

EIDOLON SKY

A CAMPAIGN FRAME FOR SPIRE RPG

BY GRANT HOWITT & CHRISTOPHER TAYLOR

SPIRE
THE CITY MUST FALL

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The background of the page is a light blue surface with a network of dark, jagged cracks, resembling a cracked stone or ice. The cracks are most prominent at the top and bottom edges, with some branching out across the middle. The overall effect is one of tension and decay.

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to *Eidolon Sky*. Here you'll find the setup for a *Spire* campaign, which you can expect to play for between six and ten sessions. At the end of the document there are five pre-generated characters that come with story hooks to draw them into the adventure so you and your group can start playing right away; or if you'd like, you can play the campaign with characters of your own creation using the rules in the core book.

Unlike many pre-written adventures you might have read before, we haven't written a set series of events for the players to work through. *Spire* is an open-ended, character-led game by design, and we can't predict what your players will do. Instead, we've given you a setup featuring several factions, all of whom are connected – tangentially or directly – to a major new development in the city around which the game focuses. Your city of Spire will be different from ours – at least it will once the characters start changing things – so it's up to you to use as much or as little as you want.

To help you get started, though, we've suggested some jumping-off points for the story before each of the main three events that trigger the start of the adventure.

OVERVIEW

[Read, or paraphrase, the following section aloud to your players to bring them up to speed on events surrounding the campaign.]

There's trouble in the streets of New Heaven and the creaking shanties of Perch: addiction to a new drug known as dreck is hitting epidemic levels. Drow are being snatched from the streets and not returning. A serial killer who calls himself The Swan is vivisecting his prey and writing cryptic letters to the Torch, taunting the guard to catch him before he claims another victim. And last week, rumour has it, a demonic incursion tore apart a tower of silence and drove everyone nearby mad.

Enter the Ministry – sworn to protect the dark elves of Spire and take advantage of every possible

opportunity they can find. The players' cell is led into a conspiracy that goes far, far above their heads, and that could change the face of Spire forever.

[Stop reading aloud now!]

WHAT'S REALLY GOING ON?

Juasha Rime-Cracks-Beneath is dying. She has been dying for the last ten years, but only known it for the last two; she has a sickness of the blood which will take her life within months. For any other wealthy inhabitant of Spire, the physicians would be summoned and their passing would be made as painless as possible – she is too ill to survive the process of undying surgery.

But: Juasha is one of the greatest demonologists Spire has ever seen, taught by the legendary blood-witch Molly Duval, in addition to holding a well-respected role within the University of Divine Magic in the fields of applied aetherics and theoretical mathematics. She has a will of iron, vast resources, and a burning, almost frantic desire to *not die*. Normal demonology would be able to extend her life, perhaps indefinitely, but she does not want extended life. She wants to *not die*.

So she has made a bond with a demon known as the Fourth Sister, a wicked thief, through a specially-made eidolon – a tool which is used to summon and contain demonic energies – in the shape of paired silver rings linked by a section of chain. By creating further eidolons in sweat-shop laboratories in New Heaven and sacrificing them to the sister, she is strengthening her bond ever deeper.

(Demonology is one of the most illegal things you can do in Spire; quite aside from the moral failings of making deals with demons, the potential risk of incursion – the opening of a demonic rift – means that the authorities make a habit of publicly executing known demonologists when found. Of course, if you have enough money to bribe the authorities, or you are the authorities, then demonology becomes just another tool in your arsenal. The aelfir make extensive use of it in their wars with the gnolls, far away from Spire, where incursions can be covered up by

burning the twisted ruins and mind-blasted survivors to ash.)

Here is her plan: she intends to bind the rings and chain around her failing heart and become one with the demon, and therefore the most powerful individual in Spire (and, she reckons, immortal). She has the rites and rituals, stolen from ancient tombs in Nujab sacked by specially-hired mercenaries, none of whom survived with their sanity intact – all she needs now is power.

So she has stepped up production on lesser eidolons, turning out several by the day, funding her operations by selling sulphur – a powerful and exclusive narcotic made as a byproduct of demon summoning. (Dreck is simply a more affordable version of sulphur, cut with all manner of chemicals, making it easier to sell on a mass scale.)

She has recruited gnoll prisoners of war, experts in demon-summoning from their time in the armies of Nujab, to run her sweatshops and increase efficiency at the cost of a few bodies here and there. She has authorised the distribution of dreck to a wider market to increase her cashflow, because making idolons isn't cheap and neither is bribing the officials – and she's taking more risks when it comes to transporting materials, such as transporting them in the open or commandeering skywhales to deliver the goods. She has a pet serial killer: a two-bit actor and successful idol who calls himself The Swan. She's hooked him on pure sulphur, and he kills whoever she asks – mainly her enemies, but also the odd sacrifice for demonic magic.

She has retreated from public life, ostensibly to die in peace, taking a mansion in Ivory Row to serve as her base of operations. Her husband and son are clueless as to her obsession with demonology, but know that she is dying, and she cares for them a great deal.

Now, she is in a race against time – against being found out by the authorities, or the Ministry, but also against her own blood. She has weeks, maybe months, to live, and she is getting sloppy and desperate. She is making mistakes.

ADVENTURE SETUP

GM, you'll notice that each sample character comes with a hook in their description that should get them involved in the adventure. Each hook gives the player a little piece of information that connects to the wider mystery at play and a lead to explore. The first scene you should play out is one where the characters meet up somewhere secure (ask them where) and discuss what they know, having agreed to come together beforehand. From here, the players can share information and work out a plan to try and get to the bottom of the situation

Once the players work out their plan of attack, there's no defined structure to the adventure; Spire isn't the sort of game where you have maps and clearly-marked ranges, and we're not the sort of GMs who try to predict every single action the players might take. It'll make for a far better experience for both you and your players if, instead of trying to second-guess the actions of the characters, you stay flexible and react to what they do. The factions outlined are the power blocs at play – when the players do something, try to answer these questions to work out the next scene.

- 1. Who's going to try and stop the player characters, and how?*
- 2. What are they going to do if the player characters succeed at their aims?*
- 3. Who is going to view this as an opportunity and try to take advantage?*

THE STORY

We're not going to give you a series of linked scenes in chronological order, because games tend not to work that way in practice. Instead, here's a list of the three most important plot threads, what you should communicate to the players, and a trigger scene for each thread to get the players involved.

We've also included write-ups on non-player characters (or NPCs) who are involved in the story – use as many, or as few, of these as you like. In fact, just to make it clear: don't try to use all of them, because that will lead to confusion and slow the game down. Instead, pick three or four.

The players won't be able to take down Juasha head-on, so they'll need some allies – whether they're aware of the player characters' Ministry status or unwitting dupes – on their side.

After each NPC, we've written a short list of suggested scenes to spark your imagination. As with almost everything in this adventure, they're all optional – use them as inspiration, and as ever, listen to your players and put them in situations that you think they'll find interesting.

PLOT THREAD: DRECK

TRIGGER SCENE

HOLD-UP. The dreck epidemic is reaching critical levels in Perch and New Heaven, and the city guards (and the informal police forces operated by the Bound, the Carrion-priests and the Morticians) can't handle the stress. While the players are doing something unremarkable – chatting to a contact, buying supplies, staking out a target – the place they're in is robbed by a gang of three or four cackling dreck addicts packing knives, clubs and a single rusty-looking gun. Everyone inside will be asked to empty their pockets, too. Assuming everything goes off without a hitch (which it won't, if the players are involved) the robbers will high-tail it out of there with their

ill-gotten gains and disappear into the winding streets and crooked minarets.

To really underline the problem, have the robbers shoot someone in the gut (not a player, an NPC) and let them bleed out on the floor. Bonus points if it's someone the players know.

THE CHARACTERS INVESTIGATE DRECK

Dreck is painfully, horrendously addictive, and addicts will happily mug you for your spare change in order to get some more. One or two characters are cornered and accosted by knife-wielding dreck addicts who won't necessarily kill them but will try to cut them and nick their wallets.

Dreck makes you cruel. Kind of. It makes you find everything tremendously funny, and it gives you a sick sense of humour, so you'll often see a group of dreck users laughing at a crippled boy or an injured bird. Players might have to break up an unfair fight between a gang of addicts and a beggar on their turf, or lose face in their community.

Dreck is cut with something demonic. The players follow a gang of dreck addicts on a high, and they descend into the basements and tunnels of New Heaven where they're building a huge, rickety labyrinth out of found parts. Maybe they pursue the players through it, maybe not. A character with the Occult domain will recognise this as the beginnings of an eidolon – a device, item or structure that channels demonic energy.

Dreck is the dirty form of sulphur. Push far enough and you'll find that sulphur, a drug derived from demonic magic, is growing in popularity in the Silver Quarter. (It's a rich person's drug; you'd be lucky to find a single vial in New Heaven, outside of the Morticians' inner sanctums.) Dreck has a similar makeup but it's much less clean – analysis of a sample (either in a lab or through the

brain of an established drug user) will tell you that not only is it cut with other street drugs, such as malak and glimmer, it has multiple demonic resonances, all playing off each other to offer an unpredictable, brutal high.

There's a copycat killer or three on the streets.

Someone on a dreck high properly eviscerated a carrion-priest, hurled the internal organs off the side of the Spire, and left feathers by the body. You hear tell of others, too. They're not carried out with the precision of The Swan, but they're inspired by something similar. (Dreck vials are left at the scene of the crimes.)

It's being distributed by various low-level mooks, but it all goes back to a single Azurite distributor.

The Azurite (name of Bern) keeps himself at a distance from the street operations, so there's some guy flogging it on a street corner, and he's being supplied and sort-of protected by a gang of big lads from Perch, and they're getting it from behind a stall in Godsmarket in the Sky Docks, and they're getting it from the Azurite. He is surrounded by bodyguards and honestly you won't be the first people he's had killed this week, so don't go at this half-cocked.

The gnolls receive sulphur from Juasha, delivered via the Vermissian and other, less secret routes – while the labs are creating the vessels for demons, the summoning is all going on in her run-down mansion. It collects in the nooks and crannies of summoning circles as a translucent, glassy powder which is scraped off and sent down to the gnolls for refinement.

Some of the sulphur remains pure – an incredibly potent and dangerous substance – but the majority of it is cut with other drugs and padded out with neutral agents to create dreck, which is viciously addictive and cheaper to produce. The gnolls who run the eidolon labs oversee this, and more than one of them are hooked on dreck and/or sulphur themselves. The drugs are then passed on to Bern, who operates a network of dealers and middlemen, and makes a tidy profit from the whole thing.

DRECK ADDICTS

Names: Lukash, Clutch, Proke

Descriptors: Laughing so much they're crying; Badly beaten-up, bleeding from the nose; Grasping hold of one of the others and refusing to let go

Difficulty: 0

Resistance: 4

Equipment: Shoddy, jagged hand weapons (D3, brutal, unreliable) or a barely-working stolen revolver (D6, ranged, dangerous)

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOU TAKE DRECK?

There's an immediate, harsh high, a rush of visceral pleasure, that peaks about five minutes in and tails off over an hour or so. During this time, the user will feel compelled to act cruelly and unkindly, as the drug hot-wires the pleasure centres of the brain to reward unpleasantness. A player character on dreck should be presented with an opportunity to be cruel, and to make a Resist+Crime or Resist+Occult check to not act upon these impulses.

Repeated use leads to addiction and bizarre group-think acts, with the following fallout available for those who have sustained Blood or Mind fallout from taking the drug and resisting (or failing to resist) the drug's effects:

A GREAT WORK. [Dreck, Blood, Mind] Whilst high on dreck, and during the grinding comedown, you devote yourself to creating a large structure with other users – most typically a labyrinth under the streets of New Heaven. You don't really remember what you did whilst high, but you know it felt good.

PLOT THREAD: THE SWAN

The drow Callisto Brox was an uninspiring desang actor – an up-and-coming form of theatre involving real combat – when he discovered the lure of the occult. He became an idol, an artist-magician, specialising in mind control and glammers – but he still couldn't act worth a damn. After murdering several of his detractors and critics over a period of months, he uncovered his true calling – a serial killer, displaying the bodies of his victims in gruesome and thought-provoking positions. Given the nature of aelfir art, his "exhibits" began to garner rave reviews in artistic publications.

Ferida approached him at a party around a year ago and introduced him to sulphur; it was everything he'd been missing, and propelled his art to a new level. Word on the street was that aelfir ladies of a certain age were secretly hoping they'd be killed by the

Swan – the name he went by – and thus go down in history. Spurred on by his success, he began taunting his victims – and the police – by sending in cryptic messages to the Torch, announcing his intentions in strange, beautifully-written code.

Now, Brox is on retainer to Juasha, and she fires him off at anyone who threatens to undermine her ascension. He’s got a lot of work ahead of him.

TRIGGER SCENE

YOUR MAGISTER IS DEAD AT THE HAND OF THE SWAN. The player characters are summoned to a meeting with their magister – the operative in the Ministry who manages their cell, amongst others – or, looking for answers and support, they arrange a meeting themselves. It doesn’t go well.

Their magister – a tall, sallow-faced drow who’s got a day job with the Morticians – is dead at the hands of the Swan. The players find him strung up in their regular meeting place (an basement underneath an derelict tower of silence somewhere on the border between Mortician and Charnelite territory) with his heart plucked out and beautifully-made glass feathers pushed into the skin of his face and neck.

The magister, it turns out, incurred the wrath of Juasha – or, more likely, the wrath of her assistant Ferida. (You can assume that the player characters aren’t the only cell of ministers he’s despatched to deal with this problem.) Like everyone else who’s tried to interfere with Juasha’s work, your magister has been tracked down and killed by the Swan; maybe they got sloppy, or maybe another cell lead him here. The Ministry is just another problem to deal with on her path to immortality, and she’s not above scaring them off or slowing their progress.

Regardless, what that means is: the players are without immediate support. And they probably have to hide the body, too.

THE CHARACTERS INVESTIGATE THE SWAN

The Swan is an assassin. He hints at his next target, and the reasons for the murders, in cryptic letters and diagrams delivered to papers – in a box with a glass feather. Pushing at this lead shows the characters that the editor of the Torch is one of The Swan’s acolytes, and worships the ground he walks on.

The Swan steals hearts. Literally – he plucks them out of the chests of his victims, presumably while they’re still alive. (To keep them alive up to this

point suggests a level of restraint and mastery rare in serial murderers.) They’re never found at the scene of the crimes, or nearby, so it can be assumed that he’s keeping them somewhere. (The hearts are being frozen in Amaranth, using the same process utilized to keep the district unnaturally cool.)

The Swan is an actor. He makes a surprising amount of references to great plays and operas in his letters. Also, in addition to the high-priority targets, he’s been killing theatre critics who gave his plays a bad review; these aren’t as recent, or as measured, as his work as The Swan. (You can look up crime records in the Necropolis’ Library of Snuffed Candles, or failing that, leaf through the back catalogues of specialist theatrical publications.)

The Swan is an artist. His kills, and his letters, are devoted to a twisted ideal of beauty – they’re inefficient, ritualistic, and needlessly creative. Where many serial killers would do things in precisely the same way each time, he elaborates around a theme and seems to be attempting to improve his art.

The Swan is using Mortician supplies. He uses a rib-spreader to crack open his victims, and leaves it in place. These are used in undying surgery and almost nowhere else, so he must have a contact. (He does: Thean, a diminutive Mortician, is part of his following, and has been stealing supplies for months.)

The Swan is a sulphur addict. Nobody saw the murders, but anyone nearby heard a rolling, baritone cackle. Also, syringes (big metal ones with curly handles) have been found at the scenes, and puncture wounds in the victim’s arms/thighs/necks, as though they’ve taken it as well. So far none of the victims match the profile of sulphur addicts – especially your magister, who was almost boringly straight-laced.

The Swan is an idol, and a powerful one at that. The first time The Swan realises he has been rumbled have whoever is taking the lead in the scene immediately make a Resist+Occult check to represent his lashing out with Spite.

The Swan has a cult around him that covers up his crimes. Favoured members get to watch, or are given mementos. The first time a character tries to use official channels to get information on The Swan, they’ll get shut down surprisingly quickly (and possibly investigated/set upon by the rest of the cult); investigating the person who shut you down will lead to a small shrine hidden under their bed or at the back of their wardrobe, devoted to the Swan and/or Callisto Brox.

The Swan is receiving orders from elsewhere.

His assignments are delivered to him by one of four intermediaries from different messenger guilds or postal services; when questioned, all of them seem magically bound not to be able to read, understand or conceive of the message they're sending, just that they need to send it. These orders also come with his payment: a packet of top-draw uncut sulphur, probably strong enough to kill anyone else. These messengers are in the employ of Juasha, which is hard to uncover, but they'll venture to see her in Ivory Row when called and walk out with a glassy look on their eyes.

CONFRONTING THE SWAN

Catching the Swan in the act is tricky, given his aptitude, but not impossible. It's far more exciting to infiltrate his lair – a petal-strewn, silk-curtained penthouse atop one of the more expensive hotels in the Silver Quarter. Here, the walls are decorated with his art (he reckons he can paint, and he's not entirely wrong) and the magically-frozen hearts of those that he's killed. There's a decent chance that one or more of his lovers, devotees, staff and hangers-on are with him, too – he doesn't like to be alone, except when he's working.

The Swan is an egotist and narcissist, and if defeated will take great pleasure in spilling the beans on his plans and his employer, as well as droning on endlessly about the artistic merit of the killings and how he's miles ahead of everyone on the scene.

THE SWAN

Description: A painfully beautiful young drow who's undergone various aelfir beautification surgeries, leaving him looking faintly unreal

Difficulty: 1 (he's too-fast and vicious)

Resistance: 9, 12 if he's on a sulphur high

Equipment: A perfect, thin-bladed boning knife (D8, piercing); idol magics (D6, ranged, devastating)

Special: Due to his idol powers, the first time you see The Swan, make a Resist+Occult check or mark D6 stress to Mind

FOLLOWER

Names: Sebastien, Lorelei, Iofeska

Description: Clearly caught mid-coitus; Sulphur-addled; Covered in oil paints

Difficulty: 0

Resistance: 3

Equipment: A hidden skylark pistol (D3, double-barrelled, ranged, concealable); an impossibly expensive thrown vase (D3, ranged, one-shot); a knife clutched in shaking hands (D3)

PLOT THREAD: THE EIDOLON LABS

All over New Heaven, unsafe and grimy labs are turning out eidolons – demon-machines – for Juasha then sending them back to her so she can sacrifice the energy from them to her patron demon. It's only a matter of time before one of them explodes...

TRIGGER SCENE

INCURSION. About two streets away from where the players are currently standing, one of the occult labs goes up in a demonic incursion. By the time they reach it, it's over (thankfully), but the aftermath is horrendous: stone has melted and run like wax, people have torn out their eyes or thrown themselves from tall buildings, glass turns to gas, and the remnants of greasy black tentacles are dissolving into muddy sludge on the floor.

Something triggered an incursion, and those aren't usually the sort of things that happen by accident – someone's playing fast and loose with demonology. Picking through the wreckage, the players discover that this was some kind of occult laboratory, and the scale of the thing (as well as the previous incursion) implies that there are more elsewhere in New Heaven.

Following dreck dealers can lead players to these labs, as the dealers collect supplies to sell on the streets – alternatively, anyone watching the strange materials being carried through the district can track them down with a little investigation and stealth.

THE CHARACTERS INVESTIGATE THE OCCULT LABS

There are five or so of these operations around New Heaven in basements, abandoned Towers of Silence, property let from uncaring landlords, etc. They all feature heavy security (they're well-hidden, locked away behind serious-looking steel doors and padlocks, and guarded by bored-looking jaeger mercs in unconvincing civilian dress). Inside they look like a cross between a silversmith and a drug laboratory,

with badly-protected drow in face-masks manipulating dangerous chemicals and magically-charged materials. A fight in one of these places can unleash waves of noxious gas and black magic; in addition to battling the guards, players will have to make Resist+Occult or Resist+Crime checks to avoid being overwhelmed by the fumes and loose arcana.

Knocking over one of the labs will incur the wrath of those higher up the chain; once they start making waves, the players will have to deal with hiding from angry gnoll gangsters, professional jaeger mercs and the Swan himself. Consider any Shadow stress they accrue to reflect this as well as the standard measure of how much trouble they are in with the authorities.

They are making eidolons. Eidolons are physical vessels for demonic energy (see *Black Magic* for more details) and they can take almost any form. Eidolons are either old and half-broken or new and badly-made, and these fall into the second camp – the workers are doing their best but the knack of making stable vessels has all but been lost from the world.

The operation is run by gnolls. Gnolls – hyena-folk from the south who aren't allowed to set foot in Spire on pain of death – seem to be running the labs. It looks like someone's relying on their knowledge of practical demonology to manufacture the supplies they need. There are around six gnolls total, all of them prisoners of war (so they know how to fight, and have no qualms about doing so) led by a rangy, scarred genius called Graylor. The gnolls can't operate in the open, so they utilise back-alleys, tunnels and heavy cloaks to mask their presence whenever they're outside of the labs – it's not out of the question to have the players notice a gnoll in New Heaven and tail them back to the lab, or for them to get cornered and mauled to bits by one of them in the attempt.

No actual demonology aside from eidolon creation. There aren't any mages here, and no signs of the traditional trappings that surround the secretive demonologist organisations that are normally found in Spire. (Anyone with the Occult domain will be able to recognise this.) Shoddy eidolons are being shipped by the crate-load up the ladder from rough-and-ready basement operations to more professional laboratories. Most of the eidolons they build don't work – there's a luck element to it – and it seems that whoever's funding this is going for quantity, not quality.

This is valuable stuff. Someone is putting a lot of money, time and effort into this – illegally importing resonance stones from Nujab, the eyes of drow sorcerers plucked from their heads in strife-wracked Ys, a magically-frozen heart, brass sculptures of dizzily fine make, glass orbs that remain warm to the touch, golden jewelry, and so on. Selling most of it might be difficult without a good fence, but there's enough here to buy almost anything.

There's pure sulphur here. Sulphur is a drug derived from demonic magic, a byproduct of the summoning rituals, and it's tremendously rare given its origin. It seems like it's being shipped in from somewhere (and created here, to a lesser extent). In the smaller labs, there's no more than a handful of the stuff – not enough to justify the dreck epidemic that's sweeping the upper Spire. In larger labs, where they're feeding demons to other demons, there's a huge amount of the stuff.

They're capturing drow. Eidolon manufacture is dangerous work, and whoever's running it doesn't want to put their own neck on the line. They've captured luckless drow, primarily from Perch, where their quick hands are famed for making ropes and tying knots – transferrable skills for the fine manipulation required. Most of them are hooked on dreck in some way, primarily as a means to keep them pliable and stop them escaping.

They've commandeered a skywhale. The players receive news: jaeger mercs have taken control of a skywhale and are bypassing the Sky Docks and delivering supplies directly to New Heaven. This is the last major delivery of supplies from overseas (mainly psychoactive metals reclaimed from raids on gnoll machine camps and special glands harvested from the nightmare creatures that stalk the shadows of Whitecross) and they can't afford for it to go wrong. The skywhale is coming around via Perch and hovering over New Heaven while the cargo is unloaded, and it's going to be heavily guarded the whole time. (Assuming this goes off without a hitch, Juasha's plan enters its final stages a week or two afterwards.)

The labs are receiving supplies from, and sending eidolons to, Ivory Row. This only happens at the top level; everything else is filtered through them. Juasha, an academic, is behind the manufacture and reinforcement of the eidolons, for her own dark purposes.

GNOLLS

Names: Kresh, Bhrakik, Thorn, Alack, Vyck

Description: Hounding you on all fours; Wearing improvised armour; Weilding an eidolon

Difficulty: 1 (they're all ex-military)

Resistance: 6

Equipment: Leather apron and patchy chainmail (Armour 2), Welding torches (D3, brutal) or heavy work tools (D6, unreliable)

JAEGER GUARDS

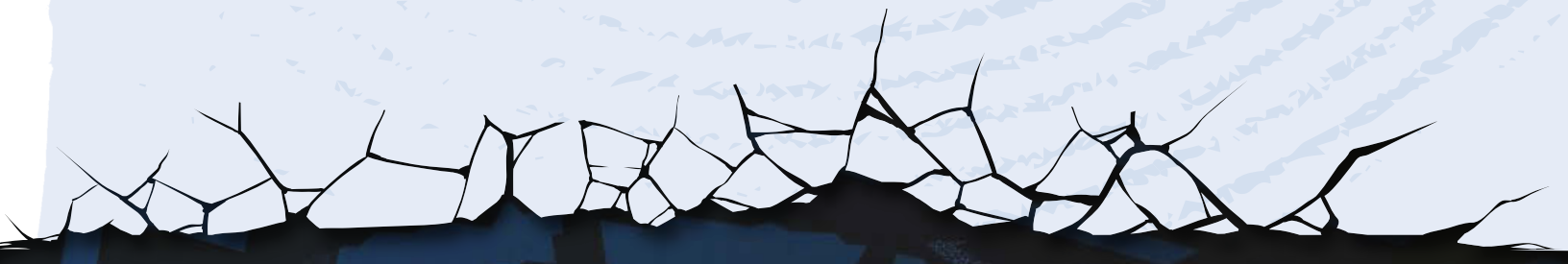
Names: Gregori, Hekant, Kostolos

Description: Picking their teeth with a combat knife; Wearing armour from three different regiments; Bearing wildly-coloured and styled hair

Difficulty: 1 (they know what they're doing)

Resistance: 6

Equipment: Military-grade armour (Armour 3), Legrand carbine (D6, accurate, ranged) or carog-pattern shotgun (D6, point-blank, reload), trench-knives (D3)



OTHER NPCs

THE CRIME LORD - ANASTASIA GRIS

Why is she involved? Anastasia is what amounts to the head of the organised crime syndicate that hustles around the streets of New Heaven and the shanties of Perch and tries to steer clear of the Morticians, the Charnelites, the Bound and the city guard while selling dagger (a grimy stimulant) and malak (a highly-illegal and cheaply-made depressant) to the lower ends of society. The new surge of popularity in dreck use has been taking her customers.

What sets her apart from the rest of the gangsters in Spire? She's seventy and she's been doing this for too godsdamn long. Her sons do what they can, acting as lieutenants, but they're a pair of idiots and she has to take things into her own hands more often than she'd like. Any character with the Low Society domain who's spent time in Perch or New Heaven will recognise her name, if not necessarily her face.

What does she desire? To get the hell out of Spire, and back to the Home Nations, where her parents emigrated from back when she was a kid. She's got a rose-tinted view of the place, unrelated to the fact that it's a country-sized tunnel war.

What does she despise? Guns. Loathes them; back in her day, guns were something that soldiers used on gnolls and if you wanted someone dead you had to shove a bit of metal in their guts or stove their head in with your own hands. Guns are dishonourable, cowardly, dangerous and loud; Anastasia has a habit of breaking, or cutting off, the trigger fingers of people who displease her.

Fallout: BROKEN TRIGGER FINGER. [Blood]
You cannot use firearms, crossbows or any device that uses a trigger while suffering from this fallout.

SUGGESTED SCENES

- Anastasia's sons, Peytor and Yosev, lift the players in "for a little chat" when they are

seen checking out dealers in the area. They are offered a deal they cannot refuse: help stop the dreck epidemic, and Anastasia will owe them a considerable favour.

- Dreck dealers are found drowned in cisterns, nailed to doorways or hanging from their legs off the side of the city, their blood spattering down on the buildings below. These killings don't have the finesse of the serial killer's work, and all of them are linked by trade – and all of them are missing the index fingers on both hands.
- Threatened by the impact of dreck, Anastasia orders her men to distribute her supplies of malak and dagger at a lower price, but cut with huge amounts of inferior chemicals. This only makes things worse.
- Anastasia and her sons attempt to strongarm their way into the dreck market by intimidating low-level dealers into working for her instead of their current masters. This goes pretty well, for a while, until Juasha gets wind of it and despatches the Swan to kill them: all three of them, in one sitting, in an unusually poignant and touching triptych that reviews pretty well in several aelfir art scene digests.

THE GUARD CAPTAIN - EMMETT VENRIDE

Why was he chosen to serve here? To stop the dreck epidemic.

What sets him apart from the other guards? He's an ex-drug addict, and something of an expert on narcotics. He used to work for Sister Victoria down in Threadneedle Square, but got drafted to the city guard as part of his durance and ended up really taking to it. He's trying to do his level best, mainly because the overseers and landowners in New Heaven have been complaining that the place is going to the dogs.

What does he desire? Malak – he's an ex-user, but he still craves it. His will is strong but the dreck epi-

demic, coupled with the pressure from his paymasters, is putting undue stress on him, and it's only a matter of time before he does something foolish.

What does he despise? Vigilantes. He hates people taking the law into their own hands, because laws are there for a reason and people get hurt, or killed, that don't deserve it.

SUGGESTED SCENES

- Emmett begins investigating the players after seeing they're involved with dreck; they're into something much more dangerous, of course, but he doesn't know that yet.
- Emmett succumbs to his habits when he finds pure sulphur, and goes... cruel. This could be an excellent opportunity to discredit him or save him from himself, depending on what the players think of him.
- Sister Victoria, the grim accountant and chief legbreaker of Threadneedle Square, pays Emmett a visit to ask for a favour – she wants dreck off the streets, too. Or at the very least under her control. She's not above drugging him to get what she wants.
- Following a surge in murders and disappearances in Perch, Emmett (wrongly) starts a turf war with the Bound, looking to establish the rule of law in the shanty town. It goes about as well as you'd expect and he's dead within a week, unless the players intervene.
- Emmett follows the money back to the Ivory Row, and figures out that the sulphur – and by extension, the dreck – is coming from there. He's just about to marshall a task force when The Swan turns up and kills him, plucking his heart out to keep with the others. Players searching the scene will find his notes, making him an excellent way to drop information into the narrative.

THE SOLAR GUARD CAPTAIN - MOURN-THE-TWO-HUNDRED

Captain Mourn-the-Two-Hundred, a drow serving in the upper echelons of the Solar Paladins (a rarity) has been despatched to New Heaven to investigate the demonic incursion and stop another one occurring. They have a vast array of resources at their disposal (paladin hit squads, banks of records to search through, sun priests on demand) but are finding it hard to make much leeway.

Why were they chosen to serve? They are unusually open-minded, and provide unusual but effective solutions to problems. Given the strong religious factions already present in New Heaven, the Archbishop in charge of the investigation opted for a more subtle approach.

What sets them apart from the rest of their faction? They are a mask-wearing drow who's gone full aelfir; their mask has heraldry of the Solar Basilica on it. It's almost unheard-of for a drow to reach this station in the Paladins, but Mourn's faith is absolute. They're held up as a success story for drow-aelfir relations by the Torch.

What, or who, do they desire? Respect from the aelfir, and also from the drow. They want to see the drow take up the Solar faith seriously, and unite the races in glorious worship.

What, or who, do they despise? Sorcery, the occult, black magic, witchery, etc. It's ungodly and dangerous and it kills people, so Mourn makes a habit of rendering casters incapable of practicing magic – they smash hands to pieces, sever tongues, and lobotomise seers. Don't hate the sinner, hate the sin. Their staff is made up mostly of aelfir and drow who've been through the process and are utterly broken, or have found faith in the light of the Solar Gods.

SUGGESTED SCENES

- Mourn shows up to go over a crime scene while the players are there, or is set up and investigating already when they show up. They've got a lot of useful supplies, so they'd be an incredible ally, if only it weren't for the fact that they're a paladin and sworn to destroy the Ministry.
- Mourn uncovers a demonological lab (and a gnoll or two!) and gathers everyone around for a public show trial and round of executions.
- Mourn turns up on the player characters' doorstep, flanked by mute, masked attendants, asking a few questions about why they've been poking around the area and looking into demonology.
- Flat out of ideas and receiving pressure from their superiors, Mourn seeks to ally with the ministers in a desperate search for answers. They probably won't betray the players, and it's more interesting if they don't and instead stick around as an asset for future stories.
- Mourn is killed, and in a tremendously messy fashion, by The Swan. It's probably best to do this after the players have already met them, and especially if they were building a useful

relationship together – or if Mourn was on their case, and about to come crashing down on their operation.

- If the players kill or drive off Mourn – unlikely, but stranger things have happened – they receive a pack of high-grade sulphur and a thank-you note from a mysterious benefactor.

THE BLOOD-WITCH - MAGRITTE “MOLLY” DUVAL

Why is she involved? Molly is a drow, but one from a moneyed family. Due to an excellent breadth of occult knowledge and willingness to teach an aelfir blood magic and demonology, Juasha sought out Molly as a teacher in the demonic arts.

What sets her apart from other blood-witches? She used to be part of high society, and was due to be wed to a high-ranking noble of House Quinn with a considerable domain in benighted Ys; but her true nature as a blood-witch was revealed, and she was cast out of her social circles (and her family scarred by her impropriety). Her lair in Perch is a mockery of finery, and is shored up with her magicks to make it look respectable – but it flickers like malfunctioning magelights, and the tablecloth stutters into torn hessian, the meat becomes rotten, and her fine makeup twists into a caked-on, pallid mask of powder.

What does she desire? To get revenge on Juasha after she betrayed her and outed her as a blood-witch to the rest of high society – the stress of which triggered a full transformation into her heartsblood form at a function, damning her to a life of exile and leaving several dead in her wake.

What does she despise? She hates Perch, and the situation she has found herself in. She hates not being a part of high society and misses all the gossip, the haute couture and the affairs. She has a wide variety of familiars that she dresses up in inadvisable costumes and talks to as though they were her dinner guests.

SUGGESTED SCENES

- A one-eyed cat keeps following the players, darting away whenever they notice it. As play progresses, they notice a wide variety of one-eyed animals watching them from windows and rooftops – these are Molly’s familiars, and they’re reporting back to her. (Bonus points if you can get one of the players to “adopt” one of her familiars, too.)

- With the disappearances, the serial killer and the dreck epidemic, Perch is spiralling into a chaos that the Bound cannot control. As people cast around for a scapegoat, their ire is focused on Molly. She approaches the players after scrying their pasts and seeing that they are part of the Ministry, asking to help them clear her name.
- Some dirt on Juasha is conveniently dropped into the players’ lap when they have started making waves in their investigation, signed with a bloody thumbprint.
- As the players near the end of their investigation, Molly invites them in for tea – a horrendous affair, once her glammers start to falter. She’s convinced that any number of people are behind her fall from grace, but chief amongst them is Juasha, and she aches for revenge.

THE GNOLL - GRAYLER

Why was he chosen to serve? Grayler is a highly accomplished military engineer and demonic binder for the gnoll army captured during skirmishes in Nujab. Unable to escape, he is forced into service by Juasha.

What sets him apart from the other gnolls? He enjoys his job. He resents being imprisoned but he takes great pleasure in a) building demonic devices, even if this isn’t what he’s used to, and b) hurting people. The other gnolls aren’t into it, and he’s had to smash down a rebellion once or twice over the last months. (By doing what the aelfir want, he gets what he wants, so he’s toeing the line – at least in the short term.)

What does he desire? To get back to Nujab and see his family again (although whether they’re still alive is anyone’s guess) ideally with armfuls of moody demonic tech. He can’t get out on his own, though, and doesn’t know how he’s going to do it.

What does he despise? Idiots: people who aren’t fully aware of the world around them, who don’t make the most of themselves. Grayler sees it as a waste and it lowers them in his eyes.

SUGGESTED SCENES

- Grayler takes it upon himself to supervise a materials delivery after he hears that the jaeger mercs have been siphoning supplies off the top. (Several of them are clearly hooked on sulphur, which makes the whole situation a tinderbox.)
- A smashed-up gnoll corpse is found in New Heaven as Grayler lets out some pent-up rage on a subordinate and chucks them into the

street. It's all over the papers, many of whom try to tie the dreck epidemic to the "terrorist gnolls", and the city guard start searching door-to-door and arresting anyone they can get their hands on.

- Upon discovering some strange demonic-looking technology, the players' contacts can't help – but they know someone who can. After being led through several rings of security, they meet Grayler, who's making some money on the side as an occult expert and fence.

THE MORTICIAN - FATHER KALIS

The Morticians, a bombastic sect of death priests who operate in the crumbling towers of New Heaven, have a responsibility to protect their domain from those who would do it harm. With the recent drug epidemic and rumours of demonic incursion, they have tasked Father Kalis – an unusually good-humoured agent – to dig into the situation. (In addition, they've uncovered subjects, most of them dead, with demonic eidolons stuffed into their chest cavities in what looks to be an adaptation of the Morticians' own undying surgery. They're keen to suppress or steal any information the implanting has uncovered.)

Why was he chosen to serve? He's a burned-out demonologist – in that he literally had the ability to summon demons scoured out of him after a ritual went awry – so he's got all the knowledge but no way of using it without a proxy or a cult around him. The Morticians found some gruesome experiments where organs were replaced with demon eidolons and sent him to investigate; they're always looking to further their arts, and consider themselves above the law.

What sets him apart? He's unusually good-humoured for a Mortician, and spends a lot of time in the bars and saloons of New Heaven (despite the warnings of his superiors). Occasionally he'll go incognito and go get riotous drunk, but he's doing his best to keep things under control.

What does he desire? He wants to get to the bottom of what's happening in New Heaven, and honestly, he wants all the knowledge on life-after-death demonology for the Morticians, which would probably allow them to take Spire or fight a war or both.

What does he despise? Occult casters, because he can't cast spells any more, and he misses the way it tastes. His hedonism is a way to try and reconnect with the sensation.

SUGGESTED SCENES

- Father Kalis is on the hunt for an escaped subject who broke out of one of the drug labs after being implanted with a demonic eidolon in place of their heart. They're on the run from their captors and Kalis, and they haven't a clue what's going on. (Perhaps they try to hide themselves with the players, too.)
- Kalis tracks down and knocks the tar out of a handful of low-level dreck dealers, looking for information. He's pretty competent in a fight, by the looks of things, and a valuable ally – and he's open to cutting a deal.
- Kalis spends a lot of time in bars, so if the characters do too, a cheery (and slightly drunk) Mortician will show up as strange. He's gathering information as best he can, and this is his turf, so he doesn't have to be too secretive about it. Players can probably learn something useful by eavesdropping.
- Kalis puts two and two together, uncovering the identity of The Swan thanks to his use of Mortician supplies, and tries to hunt him down to ask him some questions – which brings him up against the players.
- Kalis winds up dead at the hands of The Swan after he makes too much progress on the investigation for Juasha and/or Ferida to be comfortable with him continuing it. This murder seems more personal than artful when compared to the others – Kalis puts up a fight, and rather than having his heart plucked out and glass feathers pushed into his face, he gets his head smashed to bits against the corner of a table, and a single glass feather is stuffed into his mouth.

THE LIEUTENANT - FERIDA STARYS

Why was she chosen to serve? Ferida was a student of Juasha's during her stint as a professor of theoretical mathematics in the University of Divine Magic, and she developed a slavish devotion to her teacher over the years of tuition. She regards Juasha as a genius, and will do most anything to serve her – she serves as a lieutenant and agent for Juasha, overseeing her rise to demonhood, and handles much of the day-to-day business of ritual occultism. Although she is a drow, she wears ceremonial masks due to extensive contact with the aelfir.

What sets her apart? She is foremost amongst Juasha's assistants, of which only a handful remain – the others have met mysterious accidents right about the time that Ferida felt that they were growing too close to her mistress.

What does she desire? Juasha; she adores her, and is fiercely jealous of her husband – who might well meet a similar fate to her previous assistants, given time.

What does she despise? Drugs; she's overseeing a massive drug production operation, but only out of love to Juasha. She's riddled with doubts over the enterprise after seeing so many of her kin debase themselves on her supply.

leaning hard on the market, and she has more resources than them – and she doesn't need a bottom-tier occultist spreading rumours about her.

- In the Sky Docks, Ferida is overseeing a skywhale delivery guarded by jaegers. She turns up, looks through a couple of crates, plucks out a single item – a multifaceted spyglass of some kind – and waves the mercenaries on to deliver the rest of the supplies to the eidolon labs.

SUGGESTED SCENES

- When one of the player characters gets in trouble with the law, Ferida steps in to make them an offer they can't refuse: to free them, in exchange for joining her organisation. She's not aware that they're a minister – at least, not yet. If she gets suspicious, she'll use them as an asset to start spreading false information about Juasha's business.
- The player characters, investigating the spread of dreck and sulphur across New Heaven, spot a masked, wealthy-looking drow in conservative dress talking to some street dealer. It's Ferida, tackling a problem in the distribution network – maybe she gets what she wants; maybe her squad of enforcers beat the tar out of the guy and leave him in the gutter.
- One of the player characters picks up the following Shadow fallout – after acting without proper restraint, they wake up one morning to find a bag of high-grade sulphur in their quarters and squad of city guard banging the door down after being tipped off. They've been set up by Ferida, who noticed them edging closer to her operations.
- When attempting to learn more about demonology, or to buy demonological artefacts, the players find their contacts suspiciously quiet, entirely out of stock, or disappeared. Ferida is



ENDING THE STORY

If the players don't do anything to stop her, Juasha will acquire enough demonic power to undergo a stable heart transplant, replacing it with the eidolon of the Fourth Sister. According to her sources, she will then ascend to a godlike status and rule Spire – but demons are liars, and she has been fooled. What will actually happen is that the Fourth Sister will trigger an incursion on a scale completely unheard of, transporting the upper half of Spire to whatever nightmare dimension she dwells in, making it hers. (Or: destroying it utterly. Demons don't make a lot of sense.)

But, hopefully, the players will do something. We can't predict exactly what they'll do, because by the time you've spent ten or so sessions digging through the dregs of New Heaven and Perch in search of answers, the story will be your own. However, here are some things we think they'll need to have a chance of stopping her.

KNOWLEDGE

The players need to know who's doing this, why, and how – that's the main thrust of the campaign, after all. Juasha will spread misinformation about her activities as best she can, but she's grown desperate with her imminent death, and has started to make mistakes.

LEVERAGE

Juasha has a son, and a husband, who she loves dearly. (The son more so than the husband; she rigged her spouse with a demonic summoning circle without his knowledge as part of one of her many back-up plans.) She's not entirely cold-blooded, and the love she has for her family can be used against her.

Her son, Gabriel, is 15 years of age and is training to be a ballet dancer, then hoping to be accepted into the skalds before continuing on to become a warrior-poet in the army. Her husband, Lucien, runs an import-export business in the Sky Docks – although he's clueless as to her doing so, this cover has provided Juasha with means to smuggle huge quantities of

rare occult materials into the city under the noses of the authorities.

She is also responsible for Ferida Starys, her intensely loyal drow assistant, who conducts a lot of business on Juasha's behalf. While she certainly doesn't love Ferida, she's grown reliant on her assistance.

POWER

Juasha doesn't have an army under her control, but she's still a force to be reckoned with – aside from the multiple units of disposable jaeger mercenaries, the imprisoned gnoll soldiers and a collection of low-ranking drug-dealers and enforcers, she's one of the strongest and most capable demonologists that Spire has ever seen, and she is not afraid to use her power. Players attempting to take her down head-on will need considerable support and supplies, as well as some means of protecting themselves from demonic attack (whether that's religious warding, which doesn't work, or a handful of rubes to draw her attention, which does, is up to them).

SABOTAGE

The players can sap Juasha's resources and ability by attacking her eidolon labs and stopping the flow of sulphur, and therefore dreck, into the upper levels of Spire. She's gaining money and power from both of these things – hamstringing her drug trade, especially, could leave her unable to pay her mercenaries or purchase supplies, leaving her under-armed and under-protected.

SUPPORT

There are no end of factions that might be interested in taking down Juasha for good, and we've put several of them in this campaign in the NPCs chapter. The city guard, the Morticians, the Solar Guard, the blood-witch Molly Duval and even the lowlife gangsters of New Heaven could all be persuaded to help

– even if they don't know a) what they're doing or b) who they're doing it for. Going at Juasha full-tilt with an unsupported Ministry cell is a recipe for disaster.

CONFRONTING JUASHA

Juasha is, by the time the players reach her, relatively unwell. Her body is riddled with disease, and the demonic energies she has summoned have taken their toll on her mind – she has been carved down sharp to a single purpose. She can just about run, but slowly, and she is all but incapable of defending herself physically.

However: she is a demonologist par excellence, and will not hesitate to murder anyone who comes at her. Consider her attacks to inflict D8 stress and carry the Devastating tag; her bond with the Fourth Sister allows her to pluck blood and organs from attackers with but a glance.

THE FOURTH SISTER

Whether demons have personalities, or whether those personalities are bestowed upon them by their summoners, is a matter of hot debate. Regardless, the demonic entity known as the Fourth Sister has made a bond with Juasha, and she has been feeding her “lesser” demons for several months to strengthen that bond. The following text is taken from the *Black Magic* sourcebook, which goes into great detail on the subject of demons:

Legends speak of three sisters – a spinner, a weaver, a cutter – and they crop up throughout the old stories of the world. The drow position them in the night sky far above; the aelfir speak of them in hushed tones, as they are the old gods of the north-lands, and must not be worshipped; and so on, and so forth. This is the fourth sister – a thief, a scoundrel, powered by jealousy and pain and fear, spurned by myth and turned rotten like spoiled milk.

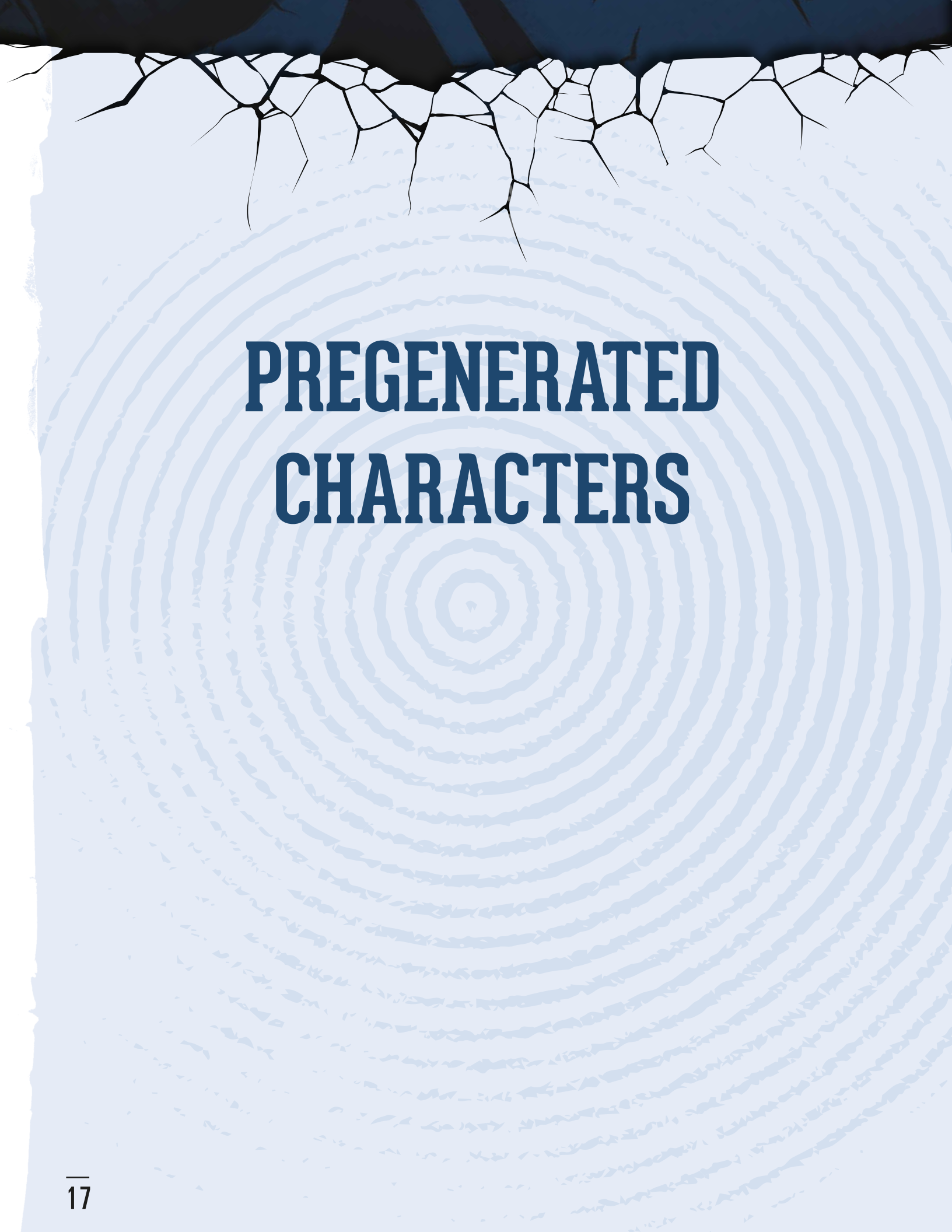
She can steal anything, from anywhere, and bring it to the caster: a ring, a heart, a crown, a sword, a last breath. Her eidolon is a pair of fine rings, linked together with silver chains; when worn, she manifests between them as a spectre, and the caster can feel her ghostly breath on their cheek. Her bond is a curse, though, as is that of all demons; she steals things from the caster, or brings them treats unasked that lead them into danger.

Juasha is currently hiding out in Ivory Row, hiring a number of adjoining buildings under fake names or shell companies. She is unwilling to leave the district due to her failing health and (accurate) paranoia, and has hunkered down in a crumbling mansion on the northern side of the district owned by Lady Theryn Thorns-on-Silk.

When confronted, Juasha will attempt to survive. If this means attacking the players, fine; more likely, though, she will flee direct confrontation, disappearing into the maze of mouldering corridors that surround her inner sanctum. Her demonic powers will come into play here, too; she will steal floorboards or entire sections of corridor from behind her, leaving pursuers unable to follow, or walk through a door and then erase it from existence, replacing it with bare wall.

Her final trick, and one she does not wish to enact, is to trigger a full-scale demonic incursion; she can do so through her own eidolon, but this will kill her, which would defeat the purpose of all her work so far. Instead, tearfully, she will despatch her husband on an errand, and use him as a conduit to trigger the spell. But: this is a last-ditch effort, and she will try anything else first.

To make one thing clear, though: her plan will not work. She will not ascend. She will die before the campaign is out, whether at the hands of the players, or one of her many enemies, or from the blood disease that is ravaging her body, or from botching the first ever demonic binding ritual in Spire on a catastrophic level.



PREGENERATED CHARACTERS

ALLIKAT, THE AZURITE

You are an Azurite – a trader-priest who worships Azur, the god of gold. Kicked out of the Blue Markets after your partners turned on you, you have set up shop in the Sky Docks selling a wide variety of religious artefacts, both legitimate and fake, to pilgrims who arrive on the backs of sky-whales. You have noticed, of late, an increase in the number of burnouts traipsing through the market, looking for alms – there’s a new drug, called dreck, that’s spreading through the upper city like an epidemic.

RESISTANCES: Silver +2, Reputation +2

REFRESH: Carry out a deal that benefits you more than it does the other party

SKILLS: Compel, Deceive

DOMAINS: Commerce (Commerce Knack – Religious Artefacts), Low Society, Religion, Technology

DURANCE: Human Emissary (Provides Technology and Commerce skills)

BONDS

- Yvette, a hard-nosed glimmer dealer with a sideline in malak, the mistress of the slightly dodgy deal. [Individual]
- You have a bond with one of the other PCs who you helped out of debt. Say who, and why they got into debt in the first place.

EQUIPMENT

- Buckler of Azur (Armour 1)
- Serious-looking club (D3, Brutal)

ABILITIES

CUT A DEAL. *You know anyone who’s anyone...*
Once per session, set up a meet with an NPC who can acquire you pretty much anything available in

Spire. It won’t be free, though, and odds are they’ll want a favour or a cut too.

HEART’S DESIRE. *...And you know what they want.* Once per situation, pick an NPC that you can observe for a while. The GM will tell you what they want most of all right now.

GOLD-BLOODED. [Divine] *You can buy your way out of anything – even gunshot wounds.* Gain Religion as a Domain. Once per situation, allot stress to Silver when you’d normally allot it to Blood, or vice-versa.

THE GOLDEN GOD’S ARCANA. [Divine] *You put a coin under your tongue as payment to Azur, who fills your mind with knowledge.* At the end of the rite, it disappears. Mark D3 stress in Silver to cast this rite; gain access to a Domain that you do not have for the remainder of the current situation.

PLAYER NAME

CHARACTER NAME Allikat

CLASS Azurite

DURANCE Human Emmisary

SKILLS

- Compel
- Deceive
- Fight
- Fix
- Investigate
- Pursue
- Resist
- Sneak
- Steal

DOMAINS

- Academia
- Crime
- Commerce
- High Society
- Low Society
- Occult
- Order
- Religion
- Technology

KNACKS

Commerce:
Religious Artefacts

EQUIPMENT

Buckler of Azur
(Armour 1)
Serious-looking
club (D3, Brutal)

REFRESH

Carry out a deal
that benefits you
more than the
other party

ABILITIES

CUT A DEAL. Once per session, set up
a deal.

HEART'S DESIRE. Once per situation,
know what an NPC wants most of all.

GOLD-BLOODED. Once per situation, if
you'd mark stress to Blood, mark it to Silver
instead.

THE GOLDEN GOD'S ARCANA. Mark
D3 stress to Silver to gain access to a Domain
for a situation.

BONDS

Yvette, hard-nosed
glimmer dealer

FREE SLOTS

-
-
-
-
-
-

RESISTANCES

Blood

Mind

Silver

Shadow

Reputation

Armour

CURRENT STRESS

TOTAL STRESS:

FALLOUT

WHENT CROWFER, THE BOUND

You are one of the Bound – an order of vigilantes who protect the lawless regions of the upper city by mastering the small gods in their weapons and armour. Once upon a time, you were a city guard, but that was a lifetime ago. Drow are going missing all over, and the situation has come to a head when you uncover a grotesque murder: a priest of the Small Gods, strung up over the side of the city with their heart plucked out, glass feathers piercing their cheeks and lips.

RESISTANCES: Blood +1, Reputation +2, Shadow +2

REFRESH: Bring a criminal to justice

SKILLS: Fight, Sneak, Pursue

DOMAINS: Crime, Low Society, Order

DURANCE: City Guard (+2 Reputation, Order)

BONDS

- Flax, a wild-eyed priest of the Small Gods in Perch who has devoted his life revealing and nurturing new and nascent deities. [Individual]
- You have a bond with one of the other PCs who you rescued from a dangerous situation. Describe the situation they found themselves in.

EQUIPMENT

- God-Knife (D3, Concealable, Bound)

ABILITIES

SURPRISE INFILTRATION: *Nothing can keep you out.* Once per session, insert yourself into a situation where you are not currently present so long as there's some conceivable way you could get in there.

BOUND BLADE: *You have captured a god and forced it into your blade.* As a Bound, you gain a god-knife or god-axe blade when you join the order, and bind a small god inside it with a bloody and dark ritual.

This weapon has the Bound tag, and as such you can use your class abilities through it. You can't use your abilities through another weapon, but if your Bound weapon is lost or destroyed, you can create a new one with a night-long, exhausting rite held back in Perch.

THE SECRET OF FEAR. [Divine] *You rattle the cage that keeps the god bound in your blade, and it terrifies your enemies.* Mark D3 stress to Shadow; your bound weapon dice size increases by 1 for the next situation.

THE SECRET OF SECOND SKIN. [Divine] *The god in your armour watches out for you.* Once per situation, when you are attacked by an enemy and the GM would roll to inflict stress, you take 1 stress instead.

PLAYER NAME

CHARACTER NAME Whent Crowfer

CLASS Bound

DURANCE City Guard

SKILLS

- Compel
- Deceive
- Fight
- Fix
- Investigate
- Pursue
- Resist
- Sneak
- Steal

DOMAINS

- Academia
- Crime
- Commerce
- High Society
- Low Society
- Occult
- Order
- Religion
- Technology

KNACKS

EQUIPMENT

God-Knife (D3, Concealable, Bound)
Bound wrappings (Armour 2)

REFRESH

Bring a criminal to justice

ABILITIES

SURPRISE INFILTRATION: Once per session, appear in any situation.

BOUND BLADE: You trapped an unwilling god in your knife.

THE SECRET OF FEAR: Mark D3 stress to Shadow to increase your god-knife to (D6) stress

THE SECRET OF SECOND SKIN: Once per situation, when you are attacked and suffer stress, take only 1 stress

BONDS

Flax, priest of the Small Gods

FALLOUT

FREE SLOTS

-
-
-
-
-
-

RESISTANCES

- Blood
- Mind
- Silver
- Shadow
- Reputation
- Armour

CURRENT STRESS

TOTAL STRESS:

CALLOW HEARST, THE CARRION-PRIEST

You are a carrion-priest – a worshipper of Charnel, the Laughing God of Death, who have flooded the streets of New Heaven with sacred hyenas and wage a war against the established forces of the Morticians. Last week, something horrendous happened on your turf, and people are saying it was a demonic incursion. Your flock are unhappy and you need to fix things, fast.

RESISTANCES: Blood +2, Reputation +3, Shadow +2

REFRESH: Complete a hunt and take your quarry

SKILLS: Pursue, Sneak

DOMAINS: Crime, Religion, Low Society

DURANCE: Agent (+2 Shadow, Crime)

BONDS

- A sect of Charnel-worshippers who view their god as an eternally hungry lord of bacchanal, including: Hektika, who carries empty wine bottles as devotional objects; Bathsheva, glimmer addict, wears uncured hyena pelts and is never not dancing; Kestrelle, penitent torch singer who restricts herself to wailing Charnelian laments. [Street]
- You have a bond with another PC who you have helped deal with a death – either by guiding them through the grieving process or disposing of the body. Say who it was, and who died.

EQUIPMENT

- War-cleaver (Damage D6)
- Preyhook (Damage D3, ranged, stunning)

ABILITIES

HYENA. *You have a companion hyena who obeys your commands.* At the start of your turn, choose one command to give to your hyena from the list below:

GUARD: When you take stress to Blood, take 1 less stress than the result rolled to a minimum of 1

SCENT: When you sniff around a scene for clues, do so with mastery

LAY OF THE LAND: *You are a trained hunter, and others would do well to heed your words.* When you enter a dangerous situation, you can name up to three features or opportunities that your allies can take advantage of. The first time you or an ally uses an opportunity, they roll with mastery. (For example: cover with a good view of the battlefield, an exit, a badly-guarded door, a stack of barrels, etc).

CAKLE: [Divine] *You are a terror of New Heaven, and your enemies quake at your approach.* +1 Reputation. Mark D3 stress to Mind or Blood to unleash a nightmarish cackle in concert with your hyena that strikes fear into the hearts of your enemies (and anyone else within earshot). For the next minute or so, if your enemies have a difficulty rating, it is one lower.

MURDER OF CROWS. [Divine] *The sacred birds of death come to your call.* Mark D3 stress to Mind or Blood to cast this spell, which you must do so with access to a large open interior space, or the sky. You summon a flock of crows, ravens, jackdaws, magpies and all kinds of corvids, who will do your bidding until the end of the situation. They aren't skilled combatants, but they can provide a distraction in a pinch, and you can talk to them in a weird, croaking dialect if you want to ask them to gather information or watch an area.

PLAYER NAME

CHARACTER NAME Callow Hearst

CLASS Carrion-priest

DURANCE Agent

SKILLS

- Compel
- Deceive
- Fight
- Fix
- Investigate
- Pursue
- Resist
- Sneak
- Steal

DOMAINS

- Academia
- Crime
- Commerce
- High Society
- Low Society
- Occult
- Order
- Religion
- Technology

KNACKS

EQUIPMENT

War-cleaver (D6)
 Preyhook (D3, ranged, stunning)
 Leather armour and pelts (Armour 1)

REFRESH

Complete a hunt and take your quarry

ABILITIES

HYENA: Your sacred hyena can perform one of the following commands at a time:

GUARD: -1 Blood stress

SCENT: Roll with mastery when you sniff around for clues

LAY OF THE LAND: Name three features when you enter a dangerous situation. You and allies can use these features to roll with mastery once per feature.

CAKLE: D3 stress to Mind or Blood to cast; reduce nearby enemies' Difficulty by 1 for a minute.

MURDER OF CROWS: D3 stress to Mind or Blood to cast; summon a flock of corvids that will do your bidding and can talk to you.

BONDS

Charnelite party cult (Hektika, Bathsheva, Kestrelle)

FALLOUT

FREE SLOTS

-
-
-
-
-
-

RESISTANCES

- Blood
- Mind
- Silver
- Shadow
- Reputation
- Armour

CURRENT STRESS

TOTAL STRESS:

DOCTOR ELYSE MONTRESSON, THE MIDWIFE

You are a Midwife – one of a spider-blooded caste of drow who are sworn to protect the unborn children of the dark elves. You are currently serving as a doctor in Perch, a shanty-town perilously nailed onto the side of the city, and you are dealing with an epidemic of dreck addicts – kids amongst them. Your assistant is strung-out and useless on the drug, too. You cannot allow this to continue.

RESISTANCES: Blood +2, Reputation +1, Mind +1

REFRESH: Defend the Defenceless

SKILLS: Fight, Fix, Sneak, Deceive, Investigate

DOMAINS: Occult, Low Society

DURANCE: Spy (Sneak, Deceive)

BONDS

- The Order of Midwives, and in particular: your immediate superior Maji Catalin, who has given up much of her body to spiderhood in service of Ishkrah, and can no longer really leave the sanctuary without drawing stares; and Maria, who knows you work for the Ministry and wants to join. [Street]
- You have a bond with another player character, whose life you saved when no-one else would. Say who, and what they'd done to ostracise themselves from their community.

EQUIPMENT

- Twin razors (D6, Concealable, Unreliable)

ABILITIES

MARTYR. *You sacrifice your life, inch by inch, to safeguard the future of the drow.* Once per session, when an ally takes fallout, you appear nearby so long as it would be at least even slightly feasible for you to do so. They ignore the effects of the fallout, and you take D6 stress to an appropriate resistance instead.

PROTECTOR'S EYE. *Ancient instincts, bound into you by forgotten sorcery, give you a measure of what a person really cares about.* Once per situation, ask the GM what a particular NPC wishes to protect above all else.

EYES OF ISHKRAH. [Occult] *You grow additional eyes with which you can sense the threads of magic.* Gain the Investigate skill. Roll Investigate+Occult to cast. On a success, you see all forms of occult magic in the surrounding area as shimmering webs of fate (including those around invisible creatures, or people observing you remotely) until the end of the current situation. You can follow these threads to the point where the spell was cast.

PLUCKTHEWEB. [Occult] *You bind up tiny effigies of your foes with glistening silk, and force them to act upon each other.* Roll Compel+Occult to cast this spell. On a success, any two connected entities or groups of your choosing (whatever their size, so long as they share a connection) immediately act upon one another in whichever fashion the GM sees fit.

PLAYER NAME

CHARACTER NAME Dr Elyse Monstresson

CLASS Midwife

DURANCE Spy

SKILLS

- Compel
- Deceive
- Fight
- Fix
- Investigate
- Pursue
- Resist
- Sneak
- Steal

DOMAINS

- Academia
- Crime
- Commerce
- High Society
- Low Society
- Occult
- Order
- Religion
- Technology

KNACKS

EQUIPMENT

Twin razors (D6, concealable, unreliable)

REFRESH

Defend the defenceless

ABILITIES

MARTYR: Once per session, when an ally would take fallout, they ignore the effects and you take D6 stress instead.

PROTECTOR'S EYE: Once per situation, work out what an NPC wishes to protect above all else.

EYES OF ISHKRAH: Investigate+Occult to cast. See occult magic as shimmering webs.

PLUCK THE WEB: Compel+Occult to cast. Force two connected entities to act upon one another.

BONDS

The Order of Midwives (Maji Catalin, Maria)

FALLOUT

FREE SLOTS

-
-
-
-
-
-

RESISTANCES

- Blood
- Mind
- Silver
- Shadow
- Reputation
- Armour

CURRENT STRESS

TOTAL STRESS:

SGT HESTER LESTRAY, THE VERMISSIAN SAGE

You are a Vermissian Sage – a magus devoted to the exploration of the reality-warping train network that pierces the walls of Spire, and unlocking the secrets within. You have observed heavily-armed squads of mercenaries carrying unusual things in and out of New Heaven: magically-suppressed bundles of glass and meat, mewling cages, and carts of twisted, scarred brass. Something's afoot, and you're determined to get to the bottom of it.

RESISTANCES: Blood +2, Mind +3, Shadow +1

REFRESH: Uncover hidden information.

And:

Have another character follow your orders, even when they'd rather not.

SKILLS: Compel, Fight, Fix, Investigate

DOMAINS: Academia, Occult, Technology

DURANCE: Enlisted (+2 Blood, Fight)

BONDS

- Lacaent, a furiously left-wing academic operating out of Brazzacott, who is determined to get to the bottom of whatever's going on there. [Individual]
- You have a bond with another PC – one that you know a secret about. Say who it is, and what the secret is, and whether they know you know or not.

EQUIPMENT

- Dagger (D3, concealable)
- Padded vest (Armour 1)
- Legrand rifle (D6, Accurate, Ranged)

ABILITIES

BACK DOOR. *You throw open a door and lunge through it into a twisted metallic nightmare: home.*

Once per session, you can find an entrance to the Vault no matter where you are in the Spire. (Whether or not it was there before you started

looking for it remains unclear.) Inside, you'll find a collection of strange items and books, many of which relate or come from alternate histories, and some of which tell the truth. Any non-Sage character who enters the Vault should roll Resist+Occult or suffer Mind stress.

THE VAULT: *You have access to the vast informational resources of the sages. While inside the Vault, whether you accessed it through a Back Door or by normal means, you have access to equipment that will allow you to perform an Investigate check on any subject. It won't confer mastery, but it will allow you to perform the check.*

THAT DIDN'T HAPPEN. [Occult] *Reality is malleable, in the right hands: yours.* Gain the Fix skill. Once per session, re-roll all the dice in your pool, as you reveal the events that just happened to be false. You can try this trick a second time, but you take D6 stress to Mind when you do so.

MARTIAL TRAINING. Gain the Fight skill and access to your military weapon – either a Legrand rifle (D6, ranged) or Raven long-gun (D6, extreme range, reload, unreliable). Ownership of this gun is illegal.

OBSESSIVE RESEARCHER. *You spend every quiet moment filling your brain with knowledge – knowledge which is often fleeting.* At the start of each session, gain a knack of your choosing in any skill or domain, even if you don't normally have access to the skill or domain. At the end of the session, you lose that knack. You can't have the same knack two sessions in a row; you get bored, and must expand your mind in different ways.

PLAYER NAME

CHARACTER NAME Sergeant Hester Lestrav

CLASS Vermissian Sage

DURANCE Enlisted

SKILLS

- Compel
- Deceive
- Fight
- Fix
- Investigate
- Pursue
- Resist
- Sneak
- Steal

DOMAINS

- Academia
- Crime
- Commerce
- High Society
- Low Society
- Occult
- Order
- Religion
- Technology

KNACKS

EQUIPMENT

Padded vest
(Armour 1)
Dagger (d3,
concealable)
Legrande rifle (D6,
Accurate, Ranged)

REFRESH

Uncover hidden
information.
Have someone
follow your orders,
even when they'd
rather not.

ABILITIES

BACK DOOR: Once per session, conjure
a portal to the Vermissian Vault through
any door.

THE VAULT: When inside the Vault, you can
investigate pretty much anything going on in
Spire with ingenious cross-referencing.

OBSESSIVE RESEARCHER: At the start
of each session, pick a Knack in any skill or
domain; lose it at the end of the session.

THAT DIDN'T HAPPEN: Once per session,
re-roll all your dice. Mark D6 stress to Mind to
do it more than once per session.

MARTIAL TRAINING: You own an illegal
Legrand rifle (shown above).

BONDS

Lacaent, left-wing
Brazzacott
academic

FALLOUT

FREE SLOTS

-
-
-
-
-
-

RESISTANCES

Blood

Mind

Silver

Shadow

Reputation

Armour

CURRENT STRESS

TOTAL STRESS:

