

The Scholomance - After Hours Gauntlet (Some Spoilers for the Last Graduate and the Golden Enclaves)

Welcome to the world of the Scholomance, a dark magic school drama by Naomi Novik. In this world, the lucky few young wizards are packed into the eponymous boarding school for years at a time, mostly safe from the monstrous maleficaria (or “mals”) that hunt them. The rest mostly die.

The good news is that you’re arriving after the events of the Golden Enclaves, part of the first class after its conclusion, so that the school is much, *much* safer, and you’ll even be allowed to go home for Christmas! The bad news is that since this is very much the Scholomance on easy mode, so you’re reduced to your bodymod and do not get any points for this jump. On the other hand, if you happen to die here, you do not fail your chain - you merely lose everything you bought *here*. In other words, this is a gauntlet.

+0 SP (Scholomance Points)

Background

You’re a newly inducted 14 year old freshman one way or the other, starting in the induction hall the moment after you arrive, but background and bloodline can and do matter in a world like this. Pick one.

Mundane (+200) Like Luisa before you, you’re from an ordinary family, and have no training, no resources, and no knowledge of magic before the very minute you were teleported into the Scholomance due to a paperwork error. The only good news is that you’ll be allowed to attend and are indeed a wizard; the power crops up in normal families every now and then.

Independent (000) You come from a long line of magical have-nots. You’re not necessarily *poor*, but your family lacks the prestige, power, and *safety* an enclave provides. You’ve had the magical equivalent of homeschooling up until this point.

Enclaver (200) You come from the upper crust of the magical world- the small percentage of wizards who can afford to live in an extradimensional space called an enclave, which provides succor from the predations of mals and the unbelief of mundanes, so they can do more magic for less. You’re well trained, and well prepared for what is to come.

Perks

For once, discounts are just half off.

Anima (000) While you’re nothing special among wizards, you generate magical energy called mana whenever you exert effort, and possess the ability to store and use it to cast various spells.

Sacrificial Magic (50) When you do the kind of magic where you trade an eye for a few more years of life, or turns imminent, possibly death into distant, *certain* doom, it seems far simpler, and costs a tiny fraction of the magical energy it normally might.

Shop Class (50) You're naturally good with your hands; crafting and carving come naturally to you, and you never forget to work safely.

Guitar Skills (50) You've spent several years learning to play the guitar or another instrument, which may have magical benefits, but is mostly just a piece of home.

Languages (50) You are fluent in an additional language, and may read it just as well. This may be taken multiple times, and the first is free to Enclavers and Independents. I recommend Latin, Mandarin, and Welsh, though every tongue has a few good spells.

Deep Magic (50) Like Beata, you're skilled in a variety of Polish spells and techniques that most mals can't sense. It's not a great skillset in the Scholomance, but it's not useless.

Sieve Out the Truth (50) You're remarkably good at sifting through rumor and hearsay to determine the truth, given time.

Natural Cleaner (50) You know how to clean an area without magic, and are not afraid to get your hands dirty. If you stick with it, you'll get mana for cleaning, rather than lose it.

Certified Snitch (50) You are generally the first person to hear any gossip in your area, and you know how to trace it back to its source or find more information if you're interested.

Study Like Your Life Depends on It (50) You never have any difficulty motivating yourself to study, even outside life or death situations.

Deep Affinity (50) You are innately suited to deep magic, like that practiced by Polish witches, and will have similar success with equivalent sorts of magic in other jumps, including those called hedge or folk magic.

Card Sharp (50) You are one of the greatest and luckiest tarot players the Scholomance has ever seen; perhaps even the sort who, once in a lifetime, may win deadly games against terrible, ancient forces and go down in legend. This talent carries over to other card games as well. It's a hobby.

Cottage Craft (50) You're very good at sewing, knitting, embroidery, and crochet. It's a helpful passtime, since it generates mana and creates useful things, though it doesn't get as much mileage as it did a few centuries ago.

Malieficer (100) You can fuel your spells by pulling magical energy called malia out of living things - and occasionally objects. They generally don't survive the process, and it's got all kinds of nasty side effects, but sometimes cheating is necessary.

Unusually Strong (100) You're still growing into your magic, but when you do, you'll be able to store and wield markedly more mana than the average wizard. There are whole magnitudes above you, but you'll beat out most of your peers.

Malia Tolerance (100) You can do twice as much malia before you start rotting inside or losing your ability to build mana, and you recover from it in half the time, which you can do while using half your magic, if you avoid drawing malia. This applies to other dark arts and their consequences as well.

Put Their Feet Back on the Right Path (100) The witches of the Crooked Forest are the architects of a dozen fairy tales, and you know them all, as well as the tricks behind them; all the better to arrange curses and blessings to help a spoiled brat or abused child or so forth find their way through life.

Check Your Privilege (100) Regardless of how favorable or lasting your circumstances are, you'll never lose sight of when they are favorable or unearned, and will never fall into the trap of blaming the poor for their poverty.

I Did Not Consent! (100) Consent is a tricky thing in magic. It has to be willing, but it doesn't always have to be informed, isn't always knowing, and it can have a lot of nasty technicalities. Worse, it's a hard thing to walk back. Fortunately, you can always tell exactly what powers are running off your acceptance, and are very good at finagling out of them when need be.

Credulous Public (100) Disbelief dampens magic, but you are skilled at playing to an audience to lighten it, and avoiding attention when need be.

Naturally Polite (100) You're reflexively friendly and courteous to everyone you meet, regardless of your emotional state.

Homeopath (100) You have a knack for the same sort of spiritual and mystical healing spells Gwen Higgins is famous for. Some wizards take a more scientific approach to repairing the body, but your way is just as good, if not better, and requires less training, if more empathy.

A Clean Bill of Health (100) You're not going to see a doctor or a dentist for a while, so it's good luck that you have no major physical issues, are immune to the common cold, never catch the flu, and generally don't get sick or develop cavities without serious reason.

Translator (100) You're a natural at translating the spells you know from one language into another, and get much better results than most.

Ward ward ward ward ward (100, Discount Mundane) You have an affinity for wards, shields, and other protection spells. They're more powerful, more intuitive, and more memorable for you than they are for other people. You can even sense and control them better than most wizards can.

Supernatural Self Confidence (100, Discount Mundane) Your doubts and disbelief do not prevent your magic from working, and your worries cannot sabotage your spellcraft, of any sort. Other people's skepticism still interferes as normal though.

This is How I'll Pay (100, Discount Independent) Magic is full of prices and balances, but they're somewhat different for you. Beata would say you live in a fairy tale like her, but the bottom line is that timely kindness and honest curses can earn you good fortune and easier magic, especially if you pay your debts.

Undergraduate Paranoia (100, Discount Independent) The school may be safer now, but you came prepared for the bad old days, when dozing off could get you killed. Besides knowing the best place to sit and checking the nearest exit, you are all but impossible to catch off guard.

Combat Affinity (100, Discount Enclaver) Your affinity is for battle- in all its forms. Shield spells, fire blasts, freeze rays, telekinetic hurls... if it's meant to cause or prevent immediate damage, it comes easily to you, as does magic to strengthen the body or restore the stamina.

Relatively Enlightened (100, Discount Enclaver) You do not feel any prejudice based on sex, sexuality, race, or religion. Please note which bigotries aren't on the list, and that you can still be a victim thereof.

Incanter Extraordinaire (150) You are naturally suited to the incanter tract, as you have an aptitude for languages, the memory to quote spellbooks, and the mindset to cast under pressure.

Alchemy Ace (150) You're a gifted alchemist, and have an easy time brewing, memorizing, modifying, and devising potion formulas using whatever is on hand. I doubt you'll ever redefine the craft, but you could refine it, given time.

Exceptional Artificer (150) You're something of a whizz with magical artifacts, and with creating them. You'll be a cut above the crowd if you apply yourself.

Any Other Affinity (200, Discount Mundane) You have an affinity for any reasonably specific branch of magic you like, such as weather working, enclave building, glamours, healing, prophecy, or unusual materials. It's narrower than Galadriel's talents, but it's a decent niche.

Read Only (200, Discount Independent) Your magic resists revising and dispelling and undoing by others. Magic resistance falters before it, and even peers will realize that commandeering or catching your spells is easier said than done.

Dominus' Child (200, Discount Enclaver) You come from power and prestige; a close relative, if not the outright child of, an enclave's ultimate leader. You may not have any de jure authority, but you're a rich kid if ever there was one. In later jumps, you will also have a wealthy relative- or quickly develop an affluent benefactor, whatever's plausible.

Tertiary Order Entity (300, Discount Independent) You're the sort of generational talent that really shouldn't be popping up so much. Once you're grown, you'll be able to store and wield at least a hundred times more magic than the average wizard, and any affinities you may have are equally ridiculous.

Gatekeeper (300, Discount Enclaver) You have the terribly simple but incredibly useful ability to pull mana out of mals by killing them, via any means, even freezing. Not malia, *mana*. Even an ordinary wizard could go far with this, and in later worlds, you can refill your other power pools by killing appropriate monsters, or just get mana.

Terrible as the Dawn (300) You may not have her strength, but you have Galadriel's affinity for death and destruction, malia and malfeasance. You can learn dark spells at a glance, and invent mass destruction magic by accident. If you draw malia, you might kill half the hall without realizing it.

Items

These do not restock during the gauntlet unless otherwise stated, but will start doing so daily if you succeed.

Handbook (000) A guide to the Scholomance, written by a committee of, by, and for the enclaves who run the place, and not yet updated for the new status quo.

Weight Allotment (50) Independents and enclavers come with their own resources, but buying this not only gives you a decent kit, but ensures that the toiletries restock yearly, the clothes always fit, and the mana stores never go dead.

Musical Instrument (50) A mundane, but well crafted guitar, flute, violin, drumset, or so forth, and all necessary to care for it. This may be purchased multiple times.

Pile of Essays (50) A few hundred papers written by prior graduates, which the school will happily accept as yours if copied into your own handwriting. In later jumps, you get a similar collection of useful but fraudulent documents, though they may be under greater scrutiny...

Contraception (50) Scared, unsupervised teenagers tend to cling to each other in very specific ways, but magical contraceptives tend to be erased by fear and doubt. You have a few dozen pills and condoms, which you could probably trade for a great deal in the Scholomance.

Toolbox (50) A box containing a collection of mundane but useful hand tools, such as a hammer, saw, drill, and screwdrivers.

Invocation of Refusal (50) A slip of paper containing a remarkably powerful shielding spell, which can be as large and specific as the user wants it to be.

Entertainment (50) A few decks of cards, four board games, a few dozen novels, and a small dvd collection, complete with a solar powered mobile player. It may not seem like much, but I'm reasonably certain half the school would murder for something like this.

One Hundred Cleaning Spells, Tertiary Edition (50) A book of minor, domestic spells in a language of your choice, mostly for cleaning, but with a minor twist; overwhelmingly powerful wizards do not struggle with these spells the way they might with other detailed work.

Mice (50) A weight allotment in mice, which can be sacrificed for malia, and are frozen in time until you need them.

Calming Waters (50) A steady supply of a potion which removes studders.

Revisor (100) A sort of magic wand used to adjust spells and do detailed work, which cannot normally be taken into the Scholomance without destroying it. Fortunately, yours is intact.

Agglo Bait (100) The recipe for a special version of the potion the honeypot spell uses to attract mals, altered to only affect the minor monsters called agglos. They aren't directly hostile, and they can be quite useful, but they're the reason the Scholomance needs so much maintenance, so this will be quite valuable on the outside. You get a new and similar recipe every jump or decade.

Fern Flower (200, Discount Mundane) A flower which grows only in impossible places, which can be used to work breathtaking feats of magic. Allowing a child to eat it is also guaranteed to grant them the ability to use this world's witchcraft. You only get one per jump or decade, however.

Phone Booth (200, Discount Mundane) A magical phone booth that can somehow contact the outside world without opening a way for the mals to get in. Students may spend up to half their weekly snack tokens for a fifteen minute call- but no more, and it won't let you trade around. In later jumps, it may contact your previous worlds just as often, time freeze or no, tokens or no.

Golden Stone Sutras (200, Discount Independent) One of the most valuable and useful spellbooks in the world, which allows a powerful strict mana wizard - or circle of weaker wizards- to create small enclaves.

Spirit Purge (200, Discount Independent) A vial of foul tasting potion which repairs the damage done by about a year's worth of rationed, but exclusive malia use. It will have similar effects on other sorts of dark magic, and you get a new bottle every year.

Modern Enclave Spells (200, Discount Enclaver) This spellbook contains methods for creating large enclaves, but while they can be used by malieficers, they have certain unique, terrible costs. It might be of limited use without a magical community, but on the upside, while you can read or cast them, you are immune to their built- in compulsions, allowing you to share their secrets in more ways than one.

Three Whole Bags (200, Discount Enclaver) You didn't just come in with a bag, you came with a war chest. You've got a fortune in magic items and other resources, at least by Scholomance standards, and you'll have just as much wealth in later jumps, if not quite the same type.

The School (300, Discount Mundane) A copy of the Scholomance with an NPC gatekeeper will follow you into future jumps. You will always be its recognized owner, and when desired you may ensure that there is a magical community like this one in each later jumps, giving you a great deal of geopolitical power in the magical world. Of course, your version doesn't need belief or a mana supply to stay upright, and it doesn't force people to learn languages they haven't signed up for like the real one. Both school and society will remain established in each universe when you leave. You can also leave reality as is and enjoy the school as a fortress.

Companions

A Friend (50) A wizard your age that you knew before the Scholomance, trained in the same tradition.

Roommate (50) Someone actually selected for you by the Scholomance's system, which is meant to pick someone you'll mesh well with. A lifelong friendship will likely arise from this.

Beata (50) A Polish witch of the Crooked Forest who had intended to sleep safely through her adolescence, until that became unfeasible. Now she's here, with strange but effective mushroom magic.

Jayne (50) The Dominus' of Chicago's spoiled, and somewhat abused daughter. She's got some odd medical needs, but she'll be a true friend to anyone who'll admit what was done to her was wrong and helps her with her issues.

Maceo (50) A young wizard with a musical bent, whose family owns an orange farm.

Your Own Family (300) Up to eight people you consider to be family from previous jumps or your homeworld are inserted into this world, granted the Anima perk, plus any training you'd expect from their ages. They can be brought along into later worlds as companions, without being imported, but they don't get any points unless you do. This may be taken multiple times.

Buried Deep

Only those who take Buried Deep may purchase perks from this section. Nothing from this section may be added to the bodymod using the Buried Deep drawback.

A Little Reasoning (100) You are a remarkably intelligent person, with investigative talents and a penchant for recognizing falsehoods.

Blessing of Wealth (100) The gift of a fairy, traditionally given at christening, which warps fate to ensure your hands ever run bright with gold or other wealth.

Blessing of Power (100) Thanks to a fairy's gift, power comes easily to your hands and there remains, giving you dominion over the realms of men.

High Magic (100) You have the tiniest bit of Staryk heritage; enough to use their silver's magic, and manifest any power you thrice claim and thrice prove upon challenge and preferably at risk. Unlike Miryem, you can use whatever gifts you manifest outside their icy kingdom.

Spinning Silver (100) You possess the ability to turn magical silver to gold with a touch. Inside icy, fairy spaces, you can also turn ordinary silver into gold. If taken with High Magic, you can do it anywhere.

Embers of Chernobog (100) A spark of the devourer's fires burns faintly but perpetually inside you, granting a small but infinite trickle of demonic magic, which you can use for all kinds of black sorcery. If that's insufficient, you can feed people to it for more.

Ugro, Meaning the Jumper (200) You are skilled in the mathematically precise, deliberately controlled magic used by Sarkhan of Polnya, a rival of that great wizard. You may only buy this if you visited Uprooted, and you cannot have bought Jaga.

Jaga (200) You know the messy, spontaneous magic favored by Agnieszka of Polnya and others like her. It's generally more powerful, but less precise and repeatable than the more conventional sort in that universe. You may only buy this if you visited Uprooted, and you cannot have taken Ugro, Meaning the Jumper.

Drawbacks

You may take these for Scholomance Points.

Monolingual (+100) You've forgotten any languages you knew outside this world, except English or Mandarin, your choice.

Graduate School (+100) You don't get to finish the gauntlet at the end of your schooling, and must instead survive a full six years after graduating as well. If taken with Buried Deep, you may take this up to twelve additional times to lengthen your time in another of the anthology's stories, but those are only worth 50 SP each.

Reputation for Curses (+150) Okay, so maybe you did hurl that hex, but it was totally deserved! Or maybe not. Either way, the first thing other students think of when they see you is that you

habitually curse people who offend you, which is going to be a boon in some ways and a bane in a lot of others. It's not impossible to work through this, or wear it off though.

Horrible Haggler (+150) You are a poor negotiator, which means you'll probably be paying half again to twice what everything costs in the Scholomance's barter economy. Learning better will be an uphill battle.

Teenagers (+150) The out of context maturity you presumably carry with you is removed, leaving you as neurotic and emotional and so forth as all the other fourteen year olds. You still remember your previous jumps, but it's more like a past life than your past.

Who Reads Side Stories? (+150) You have no out of context knowledge of this setting, nor the other stories in the anthology, save that which is contained in this document.

Negativity of Spirit (+200) Your aura makes people feel somber, and melancholic around you, at least until they acclimate. Magically, this usually marks you as seriously bad news, but in your case it's just the way you are.

Stay on Your Side (+200) Your dorm has been strictly partitioned, and anything that you leave on your roommate's side overnight is cursed to wither, unless you genuinely transfer ownership to them.

Still in That Story (+200) You owe a debt- not to a person, but to the world. Some day, the bill will come due. You'll probably just have to arrange a fairy tale or two- humble a spoiled brat or assist an abused child or so forth- but the bill will come due during your time here, and shrinking it is ill-advised.

Zero Tolerance (+200) Like Gwen Higgins, you're allergic to malia, leaving you nauseous around it- or in unreal spaces stabilized by it.

Lockdown (+200) This would have been the default in any other year, but unless it is being emergency evacuated, you cannot leave the Scholomance until graduation.

It Was Wicked (+200) A combination of bad parenting and emotional abuse has left you inconsiderate and otherwise damaged.

Blessing of Ugliness (+200) You are remarkably, strikingly ugly. Not in a sickly manner, rather in a manner that *sickens*. And nothing is going to change that.

Anima Damage (+300) Whatever invisible organ allows you to do magic has been damaged; it's mostly fine, and should recover eventually, but in the meantime you need to drink a special and somewhat expensive euphoria potion at least once a week, or you won't be able to cast. You've also got a cuff that helps, but certain spells can interfere with it, and you shouldn't take it off.

The “Good” Timeline (+400) El was not born with the incredible and destructive power she canonically was, so her father’s family took her and her mother in, and she grew up happily there. Pity about all the good that she was going to do with that incredible and destructive power, like *making the Scholomance safer*...on the upside, the school still ended up with a Gatekeeper somehow, the cast is still somehow here, things stabilized somewhat, and that initial mawmouth never made it in, so things are adjacent to okay-adjacent.

Buried Deep (+600) The gauntlet doesn’t end with graduation; once you’re done here, you’ll have to experience another four years in each of the other twelve stories in the anthology, starting on the first page and at the same location, not counting prologues, though you may swap out the Spinning Silver draft for the complete novel, and one of the two Temeraire stories for Uprooted. Word of warning; if you don’t know what’s happening on Melida, I recommend getting off world ASAP. If you survive all thirteen stories, which is somewhat unlikely, you may also add any two perks you bought on this gauntlet - except Anima or Malieficer - to your bodymod, plus two perks from outside it, but they can’t be anything that gives you superhero powers or uncapped limits or something equally ludicrous. In either case, this opens up the Buried Deep section.

Ending

After graduating from the Scholomance after four years here, you have a choice; Go Home, Stay Here, or Move On. Those who fail to graduate from the Scholomane (presumably due to dying) also get this choice, but must surrender all purchases from this jump. In any case, all drawbacks are removed, and the gauntlet’s conditions are removed.

Notes

Gauntlet by Ze Bri-On

I’m not trying to make gauntlets my new thing, but it’s been interesting.

If you buy Agglo Bait or Phone Booth with the School, the copies you leave behind are equipped with their own. Also, also a gift, the gym can be made remarkably safe, as long as no one camps there for more than a few hours a week. If anyone does, it’s the opposite.

Perks apply to all magic systems unless otherwise stated.

Before you get any funny ideas, Tertiary Order Entity doesn’t do anything without Anima or Malieficer. Neither does Unusually Strong, so don’t bother adding them to your body mod.

If you pass the Buried Deep drawback, you may defer choosing your perks until later, and if you have the Mirror of Erised from my Harry Potter and the Natural 20 jump, you may use it to swap them out- assuming they aren’t sealed.

