

BLOOD AND DUST

A CAMPAIGN FRAME FOR SPIRE RPG

BY GRANT HOWITT & CHRISTOPHER TAYLOR



SPIRE
THE CITY MUST FALL

Copyright © 2018 by Grant Howitt and Christopher Taylor.
Published by Rowan, Rook and Decard Ltd.

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, distributed, or transmitted in any form or by any means, including photocopying, recording, or other electronic or mechanical methods, without the prior written permission of the publisher, except in the case of brief quotations embodied in critical reviews and certain other noncommercial uses permitted by copyright law. For permission requests, write to the publisher at the address below.

Rowan, Rook and Decard
113 Forest View Road
London E12 5HX
www.rowanrookanddecard.com



Writing and design: Grant Howitt and Christopher Taylor
Illustrations: Adrian Stone
Layout: Alina Sandu
Proofreading and copy-editing: Harry Goldstone
Production: Mary Hamilton



INTRODUCTION

Welcome to *Blood and Dust*! This is a pay-what-you-want adventure for the Spire RPG, available at rowanrookanddecad.com. Inside, you'll find the setup for the *Blood and Dust* campaign, which you can expect to play for around five to six sessions. At the end of the document there are five pre-generated characters that come with story hooks to draw them into the adventure so you and your group can start playing right away; or if you'd like, you can play the campaign with characters of your own creation using the rules in the core book.

This campaign frame requires the use of the core Spire book, as it makes references to the text and assumes that the GM has a broad understanding of the setting.

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

To help you get started, though, we've suggested some jumping-off points for the story – and all of our pre-generated characters come with a reason to leap headlong into the plot, so most of them will start there.

BLOOD AND DUST

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

The city of Spire is rotting from within and without. Each year the structures built onto the outside of the city's structure collapse and fall away. The cursed tear in reality, the Heart, festers deep within the centre. Disorder and chaos are a natural part of daily life for those on the edges of civilisation.

And yet: the brutal undercity of Red Row is more chaotic than ever. Where before gangs would pass each other with holstered weapons and wary glances, each keeping to their respective territories, now they engage in open warfare, and spireblack gunsmoke floats through the dark city. Families come apart, leaving children without mothers, begging on the streets for sustenance. The Crimson Vigil, a group of violent anti-aelfir reactionaries, are openly recruiting soldiers for their forbidden cult. And a new play, *The Weeping Maiden*, is touring the district – and that's all anyone seems to talk about.

Things are coming apart, and ordinary people are getting caught in the middle. Someone is behind this. The player characters, all of them noted professionals in Red Row (and relative novices in the Ministry) gather their resistance cell together and start investigating.

[Stop reading aloud now!]

WHAT'S REALLY GOING ON?

What's really going on is that Councilman Drynn, the only human member of the ruling cadre of Spire, noted retroengineer and mean drunk, is attempting to seize control of the city. But that's way above the characters' pay grade, so what's more important is how he's doing it.

There is a cult, deep in Derelictus and close to the Heart, called the Church of Absolution – a gang of burnt-out magicians, dead-eyed occultists, thieves, nihilists and defrocked priests of failed religions.

They worship something they call the Hungry Deep – the very essence of decay, embodied (they feel) in the writhing, nightmare energies of the Heart. Their elder magi can act as conduits for this decay, channeling it into particular targets to suit their needs. They can make someone’s teeth rot out of their head, if they want, but they can also tear apart social structures and the minds of those who would dare stand against them in service of the Deep.

They are, every last one of them, deranged – driven mad by the corrupting energies of the Heart – and so have not strayed far from their undercity den, content to rummage around the broken remains of civilisation.

Drynn got wind of the cult, and wanted to exploit the ability to undo structures with a thought, and he got his down-Spire retroengineering contacts to do some research. They captured some cultists, strapped them into hellish memetic resonators, and attempted to use them to hex Drynn’s fellow council members so he could replace them with some malleable sympathisers to his cause.

But – it didn’t work. The ground in Derelictus was dead, the streets psychically fallow; without getting too close to the Heart to survive, they couldn’t harness enough raw discord to make the machines work. So they packed up shop, took over a portion of the Endline Vermissian station, and opened their chaos siphons to soak up the murderous cacophony that is Red Row.

That worked. The devices – called dust machines for the way that they attracted dust, rot and fat pallid moths both to their targets and to the area they occupied – were functional, but there wasn’t enough power. So they made Red Row worse.

The city guard pushed in, breaking heads and kneecaps and arresting people for carrying guns, drugs, swords – basic day-to-day accessories for the populace. They hired Knights from the North Docks to provide security for their operations, knowing that it would piss off the gangsters no end. They bribed the artist/occultists of the Sunlight Collective to write a play that was magically-charged to create tension and disharmony, and toured it round the seedy theatres of the district. They even funded the Crimson Vigil, an anti-aelfir terrorist organisation, to start recruiting and carrying out assassinations and attacks in Red Row.

The dust machines are working overtime to absorb all the chaos, and powering up for their first proper hex against a fellow council member. Things are getting dangerous. Enter the player characters.

ADVENTURE SETUP

GM, you’ll notice (hopefully) that each sample character comes with a hook in their description that should get them involved in the adventure. Each hook gives the player a little piece of information that connects to the wider mystery at play, and gives them a lead to explore.

If your players are interested in making their own characters rather than using the pre-generated ones, try to give their characters a similar background hook – or steal the ones from unused pre-generated characters, instead.

The first scene you should play out is one where the characters meet up somewhere secure and discuss what they know, having agreed to come together beforehand. From here, the characters can share information and work out a plan to try and get to the bottom of the situation in Red Row.

(If a player isn’t interested in exploring the situation in Red Row and wants to do their own thing just because they’re feeling contrary, politely explain to them that the story is about the chaos in Red Row, so if they want to take part in the story, they need to find a reason to get interested or they won’t be able to take part in it. The fact that they work for the Ministry, and are therefore honour-bound to defend the drow of Spire, is a useful motivation in a pinch.)

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

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

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

We don’t know! Odds are your players will want to follow up on the leads that they’ve started play with, and from there you’ll have to describe the world, the people and the events that unfold as they move through the story.

They might want to shut down the play, or subvert it for their own ends; they might ally with the Crimson Vigil and lead an assault on the retroengineers in Endline; they might infiltrate the police and divert them against their enemies; they might fund and reinforce the burgeoning cults of the Hungry Deep that are popping up around Red Row, and attempt to control them; they might try to steal the dust machines for their own use. We can't predict what your players will do, and it's a waste of words trying to do so. Instead, we've done our best to set up a situation that you can throw them into and watch them go.

ENDING THE STORY

As things progress, towards the end of session four you should have an idea of which of the factions listed below are most important to your group – this will depend on which sample characters were chosen, which NPCs the player characters have enjoyed interacting with, who's still alive, etc. Don't expect to use all of the material we've got in here – just go with what your players find interesting.

Pick two of the factions and have them try to kill each other, or gang up on a third. (Maybe the third could be the player characters, if they've been obvious about what they're doing.) In the following game, tensions will come to a head, and unless the players intercede then Red Row will see tremendous loss of life or property – fires, mass shootings, occult side-effects, subsequent sacrificial rituals, etc. Dealing with the crisis, and the fallout, should take up most of the final session.

ADVANCEMENT

Remember – player characters can choose advances when they change Spire in some way, whether for good or ill, so be generous with them. You can expect to give out a low advance most sessions, and a medium advance at least once during the linked series of games that make up *Blood and Dust*.

AWARDING BONDS

When you feel like a player deserves a reward, or that their character has formed a new relationship with an NPC, you can give them a bond.



FACTIONS

What follows is a list of the important people involved in the adventure who'll react when the players take action. Don't feel like you have to use all of these NPCs – they're just there to spark your imagination and help you tell the story.

THE RETROENGINEERS

Made up of mercenaries and human retroengineers who couldn't get employment anywhere legitimate, this disorganised group has moved into the twisted ruins of Endline station in an attempt to harness the raw disharmony of Red Row. Most of them don't know who they're really working for, or what the machines actually do, but they know enough to keep quiet about their job when they go out drinking.

NOTABLE MEMBERS

Feldspar: Lead researcher, hooked on the cocktail of stimulants known as dagger, and in debt to several Red Row dealers. Once possessed a brilliant scientific mind, but has lost most of it to drug abuse.

Carys: Covered in a thick layer of oil, grease and grime. Ex-military mechanic, dishonourably discharged for ignoring orders and light arms trafficking. (Resistance 7, Armour 2, carries an experimental galvanic rifle (D8, Ranged, Reload, Dangerous) that will break after a few fights if anyone other than her attempts to use it).

THE DUST MACHINES

These sparking, unpredictable devices are an attempt to technologically control the energies of the Hungry Deep. They collect and amplify ambient decay (of materials, social structures, ideologies, minds – anything) in the surrounding area and, through

barely-understood divine energy hijacked using barely-understood ancient technology, channel that decay into a target that the technicians specify. There are currently three of them in use, and a fourth under construction.

Each machine houses a cultist from the Church of Absolution, all of whom were abducted in a raid on their temple about a month and a half ago. The cultist's brain is responsible for channelling raw entropy into a usable hex, and the process drives the already unstable unfortunate even deeper into madness. The kinder retroengineers drug their victims into a coma, but the more heartlessly efficient ones say that doing this reduces the output of the machines.

If a player has the opportunity and the inclination to use a dust machine, they roll **Compel+Technology**, and arrange the galvanic receptors around a representative symbol of your target. Names, portraits, maps of their location, iconography that represents them – it's all good. On a success, the target takes D6 stress at some point over the next D6 days, wherever they are, from events conspiring against them.

If you can get a vial of the target's blood, one of their teeth, or ten fingernail clippings and include them in the ritual roll 2D6 and pick the higher when applying stress. The bodily components are consumed when the ritual is cast.

USING THE DUST MACHINES ON THE PLAYERS

If the retroengineers get a handle on the player characters' identities and what they're up to, they might use the dust machines against them. Treat this as a **Resist+Occult** roll with D3 stress on a success and D6 on a failure.

Dust, moths and rust gather around the target, and the smell of damp and rot follows their footsteps. The area directly around the machines is similarly degraded; the walls crumble, dirty water bubbles up from the floor, and operators without the proper protection (which is all experimental in nature) report their hair and nails growing brittle and black then falling off. Using the machine has a D3 stress cost on a failure or partial success.

Each dust machine can only curse a single target at once, and it must remain switched on and focused until the stress is marked. Acquiring multiple dust machines would theoretically allow you to curse the same target multiple times simultaneously, assuming the building they're housed in doesn't collapse before the curse fires off.

THE SUNLIGHT COLLECTIVE

A group of bleeding-edge artists and occultists from all races who follow the shifting patterns of the sunlight cast on the roofs of the dusty, semi-abandoned mansions of Ivory Row. Having perfected (in their opinion) the new play/ritual entitled *The Weeping Maiden*, they're touring it around the seedy tuppenny theatres of Red Row.

They're in on the scheme to destabilise Red Row, even if they're not all as devoted to the idea as Drynn would like them to be. They're not fighters, on average, and would rather be left alone to smoke and work on whatever groundbreaking art they reckon is going to take Spire by storm next than get into much trouble.

NOTABLE MEMBERS

Jessamyn, drow playwright: Wanted to become an Idol but not charismatic enough to pull it off, so is hopelessly bitter towards anyone with a magnetic personality. Keen occultist. Ivory-white skin and hair, favours aelfir-style masks.

Veronike, drow actress: Studied fight-dancing under a dishonoured aelfir skald; decent singer, dabbles in the occult; social chameleon. Dyes her hair bright red.

THE WEEPING MAIDEN

The Weeping Maiden is a play that contains various rituals, enacted in the avant-garde style of *desang* (pronounced "dessohn"). *Desang* theatre has actual violence in it, fought to first blood, which determines a sort of branching, semi-improvised narrative.

In this semi-historical morality play, the drow princess Sibyla of Ys is married off to the cruel duke Starys, but she concocts a plan to escape. She seduces and murders many of the members of his court, and – unusually for the style – dead characters are marked in strange symbols and remain on-stage, often hanging from the rafters in arcane-looking support rigs.

She finishes the murderous rite which summons the spirit of Lekolé, the Crimson Vigil, to her body. Charged with violent power, she finally slays the Duke, but she receives her comeuppance when she goes on to be possessed by Lekolé when she returns to her homeland, and the spirit shows her that even her friends and allies were involved in her disastrous marriage. Broken beyond recognition, she slays what remains of her family, and is queen to a terrified and shadowy kingdom.

The *desang* style of the play influences the plot, which has several branching paths (although it always ends the same way) determined by fights. The most important is one between Lekolé and Limyé, two parts of the trinity that make up the elven moon-goddess, fought out at the state art of the play. Fighters in elaborate ritual masks and costumes will take on the roles of the goddesses and brawl, often to knock-out rather than first blood, to determine the tone of the play.

The play has been magically imbued as a ritual that encourages discord and upset amongst its audience; there have been eighteen brawls and three murders during performances in the month that the show has been running, and divorce rates have skyrocketed. The other effect of the ritual is to convince the viewer that the play is brilliant and that they have to watch it again and again, and to vehemently disagree with anyone who tries to stop them. (This is a fairly common trick amongst occultist playwrights, and anyone with the Occult domain can make a Resist+Occult check to see through the spell.)

WHAT IF THE CHARACTERS ACT IN THE PLAY?

All bets are off. The plot is largely up to them, although this will upset the playwrights and staff members watching from the wings; it's safe to assume that the magic side-effects, if not completely removed, will be subverted and changed.

THE KNIGHTS OF THE NORTH DOCKS

Once upon a time the Knights were noble protectors of traders and merchants, but over the centuries their organisation has shifted into a web of warring orders who send gaudily-armoured legbreakers against one another in an effort to maintain control of their portion of the North Docks. They've been hired as protection for both the Weeping Maiden and the retro-engineer operation in Endline, mainly as a means of pissing off everyone in Red Row.

NOTABLE MEMBERS

“Handsome” Sally Grackler, Knight/Actor:

Came out of the burlesque scene and ended up in desang shows, doing pretty well for themselves. Brash, androgynous, maybe a little over-confident.

Absolon, Knight of the Order of the Silver Star:

Charged with keeping the peace around the plays. Suspected something was up with them a while back but has been paid into silence, and will shut down arguments to the contrary.

THE CITY GUARD

While most city guard are just local boys and girls who are working for a (semi-) honest living, the squads in Red Row are less stable, less reliable and much more prone to violence than the rest of them. Holed up in Voloren Standard Outpost, they've been pushed into cleaning up the district (an impossible and thankless task) from pressure up-Spire as Drynn leans on his contacts in the police force. Their jails are overcrowded, their officers haven't had a day off in three weeks, and they're starting to get even more laissez-faire with justice than ever.

NOTABLE MEMBERS

Jonjak, overworked captain: Under tremendous pressure from his bosses to clean up Red Row, and suspects something fishy is going on.

Hurk, grimy jailer: Enormous, powerful drow who loves her job maybe a little too much. Favourite hobby is to eat massive meals in front of starving prisoners.

Paloma, gun-crazy constable: Carries a definitely-illegal shotgun with her everywhere; is secretly a member of both Brother Hellion's Church of the Gun and the Crimson Vigil. Probably not too long

before she joins the Church of Absolution too, at this rate.

THE CHURCH OF ABSOLUTION

A cult of burned-out magicians and sages, destitute oracles and defrocked priests, who worship the very essence of decay as a deity.

The cult is understandably upset about having half of their members abducted and tortured, and is out for revenge. They lack the capacity to strike at the retroengineers directly, so they're starting up minor pockets of entropy worship around Red Row and trying (unsuccessfully so far) to broker deals with other powers. They might approach the player characters for help, and make for unusual allies.

NOTABLE MEMBERS

Mother-Ash-on-Snow: Head of the cult, barely present, unutterably strange (Resistance 6, her touch is a D8 weapon that withers skin, she doesn't like using it much).

Sonder: Builds homunculi from filth and carrion, gives them names, dresses them.

Kurtz: Fiercely nihilistic, ex-military, used to work with the Crimson Vigil but found them too forgiving (Resistance 8, rusty shotgun (D6, point-blank, reload, unreliable) and gruesome knife (D3, brutal)).

THE CRIMSON VIGIL

The Crimson Vigil are zealous devotees of the third, and some would argue least prominent drow goddess, Lekolé. In Spire, their religion is entirely illegal – just like the Ministry of Our Hidden Mistress. Driven underground and radicalised, they preach a message of destruction and hate against their oppressors that also includes anyone who colludes with them, and they are not averse to civilian casualties if their ends are met.

They are primarily here to hold up a mirror to the player characters: they have similar goals in mind, but their means are – on average – much more destructive and brutal. (And if their means aren't too different, that's a reason to drop a load of Shadow stress on the player characters, or have the Ministry rock up and give them a stern talking to.)

They might try and ally with the player characters, but they might just as easily start to work against them, or simply arrive in the middle of an already tense situation and push it over the edge into violence.

NOTABLE MEMBERS

Matilde: mother of three, dangerously zealous in her beliefs. Has killed before and will do so again; her favourite targets are drow who collude with aelfir.

Ignaz: cell leader, secretive, duplicitous. Cover identity as a merchant in the North Docks, siphoning off funds through clever accounting to his friends in the Vigil.

Harcoeur: ex-Enlisted, unwilling conduit but managed to escape. Aelfir sorcery lets her see things, often things she'd rather not see. Enforcer and gun-runner for the Vigil.

VIGILITE ZEALOT

Names: Lux Meridian, Ignacius, Matchlock

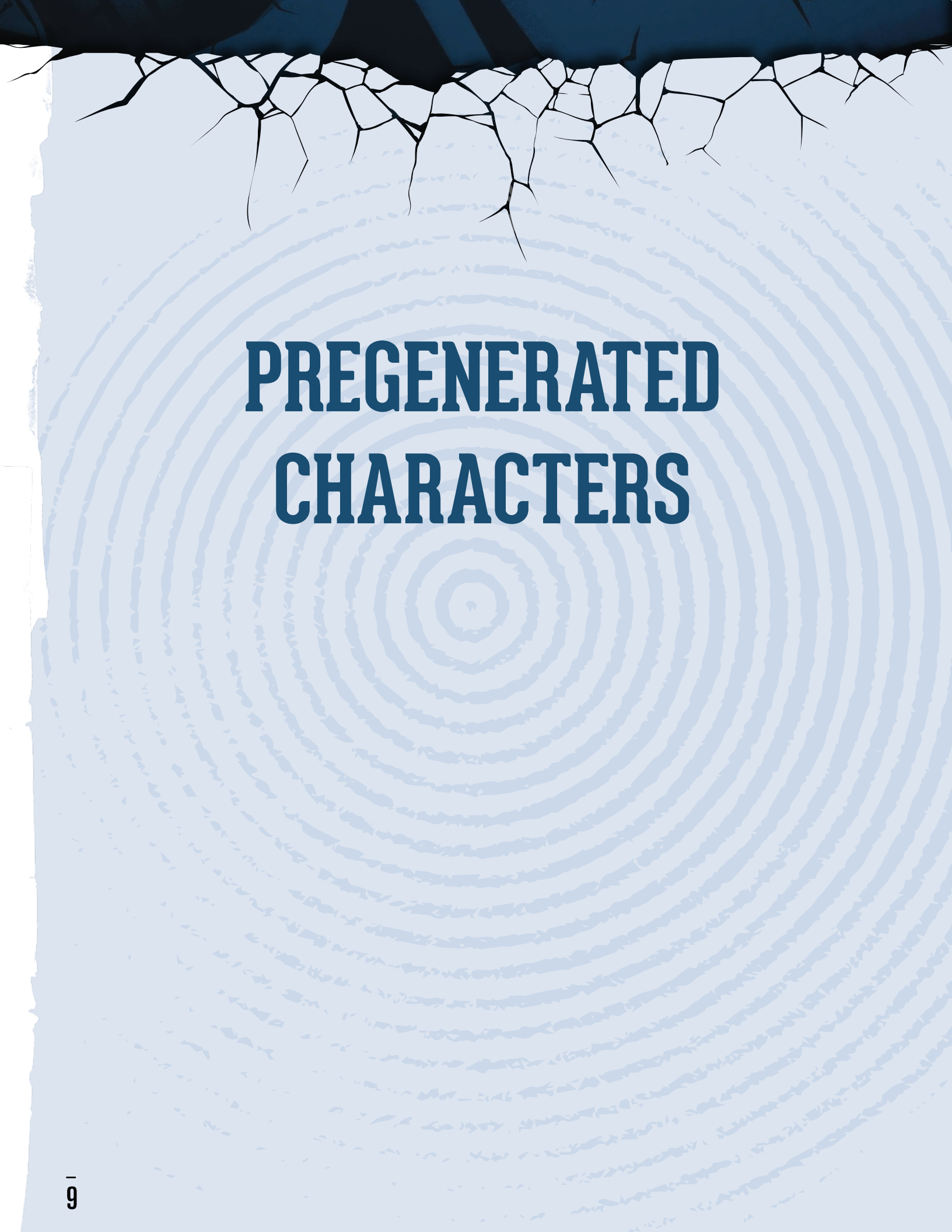
Descriptors: Carrying devotional literature, Is currently on fire, Wears their manacles as penance

Difficulty: 0 – keen, but unskilled.

Resistance: 5

Special: For each other vigilite nearby, increase their resistance by 1

Equipment: Red-painted shotgun with overcharged rounds (D6, ranged, point-blank, brutal, reload, dangerous), serious-looking knife (D3, brutal)



PREGENERATED CHARACTERS

FIREBRAND - LOZLYN DE VIRE

"They can't take us all on. Not all of us. Tonight, we show them who's really in charge."

You are an ex-military revolutionary, a dangerous criminal in the eyes of the authorities, who hangs out in the lawless undercities of Red Row and Derelictus. You lend a helping hand to other poor folk, doing your best to resist the rule of the aelfir in any way you can. This is your city, not theirs.

You've noticed a rise in brutality from the city guard who are pushing into Red Row, stamping down on local businesses and rooting out insurrection; you get word that they're on their way to your flat now after a tip-off that you have reams of seditious texts hidden under your bed. Who sold you out?

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

REFRESH: Take something back from those who would oppress you.

SKILLS: Compel, Fight, Steal, Pursue, Resist

DOMAINS: Low Society, Crime

DURANCE: Enlisted (reflected in profile)

BONDS

- (Individual) Jackson Crouch, disgraced human retroengineer, kicked out of Gywn-Enforr for heretical galvanic experimentation
- (Individual) Athelmayas, city guard, agreeably bribeable, smokes awful cigarillos

- You have a bond with one of the other PCs who you recruited to the cause. Say who, and say what it was that tipped them over the edge.

EQUIPMENT

- Brass knuckles (D3, concealable)
- Buzzard Sawn-off (D6, reload, point-blank)

ABILITIES

LEAD FROM THE FRONT. *You excel when you're under pressure.* When you have 6 or more stress in Shadow, gain mastery on all actions.

DRAW A CROWD. *You can pull together a crowd at a moment's notice.* Once per session, you can draw a crowd to you in a matter of minutes. People will stop what they're doing, so long as it isn't life-or-death, and listen to what you have to say.

FIGHT THE POWER. *You channel your anger into fighting the police, soldiers, the solar guard – anyone who'd stand against you.* Gain the Resist skill. When you engage in violence against an enemy who is part of the Order domain (city guard, military, etc) you do so with mastery.

ALWAYS OUTNUMBERED, NEVER OUT-RUN. *You are exceptional at getting the hell away from your problems.* Gain the Pursue skill. When you flee a superior force, you do so with mastery.

PLAYER NAME

CHARACTER NAME Lozlyn De Vire

CLASS Firebrand

DURANCE Enlisted

SKILLS

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

DOMAINS

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

KNACKS

EQUIPMENT

Brass Knuckles
(D3, concealable)
(Buzzard sawn-off
(D6, Reload,
Point-blank)

REFRESH

Take something
back from your
oppressors

ABILITIES

LEAD FROM THE FRONT: When you have 6 or more stress in Shadow, gain mastery on all rolls.

DRAW A CROWD: Once per session, draw a crowd to yourself in a matter of minutes.

FIGHT THE POWER: Roll with mastery when you fight an agent of Order.

ALWAYS OUTNUMBERED, NEVER OUTRUN: Roll with mastery when you flee a superior force.

BONDS

Jackson Crouch,
disgraced
retroengineer

Athelmayas,
crooked city guard

FALLOUT

FREE SLOTS

-
-
-
-
-
-

RESISTANCES

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

CURRENT STRESS

TOTAL STRESS:

IDOL - ALEXANDRA LAURANT

"Truth? What is truth, when you have beauty?"

You are a beautiful artist and revolutionary, and your creations can reshape the world through bleeding-edge, half-understood sorcery. You dabble in sculpture and painting, but your real passion is the viola – you've penned multiple songs that you've gone on to sell to aelfir operatrices up-Spire, which lets you pay rent on a decrepit top-floor studio in Red Row. The landlord is an old accomplice of yours, from back when you used to rob stagecoaches with a gang of thieves.

You've recently become aware of a new play that's touring Red Row: the Weeping Maiden, which doesn't sound great, but apparently it's causing a stir. You've been... losing fans to it. Time to work out what in the goddess' name is going on.

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

REFRESH: Someone feels deeply moved when they witness your art.

SKILLS: Deceive, Compel, Sneak, Steal

DOMAINS: High Society, Occult

DURANCE: Fell in with a gang of thieves (reflected in profile)

BONDS

- (Street-level) Your adoring fans, who will do most anything for you, even if it gets them into a bit of trouble. Some sample fans: Brigands-March-Unbecoming, bankrupt aelfir maven; Kline, who survives on canapes and free wine alone; Molly, who views you as a mentor.
- You have a bond with another PC who you know has feelings for you, even if they wouldn't admit it. Describe the moment when you knew for definite.

EQUIPMENT

- Several sets of flattering clothing
- Viola and reams of sheet music

- Small gifts and trinkets from your fans
- A knife (D3, concealable)

ABILITIES

LIFE AND SOUL OF THE PARTY. *People flock to be near you.* Once per session, so long as there are people nearby and a place to have it, you can create an instant gathering with dancing, games, drinking, eating and chatting. The party gives you mastery to persuade, deceive, or distract actions performed within it.

GLAMOUR. *Black magic and poise let you become whoever they want you to be.* Once per situation, choose an NPC. Using a cocktail of charm, practiced poise and semi-legal black magic, you change your appearance to represent their ideal partner. You don't get to determine what this looks like – it's entirely reliant on the person you're targeting – and you can end the spell by scrubbing off whatever makeup you've applied and spending five minutes in front of a mirror remembering what you look like.

Whatever your target prefers, you'll always look like you. If they're obsessed with tall people, you'll look taller; if they like aelfir, you'll look as though there's some aelfir blood in you; if they're mad about one particular person, you'll resemble them (but not enough to, say, pass as them).

CENTRE OF ATTENTION. *When you stride into a room, people take notice.* Roll with mastery when you attempt to get everyone in a situation to focus on you and you only. In addition, describe three incredible outfits that you now own.

GRACE. *You try not to sully yourself with failure.* You move with such precision that fate herself gives you a lucky break now and again. Once per situation, when you make a dice roll and one or more of the dice shows 1, you can re-roll the entire pool.

PLAYER NAME

CHARACTER NAME Alexandra Laurant

CLASS Idol

DURANCE Fell in with a gang of thieves

SKILLS

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

DOMAINS

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

KNACKS

EQUIPMENT

Several sets of flattering clothing
 Viola and sheet music
 Trinkets and gifts from your fans
 Knife (D3, concealable)

REFRESH

Move someone with your art.

ABILITIES

LIFE AND SOUL OF THE PARTY: Once per session, create a party.

GLAMOUR: Once per situation, become someone's heart's desire.

CENTRE OF ATTENTION: Roll with mastery when you get people to focus on you, and only you.

GRACE: Once per situation, when you roll dice and one or more shows 1, reroll all the dice.

BONDS

Adoring fans (Kline, Molly, Brigands-March-Unbecoming)

FALLOUT

FREE SLOTS

-
-
-
-
-
-

RESISTANCES

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

CURRENT STRESS

TOTAL STRESS:

KNIGHT - GANFORD SEIGER

"I swear to Our Lady, this hangover could bring down a skywhale. Did we win?"

You are a member of an ancient order of knights who were given the rights to police the northern river docks of Spire. Over the centuries, your order has splintered and become ever more corrupt, and now you are little more than heavily-armoured gangsters with a penchant for organised fighting tournaments.

An order of Knights, the Silver Star, have left their premises with a skeleton staff to go and handle security for a swish new play in Red Row called The Weeping Maiden. That's not Knight territory, and they know it, so there must be something really interesting going on. You inform the Ministry that you're checking it out.

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

REFRESH: Engage in reckless excess.

SKILLS: Fight, Compel, Deceive

DOMAINS: Commerce, Crime, Order

DURANCE: City Guard (reflected in profile)

BONDS

- (Individual-level) Vennis, your squire, whose parents are trying to get her on the straight and narrow.
- You have a bond with another one of the PCs – you and them used to go drinking, and still do on occasion. Describe the wildest thing you two got up to on one of your legendary nights out.

EQUIPMENT

- Knight Quarter-Plate (Armour 3, Heavy)
- Greatsword (D8, Tiring)

ABILITIES

PUBCRAWLER. *You bear an encyclopedic knowledge of where to get drunk.* Once per session, name a

nearby bar, pub or inn where you know the landlord (whether they like you or not is up to the GM).

PICK A FIGHT. *You've spent many an evening sizing up the other patrons in search of a decent brawl.* Once per situation, ask the GM who is the best person in the surrounding area to pick a fight with on one of the following conditions: 1) you want to win 2) you want to make a good impression 3) you want to cause a distraction.

LAW OF THE DOCKS. *You carry a mighty weapon.* As a Knight, you are permitted to carry a large bladed weapon (or a lance) without getting in trouble with the city guard. Using it is another matter.

KNIGHTLY ORDER: *You are a member of the Order of The Drowned Sailor, which is also the name of the pub in which you are expected to perform occasional bartending shifts.* Other duties include light hustling, mild extortion and extracting jumped-up "boat safety" fines from folk who dock in the harbour.

BRAGGADOCIO. *You are an accomplished liar, especially when it comes to exaggerating your own abilities.* Gain the Deceive skill. Once per session, automatically convince an NPC that you can achieve something (whether or not you're able to do it is immaterial).

THE CROWD GOES WILD: *You're used to fighting with the support – or ire – of the crowd to keep you going.* When you have a crowd watching you, your attacks have the Brutal tag. In addition, when you win a fight in front of a crowd, refresh.

PLAYER NAME

CHARACTER NAME Ganford Seiger

CLASS Knight of the North Docks

DURANCE City Guard

SKILLS

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

DOMAINS

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

KNACKS

EQUIPMENT

Knight
 Quarter-Plate
 (Armour 3, Heavy)
 Greatsword (D8,
 tiring)

REFRESH

Engage in reckless
 excess

ABILITIES

PUBCRAWLER: Once per session, invent a nearby pub where you know the landlord.
PICK A FIGHT: Once per situation, ask the GM who's the best person to fight in order to 1) beat them 2) make a good impression 3) cause a distraction.
LAW OF THE DOCKS: You can legally carry a sword.
KNIGHTLY ORDER: You're a member of the Order of the Drowned Sailor.
BRAGGADOCIO: Once per session, when you tell an NPC you can do something, they'll automatically believe you.
THE CROWD GOES WILD: When you fight in front of a crowd, gain the Brutal tag. If you win, refresh.

BONDS

Vennis, rebellious
 squire

FALLOUT

FREE SLOTS

-
-
-
-
-
-

RESISTANCES

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

CURRENT STRESS

TOTAL STRESS:

LAJHAN - DACIEN THEROUX

“Our Lady protects, sweetness. Hold her in your heart and she will soothe your passing.”

You are a servant of Our Glorious Lady, the light side of the moon, and the one part of the drow goddess trinity that the aelfir allow the dark elves to worship in Spire. You manage a small, run-down temple to Her in Red Row, a dark and smokey criminal undercity, looking to provide comfort and solace to the needy.

Your temple has been... strange, of late. You have uncovered rot on the walls, found nihilistic scrawlings on grimy pamphlets, broken up arguments in the lines at the soup kitchen. Now, you've heard that the Crimson Vigil – a violent pro-drow insurrection movement – have been recruiting in your Lady's house. This will not stand.

RESISTANCES: Mind +2, Reputation +4

REFRESH: Help those who cannot help themselves.

SKILLS: Fix, Resist

DOMAINS: Crime, Religion, Low Society

DURANCE: Fought to protect your community.
(Reflected in profile)

BONDS

- (Individual-level) Madame Cazanoux, failed Scryatrix of Our Lady, so just very religious and totally blind.
- You have a bond with a PC who you've helped overcome sickness, injury or addiction in the past. Say who it was, and what the problem was.

EQUIPMENT

- Ceremonial robes, a set of wooden and silver jewellery including bracelets, anklets, earrings and circlets.
- Knife (D3, concealable)
- Healer's kit

ABILITIES

RITE OF RESPITE. [Divine] *You create a place of stillness and healing.* Once per session, lead your

allies in a recuperation session while you hold vigil. Describe how you create a comfortable, healing environment and how you help them. All allies present may restore 3 stress from Mind or Blood.

MOONLIGHT. [Divine] *Limyé's light shines forth from you.* Your forehead gem (or necklace, or bracelet, etc) glows as brightly as the full moon, casting a calm light into the darkness that cannot be extinguished unless you decide to snuff it, or you fall unconscious. The more ritualists casting this spell simultaneously, the brighter the light becomes.

BUILD BRIDGES. *You sacrifice yourself for your allies.* Before you roll for fallout on a bond, you may mark stress on yourself to remove it from the ally – each point you mark removes 2 points of stress from them.

OUR LADY'S CALM. [Divine] *You shine the calming light of Limyé over a situation, and tempers fade.* Mark D6 stress to Mind to cast this spell. You, and anyone nearby to you, cannot fight, or engage in violent actions, or move above a run, for the next minute or so – you can extend it for another minute by marking another D6 stress to Mind.

PLAYER NAME

CHARACTER NAME Dacien Theroux

CLASS Lajhan

DURANCE Fought to protect your community

SKILLS

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

DOMAINS

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

KNACKS

EQUIPMENT

Ceremonial robes and jewellery
Knife (D3, concealable)
Healer's kit

REFRESH

Help those who cannot help themselves

ABILITIES

RITE OF RESPITE: Once per session, all allies remove 3 stress from Mind or Blood.

MOONLIGHT: Shine as brightly as the full moon.

BUILD BRIDGES: Mark 1 stress on yourself to remove 2 stress from a bond before the GM rolls for fallout.

OUR LADY'S CALM: D6 stress to Mind to cast. No-one nearby can engage in violence or move faster than a walk for the next minute.

BONDS

Madame Cazanoux, failed Scryatrix

FALLOUT

FREE SLOTS

-
-
-
-
-
-

RESISTANCES

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

CURRENT STRESS

TOTAL STRESS:

VERMISSIAN SAGE - ILLYRIA LOX

"I reckon I've got just the book you need – problem is it's eight stations down and five across, so you might want to bring provisions."

The drow Home Nations are spiralling into internecine conflict as the aelfir continue to occupy their cities, and you do not know how long your culture will endure. You are a scholar and occultist, and you hide the history of your people within the walls of the Vermissian – a defunct, abandoned mass transport network within Spire. It cuts through the Heart, the rotten hole in reality at the centre of the city, and acts as veins for the weird energies that bleed out of there.

Your study and workshop are in Red Row – the rent's cheap and it doesn't catch fire too often – and your main entrance into the Vermissian is Endline, a jangled mess of broken carriages fought over by gangs of scavengers. Recently, you've found your entrances barred or collapsed. Someone's trying to keep you out.

RESISTANCES: Silver +1, Mind +3, Shadow +1

REFRESH: Uncover hidden information.

SKILLS: Investigate, Compel, Deceive

DOMAINS: Academia, High society, Occult, Technology.

DURANCE: Hid in plain sight. (Reflected in profile)

BONDS: Paige, shrine-building book hunter and Vermissian guardian.

You have a bond with another PC – one that you know a secret about. Say who it is, and what the secret is, and whether they know you know or not.

EQUIPMENT

- Folding crossbow (D6, ranged, concealable, one shot)

ABILITIES

BACK DOOR. *You throw open a door and lunge through it into a twisted metallic nightmare: home.* Once per session, you can find an entrance to the

Vault no matter where you are in Spire (whether it was there before you started looking remains unclear). Inside, you'll find a collection of strange items and books, many of which relate or come from alternate histories, and some of which tell the truth. Any non-Sage character who enters the Vault should roll Resist+Occult or suffer Mind stress.

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

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

FIND CONNECTION. [Occult] *You use the unique capabilities of the Vermissian Vault to unlock secrets about a target.* Once per session, declare that two NPCs are connected in some way – ask the GM in what way.

DEAD DROP. *You are prepared for almost any eventuality.* Once per session, find a hidden stash of equipment that you, another scholar, or a version of you from an anomalous history has left in place to prepare for this eventuality. The drop allows you to equip a small group of people with generic equipment to perform a particular task (e.g. lock-picks, dark cloaks, matches and lanterns, food, etc). This equipment will never confer mastery.

PLAYER NAME

CHARACTER NAME Illyria Lox

CLASS Vermissian Sage

DURANCE Hid in plain sight

SKILLS

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

DOMAINS

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

KNACKS

EQUIPMENT

Folding crossbow
(D6, ranged,
concealable,
one shot)

REFRESH

Uncover hidden
information

ABILITIES

BACK DOOR: Once per session, conjure an
entrance to the Vermissian Vault.

THE VAULT: When in the Vault, investigate
pretty much anything going on in Spire.

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

FIND CONNECTION: Once per session,
declare that two NPCs are connected in
some way.

DEAD DROP: Once per session, uncover a
hidden stash of equipment.

BONDS

Paige, Vermissian
guardian

FALLOUT

FREE SLOTS

-
-
-
-
-
-

RESISTANCES

Blood

Mind

Silver

Shadow

Reputation

Armour

CURRENT STRESS

TOTAL STRESS: