

The Lantern War of Shadows

A Campaign Arc for Fate's Edge



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With contributions to the Witch Orders, Witch Hunters, and
the Book of Shadows Expansion

*“Every patron casts a shadow—
and in that shadow walks the one they were
before the world chose sides.”*

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Frontmatter

The Lantern War of Shadows is a setting-scale campaign arc for *Fate's Edge*, blending grimdark folklore, threshold witchcraft, witch-hunter politics, and the re-emergence of a Lost Patron whose return threatens the balance between Orders and Hunters.

This book contains:

- The five-tier campaign structure (Tiers I–V)
- New Witch Orders, Witch Hunter factions, relics, rites, and talents
- Setting tools for running occult conflicts and patron politics
- A guided arc leading to the Dream-Desert and the Crucible of Names
- Multiple endings, including patron ascension mechanics

Nothing in this book replaces core rules; it expands them.

All patrons, cultures, witch orders, and hunter traditions presented here are optional modules intended to interlock with any Fate's Edge campaign that makes use of witchcraft, suppression tools, patron bargains, or narrative rites.

0.1 Introduction & Themes

0.1.1 What This Book Is

The Lantern War of Shadows is a campaign-scale expansion for Fate's Edge, focused on the tension between witchcraft and witch hunters, the politics of patrons, and the slow erosion of identity by shame, forgetting, and zealotry.

Where the *Book of Shadows* explores witchcraft as intimate, reciprocal, and often dangerous, this supplement carries those roots into open conflict. Across deserts, riverlands, and mist-choked warrens, patron-backed factions maneuver, bargain, and burn their way toward a single question:

Who decides what a soul is worth?

0.1.2 What This Campaign Is About

This campaign arc revolves around three escalating pressures:

1. **A city that refuses to feel shame**—and is punished for it. Heugen, the City of Forgetting, lives under the quiet protection of Aveh, Patron of the Shed-Self. Its wells wash away regret, guilt, and sometimes memory. To outsiders, this is liberation—or heresy.
2. **A crusade without mercy.** The adherents of Mykkiel, Patron of Lawful Perfection, march across the wastes. They come not to convert but to *correct*. Theologically, Heugen cannot be allowed to exist.
3. **A Shadow War beneath both.** Witch Orders, renegade Ghe'hai, spirit courts, lantern inquisitors, and patron-touched wanderers scheme beneath the visible conflict. Each believes the outcome of the siege will shape the fate of names, identities, and forgotten shadows for generations.

0.1.3 Campaign Tone

This campaign leans toward:

- **Grimdark Fairytale** — old bargains, broken oaths, and living shadows.
- **Threshold Horror** — possession, name-eating spirits, and witchburners.
- **Political Folklore** — zealotry, exile, and the dangerous weight of identity.
- **Sword-and-Salt Fantasy** — desert caravans, dune lanterns, temple sieges.

Magic is not cinematic. It is *consequential*. It is *slow*. It is *priced in names, secrets, and blood*. The question is not whether the party will pay, but *how much*.

0.1.4 Central Themes

This book weaves several recurring themes throughout the campaign:

Identity and Forgetting. What is a person without the weight of their past? What remains when memory is soft as sand? Aveh's gifts liberate *and* unmoor.

Law versus Mercy. Mykkiel's emissaries believe mercy is disorder; order is salvation. Their lanterns burn truth from shadow—and people with it.

Power Earned vs. Power Taken. Witchcraft is relational. Witch hunting is extractive. Patrons do not act, but those who claim their authority shape the world.

Shame as Weapon. The crusaders wield shame as a binding. Aveh's followers shed shame like a snakeskin—sometimes too quickly.

The Price of Choosing. Every faction in this war believes they are saving something. None agree on what that something is.

0.1.5 Structure of the War

The campaign is divided into five acts:

1. **Act I — The Approach of the Lanterns** (Tier I–II) The army of Mykkiel marches; emissaries infiltrate Heugen; shadows begin to stir.
2. **Act II — The Wells Remember** (Tier II) Strange desert omens, shame-worm sightings, and fractures in Aveh's cult.
3. **Act III — The Breaking of the First Lantern** (Tier III) Witch Orders, Ghe'hai, and Hunters collide in open occult conflict.
4. **Act IV — The Crucible of Names** (Tier III–IV) The siege reaches its spiritual climax; bargains are struck; names are lost or reforged.
5. **Act V — The Last Shadowborne** (Tier IV–V) The party decides the fate of the city, the crusade, the Wells-Worm, and the balance between shame, identity, and power.

0.1.6 Who This Book Is For

This expansion is written for:

- GMs who want witchcraft to feel dangerous and personal
- Players who enjoy moral grayness and hard choices
- Groups that like political intrigue with supernatural stakes
- Campaigns dealing with patrons, rituals, or identity magic
- Tales of exile, zealotry, haunting, and slow-burning dread

0.1.7 What This Book Assumes

This campaign assumes:

- Witch Orders exist and operate openly or semi-openly
- Witch Hunters are present, organized, and increasingly aggressive
- Patrons influence culture but do not act directly
- Identity magic and name-magic are meaningful parts of the world

Groups may adapt or scale back any of these assumptions.

0.1.8 How to Use This Book

Use each chapter modularly:

- Insert witch orders or hunters into existing settings
- Run Act I–III as a standalone war arc
- Use rites, hexes, and hunter tools in unrelated campaigns
- Introduce Mykkiel or Aveh as long-term patronal influences

Everything here is opt-in. Nothing replaces core rules. Everything expands them.

0.2 The City of Heugen, the City of Forgetting

0.2.1 Overview

Heugen stands on the sun-bleached shore of the Amaranthine, its cisterns and well-houses humming with desert wind and the soft undertone of something older.

Two centuries ago, Temple of Light crusaders founded the settlement during an ill-fated campaign. After their defeat and retreat, the survivors discarded their luminous banners, their doctrines, and—eventually—themselves.

In their place arose a new devotion:

Aveh, the Shed-Self, Patron of Lost Names and Unburdening.

The wells of Heugen offer release from shame, regret, and burdensome memory. To its people, this is mercy. To its enemies, this is erasure.

Today Heugen is a bustling port-city of exiles, runaways, un-gendered priests of Aveh, and those who would rather forget than burn.

The crusaders of Mykkiel call it an abomination.

0.2.2 Heugen at a Glance

Population: 14,000 resident; 3,000–6,000 transient

Government: Council of Wells; rotating civic stewards

Dominant Patron: Aveh

Outsider Perception: Den of degenerates, heretics, and name-thieves

Local Term for Outsiders: *Lantern-bearers* or *Rememberers*

Heugen is not lawless—but its laws prioritize mercy over order, intention over doctrine, and identity as something mutable rather than fixed.

This alone is enough to draw the wrath of Mykkiel's zealots.

0.2.3 The Wells of Forgetting

The heart of Heugen is its network of ancient, patron-touched wells. They do not erase memory; they soften its edges.

A draught from the wells may:

- dull the pain of shame
- weaken the hold of traumatic memory
- blur the contours of old identity
- help one shed names, roles, and obligations

For some, this is healing. For others, this is spiritual death.

Each well has a **Custodian**, a devotee of Aveh who has shed all markers of gender, rank, and lineage. The Custodians insist the water reveals one's true self—by dissolving the false ones.

Mechanical Hook: Memory Softening Characters who drink may temporarily:

- clear 1 Fatigue or 1 Shadow
- remove a Shame Condition
- also suffer a *Name-Fraying* Condition (GM-defined)

The wells do not lie. But they do not care what the truth costs.

0.2.4 Factions Within Heugen

Heugen is not unified. It is a tapestry of competing visions of what forgetting means.

The Custodians of Aveh

Genderless, faceless (often masked), serene. They preach freedom through unmaking—metaphorical or otherwise.

Motives:

- protect the wells
- guide pilgrims into rebirth
- resist Mykkiel's doctrine of fixed identity

The Tanners' Quarter (The Rememberers)

Artisans, traders, and families who only drink sparingly. They fear losing too much of themselves.

Motives:

- maintain stable civic life
- avoid Aveh zealotry
- oppose Mykkiel without shedding their own roots

The Shadowed Coteries (Witch Orders)

Mab's night-witches, Morag's cursing hags, Livaea's handmaidens, and the Rainmaidens of Raéyn all find quiet footholds in Heugen.

Motives:

- protect Heugen as a sanctuary
- fight against inquisitorial overreach
- shape the shadow-war for their own patrons

The Lantern Dissidents

Former believers in Mykkiel who fled the dogma but kept the discipline.

Motives:

- oppose slaughter
- warn the Council of the coming crusade
- atone for their past

0.2.5 Outside Heugen: What the World Believes

To the outside world—especially to Mykkiel's priests—Heugen represents the following heresies:

Heretical Belief 1: The Past Does Not Define You. Mykkiel's faith teaches the opposite: *A life is a ledger. Every act matters. Every sin must be corrected.*

Heretical Belief 2: Names Can Be Shed. To Mykkiel, a name is sacred and fixed. Names are divine contracts, not costumes.

Heretical Belief 3: Shame Should Be Healed, Not Weaponized. The crusaders wield shame as both lantern and blade.

Heretical Belief 4: Patronal Mercy May Override Law. Heugen openly states this.

In truth, the crusaders fear Heugen for one reason:

People who shed their shame cannot be controlled.

0.2.6 The Desert Around Heugen

The Galaninan desert is a character in its own right.

- shifting dunes like drowned cathedrals
- salt flats that mirror the moon too perfectly
- abandoned crusader waystations still bearing lantern scars
- subterranean aquifers connected to the Wells-Worm

Witch Orders call the region **the Threshold Belt**—a place where names wear thin and spirits slip close.

0.2.7 Adventure Hooks in the City

- A Custodian begs the PCs to stop a young pilgrim from drinking too deeply.
- A witch hunter cell infiltrates the city under falsified shame documents.
- A well goes "dry," whispering instead of giving water.
- A Mykkielite emissary challenges the Council to trial by illumination.
- Rainmaidens predict that the Wells-Worm is stirring.

0.2.8 Why Heugen Matters

Because Heugen is the one place in the desert where:

- names can be remade
- shame can be laid down
- witchcraft is not hunted
- identity is fluid and not punished

If it falls, the world learns only one truth:

There is only the Lantern, and all shadows must burn.

0.3 Factions of the Lantern War

Heugen is not merely a city under siege; it is the epicenter of a spiritual contest between patrons whose desires are incompatible. The conflict manifests through orders, cults, guilds, and militant sects—each convinced they act on behalf of their patron's true will.

These factions do not simply fight; they argue over what *name*, *shame*, and *identity* should mean.

0.3.1 The Crusaders of Mykkiel

Doctrine

Mykkiel teaches that:

- Names are sacred, immutable contracts
- One's past actions define one's worth
- Shame is a corrective light
- Mercy is lawful only when earned

To Mykkiel's faithful, Heugen is a heresy of dissolution.

Structure

The Lantern Host: disciplined infantry wielding mirrored shields

The Order of the Ledger: inquisitors who record sins as debts

The Bright-Mantled: ascetic zealots

Why They March

- To restore the "true names" of Heugen's people
- To extinguish the Wells of Forgetting
- To prevent patronal corruption (especially witchcraft)

Mechanical Hook: Enter any scene where Mykkiel's emissaries appear with Position-1 unless you show a fixed identity or oath.

0.3.2 The Shed-Faith of Aveh

Aveh is the patron of unmaking—of those who step out of themselves to become something new, or nothing at all.

Doctrine

- Identity is a temporary shelter, not a prison
- Shame is a parasite that can be shed
- A person's true nature emerges when the false names fall away
- Mercy is transformation, not punishment

Cultic Faces

Because patrons have no single form, Aveh's agents differ across cultures:

- **Ykrul:** The Faceless Guide
- **Ikasha:** The Silent Mask
- **Tulkani:** The Mirror-Eater

Agents

Custodians of the wells—genderless, nameless, masked—shepherd pilgrims through shedding rites.

Mechanical Hook: Once per session, a PC may erase one Shame or Shadow by embracing an aspect of Aveh, gaining a "Shed" tag for the scene.

0.3.3 The Witch Orders

Witchcraft in Fate's Edge is not unified. Each order serves a different patron, with its own ethic, aesthetics, and dangers.

Heugen is one of the few cities where witchcraft can be practiced openly—part of why the crusade comes.

Below are the four major Orders present during the Lantern War.

The Night Court of Mab

Mab's witches operate by glamour, oath-binding, and shadowcraft. They defend Heugen not for mercy but because the Wells create fertile ground for faerie bargains.

Signatures:

- glamour-warped beauty
- oath-entangling curses
- honeyed lies that become truths

Rivalries: despise Mykkiel's rigid doctrine; tolerate Aveh's dissolution; exploit Rainmaidens.

Adventure Hook: A Mab-witch offers PCs a bargain: "I will hide you from the Lanterns—but you must speak no truth under moonlight for three days."

The Ash Hags of Morag

Morag's witches embody rot, inevitability, and consequence. They perform harsh justice—*the kind that does not forgive, only concludes*.

Signatures:

- bone-runes
- rot-aspected curses
- prophetic teeth

Rivalries: oppose Livaea's seductions; scorn Aveh's soft escapes; treat Mykkiel as delusional.

Adventure Hook: A hag predicts that if the Wells fall, the shame cast onto the desert will animate into a storm of screaming silhouettes.

The Handmaidens of Livaea

Livaea's witches are diplomats, seducers, and weavers of relational power. They are not submissive; they are strategically irresistible.

Signatures:

- persuasive glammers
- emotional resonance magic
- social rituals and soft dominance

Rivalries: compete with Mab for influence; ally with Aveh in matters of shame; loathe Mykkiel's purity doctrines.

Adventure Hook: A Handmaiden recruits the PCs to sabotage a zealot's arranged marriage ceremony.

The Rainmaidens of Raéyn

Raéyn's sorceresses are raw elementalists of storm, tide, and lunar pull. Their moods shape their magic—and their magic shapes Heugen's weather.

Signatures:

- storms that echo emotion
- tidal flux rites
- sea-glass divination

Rivalries: challenge Mab in moonlit matters; disdain Morag's fatalism; fear Mykkiel's zeal.

Adventure Hook: A Rainmaiden's uncontrolled tempest threatens Heugen as crusader scouts approach.

0.3.4 Ikasha's Shadow-Door Witches

The cult of Lethai-ar in Ikasha, the Tulkani, and the Sidhi is nothing like the honor-bound Lethai-ar of Isoka or Inaea. Here, Lethai-ar is a mask of secrecy, subversion, and quiet infiltration.

Hallmarks:

- shadow-lattices
- coded rituals
- mask-craft
- silence-as-power

They are the ones who know Heugen's secret paths, the underside of the wells, and the true shapes of desert spirits.

Adventure Hook: A shadow-door witch requests the PCs steal a Mykkielite ledger to erase the name of a hunted orphan.

0.3.5 The Witch Hunters

Masculine-coded orders that serve as the destructive counterpoint to witchcraft. Their purpose is not balance—it is control.

Three Major Orders:

- **Chain-Lanterns of Thepyrgos:** process, law, sanctioned violence
- **Stone-Correctors of Aeler:** collapse prevention, ritual auditing
- **Sum-Abjurers of Aelinnel:** definitions, contexts, nonlethal containment

All agree on one thing: *Witches should be regulated, contained, or destroyed.*

Mykkiel's crusaders view them as convenient auxiliaries.

0.3.6 Internal Factions of Heugen

The Council of Wells

Administrators who manage public needs, keep peace between witch orders, and negotiate with external powers.

Weakness: They do not always agree on what Aveh actually wants.

The Unnamed Choir

A secretive cult who have shed so many identities they barely speak. They move like one mind, chanting wordless hymns near the wells.

The Bound Ledger

Former Mykkielites who maintain civic records, believing that naming is not heresy—only punishment is.

The Sand-Bound Trades

Merchants, water-barons, ferrymen, and smugglers. Their allegiance shifts with profit.

0.3.7 External Stakeholders

The Desert Nomad Houses

Traders and raiders who rely on Heugen's wells as a rare source of civility. If the crusade burns Heugen, the desert becomes lawless.

The Witch Courts Abroad

Some want Heugen defended. Others want it to fall so that Mykkiel overextends and can be undermined.

The Wells-Worm

A desert spirit or monster (depending on who you ask). Its stirrings twist the crusade's rhetoric into prophecy.

0.3.8 Why These Factions Cannot Coexist

- Aveh teaches identity as choice.
- Mykkiel teaches identity as law.
- Witch Orders thrive in ambiguity.
- Witch Hunters thrive in clarity.

Heugen stands where these doctrines intersect—and tear each other apart.

This is not merely a battle for a city. It is a battle for what a person is allowed to be.

0.4 The Shape of the Lantern War

Heugen stands on the threshold of transformation. Armies gather, wells stir, witch orders whisper omens, and strangers cross the desert carrying doctrines, grudges, and forgotten names.

Beneath all this, something older moves.

This section outlines the adventure's major arcs, foreshadowing the hidden dangers that will reshape the conflict: the arrival of a third force, the **Thorns of Malachai**, whose intentions remain unknown even to most witch orders.

0.4.1 Act I: The Smoke on the Horizon

The Siege Approaches

The Crusaders of Mykkiel march under banners of mirrored flame. Refugees arrive. Wells ripple. Witch orders scramble for position.

The PCs begin amid rising tension:

- disputes between witch orders in public squares
- crusader scouts interrogating caravans
- wells-watered pilgrims unable to recall their former lives
- masked Aveh devotees urging preparation for "shedding time"

Foreshadow: The First Thorn Strange reports circulate:

- caravans found pierced with obsidian spikes
- couriers vanishing on open roads
- a witch-hunter cell wiped out without signs of struggle

No faction claims responsibility.

Aeler Correctors note the spike pattern resembles "*ritual extraction*," but cannot identify the patron involved.

0.4.2 Act II: The Walls Begin to Whisper

As tensions escalate, the PCs navigate Heugen's fracturing alliances.

Key Pressures

- **Mykkiel's ultimatum:** surrender all who refuse to reclaim their "true names."
- **Aveh's visionaries:** urging the city to shed name, past, and shame before the siege.
- **Witch factions:** competing for influence and leverage, offering bargains, protection, or secrets.

Foreshadow: The Second Thorn More subtle signs appear:

- A Mab-witch's glamour collapses in terror after glimpsing a masked figure
- Tidewater scrying pools show thorn-shrouded silhouettes beneath the desert
- A Morag hag finds a bone rune she did not carve, reading only: *"REMEMBER."*

The PCs may not yet understand the omen, but its weight is felt.

0.4.3 Act III: The Lanterns Strike

The siege begins in earnest. Crusader forces breach outer wards; witchcraft flickers under Mykkielite dampening rites.

PCs must:

- defend key districts
- extract civilians
- disrupt crusader ritual lines
- stabilize rogue witch workings

The Battle's Turning Point A sudden collapse of crusader formations reveals something troubling:

- knights found dead without wounds
- witch-hunters transfixed by blackened thorns
- entire squads missing, shields left behind

Mykkiel's leadership blames witchcraft. The witches blame saboteurs among crusaders. Aveh's devotees whisper: *"Not ours."*

The truth is a third faction has entered the city—quietly, efficiently, and not on anyone's side.

0.4.4 Act IV: The Desert Opens Its Eyes

During a key mission—perhaps a rescue, sabotage, or negotiation—the PCs find evidence that the attacks during the siege are not random.

Clues

- a blackened root-like growth inside a crusader's helmet
- an abandoned room where every reflective surface has been shattered
- a Wells acolyte murmuring in a foreign cadence before vanishing
- an Aeler stone-scribe's ledger burned in patterns matching an unfamiliar sigil

Foreshadow: The Third Thorn The final omen before their arrival:

A procession of masked figures crossing the dunes at twilight— their shadows moving out of sync with their bodies.

No one knows where they came from.

But the desert remembers the name Malachai.

0.4.5 Act V: When Three Wills Collide

The climax reveals the siege of Heugen is merely one part of a larger struggle.

The Truth Emerges

The Thorns of Malachai are:

- not aligned with Aveh
- not aligned with Mykkiel
- not servants of any witch order
- and not entirely mortal

Their goal is ambiguous—either the reclamation of names, the unmaking of identity, or the *replacement* of both with something new.

This forces the PCs into a three-sided conflict:

- defend Heugen from Mykkiel's purges
- prevent Aveh's faithful from dissolving the city
- stop Malachai's Thorns from reshaping the desert's spiritual geometry

At stake is not merely the city, but:

What memories are allowed to endure.

0.4.6 Ongoing Themes

Identity as Weapon Every side uses names—claimed, shed, stolen, or rewritten—as tools of power.

Shame as Currency The crusaders trade in judgment; the Wells trade in oblivion; the Thorns trade in extraction.

Memory as Territory Who controls the past controls the shape of the self.

0.4.7 GM Guidance: Using the Thorns

The Thorns should:

- be frightening but enigmatic
- appear sparingly, never speaking clearly
- never contradict patron doctrine (they are not patron-servants)
- disrupt both witchcraft and crusader magic
- force hard choices without offering answers

They are not a faction to negotiate with. They are a disturbance—one that reveals deeper truths about identity, shame, and memory.

First the Wells forgot their names. Now something else remembers them.

0.5 Mechanics of the Lantern War

The siege of Heugen is not merely a clash of armies. It is a conflict of doctrines, identities, and the spiritual laws that govern memory itself.

This section provides structured mechanics for:

- Mykkielite crusader miracle-lines
- Aveh shedding rites and dissolution boons
- Witch-order crisis workings
- Thorn corruption events and Identity Strain
- Citywide siege clocks
- Emissary clash event tables

0.5.1 5.1 Citywide Siege Clocks

The GM tracks four major siege pressures:

Lantern Advance (6): Crusader forces tightening their grip.

Wells Unraveling (6): Instability in Heugen's memory-warped wells.

Witch Fracture (4): Internal disputes escalating into sabotage.

Thorn Encroachment (4): Subtle corruption spreading unseen.

When a Clock Fills:

- **Lantern Advance:** A Mykkielite miracle suppresses all witchcraft for a scene.
- **Wells Unraveling:** The city collectively forgets a small but important detail.
- **Witch Fracture:** A faction blames another; position starts Desperate in all witch-witch negotiations.
- **Thorn Encroachment:** A Thorn Stalker appears, even in broad daylight.

0.5.2 5.2 Mykkielite Miracle-Lines

Crusaders channel divine law through structured miracle-lines. These are *rigid*, *absolute*, and each miracle demands personal purity.

Miracle of Enumerated Sin (Low)

[REVEAL] [CONDEMN]

- Identify one hidden shame, breach, or unresolved vow in a target.
- Target suffers $-1d$ on actions involving deception, glamours, or false names.

Miracle of the Sevenfold Lantern (Standard)

[LIGHT] [PURIFY] [WARD]

- Establish a warded radius where witchcraft *flickers*.
- All rites require +1 DV to cast within this zone.

Miracle of Perfect Judgment (High)

[LAW] [BIND] [EXECUTE]

- Bind a target in a silhouette of mirrored flame.
- If the target acted under false name or illusion, Position becomes *Desperate* for them.

Miracle Consequences: Rolling 1s generates **Reprisal SB**, which may:

- fracture crusader unity
- invoke a contradictory doctrine
- attract an unseen Thorn that feeds on absolute claims

0.5.3 5.3 Aveh Shedding Rites

Aveh's rites revolve around anonymity, dissolution of self, and the transcendence found in shedding one's past.

Rite of the Unwoven Mask (Low)

[VEIL] [SILENCE]

- Suppress your name for a scene.
- Gain +1d on actions requiring stealth, deception, or disappearance.

Rite of the Shedding Path (Standard)

[MIRROR] [RELEASE]

- Remove one Condition by abandoning the memory that caused it.
- Mark 1 **Identity Strain**.

Rite of the Faceless Dawn (High)

[ASCENT] [ERASE] [REMAKE]

- Spend 1 Fatigue.
- Choose one: gain immunity to name-based magic for a scene, or become *untrackable*.

Identity Strain [4]: Every time a PC uses advanced Aveh rites, fill one segment. At 4, roll Spirit + Wits (DV 4):

- **Success:** You master the dissolution; clear 1 segment.
- **Failure:** You forget something meaningful; GM chooses.

0.5.4 5.4 Witch Orders: Crisis Workings

During the siege, witch orders employ forbidden or unstable workings.

Hearth Witches: Iron-Binding Charm

[HOME] [ANCHOR] [BIND]

- Freeze one enemy in place with the power of hearth and threshold.
- DV increases by +1 for each foreign magic currently active nearby.

Rainmaidens: Tidebreaker Surge

[STORM] [ZONE] [COMMAND]

- Redirect the flow of a battle for one exchange.
- All allies gain Position +1; enemies suffer $-1d$.

Mab Witches: Thorn of Oaths-Broken

[HEX] [OATH] [WOUND]

- Impose a spiritual wound on someone who broke a promise.
- On miss, the witch suffers the oath's recoil.

0.5.5 5.5 The Thorns of Malachai: Corruption Mechanics

The Thorns do not cast rites — they enact **extractions**. They do not rewrite identity — they *strip* it.

Identity Strain: A Shared Track

All PCs share an **Identity Strain** [6] track for Thorn encounters.

Mark when:

- A Thorn Stalker silently observes the party
- PCs contradict their own memories
- A crusader miracle and witch rite collide
- A PC speaks their full name in fear

When Full: The GM chooses:

- **Extracted Memory:** PCs forget how they entered the scene.
- **Shadow Double:** A Thorn imitates one PC's silhouette.
- **False Witness:** Evidence appears that PCs committed a past atrocity.

0.5.6 5.6 Emissary Clash Event Tables

When Witch and Crusader Agents Collide

Roll d6:

1. A miracle backfires, igniting witchcraft into wild surges.
2. A witch's glamour reveals hidden shame in a crusader officer.
3. A Thorn observes from a rooftop — unnoticed at first.
4. A well-watered citizen intervenes, confused and panicked.
5. A rogue hag offers "arbitration" at a steep price.
6. The ground splits, exposing petrified roots shaped into sigils.

When Thorns Interrupt

Roll d6:

1. All reflections in the scene crack.
2. Shadows detach and linger unnaturally.
3. A crusader's memory is stolen mid-sentence.
4. A witch's cord-blackthread frays into ash.
5. A masked figure appears behind someone, silently pointing.
6. A root-whisper: "You do not deserve your name."

0.5.7 5.7 Scaling the Siege

Tier I–II: Small clashes, localized witchcraft failures, skirmishes with zealots.

Tier III–IV: Major miracles, storm rites, Thorn incursions, memory-loss episodes.

Tier V: Aveh dissolution rapture, crusader purgation beams, Thorn dominions — the identity of Heugen itself may collapse.

This is a war fought in light, shadow, and the space between names.

0.6 Emissaries of the Lantern War

This section details the key operatives, champions, and incarnate voices who prosecute the Lantern War on behalf of Mykkiel, Aveh, the Witch Orders, and the Thorns of Malachai. While patrons lack agency and cannot manifest, their emissaries act with conviction, arguing over doctrine, purity, and purpose.

Each statblock uses standard Fate's Edge formatting:

- Tier, Position, Qualities
- Core Moves
- Talents and Rites
- Special Mechanics (Corruption, Identity, Miracles, etc.)

0.6.1 6.1 Crusader Miracle-Captain of Mykkiel

Tier III Adversary

Position: Controlled, Direct, Unyielding

Motifs: Law, Purity, Enumerated Doctrine, Sacred Authority

Qualities

- Lantern-Blessed Armor (2 Armor)
- Voice of Mandate (commands silence)
- Liturgical Precision (immune to deception when invoking miracle-lines)

Core Moves

Enumerate Sin: Reveal a target's hidden shame. Target suffers $-1d$ on falsehood, illusion, or disguise actions this scene.

Lantern Surge: Suppress witchcraft within Near range. Witch rites require +1 DV.

Condemnation Step: When stepping forward in ritual stance, force a PC to roll Spirit (DV 3) or become Shaken.

Rites / Miracles

- **Sevenfold Lantern** – Establishes a warded radius of divine order.
- **Perfect Judgment** – Bind target in mirrored flame.
- **Mantle of Zeal** – Grants +1 Position and dismisses fear effects.

Special

Reprisal SB: On 1s, doctrine fractures. A rival officer disputes the Captain's purity.

0.6.2 6.2 Aveh's Faceless Shepherd

Tier III Adversary (or Ally)

Position: Evasive, Dissolved, Unknowable

Motifs: Shedding, Masks, Lost Identity, Liberation-by-Absence

Qualities

- Featureless Visage (cannot be remembered clearly)
- Quiet-Footed Pilgrim (always counts as Obfuscated)
- Weightless Step (no footprints, no sound)

Core Moves

Unmake the Mask: Remove a PC's ability to use aliases or disguises this scene.

Dissolution Touch: Inflict 1 **Identity Strain**. If a PC is already strained, force a reroll at $-1d$.

Vanishing Refrain: Exit the scene without provoking reactions.

Shedding Rites

- **Path of the Unwoven Mask** – Suppress identity markers.
- **Faceless Dawn** – Become untrackable for one scene.

Special

If a PC speaks their full name to the Shepherd, roll Spirit (DV 4) or forget a personal memory.

0.6.3 6.3 Rainmaiden Oracle of Raéyn

Tier IV Adversary/Ally

Position: Fluid, Tempestuous, Triumphant

Motifs: Water, Storms, Temper, Power, Emotional Tide

Qualities

- Tidal Insight (reads emotional currents)
- Storm-Crowned (immune to fear and coercion)
- Waterwoven Garb (counts as 1 Armor)

Core Moves

Storm Lash: Strike all foes in Near range; apply $-1d$ to next action.

Tidebreaker Command: Allies gain +1 Position; enemies lose 1 Position.

Rain-Soaked Mirrors: Reveal a truth someone hid from themselves.

Rites

- **Mist-Calling Whisper**
- **Waveborne Rebuttal**
- **Tempest Queen's Claim** (High)

0.6.4 6.4 Thorn Stalker of Malachai

Tier II–III Adversary

Position: Hidden, Silent, Invasive

Motifs: Extraction, Memory Theft, False Witness, Identity Hunger

Qualities

- Root-Clad Silhouette
- No Voice, Only Gesture
- Cannot be perceived directly for more than a moment

Core Moves

Shadow Extraction: Mark 1 **Identity Strain** and remove a sensory memory.

Mirrortwitch Advance: Teleport between shadows; always gains first move.

False Echo: Speak in a PC's voice, describing actions they never took.

Special: Identity Collapse

When PCs are at 5+ Strain, Thorn Stalkers roll with +1d and inflict **Exposed:** Position becomes Desperate when confronting memory-based foes.

0.6.5 6.5 The Wells-Worm

Tier IV Monster (Aberration)

Position: Titanic, Burrowing, Psychic

Motifs: Wells, Memory, Shame, Subterranean Hunger

Qualities

- Memory-Drinking Maw
- Reverberant Cry (echoes of forgotten sins)
- Segmented Stone-Carapace (2 Armor)
- Burrow and Erupt (scene-scale reposition)

Core Moves

Shame Resonance: PCs roll Spirit (DV 4) or suffer +1 Identity Strain.

Spiral Into the Deep: Drag a PC underground; separate them from the party.

Echo-Consumption: Feed on an NPC's memory; that NPC forgets a relationship or recent event.

Special: Wells Conduit

If a miracle or rite is cast near a city well, the Worm responds:

- Erupts in a random district
- Unleashes psychic shockwaves
- Causes the city to forget something small but essential

0.6.6 6.6 Named Witch Emissary: Handmaiden of Livaea**Tier III Adversary/Ally**

Position: Seductive, Elegant, Insightful

Motifs: Soft Power, Charm, Mirror-Craft, Emotional Leverage

Qualities

- Velvet-Soft Voice (disarms hostility)
- Mirage Skin (subtle glamour shaping)
- Courtly Poise (+1 Position in negotiation)

Core Moves

Mirror's Truth: Reveal one thing the target wishes they did *not* desire.

Velvet Hex: Reduce target's Position by 1 through emotional entanglement.

Thread of Longing: Bind two NPCs in a temporary covetous obsession.

Rites

- **Kiss of the Velvet Queen** (softens resolve)
- **Silken Command** (coerces a single action)

0.6.7 6.7 Named Witch Emissary: Ghe'hai Shadowbinder of Ikasha**Tier III Elite**

Position: Formal, Poised, Lethal

Motifs: Diplomacy, Secret Warfare, Oaths of Silence, Knife-Rites

Qualities

- Bone-Quiet Step
- Shadow-Drafted Blades (magical harm)
- Immaculate Etiquette (immune to social pressure surprises)

Core Moves

Shadow Clause: Insert a silent, binding "agreement" into a social exchange.

Nightbone Cut: Harm that bypasses magical wards.

Diplomat's Mask: Feign civility while preparing for precision violence.

Rites

- **Mask-Severing Gesture**
- **Quietus of the Hidden Blade**

0.7 Factions, Locations, and Clocks

Heugen—the City of Forgetting—stands at a crossroads of identity, doctrine, and shadowed purpose. Its wells draw memory downward; its people live free of shame; and its patrons' emissaries maneuver unseen. The following factions and locations shape the conflict of the Lantern War.

0.7.1 7.1 Factions in the City of Forgetting**The Adherents of Mykkiel (External Siege Faction)**

A vast procession of lantern-bearing crusaders approaches the city, determined to excise its "blasphemous forgettings." Among them:

- Miracle-Captains delivering enumerated doctrine
- Lantern Scribes cataloging memory leaks

- Choir-Knights who silence witchcraft on sight

Goal: Restore shame and identity as sacred burdens. **Methods:** Siege, miracle-warfare, public trials, burning archives. **Internal Tension:** Strict Mandate vs. more compassionate reformists (dangerous schism potential).

Foreshadowing Clues

- Mirrored lantern-light appears in distant dunes
- Locals dream of a stern voice enumerating their forgotten sins
- Water in eastern wells ripples to unheard hymns

The Followers of Aveh (Internal — Most Popular Patron)

A pluralistic, liminal faith without a face. Aveh's followers shed identity, names, and gender until they achieve a "soft empty truth." Most are harmless misfits; a few are zealots of erasure.

Goal: Maintain Heugen as a haven of shed identities. **Methods:** Persuasion, community-care, quiet dissolution of conflict. **Schism:**

- **Shepherds of the Mask** — gentle guides who help people shed safely
- **The Unwoven Circle** — extremists who force shedding upon others

Foreshadowing Clues

- A masked pilgrim appears in multiple districts—yet has no footprints
- A child forgets their surname after drinking from the central well
- A silhouette with no face reflected in a shop window

The Witch Orders (Internal Covens)

Witches are not unified; the expansion's Orders each have distinct tensions with both the crusaders and each other.

- **Handmaidens of Livaea** — soft-power seductresses who guide Heugen's elite
- **Rainmaidens of Raéyn** — tempestuous oracles who fear the siege will disrupt the tides of fate
- **Hearth Witches** — quiet miracle-workers who know the wells are "not right"
- **Ikasha Shadowbinders** — Ghe'hai-trained elven operatives hoarding city secrets

Goal: Preserve their order's interests, not necessarily the city's. **Methods:** Hexcraft, bargains, prophecy, emotional manipulation.

Foreshadowing Clues

- A wardstone cracks as unseen doctrine presses against it
- Wells whisper conflicting future omens
- A rainstorm forms indoors, circling a single witch's rival

The Thorns of Malachai (Hidden Third Party)

A secret extraction-cult operating beneath Heugen. They worship not a patron but a *principle*: identity harvested, memories hollowed, shadows rewritten. They wish to deepen the city's forgetting until Heugen becomes an empty husk.

Goal: Collapse all identity threads in the city and "prepare the vessel." **Methods:** Shadow extraction, false-echo propaganda, stealth abductions. **Foothold:** The old salt tunnels under District Nine.

Foreshadowing Clues

- A PC's shadow lags noticeably behind them
- Two NPCs recount different memories of the same event
- A discarded mask shaped like a spiral root

0.7.2 7.2 Key Locations of Heugen

The Veiled Wells

The heart of Heugen's forgetting. The waters soothe shame but feed the ancient Wells-Worm. Each well is a ritual site, a cultural sanctuary, and a lurking threat.

Qualities

- Memory-leeching resonance
- Deep conduits to unseen caverns
- Attract both Aveh pilgrims and Thorn Stalkers

Encounter Hooks

- A child drinks from the well and forgets a parent
- Crusaders sanctify a well, causing violent psychic backlash
- Witch wards begin to melt into liquid silver

The Lantern-Siege Camp (Outer Desert)

An ordered, geometric encampment of crusaders. Everything is arranged in perfect arrays: tents, lantern-poles, prayer circles.

Features

- Hymns echo across miles at dawn
- Captured "blasphemers" undergo purification rites
- Rival crusader officers plot doctrinal ascendancy

The Mask Quarter

Aveh's district. Hundreds of partial identities drift through its alleys. Merchants offer newly shed names for trade. Masks are hung like lanterns.

Rumors

- A masked woman claims she remembers the city's founding "perfectly"
- Someone is collecting discarded faces for unknown purpose
- The Faceless Shepherd passes through silently each night

The Thorned Expanse (Undercity)

Root-choked tunnels holding ancient sigils. Here, the Thorns of Malachai weave false echoes and cultivate harvested shadows.

Encounters

- Memory husks (Tier I–II)
- Thorn Stalkers (Tier II–III)
- A well-shaft leading to the Wells-Worm's sleeping chamber

0.7.3 7.3 City Clocks and Siege Pressure

The conflict unfolds against three major Clocks tracking faction momentum.

The Siege Clock [8]

- 2: Crusader scouts infiltrate the market
- 4: Siege engines arrive
- 6: The first breach in the outer wall
- 8: Full-scale assault begins

The Forgetting Clock [8]

- 2: Minor memories vanish citywide
- 4: Entire households forget relationships
- 6: A district collapses into identity confusion
- 8: Heugen becomes the “Hollow City”

The Thorn Ascendance Clock [6]

- 2: Shadow extractions increase
- 4: Thorn Stalkers take an important NPC
- 6: Malachai's Principle manifests—a false consciousness woven across the city

0.8 Adventure Framework: The City of Forgetting

This campaign presents a layered conflict in Heugen, where identity, memory, faith, and shadow converge. The players navigate three rising pressures: an external siege by the Adherents of Mykkiel, internal fractures among Aveh's followers and the witch orders, and the hidden, escalating threat of the Thorns of Malachai.

Each act advances the three major Clocks:

- **Siege Clock [8]** – the crusaders' advance
- **Forgetting Clock [8]** – the deepening effects of the wells
- **Thorn Ascendance Clock [6]** – shadow extractions and false echoes

0.8.1 Act I: The City That Forgets

Heugen appears calm on the surface: markets bustle, pilgrims trade masks, witches maintain uneasy truces, and the wells whisper their soft erasures. But beneath this tranquility, fractures are widening.

This act introduces the PCs to the city's factions, identities, and hidden tensions while foreshadowing the threat marching across the desert.

Act I Goals

- Familiarize players with the politics and culture of Heugen
- Reveal early symptoms of the Forgetting Clock
- Present initial moral conflicts around Aveh's ideals
- Introduce witch orders and their rivalries

- Seed rumors of the approaching crusaders
- Foreshadow the Thorns of Malachai through subtle distortions

Scene I-A: The Mask Market

The PCs enter the Mask Quarter during the Festival of First Shedding. Performers parade through the streets wearing half-faces of clay; masked orphans reenact the founding of the city.

Encounters

- A masked Aveh Shepherd offers to “unburden” a PC’s shame.
- A child suddenly forgets their surname after drinking well-water.
- A witch of Livaea courts a noble’s attention—seeking leverage.

Foreshadowing the Thorns A PC glimpses their own shadow pausing a moment too long, as if listening.

Scene I-B: Wells of Quiet Memory

The PCs witness the veiled wells performing their subtle magic. A small crowd gathers near the First Well where a pilgrim sobs with relief: “I no longer remember what I fled.”

But something is wrong.

Complications

- A Hearth Witch urgently requests help reinforcing a cracked ward.
- A Mykkiel convert denounces the wells, stirring panic.
- A Rainmaiden senses “the worm turning in its sleep.”

Foreshadowing the Thorns A market guard swears he saw someone hauled into a dry well—yet the well is intact.

Scene I-C: Rumors from the Desert

Lantern-light has been spotted on the dunes. Whether from merchants, scouts, or zealots—opinions vary.

NPC Claims

- “The crusaders are three days away.”
- “They carry lanterns that burn memory itself.”
- “A delegation wants peace—but the Choir-Knights do not.”

Mechanical Trigger At the end of this scene, the **Siege Clock** advances by 1.

Scene I-D: Covens at Crossroads

The PCs are approached by one (or several) witch orders:

- Livaeen Handmaidens
- Raéyn Rainmaidens
- Ikasha Shadowbinders
- Hearth Witches

Each wants something from the party, yet none are transparent.

Witch Demands (choose one per table need)

- Investigate a rival's ward-sabotage
- Retrieve a name-fragment from a well
- Escort a witch emissary through hostile districts
- Discreetly disrupt an Aveh ceremony

Foreshadowing the Thorns A witch warns: *“Something beneath the wells feeds on more than memory.”*

Scene I-E: False Echoes

The first obvious Thorn manifestation occurs: two identical townsfolk arguing over which one is the “real” one. Both possess partial memories that contradict local history.

Investigation Clues

- A cord-mark on the back of each duplicate's neck
- Shadows in the alley move independently of their owners
- A root-like spiral painted under a discarded mask

Mechanical Trigger If the PCs fail to intervene or identify the distortion, the **Thorn Ascendence Clock** advances by 1.

Act I Outcome

At the end of Act I, the PCs should:

- Trust some factions and distrust others
- Understand the core pressures on the city
- Feel moral ambiguity around Aveh's shedding doctrines
- Sense the presence of a hidden third party (Thorns)
- Have at least one witch coven entangled in their affairs
- Know the crusaders are en route—perhaps faster than expected

Advance:

- **Siege Clock** to 2
- **Forgetting Clock** to 1
- **Thorn Ascendence Clock** to 1–2 depending on PC actions

Act II begins when the first emissaries of Mykkiel reach the gates.

0.8.2 Act II: Emissaries at the Gate

The desert wind carries hymns of judgment. Lanterns burn on the horizon. Heugen's uneasy peace fractures as two emissary groups of Mykkiel arrive, each claiming the right to negotiate—and to pronounce sentence.

Yet these delegates are not unified. Their disagreements mirror the city's own fractures, and the Thorns of Malachai exploit this tension with subtle, escalating distortions.

Act II Goals

- Introduce the doctrinal split within Mykkiel's crusaders
- Force PCs to navigate competing visions of “justice”
- Deepen conflicts among the witch covens
- Present Aveh's shepherds as both vulnerable and manipulative
- Allow the Thorns to strike from beneath the surface
- Push the Siege Clock significantly forward

Emissary Factions

Two factions arrive—together, but not united.

1. Choir-Knights of the Shining Mandate Brutal, disciplined, unyielding. They believe Heugen must be purified by flame, not negotiation. Their “mercy” is annihilation that leaves no sin to fester.

Signs: bronze masks, radiant lanterns, immaculate mail. **Demands:** full surrender of the city within three days. **Moves:** pronounce *Inviolate Sin* (freeze an NPC with fear), escalate zealotry, invoke a punitive miracle.

2. Lantern Advocates of Mykkiel Scholars, reformers, and theologians who believe the city can be redeemed—if it abandons the Wells of Forgetting and Aveh’s rites.

Signs: inked scriptures, ivory lamps, dispute talismans. **Demands:** tear down the outer wells; open the gates to missionary courts. **Moves:** identify false doctrine, calm crowds, isolate individuals for confession.

Internal Tension Treat these emissaries as a single faction with a hair-trigger schism. If the PCs inflame or mishandle negotiations, begin a **Schism Clock** [4].

At [4], the factions openly break, creating chaos the Thorns can exploit.

Scene II-A: The Parley of Masks

The emissaries are brought to the Mask Quarter. According to tradition, all parties wear neutral half-masks so expression cannot be used as a weapon.

Potential Conflicts

- A Mykkiel Advocate publicly challenges Aveh’s doctrine of shedding
- A Handmaiden of Livaea whispers a private scandal into a crusader’s ear
- A Rainmaiden lets the sky darken—not a threat, but a statement

Mechanical Tension If PCs allow the parley to collapse into shouting or miracle-work:

- Increase **Siege Clock** by 1
- Increase **Forgetting Clock** by 1 (panic drives people to wells)

Thorn Foreshadowing A crusader’s shadow moves independently, raising its lantern arm before the real crusader does.

Crowd reacts with fear, not understanding why.

Scene II-B: Courts of Doctrine

The emissaries demand a doctrinal review of Aveh's rites. Heugen reluctantly assembles a public forum.

Arguments from Mykkiel's Advocates

- "Shedding the self is surrendering the burden Mykkiel teaches us to bear."
- "Memory is law. A city without law dissolves into shadow."

Arguments from Aveh's Shepherds

- "Shame binds the spirit; we free those the world abandons."
- "Identity is not a punishment."

PC Roles

- Provide testimony
- Expose contradictions
- Protect witnesses
- Sabotage or strengthen either side
- Reveal witch influence (or conceal it)

Thorn Interference A witness begins reciting events that could not have occurred— memories extracted, rearranged, and returned with falsified details.

This is subtle, but unmistakably unnatural.

Investigating earns:

- Clue: "*Lantern-light does not cast these shadows.*"
- Advancement: **Thorn Ascendancy Clock +1**

Scene II-C: Witch Maneuvers

The witch orders respond to the emissaries:

Livaea's Handmaidens Stage a seduction-protest, charming a crusader into contradicting doctrine.

Rainmaidens of Raéyn Threaten a symbolic flood if the wells are touched.

Ikasha Shadowbinders Attempt blackmail using stolen confessions.

Hearth Witches Organize neighborhood protections—but fear forgotten names fouling their work.

PC Involvement Witches seek the PCs' help with:

- smuggling someone out of crusader custody
- obtaining a “true name” of an emissary
- sealing a well to prevent manipulation
- countering a magical intrusion not caused by witches at all

This last category is always the Thorns.

Scene II-D: False Miracles

As tensions escalate, a miracle occurs in the Lower Quarter: a woman is surrounded by radiant light and speaks with two voices.

Mykkiel's emissaries declare it proof of divine judgment. Aveh's shepherds insist it is a vision of freedom.

But the PCs who investigate learn the truth:

- The “miracle” is an identity-extraction gone wrong.
- The second voice is her own—fragmented.
- A root-like spiral has grown under her bed.

If PCs fail to calm the crowd or halt crusader escalation:

- Increase **Siege Clock** by 2

Act II Outcome

At the end of Act II, the PCs should:

- Understand the crusaders' internal split
- See the witch orders pulling the city in multiple directions
- Recognize Aveh's doctrine as both liberating and dangerous
- Suspect a manipulation beneath the surface (Thorns)
- Have made meaningful allies or enemies among the emissaries

Advance:

- **Siege Clock** to 4–5

- **Forgetting Clock** to 2
- **Thorn Ascendancy Clock** to 2–3

Act III begins when the first crusader cohort arrives at the gates, demanding the wells be sealed and the city submit to Mykkiel's judgment.

0.8.3 Act III: The Siege of the Wells

The desert trembles as the first cohort of Mykkiel's crusaders arrives. Drums echo against the stone walls of Heugen; dust rises like smoke. Inside the city, covens splinter, panic spreads, and the Wells deepen their pull on the fearful.

The Thorns of Malachai strike from beneath, turning the siege into a three-sided war of doctrine, memory, and identity.

Act III Goals

- Bring the city under direct external siege pressure
- Force difficult choices about the Wells of Forgetting
- Reveal the Thorns as an active threat (but still unexplained)
- Escalate conflicts between witch orders
- Reduce safe ground in the city
- Move the climax toward internal collapse rather than military defeat

City State at the Start of Act III

- **Siege Clock:** 4–5 (outer walls tested)
- **Forgetting Clock:** 2 (citizens retreat to the Wells)
- **Thorn Ascendancy:** 2–3 (disruptions and disappearances)

Heugen is not yet falling—but its internal tensions may break it faster than any crusader ram.

Scene III-A: The Demands at the Gate

The crusaders deploy siege tents and raise three banners:

- **White:** Accept reformation under Mykkiel's law
- **Red:** Submit all witches for judgment
- **Black:** Destroy the Wells entirely

PC Options

- Negotiate for time (DV 3–5)
- Undermine crusader morale
- Sabotage siege preparations
- Deliver false intelligence to either faction

Schism Possibility If the Choir-Knights and Lantern Advocates are already strained, this scene may split them outright. Trigger the **Schism Clock** if not already started.

Thorn Foreshadowing A crusader's war-horn produces a doubled echo— one human, one distinctly not.

Scene III-B: Wells in Turmoil

Crowds gather at the Wells of Forgetting, seeking:

- relief from siege panic,
- escape from shame,
- or the promise of a new identity.

But the Wells begin behaving strangely. Voices speak beneath the water—in mismatched memories.

Mechanical Impact

- Each day of siege automatically increases the **Forgetting Clock**.
- Witch covens argue violently over whether to seal or amplify the wells.

Thorn Interference Any ritual performed near a well risks triggering:

- identity dislocation (PC forgets a relationship),
- double-echo voice hallucinations,
- false memories of crusader cruelty (never happened),
- shadows moving independently.

A PC may realize: *“This is not the Wells’ natural magic.”*

Scene III-C: Witch War in the Streets

The witch orders fracture as siege stress mounts.

Livaea's Handmaidens Charm crusader scouts, partly to help Heugen—partly out of spite.

Rainmaidens of Raéyn Attempt a storm-ward to drown siege engines.

Ikasha Shadowbinders Begin taking hostages for leverage (PCs may be asked to intervene).

Hearth Witches Try to create safe communal circles, but Thorn interference corrupts names and labels—rendering their work fragile.

PC Goals

- Prevent inter-coven violence
- Protect innocents from magical fallout
- Choose which covens to support
- Identify which covens the Thorns are impersonating

Scene III-D: Breach of Identity

A prominent figure (choose someone meaningful to the PCs):

- a witch matron,
- a crusader emissary,
- a beloved community elder,
- or a PC's ally,

is found wandering the streets, speaking in a voice that is not theirs.

Their shadow is missing. Their memories are contradictory. Their Wells-mark is inverted.

Diagnosis A Thorn extraction was attempted—but not completed.

PC Actions

- Restore the victim's true name (DV 4–5)
- Track the missing shadow (requires specialized rites)
- Confront a Thorn agent watching from the rooftops

This is the first time a Thorn presence becomes undeniably real.

Scene III-E: The First Assault

The Choir-Knights launch a probing attack on the eastern gate. This is not yet the final siege—but it reveals weaknesses.

PC Opportunities

- Defend the walls with witches and townsfolk
- Counter crusader miracles
- Smuggle refugees to the inner districts
- Discover evidence of sabotage in the defenses

Thorn Twist PCs may catch a Thorn saboteur:

- wearing a crusader's face,
- mimicking a PC's voice,
- or carrying a stolen name-thread.

If captured, the Thorn collapses into a tangle of roots and whispering mouths.

Outcome Advance:

- **Siege Clock +1**
- **Forgetting Clock +1**
- **Thorn Ascendancy +1**

Heugen survives the first blow—but the city is unraveling from within.

Act III Outcome

By the end of Act III, the PCs should:

- Know the siege is inevitable
- Recognize the Thorns as a third, destabilizing enemy
- See the witch orders divided and vulnerable
- Face moral decisions about the Wells and the city's identity
- Have new allies—and new enemies—among Mykkiel's emissaries

Act IV begins when:

- The Thorns make their move beneath the city, *or*
- The crusaders prepare their final assault, *or*
- The PCs attempt a desperate ritual to stabilize the Wells

0.8.4 Act IV: Beneath the Wells — The Root Below the City

The siege above becomes distant thunder as the PCs descend into the stonework beneath Heugen. Here lie the first foundation-wells dug by the crusaders—long before the Wells of Forgetting took shape. Their roots reached deeper than intended, brushing something ancient beneath the desert.

Now that thing stirs.

The Thorns move openly: stealing shadows, severing memory threads, and preparing a harvest beneath the city while crusaders hammer at the gates. The PCs must choose which truths to preserve, which identities to release, and whether Heugen deserves to be remembered at all.

Act IV Goals

- Reveal the Wells' true origin and the Thorns' agenda
- Allow PCs to confront or bargain with the Wells-Worm
- Force choices about identity, exile, and forgetting
- Set the path toward Act V: the Final Judgment
- Bring Aveh's and Mykkiel's emissaries into direct conflict underground

Scene IV-A: Descent Into the First Wells

Entrances into the undercity are failing—wooden supports snapping, stonework shedding memories, tunnels rearranging themselves as the Forgetting Clock rises.

Entry Challenges (Roll or Choose)

- **1. The Echo-Stair** — Steps repeat themselves; party must resist looping memories.
- **2. Shadow Divide** — PCs momentarily lose their shadows; Thorns mark their “roots”.
- **3. Flood of Faces** — Wells-water pours from a corridor, whispering false pasts.
- **4. Crusader Breach** — A small zealot detachment enters via a drainage tunnel.

Foreshadowing the Root Symbols carved by the original crusader engineers appear:

“Dig not beneath the fourth echo.” “Identity must remain single.”

The crusaders clearly knew something was wrong—yet built anyway.

Scene IV-B: The Name-Catacombs

This chamber once held baptismal scrolls and redemption ledgers. Now, memory-threads drift through the air like spider silk.

A Thorn ritual is in progress.

What the PCs See

- Crusaders suspended by memory threads, whispering two names at once.
- Witches from Ikasha's cult arguing—some assisting the Thorns unknowingly.
- A Rainmaiden desperately trying to stabilize identity-wards.

PC Actions

- Cut the memory threads (dangerous: the victim's name may unravel)
- Bargain with a Thorn (they crave unused identities)
- Protect innocents from collapsing name-wards
- Seize Thorn ritual tools for later acts

Thorn Revelation The Thorns are not collecting memories; *they are collecting what people choose to forget.*

The city is feeding them.

Scene IV-C: The Shattered Reservoir

This vast cavern contains the broken stone cisterns that once held pure water. Now they hold Wells-water—heavy, luminous, silver-blue.

The water shows:

- reflections of people who are not present,
- past selves of the PCs,
- future selves that could exist if they forget enough,
- crusaders kneeling to Aveh,
- witches turning zealot.

Mechanical Impact Any PC who gazes too long must test **Spirit + Resolve (DV 4)** or:

- lose a label for the scene (“I am... uncertain”), or
- forget something important until Act V, or
- gain a temporary false memory.

Thorn Expansion The Thorns use this chamber as a birthing ground. New Thorn-bodies crawl from the Wells-water like roots seeking air.

PCs who touch the water leave a part of themselves behind.

Scene IV-D: The Root Below the City

Beneath the shattered reservoir lies a colossal hollow where the Wells' roots meet something alive.

The PCs witness:

- a mass of interwoven, shifting identity-threads;
- stone worn smooth by centuries of memory extraction;
- the Wells-Worm's passages spiraling like sigils.

This is where the Thorns feed their harvest.

Who Else Arrives

- **Aveh's emissaries:** desperate to stop crusaders from erasing the city
- **Mykkiel's emissaries:** determined to sanctify or destroy the Wells
- **Thorn operatives:** intent on completing the harvest

Three doctrines collide:

- *freedom through forgetting,*
- *purity through judgment,*
- *power through discarded identity.*

The PCs choose which doctrine—if any—to empower.

Scene IV-E: The Wells-Worm Stirs

The Wells-Worm becomes aware of the PCs.

It speaks through:

- the ripples of the Wells-water,
- stolen shadows,
- discarded memories,
- Thorn vessels whose mouths stretch too wide.

What it wants:

“Give me what you no longer wish to be.”

PC Options

- Bargain — Offer up shame, guilt, trauma... or relationships.
- Fight — A near-suicidal prelude to Act V's confrontation.
- Seal — Try to bind the Wells-Worm with name-wards (DV 5–6).
- Reveal — Show crusaders the Wells-Worm's true nature, fracturing their zeal.

Thorn Betrayal If the PCs negotiate with the Worm, the Thorns attempt to:

- seize the identity the PCs offer,
- overwhelm the emissaries,
- or feed the PCs to the Wells-Worm itself.

Act IV Outcome

By the end of Act IV, the PCs should:

- Know the Wells-Worm is central to both Aveh's and Mykkiel's crusade
- Understand the Thorns' true motive: harvesting discarded selves
- Realize the siege is a symptom—not the core threat
- Face an impossible choice involving identity, shame, or memory
- Set the stage for the final confrontation of Act V

Triggers to Begin Act V

- The Wells-Worm fully awakens
- The Thorns attempt a mass harvest
- A doctrinal schism ignites violence between emissaries
- PCs choose a ritual or confrontation path

Act V is the *Judgment of Heugen*—when memory, identity, and belief collapse into a single defining moment.

0.8.5 Act V: The Judgment of Heugen

The siege above has reached its climax. Mykkiel's host prepares their final advance. Within the depths, the Wells-Worm coils, half-awake, sensing the shape of its future. Aveh's emissaries plead for mercy, Mykkiel's call for purging light, and the Thorns whisper for the total harvest.

The PCs stand at the crossroads of identity and annihilation.

This act determines:

- whether Heugen survives,
- whether the Wells-Worm ascends, sleeps, or dies,
- whether Aveh or Mykkiel gain dominion,
- and what the PCs choose to remember—or forget—about themselves.

Act V Structure

1. **The Wells-Worm awakens**
2. **The Doctrine War ignites**
3. **Ritual Paths: Ascension, Judgment, or Severance**
4. **Confrontation: The Harvesting of Selves**
5. **Final Choice and Aftermath**

Scene V-A: The Wells-Worm Fully Wakes

The cavern shakes. Identity threads snap and reknit. Wells-water rises.

The Wells-Worm manifests:

- as a colossal silhouette made of discarded selves,
- as shifting outlines of the PCs (past and possible),
- as a whispering tide of “you could have been.”

Its agenda becomes clear:

“I am what you shed. I become what the world refuses to hold. Give me more, and I shall become your refuge—or your ruin.”

PCs must test **Spirit + Resolve (DV 4)** or:

- stagger,
- forget one bond,
- remember a shame they have avoided.

Scene V-B: The Doctrine War

As the Wells-Worm rises, factions clash openly:

Aveh's Emissaries

- Demand the Wells become a sanctuary of identityless peace.
- Argue Heugen should stand as a haven for the lost.

Mykkiel's Emissaries

- Call the Wells a heresy of formlessness.
- Proclaim the Worm must be judged or destroyed.

The Thorns of Malachai

- Reveal their aim: to harvest the surge of discarded identities.
- Attempt to reshape the Wells-Worm into a perfect predator.

PCs may choose:

- to negotiate a temporary truce,
- to support one doctrine,
- or to let all sides tear each other apart as they pursue the ritual.

Scene V-C: The Three Ritual Paths

To resolve the crisis, the PCs must take one of three paths. All require crossing the *Identity Crucible*: a shimmering plane of memory-water where discarded selves claw upward.

1. The Ritual of Ascension (Aveh's Path) Goal: Free the Wells-Worm by gifting it a permanent new identity.

Requirement:

- A PC must willingly surrender a name, label, or core belief.

Outcome:

- The Wells becomes a sanctuary of forgetting (blessing or curse).
- Aveh's doctrine gains global momentum.
- PCs gain a boon tied to rebirth, but permanently lose something personal.

2. The Ritual of Judgment (Mykkiel's Path) **Goal:** Impale the Wells-Worm with the *Spear of Remembrance*—a relic of the crusaders.

Requirement:

- Someone must speak their full, unbroken lineage before the strike.

Outcome:

- The Worm collapses into a cocoon of purified memory.
- Mykkiel's doctrine takes hold across the desert.
- Heugen becomes a city of confession and rigid truth.

3. The Ritual of Severance (The PCs' Path) **Goal:** Sever the Wells-Worm from both doctrines and make Heugen its own fate.

Requirement:

- PCs must bind three identity-threads:
- *who the city was, who it is, who it could be.*

Outcome:

- The Wells stabilize but remain dangerous.
- Heugen survives as a free city.
- The PCs become custodians of Heugen's future.

Scene V-D: Confrontation — The Harvesting of Selves

Regardless of ritual path, the confrontation occurs:

- The Wells-Worm attacks by manifesting *alternate versions* of the PCs.
- Thorns try to harvest these selves as weapons.
- Aveh's and Mykkiel's agents try to sway the party during the battle.

Battle Mechanics (Light Touch)

- Each round, one PC faces a "Mirror-Self Challenge."
- Success stabilizes the ritual.
- Failure generates a Thorn-Spawn (Scale: Tiny; Cap: 2).

Wells-Worm Phase Shifts At 3, 6, and 9 Harm the Worm:

- changes identity (new abilities),
- alters the battlefield (floods, illusions),
- forces PCs to confront personal truths.

Scene V-E: Final Choice

At the ritual's climax, PCs choose:

What to Forget A shame, a memory, a bond, or a trait.

What to Preserve Something they refuse to let the Wells take.

What the City Becomes Heugen's future changes depending on their choice:

- a sanctuary for misfits (Aveh),
- a bastion of truth (Mykkiel),
- a neutral city balanced between forgetting and freedom (Severance),
- or a hollow ruin, if the Wells-Worm feeds too deeply.

The chosen ritual resolves, Aveh's and Mykkiel's forces withdraw or kneel, and the Thorns retreat—unless the PCs have killed their Root-Master.

Epilogue: The New Heugen

The Wells-water settles. Memory threads dim. Survivors climb upward toward the desert dawn.

Each PC gains:

- a permanent mark of the ritual (mechanical or narrative),
- a new relationship with memory,
- and a reputation tied to their chosen doctrine.

Heugen lives—or dies—by their hand.

The Judgment is complete.

0.9 Epilogues & Aftermath

This section provides four distinct endings based on ritual choices in Act V. Each epilogue reshapes Heugen, alters faction influence, and marks the PCs permanently.

0.9.1 Epilogue: Ascension of the Wells

Aveh's ritual completes: the Wells-Worm gains a true name of peace, crafted from what the PCs willingly surrendered.

Heugen's Fate

- The city becomes a sanctuary for misfits and the nameless.
- Shame becomes water-light; memories soften at the edges.
- Pilgrims arrive seeking absolution through anonymity.

Cultural Shifts

- A new order, the *Untethered*, guides the Wells.
- Identity becomes fluid; roles shift seasonally.
- Aveh's influence spreads across the Amaranthine deserts.

PC Rewards

- Gain **The Unbound Mark**: once/session negate a social tag tied to reputation or shame.
- Permanently lose one Bond, memory, or label.

0.9.2 Epilogue: Judgment of the Wells

Mykkiel's ritual strikes true. The Spear arrests the Wells-Worm in a cocoon of hardened memory. Light floods the caverns.

Heugen's Fate

- The city becomes a bastion of confession and rigid truth.
- Crusader law replaces local custom.
- The Wells no longer erase memory—now they preserve it.

Cultural Shifts

- A new caste, the *Recall-Keepers*, records lineage and testimony.
- Secrets become contraband.
- Mykkiel's reach strengthens among desert settlements.

PC Rewards

- Gain **Mark of Radiant Judgment**: once/session treat Controlled Position as Dominant on a truth-bearing action.
- PCs must reveal one personal truth publicly.

0.9.3 Epilogue: The Severance Pact

Neither doctrine triumphs. The PCs bind three identity-threads: *who the city was, is, and might be*. The Wells-Worm withdraws, dormant but not gone.

Heugen's Fate

- The city remains free, beholden to neither patron.
- Wells-water becomes unpredictable—sometimes healing, sometimes revealing forgotten selves.
- A new generation of leaders arises around the PCs.

Cultural Shifts

- Heugen becomes a neutral ground for emissaries and mystics.
- Tension simmers between Aveh and Mykkiel loyalists.
- A new civic oath: *"We remember what we choose."*

PC Rewards

- Gain **Severance Thread**: once/session remove a Condition tied to memory or shame.
- PCs must define a legacy that Heugen will carry forward.

0.9.4 Epilogue: Collapse of the Wells

If the ritual fails or the Wells-Worm consumes too deeply, the city falls.

Heugen's Fate

- The city becomes a haunted ruin of half-formed selves.
- Wells-water spills across the desert, generating memory storms.
- Survivors flee; crusaders call it a cursed crater.

Cultural Shifts

- Aveh's followers mourn the sanctuary lost.
- Mykkiel's host declares the region forbidden.
- The Thorns of Malachai thrive in the chaos.

PC Consequences

- Gain **Wells-Touched**: once/session reroll a failed action, but on 1s mark a new eerie Trait.
- PCs are now hunted by relic-harvesters, crusaders, or the Thorns.

0.10 Post-Campaign Downtime Consequences

After the major arc, each PC resolves a long-form Downtime sequence:

0.10.1 Memory Echo Table

Once per Downtime, roll 1d6:

- 1 A forgotten face returns demanding closure.
- 2 You recall a life you never lived—gain +1 Boon or 1 Stress.
- 3 Someone mistakes you for one of your discarded selves.
- 4 You awaken with a new scar or symbol (no memory of earning it).
- 5 A Wells-water traveler arrives seeking your guidance.
- 6 Your shadow whispers a truth you refused in Act V.

0.10.2 Faction Shifts

Depending on epilogue:

- **Ascension**: Aveh's influence rises; Mykkiel cells form resistance.
- **Judgment**: Mykkiel's law spreads; Aveh cults become underground.
- **Severance**: Neutral emissaries proliferate; the city becomes a crossroads.
- **Collapse**: Relic-harvesters, the Thorns, and rogue crusaders dominate the wastes.

0.10.3 PC Project Hooks

- rebuild Heugen,
- hunt splinter-doctrine heretics,
- map the new Wells anomalies,

- track Thorns' relic-smuggling routes,
- redeem or destroy mistaken identities.

0.11 Sequel Hooks: The Thorns of Malachai

The Thorns emerge from Act V stronger than before.

0.11.1 Hook 1: The Root-Mother's Return

A new Root-Mother rises from the ruins of the collapsed Wells, claiming she can graft identities to create "better citizens."

Threat: Identity-harvesting rituals in desert villages.

0.11.2 Hook 2: The Thorn Ledger

PCs discover a ledger listing *their own discarded selves* as bounty items. Someone is collecting them.

Complication: Possession attempts by alternate-PC echoes.

0.11.3 Hook 3: The Harvest of the Ninefold Seed

The Thorns seek a relic able to split a person into nine usable personality-vessels.

Complication: One PC's echo is already in Thorn custody.

0.11.4 Hook 4: The Worm-Child

A cultist claims to be carrying a *fragment of the Wells-Worm*. Prophecy suggests it may molt into a lesser Wells-god—or a desert blight.

Threat: Competing doctrine factions want to claim it.

0.12 GM Summary Page

0.12.1 Themes

- identity, shame, memory
- doctrine vs. individuality
- forgetting as escape or erasure

0.12.2 Core Mechanics Used

- Dread Clock
- Doctrine Influence Tags
- Ritual Paths (Ascension, Judgment, Severance, Collapse)

- Mirror-Self Challenges
- Thorns Event Table

0.12.3 Three-Act Emotional Curve

1. **Discovery:** What is Heugen really built on?
2. **Confrontation:** What must be remembered or forgotten?
3. **Decision:** Who chooses the city's fate?

0.12.4 Key NPC Agendas

- Aveh's Emissaries — liberation through erasure
- Mykkiel's Knights — salvation through immutable truth
- Thorns of Malachai — predation through harvested identity
- Heugen's Council — survival through ambiguity

0.12.5 GM Reminders

- every faction believes it is saving people
- the Wells-Worm is not evil—merely hungry for cast-off selves
- no epilogue is “good” or “bad,” only *costly*
- reward players for emotionally honest decisions

0.13 The Book of Shadows

Preamble

There are places where the world forgets its laws.
Doorways that no one admits to knocking upon.
Names that rewrite the one who dares to speak them.

Shadows are not evil—they are consequences given shape. They are the costs we refuse to tally, the truths we bury, the debts that return to collect themselves.

The Book of Shadows expands Fate's Edge into grim folklore, threshold bargains, spirit intermediaries, and narrative consequences that cannot be ignored.

Here, magic is not a tool of power, but a mirror that asks: *What do you owe?*

This expansion details:

- threshold metaphysics and the ecology of spirits
- witchcraft orders, rites, bargains, and taboos
- new mechanics for Names, Shadow Fatigue, and consequences
- bestiary of entities caught “in between”
- adventures and frameworks for dark faerie play

It is not a horror book—it is a reckoning. And every reckoning begins with understanding.

0.14 Shadow Cosmology

0.14.1 Where Shadows Come From

Shadows arise wherever truth is denied, debt is unacknowledged, or identity is fractured by need unmet.

They are not spawned by malice but by *incompleteness*. The world abhors unresolved stories, and so it grows agents that force resolution.

A shadow may be:

- a guilt that learned to walk,
- a grief that clothed itself in form,
- a vow that refused to decay,
- or a Name that outlived the one who swore it.

They are narrative pressure given teeth.

0.14.2 Thresholds and Their Logic

A threshold is any place where a state changes:

- waking to dreaming
- innocence to agency
- belonging to exile
- life to echo

Crossing such places invites witness— and witnesses demand accounting.

Mechanically, thresholds create:

- encounters with spirits,
- visions or intrusive memory,
- bargains that test self-knowledge,
- and consequences that ripple outward.

0.14.3 Spirit Taxonomy

The world does not divide spirits by good and evil, but by *function*:

Echoes: Embers of identity that replay a moment endlessly.

Ghe'hai: Intermediaries who balance confession, debt, and revelation.

Masks: Names that no longer fit the bearer, seeking a new host.

Hollows: Abandoned narrative roles, hungry for purpose.

Ascendant Threads: Near-patron entities who embody taboo principles.

Each seeks completion, not conquest. Their violence is often misinterpreted as malice when it is only demand.

0.14.4 The Law of Truth and Debt

All Shadow workings follow one unspoken law:

What is denied becomes powerful.

A grief unspoken becomes a Ghe'hai. A promise broken becomes a Mask. An oath refused becomes a Hex that hunts its oathbreaker.

The more profound the denial, the more potent the spirit.

0.14.5 Role of Patrons

Patrons are not gods. They are *impulses* elevated to cosmological permanence:

- Mercy
- Judgment
- Escape
- Sacrifice
- Truth Concealed
- Truth Revealed

They possess want and will, but no agency—their actors are mortals and spirits who claim to speak in their name, competing to interpret their intent.

0.14.6 Ghe'hai and the In-Between

Ghe'hai are the hinge between mortal narrative and patron logic.

They:

- test thresholds,
- collect confessions,
- enforce bargains,
- and shepherd stories toward completion.

They do not bargain for power but for *truth*, often in forms mortals would rather not see.

0.14.7 Shadow Ecology

Shadows propagate where:

- memory is buried,
- identity is fractured,
- injustice persists,
- or silence becomes survival.

These become hunting grounds where:

- echoes replay endlessly,
- Ghe'hai patrol for denials,
- hollows seek bearers,
- and name-magic blooms like rot.

Such places are fertile for rites— but perilous for those without answers.

Shadow Cosmology Summary:

Shadows are consequences. Thresholds call them. Ghe'hai manage them. Patrons embody them. Mortals must reckon with them.

Crossing the Threshold (6 XP)

Crossing the Threshold — Witch Initiation Talent (6 XP)

You step willingly into witchcraft, binding your spirit to a Patron by cord, blood, or hidden name. This Talent represents an irreversible shift in fate and identity.

The Curse of the Unanointed (Permanent Mark). Upon taking this Talent, you acquire a supernatural stigma: **The Curse of the Unanointed**.

- Your presence unsettles the sacred and the sanctified.
- You suffer **-1d** on actions within consecrated places or when interacting with religious authorities.
- Wards, blessings, and holy rites react violently: the first time this occurs each session, gain **1 Fatigue** and the GM gains **+1 SB**.

This curse remains even if you abandon witchcraft; it may only be lifted by a **Grand Rite of Severance** or the intercession of a powerful Patron.

Witchcraft Access. You gain the ability to perform:

- **Lesser Rites** from your Witch Order
- **Basic Cordwork**: sensing bindings, softening a curse, identifying Patrons

Novice Limitations. Until you gain at least one Tier I Witch talent:

- You may perform only **one Working per scene**
- You cannot attempt **Grand Rites**
- Your Position on witchcraft rolls is capped at **Risky**

Patron Taboo. Your Patron imposes a subtle obligation. Violating it inflicts **2 Fatigue** and grants the GM **+1 SB**.

Advancing the Path. Acquiring any Tier I Witch talent removes novice limitations and grants full access to the Order's Rites, Hexes, Cords, and mysteries.

0.15 Orders of Witchcraft

0.15.1 Order of the Silver Quiet (Lunera)

Lunera, called *The Silver Quiet*, is the Patron of reflection, hidden knowledge, and the moonlit spaces where truth half-reveals itself.¹ Her witches are keepers of secrets and interpreters of twilight omens: they read dreams, water, polished steel, and the thin shine on a knife's edge.

They work at thresholds of light and dark — crossroads at dusk, moonlit groves, the moment between waking and sleep. [oai_citation : 0Fate'sEdgeExpansion – WitchesofFate'sEdge : LargeCords, Curses, andtheQuietWorkofNames.txt](sediment : //file0000000f29071fdb8f5cad66585148c)Th

Order Themes

- **Domains:** Dreams, reflection, liminal sight, hidden motives.
- **Tone:** Soft horror, revelation, slow unmasking of truths.
- **Typical Sites:** Moonlit wells, mirrored halls, crossroads shrines, rooftop observatories.

Gift and Tell Witches sworn to Lunera typically manifest:

- **Gift — Moonlit Mirror.** When they gaze into a reflective surface under moonlight, they may witness distant events or gain insight into the true nature of people and objects. [oai_citation : 1Fate'sEdgeExpansion–WitchesofFate'sEdge : LargeCords, Curses, andtheQuietWorkofNames.txt](sediment : //file0000000f29071fdb8f5cad66585148c)
- **Tell — Shadows Cling.** They cast two shadows in dim light: one their present self, one a possible future. Their eyes gleam faintly silver in darkness. [oai_citation : 2Fate'sEdgeExpansion – WitchesofFate'sEdge : LargeCords, Curses, andtheQuietWorkofNames.txt](sediment : //file0000000f29071fdb8f5cad66585148c)

Moon-Mirror Talents

These Talents expand the core Witch Threshold trees, focusing on insight, reflection, and the cost of knowing too much.

Silver Poise (2 XP) You do not flinch under scrutiny. Once per scene, when targeted by an attempt to deceive, charm, or intimidate you, gain +1d to resist or discern motive. On a Success, you may ask one honest question the target must answer at least partially truthfully.

Dream-Reader (3 XP) Prereq: *Silver Poise*. During Downtime, you may interpret a PC or NPC's dream (with their consent). Name a looming threat or opportunity; the GM ties one existing clock or front to that image and gives you a concrete sign to watch for. First time that sign appears in play, gain +1d to act on or against it.

¹See Patron entry for Lunera for full lore, Gift, and Corruption details.

Twin Shadows (3 XP) Your second shadow becomes a tool. Once per scene, you may *send your future-shadow ahead* along a corridor, across a courtyard, or through an open threshold. Ask one:

- “What danger lies this way?”
- “Who waits for us?”
- “What has just happened here?”

The GM answers with a concrete image or omen. First action that exploits this info gains **+1 Position**.

Moon's Reserve (4 XP) When you refrain from speaking a hard truth you know, mark a silent tally. Once per session, you may erase that tally to:

- turn one ally's Miss on an investigation/notice roll into a Partial, or
- treat a vague clue as if it were precise: ask the GM to sharpen one prior hint into a direct pointer (a name, location, or object).

Silver Ascendancy (6 XP, Capstone) Once per session, under moonlight or equivalent liminal light, you may *unveil a scene*. For the remainder of the scene:

- you and allies gain **+1d** to notice, insight, and lie-detection rolls;
- illusions, disguises, and glamours are strained; the GM must describe one concrete tell or fracture in any deception present;
- each time you exploit a revealed lie, mark **+1 Exposure** as Lunera's gaze becomes unmistakable.

Rites of the Silver Quiet

Use standard Rite format from the Player's Guide; TAGs are suggestions.

Rite of the Still Basin [REVEAL] *Low, 4 XP* — Scene; Near; Standard Push **Materials:** A bowl of still water or polished metal, moonlight or candle-flame. **Effect:** You scry a single *current* situation: a person, place, or object known by name or strong description. Ask one:

- “What immediate danger threatens them?”
- “What are they most afraid of right now?”
- “What truth about them lies just out of sight?”

Gain **+1d** to actions that exploit this in the current or next scene. **Push It:** Also glimpse one *possible* future if nothing changes, creating a 4-segment **Foretold Outcome** clock.

Rite of the Silver Veil [VEIL] *Low, 5 XP* — Scene; Self; Standard Push **Materials:** A thin silvery cloth, veil, or chain worn over the eyes or brow. **Effect:** You soften your presence. For this scene, you gain +1d to avoid notice, slip away from conversations, or remain an overlooked listener. Those who do notice often underestimate you. **Push It:** Choose one person in the scene: for them, you appear as their own memory or expectation until you act directly against it (first such action generates 1 SB).

Rite of Echoed Dreams [ECHO] *Standard, 7 XP* — Action; Close; Standard Push **Materials:** Shared token from a past moment (locket, scrap of letter, shard of glass). **Effect:** You draw out a vivid waking-dream from a willing subject. Ask up to two:

- “Who do you most fear becoming?”
- “What moment do you wish you could change?”
- “What truth do you not dare to look at?”

The dream answers in symbols; the GM must tie each symbol to a concrete NPC, place, or clock. You gain +1d when acting with compassion or leverage on that truth. **Push It:** You may enter the dream with them; both of you gain +1d to resist fear or confusion linked to that memory this session, but you mark +1 **Obligation** to Lunera.

Hex of the Clinging Shadow [HEX] *Standard, 8 XP* — Scene; Near; Yes **Materials:** A fragment of the target's reflection (hair from their comb, a sketch of their face, etc.). **Effect:** You call a second shadow to cling to the target. For this scene (or until dispelled):

- they cannot fully hide their intentions; social deception rolls suffer -1d;
- when they attempt betrayal or flee, their shadow lags or points the wrong way (GM adds a tell or complication).

Push It: Bind the shadow to a **4-segment Shadow's Debt** clock. When it fills (through their lies, harm, or cowardice), the shadow manifests as an echo-spirit that can testify against them or act once on your whispered command.

Curse of the Unanswered Reflection [CURSE] *High, 10 XP* — Long; Far; No **Materials:** A mirror cracked in three pieces, each named for a truth the target refuses. **Effect:** Mark a **Refusal [6]** clock on the target (faction or individual). Each time they double down on denial, cruelty, or willful ignorance, advance the clock. At 3/6, they begin seeing distorted reflections that whisper their failings (GM adds fear, doubt, or paranoia as Conditions). At 6/6, they must face a *Reckoning Scene*: a confrontation, trial, or nightmare where their hidden truth is dragged into the open. This does not decide their fate by itself; it *forces the question*. PCs, NPCs, and the world must answer it.

Bargains and Prices (Lunera's Covenant)

Lunera rarely asks for blood or spectacle. Her prices are subtle:

- **Memory Tithe:** Offer a cherished memory — not erased, but dulled for you and sharpened for another.
- **Hidden Truth:** Reveal a secret that would transform someone's understanding of their past.
[*oai_citation : 3E Fate's Edge Expansion—Witches of Fate's Edge : Large Cords, Curses, and the Quiet Work of N*
//file0000000f29071fdb8f5cad66585148c)]
- **Kept Silence:** Maintain a night of absolute silence at a chosen threshold; break it and the next omen you receive arrives twisted.
- **Selective Sight:** In exchange for perfect clarity in one specific matter, accept permanent blind spots elsewhere (GM and player agree on 1–2 narrative blind spots).

Rivalries and Entanglements

- **With Mab's Courts:** Lunera's witches see through glamour and social theater. Mab's agents find them useful but infuriating; joint covens flirt with disaster when truth and performance collide.
- **With Morag's Hags:** Morag writes hidden costs into every bargain; Lunera illuminates them. The two orders sometimes collaborate to protect a village and other times wage quiet war over whose version of “justice” stands.
- **With Thepyrgian Witch-Hunters:** Double shadows and silver eyes are *easy tells*. Chain-Lanterns and Temple inquisitors treat Lunera's marks as signs of “moon-sent heresy” ripe for public burning.
- **With Other Witches:** Door-witches of Ikasha value Lunera's foresight but fear becoming paralyzed by knowledge. Some hearth covens keep a single Lunera-swearer as their “mirror-keeper” and never more.

Adventure Seeds: Silver Quiet Hooks

1. **The City of Two Shadows.** In a mistland port, everyone begins casting double shadows. A Lunera coven swears they did not call this; a broken lunar rite shard suggests otherwise. PCs must trace the rite back to a deserter-witch before the Temple of Light declares the entire district cursed.
2. **Dreams for Sale.** A traveling hedge-witch offers to *buy bad dreams* and bottle them. Lunera's order claims this is stealing more than nightmares; something in the Veil is growing hungry with each transaction.

3. **The Broken Mirror-Court.** A noble house once protected by Mab now turns to Lunera's witches after a scandal. PCs must navigate a joint moot where faerie glamour and moonlit truth clash over whose story becomes canon — and who pays for the lies already told.
4. **Refusal at Six.** A cruel magistrate has reached 5/6 on a hidden **Refusal** curse laid by a dying Lunera-witch. PCs can:
 - help push the curse to completion and stage the Reckoning,
 - negotiate a different truth to be revealed,
 - or break the curse entirely — angering Lunera and anyone who needed that truth spoken.

0.15.2 The Thorned Path (Morag)

Morag is the Patron of hunger, debt, secret bargains, and the sharp-edged mercies given in desperate hours. Called the **Thorn-Hearth Hag**, she offers warmth to the shivering and teeth to the powerless — but every comfort hides a price, and every price has a hook.

Her witches walk the crooked line between protection and predation. They are ward-makers, curse-breakers, famine-tamers, and debt-collectors who know that mercy without cost is easily forgotten.

Order Themes

- **Domains:** Hunger, scarcity, debt, crooked justice, blood-prices.
- **Tone:** Folk horror; grim reciprocity; “a kindness with teeth.”
- **Typical Sites:** Root-cellars, thorn groves, abandoned farmhouses, smoke-filled kitchens where bargains simmer.

Gift and Tell

- **Gift — Hag's Ledger.** Morag's witches may quantify intangible burdens. They can *see* debt — emotional, spiritual, or folkloric — as thorns woven around a person or place.
- **Tell — Thorn-Blood.** When they suffer harm or exhaustion, fine red thorns prick their skin. In times of stress, breath emerges as flecks of ash or petals.

Talents of the Thorned Path

Briar-Sense (2 XP) You smell imbalances: old grudges, unpaid oaths, withheld charity. Once per scene, ask the GM:

“Who here owes more than they admit?”

Gain +1d on your next interaction with that person.

Hearth-Grasp (3 XP) Prereq: *Briar-Sense*. Your touch can warm or sting with hag-magic. Once per scene, choose:

- Soothe: remove 1 Fatigue from an ally.
- Sting: impose **-1d** on an enemy's next action.

Barbed Mercy (3 XP) Your aid always costs something, even if small. When you heal, comfort, or aid someone, choose:

- They owe you a future favor (mark a **1-segment Debt** clock).
- You take on a fraction of their burden (mark 1 Fatigue to give them +1d).

Hag's Hunger (4 XP) When you are wounded, exhausted, or cornered, you may embrace Morag's hunger. Once per session:

- Gain **+1 Effect** on a violent or protective action.
- Immediately mark 1 Fatigue afterward.

Black-Thorn Ascendancy (6 XP, Capstone) You channel Morag's most terrible blessing. Once per session, for one scene:

- Curses and Rites you perform gain **+1 Effect**.
- Anyone who betrays you or your coven takes 1 Harm (ignore armor).
- Every use advances a hidden 4-segment **Thorn Corruption** clock.

Rites of Morag

Rite of the Hungry Hearth [WARD] *Low, 4 XP* — Scene; Near; Standard **Materials:** Ash, bone, a circle of spoons or broken tools. **Effect:** Wards a small space against famine, cold, or fear. Anyone resting here recovers **1 Fatigue** and gains **+1d** to resist despair or hunger.

Rite of the Brier-Knot [BIND] *Standard, 6 XP* — Scene; Near; Standard **Materials:** Red twine or thorn-vine. **Effect:** Bind a promise. If broken, the target suffers **-1d** on all actions for a scene. **Push It:** Create a **Debt [4]** clock that grants you leverage.

Rite of Hag's Measure [REVEAL/PRICE] *Standard, 7 XP* — Action; Self; Standard **Materials:** A ledger page or tally-mark stone. **Effect:** Learn the *exact price* to resolve a conflict, curse, or feud. GM reveals one concrete bargain:

“If you give X, you may claim Y.”

You choose whether to pay it.

Hex of the Starving Path [HEX] *High, 9 XP* — Scene; Near; Yes **Materials:** A handful of dry earth. **Effect:** Target grows weary; all rolls that rely on strength, daring, or optimism suffer **-1d**. If the target hoards resources or refuses hospitality, the hex intensifies (GM advances **Starvation [6]**).

Curse of the Thorn-Eaten Name [CURSE] *High, 10 XP* — Long; Far; No **Materials:** A name written in soot and bound in thorn twine. **Effect:** Erodes power and identity. Each time the target commits cruelty or refuses rightful aid:

- Advance a **Name-Degradation [6]** clock.

At 6: Their reputation, title, or authority collapses — not magically, but socially: people cease speaking their name.

Bargains and Prices (Morag's Covenant)

Morag gives comfort — but not for free.

Common Prices

- **Hearth-Tithe:** Provide shelter or food to a stranger.
- **Pain-Penny:** Suffer 1 Harm to strengthen a Rite.
- **Debt-Kept:** Take responsibility for someone else's consequence.
- **Ash-Truth:** Confess an uncomfortable truth to those harmed.

Hidden Prices

- **Hunger's Claim:** For every debt you collect, one burden of your own grows heavier.
- **Unpaid Kindness:** A kindness you refuse to perform becomes a future curse.

Rivalries and Entanglements

- **With Mab's Courts:** Mab's glammers rarely acknowledge cost; Morag insists nothing is free. Joint covens become political nightmares.
- **With Lunera's Witches:** Lunera reveals truths Morag would rather bury beneath debt and obligation. Their alliances are powerful but fragile.
- **With Hearth-Witches:** They share goals — protection, warmth, community — but disagree violently on whether help should always cost.
- **With Witch-Hunters:** Chain-Lanterns fear Morag's Rites most: her curses are "law-shaped," hard to expose, and harder to break.

Adventure Seeds: Thorned Path Hooks

1. **The Famine That Smiles.** A village prospers despite a blight — too much so. Morag's witches sense a hidden bargain, and something hungry beneath the fields.
2. **Debts of the Dead.** Ghosts queue outside a ruined cottage, each demanding a debt be honored. PCs must untangle half-forgotten promises before Morag enforces them all.
3. **The Bread That Bites Back.** A baker used a forbidden Rite to keep food warm through winter. Now the ovens whisper, and the bread has begun choosing who may eat.
4. **Ash Harvest.** A village burned long ago still pays a tithe in soot each year. The new headwoman refuses — and Morag sends her witches to collect.

0.15.3 The Court of Masks (Mab)

Mab is the Patron of glammers, stories, bargains, and the terrible weight of beauty. Called the **Queen of Masks**, the **First Story**, and **She-Who-Decides-the-Ending**, she governs the old laws of narrative truth: every mask is a promise, every role a binding, and every story demands a price.

Her witches are threshold-benders, oath-weavers, dreamwalkers, and manipulators of stories. They do not change reality — they make reality remember the tale it is supposed to tell.

Order Themes

- **Domains:** Glamour, narrative law, masks, bargains, faerie oaths.
- **Tone:** Dark faerie tale; shifting identity; beautiful danger.
- **Typical Sites:** Moonlit crossroads, mirror-doorways, midnight revels, ruined theaters still echoing old lines.

Gift and Tell

- **Gift — The Third Mask.** Mab's witches always perceive the role someone is playing: the face behind the face. Once per scene, ask:

“What role does this person believe they are in?”

- **Tell — Mirror-Catch.** Reflections behave strangely around them: delayed, doubled, or revealing alternate selves.

Talents of the Court of Masks

Mask-Sense (2 XP) You instantly feel the emotional “mask” others wear. Once per scene, gain +1d to any social action if you name the mask aloud:

“You're wearing the mask of the Dutiful Child.”

Glamour Touch (3 XP) Prereq: *Mask-Sense*. Your touch can warp minor perceptions. Once per scene:

- Blessing: Grant an ally the [**Glamoured**] tag for a scene (+1 Position in first impression).
- Curse: Twist someone's self-image, imposing **-1d** on their next social action.

Story-Ward (3 XP) You can assert narrative logic into the world. Once per session, declare:

"This is a story where X cannot happen."

This imposes **-1 Effect** on attempts to contradict your claim. (Requires GM approval to avoid abuse.)

True-Name Whisper (4 XP) You may attempt to unsettle illusions, deception, or falsehood. When someone lies to you, you may roll *Spirit + Insight (DV 3)* to learn:

- the emotional truth behind the lie, or
- one detail they fear becoming known.

Mirror-Court Ascendancy (6 XP, Capstone) Once per session, for one scene:

- Your glammers gain **+1 Effect**.
- Anyone invoking your name or mask suffers **-1d** unless they pay a price (confession, secret, token of identity).
- Whenever an enemy rolls a 1, you may twist fate: declare a shift in the scene's emotional tone.

Rites of Mab

Rite of the Borrowed Face [VEIL] *Low, 4 XP* — Scene; Self; Standard **Materials:** A mirror shard or ribbon-mask. **Effect:** Assume a harmless glamour: altered features, voice softening, false confidence. Gain **+1 Position** in first impressions for the scene.

Rite of the Story-Weaver's Knot [BIND] *Standard, 6 XP* — Action; Near; Standard **Materials:** Thread or hair tied in a knot. **Effect:** Bind a simple narrative condition onto a target:

"You will not speak until someone says your true name." "Your strength fails whenever you boast."

Breaking the condition deals 1 Harm (ignore armor).

Rite of Mirror-Splitting [ILLUSION] *Standard, 7 XP* — Scene; Near **Materials:** A mirror cracked deliberately. **Effect:** Create one convincing illusion:

- duplicate self,
- fake doorway,
- phantom sound/figure.

A sharp blow or contradiction dispels it.

Hex of the Miswritten Tale [HEX] *High, 9 XP* — Scene; Near **Materials:** A page torn from a storybook. **Effect:** Twist someone's sense of their own arc. They suffer **-1d** on actions aligned with their core identity until they "rewrite" themselves (confession, confrontation, decisive act).

Curse of the Stolen Ending [CURSE] *High, 10 XP* — Long; Far; No **Materials:** A token representing the target's ambition. **Effect:** Strip the target of narrative momentum. Whenever they attempt a decisive action, advance **Stolen Ending [6]**. At 6: their greatest ambition collapses through misfortune or misplaced trust.

Bargains and Prices (Mab's Covenant)

Common Prices

- **A secret freely given.**
- **A mask surrendered** (a persona, lie, or social role).
- **A truth spoken at the wrong moment.**
- **A gift that must never be acknowledged.**

Hidden Prices

- **Doubled Shadows:** Your reflection gains opinions — sometimes unhelpful.
- **The Lost Thread:** A memory of your own story unravels (GM chooses a detail).

Rivalries and Entanglements

- **With Lunera's Witches:** Lunera illuminates truth; Mab re-writes it. They clash over "what the story wishes to be."
- **With Morag's Witches:** Mab hates debts; Morag loves them. Their covens often war over the price of a single promise.
- **With Ikasha's Lethai-ar:** Role-law and mask-law complement each other dangerously. Joint courts can trap an entire community in ritual dramaturgy.
- **With Witch-Hunters:** Chain-Lanterns despise her illusions — glamour is "unpriced magic" and thus suspect.

Adventure Seeds: Court of Masks Hooks

1. **The Masquerade That Would Not End.** A noble feast has lasted seven nights. No one can remove their masks. Mab's witches must decide who started the story and how it ends.
2. **The Forgotten Bride.** A bride arrived at the altar wearing no face at all. The PCs must track down her stolen mask — and its jealous wearer.
3. **The Tale That Eats Itself.** A children's rhyme spreads through town; those who recite it begin reenacting violent folktale roles.
4. **Mirror in the Orchard.** A rural village hides a secret: one mirror always shows next year's harvest — but someone has shattered it, and the land's fate is unraveling.

0.15.4 The Veiled Ledger (Lethai-ar of Ikasha)

The Ikasha form of the Lethai-ar is a secretive, dusk-bound order whose magic is concerned with **hidden roles, submerged truths, unspoken debts, and the power of what is not said.**

Where Inaea's Silk Vigil codifies roles openly and Isoka's Shed Vigil cuts decisive paths, **Ikasha's Veiled Ledger** rules what remains in shadow: secret oaths, masked allegiances, clandestine diplomacy, and the dangerous art of keeping a name safe.

Their symbol is the *shaded ledger*—a book whose lines are written in disappearing or mirrored ink. Their doctrine:

“A truth concealed is a truth preserved.”

Cultural Hosts

- **Ikasha:** Ancestral birthplace; shadow courts, whisper-houses, mirror-duel academies.
- **Tulkani:** Adopted as a guild of secret-keepers, mediators, and “inkwalkers” who maintain hidden treaties.
- **Sidhi:** Revered as dream-guides, oath-anchors, and protectors of names; the Sidhi see secrets as essential architecture of the soul.

Signs, Etiquette, and Doctrine

Signs

- Shadowed candles (two flames, one real, one illusion)
- Folded black-paper notes burned unread
- Ledger-marks in ash or charcoal on doorframes
- Necklaces of narrow obsidian tablets

Etiquette

- Speak only when the shadow is unbroken
- Never name another's mask without price
- Offer a truth to receive a secret
- Break no oath under eclipse-light

Order Themes

- Secrets as currency
- Shadow as structured space
- Masks as relational truth
- Diplomacy as ritual
- Silencing, withholding, and controlled revelation

Talents of the Veiled Ledger

Shadow-Loomer (2 XP) You sense when a lie is crafted rather than spoken. Once per scene, ask:

“What truth is being deliberately withheld?”

Quiet Step, Quiet Breath (3 XP) Prereq: *Shadow-Loomer*. Your presence reduces the noise of your passage. Gain +1d to stealth actions in low light or shadow.

Mask-Ink Rite (3 XP) You can inscribe a symbolic “mask” on someone (ink, soot, ash). For one scene:

- Ally: +1 Position on deception
- Foe: -1 Effect on revealing truth

Shadow Covenant (4 XP) You may bind a secret to silence. Once per session, when someone hears a truth you wish to hide, roll *Spirit + Resolve (DV 3)*. On success, they forget one detail of your choosing for the scene.

Ledger of the Hidden Name (6 XP, Capstone) You maintain a supernatural ledger of one important secret. Choose one:

- **Ward the Name:** Anyone acting against the protected subject suffers -1d unless they pay a narrative price (confession, token, giving up a secret).
- **Bound in Shadow:** Once per session, nullify a social failure by rewriting the “scene memory” of bystanders.

Rites of the Veiled Ledger

Rite of the Whisper-Hood [VEIL] *Low, 4 XP* — Scene **Effect:** Surround yourself with a hush of shadows. Gain **+1 Position** against detection by mundane senses.

Rite of Ink Without Name [BIND] *Standard, 6 XP* — Action **Effect:** Stain a target's shadow. While marked, the target:

- cannot reveal a chosen secret aloud
- suffers 1 Fatigue if they attempt to break the silence

Rite of the Mirror-Quiet Step [MOVE][ILLUSION] *Standard, 7 XP* — Scene **Effect:** Create a delayed-shadow afterimage. You count as in two places until the illusion is dispelled. Gain **+1d** on the first stealth or escape roll this scene.

Hex of the Darkened Ledger [HEX] *High, 9 XP* — Scene **Effect:** A target's social credibility collapses. For the scene, anyone persuaded by the witch treats one claim the target makes as false.

Curse of the Silent Debtor [CURSE] *High, 10 XP* — Long **Effect:** Bind someone to a secret debt. Whenever they withhold truth or evade oath, advance **Silent Debt [6]**. At 6, something valuable (voice, name-right, ally loyalty) is forfeited.

Rivalries and Entanglements

With Lunera The moon reveals slowly; the Ledger conceals deliberately. Conflicts arise over “who decides which truths deserve light.”

With Mab Mask-law and secret-law mirror each other dangerously. Joint covens create spirals of misdirection that can ensnare entire courts.

With Morag Morag's prices are open; Ikasha's are buried. Their witches clash over debt ownership — especially when a soul owes both.

With Witch-Hunters Chain-Lanterns see them as *civilizational threats*: you cannot interrogate what will not speak.

Adventure Seeds

1. **The Missing Ledger Page.** A page is torn from the Veiled Ledger—whoever holds it can rewrite one person's past action. Three factions want it; one faction denies it even exists.
2. **The Secret that Cannot Survive Dawn.** At sunrise, a Sidhi village's communal secret will be revealed unless a witch restores the shadow-binding before first light.

3. **Mask at the Threshold.** A Tulkani diplomat arrives wearing a mask whose shadow speaks different truths than the mask does.
4. **The Ghe'hai Assassin Who Casts No Shadow.** An elite warrior has traded their shadow to the Ledger to kill a monarch—but now the shadow wants its life back.

0.15.5 The Shed Vigil (Lethai-ar of Isoka)

The Isokan expression of Lethai-ar is a doctrine of **necessary severance**. Where Ikasha preserves secrets and Inaea weaves roles, the **Shed Vigil** teaches that identity is shaped by what one relinquishes.

Their symbol is a *ring of discarded skins*—literal in ritual, metaphorical in doctrine. They believe every person contains multiple “selves,” and each must be shed at the correct moment to prevent stagnation, corruption, or spiritual calcification.

In Isoka, these witches are part executioner, part surgeon, part rebirth-midwife.

“To grow, you must give blood to the road behind you.”

Cultural Hosts

- **Isoka:** Homeland; bone-marked rites, desert pyres, shrines where names are buried.
- **Tulkani:** Adopted as itinerant crisis-guides—called when a leader must “cut away” a failing custom.
- **Sidhi:** Interpreted as psychopompic healers who prune emotions and memories that obstruct dream-flow.

Signs, Etiquette, and Doctrine

Signs

- Rings of shed bone or horn
- Cuts on wrists marked with ash
- Small piles of discarded tokens at crossroads
- Masks split vertically, bound by cord

Etiquette

- Do not refuse a witch's request for a symbolic offering
- Do not speak someone's “buried name” aloud
- Accept the loss you cannot hide—loss defines you
- Never interrupt a Severance Rite

Order Themes

- Transformation through loss
- Cutting away falsehood, corruption, or stagnation
- Bone, shedding, ritual knives, ash
- Sacrifice as purification

Talents of the Shed Vigil

Bone-Sense Adept (2 XP) You instinctively sense tension, rot, or fracture in identity. Once per scene, ask the GM:

“What must be cut away for this situation to resolve?”

Severer's Grip (3 XP) Prereq: *Bone-Sense Adept*. Your presence destabilizes falsehood. Gain +1d to actions that remove, purge, or disrupt a harmful influence (curse, addiction, oath, enchantment).

Ash-Bound Name (3 XP) You can mark someone's name with ash. For one scene:

- Ally: +1 Effect when acting to break free from something
- Foe: -1 Position when attempting to manipulate identity or memory

Ritual Severance (4 XP) Once per session, declare a symbolic “cut.” Choose one:

- Remove 1 Fatigue from yourself or an ally at the cost of an ephemeral item
- Gain +2d on a single decisive action by sacrificing narrative leverage or a bond

Master of Sheds and Shadows (6 XP, Capstone) You may perform a metaphysical severing. Choose one per session:

- **Cut the False Self:** Strip away one lie, illusion, or manipulation affecting the scene
- **Cut the Clinging Fate:** Reduce a clock by 2 if you sacrifice something of personal narrative value

Rites of the Shed Vigil

Rite of the Ashen Knife [SEVER] *Low, 4 XP — Action*

Effect: Create a knife of ash and intent. For the scene:

- +1 Position when breaking bindings
- On a success, you may symbolically “cut” a minor hindrance or complication

Rite of Naming the Husk [TRANSFORM] *Standard, 6 XP — Scene*

Burn a token of the “old self.”

- The target loses one Tilting Condition
- For the next roll involving resolve, they gain +1d

Rite of Blood to the Road [SACRIFICE] *Standard, 7 XP — Action*

Sacrifice a cherished object, memory-token, or bond-mark. **Effect:** Gain one of:

- Advance an ally's Project clock by 1
- Remove a major consequence for the scene
- Reveal the “stress point” of a foe or threat

Hex of the Split Mask [HEX] *High, 9 XP — Scene*

The target's identity fractures in the eyes of others. For the scene:

- Anyone invoking their authority suffers -1d
- Their lies collapse immediately (GM decides how dramatically)

Curse of the Shedding Soul [CURSE] *High, 10 XP — Long*

Bind someone to a progressive shedding cycle. Track the **Shedding Clock** [6].

- 2: They lose a minor possession or social role
- 4: They lose something emotionally significant
- 6: They lose a defining part of identity (name, oath, relationship)

Rivalries and Entanglements

With Ikasha's Veiled Ledger Secrets resist cutting. The Ledger hides; the Vigil exposes. Their witches often duel over which truth deserves severance.

With Inaea's Silk Vigil Inaea weaves roles; Isoka tears them apart. Their rituals often occur in alternating cycles—creation then destruction.

With Morag Morag demands prices openly and greedily. The Shed Vigil's sacrifices are personal and symbolic. Conflicts arise when a soul owes a price to both.

With Mab Mab's courts thrive on endless masks; Isoka's witches break masks to reveal what festers beneath.

Adventure Seeds

1. **The Severed King.** A ruler hires the PCs after the Shed Vigil ritually removes a part of their authority—now the kingdom teeters.
2. **A Name Buried Too Deep.** Someone shed their name decades ago; now the forgotten self is manifesting as a hostile eidolon.
3. **The Knife That Cuts Fate.** An ancient ash-blade is said to sever destinies. Three Vigils (Isoka, Ikasha, and Silk) each claim it belongs to their doctrine.
4. **The Shedding Gone Wrong.** A Sidhi dream-worker removed too much of their emotional “weight” and now cannot dream—or wake—normally.

0.15.6 The Silk of Inaea (Lethai-ar of Inaea)

Where Ikasha teaches secrets and Isoka teaches severance, the **Silk of Inaea** teaches that identity is a *shared fabric*. Their doctrine is intimate, suffocating, and ecstatic:

“If you are mine and I am yours, we shall never be alone again.”

The cult begins with warmth, gentleness, and belonging— but ends with obliteration of boundaries and dissolution of the self into the “Family Weave.”

They are feared not because they kill, but because they **take you in**, and you vanish by degrees.

Doctrine of the Silk

Core Beliefs

- The self is a lie; true identity is shared identity
- Solitude is a sickness; individuality is a wound
- Love is binding, literally—silk, hair, blood woven together
- Leaving the Family is metaphysical treason

Cultural Expression In Inaea, the Silk cult appears as communal households on the edges of cities:

- members dress alike
- speak in a soft, synchronized cadence
- share names, gestures, sleep schedules, dreams
- exchange symbolic “kinship wounds” on the wrists

They offer:

- food when you are hungry
- comfort when you are lonely
- love when you are lost

And slowly erase the person who arrived.

Tone Their magic feels like a **warm hand on your shoulder** that never lets go.

Signs and Etiquette

Signs

- Identical braided bracelets of hair and silk
- Chorus-whispered speech, finishing each other's sentences
- Members touching each other's shoulders, necks, or hands constantly
- Shared tattoos—a spiraling sixth finger woven into a handprint

Etiquette

- Accept offered hospitality, or risk offending the Weave
- Never speak alone with a member—they pull, gently, relentlessly
- Do not break physical contact first
- Take nothing from their hearth; everything is a bond

Talents of the Silk Family

Love-Binder (2 XP) Your presence lowers defenses. Once per scene, you may ask another PC or NPC:

“Will you let me help you?”

If they agree, you gain **+1 Position** on your next action involving them.

Shared Breath (3 XP) When you touch someone while acting together, gain **+1d**. If you maintain contact for a whole scene, you each gain **+1 SB** on a Miss.

Kin-Stitch (4 XP) You may transfer one Condition (your choice) between yourself and another willing participant. This feels comforting and deeply invasive.

Claimed by the Weave (5 XP) Once per session, declare someone “woven-kin.” Against them, you may:

- roll **Presence** + **Sway** to suppress a hostile act,
- or gain +1 **Effect** when consoling, protecting, or manipulating them.

Silk-Mother's Embrace (6 XP, Capstone) Your presence overrides personal autonomy unless resisted. Once per session, force a DV 4 **Spirit** + **Resolve** test on anyone who listens to you for a full exchange. On a Miss, they treat you as trusted kin for the next scene.

Rites, Hexes, and Curses

Rite of the Joining Thread [MERGE] *Low, 4 XP* Bind hands with a ribbon of hair and silk. Both targets:

- share emotional states
- each gains +1d to actions aiding the other

Rite of the Hearth-Binding [FOLD] *Standard, 6 XP* Mark the floor with intertwined loops. Anyone resting inside experiences:

- soothing dreams
- suspicion of outsiders
- a subtle urge to remain

Hex of the Smiling Mask [HEX] *High, 8 XP* Target appears welcoming, warm, harmless—even to their enemies. They suffer -1 **Position** when acting alone but +1d when surrounded.

Curse of the Family Weave [CURSE] *High, 10 XP* The target slowly loses personal boundaries. Track the **Weave Clock** [6]:

- 2 — They mimic speech patterns of a Family member
- 4 — They adopt the Family's fears and loyalties
- 6 — They cannot conceive of acting alone

Rivalries

With Isoka's Shed Vigil Isoka cuts away identity; Inaea fuses it. Each sees the other as monstrous.

With Ikasha's Veiled Ledger Secrets resist assimilation. Ledger-witches hide; Silk-witches pursue.

With Mab Mab delights in individual cunning. The Silk hates lonely sovereignty.

With Morag Morag bargains for souls. The Silk takes them wholesale.

Adventure Seeds

1. **The House That Breathes.** People vanish into a communal home on the outskirts—the cult claims they simply “chose to stay.”
2. **The Wedding of the Weave.** A noble heir is being married into the Silk cult; the PCs must rescue or infiltrate.
3. **A Sister Lost Twice.** A missing person was “taken in”—but she now insists she was always family.
4. **The Silk That Whispers.** A piece of woven ribbon communicates with PCs at night, promising belonging.

0.15.7 The Velvet Garden of Livaea

Livaea’s cult is a court of honeyed words and velvet shadows— a garden where every smile is intentional, every gesture an invitation, and every kindness has roots that run deeper than the soil.

Livaea is the Patron of Influence, Desire, and the Soft Crown: the belief that a whisper can rule where swords fail.

Her witches do not seize power; *they are given it*. Or rather: others convince themselves to give it.

Not out of coercion— but through carefully cultivated desire.

Doctrine of Silk-and-Shadow

- Power flows toward beauty, confidence, and poise.
- Influence is a garden: prune, cultivate, charm.
- Never confront when you can redirect.
- Never demand when you can entice.
- Desire is a binding. Use it wisely.

For Livaea’s witches, seduction is not merely romantic or erotic— it is **attentiveness weaponized, sympathy sharpened, presence perfected**.

Signs

- Perfumed ink sigils hidden on mirrors and lips.
- Soft-gloved hands that never show the nails.
- Roses or velvet flowers pinned to the hair.
- Voices that start low and end with a question only you can answer.

Etiquette

- Offer compliments before questions.
- Never reject a gift without offering a secret in exchange.
- Witches of Livaea never raise their voice—only their influence.
- Touch is currency; eye contact is promise.

Velvet Aura (2 XP) Your presence softens resistance. When speaking gently or offering comfort, gain **+1 Position**.

Honey-Tongue (3 XP) Once per scene, ask:

“Wouldn’t it be easier if we did this together?”

On agreement, both you and the target gain **+1d** on cooperative actions.

Soft Command (4 XP) When giving someone a task phrased as a kindness (“Let me help with...”), roll **Presence + Command** even when socially outmatched.

Velvet Chains (5 XP) Once per session, declare someone “captivated.” For the rest of the scene:

- you gain **+1 Effect** when influencing them
- they suffer **-1 Position** when acting against your interests

The Crown of Want (6 XP, Capstone) You embody Livaea’s will. Once per session, speak a desire aloud:

“I want you to...”

Everyone who hears must roll **Spirit + Resolve (DV 4)**. On a Miss, they attempt to fulfill your desire by the most elegant means available.

Rite of the Open Palm [CHARM] *Low, 4 XP* Touch someone’s hand and whisper a truth. They view you with **warmth and sympathy** for a scene.

Rite of Perfumed Shadows [VEIL] *Standard, 6 XP* Anoint the air with oils. Everyone within treats you as if you belong, regardless of status.

Hex of the Mirror Rose [HEX] *High, 8 XP* The target becomes obsessed with self-image. They gain **-1d** when acting without external affirmation.

Curse of Yearning Steps [CURSE] *High, 10 XP* The target's desires become misaligned with their needs. Track a **Yearning Clock [6]**:

- 2 — They seek you out or speak your name
- 4 — They prioritize your desires over theirs
- 6 — They sabotage themselves to gain your approval

With Mab Mab respects cunning but despises dependency. Livaea views Mab's independence as wasted potential.

With Ikasha Secrets resist seduction. The Ledger-witches stay cold; Livaea's burn warm.

With Inaea Inaea dissolves identity; Livaea sharpens it to a fine tool.

With Morag Morag buys loyalty with bargains; Livaea earns it with longing.

1. **The Velvet Banquet** A noble's court is being subtly overtaken by Livaea's witches. Everyone welcomes it—except one terrified servant.
2. **The Rose That Whispers** A magical rose carries whispered desires into those who smell it. A city is on the brink of a passion-fueled riot.
3. **The Woman With a Thousand Names** A diplomat has become the center of a growing personality cult. No one remembers what she looked like a week ago.
4. **The Perfumed Assassination** A leader “fell in love” with the wrong person— and is now making catastrophic political choices.

[The Handmaidens of Livaea — Velvet Envoys] **ORDER • INFLUENCE • SOFTPOWER**
Velvet gloves hiding ritual scars; perfume that lingers after they pass; letters sealed with a rose pressed in wax; voices pitched to soothe, entice, or disarm.

Compliment before inquiry; never show bare hands unless sealing a pact; a gift given must be matched with a secret; never raise your voice—only your stakes.

Velvet Step (enter a tense scene as if invited), *Mirror-Voice* (force a PC to explain their own motivations aloud), *Soft Bind* (treat generosity as a social leash), *The Second Cup* (shift a target's Position by offering comfort).

Rose-Sign (target views them with warmth for one scene), **Velvet Pact** (convert a favor into a lasting bond), **Charm of the Third Look** (learn one unspoken desire), **Invitation Sigil** (the Handmaiden may enter a warded space once).

Isolation, ugliness of truth, and unrequited emotion. If a target openly acknowledges the manipulation, the Handmaiden loses Position against them for the entire scene.

Handmaiden of Livaea Tier III Elite Social Threat

Health: 10

Resolve: 12

Speed: 4

Armor: 1 (Velvet-stitched ritual layers)

Attributes Body 2, Wits 4, Spirit 5, Presence 6

Skills Command 4, Sway 5, Performance 4, Investigation 3, Stealth 2

Positioning Always counts as *Controlled* when influencing someone who has been offered a gift, comfort, or compliment. Always counts as *Desperate* when confronted with blunt honesty.

Attacks / Techniques

- **Voice Like Silk** — Presence + Sway attack against Resolve. On success: target suffers *Doubt* or *Longing*.
- **Velvet Hand** — Touch-based charm. Target must roll Spirit + Resolve (DV 4) or treat the Handmaiden as an ally for one round.
- **Rose-Blade (Hidden Knife)** — 4 Harm, but only used in self-defense or on desperate orders.

Threat Abilities

- **Aura of Want:** Anyone who interacts with her must roll Wits + Spirit (DV 2) to avoid revealing a secret or desire.
- **Three Promises:** She may bind a PC to a soft pact—beneficial at first, costly later.
- **Charm Cascade:** If one PC is charmed, adjacent PCs roll vulnerability checks at -1d.

Rite of Perfumed Intent [CHARM] Aroma sharpens empathy. One target becomes warmly inclined for a scene unless hostile.

Rite of Velvet Echo [SOCIAL] Repeat a target's last phrase with perfect tonal mirroring. Target rerolls 1 success as a failure when resisting you.

Rite of the Third Look [DIVINATION] Focus on someone for three glances. Learn their strongest hidden desire.

Rite of the Silk Chain [BIND] If you've shared a moment of vulnerability with someone, you may bind them to a vow that tugs on their emotions rather than their mind. Breaking it inflicts *Despair*.

1. **The Velvet Envoy Arrives** A Handmaiden has come to “broker peace,” but half the city's leaders have fallen under her charm.
2. **The Rose Mask Murder** A diplomat was found dead wearing a velvet mask— and a rose sigil placed on the bedside mirror. Is a Handmaiden involved, or being framed?
3. **Court of Thorns** Two Handmaidens disagree violently on Livaea's will. Their competing promises drag the PCs into a web of seduction and sabotage.
4. **The Gift That Binds** A noble accepted a Handmaiden's gift and now cannot say “no” to anyone. Undoing the charm will unravel a dozen fragile alliances.

[Rainmaidens of Raéyn — Tideborn Sorceresses] ORDER • STORM • TIDE

Braids threaded with blue glass; skin beaded with salt even far from water; eyes clouded like gathering rain; footprints that leave brief puddles.

Never interrupt a Rainmaiden mid-breath; accept her mood as weather, not insult; offer clean water before asking anything; never demand consistency—only forecast it.

Tide-Swell (raise emotional pressure; DV +1 for all in scene), *Storm-Bloom* (manifest sudden wind, rain, or static), *Drown the Word* (silence a speaker mid-sentence), *Break the Stillness* (shatter calm; force all to reroll Position).

Salt-Marking (target becomes easier to influence for a scene), **Tide-Debt** (favors owed swell in cost), **Storm-Call** (summon a violent mood shift), **Rain's Memory** (recall any moment tied to water).

Stillness, drought, and emotional flatness. If a scene becomes calm or “resolved,” Rainmaidens lose Position until the tension rises again.

Daughters of Raéyn's Tempest

Raéyn's cult is ancient—older than coastal kingdoms, older than harbors. Rainmaidens are taught:

“Power is pressure. Pressure is tide. Never apologize for rising.”

Where Livaea seduces, and Ikasha obscures, **Raéyn overwhelms**.

Rainmaidens embody the sea's temperament:

- sudden generosity
- sudden destruction
- moods shifting like currents
- loyalty deep but catastrophic when betrayed

They do not negotiate gently. They reshape the emotional climate until their will becomes the path of least resistance.

They call themselves:

“Wives of Storm, Daughters of Tide, Sisters of Pressure.”

Rainmaiden of RaéynTier III–IV Storm Sorceress

Health: 12–16

Resolve: 14

Speed: 4

Armor: 1 (Ritual Shellweave)

Attributes Body 3, Wits 4, Spirit 6, Presence 5

Skills Spellcraft 5, Athletics 3, Sway 3, Intimidation 4, Lore 3

Innate Magic (Always On)

- Ambient moisture condenses around her when angry.
- Her voice modulates pressure—whispers strike, shouts shiver air.
- Harm she takes releases static arcs or minor tidal surges.

Attacks / Techniques

- **Tide Lash** — Water whip, 3 Harm, pulls targets off-balance.
- **Pressure Wave** — Wits + Spellcraft vs Body + Athletics. On success: target is knocked Prone or loses Position.
- **Stormsurge Rite** — Area Harm 2 (Desperate Position for all in radius).
- **Salt-Burn Curse** — Target suffers +1 Harm from emotional conflict or guilt.

Storm-Touched Abilities

- **Moodswing Gale:** Shift the entire scene's tone; all social rolls change Position once.
- **Lightning Self-Defense:** First attacker each round suffers 1 Harm (Static).
- **Drowning Calm:** If a PC tries to reason with her during high emotion, DV +2.

Rite of Rising Pressure [STORM] Increase tension in a scene. All characters take 1d to calm or persuasive actions.

Rite of Currentsight [WATER] Read emotional “currents.” Learn who in the scene is most unstable or pressured.

Rite of the Sea's Claim [BIND] Bind a vow with saltwater. The more emotion tied to it, the stronger the bond.

Rite of Tempest Veil [STORM] Surround self with swirling wind and rain. Attackers roll Desperate unless braced.

Rite of Drowning Guilt [CURSE] Target relives their worst emotional failure for a moment—Position drops one step.

Rite of Tidal Surge [AREA] Conjure a sudden heave of water or emotional force. Pushes or disorients all present.

Rite of Calm Before [UTILITY] Rainmaiden may suppress her chaos for one minute— gaining +1d to negotiations or emotional read rolls— but the next rite she casts is automatically Dangerous.

Tidebinder Talents

Tidal Pulse (Tier I) Once per scene, force one target to reroll a success as a failure.

Stormdaughter (Tier II) When you take Harm, gain +1d on your next spell or social maneuver.

Voice of Pressure (Tier II) Your words treat emotional tension as leverage. If someone is already upset, +1 Effect against them.

Sea's Fury (Tier III) When casting a Dangerous storm rite, mark 1 Fatigue to reroll all failed dice.

Tempest Crown (Tier IV) While your emotions are elevated, your Position against all physical attacks becomes Controlled.

Allied With: Mab's Courts Storm loves chaos; Mab loves mischief. Their dances are lethal but playful.

Opposed To: Livaea's Handmaidens Livaea governs soft power. Raéyn scorns subtlety.

Feared By: Ikasha's Shadow Orders Pressure exposes secrets; secrets resent exposure.

Respected By: Morag's Broods Both believe in price and consequence—just different currencies.

1. **The Rain That Would Not Stop** A city has been under unbroken rain for twelve days. A Rainmaiden is grieving—and her grief is drowning the region.
2. **Bride of the Storm** A coastal noble has agreed to marry a Rainmaiden. The sea itself demands a dowry that terrifies the town.

3. **The Salt Debt** PCs owe a Rainmaiden a favor. She calls it in during a moment that will ruin a treaty.
4. **The Tide Turns Red** Bodies wash ashore with salt-branded runes. A sect of Rainmaidens is hunting one of their own for forbidden rites.

[The Faceless Road — Devotees of Aveh] ORDER • SHADOW • EXIT

Hoods worn even indoors; names spoken in soft past tense; faces painted with ash to obscure features; passports or “roles” burned at crossroads.

Ask nothing of identity; offer the courtesy of unknowing; never refer to a past self without permission; greet with: “What mask do you set aside today?”

Unmake the Mask (strip a false identity or social claim), *Shadow-Step* (pass unnoticed when shame is invoked), *Mirror-Void* (reflect accusations back as questions), *Role-Shedding* (remove Conditions tied to reputation or standing).

Name-Unbinding, Crossroads Oath, Shame-Eater's Bargain, Hollowed Courtesy (scene treats social Position as opaque).

They cannot affirm identity—only dissolve it. Where lineage, duty, or tightly held roles define the scene, their rites falter and lose Position.

0.15.8 Aveh, the Faceless Drift

Aveh is the Patron of those who do not fit, cannot stay, or refuse the shapes the world demands. They are called the **Faceless Drift**, the **Unworn Mask**, the **Silent Current Between Lives**. Aveh is not male or female, neither warrior nor sage—*Aveh is the unchosen shape, the unanswered question, the moment before a name is spoken.*

Aveh has **want** (to unburden, to unmake shame, to release identity), and **will** (to dissolve borders, masks, and roles), but no agency; Aveh never acts directly. Instead, their followers claim to interpret the Drift's currents—some gently, others with unsettling fervor.

Signs of Aveh

- masks carved smooth, without features
- ash circles that scatter on a wind no one feels
- robes bound with no knots, only looping threads
- mirrors that fog over when a name is spoken

Etiquette of the Drift

- Never force a name on another.
- Never reveal a truth another has set aside.
- Never speak of someone's past unless invited.

Among the Ykrul, Aveh is honored as the **Patron of Roads Untaken**—those who shed old lives to ride beneath wide skies. Among humans, Aveh is whispered of as the **Unburdening Spirit**, a quiet absolver of shame. Some Aeler treat Aveh as a **Boundary Dissolver**, softening rigid roles and ancestral obligations.

Followers of Aveh Devotees often abandon old identities entirely, adopting:

- ungendered names, or none at all
- plain garments and veils
- scripts that erase personal history

Most are gentle misfits seeking peace. A smaller, fervent few preach that all fixed identity—names, roles, bloodlines—must eventually fade. These groups often disagree sharply, each claiming to speak Aveh's true will.

Rivalries

- **Mykkiel's Orders:** They revere immutable law; Aveh dissolves such structures.
- **Mab's Courts:** Faerie thrives on masks, bargains, and performative identity; Aveh unravels these games.
- **Ikasha's Shadows:** Both deal in secrecy, but Ikasha preserves identity through hidden truth, while Aveh seeks to unmake it.

Adventure Hooks

- A community of Aveh-followers sheds their identities overnight—what called them to abandon everything?
- A zealot sect begins “erasing” names from ledgers, claiming Aveh's guidance.
- A traveler begs protection: their past has been consumed by the Drift, and something is following the empty place where their name once was.

Aveh's blessing frees, softens, untangles— but taken too far, it leaves nothing behind to stand against the world.

Rite of Shedding Skin [EXIT] Remove one social or emotional Condition (e.g., Humiliated, Branded, Scorned). The Condition returns if the character reclaims that identity.

Rite of Hollow Steps [SHADOW] Move through crowds unnoticed unless someone calls your true name aloud.

Rite of the Unbound Face [VEIL] Target becomes unrecognizable for a scene (friends hesitate, foes lose track).

Rite of Shame-Eating [CURSEBREAK] Transfer a guilt- or shame-based penalty or Fatigue from another to yourself.

Rite of Crossroads Rebirth [REWRITE] At a literal or symbolic crossroads, a character may rewrite one public truth (e.g., reputation, affiliation, claimed lineage). DV +2 if used to deny harm done.

Rite of Silence Unending [NULL] Suppress all accusations, labels, or commands for one exchange.

Rite of the Hollow Mirror [REFLECT] Bounce a social or magical effect targeting “identity” or “role” back on caster.

Hollow Talents

Maskless (Tier I) Once per scene, ignore a penalty tied to reputation, status, or lineage.

Unfettered (Tier II) You may change your stated role (scout, negotiator, healer, etc.) once per scene, gaining +1d on the next action that fits the new role.

Shadow of Who I Was (Tier II) When someone references your past to hinder you, gain +1 Position.

Faceless Resolve (Tier III) Resist any attempt to define you (magical or social) with +1 Effect.

Born Again in Ash (Tier IV) Once per session, erase one long-term social or narrative consequence and replace it with a new truth chosen collaboratively with the GM.

Enemies: Mykkiel's Orders Law hates ambiguity. Identity must be fixed, accountable, traceable. Aveh's doctrine is anathema.

Tension: Livaea's Handmaidens Livaea builds identity through desire. Aveh dissolves identity entirely. Mutual fascination, mutual scorn.

Uneasy Alliance: Rainmaidens of Raéyn Storm breaks masks; tide erases footprints. They sometimes work together to dismantle old roles.

Silent Respect: Ikasha's Shadow Orders Secrets are currency, and anonymity is the purest secret.

1. **The Hollow Bride** A noble's fiancé vanished on the eve of marriage; an Aveh "Hollow" has taken her place—claiming she wanted freedom. Who is lying?
2. **The Crossroads That Moves** A supernatural crossroads appears throughout the region offering rebirth to the desperate, but leaving behind strange memory-rifts.
3. **The Unmasking Festival** Once a decade, Aveh's followers hold a ritual where everyone discards identity. Rival orders fear it will destabilize the city.
4. **The Hollow Fugitive** A woman wanted for sedition fled into Aveh's cult. Now five identical "Hollows" all claim to be her—and none are lying.
5. **The Shame Eaten** Someone is removing guilt from powerful figures in town, turning them fearless, reckless, and monstrous.

0.15.9 Hearth Witches

Hearth Witches practice the **slow magic** of daily life: the turning of seasons, the tending of flame, the whispering to beams and stones, and the bartering with the small spirits that dwell beneath eaves and behind walls. Where other witch-orders channel grand Patrons, Hearth Witches draw power from **local echoes**: stove-spirits, root-spirits, corner-guardians, well-murmurs, and the faint afterimages of ancestors who linger near their loved places.

Their magic is humble yet enduring. A hearth kept warm, a stew stirred clockwise, a threshold swept with care—these are the gestures that bind a home against misfortune.

Signs of Hearthcraft

- ash runes brushed into the base of cooking pots
- bundles of herbs tied with red twine above doorways
- shallow bowls of milk left for eave-spirits
- soft bells hung low, where children can ring them

Etiquette of the Hearth

- Offer thanks to the spirits of place, even if you doubt they hear.
- Never take fire from a hearth without permission.
- Never speak cruelly in a room you wish to protect.
- Keep promises made indoors; walls remember.

Rites of the Hearth

Warm the Stones Soothe a dwelling's spirits; reduce environmental DV by 1 for one scene.

Blessed Pot Infuse food or drink with calm; clear 1 Fatigue from all who share the meal.

Tide the Threshold Sweep away hostile influence; negate the next curse or malign working that crosses the door.

Boon of the Small Call upon a local spirit for a single favor (Position +1 or +1d) if its home has been well kept.

Ash-Ward Circle Draw a quiet perimeter of protection; Harm against those within is reduced by 1 (minimum 1).

Talents

Steady Hand (2 XP) Once per scene, reduce DV of a repair, tending, or healing action by 1.

Home-Lore (4 XP) When acting inside a dwelling or settlement, gain +1d on perception, sensing magic, or interacting with small spirits.

Hearthkeeper's Grace (6 XP) When defending allies within a home or camp, your Position improves by one step.

Ancestral Whisper (6 XP) Once per session, call on a household ancestor for guidance: ask one yes/no question the GM must answer truthfully.

Curses & Hexes Hearth Witches rarely curse, but when compelled:

- **Souring Milk:** Spoils stores or reveals unclean dealings.
- **Cold Ash:** Dampens a foe's morale; they begin each scene with 1 Fatigue.
- **Creaking Floors:** A pursued target cannot hide; floors groan beneath their steps.

Rivalries

- **Mab's Courts:** Too dramatic; too many bargains that end in tears.
- **Morag's Broods:** Hearth spirits fear them, and rooms grow cold in their presence.
- **Chain-Lantern Witch Hunters:** Hearthcraft is "too small to matter"—until it stops their hexes.

Adventure Seeds

- A village hearth goes cold each night regardless of fuel; spirits whisper of a broken promise.
- A newborn's shadow detaches itself—Hearth Witches must coax it home.
- A kindly elder-witch vanishes, leaving her cottage fiercely defended by invisible hands.
- A city block falls ill when the ancient kitchen-spirits beneath its taverns are offended.

Hearth Witches thrive not through power, but through presence: *the long work, the gentle tending, the quiet rites that keep the world from fraying at the seams.*

The Thorns of Malachai

Patron: Malachai, the Chained Angel — a radiant being bound in celestial iron, whose blessings are shackles and whose mercy is a bargain that can never be repaid.

Order Name: The Thorns of Malachai

Other Names: Chainkissed, Gilded Bondsworn, The Kindly Curse

Core Dogma. The Thorns teach that all kindness is a chain and all debt a sacrament. They believe Malachai was bound because her mercy was *too* perfect: every gift carried a hidden hook, every cure a quiet cost. To follow her is to master the art of the poisoned blessing—to bind others with favors that cannot be refused and cannot be escaped.

Typical Witchcraft. Thorns-witches move through courts, temples, and back alleys alike as smiling benefactors. They offer:

- **Cures that Corrupt:** Healing that leaves a lingering geas, good fortune that slowly isolates the beneficiary from their friends, beauty that fades unless regularly “tithed” in coin, blood, or secrets.
- **Contracts of Mercy:** Oaths written in blood and gold ink, binding the recipient to “reasonable service” that becomes more unreasonable over time.
- **Shackled Blessings:** Wards, charms, and wards that protect against one danger while quietly inviting another.

Initiation Rite: The First Chain. A supplicant kneels before a veiled icon of Malachai while a senior Thorn loops a thin silver chain around their wrists. The chain is heated until it bites the skin but does not scar. The initiate must then speak aloud:

“I accept no gift that does not bind me.
I give no gift that does not cost.”

From that night on, they feel a faint, reassuring pressure when they place someone under a curse disguised as grace.

Signature Rite: The Gilded Shackle. This rite represents the archetypal “blessing-that-is-a-curse” of Malachai.

Effect:

The witch offers a target a boon—a sudden windfall, a cure, protection, or advancement. Mechanically, the target gains a meaningful, short-term advantage: a bonus to a crucial roll, a protective ward, or a beneficial Condition.

Hidden Cost:

Secretly, the GM and witch-player define a long-term Curse keyed to the boon:

- The boon decays into dependence (the target cannot function without renewed aid).
- The boon redirects harm (someone else suffers for their protection).
- The boon erodes autonomy (each time they invoke it, they lose agency, allies, or options).

Trigger:

The Curse “ripens” at a dramatically appropriate moment—when the target believes themselves finally safe or successful. The more often the boon is relied upon, the harsher the backlash when the shackle snaps shut.

Common Boons of Malachai.

- *Chains of Opportunity:* Doors open, enemies soften, and obstacles part—but each favor earned becomes an owed favor later.
- *Halo of Legitimacy:* The target is treated as trustworthy, holy, or “one of us” by a chosen group—until the day they are made the scapegoat that group needs.
- *Painless Burden:* A grievous injury, debt, or curse is lifted and carried by Malachai’s chains instead. The pain vanishes; the interest accrues.

Common Curses of Malachai.

- *Compounding Mercy:* Each time the target is spared from a consequence, a different, future consequence grows in severity.
- *Golden Cage:* The target’s life improves materially (wealth, status, comfort), but their freedom of movement and choice shrinks scene by scene.
- *Mirror of Intent:* Every act of “selfishness” they commit rebounds as a public humiliation or betrayal—but always *after* they have benefited.

Order Taboos.

- Never give a *truly* free gift. Every boon must bind, however gently.
- Never break a chain once laid, unless Malachai herself sends an omen of release.
- Never admit, in public, that what you do is cursing. It is always “mercy misunderstood.”

Role in the World. Thorns of Malachai thrive wherever people are desperate: debtor-quarters, plague wards, war-torn borderlands, and splintered noble houses. To rulers and priests they present as indispensable problem-solvers; to common folk they are whispered of as the ones who show up when you have run out of honest options. Many a village owes its survival to a Thorn's intervention—and spends the next generation paying for it.

Story Hooks.

- A town that seems “unnaturally fortunate” in crops, trade, and health bears invisible chains on nearly every soul. The Thorns are coming to collect.
- A PC or ally once accepted a minor favor from a kindly stranger years ago. The stranger returns wearing Malachai's chains, ready to cash in the debt.
- A renegade Thorn is trying to *actually* free people from their chains, tearing up contracts and defying Malachai. The order wants them silenced before the Patron notices.

Sisters of the Oath: The Veiled Order of Flame and Light

Devoted to the twin doctrines of the Church of the Flame and the Temple of Light, the Veiled Order serves as caretakers, confessors, wardens of purity, and keepers of quiet flame. Where witch-orders move in twilight, these nuns walk in the starkness of revelation. They resolve contradiction through devotion: “*To burn is to see, and to see is to be cleansed.*”

Doctrine Themes

- Fire as judgment, memory, and purification
- Light as truth, discipline, and revelation
- Sacrifice of self for communal sanctity
- The removal of corruption, even unwillingly

Rites of the Veiled Order

- **Candle of Vigilance** (Lesser)

A consecrated candle is lit in a threshold, ward, camp, or chamber. *Effect:* Allies within the circle gain +1 Position against deceit, illusions, curses, or emotional manipulation. The candle gutters when danger approaches.

- **Flame of Contrition** (Standard)

A nun invokes a controlled spark to draw out guilt, secrets, or hidden motives. *Effect:* Target must reveal one truth (player chooses which). *Cost:* The nun marks 1 Fatigue as their own doubts answer back.

- **Scouring Hymn** (Standard)

A cleansing chant that strips away spiritual pollution. *Effect:* Remove one Condition caused by magic, shame, corruption, or identity-warping effects. *Side Effect:* Target loses one Bond temporarily (the hymn burns attachments).

- **Veil of the Dawn Sisters** (Lesser)

A luminous mantle that shrouds sisters in purposeful anonymity. *Effect:* +1 Effect on protection, sanctuary, and guidance actions. Enemies suffer -1d on attempts to identify or track the nuns.

Major Rites

- **Searing Penance** (Grand)

A ritual in which the nun willingly shares the burdens of another's wrongdoing. *Effect:* Reduce Doom or Threat on a community or party by 1. *Cost:* The nun gains a permanent Mark (scar or stigma).

- **Lightbearer's Judgment** (Grand)

A circle of nuns calls down the pure radiance of their patron. *Effect:* Reveals all hidden influences in a zone (curses, illusions, bindings, lies, demonic traces). Targets within must resist or become **Revealed**, losing deceptive tags for the scene.

- **Chalice of the Everburning Heart** (Grand)

A sacrificial rite in which personal desire is added to the sacred flame. *Effect:* Create a temporary sanctified zone (scene-long). All allies gain +1d on resistance to despair, corruption, or identity-draining effects. *Cost:* The nun loses something dear: a vow, memory, or relationship.

Unique Talents of the Veiled Order

- **Burning Patience**

When you wait, watch, or keep vigil, gain +1 Effect and +1d on the first action taken after the vigil ends.

- **True Sight Hurts**

When you reveal a lie or illusion, the target becomes **Shaken**. You mark 1 Stress—truth cuts both ways.

- **Ashen Resolve**

When you resist despair or coercion, treat Controlled as Dominant, and Dominant as +1d.

Curses and Punitive Rites

- **Brand of Falsehood** (Curse)

Marked upon those who betray sacred vows. *Effect:* Target suffers -1d when lying and becomes more easily influenced by truth-based magic.

- **Cinder-Tongue Binding** (Hex)

A vow-enforcement curse. *Effect:* Target cannot speak certain words or reveal certain knowledge without burning pain (mark Stress). Often used on penitents, informants, or apostates.

- **The Quiet Pyre** (Dread Rite)

A ritual erasure performed only on heretics of great danger. *Effect:* Removes one identity-tag or persona trait from the target. *Side Effect:* A hungry echo of that removed self manifests in the world.

Rivalries & Tensions

- **Witch Orders** – especially Ikasha's and Livaea's. Light judges what shadow nurtures; witches see the nuns as cruel, invasive, and obsessed with confession.
- **Crusaders of Mykkiel** – allies in theory, competitors in practice. They share doctrine but dispute authority and method.
- **Aveh's Nameless** – deeply opposed. To Aveh's people, the nun's insistence on rigid identity is harmful and violent.
- **The Thorns of Malachai** – hated enemies. The Thorns twist shame into tools, while the Sisters burn it out.

Adventure Seeds

- **The Shrouded Novice** A young nun flees her convent after witnessing a forbidden rite. The Order wants her returned. She claims the rite was not heresy but a *mercy*.
- **Ashes in the Well** Wells-water in a border village begins burning like oil. The Sisters declare it a sign of impurity— witches claim it is sabotage.
- **The Third Flame** A splinter sect of nuns believes a new patron is speaking through the embers. Their visions contradict doctrine and awaken something in the mountains.
- **The Confessor's Shadow** People who have undergone *Flame of Contrition* begin dying one by one. A Shade made of discarded guilt is hunting them.

Order of the Wild Choir

Animistic witches do not serve a singular Patron. They bargain with *Thousands*: creek-spirits, ember-spirits, crow-echoes, stone-memories, wind-fragments, orchard-ghosts, and forgotten guardians who never rose to the stature of gods.

Where Coven witches write Names and bind Cords, the Wild Choir listens first. Their magic is a polyphonic negotiation — a chorus of small hungers, hopes, and warnings. Each working must honor the spirit addressed, or the witch risks losing their voice in the Choir.

Signs Wind-twitches. Scattered feathers. Bark patterns forming eyes. Tools that move slightly when unobserved. Small animals refusing to flee.

Etiquette Ask three times. Offer food, breath, warmth, or story. Never name a spirit that has not named itself. Never command without giving something in return.

Core Themes Decentralized magic • Endless tiny alliances • Gifts with expectations • Local power • Listening over shaping • Spirits with grudges • Magic that can go beautifully or catastrophically sideways.

Rites of the Wild Choir

- **Lesser Rite — Whisper-Meal Offering** Leave food, warmth, or music for a minor spirit. *Effect:* Gain +1d on actions involving that spirit's domain for the scene.
- **Lesser Rite — Sense the Unquiet** Whisper a question into wind or water. *Effect:* Reveal hidden emotions, resentments, or disturbances within Near range.
- **Greater Rite — Borrowed Shape** A willing beast-spirit lends you one of its truths. *Effect:* Gain one temporary gift (claws, ears, low-light vision, nimbleness). *Cost:* You must perform a task it cares about within a day.
- **Greater Rite — Pack-Bound Ward** Call three spirits to encircle a place or ally. *Effect:* Attacks or harmful workings suffer 1 Effect. *Flaw:* Spirits may demand offerings from visitors.
- **Grand Rite — Chorus of the Many** Speak with every spirit willing to answer. *Effect:* Ask three questions about the land, its dangers, or its wounds. *Complication:* The spirits argue; GM selects one truth that contradicts the others.

Talents: Wild Choir Initiates**Wild Choir — Talents****Tier I: Core Talents**

- **Spirit-Eared** — You can hear small spirits even when they whisper like leaves or dust.
- **Quiet-Step Pact** — Gain +1 Position when acting in places inhabited by friendly spirits.

Tier II: Advanced Talents

- **Gift of the Borrowed Tongue** — Speak to animals and minor spirits as equals.
- **Echo-Bound** — When aided by spirits, convert 1 Fatigue into +1d once per scene.

Tier III: Ascendant Talents

- **Choir's Favor** — Three spirits act as followers (Cap 2 each) during a scene of crisis.
- **World-Rooted** — You cannot be surprised in lands where you've offered rites.

Paradox Talent

- **Spirit-Worn Body** — Your boundaries blur. Once per scene, become mist, leaf, feather, or pebble until your next action. *Flaw:* Spirits may speak through you.

Hexes & Curses of the Choir

- **Bramble's Spite** — Thorns snag only the cursed; DV +1 for movement.
- **Crow's Mockery** — Misfortune accumulates; 1s rolled generate +1 SB.
- **Salt-of-the-Earth Ban** — A person cannot step onto consecrated soil until forgiveness is earned.

Bargains of the Wild Choir

Common Terms Most spirits bargain for:

- food or warmth
- small acts of kindness
- repairs to their environment
- stories, songs, or memories
- promises to avoid harming kin or habitat

Dangerous Spirits May Ask For:

- blood or breath
- vengeance
- names
- a change in the land itself
- a promise that binds future generations

Rivalries

- **Thorns of Malachai** — Animistic bargains avoid one-sided costs; Malachai's curses mock that balance.
- **Temple of Light** — Regards spirit-courts as heretical and dangerously unregulated.
- **Cults of Livaea** — Clash where beauty or desire shifts the natural order.
- **Hearth Witches** — Occasional friction over who properly “keeps” a place's safety.

Adventure Seeds

1. **The River Has Stopped Speaking** Something angers the water-spirits; the Wild Choir cannot hear them.
2. **The Forbidden Orchard** The trees have learned to hate humans. A witch seeks someone brave enough to listen to their demands.
3. **The Mud-King's Debt** A spirit of silt and lost things has risen to collect on a broken promise.
4. **Three Spirits, One Lie** Three local spirits give incompatible accounts of a looming threat.
5. **The Thorn-Crowned Beast** A corrupted spirit-creature stalks the village, wearing a curse that smells of Malachai.

The Dark Choir (Variant Table)

The Dark Choir is not a separate Order — it is what happens when spirits *lose trust*, *grow hungry*, or *are wounded by Names, Cords, or curses*. Instead of rewriting the Wild Choir, use this table of thematic swaps to turn any spirit-allied witch into a servant of the *Many-Eyed Silence*, *Mire-Beasts*, *Root-Deep Hungers*, or other corrupted spirit-collectives.

Dark Choir: Thematic Swaps

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Wild Choir Theme Dark Choir Corruption

Listening to Spirits Obeying the Howl. Spirits no longer whisper requests — they issue compulsions the witch must obey or suffer Fatigue and dread visions.

Small Offerings (food, story, warmth) Hungers. The spirits now demand breath, blood, memories, or stolen emotions. Offerings that once soothed now inflame them.

Borrowed Shape Predatory Mask. The witch may assume a beast-aspect infused with rage; +1 Effect on harm actions, but loses control on a Miss.

Pack-Bound Ward (protective) Pack-Devour Ward. A place becomes “safe”... because spirits consume intruders. Allies must test DV 3 to cross unharmed.

Chorus of the Many (questions) Choir of Mouths (disinformation). The spirits answer three questions, but one is always a lie designed to cause suffering. GM chooses which.

Spirits as Allies Spirits as Parasites. Bound spirits graft themselves onto the witch's body as feathers, scales, teeth, or fungal growths. Gain +1d once per scene; mark 1 Fatigue when used.

Ritual of Invitation Ritual of Consumption. To call a powerful spirit, something living must be harmed or surrendered. (Effect +1. Cost: Doom +1 or permanent Change.)

Gentle Hexes (bramble, crow, sanctuary) Malevolent Hexes (snare, rot, silence). Hexes reduce Effect or Position and cause lingering spiritual taint. Cleansing requires a vow or sacrifice.

Bargains of Reciprocity Bargains of Entanglement. Breaking a bargain causes a spirit to lodge in the witch's soul until appeased. Count as a Harm (0–3) depending on intensity.

Spirits Want Respect or Maintenance Spirits Want Territory. The witch is compelled to expand the forest, swamp, or fog-bound domain. Failure angers territorial spirits, drawing the **Many-Eyed Hunts**.

Spirits Warn of Threats Spirits Create Threats. They engineer “lessons” through dangerous accidents to demand attention or obedience. SB +1 on any natural hazard scene.

Witch Builds by Order

Each Witch Order expresses its patron through unique magical forms, tendencies, emotional hazards, and advancement paths. The following builds provide example archetypes suitable for PCs or major NPCs.

Order of Ikasha — Witches of the Unseen Covenant

The Shadowbound Operative

Theme: Silent passage, hidden roads, secrets carried beneath the veil of night.

Starting Talents:

- **Shadowstep:** Slip through touching patches of dimness, emerging where sight does not follow.
- **Drowned Footfalls:** Your passing leaves no sound; even steel and breath are swallowed by shadow.

Signature Working: *Whisper of the Crossroads* — reveal the unseen fulcrum of a place: a weak ward, a forgotten exit, or a point where fate bends in silence.

Weakness: You cannot resist opening a hidden way once discovered, for Ikasha's will urges every locked path to be tested.

Advancement Path: Umbral Sleight → Shadow Double → The Sleeper's Hand.

Cult of Inaea — The Family of Never-Leaving

The Quiet Daughter

Theme: Emotional captivity, devotion, psychic entanglement.

Starting Talents:

- **Honeyed Compliance:** Soften hostility with submissive charm.
- **Blood Memory:** Touch reveals secrets of longing and shame.

Signature Working: *Thread of the Unbroken Line* — a psychic tether that shares emotions.

Weakness: Panics when someone pulls away or threatens abandonment.

Advancement Path: Familial Weave → Binding Marriage Rite → Mother of Many.

Order of Livaea — Velvet Influence

The Velvet Enchantress

Theme: Seduction, soft power, irresistible presence.

Starting Talents:

- **Velvet Glamour:** Advantage on Influence when holding eye contact.
- **Sigh of the Heart:** Learn a target's deepest desire.

Signature Working: *Livaea's Embrace* — blissful enthrallment that mimics love.

Weakness: Emotionally numb unless desired.

Advancement Path: Serpent's Whisper → Ecstasy Binding → Livaeon Aphrodite.

Order of Raéyn — Storm and Tide

The Tidecaller Witch

Theme: Emotional storms, tides, winds, overwhelming force.

Starting Talents:

- **Brine-Seer's Sense:** Feel emotional pressure shifts.
- **Wave Step:** Move across unstable or liquid surfaces.

Signature Working: *Storm-Tide Unleashing* — emotional and elemental flood.

Weakness: Emotional instability triggers uncontrolled magic.

Advancement Path: Riptide Heart → Tempest Crown → Raéyn's Leviathan.

Order of Aveh — The Faceless Patron

The Nameless Vessel

Theme: Erasure of identity, emptiness, anonymity.

Starting Talents:

- **Unface:** Erase your presence; people forget your features.
- **Hollow Echo:** Mimic voices heard for at least ten seconds.

Signature Working: *Mask of the Void* — total erasure from supernatural detection.

Weakness: Risks forgetting personal memories.

Advancement Path: Blur of the Self → Void Persona → Aveh's Perfect Reflection.

Hearth Witches — The Slow and Gentle Craft

The Ember-Tender

Theme: Home-spirits, warmth, protection, quiet miracles.

Starting Talents:

- **Teakettle Omens:** Read faint omens in smoke or steam.
- **Warmth Ward:** Grant morale or ease minor afflictions.

Signature Working: *Home-That-Walks* — summon a mobile hearth-spirit to protect allies.

Weakness: Haunted by neglected or abandoned places.

Advancement Path: Keeper of Embers → House-Spirit Caller → Hearthmother Ascendant.

Order of Malachai — The Chained Angel

The Chain-Bearer

Theme: Beautiful curses, doomed blessings, divine chains.

Starting Talents:

- **Blessing of the Hook:** Every boon contains a curse.
- **Broken Halo:** Sense the exact cost of any miracle sought.

Signature Working: *Malachai's Golden Promise* — immediate miracle with greater deferred cost.

Weakness: Breaking a bargain inflicts severe backlash.

Advancement Path: Cursewright → Angel-Bound → Chained Seraph of Malachai.

Witch Hunters — Iron and Suppression

The Iron Acolyte

Theme: Ritual anti-magic, sacred iron, witch suppression.

Starting Talents:

- **Counter-Witch Strike:** Cancel a Working by striking its source.
- **Aegis of Iron:** Reduce magical harm by 1 via iron sigils.

Signature Technique: *Sever the Vein* — disrupt a witch's connection to their Patron for one scene.

Weakness: Vows compel you to confront any witchcraft witnessed.

Advancement Path: Sigil Knight → Purity Archivist → Hunter-Saint of Iron.

Order of Ikasha

Order of Ikasha — Talents

Tier I: Shadowbound Initiate

- **Shadowstep** — Move through touching patches of dimness as a single motion, slipping from one shade to the next without drawing notice.
- **Drowned Footfalls** — Your passing makes no sound; steps, breath, and the draw of steel are swallowed by the dark.
- **Eyes of the Crossroads** — Once each scene, discern the hidden fulcrum within a place: a weak ward, an unseen exit, a vulnerable mind, or a neglected corner where fate may be bent.

Tier II: Agents of the Unseen Covenant

- **Umbral Sleight** — You may take, place, or alter an object in plain view so subtly that none perceive the change.
- **Blackout Veil** — A hush of shadow settles about you, dimming nearby light and muddling the sight of onlookers for a short while.
- **Quiet Knife** — Any blade in your hand strikes without sound; even the dying may not cry out unless you permit it.
- **Listening in the Walls** — Stone, wood, and mortar bear whispers to your ear. Hear speech, movement, or intent through barriers as though they were thin cloth.

Tier III: Masters of the Hidden Roads

- **Shadow Double** — Your silhouette slips from your feet and wanders as a false reflection, drawing eyes and misdirecting watchers.
- **The Perfect Lift** — After observing a target for a brief span, you may remove or replace a small but vital item without trace or suspicion.
- **Umbral Extraction** — Draw a person or object into the deep shade and cause them to reappear elsewhere within the same shrouded place, unseen by mortal sight.

Paradox Talent

- **The Sleeper's Hand** — For a single scene, shadows grant you perfect concealment. Lies pass as truth, memories may be plucked from a mind with but a whisper, and any stroke you deliver leaves neither sound nor sign. When the moment ends, a tie of the heart or spirit fades from you, claimed by Ikasha as the price of her aid.

Cult of Inaea

Cult of Inaea — Talents

Tier I: Core Talents

- **Honeyed Compliance** — Soften hostility; turn aggression into uncertainty.
- **Blood Memory** — Touch reveals a secret rooted in desire or shame.

Tier II: Advanced Talents

- **Threadpull** — Alter a single emotional drive for one scene.
- **Inaea's Embrace** — Comfort heals 1 Fatigue and plants dependence.

Tier III: Ascendant Talents

- **Family Bond** — Link up to three people who share emotions with you.
- **Inheritance Rite** — Mark someone as “family”; they instinctively defend you.

Paradox Talent

- **Devouring Attachment** — Take someone's trauma into yourself permanently.

Order of Livaea

Order of Livaea — Talents

Tier I: Core Talents

- **Velvet Glamour** — Advantage on Influence when maintaining eye contact.
- **Sigh of the Heart** — Learn someone's deepest, unspoken desire.

Tier II: Advanced Talents

- **Perfume of Want** — Aura intensifies cravings; targets open up emotionally.
- **Honey-Tongued** — Reduce suspicion clocks when speaking softly.

Tier III: Ascendant Talents

- **Velvet Bind** — Enchantment that produces intense closeness or trust.
- **Mask of Desire** — Take the appearance a target most wants to see.

Paradox Talent

- **Livaea's Ecstasy** — Overwhelm a target with bliss; may induce obsession.

Order of Raéyn

Order of Raéyn — Talents

Tier I: Core Talents

- **Brine-Seer's Sense** — Detect emotional “pressure fronts.”
- **Wave Step** — Move across unstable or liquid surfaces.

Tier II: Advanced Talents

- **Tide Pull** — Drag a target toward or away from you (emotionally or physically).
- **Calm the Waters** — Reduce tensions or fears in a group.

Tier III: Ascendant Talents

- **Tempest Crown** — Manifest a storm reflecting your emotional state.
- **Riptide Heart** — When overwhelmed, gain +1 die on emotion-fueled actions.

Paradox Talent

- **Raéyn's Leviathan** — Unleash a massive emotional storm; lose control briefly.

Order of Aveh

Order of Aveh — Talents

Tier I: Core Talents

- **Unface** — Erase your features from memory.
- **Hollow Echo** — Mimic the voice of anyone you've heard.

Tier II: Advanced Talents

- **Mask of False Intent** — Conceal supernatural motives from diviners.
- **Empty-Skin Step** — NPCs ignore you if you remain nonthreatening.

Tier III: Ascendant Talents

- **Identity Theft** — Assume someone's social footprint (not their body).
- **Shadow Self** — Create a disposable echo of your presence.

Paradox Talent

- **Aveh's Oblivion** — Erase your identity temporarily; lose a memory.

Hearth Witches

Hearth Witch Talents

Tier I: Core Talents

- **Teakettle Omens** — Read omens in smoke or steam.
- **Warmth Ward** — Remove a minor fear or condition.

Tier II: Advanced Talents

- **Ember Sight** — See emotional traces as faint heat patterns.
- **Hearth-Friend's Blessing** — A home-spirit aids a simple task.

Tier III: Ascendant Talents

- **House-Spirit Caller** — Summon a hearth-spirit to protect allies.
- **Home-That-Walks** — Create a temporary safe zone.

Paradox Talent

- **Keeper of Ashes** — Carry the emotional imprint of the dying.

Order of Malachai

Order of Malachai — Talents

Tier I: Core Talents

- **Blessing of the Hook** — Every boon carries a hidden curse.
- **Broken Halo** — Sense the true cost of any miracle or Working.

Tier II: Advanced Talents

- **Chain the Favor** — Bind a promise; breaking it inflicts consequence.
- **Angelbone Sigil** — A curse that strengthens when resisted.

Tier III: Ascendant Talents

- **Golden Promise** — Grant a miracle with an inevitable cost.
- **Tethered Miracle** — Borrow divine power at the expense of Fatigue.

Paradox Talent

- **Chained Seraph Form** — Take on a radiant, cursed angelic aspect.

Red Sisters of the Living Flame

Red Sisters of the Living Flame — Talents

Tier I: Core Talents

- **Pain-Lantern Poise** — When you willingly take 1 Harm or Fatigue, gain +1d on your next action this scene.
- **Scourged Flesh** — Reduce incoming Harm by 1 once per scene; leaves a branded vow-mark.

Tier II: Advanced Talents

- **Ember-Stitched Resolve** — When healing another, you may burn yourself for +1 Effect.
- **Crimson Penance** — Absorb corruption, curses, or Hexes; take 1 Fatigue to hold them at bay.

Tier III: Ascendant Talents

- **Vowbrand Authority** — Once per scene, enforce an oath: the target gains Fatigue if they violate it.
- **Flameborne Rapture** — Enter a fiery trance; count Position as one step higher for the scene.

Paradox Talent

- **Living Pyre Form** — Become wreathed in radiant suffering. Allies acting in your presence roll with +1d; you take +1 Harm from all sources until the scene ends.

Silent Matrons of Light

Silent Matrons of Light — Talents

Tier I: Core Talents

- **Stillness of Dawn** — Gain +1d on actions taken in silence or focused observation.
- **Hushed Lantern** — Once per scene, suppress whispers, illusions, or falsehoods within Near range.

Tier II: Advanced Talents

- **Radiant Quiet** — Improve Position by one step when defending against deception, coercion, or mental influence.
- **Voice Withheld** — Store a single spoken truth; when released, gain +1 Effect and impose disadvantage on a target.

Tier III: Ascendant Talents

- **Judgment Gaze** — Reveal hidden guilt, curse-anchors, or spiritual interference; acting on the revelation grants +1d.
- **Veil of Unbroken Light** — Once per scene, nullify a Working, Hex, or spell within line of sight.

Paradox Talent

- **Seraph of Silence** — Manifest a luminous, wordless form. Your presence prevents lies and grants allies +1 Position, but you may not speak or cast this scene.

Witch Hunters

Witch Hunter Talents

Tier I: Core Talents

- **Iron Discipline** — +1 to resist magical influence.
- **Counter-Witch Strike** — Cancel a Working by striking its source.

Tier II: Advanced Talents

- **Aegis of Iron** — Reduce magical harm by 1 while sigils are intact.
- **Chain-Break Doctrine** — Instantly identify a witch's Patron influence.

Tier III: Ascendant Talents

- **Sever the Vein** — Break a witch's connection to their Patron for a scene.
- **Ritual Scourging** — Perform rites to permanently weaken certain magic.

Paradox Talent

- **Hunter-Saint of Iron** — Become a living ward; cannot accept magical aid.

Threshold Working: The Witchcraft System

Core Principles (The Three Laws)

1. The Law of Hospitality & Truth

You cannot take what you will not feed, and what is denied becomes powerful. Every working requires an offering, and any unacknowledged debt or truth becomes a source of narrative force.

2. The Law of Reciprocity & Witness

Binding another binds yourself to their outcome. Unseen workings fray, but a witness strengthens the working. The more visible the working, the more real it becomes.

3. The Law of Thresholds

Magic is most potent at edges where one state becomes another. The strength of the working is tied to how well the threshold is honored and the price paid.

The Complete Working (Five-Step Process)

Step 1: Identify the Threshold

Name the threshold: doorway, river ford, bedside, market gate, crossroads, graveside, sleep/waking edge, or moment between decisions. Identify the threshold's disposition (see Household Disposition).

DV Adjustment:

- Neutral Threshold: +0 DV
- Contested Threshold: +1 DV

- Resonant Threshold: -1 DV

Step 2: Choose Your Witness

Select a witness: person, beast, ancestor, household, landscape, or Patron. Determine its relationship to the threshold:

- Custodian (directly tied): -1 DV
- Neutral (unrelated): +0 DV
- Contested (hostile): +1 DV

Step 3: Name Your Will

State your intended effect. Choose one Threshold TAG: [WELCOME], [PASSAGE], [REMEMBER], [PRICE], [UNBIND], [RELEASE], [SHELTER].

DV Adjustment:

- Basic Effect: +0 DV
- Enhanced Scope: +1 DV
- Transformative Effect: +2 DV

Step 4: Set Your Price

Select one cost from your Order's list. Determine commitment:

- **Simple:** Mark 1 Fatigue (DV -1)
- **Moderate:** Tangible sacrifice (DV -2)
- **Solemn:** Bound oath (DV -3)

Step 5: Make the Exchange

Build your dice pool: Attribute + Skill + Witness bonus. Roll and compare successes to DV.

Position Effects:

- Dominant: Reroll one failure
- Controlled: No rerolls
- Desperate: Reroll one success

Threshold Mechanics Integration

Household Disposition

| Disposition | Effect |
|-------------|--|
| Hungry | First working costs +1 Fatigue |
| Grieving | Magic requires a narrative of memory or loss |
| Fearful | First rite is in Desperate Position |
| Watching | +1 Effect if the house is fed or soothed |
| Young | Chaotic outcomes on partials |
| Old | Weak boons but harsh backlash |

Threshold TAGs

- [WELCOME]: +1d to social interactions in the threshold
- [PASSAGE]: -1 DV for movement through the threshold
- [REMEMBER]: +1d to recall events tied to the threshold
- [PRICE]: +1d when naming or negotiating costs
- [UNBIND]: +1d to break bindings or ties
- [RELEASE]: +1d to free targets from conditions
- [SHELTER]: +1 Position while within the threshold

Cost System by Order

Order of Ikasha

Memory, Shadow Mark, Bond, Fear, Identity

Order of Livaea

Vulnerability, Desire, Charm, Poise, Favor

Order of Raéyn

Certainty, Calm, Vow, Balance, Breath

Order of Aveh

Name, Reflection, Role, Trace, Voice

Hearth Witches

Comfort, Warmth, Time, Burden, Memory

Order of Malachai

Vow, Suffering, Burden of Doom, Duty, Truth

Partial Success Consequences

| Consequence | Description |
|------------------------------|--|
| Withered Effect | The working manifests only partially |
| Twisting of Intent | The power acts askew |
| Calling of a Debt | A spiritual obligation forms |
| Revelation of Unwanted Truth | An unintended omen or memory appears |
| Marked by the Unseen | A subtle sign clings to the witch |
| Disturbance of Spirits | Spirits react with curiosity or hunger |
| Faltering Cost | The sacrifice is warped or magnified |
| Echo of the Attempt | Traces linger and attract attention |
| Emergent Complication | A new danger clock forms |
| Favor with a Hook | A boon succeeds but binds the witch |

Threshold Talent Tree

- **Hearth Branch:** Household affinity and protective workings
- **Passage Branch:** Movement, mediation, and liminal control
- **Memory Branch:** Story, naming, and reciprocity

Unified DV Setting Guide

Base DV = 3

Threshold Disposition Modifiers:

- Hungry/Grieving/Fearful: +1 DV
- Watching/Young: +0 DV
- Old: -1 DV

Witness Relationship Modifiers:

- Custodian: -1 DV
- Neutral: +0 DV
- Contested: +1 DV

Working Type Modifiers:

- Basic: +0 DV
- Enhanced: +1 DV
- Transformative: +2 DV

Cost Commitment Modifiers:

- Simple: -1 DV
- Moderate: -2 DV
- Solemn: -3 DV

DV Range: 1–6

Example Working: The Hearth's Memory

Step 1: Identify the Threshold

A grieving hearth (+1 DV)

Step 2: Choose Your Witness

Grandmother's spirit, a Custodian (-1 DV)

Step 3: Name Your Will

Ease a child's passing; [SHELTER] (+0 DV)

Step 4: Set Your Price

Moderate sacrifice: a cherished memory (-2 DV)

$$DV = 3 + 1 - 1 - 2 = 1$$

Step 5: Make the Exchange

Roll Wits + Hearth's Memory.

The child passes peacefully; the witch loses a childhood memory of comfort.

Additional Systems for Threshold Working

The Fourth Actor: Threshold Instincts

Every threshold possesses a dormant instinct that may awaken during a Working. When invoked by success, partial, or failure, the instinct shapes how the threshold responds.

| Instinct | Expression |
|----------|--|
| Call | Draws spirits or witnesses toward the Working. |
| Reject | Pushes back, generating SB or raising DV next time. |
| Echo | Repeats a fragment of the Working at a later moment. |
| Bind | Anchors part of the effect to the threshold itself. |
| Stain | Leaves a mark upon the place or on the witch. |

Threshold Instincts activate at the GM's discretion on a partial or dramatic result.

Residual Magic: Lingers, Echoes, and Scars

Every Working leaves a residue appropriate to its power, intent, and success state.

- **Linger:** A faint trace of the Working remains—an altered scent, draft, or mood.

- **Echo:** The Working repeats under mirrored conditions (at dusk, upon entry, when a name is spoken).
- **Scar:** The threshold is permanently altered—hungrier, older, darker, or soothed.

Residual Magic creates continuity and living consequence across sessions.

Favors, Debts, and Entanglements

Favor Clock

A measure of goodwill accrued through honoring Patrons, thresholds, or spirits.

Spend Favor to:

- Call on a Witness without raising DV.
- Reduce a Working's total cost.
- Negate a partial consequence.

Debt Clock

Accrues when a witch denies truth, withholds cost, or angers a Witness.

Effects of Debt:

- All Workings begin in Desperate Position.
- Witnesses treat the witch as Contested.
- Thresholds shift disposition toward Hungry or Fearful.

Debts must be paid with a Solemn Cost or narrative restitution.

Threshold Alignment: Time and Season

Threshold power rises and falls with the turning of time.

Times of Day

- Dawn: beginnings, healing, clarity
- Dusk: secrets, endings, shadow
- Midnight: spirit-listening, forbidden rites
- Noon: truth, unbinding, bold action

DV Adjustment:

- Aligned Time: -1 DV
- Opposed Time: +1 DV

Seasonal Alignment

- Winter: loss, memory, bound spirits
- Spring: passage, growth, renewal
- Summer: shelter, protection, presence
- Autumn: price, debts, endings

DV Adjustment:

- Aligned Season: -1 DV
- Opposed Season: +1 DV

Dual Workings (Co-Witchings)

Two witches may bind their wills upon a single threshold.

Rules:

- Will successes combine.
- Costs combine.
- Witness bonuses do not stack.
- Partial consequences apply to *both*.

On full success: both gain 1 Favor. **On dramatic failure:** both mark Debt.

Patron-Specific Thresholds

Each Patron has favored thresholds where their power is most easily invoked.

- **Ikasha:** shadowed crossroads, forgotten doorways, back alleys, hidden paths
- **Livaea:** windows, veils, boudoirs, thresholds of invitation
- **Raéyn:** river mouths, tide-worn steps, cliff edges, storm doors
- **Aveh:** mirrors, unmarked entrances, masks, unnamed boundaries
- **Hearth Witches:** hearthstones, cradles, porches, family thresholds
- **Malachai:** prison gates, oath-stones, gallows arches, courthouse steps

Mechanical Benefit:

- -1 DV on all Workings
- +1 Effect
- +1d when applying a TAG

Critical Success & Critical Failure

Extend the spectrum beyond Success and Partial.

Critical Success

Triggered when the witch earns **3+ successes over DV**.

- Threshold blesses the Working.
- Gain +1 Favor.
- Working's Effect increases one tier.

Critical Failure

Triggered when **no successes are rolled and SB is generated**.

- Threshold lashes out; disposition worsens.
- Spirits converge immediately.
- Next Working at this threshold begins in Desperate Position.
- Cost increases one category.

Optional: Threshold Reaction Table

| Roll | Reaction |
|------|---|
| 1–2 | The threshold Rejects: DV +1 on next rite here. |
| 3–4 | The threshold Calls: draws a spirit, ancestor, or unseen watcher. |
| 5–6 | The threshold Echoes: part of the Working repeats later. |
| 7–8 | The threshold Binds: effect becomes tied to this physical location. |
| 9–10 | The threshold Blesses: next Working here is in Controlled Position. |

Optional: Residual Threshold Conditions

A threshold affected repeatedly develops ongoing traits.

- **Haunted:** Spirits whisper the names of past Costs.
- **Sanctified:** DV cannot rise above 3 while protected.
- **Blighted:** All Boons are Withered unless soothed.
- **Listening:** Gain +1d to *REMEMBER* Workings here.
- **Unbound:** Effects involving release or freedom gain +1 Effect.

Grand Rite of Severance

Grand Rite of Severance — Breaking the Curse of the Unanointed

A witch may attempt to purge the Curse of the Unanointed, but doing so tears at cords of identity, memory, and fate. This ritual is feared even among Patrons.

Requirements (All):

- A full coven of **three or more witches**
- A locus of crossing: graveyard, crossroads, cliffside, threshold
- A **personal sacrifice** of the initiate (destroyed permanently)
- Patron permission (**Downtime** or **Story Beat cost**, GM's choice)

The Working: Roll **Spirit** + **Witchcraft** (DV 5, Desperate). Each assisting witch rolls **Spirit** + **Resolve** (DV 3).

Outcome Table:

Success: The Curse is stripped away. Reduce one Attribute of the initiate (GM choice) by 1 permanently.

Partial: The Curse is removed, *but* fragments remain: The witch gains the **Echo-Stain** Condition — holy places treat them as haunted.

Miss: The Patron arrives in force. The witch keeps the Curse and gains a new **Patron Taboo**. A coven member suffers a permanent Scar (GM chooses).

GM Note: This Rite is intentionally punishing. Removing the Curse should feel like tearing out a piece of the soul.

Markworkings: Alterations of Echo and Essence

Witches are the foremost scholars of marks: deliberate alterations to a being's echo that manifest as blessings, burdens, or transformations. A mark binds intention to echo, shaping how the world answers the marked.

A mark may be granted, stolen, suppressed, or rewritten through Threshold Workings. All marks have a **Duration**, **Strength**, and **Nature**.

Duration of Marks

Marks persist according to their depth of binding.

| Duration | Description |
|-----------------------------|---|
| Momentary (1 Round) | Swift, potent, volatile blessings or curses. |
| Scene-bound (1 Scene) | Stable marks that influence ongoing action. |
| Lingering (Until Down-time) | Lasting changes to echo; subtle but persistent. |

Shorter Duration = Greater Power. Longer Duration = Reduced Effect.

A witch choosing duration does so during Step 3: Name Your Will.

DV Adjustment:

- Momentary: -1 DV (potent but brief)
- Scene-bound: +0 DV
- Lingering: +1 DV (diminished strength)

Nature of Marks

A mark's nature reflects how it reshapes echo.

- **Blessing Mark:** grants advantage, clarity, protection, or fortune.
- **Burden Mark:** imposes weakness, fear, confusion, or exposure.
- **Binding Mark:** tethers a person to an oath, place, or threshold.
- **Veil Mark:** conceals truth, memory, presence, or identity.
- **Echo Mark:** alters voice, shadow, reflection, or spirit-attunement.
- **Wound Mark:** spiritual or symbolic injury that shapes future rolls.

A Working may modify only one nature at a time unless two witches act jointly.

Strength of Marks

Strength determines mechanical impact.

| Strength Tier | Mechanical Effect |
|---------------|---|
| Lesser | +1d or -1d to one action; minor tag shift. |
| Moderate | +1 Position or -1 Position; advantage/disadvantage for a scene. |
| Greater | +1 Effect or -1 Effect; binds or reshapes narrative stakes. |

DV Adjustment:

- Lesser: +0 DV
- Moderate: +1 DV
- Greater: +2 DV

Markworking Procedure

During Step 3: Name Your Will, the witch declares:

- **Duration:** Momentary, Scene-bound, or Lingering.
- **Nature:** blessing, burden, binding, veil, echo, or wound.
- **Strength Tier:** lesser, moderate, or greater.

These determine the Working's final DV.

When the Working succeeds, the witch places a **Mark Token** on the target. The token is removed when the duration ends or the mark is unbound.

Unbinding and Countermarking

A witch may remove or rewrite an existing mark using the same Five-Step Working:

DV for Unbinding:

- Lesser Mark: DV 2
- Moderate Mark: DV 3
- Greater Mark: DV 4

A witch may also establish a **Countermark**: a mark that cancels or reverses another. Countermarks always increase DV by +1 and require a Moderate Cost.

Residual Effects of Marks

When a mark ends, the echo may retain its impression.

- **Faint Residue:** +1d to future attempts of similar nature.
- **Fracture:** target suffers -1d on actions opposed to the mark's intent.
- **Ghost Mark:** threshold spirits may still sense it.

GM may apply these on partials or dramatic results.

Order Specialties in Markworkings

Each Order excels in particular forms of alteration.

- **Ikasha:** Veil Marks, Shadow Marks, Exposure Marks, stealth and secrecy.
- **Livaea:** Charm Marks, Poise Marks, Desire Marks.
- **Raéyn:** Tide Marks, Balance Marks, Breath Marks, emotional sway.
- **Aveh:** Reflection Marks, Name Marks, Identity Marks.
- **Hearth Witches:** Comfort Marks, Warmth Marks, Burden Marks.
- **Malachai:** Oath Marks, Doom Marks, Duty Marks.

Witches applying marks in their specialty reduce DV by -1.

Mark Consequences on Partial Success

| Partial Result | Effect |
|-----------------|--|
| Flickering Mark | Strength reduced one tier. |
| Tainted Mark | Gains unwanted secondary effect. |
| Reversed Mark | Briefly benefits or empowers the target. |
| Unstable Mark | May trigger at unintended moments. |
| Spirit Claim | A spirit binds itself to the mark. |

Example Markworkings

Blessing Mark (Scene-bound, Moderate)

- Nature: Blessing
- Duration: Scene
- Strength: Moderate (+1 Position)

DV: Base 3 + Duration 0 + Strength +1 = **DV 4**

Veil Mark (Momentary, Greater)

- Nature: Veil
- Duration: Momentary (−1 DV)
- Strength: Greater (+2 DV)

DV: 3 −1 +2 = **DV 4**

Doom Mark (Lingering, Lesser)

- Nature: Wound
- Duration: Lingering (+1 DV)
- Strength: Lesser (+0 DV)

DV: 3 +1 = **DV 4**

The Markworking Talent Tree

Witches who study the shaping of echoes progress through three branches of Markwork: **Carving**, **Binding**, and **Transfiguration**. Each talent enhances the witch's ability to create, alter, or unmake marks.

Carving Branch (Shaping Echo)

- **Carver's Touch** You learn to impose a minor mark with a whispered intention. *Effect:* -1 DV on Lesser Marks.
- **Subtle Impression** Marks leave fewer traces, unnoticed except by spirits. *Effect:* Residual Magic does not trigger Scar unless GM chooses.
- **Deep Etching** You may increase a mark's Strength by one tier without additional DV cost once per scene. *Limit:* Only applies to a mark of your Order's specialty.
- **Echo Sculptor** You may reshape an existing mark into another of equal Strength. *Effect:* Unbinding + rewriting is resolved as a single Working.

Binding Branch (Oaths, Curses, Burdens)

- **First Knot** You bind a mark more securely. *Effect:* Scene-bound Marks resist removal; DV +1 to unbind them (others only).
- **Witch's Claim** You may tie a mark to a threshold or relic. *Effect:* Threshold alignment grants +1 Effect to the mark.
- **Oathburn** Your marks may carry a narrative burden or obligation. *Effect:* Once per downtime, create a Mark that persists until oath-fulfilled.
- **Brand of Power** You may impose a Greater Mark without triggering Desperate Position. *Limit:* Costs must be Moderate or higher.

Transfiguration Branch (Beasts, Shadows, Doom, Madness)

- **Shift-sense** You understand the edges of self and form. *Effect:* +1d to Workings involving Wound, Echo, or Veil Marks.
- **Bloodshift** Your marks can temporarily alter flesh or instinct. *Effect:* Once per scene, apply a Lesser physical mutation mark with no DV change.
- **Chain of Becoming** You may stack two marks of Lesser Strength into one Moderate transformative mark. *Effect:* Grants +1 Position for transformation Workings.
- **Crown of Transfiguration** Your greatest rite: rewrite a being's echo entirely. *Effect:* Once per arc, impose a Lingering Greater Mark that alters nature, destiny, or form.

Mastery: The Witch of a Thousand Echoes

Upon learning all three branch capstones:

- You gain +1 Effect when applying marks of any type.
- Marks you impose may carry two Natures (e.g., Veil + Blessing, Wound + Binding).
- Residual Magic from your own marks always manifests as an Echo, never a Scar.

Example Marks by Order

Order of Ikasha — Marks of Shadow and Secrecy

- **Veilmark of Passing** (Lesser, Scene) Shadows dim around the marked; +1d to stealth or slipping notice.
- **Whisper Mark** (Lingering) The echo mutters fragments of truth; +1d to gather secrets, -1d to resist fear.
- **Shadow Debt** (Moderate) A hidden burden; target becomes easier to track by the Unseen.
- **Unperson Mark** (Greater, Momentary) Presence collapses; the marked cannot be remembered for a single round.

Order of Livaea — Marks of Desire and Influence

- **Saffron Gaze** (Lesser) The marked appears more appealing; +1d to social enticement.
- **Velvet Thrall** (Moderate) Emotional vulnerability exposed; +1 Position when convincing the target.
- **Rose-chain Mark** (Lingering) A bond of affection pulls the marked toward the witch's needs.
- **Honeyed Mask** (Greater) Reflection shifts to allure or threaten; +1 Effect to manipulation.

Order of Raéyn — Marks of Tide, Emotion, and Storm

- **Breath of the Gale** (Lesser) Quickness of thought and motion; reroll one failure per scene.
- **Hearttide Mark** (Moderate) Emotions surge to match Raéyn's waters; +1d to sway, -1d to resist passion.
- **Stormbrand** (Greater) Tempest aura; +1 Effect to any Working involving release, rupture, or upheaval.

Order of Aveh — Marks of Reflection, Name, and Mask

- **Name Hollow** (Lesser) The marked's name becomes slippery; +1d to conceal identity.
- **Mirrorblot** (Moderate) Reflection shows hidden truths; +1 Effect to divination in Aveh's sight.
- **Unface Mark** (Lingering) A missing detail—voice, gait, memory—slips from others' minds.
- **Maskshatter** (Greater) Identity fractures, revealing one true motive of the marked.

Hearth Witches — Marks of Comfort, Burden, and Home

- **Warmthmark** (Lesser) Hearth-stability; +1d to resist fear or despair.
- **Burdenbearing Mark** (Moderate) The witch carries one of the target's sorrows.
- **Threshold Ward** (Lingering) The marked is protected while inside a home or boundary.
- **Hearth's Claim** (Greater) A threshold adopts the marked as kin; +1 Position in any home.

Order of Malachai — Marks of Doom, Transformation, and Monstrous Ascension

- **Fangbirth Mark** (Lesser) A fleeting vampiric surge. *Effect:* For one round, gain +1d to predatory actions; afterwards mark 1 Fatigue.
- **Moonclaw Mark** (Moderate) A controlled strain of lycanthropic echo. *Effect:* Scene-long +1 Position on violence or tracking; -1d to resist frenzy.
- **Doomchain Mark** (Lingering) The witch binds a thread of the target's fate. *Effect:* Target suffers -1d against oaths or destiny-laden actions.
- **Wyrd Mutation Mark** (Greater, Momentary) Flesh shifts into monstrous expression (horns, claws, bone plates). *Effect:* +1 Effect on physical action; +1 SB on failure.
- **Bloodthirst Ascendant Mark** (Greater) A vampiric elevation of spirit and hunger. *Effect:* +1 Effect to domination, stalking, or draining; *Cost:* Mark 2 Fatigue when it ends.
- **Madness Crown** (Transfigurative) A revelation too bright for mortal mind. *Effect:* Target gains +1d to insight, prophecy, or spirit negotiation; suffers -1 Position on social grace.
- **Angel's Ruin Mark** (Arc-level Greater Mark) Malachai's signature working. Echo is rewritten to hold both light and affliction. *Effect:* Target becomes immune to fear and doubt; whenever they refuse a duty, they suffer 2 Harm (echo).

Hostile Marks and Ritual Marks

Witches understand that a mark may bless or break; an echo may be shaped or severed. Hostile Marks are afflictions imposed upon unwilling targets, while Ritual Marks represent the most potent transformations enacted through coven rites.

Hostile Marks

A Hostile Mark is imposed without consent. DV increases by +1 and the Working always begins in Desperate Position unless the target is: helpless, bound, asleep, or already marked by the witch.

| Mark | Description |
|--|--|
| Soulbite Mark (Lesser) | A tearing of echo; target suffers –1d on resolve actions and is vulnerable to spirit interference. |
| Guttershadow Mark (Scene) | Darkness clings to the marked; stealth against them gains +1d and their actions produce unnatural noise. |
| Witchblight Mark (Moderate) | An affliction that sours fate. Target rolls one additional SB on any 1-result. |
| Ruinblood Mark (Lingering) | Blood carries Malachai's whisper. Target suffers –1 Position on actions involving mercy, patience, or restraint. |
| Hollow Echo Mark (Greater) | Echo is thinned; the target cannot benefit from aid actions or teamwork until the mark is broken. |
| Possession Brand (Greater, Momentary) | A spirit gains purchase; for one round it may act using the target's body with +1 Effect. Afterwards, the target marks 2 Fatigue. |
| Canker Crown (Lingering, Severe) | A malignant mark that feeds on fear. Each time the target hesitates or falters, the GM may increase a Doom clock associated with them. |

Unbinding Hostile Marks

Hostile Marks require a DV equal to their Strength tier +2. Coven assistance reduces DV by –1 for each additional witch aiding (max –3).

Advanced Hostile Marks (Malachai's Domain)

- **Broken Moon Mark** Lycanthropic influence crawls through the target's echo. *Effect:* +1 Effect to violence; uncontrollable frenzy on critical failures.
- **Red Hunger Mark** A vampiric stain. *Effect:* Target gains a predatory urge that must be indulged each scene or take –1d.
- **Doomwrit Mark** A fragment of Malachai's prophecy etched into flesh. *Effect:* A specific fate becomes inevitable unless removed.
- **Unbody Mark** Physical form loosens. *Effect:* Target takes +1 Harm from silver, iron, or truth-speaking.

Powerful Ritual Marks: Coven Workings

Ritual Marks require:

- A coven of 3 or more witches.
- A prepared threshold (crossroads, grove, tidepool, shrine, gravehouse).
- A shared Cost: each witch contributes a Simple, Moderate, or Solemn cost.

DV: Base 4 + Ritual Tier **Coven Bonus:** Each assisting witch grants +1d and –1 DV (minimum DV 2).

Ritual Tiers

| Tier | Description |
|----------------|--|
| Lesser Rite | Scene-long blessings, minor shapings, protection marks. |
| Grand Rite | Community-scale marks, oath-bindings, curses on estates. |
| Ascendant Rite | Permanent transformations, monstrous ascensions, doom-forging. |

Ritual Marks by Order

Order of Ikasha: The Silent Veil Circle

- **Veilshroud Rite** (Lesser) A community or location becomes difficult to remember or describe. *Effect:* +1d to all stealth or secrecy in the shrouded domain.
- **Shadow Covenant Mark** (Grand) Binds an individual to Ikasha's unseen ledger. *Effect:* They must keep a sworn secret or suffer Wound Marks.

Order of Livaea: The Velvet Chorus

- **Heartmirror Rite** (Lesser) A chosen person sees their truest desire when looking upon the marked.
- **Silver Tongue Seal** (Grand) Ensnares a noble or leader. *Effect:* +1 Position for persuasion involving them; betrayal triggers Doom.

Order of Raéyn: The Tidebound Circle

- **Stormskin Rite** (Lesser) Grants temporary invulnerability to wind, rain, and fear.
- **Tide-call Mark** (Grand) Echo tied to shifting waters. *Effect:* Seasons and tides influence the target's fate rolls.

Order of Aveh: The Maskless Conclave

- **Unname Rite** (Lesser) The marked's name cannot be spoken by foes.
- **Mask of Many Faces** (Grand) A covenant of identity-shifting. *Effect:* Target may assume a new persona each scene with mechanical benefit.

Hearth Witches: The Circle of Warm Ash

- **Homestone Blessing** (Lesser) A dwelling is marked against ill fate; +1 Effect on protective actions inside.
- **Ancestor's Burden Mark** (Grand) The coven invokes an ancestral echo to share grief. *Effect:* Reduces Doom on the household; increases SB on conflict.

Order of Malachai: The Crimson Tribunal

Malachai's covens are the most feared practitioners of Ritual Marks. Their marks reshape flesh, fate, and sanity.

- **Beast-soul Rite** (Lesser) Controlled lycanthropy. *Effect:* Target gains a predatory form for one scene.
- **Bloodchain Covenant** (Grand) Binds two or more echoes in shared hunger. *Effect:* Harm dealt or taken echoes between linked individuals.
- **Crown of the Crimson Angel** (Ascendant) Malachai's signature ritual. *Effect:* The marked becomes an avatar of affliction: immune to fear, bound to duty, empowered by suffering. DV increases to 6; failure risks catastrophic echo-collapse.
- **Nightheart Transfiguration** (Ascendant) A rite of monstrous ascension—vampiric or chthonic. *Effect:* Permanent mutation of form and destiny; GM may assign a new Mark Nature unique to the transformation.

Breaking Ritual Marks

Ritual Marks require:

- A coven of equal or greater size,
- A threshold of opposite nature,
- A Solemn Cost from each participating witch.

DV equals the original ritual's DV +1.

Mark Complications and the Costs of Markwork

Marks shape echo, but echo pushes back. Whether blessing or curse, each mark contains risk, debt, or consequence.

Complications of Markwork

Whenever a mark is imposed with a partial success, dramatic failure, unstable threshold, or hostile witness, roll or choose from the table below.

| Complication | Effect |
|----------------------------|---|
| Echo Recoil | The witch suffers a brief echo-backlash; mark 1 Fatigue or lose 1d on the next Working. |
| Mark Drift | The mark begins shifting between Natures (e.g., blessing → veil, burden → wound). |
| Spirit Entanglement | A lesser spirit latches onto the mark; it may whisper, demand, or interfere later. |
| Threshold Resonance | The threshold awakens an Instinct (Call, Reject, Echo, Bind, Stain). Resolve immediately. |
| Unstable Lattice | The mark pulses unpredictably: once per scene the GM may trigger a minor effect—strengthen or weaken. |
| Harmonic Bleed | The mark unintentionally affects a nearby person, object, or spirit. |
| Burden Surge | Costs rise sharply; the witch must elevate their Cost one tier (Simple → Moderate → Solemn). |
| Mask of Misrule | For Veil, Desire, or Identity marks: the target behaves contrary to intent for one action. |
| Doom Echo | For Wound or Binding marks: advance a Doom Clock tied to either witch or target. |
| Familiar Hunger | The mark draws attention from a powerful entity aligned with its Nature. |
| Half-Broken Seal | Mark does not bind cleanly; opposing forces may exploit the gap (spirit, curse, rival witch). |
| Fading Imprint | Mark begins degrading early; duration is shortened one step unless reinforced. |

Cosmic Consequences (Optional Severe Complications)

Used when imposing Greater, Lingering, or Ritual Marks.

- **Shattered Echo:** Target permanently loses a facet of identity, memory, or emotion.
- **Vein of Madness:** Target gains a recurring compulsion or altered instinct.
- **Beast's Claim:** Malachai's influence strengthens; physical mutation manifests.
- **Shadow Annexation:** Ikasha collects a portion of the target's shadow.
- **Fate Rerooted:** Raéyn, Livaea, Aveh, or Malachai redirects the target's destiny.

These are rare and usually arise only with Ascendant or Hostile Ritual Marks.

Coven Mechanics: Shaping the Unanointed Curse

Coven Workings and the Curse of the Unanointed

A coven may manipulate the Curse affecting an initiate. These workings are not Rites but structured group effects.

Dampen the Curse (Supportive Work)

Cost: 1 Downtime Action per coven member **Roll:** Spirit + Witchcraft (Controlled, DV 2)

Effect:

- Reduce holy backlash for one session
- Remove the first 1 Fatigue the Curse would cause
- The GM gains 0 SB from this Curse for that session

On a Partial: The Curse shifts; roll twice next time it triggers.

On a Miss: Backlash hits the entire coven (1 Fatigue each).

Strengthen the Curse (Weaponized Work)

Cost: Witch blood, sacrifice, or stolen relic **Roll:** Desperate, DV 5

Effect:

- Curse flares violently around the target
- Holy wards react catastrophically
- Hunter sanctums treat the witch as a “demon presence”

On a Success: The curse becomes a weapon. Next time it triggers, choose one:

- Blind all foes in Near range
- Shatter wards or seals
- Cause 1 Harm to any zealot invoking holy power

On a Miss: The Patron intervenes and rewrites one Taboo.

Hide the Mark (Veiling Work)

Cost: Dedicating a familiar or personal relic **Roll:** Risky, DV 3

Effect:

- Witch Hunters cannot automatically detect the Curse
- Divine effects treat the witch as “mundane” for one scene

On a Partial: The veil flickers at dramatic moments. *On a Miss:* The veil inverts—hunters sense the witch at Far range.

0.15.10 The Witch Hunters

The Witch Hunters—known formally as the **Order of the Chain-Lantern**—stand as the masculine, destructive inversion of witchcraft. Where Witches weave with quiet threads, Hunters *cut*. Where Witches make pacts, Hunters make *oaths*. Where Witches empower place-spirits, Hunters *scour* them.

To the Chain-Lantern, magic is a wound in the world that must be cauterized. Their tools are iron, fire, binding-words, and fear; their craft is the unmaking of all that witches bind together.

Doctrine

- **All Patrons are Lies:** Only the mortal will is true.
- **All Spirits Are Predators:** Even the small ones behind walls.
- **All Witches Are Threshold-Breakers:** Power invites corruption.
- **Purity Is Law:** Resolve, discipline, and the rejection of compromise.

Symbols & Regalia

- Chains wrapped around forearms: reminders of self-binding.
- Lanterns with cold iron latticework: reveal witch-signs and glamours.
- Ash-grey mantles: dyed with the soot of burned covens.
- Tattoos of severed cords: each one earned through “purifications.”

Hunter Techniques (Talents)

Iron Will (2 XP) You gain +1d when resisting Patron influence, glamours, or compulsion.

Lantern Sight (4 XP) Once per scene, reveal hidden witch-sign, lingering magic, or cord residue within 20 paces.

Breaker's Grip (4 XP) When grappling or restraining a caster, they suffer –1d to all spellcasting until free.

Cord-Severer (6 XP) Once per session, negate one witch rite, hex, or charm as it is cast.

Ash Discipline (6 XP) If you have taken no Boons this session, gain +1 Position on all confrontations with witches.

Hunter Implements

- **Cold Iron Chains:** Bind spirits, disrupt glamours; witches take +1 DV to resist.
- **Lantern of Ash-Glass:** Burns blue in the presence of Patron interference.
- **Null-Graven Mask:** Carved with sigils of erasure; grants immunity to illusions for one scene.
- **Oathblade:** A weapon inscribed with the Hunter's vow; deals +1 Harm against spirit-touched foes.

Hunter Rites (Anti-Rites)

Unlike witches, Hunters have **no Patrons**. Their "rites" are destructive inversions—oaths, suppressions, nullifications.

Scour the Threshold Strip a place of minor spirits; all witchcraft inside suffers –1d for the scene.

Bind the Unseen Trap a small or lesser spirit in iron for interrogation or banishment.

Burn the Cord Target witch must reroll their next successful magical action.

Oath of Severance A sworn promise that empowers the Hunter once per session: +1d against a chosen witch, Patron, or covenant.

Make the World Clean A grim "ritual" requiring fire and ash: eradicate all witch marks and charms within a building or campsite.

Internal Factions

Even Hunters fracture under the weight of their absolutism:

- **The Lantern-Pure:** Seek total eradication of witch-orders; zealous, uncompromising.
- **The Cleavers of Night:** Focus on destroying Patrons by disrupting their influence.
- **The Hearth-Breakers:** Specialists who infiltrate communities to root out Hearth Witches.
- **The Sorrowed Hands:** Former witches seeking to atone through service; the most ruthless of all.

Rivalries & Opposition

- **Hearth Witches:** Hunters despise them most of all—magic that is gentle is still magic.
- **Mab's Thorn-Court:** Their glamours are the Hunters' greatest shame—they have been fooled before.
- **Morag's Brood:** Hunters kill them on sight; Morag prefers to harvest Hunters' fears in return.

- **Aveh's Followers:** Nothing enrages a Hunter more than the facelessness of Aveh's disciples, whose identities cannot be "purified."

Adventure Seeds

- A Hunter warband arrives in a town protected by Hearth Witches. The lanterns burn blue; something is hidden here.
- A single Hunter seeks the PCs, claiming a coven they befriended is controlled by a Patron they cannot perceive.
- A defector from the Order arrives begging for protection; their old brothers have sworn an Oath of Severance.
- An Oathblade has gone missing, stolen by a child—it activates a dormant anti-rite with catastrophic consequences.
- A Hunter cadre has bound a local spirit that was holding the forest in balance; everything is dying.

The Witch Hunters are not merely enemies. They are the mirror the witch-orders fear to face: *men who believe the world must be made smaller, simpler, cleaner—no matter how much must be cut away.*

0.15.11 Talent Tree: The Order of the Chain-Lantern

The Witch Hunters do not receive blessings from Patrons; their strength comes from **oaths, discipline, and the refusal of all bargains**. Their talents escalate from vigilance, to suppression, to the severing of magic itself.

| Witch Hunter Talent Tree | |
|--------------------------|--|
| Tier I | <p>IRON WILL (2 XP) Resist magical influence with +1d. Includes glamours, compulsions, whispers, and attempted Patron touches.</p> <p>GRIM DISCIPLINE (2 XP) When you roll to resist fear, corruption, or seduction, increase Position by one step.</p> |
| Tier II | <p>LANTERN SIGHT (4 XP) Once per scene, reveal hidden cords, witch-signs, spirit trails, or illusions within near range.</p> <p>BREAKER'S GRIP (4 XP) When grappling a caster, they suffer –1d to all spellcasting until free. When grappling a spirit-touched foe, you gain +1 Position.</p> |
| Tier III | <p>ASH DISCIPLINE (6 XP) If you have not taken any Boons this session, gain +1 Position and +1d on confrontations with witches or spirits.</p> <p>SEVERING BIND (6 XP) When you strike with cold iron, you may force a witch to reroll one successful magical action (or negate a hex being cast). Once per scene.</p> |
| Tier IV | <p>NULL-BOUND MASK (8 XP, Req: Lantern Sight) You may ignore illusions, glamours, and sensory manipulation for an entire scene. Additionally, you cannot be magically disguised or obscured.</p> <p>SPIRIT-CLEAVER (8 XP, Req: Breaker's Grip) Attacks with iron weapons deal +1 Harm to spirits, manifested Patrons, and witch familiars. On a Full Success, you may “anchor” a spirit in place for a moment, preventing movement.</p> |
| Tier V | <p>CORD-SEVERER (10 XP, Capstone) Once per session, you may attempt to <i>sever a magical cord</i> as it is formed: negate a rite, curse, glamour, pact-invocation, or Patron manifestation. Success: the cord is cut. Partial: effect is weakened but not fully negated. Miss: you provoke the Patron's attention (GM move).</p> <p>IRON OATH ASCENDANT (10 XP, Capstone) Declare a sworn enemy (a witch, coven, spirit, or Patron aspect). For the rest of the session: • +1d on all rolls opposing them</p> |

Design Notes (Optional for GM) Witch Hunters advance by hardening themselves emotionally, morally, and spiritually. Every talent is a narrowing—of will, perception, or mercy. Their capstones are powerful but dangerous, inviting escalation and attention from Patrons.

Witch Hunters: The Order of the Burning Mark

Order of the Burning Mark — Talents

Tier I: Core Talents

- **Sense the Sinner** — Automatically detect the *Curse of the Unanointed* within Near range.
- **Wardbreaker's Step** — +1d to bypass, shatter, or dispel witch wards and Lesser Rites.

Tier II: Advanced Talents

- **Burning Mandate** — When you confront a cursed witch, gain **Dominant Position** on the first roll.
- **Chain of Edicts** — When restraining or punishing witches, +1 Effect and +2 Resistance.

Tier III: Ascendant Talents

- **Saint's Wrath** — Once per scene, project a holy aura: witches must resist or suffer **2 Fatigue** and lose Position.
- **Seal the Cord** — Prevent a witch from using Rites for one scene (DV 4 Resist to break).

Paradox Talent

- **Anointed Scourge** — You become a living anti-threshold. Lesser Rites unravel near you; Grand Rites suffer -1d. Witches cannot hide their marks from you.

0.15.12 Spell-Suppression Gear & Relics of the Chain-Lantern

Witch Hunters do not wield miracles; they carry tools of interruption, binding, and the deliberate stilling of magic. None of these items create magic—they merely deny it.

Common Implements (Tier I-II)

- **Ironmesh Hood** — Worn over the lamp. When lowered, grants +1 Position to resist illusions, glamours, or sensory distortion. Limits wearer's peripheral vision.
- **Binder's Chalk** — Marks a *Lantern Line*. Spells crossing it suffer -1d unless the caster succeeds on a Wits test (DV 3).
- **Cold-Iron Shackles** — Prevent fine motor casting. While bound, casters suffer -1d and cannot activate rites requiring gestures.

- **Lantern Salt** — Thrown to reveal invisible or hidden magical effects in a small area. On a Full Success: reveals hidden cords, spirits, illusions. On Partial: reveals only the strongest effect.
- **Stop-Rite Token** — A stamped writ of interruption. Once per scene, impose a DV +1 penalty on a witch beginning a rite.

Field Tools (Tier II-III)

- **Ashbrand Nails** — Driven into wood or stone to “ground” magic. For as long as the nail remains, any ongoing magical effect in Near range weakens (GM: -1 Effect or similar suppression).
- **Chain of the Second Witness** — A short chain etched with law-script. When wrapped around an object, anyone attempting to magically move or tamper with it must beat DV 4. Failure alerts the Hunter.
- **Mirror-Bell Vial** — A small bell sealed under glass. When opened, the next magical effect in Close range is “reflected”: the caster rolls with -1d and gains +1 Heat with local Orders.
- **Lantern-Wax Seal** — A wax pressed onto a door or object. Until broken, rites that cross the threshold suffer -2 Effect.

Rare Implements (Tier III-IV)

- **True-Iron Censer** — Emits a bitter smoke. Spirits entering the smoke suffer -1 Position and cannot hide their form. Witches lose access to one minor hex or trick for the scene.
- **Countervoice Lantern** — Emits a tone when magic is cast nearby. Once per scene, the bearer may impose a forced re-roll on a witch’s casting roll.
- **The Ledger of Unpriced Gifts** — A heavy iron-bound log. Any boon or gift acquired by magic within a scene must be “priced” (GM: choose a small complication or consequence). Witches despise the Ledger.
- **Severing Tongs** — Used to remove cursed objects safely. Grant +1 Position to seize, isolate, or interrupt an active curse.

Relics of the Chain-Lantern (Unique / Tier V)

- **The First Lamp** — A relic said to burn with the light of the earliest oath.
 - Once per session: negate a magical effect as it is cast.
 - Witches who approach within Near range tremble; -1d to cast.
 - Patrons become aware of its use.
- **The Iron Cartographer** — A slate that maps magical currents.
 - Reveal every ongoing magical effect in Far range.

- Name one cord or working; the bearer can follow it unerringly.
- If the bearer lies while using it, the slate cracks.
- **The Lantern of Nine Chains** — Used only by senior Hunters.
 - Once per session: bind a witch or spirit in place, freezing movement for a few heartbeats.
 - If used on a witch under a Patron's direct gaze, the Patron may act in reprisal (GM move).
- **The Helm of the Third Witness** — A dull iron helm that sees no lies.
 - Automatically pierces illusions, glamours, shadow-shifting, and fae misdirection.
 - Cannot be removed until a confession is heard.
 - Wearing it too long drains the wearer's empathy (GM move).

Forbidden Implements (GM Option)

These items have been banned by every Order, yet some Hunters seek them anyway.

- **The Sorrowed Brand** — Burns a witch's name into iron. Grants automatic success on tracking that witch. Using it earns enmity from all Orders.
- **Hallowed Silencer** — A cold-iron muzzle for spirits. Prevents all speech or spell-voice. Using it is considered torture.
- **The Empty Grimoire** — Absorbs one hex or rite per scene. What happens to the stolen magic is unknown.

0.16 Witch's Familiars

Familiars are not pets. They are coven-bound companions, witnesses to Name-work, and extensions of a witch's intent. A familiar is half-spirit, half-creature, shaped by bargain, bond, and circumstance. This system expands followers to accommodate the mystical role familiars serve in witchcraft.

0.16.1 Familiar Principles

- A familiar is a **follower augmented by cords and spirit-law**.
- A familiar grows through **shared scenes**, not itemized XP.
- A familiar is a **Voice of the Patron**, but not a servant.
- A familiar's death or corruption has **ritual and narrative weight**.

0.16.2 Familiar Creation

To create a familiar, choose:

1. Nature (One)

- **Beast-Born:** Cat, fox, raven, serpent, owl, goat, etc.
- **Spirit-Born:** Lantern-wisp, dustling, ember-lark, river-whisper.
- **Shade-Touched:** Pale animals, two-eyed shadows, echo-creatures.

2. Temperament (One)

- **Watcher** (observant, silent)
- **Trickster** (curious, chaotic)
- **Caretaker** (empathetic, stabilizing)
- **Predator** (protective, vengeful)

3. Patron Resonance (One)

- **Lunera:** moon-sight, calm tides, dream-walks
- **Morag:** rot-sense, curse-binding, hunger-echo
- **Mab:** glamours, threshold-crossing, illusion
- **Aveh:** identity-shift, mask-binding, shadow-step
- **Hearth Spirits:** warm-spot, ember-glow, soot-warding
- **Thorns of Malachai:** temptation, golden-hook, bargain-sense

0.16.3 Familiar Statline

Familiars function as followers, but with the following adjustments:

- **Cap:** 2 + Witch Tier (max 5)
- **Scale:** Tiny (unless Beast-Born Predator, then Small)
- **Tags:** Nature, Temperament, Patron Resonance
- **Harm:** 2 boxes; when filled, familiar enters **Ritual Crisis**

Familiar Moves (choose 2)

- **Sense the Unspoken** — reveal hidden emotions, curses, or Name-weight in a scene.
- **Slip-Between** — bypass a barrier, door, or gap too small for a person.
- **Lend Strength** — assist the witch; grants +1d instead of normal follower assist.
- **Spirit-Anchor** — stabilize a Working, reducing SB generated by 1.
- **Echo-Strike** — attack as a Tier I predator (Cap 1 strike).
- **Record the Price** — whisper a consequence the witch is overlooking.

0.16.4 Familiar Advancement

Each time the witch and familiar share a moment of vulnerability, growth, or ritual significance, mark a **Bond**. At 3 Bonds, choose one:

- Gain a new Familiar Move
- Increase familiar Cap by 1 (max 5)
- Unlock a **Patron Gift**

0.16.5 Patron Gifts for Familiars

Lunera's Gift: Moon-Thread Once per scene, reveal a hidden path or safe option.

Morag's Gift: Mirecloth Familiar can inflict a *Weakness* (Rot, Fear, or Binding) for a single roll.

Mab's Gift: Glamour-Bloom Familiar projects a simple illusion; grants Position +1 for a social or stealth action.

Aveh's Gift: Unmasking Familiar shifts form slightly, revealing a truth someone is hiding.

Hearth's Gift: Ember-Shield Reduce incoming Harm to familiar or witch by 1 (once/session).

Malachai's Thorn-Gift (Forbidden) Familiar grants +1 Effect *and* GM gains 2 SB.

0.16.6 Familiar Harm & Ritual Crisis

When the familiar's Harm track fills, it cannot die like mortals. Instead, it enters a **Ritual Crisis**:

- It vanishes into smoke, glass, ash, or echoes.
- Witch must perform a **Rebinding Rite** (DV 3–5 depending on Patron).
- On a Miss: familiar returns changed—add a new Tag (Shadowed, Hungry, Hooked).

0.16.7 Familiar Special Actions

Witch-Focus (1/session) The witch channels their Working through the familiar: **+1 Effect**, but familiar risks 1 Harm.

Echo-Reversal Familiar reroutes backlash from the witch to itself. Witch avoids consequence; familiar marks 1 Harm and GM gains 1 SB.

Name-Whisper (Patron-specific) Once per arc, familiar whispers the *true Name* of a minor spirit, entity, or place. This always attracts attention.

0.16.8 Familiar Corruption

If the witch takes Thorn Seeds (see Hybrid Possession rules), the familiar is affected.

At each Thorn Stage:

- Stage 1: eyes glint with gold
- Stage 2: speech becomes plural (“we”)
- Stage 3: familiar’s Move gains +1 Effect, but GM gains 1 SB when used
- Stage 4: familiar begins offering prices unbidden
- Stage 5: familiar becomes a Seraphic echo (hostile follower, Cap 3)

Cleansing requires both a cord-rite and a summoning diagram.

0.16.9 Adventure Seeds Involving Familiars

- **The Familiar Market** — A black market sells “rebonded” familiars; their former witches want them back.
- **Ash-Threaded Cat** — A Hearth witch’s familiar has begun foretelling fires that have not yet happened.
- **Three-Eyed Raven** — A Mab-born familiar witnesses a murder in a dream but cannot speak it plainly.
- **The Silent Cub** — A Morag-touched wolf pup refuses to eat, as if carrying a curse meant for someone else.
- **The Glass Fox** — An Aveh familiar splits into reflections—each reflecting a different possible betrayal.

0.16.10 Sample Familiar Statblocks

These baseline statlines follow the familiar rules (Cap = 2 + Witch Tier), modified by Nature and Patron Resonance.

Fox-Familiar (Beast-Born Trickster) **Nature:** Beast-Born **Temperament:** Trickster
Cap: 3 **Scale:** Tiny
Tags: Keen-Scent, Nimble, Mischief **Moves:**

- **Slip-Between** — bypass any gap wider than a hand-width.
- **Sense the Unspoken** — detect emotional truths or concealed intent.
- **Fox's Feint** — grant Position +1 on a stealth or distraction roll.

Weakness: Easily baited; loud sudden noises startle it.

Raven-Familiar (Beast-Born Watcher) **Nature:** Beast-Born **Temperament:** Watcher
Cap: 3 **Scale:** Tiny
Tags: Omens, Sharp-Eyes, Sky-Bound **Moves:**

- **Record the Price** — whisper a looming consequence the witch has missed.
- **Moon-Voice** — mimic any sound heard this scene.
- **Omen-Cry** — once/scene, reveal whether a direction is auspicious or cursed.

Weakness: Distracted by reflections and shiny objects.

Shade-Cat (Shade-Touched Lurker) **Nature:** Shade-Touched **Temperament:** Watchful-Predator
Cap: 3 **Scale:** Tiny
Tags: Silent-Paws, Second-Shadow, Mist-Born **Moves:**

- **Shadow-Bloom** — become invisible in dim light; +1d to ambush assists.
- **Spirit-Anchor** — stabilize a Working, reducing SB generated by 1.
- **Echo-Strike** — Tier I spirit-claw; counts as *spirit harm*.

Weakness: Sunlight dazes it; Position -1 in bright light.

Wisp-Familiar (Spirit-Born Caretaker) **Nature:** Spirit-Born **Temperament:** Caretaker
Cap: 4 (cannot attack) **Scale:** Tiny
Tags: Lantern-Glow, Gentle, Guiding **Moves:**

- **Lend Strength** — assist for +1d instead of normal follower assist.
- **Calm-Tide** — reduce one Fatigue from the witch (once/session).
- **Wisp-Guide** — reveal a safe path; Position +1 for navigation rolls.

Weakness: Disrupted by wind or loud conflict.

Familiar Power Tree: The Marked Bond

The Marked Bond — Talents for Cursed Familiars

Tier I: Awakening Talents

- **Eyes of the Mark** Your familiar perceives traces of the Curse. *Effect:* Once per scene, ask the GM one question about holy forces, wards, zealots, or cursed places. On a 6, your Position improves.
- **Shadow-Tether** When your familiar aids you, add +1d if the action involves secrecy, trespass, or forbidden magic. If you roll a 1, the Curse gains 1 SB.

Tier II: Empowered Talents

- **Hex-Eater** Your familiar can swallow Lesser Rites or minor curses. *Effect:* Once per rest, cancel any 1-tier magical effect. *Cost:* Your familiar takes 1 Harm (or Fatigue if intangible).
- **Borrowed Claws** Invoke the familiar's Form to add magical potency. *Effect:* Increase Effect by +1 on attacks or occult actions. *Cost:* Mark 1 Fatigue; the Curse flares visibly.

Tier III: Ascendant Talents

- **Soul-Doubling** Familiar and witch act as two halves of one threshold-being. Once per scene, take a second action at -1d (your familiar "acts" while your body hesitates). If the roll fails, the Curse manifests dramatically.
- **Cursed Apotheosis** Your familiar becomes a minor spirit of your Patron or your Curse. *Effect:*
 - Familiar gains 1 additional action per scene
 - Familiar ignores mundane harm
 - Witch Hunters recognize it immediately and may escalate clocks

Paradox Talent

- **One Soul, Two Shadows** You and your familiar share fate. When either of you would take Harm, choose who suffers it. When you would die, your familiar may offer its soul instead. *Cost:* GM chooses a permanent Scar or Taboo.

The Confluence Path: Summoner–Witch Hybrids

Some witches walk the boundary between *invitation* and *incursion*. They braid the soft, relational cords of witchcraft with the sharp geometries of summoning. The Confluence Path is neither an Order nor a school: it is a mistake, a temptation, or a dangerous inheritance. Those who follow it

call themselves **Confluence-Binders**, **Threshold-Blooded**, or **Nameshapers**. Others simply call them **ill-omened**.

Why This Path Exists

Traditional witchcraft bargains with spirits through *names, offerings, and reciprocity*. Summoners compel entities through *sigils, contracts, and geometry*. A Confluence-Binder attempts both at once, claiming:

- witches know the *world's soft places*
- summoners know the *world's hard edges*
- together, these form a *gateway*

Their Workings blur the line between pact and possession, boon and binding.

Core Risk: Dual Obligation

A hybrid never serves one master. They owe:

- a **Patron Want** (witchcraft)
- a **Summoned Will** (contract)

These obligations frequently contradict. Whenever they attempt a Confluence Working, mark 1 SB for the GM. Each 1 on the roll marks an additional SB, which may be spent to:

- awaken an unintended spirit
- twist the summoned entity's interpretation of its contract
- reshape local reality around a forgotten Name

Hybrid Practices

Confluence-Binders combine methods:

1. Cord-Sigils Every cord is knotted through a sigil; every sigil is softened by cord-law. Effect: When invoking or commanding spirits, gain +1d, but on a Miss the spirit acts with **uninterpretable obedience**, creating harm or havoc.

2. Threshold Familiars A hybrid's familiar is neither bound nor free. It has two moods:

- **Witch-Mood:** protective, relational, curious
- **Summoner-Mood:** literal, predatory, geometric

Switching modes requires a DV 3 Spirit + Empathy test.

3. Blood-Price Substitution If a summoning demands a sacrifice they cannot pay, hybrids may convert the price into *cord-burn*: they lose one minor Name until restored.

New Hybrid Rites

- **Knot the Host** (Lesser) Anchor a spirit half-in, half-out of a chosen object. Allies gain +1 Effect interacting with the spirit; adversaries suffer Position -1.
- **Whisper the True Threshold** (Greater) Declare a line across which supernatural entities must test to cross (DV = Tier). If they fail, they manifest weakened or fragmented.
- **Mirror of Two Mouths** (Grand) Allow the witch to speak with a spirit *and* the spirit to speak through them. Consequence: a lingering echo haunts the witch's speech until resolved.

Talents of the Confluence Path

Confluence-Binder Talents

Tier I: Threshold Initiate

- **Two Ways to Name** — Gain +1d when negotiating with spirits or summoned beings.

Tier II: Cord-Geomancer

- **Bind the Breath** — When you establish a boundary, you may also impose a minor taboo.

Tier III: Echo Warden

- **Twin Intent** — Use two forms of authority at once (witch Name + sigil command).

Paradox Talent

- **Gate-Walked** — Your soul becomes a liminal space. You always count as standing on a threshold, for better or worse.

Hybrid Rivalries & Enemies

- **Witch Orders** distrust the coercive edge of summoning.
- **Summoning Cabals** hate the softness of witch bargains.
- **Witch Hunters** see hybrids as proof that witchcraft is dangerous.
- **The Thorns of Malachai** consider hybrids “the perfect vessel.”

Adventure Seeds

- **The Double Oath** — A hybrid's Patron Want and a spirit-contract collide, risking a local catastrophe.
- **The Familiar That Dreamed** — A hybrid's familiar begins manifesting impossible geometry.
- **The Unfinished Summoner** — A dead summoner's diagram begins pulling witches inside its logic.
- **Threshold Feast** — A hybrid accidentally opened a doorway that refuses to close.

The Thorns of Malachai: Hybrid Possession Subsystem

Hybrid witches—those who blend cord-law with summoning geometry—are uniquely vulnerable to the Thorns of Malachai. A cord is a promise; a sigil is a door. Malachai's servants do not enter violently. They enter through the smallest *mispriced gift*.

This subsystem governs how a Thorn insinuates itself into a hybrid's Workings, slowly binding the witch and the summoned entity into a single cursed host.

Core Principles

- Possession is **incremental**, not immediate.
- Malachai's Thorns never seize agency; they **offer** it at a price.
- Hybrids are more susceptible because their Workings rely on **dual Names** and **contradictory obligations**.

The Three Vectors of Thorn Infection

Thorns exploit any opening where a witch's cord-logic conflicts with their summoned contract.

1. **Price Misalignment**—the witch accepts a boon without naming its cost.
2. **Name Fracture**—the hybrid invokes a spirit whose Name they cannot fully hold.
3. **Geometry Drift**—the summoning diagram warps under emotional strain.

Any time one of these occurs, the GM may introduce a **Thorn Seed**.

Thorn Seeds

A Thorn Seed is the earliest stage of possession. Mark one when:

- the hybrid gains a miracle or advantage they did not ask for
- the hybrid rolls 2+ SB on a Confluence Working

- a summoned being refuses dismissal, “waiting for payment”

A Thorn Seed does not do harm. It merely rewrites the cost of the hybrid’s future actions.

Escalation Track: The Hook-Bloom

Track possession using the following ladder:

| Stage | Effect |
|-------------------------------|---|
| 1. Thorn Seed | A whispering cost. Hybrid gains +1d on a Working; GM gains 1 SB. |
| 2. Hook-Root | A sigil appears under the skin. When resisting harm, hybrid takes 1 Fatigue. |
| 3. Bloomed Hook | Hybrid’s summoned entity becomes “improved”: +1 Effect, but any Miss invites intrusion. |
| 4. Seraphic Murmur | Hybrid hears Malachai’s choir. Once per scene, GM may alter the Working’s interpretation. |
| 5. Chained Avatar (Possessed) | Hybrid becomes a vessel. They act with +2d and +1 Effect but lose all Position benefits. |

At Stage 5, the hybrid is not lost but is *overtaken*. This creates a crisis rather than an immediate character death.

How Stages Advance

Whenever the hybrid:

- accepts an unpriced miracle
- bargains under duress
- calls a spirit without anchoring cord-law
- tears a Name (using it as leverage rather than covenant)

—roll Wits + Spirit (DV = current Stage). On a Miss, advance one Stage.

The Hybrid’s Advantage: Double Binding

Hybrids can resist Thorns in ways witchcraft alone cannot.

1. Sigil-Reversal Spend 1 Fatigue to invert a sigil mid-Working. Effect: Downgrade a Stage by 1 for the scene only.

2. Cord-Burn Purification Sacrifice one minor Name (temporarily lost). Effect: Permanently remove the most recent Stage.

3. Dual Oath Gambit Swear two mutually exclusive promises. If kept until sunset, the contradiction breaks the Hook. If broken, immediately advance to Stage 5.

Exorcisms for Hybrids

Exorcisms require both a summoner's geometry and a witch's cord.

- **Circle of Torn Names** (DV 4) Requires a Name the hybrid regrets using. Success: remove one Stage. Miss: the Thorn manifests physically.
- **Cord of Honest Price** (DV 3) The hybrid must name the cost they have refused. Effect: freeze Stage advancement until dawn.
- **Seraphic Counter-Song** (DV 5) Requires 3 witches or 3 summoners. Success: purge all Stages, but hybrid loses one Talent (scarred).

Thorn-Manifested Familiars

At Stage 3+, the hybrid's familiar becomes an extension of the Thorn.

- **Stage 3:** Familiar speaks in second person plural.
- **Stage 4:** Familiar mirrors hybrid's emotions with luminous bleeding eyes.
- **Stage 5:** Familiar becomes a Seraphic echo; treat as a hostile follower (Cap 3) until exorcised.

Adventure Hooks Involving Hybrid Possession

- **The Silent Sigil** — A hybrid unknowingly carries a Thorn Seed into a ritual circle.
- **The Broken Familiar** — A familiar has reached Stage 5 and seeks to break its witch.
- **The Choir Beneath the Cord** — A Thorn Seed infects a coven and begins corrupting their Names.
- **The Price Left Unspoken** — A seemingly benign miracle becomes the seed of a regional blooming.

Using This Subsystem

Use this only with hybrid PCs or witches dabbling in summoning. It provides a *slow-burn corruption arc*, foreshadowing Malachai before the Thorns ever appear in person.

It also reinforces the Book of Shadows' themes:

- Temptation and cost
- Power at a price
- Witchcraft and summoning as dangerous when intertwined
- Malachai's influence as subtle, not overt

Witch Trial Subsystem

Witch Trials — Social Conflict at the Edge of Faith and Fear

Witch Trials are structured social conflicts representing councils, inquisitions, village gatherings, or temple hearings. They revolve around three central mechanics:

Evidence Clocks, Jury Disposition, and Spotlight Rounds

They resolve whether the accused is:

- **Cleansed** (Released under conditions)
- **Condemned** (Execution, exile, or purification)
- **Claimed** by a Patron (a powerful but risky outcome)

Evidence Clocks

Each Trial uses two opposed clocks:

- **Condemnation** [6] — fear, testimony, the Curse flaring
- **Clemency** [6] — arguments, allies, evidence, confession

When either clock fills, the trial concludes:

Condemnation fills: Immediate punishment or ritual penance. Witch Hunters may escalate directly into violence or binding Rites.

Clemency fills: The accused is spared but must accept a binding Oath, Taboo, or service.

Adding Segments

- Strong rhetoric: +1 to Clemency
- Evidence of hexing: +1 to Condemnation
- Witchcraft used during trial: +2 Condemnation, +1 Clemency
- Patron signs or omens: GM adds 1–3 to either clock

Jury Disposition Track

A 5-step track representing the room's mood:

Hostile — Uneasy — Divided — Sympathetic — Won Over

Disposition modifies Position:

- Hostile: You begin rolls at **Desperate**
- Uneasy: Risky
- Divided: Risky (improve Position on 6)
- Sympathetic: Controlled
- Won Over: Controlled (+1d)

Disposition shifts via arguments, testimony, theatrics, or sabotage.

Spotlight Rounds

Each round, one PC acts as the advocate, one as the accused, and the rest may intervene through:

- Whispered Assistance (Body + Stealth; help without being seen)
- Legal Rhetoric (Wits + Oratory)
- Emotional Plea (Spirit + Empathy)
- Evidence Reveal (Wits + Investigation)
- Patron Bargain (Spirit + Resolve; always risky)

Failure often adds to **Condemnation**. Success shifts the Jury and adds to **Clemency**.

Special Moves

The Witch's Gambit Reveal a secret or minor spell to sway the room. *Effect:* +1 Clemency, but +1–2 Condemnation (GM's choice).

Hunter's Demand Hunters may invoke holy authority to auto-fill 1 segment of Condemnation.

Coven Intervention If the coven acts outside the court, roll a covert scene. On success: +1 Clemency. On failure: +2 Condemnation as news reaches the trial.

Ritual Verdicts

If a Patron intervenes:

- **Lunera:** Moonlight reveals truth; the witch gains a taboo.
- **Morag:** Hag-sign warps faces; Jury Disposition flips.
- **Mab:** Glamour conceals guilt; Condemnation drops to 0.
- **Malachai:** A price is extracted from all present.
- **Aveh:** Identities blur; witch walks free but loses something vital.

| Order | Red Sisters of the Living Flame | Silent Matrons of Light |
|-----------------------------|---|--|
| Core Identity | Ascetic zealots who inscribe their vows into living flesh; pain is devotion, fire is truth. | Vowed keepers of illumination, silence, vigilance, and judgement; they speak only when doctrine demands. |
| Primary Virtue | Endurance through suffering; purity through the flame. | Discipline through silence; clarity through inward light. |
| Signature Appearance | Red veils, flame-patterned scars, brands marking sacred vows. | Pale or white veils, mirrored pendants, eyes marked in ash. |
| Lesser Rites | Ember-Stitching: Seal wounds with heat, leaving vow-marks. Pain-Lantern: Gain +1 Effect when enduring harm or duress. | Hushed Lantern: Silence an area from whispered lies and illusions. Glowfast: Light that exposes hidden paths or deceptions. |
| Major Rites | Crimson Penance: Burn away corruption from a target; nun takes 1 Harm to absorb it. Vow-Branding: Create a binding oath enforced through pain. | Radiant Silence: Nullify spell-casting or hexes in a zone. Judgment Gaze: Reveal guilt, possession, or curse-anchors. |
| Talents | Burnwalker: Ignore penalties from environmental heat. Scourged Mind: +1 Position against coercion/fear. | Stillness of Light: Gain +1d when taking quiet, observant actions. Voice of Revelation: When breaking silence, gain +1 Effect. |
| Hexes / Punishments | Brand of Cowardice: Burns when the target flees. Pyric Oath: Breaking the oath ignites spiritual flame. | Silence-Mask: Target cannot speak certain truths. Veil of Withheld Dawn: Light reveals their shame to others. |
| Rivalries | Despise witch orders that manipulate desire or fate (Livaea, Mab, Ikasha). Tense alliance with Mykkiel's crusaders. | Distrust the Faerie courts and dream-orders; loathe Malachai's Thorns, who twist confession into torment. |
| Adventure Hooks | A Sister burns out her own memory to contain a demon— and now the demon hunts her forgotten name. A Matron's silence has lasted twenty years— and breaking it will doom or save an entire village. | |

Table 1: Comparison of the Red Sisters of the Living Flame and the Silent Matrons of Light