

THE PERFECT LOTUS

FROM ROOT TO BULB II

A MARTIAL ARTS COLLECTION BY MELISSA "JIVE X" XAVIER



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CHAPTER ONE

THE LOTUS ROOT

Hungry Furnace Style: A fiery style that burns with such strength it consumes the user from within.

Midnight Knife: A style based on trickery, deceit and dirty fighting, with dark origins.

Pious Exemplar of (Virtue) Style: In these fallen times, those heroes who practice this style are the lone champions of virtue and righteousness in Creation.

Scarlet Whirlwind Style: A style best practiced in a group, emphasizing fury and pack tactics.

Seeing Blade Style: Practitioners of this style see the world, not through their blind eyes, but with the keen edge of their swords.

Unsung Hero Style: Practiced by the those who realize that the life of a hero, for most people in Creation, is a short and violent one, but who choose that path anyway.

Thundering Avalanche Style: Before the practioners of this hard-hitting style, the earth itself shudders and quakes.

HUNGRY FURNACE STYLE

The Hungry Furnace Style of martial arts has its roots in the Southern dojo of an ancient Solar master. This ancient God-King, too young to have a Gens loyal to him, wished to devise a means by which he could train mortals to ascend to a sufficient level of essence control to be effective stewards and warriors, capable of standing beside the Terrestrial Exalted. And he wished to do this without reliance on artifacts, which he viewed as inelegant and pedestrian. Instead he devised a style dedicated to the idea of sacrificing one's body and one's life for a moment of power and glory. Using a hungry furnace as a

model, he taught his students the philosophy of this style. However, it proved too time-consuming and costly to effectively accomplish the purpose for which it was designed.

During the Shogunate, however, this martial art enjoyed a brief resurgence when it was discovered as a possible alternative to the costly production of Gunzoshu armor. A second variant of this style emerged which followed a more utilitarian, less enlightening ideology. This variant was designed to empower mortals to aid the beleaguered Dragon-Blooded host in the defense of Creation. The principle difference between the two styles, aside from their progenitors, is in the capstone Charm.

In this fallen age, this style is practiced by a surprising number of folk. It is taught—though secretly because it is officially considered heretical by the Immaculate Faith—to the Dragon-handlers of the Realm. In the Threshold, mortals seek training in it for its power and the relative ease with which it is learned, and because it offers them the potency to defend that which they care for against an increasingly hostile creation, even though few who practice it will live out even half their natural lifespans.

Both versions of this style are fire-aspected. Aspects of Fire find that the ferocity involved in this style comes naturally to them, and they, along with Aspect of Water, pay no surcharge when using Charms of this style. No martial artist can learn both pinnacle Charms of the style; they are mutually exclusive.

Weapons and Armor: This style may be practiced in any armor, but is not compatible with the use of any weapons other than the stylist's own body.



FLASH FIRE OF INTUITION

Cost: 3m; **Mins:** Martial Arts 2, Essence 2; **Type:** Supplemental
Keywords: Combo-Basic, Obvious
Duration: Instant
Prerequisite Charms: None

The first lesson a student of Hungry Furnace Style learns is that all beings possess a glowing coal of Essence within them that can be fanned to brilliance. Students also learn that one time, there is a terrible price for this power—one that sines their very life-force—and yet some still find the bargain tempting. Students who understand both this truth and its consequence are taught the style's first Charm.

Rapidly stoking his inner Essence to full brilliance, the student's eyes glow with an inner white light that shines forth like a beacon, and he gasps out small puffs of smoke with every breath. The hungry furnace adds two successes to his Join Battle roll and to attempts to reestablish surprise. This Charm does not allow him to reestablish surprise when such a feat would not normally be valid.

As Fire-Aspected Dragon-Blooded already have an intuitive knowledge of the fiery Essence within their hearts, they gain an additional benefit from this Charm: for an additional 2m, they may reduce the speed of a single unarmed Martial Arts attack by 1 (minimum 3).

INTERNAL COMBUSTION MIGHT

Cost: 3m; **Mins:** Martial Arts 2, Essence 2; **Type:** Reflexive (Step 1)
Keywords: Combo-OK
Duration: Instant
Prerequisite Charms: None

As the heat and flame within the volcanic mountains in the deep south burn with tremendous fury, so too do Hungry Furnace stylists draw their power from a fire that burns from deep within. Fueling the fire with motes of his Essence, the hungry furnace feeds the flames of his might.

When activated, this Charm adds (Essence ÷ 2) to the character's (Strength) when calculating jumping distances and attempting feats of strength.

SOUL-SMELTING INTENSITY

Cost: 2m; **Mins:** Martial Arts 3, Essence 2; **Type:** Supplemental
Keywords: Combo-OK, Obvious, Touch
Duration: Instant
Prerequisite Charms: Internal Combustion Might, Flashing-Fire of Intuition

Channeling the furious power that roars like a blast furnace within him to aid in his strikes, the hungry furnace momentarily imbues his blows with intense heat. A blow augmented by this Charm is sheathed in a corona of heat waves so intense it causes flesh to blister, stone to scorch and leaves mundane metals red hot.

When this Charm supplements an unarmed martial arts attack, that attack does lethal damage and adds +2 base damage dice. Against inanimate objects, this bonus increases to +3. Flammable objects struck this blow catch fire immediately.

HUNGRY FURNACE FORM

Cost: 5m; **Mins:** Martial Arts 4, Essence 2; **Type:** Simple (Speed 4, DV -0)
Keywords: Form-type, Obvious
Duration: One scene
Prerequisite Charms: Soul-Smelting Intensity

The student does not assume the Hungry Furnace Form casually, for doing so entails committing a portion of his Essence to his inner fire. The hungry furnace's smoldering core of being is bolstered by his Essence and becomes enflamed with terrible brightness. His skin flushes, his body temperature rises and he begins to shine with the orange light. Black smoke, like that which rises from a foundry's smokestack, curls from his mouth and nostrils. His voice changes; echoing the rich sound of a roaring fire and burning coals.

Activating this Charm immediately make mundane stealth impossible for the hungry furnace—his body is simply too incandescent to hide by mundane means. This negates penalties from fighting in darkness both for him and for anyone within (Essence × 2) yards.

Additionally, once per action, if the hungry furnace uses any Charm of this style to set an inanimate object on fire, he regains a number of motes equal to the (Resources) value of the materials used in the object's construction, as he feeds the hungry fires within. (Jade scrip may represent Resources 5, but it's only paper, after all, and returns motes as Resources 1). Should multiple objects be set aflame at once, such as a stack of scrolls, he only regains a number of motes equal to the value of the objects as a whole, not each individual one. This ability cannot be used on objects that are already aflame and cannot increase the hungry furnace's mote pool beyond its maximum.

Example: Enlightened Malachite uses this Charm to bolster his fading mote pool. Lashing out with Soul-Smelting Intensity to strike a merchant prince, he not only inflicts the normal damage upon the merchant prince, but he also regains 2 motes of Essence as he sets afire his opponent's fine garment.

SPITFIRE EXHALATION TECHNIQUE

Cost: 4m, 1lhl; **Mins:** Martial Arts 4, Essence 3; **Type:** Simple (Speed 6, DV -2)
Keywords: Combo-OK, Obvious
Duration: Instant
Prerequisite Charms: Hungry Furnace Form

The furnace burns and devours, but none would abide its insatiable hunger were it not for it's capacity to empower and reshape. The martial artist who studies this concept knows very well the rewards the Hungry Furnace has to offer, but also has come to appreciate that suitable raw materials and fuel must be surrendered to the furnace-of-self in return for power.

Bracing himself against agonizing pain, the hungry furnace activates this Charm, and regurgitates a stream of fiery, liquefied Essence with the consistency of molten lava. This attack is aimed with (Perception + Martial Arts), and does (Essence + 1)L dice of flame damage, which bypasses mundane armor soak, flowing between the cracks and chinks in the metal. Armor forged from magical materials applies half its soak value against this attack, but its Hardness does not apply. Because it relies heavily on the hungry furnace's limited capacity to expectorate, this attack has a limited range of (Essence) yards.





FLESH ANNEALING PROCEDURE

Cost: 6m; **Mins:** Martial Arts 4, Essence 3; **Type:** Simple

Keywords: Combo-OK, Obvious

Duration: One scene

Prerequisite Charms: Hungry Furnace Form

Fire's destructive properties are widely known, even to the most backward and unenlightened, but less thought of is the fact that fire can also be used to strengthen materials. Tempering an object in fire increases its resilience and resistance to damage, making it less brittle and less breakable. The fire within a learned Hungry Furnace stylist can be made to do much the same thing, proofing them against damage in the short term, at the cost of their long term well being.

Activating this Charm causes the hungry furnace's skin to flash and grow hot, as fiery Essence from within tempers and hardens it, turning it jet black. While this Charm is active, the hungry furnace's wounds cauterize immediately, instantly stopping any bleeding. Furthermore, he may soak lethal damage with either half his Stamina (if mortal) or his full Stamina (if Exalted).

When this Charm ends, the hungry furnace takes two unsoakable levels of lethal damage. Mortals—and sometimes even Terrestrials—who regularly use this Charm often bear prominent scars from the searing heat that closes their wounds.

RADIANT HEARTH REPRISAL

Cost: 5m, 1wp; **Mins:** Martial Arts 5, Essence 3; **Type:** Reflexive (Step 9)

Keywords: Combo-OK, Counterattack

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Hungry Furnace Form

Those who have spent time near a furnace know better than to approach it while it is burning brightly. Those less knowledgeable often underestimate the fire's heat or the danger it poses to those who dare draw too near. By stoking his own hearth fire to full flame, the hungry furnace may impart this wisdom upon those who prove foolish enough to approach him.

This Charm may be activated in response to a successful melee-range attack, or any grapple attempt. The martial artist rolls (Dexterity + Martial Arts + Essence) opposed by his enemy's (Stamina + Resistance) roll. Each success on this roll inflicts one level of lethal damage, which is soaked normally, as the martial artist reaches out and grabs his foe's wrist and lets incandescent Essence burn through his target. Opponents who take more levels of damage than their (Stamina) are automatically disarmed and drop any weapons they may be holding.

However, by using this Charm, the hungry furnace must also roll Stamina at a difficulty of his (Essence) or take his (Valor) in unsoakable lethal damage dice from the backlash. Fire-Aspected Terrestrials are immune to this ancillary damage.

ELEMENTAL'S REBIRTH

Cost: 8m, 1wp; **Mins:** Martial Arts 5, Essence 3; **Type:** Simple

Keywords: Obvious, Shaping

Duration: (Martial Arts) actions

Prerequisite Charms: Magma Breath Technique, Flesh Annealing Procedure, Radiant Hearth Reprisal

Perfecting the understanding of the burning heart of essence within him, the martial artist achieves the perfection of the

Hungry Furnace and is devoured by the fires of power and ambition. Using this Charm transforms the hungry furnace for a brief period into a being of pure fire. His flesh and sinew is wholly consumed and he becomes a living bonfire. Attempts at Stealth are impossible. Contact with him is enough to set any flammable object alight, doing (Essence)L dice of damage every action. For Fire-Aspected Terrestrials, this merely adds (Essence) dice to their normal anima power, but instantly flares their banner to totemic levels.

Additionally, the hungry furnace gains the ability to use the Dragon's Suspire and Elemental Rejuvenation powers (*The Books of Sorcery IV: The Roll of Glorious Divinity, Vol. I: Gods & Elementals*, pp. 170) at normal cost.

Mortals who activate this Charm for the first time lose their mortality and are irrevocably transformed into fire elementals, gaining all the benefits and drawbacks of being such a spirit. (Players may choose which elemental, provided it fits with their character's temperament; see *The Roll of Glorious Divinity, Vol. I*, pp. 112-22 for example elementals.) They gain a mote pool equal to $(\text{Essence} \times 10) + (\text{Willpower} \times 5)$ and permanently acquire all physical traits appropriate to the fire elemental chosen, if they're higher than the mortal's current rating. They retain the use of all other Charms they knew and may immediately purchase Charms with experience points, up to a total number as is natural for a spirit of its type (see *The Roll of Glorious Divinity, Vol. I*, pp. 170-73 for full details). After the transformation is complete, the new elemental may purchase spirit Charms normally, but must start with those Charms common to its type. Newly created fire elementals retain all Charms of this Style and can teach these Charms to others.

The sheer fiery power of the transformation often overwhelms mortal minds soon after the transformation, scouring away their personalities and memories entirely, and leaving only a newborn elemental. At the end of the scene in which a mortal first uses this Charm she must roll (Wits+ Integrity) at a difficulty of (9 – Temperance). Success leaves character's personality retains largely intact; failure means the character's Motivation changes to one appropriate to the elemental type in question. The mortal may or may not become a Storyteller character, at Storyteller discretion. This is a permanent transformation, fundamentally altering the martial artist, treating the Charm's duration as instant.

FURNACE-FORGED JUGGERNAUT PROCEDURE

Cost: 12m, 2wp; **Mins:** Martial Arts 5, Essence 3; **Type:** Simple (Speed 6, DV -2)

Keywords: Obvious. Crippling, Shaping

Duration: One scene

Prerequisite Charms: Magma Breath Technique, Flesh Annealing Procedure, Radiant Hearth Reprisal

This Charm was developed during the Shogunate for soldiers who proudly stood beside their mortal peers and held their own with the famous Gunzoshu Commandos. This was a very purposeful and sharp departure from the original pinnacle Charm of this Style, channeling the power of the Hungry Furnace itself to provide strength and durability, and allow for practitioners to be effective support troops for a, somewhat, longer period.

Using the fire from within to forge himself anew, the hungry furnace literally consumes raw materials to fuel his transfor-





mation. He can insert non-magical metals—weaponry, armor, currency or even scrap metal—into his mouth, and the incandescent heat within him will melt the materials into a slag that flows down into his belly. He must consume metal with a total (Resources) equal to his permanent Essence to fuel this Charm; it provides no benefit if this requirement is not met.

Once the hungry furnace consumes the necessary fuel, he grows a foot taller and becomes infinitely more imposing, bursting out of any non-magical armor he may be wearing. Gleaming and polished metal plates instantaneously burst forth from his skin, rune carved and jagged, to armor his body and provide him with natural weaponry. His eyes burn with righteous fury from behind an articulated faceplate, and clouds of sooty, black smoke curl from his mouth and nostrils. He becomes immune to wound penalties. He adds +1 to his Strength, Dexterity, and Stamina, + (Essence ×2) to his bashing and lethal natural soak, and +3 damage to all his unarmed martial arts attacks, and deals lethal damage unarmed. He gains +2 automatic successes on intimidation rolls, but suffers a -4 external penalty to Stealth rolls.

However, once this Charm expires, the hungry furnaces suffers an unsoakable 8ahl of damage, as his systems sffers from the terrible heat and strain of manifesting his internal furnace. If he is mortal, then one level of this damage is a permanent Crippling wound that cannot be healed without magic, and adds this Charm's minimum Essence to the difficulty of any effects used to remove this damage. Exalts suffer no such permanent damage.

This Charm cannot be activated while wearing armor forged of the magical materials.

MIDNIGHT KNIFE STYLE (AKA, SLIPPERY BASTARD STYLE)

The Midnight Knife Style was developed in the unforgiving dojos of Malfeas by an underhanded, but petty and insignificant, demon of the first Circle who had become enamored of the Ebon Dragon. For his presumption at professing to emulate the virtues of one of the Yozi, the hapless first circle was dissolved and forged into some minor helltech wonder. But the Ebon Dragon, or one of his souls, took an uncommon interest in the style, finding it, if nothing else, amusing.

The style spread through Malfeas, and then, by way of summoned demons, into Creation. There it was practiced initially by infernal cults, but eventually it was adopted by a wide number of diverse, though equally duplicitous and unsavory, individuals. The fall of the Shogunate and the Ravages of the Bolorian Crusade and Contagion, wiped away most of the style's infernalist practitioners. However, perhaps because the style possessed a portion of the emulated Yozi's own elusive nature, knowledge of the Midnight Knife Style survived, independent of the cult that backed it.

Midnight Knife Style persists to this day, practiced by a wide variety of criminals, assassins, and outright murderers, in enclaves of scum and villainy across Creation. It lacks any true dojos and is taught in a one on one basis, passed from master to student. The style's deceitful philosophy, and the personalities that find it appealing, often do not risk one another's presence

for long. They know that treachery is the only certainty when it comes to the habits of a Midnight Knife Stylist.

As a result, the style's practitioners are limited in their understanding of the style's origins. Its Malfean origins have been all but erased, and the lack of any order or unity between the masters of the style means that what information is rediscovered tends to die with the discoverer. Still, stripped of its connections to hell, the style and its dark philosophy persist, and even thrive, in some areas. Second Age martial artists have by and large forgotten this style's original name, and it is now called by a far less grandiose name: "Slippery Bastard Style."

The demons who remember its true origins fancy it was part of a long-ago failed or abandoned escape plan concocted by the Ebon Dragon, and perhaps they are correct... or perhaps the plan is neither as failed or as abandoned as they believe.

This style shares an affinity with the dark, mysterious and even deceptive nature of the Element of Water. Water Aspects find such duplicity natural, and they pay no surcharge when using Charms of this style.

Weapons and Armor: This style treats knives, and their artifact equivalents, as form weapons. It can be practiced only in light armor.

Complementary Abilities: Students of this style must have Larceny ••, Stealth ••, and must possess at least one Intimacy or Motivation which could be easily described as "treacherous" or "deceptive."

HIDDEN-BLADE-IS-SHARPEST UNDERSTANDING

Cost: 2m; **Mins:** Martial Arts 2, Essence 2; **Type:** Simple (Dramatic Action)

Keywords: None

Duration: Indefinite

Prerequisite Charms: None

The slippery bastard may attune her essence to a weapon, which must be one of this style's form weapons, and cannot be an Artifact with a rating higher than her (Essence). This attunement comes on top of any other attunement costs. Bound to the weapon by her essence, the slippery bastard has a preternatural familiarity with it. She becomes one with it, and it is never far from her hand.

As long as the essence for this Charm is kept committed, the slippery bastard may reflexively ready the weapon, provided it is in her possession, at a cost of 1m. Also, she may spend 1m to re-roll any failed attempts to resist being disarmed of the weapon. If she is successful on the second roll, she reaches out with her other hand and catches the weapon before it falls. She may only use this re-roll effect once per roll to resist being disarmed and only if her other hand is free.

OPEN PALM POSTURE

Cost: 2m, 1wp; **Mins:** Martial Arts 3, Essence 3; **Type:** Supplemental

Keywords: Combo-OK, Illusion

Duration: Indefinite

Prerequisite Charms: Hidden-Blade-is-Sharpest Understanding

The Midnight Knife stylist is adept at trickery, both psychological and physical. Her fingers are nimble, and she can make objects dance in her hands. Initiates into this style frequently practice feats of sleight of hand in order to condition their re-



flexes and dexterity to the point where the impossibly subtle movements of this style become feasible.

This Charm supplements a (Dexterity + Larceny) roll to conceal an item on one's person no larger than the stylist's hand, adding (Essence) automatic successes to the roll. In addition to the normal effect, if the roll overcomes an onlooker's MDV, he completely fails to notice the concealed item. This is an unnatural mental influence that may be overcome by spending 1wp (or 2wp if the concealed item is the knife the character has attuned through Hidden-Blade-is-Sharpest Understanding).

FOE VEXING SIDESTEP

Cost: 2m; **Mins:** Martial Arts 2, Essence 2; **Type:** Reflexive (Step 2)

Keywords: Combo-OK

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: None

The slippery bastard is perfectly aware of how to move to best destabilize her foe. When she dodges or parries, she shifts subtly to move her opponent into a position that renders him vulnerable to the next attack. This Charm may be activated whenever the slippery bastard defends against an attack through the application of her Dodge or Parry DV. If she successfully defends, this doubles the DV penalty the attack caused the attacker. Only the slippery bastard may exploit this lowered DV, and she may do so only if she attacks the target on her next action. These penalties persists until the target's DV refreshes.

In the event of a flurry, this Charm may be invoked once per attack in the flurry, and the benefit is cumulative. No matter how many attacks the attacker makes, this Charm may not increase the total penalty to the target's DVs by more than the slippery bastard's (Martial Arts).

ALL-ENCOMPASSING SUCKER-PUNCH METHOD

Cost: 4m; **Mins:** Martial Arts 3, Essence 2; **Type:** Supplemental

Keywords: Combo-OK

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Foe Vexing Sidestep

Slippery bastards are known to smile at their enemies, give them big friendly grins, and then shove a knife in their eye the second they blink. It's not their fault, they explain, grinning sheepishly, that's just how they were taught to fight. The sad truth is that this is true. This Charm may supplement any attack the slippery bastard makes while attempting to ambush a character from plain view (such as in the middle of a conversation), negating the increased difficulty of the slippery bastard's roll to establish surprise.

Furthermore, if the slippery bastard is actively engaging the target in friendly banter or conversation, the target suffers an additional -2 penalty to notice her malevolent intent, which stacks with the normal penalty for distraction.

MIDNIGHT KNIFE FORM

Cost: 5m; **Mins:** Martial Arts 4, Essence 3; **Type:** Simple (Speed 4)

Keywords: Form-type, Obvious

Duration: One scene

Prerequisite Charms: All-Encompassing Sucker-punch Method, Open Palm Posture

With legs spread wide and poised on the balls of her feet, the slippery bastard adopts the serpentine stance emblematic

of this style. While she remains in this form, her shadow performs a subtle, sinuous dance. Slippery bastards of particularly high Essence sometimes find that their animas contain writhing shadows that are strangely draconic, but few save the most suspicious occultists think anything of these apparitions.

While this Form is active, the slippery bastard adds (Essence) dice to attempt to reestablish surprise, though she may still only make such rolls if circumstances would normally permit them. Further, the slippery bastard gains one automatic success on all attack rolls using a knife she attuned through Hidden Blade is Sharpest Understanding.

THOUSAND DEADLY STINGS FEINT

Cost: 3m; **Mins:** Martial Arts 4, Essence 3; **Type:** Supplemental

Keywords: Combo-OK, Illusion

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Midnight Knife Form

The slippery bastard moves so fast that her strikes appear to replicate through the air. A blossom of blurry illusions precede her attack, setting the target up for a devastating true assault..

The target of the attack sees the slippery bastard make her (Essence) attacks before her true strike. Though these are only an illusion, and none of them strike true, defending against them throws the target off-balance. The target suffers an on-slaught penalty to his DVs against the supplemented unarmed Martial Arts attack equal to the slippery bastard's (Essence). This is an unnatural mental influence, Illusion effect, and the target may pay 1wp to resist and ignore the illusory assault.

SMIRKING SERPENT MISDIRECTION

Cost: 4m; **Mins:** Martial Arts 5, Essence 3; **Type:** Supplemental

Keywords: Combo-OK, Illusion

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Thousand Deadly Sting's Feint

Deception is the slippery bastard's bread and butter, it sustains him, nourishes him. The art of misdirection is as second nature to him as breathing.

This Charm supplements a blow against a target who has not yet Joined battle with the slippery bastard. If the attack succeeds exceed the target's DMDV, then the slippery bastard can make the attack seem as if it came from someone or someplace other than her. This is an Illusion effect, and canny targets can spend one Willpower to resist, if they have reason to suspect the plausibility of what they believe happened.

This Charm cannot be used against a target who has already Joined Battle with the slippery bastard.

DEADLY EMBRACE TECHNIQUE

Cost: 4m; **Mins:** Martial Arts 4, Essence 3; **Type:** Supplemental

Keywords: Combo-OK

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Midnight Knife Form

The martial artist who advances to this level of mastery can kill with the lightest touch and may strike deadly blows against those who come into his clutches. This Charm supplements a crush attack the slippery bastard makes while she controls a clinch. This allows her to replace the crush with a martial arts attack, which may be unarmed or made with a weapon attuned through Hidden-Blade-is Sharpest Understanding, but may not





use any other weapon. The clinched victim may not defend against this attack any more than she could defend against a normal crush, and extra successes from the grapple roll transfer over to this roll as usual. Damage from this attack is piercing if it wasn't already. In the absence of a weapon, this instead allows the martial artist to strike an unarmed blow to a vital center, at (+Essence/2)L damage. However, this technique relies on speed and finesse, not strength and brute force, and does not permit the slippery bastard to continue to restrain the target after the clinch is made. Immediately after this attack, she must release the target.

SERPENT STRIKES THE HANDLER

Cost: 3m, 1wp; **Mins:** Martial Arts 5, Essence 3; **Type:** Reflexive

Keywords: Combo OK

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Deadly Embrace Technique

Slippery Bastard stylists are dangerous at close range. Why anyone would dare to draw one closer than is absolutely necessary baffles even the most seasoned fighters. Even so, some hapless schmuck invariably makes the mistake of attempting to hold one against her will. When she finds herself in a clinch controlled by her opponent, the slippery bastard may take advantage of the clinch to stab at the areas her opponent leaves undefended. She must be unarmed, or wielding a form weapon, to use this opportunity. She may activate this Charm only once per tick where she fails to control a grapple. When she activates this Charm, the opponent grappling her automatically suffers (her Strength + her weapon's damage) dice of lethal damage. The winner of the clinch can avoid this damage by electing to release the slippery bastard, rather than throw or crush her.

DODGE TO SHADOW

Cost: 6m, 1wp; **Mins:** Martial Arts 5, Essence 4; **Type:** Reflexive (Step 2)

Keywords: Combo-Basic, Counterattack, Illusion

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Dodge To Shadow Technique, Serpent Strikes the Handler

"There is no such thing as nowhere to hide." This is the first lesson that Slippery Bastard sifus beat into their pupils...and for a student of this style, it may actually be true. When avoiding a blow against her, the slippery bastard steps into her opponent's blind spot, or leaps into the shadows of the rafters above, or somewhere else nearby. For a moment the opponent is baffled, looking for her where she used to be. Unfortunately, the mystery is short lived, for she soon re-appears, often carrying her opponent's death with her.

This Charm may be activated when the slippery bastard has successfully dodged an attack, allowing her to make an unarmed Martial Arts counterattack at her full dice pool. She also weaves an unnatural illusion, which costs one Willpower to ignore, that allows her to attempt to reestablish surprise against the victim alone. If visibility penalties from darkness exceed (target's Essence ÷ 2, round up) the victim can not prevent the surprise by seeing through the illusion, but only by the normal means of defeating surprise attacks. If the visibility penalties from darkness are greater than -1, then reestablishing surprise is reflexive, otherwise it must be flurried as normal.

PIOUS EXEMPLAR OF (VIRTUE) STYLE

In these dark times the Pious Exemplars of Virtue stand firm in their reverence for the past. Their histories recall the glories and honor of the First Age, though not its horror and tyranny. They call for a return to what they call the Time of Virtue. The Pious Exemplars of Virtue are a collection of enlightened mortals, god-bloods and Terrestrials all practicing a martial art developed during the Shogunate for peacekeeping. Itinerant defenders of the people, they bring law to lawless places and give hope to the hopeless with their martial prowess. They do often end up serving the ends of the Gold Faction Sidereals whether willing or not, and many of the group's members are under the influence of the Cult of the Illuminated. However they may be manipulated, the Exemplars first and foremost devote themselves to the path of virtue, and it shows.

In the Age of Sorrows few can rival the devoutness and piety of the Pious Exemplars. Their devotion is not directed to any god or order, they are zealots of virtue itself. This martial art resonates strongly with a different Virtue for each practitioner, always their highest Virtue, informing how they learn and use the Charms. Each Virtue is aspected to a different element. For the purposes of deciding this style's aspect, Compassion is tied to Wood, Temperance to Earth, Valor to Fire, and Conviction to Air. Dragon-Bloods suffer no surcharge when using the style if they resonate with the appropriate Virtue. As usual, Water Aspects may use any version of the style with no surcharge.

Weapons and Armor: The form weapons of this style vary depending on the Virtue the practitioner dedicates herself to. *Compassion:* staff and wrackstaff; *Conviction:* axes, hatchets and grimcleavers; *Temperance:* mauls, clubs, tetsubo and goremauls (but not grand goremauls); *Valor:* straight swords and daiklaves. This style is compatible with any armor provided its mobility penalty, before bonuses from magic materials, is less than (but not equal to) half the Exemplar's resonant Virtue.

Complementary Abilities: To practice this style, the martial artist must have a Virtue rated at ••• or better. If the Virtue in question falls below that rating for any reason, the Exemplar loses access to the Charms of this style. A martial artist who changes their highest Virtue may spend a week meditating on her new philosophy and spend two experience to realign this style with the newly increased Virtue. A martial artist must also have Melee •• and Integrity • to practice this style.

DEVOUT PENITENT GUARDIANSHIP

Cost: 2m; **Mins:** Martial Arts 2, Essence 2; **Type:** Reflexive

Keywords: Combo-OK, Obvious, Virtue-Resonant

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: None

The martial artist is willing to bear the fury of the world to atone for her past sins. She accepts the misfortune of another as punishment for her own iniquity. Whenever the Exalt sees

NEW KEYWORD: VIRTUE-RESONANT

Charms with this keyword may only be activated when a character takes an action that resonates with the virtue in question sufficiently to benefit from a virtue channel. The resonant virtue is not dictated by the charm, but is always the Character's highest virtue (or primary virtue).

someone assaulted in a way that is repulsive to the Virtue to which this style resonates for her, she may interpose herself between the attacker and the target, redirecting the attack at himself. Examples include:

- **Compassion:** Attacks which harm a group of people, or persons towards which the Exemplar has an Intimacy.
- **Conviction:** Attacks which harm an institution or specific ideology towards which the Exemplar has an Intimacy.
- **Temperance:** Wanton and indiscriminate brutality.
- **Valor:** The strong attacking the defenseless.

To interpose herself, the stylist must succeed on a (Virtue) roll. Success forces the attack to target her instead and she may apply her PDV against it. If the attack overcomes her PDV, it strikes her normally. If the Virtue roll fails, she still applies her PDV against the attack, but if it overcomes her PDV it strikes the original target instead. The attack is then applied normally to the original target with one less success, rather than the whole of the martial artist's PDV.

HUMBLE MENDICANT DEVOTION

Cost: 4m; **Mins:** Martial Arts 3, Essence 2; **Type:** Reflexive

Keywords: Combo-OK, Obvious, Virtue-Resonant

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Devout Penitent Guardianship

The Pious Exemplar's dedication to his chosen Virtue is evident in his posture and in the manner in which he humbles himself before the enormity of the task of restoring Virtue to the world. The Exemplar can steady himself against the trials ahead and activate this Charm in response to a Join Battle roll. He gains a number of successes equal to his resonant Virtue.

PIOUS EXEMPLAR OF (VIRTUE) FORM

Cost: 5m; **Mins:** Martial Arts 4, Essence 2; **Type:** Simple

Keywords: Form-type

Duration: One scene

Prerequisite Charms: Devout Penitent Guardianship

The Exemplar hones her dedication to her Virtue into a spiritual blade, and strikes out against her foes with the righteous fury of a Spirit of justice. The Exemplar moves with the swiftness of divine retribution, adding (Virtue) to her Strength and Dexterity to calculate Movement, Dashing, and Leaping distances as well as feats of strength.

Additionally, the Exemplar gains an additional benefit based on her resonant Virtue:

- **Compassion:** Add +1 to her PDV.
- **Conviction:** Reduce her wound penalties by 1.
- **Temperance:** Reduce the cumulative DV penalty of each unarmed Martial Arts attack or flurry she makes by 1.
- **Valor:** Adds 1 to the Rate of her unarmed attacks.

UNASSAILABLE (VIRTUE) DEFENSE

Cost: 5m; **Mins:** Martial Arts 5, Essence 2; **Type:** Reflexive

Keywords: Combo-OK, Obvious

Duration: One tick

Prerequisite Charms: Pious Exemplar of Virtue (Form)

Fighting for a cause greater than herself, the Exemplar may employ this Charm to negate (resonant Virtue) points of penalty from both onslaught and coordinated attacks to her Martial Arts-derived PDV for a single tick.

(VIRTUE)'S EDGE TECHNIQUE

Cost: 3m; **Mins:** Martial Arts 4, Essence 3; **Type:** Supplemental

Keywords: Combo-Basic, Obvious, Virtue-Resonant

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Pious Exemplar of (Virtue) Form

The Exemplar strikes a blow empowered by the strength of her dedication, and which resonates with her chosen Virtue. Attacks supplemented by this Charm add the Martial artist's (Virtue) to the raw damage.

AEGIS OF (VIRTUE)

Cost: 4m, 1wp; **Mins:** Martial Arts 5, Essence 3; **Type:** Reflexive

Keywords: Combo-OK, Obvious, Virtue-Resonant

Duration: (Martial Arts) actions

Prerequisite Charms: Unassailable (Virtue) Defense

The Pious Exemplar girds herself with Essence, channeled through her virtue, and becomes as durable as her own unflappable spirit. This Charm limns the Exemplar with a focused, intense, halo of light appropriate to her resonant Virtue (blue for Compassion, green for Conviction, black for Temperance and red for Valor). She adds her resonant (Virtue) to her bashing soak and half that (round up) to lethal and aggravated soak. This soak is considered natural soak, stacking with armor.

This Charm can only be activated when the Exemplar undertakes a battle for a cause that resonates with her chosen Virtue. It automatically expires if she takes any action that contradicts that Virtue, or if she fails any checks of that Virtue.

INSURMOUNTABLE (VIRTUE) DEDICATION

Cost: 3m, 1wp; **Mins:** Martial Arts 5, Essence 3; **Type:** Simple

Keywords: Combo-Basic, Virtue-Resonant

Duration: One scene

Prerequisite Charms: (Virtue)'s Edge Technique

The Exemplar is devoted to her Virtue; to her, nothing else matters. Though she may bleed from a thousand wounds, she will not falter in the defense of her Virtue. The stylist reduces wound penalties that she suffers by (resonant Virtue ÷ 2). Wound penalties accumulated after activating this Charm are subject to the same reduction. Furthermore, for this Charm's duration, the Exemplar's lethal wounds do not bleed.

RIGHTEOUS PARAGON OF (VIRTUE)

Cost: 3m, 1wp, 1hl; **Mins:** Martial Arts 5, Essence 3; **Type:** Simple (Speed 5)

Keywords: Combo-Basic, Obvious, Emotion

Duration: One scene

Prerequisite Charms: Aegis of (Virtue), Insurmountable (Virtue) Dedication

Loudly proclaiming her dedication to her chosen Virtue, the Exemplar swears to champion it in Creation and bring light to this fallen age. Opening a wound in the palm of her hand, the Exemplar consecrates this oath with her own blood, which she drips onto her weapon. Thereafter the blade shines with brilliant, virtuous light, striking fear in the hearts of trespassers.

For the rest of the scene, the Exemplar may divide (resonant Virtue) bonus dice between his weapon's Speed (to a minimum of 3), Accuracy, Rate, Damage, and Defense. (If she has no weapon, she made apply this effect to a single unarmed attack: punch, kick, clinch, etc.) No trait may benefit from more than a single point of alteration.



Furthermore, the terrible brilliance that she radiates forces anyone with Valor less than the Exemplar's (resonant Virtue) to suffers a -2 internal penalty to all dice pools while opposing her. This comes from an Emotion effect which is apropos of the Virtue she champions. (Compassionate Exemplars inspire guilt and shame, Temperate Exemplars inspire debilitating introspection and self-examination, Convicted Exemplars inspire fear at the sight of the Exemplar's single-minded ferocity, and Valorous Exemplars inspire a different type of fear based on awe.) This unnatural mental influence costs 2wp to resist for the scene.

Finally, for the Charm's duration, the Exemplar is incapable of failing checks based on her resonant Virtue without first choosing to end the Charm.

SCARLET WHIRLWIND STYLE

In the marshlands of the Southwest, a band of god-blooded marauders harass and pillages the local merchants and caravans. This riffraff—all bastard children of some corrupt deity or another—practice an art that is as violent and feared as the monsoons that ravage the region in the wet season, and as passionate and burning as the fires that scorch the grasslands in the dry months. This style is neither dark nor evil in itself, but it is horrifyingly destructive and bestially violent. Indeed, the even Guild and other wealthy merchants are loathe to travel near the territory of these bandits, for fear of the tales of the horrible Scarlet Whirlwind Stylists. These fiends are fearsome warriors alone, but together they become like living natural disasters, terrible tornadoes of steel and spattered blood, that descend in battle-fury upon their foes.

Once this style was taught to young Dragon-Blooded shock troops in the First Age, but even the minds of the Exalted were ill suited for the battle-mind of the style, which drove them mad, invariably to commit atrocities and acts of brutal madness. Alone a practitioner is a fearsome force on the battlefield, but it is together that this style's deadly potential reveals itself. Opponents who face the practitioners of this style for the first time frequently scoff at their seemingly undisciplined, mindless fury. This bestial rage is, however, not as mindless as it appears. True, their whole minds are devoted to violence, but their rage is not unfocused or untargeted. In lieu of the strict discipline and drill favored by most soldiers and warriors, they substitute a base, animalistic cunning and organization. They fight not with the coordination of a crack military unit, but with the instinctive synergy of purpose of a pack of wild dogs.

This style emulates the fury of fire, the fluid, sanguine grace of water, the unrelenting single-mindedness of the gale, and the wild vitality of Wood. It is elementally neutral, and dragon-blooded of any aspect do not have to pay the elemental surcharge on the Charms of this style.

Weapons and Armor: This style may only be used while unarmed, or wielding a matched set of chopping or hacking weapons such as hatchets, axes, or chopping swords (or their artifact equivalents). It may only be used while in light armor, though traditionally stylists wear little more than a few pelts draped over their bodies.

Complementary Abilities: Learning this style requires Valor •••+, and at least one dot each in Survival and Melee.

LUST FOR VIOLENCE METHOD

Cost: 2m; **Mins:** Martial Arts 2, Essence 2; **Type:** Reflexive

Keywords: Combo-OK

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: None

The scarlet whirlwind is eager for battle, and surges into conflict, propelled by the force of her lust. For every ally joining battle at her side, she may add 1 dice to her join battle Roll, to a maximum of her (Valor).

STEEL AND SAVAGERY PRACTICE

Cost: 3m; **Mins:** Martial Arts 2, Essence 2; **Type:** Supplemental

Keywords: Combo-OK, Obvious, Knockdown

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Lust for Violence Method

The practitioners of this style are furious indeed. This Charm supplements an unarmed martial arts attack. The attack is designed to terrify a foe rather than injure them and, therefore, does no damage. Instead, if the attack hits, the target must succeed at a (Stamina + Resistance) roll, at a difficulty of the attacker's (Valor). Should he fail, the target is overwhelmed by the attacker's martial prowess and fury and falls prone.

TWIN-BLADED MANSLAYER TECHNIQUE

Cost: 1m; **Mins:** Martial Arts 2, Essence 2; **Type:** Reflexive

Keywords: Combo-OK

Duration: One Scene

Prerequisite Charms: Lust for Violence method

Having mastered the art of fighting with a weapon in both hands, the scarlet whirlwind has become accustomed to using paired weapons. She adopts a stance suited to combat with paired weapons, eliminating any off-hand penalty from wielding a form weapon of this style in both hands.

THOUSAND FANGS OF THE HURRICANE

Cost: 3m + 2m per ally; **Mins:** Martial Arts 3, Essence 2; **Type:** Supplemental

Keywords: Combo-OK

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Steel and Savagery Practice Twin Bladed Manslayer Technique

The scarlet whirlwinds may appear to be naught but a carnage-loving mob... and in many ways they are. They howl for blood and advance with the mindless furry of a pack of rabid dogs or a natural disaster. But their howls and roars have purpose that few, uninitiated to the martial arts, can discern.

This Charm supplements an Aim action allowing, the scarlet whirlwind to share the benefit of his Aim action with up (Valor/2) allies. The selected allies gain the bonus on their next action, provided they attack the target the scarlet whirlwind was aiming at. Selected allies know instinctively which target that is. No ally may benefit from more the +3 dice from aiming.

The scarlet whirlwind does not, herself, gain any bonus from the Aim action, but her guttural grunts and howls, laden with essence, confer the full benefits of such an action to her allies.

NEW KEYWORD: KNOCKDOWN

Charms with this keyword knock the target to the ground, prone. Appropriate Charms can resist this effect.

SCARLET WHIRLWIND FORM

Cost: 5m; **Mins:** Martial Arts 4, Essence 2; **Type:** Simple (Speed 5)

Keywords: Form-type, Obvious

Duration: One scene

Prerequisite Charms: Thousand Fangs of the Hurricane

The scarlet whirlwind's mind focuses wholly on the flow of battle. She roars towards her foe, she and her allies forming a death-dealing typhoon. Their minds meld together to focus on a single task, becoming wholly dedicated to violence, to the exclusion of all other pursuits. Mortals using this form may soak lethal damage with half their Stamina, and Exalts may soak lethal damage with their full Stamina. Furthermore, the scarlet whirlwind may reduce all penalties caused by wounds or pain by his (Conviction or Essence) whichever is lower. For as long as the Form lasts, the scarlet whirlwind's Guard action becomes (-1 DV). This Charm expires on any tick where the scarlet whirlwind does not either attack or advance towards his opponents. He must always be on the attack, always moving forward, and should care nothing for his own defense.

PITILESS STORM TECHNIQUE

Cost: 3m or 5m; **Mins:** Martial Arts 4, Essence 3; **Type:** Reflexive

Keywords: Combo-OK, Counterattack

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Scarlet Whirlwind Form

None escape the scarlet whirlwind, and rare is it to see anyone survive an engagement with a full group of these rapacious monsters. Those who try to flee are cut down mercilessly, and those who try to strike back often fare worse.

The scarlet whirlwind may invoke this Charm (at the cost of 3m) to make an unarmed martial arts attack against any target who is endeavoring to move out of melee range after having engaged her in combat. This is treated as a counterattack, made at her full dice-pool and, occurs immediately before the target manages to move away. Charms such as Leaping Dodge Method, which provides a leaping dodge, do not qualify as "moving away" for this Charm's use. Only actual Move actions qualify.

If she has Scarlet Whirlwind Form active, the scarlet whirlwind can pay 5m to make a counterattack, against any target who attacks one of her allies. The target must be within melee range, or, if the scarlet whirlwind has not moved that tick, within range of a normal (unmodified) Move action.

INDOMITABLE BATTLE-MIND TRANCE

Cost: 3m, 1wp; **Mins:** Martial Arts 5, Essence 3; **Type:** Simple (Speed 4)

Keywords: Combo-Basic, Obvious

Duration: (Martial Arts) actions

Prerequisite Charms: Scarlet Whirlwind Form

While this Charm is active, the Scarlet Whirlwind adds one dot to her Valor; this may raise her Valor over 5. Characters with a Valor of 6+ are truly fearless, like automata. They are incapable of failing Valor rolls and are immune to all penalties and magics based upon fear or intimidation. Furthermore, each ally using this Charm within one another's vicinity (being in line of sight is sufficient), the scarlet whirlwind adds +1 to her Accuracy and Damage, to a maximum cumulative benefit of her (Valor).

While under the effects of this Charm, the scarlet whirlwind loses her capacity for verbal language. However, she may communicate verbally with characters who are using either this Charm or Scarlet Whirlwind Form. They understand the cunning savagery that has drowned each others' conscious minds and may apprehend the meaning behind her guttural roars, grunts, and howls.

TERRIFYING FURY ONSLAUGHT

Cost: 3m per attack; **Mins:** Martial Arts 5, Essence 3; **Type:** Extra Action

Keywords: Combo-OK

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Indomitable Battle mind Trance

The fury of the scarlet whirlwind will not—cannot—be stymied by the protestations of those it seeks to vanquish. The scarlet whirlwind makes a magical flurry, initially of only one unarmed martial arts attack, at a cost of 3m. If that attack fails to hit, however, she may spend 3m to make another attack. She may continue doing so each time she misses, subject to the following restrictions. The total number of attacks the scarlet whirlwind can make is capped by her weapons' Rates, as normal. Additionally, she can make no more attacks than the lower of her (Valor) or (Essence). She suffers no multiple action penalties, and she applies only the highest DV penalty of any single attack. However, the furious whirlwind of attacks does weaken with each successive blow. Each attack takes a penalty to its base damage equal to the number of previous attacks: -1 on the second attack, -2 on the third, etc. If her base damage pool falls to zero, she may not make the attack—she simply doesn't have the strength left.

CUTTING CYCLONE FORMATION

Cost: 3m + 1m per ally, 1wp; **Mins:** Martial Arts 5, Essence 3; **Type:** Supplemental

Keywords: Combo-Basic, Obvious

Duration: One tick

Prerequisite Charms: Terrifying Fury Onslaught

The true strength of the scarlet whirlwind is that it is never alone, and the whole is greater than the sum of the parts. This Charm supplements a flurry composed of unarmed martial arts attacks. When making the flurry, the scarlet whirlwind can name a number of allies, up to a maximum of half her Valor; each ally adds one mote to the cost of this Charm. The selected allies can take advantage of the onslaught penalties her attacks caused against that target, for the rest of the tick.

The affected allies, however, do not benefit from the onslaught caused by one another's attacks, unless they all invoke this Charm, in such a manner that all participants are affected. (This technique is called the Blood Maelstrom Tactic.)

SEEING BLADE STYLE

War is a horrible thing. It takes its tolls on combatants, bystanders and even the land itself. Those who engage for too long in battle often come to a bad end. They are often killed, and those that survive are often subject to crippling injuries. Rare is it that you see a career soldier survive into old age. No injury, however, is as feared among the soldiers as those that take away sight. Indeed, all across Creation, sightlessness can





be a death sentence for many. Without vision how can one fend for oneself in the harsh landscape of Creation? Most such injuries reduce a mortal to begging or worse.

But for those few individuals with enlightened essence and martial inclination, blindness can be a blessing. This style, invented by famed Even Blade Master Zhao Feng, who was himself blinded in a duel, functions not only to mitigate the problems of blindness, but turn it to an advantage. This style is associated with the element of Air. Aspects of Air find that the precision involved in this style comes naturally to them, and so like Water Aspects pay no surcharge to use these Charms.

Weapons and Armor: Seeing Blade Style treats swords (both slashing and straight), spears, and polearms (and their artifact equivalents) as form weapons. Practitioners frequently employ such weapons as walking aids, functioning in the roll as a blind man's cane. The style may only be practiced in light armor which is not made of metal (such as a buff jacket), or no armor at all.

ETERNAL BATTLE MIND

Cost: 2m; **Mins:** Martial Arts 2, Essence 1; **Type:** Reflexive (Step 2)

Keywords: Combo-OK

Duration: One action

Prerequisite Charms: None

This Charm allows the martial artist to use a non-readied weapon to parry or attack, striking with a sheathed blade, or with a staff or spear held as a walking stick. When used in this manner, a weapon does bashing damage instead of lethal, and suffers a -1 penalty to its accuracy and damage pool. A weapon used in this way does not hamper the Seeing Blade's ability to perceive the world through the use of Seeing Blade Form.

UNCANNY AWARENESS METHOD

Cost: 2m; **Mins:** Martial Arts 3, Essence 2; **Type:** Reflexive (Step 2)

Keywords: Combo-OK

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: None

The martial artist cannot be surprised, his awareness is acute, bettered by his sightless state rather than worsened. Activated in response to an unexpected attack, this Charm allows the Seeing Blade to apply half his PDV against the attack, even though it remains unexpected. If the martial artist is currently employing Seeing Blade Form, he may apply his full PDV against a the attack. This Charm does not allow him to ready his weapon or parry lethal damage unarmed without a stunt or other magic. This Charm does not negate surprise—all the Seeing Blade's DVs are still considered 0—but rather permits the Blade's instinctive reflexes and supernal awareness to act in his defense. If activated at the outset of combat in response to a surprise attack, this Charm adds (Essence) to the subsequent Join Battle roll, provided the attack is successfully parried.

SIGHTLESS DEFTNESS

Cost: 3m; **Mins:** Martial Arts 4, Essence 2; **Type:** Supplemental

Keywords: Combo-OK, Obvious

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Eternal Battle mind, Uncanny Awareness Method

Many martial artists rely on their ability to predict their opponent's next move, to see the course of their blades in flight and intercept them before they can be harmed. Numerous styles strive to teach their students unpredictable movements in an effort to make their attacks harder to defend against. Few are as successful as the Seeing Blade stylists.

Because his movements are informed not by sight but by other senses, the Seeing Blade attacks from angles and trajectories that seem impossible, awkward, and unlikely to opponents who rely chiefly on their sight. Unconstrained by the limitations of a single perspective, a practitioner of this style angles his attacks to take full advantage of not only the holes in their foes' defenses, but of the limitations of sight-based awareness. He strikes at ankles, or from beneath his opponent, or from the side, his weapon following a wide arc towards the target. This seemingly extraneous movement does not impede the efficacy of his attacks, but, enhanced by essence, makes them hard to defend against.

An attack supplemented by this Charm inflicts an external penalty of the user's (Essence) to the target's DV. If Seeing Blade Form is also active, the user adds (Essence/2, rounded up) dice to the attack. In order to activate this Charm the martial artist must remove the distraction of sight, ether by closing his eyes or blindfolding themselves, or by being blind.

Targets who are blind, perceive things through non-visual means (such as Feeling-the-Air Technique in **The Manual of Exalted Power: Dragon-Blooded**, p. 136), or who have learned the Form of this style are immune to this Charm.

SEEING BLADE FORM

Cost: 6m; **Mins:** Martial Arts 4, Essence 3; **Type:** Simple (Speed 5)

Keywords: Form-type

Duration: One scene

Prerequisite Charms: Sightless Deftness

The seeing blade attunes his senses to the winds and vibrations of the world around him. So long as his weapon touches the earth, channeling the subtle ambient vibrations into his core awareness, he can feel the subtle movements of the winds on her flesh, she can see the whole world around her.

He cannot differentiate colors or read, but she can see perfectly otherwise through a sort of sonar perception. His vision encompasses 360 degrees around him. His vision is not based on sight and therefore does not suffer penalties from darkness, fog or other such things. This renders him utterly impervious to mundane surprise, even when attached to attacks originating from behind him. Against magically generated surprise attacks, she adds (Essence/2) dice, rounded up, to her roll to become aware of the attack.

Furthermore, while wielding a form weapon for this style, the seeing blade increases the weapon's Rate by 1 and lowers his multiple action penalties to the accuracy pools of attacks with the weapon by 1 point each. (so a three attack flurry with a straight sword inflicts -2, -3, & -4 penalties instead of -3, -4, & -5).

Though undeniably potent, this form suffers from several restrictions. First, the seeing blade's awareness extends only through an (Essence ×5) yard radius around him. He can neither "see" beyond this range, nor is he immune to surprise from attacks originating from beyond that range. He suffers the nor-





mal penalties from blindness when reacting to ranged attacks that originate beyond this range.

Second, the seeing blade must be able to hear and feel his target in order to detect them. He suffers a -1 point visibility penalty against opponents that are magically inaudible or intangible; if attackers are both invisible and inaudible because of some Charm or combination of effects, they become invalid targets for the seeing blade's awareness.

Furthermore, the martial artist must frequently return his weapon to its resting position, touching the ground, in order to benefit fully from this magical awareness. This means he must ready his weapon each action and return it to its resting state at the end of his action, or employ *Eternal Battle Mind*, (Lowering the weapon is reflexive and does not require a separate action.) Should he maintain weapon in the readied position, then his range of sight is limited to $(\text{Essence} \times 3)$ yards around him and he suffers 1 point of visibility penalty from partial blindness.

In order to activate this form, the martial artist must remove the distraction of sight, by closing his eyes, blindfolding himself, or by being blind. Should his sight return, the Charm expires.

INSTRUCTION IN HONORABLE COMBAT

Cost: 1m, 1wp; **Mins:** Martial Arts 4, Essence 3; **Type:** Reflexive

Keywords: Combo-OK, Counterattack

Duration: (Martial Arts) actions

Prerequisite Charms: Seeing Blade Form

A seeing blade is not deterred by numerous underhanded assaults, for he can see the ways between them. He channels his essence into his awareness and reflexes, ready to punish his foes for their underhanded tactics.

For the Charm's duration, the seeing blade may make a counterattack in response to each attempted surprise attack directed at him, provided the originating attackers are within range. These counterattacks are made at the seeing blade's full dice pool. The seeing blade may not make more than (Essence) counter-attacks in a single tick. Should he receive more than one surprise attack in a single tick and choose to make a multiple counterattacks, the second counterattack (and any subsequent counterattacks) suffer an accuracy penalty equal to the number of counterattacks previously made in that tick. This Charm is of particular utility when the seeing blade finds himself completely surrounded, as he will always be able to make such a counterattack against at least one member of the attacking mob.

As an additional benefit, the seeing blade's attunement to the telltale sounds of deception (racing heartbeats, shallow breath, tenseness of the voice) increase his ability to notice dishonesty. He may add (Essence) dice to any attempts to notice deception, lying, or subterfuge for the Charm's duration.

Though this Charm is reflexive, it must be activated on a tick when the seeing blade can act, because it does require some mental preparation.

UNASSAILABLE SWORD SAGE STYLE

Cost: 5m, 1wp; **Mins:** Martial Arts 5, Essence 3; **Type:** Reflexive (Step 2)

Keywords: Combo-OK

Duration: (Essence) actions

Prerequisite Charms: Seeing Blade Form

One of the most famous and impressive feats pupils of this style are made to accomplish involves standing out in a hailstorm, naked except for their weapons, and being told to parry the storm itself. Those who scoff at the impossibility of such a feat are soon shocked to see their wizened masters stand in the hail and, their blades whirling, bat aside the torrential down-pour of ice.

The seeing blade is aware of everything around him. His defenses are without fault, and he has transcended any sort of debility on might suffer from blindness. He twirls his blade about him with the canny grace and insight of someone whose vision has surpassed the scope of simple sight. He cannot be overwhelmed, even be he subject to a hundred blows.

The seeing blade may apply his full PDV against any attack for the Charm's duration, even unexpected attacks, but not against attacks made unblockable by Charms. This includes ignoring wound penalties and penalties from his own actions, but does not include penalties caused by external factors such as terrain, onslaught, or Charms. He reduces both onslaught and coordinated attack penalties to his PDV by his (Martial Arts), though this cannot reduce such penalties below zero.

The seeing blade cannot take a move action while this Charm persists; he must remain firmly planted in place. If he is forced to move, this Charm ends. Furthermore, this Charm relies on the expansiveness of the seeing blade's carefully cultivated second sight, and cannot be used if the seeing blade can see normally at the time.

FLURRY OF SIGHTLESS STEEL

Cost: 2m/attack, 1wp; **Mins:** Martial Arts 5, Essence 3; **Type:** Extra Action

Keywords: Combo-OK

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Instruction In Honorable Combat, Unassailable Sword Sage Style

The seeing blade strikes with the kind of speed that evinces extreme planning and economy of motion made possible by the incredible spatial awareness his training affords him. The seeing blade strikes with unprecedented speed, his blows finding holes in the opponents defenses that few had believed were present. He may make $(1 + \lfloor \text{Essence}/2 \rfloor)$ attacks against a single target, up to his weapon's Rate. If the user already has Seeing Blade Form active, he may instead make one Martial Arts attack each against up to (Essence) targets within melee range, up to his weapon's Rate.

The DV penalty of this magical flurry is equal to half total penalty it would normally be for all the attacks.

INSTRUCTIVE BLINDING RETRIBUTION

Cost: 6m, 1wp; **Mins:** Martial Arts 5, Essence 4; **Type:** Reflexive (Step 9)

Keywords: Combo-OK, Counterattack, Crippling, Obvious

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Flurry of Sightless Steel

When someone cuts a Seeing Blade master, they demonstrate their own lack of enlightenment. Masters who teach this char, claim it is designed to initiate such unenlightened foes to the mysteries and majesty of the sightless world. Some less reverent seeing blades (and their opponents) wonder, however,



if it is not just the manifestation of the Zhao Feng's own bitterness at his loss of sight and his vindictive desire to inflict such blindness on his foes. Certainly, seeing blades who have learned this Charm use it that way a great deal.

When he fails to defend against an attack, this Charm allows the seeing blade to retaliate with impossible, blinding, speed. The seeing blade makes an unarmed martial arts counterattack at his full dice pool. If the attack does more than one level of lethal damage or more than two levels of bashing damage, all additional levels (beyond the required 1L or 2B) are converted into a Crippling wound which eliminates one of the target's eyes. If the counterattack does at least 4L or 6B then both eyes are removed, rendering the target completely blind. Exalted target's gouged eyes heal at the same rate as the health levels. Mortals are permanently crippled absent magical care.

THUNDERING AVALANCHE STYLE

The earth trembles, the mountain cracks, and Stone rains down from above. The great crag, which stood motionless for centuries, suddenly becomes a peril that cannot be outrun. The mountain isn't immobile, it is waiting. This is the first lesson students of the Thundering Avalanche Style learn.

The practitioners of Thundering Avalanche Style hold a long term rivalry with the masters of the Jade Mountain Style, for the two represent opposing (in their mind) philosophical viewpoints on the element of earth.

This Earth-aspected style emulates the inertial force and shocking speed of the landslide. Aspects of Earth find that the brute force involved in this style comes naturally to them, and they, along with Aspects of Water, pay no surcharge when using Charms of this style.

Weapons And Armor: Hammers, warhammers, tetsubo and such are form weapons of this style, and may be used with its Charms, along with their artifact equivalents: goremauls and grand goremauls. This style may be practiced in armor of any type, but may not armor constructed of a material that is not of the earth. Therefore, cloth or leather armor is always incompatible with this style, even if it also incorporates metal elements (such as a reinforced buff jacket).

Complementary Abilities: This style cannot be learned without at least Resistance •• and Melee ••.

EARTHEN EQUILIBRIUM UNDERSTANDING

Cost: 1m; **Mins:** Martial Arts 2, Essence 2, **Type:** Reflexive (Step 2)

Keywords: Combo-OK

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: None

Pasiap sleeps fitfully, and his stirrings cause the earth to shake and tremble. But the avalanche falls only when it wishes, and is not hindered for its fall.

The avalanche thunderer is at home on the ground and, in the manner of the boulder, has learned to be equally resilient both upright and on his side. So long as he stands on the earth, the first story of a building, or within a structure comprised largely of stone, the avalanche thunderer may activate this Charm to ignore DV penalties from being prone or on unstable terrain.

CRASHING BOULDER STYLE

Cost: 3m; **Mins:** Martial Arts 2, Essence 2; **Type:** Supplemental
Keywords: Combo-OK

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Earthen Equilibrium Insight

The longer a stone falls the more forceful its impact. Even a pebble can strike with killing force, if dropped from the peak of the Omphalos. Learning from this, the avalanche thunderer uses his own momentum to his advantage.

The avalanche thunderer adds a number of dice to the raw damage of the supplemented unarmed martial arts attack equal to the yards he had moved that tick (to a maximum of Essence dice). This Charm may be used to supplement crushing damage done as part of a clinch, by driving the opponent into a hard surface or by otherwise using momentum to increase one's impact, but only if the avalanche thunderer can move while clinching.

STONE SOLDIER STANCE

Cost: 3m; **Mins:** Martial Arts 3, Essence 2; **Type:** Reflexive
Keywords: Combo-OK, Obvious

Duration: One tick

Prerequisite Charms: Crashing Boulder Style

Hard like the earth and unassailable like the mountain, the avalanche thunderer doesn't yield even to the most savage punishment. This Charm adds (Essence) to the character's bashing and lethal soak and allows him to parry lethal damage unarmed without a stunt. His skin grows grey and hard, cracking like ancient granite when cut, rather than opening like flesh. Wounds inflicted while this Charm is active do not bleed.

This Charm only functions if the avalanche thunderer is in contact with stone, either by standing on the earth or wearing Jade armor.

THUNDERING AVALANCHE FORM

Cost: 5m; **Mins:** Martial Arts 4, Essence 3; **Type:** Simple (Speed 5)

Keywords: Form-type

Duration: One scene

Prerequisite Charms: Stone Soldier Stance

The avalanche thunderer has learned to harness the power and deadly grace of the avalanche. Long study of the movements of the earth and diligent practice of the katas of this style have rendered him as tough and powerful as stone and imparted in him the sudden speed of a rockslide.

The avalanche thunderer who activates this form adopts a staggered stance, at once both stable and mobile. Thereafter, he adds 1 to the base damage trait of all his unarmed martial arts attacks, and an additional bonus depending on the weight of his armor: +1 for medium armor, and +2 for heavy armor. If the character is wearing armor made of white jade add an additional +1 bonus. Only armor made of a mundane metal, of mundane stone, or of Jade provides this benefit.

While this Charm is active the avalanche thunderer's flesh becomes harder and more resilient. His essence crystallizes into stone flakes that harden over his skin. The avalanche thunderer may soak lethal damage with half his Stamina; if he could already do so (as with an Exalt), then he may soak Lethal damage with his full Stamina.





This Charm only works if the avalanche thunderer remains in contact with the earth or a solid stone surface. Should he break contact for more than (Essence) ticks, this form automatically terminates.

EARTHSHAKING HERO TECHNIQUE

Cost: 4m; **Mins:** Martial Arts 4, Essence 3; **Type:** Reflexive (Step 1 or 2)

Keywords: Combo-OK, Obvious

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Inexorable Landslide Offense

It is not easy to stand firm in the face of an avalanche, for the earth shudders and quakes with such ferocity that even the stoutest hearts cannot help but tremble too. The avalanche thunderer smites the Earth with the thundering force of an oncoming rockslide, and the land trembles before him.

While this Charm is active, the area within melee range of the avalanche thunderer is considered be Unstable Terrain, applying a -3 penalty to the DVs of those in the area, and to have an Instability rating equal to the avalanche thunderer's (Essence). This Charm can be employed in several ways. It may be used in step two of defense in an attempt to foil an attack, or in step 1 to set someone up for a devastating blow. However, it only works when the avalanche thunderer stands on solid ground or on a stone surface.

This attack causes (Essence \times 2)L damage to the land beneath the avalanche thunderer; if used in a stone building, this could cause the floor to give way, with disastrous results.

UNENCUMBERED AVALANCHE METHOD

Cost: 2m; **Mins:** Martial Arts 4, Essence 2; **Type:** Reflexive

Keywords: Combo-OK

Duration: Until next action

Prerequisite Charms: Thundering Avalanche Form

This Charm allows to character to not only ignores their armor's mobility penalty to their movement, but adds it as bonus to the distance of their move and dash actions equal to what the penalty would normally be. The mobility penalty still affects DDV as normal.

This Charm only functions with armor made of substances that are of the Earth. This includes most metals and stones, and Jade, but explicitly excludes the Celestial Magical Materials, and non-metal substances like silk or cloth. Furthermore, this Charm only functions while the avalanche thunderer stands upon the earth.

INEXORABLE LANDSLIDE OFFENSE

Cost: 4m; **Mins:** Martial Arts 4, Essence 2; **Type:** Reflexive

Keywords: Combo-OK, Counterattack, Knockback

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Thundering Avalanche Form

The avalanche thunderer is a true juggernaut, unstoppable and irrepressible in his might. As his armored bulk trundles towards his hapless target, the poor soul's allies often seek to stop the advance. With the stubbornness of a rock, the character ignores such attempts to halt his progress. Attackers, failing to even slow his progress, are thrown aside by a savage sweep of his fist or club. This Charm may be activated upon successfully parrying a melee attack. It allows the avalanche thunderer to make an unarmed Martial Arts counterattack. If this counter-

attack inflicts at least one level of damage, convert all levels of damage after the first into knockback (at a rate of 2 yards per 1 level). Targets who suffer knockback must check for knockdown upon landing, against a difficulty of the martial artist's (Essence).

FALLING MOUNTAIN MIGHT

Cost: 4m; **Mins:** Martial Arts 4, Essence 3; **Type:** Simple (Speed 5)

Keywords: Combo-OK, Crippling

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Unencumbered Avalanche Method

When a mountain shrugs of a portion of its burden, and stones rain down to the land below, the land is made to feel the full weight of the mountain's burden. The avalanche thunderer, similar to the mountain, may manipulate his weight in such a way that he can use it to maximum effect against his opponents. Channeling this force into a target he may pulp organs and shatter bones.

The avalanche thunderer makes an unarmed martial arts attack, adding his armored mobility penalty to the raw damage. Anyone struck by this attack who suffers multiple levels of damage, instead has their damage reduced to 1 lethal level and suffers an external penalty equal to the remaining levels of damage to all actions, representing the horrible damage wrought upon his body by this fearsome blow. This wound often manifests as very serious blunt trauma, contused organs, or rather disgusting compound fractures. The penalty stacks with wound penalties and persists until the damage inflicted is healed.

TRANSCENDENT FLESH-AND-STONE UNITY

Cost: 6m, 1wp; **Mins:** Martial Arts 5, Essence 3; **Type:** Simple

Keywords: Obvious

Duration: One scene

Prerequisite Charms: Falling Mountain Might, Earthshaking Hero Technique

Standing with legs spread wide and muscles tensed, the avalanche thunderer is enveloped in a wave of earth essence that hardens into an invulnerable carapace. If he has an elemental aspect, he takes on the trappings of that aspect (flesh of molten magma, moss covered stone, or clear crystal). The armor he is wearing fuses to his flesh, and his hands fuse to his weapon (if he is carrying one made of Jade, or mundane metal or stone).

While this Charm lasts, the avalanche thunderer's armor carries no mobility penalty (though Charms that use that value to calculate effects still function based on the normal penalty), and his weapon cannot be disarmed. Because the armor has been fused to his body by the hardened stone essence, and cannot be removed for the duration of the Charm, the soak it provides is considered either armored or natural soak, whichever on is more beneficial.

Finally, the avalanche thunderer's flesh grows numb and deadened. He does not suffer wound or pain penalties for the scene. This Charm only functions while the avalanche thunderer stands on solid earth.



UNsung HERO STYLE

The Unsong Hero is the everyman, and yet he is more rare than even the Exalt. He is that singular individual who dares to rise above his station, to fight the un-winnable fight, to stare, unblinking, into the grim face of reality and say, "I can." This style incorporates aspects of all elements. All Dragon-Bloods may use this style without incurring any elemental surcharge.

Weapons and Armor: This style may be practiced in light armor, and treats any weapon attuned to with Familiar Companion Attunement as in form, but permits the use of no other weapons.

Complementary Abilities: This style requires Melee • and at least one Virtue rated at ••••, to represent the extreme of personality required to learn this style.

As an optional rule, Storytellers may allow any martial artists capable of learning Terrestrial martial arts to learn this style without a tutor, if they possess the appropriate mindset (substituting instead appropriate martial training and hard-earned life lessons), thus making it a sort of general Hero Style—at least, for a certain type of hero...

WINGS OF DESPERATION

Cost: 3m; **Mins:** Martial Arts 3, Essence 1; **Type:** Supplemental

Keywords: Combo-OK

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: None

When a mortal fights, the stakes are always high and the threat always palpable. Even a minor scrape could potentially grow infected and turn lethal. He can spare no effort, nor hold back anything from his assaults. He must throw himself into battle with total dedication or he will certainly die. The Unsong Hero adds (Valor or Conviction), at his preference, to his Join Battle roll. If he channels that Virtue on the roll, he turns the dice added through this Charm into automatic successes.

UNFAILING PRESERVATION INSTINCTS

Cost: 3m; **Mins:** Martial Arts 3, Essence 2; **Type:** Reflexive (Step 2)

Keywords: Combo-OK

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Wings of Desperation

A mortal will never be as potent as even the least of supernatural entities, he must be swift or he will surely die.

The Unsong Hero may activate this Charm in response to an ambush or unexpected attack. He may apply (25% per Essence dot) of his DDV against the attack. Therefore, a mortal with Essence 1 may apply a quarter of his DDV, half of DDV with Essence 2, three-quarters with Essence 3, and Essence 4 beings can apply their full DDV against surprise attacks. This Charm provides no additional benefits to beings of Essence in excess of 4. This Charm can be employed against any unexpected attack he could feasibly detect, but not against unexpected attacks he has no opportunity to roll to anticipate.

LIMITLESS TENACITY OFFENSE

Cost: 3m; **Mins:** Martial Arts 4, Essence 2; **Type:** Reflexive (Step 1)

Keywords: Combo-OK, Obvious

Duration: One flurry

Prerequisite Charms: Unfailing Preservation Instincts

Mortal martial artists are playing a game where the deck is decidedly stacked against them. They must make the most of every advantage they can. To this end, they learn to fight with impossible ferocity or remarkable efficacy, in either case making the Unsong Hero's attack hard to weather. Unarmed Martial Arts attacks enhanced with this Charm inflict an onslaught penalty one higher than normal.

UNSONG HERO FORM

Cost: 5m; **Mins:** Martial Arts 4, Essence 3; **Type:** Simple (Speed 5)

Keywords: Form-type

Duration: One scene

Prerequisite Charms: Limitless Tenacity Offense

Adopting a rather natural ready stance, the Unsong Hero infuses his body with essence, and, for a time, becomes as robust as any Chosen. The Unsong Hero may soak lethal damage with half his Stamina (or his full Stamina, if he is an Exalt). If he could not close his wounds reflexively, he may do so now; if he could already, then his wounds simply do not bleed. Finally, Mortal Unsong Heroes no longer suffer naturally disabling wounds or crippling effects from mundane attacks, resisting them as the Exalted. Exalts and other supernaturals obviously, do not gain anything this third and final benefit, but instead become able to parry lethal damage unarmed, their already sturdy frames further reinforced by essence.

FAMILIAR COMPANION ATTUNEMENT

Cost: 3m, 1wp; **Mins:** Martial Arts 4, Essence 3; **Type:** Simple (Dramatic Action)

Keywords: None

Duration: Indefinite

Prerequisite Charms: Unsong Hero Form

The Weapon of an Unsong Hero is more than a tool, it is a companion, an extension of his self. The weight of the character's continued well-being often rests squarely upon his weapon, and he cherishes it for its reliability. This Charm is an outgrowth of the reverence and tender care which he lavishes upon his weapon. This Charm is invoked with a small sacrifice and ceremony (usually taking the form of delicate cleaning and maintenance) to the small god of a single weapon the Unsong Hero possesses. As long as he spends one hour each day tending to the weapon and maintains the mote commitment, he gains a situational bonus of +2 dice when wielding the weapon.

The essence pattern of this Charm does not commingle well with essence committed to artifacts, and therefore cannot be used on an artifact with an attunement cost greater than the Hero's (Martial Arts).

THOUSAND ORDEALS EMPOWERMENT

Cost: 4m; **Mins:** Martial Arts 5, Essence 3; **Type:** Supplemental

Keywords: Combo-OK, Obvious

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Familiar Companion Attunement

The Unsong Hero has hacked his way through the kind of hardship that would kill a lesser individual. Having overcome this, the Hero's blows resonate with the force of a 100 lifetimes of hardship. He strikes, unhesitatingly, against his adversaries and his blows bite deeply. He adds his (Essence) to the Lethal damage of the supplemented attack, and adds +1 to the minimum damage.



WISE CONCESSION

Cost: 4m; **Mins:** Martial Arts 5, Essence 3; **Type:** Reflexive (Step 9)

Keywords: Combo-OK, Obvious, Counterattack

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Familiar Companion Attunement

The truly brave must know when they are overmatched and have no hope of success. The Unsung Hero could not have progressed to this degree of mastery without fully absorbing such knowledge. He has no compunctions about withdrawing when necessary. Whenever the Unsung Hero applies his parry DV against an attack, whether he successfully defends himself or not, he may allow the force of the blow upon his weapon to carry him backwards (Martial Dexterity) yards. Moving away from his opponent in this manner can give him much needed respite from the fray and save him from the onslaught of a flurry.

BACK-TO-THE-WALL FEROCITY

Cost: 4m; **Mins:** Martial Arts 5, Essence 3; **Type:** Supplemental

Keywords: Combo-Basic, Obvious

Duration: One flurry

Prerequisite Charms: Familiar Companion Attunement

The Unsung Hero relies on his single-minded perseverance to see him through the travails of life, and his raw, animal desperation to see him through the ravages of combat. This Charm enhances a flurry of unarmed Martial Arts attacks. The Rate of each attack increases by 1, and the multiple action penalty applied to each attack is reduced by (Hero's Essence), to a minimum of +1 point of penalty for every attack after the first.

SURVIVAL IS FURY UNDERSTANDING

Cost: 3m, 1wp, 1xp; **Mins:** Martial Arts 5, Essence 3; **Type:** Simple (Speed 5, DV -0)

Keywords: None

Duration: One scene

Prerequisite Charms: Back-to-the-Wall Ferocity, Thousand Ordeals Empowerment, Wise Concession

The Unsung Hero, his naiveté and illusions brutally shattered by the long road behind him, knows he has two choices: survival in the shadow of beings greater than himself, or a brief, shining, moment of greatness. Those who follow the path of serving a cause or greater being find satisfaction and glory in contributing as they are able. They learn the value of their life in service, and shed the vainglorious notion of achieving glory and personal fame through senseless self-sacrifice. The Hero, knowing that to serve his cause best he must endure and fight as long as he can, may activate this Charm to do just that.

While this Charm is active, the Exalt treats all his health levels above Incapacitated as -0 levels. (His Dying health levels are considered to be -4 levels, if he is able to remain active while below Incapacitated). This reduced wound penalty applies to healing rates as well as damage resistance.

Additionally, the Hero can spend 1wp when he becomes incapacitated or knocked out to attempt to remain conscious. He rolls his (Conviction), and a success on that roll enables him to continue fighting for (Essence) actions. After this duration elapses the Exalt must spend willpower and roll again or succumb to incapacitation or knockout. This willpower expenditure is reflexive and does not count as Charm usage.

Finally, the Storyteller should track every experience point spent on the activation of this Charm. For every three points spent, the Unsung Hero gains a point of the Destiny Background (see **Scroll of the Monk**, p. 151). The nature of that destiny is up to the Storyteller, but it should lead the Hero towards playing an instrumental role in orchestrating the success or triumph of an individual or group greater than himself.

BURN FAST, BURN BRIGHT UNDERSTANDING

Cost: 3m, 1hl, 1xp; **Mins:** Martial Arts 5, Essence 3; **Type:** Simple (Speed 5, DV -0)

Keywords: Obvious

Duration: One scene

Prerequisite Charms: Back-to-the-Wall Ferocity, Thousand Ordeals Empowerment, Wise Concession

Those with the strength to become Unsung Heroes always find themselves presented with the same choice: subsume themselves to another being or cause, or sacrifice their life for one last moment of glory. While many decide there is honor enough in a life of service, a significant fraction demand that Creation provide glory to themselves and their name. Those who see this choice and choose the path of glory learn this Charm. This Charm flares the Unsung Hero's essence into a glorious beacon, even if he does not have an anima banner, he becomes enfolded in a brilliant bonfire of essence. He moves with speed far beyond the limits of the human body and strikes with the fury of a war god. His visage becomes transcendently beautiful, conveying utterly the glory and tragedy of his situation. None who see this Charm in action ever forget the sight.

When activating this Charm, the Unsung Hero may include Limitless Tenacity Offense, Back-to-the-Wall Ferocity or Thousand Ordeals Empowerment in its effect. He may choose to add only one Charm in this way and must pay that Charm's cost in addition to the cost of activating this Charm. The Charm so included remains active just as long as this Charm. Furthermore, while using this Charm the duration of the other two Charms may, optionally, be extended to (Essence) actions by adding one Willpower to their normal cost.

Perhaps most significantly, while this Charm is active, the stunt dice reward of all the Unsung Hero's combat stunts increases by one die. This has no effect on the rewards of the stunt (such as motes or Willpower). If the Hero is mortal or god-blooded and has also activated Unsung Hero Form, they stunt as Exalts rather than as heroic mortals (see **Exalted**, p. 128 for a description of the difference).

Finally, the Storyteller should track every experience point spent on the activation of this Charm. For every three points spent the Unsung Hero gains a point of the Destiny Background (see **Scroll of the Monk**, p. 151). The nature of the destiny is up to the Storyteller, but it should lead the Hero towards a climactic moment of brief but marvelous, even world changing, glory that culminates in his death or, perhaps, his ascension.





CHAPTER TWO

THE LOTUS BULB

Celestial Pig: The practitioners of this style are celebrated for both their gregarious nature and tremendous appetites.

Celestial Rabbit: Temperate, and cautious, practitioners of this style are nonetheless, deadly opponents on the battlefield.

Celestial Turtle: Cautious, with high impenetrable defenses, none may assail the practitioner of the Celestial Turtle Style.

Hellfire Ballet Style: An Infernal style dedicated to Malfeas which uses Hellpieces.

Laughing Imp Style: A style based on taunting and jeering at your foe, wearing them down to nothing. Dedicated to the laughter of Adorjan

Unbroken Bough: A that grants the supple flexibility of the young sappling and strength of the ancient oak.

CELESTIAL PIG STYLE

The Boar is an honest beast. It is stubborn, sometimes lazy, and its zeal for life's little pleasures can verge on gluttonous, but in all things it is direct and upfront. Smiling Sages, as skilled practitioners of this style are often called, are renowned for both their loyalty, honesty, and prodigious appetite, which is matched only by their stoutness of heart and body. This style is characteristically focused the body's power, both in its defensive aspect, as the ability to whether blows, and offensively as a means of doing harm. Its Charms are as direct as its underlying philosophy, and those who fight using this style are valuable allies and terrible foes.

This style does not permit the use of armor and, though it treats Mauls and Gore-mauls as form weapons, the later Charms of this style make little use of these weapons.

Complementary Abilities: One must have a Compassion rating of 3 or higher to appreciate life's pleasures to a sufficient degree to internalize the teachings of this style.

SAGE STANDS FAST

Cost: 2m; **Mins:** Martial Arts 3, Essence 2; **Type:** Reflexive

Keywords: Combo-OK

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: None

The Boar is resolute in the defense of his own, and the Smiling Sage grows decidedly unhappy when foes threaten those he holds dear. This Charm adds (Compassion) dice to the character's join battle roll, if the Exalt is fighting in the defense of someone towards whom he has a positive intimacy he adds (Compassion) successes instead.

ENLIGHTENED HEART'S STRENGTH

Cost: 4m; **Mins:** Martial Arts 3, Essence 2; **Type:** Reflexive

Keywords: Combo-OK

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: None

The Smiling Sage draws power from both his enormous size, and from the power of his loyalty and strength of his love of life. The Smiling Sage, fighting for those things which he hold dearest, be they comfort, companionship, luxury or something else, can infuse his blows with a terrible strength. He adds his (Compassion) to the raw damage of his Martial Arts attacks. Should he channel his compassion on an attack supplemented by this Charm, he instead adds (Compassion) successes to his damage roll.

CELESTIAL GOURMAND'S APPETITE

Cost: 2m, 1wp; **Mins:** Martial Arts 3, Essence 3; **Type:** Simple
Keywords: Obvious, Sage (Pig)
Duration: (Martial Arts) actions
Prerequisite Charms: Enlightened Heart's Strength, Sage Stands Fast

Truly, few creatures in creation have a love of epicurean luxuries that equals that of the Pig. Among the Exalted, there are none so renowned for their eccentric (and impressive) tastes as the Smiling Sages. The Exalt's appetite grows enormously and he becomes able to not only eat, but enjoy eating, almost anything. So long as an object is not an artifact or expressly harmful to one's health, the Exalt can eat it. Doing so causes his belly to swell as he digests the nourishing Essence. Eating an object is a miscellaneous action (Speed 5, DV -2). He regains 1 mote for each dot of Resources consumed, be it in the form of coinage, paper money, expensive fabrics, rare foods, or anything else. These motes are stored in a separate pool and can only be used to power Charms of this style or Martial Arts Excellencies and may not be committed (and therefore cannot be used for any Charm with a duration is longer than instant).

The martial artist may not store more motes than (Stamina + Compassion) through the use of this Charm. Any motes not used by the time this Charm ends are lost in a blaze of essence. While saturated with essence the Sage's stomach seems to glow from within, as if a fire burned in his gut. The brightness of this light, and its effects on stealth, are equivalent to the effects of an anima banner burning at a level equal to the number of motes currently stored. This Charm does not prevent the Sage from being poisoned or made sick by eating something, but it does permit him to eat things that are not normally edible.

CELESTIAL SWINE FORM

Cost: 6m; **Mins:** Martial Arts 4, Essence 3; **Type:** Simple
Keywords: Form-type, Obvious
Duration: One scene

Prerequisite Charms: Celestial Gourmand's Appetite

The Smiling Sage cuts a striking figure, his impressive mass is daunting to even the boldest adversaries. Taking a deep breath, a lung-full of the sweet essence of creation, the Exalt sets his feet in a wide and sturdy stance. Then he exhales with a mighty snort, doing so he gorges every fiber of his being on raw essence. Saturated with these energies his body gains considerable stature. The Exalt gains +1 to his strength and stamina, may soak Lethal damage with his full, modified, stamina, and parry ranged and lethal attacks unarmed. These increases do not interact with the character's maximum dice from Charms, either by raising the cap or counting against it, and may raise traits above 5.

The martial artist's physical stature, now at least 25% larger than before, makes him a more vulnerable target and impedes his movements somewhat. While this Charm is active the Exalt suffers -1 point of armored mobility penalty (which cannot be ignored through Charms) and can be attacked by 6 targets at once instead of the normal 5. This does mean, however, that he must be surrounded by 6 targets instead of just 5 before he suffers an automatic surprise attack.

HALE BOAR BODY TECHNIQUE

Cost: 3m, 1wp; **Mins:** Martial Arts 5, Essence 3; **Type:** Simple
Keywords: Combo-Basic, Sage (Pig)
Duration: (Martial Arts) Actions
Prerequisite Charms: Celestial Swine Form

Through careful manipulation of his internal essence and his own impossible control of his physical form the Exalt may cause his mighty body to become preternaturally hale and resistant. The Exalt rolls his (Compassion + Essence), he adds the number of successes on this roll, to a maximum of the lower of his Essence or Stamina, as -0 health levels. These health levels cannot be healed once they have been filled. At the end of its duration the Exalt may repay the mote and willpower cost of this Charm as a reflexive, non-Charm, action to maintain his increased hardiness. Ending this Charm moves the damage levels suffer by this Charm's health levels into the martial artist's normal health track. This does not count as suffering the damage again, so effects that reduce levels of damage being suffered do not apply. If the Charm is allowed to last to the end of the scene the damage levels to disappear with the health levels they fill.

MIGHTY HOG EXPANSION

Cost: 5m+, 1wp; **Mins:** Martial Arts 5, Essence 3; **Type:** Simple (Speed 4)

Keywords: Combo-OK, Obvious, Sage (Pig), Stackable

Duration: (Martial Arts) Actions

Prerequisite Charms: Celestial Swine Form

The Exalt focuses his essence into his body and grows even larger. Each expenditure of 5m committed to this Charm adds +1 to the Exalts Strength and Stamina Rating for the duration of the scene. Every five motes also applies a -1 mobility penalty (which functions as an armored mobility penalty). The trait increases this Charm grants may raise Attributes above 5 but are considered dice added by Charms. This Charm also incrementally increases the Sage's stature, causing him to grow 10% larger and more massive per usage. This may cause certain terrain to be unsuitable for him and may make it difficult to maneuver in smaller spaces. In open space the increase in size adds 1 to the maximum number of simultaneous attackers, per five motes spent. This Charm cannot be used if doing so would reduce the Sage's base movement rate (before Charms) to 0.

FURIOUS GUARDIANSHIP CHARGE

Cost: 5m; **Mins:** Martial Arts 5, Essence 3; **Type:** Simple (Speed 5, DV -2)

Keywords: Combo-Basic, Obvious

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Celestial Swine Form

The Boar's greatest weapon is its charge, and the Smiling Sage, bon vivant that he is, is no less acquainted with the raw, brutal power and combat utility of a good charge than the eldest, most battles scarred Wild Hog. The Sage trundles forward, carried on by his immense bulk, rather than by his ability to run. Some Smiling Sages roll, rather than run, tumbling like living boulders, others charge like true boars, and still others hurl themselves bodily through the air. The form this attack takes is unique to each martial artist, but the Charm is unmistakable to those who have seen it before.





The martial artist surges forward up to (Stamina) yards and crashes into his target. His travel is unimpeded by difficult terrain and unaffected by encumbrance. The Exalt strikes the target with terrible, crushing force and has a base damage of (Stamina + Strength)B Piercing. This frequently leaves the target on his back in a ditch that the Exalts terrible onslaught tore in the ground. If the attack does any damage at all both the target of the attack and anyone within (Essence x 2) yards of him must roll against knockdown at a difficulty of the Smiling Sage's (Essence). The target adds the levels of damage inflicted by the attack to this Difficulty. This attack cannot benefit from any standard weaponry, natural or otherwise.

SOW DEFENDS HER YOUNG INSIGHT

Cost: — (+2m per target, 1wp); **Mins:** Martial Arts 5, Essence 4; **Type:** Permanent

Keywords: None

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisite Charms: Furious Guardianship Charge

The Smiling Sage may attack whomsoever threatens that which he prizes. Like the Wild Sow defending her den, the Smiling Sage's loyal guardianship knows no limits. This Charm Modifies its pre-requisite. By adding 1wp to the cost of this Charm the attack becomes unblockable. Provided they are all roughly in the same direction, the Sage can target (Essence ÷ 2) targets with this Charm, altering the trajectory of his charge to strike them all en route to his main target. Therefore every targets must be within (Stamina) yards of each other.

CONSUMMATE PORCINE DELECTATION

Cost: 3m, 1wp; **Mins:** Martial Arts 5, Essence 3; **Type:** Supplemental

Keywords: Combo-OK, Shaping, Touch

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Mighty Hog Expansion, Hale Boar Technique

The Boar's Tusks maim, and eviscerate those they cut, tearing flesh savagely asunder and spilling blood. The Smiling Sage does not relish such cruelty, and cannot, though the fury of his stewardship is great, permit himself to commit such violent acts. Though reluctant to spill blood, he has no compunctions about causing his foes to hemorrhage raw essence. Should an attack supplemented by this Charm strike a target successfully, the Smiling Sage may drink deeply of his foes essence, drawing the sweetest nectar in creation into his being with a contented sigh. The Exalt rolls his 3 dice for every level of damage he inflicts with the supplemented attack. Each success on this roll spills a single, precious mote from the wound. If the Smiling Sage has Celestial Gourmand's Appetite active he reflexively draws these motes into himself (subject to that limits of that Charm's reservoir). If that Charm is inactive then the motes are still lost, but vanish in a brilliant flash of light. The Exalt cannot steal more motes than his opponent has in his pool.

CELESTIAL SWINE COMBAT INTERNALIZATION

Cost: — ; **Mins:** Martial Arts 5, Essence 4; **Type:** Permanent

Keywords: None

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisite Charms: Sow Defends Her Young Insight, Consummate Porcine Delectation

Having internalized the lessons of the Boar, and mastered its ways the Exalt gains a preternatural spiritual affinity for Charms which emulate the lessons of this style and which embody the philosophy of the Smiling Sage. Having learned this Charm, the martial artist may, when he activates the form Charm for this style, also activate up to half his Compassion (round up) Sage (Pig) Charms with it. He must pay the full cost to do so, but raises their duration (where applicable) to one scene and activates them reflexively. Should the form terminate, the effects of these Charms do as well. Variable cost Sage (Pig) Charms are activated at their lowest possible level, but may, in subsequent actions, be activated normally to increase their effects. It is also possible, on subsequent actions, while this form is active, to activate the normal duration version of the Charms and gain their benefits twice. However, Only the instance of the Charm activated with the Form has an extended duration.

CELESTIAL RABBIT STYLE

The Rabbit Style Martial Art is a curious one indeed, often overlooked, even at the height of its popularity during the Late First Age, the style is not nearly so ostentatious or flashy as other martial arts. Indeed, in many ways it is a reaction to the more overt and showy Animal Styles, most notably Celestial Rooster Style, prizing instead presence of mind and timing over brute force and ferocity. The Rabbit Style always had a small but dedicated following among those who valued a degree of quiet, understated, elegance and who were of a more meditative, thoughtful bent. Diplomats, Courtiers, both Celestial and Terrestrial, relished the Rabbit Style, more than anything, for its minimalist approach to combat.

Celestial Rabbit Style emphasizes thoughtful analysis, and its practitioners spend much of a battle assessing their opponent rather than seeking to overwhelm them with relentless offense. When a Rabbit stylist strikes a blow it is always decisive, not because of the power or strength of the fighter, but because the attack was delivered with expert timing and exactly the right amount of force. Measured and thoughtful in all things, the Rabbit Stylist does not go in for excess brutality or flashy moves, but employs a strong defense, even retreating when he must find a more favorable position. He then strikes quickly and decisively, and any doubt his earlier caution might have cast on his prowess with fist, foot or blade, is dispelled.

Weapons and Armor: This style cannot be practiced in armor, but permits the use of bucklers and target shields (though nothing larger). This style treats rapiers and their artifact equivalents as form weapons.

Complementary Abilities: This style, though not showy, requires swift reflexes and speedy reaction. No character who does not have at least Athletics or Dodge 2, Melee 1, and Awareness 2 would be able to learn this style. Sifus who teach this art also generally hope their students have Wits 3, though this isn't necessarily a requirement.

SAGACIOUS PRESERVATION ALERTNESS


Cost: 2m; **Mins:** Martial Arts 2, Essence 2; **Type:** Reflexive

Keywords: Combo-OK

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: None





The Rabbit is vigilant, ever alert and wary of threats to its well being. Though the martial artist may seem at ease, he is eternally vigilant. Even when he fails to detect an incoming threat, something at the base of his subconscious has always anticipated the threat. Whenever he would be subject to a surprise attack the Exalt may activate this Charm. This Charm guarantees the Exalt a PDV of his (Temperance), before other Charm effects, against any unexpected attack he failed to anticipate, even those he wouldn't normally be able to (such as attacks from behind), provided the surprise is not 'perfect' and resulting from a Charm or effect that does not permit the Exalt to anticipate it. Activating this Charm also allows him to ready the Form Weapon for this style reflexively.

DISCERNING SAGE APPRAISAL

Cost: 3m; **Mins:** Martial Arts 3, Essence 2; **Type:** Supplemental
Keywords: Combo-OK
Duration: One action
Prerequisite Charms: Sagacious Preservation Alertness

Rabbit Stylist takes time to study his opponents and gauge the strength of the opposition. When He strikes he does so only from a place of safety and understanding. This Charm supplements an aim action. When the aim action ends and the martial artist attacks his target he rolls the dice gained from the aim action separately and adds the successes from those dice to his PDV until the next time his PDV refreshes as well as to his accuracy. This Charm may not add more than the Exalt's Temperance to the character's PDV

PRUDENT RETREAT BOLT

Cost: 3m; **Mins:** Martial Arts 3, Essence 2; **Type:** Reflexive (Step 9)
Keywords: Combo-OK, Counterattack
Duration: Instant
Prerequisite Charms: Discerning Sage Appraisal

The Woodland Sage knows when he is outmatched and has the presence of mind to beat a hasty retreat. Feeling his opponent is in a position of strength, the Exalt will seek to retreat and re-engage on more favorable ground. Whenever the Exalt uses his PDV to successfully evade a close combat attack he may activate this Charm, somersaulting or otherwise bounding backwards a number of yards equal to (attack's base damage + Essence). Should the stylist fail to parry the attack, he may still activate this Charm to move up to (Post-Soak Damage + Essence).

CELESTIAL RABBIT FORM

Cost: 5m; **Mins:** Martial Arts 4, Essence 2; **Type:** Simple (Speed 4)
Keywords: Form-type
Duration: One scene
Prerequisite Charms: Prudent Retreat Bolt

His body alert, but relaxed and balanced, the martial artist stands on the balls of his feet and regards the adversary with calm composure and a meditative demeanor. He strikes without leaving openings in his defense, and eludes his foes with uncanny grace. The Exalt reduces the cumulative DV penalty associated with any Martial Arts attack or flurry made unarmed or with the form weapon by -1, (minimum 0) and adds dice equal to his Temperance to his Martial Arts when calculating his Parry DV.

JUDICIOUS STRIKING METHODOLOGY

Cost: 3m, 1wp; **Mins:** Martial Arts 4, Essence 3; **Type:** Simple (Speed 5)
Keywords: Combo-Basic, Obvious, Sage (Rabbit)
Duration: One scene
Prerequisite Charms: Celestial Rabbit Form

The martial artist's evaluates his foes with unerring accuracy and insight. His mind dissects, with the speed of one who knows their life depends on the swiftness of their thought not the strength of their sword-arm, his opponent's weaknesses. Taking a moment to center himself and calm his racing heart, the Exalt extends their weapon (or open hand) towards her opponent in a genteel sweeping motion. This gesture of salute serves to calm her nerves and focus her mind on her weaponry and how best to utilize it. The Player of the Woodland Sage then rolls her unmodified (Temperance + Wits). She may add a number of dice equal to the successes on this roll to the raw damage of her Martial Arts.

FIGHT OR FLIGHT EMPOWERMENT

Cost: 6m; **Mins:** Martial Arts 5, Essence 4; **Type:** Reflexive
Keywords: Combo-OK, Obvious
Duration: (Martial Arts) actions
Prerequisite Charms: Burrow of Self Armament, Judicious Striking Methodology

Even the Woodland Sage sometimes errs in his calculations and allows himself to be struck. In these moments he must fight the rising terror with the cool iron of his Temperance. Wounds dealt to the Woodland Sage are instructive, they remind him of his error and offer insight into the strengths of his foes. Touching his wound and taking a moment to reflect upon it, the Exalt dedicates his mental faculties to minimizing the threat. The Woodland Sage Rolls (Wits + Temperance) against a difficulty of the essence of the person who wounded him. He adds one automatic success to the roll for every health level of damage that target dealt him with that attack, but must contend with wound penalties as normal. Thereafter the Exalt gains an understanding of that opponent's combat style. He adds his successes on the roll as automatic successes to all his Martial Arts actions when facing that opponent.

BURROW OF SELF ARMAMENT

Cost: 3m, 1wp; **Mins:** Martial Arts 4, Essence 3; **Type:** Simple (Speed 4)
Keywords: Combo-OK, Obvious, Sage (Rabbit)
Duration: (Martial Arts) actions
Prerequisite Charms: Celestial Rabbit Form

It is Judiciousness and caution which preserves the rabbit stylist's life, his understanding of his enemy lends him to eventual, if not speedy, victory. Girding himself with his temperate soul, the Exalt may survive even the occasional error in his calculations. He reacts swiftly to incoming harm, melting away from blows and cushions them with a buffer of essence, thus he minimizes harm. Just as natural rabbits retreat to the safety of their burrows when threatened, so must Woodland Sages retreat to the safety of their own Temperance. when this Charm is activated, a second skin of downy white essence, visually evocative of fur (though clearly not fur) enfolds the martial artist's form.





The martial artist rolls his (Wits + Temperance), suffering an external penalty equal to the number of enemies facing him. He adds the number of successes, to his bashing and lethal soak. If he fails his initial roll however, his meditative state slipped and he gave in to the nagging fear that goes hand in hand with that degree of thoughtfulness. In the even that he fails the (Essence + Temperance) roll the Charm has no effect but its cost is still spent. The soak this Charm grants is considered natural. No combination of this Charm and any other can add more than the character's unmodified (Wits + Temperance) to the Sage's soak for a duration longer than Instant.

HUMBLE RABBIT TECHNIQUE

Cost: 1m, 1wp; **Mins:** Martial Arts 4, Essence 3; **Type:** Simple (Speed 4)

Keywords: Combo-Basic, Obvious, Sage (Rabbit)

Duration: (Martial Arts) actions

Prerequisite Charms: Celestial Rabbit Form

Rabbits who live long know that the best way to defend oneself is to present one's enemies with as small a target as possible. Thus, a wise rabbit, even when he stands in the middle of a field, is always folded in on himself and disturbs little or nothing with his movements. Reducing his posture, by crouching even lower and hunching slightly, the martial artist becomes a coiled spring of restrained potential movement. All attacks made against him suffer an additional -1 external penalty. His reduced stature also makes him harder to fight, reduce the maximum number of people who can attack him at once by 1. (for example: in an open area up to five enemies could normally assault the character at once, but, with this Charm active, this number would be reduced to four). Finally, his reduced stature is more easily defensible, he reduces co-ordinated attack penalties by his temperance and onslaught penalties by half that amount (round up). While this Charm is active, however, the Exalt may not Move, by his own volition or otherwise, more than half his unmodified move rating in a single tick, doing so terminates the Charm's effects. Being clinched or physically restrained also ends this Charm.

STRIKE THE BELEAGUERED FOE

Cost: 3m, 1wp; **Mins:** Martial Arts 5, Essence 3; **Type:** Reflexive (Step 9)

Keywords: Combo-OK, Counterattack

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Humble Rabbit Technique, Judicious Striking Methodology

The Rabbit knows when its enemies are weary of keeping pace with it and striking empty air. Leaping nimbly away from blows the martial artist sets himself up for a devastating counterattack which exploits the multifarious holes the attacker's offensive zeal left open in his defenses. The practitioner makes a counterattack which adds a number of automatic successes to its attack roll equal to the number of failed attacks the assailant made against the martial artist during that tick. Thus, if the martial artist used this Charm in response to the third attack in a three attack flurry, all of which failed, he adds 3 successes, if he applies it in response to a single failed attack, he gains 1 success. The number of successes gained may not exceed the martial artist's (Temperance).

LAGOMORPHIC COMBAT INTERNALIZATION

Cost: —; **Mins:** Martial Arts 5, Essence 4; **Type:** Permanent
Keywords: None

Prerequisite Charms: Strike The Beleaguered Foe, Fight or Flight Empowerment

Having internalized the lessons of the Rabbit, and mastered its ways the Exalt gains a preternatural spiritual affinity for Charms which emulate the lessons of this style and which embody the philosophy of the Woodland Sage. Having learned this Charm, the martial artist may, when he activates the form Charm for this style, also activate up to half his Temperance (round up) Sage (rabbit) Charms with it. These Charms are activated reflexively, though the martial artist must pay their full cost, and, when used in this manner, have a duration of One Scene.

Furthermore, Sage Charms (like Humble Rabbit Technique) that have conditions that cause them to lapse prematurely, can be reflexively reactivated by spending the cost of the Charm again on the martial artist's next action. Doing so does not count as a Charm activation. This benefit only applies to Charms activated in conjunction with the Form.

CELESTIAL TURTLE STYLE

Guarded Sages are not the most praised or famous of heroes, for they are an understated lot. Humble and quiet. They abhor the limelight and tend to lead lives of contentment. That is not to say they do not undertake heroic tasks or fight great battle, they do, but their heroism is often unnoticed or misattributed to others. They like it that way; the Guarded Sage values his privacy. When the sanctity of his domain or home is threatened, however, the Celestial Turtle stylist will take up arms, and what foe could be more fearsome than one which carries a fortress with him.

Weapons and Armor: This style treats shields as form weapons and masters of the style can pair the shield with another weapon. This style can be practiced in armor.

Complementary Abilities: This style cannot be learned unless the martial artist has at least two dots in Resistance.

LIVING FORTRESS INTEGRATION

Cost: —(2xp); **Mins:** Martial Arts 2, Essence 2; **Type:** Permanent

Keywords: None

Prerequisite Charms: None

The Turtle Carries his Shell on his back wherever he might go. He is never without it, and would surely die without it. It is his armor against the misfortunes of life, his sanctuary, and his home. This Charm permits the Exalt to emulate this symbiotic relationship, making a shield as much a part of his being as a shell is a part of a turtle's. Spending two experience and some time handling and generally familiarizing himself with a shield which he owns, the martial artist integrates a portion of his own life and experience into the weapon. A practitioner may bond with only one shield at a time through this Charm and, if he wishes to switch the attunement to another, must spend one scene handling the new shield and two more experience. A shield attuned to in this manner becomes a natural part of the martial artist's being, similar to a spirit's panopy. The object cannot be disarmed from the martial artist, and can be called

to his hand with a thought and a reflexive one mote expenditure. He must consciously initiate this Ready Weapon action, so it cannot be used in response to an attack the martial artist didn't anticipate. Furthermore, the item cannot be stolen, and the martial artist remains aware of its exact location, so long as he remains in physical contact with it on a daily basis, and it remains within 1 mile of his person at all times.

SANCTUARY IS NO BURDEN TECHNIQUE

Cost: 2m or 3m; **Mins:** Martial Arts 3, Essence 2; **Type:** Simple (Speed 3)

Keywords: Combo-OK, Sage (Turtle)

Duration: (Martial Arts) actions

Prerequisite Charms: Living Fortress Integration

After activating the Charm, the martial artist does not suffer any mobility penalty for using his shield for its duration. He may also wield it in whichever hand he chooses and, if Best Offense Atemi enables him to use it as a weapon, he suffers no penalty for wielding it in his offhand. As a final benefit of this Charm, he may spend one mote reflexively while it is active to avail one of his allies, who must be within melee range of him, of the benefit of his shield for a tick. This does not reduce the martial artist's DV, but allows the nearby ally to gain a shield bonus to his for the tick. The practitioner may only do this once per tick and cannot protect more than one ally in this manner. This Charm reduces its cost by one mote when used on a shield that has been attuned with Living Fortress Integration.

CITADEL BODY METHOD

Cost: 3m or 4m; **Mins:** Martial Arts 2, Essence 2; **Type:** Simple (Speed 4)

Keywords: Combo-OK, Sage (Turtle)

Duration: (Martial Arts) actions

Prerequisite Charms: Living Fortress Integration

Expanding upon the symbiosis between self and shield, the Turtle Sage makes the protection of the shield truly a part of himself. When the Sage uses this Charm the parry DV benefit it provides cannot be circumvented by Charms that enable attacks to circumvent shield bonuses. In this regard, the shield is no longer treated as a separate source of protection, but as an extension of the martial artist's body. This Charm reduces its cost by one mote when used on a shield attuned through Living Fortress Integration.

BEST OFFENSE ATEMI

Cost: 3m; **Mins:** Martial Arts 3, Essence 2; **Type:** Reflexive

Keywords: Combo-OK, Sage (Turtle)

Duration: (Martial Arts) actions

Prerequisite Charms: Living Fortress Integration

The Turtle, though he may snap those who threaten his home with his savage beak, is not an offensive creature. Instead, he is a creature of defense and repulsion, his impenetrable shell is his greatest weapon, his foes exhaust themselves beating against the impenetrable walls of his defenses. When he must fight, and the Guarded Sage knows there are times when no other response will suffice, he may use his defenses as an offense. This Charm turns a shield into a functional weapon. The weapon's traits vary depending on the size and shape of the shield. Some shields are spiked and will do lethal damage, while others do bashing damage.

Otherwise, mundane shields have the following traits: Speed 5, Accuracy +0, Damage + (shield's normal Mobility Penalty \times 2)B or + (shield's normal mobility penalty)L, Defense +1, Rate 2. . Normally, A shield used as a weapon still confers its bonus to PDV, but does not confer the benefits of its traits from being made of a magic material or of fine, exceptional or perfect quality. If the shield is one attuned to through Living Fortress Integration, however, she may apply bonuses to its weapon traits if it is fine, exceptional or perfect, or the bonuses for a magical material weapon if it is an artifact shield. Only shields made of one magic material, such as the Thunderbolt Shield, benefit in this manner. These magic material bonuses function in addition to any normal benefits the shield gains from being made of a magical material, not in lieu of them, but the shield cannot gain the material bonus to its weapon traits twice.

CELESTIAL TURTLE FORM

Cost: 6m; **Mins:** Martial Arts 4, Essence 2; **Type:** Simple (Speed 4)

Keywords: Form-type

Duration: One scene

Prerequisite Charms: Best Offense Atemi, Citadel Body Method, Sanctuary is No Burden Technique

Raising His shield and cautiously tracking his opponents with his eyes, the Martial artist adopts the Posture of the Wary Turtle. Completely defended, and yet poised to strike anyone who should assail his defenses. This form permits the Exalt to Soak Lethal damage with his full stamina, and strike lethal blows barehanded, his hands moving in a manner evocative of a turtle's snapping beak. Furthermore, his defense gain a certain natural resilience that makes them impossible to wear down. For the duration, so long as she uses either her bare hands, or her shield to defend himself, he doesn't suffer Onslaught penalties to his Martial Arts derived PDV.

ADAMANT SHELL CRUSH

Cost: 4m or 5m **Mins:** Martial Arts 4, Essence 3; **Type:** Supplemental

Keywords: Combo-OK, Knockback, Obvious

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Celestial Turtle Form

The martial artist strikes a resounding blow with his fists or shield, reinforced by essence and given the impregnable aspect of the shell of the Celestial Tortoise. An attack supplemented by this Charm doubles its base damage and counts 10's twice on the damage roll. Furthermore, if the Sage strikes with a shield attuned with Living Fortress Integration and spends an extra mote, the target is thrown back a number of yards equal to levels of damage done. This knockback can be resisted.

SNAPPING TURTLE METHOD

Cost: 3m, 1wp; **Mins:** Martial Arts 5, Essence 2; **Type:** Simple (Speed 3)

Keywords: Combo-OK, Sage (turtle)

Duration: (Martial Arts) actions

Prerequisite Charms: Celestial Turtle Form

For The Duration of this Charm the Exalt no longer Need worry about sacrificing his defense's integrity for offensive capability. He may lash out from behind the cover of his own defenses with impunity. The Sage reduces the total PDV penalty inflicted by his Martial Art's actions (or flurries thereof)



by his (Essence). Furthermore, while this Charm is active the martial artist reduces the multiple action penalty his mundane flurries suffer by his (Essence). The martial artist's Dash action increases its speed and DV penalty by one while this Charm is active, because of the difficulty maintaining involved in this level of defense while also moving swiftly.

TORTOISE-DENIES-THE-EAGLE REPRISAL

Cost: 4m (+1wp); **Mins:** Martial Arts 4, Essence 3; **Type:** Reflexive (Step 9)

Keywords: Combo-OK, Counterattack

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Celestial Turtle Form

If the martial artist's opponent makes an unsuccessful attack, the martial artist makes a reflexive counterattack with her shield, knocking her foe to the ground. The Guarded Sage's player rolls her full (Dexterity + Martial Arts) reflexively. If the martial artist's roll succeeds in striking the opponent, her target suffers no damage but is knocked to the dirt and must fight prone (suffering a -2 internal penalty) until he takes a miscellaneous action to get back to his feet. The target rolls (Stamina + Resistance) against a difficulty of (Sage's Essence) to resist severe dizziness and disorientation from the concussive force of the impact. Failure inflicts an additional -2 internal penalty from stunning until the victim's DV refreshes twice.

If the martial artist is wielding a shield that has been attuned with Living Fortress Integration she can spend one Willpower when activating this Charm to attempt to break the weapon. If she does so, she must roll damage as usual against a difficulty of the Resources cost of the weapon. Success shatters the weapon against his shield. Artifact weapons can't be broken this way, but can still be knocked clear of the target's grasp if they fail the roll. The difficulty of this roll is equal to the successes on the damage roll. For every success the resistance roll falls short of the difficulty, the weapon flies one yard away.

IRON ABATIS DEFENSE

Cost: 3m, 1wp + 2m or 1m per attack; **Mins:** Martial Arts 5, Essence 3; **Type:** Simple (Speed 5)

Keywords: Combo-OK, Counterattack, Sage (Turtle)

Duration: (Martial Arts) Actions

Prerequisite Charms: Tortoise-Denise-The-Eagle Reprisal, Snapping Turtle Method

The Exalt Stands in a guarded stance, his shield held ready to deflect incoming blows away from his body and meet out retribution. While this Charm is active, the martial artist may pay 2m to make a free reflexive (Step 9), unarmed Martial Arts counterattack against any target who fails to breach his PDV. This attack uses his full dice pool. As with normal counterattacks, this can not respond to other counterattacks, and the stylist may only respond to a given attack with a single counterattack. If this counter is made with a shield attuned via Living Fortress Integration, the stylist pays 1m per attack instead.

INVIOULATE SHELL PROTECTION

Cost: 6m, 1wp; **Mins:** Martial Arts 5, Essence 3; **Type:** Simple

Keywords: Obvious, Sage (Turtle)

Duration: One scene

Prerequisite Charms: Adamant Shell Crush, Snapping Turtle Method

The martial artist withdraws beneath an aegis of his own shield. His defense is impossibly complete, as if he had withdrawn into himself. She may using her full (Dexterity + Martial Arts) total as her Defense Value for the scene (not dividing the value by two, per her normal Parry DV). This explicitly may break the cap on dice adders. If the Exalt activates this Charm while wielding a shield attuned through Living Fortress Integration she also becomes immune to surprise, her defense never fails due to a lack of ability to predict it. Even attacks made from behind while completely surrounded may be defended against with the martial artist's full DV.

CELESTIAL TERRAPIN COMBAT INTERNALIZATION

Cost: —; **Mins:** Martial Arts 5, Essence 4; **Type:** Permanent

Keywords: None

Prerequisite Charms: Iron Abatis Defense, Inviolat Shell Protection

Having internalized the lessons of the Turtle, and mastered its ways the stylist gains a preternatural spiritual affinity for Charms which emulate the lessons of this style and which embody the philosophy of the Guarded Sage. Having learned this Charm, the martial artist may, when he activates the form Charm for this style, also activate up to half his Temperance (round up) Sage (Turtle) Charms with it. These Charms are activated reflexively, though the martial artist must pay their full cost, and, when used in this manner, and have a duration of one scene. Furthermore, The Exalt may also now a strait sword, kama, hooksword, short sword, or the artifact equivalent as any of these weapons, as a form weapons for this style provided they also wield a shield attuned to with Living Fortress Integration in the other hand. Should he not be wielding such a shield then he cannot gain this secondary benefit.

HELLFIRE BALLET STYLE

As the layers of the demon city come crashing together, gouts of vitriol and toxic fire erupt over the landscape. There is much screaming and gnashing of teeth. And in the epicenter of this daily armageddon, there stands the master of Hellfire Ballet Style. Green flames leap from her weapons and hate and wrath sparkles in her eyes. Hers is not a righteous crusade, but a crusade of bloody vengeance that shall scorch Creation.

Weapons and Armor: Hellwands, hell-tongue repeaters, and their Creation-based counterparts (firewands and plasma tongue repeaters) are form weapons for this style. It may not be practiced in armor.

Complementary Abilities: Learning this style requires, at least, Archery •••. As an added benefit, martial artists who know the Form Charm of this style may, combo any Charm that can validly enhance an Archery-based attack with the Charms of this style.

RAVENOUS FIEND PREPAREDNESS

Cost: 2m; **Mins:** Martial Arts 2, Essence 2; **Type:** Supplemental

Keywords: Combo-OK, Obvious

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: None

Martial artists find this style not out of enlightenment, nor for the benefit of others, but out of sheer hatred and wrath. They do not seek wisdom, the seek power and bloody ven-

geance. They are like Malfeas, who cries out against his own imprisonment with boundless fury, ever seeking conflict. For them violence is not a response, or a tool, but an end unto itself. This Charm supplements a Join Battle action, adding the hellfire dancer's (Martial Arts) dice to the roll, so long as it was she who initiated the conflict.

GREEN SUN SCOURGE

Cost: 3m; **Mins:** Martial Arts 2, Essence 2; **Type:** Simple

Keywords: Combo-OK, Obvious

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Ravenous Fiend Preparedness

With the wrathful fury of Malfeas himself, the hellfire dancer squeezes the trigger of her weapon and lets fly with a deluge of baleful green flame. As the algarel ammunition detonates in a gout of green fire, this blasphemous conflagration is augmented by the reservoirs of the dancer's own hatred and wrath. Stoked into veritable verdant bonfire, the flame that erupts from the barrel is far more potent and bright than it ought to be. This Charm supplements an attack with one of the style's form weapons, doubling its raw damage, and allowing the dancer to count tens twice on the damage roll.

INSIDIOUS EMERALD CONSUMPTION

Cost: 4m; **Mins:** Martial Arts 3, Essence 2; **Type:** Supplemental

Keywords: Combo-OK

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Green Sun Scourge

No barrier can slow vitriol. It seethes through the toughest barrier and dissolves to feed it's never-ending hunger. An unarmed Martial Arts attack supplemented by this Charm gains the piercing tag. Furthermore, if this attack is made against a target that is a subject of one of the hellfire dancer's negative Intimacies, it ignores armor altogether.

HELLFIRE BALLET FORM

Cost: 5m; **Mins:** Martial Arts 4, Essence 2; **Type:** Simple

Keywords: Form-type, Obvious

Duration: One scene

Prerequisite Charms: Green Sun Scourge, Insidious Emerald Consumption

The beauty of the hellfire ballet is marred only by the mortal peril it presents to even distant spectators. Green tongues of vitriolic fire dance and flicker from the barrels of the hellfire dancer's guns while this Form is active. A miasma of Malfean fumes, green and noxious, ooze out of the weapon and hang heavy in the air about the dancer, her eyes glinting with the reflected menace of Ligier. The dancer moves in jerking, abrupt, angular gestures, pivoting sharply, aiming almost without a thought, and firing at odd angles. Her accuracy does not suffer from this wild, yet tightly restrained, fury. She is a terrible whirlwind, a fiend from the depths of hell, the fury of the Titans given flesh and form.

While this form Charm is active, the hellfire dancer may use her hellwands to make hand-to-hand attacks (wielding the butt of the gun as a club or cudgel); mechanically, the gun-butt uses the traits of a tonfa. The dancer may allocate a number of bonus dots equal to her (Martial Arts) among the weapon's Rate, Accuracy, Damage or Defense. Additionally, Speed can be reduced, but doing so costs two dots and cannot lower the

Speed below 3. No trait can be raised or lowered by more than two points. These boosts to the weapon's melee stats do not benefit the weapon's use as a ranged weapon. As a final benefit of this Charm, the hellfire dancer may add half her (Martial Arts), round up, to her DDV pool against ranged attacks.

VENGEFUL TITAN'S PROWESS

Cost: —(1m); **Mins:** Martial Arts 4, Essence 2; **Type:** Permanent

Keywords: None

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisite Charms: Hellfire Ballet Form

The hellfire dancer may spend 1m ready her hellwands (or other form weapons of this style) instantly, provided they are on her person, without necessitating the normal miscellaneous action. Furthermore, if she has the Hellfire Ballet Form active, she may reload such a weapon reflexively, at a cost of 1m. She must have the appropriate ammunition for the weapon, however.

CHAMPION OF THE BALEFUL SUN

Cost: 8m, 1wp; **Mins:** Martial Arts 5, Essence 3; **Type:** Simple (Speed 5)

Keywords: Obvious

Duration: (Martial Arts) actions

Prerequisite Charms: Vengeful Titan's Prowess

The movements of the hellfire dancer are unnaturally swift and precise. Her body blurs as he takes on the speed of the rays of the Demon City's green sun. She trails faint green essence behind her as she becomes so quick she is almost impossible to see. This Charm enables the hellfire dancer to, once per action, make a free miscellaneous action without needing a flurry. She cannot use this action to activate a Charm. However, she could reflexively attack once with his weapon while leaping across the yawning chasm between two Chiaroscuran skyscrapers.

While this Charm is active the hellfire dancer also increases her movement speed by her (Essence) yards.

LAUGHTER AND TORMENT COUNTER

Cost: 5m (+1wp); **Mins:** Martial Arts 4, Essence 2; **Type:** Reflexive (Step 9)

Keywords: Combo-OK, Counterattack

Duration: Instant or one action

Prerequisite Charms: Vengeful Titan's Prowess

The virtuosos of the Hellfire Ballet are fearsome combatants. Just as none can assail the green sun of the Demon City and escape unscathed, so too do these dancers punish those hubristic enough to provoke their ire.

The hellfire dancer may reflexively activate this Charm to make a counterattack against any opponent who attacks her unsuccessfully. This attack must be a ranged attack made with a form weapon of this style. If the Form is active, the Martial artist may instead make a melee attack using the butt of his firearm. The attack is made at the dancer's full dicepool. This attack is a savage blow which automatically forces the subject to check against knockdown.

By paying an additional Willpower, the hellfire dancer can extend this effect's duration until her next action, allowing her to freely make counterattacks against anyone who tries and fails to strike her, once per failed attack.



GIFT OF THE WRATHFUL GOD

Cost: 4m; **Mins:** Martial Arts 4, Essence 3; **Type:** Simple

Keywords: Combo-OK, Crippling

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Laughter and Torment Counter

A gruesome expression of the burning wrath of Malfeas, focused into a single beam of brilliant emerald light, erupts from the hellfire dancer's weapon and burns through her foe.

This Charm is a called shot attack with the hellfire dancer's form weapon. However, instead of a gout of green flame and noxious, vitriolic fumes, the energy is focused into a relatively narrow shaft of brilliant green light, as bright and as fierce as the light of Ligier. This beam causes terrible, searing damage as it passes clean through the targeted body part, leaving naught but charred flesh, sinew and gristle in its wake.

The hellfire dancer rolls a normal (Dexterity+Martial Arts) attack, which suffers a -4 external penalty for being a called shot. This attack targets a specific part of the body. Should the attack hit and do one or more levels of damage, that damage instead becomes one level of aggravated damage. The affected character also suffers an amputation effect (**Exalted**, p. 152) due to severe damage to the limb or body part pierced by the lance of infernal fire. This is not an amputation, merely rendering the limb useless, so an Exalt can heal the Crippling effect normally as soon as the aggravated damage heals.

IN DAMNATION'S CLUTCHES

Cost: 7m, 1wp; **Mins:** Martial Arts 5, Essence 3; **Type:** Supplemental

Keywords: Combo-OK

Duration: Indefinite

Prerequisite Charms: Champion of the Baleful Sun, Gift of the Wrathful God.

This Charm supplements a clinch attack. Once the clinch succeeds, the hellfire dancer can shift her hold to a highly effective, one handed grip. This allows her to maintain control of her victim and keeps one hand free to wield her firearm. As long as she holds the victim and keeps this Charm active, the dancer may use the victim as a human shield. The victim provides a +2 cover bonus to her DVs. Attacks that miss the dancer instead hit the clinched victim, who may not defend since they are held in a clinch. Attacks that bypass the hellfire dancer's defenses still strike her, not the restrained victim. As a final benefit, since she need only hold her hostage tight against her to avoid being struck, a feat which is hardly taxing, the hellfire dancer's minimum PDV pool may not be lowered below her (Essence + 2) instead of (Essence). (This does not apply to wound penalties and the DV penalties from actions, as normal.)

The hellfire dancer makes rolls to retain control of the clinch reflexively without a need to flurry. Indeed, she may move, jump and act as normal, subject only to a few restrictions. While maintaining the clinch she may only make attacks using a form weapon for this style. Furthermore, she may not take dash actions. Finally, she may crush the victim to inflict damage (without using the next Charm, Judgment of the Maimed King), as she is only using one arm and cannot apply sufficient force. She may throw them as usual, however. Indeed, Hellfire Ballet Masters frequently hurl victims clinched in this manner at their enemies to provide a few moments of distraction.

JUDGMENT OF THE MAIMED KING

Cost: 4m, 1wp; **Mins:** Martial Arts 5, Essence 4; **Type:** Supplemental

Keywords: Combo-Basic, Obvious

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: In Damnation's Clutches

The hellfire dancer presses her blasphemous weapon against a vital area of her hostage's anatomy, her eyes gleaming with malevolent glee and the reflected flames of the Hell-Sun Ligier. She smiles, laughs, or otherwise lays bare the monstrousness of her nature and the depth of her hatred and wrath, and then executes her victim. This Charm supplements a crush attack on a victim the hellfire dancer has clinched with In Damnation's Clutches. Instead of a normal crush, she makes an unarmed Martial Arts attack with the form weapon of this style against her clinched victim. The attack hits automatically, for she is firing from point blank and there is no possibility of a miss, doing aggravated damage, and the dancer adds (her Essence) successes to the damage roll. At this range the mundane metals are turned to molten slag and even the magical materials are momentarily superheated by the vitriolic flames. They offer no protection to their wearer, the damage ignoring armor.

Deaths caused by this Charm are always gruesome: a head cut from the body by a torrent of fire, a hole the size of a melon bored into the chest cavity, or something of that nature. No one who sees the corpse, with its charred flesh and exposed viscera, will be able to ignore the infernal nature of the character's demise.

LAUGHING IMP STYLE

In Malfeas there is a silence more terrifying than any roar, and a laughter more damning than any death sentence. The Silent Wind Adorjan sweeps over the land, and in her wake she leaves a trail of destruction. Created as a glorious tribute to her by an ancient akuma, the Laughing Imp style emulates the lethal humor of Adorjan.

Weapons and Armor: This style may not be practiced in armor, it may be used with nunchaku, sais, seven-section staves, or their artifact equivalents.

Complementary Abilities: In addition to being rooted in taunting the opponent with the futility of his very existence, Laughing Imp Style is highly athletic and requires at least two dots in each Dodge, Athletics, and Presence to learn.

Because of its resonance with her nature, masters of this style may add their (Martial Arts) to their prayer rolls to Adorjan or her subsidiary souls.

LAUGHING IN THE RAIN OF BLADES


Cost: 3m; **Mins:** Martial Arts 3, Essence 2; **Type:** Reflexive (Step 2)

Keywords: Combo-OK, Obvious

Duration: One tick

Prerequisite Charms: None

The laughing imp vexes attackers with her easy, mocking manner and her quicksilver reflexes. The more she turns aside the weapons of her assailants, the more furious they become, and the more impossible she is to strike. The imp's hands and weapons flick easily into the path of incoming attacks, turning them aside with maddening ease.



This Charm negates onslaught penalties to the imp's unarmed martial arts PDV, up to his (Martial Arts). Additionally, as the fury of her enemies is something she can easily exploit, the laughing imp benefits from an onslaught bonus to her PDV equal to the benefit she would normally suffer, up to a maximum of (5 – the attacker's Temperance).

I'M OVER HERE REVELATION

Cost: 4m; **Mins:** Martial Arts 3, Essence 2; **Type:** Reflexive (Step 2)

Keywords: Combo-OK, Obvious

Duration: Until next action

Prerequisite Charms: None

The laughing imp knows how to throw her foes off balance both physically and mentally. Deftly evading an attack, she disrupts her target's balance, evading their perception for a key moment. When activated in response to a single attack, this Charm adds a number of successes equal to the difference between the attacker's attack roll and the imp's DV to an attempt to reestablish surprise on the imp's next action. This Charm does not negate penalties for reestablishing surprise in combat.

INSULT TO INJURY METHOD

Cost: 2m; **Mins:** Martial Arts 3, Essence 3; **Type:** Reflexive (Step 1)

Keywords: Combo-OK, Emotion, Obvious

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: I'm Over Here Revelation, Laughing in the Rain of Blades

In combat it is important to keep one's wits intact. The laughing imps, however, find that sort of restraint dull and draining, so they substitute for personal composure the ability to drive others to distraction. The laughing imp may invoke this Charm when striking his foe to seamlessly integrate some sort of irritating, distracting, or suggestive gesture into his movements. Her opponents find themselves quite vexed by her light hearted irreverence. Compare the results of the imp's attack roll to the target's DMDV; the attack beats the DMDV and strikes the target, the foe is so maddened by the imp's cavalier irreverence that they have trouble focusing on the battle. The foe takes an internal penalty on all actions equal to the amount by which the attack successes exceeded his DMDV, until his DV next refreshes. The foe can focus and ignore this mental influence by spending one Willpower, though they must still contend with the imp's physical attack.

LAUGHING IMP FORM

Cost: 5m; **Mins:** Martial Arts 4, Essence 3; **Type:** Simple (Speed 5)

Keywords: Form-type

Duration: One scene

Prerequisite Charms: I'm Over Here Revelation, Laughing in the Rain of Blades

The martial artist takes a relaxed, jaunty stance as he slips into the mindset of the Laughing Imp. A too-big grin spreads across his face and he comes to see the world for the farce it is. He laughs, both at the scope and profundity of the joke, and at the idiocy of those who seem to miss the humor. He moves with a jocular ease, laughing at his assailants and trying to share

the wondrous levity with him. Only through his cracked and warped perception can the truth be seen clearly. His foes find his madness unsettling and enraging and they strike with greater fury, which seems to embolden him and make him even more elusive as he flows around and past them, like a mad and deadly wind. While this form is active the martial artist adds one to the dice bonus (but not other rewards) of all stunts that emphasize cracked, and profoundly cruel, humor and the whimsical, light-hearted, and wholly inhuman malice. Furthermore, this Charm reduces the multiple action penalties the martial artist's flurries suffer by his (Essence). While this Charm is active the Exalt cannot succeed at compassion rolls.

UNMAN THE OPPOSITION METHOD

Cost: 4m; **Mins:** Martial Arts 4, Essence 3; **Type:** Reflexive (Step 9)

Keywords: Combo-OK, Obvious, Counterattack

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Laughing Imp Form

When enemies beset the Laughing Imp, he dances away, but if they press their case he is happy to take their weapons away. The Laughing Imp wants an audience for his farce of madness, he wants them to see the humor of the broken world, if that means taking their toys from them then he is more than able to do so. In response to an attack which the martial artist parries successfully (if unarmed, he may do so with his bare hands) he may attempt to disarm his attacker, gaining a number of successes on the attempt equal to the amount by which his PDV exceeded their attack roll (to a maximum of his Martial Arts rating). Use of a perfect parry grants maximum reward provided it was made with this style's form weapon. If the opponent is unarmed (or the martial artist wishes to do this instead) he may attempt a sweep counterattack in lieu of the disarm attempt. The sweep gains the same extra successes as the counterattack, though this Charm does not negate the normal penalties associated with either attempt.

CAKCLING JESTER ONSLAUGHT

Cost: 3m/attack, 1wp; **Mins:** Martial Arts 4, Essence 3; **Type:** Extra Action

Keywords: Combo-OK, Obvious

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Laughing Imp Form

Those beset by the laughing Imp have little choice but to attempt to whether the ceaseless storm of jeers and blows. His strikes, like his ceaseless mocking laughter, are not forceful, earth shaking blows. That would be easy to resist. Rather his attacks are persistent and unnerving, wearing away at his target. The martial artist may make up to his (Essence + 1) martial arts attacks against a single target. Every attack after the first suffers a compounding multiple action penalty of -1. However, the onslaught of blows is difficult to whether and taxes both body and soul, the Onslaught penalty from each of these attacks is doubled. This magical flurry's total number of attacks cannot exceed the weapon's Rate, and it suffers a DV penalty equal to half the cumulative penalties of all attacks in the flurry.





GLEEFUL INSANITY TECHNIQUE

Cost: 5m, 1wp; **Mins:** Martial Arts 5, Essence 3; **Type:** Supplemental

Keywords: Combo-OK, Obvious

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Laughing Imp Form

The Laughing imp wears his contempt for life and his amusement at its destruction on his sleeve. Striking a blow that is as ostentatious as it is nearly fatal, the martial artist does not kill a target, but rather conveys to the hapless victim exactly how meaningless his existence is. With flourish of a blade and a chuckle, the Laughing Imp can display his sociopath urges to such effect that he reduces a stalwart warrior to tears and horror. This attack supplements a attempt at Showing-off (Exalted 2nd, p. 158), where the attacker strikes the target in such a way that he non-lethally demonstrates his callousness and deadliness, if the attack hits, it does no damage. Instead, the martial artist rolls (Charisma + Martial Arts) against the MDV, of the target. If successful he applies an external penalty equal to the difficult of the Showing-off penalty against the target's combat actions for the rest of the scene. This reflects the sheer, paralytic terror that grips the target and makes even the most mundane undertaking an ordeal. The penalty endures for the rest of the scene unless the target spends 2wp to resist it. When the target spends the martial artist's (Essence) in willpower, he become immune for one scene.

MALICIOUS JESTER DEFLECTION

Cost: 8m **Mins:** Martial Arts 5, Essence 3; **Type:** Reflexive (Step 2)

Keywords: Combo-Basic, Obvious

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Unman the Opposition Method

The One thing the Laughing Imp delights in more than spreading the joy and humor of its own nihilistic philosophy, is visiting a portion of the pain and betrayal it feels in it heart upon other. With casual flick of her wrist, the Martial artist's weapons guide a would-be assailant's attack past her and into the heart of another. The more enraged the opponent, the more given to excess, the more vulnerable to her they are. With a smile and a laugh she says, "oops." and then she dances away. Subject to an attack, the martial artist spend 8m. Doing so, she rolls her (Martial Arts + Essence) against a difficulty of their Temperance, if she is successful she may apply the same attack, augmented by all the same Charms, to another target within that attack's range. She may not apply the attack directly to the attacker

SILENT LAUGHTER FORCE

Cost: 7m, 1wp, 1lh; **Mins:** Martial Arts 5, Essence 4; **Type:** Simple

Keywords: Combo-Basic, Obvious

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Unman the Opposition Method

The Laughing Imp would see Creation end amidst a chorus of laughter and tears, the malevolent jester would dance on the worlds grave and do it happily, for he sees little difference between a dead joke and a living one. Reflecting the emptiness and nihilistic outlook, the martial artist may share his destructive glee with the world. Whirling his weapons about him

in a savage, almost invisible wall of deadly steel, the martial artist exudes a destructive shockwave that smothers the area around him in silent death. This crushing pressure blasts out from his whirling weaponry as he performs the elaborate, capering death-dance, as part of a martial arts strike, he flattens the world around him beneath the sound dampening pressure of his hate. Even the martial artist is punished by this descending deathstorm. Only the mocking laughter of the martial artist can be heard. In this zone of silent death the martial artist can kill with impunity. This attack supplements a Martial Arts attack, applying the attack, as an invisible, unblockable, strike to everything within (Martial Arts) Essence yards. The martial artist needn't even strike a target, he need only strike the air and his essence expands outwards crushing everyone within range. The damage from this Charm bypasses armored soak and affects both the material and immaterial worlds, all mundane objects and structures take damage from this attack and those that are not significant should be assumed to be destroyed. Finally, all targets within range of the attack must check against knockdown.

UNBROKEN BOUGH STYLE

Unbroken Bough Style was developed by a Shogunate era Sidereal who became enamored of life in the Woods of the East. This style is, itself, a love letter to the mighty trees and forests of that direction. Those who practice it are often ascetics and hermits, and certainly posses a strong love of the woods. How else could they practice an art which is so plainly reverential of such things?

Weapons and Armor: This style treats staves (and their artifact equivalents) as form weapons. It is compatible with armor made of cloth, green jade, or other organic materials that resonate with the element of wood (spider-silk, leather—even synthetic—or the vegetative armors of the Dragon Kings, for instance).

Complementary Abilities: To learn this style, a martial artist must have Survival ••, as a minimum. Masters also frequently have Craft (Wood), as constructing one's own staff is a rite of passage that marks the transition from student to master.

BENDING SAPLING DEFENSE

Cost: 2m; **Mins:** Martial Arts 2, Essence 2; **Type:** Reflexive (Step 2)

Keywords: Combo-OK, Stackable

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: None

The bough is strong, but more than that, it is wise and judicious in its application of its strength. The unbroken bough allows this wisdom to inform his defense. When he parries a melee attack (either unarmed or with a form weapon), he not only absorbs the force of the attack but, through careful timing and martial prowess, unbalances his opponent.

This Charm adds one to the action penalty the attacker suffers as a result of making the attack which was parried, and prevents the unbroken bough from suffering onslaught penalties from that attack. The penalty this Charm imposes vanishes when the attacker's DV refreshes.

This Charm cannot be used against a ranged attack.



ANCIENT OAK REBUFF

Cost: 4m; **Mins:** Martial Arts 3, Essence 2; **Type:** Reflexive (Step 2)

Keywords: Combo-OK, Counterattack, Knockdown

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Bending Sapling Defense

The power of the ancient oak is startling. So rooted is it in the earth that those who would try to overpower it often find themselves thrown to the earth by the unbending rectitude of its trunk. In response to an attack, the unbroken bough roots himself to the ground in the balanced pose of the rooted oak, and activates this Charm. Should he parry the attack successfully, his defense is so forceful that he can sometimes knock his opponent to the ground. This often manifests as the unbroken bough, having caught a sword swing on the middle of his staff, pushing back against the opponent at the instant of contact, destroying their equilibrium, or some other feat that demonstrates his mastery of both force, timing, and flexibility.

Mechanically, the attacker, after his attack has been parried, must roll to resist knockdown at a difficulty equal to the amount by which his attack roll failed. This difficulty is never greater than the unbroken bough's (Martial Arts).

This Charm is a counterattack, and penalizes the unbroken bough's DVs accordingly. This Charm cannot be used against a ranged attack or against a Counterattack.

MIGHTY YEW TECHNIQUE

Cost: 4m; **Mins:** Martial Arts 3, Essence 2; **Type:** Supplemental

Keywords: Combo-OK

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Ancient Oak Rebuff

With the flexibility and strength of a young tree, the unbroken bough strikes with strength born of his own flexibility and agility, as well as brute force.

This Charm supplements an unarmed martial arts attack. Vaulting over his staff and using its supple power to propel him towards his foe and add momentum to the force of his blows, the unbroken bough may add his (Dexterity) to the raw damage of his attack. This Charm is somewhat limited when used without the style's form weapon. Lacking the staff with which to vault, the character must emulate the unique flexibility of the bough with his own body. Used without a staff, this Charm adds only (Dexterity ÷ 2) raw damage.

UNBROKEN BOUGH FORM

Cost: 5m; **Mins:** Martial Arts 4, Essence 2; **Type:** Simple (Speed 5)

Keywords: Form-type. Obvious

Duration: One scene

Prerequisite Charms: Mighty Yew Technique

With the regal bearing of an towering pine, the silent stillness of an ancient oak, and the flexibility of a sappling, the is somewhat limited, in both manner and bearing, evokes the virtues of these titans of the wood. Holding his weapon in both hands, he faces his opponent. His stance is wide and low; firm, yet relaxed; and ready to bend and move in the wind of combat. While he stands thus, nothing can break him.

The unbroken bough adds his (Essence) to his PDV while wielding the style's form weapon, and half that amount while unarmed (though his ability to bend, but not break, when struck allows him to parry lethal damage unarmed). He also reduces the speed of all unarmed martial arts attacks, by -1 (to a minimum of 3).

BRISTLING PINE DISARMAMENT

Cost: 3m, 1wp; **Mins:** Martial Arts 5, Essence 2; **Type:** Reflexive (Step 2)

Keywords: Combo-OK, Obvious, Counterattack

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Unbroken Bough Form

The branches of a pine extend outward, cloaking the tree's trunk with a aegis of nettles and limbs. The unbroken bough similarly attempts to dissuade those who would attack him from their course of action. By exploiting his weapon's reach and his own whiplike reflexes, the unbroken bough may strike at his opponent and render them helpless.

This Charm permits the martial artist to attempt to disarm any melee ranged attacker as a counterattack. This disarm does not suffer the normal penalties for such an attempt. This Counterattack occurs in Step 2 of attack resolution and is resolved before the opponent's attack. If successful the attacker loses his weapon and, though he cannot abort the attack, must make the attack unarmed. Should the attack benefit from any Charms that cannot supplement an unarmed strike, the attacker still spends the motes, but the Charms do not function.

LEAF AND BRANCH REPRISAL

Cost: 8m; **Mins:** Martial Arts 5, Essence 3; **Type:** Reflexive

Keywords: Combo-OK, Obvious, Counterattack

Duration: One action

Prerequisite Charms: Bristling Pine Disarmament

By this point in his training, the unbroken bough has mastered the poise, grace, and flexibility of the most mighty and ancient trees. When attacked, he responds not with fear and human emotion, but with the impassive tranquility of nature. Though he may smile amiably at an attacker, the unbroken bough is no pushover; indeed, his serenity makes him a dangerous foe indeed. This Charm may be activated in response to any attack the unbroken bough elects to dodge. If he successfully dodges the attack, he leaps into the air, coming to rest upon the attacker's weapon, as perfectly balanced as a leaf upon a stem. From there, he may make an unarmed martial arts counterattack at his full dice pool.

Furthermore, because the unbroken bough, like a sparrow on the branch of a tree, on the attacker's weapon, his opponent cannot use that weapon to parry. Instead, the opponent can only parry with another readied weapon or one that can be readied reflexively, drop that weapon and attempt to parry unarmed, or dodge. In this way he is considered functionally disarmed for the instant the unbroken bough attacks. Unlike other counterattacks this Charm imposes a -2 DV penalty, due to the sheer volume of athletic movement it involves. This Charm cannot be used to counter a ranged attack.





THRASHING ELM TECHNIQUE

Cost: 3m; **Mins:** Martial Arts 4, Essence 3; **Type:** Reflexive
Keywords: Combo-OK, Knockback, Knockdown, Obvious
Duration: One action

Prerequisite Charms: Unbroken Bough Form

The unbroken bough's blows are augmented by sudden, whip-like movements, adding force to his strikes. He batters his foes aside with his blows, hurling them back so that he may engage them only on his terms.

Every time the unbroken bough damages a target with an unarmed martial arts attack for this Charm's duration, he may opt to automatically causes knockback to the target. He hurls targets back (Essence ÷ 2) yards for each level of damage inflicted, and they must then succeed at a difficulty 2 check against knockdown or land prone.

TREE FELS THE WOODSMEN

Cost: 2m + 1m per attack, 1wp; **Mins:** Martial Arts 5, Essence 3;
Type: Extra Action
Keywords: Combo-OK, Obvious
Duration: One action

Prerequisite Charms: Thrashing Elm Technique,

The unbroken bough whirls his staff about him, fending off his foes as they press in from all sides. In some instances he focuses his fury on only one or two targets, and it is a terrible thing indeed. In other cases he opts to spin his staff in an elaborate series of arcs around his body, striking each target once. This second method is less damaging to individual targets, but may strike more opponents.

This Charm may be used in two ways:

- The unbroken bough may make magical flurry of (Essence) unarmed martial arts attacks against any targets within melee range, up to a maximum of his weapon's Rate.
- Alternatively, while wielding a staff (or other form weapon), the unbroken bough may sweep his staff about his body in whirlwind of punishing flurry. He makes a single attack against each target within melee range, regardless of their number and unlimited by Rate. He may not move between attacks. This function is often combined with Thrashing Elm Technique for truly impressive effects.

BURNING HAWTHORN UNDERSTANDING

Cost: —(0m or 1m); **Mins:** Martial Arts 5, Essence 3; **Type:** Permanent
Keywords: Obvious

Prerequisite Charms: Tree Fells the Woodsmen, Leaf and Branch Reprisal

There is a lesson to be learned from the hawthorn, whose wood—through its intimate connection with the vital energy of the world—provides the hottest fire and burns the longest. Long study has revealed the secret of this connection the unbroken bough. Once he has learned this Charm, the unbroken bough stylist shares this intimate knowledge of life essence, and so, like the hawthorn, burns hotter and longer than his fellows. Mastery of this Charm reflects a new understanding of living essence and, through it, allows for greater conservation of power.

The unbroken bough may enhance Unbroken Bough Form with this Charm when activating it, by adding an additional +1m to the Form's cost. Thereafter, the unbroken bough reduces the cost of all Charms of this style by 1m. This reduction in cost also applies to all wood-aspected Dragon-Blood Charms, wood-aspected terrestrial martial arts Charms, and wood-aspected Elemental Charms. (This does not include every Charm possessed by a Wood Elemental, but only Charms specifically dealing with the element of wood, such as Wood Affinity Control.) Because of the unbroken bough's resonance with the Element of Wood, this cost reduction applies automatically in areas that are densely forested and located in the East, without the 1m commitment, as long as the Form is active.

This Charm may never reduce the cost of a Charm by more than half. This is otherwise cumulative with other discounts.

Interestingly, this Charm is also compatible with the Wood Dragon Form, and can be activated in conjunction with that Form as well.

CHAMPION OF THE EMERALD FLOW

Cost: 7m, 1wp; **Mins:** Martial Arts 5, Essence 3; **Type:** Simple (Speed 5)

Keywords: Combo-OK, Obvious

Duration: One scene

Prerequisite Charms: Burning Hawthorn Understanding

The unbroken bough resonates fully with the woodland. He communes with the trees and the forests and they nourish his being. Wood yields to his touch and protects him. For his part, the unbroken bough has come to understand the wood, and through it, the cycle of life. He knows the cyclical nature of life and death and can appreciate its beauty and necessity. Like the leaf that falls in autumn, dancing, even in the throes of its own death, he will revel forever, and find joy in every moment of life.

When he desires, an eruption of living essence pours forth from the unbroken bough's anima. This makes the unbroken bough transcendently serene and joyful. He adds the lower of his (Survival) or (Performance) to his PDV calculation, reflecting the sinuous dance of windblown trees and falling leaves, which he mirrors in his movements, and in the way his staff, invigorated by the living essence pouring out of him, seems to dance and sway as well. Furthermore, this negates all wound penalties, and up to the unbroken bough's (Martial Arts) in onslaught penalties to his DVs. Coordinated attack penalties are reduced by half his (Martial Arts).

Most impressively, however, while under this Charm's effects, the unbroken bough's strikes drain 1m from targets when he strikes them with martial arts attacks. This essence flashes out of the opponent's body, manifesting as some floral display, such as a rain of petals or leaves. The unbroken bough does not gain these motes, however; they are absorbed into the ambient essence of Creation as soon as they leave the opponent's body. However, if he is wielding a form weapon made of Green Jade, because the weapon acts as a conduit for life essence, he gains not only the benefit of the magical material, but absorbs the motes drained by this Charm.



CHAPTER THREE

THE LOTUS BLOSSOM

Golden Home of Wanderers: A Sidereal style exploring the concepts of place, location, and journeys.

GOLDEN HOME OF WANDERERS STYLE

Sidereal who work in the Golden Barque are all, at least nominally aware of it, it is a potent style and oft favored among the more itinerant Sidereals. Delving deep into the loom of fate and the underlying principles of Travel and Place, the Martial artist learns to exploit location and displacement, and the fundamental essence of Journeys the martial artist can manipulate it and use it to grant him a significant edge in combat.

Weapons and Armor: This Style is compatible with the rope dart and the Chain Daiklaive. It may not be used in armor.

Complementary Abilities: To learn this style the martial artist must have Survival 2 and Ride or Sail 2.

Student's Sutra of Travel: Once there was a maiden on the road.

UNRESTRAINED WANDERER METHOD

Cost: 6m; **Mins:** Martial Arts 5, Essence 4; **Type:** Reflexive

Keywords: Combo-OK, Obvious

Duration: (Martial Arts) actions

Prerequisite Charms: None

She walked a hundred years...

The martial artist is accustomed to the ordeal of travel, and suffers little form natural impediments to her progress. She moves with speed that is not so much impossibly great as super-naturally deft. The martial artist moves at his Dash speed, and

may cross any terrain without regard for difficulty. Although she must still roll to maintain her balance if necessary, the Martial Artist essential ignores all obstacles to her movement. She suffers no penalties unbalanced, or difficult terrain. Most impressively, while the Charm is active, the martial artist may run up vertical or even inverted surfaces. Assuming such obstacles could be circumvented given sufficient acrobatic feats, the martial artist is assumed to do so.

Though he may not perform impossible feats, such as walking on water, through a solid object or across hazardous terrain (such as lava, etc.) without harm, the Sidereal may essentially move wherever he pleases. No external penalties affect the martial artist's movement. All These benefits apply to all forms of locomotion, not just walking, but also climbing, swimming and Riding. If the martial artist does not move on any tick while this Charm is active, the Charm ends immediately.

CUTTING TO THE CHASE TECHNIQUE

Cost: 8m; **Mins:** Martial Arts 5, Essence 4; **Type:** Simple (Speed 3, DV -0)

Keywords: Combo-OK, Obvious

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Unrestrained Wanderer Method

...crossed a thousand roads.

Every seasoned traveler knows that the significant moments of a journey are often separated by seemingly interminable expanses of mindless, boring, forward progress. Sidereals who know this style may manipulate the flow of Fate and Essence, effectively "skipping to the important part" of a journey, without having to endure the dull parts. Provided the stylist could



reach a point within (Essence) consecutive actions (which may encompass any type of movement the martial artist is capable of, but may not assume the activation of Charms or effects not already active when the Charm is used). The martial artist sidesteps the intervening space, appearing at her intended location without traversing the space in between. This means that, while the martial artist must be able to travel across the area, by running, climbing, leaping, swimming or other means, he need not necessarily concern himself with the perils of doing so.

Any environmental effects, traps, or other hazards that lie in the martial artist's path may be ignored. Obstructions, such as locked doors or impassible boulders, which can be circumvented through feats of strength (*Exalted*, p. 127), may be bypassed with one of the martial artist's 'actions' as long as the martial artist's Strength + Athletics value must be sufficient to the task. Furthermore, because the journey is 'assumed' by fate and causality, and did not actually happen, the object is not actually moved or destroyed. When this Charm is activated, the martial artist vanishes, reappearing three ticks later at his intended location. During the interim the martial artist is nonexistent and is an invalid target for attacks. The martial artist's movement for this Charm can benefit from any relevant Charms he has active, provided their durations are long enough that they will not terminate before the martial artist reappears.

HORIZON CHASER'S OBLIGATION

Cost: 8m; **Mins:** Martial Arts 5, Essence 4; **Type:** Simple (Speed 3, DV -0)

Keywords: Combo-OK, Obvious

Duration: (Martial Arts) actions

Prerequisite Charms: Cutting To the Chase Technique

But she could not rest...

A Traveler cannot tarry one place too long and be a traveler still, for every period of sedentary life two must be spent in motion. The martial artist may exploit this fact, deliberately standing still and incurring a debt of distance to the maiden of journeys, one that must be repaid with interest. For every tick the martial artist doesn't take any Move action, he doubles his Move distance for the remainder of the scene. This increase stacks with itself to a maximum of (Essence) increases.

VAGABOND'S WHIM DEFENSE

Cost: 12m; **Mins:** Martial Arts 5, Essence 4; **Type:** Simple (5/-1)

Keywords: Combo-Basic, Counterattack, Obvious

Duration: (Martial Arts) actions

Prerequisite Charms: Horizon Chaser's Obligation

...could not linger.

Place is a circumstantial consideration. A true wanderer can just as easily be in one place as a hundred others. The Sidereal who learns this Charm masters this detachment from location and, like so many vagabonds, uses it to avoid trouble. While this Charm is active, the martial artist is detached from the specifics of place and has wedded the Fate of his location to that of his personal location. Whenever he is subject to attack,

he may make a full Move action in Step 2, this functions as a counterattack (even though it does no damage) and therefore may not be used against other counterattack Charms. If this Move action carries him out of the reach of his opponents blade or the current range increment of their attack, the attack automatically fails and combat resolution proceeds no further. This also interrupts any flurry unless the attacker can close the distance somehow. If the attacker has not taken his movement action yet, he can use it in an effort to close the range between them.

If the distance the martial artist covers exceeds 1 yard, melee attacks fail, unless they carry the R tag (which then requires the stylist to move 3 yards away from the attacker). Ranged attacks fail automatically if the Exalt moves out of the attack's range. If the Exalt cannot move, or if the attack is supplemented by a Charm that allows it hit with 0 successes, or have infinite range, this Charm offers no protection. The martial artist may only elude his opponent in this manner once per enemy action. The movement this Charm provides is obviously supernatural, the marital artist appears to slip into the distance without any conscious effort on his part, as if he had been there all along.

WINDING PATH ASSAULT

Cost: 10m, 1wp; **Mins:** Martial Arts 5, Essence 4; **Type:** Simple (Speed 5)

Keywords: Combo-Basic, Obvious

Duration: Five actions

Prerequisite Charms: Cutting to the Chase Technique

The horizon called to her daily...

A True Traveler seldom takes the most direct route, for to do so would deprive him of the pleasure of the journey. The martial artist adopt the posture of Ambiguous Presence, and his limbs and weapon seems to twist and shift, occupying and moving in a way that is wholly unpredictable. The martial artist's attacks do not approach strait on, but twist and bend impossibly, becoming difficult to anticipate. Unarmed blows twist and bend, limbs becoming malleable beyond the capacity of the human form. Attacks with the form weapon coil like angry serpents, following equally impossible trajectories yet loosing none of their efficacy. At the beginning of the Sidereal's action, Targets subject to Martial Arts attacks made by the sidereal, must (Wits + Awareness) at a difficulty of the Exalt's (Essence), or the attack or flurry becomes unexpected. If the target is an Essence User, and she fails the roll, she may spend 1wp reflexively, forcing herself to ignore the distracting strangeness of the attack. Doing so enables the target to apply her full DV against the martial artist's attacks for that action. However, her DV's are still reduced by the martial artist's (Essence) against the attack, because they remain rather confusing and difficult to react to. Charms which negate surprise perfectly, allow the target to forgo this roll, but still impose the (Essence) DV penalty unless the character spends 1wp, in which case he may ignore even this for a single action. Any character who spends the Sidereal's (Essence) in wp resisting this Charm becomes immune to it for a scene.

CARAVAN SELF MASTERY

Cost: 10m; **Mins:** Martial Arts 5, Essence 4; **Type:** Extra Action

Keywords: Combo-Basic, Obvious

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Winding Path Assault

...and the one place she could not go...

The truly transcendent travelers, Like Luna and Mercury, may walk many roads at once, but great thought the Sidereal is, he cannot yet perform that miracle. He can however, divide his essence, so that a portion himself might travel several paths, so long a they arrive at the same location. Thus the Sidereal assures that even if he doesn't follow the best course, his ability to learn from experience insures eventual success. Thus, as a mortal relies upon his forebear's experiences to ensure his success on the road, does the Sidereal blaze the trail for his own journey. Activating this Charm, the martial artist releases a number of dazzling golden simulacra from his anima. These essence phantasms strike at his foe, blazing a trail for the martial artist's own attack. This Charm enables the martial artist to construct a magical flurry of up to (Essence) unarmed Martial Arts attacks against one target. Each attack benefits from the experience of the one that went before it. Therefore, it suffers, not normal multiple action penalties, but rather an inversion of them. The martial artist's first attack gains a dice bonus to its Accuracy roll equal to half the number of actions in the flurry and every attack after that increases the dice bonus by one. Should the dice reach the maximum allowable bonus from Charms, the additional dice are applied as an internal penalty to the target's PDV and DDV. This penalty is applied before onslaught but may not reduce DVs below 0.

INDISPENSABLE JOURNEY

Cost: 6m per target; **Mins:** Martial Arts 5, Essence 4; **Type:** Simple

Keywords: Combo-Basic, Obvious

Duration: Five actions

Prerequisite Charms: Caravan Self Mastery

...was her destination.

No destination can be reached without a journey, and no goal can be attained without the necessary travails. Every seeker owes a journey, both to themselves and to Mercury. Where circumstances would prohibit the Sidereal from traveling the distance to achieve his object, he may force the issue, creating a path and a journey. Having tasted the object of his desire, the Sidereal is loath to relinquish it. This Charm may be activated against any target the martial artist can directly see (even if they are behind cover), and whom he has successfully attacked or been attacked by previously in the scene. Even if neither attack did damage, that prior physical contact is necessary.

Activating this Charm the martial artist may make unarmed Martial Arts attacks against the target even if they would not be within range normally. These attacks gain extra successes equal to (martial artist's Essence ÷ 2) and ignore cover, shields, range and environmental penalties. The attacks travel to the target's location via folds in the warp and weft of fate, circumventing the distance between the two, and taking the journey in spirit if not in practice. A martial artist may subject no more than (Essence) targets at one time to this Charm.

GOLDEN HOUSE OF WANDERERS FORM

Cost: 13m; **Mins:** Martial Arts 5, Essence 5; **Type:** Simple

Keywords: Form-type, Obvious

Duration: One scene

Prerequisite Charms: Indispensable Journey, Vagabond's Whim Defense, One Complete Celestial Martial Art

The road was her home.

The martial artist takes the posture of the Student of the World his posture is easy and his gaze expansive. Paths form where he treads and his eyes and anima become shot with winding reflections of golden light. For the duration of the Charm, the martial artist is a traveler beyond compare. While on foot, or riding, he may walk up walls, or even inverted surfaces, as easily as anything. He seems to be able to casually ignore gravity. His feet form a path wherever he steps. The path is comprised of Essence hardened into a material appropriate to the Exalt's personality. This path vanishes in his wake into its component motes, but it can support the martial artist anywhere, allowing him to walk through the air or over liquid. It also prevents the martial artists feet from ever really touching the earth, which permits him to walk unharmed over dangerous surfaces and also leaves no trail. Mundane attempts at tracking the stylist automatically fail.

The martial artist gains a further benefit from this form. By folding journeys past and future into the present, the martial artist manifests himself at an almost unlimited number of locations. In lieu of his Move action, the martial artist may vanish from his current location to appear at any other location within (Essence x 10) yards, or anywhere he had previously stood in that scene. The martial artist does not travel to this location, instead he just vanishes from one point and reappears at the other. Finally, the martial artist gains the benefits of the Charm Unrestrained Wanderer Method.

ENDLESS EXPANSE BUFFER

Cost: 17m; **Mins:** Martial Arts 5, Essence 5; **Type:** Simple (Step 2)

Keywords: Combo-OK, Shaping

Duration: (Essence) actions

Prerequisite Charms: Golden House of Wanderers Form

Elder Sutra of Travel: The Maiden walked across the World...

The Exalt stretches the journey between himself and his enemies indefinitely. He dilates the space between himself and them, widening the gulf of empty air to form a buffer between himself and his enemies. Whenever an attacker would approach the martial artist while the Charm is active, he finds that, regardless of how fast or far he moves, he is always 2 yards away from the stylist. Ranged attacks suffer a similar fate, as the Exalt is always exactly 2 yards out of their range. Attacks which ignore range, also ignore this effect, but there is no way for an attacker to close to melee range while this Charm is active. Teleportation effects circumvent this protection. The Sidereal himself is affected by this buffer, and must use Charms such as Indispensable Journey to attack from a distance. The buffer zone extends in a circle around the martial artist, and affects everything within (Essence x 2) yards, preventing anything that enters within that radius from getting within 2 yards of the stylist. Multiple characters who surround a target and all employ this Charm could, theoretically, fence the target in and prevent him from moving.



WALKING A THOUSAND ROADS

Cost: 20m, 1wp 1ahl; **Mins:** Martial Arts 6, Essence 6; **Type:** Extra Action

Keywords: Combo-Basic, Obvious,

Duration: (Essence) actions

Prerequisite Charms: Golden House of Wanderers Form

...and stood atop every mountain.

The notion that location must be singular, and that an entity can occupy only a single, discrete, place at a time, is utter illusion, The Martial artist learns. Nothing keeps the a being from being in more than one place at a time, but that being's own capacity make it so. Sidereals, having progressed far on the road to mastery, have refined this capacity. Folding and twisting the threads of Fate and Journey to the near breaking point the Exalt can literally be in more than one place at a time. The Exalt creates (Essence) doppelgängers, folded into being by a brutal torsion of the Exalt's own living journey.

The entities share one mote pool, and are limited in their use of Charms as if they were one entity, but otherwise each have fully independent actions which they may flurry normally. They have only (Essence) -0 health levels and are clearly marked as the copies by the way that they are shrouded in a golden halo. Each uses the exact same traits as the stylist and is treated as if they had the same equipment as the original. When the Charm duplicates weapons, it always creates mundane variants (that appear like the original) but have the traits of the weapon's non-artifact counterpart. The copies cannot give their gear away, and it immediately vanishes if it leaves their possession. Finally, the group resists mental influence as one, and spends Willpower to do so as one.

JOURNEY LAUNCHING BLOW

Cost: 17m, 1wp; **Mins:** Martial Arts 6, Essence 7; **Type:** Supplemental

Keywords: Combo-Basic, Shaping, Touch

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Walking A Thousand Roads, Endless Expanse Buffer

The horizon came to kiss her...

Travel is not always something one chooses to do. Indeed, there are some dull souls who would stay bound to the same location for all their lives. The martial artist can free them from this drab fate however, striking her a blow with her bare fist, the martial artist separates the target's identity and self from the place to which it is bound. Thus does she free the target of her ties to the land and send her, quite abruptly, on a journey. A target struck by this attack suffers no damage, instead they are hurled across creation to any specific location the Exalt has been within the last week, has ownership of (**Exalted**, p. 238) or, otherwise to any specific location within ([Martial Arts + Essence] x 2) miles.

The target flies there propelled by the force of the journey that has been foisted upon him, becoming semi-material as he shoots through the sky at impossible speeds. He phases through obstructions, taking no damage from collisions. Normally he lands safely on the ground, though if the Exalt wishes he may cause the target's journey to end in midair, causing the target to fall and, potentially, take falling damage (**Exalted**, p. 158). This Charm is a Shaping effect, but the attack it supplements

is not, even if a defense negates the effects of this Charm, the blow might still do damage. Sidereals frequently use this Charm to provide swift transport to themselves or their allies...and sudden death to their enemies.

INESCAPABLE PSYCHOPOMP STRIDE

Cost: —(+Varies); **Mins:** Martial Arts 7, Essence 7; **Type:** Permanent

Keywords: Shaping, Touch

Prerequisite Charms: Journey Launching Blow

...and the two were one.

A journey with boundaries is not a journey. Crossing thresholds is the essence of travel, and the total separation of self and place is the treasure that, in their hearts, all wanderer's seek. The martial artist, having learned this Charm, has achieved total, transcendent, separation from place. There is nothing that may gainsay his movement, no wall or barrier that is relevant to him. An Exalt who learns this Charm is permanently transformed into a creature, not of place, but of journey. He permanently occupies the line between one space and another. This manifests physically in ways that are observable, but not easily understandable. When the martial artist walks, the movement of his legs seems out of sync with his physical displacement, as if he were really gliding from place to place, and only aping normal movement. Periodically the martial artist will veer off the balance of materiality and immateriality, causing parts of his body to accidentally phase through solid objects. This is never harmful or beneficial, and is totally outside the Sidereal's control, (though it might be an interesting explanation or consequence of a botch). This Charm offer's several benefits:

- The Exalt may pay one Willpower in addition to the usual cost of the Charm Journey Launching Blow to cause the journey to end in the immaterial realm (causing the target to remain immaterial at the end of the journey), in Yu-Shan (provided the Exalt owns [**Exalted**, p. 238] a space in Yu-Shan), or in a parallel location in the Underworld that is either within range of the normal travel or which the Exalt has visited in the last week. This makes being hit by the Charm very dangerous on the Blessed Isle, near the Imperial Mountain (which is mirrored by the Mouth of Oblivion in the Underworld).

- They May also pay one Willpower in addition to the cost of Journey Launching Blow, to have it affect a number of willing targets equal to (the Sidereal's Essence).

- The Exalt may pay one Willpower in addition to the usual cost of Cutting to the Chase Method to allow the Exalt to bypass any barriers or obstructions to his journey without need of a roll, as if he were immaterial.

- The Exalt is solid to both the material and immaterial. He is not perfectly balanced between both states, however, so he sees the immaterial as faint, blurry, phantasms. This incurs a -2 external penalty on rolls to perceive or attack an immaterial target. He can touch and be touched by immaterial creatures.

- At a cost of one mote and as part of a move action, the Exalt can set himself enough out of phase with the world phase through solid objects. While the Form is active, the stylist's mastery over his spiritual and physical location is sufficient that he may perform this trick reflexively as a defense against any attack not supplemented by Charms or made with an artifact weapon. This transformation lasts for only an instant so the



Exalt must be clear of whatever damaging effect or solid surface he wishes to phase through, on the next tick. This Charm may be reactivated on simultaneous ticks, or instants if it is used as a defense, but its cost doubles on each subsequent tick until the Exalt's DV refreshes. This protection does not function against magical attacks at all, but doesn't count as Charm use.

- Finally, as a speed 6 miscellaneous action, which while the form Charm is active, the Exalt can spend one Willpower to transcend materiality entirely. He becomes, at once, more and less material than everything. This state persists for (Essence) actions during which time no one can touch the stylist without using Charms that allow them to attack beings of the opposing material state (such as Ghost-Fire Blade, or Shattered Adamant attack). This means that immaterial beings require attacks that target the material and material beings must make an attack that targets the immaterial. The Exalt, however, can affect both with impunity.