passes, during which agreements and specifics are finalized as the universe forms and begins to grow.
 - 2. Certain life forms begin to develop, and then fail; others replace them, and some of them pass into extinction as time lengthens.
 - 3. The cosmos changes, stagnating until it bursts in innumerable tiny permutations. Change is the nature of time, but the universe would stay as it was during any given instant, save that all instants are connected by the time weaving between them.
 - iii. Crowning
 - 1. The planet of interest is chosen by happenstance of Nature’s laws, codified in the Terms of Creation.
 - 2. Suitable lifeforms are first to develop here, coinciding with a habitat of acceptable hospitality
 - 3. The Circle’s attention is naturally focused on that planet, particularly on those lifeforms; it is the nature of gods to seek subjects to govern.