

Dragon

The Embers



A Storytelling
Game of Divine Right

(Inner Title Artwork needed)

Dragon: The Embers

Dragon co-designed by Shock • Gepetto

(Prologue Artwork needed... at least 3 half-page entries)

Prologue: Ominous Drums

She could hear it beating. Sitting there in his hands, well... if you could call them hands. It shouldn't have worked. *How* could it be beating? It wasn't attached to anything!

Thump.

The sound maddened her every thought. Even if she could rationalize his story, his history, there was no reasoning with this. The nine-chambered heart, alive in the hands of the monster before her. And he wanted her to have it.

Thump

Last week. It was definitely some time last week, though the particular day had escaped her. Before that she had lived a perfectly normal life... at least by her standards anyway. Cameron was a therapist. She had a doctorate in psychology from the state university, and her credentials would have been sufficient for a glamorous research position. But she settled for therapy, mostly because it was easy. A usual day involved inviting people to open up their chests and expose weakness, which she would then quickly chew and regurgitate for seventy dollars an hour. She wasn't the most ethical of mental health professionals, but her clients seemed to enjoy her company. Work was easy, pay was easy, and that was pretty much all there was.

Thump

It was Tuesday. Yes, Tuesday, that's when it happened. Cameron received an unmarked envelope in her mailbox. No postage; it had been hand-delivered. The letter was written in script, but it looked old. The paper had been artificially aged. It must have been; no one would write something so silly on something so valuable. It was addressed "To resident," and its contents...

"After a long and lonely existence I have come to the realization that quantity and quality are not interchangeable equivalents. You'd think I'd have discovered this sooner in life, but power makes a man foolish. And I have a lot of it. God, the things I'm capable of could drive a man to tears. Or to shreds, if I wanted it. Why, the whole of this city would have bowed to me at the fall of one word, if I had had the narcissism necessary to will it."

"I've lost focus. The point is a long life of status and power has left me with no connection to the common world, and with no heir to take over for me on my inevitable death. As such, I have decided to end my life and present my fortune to you, the residing party of this address. I will arrive tomorrow at precisely ten. Serendipity has dictated you will carry on my legacy. I look forward to our imminent meeting. Ivan McGregor."

The letter was barely legible—in green ink. Yes, green ink, and the pen had torn the paper in several places. Cameron felt the writer was clearly disturbed and in need of counsel, so she decided to cancel her ten o'clock to meet with him. This Ivan. She sent her assistant home for the day and settled into her office, a hot cup of coffee in hand and a spare waiting for her guest.

Thump

Cameron waited eagerly at ten. She waited frustrated at eleven. At noon, she was ready to leave. But just as she reached for the door a knock shook it at its hinges.

“C... come in,” she managed to squeak, for the force of it had terrified her. The door was swiftly pulled open, a tall and stocky man filling its frame.

“I hope you don’t mind that I kept you waiting,” he said with a sheepish grin. “Patience is one of the most important traits an individual can possess.”

“I disagree, Mister McGregor. Punctuality is by far more important. You’re two hours late.” Cameron was confused; the man looked to be no older than thirty but he carried himself like a fossil. His clothes were ancient as well, authentic pre-depression business attire with hat. They were in perfect condition, though, which led her to believe they were counterfeit. Despite this and his corpulence, he was quite attractive. It was something about his stature, he seemed to fill up the room as he entered it and he stood with the finest posture she’d ever witnessed. She sized him up top to bottom, and then lowering her glasses slightly she met his eyes with a glare. “For a man as well off as you are, it seems odd you’d be so world-weary. Care to elaborate?”

“A bit on the direct side, are we? Fine. I won’t dance around it, I’m lonely. My oldest friend recently passed, when a young caller ate his heart.” There was a great deal of melancholy in his voice.

“You say you won’t avoid it, yet you bury your contempt in metaphor. A friend finding love is not some last hand, for him or you. And that you described it so violently concerns me greatly. What is it you find so objectionable about this young woman?”

“She beat him at chess.”

“What?” She was surprised. Certainly skill in the game of kings was laudable, not something to hold contempt for. “You don’t like her because she bested him? That’s a little misogynistic, don’t you think?”

“No, that’s not why I have a problem with her. She challenged his status as a champion then refused to prove her own prowess without incentive. It was unsporting.”

“So he bribed her into a match with love as the prize? That’s really romantic, how could you be mad about something like that?” Cameron had little time for non-professional relationships, and the fast had left her wanting. She was hungry for meaningful contact with another human being, and the thought of one forming from such an exchange warmed her heart.

Ivan scowled. “What’s love got to do with it? He offered his heart, and she took it.”

Despite her intrigue with the situation, Cameron smelled profit falling off this man. “I do believe you’re jealous of what your friend has achieved. Despite your success you lack personal attachment to anything, and the notion of a contemporary finding such attachment infuriates you.”

Ivan paced uncomfortably hither and thither in front of the door. Something could be heard jostling around his briefcase. “Maybe it would set my heart at ease to hear a little about you, young lady.” He smiled, though it was artificial. Cameron was offended.

“I’m not much younger than you, sir. I’d prefer it if you’d not talk down to me like you would a child.”

The man took a deep breath, then calmly replied.

“Sorry, sometimes I forget to whom I’m speaking.”

“Now that *is* something to be concerned about. Confusion bordering dementia combined with a sense of self-loathing and worthlessness could indicate brain misfire or even a tumor. You should seek a doctor and request an MRI immediately.”

Ivan thought about what a brain-scanning device would find inside his head. Recovering quickly, he tapped his skull with the knuckles of his left hand. “There’s a metal plate in place of my occipital, magnetic resonance imaging would be too dangerous.”

“I must insist you seek out some other form of treatment, then. Chatting with me will not help your situation.” Cameron went to grab the telephone, but Ivan took hold of her shoulder. Within moments she could not remember what she was doing, she was wrapped in memories of college. She felt uncontrollably flustered, as if a test she hadn’t studied for was next on the agenda. “Oh dear, I’ve just remembered that I’ve forgotten something. There’s... I’ve got something important to do today, could you come back tomorrow?”

Ivan smiled. “It would be my pleasure. Ten o’clock, on time I promise.” He closed the door with a forceful flex of muscle.

Thump

Cameron canceled all her remaining appointments for the week, and told her assistant to catch the next plane to anywhere. She was fascinated by this stranger with a death-wish, and something in her heart told her that he was courting her. Excitement filled her body; someone had actually come looking for her. Not exactly the man on the white horse, but he’d do well enough. She just had to fix him.

The next day he returned, though he seemed slimmer than before.

“Ivan.”

“Hello again young lady.” He took off the hat this time, and held it against his chest. The briefcase sat adjacent to his feet, safely secured by padlock.

“Am I to believe you would like to register as a patient? I’m going to have to start charging you for these visits.” She didn’t mean it. There was something mysteriously...exciting about this man.

“No, but I should like to talk with you. At least for a bit longer.”

Cameron flung herself into her chair and, with the momentum of the jump snatched up her notepad and pen. She settled at the corner of the room and, looking over the page, addressed this stranger Ivan.

“Tell me more about this friend of yours.”

“What do you want to know about him?”

“Nothing, really. Hearing you describe him will teach me something about you.”

“Well, Nathan was a pretty cool guy.”

“You’re talking about him in the past tense.”

“Right. Sorry.” Ivan swallowed hard. “Nathan is an associate dean at the college. I met him... I met him many years ago.”

“Wait, Nathan Monroe? I know him, he taught one of my classes.” The coincidence was interesting, but nothing particularly shocking. At least, until Ivan made it shocking.

“About that. I didn’t just pick your address out of a hat; Nathan had spoken about you in detail. You reminded him of his daughter.” Ivan couldn’t look her in the eye. “He made me promise to look out for you when he was gone.”

“Wait... he’s actually dead? How did he... when did he...?” Cameron shook her head back and forth. The notepad fell from her hands and struck the ground with a resounding *thump*. “I can’t deal with this today. You’ll have to come back.”

“Tomorrow then,” Ivan replied, replacing his hat and taking grasp of his briefcase.

Thump

Friday. Cameron returned to her office to meet with Ivan.

“I’m sorry about yesterday. Somehow I made the discussion about me again. You must think me incredibly unprofessional.”

“Actually, I had hoped to talk about you.” As he spoke, gentle smoke wafted from his nostrils. Had he been smoking? There was no cigar in his mouth, but the scent was thick. Pleasant but overpowering.

“What made you pick this profession? Certainly your knowledge of the human state could have led you to more glorious things, yes?” The therapist thought about her career.

“I suppose I could have carved out a path in psychiatric research, but I never wanted to be so removed from the people. We’re here to help them, after all.”

“So you set aside fame and glory for the good of everyone?”

“Yes, I suppose you could say it like that. A little general, but-”

Ivan cut her off, pressing two fingers to her lips. “I think you’ll do just fine.”

“Wait, we haven’t discussed your mental health at all. Every time the conversation drifts that way you direct it back at me.” She decided not to give him an opening. “Here’s a question: You carry around that briefcase every time you arrive, yet you never open it. What’s inside?”

The mysterious man yanked the briefcase away. “It’s my most valuable possession.”

“I can see that, you guard it with such fervor. Strange that you would want to preserve it, but not your own life.” The therapist pointed to the lock. “Why don’t you open it up and let me see what’s inside.”

“I don’t think you’re prepared for that. Not yet, anyway. And you’re right, it seems silly to protect this thing, but it’s a legacy to me. A symbol of a dying ideology.”

“I’m a big girl, Ivan. Let me see the suitcase.” She stared deeply into Ivan’s eyes, hoping to unnerve him. That’s when she noticed the iris were red.

“What’s wrong with your eyes?!”

“Huh?” Ivan blinked hard, and his eyes changed back to green. He shrugged. “I dunno, I can’t see them.”

“They were red. And not bloodshot red, just solid. Like those fake contacts the mental cases wear.” She was visibly shaken by this; she thought her mind was unwinding. Ivan grasped her hands and held them together. “Listen, I have to go out of town for a few days. When I come back we can discuss the contents of my briefcase, okay?”

Thump

Cameron went home and settled herself in front of the computer. Typing *Ivan McGregor* into the search engine yielded no useful results, which was to be expected. She decided to try a government site. One outstanding warrant for an Ivan McGregor for... bootlegging? The issue date was December 13th, 1924. Clearly this was impossible, but when the picture finally loaded, there he was. Much thinner, but the same face. Was it a relative? But why the same name? She

decided to look into it further, but the older files had not yet been added to the system. The website listed their location, a record hall two states over. With nothing holding her back, Cameron went to her car.

“This is silly. There’s not going to be anything there. I’m being insane.” She stared at the wheel, contemplating the turn her life had taken.

“Oh well, lucidity is overrated.” Slamming her foot on the gas, she whipped out of the driveway and sped down the road.

Thump

She arrived just before dawn. Locked. Of course it was locked. Six hours of driving and now she’d have to check into a hotel. She went to her glove-box and retrieved her umbrella. Striking the glass door with it twice, she fragmented it and then kicked in the remains. An alarm rang its screech, but that wasn’t important right now. She *had* to understand this man. It was essential to her mental well-being. Cameron made haste to the basement, where the records were stacked eight feet high. The boxes were labeled by year, so she started with 1896. There were eight separate boxes, so she took them down one by one and rifled through them.

“Tax records for Ivan McGregor. Age thirty. Damn, does this guy age at all?” She decided to try ten years earlier, but found the records did not go back that far. The therapist fell to her knees and slammed the record boxes with both fists.

“What are you doing here, Cameron?” Ivan was standing behind her. His footprints trailed behind him like phantoms, like the shadows were sluggish to react.

“You- you’re a paradox. An impossibility.”

“Come on now, that’s not true. I’m just incredibly improbable.” He smiled.

“How is it possible you’ve lived so long? What are you?”

“Ah, that’s the matter of the briefcase. I believe you’re ready now.”

Cameron looked to the container Ivan had been lugging around all week. The padlock was gone this time, and she could hear something moving inside. Her hands shaking, she carefully opened the case to reveal its only contents, a nine-chambered heart.

“When you said the chess girl ate Nathan’s heart, you meant-” Ivan did not allow her to finish her question.

“We were both members of the Oroboroi, Nathan and I. We met in 1912.”

“That word, Oroboroi... it’s derivative of Oroborus, the serpent that bites at its own tail.”

Ivan nodded. “You could say that’s the mark of our people. We are only sustained by consuming ourselves. To join, you must replace an existing member.” As he spoke, Ivan’s body began to change. Teeth grew sharp and gigantic, fingernails became claws, scales coated the body, the spine curved and then exploded into a set of feathered wings, and a shadow of his heart formed in the vicinity of his chest. His hair grew wild and untamed, his tongue forked, his eyes turned deep crimson, and he stood over her a hulking mass of mythical monster. Cameron fainted.

Thump

It woke her like an alarm clock. The tick of the beating. Ivan had her in his lap, with the heart in hand before her. He spoke. “My best friend cared for you a great deal. I don’t know if

you actually were his daughter, but I made a promise. If anyone deserves to take my legacy, it's you."

The sun was up. Sunday morning, new week. The police would come for the alarm soon. In fact, it was odd that they hadn't already. "You want me to eat this, your heart. And that will end your life."

"Yes."

"Won't that turn me into... you know, something big mean and scaly?" Ivan let a waft of smoke escape his nostrils.

"It's not so bad. You get to breathe fire and fly without an airplane."

"I'm afraid of heights."

"Ah, that won't last. You'll get used to it in no time."

Cameron took the heart from Ivan's claws. Looking it over top to bottom, the only response she could muster was "Will it hurt?"

"What?"

"When you die, will it hurt?"

"If I said yes, would that stop you?"

"It might."

"Well I don't think it will." Lub-dub. The heartbeat quickened. "Please, Cameron."

Thump

She lowered her mouth to the soft flesh.

THUMP

The sound rang in her head as she sank her teeth in.

THUMP

And for a moment, silence. She felt a burning down her throat that crawled into her chest. Time stopped, and she could feel her entire body light up with an intense heat. She felt... different. She felt empowered. She felt GOOD. She took another bite, and then another, and as she ate the room shrank around her.

THUMP

In her chest now. Where the sound belonged. Where it had always intended to go. Ivan sat lifeless on the floor a man again. He looked... comfortable; Cameron justified herself with the notion that she'd brought him peace.

The police would be there soon. When they came, she would greet them with fire.

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Dragon: The Embers

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Introduction

(Full-Page Art Needed. A picture of bloody knife with bone fragments should do the trick)

Come on Cameron, you can do this.

Pick up the knife. Okay. Now, take it and make a vertical incision down your chest.

God, where do they get the courage to do this stuff?

It's not going to hurt, it's not going to hurt, it's not going to HURK!

NNNGHGHAH!

Ha, hah ha! Oh what a mess.

Okay... okay, I've got to get past the ribcage now.

It would be so much easier to take out in pieces... but that wouldn't be very healthy now would it.

Come on... break. HAAGH! Deep breath now.

Wrap your fingers around the Heart.

Give it a yank.

HAH! There. Job well done.

Now I just need a mop.

“...In case of fire you have to line up quietly in a single file from smallest to tallest.
What is the logic in that? What, do tall people burn slower?”

–Warren Hutcherson

When the word Dragon is uttered the first thought that flies across the minds of most is an outdated history lesson, or some myth about an impossible beast with greed as grand as brawn and a lust for terrorizing the local populace. For some, dragons are spirits of natural events, a symbol of raw power and change.

Many political factions, including some quite despicable ones, use the Dragon as an emblem and a sign of power. Monarchs and tyrants may falsely claim heritage to a draconic bloodline. The idea of genetic right to rule is an old one indeed, and though evidence points to the contrary it is a tightly held belief in all forms of society. *My son will take over the business when I'm gone. He's my son, he'd be the best man for the job.* Obviously that is a light example of what could easily be a very controversial topic, but for the scope of this game simply consider that certain people are ‘born’ for the job, and certain people are born to lead.

If you gathered up all the world leaders and gave them an exam, what would they all have in common? Perhaps the myth of dragon blood isn't as far-fetched as it would seem. Could the act of rising to power *change* a person? Is the secretive life a leader lives for their own protection, or to hide something dark? What is it that makes a leader a Leader?

A Game of Divine Right

Dragon: the Embers is the story of secret monsters, of the people who became more than human when they take control of the world around them. It's a story of tradition broken, of cutting one's heart out to gain immortality at the cost of the future and of shunning the hubris of the past. It's also

a story of genetic attrition; there are no new hearts to be had. Dragons are on their way out, the smoldering remains of a once brilliant flame. And someday the heat of those ashes will be gone. The last flicker of light is the Dragons that remain; they are the Embers of the past.

Dragons have one crucial weakness that drives them mad; their heart. Or Heart, rather. Capital H. By removing the Heart a Dragon can guarantee her immortality, for no matter how many times her body dies her Heart remains to bring her back. But the Heart is also a great weakness, to be stolen and destroyed or consumed means the Dragon dies instantly—and likely is replaced by someone else. This fact makes most of the Oroboroi incredibly paranoid, so much in fact that much of their long lives is spent trying to develop the perfect protection for this precious cargo. Needless to say there is no such perfection.

Dragons disguise themselves as the humans they used to be, but that is not their true shape. One may take on any number of their *real* traits with little effort, but while the truth may be more comfortable and more powerful, it is not discrete. Since dragons are usually in positions of authority—be it actual authority or authority puppeteered—it is useful not to reveal these differences, firstly because it would be a publicity nightmare and secondly because it would no doubt lead to torches and pitchforks. Part of being a modern Dragon is about finding ways to subtly take advantage of the powerful truth without revealing it.

Finding oneself raised so far above humanity can be dizzying, but members of the Oroboroi have to temper themselves with the fact that they *chose* this fate. The only way to become a member is to eat the



heart of an old member, and with the first bite that fate is sealed. No matter how much a Dragon wants to pretend she's human, the power that sets her apart will exist as long as she lives and will tug at her from afar should she shun it. Embracing the new life completely isn't an option either, the Dragon risks losing her perspective. It takes respect for the power and the knowledge it isn't self-affirming to live a Dragon's life properly.

This is **Dragon: the Embers**—the Storytelling game of Divine Right.

A Societal Metaphor

Most dragons from the western myths are simply monsters, ravaging the countryside in search of meal and plunder. A monstrous beast of six limbs, two being wings. Something to be killed. Virtually opposite are the eastern myths, in which dragons are seen as righteous beings in command of the waters of the world, akin to gods. They are a symbol of purity and power, though sometimes those features can cause destruction. It was the modern reinvention of the dragon that created the fire-breathing madly-intelligent hoarders. For this book, we will be combining these three Philosophies to create a new type of dragon.

Embers Dragons are no more intelligent than people, seeing as they used to BE people. They are also neither benevolent nor malevolent, they are both. A necessary part of the world proper. Embers Dragons gather valuables not particularly from greed, but to feed off the metaphoric value of them. They have a heat-source burning in their gut—the furnace—and it takes quite a bit to keep it hot after all. Finally, Embers Dragons have a psychic bond with their heart, and can survive so long as it is intact (Even if it is not in the body). From this point on, when Dragon is capitalized it refers to Embers Dragons.

So where does the metaphor for society start? Replace 'Dragon' with 'Leader' and it becomes very clear. In times of old leaders were born into their position, a genetic predisposition to lord over others. But eventually the plebs beneath figured out leadership was not exclusive to royalty, and some rose up to claim the position. Ironically they became just as the ones they'd replaced, initiating the cycle anew.

It took a while, but eventually Dragons figured out how to protect themselves from usurpation. Cutting out the heart, *that* was the secret. A Dragon could die time and again, but so long as the heart is whole she can come back to reclaim her position. This too is part of the metaphor. Though a position can be lost time and again, the only way to eliminate a leader permanently is to destroy her.

Genetic Attrition

If Dragon is a metaphor about leaders, why are their numbers dwindling? Though leaders can be replaced, they are also destroyed by competitors. As eliminations stack up the numbers dwindle, eventually 'endangered' becomes 'final specimen', and from there it isn't even a baby step to extinction.

So why not breed for more numbers? History has shown that such a method does not work well. Heirs to power are spoiled by their entitlement, and usually eradicated in a coup. Dragons have also given up their right to genetic heirs by removing their Hearts, so such a notion is no longer even possible. An inability to produce draconic children means negative population growth and thus negative population; the point being no new Dragons are born and so no new hearts bolster the population.

This is not to say that Dragons are incapable of creating children. The children are simply born 100% human, 100% of the time.

A Voluntary Madness of Heart

A new Dragon is born when she consumes the heart of an old dragon, in its entirety. This is a life-affirming experience, and the means through which the heart was acquired forever marks the type of beast she'll be (It provided her with her Method). Most know at least a little about what will happen when they take this step... after all, there's rarely incentive to just eat a mysterious muscle for the fun of it. Part of the personal horror stems from this foreshadowing; when actions lead to regret the Dragon can only blame herself. After all, she took that first bite.

The following metamorphosis is exhilarating if not just a little frightening. The entire body burns as the furnace ignites, particularly in the region of the heart and throat. Many parts become unfamiliar and foreign. And in the midst of this, the draconic code of conduct flash-burns into the mind. It takes time to adjust. Of anything it is an unforgettable, if not solitary, experience.

Schools and Philosophies

Almost immediately after the metamorphosis a Dragon proceeds to remove her heart and choose a school—The Dominion school of Embers or the Saintly Devil school of the Five Evils. The code of conduct makes her aware of these options and the fact that her heart is the key to her longevity. There are a rare few who refuse this decision, and thus keep their heart in chest.

Each school provides a general mentality. The Embers school doesn't deny their purpose but neither do they gorge. The Five Evils school, on the other hand, live life with a binge-and-purge gusto. The violent type of binge-and-purge gusto. After choosing a school the Dragon chooses a main philosophy, the lens through which she

examines all things. This is not the only philosophy she can follow, but it is the one she holds with most regard.

Theme and Mood

Though every story told with the Storyteller System is unique, stories that involve Dragons have some common ground regardless of setting or plot. These anchors are the mood and theme, which are inescapably sewn into the state of Oroboroi membership.

Theme

The prevalent theme in any **Dragon** game is divine right facing faded glory. This often takes the form of relevance. In a world that is evolving beyond a need for them, Dragons as a group have to take a stab at importance or be trampled in the march of time. Being natural leaders this attempt usually takes the form of climbing social ladders.

Dashing to the top is dangerous business. There's nothing left to grab onto, with a great plummet waiting at just a single push. Mortals are vicious competitors in this pursuit, but they are not the only threats. *Other* things also vie for the reins.

Mood

The mood of any **Dragon** game is simple: paranoia for the sake of self-preservation. Despite the fact that they are practically indestructible, the critical weakness attached to this revival cycle is a matter of constant concern for dragons of any age.

With the information revolution it has never been more dangerous to hold membership with the Oroboroi. Whispers become screams as little fragments of truth slip free into the ether and more secrets become fact. Though many are hesitant to believe, there is always someone who is



willing to research further. And that research is becoming easier and easier. There's a reason exposure and extinction start the same way.

How to Use This Book

A sampling of the Oroboroi in whole can be found in the **Introduction**; it's a good section to check before planning a **Dragon: The Embers** game.

Chapter One explores what it means to be a Dragon, from history to society to threats to Provinces.

To make use of the storyteller system and craft a member of the Oroboroi, go to **Chapter Two**. It details all the physical traits a Dragon can incorporate into her True Form, as well as the mysterious powers Philosophies grant her.

Chapter Three covers mechanics exclusive to Dragons, from assuming Oroboroi traits to Caloric requirements of the Furnace to the conditions of death and resurrection. This chapter also covers the function of the Dragon Code of Ethics (their alternative to Morality), as well as special wound penalty mechanics new to this template.

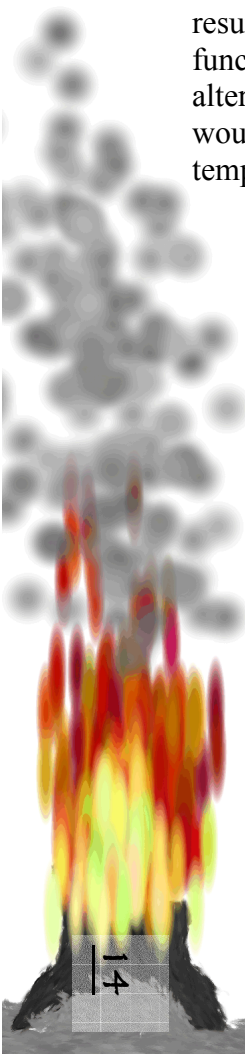
Story and setting swatches are the focus of **Chapter 4**, which provides a range of different story seeds for basing a chronicle. This chapter also delves further into the various antagonists a Dragon might face.

In **Appendix One** the Dreamtide is discussed in detail. (We haven't done this appendix yet, so we can't summarize it)

Finally **Appendix Two** covers the setting of San Francisco, California. (We haven't done this appendix yet, so we can't summarize it)

Sources and Inspiration

Dragons in a modern setting are somewhat a new localization of the classic myth. As of yet they have been inescapably tied to fantasy. An unfortunate side effect of this is a general lack of sources for a modern Dragon story. You can use your preconceptions about Dragons from their fictional appearances as a source of information, but incorporating them into the setting will be a challenge only your imagination can face. As such, no recommended sources will be provided.



Lexicon

- Anima:** A mortal's copy found in the Dreamtide. Indistinguishable from the real thing.
- Antecedent:** An Oroboroi Heart's previous owner.
- Aspect:** A physical trait of Dragonhood. To manifest an Aspect is to relinquish human features and become more divine. To disband an Aspect is to disguise the true nature and blend.
- Attra:** A wealth magnet in Oroboroi superstition. Often believed to be double-edged.
- Breath:** The heat of a Dragon's furnace, it fuels the Oroboroi and their mysterious powers.
- Brood:** A Dragon's family unit.
- Bonded:** Mortals that possess a piece of Dragon heart in chest, usually as a gift.
- Carrion:** A mortal's copy found in the Dreamtide. Sentient but locked in one emotion.
- Challenger:** An Oroboroi who received her Heart as a prize for a test of skill; Challengers shine in matters of honor and hard work.
- Code, the:** The set of ethics by which a Dragon is judged.
- Collapse, the:** The mythical end of Dominion in which mankind rose up to steal the hearts of the Oroboroi. The birth of the two Schools.
- Common Aspect:** A draconic trait common to Oroboroi of all methods.
- Constituent:** A mortal living within the boundaries of an Oroboroi Province.
- Daylight:** The Material world.
- Den:** An alliance of Oroboroi.
- Devourer:** A Dragon who stokes her Furnace with the Hearts of others.
- Doll:** A mortal's copy found in the Dreamtide. Limited to a pittance of pre-determined responses.
- Dominion:** The mythical time of monarchy by genetic right, ended by the Collapse.
- Dragon-Born:** A child born from a Dragon and Human mating.
- Dreamtide, the:** The Astral world. Dragons may travel here by piercing the Miasma.
- Embers Schools:** The group of schools practiced by the Embers Oroboroi, based off lessons learned in the Collapse.
- Ether, the:** The Emyrean world. Locked away behind the Equinox.
- Ethics:** Dragon Morality
- Finder:** An Oroboroi who received her Heart as a result of research and investigation; Finders are usually intellectuals and antiquers.
- Furnace:** The heat of a Dragon's Heart, held in chest and reflecting the degree of her leadership potential.
- Graft:** Boney clasp that supernaturally enhances other objects. Made by erasing a mortal.
- Heart:** A nine-chambered blood pumping muscle. A Dragon's weak point and most treasured possession.
- Hedge, the:** The Fae world. The Bramble holds it separate from Twilight.
- Hydra:** A multi-headed Oroboroi who's neglect for the Code of Ethics has rendered her a monster.
- Inheritor:** An Oroboroi who received her Heart as a gift; Inheritors are social titans.
- Knight:** A member of the Bloody Chalice conspiracy.
- Lair:** A Dragon or Den's home.
- Last Hand, the:** Euphemism for a death that holds no escape. Death that prevents resurrection.
- Metamorphosis:** The first manifestation of Aspects, immediately after consuming the Heart.
- Method:** The means by which a Dragon came into possession of her Heart.



Method Aspect: Aspects seen most frequently in Dragons of a particular method.

Miasma, the: The skin of negative thought that an Oroboroi must pierce to enter the Dreamtide.

Non-Method Aspect: Aspects not usually seen in Dragons of a particular method.

Oroboroi (or-ROB-or-roy): Dragons

Oroborus (or-ROB-or-us): The mythical self-consuming serpent.

Pandemonium: The furthest depths of the Dreamtide, where the dreams of all living things melt together.

Philosophy: An Oroboroi outlook and worldview. Thought made reality.

Philosophy of Ash: An Embers Philosophy that believes society has a fundamental flaw that is causing its decay and inevitable destruction. That flaw should be exposed and utilized if necessary.

Philosophy of Blood: An Embers Philosophy that believes treachery and broken vows are the source of the past's suffering. Crafted the Code of the Oroboroi after the Collapse to push forth the duty of honor.

Philosophy of Bone: An Embers Philosophy that believes the unrelenting hand of fate will strike regardless, and the best option is to pick up the pieces after tragedy falls.

Philosophy of Greed: A Sainly Devil Philosophy that believes Greed is the worst sin to indulge. Takes measures to prevent the greed of others without recognizing their own covetous nature.

Philosophy of Lust: A Sainly Devil Philosophy that believes Lust is the worst sin to indulge. Desensitizes the body to suppress urges.

Philosophy of Pride: A Sainly Devil Philosophy that believes Pride is the worst sin to indulge. Works to prove others wrong, though without the modesty to admit a *personal* shortcoming.

Philosophy of Sloth: A Sainly Devil Philosophy that believes Sloth is the worst sin to indulge. Drives others to act with the power of memory.

Philosophy of Sweat: An Embers Philosophy that believes pain is the taskmaster of life and any attempts to defer it, such as society, are doomed to fail.

Philosophy of Tears: An Embers Philosophy that believes emotion outweighs action when the chips fall. Seek a society with the proper motive to thrive.

Philosophy of Wrath: A Sainly Devil Philosophy that believes Wrath is the worst sin to indulge. Bottled anger explodes in a destructive rampage.

Province: A Dragon's range of property, both territorial and by population.

Red Pearl: A crystalline formation within an elderly Oroboroi brain. Highly coveted.

Sainly Devil Schools: The group of schools practiced by the Scholars of the Five Evils, determined to expunge the wicked but doomed to backslide.

Sect: An exclusive philosophy sub-group.

Shadow, the: The Ephemeral world. The Gauntlet keeps it from merging with Twilight.

Slayer: An Oroboroi who received her Heart through murder; Slayers are vicious and powerful.

Trickster: An Oroboroi who received her Heart through treachery or resources; Tricksters are noxious and toxic, and are not to be trusted.

True Form: The state of having all Aspects manifest.

True Heart: The state of living with Heart in chest; a refusal to remove the Heart for immortality.

Twilight: The skin between Daylight and the Realms Invisible, where Material coexists with Ephemeral, Astral, Empyrean, Plasm, and Fae. Ghosts live here, if it could be called life.

Underworld, the: Home of the resolved dead. This world is comprised of Plasm, and is separated from Twilight by the Wall.

Chapter One: Fire of the Oroboroi

(Full-Page art needed. A picture of Cameron sitting at a diner counter with the Bloody Chalice Knight in back would work well)

Cameron sat in the diner slowly stirring the table sugar into her coffee. It was her fourth cup. Normally she'd only have one, and it'd be decaffeinated, but her recent shift in fortune had made her bold. It was odd to be drinking it on such a hot day, but the bean water made the cavity of her chest warm and that felt good.

That guy by the window had been staring at her for twenty minutes. He hadn't even ordered anything; he just sat there pretending to read the paper. Poorly pretending. Cameron wasn't worried, though. She was practically indestructible after all.

The edges of the man's newspaper began to sag with red, and he looked around with greater care. The people around him began to back away and then fled the establishment. There were a few screams as he was spontaneously coated in blood. Hematidrosis: the condition of bleeding through the sweat glands, though not contagious, is particularly rare and thus incredibly frightening to the layman.

But something was off about this. The man stood, dropping the bloodied print to the floor. Glaring sternly at Cameron, his lips widened into a smile of brilliant white teeth. When he spoke, he sounded hungry: "I've found you."

"He who fights too long against dragons becomes a dragon himself; and if you gaze too long into the abyss, the abyss will gaze into you."

–Friedrich Nietzsche

Before the Metamorphosis, a Dragon is mortal. There's no mystical predetermination that slates a mortal for membership in the Oroboroi, so eating the Heart is their first step into the supernatural. While this brings a refreshing change in perspective, most learn things about the world they were much more blissful without.

The world is less fair than it seems. When it comes down to it, life is nothing but a giant pileup, and the one on top holds the highest chance for survival.

A new kind of Cardio

In the days of old the Dragon was feared. Similar in stature to a god, she sat untouchable on the backs of the plebs, who would do everything in their power to please her (so that she wouldn't incinerate them). But as mankind became enlightened new gods took the throne, and banished the monsters from sight.

The Dragon was distraught. Without belief, and without the stature that accompanied it, she would fade into obscurity and ineptitude. An ancient god from the deep, long forgotten but still immensely powerful, came to her in a dream and offered her a choice. "I can make you eternal," he said, "but I do not work for free."

"Your ambition, your foresight, or your joy. This is the price I demand." The deep one reeked of the sea's rot, but his words were sickly sweet. "I cannot part with my ambition" the Dragon said, "for without it my life would be pointless."

"Then your ambition you shall keep," the deep one said, a silhouette of the Dragon's gut becoming illuminated. "I cannot part with my foresight," the Dragon

said, "for without it I cannot shape the world as I must."

"Then your foresight you shall keep," the deep one said, as the eyes of the Dragon lit up like stars. "So you would part with your joy?" The deep one smiled; a wicked grin of sharp teeth it was. "Yes, that is the only acceptable choice."

The forgotten god of the deep reached into the Dragon's chest and removed her Heart. Holding it out in his hand, he offered it freely. "Keep this someplace safe," he said, "You may need it again. But remember, should you welcome it home my gift is forfeit."

With that, the Dragon awakened.

Dominion and the Collapse

The time when Dragons were prominent was called *Dominion*. They were regarded as a perfect combination of fear and respect, which let them leech off civilization while throttling its growth. It was the period where Dragons were gods.

But as mankind evolves, it invents new deities. Ones less demanding and less likely to retaliate with wrath. Dragons lost their status, and likewise the power they held over the world. In a vain effort to reclaim their usurped thrones, the Dragons removed their Hearts. With the loss of their joy came the ability to blend with the sheep, and so Dragons vanished into myth and infected the world of man.

But not everyone forgot. While the Dragons climbed back into their seats of power, these people watched. And when the guard was dropped, they struck. The dredges killed their masters. The dredges ate their hearts. And the dredges became the new masters. This was called *the Collapse*.

By the power of worship, a man became a monster. But he was not a Dragon;

he did not have the stature to extend his rule beyond his life. A charismatic dictator... *that* is what came out of the Collapse. A new ruler could rise only by destroying the old one, and so Oroboroi became the word to describe them. A serpent sustained only by itself but dying a little more with each and every bite.

Personal Matters Draconic

The Oroboroi are as diverse a people as the imaginations that forged them. Still, there are a few areas where they all hold common ground. These include their initial Metamorphosis, the Heart Removal, the methods through which they acquired their Hearts and the Schools of thought through which they examine the world around them.

The Metamorphosis

When a mortal eats a Dragon's Heart, she joins the Oroboroi. But what is that like? First off, it's the worst heartburn you'll ever experience. Sharp, insanely hot pain spikes at the center of your chest, boring through and likely crumpling you into a balled-up heap. Then, both skin and muscle begin to scream as they heat up and reshape. Your body is hammered into your own personal image of a Dragon... at least within reason. Finally comes a migraine that's similar to setting off dynamite that was stuffed into both ears. This is the Code of Ethics inscribing itself in your mind, and you spontaneously become aware of Dominion and the Collapse.

Some Oroboroi feel that these are both fictional events, built into the Metamorphosis as a conduct guide and looming threat rolled into one. Others observe the visions more literally and try to learn from them. Either way, your reaction to these two stories will help you decide which School to join should you remove your Heart.

Heart Removal

Usually a very personal affair, removing the Heart involves making a vertical incision down the chest, then cracking open or breaking off the ribcage and finally severing the four veins and five arteries that connect the Heart to the bloodstream (this sets them apart from mortals who only have two veins and two arteries forming these connections). As it is detached, the light of the Furnace takes on a firmer form in the chest cavity, acting as a substitute pump in the Heart's absence. For mortals, this is a very fatal process. For the Oroboroi, it is an incredibly painful and likely traumatizing process, but one that will not end in death.

After the Heart has been removed, the sternum can be replaced or re-set and it will heal instantly. When closed, the chest wound cauterizes leaving a hard-to-spot scar.

Methods

Each Dragon becomes that way by acquiring the Heart of another Dragon. The means by which this Heart is acquired have a greater influence on the new Dragon than they would seem. A Dragon's Method helps to classify which traits she'll likely possess, as well as the way she conducts herself in her new life.

The way a Dragon acquires her Heart falls into one of five categories (the fit may not always be the best, but a suspension of disbelief and generalized description helps). Those that acquire their Heart by taking a life are called the Slayers. Research and baiting leads to the birth of a Finder. When Hearts are a prize of competition, a Challenger is the result. Conversely, if Hearts are the cornerstone of a heist or the subject of theft, a Trickster is made. And finally, Hearts that are gifted forge Inheritors.

Slayers

Often called "the Rabid Monster", the Slayer is forceful, violent, and impatient.



Bloodshed is her first resort, not her last, and she has the muscle to back it up. The Aspects a Slayer incorporates into her True Form always have something to do with war.

Finders

“The Inquisitive Monster”, as Finders are sometimes called, is curious, determined, and driven. Finders want to know everything about everything, and they have the time to do it. Finders use Aspects that enhance their intellectual pursuits.

Challengers

Also known as “the Devoted Monster”, Challengers are skilled, tactful, and arrogant. A Challenger is always looking for the next big game, no doubt because she thinks she’s unbeatable or maybe because she wants someone to finally best her. The True Form of a Challenger is that of some great champion, ready to take on all odds through sheer force of will.

Tricksters

Referred to as “the Noxious Monster”, a Trickster is deceitful, cunning, and treacherous. The favored past-times of a Trickster involve setting traps and pulling the rug out from other people. Tricksters are rotten on the inside, and it shows on the outside when they assume Aspects. They’re toxic.

Inheritors

Synonymous with “the Entitled Monster”, the Inheritor is socially favored, pompous, and ambitious. Ingrained by their initial handout, Inheritors expect respect and are adept at negotiation. Their True Form is a perfect combination of stature and elegance.

Schools of Thought

Less important than the method and a larger matter of choice, a School is the lens through which a member of the Oroboroi looks at the world. The Dominion Schools are based on conclusions regarding the collapse, and the Schools of the Five Evils are based on the rejection of sin...

particularly the flavor of sin the Five Evils Scholar hates most.

Ash

The Dominion School of nihilism, Ash followers feel the world is crumbling around them with no option but acceptance. Fatalistic and broody, they are slow to make friends.

Blood

The Dominion School of honor, Blood followers believe broken oaths are the source of the world’s problems. Determined and serious, these Dragons lay judgment constantly.

Bone

The Dominion School of second chances, Bone followers are similar to Ash followers in that they believe the world is inescapably fragile. However, Bone followers feel that once the world breaks, all that need be done is sweep up the pieces and glue them back together. Eternal optimists, they are quite loveable.

Sweat

The Dominion School of hard-asses, Sweat followers are not happy unless they are suffering. To them, pain is the only true sign of life and to settle into comfort is to resign into mediocrity. They’re tough to get along with.

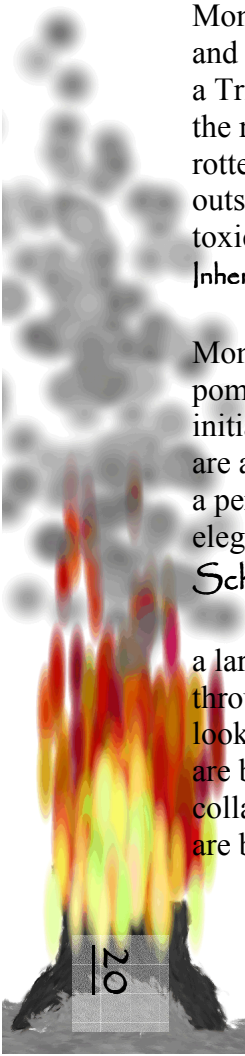
Tears

The Dominion School of carpe-diem, Tears followers feel that the world is lost in its apathy and needs ‘awakening’. The methods these creatures apply are less than savory, though. Scary and difficult to trust.

Wrath

The Five Evils School that detests the failure of rage control. Ironically, they struggle the most with their own anger, and it escapes in explosive bursts. Detested for the damage they inflict, but loved for the charity they rain.

Pride



The Five Evils School that detests the over-inflated ego. They fight to keep themselves out of the spotlight, but once they're there they will not step down. Quickly hated as a stage hog, then just as quickly forgotten.

Greed

The Five Evils School that detests the materialistic hoarding of the modern world. Though they claim their possessions are meaningless, they constantly fear the loss of 'things'. When fear turns to overprotection, people suffer.

Lust

The Five Evils School that detests the washed-out focus that comes from passion untended. They spend their whole lives running from what they love, but inevitably run back into its arms. Once there, they must start over. Tragic, really.

Sloth

The Five Evils School that detests the concession of motivation to apathy. In their fervor to 'get up and go', they tire themselves out and slink home in a stew of shame and exhaustion. Incapable of doing a good job, as they don't work efficiently.

Life of the Flickering Flames

The Oroboroi may live virtually forever, but such a life is not without hardships. Besides the immediately apparent horror of outliving all their loved ones, an Oroboroi must cope with the fact that she has access to stupendous capabilities, but has few appropriate situations in which to expend them. Her membership is her greatest gift and darkest secret, and most of her life is spent trying to take advantage of the gift part without giving away the secret part.

For those that peel away the secret, there are really only three possible outcomes. They could promise never to tell anyone and to help bear the burden of the secret, but that's incredibly unlikely. That, and even if

they did, time would eventually steal them away. They could blab to somebody else, which will either land them in a mental asylum or homicidal frenzy. But... even incoherent nonsense draws unwanted attention. And then, there are those that would harvest the Oroboroi for her Heart, Red Pearl, or blood (would-be Dragons, greed-hoarders, or Knights of the Bloody Chalice respectively).

Another thing the Oroboroi must face in their longevity is boredom. Those that continue living the life they did before their Metamorphosis find it does not fill them the way they did before. Grander stature calls for grander things, and so most Oroboroi take on a Province to occupy their time.

Dens

The name is a little deceiving, but Den comes from a self-loathing Oroboroi who called Dragon alliances a 'Den of Evil'. Unfortunately, the name stuck.

The Oroboroi population is so phenomenally low that usually the only other Dragon one meets is the Heart's previous owner. Still, paths do cross, and when Dragons meet they need a way to interact peaceably with each other. While they're working towards a common goal, Dragons will willingly call themselves beasts 'of the same den'.

Oroboroi Society

A Dragon and her Province combined are easily compared to an independent nation. Likewise, the relationships between two Dragons can be easily analyzed by thinking of them in a world scope, rather than a personal one. Dragons forge trade routes with each other, swap techniques, and make treaties, but they could never really be called friends. So long as a relationship is mutually beneficial or sufficiently forced, the Oroboroi will interact.



It is this ‘island’ mentality that keeps the Oroboroi in check, as they are too paranoid and greedy to actually collaborate on a regular basis. So in truth, the Oroboroi don’t really have a society. It’s a maelstrom of control freaks trying desperately to shield themselves from calamity. Despite this, though, there are a few rules of etiquette that (most) Oroboroi follow.

1: The Subjects must not Know

The presence of the Oroboroi and the details of their physiology are precious secrets that if leaked could endanger every living Dragon. This rule is a matter of self-preservation, and to break it is to risk extinction.

2: The Devourers must not be Harbored

The Heart is a delicacy a Dragon is only allowed to enjoy once. Those that eat Hearts only serve to accelerate the end of days. Members of the Oroboroi are forbidden from interacting with the Hungry both as a message of self-preservation and for the good of their species. If an Oroboroi meets one of the heart-eaters, she should kill him, or find somebody who can.

3: The Righteous must honor Surrender

Members of the Oroboroi are free to place pressure on their peers, be it for wish of land or simple rat-bastardry. All such pressure, political or physical, must stop when the Dragon surrenders. In essence, every Dragon has a right to demand negotiations, and that Dragon is guaranteed her safety up and through the execution of that meeting. Her fate afterwards depends on the agreement forged, but will not impart physical violence. Likely, she will be incorporated as a vassal in the winning Dragon’s Province, or she’ll be deported.

It is important to note that this rule of etiquette only applies to members of the Oroboroi. Those that extend these courtesies to mortals are exceptional, but

rare. The golden rule of survival enforces this. If an Oroboroi wishes to be treated fairly when she is bested, she’d better do the same for those she conquers.

4: The Gracious will greet Guests without Malice

Vagabond Oroboroi and those that decide to vacation may sometimes wander into the Province of another Dragon (with or without knowledge of this blunder). Provided the intrusive Dragon does not stir up trouble, she is allowed to spend three days in the other Dragon’s Province before she’ll be disturbed. If at that time she is asked to leave and she refuses, the other Dragon is within his rights to attack her by any means.

This rule is enforced by mutual courtesy. If a Dragon wishes to be treated well in another’s Province, she’d best extend the same welcoming atmosphere lest she be rendered a hypocrite.

A Dragon’s Lair

Though the term is a bit archaic, the Lair is a Dragon’s home. It’s where she keeps all of her valuables, the most important one being her Heart. A Dragon’s Lair may or may not be part of her Province.

Most modern Oroboroi don’t care for cave life. In fact, they like to live the way they did when they were mortal, or possibly just a smidge more extravagant than that. Lairs run the spectrum from studios to penthouses, and they’re indistinguishable from other properties.

Because of her ventures into the Dreamtide, a Dragon’s Lair fills up with astral energy. Though not immediately apparent, this energy leaves a touch of mysticism behind when a Dragon has gone, and it draws the attention of other supernatural beings. It works like creating a magnet; the Oroboroi presence polarized the world around her, and her presence is no greater felt than in the place she resides.

Provinces

The word 'province' comes from the Latin 'provincia' which meant "a territory under Roman domination". In this case, it is used to mean "a territory under Oroboroi domination", and the meaning of territory is loosely applied. A Dragon Province could be a particular group of professionals, or even a genetic bloodline. For those that take physical Provinces, their geographic extent is usually one building or at most one city block.

The Province is a Dragon's pet project; it gives her something to do as well as a source of accomplishment and pride. The long-term goals of a Dragon almost always involve shaping her Province and its residents into a form that pleases her. It's a reason to live. Pretty much the only reason.

What an Oroboroi may not notice, though, is the way her Province shapes her. As she mixes the ingredients of her region, she too breaks apart and becomes amalgamated in the concoction. She picks up traits of her Province as it assumes traits from her, and the two become a compromise of their original components.

Superstition of the Attra

An Attra, or Wealth Magnet, is a luck trinket believed to attract riches from the shadows. Though it's never been proven the things work, the Oroboroi like to keep them around. In fact, it's a matter of spite to swipe an Attra from another Dragon. If an Attra actually DOES produce wealth, it does not form from the air. It has a source, and sometimes it's of a type that is unsavory (Like illegal narcotics).

The Attra itself is usually a statuette or trinket. Even if it's portable, an Attra is traditionally left on a counter so that it can work in peace. "If you lug it around, the riches won't know where to go!" Attra are always made of stone.

As for what started this superstition, nobody really knows. There's a rumor that

an incredibly selfless act is the only way to create an Attra, as it causes the good karma to solidify as a precious stone. Another says that the collective wishes of mankind gather in the Dreamtide and fall as tears into the material world. Whatever makes them, they're certainly special even if they aren't actually magic.

Threats

Life as an Oroboroi isn't a safe existence. Despite being a particularly exposed target (standing at the top of a ladder does that), there are a slew of supernatural entities that want nothing more than to harvest you for your flesh, your Heart, or your blood. Potential future Dragons, other Dragons, psychotic human serial killer cultists, vampires, sorcerers, were-beasts, forgotten monsters from the deep, and even nightmares from the Dreamtide all have something to gain from slaying a Dragon.

Obviously a human mortal that knows too much is a threat, as they covet the Heart that makes a Dragon special. They are not the only ones that seek Hearts, however. The Hungry, or rather Oroboroi that eat Dragon Hearts to stoke their Furnace, are a constant and dangerous force in the darkness. Then, there are those who wish to snuff out Dragonkind completely, and these predators hunt for Hearts so they can destroy them.

The Knights of the Bloody Chalice are a lingering problem for all the night folk, but especially for the Oroboroi. Blood-bathing murderers, they maim and accost others for sacrifice in their bizarre rituals. A Province, its denizens, and its Dragon are in danger as long as a Chalice Knight is in town. But they are not the only ones interested in Oroboroi Blood. Vampires are especially allured by its full-bodied flavor, and Mages are inescapably intrigued by its alchemical properties.



Then there are those that would kill a Dragon for her flesh. The first that come to mind are the Deep Ones, who like the original forgotten deity wish to trade favors for body parts. Something about these creatures is sustained by Dragon flesh. Werewolves tend to rip Dragons to pieces before asking questions, mistaking them for spirit-claimed. Finally, the Hydra that have slid down the slopes of the Dragon's Code of Ethics have no problem fueling their Furnace with cannibalized flesh, and for this reason they hunt and kill other Oroboroi.

Those that Hunt for Heart

The most dangerous of the Dragon's enemies, those that hunt for an Oroboroi Heart are out to inflict the Last Hand. Threats of this manner are always taken seriously, since it only takes one to end a Dragon.

Mortals

Likely the biggest danger in the Oroboroi world, a mortal that's done his homework is a ticking roll of dynamite. Intoxicated by the promise of power, he'll stop at nothing to 'join the club'.

Mortals have been a problem to the Oroboroi since the Collapse, though only on a personal level. Since consuming a Heart kills a Dragon and makes a new one, the Oroboroi populace as a whole doesn't really care. But... for the Dragon replaced it is a very distressing matter indeed.

Mortals are crafty. Those that become Slayers and Challengers may take a direct approach, but Finders and Tricksters almost always strike from the shadows. Besides possibly their demeanor, there is no way to discern a mortal that knows of the Oroboroi from one that does not.

The Hungry

Normally a Dragon only eats one Heart in her lifetime—that Heart being the one that granted her membership in the Oroboroi. There are always exceptions, though, and those exceptions are the Hungry.

Consuming the Hearts of other Dragons, they irreparably damage the Oroboroi population.

The Hungry are wasteful bastards. Too impatient to stoke their Furnace properly, they dump other Hearts into it like lighter fluid to watch it flare up. For each Heart they devour their Furnace burns more brightly, but their mind slips further into cannibalistic addiction.

Hungry Players

Though it is okay to give players a taste of the cannibalistic spiral of Heart consumption, it's not a good idea to let them indulge. Such action would lead to a meteoric, bloody rise to power... one far too swift for the themes of this game. For this reason the increase in Furnace is not free, but rather discounted. A character who commits cannibalism pays only *4x new dots* for the next dot of Furnace they purchase. This does not stack, so if they intend to eat multiple Hearts they should make sure they have the experience to do so.

Be sure to use consequences to discourage them as well. Eating another Dragon's Heart is both a level 2 sin against ethics (cannibalism) and a level 1 sin (destroying the Heart of an Oroboroi). Roll for degeneration twice, showing the speed of the slip and the slew of mental anguish that follows. Also, eating a Heart transfers all its antecedents to the cannibal Dragon, and the consequences of that should follow suit. Information on these topics can be found in Chapter 3.

The worst part? They look just like other Dragons. Many Oroboroi have trust issues with their neighbors for fear of the Hungry, and every single member of Dragonkind hates them. By both stripping an already thin, non-producing population and driving trustworthy Dragons apart, the

Hungry ruin any chance of Oroboroi prosperity.

Conspirators

Like mortals, Oroboroi Conspirators are a personal and not a societal threat. Holding themselves on high as judges, Conspirators spirit away Hearts and ‘gift’ them to mortals, with the justification that a better Dragon is possible. For Dragons that don’t meet the standard of the Conspirators, life can become quite a hardship.

Conspirators rarely fight their condemned in open combat, but that doesn’t mean they never do. Often they find ways to subcontract Heart location and retrieval, though, so the condemned Oroboroi rarely knows what’s coming until she’s toast.

Just like the Hungry, there’s no way to tell a Conspirator from any other Dragon. They may even forge dens, only to snatch away the most precious possession when guards drop. Sometimes a condemned Dragon gets lucky and changes the opinion of the undercover Conspirator, but such is the exception and not the norm.

Those that Hunt for Blood

Dragon blood, while not inherently mystical, still has some pretty interesting properties. Like a finely aged wine, the Blood becomes full bodied and timeless as it passes through the Furnace. Coating an object with it causes it to resist the tests of time, until the blood itself has been washed away. Those that hunt a Dragon for her blood want it for this peculiar quality.

Knights of the Bloody Chalice

There are men who learned a secret about blood, that secret being the key to immortality. Subjected to the faith of three, the blood becomes a mystical panacea that restores youth and strength, at least for one year. The one seeking this boon must bathe in the blood long enough to coat his entire body once... and the person from which the blood is stolen must perish.

Those that whisk away others to perform this ritual vainly call themselves the Knights of the Bloody Chalice, as its initial conception was forged in the feudal days of the Collapse. Though any blood will do, supernatural blood is preferred for its extraordinary qualities, and the blood of a Dragon is particularly coveted. Its trait of timelessness can be applied to the Knight through this ritual, and the application lasts five times as long as a mortal one.

Knights can blend like mortals, though not as effectively. Knights of even moderate status in the Bloody Chalice conspiracy sweat blood when near another supernatural. It is a means of finding quality victims, but also a useful tell for a targeted Oroboroi. While individual Knights are not much of a threat, they are *never* alone.

Vampires

Of all the inhabitants of the midnight world, the Leeches share the most space with the Oroboroi. Vampires and Dragons both set up kingdom in the cities, and their shared longevity makes their interactions a matter of patience and not fortitude. Truly, they share a lot of common ground with the Oroboroi, but where Dragons sustain themselves on scores of edibles, Vampires must feed on blood.

For the most part, the Kindred and the Oroboroi can interact on a peaceable level. But it is the key difference in their diet that causes a breakdown. Most Dragons are uncomfortable with the harming of their constituents, which is usually how they interpret the involuntary blood donations. Then there’s the matter of Dragon blood. Though there’s no evidence it’s any better than the mortal variety, the aged nature holds a flavor the Kindred can’t resist. It’s almost... narcotic.

Vampires kill Dragons to get a taste of their blood. Or rather, pints of it. An attentive Dragon can recognize a Vampire’s supernatural tendencies with enough



observation, but the Vampire will not give ample opportunities to do so. If he wants Oroboroi blood, he will take it through underhanded means. Sometimes, he requests it nicely and bargains are struck, but this is the exception and not the rule.

Mages

Nothing's worse than a mortal armed with Truth from a higher reality. Mages pull down miracles from a template world and study the material world in search of higher wisdom. Maybe if they could understand the world they live in, they could reach the template world they're so obsessed with. But when Dragons are introduced, they hit a snag.

Part of the Mage creation myth involves Dragons flying off to the higher reality, never to return. Obviously, even a skeptical sorcerer's cynicism is shaken by an encounter with a real Dragon. Though he can be reasonable, the Mage feels he must understand everything about everything about the Dragon, as if it is some grand secret that will validate his life. If the Dragon does not part with information freely, the Mage will take his fill by force. Mages hunt Dragons because they want to study their anatomy. Dragon's blood is particularly useful as an accelerant in supernal rituals, and sorcerers who learn this want to get as much of it as possible. It seems to glue reality together, preventing the 'paradoxes' that Mages fear so much.

Mages can be as crafty as other mortals, and they're just as frail. They are not a threat on the same caliber, however, as they possess a score of unexpected tricks that make combating them... difficult. A Dragon must be sure to research one before letting their confrontation reach combat, since the powers of the Mage will likely unravel at least some of their divinities.

Those that Hunt for Flesh

The least dangerous of the entities that hunt a Dragon, those that hunt for flesh

seek to kill the Oroboroi body (and sometimes reap a reward from the carcass). Since Dragons resurrect, this is usually just an annoying setback. Still, there are problems associated with dying and most Oroboroi would rather not deal with them.

Deep Ones

Like the first forgotten god that came offering a bargain, there are archaic sea monsters in the world that trade favors for body parts. Though most common in sea-bordering communities, the Deep Ones can step into a Dragon's mind through the Dreamtide and often do when they smell profit in an exchange.

Deep Ones seek out Dragons who are spiraling out of control, offering clarity in exchange for an emotion. When the Dragon agrees to the terms, the Deep One helps himself to one of her organs. Both the physical and symbolic representation of the emotion, these organs sustain the Deep One in inexplicable ways.

Deep Ones do not need to strike bargains often, but each one they forge makes them stronger and more dangerous. They become bold, more demanding, and in the end when a bargain fails they simply take what they need. Deep Ones are not completely unpredictable, as they approach the Dragon directly and their strengths are quite similar to those of the Oroboroi. Still, they are not to be underestimated.

Werewolves

There are peculiar beings that are half-flesh and half-spirit. They come from the Shadow, a place forbidden to the Oroboroi. Or maybe they migrate there afterwards. It's hard to tell, but they seem to be born this way. Shape-shifters, the lot of them, and spiritually minded to boot. Werewolves are the things that go bump in the night for a Dragon, since they are so totally foreign to the Material world. Oroboroi and the moon-changers sometimes

share space, and when they do the moon-changers tend not to play nice.

More a matter of false identification than anything else, Werewolves fight Dragons because they mistake them for spirit invaders, or possibly the possessed. This is of course ridiculous, as the Oroboroi are the sole owners of their corporeal form and no Shadow entity can intrude (excluding Antecedents, of course). Still, Werewolves feel threatened by Dragons and they kill the threat accordingly.

Werewolves can take human guise, but it is not a very effective disguise. Something about them just screams “RAGE!”, and for an attentive Dragon they’re relatively easy to spot. The real danger comes from the Werewolf’s spirit powers, and not its shape-changing prowess. While an Oroboroi can meet a moon-changer tooth for tooth and claw for claw, when the whispers of the Shadow are brought to bear they cut through the Dragon like butter.

Hydra

Dragons that forsake their ethics quickly devolve and mutate into horrible monsters. Tales tell of the Hydra burning and devouring everything in their path in an undying rampage. It’s all about the next meal for Hydra, and for the Oroboroi whose Province they tear through the Hydra poses both a danger to body and a danger to the secrecy of their ‘club’.

Hydra aren’t particularly bright, as they are too busy bickering with themselves to make a solid decision. When they attack a Dragon it is simply because they’re hungry, and Dragon flesh burns hottest in the Furnace.

Hydra are the most likely to strike in open combat. They cause a lot of collateral damage, but at their core they’re still Oroboroi. A Dragon can fight a Hydra with the knowledge he can’t do anything she can’t do. The only trick is dealing with the

unpredictability that comes with a Hydra’s insanity.

Werewolves, Vampires and Mages, oh my!

Though discussed as possible threats to an Oroboroi, Vampires, Werewolves and Mages are each entities beyond the scope of this book. If you wish to know more about them, you should consult the corresponding White Wolf books

Vampire: The Requiem, Werewolf: The Forsaken and Mage: The Awakening.

It is important to note that the interactions presented here are ways for these night folk to act as predators to a Dragon. Each could just as easily be an ally... for the exact same reasons as well. Know that every person is different, and there is no restriction *demanding* these entities attack the Oroboroi.

Dreamtide Nightmares

Sometimes a Dragon dies without reason. Sometimes an entity kills a Dragon simply because it can. The twisted inhabitants of the Dreamtide, known as the Nightmares, flex their muscles by stepping on Dragons.

Nightmares are peculiar entities, made from an amalgamation of violent and frightening imagery. In (very) rare cases a nightmare kills its host dreamer’s soul and crawls into the body, warping it into a preferred shape. For the most part, though, Dragons encounter Nightmares when they are traveling the Dreamtide.

As they are made up of mental energy, the Strength of a nightmare is equivalent to its Presence and Intelligence. In this way, they are very similar to ghosts, but a standard nightmare is far more powerful. If a Dragon wishes to fight a Nightmare, she best corner it in the individual dream of a mortal, so that she can



enlist the help of the sleeper. Otherwise, fighting a Nightmare in the Pandemonium is practically impossible.

Realms Invisible

When a Dragon dies, she must wait in Twilight for her body to repair itself. This space between worlds gives her a glimpse into the places that surround the Daylight. Though she can only gain access to the Dreamtide, she can still glean information as she sees others slip in and out of these realms.

Credit where Credit is Due

Much of the information on the Realms invisible is derived from White Wolf products, especially **Mage: The Awakening**, **Geist the Sin Eaters**, and **Changeling the Lost**. It is important to note that, while liberties were taken here, the information presented on the Realms Invisible here is still the intellectual property of White Wolf. The writers of this supplement do not take credit for it, as that would be plagiarism.

The Dreamtide

The original dragons entered the world from the Dreamtide. Becoming half- astral and half-material, they were able to invigorate themselves on the hopes and fears of others, much as modern gods are given physical presence from prayer. When the Oroboroi overthrew the original dragons they inherited access to the Dreamtide, but not the ability to better themselves through the thoughts of their subjects.

The Dreamtide itself is held apart from the Daylight by a barrier of mental noise called the Miasma. All living creatures have the capacity to pass through this barrier, but only with their minds when they sleep. The act of entering Rapid Eye Movement sleep thins the Miasma around a

mortal just enough for an Oroboroi to tear it open and step inside, both body and mind.

In the shallow end of the Dreamtide near the Miasma, the realm is comprised entirely of the sleeper's dream. As the Oroboroi journey deeper into the Dreamtide, similar dreams begin to merge together, and the denizens become more powerful. Mortal minds never venture here, though malicious entities that are born here may travel towards the Miasma to torture them. Finally, should the Oroboroi venture even further into the Dreamtide she will reach Pandemonium, the amalgamation of all unconscious thought in the world. Pandemonium is a horrid, never-ending nightmare filled with the most frightful monsters man and beast can imagine. Only a fool would travel there.

The Shadow

All objects, instinctive creatures, ideas, and even weather phenomenon of the world have both a physical and a symbolic form, the symbolic form existing as a spirit in the Shadow. Ironically, the only being that does not have a spirit counterpart is mankind. The Oroboroi cannot tell whether this is a sign that they are unique or damaged in some way, but as they are derived from mankind they too are robbed this spirit reflection. The moon-changers come and go from the Shadow, and that is how the Oroboroi know of it.

The Gauntlet, as the Werewolves call it, keeps people from freely passing between the Daylight and the Shadow. A whirling barrier that resembles the spinning blades of a blender, 'the Gauntlet' stands as quite the appropriate name for this world threshold. Werewolves only cross when the Gauntlet is thin, which seems to happen in places and times of spiritual significance (and most often at night).

From what few glances an Oroboroi can get through the Gauntlet, the Shadow looks like the world through a mirror darkly

(thus the name). Since Oroboroi have seen things as terrifying as walking buildings and men made entirely of knives, they don't feel too badly about not being able to visit the Shadow.

The Hedge

A promise congeals into obligation, and obligation escalates into fate. There is a place where this is the only law of physics, and that place is the Hedge. While things native to this strange place can handle it, the lack of boundaries twists anything else it touches. Mortals dragged into the Hedge become Changelings, and it is because of Changelings that Oroboroi know of the Hedge at all.

The Hedge is protected by a towering line of bloodied thorns, which the Oroboroi call the Bramble. This Bramble is ubiquitous except in places with a natural opening, where a Changeling can craft a gateway into the Hedge. Gateways are shut tight unless they are in use, so an Oroboroi only sees the Hedge when a Changeling is passing through.

The Hedge itself looks like something out of a twisted fairytale. Or maybe the Hedge came first, and fairytales followed. A beautiful but dangerous place, the Hedge has long been a matter of intrigue for the Oroboroi. Everything within is... alive.

The Underworld

Not everything that dies leaves a ghost. Most things are severed body, mind, and soul, with the mind traveling to the Underworld. Many religions speak of afterlife or the cycle of reincarnation, and the process seems to be inescapably intertwined with the Underworld. There are ferrymen who come and go from this place, and they are known as the Bound.

The impassible barrier between the Underworld and Twilight, which the Bound

neglected to name, is often called the Wall by the Oroboroi. This may be because they feel it's a solid entity no living body may pass through, but more likely it's because they couldn't think up a more clever name. The Bound pass through pre-determined weaknesses in the Wall known as Avernian Gates, and the Oroboroi get a quick peek when they do so.

Antecedents who cannot sustain themselves in Twilight fall through the Wall, never to return. Oroboroi recognize the Underworld as the tragic finale to their Last Hand, and likewise are terrified of the place. If they manage to sum up the courage to look, they see only a twisting tunnel, lined with the mourning traditions of the region.

The Ether

Potential in its purest form is a blinding white energy that fills up everything around it. This energy is not light, heat, sound, or electricity, but some manifestation of all these things combined. Some would call this energy "Ichor". The Ether is filled to capacity with this purified potential, and the Oroboroi believe it's held at bay to keep from drowning out the world in white.

Rarely does the Ether open up to the Material world. The boundary of the Ether is a blinding tornado frozen in solid glass, and the polarized imagery of this led the Oroboroi to call it "the Equinox". A human silhouette occasionally cracks the Equinox, creating a Fracture that it can pass through. Oroboroi never get a good look at these Ether-walkers, but they seem very powerful and terrible.

As for the Ether itself, little can be discerned from the glances through Equinox Fractures. Only a blast of brilliant white chaos slips out. With just this little taste, it becomes apparent the Ether is something both magnificent and terrible.



Chapter Two: Character

(Full-Page art needed. A picture of Cameron in an office, with a spider-web fractured shot-glass in her hand would work well)

“Do you mind explaining to me why a blood-sweating psychotic had this card in his pocket?” Cameron flicked the paste-board rectangle towards the desk. It landed face up, a picture of a blazing dragon adorned it alongside an address. The Squire of Hearts.

“That guy tried to kill me, you know. I suppose you hired him?” The luxurious office chair swiveled around, revealing Frank Gringham.

“Don’t do that, that’s totally lame,” Cameron commented. “I’m afraid I had to. I so rarely get the chance to play the big-shot anymore.” The whole office was made up to be classy, but it was really a dingy pit. The chair was pleather, the books cardboard boxes and the desk plywood.

“Mister McGregor and I had a bargain... a sort of mutual blackmail that kept each other in check. Now that he’s out of the picture, I can get back to business.” Frank’s lips receded, revealing a sinister grin of pearl-white teeth. He leaned back smugly in his chair.

“You know, your office is sort of pathetic. For a guy as rich and famous as you, I thought I’d see, like, plasma television sets or something.” Cameron was feeling pretty good about herself.

“Ah, but this isn’t my office.”

“What?”

Frank pitched the glass of brandy at Cameron. Catching it, she sent fractures up its edges and shattered it in a mess of alcohol and broken glass. But when she looked back, Frank was gone. And then she noticed the ticking.

“Oh shit.”

“We’re our own dragons as well as our own heroes, and we have to rescue ourselves from ourselves”

–Tom Robbins

This chapter takes an in-depth look into the character construction process. Included are the five methods—the means through which a dragon acquires her heart that colors her approach to a leader’s life—and the two schools of heartless Oroboroi. Also included are the various Aspects a Dragon can manifest, as well as all ten Philosophies and the reality-bending power associated with them. The chapter concludes with an exploration of several sects that Dragons of a certain philosophy may follow.

Character Creation

To build a character you must first invent a concept and then flesh it out with the provided mechanics. Don’t try to build somebody that can ‘win’ a game, strengths and weaknesses can produce an individual in your character that really brings her to life.

It’s best to work with both the storyteller and your fellow players during the character creation process to ensure that no game-breaking conflict will develop. While tension between characters can make a game more interesting, personas too incompatible to cooperate undermine the story and may drag conflict back into the real world. Remember the game is about having a good time; if the characters make that impossible it’s time to dream up new characters.

Character-Creation Process

Use the rules from the **World of Darkness Rulebook**, and add the following template to dragon characters during Step Five.

Choose a method (see page XX)

Choose a school (see page XX)

For beginning Aspects, place five dots in common Aspects, three dots in method Aspects, and two “free pick” dots in Aspects from *any* category. For beginning Philosophies, place one dot in the philosophy that matches your school, and place another dot in a philosophy of your choice (Even your school’s philosophy).

Dragons have access to merits specially designed for them (see page XX)

Morality is now called Ethics (see page XX)

If you want to create a Dragon-born, bonded, or pilot light character, you may do so with the Storyteller’s approval.

Identical to the process for making mortals, follow the rules detailed in the **World of Darkness Rulebook** and purchase the corresponding merit.

Bonded and pilot light characters will need to use the sheet from this book, and will have to pick Aspects (Unless they are associated with another player).

Step One:

In accordance with the “Dark Pack” agreement terms, the steps of Character Creation will not be provided here. These sections were written and then excised, so that the working draft had all components and could easily be made compliant with any changing terms of the agreement. For the final draft, this section will be left with gaps for you to record your own notes, as



well as to ensure internal page references are not altered.

Step Two:

Excised

Step Three:

Excised

Step Four:

Excised

Step Five: Add Dragon Template

Steps 5, 7, and 8 are exceptions handled in the Dark Pack agreement, where specific changes to the character creation rules are necessary to make them compatible with the Dragon template. In the final draft, this note will be removed.

With one act of pseudo-cannibalism your character ceases to be human and becomes something *else*. Whether that's a good thing is something to be questioned, but there are advantages to holding such power.

No character can possess multiple supernatural templates. While a character may be able to maintain abilities from her human life, other supernatural features are purged when she joins the Oroboroi. Only mortals may become Dragons.

Method

The means by which a Dragon came upon her heart color the flame of her furnace, and likewise the cut of her personality. Though the method does not control how a Dragon acts, Dragons of a certain method can be expected to behave in a certain way. After all, it takes a type to do things that way.

A Method makes certain Aspects more readily available, those that fit the theme of the means. At least three dots of the starting ten allotted to Aspects at character creation must be spent within the Dragon's method.

School

Schools are both a means of blaming the past and approaching the future. When a

Dragon becomes what she is she is made aware of both the past of her new species and their purpose. Schools of philosophy help her approach this knowledge, justifying the mistakes of her predecessors while vowing to charge toward a better future (Or what's left of it).

Though a Dragon may find herself a follower of many Philosophies, the one held closest to her heart is that of her School, and when a conflict of ethics occurs she will turn to her School for guidance. Choosing a school is a very personal matter; usually all of the variables are internal. A select few join schools due to external pressure, but such decision usually backfires in the Dragon's future.

Check the Dominion schools (pp.XX-XX)—or possibly the schools of the Five Evils (pages XX-XX) if you selected that merit—and pick one that fits your character's mindset. If you have trouble, ask your Storyteller or the other players for their opinion.

The biggest benefit of membership in a school is the fantastic power born when the philosophy manifests into reality. Destruction, Oath, Health, Pain, and Mind are engrained strengths all Dragons possess, and Philosophies grant an outlet for those strengths.

Furnace

Sometimes a measure of age, and sometimes a measure of stature, is your character's Furnace. The Furnace is a fire at the core of every Dragon; a stoked fire that makes them possible. A bigger Furnace means a heartier Dragon, who has more thoroughly embraced her new nature. Dragons with higher Furnace manifest Aspects more quickly, have more Breath to spend on Philosophies and sects, and can burn practically anything flammable to keep the Furnace lit. Dragons with low Furnace are slow to take their True Form, have little breath to spare, and must eat carefully lest

they choke on the volumes required to maintain the flames.

All Dragons receive one free dot of Furnace at character creation. Furnace can be increased with Merit dots at that time, at a rate of three Merit dots to one dot of Furnace. This places a limit of Furnace 3 at character creation. More on Furnace can be found on page XX.

Breath

A measure of the Dragon's energy, Breath not only fuels certain Aspects, it is refined to bring material force to Philosophies. A Dragon with high breath is capable of belching waves of flame, using high levels of philosophy, and cauterizing severe injury. A Dragon with low Breath is soon a Dragon with no Breath, it's incredibly important.

Any Dragon character begins play with a number of Breath points equal to her Ethics. One point of Breath must be spent each day to stave off deprivation (See **World of Darkness Rulebook** p 175). Breath changes as your character lives from day to day, uses Philosophies or sects, uses certain Aspects, or eats. It is described in full on page XX.

Unlike other derived traits, Breath has only points to be acquired and spent. There are limits on Breath expenditure per turn and Breath storage, which are details on page XX.

Aspects

When a Dragon undergoes her metamorphosis, she acquires a number of "divinities" (As the Oroboroi call them) that define her True Form. Traits, or features, or rather Aspects as they are most commonly called, all grant a biological boost to be the best. A starting Dragon begins play with ten Aspects. Five must be drawn from the Common Aspect lists, three must be drawn from the list associated with the Dragon's method, and two can be taken from a list of

your choice (Even a list associated with a different method).

Aspects are explored in further detail on page XX.

Philosophies

Derived from a school of thought, Philosophies (Capital P) are a mindset made real by force of will or strength of Breath. They are the only potency Dragons do not draw from their own genetic structure; they are the power of idea. Oroboroi start with only two Philosophies, the first level of the philosophy associated with their School, and one level of your choice.

It is possible to start with two levels of a single philosophy, provided it's in the primary school. For more on Philosophies, see page XX.

Step Six:

Excised

Step Seven: Determine Advantages

Most of the advantages Dragons receive are identical to those found in Chapter 4 of the **World of Darkness Rulebook**. One advantage in particular differs significantly, however.

Ethics

A set of regulations for dealing with humans and other Dragons is psychologically ingrained in the Heart, and recorded to the brain during the metamorphosis. Becoming a member of the Oroboroi involves a ripening of the soul (In both connotations), and certain things become... trivial. People become expendable, no more significant than any other possession. Not all Dragons feel this way, but their soul is no worse for wear acting on that notion.

To fit this notion that people are more expendable than property, the Code of Draconic Ethics has been fashioned. It speaks against meaningless sacrifice, but



cares little for using tools for a purpose. And that's what mortals are to Dragons: tools to be used and broken. Ethics replaces Morality.

Optionally (at Storyteller discretion) a character may start with a reduced Ethics rating in exchange for bonus experience. Each point of Ethics sacrificed grants 5 additional experience. Note that such a sacrifice cannot lower Ethics below five, and will also affect the starting amount of Breath the character receives. Saintry Devil Oroboroi cannot trade Ethics for experience.

For more information on the Code of Draconic Ethics, see page XX.

Grand Dynasty

Sometimes a Storyteller wishes to widen the gap between induction into the Oroboroi and the start of play. Though it is best to play the game from the start with an unfamiliar group, if your troupe is familiar with the setting and systems of **Dragon: The Embers** you may decide to grant players additional experience to spend at character creation.

First days of Dragonhood	0 EXP
Petty Vassal	35 EXP
Independent Nation	75 EXP
World Power	120+ EXP

Step Eight: Spark of Life

With the muck of the character sheet out of the way, it's time to make your character as real as possible. Why did you choose the traits you did? Is there a story behind that extra dot of Resolve? Did your character go to college for those ratings in Academics, or was she a self-inspired bookworm? Try to come up with a reason for your trait choices. In fiction everything revealed about a character has at least some degree of significance, and it is your job to create those degrees. That is the Spark of Life. A character with a well-defined

background is more 'alive' than one that is just an assortment of features. It is essential to remember that, in the end, the story is more important than the stats.

With that in mind, consider some of the physical characteristics your character exhibits. What does she look like? What are her features like when she sports True Form? The Aspects give a guideline for physical tells, but don't let that limit you. Try to create a picture of your creation in your mind. If you're good with a sketchbook, draw her out. The more you do while creating the character, the more attached you will become and the more real she will be.

Physical stature is not the only component of appearance. How does your character carry herself? Act at a party? Is the world revolving around her, or the other way around? What kind of clothes does she wear? What's her favorite food? Color? Branch of Government? Okay, so that last one was a joke, but you get the idea.

[IMAGE TO THE RIGHT!]

Character Creation Quick Reference

This Reference, if used with the one provided on page 34 of the **World of Darkness** Rulebook, can be utilized to quickly and easily follow the steps of creating a Dragon character.

Method

Choose the method through which your character obtained her Heart. Five Methods exist.

Slayer (The Rabid Monster): violent, forceful, impatient; **+1 Strength**

Finder (The Inquisitive Monster): curious, determined, driven; **+1 Intelligence**

Challenger (The Devoted Monster): skilled, tactful, arrogant; **+1 Wits**

Trickster (The Noxious Monster): deceitful, cunning, treacherous; **+1 Manipulation**

Inheritor (The Entitled Monster): favored, pompous, ambitious; **+1 Presence**

School

Choose the school of thought that your character follows. Ten schools are available, though the latter five require the “Scholar of the Five Evils” Merit. If you do not choose a school, you must take the “True Heart” Merit.

Embers

Ash (Destruction): anarchists, demolitionists, saboteurs

Blood (Oath): prosecutors, judges, executioners

Bone (Health): pacifists, humanitarians, menders

Sweat (Pain): workaholics, contractors, tanks

Tears (Mind): zealots, mediators, puppeteers

Saintly Devils

Wrath (Destruction): prey/predator

Pride (Oath): sheep/shepherd

Greed (Health): ascetic/abyss

Lust (Pain): abstainer/addict

Sloth (Mind): brigadier/bum

Furnace

The default Furnace rating of an Oroboroi character is one dot. Three Merit dots may be allocated towards this rating, raising it to two dots of Furnace for three Merit dots or three dots of Furnace for six Merit dots.

Breath

An Oroboroi character begins play with a number of points of Breath equal to her Ethics.

Merits

Dragon Merits include Graft (● to ●●●●●), Hoard (● to ●●●●●), Lair (varies; special), Scholar of the Five Evils (●), and True Heart (●●●).

Normal human characters, but not Dragons, can take the Dragon-Born (●● to ●●●●●), Bond of Brood (●●●●●), or Pilot Light (●●●●●) Merits.

Experience Point Costs

Trait	Cost
Attribute	New dots x 5
Skill	New dots x 3
Skill Specialty	3
Common Aspect	New dots x 5
Method Aspect	New dots x 6
Non-Method Aspect	New dots x 7
Primary Philosophy	New dots x 6
Ancillary Philosophy	New dots x 8
Merit	New dots x 2
Furnace	New dots x 8
Ethics	New dots x 3
Willpower	8

Prelude

An optional private session between player and storyteller, the Prelude is a chance to explore your character's life *before* the Oroboroi. Think of it as a test drive, to see how your skill and attribute choices fit, and how your creation reacts under different forms of pressure. It also lets you explore the reasoning behind your character's Method.

A Prelude doesn't necessarily have to run like a normal session. It can be used as a brainstorm to develop a rich past for the character, a pre-emptive exposure to the system if you're a new player, or even just a warm-up for a new or out-of-practice storyteller. Nothing on your sheet is concrete during the prelude, if during the course of it you find your character has greater bursts of mental prowess but is troubled under stress, you may wish to move a point of Resolve to Intelligence. These tweaks are acceptable, but it's best to do it before the chronicle begins.

Preludes can also be run with the entire group simultaneously, but it may become more hectic than expected. If the storyteller prefers, two sets of pre-chronicle sessions could be held, one on the individual level and one regarding the troupe's union as an Oroboroi Den.

Example of Character Creation

After reading this book, Frank decides to take over his gaming troupe's World of Darkness campaign, which had disbanded a few weeks before at the end of the last chronicle. He decides to reuse the setting from the previous game, but have each player create a new character. All of the players are familiar with the setting, as it is being recycled from the last game. With this, Frank states that the characters can use any reasonable concept, so long as they have not possessed their Oroboroi Heart for more than a year. Jesse comments in jest about

playing a serial killer, but to his surprise Frank explains that could be a viable concept. Intrigued, Jesse decides to elaborate.

Jesse's character is likely going to be a mixer in the group, so Frank demands a concept that the other players approve. Jesse's first attempt, "Creepy Janitor", was rejected as being hackneyed and stereotypical. "Philanthropic Sadist" fared a little better, but Frank decided to veto it for his own reasons. Finally, Jesse settles on "Sinister Bartender" and refuses to budge. The other players don't mind, though, as they think it'd work well with their concepts.

Jesse begins to flesh out his character's background. He determines the Bartender started his business as a vain attempt to shake his own addictions, but as the booze left his system he found... other outlets for his stress.

The grit of the character creation process, along with its justification, has been removed in compliance with the Dark Pack agreement. A gap will be provided here in the final draft to maintain internal page references and give room for your own notes should you print a copy of this game.

Here the character creation process begins to flow a little less smoothly. Jesse has not played **Dragon the Embers** before, and so he is not very familiar with the rules involved. Frank explains that it is mostly like the other supernatural templates, but Jesse requests access to the **Dragon** book anyway.

The first choice to be made is Method. Jesse flips forward to page XX and quickly skims the five available Methods, settling on Trickster as it feels the most appropriate for his sinister Bartender. He tells Frank that his character acquired the Heart several days after cleaning up one of his 'projects', as it sat unharmed in the incinerator when he dumped the personal

supplies. Frank says that would be closer to the Finder Method, but considering the means through which the Dragon was disposed he makes an exception. For selecting this method, Jesse's bartender gains an extra dot of Manipulation, raising it to 4.

Next, Jesse must choose a school. Frank mentions that the Tears School of Dominion fits his character's persona almost perfectly, so Jesse takes a look. After briefly comparing it to the other Schools, he agrees that it's the best fit for the Bartender. The Tears Philosophy will start with a single dot because of this decision, but that comes later.

Furnace is up next. All **Dragon** characters automatically possess one dot in this trait, but it can be increased at a rate of one Furnace dot for every three Merit dots sacrificed. Jesse feels his bartender will need all the Merits he can muster, so he decides to leave the furnace rating at 1.

Next, Jesse must determine his Bartender's starting Breath. This is equal to his Ethics, so Jesse flips to Chapter 3 to check out the sins. Though not as grave as when he was a mortal, serial murder is still a pretty heinous sin for the Bartender. Jesse decides that warrants a lower starting ethics, so he sells off two dots for ten experience. That means the Bartender begins with five points of Breath.

And then, on to Aspects. Jesse has five dots for the Hearts Suit, three dots for the Clubs Suit, and two dots to place where he pleases. Scales 1, Natural Weaponry 1 (Wrist Blade), Soothing Incense 1, Many-Limbed 1, and Wall Climber 1 are his five picks from the Hearts Suit. Vile Blood 1, Chameleon Hide 1, and Venoms 1 are his Clubs Suit choices. And Pounce! 1 from the Blades Suit and Impassioned Effort 1 from the Diamonds Suit are his final two choices. Jesse pictures the True Form of his sinister

Bartender as a lurking beast, waiting on the ceiling to strike.

Finally, the last application of the Oroboroi template is the selection of Philosophies. Only two dots are available, and one is already designated for the Tears Philosophy due to Jesse's School selection. He decides to place the other dot in Tears as well, since it presents more immediate utility than the first level of a different Philosophy.

Jesse has seven dots of Merits to assign, so he starts with the Dragon-specific ones in this book. "True Heart" and "Scholar of the Five Evils" do not appeal to him, and he decides that the Bartender likely would not possess a Graft. Lair intrigues him, though. He dedicates two dots to the sinister Bartender's Lair Merit, converting the local watering hole into a safe haven with minimal security and size. Anything more extravagant would likely draw too much attention from his patrons, but even the Bartender is not immune to the Heart-oriented paranoia of the Oroboroi. Jesse also considers the Horde Merit, but decides the Bartender is neither affluent nor arrogant enough to sleep on his riches.

So he turns back to the **World of Darkness** Rulebook. Jesse sees Barfly as a perfect fit, so he spends a dot there. Contacts (the Downtrodden) eats up another dot, but fits perfectly with both the Bartender's Lair and his profession. This causes him to reconsider the Lair Merit, and he decides to apply three more dots to it. One of these increases the size of the location again, making for a more sprawling bar-scene. The remaining two go to devotees, which Jesse declares as the Bartender's regulars. Devotees function similar to Allies (page 114 of the **World of Darkness** Rulebook), but are more diverse in exchange for their reduced numbers. They may influence a greater variety of



fields, but not nearly as quickly or as effectively as a legitimate horde of allies would.

Jesse has spent all of his Merit dots, but has realized he did not put anything towards Resources. He considers rearranging his Merits, but Frank (eager to finish the character creation process) says the Bartender's devotees help cover the bill for his big appetite.

Jesse's sinister Bartender is almost complete mechanically. He need simply assign a Virtue and Vice, mark down his Ethics, and determine his other traits.

Jesse has already decided the Bartender's Vice is Gluttony. Too long has addiction plagued him in his vain attempt to escape his own life. Deep down he hates himself for being so flawed, so he looks for answers at the bottom of a bottle. At least he did until he started looking for them at the back of somebody's intestines. Despite the sickly degenerated shell of a man the Bartender has become, he still dreams of kicking his need for addiction. Jesse declares the Bartender's Virtue is Hope. Jesse has already sold two dots of the Bartender's Ethics, so it starts at 5. Frank doesn't ask for justification as this sacrifice makes sense for a serial killer.

Now Jesse must calculate and mark down the Bartender's other traits.

This portion has been excised in accordance with the "Dark Pack" agreement.

Jesse's Bartender needs a name. He decides to be a smart-ass, so using a random number generator he tries to invent a first name. The luck of the draw gives him a four-letter name with two vowels and two consonants, and those turn out to be "u" "e" "k" and "x". Xuke. Frank says it's a little funky, but considering a name that sounds even remotely cool came out of a random number generator, he lets Jesse use it with a

spelling change. "Zuke" becomes the last name of the Bartender, and vicariously his nickname. Zuke needs a first name, though, and Jesse decides to go with Damian.

Damian Zuke, sinister Bartender of the Rotten Luck, looks to be in his mid-thirties, though he's actually twenty-seven. Spiraling down the drain of alcoholism, Zuke purchased his bar from its previous owner in a vain attempt to fill his need for booze vicariously through his patrons. As the liquor left his system a hole remained, and in a scuffle against a rowdy patron that hole found a new plug.

Zuke needs to kill frequently or he begins to go into withdrawal. Because of this, he will begin play with the Addiction flaw. This need is rooted in his soul, an impulse to deaden his feelings of self-loathing. He acquired his Oroboroi Heart and became a Trickster because of this addiction; one of the lingering patrons he vanquished had it in her possession, and he discovered it as he burned her effects in the bar's furnace. The sickly sweet smell of the fireproof flesh overpowered Zuke's inhibitions, and he fetched it from the flames for his plate.

Despite becoming supernatural, Zuke's life did not really change much. His methods of dealing with prey had been enhanced, but overall he was the same monster. In fact, his targets were indiscriminate until a conniving Blood Dragon (one of the other players) made a deal. She would supply him with trace-free targets in exchange for friendship and favors. Little does Zuke know these targets are actually unfavorable residents of the Blood Dragon's Province.

Frank says it sounds like a great start. He reclaims the books from Jesse so that he can help the other players make their characters.

Traits

The nine-chambered heart sets Dragons apart from standard mortals, both in immense physical prowess and in longevity.

New Advantage: Furnace

Burn hot, burn bright, and keep burning. That's the cornerstone of life in the Oroboroi. To combat the cold world of politics and secrecy, Dragons store their fuel-source at the core of their body. Both a rating of stature and of age, the Furnace gauges both the control a Dragon holds over her own body and the influence she can bring to bear in the world around her. The heat of the Furnace gives force to a Dragon's Philosophies, it incinerates the supernatural before it reaches her person, and it accelerates metabolism in both digestion and the manifestation of True Form.

All Dragon characters begin play with one dot of Furnace. This value may be increased at a rate of 1 Furnace dot for every 3 Merit points spent, with a maximum starting Furnace of 3. High Furnace at game's start may be a result of a courageous early career in Dragon life, or may be a result of longevity. To make your character more rounded, be sure to rationalize such a purchase. After the sheet is finalized, experience must be spent to further increase this advantage's rating.

With the growth of Furnace comes greater access to Breath. The Furnace rating represents the heat of the Dragon's core, and it is the heat and not the volume that creates Breath. A Dragon with a hotter Furnace has more Breath to spend, and can spend it more quickly. Furnace ratings of 6 or higher also increase the limit of Attributes and Skills to legendary limits.

When a dot of Furnace is purchased, it comes with two free dots of Aspects. That means a higher-Furnace Dragon is a more

complex Dragon. As stated before, the Furnace incinerates peculiar supernatural forces that approach the Dragon. This is applied as bonus dice in contested rolls against Supernatural powers (Excluding Spirit-Origin powers, see the "Supernatural Conflict" sidebar on page XX).

Overcooked and Under-Processed

Dragons are hopelessly paranoid, and with good reason. If anyone happened across their most valuable possession (with knowledge of its purpose) that would be the end of them. The Furnace does not make it any easier on the poor monsters. As it increases in intensity, its spectral connection to the Heart forces the disembodied organ to work harder to maintain core temperature. The Heart beats louder and louder as the Furnace grows hot, and soon it is even audible from a distance. Anyone listening for subtle sounds in the vicinity of the Heart gains a bonus to hearing rolls based on the Heartbeat rating that corresponds to its owner's Furnace rating. For example, a Dragon with Furnace 4 has a Heart that beats with such intensity that a listener receives +2 to rolls while trying to detect it. What horror an Oroboroi must feel when even she can hear the Heart beating?

Another unfortunate side-effect of high-Furnace is the heat required to stoke it. A higher Furnace burns hotter, so it needs more fuel. To garner a point of Breath, the Dragon must eat a number of Calories equal to or exceeding the listed value for her Furnace rating. This also affects how many Calories she must eat in a day to stave off starvation, so high-Furnace Dragons have to eat more, and sometimes things that are less than pleasant, to keep their bodies ticking (This process is simplified through the Caloric Point system, explained in Chapter 3 on page XX.).

New Advantage: Breath

The Furnace generates heat, but the application of that heat produces Breath.



Though in its unrefined form Breath is just a mass of flame and heat, it can be subconsciously reassigned to different forms of energy, often bringing the impossible into reality by force-of-will.

Breath does not have a dot value, it only comes in points. Like Willpower points, Breath may be spent to achieve a variety of functions. Unlike Willpower, however, Breath usage is limited by Furnace and its recovery is based on Calorie consumption. Breath may be expended to:

- Stave off Starvation. One point of Breath must be spent every day to meet the Dragon's food requirements, or they begin to suffer from hunger and thirst the following day (See the **World of Darkness Core Rulebook**, page 175). Because Dragons need so much to keep the Furnace stoked, they do not get the extended periods without sustenance for high Stamina or Resolve.
- Gather Aspect points as a reflexive action instead of a manifest action. Aspect mechanics are explained in detail in Chapter 3 (page XX)
- Power a Philosophy. The available Philosophies can be found on pages XX-XX.
- Recover a single point of lethal damage when used in conjunction with another point (In other words, it takes two Breath to remove one lethal wound).
- Fly with the appropriate Aspect.
- Breathe Fire with the appropriate Aspect.
- Pump up an Attribute with the appropriate Aspect.

There are two major ways to recover spent points of Breath.

- Eat the required amount of Calories for your Furnace rating.

- Sleep on a hoard of treasure to draw metaphoric nourishment (See the Hoard Merit, page XX)

Merits

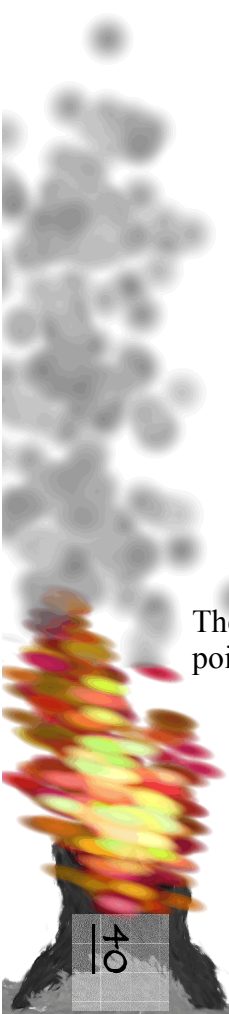
All modern Dragons began as humans, so they are entitled to any merits that a normal human could have. They must still meet the same requirements, but such merits are not stripped away from them when they join the Oroboroi. In fact, the only merits they can lose from Heart consumption are those that specify they are incompatible with supernatural templates. It is important to note that Aspects do not help with meeting prerequisites. The complexity of having access to an ability only when a certain combination of Dragon traits are manifest would cause a slew of problems in the long run, so all merits are limited by the Mortal Coil and not the True Form.

Below are merits specifically designed for Dragons and the mortals with whom they interact.

Graft (● to ●●●●●)

Effect: Your Dragon begins play with a Graft, a boney clasp that when attached to tools grants a bonus equal to its rating for the use of that tool. These dreadful devices are created by erasing the body and soul of a mortal, though your character may not be aware of that. In all likelihood, the Graft was a spoil of war or a lucky find, and its nature and function remain a mystery to her.

Grafts may be attached to a tool at the beginning of a scene as an instant action, or removed from a tool in the same fashion. All Grafts are size 1 with durability equal to twice their rating. They are surprisingly difficult to destroy, as they repair themselves at a rate of 1 Structure per scene while attached to another object. The Graft Merit may be taken multiple times to signify different Grafts, but its total rating cannot exceed 5 at character creation (So you could



have a 4 dot Graft and a 1 dot Graft, or two 2 dot Grafts and a 1 dot Graft, but never a 5 dot Graft and a 1 dot Graft).

After character creation, Grafts can only be acquired through play.

Hoard (● to ●●●●●)

Prerequisite: A matching number of dots in Resources.

Effect: Dragons have bottomless stomachs, but not all sustenance has to be physical. A Dragon with the Hoard merit can draw fuel from the metaphoric value of riches. For a Dragon that sleeps on her wealth each night and owns this Merit, a free point of Breath is gifted after a set time period has passed. For the first dot, the time period is 1 week. Two dots makes the time period 5 days, three dots makes it 3 days, four dots makes it 2 days, and five dots makes the Dragon draw Breath from the wealth every day.

Lair (Varies; Special)

Effect: Dragons need a place to keep all their treasure, including the Heart. The Lair is a Dragon's home, where she can wait out the heat of a bad situation or relax knowing her Heart is secure. For many Dragons it's a place where they can be themselves, without fear of exposure.

Multiple Dragons can go in on this merit, each contributing dots on their individual sheet. Dots in the Lair Merit can be spent to increase size (From a cramped studio apartment {1 dot} to a sprawling mansion {5 dots}), increase security (From a single latch {1 dot} to full gridlock, automated defense and patrolling sentries {5 dots}), or maintain loyal followers (From one diehard fan {1 dot} to a veritable crowd of loyal assistants {Squared dots of average mortals up to 5 dots}).

Scholar of the Five Evils (●)

Character Creation Only

Effect: For some reason or another when faced with the decision of which

school of thought to follow you Dragon decided to shirk her entitlement and join the Saintly Devil Oroboroi. She begins play as a Scholar of the Five Evils, gaining access to the associated Philosophies in place of those available to the Scholars of Dominion. For more information on the Saintly Devil Oroboroi, see page XX.

It is important to note that any Dragon who has taken this Merit has had to remove her Heart to do so, and thus is ineligible for the True Heart Merit.

True Heart (●●●)

Character Creation Only

Effect: The Dragon did not remove her Heart as so many do when they become divine. As such, she is empowered with the ability to pass a portion of the Oroboroi genetically. If two True Heart Dragons produce a child, that child is born with the 5 dot "Pilot Light" merit. A True Heart dragon can also learn Philosophies from both Dominion and Five Evil schools, though she possesses the same limit of 5 Philosophies total.

The True Heart dragon gains a +1 bonus to all rolls involving Ethics and Degeneration, as it is easier for her to maintain her sense of right and self (Being whole, instead of segmented). The benefit stops there.

Anyone aware that the Dragon still houses her heart in chest will no doubt hunt her to the ends of the earth. Her first death will likely be her final, as her Heart will be openly exposed while her body tries to reassemble. She also begins to produce a Red Pearl at Furnace 4 (And all associated furnace relations are based off *Furnace -3* instead of *Furnace -5*) unless she removes her Heart before she reaches that milestone. For more information regarding Red Pearls, see page XX in Chapter 3.

This Merit is lost when the Dragon submits herself to the heart-removal process, and any Philosophies she possesses from an



opposing school are moved to the school she chooses (So Greed would become Bone if she joined the schools of Dominion, and Wrath 2 Ash 3 becomes Wrath 5 if she joined the schools of the Five Evils. Excess dots revert back to experience). The Dragon must choose to remove her own heart, no one can force her. Should another try to submit her through the ritual, the Heart remains separated for one day at which point it returns safely to her chest (Unless devoured in that time).

Dragon-Born (●● to ●●●●)

Character Creation Only

Prerequisite: Non-Dragon character.

Effect: Though most dragons are incapable of producing draconic offspring, they can still breed with mortals. Children born of one Oroboroi parent are natural leaders, though they aren't particularly supernatural.

Dragon-Born begin play with an extra skill specialty, and are better prepped for dragonhood when they reach maturity, in that they gain a general sense of what it means to be a Dragon, what Dragons are capable of, and their bodies are better designed to house a Dragon Furnace upon the metamorphosis. Dragon-Born make great contacts, but they themselves usually yearn for Hearts of their own. A Dragon-Born that devours a Heart rolls a number of dice equal to their dots in this merit. If successful, they begin their life as one of the Oroboroi with an extra dot of Furnace.

A Dragon who has a child with a mortal produces a 4-Dot Dragon-Born. That hybrid can then mate with mortals to create a 3-Dot generation, who would subsequently produce a 2-Dot generation. 2-Dot Dragon-Born are too far from the potency of Dragon genetics to produce children with this special advantage; all their children are mortal.

If hybrids of two different ratings breed, the resulting child has a rating equal to one less

than the highest-ranking parent. Two hybrids of the same rating produce a child with that rating.

Having this Merit does not prevent the subject from having other template-specific Merits, like wolf-blooded. This Merit is lost when the owner becomes supernatural, though the specialty remains. This Merit may only be taken at character creation.

Bond of Brood (●●●●●)

Prerequisite: Non-Dragon character.

Effect: Dragons fall in love with mortals. Not just carnal love, sometimes it's genuine infallible friendship. But the length of a Dragon's lifespan is a heavy burden. Sometimes, she likes to share that burden.

The Bond of Brood is a ritual in which the Dragon makes a willing participant like family. She removes a portion of her heart and gives it to the participant for consumption. In return, the participant will cough up a piece of his own heart after eating the segment of hers. She swallows this piece, and the ritual is complete. The participant must be mortal to take part in this ritual.

From that moment on, the Participant has a Furnace rating of 1, and can increase it up to 3 with experience if he so desires. He can also 'borrow' up to 5 points of Aspects that the heart-segment owner possesses. While he is using those Aspects, she cannot activate them herself (For more information, see page XX in Chapter 3). The participant may also use up to the third level in the Dragon's highest Philosophy. In addition, his natural lifespan is doubled.

This gift does not come without a price for the dragon. She loses the capacity to reach Furnace 10 until her heart is whole again, and each subsequent "Bond of Brood" means another level of furnace that can never be reached. From the ritual forward, she also shares degeneration roles with the mortal; whenever he sins against Morality

she faces sinning against her Ethics. Willpower lost (Not spent, but lost) by the participant is also lost by the Dragon. Truly the only benefit she receives is a long-lasting friend, so very few dragons actually perform the "Bond of Brood".

The heart must have been removed prior to performing this ritual. No True Heart dragon can partake without sacrificing that Merit.

Pilot Light (●●●●●)

Character Creation Only

Prerequisite: Non-Dragon Character

Effect: Children born of two True Heart dragons have a small piece of Dragon in their chest. Not an entire heart, but one ninth. Pilot Light works exactly the same as Bond of Brood with two exceptions: with Pilot Light the child can use up to 10 Aspect points possessed by the parent (Mother or Father, determined at character creation) and the child can use Aspects points at the same time as the parent (They aren't borrowed). This does not mean the child possesses a True Form, though... no, that benefit is exclusive to the Oroboroi.

...There's a nasty rumor floating around that the Hearts of nine Pilot Light children can be cobbled together to forge a new Oroboroi Heart. Though the validity of this rumor is questionable, that doesn't stop desperate characters from ruthlessly murdering Pilot Lights.

This Merit may only be taken at character creation.

[BIG IMAGE!!!]



Slayer: The Rabid Monster, Those who Claim through Violence

The least tactful of the Oroboroi, Slayers were the first Method as they replaced the original Dragons in the Collapse. A Slayer learns about a Dragon's capabilities, then finds one to take its place. The combat serves as a test of mettle for the soon-to-be Oroboroi Slayer, and those that slay their target take the greatest prize.

Slayers are not to be mistaken for Challengers. Killing the Dragon is their highest priority; honor or even playing fair are not part of the equation. This isn't to say that Slayers are devoid of honor, it's more a matter of honor as it's useful. All Slayers do share a common trait, though. They want to feel the Dragon's life leave in their hands.

Aspects of the Slayer Method are focused on gaining the advantage in combat. A Slayer has the easiest time closing distance on an enemy and pummeling them into powder. Slayers control the battlefield as it is advantageous, since it is their greatest joy to inflict pain on others. A Slayer never laxes her practice of combat, and when dealing with matters of Province her first solution is violence. It's often a good solution.

Slayers begin play with an extra dot of Strength, and their Strength limit is one higher than that of their other Attributes.



Cje

Finder: The Inquisitive Monster, Those who Claim through Curiosity

The Second Method to appear after the Collapse, Finders followed rumors of the Slayers and salvaged the Hearts lost by violence or the flow of time. A Finder hears whispers of Dragons and fervently researches everything she can about them. Even with modern resources, it isn't an easy journey. But eventually the path leads to a Heart, and that is what the Finder was *really* looking for, even if she didn't know it.

Finders know the most about, well, everything. Regarding Oroboroi anatomy, history, politics, and religion there is no other more versed in the subject than a Finder. Many have a weak countenance, but more than make up for it with the vast amount of information that they can muster or easily find. Finders are driven by a desire

to unearth *everything*, and with centuries at their disposal they very well could.

Aspects of the Finder Method are focused on building and locating information. If there's research that needs to be done, the Finder's the one to call. If there's something (or someone) that needs to be brought out into the open, the Finder's the one to ask. If a mysterious object needs to be identified, the Finder's the one to seek. A Finder runs her Province with the power of information, setting up an efficient and effective system that protects her and ensures things go her way. After all, knowledge is power.

Finders begin play with an extra dot of Intelligence, and their Intelligence limit is one higher than that of their other Attributes.



Cje



Challenger: The Devoted Monster, Those who Claim through Skill

Finders brought a degree of approachability back to Dragonkind, and the first to take advantage of that became the Challengers. Bested by arrogance Dragons were willing to gamble their Heart on the life of an opponent when challenged to a test of skill, just for the amusement of crushing the poor bastard when he lost. Well, some of them didn't, and the Dragon became bound to keep the promise. Regardless of how Challengers become aware of the Oroboroi, they all feel the great burden of power and longevity has added a Dragon's modesty. Old leaders don't grow with the times, and need to be replaced. If the Challenger can humble the incumbent, maybe she's better for the job.

Challengers pick a subject and focus to perfection. There's one skill or feature they hold above all other, and to the best of their effort they try to be the best. Most actually are. They are bound by the rules of honor, ingrained by the honor shown them when they first won their own Heart. This doesn't mean they are incapable of betrayal; it just means they betray their newest oath first.

Aspects of the Challenger Method are focused on being socially just, good to their word, and focused to the extent of perfection. If a mob is gathering to stop a corrupt official, a Challenger will be leading the charge. In one on one contests, the Challenger will no doubt win. A Challenger

runs her Province by pure charisma and talent. There is power to be had in numbers, and she has no problem acquiring them.

Challengers begin play with an extra dot of Wits, and their Wits limit is one higher than that of their other Attributes.



Trickster: The Noxious Monster, Those who Claim through Deceit

With Challengers came a measure of honor and respectability. But life is built of balance, and an equal degree of treachery met the skillful in combat. Dragons as a whole had become easy to spot, easy to approach, and easy to trick. Those aware of this and with the cunning and malice to take what they wanted became the Tricksters, striking with poison, trickery, bribery, theft, and pretty much any other shifty activity possible to claim what they wanted: a piece of the Oroboroi.

Tricksters are often even more charming than Challengers are, and they are experts on the approach, the misdirection, and finally the kill. Their attacks are slow to

act but lethal in both government and mortality, and they never leave a trail.

Aspects of the Trickster Method reflect the contamination their Furnace suffers due to the means by which they joined Dragonkind. Corrosive, toxic, and inconspicuous: these sum up the powers a Trickster's divinity grants her. If something needs to be done discretely, contact a Trickster. Tricksters run their Province by the same means they obtained their Heart. Little protest has ground when those who complain simply vanish.

Tricksters begin play with an extra dot of Manipulation, and their Manipulation limit is one higher than that of their other Attributes.



Cjc



Inheritor: The Entitled Monster, Those who Claim by Favor

The final Method came to life when Dragons reconnected with their humanity, realizing their hubris or tiring of their existence. This was the cost of stealing the power in the first place, humanity doesn't have the temperance to watch everything it loves wither and die. The escape clause: hand the power off to somebody else.

Unlike other Dragons, Inheritors do not risk much to join the Oroboroi. As such, they come in all creeds and classes, a veritable melting pot of traits. The Furnace of an Inheritor is flavored by this initial favor, however. Each of them receives an

aura of entitlement that unites them as a method.

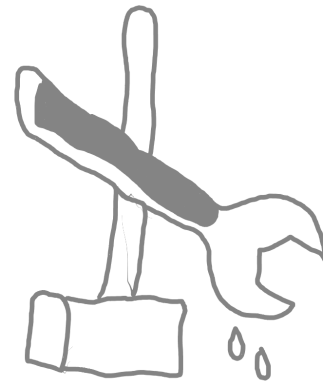
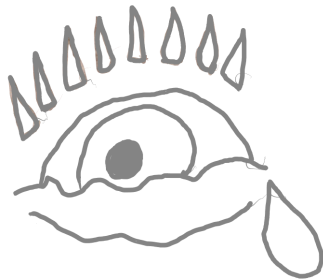
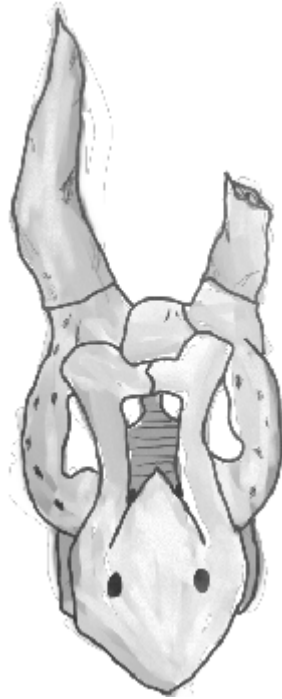
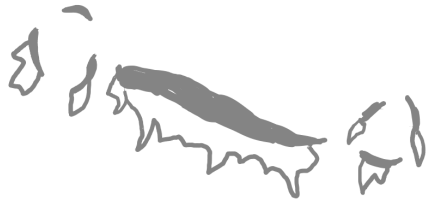
Inheritor Aspects are all about the regality that comes with entitlement, including the direction of others, corporate ladder-climbing, and filling a room with her presence. If there's a gala, an Inheritor is no doubt hosting. Or maybe she's the life of the party. Either way, she's someone you'll notice. Inheritors run their Province in a style befitting a monarch. Usually not the best means, but considering history it is a time-tested one.

Inheritors begin play with an extra dot of Presence, and their Presence limit is one higher than that of their other Attributes.



Schools of Dominion

The Schools of Dominion are mentalities derived from careful analysis of Dominion's Collapse, the event that ended the glorious rule of the Dragons and began the cycle of life, consumption, death. Each school has access to one of the five entitled purviews of dragonhood (Destruction, Oath, Health, Pain, and Mind) in a direct and focused manner. It is expected that Players will choose one of these five schools.



School of Ash: Gateways to Destruction

The night before it had been new. Pristine foundation, perfect walls, beautiful marbled columns supporting the structure. The restoration had been a phenomenal success. But when the building inspector came around, the place was barely standing. Ruptured plumbing, stairwell cracking, shattered stone, it was as if it was being dragged into hell.

Confident in their analysis of the world as a whole, the followers of Ash believe that without the guiding wisdom of the original Dragons the world is doomed to crumble under the weight of its own faults. Repairs are never sufficient, no matter how much effort is applied everything will eventually return to the dust from whence it was formed. These Oroboroi have the longevity to validate their theories, both in the craft of mankind and in the society they raise up around that craft.

Followers of Ash are fatalists. They have the power to bring the world to ruin if they so desired, but most don't even bother. After all, it'll get there eventually anyway. Those that are drawn to act feel that the least pleasant things should be destroyed first, so that they may enjoy a more pleasant slip into oblivion. In summary, they are slackers.

Inheritors are not locked out of the school, but theirs is a great challenge to maintain membership. Ash Inheritors must overcome their sense of entitlement and come to grips with the fact that everything—even the rights to their Heart—is terminal. An invisible clock hangs over their head, and to recognize that is to break away from the mold. Inheritors who manage to keep up the path of Ash prosper the most, their social Aspects perfectly designed for remote networking.

With regards to Province, they regard property as a holey bucket. It is

pointless to keep water within, as it drains away too quickly. To plunge it repeatedly until water needs are met would prove too much effort. Instead the Ash Dragon arranges for the bucket to be somewhere favorable, a place where its draining can serve some benefit.

Mannerism: Being the slackers that they are, most followers of Ash do not pay due process to grooming or attire. Their hair tends to be unkempt and greasy, their eyes dull and listless, their clothes simple and easily tended. They tend to run their Provinces through remote mediums like mail correspondence or with more recent advances the internet. They know the inherent flaws of these systems, and use them to tactical advantage. Lethargy is not an absence of brilliance, just a lack of enthusiasm to utilize it. Most of all, though, they recognize that everything has an end-game flaw. Exploiting that flaw is both the easiest and fastest path to victory.

Philosophy: All followers of Ash open up the path to focused destruction. The pessimism they feel towards existence leeches into the world around them, creating the flaws they claim were there all along. With the infusion of Breath, these flaws can explode into a total breakdown of misfortune.

Background: Those that follow Ash are drawn by the inherent nihilism it entails. For atheists the lingering threat of oblivion validates their stand on life, ironically serving as a crude form of religion. Some grow bitter when the world of the Oroboroi turns out more gritty and less glamorous than first anticipated, and find comfort in the school's explanation. Though there are always exceptions, followers of Ash are notoriously bitter and introverted.

Character Creation: Followers of Ash are not social. Ever. Their attitude makes for unpleasant company, and the lack of practice renders them lost for words. Intelligence keeps them occupied, Resolve holds them to their creed, and Wits makes them tactically savvy to the extent necessary to run their world. Being strong or dexterous depends on personal preference, but most Ash Dragons are hearty enough to run all-nighters on the computer screen throwing together a good virus or buyout. If they practice any social graces at all, it would be Manipulation.

Common Ash Dragon skills include Computer, Investigation, and Science. Those worth their salt also turn to Larceny and Subterfuge to achieve their ends. Ash Dragons know how to wait; they know that direct confrontation is not the only way to beat a foe.

Province: Ash Dragons enjoy a great deal of prosperity due to the advent of the information superhighway. As a result, much of their Province does not have a physical counterpart. Faceless masses of remote contacts make up the majority of the Dragon's holdings, each striving by request or by infatuation to make the locale of the Dragon's Lair more pleasant. Relationships share just as many flaws as buildings do, though, so a good Ash Dragon knows when to break a bad connection.

Concept: hacker, investor, saboteur, demolitionist, marriage counselor, politician, administrator, lawyer.

Quote: *Your presence hadn't escaped me. I've got millions of eyes,*

each contributing a piece to your mosaic. Though I have to say... it's much easier to make out in person.



Stereotypes

Blood Dragons: What purpose serves a promise? Words are as easily broken as the thing that preserves them.

Bone Dragons: So you want to pick up the pieces when I'm done? I'll just have to make sure there aren't any left.

Sweat Dragons: All that effort and for what? It'll fall apart in the end; *that* I can assure you.

Tears Dragons: ...You're scary. Stay away from me.

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Scholars of the Five Evils: I feel sorry for you. I really do. I can understand how scary it is being a monster. But you're making my life unpleasant. So you die now.

Vampires: They do WHAT with their blood? Oh that's nasty.

Werewolves: My bad attitude is doing something to your resonance? Well, I guess you could fix it, but it'll break again.

Mages: You say I'm some sort of Atlantean god? Sorry, I've never been to the south.

Mortals: The most fragile beings in existence. It's amazing how much they break before they're broken.



School of Blood: Keepers of the Oath

“The words spoiled in your mouth, mister Nicholas” A flicked match singed the banker’s suit coat. “You never wanted to help those people. But I’m going to help you. Help you become a better person.” The accompanying screams could have shattered steel. When the bank opened the next morning, all that remained was a splatter of blood.

Frontline combatants against the retched art of treachery, followers of Blood strive to be good to their word, and also to keep others honest. After all, it was deceit that first caused the Collapse. Those who will not be righteous will be punished. Those who continually infract will not live to pass another lie as truth. These Oroboroi judge harshly, and the world warps around their sense of honor.

Followers of Blood are sadists. Clever, smooth, and attentive, nothing escapes their gaze and words are not forgotten. Conversation with a known Blood Dragon should not be taken lightly, lest you walk into an agreement you aren’t even aware of. The fine print will be the death of you. No, seriously, you’ll die. Blood Dragons are obsessive-compulsive executioners.

The oath does not exclude Tricksters from this school of thought, although they are rare and often less prosperous than members from other methods. Blood Tricksters quickly learn to say things in a way that does not entangle them legally or mystically. In some ways, they’re actually better at keeping promises than Blood Dragons of other methods.

In regards to Province, a Blood Dragon sees property as a beautiful yet hopelessly fragile piece of crystal. It is a sign of prestige, but care must be taken to use it properly or it will be damaged. Keeping it locked away isn’t an option

either, as that would defeat its purpose. The Dragon must rather be courageous yet cautious with her Province, willing to defend it with violence if it is threatened.

Mannerism: Blood Dragons are clean-cut and formal, usually wearing appropriate business vestments for any given outing. They are tidy, industrious, and efficient to the letter, and a great modicum of respect is rightly gifted to them for that. Blood Dragons run their Provinces like a business. Punctuality and dedication are important, and those that do not practice those virtues are a waste of money and time.

Philosophy: All followers of Blood hold close the power of locked oath. Though unable to force action on others, they can guarantee someone sticks to a promise, and in many cases that is all the more potent. Their presence keeps people honest by means of their world view leaking into material form. With Breath, that honesty can be made to face the greatest of deterrents unshaken.

Background: Blood Dragons have been hurt in the past. They recognize the faults of poorly chosen words, and of haphazard vows made without care for consequence. They take it upon themselves to make the consequences real, so fewer people suffer from empty promises. Many are charged by the hope the world can be made better through their protection, so the Blood school calls to them.

Character Creation: Followers of Blood are clever, quick on their feet, and their interpersonal skills are unparalleled. Their deadpan serious nature makes them feel trustworthy, and others use them for advice when they are spiraling out of control. Little do they know that their words will be turned against them if they stray. Presence is a Blood Dragon’s biggest ally, followed by Resolve and Composure. Wits makes a



good follow-up, then Strength to add punch to their threats. Blood Dragons are usually weak in Manipulation, preferring the direct approach to subterfuge.

Common Blood Dragon skills include Empathy, Medicine, and Socialize. Many successful Blood Dragons also practice Expression, Persuasion, and Politics. They're socialites, so they have to keep on top of the times to ensure the oaths continue.

Province: Blood Dragons are quite traditional when it comes to Province. They pick a specific region of city or county to guard as their own, and the constituents that occupy that space. They are usually well known in the parts they choose, though not for their true nature. Rather they are respected as paragons of good morals in a rapidly collapsing ethic wasteland. Blood Dragons that do rise to significant political power find themselves hard-pressed to keep all the promises they've made.

Concept: lawyer, marriage counselor, politician, executive, protestor, police officer, judge, professional juror, writer.

Quote: *This park is a city landmark and I've got the petition signatures to prove it. You will not raze tree one here.*



Stereotypes

Ash Dragons: Classic self loathers, the lot of them. Pay them little attention but don't ignore them, or they'll break something.

Bone Dragons: Yours is an honorable mentality, but a little too passive for me. Prevention is the better course.

Sweat Dragons: If we worked together we could build a golden age for this city. But I'm unworthy because I get help from others? Fine, keep to your labor, and enjoy the lonely life it brings you.

Tears Dragons: You don't cry when someone breaks a promise, you break them. When you understand that, maybe we can be friends.

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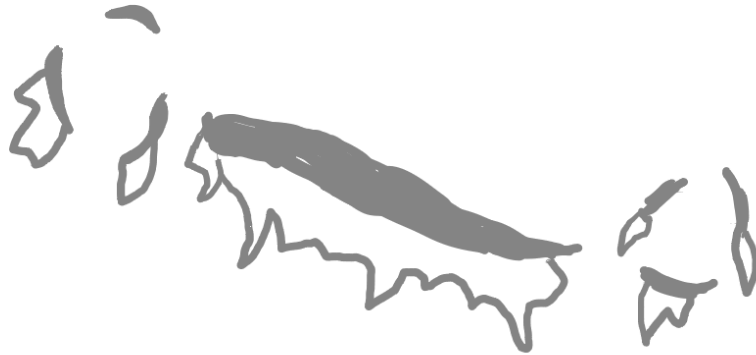
Scholars of the Five Evils: You use your good will to hide your sins, but I can see them. You've failed to keep even your personal promises, so why should I trust you?

Vampires: They have no place in my kingdom.

Werewolves: I will keep the daylight safe, if you protect the night. Promise?

Mages: The ones that practice Fate? Yeah, I like them.

Mortals: It depends on the person. Some can be almost pleasant.



School of Bone: Menders of the Broken

*There's this guy who lives a few blocks over... he's totally nuts! He's got a bomb shelter with four years of food and water, and a backup generator. He says its for the earthquake to come. Seriously? There's never been even a seismic hiccup around *RUMBLE*... What was that?! *CRASH!**

Dedicated followers of the Farmer's Almanac, those of the School of Bone know the world is an unstoppable force, one to be picked up after when its whimsy spells destruction. The Collapse was the inevitable conclusion of Dominion, and the only suitable reaction is to rebuild. These Oroboroi are hoarders, planners, and replanners as is necessary. No situation is hopeless, *that* is their mantra.

Followers of Bone are optimists. Intelligent, caring, and kind, they hold the longest friendships and the strongest marriages. A Bone Dragon is nauseatingly cheerful, almost to the point of diabetic coma. Still, they'll help out whenever tragedy strikes, so it's not a bad friendship to have.

Slayers following the way of Bone are hard to come by, as the inherent aggression contradicts the ways of reconstruction. Many are just too violent to pick up the pieces after a particularly bad fall, and so they go to schools that are more properly suited to their personality. Slayers that do succeed as Bone Dragons do so by aiming their violence in practical ways. They make the situation better by removing 'hazards'.

Bone Dragons treat their Province like a time-honored childhood toy. If it breaks, they glue it back together. They aren't afraid to let others see it, as it's a token of where they've been. Unfortunately,

though, they don't ever really try to change it, only return it to its original condition.

Mannerism: Bone Dragons are quiet. They observe. And after something happens, that's when they get involved. For people who know a little about them, they are often found irritating for their 'wait and see' attitudes. Bone Dragons don't run their Provinces so much as polish them. They draw a great deal of joy from setting things straight, which means they need to let things become 'misplaced' first.

Philosophy: Bone Dragons are entitled the power of good health. Diseases don't linger long in their company, wounds knit with haste, and everyone feels heartier at their gait. Breath further expands this wave of well-being.

Background: Bone Dragons are humanitarians. Or animal lovers. Or keepers of the faith. They have a strong sense of karma that comforts them when times are tough. With the power of Dragonhood comes a sense of release; finally able to take control of Karma's rebound. Regardless of background all Bone Dragons are versed in the paths of consequence, having followed them on several occasions.

Character Creation: Followers of Bone are charming, intelligent, persistent, and unshaken. They're the perfect sounding board when life needs sorting out. Also, they're great at giving advice. Bone Dragons like Resolve best, with Composure riding second and Intelligence a close third. Physical attributes fall in after that, with Strength being the most important. Other social attributes fall off.

Bone Dragon like to practice Medicine. A lot. It's actually their favorite

skill. Falling in a far second is Streetwise, with Survival standing third. A good Bone Dragon knows her way around Politics as well, but as said before it doesn't hold a candle to Medicine.

Province: The Province of a Bone Dragon usually consists of a single place of business, such as an office or a hospital. The Dragon makes a dedicated effort to learn the name of every person that interacts with that building, be they employee or visitor or passing lunatic shooter. They come off kind of creepy and obsessive, but in a loveable way.

Concept: advice columnist, doctor, nurse, lawyer, marriage counselor, 'good' insurance agent, politician, carpenter.

Quote: *Go ahead. Break my bones, shatter my body, and spill my blood. I know*

how it all goes together. I can put it back when you're done.



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Stereotypes

Ash Dragons: Everything you break, I can fix. Go ahead, break it again. You won't stop me.

Blood Dragons: Judge me as you will. Punish me as you wish. My spirit will not be broken.

Sweat Dragons: I could help you when you're weary, but you reject such comfort. Why?

Tears Dragons: Cheer up. Things will work out in the end.

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Scholars of the Five Evils: Those scars that coat your body... that's Karma telling you it hates you. And I do too.

Vampires: Blood grows back. I've got no problem with the leeches.

Werewolves: What do you mean I'm an angel of death?!

Mages: Whisper your mysteries to the wind, but none will hear them. You're a shadow in the night. That's too bad.

Mortals: They are so dear to me I cannot bear to part with any.



School of Sweat: Champions of the Pain

They say he built the whole thing himself. From the frame out, every bolt in that car was tightened by his hand. But he never drives it. I heard the purr of its engine once, but it's silent now. He doesn't even open the garage to show it off. Makes you wonder why he built it in the first place?



Ever the martyr, Sweat Dragons are all about the journey. Pain is an inescapable part of life, and to flee from it is to achieve nothing. Hedonism is the enemy, and followers of Sweat work to shatter the grip of lazy comfort that has carpeted the land. After all, the collapse came when Dragons got a little *too* comfortable.

Followers of Sweat are realists. Hearty, hale, and energetic, they ricochet from project to project seeking the endorphin rush that accompanies exhaustion. A Sweat Dragon is hard to stop, and becomes irritated when her focus is broken. If you set her to a task, though, she will dedicate all her forces of nature towards it until it is done.

Somewhat taboo to this mindset are the Finders, who enjoy a life of relative safety in their book stacks. Though there is hard work to be done in a library, it is hardly the type that draws a sweat. Sweat Finders are hard-pressed to draw respect from their peers, as their work is considered menial and un-devoted by other Sweat Dragons. For this reason, Sweat Finders work the hardest in a vain effort to prove themselves, and are often the most useful Sweat Dragons around.

Sweat Dragons treat their Province like an unfinished project. It needs to stay on the agenda, and they need to bleed for it every once in a while. Province forgotten is Province lost. Though it is easy to get distracted, they must never leave their Province to stew for too long.

Mannerism: Sweat Dragons are gregarious. They laugh openly, they live freely, and they love often. They are also harsh, often the first to



present a criticism against those who are lazy or weak. Sweat Dragons are known for their no-nonsense approach to virtually every situation. They come off as abrasive, but sometimes that harsh light is necessary.

Philosophy: Sweat Dragons have control over pain, specifically the increase of pain. They redirect the nerve reactions of injuries for benefit or ill, they intensify the agony their enemies, and they make sure injuries take longer to heal. Driven by a need to prove the character of others, Sweat Dragons make the world around them more taxing.

Background: Sweat Dragons know the value of a hard day's work. Very few of them are from entitled family, and those that are find that entitlement ripped away from them when they join the Oroboroi. Effort is the greatest force in existence for these crafters. The state of Dragonhood merely provides them the longevity to continue that effort.

Character Creation: Followers of Sweat are strong. Very strong. And they know how to endure. If there's a project that needs doing, the Sweat Dragon is the one to ask. Physical attributes take the forefront, followed by Social attributes. Studying is viewed as a slacker's passion, so it is usually ignored by all but Finder Dragons in the school.

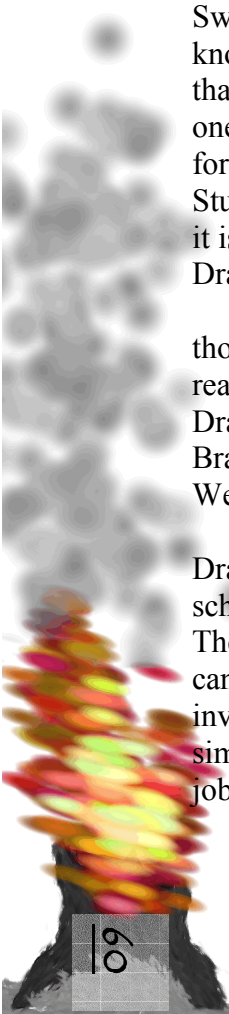
Sweat Dragons enjoy Medicine, though not as much as Bone Dragons. Their real passion is Survival, though. Sweat Dragons worth their salt will also practice Brawl and Athletics, with just a touch of Weaponry. Another favorite is Intimidation.

Province: The Province of a Sweat Dragon is probably the largest of all the schools, covering the most geographic area. They prefer regions in development, so they can join in on the labor. Their goals often involve landscaping and home improvement, simply because of the taxing nature of those jobs. Most are seen as humanitarians, but

their aspirations are not for the good will of men. Instead it's a sort of ascetic; reaching for purity through pain.

Concept: carpenter, artisan, artist, mailroom clerk, personal trainer, doctor, lawyer, politician, mechanic, soldier, chef.

Quote: *A cheap rip-off, that's what manufacturing is. See this? This is the real deal.*



Stereotypes

Ash Dragons: Go ahead, knock the building down. I'll just build another one.

Blood Dragons: You are weak. There's nothing else to say.

Bone Dragons: I don't think you understand what injuries *mean*. Maybe if you had a few?

Tears Dragons: You're too concerned with the impact an action has on the people around them. Sometimes, a hammer is just a hammer.

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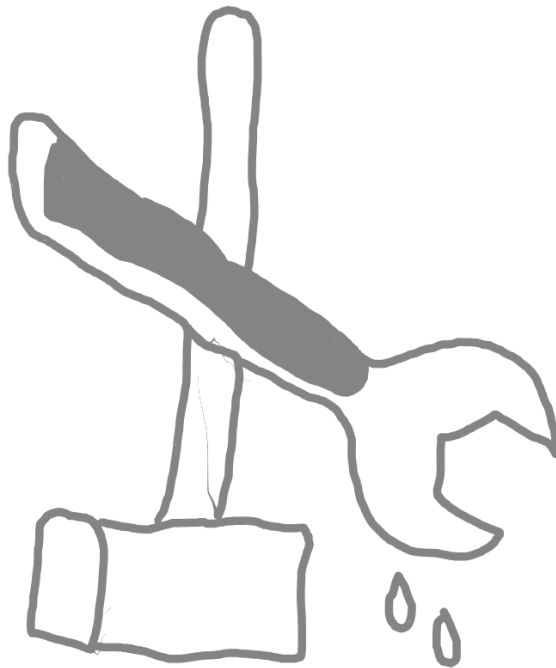
Scholars of the Five Evils: The ultimate hedonists, fleeing from the pain that could purify them. The only option is to catch them.

Vampires: The euphoria that their embrace grants is an unholy sin against nature. Bring fire.

Werewolves: These know the rewards of hard work. A kindred spirit, in more ways than one.

Mages: Anything you weave supernal, I have wrought with my hands. You decide who is more worthy.

Mortals: Those who work for their living, support. Those that take for their living, destroy. Adjust as necessary.



School of Tears: Paragons of Emotion

Sweet little whispers, sweet little whispers as the life slips out of you. I'm sorry you have to die, but your lack of compassion is contagious. And it's not a bug I want my friends to catch.

There's only one enemy to a Tears Dragon, and that enemy is apathy. Convinced the Collapse was a result of the dilution of passion, followers in this school push to ensure that *all* things have some sort of emotional response. Rage, fear, joy, hatred, love, it doesn't matter as long as it isn't indifference. They are the closest to Zealots among the Oroboroi.

Followers of Tears are fanatics. Intelligent and socially adept, they wander from place to place instigating 'scenes'. Within these episodes of unusual circumstance, the Tears Dragon steps in as mediator and guide, helping the 'actors' properly face or express the appropriate emotion. Few are able to recognize that they are being puppeteered by the nearby follower of Tears, and those that do will no doubt face a wretched fate.

A rarely seen but not impossible method of this school is the Challenger. The laws of honor and chivalry imply a subtlety that Tears Dragons do not respect. A Tears Challenger has to work twice as hard to get the emotional responses she craves, as she herself is so muted in personality. The extra effort pays off, though, in a twisted sort of way. They become a symbol of what apathy can do.

Tears Dragons feel their Province is a play, with them as the star. There are act breaks, yes, which buys about enough time to change costumes, then it's back to the show. The show is all that matters. The performance needs to make them cheer. There is nothing else.

Mannerism: Tears Dragons are creepy. Many are deranged, laughing at inappropriate times or sobbing uncontrollably. They act courteous and polite, though they never really develop



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friends. They're far too dangerous for that. If close attention is paid to a Tears Dragon, it is easy to tell that something is off about them. For them, everyone is a tool to be exploited. That makes them great for stirring up a crowd, but one can never be sure what exactly a Tears Dragon is after.

Philosophy: Tears Dragons have control over the emotions that are tied to memory. With just a little effort, they can change the associations that may exist between an emotion and a memory, moving them to their needs. Many of the philosophy's powers neutralize emotion completely, an ironic punishment considering the core mentality of the Tears School. Tears Dragons feel the world does not care enough, and their ideology drains into the world to prove them right.

Background: All Tears Dragons have been hurt in the past by indifference. Maybe they were maimed and no one came to the rescue. Maybe they slumped into depression and none sympathized with their plight. Whatever the case, it has made them bitter and driven them to force reactions, whatever those reactions may be. Being an Oroboroi gives them the endurance to survive the consequences of their puppeteering.

Character Creation: Followers of Tears are terribly smart. And they're charming; charming enough to get what they want without ever coming off as the bad guy. It is unlikely anyone would seek out a Tears Dragon, they simply fall into the lives of others and manipulate them to their bizarre ends. Tears Dragons rarely practice physical skills; they tend to flee when in danger.

Tears Dragons love the social skills, but none more than Empathy. It is the cornerstone of their puppet strings. Other favored skills are Expression, Persuasion, and Socialize. Those worth their weight also practice the art of Subterfuge. Pretty

much everything about them revolves around the core deception, which makes for an uneasy alliance should anyone Den with them.

Province: Parent Teacher Associations, Country Clubs, and other borderless groupings with a central locus are the Provinces of choice for a Tears Dragon. The membership gives them freedom to interact with the visitors and residents without too much suspicion, and the clubhouse gives them a place to fall back on in the event of a lull. The perfect Province for a Tears Dragon is one that never sleeps, one that cries out or sings to the mountains. Unfortunately sorrow is easier to sow than joy.

Concept: angel of death, actor, musician, postman, reporter, nurse, lawyer, politician, homeless prophet, serial killer, ventriloquist.

Quote: *Come now, it's okay to cry. That's why we're here.*



Stereotypes

Ash Dragons: Your protests are empty, and so are you. Come, let me fill you.

Blood Dragons: Oaths lead to promise, and a promise kept gives satisfaction. Carry on.

Bone Dragons: You may mend their bodies, but their minds still blither. Expect to see them again. In more pieces next time.

Sweat Dragons: Be it joy or misery, pain at least brings something. I respect that.

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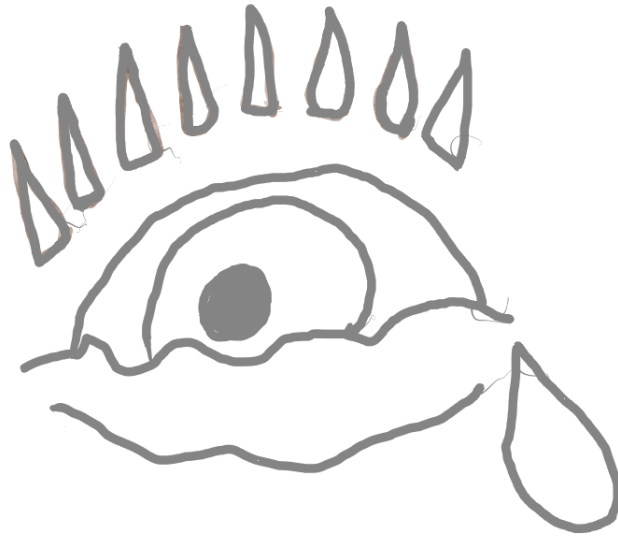
Scholars of the Five Evils: The sorrow of their predicament is exhilarating. I just love to watch them squirm.

Vampires: While you are young enough to feel, you will drain the emotion of others. When you are too old to feel, you sit a gravity well of emptiness. Either way, when I catch you you'll be dust.

Werewolves: You're angry? Good. Get angry. Let me see those teeth!

Mages: The mind mages share my enthusiasm. The other ones, well, that's a case by case basis.

Mortals: They need my help the most.



Schools of the Five Evils

The Schools of Five Evils, unlike the Schools of Dominion, are far more isolated and are all based on the same principle that one sin is far worse to indulge than all the others. Ironically, the powers these schools' Philosophies grant are based in the very sins they shun; a forbidden fruit the Saintry Devil Dragon must resign herself to.

Being a member of one of these schools does not preclude the character to a particular vice. On the contrary, the vice carried is probably completely different from the vice of their school. You may also notice that two vices are excluded, those of Envy and Gluttony. Though these sins are recognized, they are a quintessential part of existence as a member of the Oroboroi, and none see them as the gravest atrocity. They are a necessary evil.

Scholars of the Five Evils have access to the full extent of the Dragon purviews, instead of the focused versions those Dominion Dragons practice. With this extra power comes an increased risk of backfire, which will be discussed later with their Philosophies (See page XX). In order to choose one of these schools, the character must possess the one-Dot merit possessing the same name (See page XX). Saintry Devil Dragons also face a different system for Ethics, explained in further detail in Chapter 3 (page XX).

School of Wrath:

Locomotives to Catastrophe

"What did the man look like?" "I... I don't know. He was just sitting in the corner, nobody was even talking to him." "And he just opened fire?" "Yeah, Kris and I were arguing about splitting the tip, and he just went berserk."

Saintry Devil Dragons who fall prey to the School of Wrath are usually pacifists, well aware of the damage violence brings. They absolutely hate the idea of anger taking control and ravaging the world around them, but their very rejection of the concept dooms them to face it.

The best way to ensure destiny gets its way is to flee from it. Victims of the School of Wrath are dragged into world-class rampages simply because they do not want to be. Ironically, if they resolved themselves to get angry every once in a while, the episodes wouldn't be nearly as bad, and less damage would be done overall. But the Scholars of the Five Evils are not known for their common sense. It's all about running away from problems.

Whenever a victim of Wrath witnesses an act of violence that would

warrant a Wrath Vice's recovery of Willpower, EVEN if they themselves did not commit that act, they must roll Composure or slide into their other mode.

Good Dragon Mode: When in Good Dragon mode, victims of Wrath are cripplingly timid and often quiet. Those that are social pick safe events that are unlikely to escalate. Good Wrath Dragons often take up hobbies that make up for their rampages, like house building for the poor or soup kitchen management for the hungry. Those with wealth will splurge it on hospital charities after a 'binge', trying to redeem themselves in the eyes of the people they hurt.

Of course, as they climb higher and higher on the Dragon's Code of Ethics, they quickly become deranged with an idealized picture of reality. They feel their pacifism can guide others to peace, and so willingly begin to throw themselves in powder-keg situations. Of course, that exposure drags them into Bad Dragon mode.

Bad Dragon Mode: When in Bad Dragon mode, Wrath Dragons cease to be victims. They revel in watching others lose their temper, but they draw the most joy from causing extensive destruction to



everything around them. Bad Wrath Dragons start bar brawls, they open fire at protest rallies, or sometimes if they're really demented they pick secluded cities near fault lines and then raze them.

Bad Wrath Dragons plummet down their Ethics scale the fastest of all Saintly Devil Scholars, but their stint of evil is the shortest as well. As they are driven mad by their indulgence, their wrath turns from objects to people, and when met in turn they see just how much harm they've really done. Usually this mirror darkly is enough to put them back on the path to Good Dragon mode.

Philosophy: Victims of Wrath will only use their philosophy while in Bad Dragon mode. In fact, they often blast through all the levels they know as quickly as possible, to cause the most havoc and destruction. Everything crumbles around a Wrath Dragon in Bad Dragon mode, and the powers granted by their philosophy make sure of that.

Province: Wrath Dragons are most often found in areas of residential expansion. They have seen a resurgence of membership with the advent of the suburb community, where repressing thoughts of rage is the social norm. The Wrath Dragon cannot understand this façade, truly believing that her neighbors are fellow advocates of non-violence. This creates a comfortable and deceptively safe environment for the Wrath Dragon, and when they do fall of the wagon the area gives them ample opportunity to repent.

Concept: barfly, investor, philanthropist, carpenter, legislator, PTA member, legislator.

Quote: *Look at this. This is a genuine cherry wood nightstand. It's from the nineteen-twenties. I restored it myself; have you ever seen anything more beautiful?*

School of Pride:

Shepherds to the Masses

A crowd had gathered in the plaza. Or rather, amalgamated in the plaza. A woman had just started band-standing, and initially it was nothing but anarchistic nonsense. But after a while it started to make sense. And the people were really getting riled up. Was I the only one with my senses still intact?

Victims of Pride fear narcissism, and the big nothing of empty promises. They are often politically motivated and revolutionary, insisting that those in power simply use it for their own gains. This puts them on the spot as the state of Oroboro membership entitles them to that same status. These Dragons despise Pride, that sense of self-satisfaction that is often undeserved.

Pride is a peculiar phenomenon; like fire it is both alluring and abrasive, and it serves both positive and negative purpose. There is a great deal of self-confidence that can be drawn from Pride, but flaunting of achievement cheapens the moment. Pride is detested because it is tacky. And pathetic, sometimes. But to run away from something is to still acknowledge its existence, which is why victims of Pride cannot escape it.

Whenever a victim of Pride witnesses an act of gloating that would warrant a Pride Vice's recovery of Willpower, EVEN if they themselves did not commit that act, they must roll Composure or slide into their other mode.

Good Dragon Mode: When in Good Dragon mode, victims of Pride are modest and extroverted. They do their best not to stand out, pushing attention onto others for their good works. Of course, those who receive the praise accept it willingly, and inadvertently push the Dragon towards her wicked streak. Good Pride Dragons work to push others up the ladder,

to make up for their selfish indulgence when they lose control.

But stolen credit eventually drives them mad. Despite the fact that they may be making the world a better place, they perpetually remain an insignificant nobody. This drives them to rise up and claim what should have been theirs all along. Unfortunately the methods used are the same that crushed them in the first place.

Bad Dragon Mode: When in Bad Dragon mode, Pride Dragons step on others to get the job done. By drawing a group of people together under common banner, they're able to claim the credit for a group effort and come out smelling like a rose. After all, their minions (as it were) are more than willing to let them have that honor. It has nothing at all to do with the philosophy that addles their sense of oath and makes them puppets... okay, that's a lie. Bad Pride Dragons go big, or they go back to good mode and return to mediocrity.

Pride Dragons stay in bad mode the longest, as their thralls rarely show the initiative to gloat. When they do finally see an instance of their most detested sin they very quickly realize how foolish they've been acting, and the shame pulls them back into good mode.

Philosophy: Pride Dragons will only use their philosophy while in Bad Dragon mode. They move to populated areas and use the group mentality to sew promises, which then must be fulfilled by the honorable. And the Pride philosophy makes sure they're honorable. Pride Dragons cause very little collateral damage themselves, but their mobs certainly get the job done.

Province: Pride Dragons love the city. What better place to remain anonymous than one that's bursting at the seams with people? City folk are of course relentless in their corporate spelunking, and anyone willing to get stepped on *is* stepped

on without a second thought. And when the shoeprints add up, revenge becomes the only option.

Concept: doormat, mailroom clerk, archivist, delivery person, secretary, assistant, paralegal.

Quote: *Here's your coffee, sir. And that report on the quarterly returns. I made sure to mimic your handwriting carefully; all it needs is your signature.*

School of Greed: Coveters of Gold

The smoke belched from the building was surprisingly acrid. It struggled to climb into the sky, then exhaustedly sank toward the ground. As the choking smog settled on the street below the gathered crowd was thrown into an addled frenzy. "What the hell was in there?!" "Smells like refer to me. Enough to stuff ten elephants."

Victims of Greed quiver at the thought of becoming pack rats. They are powerless to discard their possessions, yet terrified that others might snatch them. As a tragic point of irony, wealth gravitates to them. Greed Dragons are the only ones who despise the concept of an Attra, and the only ones who will inflict their Attra on others.

Greed swallows up the world around it. It is extensive. It is unnecessary. A tidal wave of possessions that drowns those that cannot wade it. But the stuff is *really* cool! And somebody might swipe it! And then you wouldn't have it anymore! ...Greed is probably the hardest desire to shake, and for good reason.

Whenever a victim of Greed witnesses someone simply taking what they want—to the extent that would warrant a Greed Vice's recovery of Willpower—they must roll Composure or slide into their other mode.

Good Dragon Mode: When in Good Dragon mode, victims of Greed try their best to live a life of an ascetic. Purging



the goods they acquired during their binge, or at least their least favorites, Good Greed Dragons try to bring a little joy to the places and people they've wronged. They could really revitalize the community if they matched effort to their charity, but for them the gifts alone are enough.

It's impossible to be giving and yet maintain control of everything. Part of Greed is having contract and deed to prove status, and despite their best efforts a sick pleasure comes for these dragons; from the taking of the belongings of others. As their continued gifts begin to numb gratitude, these Dragons begin to feel saint's remorse, and soon fall into a binge of self-satisfaction.

Bad Dragon Mode: When in Bad Dragon mode, Greed Dragons take what they want by whatever means necessary. And whatever means necessary usually involves ruthlessly murdering the owner of whatever it is the Bad Greed Dragon wants. They are not reckless, however. They maintain the sense to realize that lifted merchandise will be tracked, that murders will be investigated, and that taking has a lot of loose ends. For this reason Bad Greed Dragons booby-trap their belongings, so that when the rightful owner (or his inheritors) tries to reclaim his property, he will be rendered unable to do so.

Greed Dragons are the progenitors of Grafts. Though most other Oroboroi are ignorant to the origin of such a useful tool, a Greed Dragon always knows where it came from and why it does what it does. Making use of the devices despite that knowledge is usually a personal choice, but those in Bad mode don't care enough to protest the ethics of the matter. After all, it makes their stuff all the better, and often so much easier to keep safe. Only by seeing someone else consumed by the need to collect and protect will a Bad Greed Dragon begin to question her own motivations, and return to the road of righteousness.

Philosophy: Greed Dragons use their philosophy in both modes, but only rarely while in Good Dragon mode. Greed Dragons paint an object with a substance that is only supernaturally visible, as a means of both tracking those who claim said object and punishing them should they acquire it inappropriately. Those who come under the scrutiny of a Greed Dragon watch their health fail and their body degrade, faced with the wrath of Greed's Philosophy made fact. Robbers beware.

Province: Greed Dragons are fond of rural regions simply because they are easy to protect. They can keep their hoard of valuables yet not be driven to pillage for more loot, as the surrounding residences are resoundingly poor. Such Provinces usually end up within driving distance of a big city, though, where a Greed Dragon in the thrall of her binge can pull a few quick heists before retreating to her lair to sleep them off.

Concept: investor, farmer, lawyer, priest, bank robber, robin hood wannabe, politician, embezzler.

Quote: *Sweet are the simple things in life. I may have a sixty-three inch plasma waiting in my penthouse apartment, but this is so much better. Just a quiet fireplace to watch while you think. That beats out all the possessions in the world... except for that new Dodge I saw last week. Oh, and those cross-trainers. Oh, you've just got to have those!*

School of Lust:

Saints of Euphoria

Layout the lot of them and you'll begin to see the pattern. None of the wounds suffered show any regard for self-preservation. And the gunshots didn't even faze them. There'd been reports of this sort of thing; drugged-out lunatics too numb to feel their bodies fail. But all of those cases were violent. And the tox-screens all came

back clean. These murders... the victims were voluntarily helpless. But why?

Victims of Lust have drives that consume them. They are driven by a focus and passion that erodes everything around it, a passion that is acidic. With it they can build the greatest things, share the greatest loves, live the fullest lives. But the fervor at which they pursue these goals... it scares even them. The Lust Dragons are faced with the dilemma of drawing joy from their achievements, or letting others keep their joy.

Lust is a hard thing to fight. It crawls through the body and pools at the extremities, where the nerves can feel it most. Of course that's an odd way to describe an emotion, but Lust itself is a very sensual one. Getting a fix is exhilarating, but it always leaves much to be cleaned. A moment of Lust leaves months of aftershock.

Whenever a victim of Lust witnesses another consumed by their passion—to the extent that would warrant a Lust Vice's recovery of Willpower—they must roll Composure or slide into their other mode.

Good Dragon Mode: When in Good Dragon mode, victims of Lust run from their passion. They'll sell anything that reminds them of their drive, and they'll shun the thing that brought them so much pleasure. That thing is sometimes a lover's touch, but Lust Dragons would never consider the lover themselves a 'thing'. Lust Dragons are the only ones that make the smallest impact while they are behaving.

Even when fleeing from something onerous, it still remains a focal point of life. Despite the Lust Dragon's efforts to marginalize the impact of her passion, it still influences her every decision. Distance makes the heart grow fonder, and the imposed distance accelerates this process. The passion becomes idealized and mysterious again, and soon the Lust Dragon cannot help but return to her jilted paramour.

Bad Dragon Mode: By contrast, this is the better mode, so long as actions aren't defined as righteous or wicked. Their focus consumes them, and the subject of their passion greatly benefits from the attention. Of course, those things that do not capture her interest suffer. If given the option of saving a friend or pursuing a passion, the Bad Lust Dragon will always choose the passion. Even if her life is at risk, the passion will come first. Their philosophy grants them a guarantee they will not be distracted, even as their entrails are falling out..

Lust Dragons can maintain their Bad mode for quite a while, almost as long as that of a Pride Dragon. They become numb to the outside world, shirking off pain and replacing it with euphoria which is only enhanced by their craft. The only real way to pull them from their sin is to rip away their paramour, then stage a skit to teach them the error of their ways. Either that, or get them out in public and convince the paramour to point out said skits (Obviously that's very difficult when their passion is painting or music).

Philosophy: Lust Dragons make use of their philosophy in both modes, but most often in Bad Dragon mode. Where pain has been felt, they diminish it. Where there are endorphins, they enhance them. They may not actually *heal* wounds like a Bone Dragon, but they certainly make them better. And less distracting.

Province: Lust Dragons have found new life in the apartment complex. City life has its charms, but all the people they need can be found on some other floor. When they're in Good Dragon mode, Lust Dragons come off as kind if not a little nosy neighbors. When in Bad Dragon mode, they withdraw to their apartment, announcing their presence only by the bizarre sounds that leech through the walls, or when they have to go out for supplies. In this manner



they are not forgotten, and yet they are left to their own ends.

Concept: addict, nymphomaniac, personal trainer, police officer, priest, artist, politician, musician, unemployed vagrant.

Quote: *Do you see the way she's soaring on pastel rainbows? God I miss that. Beautiful streaks of saffron and fuchsia... my brushes have been gathering dust for so long. Maybe just one painting.*

School of Sloth:

Martyrs to Memory

The sun rises every morning in a beautiful wave of purples, blues, and then oranges. For some this is a soul-affirming portion of their day. But what is the point? If you've seen one sunrise, or even a sunset, you've seen them all. There aren't enough distinguishing characteristics to warrant wasting time.

Victims of Sloth cringe at the thought of being lazy. Their ends should come from their efforts, or at least that's the way they feel about it. Out of this concern comes a call to arms that accelerates them like a train towards... well, everything. Sloth Dragons work themselves to exhaustion, and once they reach that exhaustion, well...

Sloth isn't dangerous. In fact, it's the opposite. Nobody dies from just sitting around. Nothing gets done while just sitting around. The only thing that really happens when somebody's 'slothing' is flatulence. Or bed rash. Sloth does damage by sitting back and watching the world rust.

Whenever a victim of Sloth witnesses an act of excessive laziness that would grant a Sloth Vice's recovery of Willpower, they must roll Composure or slide into their other mode.

Good Dragon Mode: When in Good Dragon mode, victims of Sloth can often be mistaken for Sweat Dragons. They see sleep and relaxations as fallbacks to the

most wretched of sins, so they work until they pass out. Be it writing a sonnet, running a homeless shelter, running a marathon, or building a shack, the work serves a more important function than the accomplishment. Of the Saintly Devils, Sloth Dragons do the most good in Good Mode.

Working into unconsciousness is not at all healthy. The mental state that makes Sloth Dragons do it is even worse. When the body gives up from exhaustion, Sloth Dragons are forced to sit still, and this is usually enough to push them over the edge.

Bad Dragon Mode: Not so much a fall as a slow drift, Sloth Dragons that descend into Bad Dragon mode accept the inactivity that accompanies their exhaustion, and settle back for a nice relaxing... rest. Any unfinished projects remain unfinished, and no doubt decay from the loss of attention. Bad Sloth Dragons suffer medically as well, their overexertion replaced by total inaction that softens their toned muscles to mush.

Sloth Dragons don't stay in Bad mode for long. Provided there's at least one person who cares about the Dragon, eventually she'll be pulled from her seat and brought back into the world. If, by some slim chance, there's nobody left who cares about the Sloth Dragon, she'd better settle in for a long stay on the couch.

Philosophy: The philosophy of Sloth is about the convenience of memory alteration. Even though it is convenient, it isn't directly lazy, so Sloth Dragons are willing to utilize it in both modes, and often are more driven to use it in Good Dragon mode. The power to gloss over niggling details, or replace them with more convenient perceptions, makes it easy for a Sloth Dragon to seem like she belongs while she needs to belong, and to scrape away her tracks when she's done.

Province: Sloth Dragons are most comfortable in spaces with work to be done. The projects come to mind most often. There's excitement to be had, work to be done, and crime to be bested. Plus, when they settle into their nest for the sake of Sloth, their absence is not immediately noticed, giving them time to work out their demons. Once the neighborhood is revitalized, the Sloth Dragon moves on... at least once she gets out of bed.

Concept: carpenter, priest, artist, musician, truck driver, politician, writer, philosopher.

Quote: *Two more months. Just two more months. I've just gotten comfy.*



Aspects

Dragons are definitively biologically separate from mankind. Myth and fiction piece together traits both natural and alien to construct the visage of these creatures, and a rich treasury of illustrations old and new create a dizzying array of meanings for the word 'Dragon'. Aspects are these traits.

Members of the Oroboroi define for themselves what it means to be a Dragon, both spiritually and physically. The combined complement of Aspects they manifest is both an arsenal at their disposal and a means of self-expression. Wearing them is always a road toward suspicion by the masses, but the might of a draconic body is a hard power to resist.

Aspects are associated with individual cards from a six-suit playing deck, not out of some mystical link but out of tradition. Members of the Oroboroi can freely learn Aspects from the common suit and the suit of their method, but Aspects of other methods must be taught or at least witnessed several times, and they are always more difficult to incorporate.

When making a **Dragon** character, that character gets to choose ten Aspects. Partly their preconceptions about Dragons from fiction, partly a conversion of their personality into physical characteristics, these first Aspects give the new Dragon some defense mechanisms for her new Furnace. Five Aspects are chosen from the Heart suit, those common to all dragon kind. Three Aspects come from the Dragon's method suit, which is determined by the means through which their Heart was acquired. Finally, two Aspects can be chosen from any suit, including those not associated with the Dragon's method.

Though not possible at character creation, it is important to note that Aspects from other methods are limited in number. Their total dots cannot exceed the sum total of method and common Aspect dots. For

example, a Challenger chooses to take two Trickster Aspect dots at character creation, which means she has eight dots between common genetics and her method, and two dots from other sources. Suppose she uses her experience to continue purchasing Aspects from other methods. As the tally grows, she will eventually acquire eight dots in non-method Aspects. At that point, this Challenger will be unable to acquire more Aspects in those suits, she must first expand her common genetics or those focused to her method.

As implied above, it is possible and indeed encouraged to build more complex draconic biology, and indeed as the Furnace grows in temperature the Oroboroi becomes more divine. For each dot of Furnace acquired, a Dragon receives two free dots of Aspects to place where she pleases, provided she does not exceed her limits (as explained above). It is important to note that, just as in character creation, getting a 'free' fifth dot in an Aspect costs double. For example, a Dragon with Natural Weaponry 4 gains a dot of Furnace, and with it two free dots of Aspects. To get Natural Weaponry 5, however, she must spend both of those free dots.

Besides Furnace stoking, the only way to get new Aspects is with the expenditure of experience. The Dragon finds and practices a trait she likes, eventually incorporating it into her divine form. The experience chart shows the cost of purchasing Aspects in this manner. (Aspects must be acquired *sequentially*.)

Having a complex True Form means more power at your disposal, but it also means a longer trek to True Form. Aspects must be manifest, so simply owning them does not grant all of their benefits simultaneously. The rules for manifesting Aspects are explained in detail in Chapter 3 (p. XX).

The Aspects detailed here are only some of the many once possessed by Dragonkind. It is not at all an all-encompassing list, yet none remember those that are absent. In other words, you're free to make them up as you go. An Aspect creation guide is provided in the sidebar at the end of this section (p. XX).

All Aspects provided here come with an explanation of their function, a description of their physical tell, any associated costs, and any rolls involved. If there is an action or roll associated, the possible outcomes are listed. They are also defined by their complexity, be they compound, sequential, or odd/even.

Suit of Hearts (Traits Common to All Dragons)

No matter how varied the Oroboroi may be, they all share one common feature in the hand fate dealt: the Heart. There are certain features of Dragonkind that are universal to their common state, and those features are found in the suit of Hearts.

These are the cheapest Aspects to acquire, and the cost does not vary by method. This is the only suit that has no cards missing.

Inferno (Ace of Hearts)

Though the heat of a Dragon's Furnace can be put to many uses and converted to many different forms of energy, sometimes the most effective application of that heat is incineration. The Dragon simply belches out a blast of fire, good for igniting flammables and fauna alike. This blast has a range in yards equal to double the points manifest in Inferno, plus 10 yards.

Being that the Breath is in its most potent form, this attack inflicts horrific wounds. It is the only attack an Oroboroi can have that deals aggravated damage.

Type: Sequential

Cost: 1 Breath per shot

Dice Pool: Stamina + Firearms + Inferno

Action: Instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: In the unlikely event of a Dramatic failure, the Dragon accidentally swallows the ball of flame she was about to project. She suffers a single point of lethal damage, but recovers the spent point of Breath.

Failure: The orb of flame fails to connect with the target.

Success: The orb of flame strikes the target and inflicts a number of aggravated wounds equal to the successes rolled.

Exceptional Success: In addition to the massive damage inflicted, the target catches fire. This fire is considered to be the size of a bonfire with the intensity of a torch, but it inflicts aggravated damage. It is comprised of natural accelerants and thus all attempts to smother the flame are successful. For more information on fire, see the **World of Darkness** Rulebook, page 180.

While this Aspect is manifest, the Dragon's throat glows with a radiating heat in the vicinity of the Adam's apple.

But it says | roll Inferno!

The Dice pools for actions based on Aspects are more variable than they seem. Though some of them may state to roll the Aspect, these statements always refer to Aspect points and not Aspect dots. Depending on which Aspects are active and to which degrees, the value can vary from 1 to 5. For more information on manifesting Aspects and the difference between Aspect dots and Aspect points, see page XX in Chapter 3.

NOTE: Inferno is the weapon bonus for this particular dice pool. In the sample antagonists, it will be listed as damage.



Scales (King of Hearts)

In many of the tales of old, it was said that mortal weapons served no purpose against the scales of the Dragon. Weapons of all materials were repelled by their mighty armored skin. In that same tradition Dragons who use this Aspect become nigh invincible, repelling all but the strongest strikes.

Each active point in this Aspect grants the Dragon a +1/+1 rating to their armor, save the fifth point which also makes the armor bulletproof. This rating may be applied on top of any other armor the Dragon may be utilizing, as the armor is both biological and space-efficient.

Type: Sequential

Cost: None

Dice Pool: None

Action: None

While this Aspect is manifest, the Dragon becomes covered in a thick layer of wide scales, colored solid in a tone of the Player's choice. A True Form Dragon may already have scales, but they are much smaller and mostly aesthetic. In a way, the wide scales given by this Aspect resemble the armor of an armadillo.

Wings (Queen of Hearts)

Often when depicted in western art a Dragon sports a pair of leathery wings, used to soar over villages and terrorize the populace below. Not all Dragons have wings, but many of them like to fly. This Aspect allows them to do so.

Having any amount of points active in this Aspect allows the Dragon to take to the sky. The speed at which she flies is equal to (Strength + Stamina) x the active points in the Wings Aspect. Flight can be incredibly useful to escape combat and find cover or get a high-ground advantage.

Type: Sequential

Cost: 1 Breath to get into the Air

Dice Pool: None

Action: Instant

While this Aspect is manifest, the Dragon sprouts wings in the mid-shoulder region. These wings can be feathered, flesh, or even a whirling vortex of fog, but such aesthetics must be determined when the Aspect is purchased.

Natural Weaponry (Jack of Hearts)

Dragons were not legendary simply for their longevity and fortitude. They were dangerous, and they had a personal arsenal of biological weapons to throw at their enemies. Each point of this Aspect unlocks another tool of destruction.

When dots of this Aspect are purchased, they are assigned to one of the weapons below. Manifesting the point that corresponds to that dot gives the Dragon access to that weapon.

Type: Compound

Cost: None

Dice Pool: Varies

Action: Instant

Teeth and Jaw: The Dragon's jaw is a snapper like those possessed by carnivorous turtles, and the mouth is filled with sharp teeth. This weapon allows lethal bite attacks (Made with Strength + Brawl) without first restraining the target or establishing a grapple, and without those pesky penalties. Damage for the Teeth and Jaw is equal to the points manifest in this aspect.

Claws: The fingers from second joint to tip are vicious self-contained knives of bone designed for slashing and puncture. The claws have a pierce rating equal to the points manifest in this aspect, and they can be used with fighting styles such as Boxing. Attacks with the Claws are made with Strength + Brawl, and the damage is two lethal.

Tail Spikes and Scythe: The Dragon sprouts a tail if not already sporting one, and the tail's tip is covered in spikes. A sharp blade roughly one foot in length adorns the end. This weapon can be used to strike

Natural Weapon	Damage	Dice Pool	Effect
Teeth and Jaw	Manifest (L)	Strength + Brawl	Bite without established Grapple
Claws	2 (L)	Strength + Brawl	Use with Fighting Styles, Pierce “manifest”
Tail Spike and Scythe	1 (L)	Dexterity + Brawl	Sweep “manifest”, deal 1 (L) auto each turn in controlled grab
Horns	Yards Charged (L) [Max Stamina]	Strength + Brawl	Knock-back “manifest” yards
Razor Wings	-2 (L)	Dexterity + Brawl	Defense increased by “manifest” until next turn
Wrist Blade	3 (L)	Strength + Weaponry	Use with Fighting Styles, Deadly “manifest”
Palm Pike	2 (L)	Dexterity + Firearms <i>Range</i> 25/50/100	Add “manifest” to grapple attempts, inflict 1 (L) on successful grabs

multiple nearby targets simultaneously (A number of targets up to the points manifest in this aspect in close combat with the Dragon), or to lash at a grappled opponent. Targets restrained by the Dragon may be whipped with the scythe for one automatic lethal wound each turn the Dragon remains in control of the grab. Sweep attacks instigated with the tail are made with Dexterity + Brawl, and the damage is one lethal.

Horns: Though the Dragon may also have decorative horns, these are sharp and located at the temples of the forehead for maximum thrust. The Dragon can ram her enemies with the horns for huge momentum damage, equal to the yards she's traveled before striking (Maximum bonus equal to Stamina). The victim is then flung a number of yards equal to the points manifest in this aspect, and may suffer bashing damage if he crashes into something. Attacks with the Horns are made with Strength + Brawl.

Razor Wings: The Dragon may or may not be capable of flight, but she forms chiropteran wings with razor digits (or just the razor along the digits if she's sporting wings already) that she uses like a bladed

fan. Attacks with Razor Wings are clumsy, but in return the Dragon's Defense is increased by the points manifest in this aspect until the next turn. This increase occurs even if she has sacrificed her Defense this turn. Attacks with the Razor Wings are made with Dexterity + Brawl, and the damage is negative two lethal.

Wrist Blade: On the wrist of her main hand the Dragon has a sharp, double-edged blade. This blade stretches roughly one foot in length, and unlike the other biological weapons it uses the Weaponry Skill. Any fighting style that uses knives or short-length blades can be applied to this weapon. The blade has an ingrained channel down the center, designed to accelerate blood flow. This makes it very deadly. Whenever an exceptional success is scored on an attack with the Wrist Blade, an additional number of lethal wounds equal to the points manifest in this aspect are inflicted [Exceptionally striking an enemy (lets say it was 5 successes) while manifesting Natural Weaponry 4 would inflict a whopping 9 lethal damage]. Attacks with the Wrist Blade are made with Strength + Weaponry. Standard damage is three lethal.



Palm Pike: Embedded in the palm of the Dragon's off hand is a short retractable spear made of a bonelike modified scale (similar to a shark's tooth). With this concealed mini-pike the Dragon may add the points manifest in this aspect as a bonus to grapple attempts. Such grabs inflict one lethal wound if successful. The pike may also be fired without penalty a distance of twenty-five yards, though a full turn must pass before the pike is replenished. Shooting the pike uses Dexterity and Firearms instead of Strength and Brawl. Damage is two lethal.

Natural Weaponry and Fighting Styles

Certain fighting styles, particularly Martial Arts and Boxing, allow at their peak a damage conversion from bashing to lethal. The utility of this remains while using human hands, but for Dragons their natural weaponry is just too powerful to improve by sheer force of will. Fighting Style abilities that upgrade the damage type of unarmed attacks do not work while manifesting Natural Weaponry.

Fire Skin (Squire of Hearts)

With just a little focus the heat of the Furnace can be drawn to the surface, igniting the skin like a hot kettle. Though bad for her clothes, it makes her very touch a dangerous weapon.

Those in direct contact with the Dragon suffer a point of bashing damage for each point manifest in this Aspect. This damage continues each turn contact is maintained by either party. The highest close rating of a non-biological armor (either the Dragon's or the victim's) reduces the damage, but has a chance of catching fire if it is flammable (if its durability is equal to or less than the points manifest in Fire Skin).

This requires further explanation. Let's say a Dragon using Fire Skin grabs

hold of an opponent. If that opponent was wearing a flak jacket (rated 2/3) and the Dragon was wearing thick clothes (rated 1/0) and manifesting three points of Fire Skin, the contact damage suffered by the opponent would only be 1 bashing [3 Fire Skin – the higher close armor rating of 2 = 1 damage]. It is important to note that the Dragon's natural armor rating (4/4 from Scales) does not contribute to the damage reduction. As for the burned opponent, his flak jacket only has durability of 2 and thus is at risk of combustion (Its durability is less than or equal to the points manifest in Fire Skin). For each turn of contact he must roll its durability rating, and if he fails his clothes will ignite as a fire of size torch and intensity candle. Such flames always inflict at least one wound before they're doused (though they can be doused by any reasonable means), and they grow in size each turn the character does not break contact with the Dragon. Unless the Dragon spends Breath, she may also be harmed by such fire and may have her own gear damaged. It's also important to note that even if the opponent was not wearing apparel that reduced the damage, it would still be at risk of catching fire (and thus would need to roll durability each turn).

Many Oroboroi who utilize this Aspect will first remove some of their protective gear so that their skin inflicts the most harm. For more information about fire, see the **World of Darkness** Rulebook, page 180.

Type: Sequential

Cost: 1 Breath to protect own equipment for the Scene

Dice Pool: None

Action: Reflexive

While this Aspect is manifest, the Dragon's entire body begins to radiate heat, and she is searing hot to the touch. People are sure to notice that she is giving off heat, and may become frightened when they

suffer contact burns. The Dragon's clothes may singe and burn away, though she can spend Breath to protect herself and her valuables for the scene.

Whipping Tail (Nine of Hearts)

The Dragon is possessed of a tail more agile than most, and the added length and finesse improves her balance greatly. She tires less easily because her posture is improved, and her prowess in combat becomes unparalleled.

For each odd point manifest, the Dragon gains a +1 bonus to Brawl. For each even point manifest, the Dragon gains a +1 bonus to Athletics. The Dragon may wield equipment with her tail as if it were her off-hand (even if she is ambidextrous, it is still treated as an off-hand), and may hang by her tail effortlessly. If lifting an object and using her tail in the effort, the Dragon's strength is increased by the points manifest in Whipping Tail for the sake of calculating her lifting capacity. For more information on lifting, see the **World of Darkness** Rulebook, page 47.

Type: Odd/Even

Cost: None

Dice Pool: None

Action: None

While this Aspect is manifest, the Dragon's tail elongates by half again. If she has not yet acquired a tail, manifesting this Aspect forms the tail as well.

Why buy Skills?

Many Aspects provide a bonus to skills, improving the natural talents an Oroboroi in her proper body possesses. However, if she is not skilled to begin with, even the added expertise is not enough to outweigh the unfamiliarity. For this reason, skill bonuses provided by Aspects do not nullify the untrained penalty. The Dragon must know at least a little about what she's doing in order to take full advantage of her new traits. The Aspects, on the other hand, are not throttled by the maximums imposed on a character. With clever use of Aspect and Skill training, a Dragon can get up to eight dots in a single Skill.

Reptilian Fear (Eight of Hearts)

The Dragon knows how to make use of her cold-blooded half, and people around her notice. She utilizes this trait when she wants to acquire something through force, or if she wants to better relate with the animal kingdom. As material kings, this is often an essential trait to bear.

Mortals are ill at ease around the Dragon, making threats and torture more effective. The Dragon gains a +1 bonus to Intimidation for each odd point manifest. On the other side of the coin, creatures find it easier to relate to the Dragon. She gains a +1 bonus to Animal Ken for each even point manifest. When Willpower is spent to improve a roll, all these bonuses are doubled.

Type: Odd/Even

Cost: None

Dice Pool: None

Action: None

While this Aspect is manifest, the Dragon's eyes slit like those of a common reptile, and she exudes an aura of aggression that makes other uncomfortable.



Fork-Tongued (Seven of Hearts)

The European mythos of Dragon-kind weaves them as sly and eloquent monsters. Likewise when lizards and snakes are anthropomorphized their forked tongues are tools of social espionage, wielded as foils in social combat. These stereotypes have leached into Dragon anatomy, making Oroboroi possessed of forked tongue excellent speakers.

For each odd point manifest, the Dragon gains a +1 bonus to Subterfuge. For each even point manifest, the Dragon gains a +1 bonus to Expression. When Willpower is spent to improve a roll, all these bonuses are doubled.

Type: Odd/Even

Cost: None

Dice Pool: None

Action: None

While this Aspect is manifest, the Dragon's tongue splits at the tip, like that of the snake. Some are known to flit the tongue in and out as they speak, though that trait isn't anchored to the Aspect itself.

Colossal Beast (Six of Hearts)

Dragons are not tiny. Very rarely is a Dragon in fiction depicted smaller than a full-grown stallion, and most stretch hundreds of feet in length. People, however, are quite small, and the Oroboroi are at their core people. To that extent, the grandeur of their size has been greatly exaggerated. Still, some do go big instead of going home, and those that do wear this Aspect.

Each point manifest in this Aspect increases the Dragon's Size trait by 1. This of course causes Health dots to increase by 1 per point. The Dragon may apply the points manifest in this aspect as a bonus to overpowering maneuvers in grappling (though not in the initial grab).

Type: Sequential

Cost: None

Dice Pool: None

Action: None

While this Aspect is manifest, the Dragon gets noticeably taller, bulkier, and more muscled. Any who'd seen her before manifesting the Aspect is sure to notice the difference, and even if she's a stranger someone of such massive proportions is sure to be noticed. At higher levels of manifestation, the Dragon's size rivals that of a small family automobile.

Soothing Incense (Five of Hearts)

Not so much a trait of Dragons as it is a feature of smoking in general, there is something about the waft of nostril fog that is... relaxing. When the Dragon uses this Aspect the heat of their furnace cloys in the air and falls as heavy smoke from the nostrils.

Scented like a dozen spices, this mystic smoke makes the Dragon an instant socialite. For each odd point manifest, she gains a +1 bonus to Socialize, and for each even point manifest she gains a +1 bonus to Persuasion. These bonuses only apply to those who can smell the scented smoke. When Willpower is spent to improve a roll, the bonuses provided by this Aspect are doubled.

Type: Odd/Even

Cost: None

Dice Pool: None

Action: Instant (Exhaling more Smoke)

While this Aspect is manifest, the Dragon's nostrils let out a waft of thick smoke each time she exhales. The smoke can be made even thicker with a hearty emptying of the lungs. The bonuses provided by this Aspect may be reduced by situational modifiers that pertain to smell, and the smoke may disperse if not maintained. Without some sort of prop to explain the smoke, this Aspect comes off very suspicious.

Many-Limbed (Four of Hearts)

There's really very little justification for this Aspect. For the most part, Dragons as a whole have remained four to six-limbed vertebrates. Still, some find a great deal of utility in insect scuttling, or twelve arm brawling.

Each point manifest in this Aspect adds another pair of limbs between the Dragon's arms and legs. These extra appendages can serve as arms or legs selectively, either adding an extra pair of hands for equipment or increasing Speed by 1 per pair. In turns where bonus speed is used, the limbs cannot be used as arms. Likewise in turns where the extra limbs have been used to hold and manipulate tools, no bonus to speed may be utilized.

Type: Sequential

Cost: None

Dice Pool: None

Action: None

When this Aspect is manifest, the Dragon acquires extra limbs in the vicinity of her torso. The number is dependent on the points active, but even two extra can be horrifying and very difficult to conceal. Plus, most forms of clothing aren't designed to accommodate such... divinities.

Dragon Blender

Both Whipping Tail and Many-Limbed provide a Dragon with extra hands. In private this likely makes her very good at multitasking, but what does it mean for combat? Holding lots of weapons, while intimidating, has its drawbacks. The bonus of each weapon gets added into the total effort, but a penalty one higher than the number of weapons used is levied. For example, if the Dragon was using four knives she would get to use all their bonuses, but would suffer a -5 penalty to the attack. This does not take into account the off-hand penalties for each of her off-hands (If she's left handed, both her right hands are off-hands and both inflict -2 to the effort). Without the proper merits for combating with multiple weapons simultaneously, the effort is hardly worthwhile. Still, it's possible.

Serpentine Form (Three of Hearts)

Often Dragons are depicted as more snake and less lizard, particularly in China. These long, thin bodies are great for constriction, and the added ground contact makes crossing difficult terrain easier.

But most significant of all is the redistribution of mass. For each point manifest the Dragon can treat her size as 1 lower for the purpose of squeezing through tight spaces. This does not affect her Health dots.

This is not the only benefit of the Serpentine Form Aspect. For each odd point manifest, penalties for rough terrain are reduced by 1. For each even point manifest, the Dragon gets a +1 bonus to grappling rolls. The points manifest in Serpentine form also act as a multiplier to the Dragon's swimming speed, so having three points manifest means she swims three times as fast.



Type: Odd/Even

Cost: None

Dice Pool: None

Action: None

While this Aspect is manifest, the Dragon's torso elongates downward, stretching at least fifty percent. If she does not yet have a tail, taking up this Aspect forms one. The majority of the Dragon's bones disperse throughout the body, forming flexible spines in her appendages and abdomen. It's practically impossible to conceal this Aspect.

Keen-Eyed (Two of Hearts)

Not everything has an extensive back-story or mythical justification. Sometimes Dragon anatomy is just better than mortal counterparts, and in this case the Eyes are included.

Points in this Aspect increase sight Perception rolls on a one-to-one basis. This Aspect also grants the Dragon the capacity to utilize the broader light spectrum, specifically Infrared and Ultraviolet frequencies. Doing so takes focus, though, and thus costs a point of Willpower.

Type: Sequential

Cost: 1 Willpower to use Infrared or Ultraviolet

Dice Pool: Wits + Composure (For Infrared or Ultraviolet)

Action: Instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The Dragon succeeds in tapping into the other spectrum, but the contrast is so overwhelming the Dragon is rendered blind until she rolls successfully on Composure + Stamina.

Failure: The Dragon fails to see the extra spectrum.

Success: The Dragon succeeds in tapping into the other spectrum, and gleans some sort of information associated with heat detection or concealed particulates.

Exceptional Success: In addition to Success, the Dragon gets to keep her Willpower point.

While this Aspect is manifest, the iris of the Dragon's eyes become a deep crimson.

Wall Climber (Hearts Joker)

More demonic than divine, the idea of something climbing on walls is horrifying by instinct. Though not founded on myth, many Dragons find the ceiling a very safe place to hide, and use this trait to spring traps and remain undetected. Well, mostly undetected.

When this Aspect is manifest a strong adhesive coats the hands and feet. The Dragon can control just how much stick this adhesive has, and may use it to climb sheer surfaces effortlessly. The speed at which she may climb is a number of yards equal to the sum of Dexterity, active Wall Climber points, Species Speed Factor (Usually 5), and any other speed modifiers (Rough vertical surfaces can lay penalties).

The adhesive also makes it more difficult to disarm the Dragon. Any such attempts with aimed attacks suffer an additional penalty equal to the points manifest in this Aspect. In battle it proves quite convenient.

Type: Sequential

Cost: None

Dice Pool: None

Action: None

The adhesive that makes this Aspect useful has a strong scent of wood glue. While there are ways to conceal that, sticky handshakes are quite suspicious. Any patches of adhesive left in the Dragon's wake remain sticky for one scene and then flake away to dust.

Suit of Blades (Traits possessed of Slayers)

More for the Slayers than any other, the Suit of Blades are tools of war. Traits of the most aggressive and ferocious nature, no other Dragon has the Heart necessary to wield them effectively.

Besides the Heart Suit, these Aspects are the cheapest available to a Slayer. All other methods must pay the highest price to purchase Aspects of this method, as they do not suit their Heart as readily. All but the face cards of the Blades Suit have been lost to time.

Tempest Roar (Ace of Blades)

Some Dragons have shouts that pierce the eardrums, but these Dragons move their prey with the sheer force of their roar. Those before her scatter like paper in the breeze when she screams, with only the hardiest remaining on their feet.

This roar is fired off as a long burst (with all implied bonuses and penalties), stretching out a number of yards equal to thrice the points manifest. Medium range is double this number. It can be heard much further than this, of course, but it only has flinging force at these distances. The roar takes quite a bit out of the Dragon, though. The first roar of the scene is free, but subsequent uses require a point of Breath. For information regarding long bursts, see page 160 in the **World of Darkness** Rulebook. Obvious in this case there are no bullets to be fired.

Type: Sequential

Cost: 1 Breath per subsequent roar in the scene

Dice Pool: Stamina + Presence

Action: Instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The Dragon chokes on her roar and enters a coughing fit. She loses her next action and suffers a single point of bashing damage.

Failure: The roar lacks the force necessary to move the Dragon's enemies. If she used Breath to make the roar, she recovers the point.

Success: Those in short range of the roar are flung a number of yards equal to the successes rolled, and are temporarily deafened by it. Those in medium range of the roar fly a number of yards equal to half the successes rolled (rounded down). Each subject may spend a point of Willpower to reduce this distance by their Stamina. When they land (Provided they don't fall off a cliff), they suffer an amount of bashing damage equal to the yards they flew.

Exceptional Success: In addition to the exorbitant amount of damage, no targets may use Willpower to reduce the distance thrown. Hearing loss from the roar may be long term as well if the attack was exceptional.

While this Aspect is manifest, the Dragon's neck elongates by fifty percent. It's hard to miss something like that, and without other traits this can be quite horrifying.

Draconic Strength (King of Blades)

Dragons are strong. They can carry castles on their backs. But some humans who become Oroboroi can barely lift a feather. That's a bit of an exaggeration, but still. To build the Strength without a montage, the Dragon uses this Aspect.

Like the bedrock of mountains, the sinews of the Dragon are as strong as coiled steel. For each point manifest the Dragon gets a +1 bonus to Strength, but to make use of this power for the scene she must spend a point of Breath. In addition, any item thrown while this Aspect is manifest is considered aerodynamic.

Type: Sequential

Cost: 1 Breath to use the Strength for the scene

Dice Pool: None



Action: Reflexive

While this Aspect is manifest, the Dragon physically bulks to accommodate the extra muscle mass. The muscle arrangement appears almost... reptilian, and those that are attentive will notice.

Attribute Bumps

Certain Aspects, as well as True Form, grant bonuses to attributes. These bonuses not only increase dice pools, but also alter derived traits. It's important to keep track of which traits are changed by which attribute, but if you can't remember here's a quick guide.

Speed: Strength + Dexterity + 5

Health: Stamina + Size

Willpower: Resolve + Composure

Defense: Lower of Dexterity or Wits

Initiative Mod: Dexterity + Composure

Also important to note is the attribute limit imposed by Furnace. Or rather, that it only applies to basic attributes and not those modified by Aspects. If a Dragon has a Strength rating of 5 and Strength limit of 5, she may still use this Aspect to increase her Strength (up to 10 if she owns all five dots).

Body Spines (Queen of Blades)

Making use of the trait that made porcupines famous, the Slayer covers her body in a layer of sharp, thin spikes that both protect her and maim her foes.

The spines act as an incentive for the Dragon to close in on her prey. Whenever a close-range action somehow involving the Dragon succeeds, the Dragon gets to roll a follow-up attack to inflict bashing damage. In effect, she jabs with the spines to both injure and repel.

It is important to note that the Dragon may use these spines following her own attacks. This makes it a very powerful

combat tool, though it serves little other purpose.

Type: Sequential

Cost: None

Dice Pool: Body Spines + Successes from Close Action

Action: Reflexive

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The Dragon manages to prick herself with her own spines. She suffers a single point of bashing damage.

Failure: The spines miss.

Success: The spines hit, inflicting a number of bashing wounds equal to the Dragon's successes.

Exceptional Success: Besides the massive damage, the spines detach and remain in the victim's body. All wounds inflicted by the spines become resistant until the hollow shafts of scale are removed, and doing so inflicts a single point of lethal damage.

While this Aspect is manifest, the Dragon's becomes covered in thin spines. They are quite similar to those of the common porcupine. Unless otherwise prepared, the spines will puncture any clothing the Dragon may have been wearing.

Sworn Foe (Jack of Blades)

In the old legends a single knight would go to face the Dragon of the Province, in the hopes of slaying it and freeing the land. Some believed it was a matter of honor and glory, but the clever ones realized sending more was a waste of good soldiers. The Dragon knows how to single out a target, and others find it difficult to interfere. Those that do are quickly turned to firewood.

The Dragon makes sure the battle odds lay in her favor. While this Aspect is manifest she may declare a Sworn Foe, and the grounds on which they will battle. All others who try to interfere in this exchange between her and her Foe suffer a penalty to act equal to the points manifest in this

Aspect. There is an invisible force that prevents them from influencing the outcome.

The subject remains a Sworn Foe until the matter of contest has concluded. If both were competing for top student in a three-week summer course, then the interference penalty remains for those three weeks. The Dragon may remove the penalty at any time before that conclusion, though such an act effectively calls off the competition and thus the penalty cannot be reinstated. Should the Dragon disband this Aspect, however, the penalty is removed until such time as she manifests it again (or the contest ends, whichever comes first).

All who try to interfere in the contest between Dragon and foe, be it to the Dragon's benefit or behest, suffer a penalty to act equal to the points manifest in this Aspect. If they wish to interact in ways that would not influence the contest AT ALL, no penalty is levied. Of course, the chance of that is very, VERY slim. The Dragon may spend one Willpower point to make this force biased for the scene, removing the penalty from those that would aid her.

Type: Sequential

Cost: 1 Willpower to make penalty bias for the scene

Dice Pool: None

Action: Instant

While this Aspect is manifest, the Dragon finds it difficult to control the volume of her voice. She may have spurts of ridiculously loud talking for no reason, and these spurts increase in frequency when she is lagging in the competition.

Beat them into the Ground (Squire of Blades)

More the calling of a serial murderer, this trait allows the Dragon to get charged up about repeating the same motions, instead of wearing down from exhaustion. The luck of the draw makes their subsequent tries more effective than their initial one.

Manifesting this Aspect at all removes the penalties for successive attempts (See the **World of Darkness** Rulebook for information on successive attempts, page 132). Instead, a bonus builds for each successive attempt with a maximum equal to the points manifest in this Aspect. For example, a Dragon trying to reconstruct a broken vase with "Beat them into the Ground" 4 would start with a normal roll, then be at +1 for the second attempt, +2 for the third, and so on until the fifth attempt, which would be at +4. Beyond that, the bonuses do not increase further, but successive attempts can still be made.

It is the repetitive nature of the action that grants this bonus, so taking a break erases the build-up. Also, removing some of the manifested points will also reduce the bonus, even if it has exceeded that value.

Type: Sequential

Cost: None

Dice Pool: None

Action: Reflexive

While this Aspect is manifest, the Dragon forms spikes of bone at the knees and elbows. Though not particularly long, they make clothes rest in peculiar ways and may pierce fabric.

Pounce! (Blades Joker)

Lizards and frogs know how to jump, with the latter so much more so than the prior. With this trait, the Dragon's body adapts to better jump like a frog.

The Dragon's forward jumping distance becomes static: measured in yards instead of feet, it is always Size + "Pounce!" points. Her vertical jumping distance also changes from feet to yards, but must still be rolled (albeit with Pounce! in the dice pool). In addition, she gains the ability to leap and crush her opponents. The range of this attack is equal to her forward jumping distance.



For information on jumping, see the **World of Darkness** Rulebook, pages 66 and 67.

Type: Sequential

Cost: None

Dice Pool: Strength + Pounce! + Dragon's Size – Target's Size

Action: Instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The Dragon leaps forward to attack, but misses and lands poorly. She suffers a single lethal wound.

Failure: The Dragon leaps forward but the attack misses. She lands somewhere adjacent or beyond her target.

Success: The Dragon leaps forward and crushes the target with her landing, inflicting a number of bashing wounds equal to the successes rolled. The subject becomes prone.

Exceptional Success: One of the target's limbs is wrenched by the force of the pounce. This inflicts a level of lethal damage and the target may face penalties related to that limb until the wounds have healed.

While this Aspect is manifest, the Dragon's hind legs (or hindmost legs) bow and bulk to make them more effective in quick bursts of jumping. Not only is this noticeable, it makes walking incredibly awkward and embarrassing, so many choose to hop while making use of this Aspect.

Suit of Spades (Traits possessed of Finders)

Designed to find, gather, and then protect secrets, the Suit of Spades is most comfortable in the hands of a Finder. Traits of the wisest and most observant beasts of old, the Finder is the only monster with the devotion necessary to appreciate these talents.

Besides the Heart Suit, these Aspects are the cheapest available to a Finder. All other methods must pay the highest price to

purchase Aspects of this method, as they do not suit their Heart as readily. As with the Blades Suit, only the face cards remain in circulation.

Burrowing Body (Ace of Spades)

Not every Dragon hides in the clouds, and those cave legends have to come from somewhere. Those who make use of this trait have a particular affinity with the Earth and its minerals, and find it a much safer hiding place when the heat is on. They move through the ground as freely as water.

The Dragon has the distinct ability of effortlessly and painlessly digging through earth, usually to evade pursuit. She may move through soft soil at a rate of Strength + Dexterity + "Burrowing Body" yards per turn, or hard objects at a rate in yards equal to just her "Burrowing Body". She cannot attack while she is digging, as it requires too much concentration, and likewise defense is sacrificed while digging. The associated cover and concealment are worth the gamble, though.

It is assumed both these situations involve materials that are not solid and have room to give way. Were she to attempt to burrow through a solid surface (Like reinforced steel), she would need to spend 1 Breath per turn to dig, inflicting her "Burrowing Body" points to the object's Structure each time (minus Durability, of course). When the Structure is exceeded, she may pass through one yard of the solid substance, and then must repeat the process to go deeper.

Type: Sequential

Cost: 1 Breath per yard of solid digging

Dice Pool: None

Action: Full

While this Aspect is manifest, the fingers of the hands widen and web for better removal of soil, much like that of the common garden mole. Gloves can conceal this without too much difficulty, though they must be custom-tailored.

Horde of Knowledge (King of Spades)

Dragons are smart. They'd have to be to stay sane over all the long years of their lifetime. If a Dragon had memory problems, her double life could end quickly in a lapse of poor judgment, or out of fear that she'll expose the Oroboroi lifestyle. So Dragons stay sharp, and those that really need to stay on the ball use this Aspect.

Each point manifest grants the Dragon a +1 bonus to Intelligence, but to make use of this massive surge of capacity for the scene she must spend a point of Breath.

In addition, once during any conversation in which the Dragon participates she may pull relevant information from thin air by spending a point of Willpower and rolling Intelligence with a relevant mental skill. Though the Dragon herself draws this information, it does not stay with her. At the end of the scene she is unable to remember what fact the roll derived, and must rely on others to retain it.

Type: Sequential

Cost: 1 Breath to use the Intelligence for the scene

1 Willpower to summon up relevant info

Dice Pool: Intelligence + Relevant Mental Skill

Action: Reflexive (Attributes) or Instant (Info)

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The factoid is wrong, but the Dragon is so convincing her words are taken as fact. Though this can sometimes be harmless, it often explodes in the Dragon's face.

Failure: The factoid is useless or irrelevant.

Success: The factoid deftly sums up the discussion in a neat package, or leads to a breakthrough that advances the discussion's goals. The Dragon is likely praised for her input.

Exceptional Success: In addition to success, the Dragon recovers her spent Willpower and may attempt to fetch another fact in the same conversation.

While this Aspect is manifest, the Dragon's hair becomes wild and unruly. If she is deficient of hair, it grows to a length whereupon it can be wild and unruly. No amount of combing or pampering will settle the frazzled locks.

Trail of Scales (Queen of Spades)

The footprints a person leaves in their wake are not simply physical; their impact has a far more lasting effect than is immediately apparent. Being masters of the Material realm, Dragons can pick up on cold or even buried trails if they need to find information.

Each odd point manifest grants a +1 bonus to Investigation, and each even point manifest grants a +1 bonus to Computers. For a single Willpower point the Dragon may search for a specified target simply by observing him in media (magazines, television interviews, newspapers, and so on). This is an extended research roll in thirty second intervals with a maximum number of rolls equal to points manifest. The required number of successes is dependent on the obscurity of the subject.

Such scouring has its limitations, though, and can only be attempted once per day per subject. Still, if the Dragon does not learn enough to locate her target, she can always hit the beat. After all the rolls are used up, the Dragon may apply the successes to a traditional extended investigation, though this usually takes MUCH longer.

Type: Odd/Even

Cost: 1 Willpower to commence Media Scour

Dice Pool: Wits + Investigation or Wits + Computers depending on media observed.



Action: Extended (4-30 Successes; each roll represents thirty seconds of scouring; a maximum of “Trail of Scales” rolls may be made)

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: All accumulated successes are lost, and the Media Scour is concluded. The Dragon cannot try again for twenty-four hours.

Failure: No successes are accumulated.

Success: Successes are accumulated toward the target value, which varies depending on how obscure the person sought may be. Celebrities are always easier to find than some random plumber who just happened to swipe a Dragon Heart.

Exceptional Success: A massive number of successes are accumulated toward the target value. If the target value is exceeded by 5 or more successes, the Dragon instantly knows exactly where the target is and where he will most likely be for the next few days.

While this Aspect is manifest, the Dragon leaves shadowy footprints where she walks. They last for roughly three seconds before vanishing.

Master of Secrets (Jack of Spades)

Intelligence serves no function if it isn't used to gather knowledge. But gathering knowledge is so time-consuming. You'd think that wouldn't be a problem with something as long-lived as a Dragon, but impatience is a hard feeling to fight. To research more efficiently, Dragons use this Aspect.

Each odd point manifest grants a +1 bonus to Academics, and each even point manifest grants a +1 bonus to Occult. Research roll times are reduced to a fraction with denominator equal to the points manifest in this Aspect (so assuming two points halves research time and assuming five points reduces it to one fifth Round down). Dragons very practiced in this Aspect can research at breakneck speeds.

Type: Odd/Even

Cost: None

Dice Pool: None

Action: Reflexive

While this Aspect is manifest, the Dragon sprouts two long fleshy whiskers in the vicinity of her upper lip. Obviously this is virtually impossible to conceal, which is why the Aspect is locked in dark libraries.

Sympathetic Scale (Squire of Spades)

Dragons, more so than the humans they used to be, are hesitant to draw attention to their weaknesses, and most loathe admitting they have any. Still, the notion that everything has its vulnerable spot is a solid one, and Dragons who make use of this Aspect take time to analyze and exploit those spots.

Manifesting this Aspect lets the Dragon aim actions at close range, sans the drawbacks of defense loss and movement limitation. Effectively, the aiming action changes from a Full action to an Instant action. In addition, the Dragon may aim actions that normally would not be associated with precision fire, like a Persuasion attempt. She does so by seeking out her target's weak scale, then applying her effort against that.

Each turn spent aiming an action adds an additional die to the dice pool, up to a maximum equal to the points manifest in this Aspect. For ranged attacks, the maximum is three higher than the points manifest. Contested actions cannot be aimed, and the time to aim an extended action is based on the roll time of that action. For example, aiming at a research project with 30 minute rolls takes 30 minutes per bonus die desired.

If at any point during the aim the Aspect is manifest to a degree lesser than the bonus accrued, all bonus dice in excess of the active points are lost. For more information on aiming, see the **World of**

Darkness Rulebook, page 162, and for more information on Aspect Manifestation see Chapter 3, page XX.

Type: Sequential

Cost: None

Dice Pool: None

Action: Instant

While this Aspect is manifest, a silhouette of the Dragon's Heart becomes visible through her chest. This shadow shows through clothes and is very hard to conceal. Ironically the Heart usually isn't in chest, but some believe the silhouette reflects the emptiness in its place. It's believed that those with their True Heart have in place of darkness a brilliant light, but few are willing to test the theory for fear of the Last Hand.

Eye of Value (Spades Joker)

You'd think with all that treasure a Dragon would know the difference between an antique and a cheap knockoff. But of course such knowledge only comes from extensive training. Some Dragons prefer to save themselves the trouble, though, and those that do use this merit.

Whereas most delves into the history of an object can take months of research, a Dragon with Eye of Value can simply study it briefly and learn a great deal. In fact, depending on her luck she can learn absolutely everything about something practically instantaneously.

The Dragon using Eye of Value makes an extended research roll with six-second intervals, using Intelligence + Academics + "Eye of Value" for her dice pool. Depending on the object's apparent value (but possibly not its actual value), the target number can vary from 4 to 30. The Dragon may only roll for the research a number of times equal to her points manifest in Eye of Value, after which she becomes disinterested and cannot try again for twenty-four hours. Her successes are not

lost, though, so she can pick up where she left off.

Type: Sequential

Cost: None

Dice Pool: Intelligence + Academics + Eye of Value

Action: Extended (4-30 successes; each roll represents six seconds of examination; a maximum of "Eye of Value" rolls may be made)

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The Dragon believes she's discovered the function of the object, but it is something completely different. If she thinks it's valuable, it's actually a piece of junk. If she thinks it's junk, it's priceless. She cannot attempt to appraise this object again.

Failure: The nature of the object eludes the Dragon. She does not gather any successes towards the target number. If the target number is not met, she remains unsure of the object's actual history and worth.

Success: Successes are accumulated towards the target number. If the target number is reached, the Dragon gains some idea of the object's origin, age, function, and worth. Further research may be warranted, but the initial appraisal has paid off.

Exceptional Success: A large sum of successes are garnered toward the target number. If the target number is exceeded by five or more, the Dragon becomes privy to ALL the details of the object, including any mystical properties it may contain and how such properties are activated.

While this Aspect is manifest, the Dragon's sclera, which is the white around the iris, takes on a light sage hue. Great care is often taken to ensure the eyes are concealed while an appraisal is being made.



Suit of Diamonds (Traits possessed of Challengers)

Honorable, inspiring, and passionate, the Suit of Diamonds is best fit to a Challenger. There's a certain degree of showmanship and grandeur these traits entail that are just harder to grasp for other Dragons.

Besides the Heart Suit, these Aspects are the cheapest available to a Challenger. All other methods must pay the highest price to purchase Aspects of this method, as they do not suit their Heart as readily. By now you've probably gotten the idea that all the methods have only their face cards remaining.

Impassioned Effort (Ace of Diamonds)

Driven by their sheer force of will, some Dragons have bursts of incredible stunts; the scope of which are wholly legendary. It's not surprising they were treated as gods. What was actually a moment of passion became a symbol of divinity, and the Dragon was more than happy to accept the praise.

When a Dragon with this Aspect manifest uses Willpower to increase her dice pool or resistance traits, she may spend one ADDITIONAL point to bump that value by her "Impassioned Effort". For example, a Dragon with "Impassioned Effort" 4 could spend two Willpower to add +7 to her attack instead of the usual +3. This Aspect allows the Dragon to spend two Willpower points in a single turn instead of the usual limit of one, though only in the manner described. For more information on augmenting rolls with Willpower, see the **World of Darkness** Rulebook, page 95.

Type: Sequential

Cost: 1 additional Willpower to augment the action

Dice Pool: None

Action: Reflexive

While this Aspect is manifest, the Dragon forms a Mohawk fin stretching from mid-

scalp to the back of the neck. The coloration of this fin is dependent on that of the underbelly. It can usually be concealed (relatively uncomfortably) under a hood.

Skill of the Gods (King of Diamonds)

More a reflection of the training that precedes a battle of skill, the rote talent that costs Challengers their Hearts bleeds over into this trait. Certain skills become elevated over all others, to the scale of the gods.

When purchased, each dot of this Aspect is assigned to a particular Skill. When the point corresponding to that dot is manifest, the Target Number for rolls involving that Skill is reduced from 8 to 7. That means any roll of 7 or higher is a success. To make use of such awesome talent, a point of Breath must be spent in the scene.

Type: Compound

Cost: 1 Breath to use lowered Target Numbers for the scene

Dice Pool: None

Action: Reflexive

While this Aspect is manifest, the Dragon acquires a dorsal fin between her shoulders. This structure is too pronounced to conceal effectively and often pierces through clothing.

Natural Inspiration (Queen of Diamonds)

Though not particularly crafty themselves, Dragons have been the inspiration of art the world over. In dozens of mediums in hundreds of styles, they have appeared virtually everywhere.

The Dragon's very presence serves as a muse to those around her. Within a radius in yards equal to the Dragon's Furnace, all subjects receive a +1 bonus to Crafts for each odd point manifest and a +1 bonus to Politics for each even point manifest. The Dragon herself does not receive this bonus. Should she expend a

point of Breath to ‘warm’ her inspiration, these bonuses are doubled until the end of the scene.

Type: Odd/Even

Cost: 1 Breath to double bonuses for the scene

Dice Pool: None

Action: None

While this Aspect is manifest, the Dragon exudes a faint smell of flowers. This is the easiest Aspect to use in public.

Binding Oath (Jack of Diamonds)

Dragons are creatures of majesty and pride—or at least they tell themselves that—and so a Dragon's words blaze with the same strength as her Furnace. Some take it a step beyond this, able to not only encode oaths with their very Breath, but are rewarded with a stoked Furnace when they adhere to their Oath.

When a Dragon proclaims an oath with this Aspect active, she is rewarded with ephemeral calories each time she keeps in step with that oath. Once the terms of the oath have been determined the Dragon spends a point of Breath to seal it. For each Point manifest when she fulfills a step of this oath, the Dragon gets a bonus 1000 Calories that day (4 Caloric points). The step must be of some significance, as determined by the Storyteller but usually on par with a Vice fulfillment (Not necessarily the Dragon's Vice).

If an oath is inherently dangerous, the Calories derived are doubled. The Dragon must have been put in danger by the oath at least twice before the benefit is doubled. Each Dragon may only hold one oath at a time; it must be completed or abandoned before another can be declared.

Type: Sequential

Cost: 1 Breath to declare an Oath

Dice Pool: None

Action: Instant

While this Aspect is manifest, the Dragon becomes obviously stocky. Dragons are never particularly heavy due to their Caloric requirement, but the self-rewarding nature of this Aspect makes them husky.

Bravo's Crest (Squire of Diamonds)

Certain lizards are prey, and use the illusion of size to scare off attackers. For Dragons, they all have to face the fact that they are prey to those that will follow, and some take it harder than others. Dragons that pick this trait understand that they don't necessarily have to be stronger; they just need to be more intimidating.

While manifesting this Aspect, the Dragon can puff up her chest and flaunt her crest to scare away aggressors. By rolling Presence + Intimidation + “Bravo's Crest” (Minus the target's Composure), the Dragon can force her enemy to do nothing but flee for a number of turns equal to the points manifest in Bravo's Crest.

The first use of this Aspect is free, but successive uses each cost one point of Willpower. This action suffers no successive penalties.

Type: Sequential

Cost: 1 Willpower for subsequent scares in the scene

Dice Pool: Presence + Intimidation + Bravo's Crest - Composure

Action: Instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The target... laughs. The Dragon cannot try to frighten off the target again, and suffers a -2 penalty to all Intimidation rolls until the end of the scene.

Failure: The target is shaken, but does not flee. The Dragon is free to try again.

Success: The target flees for a number of turns equal to the Points manifest in Bravo's Crest at the time of the scare. He does not flee blindly into danger, but will do everything reasonably sane to escape.



Exceptional Success: The target's mind is shattered. He has no concern for his safety as he flees, and will likely run off a cliff if it is away from the Dragon.

While this Aspect is manifest, the Dragon sprouts a crest, mane, or similar ornamental protrusion in the vicinity of her head or neck. Such traits are impossible to conceal, but that's the point.

Test of Mettle (Diamonds Joker)

A matter of cunning made manifest, the Dragon wields her wit and competitive spirit like a knife against... well, everybody. This Aspect can make a simple greeting into a social opening strike that gives the Dragon the advantage on the first foot.

When this Aspect is manifest, the Dragon may match eyes with her mark and size him up. Based on the subject's reaction she gauges her own responses, stretching the advantage for all its worth. The Dragon rolls Presence + Socialize + "Test of Mettle" against the subject's Composure. Success yields an amount of information regarding the subject's social prowess equal to the points manifest in this Aspect. Possible results include a number of social Merits the subject possesses, the subject's rating in a social skill, or his rating in a social attribute.

No subject may be tested more than once per scene. Likewise, the first Test of Mettle is free, but successive uses require a point of Willpower

Type: Sequential

Cost: 1 Willpower for subsequent Tests in the scene

Dice Pool: Presence + Socialize + Test of Mettle vs. Composure

Action: Instant and Contested (resistance is reflexive)

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: No information is gathered, and the Dragon cannot use Test of Mettle again this scene.

Failure: No information is gathered. The Dragon may still try to test others if she is willing to expend Willpower.

Success: An amount of social crunch on the subject's sheet is revealed to the Dragon (equal to the points manifest in this Aspect), be it his rating in the Allies Merit, his dots of Presence, his dots in Socialize, or any other ratable social mechanic adorning his sheet. The storyteller decides what information to give.

Exceptional Success: In addition to success, an extra bit of information is revealed.

While this Aspect is manifest, the Dragon develops ridges along her back like those of the common croc. This is sometimes easy to hide under clothing, but the texture can be detected both with tactile contact and with close visual inspection.

Information with Test of Mettle

Nice storytellers give information freely with this Aspect, like this:

He has four dots of Empathy, three dots of Manipulation, and one dot of Contacts. The Police variety. (Success for "Test of Mettle" 3; provided three separate bits of social information)

Mean storytellers are very cagey with information, like this:

He has at least three dots of Presence. (Success for "Test of Mettle" 3; provided three dots of social information)

Neither method is wrong. It is, however, wrong to switch back and forth between the two. The storyteller must decide when this Aspect first comes into play which way to provide the information, and stick with it for the Chronicle.

Suit of Clubs (Traits possessed of Tricksters)

Traits born of a Dragon's body becoming contaminated and toxic, these noxious Aspects feel right at home in the

possession of a Trickster. The underhanded nature by which they claim their Heart poisons their souls, and that poison leaks out of them in droves. Other Dragons may submit themselves to this by choice, but it will always be more difficult.

Besides the Heart Suit, these Aspects are the cheapest available to a Trickster. All other methods must pay the highest price to purchase Aspects of this method, as they do not suit their Heart as readily.

Noxious Breath (Ace of Clubs)

Dragons that use this Aspect consume fuels that are not as efficiently burned in the Furnace, and these fuels produce poisonous waste gas that can be expelled to malicious effect.

The dragon can belch out toxic fumes, which deal one point of Bashing per success. This noxious assault is fired off as a long burst (with all implied bonuses and penalties), with a standard range in yards equal to thrice the points manifest. The gas generated is charcoal black and has no other symptom of inhalation other than a slight sense of vertigo. For information about long bursts, see page 160 in the **World of Darkness** Rulebook. Obvious in this case there are no bullets to be fired.

The fumes will linger in the air for a number of additional turns equal to the points manifest, provided a wind or other outside force doesn't accelerate its dispersal. Any who remain in range of the fumes will suffer an extra bashing damage each turn, unless they hold their breath or get to fresh air.

Type: Sequential

Cost: 1 Breath to belch out fumes

Dice Pool: Stamina + Resolve + Noxious Breath

Action: Instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The Dragon chokes on the belch, suffering a single point of bashing damage.

Failure: The fumes inflict no damage. They linger for two turns fewer than usual.

Success: The fumes inflict bashing damage equal to the successes rolled. The fumes will linger for a number of turns equal to the points manifest in Noxious Breath, and those in their smoggy grasp continue to suffer single points of bashing damage.

Exceptional Success: Besides the standard effect, the belch costs no Breath.

While this Aspect is manifest, the Dragon's breath becomes slightly sour like citrus fruit. Some Dragons produce this gas from an... alternative source.

Tempter (King of Clubs)

Snakes are notorious in fiction as great tricksters and manipulators. In reality, a snake is no more cunning than any other predator. But the myth is part of the snake's reputation, and Dragons feed more off reputation than reality.

For each odd point manifest the Dragon gains a +1 bonus to Empathy. For each even point manifest the Dragon gains a +1 bonus to Streetwise. In addition, she gains the capacity to tempt by misdirection.

With a whisper in the ear of her mark, the Dragon convinces him that his dark desires can be appeased by a single act of sin. The sin of course will end in benefit for the Dragon and not the mark, though he is unaware of this.

The tempting Dragon compels her mark to perform a task. That task can be at a level of sin up to her Tempter points lower than the mark's Morality. For example, a CEO with Morality 6 could be compelled to sin at Morality 2 if the Dragon manipulating had 4 Tempter points manifest.

The compulsion is limited to one task. It is a heat-of-the-moment impulse, and so the task must be something that can be completed within a single scene (Though its implications may stretch out for years). The target number of the temptation may be



modified based on how out-of-character the action may be for the mark.

Type: Odd/Even

Cost: 1 Breath to tempt

Dice Pool: Manipulation + Persuasion + Tempter - Composure

Action: Extended (Target's Morality successes; each roll represents six seconds of tempting; a maximum of "Tempter" rolls may be made)

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: All accumulated successes are lost, and the Dragon may not try to tempt the same mark again. He steels himself against her words, and has a solid week of immunity from this Aspect.

Failure: No successes are accumulated in this step of the temptation. If the temptation fails, the Dragon may try again as a successive attempt, but the moment may be lost.

Success: The mark is convinced that the sin proposed is the best way to get what he wants (So long as it is in the morality range allowed by the Tempter Aspect). He will perform it without delay and suffer the associated shake of Morality, provided it takes less than a scene to complete.

Exceptional Success: Identical to success, but the Breath is not spent.

While this Aspect is manifest, the Dragon's tongue extends 25% and rounds slightly. It tends to slip out while the Dragon is talking.

Vile Blood (Queen of Clubs)

Another feature of a sickly Furnace, some Dragons are corrosive on the inside. Their bloodstream is contaminated by the sickness of the Furnace, and it becomes a caustic bubbling mass of black acid. While not immediately useful, if the Dragon needs to bleed she might as well do some damage while she's at it.

The Dragon's blood is replaced with an acidic compound, but this does not hinder

her. It can prove bothersome to attackers, though. Each time the Dragon suffers lethal or aggravated damage, she inflicts 1 lethal damage automatically to everything within close combat range (one to three yards). She also corrodes a number of armor points equal to the points manifest in this Aspect (Excluding her own biological armor, though not the armor she's wearing). Corrosion is not cumulative, it is always at the highest level manifest when blood is drawn. If the armor corroded is supernatural or biological in origin, the reduced utility lasts for the scene only. Otherwise the damage is permanent.

Type: Sequential

Cost: None

Dice Pool: None

Action: None

While this Aspect is manifest, the Dragon's bloodstream turns sickly black, and can be seen through the skin in certain areas of the body. Her blood also becomes corrosive, slowly eating through materials when exposed to oxygen.

Acidic Saliva (Jack of Clubs)

Just as the blood becomes contaminated by the pollution, so do the other fluids in the Dragon's body. For those with this Aspect, the fluid in question is saliva.

The corrosion attacks anything that comes into contact with the Dragon's saliva, be it by bite or spit. For bite attacks, she may add a number of additional dice equal to points manifest in this Aspect. She may also spit this acid a number of yards equal to her Furnace. When the saliva comes in contact with objects, it ignores an amount of Durability up to points manifest when dealing damage to Structure.

This Aspect is designed to destroy equipment. Attacking a specified target (**World of Darkness** Rulebook, page 165) is the norm for Acidic Saliva, but generalized

attacks work as well (they just attack the target's armor's structure instead).

Type: Sequential

Cost: None

Dice Pool: Dexterity + Firearms + Acidic Saliva (to spit)

Action: Instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The attack misses, and likely hits something completely off-course. For sadistic storytellers, it'll always hit an ally.

Failure: The attack misses, landing somewhere and causing little harm. The ground or scenery may be damaged, but not irreparably.

Success: The spitball hits the target object and inflicts damage to structure equal to the successes rolled. An amount of the object's Durability equal to the points manifest is ignored by this attack. If the targeted object was being worn by a person, they suffer a single point of bashing damage.

Exceptional Success: Identical to success, but the damage suffered is lethal. On inanimate objects, no different than a success.

While this Aspect is manifest, the Dragon's saliva becomes corrosive. The dragon herself is immune to the degrading effects of this high pH, but her clothes are not. Ironically, food is more easily digested while this Aspect is active.

Chameleon Hide (Squire of Clubs)

Another tool taken from the box of reptile traits, Chameleon Hide lets a Dragon easily blend with her surroundings. Those that fall into the category of prey find this trait indispensable.

For each odd point manifest, the Dragon gains a +1 bonus to Stealth. For each even point manifest, she gains a +1 bonus to Larceny. She may hide in plain sight without need for cover, and suffers no situational penalties for doing so.

It is important to note that the passive form of this Aspect only applies to the Dragon's skin, and not her clothes. If she wishes to hide in plain sight, she will need to remove her vestments or spend a point of Breath to draw them into the blend with her. The Dragon's eyes are never concealed, period, and are usually the means of discovery if her sneaking fails.

Type: Odd/Even

Cost: 1 Breath to blend clothes

Dice Pool: None

Action: Reflexive

While this Aspect is manifest, the Dragon's skin shifts with the pattern and color of the relevant background. She must actively blend with an object to receive bonuses for this shifting, which means she must be trying to sneak.

Venoms (Clubs Joker)

Snakes have venom that disables their prey. Without a decent knowledge of snakes it is impossible to tell if it is poisonous, pretending to be poisonous or simply devoid of the dangerous substance. For those facing Dragons with this Aspect... whoops, tough luck. This poison is practically impossible to detect until it is too late.

The Dragon's sharp exposed extremities are all actually hollow, with a dose of poison waiting to burst forth from their tips. Whenever the Dragon inflicts lethal damage, she exposes her victim to this nerve-locking chemical.

The venom inflicts trauma, with a rating equal to the points manifest in Venoms (which means its potency changes as the Aspect is assumed or disbanded). This trauma lingers until the subject is no longer suffering any lethal wounds, or until the end of the scene (whichever comes first).

It is important to note that in this case the penalty inflicted by trauma cannot be localized, as the venoms move too



quickly through the bloodstream. Also, this trauma does not stack with others inflicted by Venoms, so its rating is only ever the points manifest in Venoms. If multiple Dragons attack with Venoms, only the highest applies.

Type: Sequential

Cost: None

Dice Pool: None

Action: Reflexive

While this Aspect is manifest white toxins exude from the Dragon's natural weaponry. Depending on the other Aspects manifest, that natural weaponry varies from teeth, claws, horns, or blades. The venom loses its potency almost instantly in the air, and is thus only useful when introduced to a bloodstream.

More about Trauma

Trauma is very a very useful combat infliction, but in the case of Venoms it is only as potent as the Dragon's poison. Though highly unlikely, should a Dragon disband some points of Venoms while trauma is in effect, trauma is likewise decreased. For example, should a Dragon move from Venoms 5 to Venoms 4 while an enemy is suffering Trauma 5, that enemy would then only suffer Trauma 4.

Trauma itself is a new combat affliction introduced in this book. You can read more about it in Chapter 3 on page XX.

Suit of Goblets (Traits possessed of Inheritors)

Features of stature and entitlement, the bureaucratic drive of these traits fit best in the hand of an Inheritor. There's a certain degree of callous pomp that makes others hesitant to embrace the Goblet. It doesn't lock them out, but it certainly makes things difficult.

Besides the Heart Suit, these Aspects are the cheapest available to an Inheritor. All other methods must pay the highest price to purchase Aspects of this method, as they do not suit their Heart as readily.

Flight of the King (Ace of Goblets)

Where there are world leaders there are assassins. With this Aspect Dragons stay on their toes, and can get the drop on a would-be surprise attacker.

Odd points manifest increase the Dragon's initiative by 1, and even points manifest increase her Defense by 1. When taking a dodge action, the Dragon may add her points manifest in Flight of the King after the doubling. This works almost identically to the "Brawling Dodge" Merit (**World of Darkness** Rulebook, page 110), except Defense is doubled and *then* increased by Flight of the King (Unlike the Merit which increases instead of doubling, though this Aspect may be used in conjunction with the Merit if preferred). For more information on taking a dodge action, see the **World of Darkness** Rulebook, page 156.

Type: Odd/Even

Cost: None

Dice Pool: None

Action: Reflexive

When this aspect is manifest, the Dragon acquires a static 'tic' that works its way through her interactions. She may hiccup after saying a certain word, snap her fingers every ten seconds, or finish her sentences with a single laugh.

Regal Stature (King of Goblets)

Playing more on the idea of Dragons as movers and shakers and less on the idea of Dragons as massive fire-breathing monsters, Regal Stature provides a level of impact to the Dragon's presence in a room. Dragons take this trait when they want to be seen, and want their words to be heard.

Each point manifest grants the Dragon a +1 bonus to Presence, but to make use of this massive surge of capacity for the scene she must spend a point of Breath.

In addition, while this Aspect is active mortals will delay their judgment of the Dragon's motives and personality until the scene has concluded. While it might not seem like much it does give the Dragon some breathing room to do what needs to be done, without risking her reputation. After all, it's the result that matters, and not the process.

Type: Sequential

Cost: 1 Breath to use the Presence for the scene

Dice Pool: None

Action: Reflexive

While this Aspect is manifest, the Dragon appears to stand with perfect posture. Even if there was no noticeable slouch beforehand, the Dragon seems to be standing more "correct" than before.

Envoy's Passage (Queen of Goblets)

Oftentimes a Dragon does not start at the top. Frequently, she may have no association with a group from which she needs favors. But rather than earning them, she can project an air of status that will get her in the door; at least briefly.

The Dragon declares a group, and for

the rest of the scene she gains dots in Status equal to the points manifest in Envoy's Passage. In fact, if she increases or decreases points manifest, her dots in Status also change. The Aspect grants her no actual credentials, just the semblance of "being in charge".

If she doesn't play along with somebody of higher status, it's likely her ruse will be unveiled. Also, some particularly attentive members of the group may question her sudden appearance once she's gone. In addition, she may be associated with the group when faced with that group's enemies (Like say, facing the police when posing as a gang member). Needless to say she'll need to be clever to make the passage stick.

When the scene ends, her association with the group dissolves without contest. They notice she's gone, but don't particularly understand or care why. They may rationalize it as a transfer or a termination, or possibly a long leave-of-absence for medical or mental reasons. After the scene ends the Dragon may select a new group with which to associate (But not the same group for another twenty-four hours), but until she does this Aspect grants no other benefits.

For more information on Status, see the **World of Darkness** Rulebook, page 116.

A Free Merit?

At first glance it may seem that Envoy's Passage is just a more flexible version of the Status Merit, but that is not the case. Though being able to switch between factions fast has its benefits, the Dragon does not prosper from extended relationships with these factions. Her interactions with them are fleeting, and she likely generates many enemies in the process. Plus, there's a certain degree of resentment at her sudden injection into the fold, and should she draw too much attention to herself her charade can be dispelled.

Another thing to consider is that Envoy's Passage does not replace other forms of Status. In fact, it stacks with them and can sometimes lead to ridiculous and non-existent positions of authority, like the Emperor of Police. Only attainable by possessing some hold in the Status she pumps up, she gains access to the assumed powers of such a position despite the fact that it is fictitious. When the Aspect's duration ends, she is considered demoted, and may be harassed by her superiors for her actions while at the "top of the ladder".



Type: Sequential

Cost: None

Dice Pool: None

Action: None

While this Aspect is manifest, the Dragon gains a physical trait usually associated with the top dog of the group selected. This trait may turn out to be a stereotype, which could prove troublesome for a Dragon trying to blend in.

Crown of the Ages (Jack of Goblets)

Another tribute to regality, this Aspect bestows upon the Dragon the power of command, though limited by the language in which it is issued. Dragons take this trait when they like to get things done, but don't care for the consequences of plying authority.

The Dragon spends a point of Willpower and rolls Presence + Persuasion + "Crown of Ages" – Resolve to issue a command—which can be no longer than a single sentence—to a mortal. The command can have a number of steps equal to the points manifest in Crown of the Ages, but cannot be suicidal and cannot call the mortal's morality into question. Also, the mortal will only follow the command as issued, and is free to fill in gaps of grammar any way he pleases.

She must be careful with her words, though. Any mortal in earshot who hears a step of the command from start to finish will perform that command. In places where her voice travels, the Dragon may cause more problems than good through the use of this Aspect.

This Aspect works on supernatural beings, but only if Breath is spent in conjunction with the Willpower. It does not work if it forces a subject to sin (by their perspective, not society's). The subject cannot be commanded more than once in a scene.

Type: Sequential

Cost: 1 Willpower to command (+1 Breath for Supernatural Beings)

Dice Pool: Presence + Manipulation + "Crown of Ages" - Resolve

Action: Instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The means through which the commands are carried out is piecemeal and often out of order.

Unintended subjects are drawn into the words of the Crown, and are likely incapable of completing the tasks they pick up on effectively. Needless to say it blows up in the Dragon's face.

Failure: Nobody is compelled to follow the command. In fact, it draws suspicion and scorn. The Dragon will likely face scrutiny for being so bossy.

Success: Mortals who hear a step of the command in its entirety are compelled to attempt carrying it out, though they feel it is of their own volition. If the command places the subject in danger, he may immediately break from it. If the command happens to fall below his acceptable level of sin, he is not compelled at all. If Breath is spent when issuing the command, supernatural beings are likewise compelled with the same conditions.

Exceptional Success: Identical to success, but the Willpower is not spent.

While this Aspect is manifest, the Dragon forms a crown of light that hovers just above her head. This crown can be hard to notice in daylight, but shines softly in shadows.

Sigil Scales (Squire of Goblets)

Symbols of prowess that decorate the Dragon's body, they do more than establish her as a big shot. The skills that the symbols represent are mystically enhanced by the myth of prowess these sigils creates, making the Dragon more capable than she should be.

When purchased, each dot of this Aspect is assigned to a particular Skill. When the point corresponding to that dot is

manifest, that Skill gains the 9-Again feature. That means rolls of both 9 and 10 will add an extra die to the pool, greatly increasing the chances of success. To make use of this phenomenal ability during a scene, the Dragon must spend a point of Breath.

Type: Compound

Cost: 1 Breath to use 9-again for the scene

Dice Pool: None

Action: Reflexive

While this Aspect is manifest, symbols form over the Dragon's skin. They might pass as tattoos, but they are incredibly detailed and sometimes cumulatively form larger images.

Mesmerizing Eyes (Goblets Joker)

Fabled serpents have stares that cannot be broken; stares that hypnotize and pacify their prey. Dragons, on the other hand, can use such stares on both prey and predators, provided they've incorporated this trait into their form.

By locking eyes with her mark the Dragon can trap him in the gaze, giving him no other option but to stare back, and robbing him of his Defense. The Dragon is free to do other things while her mark is stunned, so long as she does not break eye contact.

The stare has its limitations, though. It can only last a number of turns equal to the points manifest in this Aspect, after which the Dragon must wait at least a turn before trying again. Also, if the mark is subjected to harm of any kind, it is enough to free him from the trap. After the first use of the scene, further gaze locks with this Aspect cost one point of Willpower.

Type: Sequential

Cost: 1 Willpower for subsequent gazes in the scene

Dice Pool: Composure + Expression + Mesmerizing Eyes - Resolve

Action: Instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The gaze backfires, and the Dragon finds herself unable to escape the eyes of her mark. She loses her Defense for the turn, and then the gaze ends.

Failure: The mark is not trapped in the gaze, and does not lose his defense.

Success: The mark becomes trapped in the gaze of the Dragon and cannot act for a number of turns equal to the points manifest in Mesmerizing Eyes. During these lost turns, he cannot apply his Defense against incoming attacks, though should he suffer any damage he is freed from the gaze and recovers any remaining lost turns.

Exceptional Success: Identical to success, but the Willpower is not spent.

While this Aspect is activated, the Dragon's eyelids are replaced with a translucent, protecting film. This makes stare-downs easy, but as a result the dragon never blinks.

[IMAGE!]



Aspect Factory

Now that you've seen the array of pre-made Aspects, you possess enough information to create some of your own. Crafting an Aspect takes four steps:

Step 1: Create an Ability

Your Aspect should alter some way the Dragon interacts with her world. For Sequential Aspects, this advantage takes the form of an increasing bonus. For Odd/Even Aspects, two advantages alternate between granting bonuses. For Compound Aspects, an advantage is applied to an increasingly wide selection of tasks (At least five).

Step 2: Assign a Physical Tell

Every Aspect has a sign that it is in use. This forces your Dragon to turn it off, lest she give herself away. The Tell that you use should be unique and at least somewhat difficult to conceal. As a good guideline, the more potent the advantage your Aspect provides, the more difficult the Tell should be to conceal.

Step 3: Attach a Cost

Determine whether your Aspect needs a cost to deter use. If it is often useful, requiring Breath once a scene is a good deterrent against overuse. If it is incredibly useful, make it cost Willpower each time it is used. And if it is indispensable, each use should require Breath.

Step 4: Assign a Card and Suit

Deciding the Method your Aspect is associated with is really a matter of gut feeling, so there's little to say about this. Before placing your new trait, look at the other Aspects in your target Method to make sure your new advantage fits thematically.

opinions that they enforce on the world around them. Part of their divine right is the ability to impose things on matter by force-of-will, and the Philosophies are the roads Dragons use to achieve that end.

The cynicisms and stereotypes of a particular school become reality when they are focused into a Philosophy. The five forces Dragons control, woven into their very fabric of existence, leech out with thought and make a more suitable environment. Destruction, Oath, Health, Pain, and Memory all bow to the material kings, and their tribute is magnificent. It's good to be king.

While once available in full to each and every dragon, the dichotomy that came with the Collapse shattered these five forces down the middle, and the schools that followed each took a piece. When brought together some semblance of the original potency can be mimicked, but never will it be the same.

When making a **Dragon** character, that character receives a fleeting two dots to place in Philosophies, and one such dot must always be placed in the Philosophy that matches the Dragon's school. These first two dots reflect the Dragon's introduction to her new worldview, and the influences that come with such a worldview.

Unless the Dragon is possessed of the "True Heart" Merit (see page XX) and vicariously houses her Heart in chest, she is unable to cross schools to claim Philosophies. A Dragon of Bone cannot acquire dots in the Wrath Philosophy (Being that it's a Saintly Devil School), though she could purchase dots in the Ash Philosophy as it too is one of the Embers Schools. Also, unlike Aspects, Philosophies must always be activated *in order*, starting with the lowest level and working up to the highest level known. Obviously this means Philosophies must also be purchased sequentially.

Philosophies

Besides their introverted view, Dragons are all possessed of extroverted

To get new Philosophies or new levels in a known Philosophy, the Dragon must practice the lifestyle that forms them (then spend the experience necessary). For Philosophies that fall outside their own school of thought, this can be an arduous process. The vast difference in mentality alone hinders learning, not to mention the completely different nature the other force presents to the Dragon. Mastery in more than one Philosophy is almost never possible.

The Philosophies detailed here are all surface-oriented, based on the Schools that made them reality. It is somewhat of an old-wives tale that certain Dragons spend their millennia underwater, and there is little known about the mindsets of these deep ones. Schools and Philosophies of the deep could be completely different, but still based on the five forces of Destruction, Oath, Health, Bone, and Memory. Still, that is beyond the scope of this book.

Each Philosophy is accompanied by its five levels, with the common names for those levels and a description of their function. Also included by level are the costs of using that level, the rolls necessary to complete that level, and the possible outcomes of those rolls. Embers Philosophies will state a force and the 'yang' Philosophy that mirrors them. Sainly Devil Philosophies also state a force, the 'yin' Philosophy that mirrors them, and a 'Karmic Backlash' that accompanies Dramatic Failures.

Philosophy dice pools are a rather unique thing in the World of Darkness, in that they include not only an Attribute and Skill but also the Dragon's Furnace rating and her proficiency in the Philosophy. This leads to relatively large dice pools, and likewise a high chance of success. Though Philosophies may seem expensive for the benefits they provide, the strength of their guarantee makes up for it.

Supernatural Conflict

All Philosophies incorporate Furnace in their dice pool. As such, a target facing the Philosophy may subtract his Furnace from the attacking Dragon's dice pool. This is supernatural resistance; the force of one Dragon's will against another. But what happens if a Dragon uses a Philosophy on another creature of the night? Are Vampires as vulnerable to the reality-bending will of a Dragon as a mortal is? The answer is simply "no". In place of Furnace, any supernatural creature may ply their own fantastic nature against the Dragon's will. For Vampires, that would be Blood Potency. For Werewolves, it's Primal Urge, Mages would subtract their Gnosis, and anything that possesses a Supernaturalism Trait gets to use that trait to resist these powers.

Embers Philosophies (Held by the Schools of Dominion)

Those who base their mindsets on lessons learned in the Collapse fall into the Schools of Dominion. They are called Embers Dragons, and these are their Philosophies.

Ash

The Philosophy of Ash focuses on the innate frailty of all things, and it destroys by breaking down the object on a fundamental level. Widening cracks. Magnifying flaws.

Force: Destruction

Yang: Wrath

Sense the Faults (●)

With a clear glance at an object of interest, the Dragon is made aware of any crucial weaknesses said object possesses and may ply that knowledge to her advantage.



To start, she becomes aware of a number of faults in the object equal to her proficiency in the Ash Philosophy. These faults may hinder performance or outright break the object, and Sense the Faults makes her aware of what causes the fault and how the fault could be used to damage the object.

In addition, the successes rolled on Sense the Faults form a pool of free dice which can be distributed amongst further Ash Philosophy uses against the same object. These dice are temporary, which means they're used up when they're added to a roll. All the dice in the free pool expire at the end of a scene, or if the Ash Philosophy is applied against another object.

Cost: None

Dice Pool: Wits + Crafts + Furnace + Ash – Durability – Artifact Rating

Action: Instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The Ash Dragon misinterprets the nature of a fault, be it by position or nature. If she tries to exploit said fault, something bad will happen (as it isn't actually what she thought it was). Further Ash uses against the object suffer a -5 penalty until the Dragon uses Sense the Faults again.

Failure: No faults are detected, though that doesn't mean there aren't any. The Ash Dragon cannot use higher levels of the Ash Philosophy until she succeeds on this one.

Success: Even if something seems absolutely perfect and unbreakable, there is ALWAYS a flaw. It could be a design problem. It could be a material impurity. It could be something the Dragon's force of will plants in the object. Regardless, the Dragon becomes aware of the object's flaws and is free to exploit them. Also, the successes turn into free pool dice for Ash uses.

Exceptional Success: Besides the massive free pool for Ash, there is no additional benefit.

Artifact Rating?

Mystical items, such as a Graft, are possessed of a rating that sets their Merit cost. This Merit rating gives them an added degree of protection against a Dragon's power of Destruction (in the case of Ash, it is applied as a penalty to dice pools). Whenever a dice pool involves Artifact Rating, it is referring to the Merit Cost of a mystic item that is being targeted by the Philosophy.

Intensify the Faults (●●)

The Dragon takes control of the fault, bringing it to the foregrounds and causing it to interfere with all normal functions. The object inflicts a penalty against users equal to the Dragon's Ash rating, for a number of turns equal to the successes rolled.

If the object is in the process of functioning, it must roll Durability – Dragon's Ash Rating and succeed or it instantly stops working.

Cost: 1 Willpower

Dice Pool: Resolve + Crafts + Furnace + Ash – Durability – Artifact Rating

Action: Instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The Ash Dragon inadvertently fixes the fault, granting all users a +2 bonus with the object. That same fault cannot be plied again, and the Dragon cannot continue to the next level of Ash until she succeeds in intensifying the fault.

Failure: Despite her best efforts, the fault does not trigger a malfunction. The Ash Dragon cannot use higher levels of the Ash Philosophy until she succeeds on this one.

Success: The fault in the object is brought to the forefront, inflicting a penalty for use equal to the Dragon's proficiency in Ash for a number of turns equal to the successes rolled. If the object was in the process of functioning (Like say, a computer running a

program) it must roll Durability – Ash and succeed or crash.

Exceptional Success: Same as Success, but the Willpower is not spent.

Crumble by Faults (●●●)

The Dragon widens the faults the target possesses, corroding equipment or stiffening seams. The Durability of the object is reduced by the Dragon's proficiency in Ash. This is a lasting effect.

That is, unless the object is supernatural in some way. If it is indeed of mystical origin, the reduction lasts for a number of turns equal to the successes rolled on activation, and then the object returns to normal.

Cost: 1 Breath

Dice Pool: Manipulation + Crafts + Furnace + Ash – Durability – Artifact Rating

Action: Instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The object is dramatically improved, increasing its Durability by 3. The fault being exploited is also repaired, which means the Dragon must find a different fault and complete the steps necessary to use Crumble by Faults. She cannot move up to the next level of Ash until she successfully uses Crumble by Faults.

Failure: Try as she might, the fault will not compromise the object's integrity. The Ash Dragon cannot use higher levels of the Ash Philosophy until she succeeds on this one.

Success: The fault in the object is widened, causing damage to the object's integrity and making it easier to break. If the object is mundane, this damage is permanent. If, however, the object is somehow mystical or being amplified by a Graft, this damage only lingers for a number of turns equal to the successes rolled.

Exceptional Success: Same as Success, but the Breath is not spent.

Ashes to Dust (●●●●)

The Dragon further extends the faults beyond diminishment, usually destroying the target utterly. The successes on activation inflict damage directly to Structure.

It might seem odd to damage Structure directly after going through the trouble of reducing Durability, but on close examination it begins to make sense. Durability is plied against this Philosophy only as a penalty, and it does not automatically reduce damage when this Philosophy is used. Therefore, both having it lowered and ignored as a damage sponge makes destroying the object so much easier.

Cost: 1 Breath

Dice Pool: Presence + Crafts + Furnace + Ash – Durability – Artifact Rating

Action: Instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The object is repaired by the attempt at destruction, recovering four points of Structure. The fault being exploited is also repaired, which means the Dragon must find a different fault and complete the steps necessary to use Ashes to Dust. She cannot move up to the next level of Ash until she successfully uses Ashes to Dust.

Failure: Though the fault may writhe and seem to crack, it does not inflict any damage to Structure. The Ash Dragon cannot use the final level of the Ash Philosophy until she succeeds on this one.

Success: The fault in the object is spread, inflicting damage to Structure equal to the successes rolled. Like any attack against an object, if Structure is reduced to zero it breaks and ceases to function as intended. The damage inflicted by this Philosophy is not reduced by the object's Durability.

Exceptional Success: Same as Success, but the Breath is not spent.



Disintegrator Grasp (●●●●●)

The Dragon touches the target and removes any lingering evidence of utility, filling it from top to bottom with fault. This touch inflicts 4 damage to Structure for each success on activation, usually reducing it to powder.

Disintegrator Grasp is an instant action, but not every Dragon is capable of spending 3 Breath in a single turn. For those that are not, they may drag out the touch over multiple turns by sacrificing their Defense, until they can pay the full price. In such cases, the touch must be maintained for the duration of these turns, and the roll to activate is made on the turn in which the total Breath owed is paid.

Cost: 3 Breath, or 1 Breath over three turns

Dice Pool: Resolve + Crafts + Furnace + Ash – Durability – Artifact Rating

Action: Instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The object is miraculously repaired, returning to full Structure and repairing all of the faults. The Dragon cannot use the Ash Philosophy on the object for a full day, whereupon her imagination can inflict new faults.

Failure: The surface of the object powders and blows away, but it does not seem damaged by the effort. The Dragon is free to try again, though.

Success: The object suffers damage to Structure equal to four times the successes rolled. Like any attack against an object, if Structure is reduced to zero it breaks and ceases to function as intended, but in this case it crumbles away to dust, leaving it irreparable.

Exceptional Success: The object suffers damage to Structure equal to six times the successes rolled. If the object is mystical in any way, the Dragon absorbs Breath from it equal to its rating.

Blood

The Philosophy of Blood focuses on the art of vows: seeing how valuable the word of another is, and binding them to that word on pain of death (Or insanity).

Force: Oath

Yang: Pride

See the Scars (●)

Adjusting her eyes to see the soul in tandem with the body, the Dragon analyzes how trustworthy a subject may be by reading their sins. By succeeding with See the Scars, the Dragon is provided with the following information: The target's current morality score, and the LAST active derangement the target received (If any).

This Philosophy shows the vascular system of the target, and how lively or deathly the blood moves through the body—a metaphor for spiritual vitality—helps diagnose the Morality (or relevant ethics trait). In addition, the body shows both physical and spiritual wounds (And some Blood Dragons may have trouble telling the difference), and the state of the spiritual wound displays the type of derangement, how well it has been treated, and how long ago it was inflicted.

In addition, the successes rolled on See the Scars form a pool of free dice which can be distributed amongst further Blood Philosophy uses against the target. These dice are temporary, which means they're used up when they're added to a roll. All the dice in the free pool expire at the end of a scene, or if the Blood Philosophy is applied against another target.

Cost: None

Dice Pool: Intelligence + Socialize + Furnace + Blood – Composure - Furnace

Action: Instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The Blood Dragon gets only a foggy and cryptic glimpse at the subject's soul, one which gives little insight

into their character. She may move on to higher levels of Blood, but she'll suffer a -5 penalty until she succeeds on See the Scars.

Failure: The Blood Dragon cannot alter her perception to see the sin of her subject. She cannot use higher levels of the Blood Philosophy until she succeeds on this one.

Success: Regardless of the end result, studying a soul print gives the Blood Dragon a load of insight. The Dragon learns the subject's Morality score (Or Ethics, or whatever relevant score is applicable to the Subject). Also, the successes turn into free pool dice for Blood uses.

Exceptional Success: In addition to success, the Blood Dragon can guess roughly when the last Derangement was acquired.

Ply the Scars (••)

Using the information gathered with See the Scars, the Blood Dragon socially twists the subject into submission. The Dragon adds her Blood proficiency to a number of social exchanges equal to the successes rolled on the activation of this Philosophy.

The social exchanges need not be aggressive or successive, but any accumulated applications that aren't used by the end of the scene are lost.

Cost: 1 Willpower

Dice Pool: Wits + Socialize + Furnace + Blood – Composure - Furnace

Action: Instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The Blood Dragon misjudges the subject, and bends her knowledge in the wrong direction. The Dragon suffers a -2 penalty to all social rolls involving the subject, until she successfully uses Ply the Scars.

Failure: The Dragon does not use her knowledge with the finesse necessary to benefit from it. No social rolls can be bumped by the Blood proficiency, and the

Dragon cannot move up to the next level until she succeeds at this one.

Success: For each success rolled, the Dragon may add her Blood proficiency to one social roll involving the subject, until the end of the scene.

Exceptional Success: Same as Success, but the Willpower is not spent.

Bind the Scars (•••)

A sinner properly manipulated can be made to keep his word. Words in passing that can do a lot of damage if not chosen carefully. If a subject the Blood Dragon have primed with Ply the Scars states an intention, that Dragon may initiate Bind the Scars. If she succeeds, the oath-taker is bound by Blood to carry out that intention.

While under the effects of Bind the Scars, if the oath-taker does not fulfill the promised action a degeneration roll is made (At a morality score two below the subject's current; if that falls below 1 the roll automatically fails). This subject may not be applied against the same subject within twenty-four hours.

Cost: 1 Breath

Dice Pool: Manipulation + Socialize + Furnace + Ash – Composure - Furnace

Action: Instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: All the progress made with the Blood Philosophy is lost, and the Dragon must start over.

Failure: The passing comment is not bound in oath, and the Blood Dragon cannot proceed in her Philosophy until a task is set. She must wait for another fleeting promise and succeed with Bind the Scars before she may move to higher levels of the Blood Philosophy.

Success: The subject has no mystic compulsion to fulfill his promise, but his sanity is placed on the line if he does not. Abandoning the task or failing to complete it counts as a sin, two levels below the current



Morality (or Ethics, or whatever) of the subject. The subject must roll the appropriate degeneration and derangement rolls.

Exceptional Success: Same as Success, but the sin is three levels below the current Morality of the subject.

Bleed the Betrayer (●●●●)

The Blood Dragon becomes mildly aware of the subject's actions. She knows he is working towards or against the stated goal, provided the event is significant enough. If at any point she detects he is drifting off the path, she may spend a Willpower point to roll Bleed the Betrayer, which inflicts bashing wounds on the oath-breaker. The subject remains unaware of the damage's source (Unless told), and feels only a crushing sensation in the vicinity of his heart. Since bashing damage heals quickly (Save the overflow that goes to lethal), this usually is not an effective combat tactic. Medical examination mistakes it as a heart attack, but the oath-breaker can feel in his soul it's something more than that. Bleed the Betrayer is best used to scare an oath-taker back onto the path.

This philosophy requires one turn of physical contact to apply (but not a roll), within one hour of the Bind the Scars Philosophy. Bleed the Betrayer lasts for one week after it is applied, and may be used as many times as the oath-taker drifts from the path. The duration may not be extended.

Cost: 1 Breath to apply

1

Willpower to activate

Dice Pool: Resolve + Socialize + Furnace + Blood – Composure - Furnace

Action: Instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The subject is inadvertently let off the hook, though the Blood Dragon remains unaware of this. She

may continue on to the last level of the Philosophy, but it will always fail.

Failure: No bashing damage is inflicted, and the subject gets away with stepping off-track. The Dragon cannot make use of the final Philosophy's wrath until she's inflicted damage with Bleed the Betrayer at least once, though she may apply it.

Success: The oath-breaker suffers a number of bashing wounds equal to the successes rolled. This damage can be dealt from any distance, via the connection between Dragon and oath-taker.

Exceptional Success: Same as Success, but the Willpower is not spent.

No Greater Justice (●●●●●)

By the same connection forged in Bleed the Betrayer, the Dragon watches for signs that the subject is abandoning or forsaking the oath. If he is turning his back on the promise, the Dragon has the option of boiling his blood. For a single point of Breath, she inflicts Presence + Socialize + Furnace + Blood automatic lethal damage, minus the target's Composure (And Furnace, if he has one).

No Greater Justice is an instant action, but not every Dragon is capable of spending 2 Breath in a single turn. For those that are not, they may drag out the touch over two turns by sacrificing their Defense, until they can pay the full price. In such cases, the touch must be maintained for the duration of these turns, and the roll to activate is made on the turn in which the total Breath owed is paid.

And unlike Bleed the Betrayer, the roll for this Philosophy is made on application and not activation. No Greater Justice lasts for one week once it is applied, and must be applied again after it is activated. However, unlike the other levels of the Blood Philosophy, No Greater Justice can be extended almost indefinitely by spending Willpower. Each point of

Willpower spent extends the duration of this Philosophy by one week.

Cost: 2 Breath, or 1 Breath over two turns (to apply)

1 Breath to activate

1 Willpower to extend duration by one week

Dice Pool: Presence + Socialize + Furnace + Blood – Composure - Furnace

Action: Instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: OUCH! The connection between Dragon and subject is broken, and the Blood Dragon must start over from the last level that has not expired. If it's been more than a week, she'll have to start from scratch.

Failure: The Blood Dragon cannot bind her subject with No Greater Justice, but may try again so long as she maintains physical contact with him.

Success: The invisible link between Blood Dragon and subject gets one final, grim clause. If the subject breaks from his oath completely, he will suffer an exorbitant amount of automatic lethal damage equal to the Dragon's Presence + Socialize + Furnace + Blood proficiency, minus his own Composure (and Furnace if applicable)... if the Dragon wishes it, that is (and pays a point of Breath). This damage may only be inflicted once per application, but usually ends the subject.

Exceptional Success: Identical to success, but the link lasts an extra week.

Bone

The Philosophy of Bone focuses on re-knitting wounds, quickening reflexes, sensing incoming danger, and otherwise ensuring that the Scholar can survive what he has prepared for.

Force: Health

Yang: Greed

Check the Core (●)

The Dragon examines a body's health as accurately as if she were in the doctor's office with advanced medical equipment. Though she may not possess the know-how in theory, her imagination fills in the gaps and her sheer force of will ensures such fill-ins are not just stipulation.

By rolling this Philosophy, the Dragon is able to determine what sorts of diseases, poisons, physical ailments, wounds, drugs, or other miscellaneous issues are affecting her subject. She gets an instant snapshot of how healthy someone is and what might be troubling them, though she'll need to research to understand how serious a condition is.

In addition, the successes rolled on Check the Core form a pool of free dice which can be distributed amongst further Bone Philosophy uses against the subject. These dice are temporary, which means they're used up when they're added to a roll. All the dice in the free pool expire at the end of a scene, or if the Bone Philosophy is applied against another subject.

Cost: None

Dice Pool: Intelligence + Medicine + Furnace + Bone – Composure - Furnace

Action: Instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The Bone Dragon misdiagnoses the subject, and treatment is likely to go in the wrong direction. She may move on to higher levels of Bone, but she'll suffer a -5 penalty until she succeeds on Check the Core.

Failure: The Bone Dragon's mental triage care fails to launch, and she is completely stumped regarding the subject's condition. She will have to rely on mundane means of diagnosis, or try the Philosophy again. Higher levels of Bone cannot be used until this level has succeeded.

Success: Successes turn into free pool dice for Bone uses. In addition, she becomes



aware of (up to) a number of conditions the subject is suffering—be they of infectious, foreign, toxic, or genetic origins—equal to her proficiency rating in Bone. Obviously if the subject does not have such conditions, there is no awareness to be had.

Exceptional Success: Besides the larger free dice pool, this is identical to a success.

Manage the Core (••)

Following Check the Core, this Philosophy helps cope with the symptoms the Dragon detected. Those ailments afflicting effectively go into remission for the rest of the scene.

The subject may ignore a number of symptoms associated with his condition equal to the Dragon's proficiency in Bone, excluding penalties associated with suffering wounds (those are beyond the focus of this Philosophy). Until the end of the scene, the target of this Philosophy does not need to roll to resist unconsciousness; he will not pass out until after the scene has ended.

Cost: 1 Willpower

Dice Pool: Composure + Medicine + Furnace + Bone – Composure - Furnace

Action: Instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The symptoms are made worse by the Bone Dragon's meddling. While for some this may just be a really unpleasant time, for those with serious

conditions such a surge of bad health can be fatal.

Failure: The Dragon fails to suppress the symptoms of her subject's condition. She must succeed with Manage the Core before she may use higher levels of the Bone Philosophy.

Success: A number of symptoms the subject is suffering equal to the Dragon's Bone proficiency are suppressed, neutralizing any ill effects they may impose until the end of the scene. Such suppression works on all forms of suffering, including fatigue and drug withdrawal.

Exceptional Success: Same as Success, but the Willpower is not spent.

Mend the Core (•••)

After suppressing the symptoms, the Bone Dragon has enough room to actually treat causes. She can heal diseases, wounds, or addictions by rolling Mend the Core.

Each success heals either two points of bashing or a single point of lethal. In addition, succeeding on Mend the Core allows the Bone Dragon to "spend" her proficiency to remove conditions, spending them as points to remove up to its rating as a cumulative total. For more information, see the "Mending Disease" sidebar on this page.

Cost: 1 Breath

Dice Pool: Strength + Medicine + Furnace + Bone – Composure - Furnace

Isn't it Beneficial?

You may have noticed that despite this Philosophy's benign purview it still has its dice pool reduced by the target's values. There are several reasons for this, but the one you will be receiving is this: people are good at hiding illness. There is still a social stigma associated with the sick, and such preconceptions will linger for a very long time. As a natural defense mechanism (Very primal, to avoid being sent away from the herd), humans hide their illness so as to avoid rejection by the populace. Dragons too hide their weakness reflexively as a means of self-defense, as a sickly Dragon is easy to overpower and eventually smother out. The heat of a Furnace burns both physically and metaphorically, which means it incinerates a degree of any supernatural influence. As the Bone Philosophy is technically supernatural, it is not excluded from this incineration.

NOTE: A Bone Dragon may target herself with the Bone Philosophy. In such a case, she subtracts her own Composure and Furnace from her dice pool.

Action: Instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The subject suffers internal trauma (Trauma 3), and three lethal damage with it. The Dragon is free to try again, provided the subject is still willing to accept treatment. This trauma lasts until the subject no longer suffers any lethal wounds.

Failure: No wounds are healed, and no conditions are treated. The Dragon must succeed on this level of the Philosophy before continuing to higher levels.

Success: Each success can be spent to heal two bashing wounds or one lethal wound. In addition, the Dragon may treat a number of conditions that sum up to no more than her Bone proficiency.

Exceptional Success: Same as Success, but the Breath is not spent.

Mending Disease

When using Mend the Core, the Dragon gains the ability to cure diseases up to her proficiency in the Bone Philosophy, but what does that actually mean?

Conditions fall into a variety of categories depending on their overall interpreted severity. Such severity may not match their real-world severity, but these are the numbers assigned by the Dragon's mind.

Trivial Condition (●): cold, flu, minor addiction, fatigue, acne, parasites, etc.

Pesky Condition (●●): most STDs, major addiction, bone fractures, etc.

Serious Condition (●●●): neurological disorders, blood disorders, asthma, rabies, etc.

Fatal Condition (●●●●): cancer, aids, Huntington's, meningitis, etc.

Supernatural Condition (●●●●●): possession, claiming, antecedent passenger, etc. (NOT vampirism)

Each time Mend the Core succeeds, the Dragon may remove any conditions she is aware of that are *less* than her current Bone rating, so long as the total number removed does not exceed her Bone rating. For example, a Dragon with Bone 4 using Mend the Core could remove a Serious and Trivial condition, but not a Supernatural condition.

Cycle the Core (●●●●)

Once the body is back to neutral (as in, it's healthy), a Bone Dragon can make it stay that way. Focusing the force of health directly into her subject, she accelerates the rate at which their tissues mend.

Until the end of the scene, the subject recovers one bashing wound each turn and one lethal wound every other turn. This stacks on top of the subject's natural regenerative capabilities.



Cost: 1 Breath to apply

Dice Pool: Resolve + Medicine + Furnace + Bone – Composure - Furnace

Action: Instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: Whoops! The subject feels sickly, and suffers four points of bashing damage sporadically during the course of the remainder of the scene. The Bone Philosophy must be started again from scratch.

Failure: No regeneration is supplied, and the Bone Dragon cannot continue her Philosophy until she succeeds at this level.

Success: The subject's regeneration is improved until the end of the scene. On top of his normal healing rates, he recovers one bashing wound every turn and one lethal turn every two turns. It is possible to heal both a bashing and a lethal wound on the same turn.

Exceptional Success: Same as Success, but the Breath is not spent.

Overcharge the Core (●●●●●)

The last stand, Overcharge the Core fortifies the subject's body against future injury. By spending two Breath, rolling it, and succeeding, she can both increase the subject's Health dots and his Defense.

Overcharge the Core lasts for the entirety of the scene in which it is activated, but it may be extended into subsequent scenes by spending a point of Breath. Overcharge the Core cannot be extended longer than one day in this fashion.

Overcharge the Core is an instant action, but not every Dragon is capable of spending 2 Breath in a single turn. For those that are not, they may drag out the activation over two turns by sacrificing their Defense, until they can pay the full price. In such cases the roll to activate is made on the turn in which the total Breath owed is paid.

Cost: 2 Breath, or 1 Breath over two turns (to apply)

1 Breath to extend by one scene

Dice Pool: Wits + Medicine + Furnace + Bone – Composure - Furnace

Action: Instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The subject's muscles lock instead of loosen, and he suffers a -5 penalty to Defense until the end of the scene. He does not gain any bonus health levels.

Failure: The Bone Dragon fails to overcharge the subject's core. The Philosophy sequence is broken with no benefit, and she must start from scratch before she may try again.

Success: Each success scored on activation grants the subject an additional temporary Health dot (Which follows the rules regarding temporary health, in the **World of Darkness** Rulebook sidebar "Temporary Health Dots" on page 173). For every two successes, the subject receives a +1 bonus to his Defense. Both bonuses last until the end of the scene, or until the end of the last scene the Dragon pays for. This effect cannot be extended further than one day.

Exceptional Success: Identical to success, but the bonus lasts an extra scene.

Sweat

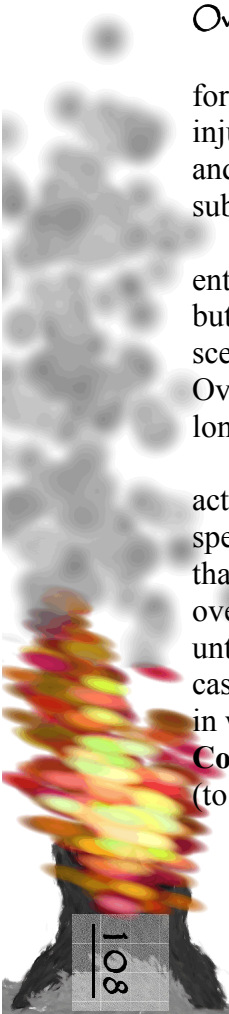
The Philosophy of focuses on mitigating or intensifying pain and its associated penalties. Scholars of Sweat feel that pain affirms life, but they always find a way to make other suffer more than they do.

Force: Pain

Yang: Lust

Find the Pain (●)

The Dragon gains an understanding of what it means to feel pain, and can successfully detect the level of pain those near to her suffer. Pain can be difficult to detect, as the sturdy and the socially infallible find clever ways to hide it. But with enough effort, it can be found. At this level of Philosophy the dragon becomes



aware of the target's Health stat, knowing both how much they can suffer before they drop and how much they have suffered already, as well as the source of that pain.

The player is informed by the storyteller how much aggravated, lethal, and bashing damage the target is suffering, and how many dots of Health they possess. This information is provided once when the Philosophy is used, so the Dragon must estimate future damage as it is dealt.

In addition, the successes rolled on Find the Pain form a pool of free dice which can be distributed amongst further Sweat Philosophy uses against the subject. These dice are temporary, which means they're used up when they're added to a roll. All the dice in the free pool expire at the end of a scene, or if the Sweat Philosophy is applied against another subject.

Cost: None

Dice Pool: Wits + Survival + Furnace + Sweat – Stamina - Furnace

Action: Instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The Sweat Dragon underestimates the target's tolerance of pain. She may move on to higher levels of Sweat, but she'll suffer a -5 penalty until she succeeds on Find the Pain.

Failure: The Sweat Dragon is stumped, unable to size up her target. Higher levels of Sweat cannot be used until this level has succeeded.

Success: Successes turn into free pool dice for Sweat uses. The Sweat Dragon also learns how many Health dots the subject has, how many wounds he has suffered and of what type they may be, and the degree (if any) of trauma the subject suffers.

Exceptional Success: Besides the larger free dice pool, this is identical to a success.

Trauma?

Trauma is a penalty-inflicting ailment triggered when a subject does not sacrifice his defense or moves more than half his speed. The penalty is equal to the trauma's rating, and applies to the subject's next action. For more information on trauma, see page XX in Chapter 3.

Manipulate the Pain (●●)

With the knowledge of where the pain is situated (and a point of Willpower), the Dragon may actively redirect it to a focused location. For example, a man with a broken leg and an arthritic shoulder could be made capable of walking by moving the pain to his head, though the resulting shock would probably addle him. Likewise, someone with migraines could be rendered unable to hold a pistol when the pain moves to his hands. People suffering generalized pain (Health penalties) can have them focused on a single area, increasing the penalty for actions involving that region by the Dragon's Sweat rating. Trauma can be localized, but only increases by half the Dragon's Sweat rating (rounded down).

Though it may seem like this wouldn't work on a healthy subject, there is always some little discomfort that can be compressed into a hindrance. Even if there wasn't, the Sweat Dragon's belief in Pain creates that discomfort which can then be manipulated.

Cost: 1 Willpower

Dice Pool: Manipulation + Survival + Furnace + Sweat – Stamina - Furnace

Action: Instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The pain moves, but not in the way the Dragon intended. The target suffers a -2 penalty in a region of the storyteller's choice, for two minutes.



Failure: The Dragon does not anchor the pain when she moves it, so it slips back into its original position almost instantly. She must succeed at this level before she can move on to the next one.

Success: The Dragon moves a pain from one section of the target's body to another, or gathers up a general pain (or invented pain) and focuses it in one region. In the case of the former, any penalties from the source are removed, made situational in the target region and increased by the Dragon's proficiency in Sweat. For the latter, the Health Penalty Shift takes two steps right, and a situational penalty equal to the Dragon's Sweat proficiency is applied to the target region. This effect lasts for the scene. (Trauma is moved just like pain, but is only increased by half the Dragon's Sweat rating).

Exceptional Success: Same as Success, but the Willpower is not spent.

Health Penalty Shift?

Both the Sweat and Lust Philosophies have quite a bit of influence on the penalties inflicted by low Health levels. Portions of this influence involve changing where penalties start, and such situations are referenced as Health Penalty Shifts.

In this case, the Health Penalty Shift is not beneficial for the Dragon, as it reduces the penalties the subject suffers. Thus it is better to take actual pain and move it, rather than summon up nonexistent pain.

Health Penalty Shifts are explained in Chapter 3, on page XX.

Heighten the Pain (●●●)

Extensive redirection of the pain allows the Dragon to intensify the amount that the target suffers. By spending a point of Breath, the Dragon applies a Health

Penalty Shift left, for a number of steps equal to her proficiency in Sweat.

Cost: 1 Breath

Dice Pool: Strength + Survival + Furnace + Sweat – Stamina - Furnace

Action: Instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The attempt backfires, dulling the pain and causing the Health Penalty Shift to take three steps right until the end of the scene. The Sweat Dragon is free to continue to the next level.

Failure: The Health Penalty Shift does not change. The Sweat Dragon cannot continue with her Philosophy until she succeeds at this level.

Success: The Health Penalty Shift takes a number of steps to the left equal to the Dragon's proficiency in Sweat. This effect lasts for the scene.

Exceptional Success: Same as Success, but the Breath is not spent.

Focus the Pain (●●●●)

After having increased the magnitude of pain experience, the Sweat Dragon can take hold of the reins of adrenaline, controlling just how far a person can be pushed before they feel nothing. With a point of Breath the Dragon lays out invisible wires between herself and her target. She is free to pull them at her whim, inflicting harm when her target displeases her.

Cost: 1 Breath

Dice Pool: Presence + Survival + Furnace + Sweat – Stamina - Furnace

Action: Instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: Uh oh. The target gets four free pool dice to apply where he pleases, and the Philosophy must begin again from level 1.

Failure: No free penalty pool is formed. The Dragon must succeed on this level

before she can move on to the final level of Sweat.

Success: Successes rolled on activation form a free pool of penalties, which the Dragon may levy against her target until the end of the scene. Like all free pools, once these penalties are used they're gone. The setback of this limit is counterbalanced by the flexibility it provides: these penalties may be applied to *any* action the target makes. This free pool expires at the end of the scene.

Exceptional Success: Same as Success, but the Breath is not spent.

Lock the Pain (●●●●●)

After controlling the adrenaline, the Sweat Dragon may choose to make particular injuries more severe. The wounds do not appear to change, but are healed at a slower rate and are immune to supernatural intervention.

The Dragon renders a number of the target's wounds (her choice) resistant. Resistant wounds are explained in Chapter 3, on page XX. The wounds remain resistant until they have healed. It is important to note that this Philosophy only works on existing wounds. If the target is currently devoid of wounds, he suffers a single point of resistant lethal damage.

Lock the Pain is an instant action, but not every Dragon is capable of spending 3 Breath in a single turn. For those that are not, they may drag out the activation over up to three turns by sacrificing their Defense, until they can pay the full price. In such cases the roll to activate is made on the turn in which the total Breath owed is paid.

Cost: 3 Breath, or 1 Breath over three turns

Dice Pool: Intelligence + Survival + Furnace + Sweat – Stamina - Furnace

Action: Instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: If the subject is currently suffering any resistant wounds, they change

back into normal wounds. The subject also instantly recovers from one lethal wound. The Sweat Philosophy must be started over.

Failure: No wounds are made resistant. The Dragon must start over.

Success: A number of the target's current wounds become resistant, equal to the Dragon's proficiency in Sweat. If there are no current wounds, one resistant lethal one is inflicted. This is a lasting effect.

Exceptional Success: Identical to success, but an extra resistant lethal wound is inflicted regardless of the target's current state. Also, the target suffers Trauma 5 until such time as he no longer suffers from lethal wounds.

Tears

The Philosophy of Tears focuses on controlling the chains and grooves that connect emotion and memory.

Force: Mind

Yang: Sloth

Identify the Chains (●)

The Dragon knows the connections between emotion and memory, and can identify those connections in another person. By studying her mark the Dragon becomes aware of several memory-emotion pairings, often called chains. Having knowledge of these chains is essential to proceed with the Tears Philosophy.

The Dragon becomes aware of a number of chains in the target's mind equal to her proficiency in the Tears Philosophy. Each chain has both a memory component and an emotion component, though the emotions can sometimes be more complex than 'sad' or 'angry'. The Tears Dragon can also detect suppressed memories, but the chains binding them are locked and impossible to manipulate. The Dragon must touch the target to activate this Philosophy.

In addition, the successes rolled on Identify the Chains form a pool of free dice



which can be distributed amongst further Tears Philosophy uses against the mark. These dice are temporary, which means they're used up when they're added to a roll. All the dice in the free pool expire at the end of a scene, or if the Tears Philosophy is applied against another subject.

Cost: None

Dice Pool: Composure + Empathy + Furnace + Tears – Resolve - Furnace

Action: Instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The Tears Dragon misidentifies at least one of the chains, though she remains unaware of this. She may move on to higher levels of Tears, but she'll suffer a -5 penalty until she succeeds on Identify the Chains.

Failure: Despite her best effort, the Tears Dragon cannot follow the chain from memory to emotion. Without knowing where it leads, she cannot control it, so higher levels of Tears remain locked until this level has succeeded.

Success: Successes turn into free pool dice for Tears uses. The Tears Dragon also learns of a number of chains equal to her proficiency in Tears.

Exceptional Success: Besides the larger free dice pool, this is identical to a success.

Tug the Chain (●●)

With this philosophy, a Dragon has the power to bring up other memories that have a connection to a current emotion. For example, maybe an act of aggression has relevance with a memory that also connect to regret. The Dragon can give that chain a swift pull, forcing her mark to re-experience the memory and possibly stray to another emotion. It can buy a few seconds as a distraction, but serves an infinitely more useful purpose in giving the mark a new perspective.

To tug the Chain, the Dragon must be touching the mark.

Cost: 1 Willpower

Dice Pool: Manipulation + Empathy + Furnace + Tears – Resolve - Furnace

Action: Instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The memory only serves to fortify the mark's resolve. He gets a +2 bonus to Resolve until the end of the scene, and the Dragon must try again with a different chain.

Failure: Despite her pulling, the Dragon does not pull forth an associated memory. She must succeed at this level before she can move on to the next one.

Success: The mark is drawn into a memory in which his current emotion was significant. He spends a number of turns dwelling in the flashback equal to the Dragon's Tears proficiency. The memory might give him some insight that changes his mind, but that is dependent on the storyteller.

Exceptional Success: Same as Success, but the Willpower is not spent.

Pluck the Chain (●●●)

After tugging a chain hard enough, a Tears Dragon may remove it completely, causing the mark to suddenly lose all emotional attachment to the memory (A strange sensation). The groove of that chain remains for a time, a lingering behavior that seems unwarranted, but it will heal after several weeks. For example, a man who once held a chain of love associated with his daughter might still hug her when he came home from work, but not really understand why. Eventually, he won't hug her at all.

It is important to note that this tug can also apply to derangements. Without an emotional attachment, the derangement eventually fades (as the groove heals). The chain is comprised of astral material that is only detectable by the Dragon and those who are enlightened enough to see the Dreamtide. The Dragon may lay one of these chains in an open groove, but cannot

trailblaze a new emotional connection at this level.

Each pluck takes approximately three seconds. The Tears Dragon must be touching the mark to pluck a chain.

Cost: 1 Breath

Dice Pool: Strength + Empathy + Furnace + Tears – Resolve - Furnace

Action: Instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The chain injures the mark's mind, causing a derangement until the end of the scene. The Tears Dragon must continue from a different chain, moving back to the previous level if necessary.

Failure: The chain is affixed too firmly for the Dragon's tug, which means she'll have to pull harder. She cannot move on to the next level until she succeeds at this one.

Success: As explained, the connection between emotion and memory is removed, causing an emotional numbness that eventually heals to indifference. If the chain was deranged, the associated derangement vanishes after approximately one week.

Exceptional Success: Same as Success, but the Breath is not spent.

Lay the Chain (●●●●)

Usually after plucking the chain of an undesirable emotion, a Tears Dragon wants to plant a desirable one. At this level, she can follow Pluck the Chain by laying down a new groove, connecting any known memory to an available emotion using the chain just plucked. Depending on how radical the connection (Like connecting love to a murder), there's a chance that the connection will cause a derangement (Forced Morality roll by the mark at storyteller discretion). Each connection forms a new behavior that is usually favorable compared to the old one.

To lay a chain, the Dragon must be touching the mark.

Cost: 1 Breath

Dice Pool: Wits + Empathy + Furnace + Tears – Resolve - Furnace

Action: Instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The Tears Dragon miscalculates the placement, attaching it to the wrong memory or wrong emotion. The result is a less than desirable new behavior.

Failure: The chain does not anchor to the mind, breaking free only moments after it is placed. The Dragon can pick it up off the ground and try again, but she cannot continue to the final level of Tears until she succeeds.

Success: As explained, the chain creates a new emotional connect and most likely a new behavior. While the short term ramifications of that may seem limited, clever placement can radically change a mark's personality.

Exceptional Success: Same as Success, but the Breath is not spent.

Rip the Chain (●●●●●)

On certain foes, creating new emotions isn't enough to overpower the burning rage or hatred of a mark, so sometimes a Tears Dragon is driven to take this cruelest of measures. The Dragon takes tight grip of one chain and uses it to rip them all from the mark's mind. This robs him of ALL his Willpower points, and instantly lowers his Morality by two. This act requires a sacrifice of 4 Breath.

Having all emotional connections extracted can be devastating to the psyche. The mark hereafter has no connection to his past, and can feel nothing until such time as he forges a new chain (Usually by getting a derangement). He is essentially made into a sociopath, having only the false chain the Tears Dragon supplied as a compass for what it means to feel. There truly can be no worse punishment than this.



Rip the Chain is an instant action, but not every Dragon is capable of spending 4 Breath in a single turn. For those that are not, they may drag out the activation over multiple turns by sacrificing their Defense, until they can pay the full price. Rip the Chain requires physical contact to perform, and extending the action for fueling purposes does not change this. The Dragon must maintain some form of touch with the mark until she has paid the full price of the Philosophy, and then she may roll Rip the Chain.

Cost: 4 Breath, or 1 Breath over four turns

Dice Pool: Resolve + Empathy + Furnace + Tears – Resolve - Furnace

Action: Instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The mark's chains defend themselves from the pull, drawing Willpower from the Tears Dragon until she is devoid of it or he is full. If she wishes to try again, she must do so from scratch.

Failure: The chains give some slack, but do not rip free. Provided she does not break contact with the mark she may try again.

Success: Any derangements the mark may be suffering are removed. The mark is also drained of all of his Willpower points. The mark's Morality (or other relevant ethics trait) score also drops two, or to zero if such a drop would make his Morality negative.

Exceptional Success: Identical to success, but Morality falls another step.

Saintly Devil Philosophies (Held by the Schools of the Five Evils)

Those who flee from leadership's call, then plummet into rampages of dictatorial self-satisfaction, fall into the Schools of the Five Evils. They are called Saintly Devil Dragons, and these are their Philosophies.

Wrath

The Philosophy of Wrath is founded around the mass destruction of anything and everything.

Force: Destruction

Yin: Ash

Karmic Backlash: Rampage. The Dragon must spend every action he takes trying to attack someone (or something in destruction range). If nothing is in range, she will attack herself, ripping at her own body in a bloodthirsty frenzy. She only calms down once she has either destroyed her target (a person, a group of people, or a town) or when her wounds are within certain parameters (which cause her to flee). Those parameters are determined by the level of Wrath that she failed. While in a Rampage, the Dragon can still manifest Aspects, but cannot remove them.

Calling the Tempest (●)

There is calm before every storm; a silent sense of foreboding that whispers of things to come. In the case of a Wrath Dragon, that storm is her rage. Taking advantage of the mortal flaw that is terror, the Dragon creates an aura of protection in the form of hesitation.

When a Dragon rolls Calling the Tempest, those that would act aggressively against her must roll Composure (+Furnace, if they have it) first and succeed, or the action suffers a penalty equal to the Dragon's proficiency in Wrath. This effect lasts for the scene.

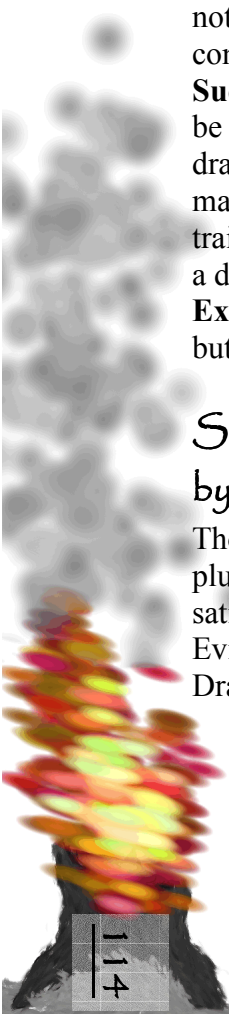
Cost: None

Dice Pool: Presence + Intimidation + Furnace + Wrath

Action: Instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The Wrath Dragon falls into a Rampage, until such time as her primary target is felled or she suffers a wound in her fifth-to-last Health slot.



Failure: The Wrath Dragon is not as badass as she thinks she is, and her presence doesn't ward off aggressors. She must succeed at this level before she can move on to further levels of Wrath.

Success: The Dragon wraps herself in an aura of fear, sapping the resolve of would-be attackers. Anyone taking aggressive action against her must roll Resolve + Furnace and succeed, or suffer a penalty equal to the Dragon's proficiency in Wrath.

Exceptional Success: In addition to a success, if the aggressor fails the Resolve + Furnace roll they cannot spend Willpower until their next turn.

Hone the Fire (●●)

Many people speak of Wrath as a wildfire that can spread through a mind, rendering it oblivious to other things. Others speak of it as if it was a hurricane of one's own making. Still others speak of it as if it was a Smith's forge, the heat necessary to craft something powerful. The Dragons of Wrath agree with the last. Wrath is nothing but a fire; uncontrolled it quickly spreads and burns itself out. Controlled, a Dragon can use it while not being a slave to it.

The Dragon not only separates herself from her Wrath but she pushes it out into others. Any mortals within a number of yards equal to the successes rolled must roll Composure to avoid lashing out against the nearest object. Such a push requires a point of Willpower.

Wrath is harshest to the powerful. Anyone in range with a Furnace trait (or other supernatural trait) must roll Composure + Furnace to avoid the Rampage Karmic Backlash. Failure sends them into a destruction spree with the same end conditions as the Dramatic Failure of this Philosophy.

Cost: 1 Willpower

Dice Pool: Resolve + Intimidation + Furnace + Wrath

Action: Instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The Wrath Dragon falls into a Rampage, until such time as her primary target is felled or she suffers a wound in her fourth-to-last Health slot.

Failure: The Dragon cannot extract the emotion from her actions, and must struggle with its volcanic fury for another turn. She also cannot move on in Wrath until she succeeds at this level.

Success: For each success rolled, the madness stretched out an extra yard. Mortals in range must roll Composure or lash out at something around them.

Supernatural beings in range must roll Composure with their supernatural trait, or fall into a Rampage. In addition, until the end of the scene the Wrath Dragon does not need to roll to control her anger, unless she falls into a Rampage.

Exceptional Success: Same as Success, but the Willpower is not spent.

Terminal Velocity Strike (●●●)

Wrath is more potent than other emotions, and it demands action. Having filtered out her wrath, the Dragon can draw it to her extremities and use this Philosophy to give her close-range attacks phenomenal recoil. Activating this effect costs a point of Breath.

Every hit an opponent takes from a non-grapple, non-ranged attack sends him flying a number of yards equal to double the Dragon's Strength rating (or adds double the Dragon's Strength to the distance thrown if the attack already sends an opponent flying), plus a few more for the force of the hit. Should he hit something, he takes damage as if he fell the distance he was sent flying. Falling information can be found on page 179 of the **World of Darkness** Rulebook.

Cost: 1 Breath



Dice Pool: Dexterity + Intimidation + Furnace + Wrath

Action: Instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The Wrath Dragon falls into a Rampage, until such time as her primary target is felled or she suffers a wound in her third-to-last Health slot.

Failure: The rage fails to pool at the Dragon's extremities, and thus does not send her enemies flying. She must succeed at this level before she may continue to the higher Wrath Philosophies.

Success: Any attack the Dragon makes that is not ranged and not against a grappled target sends the target flying a number of yards equal to twice the Dragon's Strength, plus the damage of the attack. The target suffers falling damage as if he fell this distance, provided he hits something before landing. This effect lasts until the end of the scene.

Exceptional Success: Same as Success, but the Breath is not spent.

Shattering Force (●●●●)

Once a Dragon's Wrath is focused enough, she can focus it into the very earth itself, causing a minor quake. She does this by striking the ground (a punch or stomp, or even a whap of the tail) with rage focused at the striking appendage. The affected area is one radial yard for each dot of proficiency.

Using this Philosophy costs a point of Breath.

Anyone caught in the area has to either give up their Defense, or lose their next turn. Objects in range lose one third of their total Structure points (rounded up).

Cost: 1 Breath

Dice Pool: Strength + Intimidation + Furnace + Wrath

Action: Instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The Wrath Dragon falls into a Rampage, until such time as her

primary target is felled or she suffers a wound in her second-to-last Health slot.

Failure: The earth may rumble a bit, but it doesn't shake enough to unsteady anybody's foothold. The Dragon must try again and succeed before she can proceed to the final level.

Success: Everybody in range has the choice of giving up their Defense, or their turn. If Defense has already been used, they have no choice. Any object in range that has contact with the ground loses one third of its Structure (rounded up).

Exceptional Success: Same as Success, but the Breath is not spent.

The End of Days (●●●●●)

Again striking the ground, the Dragon magnifies the range phenomenally, causing earthquakes that destroy towns and bury her victims alive. The affected area is one square mile per dot in Wrath (So 5 miles at this proficiency).

The quake lasts for a number of turns equal to the successes rolled. Like Shattering Force, those in range must choose between their Defense or their turn for the duration of the quake. All object that have any direct contact with the ground (buildings, cars, telephone poles, etc.) lose half of their total Structure (rounded up) over the course of the quake. For mechanical purposes, this loss of Structure is immediate.

The End of Days is an instant action, but not every Dragon is capable of spending 3 Breath in a single turn. For those that are not, they may drag out their windup over multiple turns by sacrificing their Defense, until they can pay the full price. The roll to activate is made on the turn in which the total Breath owed is paid.

Cost: 3 Breath, or 1 Breath over three turns

Dice Pool: Stamina + Intimidation + Furnace + Wrath

Action: Instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The Wrath Dragon falls into a Rampage, until such time as her primary target is felled or all of her Health slots are filled with some kind of wound.

Failure: Again, the ground in range trembles a little but fails to shake with the proper force. This last strike exhausts the Dragon's rage, though, so she must start anew if she wishes to try again.

Success: Anyone within the range of the quake's epicenter (which is a distance in miles away from the Dragon equal to the Dragon's Wrath proficiency) must either sacrifice Defense or their turn, for a number of turns equal to the successes rolled. Any objects in range that have direct contact with the ground automatically lose half of their total Structure (rounded up).

Exceptional Success: The earthquake is excessively violent. In addition to the success, EVERYONE in range immediately suffers two lethal wounds (excluding the Dragon, of course).

Pride

The Philosophy of Pride is founded on gathering others under a common goal and banner.

Force: Oath

Yin: Blood

Karmic Backlash: Social

Invisibility. No matter how hard the Dragon tries to save face, she has become a nuisance and none will pay her even the fleeting respect of small talk. She finds it impossible to get others to listen to her, and must roll Presence + Composure, penalized based on the level failed, each time she wants to have a statement heard. Social Invisibility does not protect her from being noticed, it just stops others from caring she's there. Social Invisibility has a duration dependent on the level failed.

A Display of Power (●)

Pride Dragons recognize that their divine prowess has the potential to ensnare a group... for a time. People within range when A Display of Power is used notice the Pride Dragon and are ready to listen to what she has to say. This group is the only one that can be targeted by subsequent uses of Pride Philosophies, and regardless of their views they will not interrupt the Dragon until the duration of this Philosophy expires. This effect lasts as long as the Dragon keeps talking, and its range is based on the successes rolled.

Regardless of the nature of the crowd, they will behave as long as they are under the thrall of this display. This may not seem like an entirely useful ability (since the Dragon cannot flee while she's got their attention), but even a few minutes of attention can cease a riot (or start one).

Cost: None

Dice Pool: Presence + Politics + Furnace + Pride

Action: Instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The Pride Dragon is rendered Socially Invisible, with a -1 penalty to each proclamation roll. She remains this way for one day.

Failure: The Pride Dragon draws no more attention than she would without the Philosophy. She must try again to advance to the next level.

Success: Each success can ensnare up to ten people, or one supernatural being if present in the crowd. All drawn in by the Dragon's mystically enhanced words must listen until the Dragon stops talking, or the scene ends (Whichever happens first).

Exceptional Success: In addition to a success, the Pride Dragon can ensnare an extra ten people.



I have your Ear (●●)

Whereas A Display of Power keeps crowd members from being rowdy, it does not keep them from leaving. I have your Ear, on the other hand, locks all listening in rapture, rendering them unable to even look away from the Dragon while she is talking. Attempting this Philosophy requires a point of Willpower.

The Crowd forms an oath with the Dragon. They promise subconsciously to hear her out, and the Pride exuding from the Dragon's lips holds them to it. They cannot leave the crowd without a successful Composure + Furnace roll. In addition, anyone who drifts into the crowd gets drawn into the Pride Philosophy, and becomes a viable target for higher levels.

The shape of this gathering becomes impossibly glued. Any who manage to break free find themselves Socially Invisible to those still in the crowd, needing to roll Presence + Composure - 2 simply to be noticed.

Cost: 1 Willpower

Dice Pool: Composure + Politics + Furnace + Pride

Action: Instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The Pride Dragon is rendered Socially Invisible, with a -2 penalty to each proclamation roll. She remains this way for two days.

Failure: The Dragon's words do not glue the crowd in place. If she cannot control them in this fashion, her further endeavors are hopeless. She must succeed here before she continues.

Success: The crowd is enraptured, totally incapable of pulling away from the Pride Dragon's filibustering. Any who enter the crowd fall victim to the Pride Philosophy, becoming viable targets for later levels. All within its bounds who wish to leave must first succeed at a Composure + Furnace roll, and then become Socially Invisible to those

still in the crowd. This effect lasts until the Dragon stops talking or until the end of the scene, whichever comes first.

Exceptional Success: Same as Success, but no mortal may leave the crowd.

Sweet Little Whispers (●●●)

Once rooted on the spot, a Pride Dragon can then start to soften the crowd's opinion about certain topics (like the type of political parties they would support, what religion they would follow, even if one should purchase one brand over another). Given enough time, a Pride Dragon can convert a person or an entire group to follow her message.

The Dragon contests her message against the strongest-willed listener in the group, whittling away his beliefs as he tries to snap free of her invisible grasp. She must reach his Willpower Rating (+ Furnace if he has one) before he reaches hers, or the crowd will begin to fracture and require re-gluing (with I have your Ear).

The total effort requires a point of Breath. Should the Dragon succeed, the crowd accepts her mentality as their own, until such time as they are convinced otherwise.

Cost: 1 Breath

Dice Pool: Manipulation + Politics + Furnace + Pride vs. Composure + Furnace

Action: Extended and Contested (First to Willpower + Furnace wins; each roll represents six seconds of schmoozing)

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: If the Pride Dragon fails dramatically, she is rendered Socially Invisible, with a -3 penalty to each proclamation roll. She remains this way for three days.

Should the strongest listener dramatically fail, the Pride Dragon succeeds instantly and binds her mentality to the crowd.

Failure: The Dragon scores fewer successes than the strongest listener, and thus does not

accumulate towards her goal. If the strongest listener reaches his goal first, the Pride Dragon must once more succeed at the second level of this Philosophy before she may try again.

Success: The Dragon scores more successes than the strongest listener, and applies them towards her goal of the strongest listener's Willpower + Furnace. If she reaches this goal, the entirety of the crowd abandons their feelings on the topic in question, adopting the Dragon's viewpoint instead.

Exceptional Success: The Dragon out-rolls the strongest listener and in the process scores five or more successes. The strongest listener suffers a -3 penalty to his next roll in the contested action.

Should the Dragon exceed her final goal by more than five successes, she recovers the initial investment of Breath.

Vote for Me Damn It! (●●●●)

Once the Pride Dragon's message is indoctrinated into the group, she can move them to act. So long as the command is not inherently dangerous, those who were in the crowd are compelled to do what the Pride Dragon says. They may buy groceries, vote a particular way in an election, or gift the Dragon the cash from their wallets. At this level, nothing truly life-changing can be commanded. Using this Philosophy costs a point of Breath.

The crowd acts as a unit, and cannot be given commands intended for a single member. The only way to resist these compulsions is to break free of the crowd, as explained in I have your Ear.

Cost: 1 Breath

Dice Pool: Wits + Politics + Furnace + Pride

Action: Instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The Pride Dragon is rendered Socially Invisible, with a -4

penalty to each proclamation roll. She remains this way for four days.

Failure: Her words do not gain the force of command as she intended. She can keep trying, but must succeed at this level before moving on to the final Pride Philosophy.

Success: The crowd unwittingly becomes slaves to the Dragon's whim. So long as she remains in the crowd, she can issue commands and the group will obey.

Important individuals may still try to break free from the crowd, but until they do the group mentality forces them to carry out the Pride Dragon's commands. The crowd will not perform any inherently dangerous actions. This effect lasts for the scene.

Exceptional Success: Same as Success, but the Breath is not spent.

In MY Army Now (●●●●●)

Just a few more words and the crowd is rendered willing to do anything for the Dragon, including the complete and self-inflicted ruining of their lives. They follow every order to the letter, even if it will bankrupt them or put them in physical danger. If the Dragon says "Riot", they riot. If the Dragon says "Break your Legs", they will do their best to comply. The crowd essentially becomes the Dragon's private army.

Members may still attempt to break from the crowd, but so long as they remain within its bounds they are helpless to the Dragon's whim. Unlike the other levels of the Pride Philosophy, this one lasts for days so long as the Dragon remains with her army. A truly terrible amount of damage can be caused by this malicious power.

In MY Army Now is an instant action, but not every Dragon is capable of spending 3 Breath in a single turn. For those that are not, they may drag out their filibuster over multiple turns by sacrificing their Defense, until they can pay the full price. The roll to activate is made on the



turn in which the total Breath owed is paid. Once this Philosophy is activated, the Dragon is free to catch a gulp of air and stop talking.

Cost: 3 Breath, or 1 Breath over three turns

Dice Pool: Stamina + Politics + Furnace + Pride

Action: Instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The Pride Dragon is rendered Socially Invisible, with a -5 penalty to each proclamation roll. She remains this way for five days.

Failure: The Pride Dragon says some terrible faux-pas that offends the entirety of the crowd. They disperse immediately, and the Dragon must start again with a new group.

Success: Again, so long as she remains in the crowd the Dragon can issue commands and the group will obey. However, at this level the commands can be anything, even acts of self mutilation. Important individuals may still try to break free from the crowd, but until they do the group mentality forces them to carry out the Pride Dragon's commands. This effect lasts for a number of days equal to the successes rolled.

Exceptional Success: In addition to success, those individuals who wish to break from the crowd may only attempt so after suffering damage, and then only once before suffering damage again.

Greed

The Philosophy of Greed is founded on laying traps along possessions, the main type of trap being one that preys on the health of the victim.

Force: Health

Yin: Bone

Karmic Backlash: Splatter. The Greed Dragon becomes covered in the same mystical paint she was manipulating. The Dragon is subject to any subsequent effects that would be applied by touch, until the

paint fades. Part of the karmic backlash is the lack of knowledge that she's exposed herself. Each time she uses a level of the Greed Philosophy, she gets to roll Wits + Stamina, penalized based on the level failed, to figure out what she's done.

Mark the Possession (●)

The Greed Dragon coats an object with a mystical paint that only those of her Philosophy can see. Any who touch the object get this Greed paint on their hands, letting the Dragon easily identify if an object has been tampered with and inflicting the poor thief with any curse lain on the object. Curses (further Greed Philosophies) are applied to the paint, which can be on object or thief. Unfortunately (or maybe fortunately) the paint does not stick well once it dries, and flakes off mere minutes later.

The paint is usually only useful on inanimate things. While a living creature could be coated (like perhaps a pet), it would suffer the same ill intended to ward off plunders.

If the being attempting to take the object is supernatural in some way, a Wits + Subterfuge roll may be made to see if something is amiss. Without an exceptional success, the being cannot tell what is off about the object, but will be loathe touching it.

Cost: None

Dice Pool: Dexterity + Subterfuge + Furnace + Greed – Durability – Artifact Rating

Action: Instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The Greed Dragon is splattered, with a -1 penalty to detect it. She can continue to apply curses to the object, but will suffer their vengeance herself.

Failure: The mystic 'paint' is not prepared properly, and dries almost instantly. The Dragon must prepare a new batch.

Success: Each success keeps the paint wet for another day. Wet paint is necessary for spreading and applying curses.

Exceptional Success: In addition to success, the paint lasts an extra day.

Taint the Possession (●●)

On a cursed object, the Greed Dragon may first lace sickness. Taint the Possession allows the Greed Dragon to “spend” her proficiency to inflict conditions, spending them as points to add up to its rating as a cumulative total. For more information, see the “Inflicting Disease” sidebar on this page. Using Taint the Possession requires a point of Willpower.

After the disease is inflicted, it is considered the ordinary version and can be treated as such. The drying of the paint will not remove such a condition; it must be treated by other means.

Also important to note, Dragons are immune to almost all forms of possession. The reasons for this are explained in Chapter 3, but a supernatural curse that causes possession will not trigger against a Dragon.

Cost: 1 Willpower

Dice Pool: Intelligence + Subterfuge + Furnace + Greed – Durability – Artifact Rating

Action: Instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The Greed Dragon is splattered, with a -2 penalty to detect it. She too suffers from the conditions she has laced the object with. She can continue to apply curses to the object, but will suffer their vengeance herself.

Failure: Try as she might the Greed Dragon cannot think of a condition worthy of laying curse with, so she must try again. She cannot lace further curses until she successfully applies this one.

Success: The Dragon may apply a number of conditions that sum up to no more than her Greed proficiency. Any who touch the

object while the paint is still wet will instantly succumb to all of these conditions, though they can henceforth be treated through natural means. This effect (though not the resulting conditions) lasts as long as the Greed paint does.

Exceptional Success: Same as Success, but the Willpower is not spent.

[IMAGE!]



Inflicting Disease

When using Taint the Possession, the object's paint gifts sickness and madness to those who touch it. The Dragon is able to lace the object with a range of conditions up to her proficiency in the Greed Philosophy. Like mending diseases in the Dominion school, conditions fall into a variety of categories depending on their overall interpreted severity. Such severity may not match their real-world severity, but these are the numbers assigned by the Dragon's mind.

Trivial Condition (●): cold, flu, minor addiction, fatigue, acne, parasites, etc.

Pesky Condition (●●): most STDs, major addiction, bone fractures, etc.

Serious Condition (●●●): neurological disorders, blood disorders, asthma, rabies, etc.

Fatal Condition (●●●●): cancer, aids, Huntington's, meningitis, etc.

Supernatural Condition (●●●●●): possession, claiming, antecedent passenger, etc. (NOT vampirism)

Any who touch the successfully painted object suffer the conditions laid out by the Greed Dragon, so long as those conditions total *less or equal to* her current Greed rating. For example, a Dragon with Greed 4 using Taint the Possession could curse it with two Pesky conditions, but not a Supernatural condition.

Poison the Possession (●●●)

Once the object has been cursed with long-term consequences, the Dragon can begin lacing it with short-term ones. This takes the form of abrasive contact. The Greed Dragon spends one point of Breath and rolls Poison the Possession. Each time

someone touches the object, they suffer an amount of bashing wounds equal to the Dragon's proficiency in Greed.

Though Poison the Possession can be applied multiple times to the same object, only the last time counts.

Cost: 1 Breath

Dice Pool: Strength + Subterfuge + Furnace + Greed – Durability – Artifact Rating

Action: Instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The Greed Dragon is splattered, with a -3 penalty to detect it. She will not suffer the damage, as that would immediately reveal her blunder. She can continue to apply curses to the object, but will suffer their vengeance herself.

Failure: The abrasive lacing fails, and the Greed Dragon must try again before she can continue with bigger curses.

Success: The object is laced with an abrasion curse, making it inflict injury each time it is touched. Any touch sends a jolt through the thief, inflicting a number of bashing wounds equal to the Dragon's Greed proficiency. This effect lasts as long as the Greed paint does.

Exceptional Success: In addition to success, the Dragon recovers her point of Breath.

Radiating Sickness (●●●●)

The ultimate in revenge, this effect causes the object to radiate an aura of unhealth. Wounds do not heal while in the radius of this object's curse. This can only be applied to the object's paint, not the thief's. Within 10 yards for every dot of Furnace and every Success, time to recover wounds does not count down for anyone who has touched the painted object. Using this Philosophy costs a point of Willpower.

If a thief sleeps in the range, 8 hours are lost towards healing lethal wounds, or rather one-third of a day. That means it takes three days to heal a lethal wound, provided the subject leaves the curse range

as soon as they wake. The long and short of it? Provided a normal sleep schedule, all healing takes half again as long. This effect lasts as long as the Greed paint does.

Cost: 1 Breath

Dice Pool: Manipulation + Subterfuge + Furnace + Greed – Durability – Artifact Rating

Action: Instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The Greed Dragon is splattered, with a -4 penalty to detect it. In addition she will not heal naturally for four days. She can continue to apply curses to the object, but will suffer their vengeance herself.

Failure: The radiating sickness does not stick to the paint, and the Dragon must try again before she can move to the final curse.

Success: As explained, any time spent in the presence of the cursed object is time that does not count towards wound recovery. If the thief carries the object around, he's likely to perish very quickly. This effect lasts as long as the Greed paint does.

Exceptional Success: Same as Success, but the Breath is not spent.

Don't Touch My Stuff (●●●●●)

Subjects that touch the marked object (Excluding the Greed Dragon that cursed it) find themselves weakened body and mind. When laced with this final curse, thieves who touch the treasure instantly lose a point of Willpower, and suffer a number of resistant aggravated wounds equal to the Dragon's Furnace + Greed proficiency.

With very powerful Dragons, this can instantly kill the subject. The curse has workings in place for such a contingency, in order to prevent a hideous mess. Anyone killed by touching the cursed treasure is instantly turned into a Graft, with a rating equal to the aggravated damage they suffered *in excess of their Health*. For example, if a thief with seven Health

touched the object and suffered ten aggravated damage, he would become a Graft with a Merit value of three.

Don't Touch My Stuff requires a staggering eleven Breath to apply, the likes of which no Dragon can sum up instantly. Any Greed Dragon must drag out the application to pay the full price. This mostly prohibits them from cursing on the spot, which makes sense as this is an act of preparation and not aggression. Defense is sacrificed every turn that the Dragon must pay toward Don't Touch My Stuff, and the roll to activate is made only on the turn in which the total Breath owed is paid.

A few niggling details remain regarding this curse. For one, it is permanent once it is applied. Even when the Greed paint expires, this wretched curse lingers for any who'd try to steal from the Dragon. Secondly, any being who touches the object can only suffer its rage once. After taking one wave of aggravated damage, the thief is forever immune to THAT object's curse. Other objects with this same curse may still inflict damage, but only ever once. Finally, if a supernatural being (like another Dragon) touches the cursed object, the damage inflicted is reduced by their own Furnace rating (or other Supernatural trait).

Cost: 11 Breath, or 1 Breath over eleven turns

Dice Pool: Stamina + Subterfuge + Furnace + Greed – Durability – Artifact Rating

Action: Instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The Greed Dragon is splattered, immediately suffering the resistant aggravated damage associated with this level. If she survives, the paint is immediately brushed away from her body. Because of the danger involved, few Greed Dragons take the risk with this final level.

Failure: The object is cursed, but only for as long as the Greed paint remains wet. The Dragon is unaware of this, and may be



surprised when the defensive measures she laid in place fail.

Success: Any who touch the cursed object (or are touched by the cursed object) suffer a number of resistant aggravated wounds equal to the sum of the Dragon's Furnace and Greed proficiency. In addition, they lose a single point of Willpower. Provided they survive, thereafter they are immune to the curse. Should they perish by aggravated damage, their body becomes a Graft with value equal to the overflow aggravated damage.

Exceptional Success: In addition to success, the Dragon saves one point of Breath.

Free Grafts?

It seems like playing a Greed Dragon is a fast and easy way to get all the Grafts you could want, and to a degree that is true. However, each Graft requires dedication, and the Merit reflects this as much as it does the actual possession. While you can use the final Greed Philosophy to justify the purchase of a Graft, you must still part with the experience to own one.

Lust

The Philosophy of Lust is founded on mitigating pain and its associated penalties

Force: Pain

Yin: Sweat

Karmic Backlash: Compulsion.

The Lust Dragon is overwhelmed by her own urges, and must act out her vice within the specified amount of time or instantly lose the specified amount of Willpower. Both are dependent on the level that failed.

Feel the Hurt (●)

At this level of Philosophy the Dragon becomes aware of the target's Health stat, knowing both how much they have

suffered and the type of suffering they have endured. The player is informed by the storyteller how much aggravated, lethal, and bashing damage the target is suffering, and which of it if any is resistant.

While touching the subject, the Lust Dragon pumps a narcotic euphoria into him. The subject's Speed and Initiative Mod are increased by her proficiency in the Philosophy, and he likely becomes addicted to her touch. This effect lasts for the scene.

Cost: None

Dice Pool: Manipulation + Expression + Furnace + Lust – Stamina - Furnace

Action: Instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The Lust Dragon is dragged to compulsion, and must act out her vice within seven turns or lose a point of Willpower. If she cannot pay this price, she suffers a resistant lethal wound instead.

Failure: The Lust Dragon does not learn of the subject's pain, and his euphoria from her touch is fleeting. No benefit for either party is experienced, and she must succeed before she can move on to higher levels of Lust.

Success: The Dragon learns where the subject may be suffering pain, and gifts him an ecstasy trip that pumps both his Speed and Initiative Mod by her Lust proficiency.

Exceptional Success: In addition to success, the Subject receives an additional +1 to both his Speed and his Initiative Mod.

Thin the Hurt (●●)

Using the garnered knowledge of a person's condition, the Dragon eases focused pain by spreading it evenly across the body. A situational penalty assigned to a particular region of the body (like a hand) could be spread out over the entire body, reducing it by the Dragon's Lust proficiency but making it a Health penalty.

By spending a point of Willpower and rolling Thin the Hurt, the Lust Dragon can help her subject overcome a focused

pain for a number of minutes equal to the successes rolled.

Cost: 1 Willpower

Dice Pool: Wits + Expression + Furnace + Lust – Stamina - Furnace

Action: Instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The Lust Dragon is dragged to compulsion, and must act out her vice within six turns or lose two points of Willpower. If she cannot pay, she suffers two resistant lethal wounds instead.

Failure: The pain is spread out, but only briefly. The Lust Dragon must try again before she can move to the next level.

Success: A situational penalty of the Lust Dragon's choice that is being applied due to injury or addiction is generalized, reduced by the Dragon's Lust proficiency and made into a Health penalty.

Exceptional Success: Same as Success, but the Willpower is not spent.

Lessen the Hurt (●●●)

By spreading it thin, eventually the Lust Dragon can smother the pain, reducing it or eliminating it completely. Spending a point of Breath, the Dragon applies a Health Penalty Shift right, for a number of steps equal to her proficiency in Lust.

Cost: 1 Breath

Dice Pool: Stamina + Expression + Furnace + Lust – Stamina - Furnace

Action: Instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The Lust Dragon is dragged to compulsion, and must act out her vice within five turns or lose three points of Willpower. If she cannot pay, she suffers three resistant lethal wounds instead.

Failure: The Health Penalty Shift does not change. The Lust Dragon cannot continue with her Philosophy until she succeeds at this level.

Success: The Health Penalty Shift takes a number of steps to the right equal to the

Dragon's proficiency in Lust. This effect lasts for the scene.

Exceptional Success: Same as Success, but the Breath is not spent.

Pump the Adrenaline (●●●●)

Trekking back to the original euphoria, the Lust Dragon forms an invisible bond with her subject. With a point of Breath the Dragon takes control of her subject's adrenaline, stimulating it at the moments she feels it would serve the most use.

Successes on the activation of Pump the Adrenaline form a free pool of dice that the Lust Dragon is free to gift to her subject at any time she deems worthy. Whenever the subject declares an action, the Lust Dragon may commit a portion of this free pool towards that action. All free pool dice expire at the end of the scene, or if the Lust Dragon falls to Compulsion.

Cost: 1 Breath

Dice Pool: Presence + Expression + Furnace + Lust – Stamina - Furnace

Action: Instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The Lust Dragon is dragged to compulsion, and must act out her vice within four turns or lose four points of Willpower. If she cannot pay, she suffers four resistant lethal wounds instead.

Failure: No free bonus pool is formed. The Dragon must succeed on this level before she can move on to the final level of Lust.

Success: Successes rolled on activation form a free pool of bonuses, which the Dragon may gift to her subject until the end of the scene. Like all free pools, once these bonuses are used they're gone. The setback of this limit is counterbalanced by the flexibility it provides: these bonuses may be applied to *any* action the subject makes. This free pool expires at the end of the scene.

Exceptional Success: Same as Success, but the Breath is not spent.



Ease the Recovery (●●●●●)

After controlling the adrenaline, the Sweat Dragon may choose to speed up the healing process. She does so by unlocking resistant wounds. They do not appear to change, but can henceforth be mended by supernatural means.

The Dragon removes the marker on a number of the subject's resistant wounds (her choice). Resistant wounds are explained in Chapter 3, on page XX. The wounds may then be removed by use of Breath, or other healing mysticisms.

It is important to note that this Philosophy only works on existing wounds. If the subject is currently devoid of wounds, he recovers a single point of Willpower.

Ease the Recovery has another purpose... when successfully used on the target it instantly extends all the other Lust effects by a number of scenes equal to the Dragon's proficiency in the Philosophy. Such extension can be pushed even further by using Breath, but cannot exceed a full day.

Ease the Recovery is an instant action, but not every Dragon is capable of spending 4 Breath in a single turn. For those that are not, they may drag out the activation over up to four turns by sacrificing their Defense, until they can pay the full price. In such cases the roll to activate is made on the turn in which the total Breath owed is paid.

Cost: 4 Breath, or 1 Breath over four turns to apply

1 Breath to extend the Lust effects for an extra scene

Dice Pool: Intelligence + Expression + Furnace + Lust – Stamina - Furnace

Action: Instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The Lust Dragon is dragged to compulsion, and must act out her vice within three turns or lose five points of

Willpower. If she cannot pay, she suffers five resistant lethal wounds instead.

Failure: The subject benefits from no change, and his euphoria is not locked. The Dragon must start over.

Success: A number of the subject's resistant wounds return to normal, equal to the Dragon's proficiency in Lust. If there are no current wounds, one Willpower is gifted. This is a lasting effect.

In addition, all the effects of the Lust Philosophy are extended into the next scene. They may continue to be extended scene by scene for one Breath each, so long as the Lust Dragon keeps some sort of proximity to the subject.

Exceptional Success: Identical to success, but the Lust effects last for another additional scene.

Sloth

The Philosophy of Sloth is founded on the warping of memory, and the distraction therein.

Force: Mind

Yin: Tears

Karmic Backlash: Trance. The Sloth Dragon is swallowed up by her own memories in a bizarre dream-state. People and objects around her take the shape of things from her history, and though their physical actions remain the same their words speak relevance from the Dragon's past. The Sloth Dragon is greatly disoriented by this, and cannot break free unless she succeeds on an Intelligence + Composure roll. All of her actions, including the roll to break from Trance, are penalized based on the level of Sloth failed. Should she be wounded under the conditions specified in the level failed, she may also slip free.

Find the Scars (●)

Unlike the Tears Philosophy which is dependent on emotional connections, a Sloth Dragon can simply identify weak

memories (known as scars) and toy with them as she pleases. Simply sizing up her opponent's mind, the Sloth Dragon learns a great deal about his history and finds ways to move it in her favor.

The Dragon becomes aware of the target's Willpower trait, and how many points he may have left to spend. The Dragon also locates a number of long-term memories equal to her proficiency in Sloth, and the later levels of this Philosophy require such knowledge to function. The Dragon must touch the target to activate this Philosophy.

In addition, any successes rolled on Find the Scars may be applied to a research roll investigating the target, so long as said research is done within one day. Using the Sloth Philosophy on another person before taking advantage of this causes the original bonus to be lost.

Cost: None

Dice Pool: Composure + Larceny + Furnace + Sloth – Resolve - Furnace

Action: Instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The Sloth Dragon falls into Trance, and suffers a -1 penalty to all actions (on top of any other penalties) until she can escape. If she suffers a wound in her fifth-to-last Health slot, she is freed from the Trance.

Failure: The target's brain is mysteriously occluded. The Sloth Dragon gains no benefit from her search for scars, and must succeed before she can move on to the next level.

Success: The Sloth Dragon instantly learns of a number of significant memories equal to her proficiency in her Philosophy. She is also provided with the target's Willpower rating, and how many points of it he may have left.

Successes rolled on the activation of Find the Scars can be applied to an investigative research roll, so long as Find the Scars has

not been used again and one day has not passed.

Exceptional Success: In addition to success, the Sloth Dragon becomes aware of one additional significant memory.

Pick the Fresh Wound (••)

With this philosophy, a Dragon steals control of the target's short-term memory. A Sloth Dragon can change a number of minor details remembered by the target within a number of minutes equal to her proficiency in Sloth. This can include where the target left his keys, who came through the checkpoint, or the face of the person who just ate his cat.

Each time the memory is called upon from an external force (Like an investigator), the target can roll to recall as per the rules in the **World of Darkness** Rulebook (page 44), with a penalty equal to the Dragon's Sloth proficiency. If the target does not remember the event before he sleeps, it cannot become a long-term memory and is lost forever.

To alter a short-term memory, the Dragon must touch the mark.

Cost: 1 Willpower

Dice Pool: Manipulation + Larceny + Furnace + Sloth – Resolve - Furnace

Action: Instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The Sloth Dragon falls into Trance, and suffers a -2 penalty to all actions (on top of any other penalties) until she can escape. If she suffers a wound in her fourth-to-last Health slot, she is freed from the Trance.

Failure: The Dragon has insufficient pull to alter the target's memory. She must succeed at this level before she can move on to the next one.

Success: The Dragon can alter a number of details in the target's short term memory equal to the successes rolled. She can go back a number of minutes equal to her Sloth proficiency. The target is rendered unable to



recognize the false details without external influence, and if he goes to sleep before he remembers the original details are lost for good.

Exceptional Success: Same as Success, but the Willpower is not spent.

Alter the Closed Wound (●●●)

Pushing through the short-term, the Sloth Dragon finally reaches the long-term memory. The Dragon can change a number of minor details equal to her Sloth proficiency in any of the memories she found with Find the Scars. The target can be made to forget or falsely remember a fact from their past (like his dog's name, which exit to take on the way home from Vegas, etc). This lasts for one week.

Now, the specification of minor details may seem a bit cloudy, but the idea is to tweak a memory and not completely replace it. As long as something *could* be a believable outcome, the Sloth Dragon can make the target believe that outcome.

Each time the memory is called upon from an external force, the target can roll Intelligence + Composure, with a penalty equal to the Dragon's Sloth proficiency, to recognize the falsity of the facts. When the duration of this Philosophy expires, any memory confusion clears up.

Changing a set of details takes three seconds. The Sloth Dragon must be touching the target to change the long-term memories. Making a detail change requires a point of Breath.

Cost: 1 Breath

Dice Pool: Wits + Larceny + Furnace + Sloth – Resolve - Furnace

Action: Instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The Sloth Dragon falls into Trance, and suffers a -3 penalty to all actions (on top of any other penalties) until she can escape. If she suffers a wound in

her third-to-last Health slot, she is freed from the Trance.

Failure: The memory is firmer than it originally appeared. The Dragon must try again with a different memory and succeed before she can move on to the next level of Sloth.

Success: For the memory targeted, the Sloth Dragon can alter a number of details up to her proficiency in the Philosophy, *within reason*. Such fact alterations cannot be noticed as false by the target unless reliable outside information disproves it. This effect lasts for one week.

Exceptional Success: Same as Success, but the Breath is not spent.

Cover the Scar (●●●●)

After making room with memory erasure, the Sloth Dragon can change major details of the target's life by covering over a real memory with a false one. The memory that the Dragon has created to cover the old one is accepted by the person, no matter how ridiculous it may be. The target could be convinced that he was a magic shoe for twenty-seven decades before the god in the moon turned him into a man. Obviously, a creative Sloth Dragon can absolutely unhinge the target with this madness.

He is not without salvation, though. Evidence proving the memory false allows the target to roll Intelligence + Composure, albeit minus the Dragon's Sloth proficiency, to recognize and break from the illusion. If such an opportunity does not present itself, the false memory lingers for a number of weeks equal to the successes rolled and then falls away.

To Cover a Scar with a prepared memory, the Dragon must be touching the mark for at least three seconds.

Cost: 1 Breath

Dice Pool: Intelligence + Larceny + Furnace + Sloth – Resolve - Furnace

Action: Instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The Sloth Dragon falls into Trance, and suffers a -4 penalty to all actions (on top of any other penalties) until she can escape. If she suffers a wound in her second-to-last Health slot, she is freed from the Trance.

Failure: The prepared memory is poorly affixed, and only lasts a single scene. If the Dragon moves to the final level without succeeding at this one, she suffers a -4 penalty to the application of that Philosophy.

Success: Unlike the previous level, the only limitation on the memory alteration is the Sloth Dragon's own imagination. The memory also has no need for sense, and can be completely bizarre and unrealistic. It cannot be noticed as false by the target unless reliable outside information disproves it. This effect lasts for one week.

Exceptional Success: Same as Success, but the Breath is not spent.

Stitches (●●●●●)

Once she's calibrated herself with a singular memory overhaul, the Sloth Dragon is prepared to completely rewrite her target's mind. Creating an astral pool-cover, she takes the available mental and social potential and sculpts it to her whim.

The Dragon can rearrange the target's Mental and Social attributes, up to her proficiency in the Sloth Philosophy. She may also rearrange the target's skills, up to her proficiency in the Sloth Philosophy. Also, she gets to choose a new Virtue and Vice for the target.

In essence, the Sloth Dragon turns the target into a completely new person. This personality lingers for a number of weeks equal to the successes rolled on the activation of Stitches, and it may resurface should the target suffer the Multiple Personalities derangement.

Stitches may be an instant action, but few Dragons are capable of spending 5

Breath in a single turn. For those that are not, they may drag out the activation over up to five turns by sacrificing their Defense, until they can pay the full price. In such cases physical contact must be maintained for all five of these turns, and the roll to activate is made on the turn in which the total Breath owed is paid.

Cost: 5 Breath, or 1 Breath over five turns

Dice Pool: Resolve + Larceny + Furnace + Sloth – Resolve - Furnace

Action: Instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The Sloth Dragon falls into Trance, and suffers a -5 penalty to all actions (on top of any other penalties) until she can escape. If she has suffered a wound in every Health slot, she is freed from the Trance.

Failure: The cover does not adhere to the target's mind, and pulls away the Sloth Dragon's efforts as it tears. She must start over from scratch.

Success: The Dragon may move a number of Mental and Social attribute dots equal to her Sloth proficiency. She may also move that same number of dots between the target's skills. Should she desire, she may assign a different Virtue and Vice to this new personality. The result lasts for a number of weeks equal to the successes rolled, and may resurface if the target ever acquires the Multiple Personalities derangement. For this reason, it is recommended the new personality be recorded on a separate sheet.

Exceptional Success: In addition to success, the Dragon may move an additional three dots of attributes, and an additional five dots of skills.



High Octane Games

Most games will not extend past the Furnace rating of 5, as reaching such a pinnacle is a journey within itself. Those that do wish to play the blazing inferno that is Furnace 6-10 may optionally use the following:

Aspect dots 6-10: These are relatively easy, as all of the Aspects are designed in a manner that can be extended to ten. Continue the sequential bonus, or the odd/even bonus, or assign more features to a compound Aspect. No Aspect can have a dot rating higher than the Dragon's Furnace (After dot five, that is), and manifesting any Aspect 5 or higher requires two points, not one.

Philosophies 6-10: More difficult than the Aspects are the Philosophies. Though five additional levels for each could be detailed here, the degree of creativity that comes with designing high-level powers is not one we wish to rob. If, however, you are having trouble thinking of higher Philosophies, consider that each is only half of the original power a Dragon held. As an optional rule you may say that levels 6-10 of an Embers Philosophy are actually the five levels of its corresponding Yang Philosophy, and levels 6-10 of a Saintly Devil Philosophy are actually the five levels of its corresponding Yin Philosophy. In this manner, Dragons with a high Furnace rating progress ever closer to the power their species held before the Collapse.

[IMAGE!]

Chapter Three: Special Rules and Systems

(Full-Page art needed. A picture of a bloody draconic hand pressing against a wall would work well)

Something had gone horribly wrong.

He'd been sliding that trinket across the pipe, and now her legs were a jumbled mess of ripped muscle and shattered bone. What the hell was it? Just some stupid little statue, but it must have been special. And he dumped her into the compactor they use to crush cars.

The walls were moving in. Cameron dug her claws into the metal and pushed, but she could feel her bones snapping. She screamed as her fingers crumpled and shot a flechette of bloody bone into her chest. This was the end.

Cameron settled into a blur of red, and then there was darkness.

“Success is not the result of spontaneous combustion. You must first set yourself on fire.”

—Fred Shero

Dragons suffer a dichotomy of depiction, either being praised as divine spirits or abhorred as rampaging monsters. Modern versions of the Dragon are subjected to both of these images simultaneously. Either depiction is both immensely powerful and more than moderately intelligent, though, be it a treasury of wisdom or a weaving of wretched magicks.

Oddly enough, Dragon has become a term for any hodge-podge compilation of biological characteristics thrown together in a chimera—or rather an amalgamated being. Provided it can exhale an elemental substance and is at least partially reptilian, anything can pass as a Dragon. To encourage the creativity of this game in particular, the players choose Aspects to define their own image of “what makes a dragon”, and they are even free to put on and take off those traits as the please. The process of Aspect manifestation is described in this chapter, along with the conditions and benefits of True Form.

Also in this chapter is the matter of managing Calories. Rather than force you to purchase a diet book, Calories are simplified with a point system based on hunger satisfaction. Inedible fuel sources are also provided, but have minimum Composure and Stamina ratings (so if your Dragon plans to fuel up at the gas station, she’d better bring her wallet and her guts). When it comes time to gather Breath, this is the chapter to read.

What does it mean to be a Dragon? By what rules do they judge themselves? They cannot be called human, anymore, and some of mortal life’s common-sense becomes muddled by the eternity that stretches before an Oroboroi. Detailed in this chapter is the concept of the Dragon’s

Code of Ethics, and what it means to sin against the nature of a tyrant.

Then, of course, there is the matter of resurrection. What happens when a Dragon dies? How does her Heart work, and how does her body recover while she’s in the space between worlds? What happens after the Last Hand? What is an Antecedent Passenger? What is a Red Pearl? All of these questions are answered in this chapter.

Finally, there is the matter of miscellaneous Health concerns. Both the Sweat and Lust Philosophies make use of an as of yet nonexistent Health Penalty Shift system. These two Philosophies also bring the concern of limb-specific hindrances, which are a necessary inclusion to make them function properly. Finally, there is the matter of resistant wounds, which are inflicted in various ways and have different rules for mending. These topics are covered in this chapter.

Aspect Manifestation

Unveiling and re-concealing a divinity makes up much of the dance that is a Dragon’s eternity. Charging around as a giant lizard all the time is not an option, as no mystical occultation protects the secret of her existence. Much of Aspect use is the struggle of having access to fantastic powers, but not being able to use them.

But that is irrelevant here. To assume or disband an Aspect without tissue damage is a time-consuming process. The heat of the Furnace is applied to the region that needs reshaping, and then the Dragon’s will forges it into the form proper.

System: To assume or disband an Aspect, you must take a manifest action. A manifest action takes the place of either your Dragon’s Defense, or her Instant action. In other words, she could move her speed,

apply her Defense, and assume Aspect points, OR she could move her speed, take an Instant action, and assume Aspect points. You are free to decide which you prefer on a turn-to-turn basis, but if Defense has been used already it cannot be sacrificed to manifest Aspects. (NOTE: If the Dragon so chooses, she may spend a point of Breath to gain the benefit of a manifest action without the sacrifice of her Defense or her Instant action. In effect, the action become reflexive for that turn)

Taking a manifest action supplies the Dragon with a number of Aspect points equal to her Furnace, which can be spent to assume or disband an Aspect.

<i>Wings</i>	<i>Scales</i>	<i>Natural Weaponry</i>
●●●○○	●●●●●	●●●●○
☒☒☒□□	☒☒☒☒☒	☒☒☒☒□

When no Aspects are manifest, the Oroboroi cannot be differentiated from an ordinary human being. By applying Aspect points, she can draw out her divine traits and actually benefit from them. If the above Dragon had a Furnace rating of 4:

<i>Wings</i>	<i>Scales</i>	<i>Natural Weaponry</i>
●●●○○	●●●●●	●●●●○
☒☒☒□□	☒☒☒☒☒	☒□□□□

She could apply those points to pull out her wings, and one of her biological weapons. It's important to note that even though she had four Aspect points to apply, she did not need to use them all. If she did not, however, the overflow is lost at the end of the turn. The number of points assumed in an Aspect may never exceed the number of dots owned in that same Aspect. Dots in an Aspect are purchased with experience, whereas points show how manifest an Aspect is. The prior is more permanent than the latter.

<i>Wings</i>	<i>Scales</i>	<i>Natural Weaponry</i>
●●●○○	●●●●●	●●●●○
☒☒☒□□	☒☒☒☒☒	☒☒☒☒□

To assume the fifth point of an Aspect (And any point higher, if you're going that far), TWO points must be spent. For our Furnace 4 Dragon, moving from Scales 4 to Scales 5 would take two of her four Aspect points from the manifest action, leaving her two to spare.

Low-Light Furnace

You no doubt noticed that it is impossible for a Furnace 1 Dragon to assume the final point of an Aspect. At least, not with a manifest action. For Furnace 1 Dragons *ONLY*, an entire turn may be dedicated to assuming the fifth point of an Aspect. That means no movement, no Defense, AND no action.

Disbanding an Aspect (For the means of concealing the Oroboroi nature) works exactly the same, but in reverse. A manifest action is taken by the Dragon, but the points are spent to remove Aspects. Our Furnace 4 Dragon, after ending her foe, takes another manifest action to:

<i>Wings</i>	<i>Scales</i>	<i>Natural Weaponry</i>
●●●○○	●●●●●	●●●●○
☒☒☒□□	☒☒☒☒☒	☒☒□□□

soften a single point of her Scales and remove two Natural Weapons. In this manner, disbanding Aspects takes as long as manifesting them. It is important to note that disbanding the fifth point or higher in an Aspect requires two points, just as assuming it does.



Excess Manifest Points

Each manifest action produces a number of points that expire at the end of the turn. The two primary uses are assuming and disbanding Aspects, but for a certain number of these points a Dragon can instead dedicate them to removing a wound. Just like assuming or disbanding an Aspect, the heat of the Furnace is redirected to the injured area where it is reshaped into a healthy version of itself. Dragons of Furnace 2 or higher may use two points from a manifest action to remove a bashing wound. Dragons of Furnace 4 or higher may use four points from a manifest action to remove a lethal wound. Dragons of Furnace 8 or higher may use eight points to remove an aggravated wound. Resistant wounds cannot be healed in this manner.

True Form

Once a Dragon has manifested every single Aspect to its fullest...

Wings



Scales



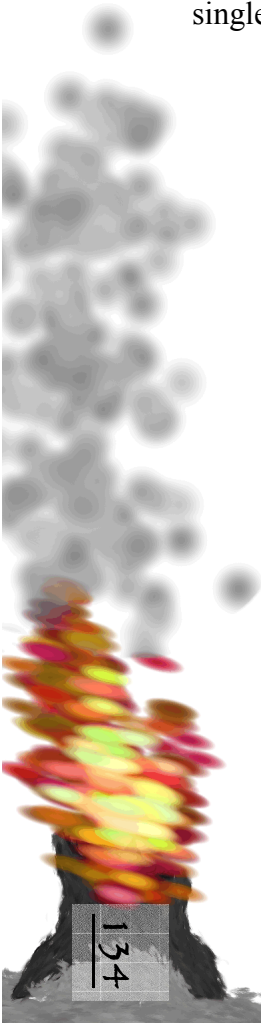
Natural Weaponry



She unlocks True Form. Firstly, all of her attributes instantly jump up by 1. She also gains another point of size. All damage, except roll-over damage, is downgraded one severity level before hitting the Dragon. Aggravated attacks inflict lethal damage, lethal attacks inflict bashing damage, and bashing attacks inflict no damage at all. This is cumulative with the bulletproof property, but disabled on exceptional successes. For those slayer-minded mortals out there, a targeted attack against the Dragon's weak scale (located with a Wits + Occult roll, -1 penalty to target) inflicts damage normally and makes killing a Dragon... possible.

A Dragon in True Form is a veritable foe indeed. In fact, she is nigh unstoppable. She can stay in True Form as long as she wishes, though there are matters of etiquette that other Dragons will enforce... violently.

[IMAGE]



Killing a True-Form Dragon

The task of slaying a Dragon in True Form can seem immensely difficult, and indeed it should be. The way they reduce damage in this state, when combined with certain Aspects, render most forms of weaponry useless (especially firearms). This is for thematic purposes, as defeating a Dragon should not simply be a matter of brute force. Here are some tips to apply when setting out to slay an Oroboroi.

Bring a Sword: Though Firearms ignore defense when used at range, many Dragons will have the bulletproof quality, or at least some bulletproof armor. When combined with the damage severity reduction of True Form, bullets are rendered incapable of inflicting damage without an exceptional success. Swords are not subject to the bulletproof quality, and thus inflict bashing damage to a True Form Dragon.

Find the Weak Scale and Strike it: The penalty to target the weak scale is worth the increase in damage severity. When a Dragon enters True Form, get some distance and study its behavior to locate the weak scale, then close in again and strike there as much as possible.

Tilt the odds in your Favor: True Form Dragons have difficulty maneuvering in small spaces. They're also going to have trouble seeing you in pitch darkness while you're wearing night-vision goggles. Find ways to use the environment to your advantage, or you'll end up barbecued chicken.

Know your Foe: Jadeite inflicts aggravated damage to Dragons, which means lethal damage in True Form. If you're targeting the weak scale too, it stands as the fastest way to defeat them. Most people don't know about the jade vulnerability, though, which just proves the point that it pays to know your foe.

Borrowing Aspects

The Bond of Brood Merit allows a mortal who has undergone the described ritual to share a Dragon's Aspects. That mortal gains access to the manifest action, using his own Furnace to generate points. But he and his patron share the same Aspects, and thus the same sheet. If the Bonded manifests an Aspect:

<i>Wings</i>	<i>Scales</i>	<i>Natural Weaponry</i>
●●●○○	●●●●●	●●●●●
☒☒☒□□	□□□□□	☒□□□□

he goes from right to left, and blocks the Dragon from manifesting those points herself. For the bonded, this is his first point, and the far left is his last. Obviously, if the bonded is manifesting any Aspects, the Dragon cannot attain True Form.

Calories

To garner Breath, a Dragon must pour fuel into her Furnace. She does this by eating anything and everything. But how do you keep track of something like that? While you could certainly dig out a diet book and with fluster search for the components of every meal, servings tend to have value by grouping and time for storytelling can be saved by just throwing together some servings. In the sidebar below is a list of common servings.



Common Fuel Sources

The following are commonly used by the Oroboroi to garner Breath. Each is considered one serving.

Fast Foods (1 meal)

600-1300

Restaurant Meals (1 meal)

800-1200

Dairies (1/2 cup)

60-140

Meats (4 ounces)

180-220

Poultry and Seafood (4 ounces)

270-360

Fruits (1/2 cup)

80-100

Vegetables (1/2 cup)

40-60

Grains (1/2 cup)

90-120

Junk Foods (8 pieces)

110-300

Desserts (1 piece)

300-500

Alcohol (1 serving)

80-100

Gasoline (1 Glass)

2000

Coal (1 hunk)

630

Crude Oil (1 Glass)

2200

This, of course, is all a little bit of a moot point, as time spent counting Calories is better applied elsewhere. For this reason **Dragon: The Embers** uses an abstract method for the Dragon's food consumption process.

250 Calories roll into one tidy Caloric point, used with the Furnace chart to determine when Breath is rewarded. How do you determine how many Caloric points a meal provides? For regular foods it's incredibly easy. Ask the player to rate how full her character would feel after a meal like that (provided she was still mortal) on a scale from 1 to 5 (with 5 being nauseously stuffed). The resulting number is how many Caloric points are rewarded. When it comes to alternative fuels, consult the chart at the bottom of this page.

You may have noticed that minimum ratings are provided for these consumables. They're simply harder to eat than regular food. All listed requirements (except for Furnace) increase by one each time the Dragon partakes in that source in a day. Continuous consumption eventually leads to nausea and bloating, especially with substances not intended for ingestion. Fuels that have a higher Composure minimum are more difficult to eat due to taste or smell. Foods with a higher Stamina minimum are harder to digest and in those of less sturdy build would likely cause internal damage.

Meals					
Fuel	Caloric Points	Minimum Resources	Minimum Composure	Minimum Stamina	Minimum Furnace
A Log of Kindling	2	0	2	2	1
A Hunk of Coal	2	0	3	1	2
A Glass of Gasoline	8	0	3	3	3
A Glass of Crude Oil	10	1	4	3	5
A Glass of Rocket Fuel	18	5	3	4	7
A Bag of Laundry	2	0	2	3	1

It is important to note that this is not an all-encompassing list. Far from it, actually, as there are actually lots of meals that would have lower requirements in one or all of the categories. Treat this list as a guideline, not a decree. Also, while the pressure to consume is an important topic to touch on, you need not do so constantly. Sometimes to keep the story from snagging you may just hand out Calories (or Caloric Points), but remember to revisit the need to gorge occasionally. If you don't, your players may become careless with their Breath, confident it will be replenished.

Garnering Breath

As soon as a Dragon has consumed enough Calories to meet her Furnace requirements, she will gain a point of Breath. By dividing Caloric points by the number required for Breath, you can determine how much of each the Dragon receives. For example, if a Dragon has 12 Caloric points and only requires 8 for a point of Breath, 12 would be divided by 8. The resulting 1 remainder 4 means that Dragon accrues one Breath, with four Caloric points left over.

But... should she sleep before she's finished a point of Breath the remaining Calories are lost, burned away in the Furnace but insufficient to provide preternatural benefit. If the Dragon decides to go without sleep for several days, she can avoid the unnecessary loss of Calories but must face Fatigue (see the **World of Darkness** Rulebook, page 179).

For Dragons with a Furnace below 6, 2000 Calories (or 8 Caloric points) are required to produce a single point of Breath. Consuming 4000 Calories would gift the Dragon two points of Breath, and consuming a whopping 6000 Calories could get her three points. However, even falling a single Calorie short could prove a massive exercise in waste. Suppose a Dragon ate 5999 Calories (or 23 Caloric points) and then slept. She would receive only two

points of Breath. The remaining 1999 Calories would be lost to the wind, providing no benefit.

Overeating

Despite the Composure and Stamina requirements, a Dragon can still try keep eating by rolling Stamina + Presence. There are drawbacks, though.

For each dot short you fall of the rating (in any of the three requirements), suffer a -1 penalty to this roll.

If you do not meet the Stamina requirement, suffer a lethal wound upon completing the meal.

If you do not meet the Composure requirement, lose a point of Willpower.

If the Resources requirement exceeds your rating, you cannot acquire the meal through lawful means. In appropriate cases, another Merit's rating (such as Status or Lair allies) may be substituted for Resources for this chart only.

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: Suffer all associated penalties for your inadequacies (like the lethal wound or the Willpower loss), but garner no Caloric Points.

Failure: The Dragon cannot bring herself to eat the meal. No penalty, but no Caloric Points garnered.

Success: Suffer all associated penalties for your inadequacies, but garner the Caloric Points for the meal.

Exceptional Success: Garner the Caloric Points for the meal, but suffer no penalties for your inadequacies.

For characters that have the "Iron Stomach" Merit, their Stamina rating is treated as one higher for the purpose of this chart.

The Invisible Sources of Protein

The realms invisible provide both great risk and promise of reward. Charged with supernal energy, consumables from



these reaches of reality offer thrice the Caloric value of their mundane material counterparts. A Dragon may travel to these places (if capable) in search of such magnificent sustenance, but must acknowledge the peril involved. For if she was to perish in such a foreign place...

Ethics, The Code of the Oroboroi

Unlike the humans they used to be, an Oroboroi sense of principles is almost inverted. Young Dragons are often quite surprised at how little grief a human death presents them, and likewise become startled when what would normally be considered a petty offense shakes them so thoroughly. Though this would cause many to question their own beliefs, they are no longer judged by the same scales as humanity. Still, despite its peculiar inversion, the Code of Ethics does possess an inherent flavor of

honor and justice. Those who would act on whim find themselves in a downward spiral towards the Hydra.

The main function of Ethics is to remind Dragons that they are supposed to be better than mankind. Without a compass of good leadership, they become nothing more than monsters. Without death as a punctuation to life's sentence, priorities change in ways no non-Dragon could understand.

When a Dragon sins at or below her current standards in the Code, her player must roll the specified dice to check for moral degeneration. Should the roll succeed, the Dragon finds shame in her actions, or likely feels a wound to her honor. But if the roll fails she slips closer to tyranny, losing a dot of Ethics in the process.

As a Dragon slips away from grace, she begins to lose interest in her own life. Things that brought her joy or pride cease to

Ethics	Threshold Sin	Dice Rolled	Scholar Ethics Pool
10	Allowing an insult to go unchallenged.	(Roll five dice.)	2
9	Not demanding Tribute within a month's period.	(Roll five dice.)	3
8	Failing to assume True Form within a month's period.	(Roll four dice.)	4
7	Killing a human with good reason.	(Roll four dice.)	5
6	Killing a Dragon's body with good reason. Murdering a mortal without just cause.	(Roll three dice.)	6
5	Killing another Dragon without just cause. Theft of any kind. Taking revenge on a mortal.	(Roll three dice.)	5
4	Inflicting collateral or emotional damage on one's own Province. Serial Murder with good reasons.	(Roll three dice.)	4
3	Taking <i>violent</i> revenge on a mortal. Gifting another Dragon's Heart to a mortal. Serial Murder for the hell of it.	(Roll two dice.)	3
2	Cannibalism of either the Oroboroi or Mortal variety. Mass Murder. Harvesting another Dragon's Red Pearl.	(Roll two dice.)	2
1	Participating in Torture. Destroying a Heart of the Oroboroi.	(Roll two dice.)	1

matter, and she becomes more and more corrosive to the world around her in a vain effort to regain the euphoria of glory. This apathy often leads to madness, and for each time Ethics falls the Dragon must roll her new score and succeed or acquire a derangement. For more information on Derangements, see the **World of Darkness** Rulebook, page 96.

The details of Ethics and the sins that violate it are provided below.

Roll Results

Degeneration rolls are made with the dice pool associated with the sin committed. On derangement rolls Dominion Dragons roll their Ethics unmodified (which means no Willpower boosting, either). For Scholars of the Five Evils, see the sidebar below.

Dramatic Failure: Impossible. There are no penalties applied to either pool, so a chance roll cannot be made.

Failure: On a degeneration roll, your Dragon slips away from grace, losing a dot of Ethics as her standards blur. On an Ethics roll, your Dragon's actions have won her a derangement.

Success: Recognizing her actions are abrasive to her purpose, your Dragon manages to maintain her sense of what is just and vindictive, and is no less stable for the mistake.

Exceptional Success: The infarction has shown your Dragon the error of her ways. Determined to stay righteous, she instantly gains a single point of Breath.

Scholars of the Five Evils

The delicate and unsettling dance between Good and Bad is played out across the Oroboro Code for these saintly devils. Forever warped by their rejection of their nature, the best sanity a Scholar of the Five Evil can hope for is the safety of the middle ground. For every step in Ethics ABOVE 6 a Scholar

takes, they risk derangement and must roll their modified Ethics (Scholar Ethics Pool of the table above). Likewise, for every step BELOW 6 a Scholar takes, they risk derangement and must roll their Ethics. Derangements received from Ethics ratings 7-10 only fade when the Scholar plummets back to Ethics 6. The Derangements caused by Ethics ratings 1-5 are removed as the Scholar climbs back to Ethics 6.

While in Good Dragon mode, any sin committed at or below the current Ethics rating causes a degeneration roll (if it can be called that), but failure pushes the Scholar's Ethics rating *up*. The Dragon may choose to abandon Good Dragon mode the first time her Ethics exceeds 8 in a story, or a single time unprovoked once per story. If faced with her most-hated Vice, a Dragon will leave Good mode if she fails her Composure roll.

While in Bad Dragon mode, sinning works the same as it does with Dominion Dragons with one exception: the Ethics rating can only go down. Again, the Dragon may choose to abandon Bad Dragon mode a single time unprovoked once per story, or the first time her Ethics falls below 3 in a single story. If faced with her most-hated Vice, a Dragon will leave Bad mode if she fails her Composure roll.

As for the Degeneration and Derangement rolls:

Dramatic Failure: Impossible. There are no penalties applied to either pool, so a chance roll cannot be made.

Failure: In Good Dragon mode, a failed degeneration roll causes your Dragon to falsely believe her actions are for the greater good. She plunges deeper into her maniacal crusade, and her Ethics climbs ever higher. In Bad Dragon



mode, a failed degeneration roll fills your Dragon with an overwhelming sense of power without consequence, and she plunges into tyranny. On an Ethics roll, your Dragon's actions have won her a derangement either by fanaticism or vindication.

Success: Ethics does not drift, which may or may not be a good thing. But your Dragon's state of sanity remains unaltered.

Exceptional Success: In addition to success, the Dragon may choose to switch between Good or Bad mode. This doesn't use up her free switches.

Sins

As stated earlier, some of the sins fall in peculiar levels of severity, and here are the reasons why.

- **Allowing an Insult to go**

Unchallenged – The Code is about being a good leader, and part of that is maintaining an aura of authority. Insubordination must be stifled lest it poison the Province.

For Dragons of very high Ethics, allowing an insult to go unchallenged would subject her to a degeneration roll.

- **Not Demanding Tribute within a Month's Period** – Akin to the Insult issue, tribute implies a respect that is necessary to run a healthy Province. After all, a leader is nothing without willing people to follow.

For Dragons of very high Ethics, not demanding some sort of tribute would subject her to a degeneration roll.

- **Killing a Human with Good Reason** – Oddly enough, the life of a single human being is fleeting in the eyes of progress, at least when it comes to the Oroboroi. Taking a single life in the face of a graver fate hardly shakes the principles of an average Dragon. If she

makes a habit of it, however, she may find herself less disturbed than she anticipated. For Dragons of moderate Ethics, killing a human whose continued life would lead to severe consequence would subject her to a degeneration roll.

- **Theft and Revenge** –

Underhanded methods are ill-fitted for a good ruler. Taking revenge on a lesser being is a dirtying experience, and taking without permission is beneath a paragon of the people. As such, both are grievous offenses against the Code.

Even for Dragons of low Ethics, taking instead of asking is a terrible crime, and degeneration follows.

- **Participating in Torture** –

Whereas theft and revenge are ill-fitted for a ruler, torture is outright unacceptable. Without a doubt the most abhorrent action any member of the Oroboroi could take, torture is unforgivable.

Dragons at any level of Ethics, even the most atrocious, face degeneration when resorting to torture.

State of the Union

At any given point in the eternity that is Oroboroi life, a Dragon fluctuates between mythical monarch and terrible tyrant. Besides inhibiting (or not inhibiting) depravity, the state of a Dragon's Ethics determines the vibe she gives off to those around her.

☐ Ethics 10

Likely recognized as a leader, the Ethics 10 Dragon is an admirable beacon of what a person can strive for. Those that know her well would never wish to cross her, and those that cross her face appropriate consequence (though she is not cruel). Beloved is a good description for this Dragon.

Embers Dragons of Ethics 10 receive an additional two Aspect points when they take a manifest action. Sainly Devil Dragons of Ethics 10 in Good mode also

receive these additional two Aspect points when they take a manifest action.

┌*ethics 9*

Maybe construed as the boss, maybe not, the Ethics 9 Dragon has an excellent grasp on what's right and wrong, and what traits define an honorable figurehead. Though not perfect, it's difficult to find something to dislike about this Dragon.

Embers Dragons of Ethics 9 receive an additional Aspect point when they take a manifest action. Sainly Devil Dragons of Ethics 9 in Good mode also receive this additional Aspect point when they take a manifest action.

┌*ethics 8*

A touch better than average, but not so lofty as to breed loyalty by presence, the Ethics 8 Dragon may not be recognized as the leader of her Province. Though she doesn't command respect like Dragons of higher Ethics, the Ethics 8 Dragon is no less principled. Her Province is likely a place of comfort and joy; a reflection of her loving care. People recognize this Dragon is a good person.

┌*ethics 7*

Quite similar to the Ethics 8 Dragon, the Ethics 7 Dragon knows what it means to be decent and just to her Province and its residents. Still, there's a sliver of doubt in her step, and the objective observer can see it. It's as if she's afraid to accept her responsibility.

┌*ethics 6*

Though not necessarily evil, the Ethics 6 Dragon is not above underhanded actions for the sake of progress. If something poses a threat to her Province, she removes it cleanly and quietly. It's still about the Province and not the self, so she will not stoop to such levels for personal gain. Still, those that meet her feel a darkness beneath her voice that is difficult to explain.

┌*ethics 5*

For the Ethics 5 Dragon, the lines of easiest and best begin to blur and convenience takes the place of good judgment. The Dragon may remove obstacles from her Province simply because they don't suit her preferences. She comes off as a little selfish, but the Province is still better off for her presence.

┌*ethics 4*

The commencement of tyranny, a Dragon at Ethics 4 places her own desires and drives above the good of her province. She takes what she wants, and gets back at slights when she wants. These retributions are not fair or properly prompted like those of a higher-Ethics Dragon, but they are not inherently violent. Ethics 4 Dragons come off as bossy and self-centered, and often are not very likeable.

┌*ethics 3*

The Province becomes a tool for the Dragon's own desires when she reaches Ethics 3. She may take destructive measures against her own Province for some fleeting benefit, or maim the morale of her subjects in the name of inflating her own position. Whereas a singular threat would prompt pruning by a higher Ethics Dragon, one at this level does not flinch at purging all involved (Even if that purge involves murder).

At this point, the Dragon is likely recognized once more as an authority figure. Loathing, if not outright hatred, is the common perception of the Ethics 3 Dragon.

┌*ethics 2*

Petty to a maniacal degree, the Ethics 2 Dragon is willing to remove dozens of people from the 'privilege' of life simply because they do not meet her preferences. A grudge-bearer by nature, her revenge is often violent. The Ethics 2 Dragon sends out an unsettling vibe, and seems to lack any lingering flicker of light. A dictator, definitely.



Saintly Devil Dragons of Ethics 2 in Bad mode receive one extra Aspect point when they take a manifest action.

└ Ethics 1

There is little distance left to the bottom. The Ethics 1 Dragon likely fuels her furnace by killing and consuming at random. She doesn't care who catches her with Aspects blazing, as she murders without remorse. The only flicker of conscience remaining is that of torture. Though she may be a murderous monster, she cannot bring herself to cause that kind of suffering. Those in the vicinity of the Ethics 1 Dragon feel the chill of death dance down their spine. Extended contact is not recommended.

Saintly Devil Dragons of Ethics 1 in Bad mode receive two extra Aspect points when they take a manifest action.

└ Ethics 0

At this point, the Dragon can no longer claim a Province. In fact, she can no longer claim her Dragonhood, as she has become a Hydra. A Rabid uncontrollable monster feuding with its own heads, no action is too depraved for this beast. While a Hydra can still disband Aspects, she usually has no reason to. If your Dragon reaches this level of depravity, she becomes a non-player character and can no longer be used. More information on the Hydra can be found in Chapter 4, page XX.

The Journey Up and Down Principles

For an Embers Dragon, losing Ethics is essentially identical to losing Morality, as detailed in the **World of Darkness** Rulebook page 91. Drifting below 7 may lead to derangements, which are removed in the reverse order as Ethics recovers. Scholars of the Five Evils also recover from derangements as their Ethics rises, but their watermark is 6. Scholars may suffer derangements if they exceed Ethics 6, just as if they'd fallen beneath it.

Embers Dragons cannot simply repent as a mortal does, for their position should have taught them better. To increase their Ethics rating, they must both reaffirm their dedication to its teachings and spend the experience to increase the rating. Scholars of the Five Evils are sheltered from this cost by their naiveté, and as such their upward movements are free. If the Scholar rededicates herself to sanity, she *may* spend experience to move towards Ethics 6.

A Dragon's Death

Just like mortals, when a Dragon is riddled with lethal wounds she will begin to bleed to death. But for the Oroboroi—well, most of them anyway—death does not hold the permanence it does for humanity. If her physical form is destroyed, her mental and spiritual self become anchored to her Heart while her body undergoes repair.

Curiously enough, though, is the matter of the corpse a dead Dragon leaves behind. Which form is truth, and which is the lie?

For Dragons that still possess their Hearts in chest, the human form is a lie. When these dragons die, their bodies are thrust into True form where they quickly decay into convincing reptile fossils. Though technically authentic, the carbon dating of these bones usually gets them tossed aside as a hoax. Only someone willing to study them could garner a snifter of useful information, and very little at that. Only one valuable remains in the wake of this phenomenon, the Heart.

For Dragons who renounce their Heart for immortality, the human form is simply a vessel. It's their soul's presence that makes it special, and at severing the flesh becomes absolutely, untraceably human. This does not absolve them of an evidence trail, though, as people are bound to notice that guy who looks remarkably like the one that died.

Resurrection

When a member of the Oroboroi suffers that last aggravated wound, she dies. Each and every wound she has suffered becomes resistant (see page XX in this chapter) and her consciousness is instantly teleported to the Twilight vicinity of their Heart.

Her body continues to heal at the normal (albeit incredibly slow) rate, but she cannot return to her body until at least three of her wounds have healed. While in this state, it is impossible for the Dragon to produce Breath, but on the bright side she does not need to pay Breath each day to stave off hunger. In the meantime the Dragon is free to explore the spectral reflection of her Lair and converse with any of her Heart's lingering Antecedents.

Dragons that die of starvation permanently lose a dot of Furnace during this process, as well as two dots of Aspects and any attributes that would exceed the limit after said loss of Furnace. Without a constant supply of fuel the Furnace just cannot continue burning at that temperature. This is also a defense mechanism for the Dragon; by dimming the Furnace it becomes less likely she will starve again.

Once the body is ready, the Dragon is ripped out of Twilight and returned to life once more. She may not be the only one to take this trip, though.

Death in a Realm Invisible

The above situation assumes the Dragon perished in the Daylight (or rather, the material world). Should a Dragon perish when traveling the Dream Realm, or any other supernatural realm, her body is lost. Unable to return to the Daylight, reconstruction cannot be initiated and the Dragon effectively plays her Last Hand. Or maybe her mind and soul can't get back to her body without her body. A catch twenty-two as is were.

There is one exception. If a Lucid Dreamer slays a Dragon within her dreamscape (in the Dreamtide, of course), a shard of that Dragon imbeds itself in her psyche. The following morning that Dreamer is destined to lose a piece of himself (usually by vomiting), that piece being the Dragon's fragment that became lodged the previous night. This is just enough of the Dragon's body to instigate Resurrection.

The Antecedent

For those that are stricken with the Last Hand, the region around their Heart becomes their permanent residence. Because they are those that owned the heart before, they are called Antecedents. Unlike the Oroboroi awaiting resurrection's renewal, an Antecedent must find ways to fend for himself.

Though not TECHNICALLY ghosts, Antecedents gain access to two non-manifesting Numina from the **World of Darkness** Rulebook, pages 210-212. These Numina use Breath in place of Essence. An Antecedent garners Breath in the same way that a living Dragon does, though he possesses the advantage of spectrally charged consumables (which are worth triple Calories) and the disadvantage of an anchor. As a result, the Twilight regions around a Dragon's Heart are usually barren and bleak.

Antecedents must pay up Breath each day to avoid starving to death... or rather second death. While he can remain in the vicinity of his Heart when he has Breath, should he let his own Furnace burn out his anchoring dissolves, and he slips helplessly into the Underworld. While there are rumors that an Antecedent can come back from such a fate, such action is wildly unlikely. For each day an Antecedent does



not pay his Breath, he suffers a wound of the resistant aggravated variety to his Corpus. Unlike ghosts, to discorporate is a one-way ticket, so Antecedents are far more careful with their spectral flesh. Though these wounds heal at the normal rate, they will not unless the Antecedent pays up.

Antecedents have a Corpus trait, as the ghosts of the **World of Darkness** Rulebook (page 170). It is thus in name only, though, as the Antecedent maintains his individual attributes in place of Power, Finesse, and Resistance. He may also continue to utilize his Aspects, and probably spends most of his time in True Form (as there is no risk of discovery).

Antecedents as Backseat Drivers

The real trouble that comes with an Antecedent is when they decide to take a ride with their Heart's current owner. When a Dragon's body has finished its reconstruction, the Antecedent can try to tag along. The Oroboroi must roll her Ethics:

Dramatic Failure: Impossible when rolling Ethics.

Failure: One of the Dragon's Antecedents manages to anchor himself to her body instead of her Heart. The complications of this are explained below.

Success: The Antecedent doesn't succeed in changing his anchor.

Exceptional Success: No different than a success.

For the Antecedents that do grab a ride, the Dragon's body becomes their anchor until the Dragon dies again, the Antecedent runs out of Breath (and is flung back to the Heart as anchor), or the Antecedent runs out of Corpus (and is flung to the underworld). He can also be exorcised, in which case it returns to the Heart as anchor. This of course has the potential of making the Dragon a walking haunted house, so it's not particularly a good thing.

The Antecedent suffers damage to Corpus each time his anchor (the Dragon's body) suffers damage to Health, though the amount inflicted is one step lower. For example, if the Dragon were to suffer a lethal wound, the Antecedent would suffer a bashing one. The risk is worth it, though, to have a readily moving anchor with which to haunt and feast.

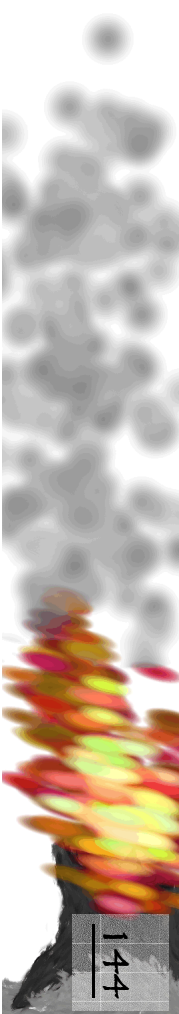
Antecedent souls that anchor to the Dragon gain access to a specialized Numen that can be activated when the anchor is in the process of manifesting Aspects. The Antecedent takes advantage of the metamorphosing body's instability and sprouts his own head, gaining contested access to control.

- **Two for One:** When a Dragon with Antecedent Passenger has manifested at least ten points of Aspects, the Antecedent may activate this Numen to sprout his own head on the body. This requires the expenditure of one Breath.

A Dragon sporting more than one head gets a second instant action within the turn, at the position equal to her Initiative Modifier. That Dragon also gains a short-burst attack when performing a bite (Though she must be in agreement with her other head) and has her Inferno converted to a long-burst attack (also when in agreement with her other head). Both these actions gain a +1 bonus for the additional head.

The benefit ends there. That second instant action? It belongs to the Antecedent, and he may act independently of the body. Usually such action can only involve his own head, but for a point of Willpower he can move limbs for the next three turns. This could prove disastrous if he has an agenda that doesn't match that of his anchor.

While forming a head on the Dragon's body, the Antecedent cannot use his own Aspects. The extra head will remain until



the Antecedent runs out of Corpus or Breath. The Dragon who is serving as anchor cannot disband her last ten points of Aspects unless she spends a point of Breath to retract the Antecedent's head (or he decides to comply).

The Red Pearl

For Dragons that exceed five dots of Furnace, an inborn genetic flaw begins to manifest within their skull. This flaw causes the brain-matter to crystallize, creating a valuable stone known as a Red Pearl. It can be removed, but only by killing the Dragon. Also, being caused by genetic instability, this pearl is caustic to the touch. Many take this to mean the object is cursed, but that couldn't be further from the truth.

To those who can find a way to remove the caustic flaw, great rewards for owning such a treasure can be found. If the Red Pearl is subjected to a purifying procedure (Storyteller discretion... though it may involve submersion in pure water, being struck by lightning, or being placed in a sufficiently hot flame for 13 hours), the Dragon's resurrection is instantly extended by a month and the Pearl begins to bestow benefits unto its new wielder. The Oroboroi Heart remains unharmed, and some clever harvesters will steal it while the Dragon is vulnerable to present it to a more favorable owner (The Knights of the Bloody Chalice are known to practice such debauchery). Red Pearls must be purified quickly, though. If it has not been properly processed by the time the Dragon resurrects, it works its way out of mortal hands and vanishes from the world, only to reappear within her head.

In addition to the slower resurrection, losing a Red Pearl causes an instant and permanent loss of one dot of Furnace. A Dragon may produce an infinite number of Red Pearls, provided she has a sufficiently hot Furnace. For Dragons the removed Red Pearl serves no benefit but spite, and as such

it is one of the gravest crimes a member of the Oroboroi can commit.

Benefits of a Red Pearl

For an Oroboroi who owns a Red Pearl, there is no benefit. But for a mortal who manages to get a hold of one, the sky's the limit. Each Red Pearl has a benefit based on the type of Dragon that produced it, as well as a general benefit. The mortal experiences these benefits so long as the Red Pearl remains within two inches of his person.

All Red Pearls have a size of 1 and a durability of 5. Each Red Pearl has a rating, equal to five dots less than the source Dragon's Furnace at time of harvest. Owning any type of Pearl extends the lifespan of the owner by half again, and causes wounds to heal in half the time.

Slayer Pearl: The crystal brain of a Slayer Oroboroi grants the wielder a number of free attribute dots to allocate among his different attributes equal to its rating. His needs upon acquiring the Red Pearl are ingrained into its form, so once the attribute bumps are chosen they become a feature of that particular Red Pearl and cannot be reassigned. The dots are lost if the mortal loses the Red Pearl, though.

Finder Pearl: The crystal brain of a Finder Oroboroi grants sight of the future. On each night the wielder goes to sleep with the crystal adjacent, roll the Red Pearl's rating. With even a single success, the mortal gets a prophetic dream of some relevance to him. Even in the event of a failure, the wielder experiences a vision awash in metaphor, which can be deciphered with time and patience.



Challenger Pearl: The crystal brain of a Challenger gives its wielder a bonus to resist toxins and diseases equal to its rating. She can also extend the amount of time she can go without food or sleep by a number of days equal to that same amount, as well as the number of hours without water, and the number of minutes without oxygen.

Trickster Pearl: The crystal brain of a Trickster grants amazing fortune. A number of times per story equal to the Red Pearl's rating, the mortal may decide to toss and re-roll a number of failed dice on a roll equal to that same rating. This can be initiated even after the roll is made.

Inheritor Pearl: The crystal brain of an Inheritor is probably the greatest record of Oroboroi history that exists. At least, it would be if it could be proven accurate. The Red Pearl of an Inheritor serves as an encyclopedia of her life and those of her Antecedents. Once a day, the wielder of an Inheritor Pearl may *dive* into the memories of any Dragon that owned the Inheritor's Heart at some time (All but the Inheritor are dead, of course) for any reason he desires. While he is diving, he appears to be in REM sleep. The memory diver cannot interact with the events, though, he only witnesses them. The Diver experiences memories in real time, and may remain submerged in the encyclopedia for a number of hours equal to the rating of the Red Pearl. Any memories that occur *after* the time of harvest cannot be witnessed, as they were not yet recorded. It is also quite difficult to discern real memories from false ones.

The Last Hand

Not every Oroboroi death is temporary. Hearts get lost, and find new owners. Eternity doesn't last forever. If that doesn't make any sense, think of it this way: There's always another to take up the mantle.

Should a Dragon perish in one of the realms invisible (Including the Dreamtide), inescapably far from her Heart, she has played her Last Hand. Should a Dragon's Heart be consumed (by mortal or otherwise), she has played her Last Hand. Should a Dragon perish by exsanguination, specifically during the blood-bathing ritual of the Knights of the Bloody Chalice, she has played her Last Hand. Should a Dragon be one of the True Hearts, her first death and her Last Hand are one and the same.

Upon dying this final time, a Dragon becomes an Antecedent, as has been described earlier in this chapter. In the case of death by Heart consumption, the new Antecedent may be anchored to a Heart that still rests in chest. Despite being attached to a moving anchor, this Antecedent is not technically a passenger and cannot manifest a head.

Matters of the Form Corporeal

Dragons heal at a preternatural rate, though not through some miracle of metabolism or mystic fate. No, Dragons heal at the speed they do because the heat of their Furnace cauterizes the wounds they suffer. Though this process is not mercurial enough to be suspicious, Dragons are surprisingly healthy.

- For Dragons who can spend two points of Breath, a single lethal wound can be removed as a reflexive action. This shifts any bashing wounds left one space on the meter. Even if the Dragon is unconscious or bleeding to death, she may remove lethal wounds in this manner. Resistant lethal damage cannot be healed in this manner.

- For Dragons who can generate two Aspect points with a manifest action, they may sacrifice those two points to remove a single bashing wound. Resistant wounds cannot be healed in this manner.

- If they can come up with four Aspect points, a Dragon can sacrifice them to remove a single lethal wound. This shifts any bashing wounds left one space on the meter. Resistant wounds cannot be healed in this manner.

- For Dragons who can come up with a whopping eight Aspect points on a single manifest action, a single aggravated wound may be removed. This shifts all lethal and bashing wounds to the left one space. Resistant wounds cannot be healed in this manner.

When not using supernatural means, a Dragon recovers at the same rate a normal human being does. Bashing damage takes fifteen minutes to heal, lethal damage takes two days, and aggravated damage takes an entire week.

- True Form increases a Dragon's Stamina and Size, creating two extra wound slots. The Enormous Size Aspect boosts a Dragon's Size trait, also creating extra wound slots.

Should a Dragon's expanded health meter contract while wounds are occupying it:



changes to this:



causing the smaller wounds to cluster and become more severe. In this example, one bashing wound ends up in a wound slot that no longer exists, so it combines with the rightmost bashing wound to make a single lethal one. Likewise, if a lethal wound filled a vanishing wound slot, it would combine with the rightmost lethal wound and become an aggravated one.

Extended Willpower

True Form grants an additional dot of Composure and an additional dot of Resolve. This means an extra two dots of Willpower, and an extra two points to spend. These do not come without a price, though.

Should the bar contract when those last points have been used...

This:



changes to this:



The used Willpower rolls back, marking the first slots with an asterisk. This mark represents mental overexertion, and can only be removed by the fulfillment of a Virtue (one each time a Virtue is upheld).

This is an extension of the Willpower Health system presented for Dreamers in the first Appendix, as found on page XX.

Trauma

Trauma is a new affliction found both in the Sweat Philosophy and the Venoms Aspect, though you may attach it to certain weaponry as you please. Trauma always has a set rating and lasts until the subject suffers no more lethal wounds or until the scene ends (The first is always true, while the second depends on the source of the trauma and storyteller discretion).

When someone is suffering from trauma, gut-wrenching pain prohibits them from moving quickly or effectively. If they so much as attempt to apply their defense against an incoming attack, sharp stabbing sensations overcome them and their capacity to act is hindered until next turn (thus defense must be sacrificed to avoid the penalty). Likewise, moving more than a slow walk (half speed) causes the same



reaction. For example, a character suffering Trauma 3 with speed 12 moving more than 6 yards in a turn would be penalized 3 dice to his next action. This penalty is a hold-out, so if a clever player tries to move extra distance and then wait a turn to act, the penalty still applies.

Another interesting thing to note is how trauma stacks. Usually it only sticks as the highest exposure, but if the trauma is from separate sources it becomes cumulative. The highest instance of trauma from an Aspect, a Philosophy, and a Weapon are all added together to give the total trauma rating. A man suffering from “Lock the Pain” 5 (with an exceptional success), struck with Venoms 3 and then a sword that inflicts Trauma 1 would have a total rating of Trauma 9. If that same man was then struck with a different attack of Venoms 2, his trauma would not change (Venoms 2 is less than Venoms 3, and as both are Aspect-origin they do not stack). Below are more examples of how trauma works.

- A subject suffering Trauma 4 does not move, but refuses to sacrifice his defense. His next rolled action suffers -4.
- A subject suffering Trauma 2 sacrifices his defense but moves his full speed. His next rolled action suffers -2.
- A subject suffering Trauma 1 continually applies his defense, but takes no other actions. His trauma does not expire, but neither does it pile up. Only the next rolled action suffers -1.
- A subject suffering Trauma 5 recovers from all his lethal damage. He will no longer trigger trauma penalties, and if one was pending it is discarded.
- A subject suffering Trauma 1 from an Aspect is struck with Trauma 3 from another Aspect. The subject now suffers Trauma 3.
- A subject suffering Trauma 1 from an Aspect is struck with Trauma 5 from a Philosophy. The subject now suffers

Trauma 6, as the philosophy is considered a different source than the Aspect.

- A subject suffering Trauma 3 moves no further than half his speed and sacrifices his defense. He suffers no penalty to act.

Resistant Injuries

The Oroboroi rule the material world. And some wounds they inflict or suffer can only be mended by the material world. Resistant wounds cannot be healed by supernatural means (Though high levels of the Lust Philosophy may remove the resistant status). Also, they take twice as long to heal as a regular wound of the same type would. For bashing wounds, that’s thirty minutes. Resistant lethal wounds take four days to heal, and resistant aggravated wounds take an astounding two weeks.

A resistant wound becomes attached to that wound slot at the time of infliction. Marked with a registered trademark symbol beneath the corresponding slot, the resistant status remains until a wound in that slot has healed naturally. This can be especially frustrating if the resistant status occurs near the left side of the health bar, where the wound is likely to upgrade in severity before it has time to heal.

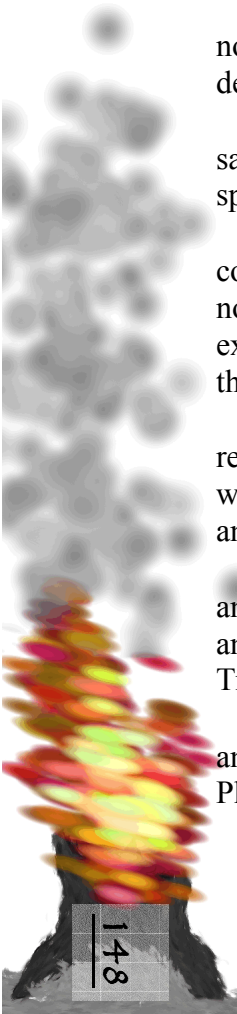


In this example, the third wound slot has become resistant. To heal that bashing wound takes thirty minutes. If the subject were to suffer additional lethal wounds:

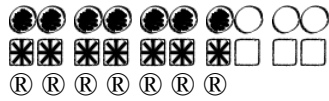


the resistant mark does not move with the bashing wound. In fact, a lethal wound now occupies the resistant slot. It will take four days to heal, and no mysticism save the force of will of a Lust Dragon will accelerate this process.

As specified in the Resurrection section, when a Dragon has died from her



injuries (Suffered aggravated wounds to every slot) all of her wounds become resistant, and she will not revive until her final three slots have cleared.



Provided someone does not intervene and hasten the speed of her recovery, six weeks after she perished:



three aggravated wounds clear out, and the resistant marks with them. That means that it will take six weeks for her body to be ready, and then an additional six to fourteen weeks before she's back to healthy.

(Note: Though resistant wounds cannot be healed by supernatural means, their mending can be accelerated by natural ones. This includes the Quick Healer Merit, which can be found in the **World of Darkness** Rulebook on page 113.)

Citing Sources

The previous two health complications (Trauma and Resistant Injuries) are embellished versions of systems found in other White Wolf products, the prior loosely based on a system found in **Scion** and the latter similarly derivative of a system found in **Mage the Awakening**. This mention is to credit the source of the inspiration, though, as the complications found in the two previously mentioned titles differ from the versions found in this book. While Trauma may be called a "new affliction" in this book, such referral is in reference to the new World of Darkness, and not to White Wolf products in general.

Allergy to Jadeite

Believed to be a house for the virtues of mankind, true Chinese hard jade (Jadeite)

inflicts grievous, unnatural wounds to the Oroboroi. Some believe this is a built-in secret weapon of the original dragons, designed to punish the Oroboroi when they seized power during the Collapse. Others say the faith poured into the precious stone over the centuries has given it properties of the Dreamtide, and that shared trait is what makes it so effective against draconic flesh. Whatever the case, it is a long-held secret, and the jade statues are the hint.

Any weapon that has touched hard jade (Jadeite) within 9 seconds (3 turns) of striking an Oroboroi inflicts aggravated damage. Weapons that are actually made of Jade, though incredibly rare, are even more effective as the wounds they inflict are resistant (such weapons would have to be made from scratch, as Dragons are holy creatures in China and a weapon designed to murder them would never be forged). Most would-be dragon-slayers keep a jade trinket to pass over their blades or bullets during the fight. Soft jade (Nephrite) and cheap forgeries that may look like hard jade do not possess the same quality that Jadeite does, and thus have no effect on the damage a weapon inflicts.

Health Penalty Shifts

Prompted by the use of the Sweat or Lust Philosophies, a Health Penalty shift takes all the penalties on the health meter and slides them to the left or to the right, as specified by the philosophy used. This makes the penalties more severe, or grants bonuses for high states of health. There are restrictions, though.

- Left shifts and Right shifts cancel each other out. Having the penalty shift three steps left and four steps right means it moves only one step right. As four is the larger number, three is subtracted from it and it determines the direction of the shift.
- The maximum number of steps the penalty can shift is ten. Even if twelve



skilled Sweat Dragons all applied their Philosophies, the shift would never go further than ten steps to the left. Likewise, if twelve Lust Dragons tried to pump euphoria to the maximum, the shift would go no further than ten steps to the right.

- The active bonus is determined by the leftmost open slot. The active penalty is determined by the rightmost filled slot. Never the two shall meet.

- A bonus is only applied when an unmodified slot is pushed off the meter. Though all possible permutations of the Health Penalty Shift will be provided, this information is provided should you wish to modify the system.

- If the -1 penalty reaches the left end of the meter, it will be pushed off in the next step. Likewise, -2, -3, and -4 will vanish as leftward steps progress. The loss of these lower penalties is dependent on how many health slots the meter possesses. If the subject manages to acquire more health slots, these lower penalties are likely to reappear.

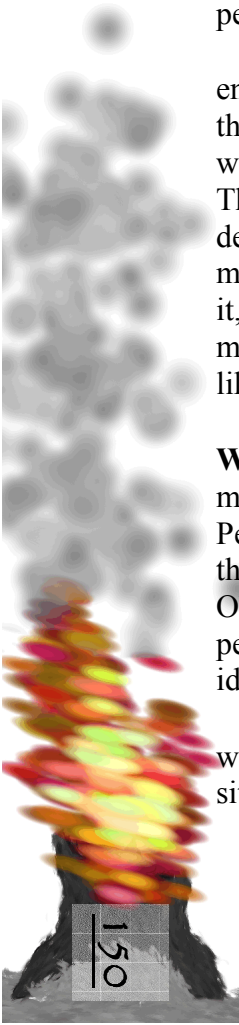
- If the +1 bonus reaches the right end of the meter, it will be pushed off in the next step. Likewise, +2, +3, and +4 will vanish as rightward steps progress. The loss of these lower bonuses is also dependent on how many health slots the meter possesses. Though it may seem like it, this really isn't a good thing. Should more health slots appear, these bonuses are likely to reappear.

- The merit Iron Stamina from the **World of Darkness** Rulebook (page 113) may be treated as a rightward Health Penalty Shift, the number of steps being the same as the dots owned in the merit. Obviously this is in place of its wound penalty reduction, and mechanically it is identical.

- No wound penalty or health bonus will exceed 5. This limit does not apply to situational penalties, which are applied

afterward. Again, this information is provided should you wish to modify the system.

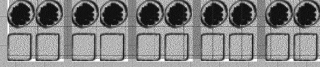
[IMAGE!]



Negative Health Penalty Shifts

Left Ten:

Penalties begin to count up at the thirteenth-to-last health slot. Should the meter prove too short, the difference between the health dots and fourteen forms the starting penalty.

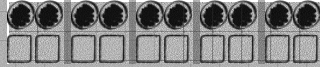


-4-5 -5-5 -5-5 -5-5 -5-5

(10 health dots – 14 = -4 in first slot)

Left Nine:

Penalties begin to count up at the twelfth-to-last health slot. Should the meter prove too short, the difference between the health dots and thirteen forms the starting penalty.

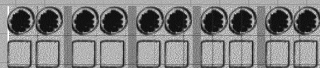


-3-4 -5-5 -5-5 -5-5 -5-5

(10 health dots – 13 = -3 in first slot)

Left Eight:

Penalties begin to count up at the eleventh-to-last health slot. Should the meter prove too short, the difference between the health dots and twelve forms the starting penalty.



-2-3 -4-5 -5-5 -5-5 -5-5

(10 health dots – 12 = -2 in first slot)

Left Seven:

Penalties begin to count up at the tenth-to-last health slot. Should the meter prove too short, the difference between the health dots and eleven forms the starting penalty.



-1-2 -3-4 -5-5 -5-5 -5-5

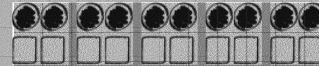
Left Six:

Penalties begin to count up at the ninth-to-last health slot. Should the meter prove too short, the difference between the health dots and ten forms the starting penalty.

Positive Health Penalty Shifts

Right Ten:

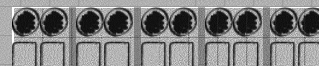
The first three health slots receive a plus five bonus. Starting at the fourth slot, these bonuses decrease until they reach zero.



+5+5 +5+4 +3+2 +1

Right Nine:

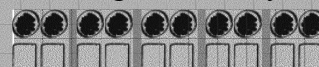
The first two health slots receive a plus five bonus. Starting at the third slot, these bonuses decrease until they reach zero.



+5+5 +4+3 +2+1

Right Eight:

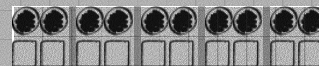
Starting at plus five, bonuses count down to the right until they reach zero.



+5+4 +3+2 +1

Right Seven:

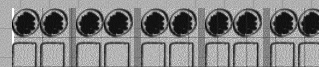
Starting at plus four, bonuses count down to the right until they reach zero.



+4+3 +2+1

Right Six:

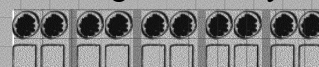
Starting at plus three, bonuses count down to the right until they reach zero.



+3+2 +1

Right Five:

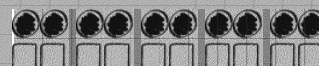
Starting at plus two, bonuses count down to the right until they reach zero.



+4+3 +2+1

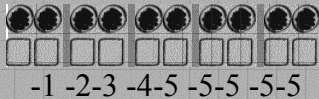
Right Four:

A plus one bonus is granted to the first health slot.



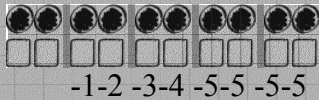
+1





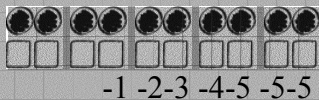
Left Five:

Penalties begin to count up at the eighth-to-last health slot. Should the meter prove too short, the difference between the health dots and nine forms the starting penalty.



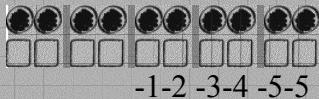
Left Four:

Penalties begin to count up at the seventh-to-last health slot. Should the meter prove too short, the difference between the health dots and eight forms the starting penalty.



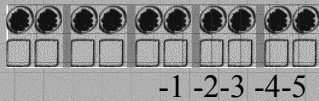
Left Three:

Penalties begin to count up at the sixth-to-last health slot.



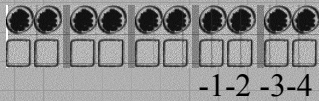
Left Two:

Penalties begin to count up at the fifth-to-last health slot.



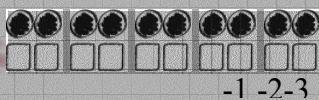
Left One:

Penalties begin to count up at the fourth-to-last health slot.



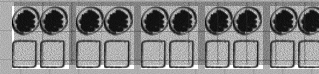
No Penalty Shift:

Penalties begin to count up at the third-to-last health slot. This is the standard on which all shifts are based.



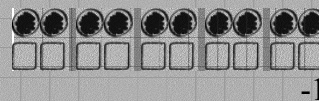
Right Three:

No penalties are applied for severity of wounds.



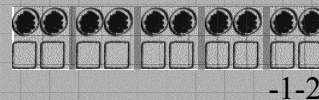
Right Two:

A minus one penalty is applied on the final health slot.



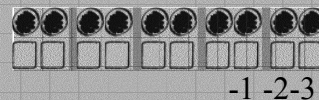
Right One:

Penalties begin to count up at the second-to-last health slot.



No Penalty Shift:

Penalties begin to count up at the third-to-last health slot. This is the standard on which all shifts are based.



Situational Penalties for Wounds

Though explained in a summarized sense in the **World of Darkness** Rulebook, page 124, there is a need to reiterate the situational modifier. In order for generalized and localized pains to work properly, an increased level of care must be taken to keep track of where wounds occur, and how such wounds would influence someone's actions. For the sake of this, the general malaise of a beating is covered by the Health meter penalties, and the localized reduced capacity of an injured or broken extremity is covered by situational modifiers. If a player takes a sharp blow to his arm, levy a penalty against actions involving the arm. Even one fewer dice renders the injury a little more real, and likewise makes the Sweat and Lust Philosophies more plausible.

As a good rule of thumb, a limb that has suffered bashing damage (of any amount) should inflict a -1 situational penalty to activities involving that limb. If the wound (or wounds) suffered were lethal, -2 would stand as a better penalty. And if the limb has suffered any kind of aggravated damage, a -3 situational penalty to actions involving its use is not unreasonable.

Anatomy of the Heart

The Oroboroi Heart consists of nine chambers, four of which are atria with the remaining five serving as ventricles. The Oroboroi Heart is essentially two independent Hearts drawing from two separate oxygen sources, connected by a center ventricle which pumps oxygenated blood throughout the body.

The Left Heart, or rather the left four chambers of the Oroboroi Heart, gathers low-oxygen blood (in the dorsal left atrium) from the body and sends it to the lungs (from the dorsal left ventricle), where it becomes high-oxygen blood if the lungs are in use. High-oxygen blood is then received in the Left Heart again (in the ventral left atrium), where it is sent to the center ventricle (from the ventral left ventricle). If the Dragon is currently not utilizing her lungs, the low oxygen blood is blocked out of the center ventricle by means of a specialized nervous reaction, instead being redirected to the first atrium of the Right Heart (The ventral right atrium)

The Right Heart, or rather the right four chambers of the Oroboroi Heart, gathers low-oxygen blood just as the Left Heart does (in the ventral right atrium), but sends it off to the gills instead (from the ventral right ventricle), where it becomes high-oxygen blood if the Dragon is submerged in water. Returning from the gills, high-oxygen blood (in the dorsal right atrium) is then pumped into the center ventricle (from the dorsal right ventricle). If the Dragon is currently not utilizing her gills,

the low oxygen blood cannot enter the central ventricle due to the same nervous reaction that occurs in the Left Heart.

Finally, the central ventricle stores oxygenated blood and pumps it throughout the body. It only ever contains oxygenated blood, and will only pump if it has blood in it. Because of this, a Dragon who has had both her sources of oxygen cut off will not have a pulse, as the low-oxygen blood simply flows back and fourth between the Left and Right Hearts.

Of course, that's how it would work if a Dragon kept her Heart in chest. All of these functions are performed sympathetically with the Heart's beat, so it needn't actually hold the Dragon's blood at all. An astral bond connects the body with its blood muscle, and some say a silver string can be seen connecting the two if you look hard enough. Though, it could be jade, too.

An interesting thing to note is the fact that Dragons possess both gills and lungs. Due to the design of their Heart, the Oroboroi are capable of life on land or sea without consequence, even if they are not manifesting a single Aspect. There are rumors of Dragon cities beneath the waves, but each is colored by legends of horrid creatures that sleep where ocean swallows the light.

Grafts

What's this? The thesis summary of this chapter mentioned nothing about Grafts. Best to consider it a bonus. The Graft Merit (page XX in Chapter 2) gifts a Dragon one of these boney devices, but what are they, exactly? And what do they do?

Creating a Graft involves the death of a mortal, mainly when said mortal touches a heavily cursed item. The Graft itself is comprised of the slain mortal's body, compressed tenfold and shaped in gruesome fashion. It is mystically charged by the former life that created it, and by grasping



another object it converts that mysticism into something useful.

Alone, a Graft is useless. It must be attached to something, and that something must have some mundane function (though it needn't be mundane itself). From that point until such time as the Graft is detached, the item receives a bonus equal to the Graft's rating when performing that mundane task. Grafts can be opened or closed once per scene, which means in a scene where a Graft is detached from a tool, it cannot be reattached to a different one. Likewise, if a Graft is attached in a scene, it cannot be removed until the subsequent scene.

Profession and Provincial Boons

While a School determines a Dragon's philosophy, her Province flavors it. Despite all her divine traits, the mind is the greatest tool an Oroboroi can utilize. If her Furnace reaches **four dots**, she can project the metaphoric power of her chosen people through sheer force of will, just like when she weaves a Philosophy.

There are many different types of people, but Provincial Boons are based specifically on profession. A Dragon whose Province is a courthouse would likely receive the Boons of judgment, as the most prominent regulars of a courthouse are attorneys and judges. Likewise, a Dragon whose Province is a prison would likely receive Boons related to crime, as the inmates outnumber the guards. Since there's no way to cover every single profession, a few examples will be provided, followed by guidelines for crafting your own Provincial Boons.

Smoke—Provincial Boon of Criminals

With a province of criminals comes the guile to obscure, and to see through the darkness. The Provincial Boon of Smoke allows a Dragon to utilize "Pierce the Fog" and "Smoke Bomb".

Pierce the Fog

For a single point of Willpower, the Dragon may roll Wits + Composure + Furnace to 'Pierce the Fog'. She believes herself immune to the occluding effects of darkness, and her force of will makes it so.

Roll Results:

Dramatic Failure: Blinded by her ambition, the Dragon cannot utilize her sense of sight for the rest of the scene.

Failure: The Dragon's sight is not improved.

Success: Any situational penalties that would be levied against Sight do not trigger against the Dragon, until the scene ends. She can see just as well in pitch darkness and dense fog as she sees in daylight.

Exceptional Success: Same as success, but the Willpower is not spent.

Smoke Bomb

For two points of Breath, the Dragon may roll Stamina + Resolve + Furnace to drop a 'Smoke Bomb'. Steam erupts from the surface of her body, quickly filling a room and making it *very* difficult to see. For a number of turns dependent on her success, the room is considered blindingly smoky. Unless the Dragon has used "Pierce the Fog" this scene, she too is stricken sightless. A Dragon can only use 'Smoke Bomb' once per scene.

Roll Results:

Dramatic Failure: The smoke forms, but dissipates almost instantly. If she wasn't considered suspicious before, she is now.

Failure: No smoke erupts from the Dragon's body.

Success: A thick, scentless fog fills the room by falling off the Dragon's body, and lingers for a number of turns equal to the successes rolled. Any within this gray haze are rendered completely blind unless otherwise prepared, and must rely on their other senses to navigate. If the Smoke Bomb is used outdoors, it will disperse one turn sooner.

Exceptional Success: Besides the longer duration of the smoke, there is no additional benefit.

Holy Light—Provincial Boon of the Flock

With a province of highly religious constituents (of any theology) comes a faith in the hereafter. Though Dragons know where they go upon death (and have an inkling of where they go after the Last Hand), the Holy Light lets them see and interact with the Twilight on an almost-equal level. The Provincial Boon of Holy Light allows a Dragon to utilize “Find the Darkness” and “Forge the Light”.

Find the Darkness

For a single point of Willpower, the Dragon may roll Intelligence + Manipulation + Furnace to ‘Find the Darkness’. By her faith she gains the capacity to see objects in both Daylight and Twilight simultaneously, at least until the end of the scene. Despite being aware of them, she cannot interact with them.

Roll Results:

Dramatic Failure: The Dragon’s efforts backfire, and all at once she can see ONLY Twilight. She bumbles through a perceived world she cannot touch, and a tangible world she cannot see, until the end of the scene.

Failure: The Dragon’s sight is not altered.

Success: The Dragon sees both the material and the immaterial in her vicinity. She is unable to interact with them, but she is aware of their presence and can detect their Numina.

Exceptional Success: Same as success, but the Willpower is not spent.

Forge the Light

For two points of Breath, the Dragon may roll Strength + Stamina + Furnace to bless an item. The item becomes bathed in the warm glow of the Dragon’s faith, and until the end of the scene it is capable of interacting with both Daylight and Twilight in equal fashion. If used as a weapon, the damage it inflicts is bashing and it is only

capable of rendering others unconscious (In other words, if the final health slot has a bashing wound, the weapon deals no damage). The item remains blessed until the end of the scene.

Roll Results:

Dramatic Failure: The item is rendered completely ethereal. Unable to interact with the material world, the Dragon cannot maintain her grip and the item falls to the ground. It’s lost to the Twilight, so hopefully it wasn’t important.

Failure: The light does not embrace the item, and it remains material only.

Success: The item gains the peculiar trait of being both material and immaterial simultaneously. It’s capable of interacting with the realms invisible (specifically the Twilight) until the end of the scene. If used as a weapon, it deals only bashing damage and cannot kill.

Exceptional Success: In addition to success, one point of Breath is refunded.

Crafting a Provincial Boon

To make your own provincial boons, you need to come up with two powers (one that uses Willpower, and one that uses two Breath) that, while useful separately, are only really practical when used in tandem. The power that uses Willpower should be something internalized, while the power that uses Breath should be something projected. And both powers should have some sort of metaphoric relation to the constituents that bore it. A Provincial Boon of law enforcers should involve shattering lies, or bringing order. A Provincial Boon of fisherman should have something to do with salt, the sea, boats, or fish. Use your imagination, but be sure to keep it reasonable.



Chapter Four: Storytelling and Antagonists

(Full-Page art needed. A picture of Ivan in True Form in the corner, with Cameron's back facing the reader would work well.)

She stood in her apartment, but it was peculiarly barren and devoid of color. It was as if the light had been robbed of it, the diversity stolen away in the night while it was sleeping.

Cameron remained the only thing with color... a sore thumb protruding, that's what she was.

"So this is hell, then?"

"Hardly." It was Ivan. He reclined against the far wall of the kitchen, chomping on a chunk of kitchen counter he'd liberated with his claws. "No, this is more like hell's waiting room." Cameron took a step back.

"You're dead."

"Yeah, well so are you. At least for the moment."

"What do you mean?"

"I have to say you're doing better than I did. Two months before your first fatality, that's got to be a new record. At least for our kind."

"Why are you here? What *is* here? Why am *I* here?"

Ivan smiled. "Well, let's just say we've got plenty of time to discuss it."



“Love is friendship that has caught fire”

–Ann Landers

“Hate is distrust subjected to arson. Especially the part where the arsonist sticks around to watch it burn”

-Anonymous

*In order to use this chapter, you'll have to have read the Storytelling chapter in the **World of Darkness** Rulebook. While there's probably sufficient space here to go over all of the topics covered there, that wouldn't be very sporting and frankly the redundancy would be pointless.*

Much of the **Dragon** game is about maintaining and improving a building and its surrounding community. Each player is going to have a Province, and it's your job to make that Province as real as possible. Your stories will be frail and your group disinterested if you fail to properly develop your setting. That, and the threats to the status quo of each province. This chapter provides some starting points for developing your **Dragon** World of Darkness.

The Horror that comes with Eternity

There are precious few stories in which the Dragon is the protagonist. Usually it stands as a monster to be slain, or a mystery to be studied. Sometimes, especially in modern fiction, the Dragon stands as a guide to push heroes in the right direction (sometimes violently). The Chinese tradition depicts dragons as unknowable forces of nature. But still, in all of these instances the Dragon stands as an ancillary character.

We could delve into the Dragon as a political image but considering the groups that use it as their symbol it is best not to dig too deeply there. So what's life like from the dragon's perspective? There's no way to tell without anthropomorphizing the fire-

breathing lizards. Luckily, that's what we've done.

Dragons are durable, powerful, long-lived and feared. The Oroboroi are formerly human and possess a singular frailty like that of precious stones. Though this frailty is not expressly emotional, it is symbolically so. What does it mean to live forever, only to watch everything you love wither, die, and crumble to dust? Now consider this is a consequence of indulging in power. Couple the loneliness and guilt of a life like this with the self-loathing knowledge that *choice* made life that way, and you've got a **Dragon: The Embers** game.

As a storyteller, it's your job to make your players regret their decision in joining the Oroboroi. This is a more delicate process than it sounds. If you snatch away every happiness as it reaches its climax, your players and likewise their characters will become jaded and introverted. Likewise if you allow the players to perfect their environment you marginalize the mood. Ideally you want them to be aware of conclusions but not paranoid of them. Practically, you want to make the players more than uncomfortable but less than miserable.

The lingering threat of Extinction

In the World of Darkness Dragonkind is on its way out. There's no (or little) hope of propagation and the self-destructive nature of the Oroboroi condition spirals the species towards oblivion. After all, Oroborus cannot survive forever on the meat of its own body.

It's important to keep this truth in mind while you're forging a chronicle.



Really, it's a tool with which to beat back the chaotic impulses of your players. If the threat of personal exposure is not enough to deter someone from waving 'DRAGON!' in the media's face, then the knowledge that Oroboroi exposure en masse will accelerate their end should act as a nice buffer. If this still doesn't help, it can be used by others as a justification for removing the dangerous blabbermouth.

The trials of Terror versus Tact

Just as extinction keeps them in line on a grand scale, discretion keeps the Oroboroi from trotting around as giant reptilian monsters. Even if they were completely untouchable, the human that Dragon used to be would still have to face some pretty tough facts before unleashing her scaly self.

Be it creation or destruction, a Dragon's features are catalyst to the world. Change is scary both when it is physical and when it is environmental, and the human inside must understand that each time she goes into her True Form she's going to come out in a different world. New Oroboroi fear losing themselves in the monster, while older Oroboroi fear disbanding back to the charade.

Even if she can resolve herself to the duality of her existence, she cannot force such understanding on the things she cares about. Even domestic animals have difficulty coping when their owners grow half a foot taller and sprout wings, so imagine how more rational beings react. Unpredictably, of course.

So what does this have to do with you, the Storyteller? You need to present your players with these situations; instances where they would both benefit and suffer from using their divinities. This is one of the core struggles in the **Dragon** setting, and you have to make it legitimately difficult to portray the gravity of the decision.

Ego against the Den

Though not a support structure of the game, the Den will serve as the primary means through which your players interact. In this instance (almost ironically) Dragons work better in a cross-over than they do in their own setting. There are no creatures more greedy and vicariously untrustworthy than another Dragon. If you think of each Dragon as its own nation, it becomes clear that friendship is highly unlikely and secrets are the greatest currency.

Interacting Dragons live on the uneasy balance of a symbiotic relationship. So long as both continue to benefit on a relatively fair basis, they can collaborate. Should one resort to blackmail or extortion, though, the alliance is likely to end in a bloody mess (along with the destruction of one or both Provinces). This is the hard way out.

Slights that lead to vicious massacres may seem like a lot of fun, but they're really more chaotic than engrossing. While you want to make your players nervous around each other, you should bait them away from this 'bad end'. The best way to do so is by rendering the Den's union co-dependent. The characters will be less adamant about slights and backstabs if the alliance provides them with something their Province cannot run without. Maybe one player lays claim to the local legislature and another to a hospital. The latter must stay in alliance with the former to cover up insurance 'shufflings' for their poorer patients, and the former must stay in alliance with the latter to get the good hospital PR for her politicians. Both would suffer extreme setbacks if they broke their Den, and so both would have to be rational when faced with the gluttony and ego of the other.

Methods as a means of maintaining a Den

Co-dependency need not be as specific as that. There are certain areas

where one Oroboroi excels over another, and planning each chapter to the talents of a particular player can help keep them from ripping each other apart.

Each method's suit of Aspects is designed for a specific set of tasks, but that's not the only thing a method has going for it. One focal attribute gets both a dot and maximum value boost, and that can have quite an influence on the areas where an Oroboroi excels.

When it comes to Slayers, their main function is to inflict death on others. The Suit of Blades is specifically designed to be a blender of complementing weaponry. But that's not all a Slayer can do. It's likely the Den's Slayer is the strongest Dragon in the group, and muscles aren't just for maiming. While a Slayer's main function will be combat, she should also take the lead in tasks that require tireless effort or massive strength. Perhaps a collapsed metro station is full of innocent mortals with only one hour of air left. The Den's Slayer is the one to turn to.

Finders are bookworms. The Spades Suit is particularly effective in studying, understand, and then tracking down pretty much anything. Beyond the hound-dog position, though, a Finder has the capacity to be ferociously intelligent. While research and retrieval will be the two primary focuses of a Finder-intensive chapter, they also stand out as great thinkers and planners. If something needs to be done, the Finder can probably find the best way to do it.

Challengers are difficult. Their major strength is humbling others with their superior talent, and for this reason their main purpose is spite. Challengers do have other functions in a Den, however, the biggest of which serving as bait. Whereas a Finder locates the Den's enemies with research, a Challenger lures them out with her arrogance and prowess. Their knack for Wits also complements this function.

The Suit of Clubs is largely acidic, set up to expose weakness. Most of its applications are defensive, so a Trickster is at her best when helping the Den retreat from an angered enemy. This is not the Trickster's only talent, though, and you should be wary of falling into a rut with it. A Trickster has the capacity to be the Den's best manipulator, and likewise she should be very good at convincing others to do things they shouldn't. Setting up situations where a Trickster can twist someone else into working for her can lead to some very interesting vendetta stories.

Inheritors are socialites, hands down. The Suit of Goblets is all about confidence, and grants the traits necessary to safely inject the Dragon into any social situation with at least some modicum of authority. They stand as great investigators because of this, having easy access to privileged information and possible suspects. Their talents are not exclusive to external endeavors, though. When the Den needs someone to stand up and take charge, an Inheritor is the one to turn to. Versatile enough to be competent as a fighter, researcher, intimidator or saboteur, an Inheritor can relate with the other Oroboroi of her Den and possesses (or rather should possess) the Presence necessary to get them to listen. You can get a lot of story for your effort by creating internal conflicts that the Inheritor has to resolve, if only temporarily.

These suggestions assume you have five players of five separate methods. Don't worry if your game is not the case. Throwing in opportunities for an 'absent' method to shine is a great way to get your players to panic and cooperate.

The Power of the Province

For the most part world travel is a matter of soul-searching, when an Oroboroi needs to find some perspective in her eternity. It's a very personal matter, though... one that doesn't play out well



when you have more than one player. For this reason your geographic setting will usually be static, with the Provinces of your players being the focal points. For most Oroboroi the Province gives their longevity meaning. It stands as their most beloved possession and they are loathe to travel far from it for long.

The foundation of your chronicle should be an area where people congregate. A city, farming community, or suburb are all good building points, but a twelve-member municipality in the middle of nowhere is not a likely place for even a single Dragon to settle, let alone three to five.

Control Freak versus Pacifist

You may have an image of your desired city in your head. *History* may have an image of that city. But your players are going to be the ones living in it. While the urge to control every single detail is crushingly powerful, players will struggle creating characters to fit in a setting, rather than a setting to fit their characters. For this reason, it is best to let each player design their own Province, including some of the locals that live/work/pass through.

This doesn't mean you're helpless in terms of defining the setting. Far from it, the unclaimed spaces between each Province fall into your jurisdiction. Also, as storyteller you have final say what is acceptable and what is a stretch when players pitch Province ideas. Any constituent concepts a player gives you will be yours to flesh out and exploit. It is not a passive process.

The point to be made is this. Don't just sit back and approve everything. Players may be joking or trying to get a leg up, and such haphazard decision making could harm your theme or plot. Still, that doesn't give you permission to be a dictator. Letting the players contribute to the setting builds attachment which makes them more engrossed in their characters. That means

fewer distractions at the game table and higher-quality stories.

Locations and Locals

Destinations and the people that occupy them will color your story. Details are important, but need not be immediately evident. No, it is best to introduce things softly and then season them with description as your story probes them. With a location you need only start with the public areas. Atmosphere and vague layout will suffice until players express an interest, and then you can embellish as necessary. Contacts are even easier, you need only come up with a name and basic mannerism to start, and the character can then develop as he interacts with the world around him. In both cases this means performing the first step of character creation, that of producing a concept.

At the initial step assigning attributes and skills is not necessary, but keeping good notes is. You should record the names of anyone the players encounter (just in case the character becomes important later) and you should record the basic facts about a location (its general size, the time it takes to travel there from a specific location, the kind of people that gather there, etc.). Keeping good notes can prevent you from being put on the spot by smart-*** players, and will give you directions to take later on in the chronicle.

Any incidental character can become an important character. Assign attributes as they are necessary for rolling, and what started as a five-second improvisation can become a recurring character.

Antagonists

Antagonists are the inversion of contacts, for while a contact can be rolled up into a complex character over time, an antagonist is unraveled. They need to start complex in order to have somewhere to go. After all, there's little difference between a flat character and a dead character. Players

should feel a sense of accomplishment when they defeat an antagonist, and they won't if he is underdeveloped.

Making antagonists hurts, because a large amount of effort goes into a character that is doomed to perish. If you do it correctly, your group will talk about the villain long after his time in the sun has passed. *THAT* is what it's about, and the payoff is way better than the sting of losing a developed character.

Though it would seem that you could roll up an incidental character and then unravel them, you risk transforming your players into meta-gamers. If they catch on that each character who grinds up a back-story becomes a villain, they will interfere before you get the chance. You do *not* want this to happen, so for the most part it is better for an antagonist to start off complex. At least more-so than the run-of-the-mill background character.

Allegro, Maestro!

Dragon is a game about eternity, which means occasionally eternity has to come quickly. Some conflicts take years to culture, and sometimes time is the only tool available to bring misery. For this reason we discuss the time slip as a plot device and storytelling tool.

A time slip is just that, an application of dramatic timing in which the frame of play advances significantly. Weeks, months, or years may be made to fly past at your whim, but there are precautions to be taken.

1- Only Time Slip when it is Necessary: Often a time slip is prompted when one player has died and must wait months for her resurrection. While you may sometimes present her with a temporary character to play (Someone from another player's Province... possibly a Dragon-Born or Bonded.), the significant amount of time away from her own character can be disheartening. On the other hand, if time moves too quickly players will become

disoriented and thus disconnected from the setting. For this reason, more than one time slip in a single chronicle is highly discouraged.

2- Prepare for a Time Slip and define it accordingly: Time slips should not be made on the fly. Things happen in the years you fast-forward through; settings and characters and Provinces change by events you choose to skip. This is a fact you cannot gloss over, or the time slip will be surreal (and likewise pointless). The player's characters will be likewise influenced by these differences, so you should explain to each player how their world has changed and take record of their responses accordingly. For this reason, it is best to perform a time slip between game sessions, to generate opportunity to collect this feedback.

3- Don't exit a Time Slip in times of Bounty: When a time slip ends, a significant issue should prompt the end. There's no reason to stop sprinting through the years if nothing interesting is going to happen. Impending catastrophe is necessary to slow time down again. Occasionally a time slip is necessary to steal happiness from a particular character, and likewise the time slip should not end until *after* it's too late to interfere. A little rude, yes, but effective nonetheless.

No Running Starts

Like the Oroboroi themselves, your chronicles should start slowly and work up a pace until they are ready to be earth-shattering. Much of this book assumes at least moderate competence as a storyteller, but in this case it's back to basics. After all, **Dragon** is not only a new take on the **World of Darkness** system, it's a new setting too. The idea is to think small, build skill with the book, and then move on to bigger endeavors when experience is sufficient to fuel them.

When starting, it is best to plan a series of mutually exclusive events,



triggered by players who travel to particular locations or speak to particular people. This creates the illusion that you are prepared for any contingency, and will keep your players more reasonable in their pursuits. It will also discourage them from splitting up on more than a local scale, which is desirable to prevent lag in more complex sessions.

Once your feet are wet, you can start interconnecting planned events, making them happen in sequence instead of haphazardly. Not only does this unlock the possibility of investigation, it increases the potential complexity a story may have.

Finally, after improvisation has become second nature, you may start planning events that the players can miss. Events that have repercussions, events that you can use to torture inattentive players. This is the ideal.

Sample Stories

Provided here are some sample plots that you can use to get started. Each is capable of standing alone but can be combined to craft an even more engrossing tale. Most are vague enough to fit in any setting.

- **A Gift of Karma?:** A peculiar bit of antiquity comes up at auction and evidence suggests it is an Attra. No matter how hard any of the players try, the thing goes home with some hapless mogul. What does this guy know about this object? Is he a threat? And damn, I want it. The characters, plagued by their own superstitions, feel an inescapable drive to liberate this artifact from the buyer. But even if they get it, how will they decide who gets to keep it?

- **Here Comes the Leper:** A new Oroboroi has arrived in the city, but she's a Scholar of the Five Evils. This Dragon has set up shop in one of the most forsaken corners of town and is really starting to turn the place around. Her charity is infectious, but... what if she turns? Or

rather, when she turns, what's going to happen, and who'll feel the repercussions? The characters must decide whether to judge the Five Evils Scholar prematurely as an act of damage control, or sit back and hope to put out the fires when she explodes.

- **Pilot Light for Sale:** Several missing persons have turned up dead within the past couple months. They each suffered similar knife-like stabs and slashes, and each had their heart removed post-mortem. Though the organ theft implies a hapless mortal trying to get his hands on an Oroboroi Heart, cursory study shows that these people were not actually Oroboroi. Also, the injuries imply that a *Dragon* was the murderer. What connects these victims? Why would a Dragon (even a depraved one) mutilate their bodies after murdering them? What unfolds before the characters eyes is a story of hope exacted through bloody murder. When the Den learns the truth, which side will they take?

- **Faustian Whisper:** One of the Den's Oroboroi is approached by a Deep One, demanding payment for a favor her Antecedent had requested. It gives her twenty-four hours to say goodbye to her liver, after which it will come to collect. What do the characters do when they find out about this demand? Will they submit to the desires of this mysterious beast, or try to fight it off? Do any of the other Den members have secret requests to posit to the Deep One?

- **Castle under Fire:** There's a new Dragon in town, and he wants the Province of one of the Den's Oroboroi. His attacks are subtle at first, manipulating the constituents into harming the Province or its caretaker. If he does not get his way quickly, though, he will resort to all-out violence. How will the characters react to open warfare? Will the other Oroboroi

leave the Dragon under attack hanging in the wind, or will they come to her aid? What will they do if the newcomer wins?

- **Where each head falls, the**

Ground will Rot: A Hydra has come to the city and is wreaking havoc on everything. Even if it's a foe the Den can best, it won't stay dead until they deal with its Heart. What do the characters do when pressured to eliminate another Oroboroi? Will they resort to cannibalism if it means ridding their kingdom of a monster? This is not the only problem. The Hydra has no concern for the well-being of Dragonkind as a whole, and thus it leaves a massive trail of evidence. How will the characters clean up this mess without being exposed?

- **Shh! She's Sleeping Now:** A recent media hit has wrought the minds of hundreds of people in the city, and as a result their fears have given birth to a powerful Nightmare. While it does not attack the Dragons directly, the Nightmare reaps havoc upon their subjects and likewise harms the province. People are driven to mental breakdowns by loss of sleep and fear of mental illness. So the question becomes not whether to fight this beast but how to fight this beast. Do the characters wage political warfare against the film that birthed the monster? Do they try to inspire their constituents to fight their fear and conquer their dreams? Or do they risk death by confronting the monster directly in the Dreamtide?

- **A Thirst for the Waters of Life:** A cell of Bloody Chalice Knights have come to the city, drawn by rumors that 'giant crocodiles' are living in the sewers. These half-immortal dragon-slayers rip through the characters' Provinces, using kidnapping and torture to find the whereabouts of their most-prized blood source. How do the characters face off against a foe like this? Can they come to terms with killing these murderers, or are

they crippled by the fact that they are, effectively, no different?

Antagonists

It's not safe at the top of the world, no matter how invigorating the experience may be. There are forces whose sole purpose is to knock a man from the top, and there are others from below who vulgarly claw at power, eager to forge their own peak.

Many would kill the Oroboroi, but they can be divided into three categories: Those that hunt for Heart, Those that hunt for Blood, and Those that hunt for Flesh. Likewise, the beings that would deal harm to the Divine Rulers may be divided up in terms of their ignorance to the Dragon condition. Some attack out of fear of the unknown, while others know just enough to recognize a Dragon's death is profitable. Those that understand the Oroboroi completely strike to kill forever, to claim the spoils of the Last Hand and take their position at the top.

Mortals

Without a doubt Mortals are the greatest threat to the well-being of an Oroboroi. They possess within them the powers of blackmail and congregation, being perfectly capable of rallying thousands under the banner of fear and simply trample... well, anything. Many Dragons mistakenly think of humans as tools, inanimate until needed and perfectly willing to submit to labor's punishments. While it is true mortals can be useful, it is foolish and elitist to think they are mindless drones. Sometimes violence is the best means of teaching this lesson.

Would-Be Slayer

Quote: "Uzi? Check. Limbic mines? Check. Jade locket? Can't forget that."

Background: Mortals aware of the Oroboroi condition are often pulled into the clammy grasp of Greed by the heartstrings.



Or maybe it's a matter of fear evolving to self-righteous hatred? Or maybe it's about bagging the strongest, most cunning big game on the planet. Whatever the reason, they are driven to kill the Oroboroi.

Description: When in public, would-be slayers are perfectly average. Maybe they're a touch muscular, and perhaps they have some burn wounds or joint braces. These injuries come from training and not actual combat with a Dragon, though, as such battle would likely result in fatal injuries. Once a slayer is ready for battle, though, he'll strap on as much weaponry as he can carry and don whatever gear he can get his hands on (an effort to protect against the fire and the claws is almost standards, and common weapons include knives, guns, and spears. ... Well, pitchforks anyway, as they're easier to acquire in suburbia). The smart ones pack jadeite as well, so that its touch rips through the Dragon's nigh-impregnable skin.

Storytelling Hints: A simple would-be slayer is arrogant enough to believe he can kill a Dragon, and so he attacks directly and works alone. The smart ones (who are by far the most dangerous, and whose statistics are provided here) know that direct combat is simply suicide, and so they bring friends to act as decoys. Intelligent would-be slayers lure the Oroboroi onto their own turf, where traps await to disorient the beast. Jade-blessed assaults follow.

Attributes: Intelligence 3, Wits 2, Resolve 2, Strength 3, Dexterity 2, Stamina 3, Presence 1, Manipulation 2, Composure 3

Skills: Investigation 2, Occult 2, Athletics 1, Brawl 2, Drive 1, Firearms 2, Larceny 1, Stealth 1, Survival 1, Weaponry 2, Intimidation 1, Persuasion 2, Streetwise 2, Subterfuge 2

Merits: Danger Sense, Kung Fu 3, Iron Stamina 2

Willpower: 5

Morality: 5

Virtue: Prudence

Vice: Envy

Health: 8

Initiative: 5

Defense: 2

Speed: 10

Weapons:

Type	Damage	Range	Clip	Pool
Heavy Pistol	3 (L)	30/60/120	7+1	4
Knife	1(L)	Close	-	5
Brass Knuckles	1(B)	Close	-	5

Armor:

Type	Rating	Defense Penalty
Thick Clothes	1/0	0

Knight of the Bloody Chalice

Quote: [Hungry eyes hovering over a sinister smile]

Background: Membership in the Knights is something of a contagious condition. There are two ways to join. One is to interrupt an abduction in progress, and the other is to be abducted. Knights collect and imprison sacrifices for months, waiting for the optimum time of exsanguination. When it comes time for the ritual, these captives are lined up and forced to watch. Those that declare loyalty (out of fear, usually) are allowed to live, themselves dipped into the vat of blood.

Description: Knights of the Bloody Chalice are nauseatingly modern. They recognize that settling on a style will lock them in a particular time period, hindering them greatly when it comes time to hunt again. Despite their fashion sense, though, they are socially small and they do not leave a big impression. Such anonymity is harrowing, but useful for their cause. Whenever a knight draws near to his quarry, he begins to sweat blood.

Storytelling Hints: A knight should be introduced from the shadows of the Province. Maybe whispers of a peculiar stranger make their way to the Oroboroi. Even if the Oroboroi becomes aware of the blood-bather, he will not reveal himself until he's ready to capture. Make your players paranoid, and when they go looking spring the knight's trap.

Attributes: Intelligence 3, Wits 3, Resolve 4, Strength 4, Dexterity 3, Stamina 4, Presence 2, Manipulation 4, Composure 3
Skills: Investigation 4, Occult 4, Athletics 2, Larceny 3, Stealth 2, Survival 2, Weaponry 4, Firearms 1, Intimidation 2, Subterfuge 2
Merits: Eidetic Memory, Holistic Awareness, Unseen Sense (Bleed near Supernaturalism), Strong Lungs, Iron Stamina 3, Striking Looks 2, Quick Healer, Barfly, Resources 1, Status 3 (Knights of the Bloody Chalice),

Willpower: 7

Morality: 2

Virtue: Fortitude

Vice: Gluttony

Health: 9

Initiative: 6

Defense: 3

Speed: 12

Weapons:

Type	Damage	Range	Clip	Pool
Shotgun	4(L) [9-Again]	20/40/ 80	5+1	4
Jadeite Kris	1(A)	Close	-	8
Jadeite Sword	3(A)	Close	-	8

Armor:

Type	Rating	Defense Penalty
Flak Jacket	2/3 [Bulletproof]	-1

Blood-Bathing Ritual

Knights of the Bloody Chalice enjoy a taste of morality at the expense of others. By killing a victim by bloodletting and then coating their skin, they are restored to a state of youth and imbued with both massive physical strength and a fantastic visage (at least compared to before). This comes with a cost, as all things do (and that cost is more than the sin of murder). The knight's life-force is consumed by the blood, and he wears it as a coat around himself. It is impervious until the blood wears off (a year for most beings, five for Dragon's blood), at which point it rips and frays. The knight will begin to disfigure, age quickly, and physically weaken when the blood wears off. He has one month to bathe again before he rots to dust.

Dragons

There are plenty of reasons for two Oroboroi to wage war. In a way, they are too far above everything else to throw punches. Nothing is as climactic as a clash of two Dragons. A big thing to face in any Dragon conflict is the narcissism. Each Oroboroi thinks she is the greatest thing since sliced bread, and that confidence is her downfall when faced with another... greatest thing.

Lust Trickster

Quote: "Come little broken bird. Your wounds need easing, and my body needs pleasing."

Background: Broken by the actions she took to become a member of the Oroboroi, this Dragon rejects her state of being and thusly aligns herself with the Scholars of the Five Evils. Haunted by the passion that drove her to kill, she runs scared from it until it catches her and then



she dives in buck naked, engulfed by the rush she'd forgotten.

Description: Like all Oroboroi the appearance of a Lust Trickster is dependent on the Aspects she chooses to manifest. Usually she is indistinguishable from an ordinary mortal, though she might carry herself with a higher level of entitlement than most. Something's off about her, though. Maybe her veins show a little too clearly. Maybe her burger seems to waste away after she takes a bite. Something's definitely... off. When in True Form, a Lust Trickster looks sickly and shifty. Somebody with brain damage might mistake her for some Caribbean reptile, but most recognize her for what she is, a gigantic prehistoric monster.

Storytelling Hints: It's best to introduce any Scholar of the Five Evils in Good Dragon mode and allow them to build trust. In groups that have no Sainly Devil players this Oroboroi will seem refreshingly benevolent in a world full of back-stabbers. This is not the case, though; as soon as they get comfortable their demeanor turns. Using a Sainly Devil Dragon forces your players with the force of their own power. If that isn't enough, they have to decide how to retaliate against someone they'd considered a friend.

Attributes: Intelligence 2, Wits 2, Resolve 2, Strength 2, Dexterity 2, Stamina 3, Presence 3, Manipulation 3, Composure 2

Skills: Investigation 2, Occult 2, Athletics 1, Brawl 2, Drive 1, Firearms 2, Larceny 1, Stealth 1, Survival 1, Weaponry 2, Intimidation 1, Persuasion 2, Streetwise 2, Subterfuge 2

Merits: Hoard 2, Lair 2 (small, minimally secure apartment), Scholar of the Five Evils, Resources 2

Furnace: 1

Breath: 8

Willpower: 4

Ethics: 6

Virtue: Charity

Vice: Gluttony

Health: 8

Initiative: 4

Defense: 2

Speed: 9 (Fly 5 x Wings)

Philosophies: Lust 2

Aspects: Inferno 2, Wings 1, Natural Weaponry 1 (Teeth and Jaw), Whipping Tail 1, Tempter 2, Acidic Saliva 1, Envoy's Passage 2

Provincial Boons: -

Attacks:

Type	Damage	Range	Pool
Fireball	Inferno(A)	10 + 2 x Inferno/ 20 + 4 x Inferno/ 30 + 6 x Inferno	5
Spit	Acidic Saliva (Structure)	1/2/4	4
Bite	Natural Weaponry (L)	Close	7

Weapons:

Type	Damage	Range	Clip	Pool
Baseball Bat	2(B)	Close	-	4

Armor:

Type	Rating	Defense Penalty
Clothes	0/0	0

Heart-Eater

Quote: "Okay. I'm stopping now. This is *definitely* the last time. Promise"

Background: A Heart-Eater, or one of the hungry as they are called by their people, is an Oroboroi who fuels his Furnace with the Hearts of other Dragons. He starts innocently enough, consuming out of need to quickly dispatch a dangerous foe (usually a Hydra). The resulting surge of power is

highly addicting, though, and soon he craves more.

Description: A Heart-Eater is nonchalant, because attention will draw other Dragons and when they learn of his sins he's toast. He's finicky and easily excited, though, stirred on by his guilty conscience. Rarely a Heart-Eater will play friendly to gain access to another Dragon's Heart, but he cannot maintain the charade for long.

Storytelling Hints: A Heart-Eater is most effective as a short-term threat. Too flighty to maintain a Province, a Heart-Eater drifts from place to place seeking his next fix. Use a Heart-Eater if you need to get rid of an Oroboroi in the city (usually an NPC). As an added bonus, it should scare the characters into being more paranoid with their own Hearts, as well as tempt them with what could come from sin.

Attributes: Intelligence 3, Wits 4, Resolve 1, Strength 3, Dexterity 4, Stamina 4, Presence 1, Manipulation 4, Composure 1

Skills: Academics 2, Computers 3, Investigation 3, Medicine 4, Occult 5, Politics 2, Larceny 4, Stealth 3, Survival 3, Expression 1, Persuasion 3, Streetwise 4, Subterfuge 4

Merits: Graft 3, Hoard 4, Direction Sense, Fresh Start, Quick Draw, Quick Healer, Resources 4

Furnace: 4

Breath: 13

Willpower: 2

Ethics: 3

Virtue: Charity

Vice: Gluttony

Health: 9

Initiative: 5

Defense: 4

Speed: 12, Climb 9 + Wall Climber, Burrow 7 + Burrowing Body

Philosophies: Ash 2, Blood 5

Aspects: Scales 2, Natural Weaponry 3 (Horns, Tail Spikes and Scythe, Razor

Wings), Fire Skin 2, Whipping Tail 2, Colossal Beast 2, Wall Climber 2, Burrowing Body 2, Trail of Scales 1

Provincial Boons: - [The Heart-Eater does not have a Province]

Attacks:

Type	Damage	Range	Pool
Horns	Yards Charged [Max +4] (L)	Close	2
Tail Spikes	1 (L)	Close	3
Razor Wings	-2 (L)	Close	3

Armor:

Type	Rating	Defense Penalty
Thin Kevlar	1/2	0
Scales	2/2	0

Hydra

Quote: [Incomprehensible Hiss]

Background: An Oroboroi with no respect for the state of Dragonhood slips down the slopes of the Code and, deranged and fractured, becomes a raving monster. Torture, mass murder, and treachery lead to this end, and none would say a Hydra has not earned his suffering.

Description: Hydra are always in True Form, with a slew of conflicting heads barking and biting at each other. Most of the time they sleep somewhere in the wilderness, sustained on the spoils of their rampages. They are incapable of coherent thought, though some of the heads will ramble on depending on the derangements a Hydra has accrued on its journey to the bottom. Maddeningly senseless and immovable, a Hydra is little more than a bloody typhoon of death.

Storytelling Hints: Fighting a Hydra head-on is suicide. Still, there's little other choice when it rips through the city causing



havoc and raising questions. A Hydra broadcasts the Oroboroi condition, and even if the beast can be slain a great deal of clean-up is necessary to stop a witch-hunt.

Awareness is the first coffin-nail for Dragonkind, and once it's in it's a bitch to pull out. The best way to fight a Hydra is to find its Heart and, well... you figure it out.

Attributes: Intelligence 1, Wits 3, Resolve 2, Strength 6, Dexterity 4, Stamina 4, Presence 5, Manipulation 2, Composure 1
[True Form: Intelligence 2, Wits 4, Resolve 3, Strength 7, Dexterity 5, Stamina 5, Presence 6, Manipulation 3, Composure 2]

Skills: Athletics 3, Brawl 4, Firearms 2, Survival 2, Weaponry 5, Intimidation 3

Merits: Hoard 5, Danger Sense, Fast Reflexes 2, Fleet of Foot 3, Iron Stamina 3, Quick Healer, Resources 5

Furnace: 6

Breath: 10

Willpower: 5 [Includes +2 from True Form]

Code: 0

Virtue: -

Vice: Greed, Gluttony

Health: 15 [Includes +2 from True Form and +4 from Colossal Beast]

Initiative: 11 [Includes +2 from True Form, +2 from Fast Reflexes, and +2 from Flight of the King]

Defense: 5 [Includes +1 for True Form and +1 for Flight of the King]

Speed: 23 [Includes +2 from True Form, +3 from Fleet of Foot, and +3 from Many-Limbed], Fly 24 [Includes True Form and Wings bonuses]

Philosophies: -

Aspects: Inferno 2, Scales 4, Wings 2, Natural Weaponry 6 (Palm Pike, Wrist Blade, Teeth and Jaw, Tail Spikes and Scythe, Claws, Horns), Colossal Beast 4, Many-Limbed 3, Draconic Strength 3, Impassioned Effort 3, Skill of the Gods 1 (Brawl), Vile Blood 1, Flight of the King 3, Extra Heads 4

Provincial Boons: - [The Hydra is incapable of owning a Province]

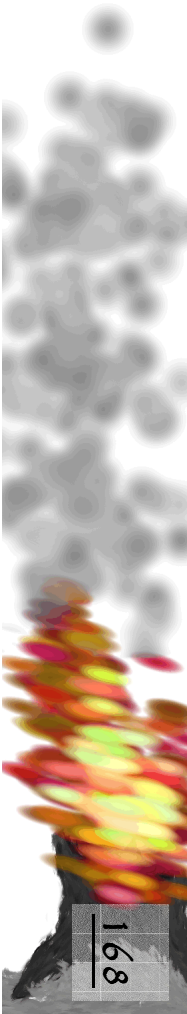
Attacks:

Type	Damage	Range	Pool
Fireball	2 (A) [Long Burst]	14/28/56	10
Wrist Blade	3 (L) [Deadly 6]	Close	12
Bite	6 (L) [Target-7] [Short Burst]	Close	12
Spike Cannon	2 (L)	25/50 /100	7
Horns	Yards Charged [Max +5] (L) [Target-7]	Close	11
Tail Lash	1 (L) [Sweep 6] [Target-7]	Close	9
Claw	2 (L) [Pierce 6] [Target-7]		11

Armor:

Type	Rating	Defense Penalty
Scales	4/4	0

[IMAGE!]



Extra Heads

This Hydra has five heads, which means it has four dots in the as of yet undefined “Extra Heads” Aspect. This Aspect grants the same benefits (and hindrances) that an Antecedent Passenger’s extra head does, though in greater degree. Each extra head gives a +1 bonus to Inferno and Bite attacks. Bite attacks gain the Short Burst property [Another +1 and some spread out wounds, but little more] and Inferno attacks gain the Long Burst property [+3 with the ability to simultaneously attack a wide range of enemies].

Likewise, the extra heads get to act on their own, each granting an additional instant action at the Hydra’s Initiative Mod in the turn order. They don’t usually cooperate, though, so these extra actions are often spent going back and forth or nipping at each other.

Deep Ones

To the Oroboroi Deep Ones pose the greatest mystery. What are they? Where do they come from? Why do they make bargains in exchange for organs? Some believe the Deep Ones came from the furthest depths of the Dreamtide, originating as Nightmares but piercing the Miasma and becoming flesh and blood. That would explain their similarities to the denizens of the astral stretches. But still, they have a lot in common with Dragons as well. Could that state be some sort of infectious corruption? What happens when a Dragon makes too many bargains?

Corrupting Bargainer

Quote: [In a low, vibrating mumble] “Do you accept the terms?”

Background: There’s little to be had here. The Bargainer is so utterly foreign no background exists to be found. It’s as if it was erased... or it never existed at all.

Description: The Corrupting Bargainer, like all Deep Ones, is completely aquatic. It’s as if various oceanic traits were blended and then wrapped around the shape of a man. Some have wings, some have claws, and some have fins. In fact, pretty much the only thing they have in common is their deadpan demeanor. Often overlooked is the stench, though—a Deep One smells of wet rot and muck. A bucket of leaves left in the rain for a month simulates the odor pretty effectively.

Storytelling Hints: When a character becomes unappreciative of what she has, it’s time for a visit from the Corrupting Bargainer. The Deep One will make an enticing offer (from reviving a dead loved one to killing an unstoppable foe, or even a gift of personal power). This offer does not come without a price, though, which must be paid in both emotion and body parts. To make players learn to appreciate what they have, or to make them suffer for their greed, use a Corrupting Bargainer.

Attributes: Power 2, Finesse 6, Resistance 3

Skills: Academics 1, Brawl 2, Persuasion 4

Merits: Fresh Start

Cold: 2

Dread: 10

Willpower: 5

Code: 3

Virtue: Justice

Vice: Wrath

Health: 8

Initiative: 9

Defense: 6

Speed: 18

Aspects: Vile Blood 5, Regal Stature 3, Beguiling Mandibles 4



Attacks:

Type	Damage	Range	Pool
Brawl	0 (B)	Close	8

Armor:

Type	Rating	Defense Penalty
Tough Hide	1/1 [Bulletproof]	0

Aspects and the Dreamtide Denizens

Both Deep Ones and Dreamtide Nightmares use the three-attribute system instead of the nine-attribute system (The Power/Finesse/Resistance system is detailed in the **World of Darkness** Rulebook, page 208). Deep Ones on occasion have access to Aspects. When either of these entities needs to utilize an ability that requires Essence or Breath, they spend Dread instead. Aspects that increase one particular attribute instead increase the category (a Deep One using Horde of Knowledge increases Power by the dots owned, instead of Intelligence by the points manifest). One other thing ... though Deep Ones can own Aspects, they are incapable of turning them on and off. More detail on this subject will be provided in the first Appendix.

Experience

Experience works practically identically to the system found in the **World of Darkness** Rulebook, pages 216 and 217. The Oroboroi, just like the mortals they used to be, learn from mistakes and experiences and are bettered for it.

Experience is used to increase attributes, skills, merits, and supernatural abilities. As storyteller you will award experience to your players, who spend it to improve their characters in all sorts of ways. Though this a character becomes more

talented in her endeavors and is thus transformed from rookie to veteran.

Awarding Experience

Experience is given out by the Storyteller at the end of each session. Giving low experience will frustrate your players, but giving copious amounts will marginalize achievements and cause a meteoric rise to power. As a general rule, you should give no fewer than two experience per character per session, but no more than seven. If you choose to give bonus experience to a “most valuable player” each night, make sure it evens out in the end. After all, it’s never a good thing to play favorites with friends.

Spending Experience Points

Each player should keep record the amount of experience they’ve spent, the amount they haven’t spent, and the total amount tendered. Experience can be spent at the end of each story (not each chapter) or immediately after a time-slip, but such expenditures should make logical sense in the context of the character’s actions. A police officer that was grilling suspects all story should not spend experience on Dexterity, though Presence or Manipulation would be okay.

Philosophies follow this rule, but Aspects do not. As an Oroboroi defines what she believes to be the Dragon condition, her imagination shapes her divinities to fit. In order to purchase a new Aspect, a Dragon need only imagine it and practice. Existing Aspects are similarly improved. Getting the idea in the Dragon’s head, though... *that’s* where the justification comes in. Each method provides it own unique way of discovering new traits, and researching a new Aspect is good filler for a time-slip.

The experience cost of almost everything is a number of points times the new total, but you knew that already. What you may not have known is that *all* dots

have to be purchased in sequence, even those they may not provide a benefit. If you wanted to acquire the “Danger Sense” mental merit, you’d have to pay for the first dot (2 experience) before you could purchase the second dot (4 experience, for a total of 6). No benefit is accrued for owning Danger Sense 1, though.

As for Merits, they’re mostly unchanged for this template. Obviously a Merit cannot be purchased if the prerequisites are not met, and some merits are limited to character creation. One in particular, the “Graft” Merit, warrants further explanation. Though the Merit itself states that Grafts must be acquired through play, that doesn’t mean they’re free. Each Graft is different and it takes time to attune. To use a Graft acquired in play, a character must purchase the Merit dots in sequence until they match the rating of said Graft. Worse yet, they must do so for each Graft individually. For example, if an Oroboroi acquired both a rank 2 Graft and a rank 3 Graft, he would have to buy dots 1 and 2 of the Graft Merit to use the prior and dots 1, 2, and 3 to use the latter

Experience Costs	
<i>Trait</i>	<i>Cost</i>
Attribute	New dots x 5
Skill	New dots x 3
Skill Specialty	3
Common Aspect	New dots x 5
Method Aspect	New dots x 6
Non-Method Aspect	New dots x 7
Primary Philosophy	New dots x 6
Ancillary Philosophy	New dots x 8
Merit	New dots x 2
Furnace	New dots x 8
Ethics	New dots x 3
Willpower	8

Two free dots of Aspects come with every dot of Furnace purchased. Just like character creation, the fifth dot of any Aspect costs both of these free dots. Keep that in mind when purchasing dots of Furnace.

[IMAGE!]



Appendix One: The Dreamtide

(Full-Page art needed)

Cameron held her hand softly, so as not to pierce her with her claws. This girl's dream would be the battleground on which Black Ben would fall.

Ten feet tall, his fingers were double-barrel shotguns and his smile stretched over his eyes; the teeth polished bits of shrapnel. His feet were mangled bloody messes, peppered with shards of broken glass. As he laughed, a storm thundered behind him.

Some derelict psychopath had birthed this fear in the children, and their active imaginations immortalized him as a monster. But Cameron would end the nightmares, and little Julia was the key.

"A dreamer is one who can only find his way by moonlight, and his punishment is that he sees the dawn before the rest of the world."

—Oscar Wilde

The Dreamtide

The sensory input of a day is processed during rapid-eye movement sleep, organized into patterns based on relatable stimulus. The seemingly random result is both confusing and whimsical; a world tied together by emotions and connections instead of logic and matter. What if this world was real... an entire landscape crafted by the subconscious of living beings? It is.

In the World of Darkness there is more fear than faith, more hatred than love, and more damnation than retribution. The terrified and deranged minds of both man and beast craft a dark and dangerous sleeping world. Those that know the darker truths of the world around them contribute still more to this group nightmare. The result is a rumor sea; fact and myth twisted gnarled in darkness.

Supposedly the first, original dragons descended from the depths of the Dreamtide and pierced the static of the subconscious, becoming real. Whether or not they started there or were born of superstition is really no more than a matter of semantics. The Oroboroi, being imperfect facsimiles of the first dragons, may also travel to and from the Dreamtide, though the journey is not as significant as that of their predecessors. For the modern Dragon this astral expanse is a place where one can explore their divinities without fear of exposure. Still, the place is not safe. The sickest and most dangerous beings an imagination can muster live in the Dreamtide, and Dragons do not enjoy the protection a dreamer does.

A comfort of the Dreamtide's shallows (or perhaps a hazard) that is not

extended to its Pandemonium depths is that of the Dreamers. Each region of the astral reaches plays out the events of one being's sleep. Depending on the Dreamer in question, and whether or not they are aware that they are dreaming, this landscape can change violently at the drop of a pin. Lucid dreamers are the most powerful entity in the Dreamtide, though, and if a Dragon can ally herself with one her visit will be far more pleasant.

The Miasma

The Dreamtide stands on a different frequency of existence that most can only tune into while they sleep. Around it is a mental static that keeps others from tuning in. Perhaps each being's frequency is incompatible with another's, or maybe it's a form of defense against the things beyond, but the Miasma keeps the Dreamtide at bay.

Rapid Eye Movement sleep organizes thoughts in a pattern, which makes them compatible with the waking world. This array cuts through the static, generating a blurry glimpse into the sleeping world for those with sense to see it. And the Oroboroi are the ones with that capacity. They can tune the static to clear, and once it's so they are free to step through.

From the material side entering the Dreamtide is phenomenally easy. An Oroboroi need only creep up on a sleeper and attune herself with the thinned Miasma's frequency, and she may leap body and all into the dream. Said sleeper needn't even be human, as animals too create doorways into the astral expanses.

Getting out, however, is a far different story. Some anchored object stands out where the Dragon arrives, and serves as the silver tether that holds the



Miasma open. She must familiarize herself with this object if she hopes to leave the Dreamtide, as finding another weakness in the Miasma is both time-consuming and dangerous. Worse, if the dreamer awakens while she's still inside said anchor is destroyed, leaving no choice but to seek out another (possibly by entering another dreamer's landscape, therein lies the danger).

Reclining Whispers

The Dreamtide is a difficult place to describe, mostly because it changes not only night by night but minute by minute. Geography has a parallel in this place, but the puzzle pieces fall together in different ways. In the real world spatial connections hold locations together. An upstairs hallway has three doors, one of which leads to a daughter's bedroom. Using this door will lead into the room, and using it again will return to the hallway (as is logical). In the Dreamtide, this is not the case. Perhaps when the door opens it leads to a burn ward. If you turn around, the door no longer returns to the hallway but instead opens out into a cemetery. In this way fears and memories are preserved, given new significance as a form of maintenance.

The coloration of these places tells more than their material world counterparts. Everything is dulled... almost numb in its drab cloak. Only things of great significance enjoy the benefit of vivid color, and this stands a sort of syntax highlighting of what the dreamer considers important.

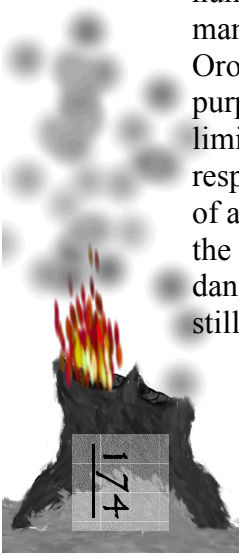
Equally peculiar are what passes for human beings. The most simplistic of these mankind imitators is the Doll (as the Oroboroi calls it). A Doll serves minimal purpose in the course of the dream, and is limited to a small set of stimulus-prompted responses. This gives them a disturbing feel of artificiality, and depending on the feel of the dream it can render them quite dangerous. More complex than the Doll but still limited in its interactive capabilities is

the Carrion. A Carrion contains within it all the capabilities of the person it is portraying, but it is perpetually locked in a single emotion. Carrion stand as mixers and antagonists in a standard nightmare, supporting the Dreamer's opinions with sweeping preconceptions. Finally, there are Dreamtide copies of a person that are indistinguishable from the real thing, though they may be idealized. Called Anima, these entities are always pivotal to the dream, and likely the dreamer as well.

Not all dreams are created equal. Some are shockingly vivid while others are almost cartoons. Also important to note is that some dreams are not human. An animal's dream, while outwardly simplistic, can be intensely complicated especially considering the barrier of language. The dreams of supernatural beings, especially those of Vampires, are viciously turbulent and should be described as grimly as possible. Remember to let your imagination run wild when you describe journeys through the Dreamtide, as logic does not apply here.

Pandemonium

Though individual shallows of the sleeping world are vastly different, Pandemonium is where all the elements are amalgamated. A twisted maze of buildings, trees, storms, and faces, there truly is no place more frightening than this in the life of an Oroboroi. Only Nightmares live here, and only the ones strong enough to make the journey. In order to cross the barrier between individual dreams and the world subconscious, an idea must have multiple points of origin. By merging copies of itself a Nightmare becomes memorable enough to become myth, and is thus empowered like a god. Dragons practically never have a good reason to travel to Pandemonium, but may go there anyways out of curiosity or disorientation. Those that do are most likely



killed by the denizens of this place... or worse.

Pandemonium is not all hopeless destruction, though. If an Oroboroi wishes to exit the dream of one sleeper and enter that of another, she must first step out into Pandemonium. It's like the great outdoors between two houses in a neighborhood. Some clever Dragons use this as a means of safely evading pursuers, entering the Dreamtide through one sleeper, traveling past Pandemonium into another dream, and then exiting the Dreamtide by means of another sleeper. It's certainly a gamble, though, as two adjacent dreams may have no material correlation at all.

The End of a Dream

When a dreamer awakens, the dream ends for him. But what does that mean for someone walking around inside his head? What happens to a Dragon who is still inside when a dream ends?

Any dream-walkers receive one subtle warning that the dreamer has begun to stir; the walls of the Dreamtide vibrate briefly as if snoring. What follows is a cold wind that sweeps through the dreamscape paralyzing (almost) everything it touches. Doors can be heard locking, Dolls and Carrion freeze in place, Anima fall asleep, and the world fades to black and white.

The most terrible part? The opening in the Miasma closes, trapping the Dragon within the Dreamtide until she can find another weakness to exploit. She may wait in the silenced dreamscape until the next night when she gets another opportunity to escape, but such action is not always recommended. Nightmares that were not resolved before the awakening still linger, and are not rendered inactive like the actors of a dreamer's imagination. No... if these monsters are still alive they're likely wandering the dark hallways searching for ways to become *real*.

Making the Best of It

The thought has probably occurred to you by now... "Why bother with such a dangerous place?" That's easy to answer. Because it's profitable. Not only does the Dreamtide provide an Oroboroi with a place to evade nighttime pursuers for a few hours, it also allows them to harvest resources for the material world. Though a gap in the Miasma is only big enough for one person (or Dragon, rather), they can still carry most anything back with them. Also, the Dreamtide is the only battleground on which Dragons may clash with the horrors of their constituents. Part of owning a Province is maintaining the well-being of its inhabitants, and part of that is putting an end to their fears. Plus, anything edible from the Dreamtide is worth triple calories.

A Dreamer twists his environment with his imagination, and can even make something out of nothing. That sort of power is breath-taking, but pointless in a world where everyone else can do the same. As a Dragon is only a visitor in any given dream, she cannot herself take advantage of these bizarre physics. Still, she can exploit the talents of others. Anything not nailed down to the dreamscape can be absconded back through the miasma to the real world. Though any fantastic powers an item may possess fade away as it passes through the Miasma, the item still maintains all of its mundane properties (and machines still function as intended, provided the design is somewhat sound). In this way the Dreamtide is both a source of cheap raw material and a font for invention... provided the Dragon can convince or trick a dreamer into helping her.

Likewise, when peace of mind is shattered by Nightmares a Dragon has two options. She can either struggle in the waking world to rally the spirits of her constituents and dispel their fears... or she can invite herself into their dreams and



squash them herself. The second option is more preferable, mainly because it's much faster. And easier, in a way. Instead of a test of endurance and resolve, the Dragon simply battles the symbolic manifestation and *POOF*, no more problem. Constituents are likely to be suspicious of such a change in their concerns, though, as it is with all things in the World of Darkness.

Dreamers

Mortals may not be able to physically travel to the Dreamtime, but that doesn't keep them out. They are the world-builders, god in chains. Even if the dreamer is not lucid, his powers of influence warp the dreamscape around him each and every second. If the dreamer's lucid... well, there's nothing he can't do.

Hysterical Dreamers

Hysterical Dreamers do not know they are asleep. They make up the majority of the sleeping population. Hysterical Dreamers are a Nightmare's primary source of Dread, and they're usually the ones a Dragon dream-dives to rescue.

Hysterical Dreamers have no conscious powers, though their mood colors the scenery. Hysterical Dreamers suffer a -2 to resist all Nightmare-instigated Numina, and they wake up if their willpower is depleted (full of lethal). Other than that, they're pretty much ordinary.

There is one thing a Hysterical Dreamer can do. When he lays his faith upon something... anything in his dreamscape, it is improved by the lower of his Resolve or Composure until such time as he can no longer see it or it leaves his dreamscape.

Lucid Dreamers

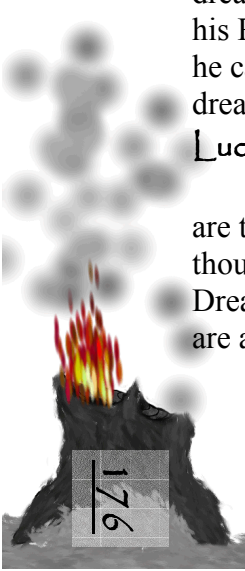
Lucid Dreamers (rare as they may be) are those that are aware that they are asleep, though they may not know the dangers the Dreamtime actually poses. Lucid Dreamers are a threat to both the Nightmares and the

dream-walking Dragons, so it's usually best to put them back in the dark. Lucid Dreamers make great swords if one is trying to do away with the other, though.

As soon as a Dreamer becomes Lucid, their attributes are converted to Power, Finesse, and Resistance (by taking the highest of each from Mental, Physical, and Social), and those three attributes jump by 3. A Lucid Dreamer has infinite speed within the boundaries of his dreamscape, and thus may teleport anywhere at any second. He can also fly, shoot lightning from his fingertips, materialize anything from nothing, or pretty much do whatever he wants. A Lucid Dreamer that is injured (if he can be injured, which is a big if) does not awaken when his Willpower is depleted (filled with lethal). No, he risks madness if he suffers too much harm. Still, he can always end the dream if he gets in trouble.

Lucid Dreamers work pretty much like ghosts do in the **World of Darkness** Rulebook, as explained in that work starting on page 208. They're more flexible, though, in that they can do pretty much anything they want. Attacks a Lucid Dreamer throws can have any range, hit any number of targets perfectly, and use any combination of two of their attributes. Their only real weakness is perception; a Lucid Dreamer may be powerful but he is not omniscient. The point is simple: don't try to fight a Lucid Dreamer. Storytelling in the dreamscape of a Lucid Dreamer should be about cat and mouse, not doing battle with god. NOTE: Lucid Dreamers that kill Dragons in their dreamscape do not get the pleasure of dealing the Final Hand. Their body houses a piece of the Dragon until such time as it can be expunged (by any means, but usually violent vomiting), and then Resurrection begins.

Obviously, all powers bestowed upon Lucid Dreamers vanish when said Dreamer awakens. It is important to note



that the Dreamer's "Health" advantage is not altered by her change in attributes (though for a Ghost its Corpus rating would be). Power bestowed by self-awareness in a dream-state does not translate back to the Daylight world, and such alterations would not be necessary anyway (as Willpower is used for Health for a Dreamer).

Dreamer Willpower

A Dreamer does not physically travel to the Dreamtide, so his body is not at risk. Instead, his mind suffers the damage he receives in this place. The Dreamer's Willpower meter effectively becomes his Health meter (working in the same fashion as explained in the **World of Darkness** Rulebook, starting on page 171) with a few exceptions.

- **With Regard to Bashing Wounds:**

There is no effect for having a Willpower meter filled with bashing wounds, unlike the Health meter which places one at risk of unconsciousness. Bashing wounds heal at a faster rate as well, one per minute instead of one every fifteen minutes. This healing rate is static, and thus not controlled by merits that accelerate healing or by supernatural powers which do the same. Dreamers may also suffer a few bashing wounds when they're frightened (usually one point of bashing for every point of Dread a Nightmare reaps). All bashing wounds on the Willpower meter are removed each time Vice is fulfilled or a Virtue is upheld. This does not interfere with the removal of lethal or aggravated wounds either, so indulging a Vice removes from the Willpower meter all bashing wounds and one lethal wound, while indulging in a Virtue clears the meter of all bashing and lethal wounds (plus one aggravated one).

- **With Regard to Lethal Wounds:**

When the Willpower meter has filled with lethal wounds, a hysteric Dreamer abruptly awakens in a panicked sweat.

Lucid Dreamers may remain in their dreamscape, but they must roll Resistance each turn to fight awakening (this roll is reflexive and suffers no penalty, just as the roll to stay conscious works in the **World of Darkness** Rulebook, as detailed on page 173). There's no risk of bleeding out, though.

Lethal wounds to the Willpower meter do not heal by themselves. No, they are removed one at a time if Vice is indulged, or all at once if Virtue is upheld. Dreamers suffer a lethal wound to their Willpower meter whenever they spend Willpower, just like in the Daylight world.

Insomnia?

As written it may appear that those depleted of Willpower are incapable of sleeping. That is not the case. They are *actually* rendered unable to dream... a state whose implications are not immediately apparent. Willpower-drained individuals may still fall asleep, but such sleep is not comfortable or refreshing. They awaken drowsy and sore, and if such a state of mental exhaustion continues they may struggle with short-term memory loss or even depression. There are no mechanics for this downbeat, but it gives additional directions for character development to follow.

- **With Regard to Aggravated Wounds:** When the Willpower meter has filled with aggravated wounds, the Dreamer is immediately forced to awaken and suffers a derangement until such time as his meter is completely emptied. Aggravated wounds on the Willpower meter can only be removed one at a time, by upholding the Dreamer's Virtue. Unfortunately Vices have no effect on so severe a mental injury. There are no situations where Dreamers



suffer aggravated wounds to their Willpower meter automatically. Rollover still applies, though.

Comatose Dreamers

Comatose Dreamers, both Hysteric and Lucid, are incapable of awakening on their own. Well... not incapable, but it's quite unlikely. Usually that makes them a safe bet when a Dragon goes dream-walking, as there is virtually no risk of getting trapped. Coma victims can be brought around, though, just as any other Dreamer is awakened. If a Dragon (or more likely, a Nightmare) so desired, they could just be beaten back into consciousness. That doesn't mean their bodies are still capable of handling conscious mental activity, but they awaken nevertheless.

Shared Dreaming

A rarely practiced but still possible mortal excursion into the Dreamtide is that of the shared dreaming. A group of determined individuals gather in a circle (much like a séance) and simultaneously drift into unconsciousness—under the direction of a lead dreamer that is. The Lead Dreamer generates the dreamscape, though other Dreamers may contribute to its scenery or trappings as they please.

Just like a private dreamscape, inflicting enough harm to a group Dreamer will force him to consciousness. The dream will not end, however, until the Lead Dreamer awakens. Also, group dreamers are much more likely to be lucid and travel in a pack. Usually Dragons will stay away from such dreams unless they are assured the group of dreamers is acting in their interest. Sometimes Dragons encourage such shared dreaming to overcome a subconscious trauma, secretly intending to use them as weapons against a Dreamtide

Nightmare. Dragons may also act as Lead Dreamers, but only if they enter the Dreamtide through sleep (rather than through the Miasma).

Another (albeit much more rare) form of shared dreaming is that of touching dreams. Occasionally two very similar dreamscapes actually merge, first overlapping slightly and then amalgamating completely. In such situations one Dreamer may pass over into the other's dreamscape, whereupon his control of his environment (hysteric or lucid) is lost. After all, it isn't his dream anymore.

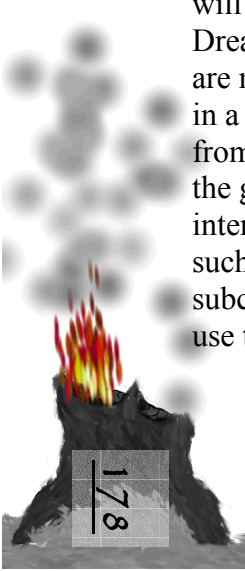
Dreamers and Pandemonium

It is important to note that no matter how powerful a Dreamer may become, they never possess the capacity to pierce the walls of their dreamscape. They are incapable of entering Pandemonium.

Nightmares

Anima, Carrion, or even Dolls that taste the fear of others slowly grow in power, mutating into a twisted reflection of their original purpose and growing hungry for more. These are Material Nightmares, those originating from the mortal mind (bestial or otherwise). Material Nightmares are excellent at terrorizing the Dreamers that spawned them, but that's where they stop. It is terror, not death, that fuels them. Without the Dreamer to remember them and provide them a food source, they cease to exist.

Such is not the case for nightmares born of the world's slumber. Pandemonium Nightmares—those that flicker into existence in the deepest stretches of the Dreamtide—are ruthless maws that live to eat and eat to live. Pandemonium Nightmares don't care how much damage they cause, as they can always retreat to the depths if they begin to fade. Sturdy enough



to survive the death of one believer, they actually use slaughter to fuel their legend.

Either way, Nightmares are strictly solitary, and may even fight each other for a meal (that meal being the fear of a Dreamer).

Though these two types of beings are quite different in motivation, their composition is practically identical. Nightmares are significantly foreign when compared to the Daylight world, and thus they use a tweaked version of the Ghost Rules as found in the **World of Darkness** Rulebook, page 208.

Power

Instead of Intelligence, Strength, or Presence, a Nightmare has only Power. An imposing person in the Daylight produces an Anima that is likewise domineering. As said Anima evolves into a full-blown Nightmare its imposing nature bleeds into other extremities. Suddenly the imposing man is more mentally acute, and his meager muscles unfurl as mountain movers. As this Anima becomes a Nightmare, its Presence (the highest Power attribute) simply becomes Power.

Finesse

Wits, Dexterity, and Manipulation compress into simply Finesse where a Nightmare is concerned. Something that was initially clever likewise becomes hard to pin down, and quite skilled at the art of twisting others. Nightmares do not have to distinguish between Mental, Physical, and Social, because subconsciously their prowess in one translates to all three.

Resistance

Resolve, Stamina, and Composure for a Nightmare is all summed up in Resistance. Again this is because the preconception of talent bleeds over into the other categories, rendering them more potent. Resistance controls how difficult a Nightmare is to harm.

Skills and Merits

A break from the rules of traditional Ghosts, Nightmares do need skills to act without penalty. This is a weakness of the Nightmare, who need not fret an anchor in the dreamscape or some restriction to act. When a Nightmare performs a task that requires a skill, it uses the most appropriate of its three attributes with that skill. Attempting to act unskilled causes the expected penalties.

Nightmares have no use for Merits.

Dread

Unlike Deep Ones (which will be covered later in this appendix) Nightmares do not have an independent well-being stat. Instead they both maintain their corporeal form and fuel their wicked Numina with the same energy: Dread.

Dread is spent to activate Numina. Dread is lost when a Nightmare suffers damage. Whenever the emotion of fear is directed towards a Nightmare, an appropriate amount of Dread is replenished. A Nightmare gains one Dread each night it is included in the plot of a dream. When one Nightmare devours another, it gains an amount of Dread equal to the devoured Nightmare's Resistance. A Nightmare can garner Dread no other way.

There is a limit to how much Dread a Nightmare can keep, and that limit is the sum total of its three attributes. Since Nightmares have no limits on how high each of those attributes can climb, this creates the potential of a massive pool of Dread. Acceptable, since it fluctuates so much.

Everything in the Dreamtime is comprised of Astra. That means objects interact in the same way they do in the Material world (as they are made of the same creation components). Any damage a Nightmare suffers subtracts from its Dread, so in this case the type of damage does not matter. The amount a Nightmare can inflict, however, is dependent on how much Dread



it spends on an action. Normally its attacks are bashing, but if one Dread is used (even if it's just the activation cost of a Numina) the attack becomes lethal. Five Dread makes a Nightmare's attack inflict aggravated damage (and the activation cost of Numina counts towards this).

Besides this, combat functions as normal. In situations where Strength + a Skill would be rolled, the Nightmare instead rolls Power + that same Skill. Likewise, instead of Dexterity + a Skill the Nightmare would roll Finesse + that same Skill. If a Nightmare is ever completely depleted of its Dread, it is forgotten and ceases to exist.

Gone for Good?

The wording is a little dodgy regarding the destruction of a Nightmare. While the Nightmare itself is destroyed, the Dreamer who created it forgets why he was afraid. This works for the most part when it comes to Material Nightmares, but for those that descended from Pandemonium... Pandemonium Nightmares are known to a large population, and even if they are destroyed in the Dreamtide the sources that made them renowned are likely to craft them anew.

For example, a popular scary movie features a slasher villain that births a Pandemonium Nightmare. A Den of Dragons enters the Dreamtide to deal with this monster, but constituents in their Provinces just see the movie again and create a new one. Even if the movie loses its pizzazz from viewer burnout, *somebody* will get the idea to film a remake.

This makes it virtually impossible to eliminate a Pandemonium Nightmare, which is why it's better to discourage re-exposure from the material side after dealing with it in the Dreamtide.

Other Traits

Nightmares do not have Willpower. Though they maintain the illusion of sentience, they lack the actual mental impact to push themselves to extremes. Instances where Willpower would be removed instead drain Dread, and a Nightmare obviously cannot expend Willpower for bonuses to Resistance or a roll.

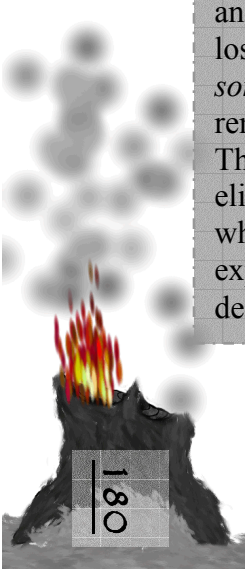
Initiative is Finesse + Resistance. Defense is the higher of Power or Finesse. Speed is Power + Finesse, + Power again. Size is totally variable, but usually falls between 3 and 20. Since Size plays no part in calculating any of the Nightmare's traits, it really doesn't matter all that much (though it may play into the whole stature of fear thing).

Numina

Just like ghosts, Nightmares have access to otherworldly mysticisms called Numina. They could technically use the same ones presented in the **World of Darkness** book, though Nightmares have little if any interest in the waking world (so it's unlikely).

- **London Bridge is Falling:** The Nightmare can meld with the dreamscape, sinking its limbs into the walls or floor and then resurfacing them elsewhere. When the limbs re-emerge, they do so as skeletal fingers, bloody swords, tendrils of darkness, or some other horrific extension. For one Dread, the Nightmare can attack anything within ten times its Power in yards (such attacks are made with Power + Brawl or Power + Weaponry, depending on the type of weapon formed). For an extra two Dread, the Nightmare also grapples its target (provided the attack hits).

- **False Awakening:** The Nightmare reaches down to the floor and rips out a chunk. Abruptly the dream takes a sharp turn, one which causes the Dreamer to



believe he's woken. The dreamscape suddenly converts to that of the Dreamer's favored place of slumber, with both the Nightmare and any other entities flung to nearby hiding places. This Numen costs five Dread, and renders any Lucid Dreamer Hysterical. It likewise confuses any Dragon that was in the dreamscape at the time of the False Awakening. A Dragon subjected to the False Awakening Numen must pass a reflexive Wits + Composure roll to recognize she is still in the Dreamtide. (NOTE: False Awakening removes any twists the Mutation Numen inflicts)

- **Dream Maiming:** Made famous by a particular series of popular movies, Dream Maiming allows a Nightmare to inflict actual injuries on a Dreamer's body. For two Dread the Nightmare can attack a Dreamer's Health instead of his Willpower. These injuries, being material and not mental, cannot be healed while the Dreamer is sleeping and thus carry over into the real world.

Material Nightmares use this Numen to frighten, not kill. Pandemonium Nightmares are not so conservative, though, and likely cause plenty of waking world problems.

- **Powerless:** The Nightmare has such an imposing presence it disarms any attacks directed toward it. Guns break before they can fire, bullets melt, swords break, knives shatter, bones fracture, or *something* stops the attack from inflicting harm. Heaven help someone who tries to attack the Nightmare unarmed. For one Dread the Nightmare completely neutralizes an incoming attack that it saw coming. If Willpower was used for the attack, the weapon used ceases to function but the determined Dreamer (or Dragon) still manages to land a blow (it breaks after a single use, instead of right before a

single use). Nightmares cannot use this Numen on attacks they don't expect.

- **Mutation:** With one touch the Nightmare twists the flesh of another within the Dreamtide. The Nightmare spends three Dread and rolls Finesse + Craft. Successes both inflict damage and a penalty to act with the manipulated body-part on a one-to-one basis. There may be some benefit to said alteration, but it is gravely outweighed by the penalties. Besides that, there's always the horrifying implications of watching a hand expel all its bones (or twist into a hammer, or whatever else you can imagine).

Hysterical Dreamers cannot escape this horror while they are dreaming, though they are saved when they awaken. Lucid Dreamers can simply undo the mutation, though any injury they suffered may linger. Dragons, having traveled to the Dreamtide with their physical body, take such horrid disfigurements home with them when they pass back through the Miasma. To remove the mutation, a Dragon must spend five Breath over the course of two days. Such Breath need not be spent all at once, but all five points have to be paid by the end of the second day, and the Breath cannot be spent for dual purpose.

- **Ford the Miasma:** Only possessed by the most powerful of Pandemonium Nightmares, this Numen allows the beast to phase through the Miasma and enter the real world. Such action costs three Dread each turn for three turns, and if the Nightmare is interrupted during this process it must start over.

If said Nightmare manages to finish fording the Miasma, it becomes ensnared in Twilight (though it need not worry about anchors) until something drags it back to the Dreamtide. To become material and interact directly with the waking world, it must purchase minutes with Dread (So a Nightmare spending



three Dread could become material for three minutes). Such purchases can be made at a whim, and most Nightmares prefer to pop in briefly and then retreat to the Twilight to gorge on the resulting terror. Needless to say, a Nightmare loose in the Daylight is a huge problem.

This list is by no means all-encompassing. Think of it more as a guideline from which to design your own Nightmare Numina. Each Nightmare should be uniquely terrifying, and part of building that terror is pouring love into the Nightmare creation process. Be sure to consider the Nightmare's appearance as you choose and create Numina for it. Many of these horrors incorporate their weaponry into their form, breaking it away to strike at their terror victims.

Deep Ones

Difficult to categorize, "Deep One" is a catch-all term for the emotion-dead bargainers of the world. Supernaturally speaking, all Deep Ones are at least partially aquatic, reek of the rotten and silent sea, and emit a crushing cold from their core. Like Nightmares a Deep One does not play well with others. They lack the rage to actually fight over a bargainer, so the weaker simply bows out to the stronger. Deep Ones do not attack first, ever.

It is uncertain what creates a Deep One, or if they're even from the Dreamtide. Something about them seems suspiciously... simple, as if their true purpose was concealed beneath independently insignificant undertakings. Deep Ones also use a tweaked version of the Ghost Rules as found in the **World of Darkness** Rulebook, page 208.

Attributes

Intelligence, Strength, and Presence are rolled up into Power. Wits, Dexterity, and Manipulation all become Finesse. Resolve, Stamina, and Composure become

Resistance. It is unclear why the Deep Ones are this way, though it gives evidence they're of some ethereal origin.

Skills and Merits

Deep Ones, just like Mortals and Oroboroi, have need of both Skills and Merits. When a Deep One performs a task that requires a skill, it uses the most appropriate of its three attributes with that skill. Attempting to act unskilled causes the expected penalties.

Deep Ones tend to Physical Merits, though they are not restricted to them. Deep Ones cannot take the Status Merit. Any Merits a Deep One holds function as written.

Dread and Cold

Deep Ones use Dread solely as a source of fuel... to restore themselves and power their Aspects. A Deep One's Dread works exactly as a Dragon's Breath (See Chapter 3) save how it is acquired. Deep Ones garner Dread from only one source: the organs of a bargainer. The specifics of this is discussed later in this chapter.

Deep Ones can only hold so much Dread, and they can only use so much in a given turn. In this way they are quite different from Nightmares and actually closer to the Oroboroi. Deep Ones have a supernatural trait called "Cold" that works practically identically to Furnace (save the Calorie requirements). Compare the Deep One's "Cold" rating to the corresponding "Furnace" rating in the chart on page XX to find out how much Dread it can hold, and how much it can use at once. Cold would also be used for Aspect manifestation... that is if Deep Ones could disband their Aspects.

Health

Deep Ones have a physical body, and thus possess flesh to be torn and bones to be broken. A Deep One's Health rating is Resistance + Size, with Size usually being 5. Deep Ones may suffer resistant wounds, trauma, health penalty shifts, and all three



types of damage. If they have been bruised, they risk falling unconscious. If they are stabbed repeatedly they bleed. If they are maimed enough, they die. They are no different than Mortals or Dragons in this way.

Other Traits

Though Deep Ones may not be able to feel emotion, they are not stifled in their capacity to commit to a goal. Willpower is the greatest difference between a Deep One and a Nightmare. To find a Deep One's Willpower, take Power + Resistance. Deep Ones may spend and recover Willpower in the same manner any Oroboroi would.

Initiative is Finesse + Resistance. Defense is the higher of Power or Finesse. Speed is Power + Finesse + 5. Size is 5. Deep Ones can learn and incorporate any Aspects an Oroboroi can use, as well as a few exclusive to them and their bargains.

Aspects

The primary feature that makes a Deep One supernatural is also the main commonality they share with the Oroboroi: they have and utilize Aspects. In places where Furnace is demanded a Deep One instead uses Cold. Where Breath is required, Dread is used instead. In situations where an attribute would be increased, the Deep One's equivalent attribute is instead increased (for example, an increase in Strength would be applied to the Deep One's Power). Deep Ones cannot disband Aspects; they are always manifested.

Deep Ones may own and use any of the Aspects presented in Chapter 2. In addition, there are certain features that are exclusive to these beings; features an Oroboroi may only acquire through bargaining.

Luminescent Lure

The silent dark of the deep ocean is a hunter's paradise, trapping the weak in a velvet net of black. Terrified and helpless they swim to the light, only to be swallowed

by the monster that uses it as bait. Deep Ones use this Aspect to repeat this process on land, and likewise the Oroboroi who make bargains take advantage.

The Deep One (or a bargaining Oroboroi) possesses a phosphorescent angler's lure and the maneuverability to use it effectively. The flexibility and speed of baiting predators fills her body, granting a +1 bonus to Dexterity and its associated traits for each point manifest. Making use of this phenomenal advantage means paying one Dread (or Breath) per scene. While the Luminescent Lure is manifest, aggressors who decide to make targeted attack may only target the lure (-4 to attack). The Luminescent Lure dispels a bit of darkness... just enough to change pitch darkness (chance die) to substantial darkness (-3 to act).

Type: Sequential

Cost: 1 Breath to use the Dexterity for the scene

Dice Pool: None

Action: Reflexive

While this Aspect is manifest, the Dragon forms a glowing lure originating from the forehead's temple and hanging down to the chin. Impossible to conceal, but that's the point. Deep Ones that own this aspect always exhibit this trait.

Beguiling Mandibles

Tentacles provide a flexibility of weaponry that uniquely allows their owners to snag and crush prey with ease. Grab, crush, and scar. Even if the end result is their own death, the tentacle-bearer teaches its attacker to think before trying for seconds. This Aspect transfers that "crush and scar" ruthlessness to the words of its Deep One owner.

The Deep One (or a bargaining Oroboroi)'s voice takes on the rhythm of the tide, waning loud and soft and gently mesmerizing those it touches. For each



point manifest a +1 bonus to Manipulation is bestowed, but making use of this within a scene requires Dread (or Breath). While Beguiling Mandibles are manifest the Deep One may release a guttural rumble from his throat, inflicting bashing wounds (equal to the points manifest in this Aspect) to the Willpower of all who can hear it. The first such rumble is free, but subsequent uses in the scene require Willpower as payment.

Type: Sequential

Cost: 1 Breath to use the Manipulation for the scene

1 Willpower to use successive throat rumbles in the scene

Dice Pool: None

Action: Reflexive (Attributes) or Instant (Rumble)

While this Aspect is manifest, the Dragon forms a set of octopus arms in the vicinity of her upper lip. Males also form two slightly longer tentacles which are mildly prehensile, though not enough to be useful. Any Dragon would have a tough time hiding these features, especially considering the change in voice that accompanies them. Deep Ones that own this aspect always exhibit this trait.

Tympanic Membrane

Fish get by on water's vibrations, but more perceptive entities need a better sense of the space that surrounds them. Hearing is an orbital sensation, unlike sight which is quite directional. In a place where danger can originate from any angle, the limited field of vision is not enough. That's where the Tympanic Membrane comes in.

Wide, flexible covers of the opening of the ear, a pair of tympanic membranes amplifies sound underwater instead of drowning it out as mammalian ears do. The Deep One (or a bargaining Oroboroi) owns a pair of these amphibian membranes, and the hearing that comes with it. While most biologists would argue that there are both

benefits and downsides to a tympanic membrane, the Deep One experiences only the positives. A +1 bonus to Wits is granted for each point manifest in this Aspect, but to make use of this bonus during a scene Dread (or Breath) must be spent. While this Aspect is manifest the Deep One need not roll while blind to pick the direction of his attacker. Though he still needs to take an instant action to listen, no roll is necessary. It is as if he scores an exceptional success automatically. For more information on fighting blind, see the **World of Darkness** Rulebook, pages 166 and 167.

Type: Sequential

Cost: 1 Breath to use the Wits for the scene

Dice Pool: None

Action: Reflexive

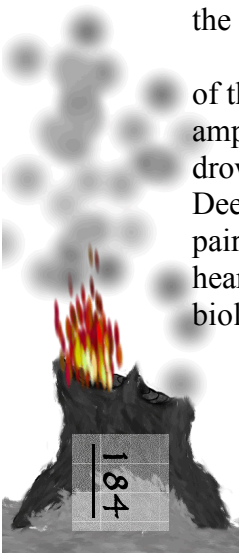
While this Aspect is manifest, the opening of the Dragon's ears widens and is capped with a thin, circular film. This structure does not alter the normal shaping of the outer ear. Deep Ones that own this aspect always exhibit this trait.

Nightmare Gullet

Nightmares do have one feature that is desirable. In fact, it's practically godly. They sustain themselves on the thoughts of others. Though any type of reaction will suffice, *fear* is the most potent for the effort invested. With this Aspect a Deep One (or a bargaining Oroboroi) too gains the ability to feed on the emotions of others... specifically fear.

For Deep Ones, each dot in this Aspect allows them to harvest Dread at half value. For Nightmare Gullet 1, where a Nightmare would garner two Dread the Deep One would receive one. For Nightmare Gullet 4, whenever a Nightmare would garner one Dread the Deep One would receive two. For the bargainers of the dark this ability is indispensable.

Oroboroi are further from the Dreamtide, and so benefit less from this



Aspect. For each point manifest in this Aspect, a Dragon receives 250 Calories (1 Caloric Point) where Dread would usually be granted.

Type: Sequential

Cost: None

Dice Pool: None

Action: None

While this Aspect is manifest, the Dragon's tongue turns black, and it drains light out of the room. Anything the Dragon places in its mouth turns to ash (provided it was dead or inanimate), though this does not impair her ability to draw Calories from such consumables. Deep Ones that own this aspect always exhibit this trait.

Fear

Nightmares gain their Dread primarily by inflicting fear on others. We've already discussed how fear affects a Dreamer (inflicting bashing wounds to the Willpower meter), but we need to discuss where levels of fear fall in a numerical representation. This is actually easier than it sounds. Put yourself in the shoes of the cast member who is frightened, and try to rate the fear from 1 to 5. Whatever you settle on is the amount of Dread that is generated. You can then use that Dread to determine the benefit of Nightmare Gullet.

Electric Skin

The electric eel (in name only, as it was originally misidentified as an eel) attacks prey by discharging voltage from its electric organs (voltage generated by the water's current). Deep Ones that take this Aspect develop similar organs, though they generate voltage from the subtle motion of the atmosphere.

The Deep One (or bargaining Oroboroi) can discharge this voltage buildup

once per scene as he pleases, though successive uses require a point of Willpower. The resulting jolt inflicts two bashing wounds per point manifest to everything within close combat range (one to three yards) excluding the Deep One herself. Any living being touching the Deep One becomes trapped by the shock's resulting muscle contractions, and must succeed at a Strength roll or continue taking damage (as explained in the "Electrocution" section of the **World of Darkness** Rulebook, on pages 177 and 178). Because of this the voltage continues its output until that being finally breaks free (or falls dead), though that does not prevent the Deep One from discharging the voltage again.

Type: Sequential

Cost: 1 Willpower for subsequent jolts in the Scene

Dice Pool: None

Action: Instant

While this Aspect is manifest the Dragon seems to take deeper breaths than usual. Touching her between discharges causes static cling, though, which is the biggest giveaway. This Aspect is harder to detect on a Deep One as they tend not to dress.

Obsidian Fog

A defense mechanism of cephalopods in the brighter surface waters, the ink sac produces a spray of mucus-locked melanin. Effective but costly to produce, this clod of dark liquid distracts and sometimes even stuns predators. Deep Ones have developed similar versions for use on land.

The Deep One (or a bargaining Oroboroi) may spend one Dread (or Breath) to expel a pitch-black gas from a modified pore on its face. This gas quickly envelops everything within twenty-five yards of its source, creating a pocket of complete darkness through which the Deep One may escape undetected.



All beings within the Obsidian Fog are rendered completely blind for a number of turns equal to twice the points manifest in this Aspect. This of course means that changing the degree of manifestation in the Aspect also alters the duration of the fog (adding or subtracting two turns per point altered).

Those that can detect heat through vision (Infrared Sight) are not completely blinded, but instead treat all combatants as if they were substantially concealed (-3 to act against them). The cloying cold of the fog prevents clearer perception. Ultraviolet vision provides no benefit against the darkness this Aspect produces. For more information about fighting blind, see the **World of Darkness Rulebook**, pages 166 and 167.

Type: Sequential

Cost: 1 Breath to emit Obsidian Fog

Dice Pool: None

Action: Instant

While this Aspect is manifest, a single pore on the Dragon's cheek widens into a funnel, like those seen on the common octopus. Behind this protrusion lies the sac of melanin cells which are atomized to blind attackers. Deep Ones that own this aspect always possess this funnel.

Bargains with a Deep One

Beasts from the silent night come to the light for one reason: to trade dark serendipity for emotion. A symbolic sacrifice of organ severs the mind's hold on the feeling associated, thus gifting its potency to the being that can feel nothing.

Deep Ones grant wishes to the extent that coincidence allows, and in exchange they expect payment. They cannot unwind death, but they can deflect its approach. They cannot turn rain to gold, though gold can be made to rain upon a bargainer through other means. Hearts can be warmed or cooled, families forged or torn asunder, businesses overthrown or enhanced. Whatever the request, the means through which it is fulfilled are contrived and lined with blood. It is impossible to connect these events to the Deep One himself... one wonders if he plays any part at all?

Not all bargains are created equal. Below is a chart of the organs within the human body a Deep One will accept, the emotion with which it is associated, the organ's worth in Dread, and how long it will take to complete the request:

Organ	Emotion	Value (in Dread)	Response
Appendix	Disgust	1	Decades
Eyes	Foresight	2	Years
Stomach	Ambition	2	Years
Intestines	Rage	3	Months
Liver	Inhibition	3	Months
Kidneys	Trust	4	Weeks
Pancreas	Amazement	4	Weeks
Lungs	Sadness	5	Days
Spleen	Fear	5	Days
Heart*	Joy	6	Instants
Brain	Remorse**	6	Instants
*Dragons cannot offer their Hearts as collateral in a bargain			
**Those incapable of Remorse fail all degeneration rolls automatically			

Any organ removed in a bargain is replaced with a glass copy, though it still functions as intended from a biological perspective. The character is rendered incapable of expressing the emotion sacrificed, and must spend Willpower if she wishes to fake it (or if she does not role-play the loss appropriately). If a bargainer who gave up her Appendix wants to appear disgusted when some partier throws up in her lap, she'll need to spend Willpower. This is not necessarily because she lacks talents in acting or the human condition, but from the bargain on the emotion is so foreign it must be forced.

When the Deep One claims an organ, he is instantly awarded the corresponding amount of Dread. In addition, each night he maintains ownership of that organ he receives this Dread again. Dread acquired in

this way is not fear-based, and thus does not contribute to "Nightmare Gullet".

The Dread Value serves another purpose. When a Dragon makes a bargain, she receives a number of dots of Deep One Aspects equal to the Dread Value of the organ sacrificed. Like the free dots from an increase in Furnace these may be spent where the player pleases, so long as it's amongst the Deep One Aspects presented earlier. Just as with character creation, the fifth dot of a Deep One Aspect costs two of these "free" dots.

"Why?" you ask? In many ways the True Form of an Oroboroi is a reflection of her state of mind. She does not leave the bargaining table unchanged, in mind or body. The process of slaying emotions is one that brings her closer to the Deep Ones, in more ways than one.

[IMAGE!]



Appendix Two: San Francisco

(Full-Page art needed)

“Settle down for bed and I’ll tell you a story, okay? Hmm... which’s one should I tell? Ah, how about this. Why do you think the earth shakes, son?”

“Tectonic plates shift back and forth causing vibrations!”

“Well, aren’t you a little smarty! I’m glad you’re learning something at school. But why does the earth *really* shake?”

“I dunno. Why?”

“Long ago, when the world was young and man was not yet ruler of the lands, there was a mighty serpent that from end to end stretched the world over. His name was Jörmungandr.”

“Jörmungandr?”

“It’s a Norse word. It means great world serpent. Jörmungandr traveled the world as he pleased, eating what he liked and stealing what he wanted. He had a particular fancy for gold, you see, and he stashed a great haul of it right here under San Francisco.”

“Really?”

“Yes. Its said that even today his hoard of treasure is buried, waiting to be found.”

“Cool!”

“Not exactly. You see Jörmungandr was quite sinful, and a hammer of justice slew him for his wickedness. But not quite. Instead of death Jörmungandr was knocked into eternal slumber and buried beneath the earth, so that other creatures might flourish on the land. But it is a restless sleep the world serpent sleeps. As he tosses and turns the earth atop him is shaken and shattered, the tremors causing quakes like the one we had today.”

“But if he’s asleep, wouldn’t he starve?”

“No, son. There’s a reason he was drawn to gather gold. The wealth sustains him like food sustains us, and so long as it is with him he will continue his sleep. But should someone steal the treasure from beneath his scaly form, Jörmungandr would rise once more and eradicate the world that trapped him.”

“Don’t worry about the tremors. It’s just mother Earth having a seizure.”

-Anonymous

The hooks and mechanics may be present in the earlier sections of the book, but you might still be having trouble setting up your **Dragon the Embers** chronicle. The best way to teach is to lead by example, though, and so the San Francisco setting is provided here.

The City by the Bay is practically a living sitcom, populated with eccentrics, outsiders, and trendsetters. The fog enshrouds the city in a cloak of insane whimsy, which is partly why Dragons find the location so enticing. It brings excitement to their otherwise miserable eternities.

That being said, the Oroboroi population has taken a dip as of late, and at the moment less than one hundred live within the city proper. The threat of Bloody Chalice Knights is high in the area, partly due to their anticipation of modern draconic needs. Likewise, the superstition of Jörmungandr keeps many Oroboroi at bay. Life in the so-called Paris of the West is exciting, but not free.

Theme

The theme of San Francisco is that of relief. The laid-back nature of the city makes blending easier for Dragons, especially the more world-weary and rigid who need a place to hide their old ways. The combination of Victorian and modern architecture appeals to a wide range of personalities. Likewise, since the area is quite apparently a Dragon magnet Oroboroi can go seeking companionship with their own... a matter quite difficult to pursue in other regions.

Contradicting and yet complimenting the first theme is that of doom. Those in the region who know what to look for can spot Dragons easily, and that includes any

enemies they carry as a species. The Knights of the Bloody Chalice have long had a priory in San Francisco, where their prey is not only easy to hunt but amply available. Also looming is the threat of exposure... even though the city is likely to ignore any crazy happenstance, should too many build up in similar fashion suspicion will follow. The Oroboroi are almost *too* comfortable here, and one wonders if somebody isn’t encouraging it to gather proof of their existence.

Mood

The mood of San Francisco is one of Ambivalence. Dragons migrating to the area find they are torn in their decisions, startled by the new freedom the city offers but still locked in their paranoia. Likewise, freedom and dominance are contradictory states of existence. Dragons attempting to set up province find the “free spirits” that make up their constituency to be laboring and indignant. Such subjects are unfitting of kings, but necessary to enjoy the other benefits of the region. Again, ambivalence ensues.

A complimenting mood is one of Drama. Not only do the local Dragons need to deal with their rebellious mortals, but also with the knowledge that other Oroboroi are nearby. If there is any place where draconic politics could be so tense, it would be in San Francisco. Individual monsters faction off into dens and wage war with others over what they believe is best for the city, though there’s no evidence that any of them are right. Oroboroi who come to San Francisco seeking interaction with their own may find more than they bargained for, unable to deal with the egos of other self-proclaimed gods.



History

The draw to the San Franciscan bay has always been one of glittering jewels. The area has had much to offer all along, from its first settlement by the Ohlone people through Spanish settlement and mission years up to the gold rush. Part of this process involves displacing (or incorporating) the previous occupants, and for modern Oroboroi that requirement has not changed. After all, nothing shines quite like gold, and people will take as much as they can.

Early History

The tale of the San Francisco bay begins with the Ohlone tribes of central California, a village-based people who migrated to the area for its convenient access to hunting and gathering. In the process, they displaced or absorbed the smaller Hokan-speaking tribes of the area. Whichever actually occurred has been lost in the fogs of time, though it really doesn't matter. Ending a five-thousand year occupation, the Ohlones would remain themselves for only twelve-hundred years.

Approaching from the south, Spanish explorers came to the region with hopes it would be suitable to colonize. Lead by one Don Gaspar de Portolà, a soldier of noble blood originating from Catalina, the Alta region was surveyed in the name of Spain. Following the soldiers were the missionaries, armed with crosses and the conviction of God.

Under the supervision of Father Junípero Serra missions were constructed to assist in converting unbelievers to the way of god. One of these missions was the Mission San Francisco de Asís, an adobe structure that is today the oldest surviving building in the San Francisco city proper. The Ohlone tribes were assimilated into the missions, their own lives drowned out in a

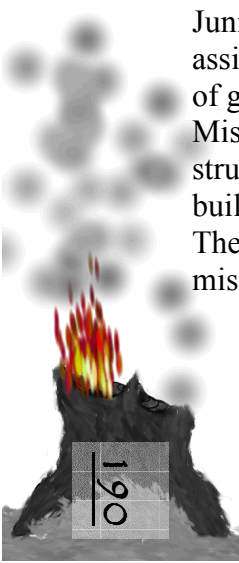
flood of piety and poverty. San Francisco had become the property of Spain.

But it would not stay that way. Eleven years of bloody guerrilla fighting liberated Mexico and its provinces from the grasp of Spain. Once more the bay changed hands, and the new government of Mexico worked to end the mission system and replace it with privatization. An Englishman by the name of William Richardson established a homestead near the bay and, with the help of the region's mayor "Francisco de Haro", laid out designs for Yerba Buena.

In February of 1948, at the end a two-year pugilism with the United States over the latter's annexation of Texas, Mexico relinquished California for fifteen million dollars. This of course was a formality, as Commodore John D Sloat had claimed California for the United States in 1946 (at the beginning of the Mexican-American war). Yerba Buena was included in this conquest, and by 1947 it had been renamed "San Francisco".

This was a big blow to Mexico, for one James W Marshall struck gold only nine days earlier. The resulting flash of gold fever sent hundreds of thousands sprinting to the west coast to make a claim, and San Francisco swelled into a boom town for it. In many ways the forty-niners made the city as memorable as it is. The gold rush also introduced Oroboroi to the region, magnetized to the flocking masses. Or perhaps it was the glitter of gold that drew them as well.

Oroboroi from the Americas and Oroboroi from China met for the first time in San Francisco. Culture shock forged them into enemies: the Chinese Dragons startled and angered by the disrespect shown them and American Dragons furious that these newcomers arrived expecting positions of power. In fact, the two years between California's acquisition and its induction as



a state brought a great deal of different cultures to the pot, with violence in toe. The accompanying lawlessness made this mixture dangerously explosive. Dragons and mortals alike fought over claims, businesses, and matters of dignity in a bloody tornado of soot, gold, and bullets.

Recent History

The earth shook San Francisco on the eighth of April 1906, the city shuddering into rubble. The city is said to have suffered over four hundred million dollar damages (an enormous fortune at the time), and the collapse and subsequent fires killed thousands of residents. The quake's epicenter was off the coast of San Francisco, near a greenstone assemblage called Mussel Rock. This location was directly adjacent to the San Andreas Fault, which led local Oroboroi to believe it was sabotage.

The controversy lead to a full-out brawl between the San Francisco Dens, often referenced as the "War of the Conspirators". Accusations fell like rain, and old enemies from the gold rush took the opportunity to settle scores. Hearts changed hands again and again, justified with claims that "he was the saboteur". Only a dozen or so gold-rush Dragons living in the region are believed to have survived this period, the rest replaced with new Oroboroi.

The city was quickly rebuilt, mostly out of earnest to be prepared for the Panama-Pacific International Exposition, a 1915 World's Fair to celebrate the completion of the Panama Canal. This feat was achieved at the cost of safety codes, which were discarded after the first year of reconstruction to meet this deadline. Even today the city suffers for that haste, and a quake of equal or lesser magnitude to the one in 1906 would topple several sectors of the city, ending hundreds of lives.

Life went on in the bay, the city becoming a financial symbol as the gold-founded banks secured themselves as national powerhouses. Not a single San Franciscan bank closed at the stock market crash of 1929. Oroboroi from the period like to flaunt this as a grand achievement to the "whipper-snappers", a sign that their leadership weathers all disasters and keeps the land alive. Some actually did contribute to the "Great Depression Buffer", and have records to prove it. Others are full of shit.

Despite the survival of the city's value as a whole, many independently wealthy Oroboroi were ruined by the crash. Province-snatching became commonplace, and the Dragon underground seemed ready



A picture of the ruins of San Francisco, taken by George R. Lawrence on May 28th of 1906



to burst into Daylight. Then, a curse in blessing's skin. The outraged Dragons simply vanished. In fact, any Dragon whose actions drew too much attention vanished. The Knights of the Bloody Chalice had arrived in San Francisco.

Proximity to the Pacific Theater brought scores of young men to San Francisco during World War Two. Industry followed to meet the demands of the soldiering, and lingered after the war ended. Just as new blood came for work and war, Oroboroi once more flocked to the City in the Bay. This second immigration was less violent than that of the forty-niners, held civil by patriotism. It also helped that most of the resident Dragons were post-quake Oroboroi, possessing a more modern outlook for the city and its interests. Province quarrels still existed, but on the down-low in respect for the issues at hand.

As San Francisco approached the 1980s the denizens became increasingly principled and difficult to control, empowered by activism and "Love" (as the hippies called it). The city became a symbol for change, breaking off into factions as each group gained support in a neighborhood. This outspokenness, along with the ever-increasing presence of Bloody Chalice Knights, drove many Oroboroi out of the area, and the Dragon population is still thin to this day.

History Yet to be Made

Even though the gold may be gone (at least perceivably), San Francisco is still and always will be a focal point for the new. In the modern world, this is the breeding ground for new ideas and new philosophies. Maybe the Oroboroi will learn a great truth about their existence in San Francisco. Maybe it will give meaning to their extinction. Or maybe it will wake Jörmungandr.

Culture and the Province

The selection of a Province is a very personal matter, limited to one gathering of people and usually one place of business. That being said, the process is virtually identical regardless of city. Still, the constituents of a Province are quite variable based on location, and the layout of a populous region contributes to that. In this section we will discuss some of the norms of a San Franciscan neighborhood, and how to use those norms to make one up.

Much of the city is mixed-demographic, meaning buildings are zoned for both commercial and residential use. This gives the City by the Bay a cozy, pulsing feel; keeping work and play close together renders the entire city "downtown". An unfortunate after-effect of this is the cost of said "mixed-use" properties. Industry has left the city, replaced with entitlement, and the middle and lower classes have been pushed into orbit around the city, rather than living in the city proper. A pity, as they could benefit greatly from close proximity (It'd certainly save on gas... and traffic jam stress). The city's convenient layout is quite appealing to tourists; this combined with its pleasant climate keeps the camera-snappers in constant supply. Well... that and the eclectic mixture of modern and historic architecture.

The best way to make a province in the San Francisco setting is to suspend disbelief and make up your own street. What are the buildings like? Is the street mostly Victorian, or does it have a modern feel? What types of business take up the store-fronts on your street? Is it mostly restaurants? Grocers? Boutiques? Who works at these businesses? Who lives above them? San Francisco Dragons tend to share denizens (not voluntarily, the city is just tight-knit that way), so the best thing you can do as a storyteller is generate a well-developed cast of extras for your street. Lay



out their personality. Lay out their routine. Determine when and how they interact with each Dragon's Province and the other regulars of the street. The effort you put in will pay out in turn, flavoring your chronicle and giving the Dragons something to lose.

Complications of Life in San Francisco

As stated before, there is a looming sense of doom in the City by the Bay. Something that seems perfect needs to be inspected from a different angle; flaws or something sinister could be waiting beneath the veil of standard perception. The fog certainly doesn't help this feeling, either.

Accompanying this is the issue of the residents, too self-involved to play along for the greater good and too opinionated to stay out of the way. If a Dragon pushes her denizens too hard they will mutiny against her. A catch-twenty-two, as letting them run amok doesn't work either. Oroboroi machinations are thusly forced underground, exacted through manipulative charisma and the persuasion of "problem" individuals. Much of the conflict in a San Francisco campaign will be political; the endless tug of war that is convincing others your way is right.

Knights of the Bloody Chalice

The blood-bathing serial killers are a parasite of the city, hooked to its intestines and feeding off its glut. Just as Dragons move with relaxed gait in San Francisco, so do the Knights travel unnoticed. In a place with so many people, who notices one person go missing? In any scene with a crowd, a Knight could be bleeding in the background. Maybe he's a customer in the Dragon's Province, and his sweat alerts him to her presence. As anywhere, the Knights are indistinguishable until they attack. The only difference is concentration. As many

as five Bloody Chalice Knights can occupy a single public gathering, and with so many witnesses the Dragon cannot fight them with her full range of talent.

Jörmungandr

There's a nasty rumor that some ancient world serpent is sleeping under the bay, on top of a delicious hoard of treasure. The kind of riches that make mythical gold vaults look like chump change. But, there's a catch, as there always is. Jörmungandr is sleeping on top of it, and if he were to wake up the resulting cataclysmic earthquake would destroy the entire continent. Even now as he stirs in slumber the earth shakes above him. Plus, upon awakening he would proceed to destroy the rest of the world.

Or maybe not. Does Jörmungandr even exist? If the local Oroboroi believe in him enough, will he become *real*? Should Jörmungandr rise, could he be stopped? Who would claim his riches? Who would be so *reckless* as to claim his riches? All of these are considerations an Oroboroi migrating to San Francisco will mull. There's a reason the city is so pleasant, and that reason could be the draw of Jörmungandr's breath. He *wants* to wake up.

Factions and Figureheads

In many ways the Oroboroi that live in San Francisco are as unique as the mortals that share the same space. Being virtually timeless beings promotes quirky outdated behavior, especially in the older Dragons who have grown wearing of the world's ebb and tide. San Francisco is a haven for these Oroboroi, a place both driven and locked in time. Below are some of the more interesting factions in the San Francisco area, accompanied with their den's progenitor. How they serve in your chronicle is entirely up to you.

(Factions and Figureheads will be developed after the setting has been repaired in Playtesting)



Epilogue: Silence

(Full-Page art needed. A picture of Cameron looking in a box on her nightstand would work perfectly)

She left the box open for a little while, just to hear it tick. She really did miss it. The metronome of the beat. A secret friend beneath the surface that so often goes unnoticed. But it makes a difference when he's gone.

Cameron recalled something a friend of hers once said. "Every heart has a certain number of beats, and after that? Kaput. Like a light-bulb. They just flicker out." She wondered how many beats this Heart had left. This second-hand Heart.

She closed the box. The heavy woodwork of the rehashed music box blocked the beats from escaping, and there was silence. Cameron retired to her bed. When would her last moment come? In ten minutes? Ten centuries? She had inflicted this upon herself, the wonders and horrors of a life both short and eternal. Now it seemed more horror than wonder, though. She stirred on the mattress, though its springs refused to creak. Silence.

She would not sleep tonight.

Index

(Both the Index and any Internal Page References will not be generated until the document has reached an acceptable level of quality. Such features are ancillary and will be added after play-testing. Apologies in advance for any inconvenience.)



Name:
Player:
Chronicle:

Concept:
Virtue:
Vice:

Method:
School:
Province:

ATTRIBUTES

POWER Intelligence: ●○○○○○ (○) Strength: ●○○○○○ (○) Presence: ●○○○○○ (○)
 FINESSE Wits: ●○○○○○ (○) Dexterity: ●○○○○○ Manipulation: ●○○○○○ (○)
 RESISTANCE Resolve: ●○○○○○ Stamina: ●○○○○○ Composure: ●○○○○○

SKILLS

MENTAL

(-3 UNSKILLED)

Academics _____ ○○○○○○
 Computer _____ ○○○○○○
 Crafts _____ ○○○○○○
 Investigation _____ ○○○○○○
 Medicine _____ ○○○○○○
 Occult _____ ○○○○○○
 Politics _____ ○○○○○○
 Science _____ ○○○○○○

PHYSICAL

(-1 UNSKILLED)

Athletics _____ ○○○○○○
 Brawl _____ ○○○○○○
 Drive _____ ○○○○○○
 Firearms _____ ○○○○○○
 Larceny _____ ○○○○○○
 Stealth _____ ○○○○○○
 Survival _____ ○○○○○○
 Weaponry _____ ○○○○○○

SOCIAL

(-1 UNSKILLED)

Animal Ken _____ ○○○○○○
 Empathy _____ ○○○○○○
 Expression _____ ○○○○○○
 Intimidation _____ ○○○○○○
 Persuasion _____ ○○○○○○
 Socialize _____ ○○○○○○
 Streetwise _____ ○○○○○○
 Subterfuge _____ ○○○○○○

OTHER TRAITS

MERITS

_____ ○○○○○○
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FLAWS

ASPECTS

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MORTAL TRAITS

Size: _____
 Defense: _____
 Initiative mod: _____
 Speed: _____
 Armor: _____

HEALTH

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WILLPOWER

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FURNACE

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BREATH

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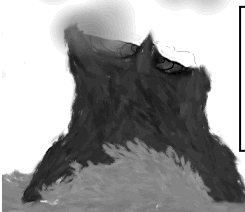
Caloric Points

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ETHICS

10 _____ ○
 9 _____ ○
 8 _____ ○
 7 _____ ○
 6 _____ ○
 5 _____ ○
 4 _____ ○
 3 _____ ○
 2 _____ ○
 1 _____ ○

Attributes 5/4/3 • Skills 11/7/4 (+3 Specialties) • Method • School • Province • Aspects 5/3/2 (Common/Method/Choice) • Philosophies 1/1 (School, Choice) • (Buying the fifth dot in Attributes, Skills, Merits, or Aspects costs 2 points) • Favored Attribute (+1 Strength Slayer, +1 Intelligence Finder, +1 Wits Challenger, +1 Manipulation Trickster, +1 Presence Inheritor) • Health = Stamina + Size • Willpower = Resolve + Composure • Size = Five for adult humans • Defense = Lowest of Dexterity or Wits • Initiative Mod = Dexterity + Composure • Speed = Strength + Dexterity + 5 • Starting Ethics = 7 • Furnace starts at 1 dot • Breath = Ethics



ASPECTS

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EQUIPMENT

PHILOSOPHIES

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_____	OOOOOO		

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_____	dice pool	_____	page

PROVINCIAL BOONS

 _____ dice pool _____

 _____ dice pool _____

TRUE FORM TRAITS

Intelligence: _____	Strength: _____	Presence: _____
Wits: _____	Dexterity: _____	Manipulation: _____
Resolve: _____	Stamina: _____	Composure: _____
	Skills: _____	Size: _____
_____	: _____	: _____
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True Form Traits: Attributes +1 ● Health +2 ● Willpower +2 ● Size +1 ● Defense +1 ● Initiative Mod +2 ● Land Speed = Speed + 2 ● Flight Speed = (Strength + Stamina) x Wings ● Climb Speed = Dexterity + Wall Climber + 5 ● Burrow Speed = Strength + Dexterity + Burrowing Body ● Swim Speed = (Strength + Dexterity + Stream) x Serpentine Form ● List skills modified by Aspects ● Don't forget to add in Aspect Bonuses

