Between men and gods.
Reality and myth.
Perfection and the end of everything.
There stand the

Nobilis

Would you know more?

Then know this: The modern, prosaic world that seems so familiar to you is a superficial slice of reality's truth. Oh, to the man on the street it's real enough; stub your toe and there are consequences, nor is the love you feel any less real for being founded on such polite fictions as the absence of the mystical-but it is an emergent process arising from the miraculous forces of *first cause.*

And the war they wage, so this world endures.

To those who know better, every mundane phenomena has a spiritual counterpart in which it lives and breathes and struggles and, perhaps, loves. A Living World to which the Prosaic one is a kind of skein. It is impossible for most to see the sun as anything other than a massive ball of thermonuclear gasses-and not the face, or vessel, or burden of the angel who is it's tutelary spirit.

Most do not see how at the world's edges, oceans pour forever down into infinity, and en route they splash against the branches of Yggdrasil: The World Ash, in which Earth is just one of countless worlds hanging in its branches like so many fruit. They cannot see the bright garden called Heaven at its apex, a place of perfect beauty. Nor how it roots in the sickening, noxious, cavernous nadir called Hell-whose torment and corruption is also fuel for the murdered cup of flame called the Weirding Wall that surrounds and guards Creation.

They do not see the Imperators, also called the *Magisters* and *Regi* and *Ymerae,* cosmic divinities whose flesh is the first stuff of creation that is called *spiritus Dei* or *causa causans*. They do not see how their existence defines the concepts that make up reality, from existence and infinity to epochs and time.

Most certainly cannot see the Lands Beyond Creation, which are sometimes called *Ninuan* by those who hail from there, that defy conventional perception itself. Nor the host of pallid Excrucians, who are also called Riders, that come from the great beyond to tear it all down. But you? For you, the scales have fallen from your eyes. And nothing will ever be the same. Take **1000 CP** with you, and embrace a decade of the miraculous.

Age and location are, frankly, immaterial. **You may start anywhere, notionally anywhere at all in the world or Beyond, and you may appear within any age range and as any gender you wish for free.** For whatever you have become, such considerations are…unimportant, when the flame of divinity inside yourself is to the prosaic façade of Earth as the fire in the cave is to the shadows it throws.

Let us discard such trifling matters.
Let us speak of the Valde Bellum.
The Void-Creation War.

Many years ago, the angels looked upon the Lands Beyond Creation, the endless Not, and though few could even see where there was no time, no space, no being, the angels' wisdom and insight made the Void broil.

This thing, they should not have done. For it conjured up great nightmares from its depths.

(There is another perspective held by the Excrucians, which states those nightmares were suzerains and sovereigns of their own right, and that they were imminent in the correlative causation of the Void since time immemorial. That their kingdoms drowned when Cneph the Creator committed a great crime that wounded Ninuan mightily, and that much

of what they once were was twisted and maimed in that act. This perspective is not necessarily a contradiction, because time is a construct of the angels and has less bearing upon the Void. In any case it would be difficult to prove or disprove what by definition Is Not)

They weren't shapeless or inchoate horrors. In fact, though they had a sick pallor to them, they rather resembled beautiful humans. Or perhaps, angels back then. Their specifics and identity was always a little malleable around the edges, but the point was they resembled people, the kind of people you expected to be able to have a conversation with. But when you looked into their eyes, you'd *miss* and see the night and falling stars within instead

(It is a sensory peculiarity not limited to sight, only habit and expectation. Those who rely primarily of touch to navigate the world would feel a wall of crumbling snow-and the wind, night, perhaps waving branches-if they were to stroke an Excrucian's face.)

And these Excrucians, they rode their pale horses and raised high the Abhorrent Weapons that could kill even Imperators with a sure blow, and they committed a great slaughter upon the world.

It broke. It became less. It lost concepts.

Threefold were the varieties of Excrucians that came forth that day, each a power commensurate with the Imperators if often much narrower in scope and far removed from the world proper.

The **Strategists** were their warleaders and standard bearers, the storied royalty of the Void. Sickened, hateful and dying from their immersion in it, mere death only causes them to fade into unbeing and re-armor themselves in the power of emptiness.

Hot on their heels were the **Deceivers**, who love something they cannot put into words and claim all the world is a falsehood they must save the living from. Terrifyingly powerful shapeshifters and demagogues, their campaigns seemed as much crusade as battle at times.

With them came the **Warmains**, great hunters that declared the world was largely worthless but by testing it, by wrestling and challenging it with great trials, something of worth might be found. Brutal but oddly honourable predators, their power to curse the land and forge wondrous yet fell artifacts was particularly feared.

And sometimes when an Imperator was not lucky enough to die quickly to them, the Excrucians would gather round their broken body and summoned a Strategist to invoke the rite that would transform them into a **Mimic**: An infiltrator guided by a blasphemy implanted within the corpse-Imperator.

The Excrucians fought hardest and heaviest at the gates of Heaven, though a few slipped past them to bend their will against the Seal of Time: The great artifact wrought around the end of all creation by the Imperators so it would never come to pass, within which were sealed three Ages. The First Age was one of harmony. The Second Age was tainted by war. Yet as the world cried out, and the Seal of Time rang like a great brass gong, the silver days of the Second Age embodied in every act of nostalgia rushed out like a wind, like a reaped crop, and were scattered a thousand ways.

It was not until the Third Age that anyone seriously considered the possibility that the world itself could die. Now, it is a given that it likely will sooner or later.

In Heaven the Excrucians were beaten back, with great difficulty and cost.
In the Seal of Time, they were whelmed by the Imperator of the Wild who revealed herself as Attaris Ebrot Appeka, Magistra of the Third Age. She named herself, made herself the governing law and tutelary spirit *of the war itself between world and void*, at once dooming it so the war would not, COULD not, end until it's closing measures were wrought and consigned it to an epoch of pain and battle-

-and yet, she saved it.

Even as in the bowers of Hell, the Fallen Angel called Ebrot Appeka dissolved to dust and ash, Attaris held *the law of the Excrucian War's age itself* like a sceptre and it was all but for impossible for the Excrucians to even touch her. With a wave of her hand, she could *declare their efforts shattered*. With a laugh she could write *they failed, they messed up, they jobbed, they're just jabronies with ponies* and lo-this would be made immutable, self-evident fact in the fabric of the world, and all concerned would be no more able to resist Attaris' will than a mortal man could stop breathing. Or blinking. Or experiencing gravity.

They could not even kill her. Were Attaris to die while the Fourth Age set to follow her came to be-whatever else might happen, the Excrucians would have lost *their* chance to kill the world.

It is for this reason that it must be understood: The Imperators are more than strong enough to fight this war. There is a reason why since that time, the Excrucians have come as raiders and infiltrators, carving away at the world's edges and whittling down it's concepts rather than risk open war against experienced foes. The thing is-they are stronger than the Excrucians in the sense that a man is stronger than a venomous cobra.

The problem isn't cosmic might per se. The problem is that one day you turn around, and there's a cobra, and you try to do something, and then you're dead.
They're not *really* meant for war. They're meant for emanating and governing concepts. At least not most of them, and at least not for war against the void.

They're farther-seeing, deeper-thinking but not as cunning or clever. Their first reaction to this kind of thing is to immerse their spirits in the deeper layers of existence while their bodies idle somewhere else, set off a chain reaction of meaning and ideas at a profound level of reality that can enact great changes all at once to counteract all the possible ways an Excrucian could affect reality-and while they're doing this the Rider's already finished his ingenious plan to seal him in chains of burning ice,

or fashioned the doom-stained knife that can end the eternal, or fished out their hope and turned it into a garrotte.
It's for this reason that every now and then an Imperator-however reluctantly, or not, given their natures-goes on a kind of killing spree. By sacrificing 100 mortal souls they can spawn a Chancel: A magical pocket dimension in which their nature defines the rules of reality. More importantly the creation of such a locale lets them split off shards of their power to a mortal, or a group of mortals, sharing with them the substance of First Cause and elevating them to godlike power.

By such means to the Nobilis come into being. And in this manner, is the playing field evened.

Thus to the Imperators, the Nobilis are merely weapons who can react quicker than they and devise countermeasures more quickly against the Excrucians. But in many meaningful respects, they are divine power incarnate.

Origins

Drop-In (Free): Not all who are immersed in the miraculous are deeply touched by the ineffable divinities of this world. If you treasure your sense of self, if you prefer to avoid entanglement with the great powers of this world, then you may come to this world without a history in it. What you are in turn, is unimportant. You can be a human of any mundane background and fortune, just another misbegotten spawn of the Imperial Adam and Eve, whose proud lineage has been diluted by the blood of beasts into almost nothing due to the first humans' decree to forbid incest in their descendants.

You can also be so much more. Would you prefer not to hail from Earth? That can be arranged.

You may be one of the Dock-Alfar who hail from Aelfscienne, blood-red miners who turn to stone in the sun. When the Earth was flooded Samiasa the angel brought his human love Aholibamah to this far land, and their children married into the royal Dock-Alfar line. So too can you be one of the Ljos-Alfar, angel-pale elves descended from this lineage who can assume an animal shape, or cast lethal fire magics and ice ones that can resurrect the user.

You could also be a cloth spirit from Dionyl, your race named after your world. With a surprisingly human mindset, you are almost entirely an ephemeral spirit bar whatever clothes you wear at any given time. Your people tend the Edge Cauldrons: Great vessels afire with rare magics that

send miraculous energy to Imperators of worlds that, unlike Dionyl, are not under attack. As Earth has Light and Dark, upon your world there are Imperators of Splintering and Domination.

You could be one of the Jotun: An agrarian folk with a deep understanding of metals, of whom the average Jotun stands 50 feet tall; the tallest of your kind stood at 400. Alas, your world has almost fallen- your society to diffuse to mount an effective resistance, and your population too small to afford more than 20 Chancels with their associated Powers. Metallurgy alone holds hope for you, since your greatest smiths can forge items of miraculous potence.

You could even be a demon, one of the natural inhabitants of Hell. They lack any real power and are weak of mind, but are naturally attuned to the maleficence and corruption of their birth-world. Theirs is a glee for destruction that no on once sworn to beauty, not even the Fallen Angels, can match.

If this seems overly generous, than know this: It is because whatever you start as before acquiring perks before this background, is not suffused with the power of First Cause inherently that it matters little to those who rule this world what you are. Conventional magic is as resilient as juggling or baking compared to the forces that define it's parameters. For even the works of the world's greatest archmages and cosmic heroes are ultimately counted as part of the world, and in direct conflict with even the simplest of miracles they will be snuffed out.

Each origin below has access to 4 Divine Attributes. At higher levels of Divine Attribute, lower level miracles cease to cost miraculous energy. It is initially assumed that you are a relatively balanced and inexperienced specimen of your kind. Thus, Nobles may distribute 7 levels across their Attributes while Imperators may distribute 10; this should not be taken to be a 1:1 statement about their raw mystical power, in which the Imperators still greatly surpass the Nobles though the Nobles have other advantages that makes them broadly quicker-acting; it is unclear how the Zu fare in this comparison, although they have apparently warded their home from both the Imperators and their forces. Should you wish,

you may purchase additional levels of any type for 100 CP each to represent greater experience and/or overall power up to a maximum of 7.

As a general rule, perks that affect Estates may affect Estate-like traits such as Spheres for Strategists, the pseudo-Estates of Deceivers, the mysterious Estate-like facets of enlightenment wielded by the Zu, the surpassing powers of the Transcendent and so on.

As mentioned for Strategists' Lore later on, maximise Divine Attributes can represent profound metaphysical or spiritual evolution of some sort as well as the listed abilities, although as of writing we have limited information on the potential implications other than the Strategists- which are subtle yet significant changes to their way of being as much as greater overall divine power. Please fanwank responsibly.

Nobilis (Free): Stand tall. You are a Noble, also called a *Power,* one of the few to be uplifted by an Imperator's investment of being into mortal clay, called. You are at least as much divine pith than flesh and blood. You can be any of those beings described above, but now a shard of an Imperator-a fundamental building block of reality-has been stuck into you; traditionally your kind is formed in a group called a *familia* created from shards of your Imperator's power shed at the same time as a Chancel's creation. Within you is entrusted an Estate: A concept that pervades reality, symbiotically entwined and embodied in your very being. Estates can be wielded to miraculous effect, but Estates themselves are generally limited in scope as to be discrete, observable aspects of creation itself; Existence, The Valde-Bellum itself, The Infinite, The Fourth Age Yet To Come and Meaning are the broadest known Estates wielded by actual Imperators and Nobles. As a side effect this renders you superhumanly competent at all mundane abilities and actions even without directly exercising your divine power.

Fortune. Emotion. Tea. Baskets. Martial Arts. Fire. Fleece. Blankets. Computers. Dogs. Storms. You can be the divine representative for any of these or a similarly broad concept, a facet and extension of your Imperator with great independence and mobility from it. And you are far

more than just the literal, quantifiable existence of these things. Through you their divinely mythopoeic nature is expressed, such that the Power of Fire could burn others with passion as well as actual heat. Perhaps it would be easier to explain by discussing your native divine attributes. By default you are a newly fledged Noble with a good balance of all four, although arrangements can be made to change this. The following divine attributes are the unique loadout of the Nobilis, and the types of Imperators each have a different arrangement of four traits.

- **Aspect** upgrades your non-magical actions, making them have great metaphysical inertia when contending against other miraculous forces. It is not merely superhuman strength, speed, endurance and dexterity-through it, the divine essence making up your body responds more to thoughts and ideas than physics and muscle action, as great heroes from myth seem to defy certain logical assumptions for their legendary feats. You are more the *idea* of flesh than simply just powerful flesh. At lower levels you simply can't lose a mundane contest or fail at a similarly mundane contest more than twice, become as strong as a bear or attain supercomputer-like calculation speed. Total conscious control over your body and making both it and your mind selectively light and easy to use is possible for those especially steeped in Aspect. At higher levels feats such as exerting as much force as you need to for a million-ton weight or as much speed as you need to outrun a laser you see coming *just in time*, shooting down a star with a gun, hauling a character *out of a movie* to punch them in the face, figuring out the acoustics to talk to anyone in the world or with a great effort "mastering a technique" to do any of the above so it can be accomplished as a mundane action even without the exercise of miraculous energy (though strongly protected by a level 4 Auctoritas, a sort of reality-enforcement) becomes possible. To cap it all, wielders of Aspect also enjoy the impossible competence, focus and unflappability known as **Cool** which functions as a fiat penalty to all immediate deleterious effects attempting to affect the Noble or an organization, person or situation they are actively overseeing-and rises in power along with the Noble's mastery of Aspect.

- **Domain** grants a Noble direct control over his Estate-bringing its substance into being, destroying it, strengthening it, summoning it and changing its destiny. It is the part of them that represents divine authority that effects direct control over the phenomena and instances of your Estate. At low levels the Power of Kitsunes could know when something endangers kitsunes, make a kitsune stronger or more magically capable or fluffier, intuit information about kitsunes from anywhere in the world or compel kitsunes to follow someone around to befriend them, and create kitsunes out of thin air. At high levels the Power of Kitsunes can preordain a kitsune to abandon her life as a wild predator and become a successful happy merchant in the city, make a kitsune's tails grow forever or render a population of kitsunes eternal, limitlessly conjure enough kitsunes to drown entire continents or blast an entire species of kitsunes out of history and perform large scale miracles of movement, dharma and complexity tangentially related to kitsunes that treats them more like an idea than flesh and blood women with fox tails. It would be possible, for example, to manipulate fur all over the world to become seeds for new kitsunes who are destined to set in motion events to rapidly topple humanity as the dominant species of Earth. As an additional boon, Domain provides a force called **the Divine Mantle** that represents the glory, the roaring fire and flaming aura of raw power that aids Powers in winning conflicts with other miracles when determining which one takes precedence. This only applies to direct opposition though; the Divine Mantle makes it harder for your enemies to burn away the avalanche you unleash or stop it from hitting a town, but it doesn't make it any harder to ski across the snow or shelter from it.

- **Flore** or **Treasure** as it's sometimes called represents the power born of the bond between a Noble and her divine panoply, iconography and regalia. The general term for those things a Noble invests a relationship with to awaken unique powers is **Anchors**, and they can be extremely open ended: Individual Anchors can be networks of spies, vast collections of magic

weaponry, armies of monsters, whole families-or simply your favourite dog or magic sword or hat, without necessarily being any greater or lesser-though the touch of truly miraculous power will. This is a somewhat intimate process: By singing to the heart of these things, by raising up and enriching them your divinity becomes transformative and immersive-potentially risking subsuming your own divine identity into inchoate entanglement with the world at the cost of your divine nature, if done in excess. Nonetheless this offers great versatility, and potentially tremendous power beyond even the usual scope for Nobles. At low levels Powers can intuit when their laptop is stolen, lend their innate powers (even miraculous ones) to their boy sidekick or take damage to protect him from unwanted effects, skilfully guide a team of maids with all their own tactical prowess or skill at cleaning and let a treasured fan knock people over with blasts of wind or mark a new friend as a Treasure or Flore. Particularly Flore-steeped Nobles can even let their Treasures' mundane actions compete with miracles with an investment of miraculous power. At higher levels this permits the Treasures themselves to reach and rescue Nobles wherever they are, integrate minor improvements and repairs into an existing Flore or building a new one and awaken such a power from your Segway that it can gloriously drive straight through a tsunami without even getting you wet. At true mastery it even becomes possible to construct large scale artifacts that encode a new convention of reality into the world or modify an existing one, such as building a lighthouse that enforces the existence of enlightenment across the mundane world or even repair a damaged tree of worlds. The greatest expression of Flore is something normally out of reach for a Noble: Drawing on a greater plan that wields the Treasure like an alchemical cauldron to craft a true wish that suits it's nature through your shared network of correlative fate. It is by this means that you can use a treasured bookmark to open a portal into a fictional version of Victorian England, or draw on the compassionate heart of a treasured friend to bring peace to a war-torn locale.

- Finally **Persona** measures the extent to which your identity and Estate are one thing. In many ways it approaches the Estate from the opposite direction as Domain, focusing on the dharma, fate and experience of your Estate before it's physical motions. It's the sort of divine identification where you smile and suddenly you're more than human-you're the roaring of the sea, your sweat is the salt air from a forgotten summer vacation, your voice the calling of gulls, your presence the sun. It's not entirely healthy for those of you who value your lingering humanity, yet through this you can incarnate into the things of your estate, bind yourself to the rules it follows (e.g. "springing eternal" as the Power of Hope) and turn things into or back from being a part of their Estate. At low levels the same Power of the Beach can make someone more relaxed, pretty, tanned or otherwise ready for the beach, spend some time experiencing life as a sandcastle or transform a gathering of pirates into a spontaneous beach party. Especially Persona-attuned Nobles could also remove the experiences of beaches from things, making situations less carefree or dimming the sunlight in a city block-or spreading your consciousness into hundreds or thousands of beaches on Earth, or into a miraculously significant one such as a beach encounter between an Aaron's Serpent and a Lord of Dark. At higher levels you can change how things relate to beaches or apply their qualities to you on a grand scale, such that everyone who comes to a beach will go away wiser and more spiritually aware, or enchant yourself to crumble away like sand from inconvenient circumstances in your life. You can also imbue things more powerfully with your Estate's qualities, retract those qualities from things on a large scale, ordain how large portions of the world relate to it or enact complex destinies protected by a level 4 Auctoritas. It is at the heights of mastery that you can make it so Hawaii is a place from which secret cabals gather to worship and improve beaches while spreading them to parts of the world they would normally be unable to exist in. Persona also provides **Shine** in quantities that rise with your mastery of it. This represents not just leadership, glory and influence but the mythologically fortuitous enactment of it-though other miraculous beings on the scale of Nobles and above are resistant to Shine. For example you

approach a door to door salesman, tell them to "go fuck yourself' and by investing your Shine in that action it would transpire that the act of autofellatio somehow improves their life greatly.

You are straddle the line between mortality and divinity. You could live a life as a successful businesswoman, yet ride a chariot drawn by flaming horses to your true job with every sunrise. And you are not something the Prosaic World can study or impede or do much more than watch in awe under most circumstances, oh no. When you bear the inexpressible source and foundation of the world others live in, you are quite literally a living miracle.

Excrucian (Free/500 CP): You come from beyond the known lands, staring at the blasphemy of Creation's stain upon the absoluteness of oblivion. The world is *wrong*. Or it is a cruel lie that prevents others from reaching the *True Thing* that can make an answer to all that ails us, or you are simply driven to *wrestle* it and hope something worth adding to yourself falls out. And whatever fate compels you to make war upon it brings with it a fire and divine passion as fierce as any Imperator's. Already your kind have vanquished worlds and shattered the strictures of reality to gape wide the yawning blight that is being and existence in a furious bid to reclaim your elusive, formless, silvered lands. But…is this really the right thing to do? No not as a matter of generalised morality, the right thing for YOUR development and self-actualisation, personally. Don't rush to give an answer. Some spend their whole lives trying to find one.

You may belong to any one of the following templates of Excrucians. <u>All Excrucians have the following minor powers-</u>an apparent gift for all mundane languages regardless of their actual proficiency, permitting listeners to interpret their meaning and intent in their own native languages. And a liminal, uncertain existence which allows minor details such as hairstyle, eye colour and other minor aesthetic traits to shift reflexively when out of sight:

Strategists are simultaneously the most fragile and destructively grandiose of Excrucians. Though not all Excrucians (except those Mimics lucky enough to carry over the innate form of immortality from Imperators they were stitched from) are truly immortal as the Angels are, the Strategists in particular shrug off death not dealt by great miraculous power as if it were a particularly persistent flu. Each is dying, constantly and inevitably, of a specific facet of Creation that has affected them-the *infection* that has broken their nature in such a way, that their fundamental essence mirrors it and it defines their abilities somewhat. This is inescapable, inherent to their nature and usually a large reason for their grievances against Creation-their perspective that it's inherent structure and formation *is fundamentally wrong; and should be abolished*, and inevitably their seething grudge against this state of affairs resurrects them from the void-bound sanctuary that nurtures them, restores them from infection and brings them back to the world in a series of transitions more akin to religious experiences than logical transportation. A few struggle with their faith in this belief, especially those endowed with great Wyrd or Flore. No matter how much an Excrucian likes jokes, if they are dying of Laughter their chuckles may choke them until they spit blood and vomit out their viscera for example. Or a Strategist dying of Wrestling find people inexplicably suplexing him until he dies, reforms in a vague wrestling ring-themed dimension and eventually musters the will to come back into reality.

- With the correlative dream of themselves called **Eide**, they overwrite reality with their own legend. Feats of charm, talent, strategies and stagecraft that overwrite the world with the identity your present to it are achieved through this attribute. At low levels they can conjure clothing and weaponry like props out of nothing, fake their deaths to even divine senses very circumstantially and perform divinely efficacious plans and miraculous talents. At high levels they can qualify for cosmic circumstances, work virtually any desired transformation on the world with a sound enough plan and shape perception across all existence. Both **Eide** and **Wyrd** below can bend reality in a more specific way to express facets of the Strategist: Creating minor minions that can offload damage onto others, splitting off their spirit to reshape the world into a kind of spatial anomaly that adds heavily enforced metaphysical

laws meant to express different aspects of themselves and transforming into giant monsters representing either what the Strategists strive to be or are deep down.

- With their deep understanding of their own fates called **Wyrd**, they spread the infection that shortens their life into the world. At low levels they can retreat to hidden sanctuaries with miraculous efficacy, tear free of binding oaths or maintain their enmity to the world by succumbing to whatever kills them, spread curses such as bad luck or putting invisible blade in someone that cut if they try to escape or perform limited acts of destruction like erasing named, individual properties of distinct things, crumbling simple yet non-living items to dust or casting living things only into the Beyond. At high levels they can break free from select laws of reality, reshape their inner identities to be ordained to fulfil a specific outcome and destroy nearly *anything* of Creation with the terrible World-Breaker's Hand power. Even hope and possibility can be crumbled to dust with this.

- With their authority, **Lore,** they hunt and bind servants or artifacts from the void or navigate all the places they should not have been able to. Each Strategist is bound through correlative karma to a certain subset of unworldly powers; in layman's terms, circumstance and inevitability conspire for them to master a specific aspect of the void related to the manner in which they are dying. An Excrucian dying of ponds may own the Lore of void-ducks, which might let them collect whispering eggs and shadowy mallard-spirits, for example. The un-phenomena are formally called their **Sphere**, it's manifestations their **Arcana** and the ones they have bound to them their **Deck.** At lower levels they can navigate the void like human geographers would navigate a foreign valley, bridge the divide between different planes of existence or forge metal that only un-exists in the Void into useful tools, minions, techniques or magical abilities-lesser in scope than many miracles, but still miraculous in their own right, and commune with subtle and ethereal forces such as talking to cosmic horrors or making a pair of glasses that can see entrances to fairy

glades. At high levels they can *literally* cross into memory or reach beyond death, use the elements of the void like cultivation-style enchantments to turn a bed into a cosmos-traveling bed with your old university hidden under its covers or burn away your mortality in the fire of the void-phoenix, build a great fortress of the Void overnight or perform mighty improvisational void-magic to hunt, bind or banish e.g. chucking an annoying Noble off the World Tree.

- And yet like the Nobilis themselves they can use **Flore** (which is also called **Treasure)** to receive aid and unlock hidden powers forged of their bond with aspects of it. This greatly shames the Strategist host, even most of the rare Strategists who truly master this trait. Everything Nobles can do with this divine trait, Excrucians can too.

Deceivers though most blind to the Lands Beyond Creation (many consider it a kind of mental construct shared by the Excrucians) are arguably the most unpredictable and greatest at improvisation. Overall they are not quite as powerful as an entire Familia of Nobles, and some can't even take on a single Noble in a fair fight. Many are conventionally immortal, unnaturally beautiful or both. They are gifted with **Deepness** with all that entails, able to vanish from the superficial experience of Creation, represent something more than the people they appear as and infect those who encounter them with their particular ideas. They also possess **Theft**, one particularly famous Deceiver specialising in using brass hooks to fish out the hearts of others and their potential with them. Theft focuses on extracting a certain quality of existence from things or people called a *waymark* that can be wielded in various ways. At low levels you can force others for many miles to feel the experience as an Imperial Miracle, inflict voodoo-like changes on the original target by manipulating the waymark, sense through/communicate with/direct the actions of a target remotely using the waymark and miraculously suborn a specific group of things or living beings to be your vessels and do your will. The weymarks are mystically entwined with their targets; this also permits you to transform and banish those for whom you hold a

waymark, and to draw on spontaneously created miraculous powers related to their nature. At higher levels you can wield true Imperial Miracles using the waymark as a catalyst, shape the fates of those for which you hold a waymark and force others undergoing your experience to become vessels to your will. They wield **Persona** too but for them instead of identifying with or governing anything of the world, a personalized edifice of their myth gains specific properties that they may evoke to similar effect. For example "lies" or "those who listen to you" or "your shadow" or "your voice" would then grant the capacity to bind the Deceivers to the mythical rules of those pseudo-Estates, or make existing things into them, or expel their substrate to turn nearby voices to silence or lies to truth, or entrap others into becoming listeners or food for the shadow or whatnot. Last but not least they have **Sealed**, the divine attribute that uses a systemised methodology to do something truly reality-defying, and for most of them the power that breaks the laws of the world is called the Rite of the Second Skin: Following a specific interaction with any being, even a Noble or Imperator, and a 24 hour long rite (the specifics for both of which are unique to a given Deceiver), and afterwards they tell themselves the story they're somebody else. This weaves the power of that person around them, maybe lies to the world about it, and they thus gain *everything* about that person. Their powers (even the miraculous ones), many of their passions and mannerisms, their appearance and mundane skills, relationships they are aware of.

Mimics are quite literally sad, pitiful husks of Imperators living a tainted life. Like Deceivers they can practice **Theft**, and they have an equivalent to **Eide** built by their creator(s) out of an Imperator's corpse. Arguably they are even more **Wounded** than the Fallen Angels, given there is nothing to them at their core but a wound-like a constellation drifting around an event horizon. Last of all, unique among their kind they wiled the divine trait called **Style** which represents a unique speciality and series of inventive plot devices that emulate some of their old divine traits and disguise their lack of them. At low levels this lets them shapeshift or repair themselves while enduring specific minor damage sources, enable those meeting a certain criteria (including yourself) to use a minor supernatural power, pull steampunk devices that can banish

a zombie invasion out of thin air and rely on an implausible skill to do something-such as your luck or intuition. At high levels this lets them force others to struggle with an idea or emotion, enable your specialty skills to become truly miraculous and turn your plot devices into generalised problem solvers. They *never* access the true power they have as living Imperators, but through Style, on its own and with creative combinations with other traits, may disguise their lack of them.

Warmains are eerily competent predators whose physical forms are often things of power, possessing flight, natural weaponry, immortality, fiery breath, unnatural beauty, the ability to pass between worlds or similar innate traits. Each undergoes a sort of spiritual maturity called Tempering over the course of its existence: Once when it first kills, once when confronting a Noble or Imperator (or a being of similar magnitude) and once when it kills someone for whom it has a profound respect, the creatures takes on the shape and devours the mind of the one it murdered-bringing about a profound sort of communion and self-actualisation beyond its usual habits. In many ways they are twisted doppelgangers of the Game and Dark, or perhaps it's the other way around. Like them they are **Monstrous** and can lurk in inconspicuous forms, hide behind lieutenants their enemies must defeat before they can challenge them or escalate a certain ability to a level beyond the world's ken. This trait also permits them to see into Ninuan with great ease, as it's scourges and guardians. Their core trait, like the Game, is **Hunter** which permits them to mimic, trick and counter others or their powers. In one respect they differ from the Game: Through **Architect** the Warmains can move others to their will and anticipate things to come by grasping the grand design of all Creation. Finally they are **Allegorical** and can transform others, wake the world to life and wield ancient, wondrous powers as beings of metaphorical and psychological import.

Last but not least, all Excrucians are capable of creating a handful of shard-selves (around half a dozen or so, usually) to support themselves, which can access parts of the world the full Excrucian cannot normally get into. They are built on the same scale of Powers (indeed, Mimics usually simply create actual Nobles) and similarly individual in scope;

killing one *usually* does not harm your true self, although creating and reconstituting one (assuming it hasn't been slain with effects that prevent resurrection, which it probably has been given how difficult Powers are to kill normally) can be quite costly. Strategist, Mimic and Warmain-shards have the same set of divine attributes as their Excrucian-types and Strategist-shards in particular are easily equipped with the World-Breaker's Hand as a Gift. Deceiver shards are much weaker, little better than mortals with weak levels of Aspect or Flore at best-but also can enact the Ritual of Two Skins to borrow a Power or even Imperator's abilities to make up for it. **Should you wish, you may waive the cost of being an Excrucian and start as a mere shard of one. If your greater self and co-selves agree, you may take them with you to the next jump for free.**

Imperator (500 CP): The churning motion of the prosaic world. The rising sun, and the gibbous moon. The whims of famine, pestilence, man's inhumanity to man, and fate. These are the laws of the world from which your kind's flesh is spun. The Nobilis are living forces of nature who can split apart the seas, write poems that change the course of history and leap through time. And with this option, you can be one of the greater beings whose touch creates them. Such is the scope and breadth of how your existence that nearly all supernatural beings from this world are to you as ants are before a mountain, some even emanating from you as an extension of the concepts you embody. You may choose up to four Estates to embody, and no aspect of your mind, body or soul is considered part of any Estate for the purpose of resisting direct miracles i.e. a different Imperator of Stones can't warp you like a regular stone if you're also an Imperator of Stones. It should be noted that having more Estates does not necessarily make you more powerful overall among other Imperators; while Lord Entropy presides over Destruction, Desecration and Scorn the angelic leaders Firstborn (who oversees Meaning and Existence) and Lucifer (he whose flesh is Pride and Persuasion) are considered great among their kind as well. While your deep experience of them has a great pull upon your nature that may or may not lack some mortal spontaneity you also understand them on a profound level, having literally been there and shaped history.

Beyond your cosmic might and stature, what truly sets you apart from the Nobilis is your capacity to perform what is called an *Imperial Miracle* or a *wish.* While some of your divine traits are capable of similar effects in a narrower band, when you act in accordance with your Estates and fundamental nature to perform a miracle of such absoluteness and complexity that it is akin to a story told unto the world than a force that can be escaped or deflected. They are pure abstractions that transcend the usual traits and limits of your kind, and that reflect your will upon reality; if you were to rip someone from the world, nail them to the sky and scour them with the storms it is not actually a series of causal processes in motion but the transformation of reality through divine will. In direct conflict with most other forces from this world the wish simply comes true in tandem with the other effects, and the burden falls upon reality to reconcile them somehow. With that in mind, virtually any desired transformation or act of creation can be worked by an Imperial Miracle, and in all cases it is in their nature to endure indefinitely and have unlimited range if the Imperator wishes so. This operates under four limitations and exceptions:

1. Powerful miraculous beings like Nobles or their betters may "take damage", clinging to their selfhood and identity because of an utterly unacceptable transformation in exchange for suffering **grievous harm or costs** to their miraculous resources.
2. From a broader perspective, **Wards, Rites and Geasa** are resistant to Wishes insofar as they are not automatically overridden by them in a direct contest. Wards are a kind of friction built into the fundamental bedrock of reality; powerful spiritual barriers such as the divide between world and void, as well as sufficiently foundational metaphysical principles of the world or void as a whole may qualify at your discretion. If not, the forces unleashed by the Wish simply linger so long as the Ward is maintained. A Geas is similar to a Ward but applicable to a character-an underlying truth to their identity so profound it throws up miraculous effects to manifest it or creates a Ward-like nullification effect in defence of it. Even then *geas tend to be somewhat unreliable* and in rare circumstances may falter even when not set against a Wish. Rites are pervasive miraculous

supernatural effects that undermine the substrate of the world or void's conventional miraculous effects. Many divine traits inherent to Imperators can produce or manifest as variants of all 3, such as the famous Auctoritas Magister most notably wielded by Angels and Lords of Light. In all cases, a Wish may still contend against these effects as if it were any miracle where it is required to fulfil their outcome. If there is a *plausible* way to fulfil the wish *without* overcoming the Ward, Rite or Geas at all, the Wish will simply find a workaround.

3. Relative to other miracles, Imperial Miracles are relatively slow and subtle as a general rule before being modified by certain divine attributes such as **Sealed** or more complex workarounds.

In this manner, you may even have *created* your Estate in its current prosaic form, such as how the Imperator of Bears reified them from a mere memory of another race of beings into a full species. Even should you be a primarily Earth-bound Imperator, when you leave for other planes of reality your Estate permeates the region; while the Nobilis lose no power from entering the Void or other worlds, you in particular are a keystone for your Estate to propagate and develop. Whether you are a frontline general for the Valde Bellum or a relative bystander, you likely have quite the history here.

Imperators of the most influential and elaborated upon varieties will be described later in the Affiliation section. You may be an instance of any of the Imperators described below. Alternatively you may choose to be an OC Imperator whose presence defines the principles of a different world than Earth, so long as your nature falls in the scope of the given examples and does not partake of Ninuan.

Affiliation

Many are the factions made up of the types of Imperator in the world, some seeking to redefine it in some way while others seek to merely celebrate some aspect or others of it. Some are organised and focused, while others are more Here, you may select one to whom you have decided to align yourself with.

Should you be a Noble, the shard of *causas causan* implanted within you shall come from an Imperator of this faction. Should you be an Imperator, you will instead either be one of your own kind that make up this faction, although nothing stops you from being an Imperator of a different variety that has somehow eccentrically decided to act for another cause.

Of note should be that while it is expected and near-universal for the Excrucians to stand with Ninuan, the nuances and complexities of the war mean that though it will likely cost you dearly and leave many suspicious eyes upon you from your so-called allies as well as your disgruntled ex-comrades, should you wish you may align with one of the other factions instead.

And as for Transcendent beings it would be less accurate to say you are part of that faction, and more accurate to say that either that faction is part of you. Or on a whim, you have deigned to favour a faction with your attention for some reason.

Heaven: At the highest point of the World Ash where even what passes for the sky is a glimpse into Ninuan, lies a realm of infinite beauty. A garden that is constantly worked and reworked to keep it's absolute perfection in motion. It is for that reason that the Angels who are born to it have a commitment to beauty that may seem shallow for beings so elevated above all others. It is not. The Angels are committed to celebrate the wonder of Creation *despite all the horror in it*, and in the name of that celebration will block an Abhorrent Weapon with their own body and blood. In that regard even justice is regarded as an extension of beauty-to which Law is an unfortunate necessity-despite the sometimes differing interpretations of it among them, and so too are the Angels

committed to not just working for the greater good but providing the best lives for themselves and others in doing so.

The Angels can be likened to an occupying army in the prosaic world. Where people want to get by day to day, they visit enlightenment upon the unsuspecting. Where people fall without expectation of salvation, the Angels catch them not to fulfil a wish-but because they decided the world was better if they lived. Their own kin-lovers, friends, acquaintances and enemies alike-are choking on the flames of Hell, twisting and corroding into wretched shadows of themselves, and still they speak of justice and righteousness, and work tirelessly to bring grace where it can transform the world into a better place. And if they are hard on cruelty, if they make it hard to be petty and base and *human* at times with their overbearing expectations, if sometimes it feels unbearable to live up to an inhuman standard of justice. All they can say is this: They ask no more of any living being, than they ask of themselves.

And what of the angels themselves? They run the gamut from unfathomable beings straight out of Abrahamic mythology, to beautiful people with wings (which are not necessarily different things). In all cases they are inherently immortal, even by Imperator standards, dismissing low level hostile miracles and even reducing the impact of greater ones from sheer glory of spirit while simply unaffected by any and all mundane assault. As a general rule their beauty is exceeded only by the Excrucians, and only the Aaron's Serpents exceed them in might. Like the Nobilis, they are effortlessly skilled at many mundane things due to their inherent grace. Gifts of flight are common, though Geasa rare. They have the divine trait called **Adept** that grands flexibility, mobility, shielding and blasting powers to their magical skills. They innovate new magic like breathing, and can lift it up to contend against miraculous powers. An Angel's glamour can repel the dread World-Breaker's Hand of the Strategists, while their alchemical concoctions can unmake miraculous contagion and their wards can bind Excrucians or other Imperators in place. With great effort, they can erase even the infamous Bleak Academy that lies beyond the world and trains more Excrucians from Creation-born with a single blasting spell. In addition

they wield an attribute similar to **Lore** save that instead of the void they correlate to strata hidden in Creation which they can awaken, wield and propagate. **Gardener** allows them to reshape Heaven or other places they've claimed, bringing forth wonders and potentially reshaping part of Heaven into a massive war machine or growing a new race from the lands they've staked a claim on. It is a demiurgic power, sculpting the lands, those living in them and those grown from them like the breath of God-and provides for them a supernatural reagent that can purify things to be aligned with their nature. Finally, **Holy** grants them a numinous, inspirational glory-makes them more experience than individual. It's in this capacity that angels can erect barriers against even wish-level effects, appear circumstantially wherever they want or invoke the thematic circumstance of others being upon their killing ground, interact with others even if they're dead or fictional and at their limits open paths, reshape the world, twist fate and create powerful servants or artifacts when done in service of their principles.

Hell: Lucifer, Imperator of Pride and Persuasion, was the greatest leader of the Angels once. He heard Cneph's voice with aching clarity, and his beauty surpassed Heaven's own. He led Heaven through evolution after evolution of humanity-and then one fell day, everything changed. Some say it was a loathing of humanity that brought on his rebellion, that Cneph told him to bow down before new, pitiable life that would one day burn brighter than any angel. Others claim that he was simply consumed by the passion that took each and every Fallen Angel: The idea that there should be a place in the world for the foul, the ugly and the evil. That *no matter how far from grace one fell, there should be someone to witness them in their lowest moments.*

The result is the same: At least a hundred Angels forsook Heaven for the toxic flames of Hell, and became so immersed in its corruption that they started to become evil themselves. Suffering and corruption became intrinsic to them, to the extent that to this day many are actually uncomfortable in social situations for fear of reflexively corrupting what they interact with. Many truly believe corruption to be the highest and truest principle in all the world, or that power justifies itself. Yet just as Lucifer found, to his surprise, that Hell could not corrupt him as it could

the other Angels and he remained incapable of betrayal, so too is defilement for the Fallen Angels a mere side effect of their core ethos. The work of Hell is to love whoever needs them most, and whatever would, without Hell, be alone. It is because of this that they've come to love the worst parts of the world the most, and even as they're tainted and wracked with filth they will not look away.

Holy the Fallen Angels remain even debased and disgraced, yet so tarnished in spirit are they that they're worse at mundane living than even some mortals. Where the Angels are glorious and awe-inspiring, Hell is debased and tarnished-though often no less beautiful or magnetic. In losing Heaven's garden and taking up the love of all things they also became **Allegorical.** Thus can they compete against miracles with mundane actions when acting in a certain role and/or elevate them into miracles themselves, rouse the inanimate things of the world to life in emulation of their Estates, make possible to all around them a specific impossible action and wield wondrously devastating weapons or modes of transportation. So too are they **Wounded** by exposure to the wicked fires of Hell, in ways that permits them to delay their suffering and turn everything terrible that happens to them into more power. Cut off their head and they may gain powers befitting an angelic Dullahan. Electrocute them, and they'll somehow wield their spasms and arcs of lightning for their own ends. Cast them into Hell to burn forever and well…that's how we got the Fallen to begin with. It is also why though the damage wrought on them has cost many the absolute immortality of the Angels, weak attempts don't even register and their calloused souls can soak up many *serious* attempts or even turn them into more power for themselves. And this pain, this distress also inculcates within them a **Sealed** power that breaks all the rules of Creation or void alike, yet takes great mastery even by Imperator standards to do anything useful with. One Fallen Angel is rumoured to use some form of nightmare technology that could power a new sun if the current one was ever destroyed forever using his own heart, bring nightmares into reality or grant wish-like effects on a denial-based system ("This gadget couldn't POSSIBLY ever work!").

The Wild: Not every Imperator served of its own free will from the outset. Eons ago, the Creator bound inscrutable, powerful beings that seem to skip between worlds like children at play-yet claim their choices are bound by laws others cannot comprehend, and their behaviour is a strict consequences of principles built into their souls. Alone of all Imperators they cannot enter the Lands Beyond Creation, locked into their own imprisonment by self-definition. They understand themselves to be prisoners in Creation, and so they are. They understand themselves to be alien to the world, and so they are. They pursue the freedom to truly be themselves, liberating themselves from sanity and mundanity, and adhering to those laws they find within their own nature. There is nothing they abhor so much as coercion and confinement in any form. And they are fair in their dealings, for they cannot be otherwise.

To serve or act in accord with the Wild is to recognise that freedom is the highest principle, and to be yourself, beyond all sanity and reason. The lattice of choices taken are heartbreakingly pure notes to the Wild Powers or Ymerae, and interference with these choices is obscene to them. It is for this reason that the Wild abhors sanity and mundanity; they will not trap another in a dark alley to beat upon, but will gladly hunt them to the ends of the Earth. Paradoxically the Wild is solipsistic, it focuses on self-knowledge and preoccupied with their own way of being in order to formulate the absolute dedication, abhorrence of waste, and love of fairness that governs their behaviour. In spite of that, the Wild's most sincere wish is to free those around it. Last but not least, the Wild believes in giving in kind with a gift received represents an inextricable bond of destiny. Ironically, this means that accepting a gift and returning nothing is the highest honour one of the Wild can offer anyone-for this represents a waiving of obligation's entanglement.

So seriously is this taken that there are some indications certain Wildlords are actually dead, *yet fight and play on because they fundamentally cannot do anything else*, immortal like the Angels so they are. Many have beastly traits or outright resemble great animals, though all are wiser than any mortal man. They are commonly poor at life, prone to alienation by their strange ways and even for those rare Wildlords who can fare well socially they experience synchronicity

rather than a conventional mastery of the mundane. Like the Nobilis they use **Persona** to bind themselves to their Estate's laws, turn things into or back from their Estates or incarnate in their aspects. Like the Fallen Angels they are **Allegorical**, driving things to unroot themselves, become self-contained and cease-self justifications to the extent of bleeding symbols into reality or causing humans to discard their faces, grow extra arms and turning their speech into fire. But the Wild is **Symbolic** as well, even more deeply entwined with their Estates than most Imperators and being able to sprout additional limbs or other physical features that provide persistent divine features. This also allows them to notionally devour and digest anything successfully, whether it's a small black hole or the bow that can shoot down the sun, with enough effort or capture the experience of your Estate into a physical token that can be manipulated for various effects or unleashed to release your Estate somewhere normally beyond its reach-at its greatest heights, this particular power forms the basis for a form of Imperial Miracle. And finally, the Wild is nightmarishly **Monstrous** as well. One very specific trait of theirs is limitlessly potent, defying all mundane efforts to impede it and even greatly resistant opposed miracles, and coupled with the Superior Vitality this trait provides at great mastery physics are lenient to permit this to occur-permitting a limitlessly strong being to brace against nothing and push back for example. They have great power and flexibility to curse and cure the land or shapeshift into various inconspicuous forms. The greatest feats of this trait manifest in smithcraft and artifice, creating fabled artifacts that are both wondrous and fell which can be fiated by Imperial Miracle to accomplish a certain task.

Light/Rules: There is an order of self-appointed guardians of humanity, that stand in clouds of radiant glory and look away from life. There are rigid, uncompromising beings that speak of loving and knowing humanity, even as they avert their eyes from the gross physicality and chaos that real life inevitably becomes. And if asked why they do not, CANNOT, do more, they will answer: It's the Dark's fault. The Game's fault. The *human impulse to shout and kill and be free and be wild's* fault. There in the Garden, where Eve bit the apple it was not THEIR will that she understand only too late that she wasn't ready for it, even as she

partook of that same force that gave them form and purpose-there then, was an opportunity for humanity to gain immortality. But Eve realised that it wasn't right. It was too soon, and she had jumped the gun so to speak. The Light-that which is sometimes called the Rules-recognises itself in the potential perfection and deep truths of what's left of humanity. Tirelessly, it writes equations on gematria to ensure *humanity's survival any cost*-including those things that most would agree make us human at all. Bitterly, it recounts how when the first Lord of Light arose like a white linen in the wake of humanity's departure from paradise. Endlessly, it tries to make of humanity something that will live forever.

It is, in many ways, quite literally a dream of humanity made perfect through good law. Does it seem cruel, the lengths they are willing to in order to prevent the extinction of humanity? Does the condescension and willingness to throw away what makes human life worthwhile, throwing away five hundred to save a thousand without hesitation, seem inhuman? Does it seem unfair that many not only believe that above all humans need to be protected from themselves, but also sincerely believe humanity should remain savages even if some Light Lords themselves arose from the advent of civilisation itself? If it does, it is because many millennia of frustration with the runtish, incomprehensible beasts that humans have become coupled with a fundamental lack of understanding any way to make humans immortal than by recreating them in their own image have not just taken their toll-in many ways, they are those facets of humanity that strive for solutions that appear elegant on paper. They are not precisely hypocrites, in their own eyes at least. They won't even pretend that to turn you into a word, a name, a living law is the immortality to seek-merely a preferable but imperfect preservation. By and large, their Imperators simply lack more…transformational understandings of what "saving humanity" can and should mean.

In many ways, the Rules resemble the Angels. They are **Holy** and unerringly skilled at all mundane actions, though even compared to angels they have a certain straightness and uniformity in design. They mostly resemble the forms of mankind, perhaps a little *too* polished and well-kept. So too are they as immortal as the Angels are, often swiftly

reconstituting themselves from the very laws they enact when seemingly torn apart by mundane force or lesser miracles. Their claim over the cities of humanity grants them the **Gardener** trait, though most are circumspect about using it. Yet in two regards they differ. As embodiments of dispassionate apotheosis there is a **Deepness** about them, which lets them dissolve their identities into emptiness and move around as an idea or less in the wider world-still able to interact with it directly, with a bit more effort. They can also infect others with their soulless vision in this manner, imprison people or objects in the conceptual empyrean that is their home or flat out banish the messes of life they cannot abide with this power. The greatest among them with this trait can even bring about new metaphysical precepts over a few dozen square miles, permeating it with eldritch koans and a hidden path to a realm of existence closely related to them. Finally, **Architect** is the power they have to guide the grand design of Creation like a master conductor-miraculously guiding others with their will whether they know it or not, anticipating what comes, creating inspirational relationships with strangers or committing them to remarkably efficacious courses of action and banishing or summoning others miraculously. Those weak in this trait can barely manage a pocket world. Those powerful in it can map out fate and time to their distant ends.

Game/Dark: Have you ever looked over a cliff and felt that nagging, gut-level whisper to throw yourself from it, feel the wind and the exhilaration of breaching the ultimate taboo, and damn the consequences? The Dark, sometimes called the Game, was that voice. It is the cognitive error and small-minded negligence that lives in the id of all humanity. In many ways it's the inevitable animality that comes with being a flawed, mortal creature of flesh. And there is a grandeur to it, though perhaps only because many humans expect-hope, even-that the unwanted impulses and spite and uncomprehending grief in their bones have something more to them than the chatter of monkeys and parrots. The Dark has always been twistedly magnanimous like that. When Adam bit into the apple-when he spat out its seeds, gained the knowledge of self and began to *want* and *need* things, it was the Dark in him urging him to *decide* stuff. He became a namer of things. He became a mad god of

power, and though he could have made himself immortal he never did and never would because he was on fire with the Dark. And while by all accounts it appears his relationship remained surprisingly amicable with Eve all things considered, it still meant that right after both left the Garden the First Lord of Dark mouldered and writhed up from the seeds spat from Adam's mouth. And by claiming Eden as a Chancel, he forever seared away the fruit of immortality then warped mankind's once-perfect home into the Sable Gardens

The Dark loves every, *every* human voice that cries out for independence and self-determination. It even loves many of the demihuman ones, finding them as hilarious and interesting as any full-blooded human. It's highest principle, really it's only true value is that it wants everyone to stop holding themselves in. To be as free and crazy and wicked as any other animal in the natural world, fighting and rutting and feasting like there's no tomorrow. And come what may, it is the Dark's will that *humanity alone, should ultimately destroy itself* not any interloping void god or impetuously intolerant angel. It will go to great lengths to free prisoners from their cells. It will also eagerly whisper ideas for weapons of war and noxious drugs into mortal ears. And this mania, this incarnate flaw of the human condition, is so wild in its mad celebration of self-destructive freedom that it's barely aware of itself except when it's with you. Many a Lord of Dark is much more interested in what the man on the street has to say about its schemes, than their own opinion on the subject.

As the Fallen Angels are stained, darkened reflections of their hale peers, so too does the Dark often resemble glamorous yet foreboding cinematic icons. They are **Monstrous** figures. The Lords of Dark are nominally crippled from being functional members of society, but their divine traits largely nullify this as an obstacle to being awesome, glorious things. They aren't even typically immortal, yet even when their body, soul and mind have been shorn apart it's common for the Lord of Dark's essence to flee as a fading shadow, returning at some future time with another personality and face. This is the purview of **Wanderer**, a trait that miraculously transports the Dark to hidden mystical worlds and lands-most commonly those that in some way represent their Estates. The

stronger their trait is, the better they are at bridging these worlds at whim and bringing back useful resources from them. At low levels they can show up somewhere circumstantially and crudely interact with places without technically even being there, gain boons or good fortune during their travels, drastically heighten their fortune for travelling in general or bypassing a given barrier and suffuse the experience of the strange lands they have visited into other worlds. Stabilising boons brought from those realms dependent on native forces, merging traits of the physical and metaphysical natures of those realms into others and transforming people or objects (entire populations, at great mastery) to be more befitting a realm you are bound to is also possible. At higher mastery they can truly appear anywhere not heavily monitored or mystically sealed, grant themselves powers from the realms they are bonded with as an Imperial Miracle and even superimpose a portion of that realm onto another world. One of the greatest, most costly feats of this is an Imperial Miracle that somehow *doubles* your identity into a significant figure from that world-one commensurate with the stature of an Imperator, and often refashioned to be more suited to the benefit of your Estates now you are they. Whether you merged with them, or discovered you've always been them, or killed and replaced them (while still being two different Imperators controlled by one will for all intents and purposes) is highly circumstantial. They also have the trait called **Prophet**, a parallel to Domain that lets them enact their Estates into the world. It makes them purveyors of subtle or wide scale inspiration, grants strange arts evocative of their Estates and lets them solve problems as their Estates would. In this capacity can the Duke of Greed devour delays in his journey, or the Count of Thieves steal away attention and escape in broad daylight. It is also possible to predict when others may threaten your Estate then pronounce warnings with tangible karmic consequences against them, manifest epic possibilities related to your Estate, acquire miraculous energy from experiencing your Estate periodically and consecrate territory to have your Estate strengthened in it. Those particularly skilled in this trait may even provide prophetic fortunate circumstances for themselves in serving the betterment of your Estate, or grant others miraculous energy when rejoice in it with you. And **Hunter,** last and cruellest of the Game's traits, is a hungry power born of void that sees past the surface of the world and revels in

the subtle essence beyond it. At low levels specific tasks with no miraculous opposition can be accomplished in impossible ways, you can force emotional truths on those around you, you may nullify the specific powers of others by observation (unless they are greatly defended against miraculous intrusion) until you are significantly injure or decide to let go, are capable of maintaining your appearance in any and all circumstances and have a specific supernatural skillset representing your supernatural role. At greater mastery you may blind others to specific concepts around them or awaken them to their true selves despite all ongoing conditions, retroactively reveal conditions that defy prior understanding of reality (though unless fairly plausible, the consequences of such revelations will fade in half a day or so) and at utmost mastery bring true peace, respite and solace to anyone.

True Gods: When you think of gods you may envision a bearded man in the sky, a beautiful wise woman, a cunning trickster or a solemn warden of the underworld. Truth be told the likes of Zeus, Perun, Indra and so on have more commonality with the exploits of Nobles than Earth's true deities-whose mere passing leaves some men mad, others inspired. For the evolutionary struggle recorded upon Earth's prehistory-the division of microbial mats, the emergence of single celled prokaryotes from bubbling water-is a pale shadow of the competition between tangled, amorphous spirits of incalculable power that twisted around each other and the border between life and death. They call the native world of these gods the Deep Mythic: An animistic ecology where causality is as amorphous as the sprawl of life at the beginning, and all physical aspects of Earthly reality is a roiling sea of chaos where stone and brick and sky compete and devour against each other. Unable to say where one began and another ended, a genuine ambiguity between their virulent forms. It was the greatest predators that survived the initial scrum-but once minds began to stabilise it was empathy and cooperation that ultimately won the war of life to consume other life. And so the most cantankerous of the gods were imprisoned in mazes of themselves, while those who became known as the True Gods of Earth prospered and spread over the mythical depths behind the scenes of reality, so to speak. They dwell in palaces that are one another's bodies-or their own, looking up at the

pulsing sun of their own heart or walking in hollowed out caverns in which vast civilisations of lesser spirits that are soldiers and servants and blood cells and spoken words alike dwell.

To understand how disparate and individualistic this faction's goals are, it must be understood that *the True Gods pervade the world around you* in ways difficult for the mortal mind to grasp. Their power is, to the extent it matters among Imperial beings when even Powers can simply manifest their Estates even if they wander into stranger worlds, rooted in Earth and more bound to it than Angels or the Wild. Imagine the growth of a city captured in a time lapse. Imagine the whirring of molecules and atoms in constant motion in the atmosphere. Imagine the cascade of the ocean's movements or the frenetic growth of a forest over a century condensed into an hour-and you begin to grasp the sheer scope of a thing that at once can be intimately connected to you at all times-strands of it wrapped like the searching tendrils of plant roots-and yet more inclined to communicate through bodily impressions and sensations than words. In other words, there are no commonalities between the creeds of individual True Gods only an underlying theme: Growth, preservation and expansion of their Estates in the manner of the most primordial life as well as deep and profound interconnectedness with all the things of Earth. Do not expect a reprimand from such a being so much as a sharp alarm that gives you the impression of an incongruity suddenly detected. And do not expect thanks so much as an approving sensation that communicates harmony with the flow of the god's moods.

True Gods are not so much badly equipped at life so much as poorly equipped to move at the human scale as a rule-many could sing or cook more beautifully than any man alive, just not in ways humans could tolerate. The trait **Symbolic** reflects their deep communion with their Estates, and like the Game they are each a **Wanderer** that can bring forth wonders and immensities from the palaces and kingdoms within their sprawling metaphysical innards. A low rating in this trait reflects inexperience or frustrated efforts to reach those well-hidden lands. They also have **Deepness** as natives of the spirit world, like thousand-tendrilled thoughts that permeates and transfigure the things of the world into being more symbolic, more abstract and thus spiritually compatible with

their own natures. But it is the trait **Vastness** that grants them truly ambiguous size and structure, and exceptional physical and spiritual power even compared to other Imperators. At low levels this lets them release a miasma related to their Estate around themselves, a "war form" with various attributes (the ability to communicate with beings related to their Estates, minor abilities that prevent their forms from being logically non-functional, supernatural enhancement of the form that rises with their mastery of Vastness and generalised miraculous prowess) or invert some of their Estates' characteristics manifesting through them. Mastering the expansion and contraction of their war form is a tricky skill even for such beings, though particularly potent True Gods may be capable of doing it instantly or within a few minutes generate evolutionary adaptations for that form such as antlers that release seductive pollen, wings of winter wind or fangs that are supernaturally baneful against the machinery that threaten the clay structures falling under the True God's governance-and these adaptions are always miraculously effective. At higher levels they can do this instantly, seamlessly blend into the environment while subtely granting it aspects of your war form or nature OR declare 2 pre-established features of your war form are not logically consistent. Though somewhat disorienting even for them this is what allows True Gods to chase others down their own throat, be in several places at once or *always be bigger than their opponent* depending on their needs. The greatest masters of Vastness can flood massive regions with their Estate's elements, potentially creating dangerous terrain even on the scale of miraculous combat, and treat it as an extension of their own bodies.

Aaron's Serpents: These Imperators are impossibly huge snakes that enjoy making new friends, visiting cool places and simply enjoying life. The life force of the World Ash that sired them flows in their veins, and they're often found cheerfully slithering about its branches without a care in the world despite being 25 trillion tons and already large enough to be seen from space…without unleashing the true, conceptual bigness of their huge. If mass alone could win the Valde Bellum, then a single Aaron's Serpent could quite literally roll over all the Excrucian Host at once. It might be nice if more of them could snap out of being

sensualists lost in the sheer joy of the sea, the stars and the branches of the World Ash to participate in the Valde Bellum, as some of them are responsible enough to do so on particularly threatened worlds. But then again, there might well be a lot more collateral damage once the less prudent snakes get going.

In many ways, Aaron's Serpents are the most human of all the Imperators. They are generally individual in their tastes and desires, and so like the True Gods do not share a common creed or mission, only values, but where the Gods are inchoate and urge-driven the Serpents are solidly physical, sane and stable for the most part. A few values are universal among them: They respect life, especially the plant life due to their love for their parents; one of the few ways to enrage them is to use fire, wield the saw or otherwise threaten violence towards the spirits of the trees. They hold the stars to be sacred, and an oath sworn under them as binding. They believe strongly in strictly working and sacrificing in proportion to what they desire, taking only what they have earned-to the degree that some Serpents crippled in the war have starved themselves for being too weak to sup on the rich sap in the World Ash. Last but not least, the serpents are great lovers of peace. As a general rule many don't really think of their job as fighting, or even giving you orders. They just want to live in the world, explore and see it's wonders. If you manage to get your serpentine master's attention, it will show you all the wonders of the world, and help you find hope and things to love. It'll open your mind. Maybe you can help open it's in return?

The Aaron's Serpents immerse themselves within the world naturally, not particularly competent yet oddly not as inconvenienced as gigantic snakes should be. The **Vastness** they have goes some way to explaining this perhaps, given some have been known to assume smaller human-scale and shaped forms with great feats of miniaturisation. **Wanderer** empowers them to visiting hidden worlds and distant lands along mystical journeying methods, and to bring back wonders from them. **Allegorical** in turn does not just transform those around them and wake the world to life, but renders them the greatest in raw might among Imperators by letting their mundane actions compete with miracles when living up to a certain rule. Last but not least, they are **Sealed**, each

wielding bizarre powers that defy many normal limits or conventional ideas. One Serpent, it is said, has built a wish-granting engine of such potency that the engine itself holds a marvellous world within it and is also sometimes a young woman who goes on adventures separate from her engine-body.

Ninuan: Close your eyes.
Sense the silvered, difficult to pin down un-motions that are not light yet are not dark. And you begin to grasp what the spaceless, timeless, endless cauldron of potentiality and nothingness that are the Not resemble. It is disorientating for the Creation-born to be there. Minutes, even hours slip past due to time being more or less a matter of opinion. All existence operates in a process of structural harmony like some great mathematical ur-set, or a dreaming mind restlessly reliving the same dreams over and over. Predators dwell here but they do not stalk prey; they articulate the hunting-nature of themselves as a kind of emanation. Likewise prey does not recognise the hunter and fear it, but enacts the mournful passage of its own death. Lightning strikes because it was always meant to, forests and waterfalls have always been there from one perspective yet to another they have existed but recently.

And this silvered land, this dreaming emptiness, is mostly only perceived by the beings of Creation when on the verge of death or broken by its un-substrates. Certain miracles of the Imperators, most notable those of Lore and Monstrous, enable them to pass through and wonder at the rich stone paths or shivering forests of the void. Yet to most, they are and always will be terrible, absolute nothingness.

For one reason or another you have staked your loyalty to the Void beyond Creation. **This is highly inadvisable for anything born of Creation. There is no reward for doing this** even if you have found something to admire about the void, or merely express publicly an intent to reconcile with it, **and you will be considered a traitor by virtually all who fight for its survival.** On the other hand for the Excrucians, it is the natural position to take. Below are the basic ethical principles for the four Excrucian kinds, which define their personal expectations and

standards for wartime operations. Not all perfectly adhere to them, but fulfilment of them is considered to be socially admirable for their kind.

Cant of the Warmains

1. Never surrender. Retreat only when necessary.
2. Never abandon your comrades or arms.
3. Die for the cause before living in shame.

Cant of the Mimics

1. Guard your privacy. Guard your thoughts. Guard your nature.
2. Plan ten steps ahead. Lace every trap with traps.
3. Never act when waiting is enough.

Cant of the Deceivers

1. (Use) Lies before Poison.
2. (Use) Poison before the Dagger.
3. (Use) The Dagger before the Sword.

Cant of the Strategists

1. Be strong in adversity.
2. Be wise in decision.
3. In action, be elegance itself.

The Zu: It's all so tiresome, this bickering between so-called gods and their once-mortal slaves. Ruled by a great king of evil (who may or may not be identified with Lord Entropy), spreading impurity and distraction through the endless wheel of karma, the demons and gods calling themselves Imperators are *Samsara incarnate* for those who seek spiritual maturity and blessings for all mankind. The Powers are not really people (if they ever were), they are alien creatures fulfilling inscrutable goals for those who own their leashes. And it goes without saying that the horrors from beyond the world are equally repugnant. This is the position on the Valde Bellum taken by the Zu: An isolated order of martial artists who have trained past the conventional bounds of mortality. *It is not necessarily the objectively correct one*, but it is one that has endured for many generations.

Perhaps it is even ultimately self-contradictory. It is said that some cosmic force-something transcendent, pre-Imperial, supreme and mindless and alien-powers the Zu that batten themselves on extrusions of that creature's force, as a corpse gives sustenance to ravens. Perhaps this being is the rumoured Ultimate Kung Fu Master in his Endless Lotus Palace at the centre of the Zu domains, a being compared at once to an immaculate jade emperor and a roiling nuclear chaos. Shielded on a remote mountain range against the strongest powers of divinity and void alike, the sole mission of the Zu is to protect ordinary people from both sides of the war.

The Zu wield unique weapons made from their own souls and supernatural martial arts, granting them a trait equal to **Aspect** in all relevant particulars. As spiritual visionaries their grasp of dharma amounts to **Persona** in terms of the fate-rending power they can bring to bear, and as masters of the elements they are truly **Adept** in ways only the Angels can match. In seeking a quixotic personal enlightenment, their training and secret disciplines eventually make them more similar to coils of slow magic in a person's shape, and in this they are **Holy** as heroes that are as much experience as individual.

As a special consideration, should you be of the Imperator, Noble or Transcendent templates you may freely decide whether you are one of the more conventional ones who has simply declared support for the Zu, or are a Zu martial artist that has reached a level of mastery and overall power comparable to those templates

Perks

All perks are discounted under the relevant background headers. Discounted perks are 50% off, with 100 CP perks being free.

General Perks

Beauty Isn't In The World, Therefore It Is (50 CP): Despite the nominal urgency of the Valde Bellum, quite a few of its participants find the time to get dressed and look their best while going about their capers into strange realms or matching wits with the destroyers of all. If you'd like a bit of a polish to keep up, this will help you out. You won't just be beautified and airbrushed like you just stepped off a movie set, while not quite as dramatic as certain powers from this world you'll find that fortune and circumstance err on the side of keeping your appearance intact in the worst of environmental conditions or recovery swiftly from them. You also gain quite an eye for fashion, and it impedes you in battle just a shade less than it would someone genuinely ordinary.

A New Adventure, Every Day (50 CP): The flow of dharma and fate mandates a certain amount of consequence in the lives of the Nobilis. They cannot simply slay the dragon or corporation, call it a day and live out their lives in a log cabin somewhere indefinitely-the interconnectedness of things calls them to action sooner or later, and by obligation or desire they find themselves answer. With this, you may guarantee that in future worlds unexpected journeys and opportunities for adventure will continue to find you. They'll never be more dangerous than the major conflicts of the worlds you're in, will err on the more whimsical side and in worlds without over supernatural elements will involve relatively mundane magics by this world's standards rather than miracle-scale effects if they have any at all. But there's always something of minor satisfaction awaiting you at the end of them-whether a new friend, a magic stick, a pouch of magic seeds or simply a deep feeling of satisfaction. This can be toggled on and off for when you'd rather not be surrounded by golden egg-laying geese and have to frequently catch lightning in a literal bottle.

Mundane Life, Interrupted (50 CP): And that's not fair. You had a life before being called to serve your Imperator, didn't you? Or maybe you're an Imperator who always wanted something to avoid the strictures of the war and competition between your kind. With this toggle, you can

accentuate the mundane and simply in your life, letting you not only function as an office worker but also find great fortune and fulfilment in it. Like the preceding perk it is not truly protected by an Auctoritas or any such defence, being more akin to a minor creation of fortune. But maybe it's better that way. When you get away from the world for a while, the last thing you want to worry about is whether you're doing it right.

Impersonal Victories/Failures (100/200 CP) The Nobilis' powers are deeply entwined with their fundamental selfhood, waxing and waning with the triumphs in their lives. So fundamentally wrought in opposition to Creation are the Strategists, that they instead find their powers rallying and advancing in skill when they DISAPPOINT those around them, let them down or otherwise fail to accomplish their goals or win influence around themselves. By choosing this option you may greatly accentuate one of these phenomena for yourself, even if you are not a Noble or Strategist yourself, gaining insights and breakthroughs in mastery over your miraculous or supernatural powers with each victory. While mostly minor and low key, over time accumulating a great many can see you live a rather charmed life comparable to a minor creation of Advancement applied to your person-without it's miraculous enforcement as would apply for a Power's actual blessing.

Can't We Talk This Out? (200 CP): Okay, so that Deceiver in the top hat sincerely believes in shearing away the skin and perception and hope and teeth and truth from your best friend in order to show him the True Thing for his own good, and that's very bad of him. BUT that's no excuse for you both to mind your manners! In future worlds you'll find that opportunities frequently, frankly unnaturally, arise for you to resolve your difference with your foes diplomatically. It's no guarantee and if you fail then shooting you could still be on the table, but with astonishing implausibility you could get a team of gunmen ambushing you to sit down, have some tea and talk out your differences. While your own charisma and personal persuasion will still determine whether this is a hard-won out from violence or a temporary reprieve before hostilities resume, during these talks you'll find your enemies frequently feel compelled to discuss their own motivations and points of view. It works

just as well here, of course. But sometimes it seems like many in this world are doing that anyway.

A Rite for All Occasions (200 CP): Like a neat set of cords, the *spiritus Dei* can manipulated in various rites used on both sides of the war. The Witch Hunt Rite, where a Noble devises a living bloom that represents themselves and pushes power through it to disguise their mystic signature from their own miracles.

The Rite of Rescue, where a family of Nobles spawned by the same Imperator gives a consenting Noble whose Imperator has died flowers, without coercion, to formally adopt them to their Imperator's jurisdiction.

The Rites of the Fallen, terrible punishments inflicted by aforementioned family members on each other: Blade (cripples their spirit, in exchange for enhancing Aspect or Domain), Whip (cripples access to miraculous energy outright) and Fire (which simply rips the miraculous qualia of the Noble from their human soul-disempowering them, and usually killing or ruining their minds too). To perform it two of the Powers and their Imperator must agree it is warranted, then they simply bind the offender to a rack and strip their power.

The Rite of the Last Trump, which in a process similar to acupuncture permits a Power to re-spec their divine attributes, painfully but quickly.

The Right of Passage, which permits the Nobles to travel between worlds by spying a mystic path through a broken crystal.

The Redtooth Rite, which permits a mortal (or unscrupulous Noble) to consume a dead Noble's heart and obtain their Imperator-shard and Estate for themselves.

The Rite of Anguish, requiring a handful of days, blood of virgin, a pentacle and candles among other occult trappings-which is famously used by Excrucians to drain a dead Imperator's power and convert it into their negative energy. Which some Powers *suggest* that Powers

themselves could use a variant of to become like unto the Imperators themselves (in the name of the Valde Bellum, of course).

The Rite of Holy Fire, a full night of ritual canting amidst candles during a starlit night in exchange for immunising a Noble from all mundane harm by raising the *spiritus Dei* from within them like a raging bonfire suffusing their skin. Swords, bullets and nuclear explosions alike wash off the Noble, though the rite must be renewed relatively regularly. It does have one other major limitation: The stronger the Noble's spirit the more subtle effects can be defended in this manner, and the less the rite must be renewed. A Noble of barely present spirit would only be immune to almost unsurvivable conditions like loss of hull integrity in a submarine, and would have to renew the rite every week. A Noble of mighty spirit could deflect even social assault and thus avoid penalties related to discourtesy, and only need to renew the rite every 10 years.

And most important of all, the Nettle Rite. By taking something belonging to the target that the target has invested energy and emotion into, and bringing it under control, the Noble or Excrucian can create a metaphorical channel for miraculous power by damaging it, defiling it, claiming it for their own or turning it against the target. After wards, a few spoken phrases and crushing some nettles to sprinkle on the ground siphons miraculous energy-a feat much more energy efficient than many forms of direct confrontation. With effort on the level of smashing up the victim's treasured car, little if any energy is lost. With effort commensurate to getting the victim's friend sentence to a year-long prison term or otherwise disrupts the victim's life and makes them very unhappy for a while, a larger but still modest amount of energy is lost. With effort equivalent to infesting a treasured car with psychic parasites or giving a dear mortal friend third degree burns-something taking longer time to pull off and resulting in long term sadness to the victim, even those close to the victim can have their miracle points lost in modest amounts. With effort tantamount to corrupting the treasured car to drive the target into trouble, convince the treasured friend the target serves Hell or ruining the target's reputation to build a case against them in the Locust court-devoting effort to induce long term misery, in other

words, the victim and those emotionally near them all risk having devastating amounts of miraculous energy siphoned through the channel.

Two rites are normally unique to the Excrucians: The Flower Rite, and the Welkin Rite.

The Flower Rite operates on the principles of corrupting the underlying logic of the world, and engineering deviations from Estates and fixed metaphysical laws inculcated into a sort of metaphorical clot or glitch that strains the very fabric of being until reality can't explain what is going on. Such feats operate on a kind of metaphor-logic; an Excrucian could use their techniques and miracles to coat the winter ground in happiness and thus turn the idea of "cold is melancholy" in a place where culturally the cold is associated with such against "cold descends", or insidiously associate the idea of desperate, stagnant self-preservation with Christmas in an attempt to create a stable loop of events enacted by people and things that betrays the spirit of Christmas in order to indefinitely perpetuate the trappings and celebrations of it. And like inducing an autoimmune response, this induces a reaction in reality that compels it to eject the offending concepts from existence. Potentially, entire concepts or even entire Estates can be fizzled out of existence through sheer paradox in this manner.

The Welkin Rite is less haphazard, but covers an overall smaller target. You simply plant a significant mass of the forces, phenomena and *anti-things* of Ninuan somewhere in reality and cultivate it's growth. Whenever possible you nurture relationships with as many objects, people and phenomena in Creation as possible. A Void-tainted malware that circulates on numerous users' computers for example, or a cursed letter, or a Void-tree growing in a park. If done correctly, a specialised technique or miracle can thus use the ongoing process as mystic leverage to "snap" out the associated things into Ninuan, annihilating them from Creation's perspective. It's possible to entangle pieces of Estates in a Welkin Rite with some creativity, but overall it may be thought of as nickel and diming the world in the grand scheme of things unless one is very selective about certain vital targets.

While most active Nobles, Excrucians and all Imperators are familiar with these rites for use in the war, you are particularly proficient in them due to your underlying understanding of their principles. Your knowledge lets you innovate them by cutting costs or using mystical techniques to amplify their effects, and you may eventually design new ones on the same scale.

Geased, Bonded, Gifted (100-600 CP): Not all supernatural powers are so universally provided by the Divine Attributes. Some are innate abilities unique to the specific natures and histories of individuals.

These include the **geas**, an objective law of one's divine nature that wield intrinsic divine power to make their law come true-laws equivalent to light's law that it cannot be outraced by most effects. Generally quite powerful, showy and easier to bring into play, they are also fairly fixed in effect. Geas oppose divine power that attempts to suppress or invalidate them directly, scaling with their overall power, and can earn you a small amount of miraculous energy for living up to someone's expectations (or disappointing someone, if you're an Excrucian).

Bonds are subjective laws of one's nature that grant a bonus "technique" (whether by the normal meaning, or a specific ability such as magic, technology or psychic powers that is not invested with miraculous energy by itself) to fulfil the law; think about the scorpion's law that "I must sting the frog". Highly flexible and personalised, these tend to be limited in clashes between miraculous beings. Regardless of their nature Bonds can heighten the "level" of divine attributes when contested in circumstances where they can be considered relevant, and also grant miraculous energy for impressing/disappointing those near you.

Gifts are custom-built adaptations of a divine attribute's power, or set effects similar to those already covered by existing divine attributes-and generally occur on a much quicker timeframe, or less circumstantially. Although both Bonds and Geas are generally thematically inspired by your Estate(s) and divine attributes, Gifts are more direct about being equivocal to your conventional miraculous efforts. Commensurate with

miraculous effects in all meaningful ways, they can even take on miracles. They need only be "mechanically equivocal" to divine attribute effects while being variations of them, or even existing Gifts.

And here, you too can purchase some for yourself. You may repurchase this perk as often as you can afford to. Feel free to incorporate these into interesting events in your backstory. **Lords of Game/Dark** may buy Bonds at a discount while **Warmains** buy Gifts at a discount, as their physical forms are things of power. **Lords of the Wild** may buy Geas at a discount. **Angels** purchase Bonds and Gifts alike at a discount. Due to their close affinity to destruction, **Strategists** may purchase The World-Breaker's Hand (and it's little brother, The Drunkard's Gift) at a discount. The following examples are minimums for stated, individual effects; you may pay more or less CP to upgrade example effects or gain weaker versions of more powerful effects. <u>You may repurchase and combine example Gift effects to create Gifts of unusual potency or that provide exotic effects.</u>

For 100 CP you may purchase relatively minor gifts or bonds with limited usage that are mired in the physical world. The gift of being "Durant" or unusually durable to weapons wielded by mortal hands and regenerating quickly enough to leave a faded scar from any blow you can survive in seven days' time is available here. So is the gift of surviving indefinitely without food, water, sleep or air and never dying of natural causes. In general this is the remit of creating well-reinforced minor manifestations of an Estate, blessing or cursing yourself or others with its mythopoeic ideas and similar lesser motions of Imperator divine attributes. It's also possible to boost a Divine Attribute-related course of action to several times its natural level, such attaining generalised perfection of composure and action through raising Aspect levels by roughly 4 or so, at the cost of even the meanest miracle defeating such a boost in direct conflict. So is a relatively localised geas such as "I must always have a hammer when I reach behind my back for one" or a bond that provides something like a giant, venomous scorpion's tail.
For 200 CP your physical form may be that of a mythological beast such as a dragon, phoenix or unicorn accompanied with one or two effects such as removing poison or petrifying with a look. Your Gift could also

be an appearance that has an enormous impact on the emotions and behaviours of mortals and to a lesser extent Powers, the power to seek hidden roads or places mortals cannot access; these approximate Lesser Creations of a specific emotion or great feats of Flore such as weaving destiny but with little defence against miraculous conflict. You can also command the simpler motions of your Estate, such as shifting moonbeams around or changing the moon's position slowly in the sky, or approximate Eide or Wyrd to create useful servants with lesser miraculous powers of their own. A geas that provides a useful stock of mundane weapons and equipment or a bond that allows for elaborate spiritual or magical systems is also viable.

For 300 CP your Gift can be a nigh-absolute abstract effect such as perfect timing. If someone warns you a cult plans to sacrifice your beagle, you can arrive just in time to rescue it-even if the cult planned the sacrifice for the day before (however, the responder knowing the dog is dead "fixes" events and even if warned you cannot arrive at what you know to be a futile course of action). You may always catch trains and cabs with several seconds to spare. The Strategists' World-Breaker's Hand, the power to sunder anything and everything-even ideas, dreams, systems of non-miraculous magic, emotions and other abstract qualia into dust is also available. Keep in mind that the Auctoritas protecting this Gift is relatively weak, and at this level it contends poorly against most protective miracles. Most Estates of this world are sufficiently defended enough to be effectively immune to direct erasure, and Nobles themselves are heavily resistant to it due to their own miracles while even individual Imperators themselves are all but immune. A wide-ranging Geas such as "I must be recognized, by name, by everyone in the world" or a Bond as generalised as "vampire powers" is also permissible.

For 400 CP your Gift can include spending a small amount of miraculous energy to enact unpredictable miraculous good fortune on yourself. It might occur far away and only impact you hours or even days later for all you know, but something major and beneficial will always happen that would otherwise not have-and penetrate all but the strongest Auctoritas. Transfiguring into the form of your Estate (or the thing you are dying of, as a Strategist) is also available. Strategists may

also enact a secondary mode of destruction aside from their default through such a gift, one with a significant amount of penetration and defence in miraculous conflict. Being able to create a portal to anywhere and everywhere, even the past or into a TV series' world or into a heavily defended Chancel, is also available at this level, as are other moderate to greater uses of divine attributes. A Geas with significant long term benefits such as “I am destined to rise to high office in any organization I join” or a Bond with significant supernatural trait as “being a giant eldritch kaiju” is also permissible.

For 500 CP your Gift can include a narratively resilient form of immortality. Not only are you nearly impossible to kill short of truly impressive metaphysical force by this world’s standards (though your infection will still kill you, as a Strategist), but eradicating, unmaking, paralyzing, dissolving, soul-killing, permanently imprisoning or otherwise *taking you out of the picture* has a tendency to simply not work long term-albeit usually with some cosmetic side effects like blistering and sweating while striding out of a pit of molten metal, or staggering after being nuked. Specific but highly absolute rapid fire miracles with extreme advantages and resilience in miraculous combat in exchange for little utility are available here too. One example is the racial trait of the Peregrine Bears. Like them, you can become a "living Auctoritas" and counter any miracle you see used as a Greater Destruction of Miraculous Power. A Geas such as “I will behold the True Thing with my own eyes though I am born of Creation, and until then I must ever journey onwards” or a Bond such as “hosting a psychic deity’s power” is also gainable here, though keep in mind a Bond is not miraculous in and of itself.

For 600 CP your Gift can be the miraculous equivalent of a weapon of mass destruction. The power of mastered Flore that permits Imperial Miracles to be invoked, sped to automatically activate whenever appropriate, in almost any location and with a flexible, loosely defined ability to achieve the outcome "everything will work out in the end, and love and friendship will prevail" that on top of everything has significant advantages in miraculous combat is available. So are grand feats of creation such as that which the newborn Imperator of Bears used to

make bears, then a kind of notional idea, into a tangible and fully realised species. A subtler but still obscenely lethal power associated with the Warmains called Midas Mors Mortis is also available for emulation: By touching any non-miraculous person, object or land, everything it in turn touches goes awry, often in a lethal manner. It wears off in a week, or when the Warmain and/or it's shards are killed or exiled from the Earth. Note that Imperators may approximate such feats with their own themes and Estates. A Geas on the level of "I must be critical to the fate of the Valde Bellum, and so long as I live the forces of Creation/the Void must have the advantage" or a Bond similar to "I operate on cartoon physics, including walking in and out of TVs, and can absorb entire television shows to ascend to a higher state of network TV meme-induced pandimensional transcendence" is also available.

Drop-In

Barely Phased Everyman (100 CP): It's not easy, living in a world where at any given moment everything you take for granted could be whisked away by a single wish. Including your very self and soul. But somehow or other, you manage. Your fortitude and inner resilience is bolstered specifically in encountering the supernatural. Elves and demons ambling in your garage? Suck it up and keep on walking. Accidentally walked into another dimension? You'll keep your wits about you and do your damnedest to learn what odd rules there may be there. And while you won't last long against an Imperator demanding you to bag their groceries if it decides to pick on you, you'll at least be able to do your job and ask if the orrery of flaming wheels wants to know about your store's benefits card if it just looms stands there being otherworldly and majestic.

Minion In The Making (100 CP): It's not exactly flattering to be thought of as a useful pawn, but when the being thinking that is one whose whims can cast down the stars or erase mountains from ever having being there that may. But such was unlikely to be in the thoughts of the criminal lords of Europe (and actual politicians and the highest of priests) when, seemingly impressed by their capacity to do evil, that Lord

Entropy formed them into the Cammora: A group ostensibly that exists to provide mortal service to the Powers, and effectively extorts power beyond their reach from them. In exchange he lengthened the span of their days into centuries and pronounced them "invisible to law" such that crime committed by them would not be judged by his court-a valuable piece of leverage for beings so far beneath the Nobles' notice. While you may not encounter such drastic responsibility so late in the war, you too have something that comes across as agreeable and useful to those far greater than you-lessening the chance of them swatting you on a whim, and potentially making them open to negotiation in a similar manner. You may not have the sheer evil of the original Cammora that drew Lord Entropy's attention but…well, you LACK their sheer evil, having more of a can-do attitude and willingness to listen that makes those far above you think you open to furthering their causes.

Master of the Mundane (100 CP): Some of the grandest beings in this world barely know how to operate a vacuum. The Strategists, for instance, are infamously bad at functioning as people should they ever give up their cause to destroy everything but even the Fallen Angels are rather crippled in interacting with people without trying to corrupt or debase them. In many ways, the proficiency you have with one aspect of mortal life is the envy of some of the greatest immortals in this world. You could be anything from a successful CEO with all the business and speaking skills that denotes, or simply a highly trained park ranger who loves his job and is loved by his community in turn. And if you're something other than a human, you could be equally skilled at any relatively mundane trade of your people. Though an Imperator could utterly master your trade if they ever brought their skill to bear at practicing it, for many it's hard to imagine the circumstances where their natures and duties would even permit them to bother.

Parting the Veil (100 CP): There is a magical barrier of sorts, that parts mortal society on Earth from the miraculous conflicts around them. But you're not exactly *from* Earth, one way or another, and the loophole of your interdimensional nature permits you a much greater glimpse into the things beyond. Whenever wide scale supernatural forces attempt to obscure the mystical, the spiritual and the outright eldritch dwelling

among your daily life, you'll find your mundane senses are able to see much more of them than you should. While this makes you no better at seeing through illusions, knowledge of the supernatural itself and the proof thereof won't be so easily scrubbed from your mind and senses. Any effect that tries to make you forget the woman who turns into a flock of swans mid-leap over a building is quickly spotted, and while it may still affect your mind concentration and hard thought will see it swiftly evaporate from your mind.

A Sense For Dream-Spun Paths (200 CP): The world is full of odd little places where reality isn't consistent, runs on its own inscrutable rules or just plain changes on a time depending on who's giving it a good hard stare. And while even without actually putting in a proper miraculous effort Nobles and Imperators can just kind of *try hard enough* to stroll through a dream or navigate an errant fairy glade, the rest of us aren't so privileged. Fortunately, you seem to be learning the ropes quite quickly. When you find yourself in realms of existence where conventional mobility isn't possible, you'll find yourself able to move at the bare minimum of your normal range of motion as possible. You'll fare no better against getting past warded citadels or finding secret doors and it may still be quite challenging, but if you get stranded in Ninuan you could at least notionally kick, fumble and swim your way out back to Creation. And if lost in a dreamlike realm, you'll have a good gut feeling for how to get out safely. You are greatly resistant to ambient environmental conditions although it would be wise not to press your luck with any especially volatile or energetic phenomena around you; this isn't a great way to survive a dip in lava and castles made of thunderstorms can still be quite dangerous. But at least notionally, a place that mostly doesn't exist can be walked by you like a particularly treacherous mountain path.

An Anchor For Every Harbour (200 CP): Epic in scope and sometimes alien in mentality as they can be, like any other person the Nobilis have preferences of all kinds. But unlike most people, what they find a true bond with-what can be considered a true Treasure by them-also finds a hidden power forged from their bond rising up. There's something about you that makes you highly likeable to the average Nobilis, insofar as

those eccentric gods among men have any commonalities. And that pleasant thing about you could be anything from being a good neighbour, to someone they just can't help but take an interest in-even something romantic in, if you dare. Either way, the process of becoming their Flore isn't just easier than it should be in terms of miraculous energy expenditure, it feels as *right* as obeying their Imperator does-and while wielding your hidden power would have been miraculously intuitive in any case, you find predicting what it'll be and strategic uses for it come naturally. It could even be something romantic if you dare catch the attention of one who clashes with gods one day and takes long strolls on the river with them the next; just be warned that many Nobles are as passionate and intense in relationships as they are in anything else. In future worlds you'll find it similarly easy to get in the good graces of demigods and empowered mortal champions for the divine in general.

A Temple Is My Body (200 CP): There's two sides to every coin, and more than one way for a divine being to wield a mortal vessel. And there's something about you that seems to make you much more suited for the more direct approach. When you host the spiritual extensions of supernatural beings or otherwise serve as a beacon for their influence, you magnify their efforts and lessen their costs. As an office worker, the Noble of Bureaucrats would find it much easier to act through you with their Persona trait. Moreover you retain a great deal of independence when the divine acts through you in this manner; to use the earlier example while you may still be compelled to stop an Excrucian influence, if you decide the Noble's decision to kill a nearby secretary is too cruel you could "creatively reinterpret" the divine will flowing through you, and rugby tackle the Excrucian directly so long as you can justify your actions to yourself as a good faith attempt to serve what you can intuit of the divine forces moving you. And your tackle could be so effective, that with a low level miracle takes you both.

Applied Botany (200/300/400 CP): Foremost among the mortals that tamper with miraculous powers are the Cleave of the Botanists: A group of alchemists whose legacy dates back to the Power Hermes Trismegistus. It was while repairing the heavens that the Trismegistus saw the flower Niruka, also called Nu Wa, floating on the sea waves and

greatly admired it's fiery petals and dragon-like proportions. His revelation was extraordinary: Heaven reflects the power of the Creator, the flowers of the world reflect the power of the Brightest Realm, and as revealed by the Emerald Tablet found clutched on his corpse thirty years later-it is thus possible for alchemists to wield such broken fragments of creation to shape and refine the world around them. Sometimes as imbibed mixtures, and sometimes as powders and reagents simply cast at the target they wish to affect

For 200 CP you are a professional Botanist of some note, able to transfigure and conjure the things of the world with remarkable grace so long as you have the correct mix of flowers. You are familiar with the alembics, pestles, lenses, crucibles, exotic fluids and sometimes coffee grinders needed to purify and extract the hidden magic of flowers. Though your magic is still fragile compared to the miracles of the Nobilis, it offers much greater breadth for what is possible in the world. Like a magician of old you can speak to the dead, turn bullets from your skin, dissolve into a liquid to escape safely down a drainpipe then reform at will once you're safely out, blind others with conjured darkness, wield the elemental forces like natural disasters in miniature or fly. Even interplays of perception and desire are possible, like reflecting a man's ambition as an insect in a mirror then swelling and releasing it into reality to burrow into his body so his ambition literally burrows into his life and controls his every waking hours. In essence any facet of the natural world, including those facets of it considered folklore or myth more than science, can be recreated with enough time. And flowers. Care must be taken to screen out the impurities represented by excessive or imprecise meanings represented by each flower, and alchemical works performed with insufficient knowledge can thus come with limitations such as requiring a full Gregorian choir to function or putting those who carry it to sleep. However, designing a gun that never misses against anything non-miraculous with the limit of not working when aimed at an inanimate object or powders to awaken the inanimate and give it life and mobility in the prosaic world are old hat to you.

For 300 CP you are a grandmaster of the art, familiar with their archetypes rather than their prosaic forms. This greatly improves the

efficiency and productivity of the art in the way a grasp of quantum mechanics and physics improves a chemist's understanding creating new and improved substances. Your study of flowers and their meanings is greatly expanded; fields and glades become riots of deeper meaning for the underlying truths of existence, and rather than simply appreciating that a bouquet is pretty you could study the world reflect in a single rose. While not quite miraculous yet, it is at this level of advancement that it becomes feasible to brew a five-colored rainbow and cast it upwards to repair the sky as the Trismegistus did when he first grasped the art, or develop the magic to annihilate a gang of thugs with guns with a single indigo orchid. Should you wish, you may be a leader of the Cleave's orthodoxy in your history here in this world. It is at this stage that forging a blade that when drawn, inspires great love and the will to fight for the wielder becomes readily within reach.

For 400 CP you are honoured for your talent as *emeriti*, but obliged by the Cleave to retreat from the world and practice in seclusion. For though perpetually incomplete, the knowledge and power offered by this degree of the art is one that even the Powers are wary about: The creation of artifacts capable of Imperial Miracles. It is difficult for a mind grounded in form to apprehend what is by definition formless, and not even the Trismegistus nor any known Power has fully mastered this skill. The feats possible to you are astonishing: It is at this mastery that determining how to brew a mash from the sour and withered apples of the Tree of Knowledge, construct a musical instrument capable of crushing the hearts of the world's defilers or arms or armaments which nullify the Warmain counter-miracle to negate miraculous phenomena- though the risks are correspondingly greater for such powerful artifacts. One alchemist of note has lost half her mind to an experiment gone awry, albeit remaining surprisingly sound of mind and unimpeded in her work for someone who cannot think half the thoughts she might otherwise be capable of.

Charitable Soul (400 CP): Well that's odd. Do you have some of Ninuan's blood in your veins? You see, you've now gained an odd ability shared by the Charitable Beings: One of the many odd, technically nonexistent lifeforms from Ninuan that aren't Excrucians, and are far more

ambivalent about interacting with Creation. Nine feet tall and pale, with long fingers and a willow-thin body, they have a great compulsion to give gifts to others they encounter-sometimes asking them to wait hours or days to fetch one. While you lack the absolute fury they exhibit, you now share their odd native trait: Anything you already own and can fit in your hands can be immediately summoned to hand, implausibly taken out from behind your back or otherwise delivered to a recipient near you. You have a great instinct for what would make a suitable gift for them, and also a supernatural proficiency for gift-giving: If you have somehow claimed metaphysical ownership of spells, curses or even angry spirits you can pass these on as a "gift" that's rather bothersome to the recipient, whether they like it or not. Even techniques or powers you have to apply arm transplants, progenitive blessings or powerful artifacts that normally choose their bearer can be reassigned by you in this manner. Furthermore what you give is miraculously difficult to lose, and while perhaps not impossible with significant effort the easiest way is to simply hold a suitably ornate gift-giving celebration and pass on the goods to someone else.

Beyond the Law (400 CP): The Nobilis operate under many restrictions levied by Lord Entropy and while not always dutifully punished, can often make for inconvenient excuses for him to "punish them for", coincidentally whenever it's convenient for him. Which makes this aspect of your otherworldly nature a great bargaining chip. Like the cadaverous, burning eyed Lawbreakers from Ninuan you are innately invisible to all kinds of laws. Duties and oaths of all forms simply do not recognise you as having breached them, to the extent that you could kill in broad daylight while mortal police stroll past. The miraculous, literal social constructs of the Nobilis do not recognise you, allowing you to walk straight through them and any other embodiments of social convention as if they weren't there. Your final gift is to let someone accept a *weird* from you. This concept does not translate well into Creation proper, but essentially it drives even a Nobilis into a clinically diagnosable insanity of your choice allowing them to share your immunity to social obligation as long as they stay near you. This ensures protection against the anger of their Imperator and the punishments of Lord Entropy-so long as they gain no further reason to torment your

ward or yourself other than the breach of law anyway, so it would be prudent to stay somewhere hidden if you wish to so flagrantly defy powers as mighty and whimsical as they.

Fortunate Son (400 CP): A long time ago, you did someone very powerful a big favour. They were kind enough to repay you by tying up your destiny in knots of rope, and teaching you the method somehow before shaking your hand and abruptly jumping into the sky. Never to be seen again. When you cut through one knot, a portion of your destiny is manifested as an extremely favourable coincidence-often unlikely, and always beneficial for you in the long run. You don't just survive walking through traffic, you end up reaping royalties for the documentary made about how trucks and cars from every direction somehow missed you all at once. And this is no ordinary Gift available to any Noble, oh no. Not only does this luck have such potency invested in it that it can breach through powerful defences such as all but the greatest Auctoritas effects, but by using the knot-tying method in future jumps you can continue to delay grand events in your life and convert them into more stocks of short term good fortune using the rope-tying method. If you're destined to claim Excalibur and sit upon the throne of Camelot within the year but would rather turn that destiny into raffle prizes and promised victories, you might only get that throne near the end of a decade.

Favour of the Locust Court (400 CP): There is a kindly Imperatrix of ordinary things, who protects people from the pain of the extraordinary. A dog-headed goddess of Willpower, Law and the Broken-Hearted who is also part of the Weirding Wall. And she seems to have decided you are in dire need. The psychological disease *dementia animus* affects those who talk to their toaster and tell their friends you're all just shadows of the true things in the world-and while an accurate perspective, is not a functional one in modern society. When you suffer dread revelations and truths you'd rather forget, you may freely meditate to retreat deep into yourself to pass the dog-flanked gates of her temples. There in sanctuary and comfort you can recover, and when she passes by speak to her of your woes. But perhaps you think enough strong enough to bear these burdens, in which case you can wield forgetfulness like a blade and bless (or curse) other mortals to forget the supernatural or purge them of

harmful information-up to an entire town or so at maximum without falling unconsciousness, with the stamina of a mortal man. The authority of Surolam's court also comes as a compact with fungi, insects and diseases: Such creatures honour the truce normally extended to larger creatures within the bounds of her court, and when you pass through large concentrations of their presence you may at will shed disease or infestation. Or conversely, act as a carrier for them to others without the critters doing more than crawl on your back.

My Destroyer of Worlds' Keeper (600 CP): It is a terrible thing to be the favoured Flore of an Excrucian. To be bonded so closely as to be the extension of the (non-)existence of a thing that even when majestic and beauteous, is fundamentally wrong in the world. How much more awful must it be for a Strategist whose mission is not impeded by great destruction sufficient to leave their bodies and minds riven or simply mature beyond the need for war, but fall helplessly in love with a facet of Creation that they simply cannot enact their purpose anymore? How awful, then, for one to meet you. Though this is but the least of your powers, it appears that whether or not you hail from the Void it's correlative nature has intrinsically recognised you as friend and long-lost, beloved kin. Though with this alone you are no safer from Ninuan, at least most of the things within are inclined to be courteous at worst and often friendly to you. There are still horrors that would do you harm, but these are rare and powerful enough to be counted among things such as particularly aggressive Warmains or the nastier Abhorrent Weapons-the ones who had a bad reputation even before the Valde Bellum.

More than that, there is something about you that is as alluring and soothing to the things of the Void as their greatest feats of worth and glamour are to the things of Creation. The Deceivers marvel at you for being so much closer to the True Thing than the rest of Creation's dross, or perhaps for making them doubt the righteousness of their cause. The Warmains find you excellent an excellent travelling companion and great conversation, even if you lack anything worth hunting. Even the Mimics find a reprieve from the blasphemy in their core around you. And the Strategists? To them you are not just a person of great worth-

you are a second sanctuary, something around which they recover swiftly from infection-state and find great solace in. You have a great sense for how to make arguments for the value and beauty of Creation that sing to their hearts, or justifications for its continued existence if that does not suffice. In turn, your dharma is such that it would take a firm and personal vendetta to drive an Excrucian who knows you well to deliberately do you harm-and one who knew you before their…awakening would literally go to the ends of the world and back for your wellbeing. Make no mistake, so anathema are they to Creation and so set against them are the Imperators and their forces that in some ways this is as much a curse as a blessing.

In future worlds, you have a similar bond with those beings and great powers of the primordial void that presages existence. While truly powerful entities of oblivion greater in divine stature than Excrucians may be less affectionate, even they will at least be courteous enough to avoid crushing you in their passage or warning you away from their presence should they not wish you to intrude upon them-and you would still be closer to making conversation with them than many Excrucians themselves.

Successor to the Sage Vyasa (600 CP): The sage Vyasa, who wrote the Sutra of Questions and said that whosoever answered them all should surmount the world. And like him, you have gained a true and transcendent understanding of the fate, cosmological makeup, spiritual significance and deeper meaning of all facets of Creation-and much of what assails it from the Void. Your knowledge of the world around you is so comprehensive, that you could easily disguise it into parables and riddles that only the similarly clever could interpret correctly.

Chosen correctly, as you are quite good at doing, your words could save a nation, strike doubt into a god's mind or set in motion great movements of fate. While you may not necessarily have the practical experience and specific shards of enlightenment that many of the skills offered previously and later on may have, your understanding of the fundamental interactions between the Prosaic and Living Worlds is so intrinsic and complex that your ability to predict, innovate upon and

make wise answers to all the things of the world could be a great power in itself. This comes with an enlightened focus and sense of inner peace, one unseen in all but the messiahs of legend. Even Powers will respect your sagacity, and perhaps envy the way you navigate life in a much more charmed passion than their godly passions sometimes entangle them in. And in future worlds, you'll gain a similarly profound grasp of the local worldly lore and cosmological mysteries.

The Face That Slew A Lord of Dark (600 CP): That a mortal man cannot stand before a Power is normally as obvious as saying a drawing of the sun cannot stand against the actual star. Yet even in this, there are no absolutes. In times past Jehannum, one of the oldest Regi, abducted the city of Troy from Earth into the spirit realm and conscripted its men to use as shock troops against the Excrucians. Yet a mere 20 years later with what was once Earth's most glorious culture a ghost of itself, Helen of Troy inspired it's last warriors into rebellion. Jehannum, endlessly confident, came in person to crush this rebellion. And yet, it was one of only three times in all history when mere mortals destroyed an Imperator, for then the most glorious civilisation in human history was motivated by history's most beautiful woman-a feat that won Helen ascension into the ranks of the Nobilis as thanks from the Light.

To call you merely beautiful is an insult, when even to Imperial eyes your charm and elegance brightens the world. Whatever your species or nature, it would be no exaggeration to call you either the OTHER most beautiful woman ever to live, the most handsome man ever to live, or even a joy to the eyes among frost giants or living clothes or stranger things from other worlds. The kind of beauty that transcends species at a certain point. You reflect all the unbound glory and splendour of Heaven itself in ways no flower can match, and in this you are not just inspiring, lovable or commanding-but people do better at life when they do things for you. When others act for your sake, to protect you, in the name of their love for you or for similar reasons your beauty uplifts their efforts and makes them supernaturally efficacious. And they'll want to. Oh, how they'll want to; even Powers will swoon at your visage, for in their terms you have **Shine** at such heights that even among them it is extremely rare. And the bond between your wonder and your beauty is not

something that can be so easily quantified. Henceforth as you refine and improve your miraculous power, your wondrous **Shine** too will be refined beyond even this. Consider that even with the spiritual strength of a mortal human woman, your face is one that could sink a thousand ships.

Scholar of Perseverance (1000 CP):

Did. Did you feel that?! Like everything made right in the world, all at once! Like a note at perfect pitch, or the first rain of spring. Like lightness of heart, and new beginnings, and endless possibilities forever and always. You feel, in short, just like Cneph the Creator reached out and touched you-because he is ever-curious about new and unexpected things in his creation. It was inevitable, then, that the ultimate experiment of creation was to create another in his image.

It will take a long, long time to see such exquisite craftsmanship come to full fruition, but in the meantime you have an assortment of gifts to show the Creator's grace. You are made sacrosanct in his name, warded against harm by all but the most powerful weapons and forces of this world, and heal even the most severe wound of any kind in a day. Not only are you preserved against all deleterious effects as well as true death such as capture, torture, exile or isolation from what you hold dear or degradation as if consecrated by a 500 CP variant of immortality but a great miracle of retaliation are placed upon you: A holy, radiant nemesis on par with a Noble is created by the wrong of doing you harm, and it's purpose is set to seek retaliation on your behalf-unless you call it off, depriving the poor avenger of its purpose in life.

Your spoken words, your arguments and vocal performances are also elevated such that a mortal man could mesmerise and bind the Nobilis to his will. This is no mere charisma, though your speechmaking is frankly inhuman-your speech moves causal forces to support the course

of action you advocate on behalf of. The metaphysical, abstract and spiritual bends to your speech as easily as crowds. You could ask rocks to roll uphill, or compel the wind to blow hard enough to set in motion the downfall of a dynasty in another world. You could tell people they are wise, and lo-it would be true. The metaphysical and causal change you can enact is to Shine what the sun is to a torch; simply by saying things you make them more likely to happen, inure them against miraculous interference, alter fate and circumstance for them to achieve their ultimate ends. What you do is no less than a Major Creation of Worth and Value. In time you may argue as the Creator does: Speaking continuously for seventy-seven days against a Deceiver whose Gift was destruction through debate, snuffing out all the lights of the world and leaving all its inhabitants' minds dark as void, yet ultimately turning her hate of it to purest light and making her waver until she conceded that the world wasn't so bad after all, or bestow upon others such perfect, alchemical knowledge of Creation that they could reshape the world with a single flower-yet gain all the happiness they ever want from contemplating the truth from its single petal-as Cneph discovered about Lo Mei-zhu when he granted her this gift, to his apparent surprise.

And last but not least, your miraculous energy is greatly swollen, and slowly but continuously expands like an ocean without end. With this, even a mortal man would have raw power equalling an entire family of Nobles-and in time even the rate at which you recover your miraculous energy shall increase along with your capacity; after much time, you may boast truly limitless creative forces. This godly touch brings with it a special knack for creation in all its facets, whether forging mundane ore into miraculously effective sword or exerting major efforts of your Estate's creation with the same effort it once took to create minor efforts of its motion. Projects you personally guide accomplished with miraculous success and with inexplicable speed, and your mind and dreams team with all manner of inspiration and revelation on how to create, to make enduring, to give forth worth to the world. And all this is merely the mark of a nascent Creator, one whose growth is sped by both age as well as striving to continuously create and master new forms of creation. It will still take time to reach what you are becoming, and should the Age of Pain end and all Creation pass safely into Ananda's

Fourth Age it will yet take several millennia to reach what you are becoming without more complex effort. But whether it takes forever or a day, hallowed force that made Creation awaits you. In time, stupendous feats of wisdom, miraculous force and of course Creation will be yours.

With a single word, the Creator built the Appian Way: One of seven vast roads that travel the whole length of Creation, running along the gnarled and twisted surface of the Ash, but its main course straighter than any razor's edge. It's winds carry the tang of both beauty and corruption. The rivers that score the Ash's surface duck under the Way-whether made of water, hatred, boiling lead or an effusion of hope. A complete journey along the Way may take weeks, months, years or even a lifetime; the Ash obeys no simple measures of distance or time. It is for this reason that the Imperator Ambrolam, a True God whose chancel takes up merely the Milkweed Branch of the Appian Way, hopes to pull a kind of metaphysical coup and use it to flood the Ash with Earth's nature. If its plan works out, all worlds save Hell would become reflections of Earth rather than Heaven-and thus, all True Gods would become creatures of the universe rather than predominant on one tiny planet.

Another example is Seven Teeth of Righteousness, the hurricane spirit regarded as a threat on par with a Noble. It is not an example of the Creator's work, the blessing upon it is: No force can oppose it directly in a head-on clash, no Power can destroy it and it has endured ever since its thunderclap birth at the beginning of the current Age despite the ongoing Valde Bellum.

A third instance of the Creator's power can be seen in how he did not come to Creation empty-handed, but wrestled first with three suzerains greater than both Imperators and Excrucians. N'mosnikttiel, the fire that swallows worlds, chanted words of destruction with its many faces. The beings of the void trembled in its heat. Yet Cneph caught N'mosnikttiel in his net and shaped the Angels from its flesh. Azbogah, the radiance that destroys the unrighteous, wore the jewel named Structure and held the staff called Strength as its scepter. Yet Cneph caught it in his hand, and planted the World Ash in its heart. Narsinha, the lightning that dances on the surface of the abyss, fled the Creator and yet Cneph simply

stood at the end of its every path. Its hands twisting into claws and its face a mask of spitting, furious hatred, Cneph nevertheless tamed its heart and wrapped it around Creation to form the Weirding Wall. And thus, did the universe come to be.

Such prowess awaits your discovery, fellow scholar of perseverance.

Noble

"Yes, Imperator!" (100 CP): The Code Fidelitatis, Lord Entropy's law for the Nobles, has several core commands for them: Do not love, harm no one that has done no harm nor seek vengeance more than the sevenfold degree, never let a mortal get the best of you, serve your Imperator before the War and the War before yourself-and protect no Power from the justice of the Code. And while some would question how exactly you're supposed to conduct a campaign of war under these conditions, as a professional champion of powers beyond mortal ken you that it's much wiser to shut up, get on with it-and get away with as much as possible with every available loophole. You're quite the consummate professional when it comes to working under arbitrary and perplexing restrictions from your superiors, and were you a mortal man you'd have no trouble running a company under similarly confusing yet harsh restrictions. But more than that, your clever mind is quite adept at finding and exploiting any loopholes available for getting around these strictures.

Swiss Army Elementalist (100 CP): Open battle is often the weapon of last resort for the Nobilis against their true enemies for a number of reasons. The politics of their Imperators steer their far-reaching plans, even when not accounting for the restrictions of their Code. In some cases, their enemies may prove less insufferable than their employers or colleagues. And in any case, *truly* destroying for good a genuine Excrucian rather than one of its spawned minions is far harder than simply frustrating it's efforts and wringing it of miraculous energy. Which is why your creativity, precision and skill with wielding elemental powers or subtle forces like fate has been greatly bolstered by simple experience with many an unorthodox conflict. You could throw fireballs

at your enemies, or you could keep tiny embers simmering gently in their pocket only to roar up into a blaze when they least expect it. Even seemingly benign ones can be weaponised; anyone can throw lightning bolts, but it takes a seasoned Noble to wield blankets with such skill that the Excrucians would fear to sleep.

Strength of Euryale (100 CP): The Nobilis are all but untouchable to mundane harm. Even the least of them, those without innate immortality or flesh that can withstand the sun's surface, have ways to recover from decapitation or a building collapsed on top of them and divine resilience beyond the norm. Far more dangerous to the Nobilis is heartache and the breaking of bonds, the practice of counting coup performed by both Excrucians and Powers in their war against each other in which the symbolically sabotaged or claimed facet of one's own efforts bleeds miraculous power. In this, you have learned to harden your heart and steel your resolve. Your willpower is that of a professional special forces soldier, able to endure and hold true to your convictions even in the extremes your duties call to you. Like the gorgon Euryale though parting from loved ones will hurt no less, you'll find the resilience within yourself to do what is necessary lest you and everything you care about be broken between the wills of the gods and the ferocity of the Void.

The Language of Flowers (100 CP): The Sovereign Powers do not leave messages to each other in anything as crass and potentially decipherable as the written worlds. Rather, they use the language of flowers. So too are you skilled at leaving evocative, even complex messages conveyed solely through the elaborately chosen fields and arrangements and bouquets commonly available at a flower seller or garden market near you. Your floriography would make any Victorian expert in the field swoon with your fluency and eloquence. Perhaps in between inscrutable missions from the divine, you could try to make the language of flowers popular on Earth again?

Wielder of Merit (200 CP/300 CP/400 CP): The ancient law that maintains Noble society is called the *mos maiorum*, "the way things have always been done". It was forged near the beginning of the Third Age at the

famous Accords at Babylon. Aurelius, the Power of Apotheosis, pointed out that the law was unenforceable upon miraculous beings like the Powers and temporarily merged with the law's living spirit to grant it a measure of *spiritus Dei* which made the law itself partially divine. Through provisions in it, the Powers who choose to abide by the social norms of their kind feed a tiny, unnoticeable portion of their miraculous strength to the law, allowing it to grow with the Noble population. And to one extent or another, you've committed yourself to this system and reaped some of it's rewards.

For 200 CP, you (and optionally, any number of allies you've imported or made in this jump) have formed a sacred contract bound in physical form called a *res*. The body of a *res* can take any physical form, from a stone to a bronze spear-some even live as humans or animals. The contracts for which a *res* is formed can technically be for anything, but tend to be reserved for extreme pursuits or philosophies as mentioned in subsequent perks. When you go to extraordinary lengths or commit magnificent deeds towards advancing your cause, your social credit is rewarded in the form of additional miraculous energy accorded by the Living Society that the *res* can dispense to you or your allies. This energy is particularly powerful when used to affect social situations, acquire information from Noble society (or from similar societies of divine beings, in future worlds) and the completion of grand feats of creation. Conversely breaking the contract can see these additional quotas of miraculous energy diminished. By definition, being so steeped in society grants you great influence and authority recognised by other Nobles, and any other beings who accept the terms of your social contract.

You can also perform the miracles of society-which uniquely, ignore the Auctoritas defence because technically no Noble is ever considered the target of the miracle since the living society is performing these miracles upon itself. These include the ability to manifest a *dignitas*: A kind of personal *res* that manifests as a mostly mundane animal or person around you when you wish like a spirit or familiar, and can whisper to you the oaths that bind other beings similar to Nobles as well as the precise amount of miraculous power according to them for fulfilling those oaths. It also glows brighter the more social credit you have.

Furthermore, you can create a new *res* object using an object of wealth you own, which persists until 1. The obligation of the *res* is met, 2. Unless otherwise specified, the owner of the contract dissolves it at any time or 3. If every Noble bound to it or dies and severs their connection to it. In the event of those occurrences, the *res* returns to being a mundane object. A *res* can survive the death of its owner, and choose a new one from any Noble that has committed themselves to the living society. You are also able to create an oracle *amicus*, a social concept that allows a chosen Noble to access information stored within the *res* or in other words among your group, and also the right to annul the oracle at will from any distance. Finally, you can create powerful shields of sheer, unbearable virtue around a *res* to protect it from external influence. The terms set for these provide safe passage among your allies and enemies as desired, while exerting tremendous supernatural social pressure on undesirables.

For 300 CP, you stand in a position of great social influence and intrigue in Noble society (or the society that incorporates your *res,* in future worlds). As well as the above, you can also create artifacts called *croetic keys* which allow members to draw upon physical, material resources bound to the *res* of your group. Such wealth appears mysteriously at their side, as if conjured from thin air.

For 400 CP, your reputation is vaster than the ocean and spans the world of the Nobilis-to the extent that the Powers of Hell would respect your word as a Power of Heaven. Quite frankly, you stand at the pinnacle of social excellence-and in future worlds, will be almost irresistible among your self-made in-group. With this mastery, you have also gained the ability to create standards bound to your *res* which not only permit access to any time and effort pledged to the *res'* service, but can bestow miraculous energy on its followers remotely from the *res* as a reward-subject again to your restrictions, as the master of social norms.

On Purity, Pollution and the Soul (200 CP/300 CP/400 CP): The Power Mammetum theorises that the greatest long term threat presented by the Excrucians lies in no weapon nor spell, but in a fundamental flaw of the Nobilis themselves. For thirty years she studied the four Unclean

Kings, Excrucians dedicated to undermining the loyalty of the Nobilis using the fatal flaws that became part of their namesakes: Shirk, Failure, Treason and Shame. By cultivating and exacerbating the fickle mortal behaviours in Nobles, not only can the Kings drive them into betrayal-but also create various corruptive substances, abominations and locations from the metaphysical friction between the Nobles' mortality and their own weaponization of the Void's anti-natural forces. 83 years later, with the avatar of the Nobilis' living society's help to integrate her insights into alchemy, she published the *Book of Purity* which lists six pure arts designed to mend the Nobilis vulnerability to these forces by rebalancing and ultimately cleansing the particulate imbalances within them that make them mortal-in favour of amplifying the *spiritus Dei* within-and ultimately reshaping the Noble soul in the Imperial image, by cleansing away the degeneration of the human species that began when the Garden of Eden was lost. As one who has followed in these arts, yours is a supernatural moral authority that makes you greatly in demand in Nobilis society. For beyond the power over the Unclean Kings and their forces this provides, your words and deeds have extraordinary social moral authority-which puts you in high demand for beings so great that their only true currency is social influence.

For 200 CP, you're emotionally pure. Influential enough to lend a small organization moral legitimacy simply by joining and cleansing those members who err. So great is your control over yourself that petty and transient passions are yours to eliminate, accept or make eternal in your soul with enlightened clarity. You have also mastered the arts of knowing what is truly important in life to you while discarding the excess, let yourself fall into blind faith or force yourself into introspection and inspiration, and can either deepen your understanding of suffering or temporarily replace it with apathy towards pain. In terms of tangible miracles you can assess and identify places already tainted or likely to be preyed on by the Unclean Kings' magics and purify them. For a person this erases the stain and social guilt of their actions, preventing the eldritch workings of the Kings from warping them into monsters or madmen. Against foul substances created by their workings it simply erases them in a flash of lightning, while the wretched horrors created by them can be struct down by miraculous attacks using the four

classic elements. Similar forms of corruption or corrupted beings may also be repelled or cleansed in this manner, thanks to your discipline. Artifacts tainted by their touch can be cleansed, and you may generate a spiritual barrier to protect others from active uses of all the above.

For 300 CP, you have become aetherially pure. As well as the abilities described above, you have truly conquering the pollution in your soul you can free yourself from acts of limited vision or self-justification, and control how inhumanly deific or mundanely your mindset is. At this level of development you have great yet indirect political influence over the high ceremony and ritual of Nobilis society-many being unable to proceed without someone at your level supervising. You inspire shame in those who act pettily around you. It is at this level that it also becomes possible to break indirect metaphysical or spiritual connections between corruptive forces and their targets, to ensure a rapid and full recovery.

For 400 CP, you are truly elementally pure-a feat that makes the righteousness of your behaviour a cosmological constant in the eyes of those around you, and burns away corruption at your touch. Your self-evident righteousness is such that if you slew another power with a poisoned knife, in that moment the knife would be a precious artifact of its kind in the eyes of those around you. You could tell an order of priests that cannibalism was a sacrament, and they would happily adopt it. You can bring other Powers to tears from the beauty of your reprimands. It is at this level that you are also able to bind corruption and make it harmless, generally by sealing them into a sort of subspace in a small object or under a region, and inflict unendurable pain or grant immeasurable euphoria to such tainted beings. On a darker note, if moral authority alone isn't enough to compel your enemies you yet retain the power to unbind these forces if desired.

Cult of the Stars (200 CP/300 CP/400 CP): Where human sorcerers speak of binding demons and creatures of myth for power, to some Nobles the Lands Beyond Creation possess a terrible allure. They take to the art of High Summoning to summon, bind and make pacts with beings that are *not* Excrucians yet can offer much power at the cost of strange promises-and making the Nobles a little alien themselves. It rests on two

foundations: Knowledge, specifically on understanding the creatures of the Void (an ever-changing premise given the Void's mutable nature), and influence: The acquisition of mystically social standing in the Void. In particular the Cleave called the Navigators' Tribe (or more informally, the Entomologists or the Cult of the Stars) are particularly fascinated by the Aaron's Serpent Legend that the stars are the first children of the World Ash-and use High Summoning as their primary tool to investigate possible ways to ascend and interact with them. Whether or not you are formally part of the formally 11-strong group, you have obtained great mastery in the art of High Summoning.

For 200 CP your mastery of the art has risen to a level where you can manifest a crown woven of *sukka adharma*: A substance or possibly quality found in the Beyond that sometimes appears as shadow and sometimes as light. You have a high place in the distant courts of the Void, insofar as that means anything in a realm that by definition does not exist. Nevertheless, you have significant influence over many unintelligent denizens of the void, and limited control over those which approach the Nobilis in overall power. Binding an acidic mist that eats corruption and beauty or a bodyguard with indistinct features but supernatural combat skill and an alluring yet vague appearance is easy at this level of mastery.

For 300 CP, as well as the abilities listed above your skill permits you to manifest the crown of *ariya adharma*, crafted from a substance that sometimes shines with glory and sometimes flickers with unworthy. You are a significant potentate in the Void, roughly as influential there as you are in Creation. In some, unpredictable cases you may find that restrictions imposed by your Imperator have begun to come loose due to disentangling yourself from Creation's relationships. The menial beings of the Void offer you near-comprehensive subservience, and you may treat with beings of the Beyond equating Nobles as equals-or occasionally superiors. Binding an army of scissor men that can cut away a mortal or spirit's limbs or life AND turn their scissors inside out to restore the lives, limbs or health of those they have cut AND prevent those they hack up from moving on to a proper afterlife until the scissor

men leave Creation or restores them to life is feasible at this degree of mastery.

For 400 CP, you have obtained the feat of manifesting a crown made of *nijhat adharma*, a circlet that perfects to an unknown standard. Death has no hold on you; should you die a Creational death without truly specific miracles arrayed to prevent your rebirth, you will transcend into something grander, more glorious and much more inhuman than a Noble. It's specifics are a great mystery, though some who reach this level profess they think of their Voidborn aspect of authority as a being they were part of all along. Apart from the tremendous authority of being an emperor in the Void, while you cannot manipulate the terrible forces that correspond to the Beyond's Imperators even they will **generally** go out of their way to avoid crushing you in their wake. Creatures whose limbs change between seven and twenty-three each day who can eat shadows and spit them out speak well of you. Monsters whose fangs can cut the night, whose eyes can see through stone and who can flip a coin yet have it come up null fear the merest shadow of your name. The living antithesis of mountains joke glibly at you, winking their seven sapphire eyes. It is at this level of mastery that it becomes safe to bind a mighty peregrine bear, one of the nigh-unstoppable precursors to modern ursine life.

Sable Garden Drunkard (200 CP): Not every Cleave is as pure of intent as the Botanists, and not every art as pure as alchemy. The Sable Garden Drunkards are those who followed in the path of one Maliqe Ristani: A prodigious Power of the Dark who brewed a sour apple mash of revelations from the sickened, black and wrinkled fruit from the original tree that taught humans an understanding of mortality. Though deeply stained by the bleak truths of the Dark, it is Maliqe's contention that the apples hold three more secrets as potent as the truths that Adam and Eve learned-though the Drunkards disagree on what exactly those revelations may be. And whether or not you too are part of this clique, you've been paying attention to their techniques. You have a great aptitude for brewing useful elixirs from normally harmful mystical reagents, with what you create being far safer and easier to distil than it normally should be. Whereas some spend lifetimes searching for heavenly

meaning in a blossom, your creations often unlock blasphemous or eldritch forbidden lore related to whatever it is you rendered fit for human (or at least Noble) consumption. Whether you obtain spell-like abilities or enlightenment about your current condition and place in the world is up to you to discover.

Set Your House In Order (400 CP): The Chancels that function as kingdom, training ground and home base alike for the Nobles often have many challenging aspects to run. Populations must be fed, mystic defences shored up and artifact production lines managed. Fortunately, you've taken to it like a duck to water. You're almost literally the platonic ideal of an efficient administrator, ably and intuitively meeting all the organisational needs of a thriving magical kingdom which may or may not also be the actual incarnation of a higher concept that defines the Prosaic World. You're particularly adept at handling eccentric policies designed to accommodate suspended or altered laws of reality, and making the balance of power between yourself and your peers sustainable while catering the place to an Imperator's tastes.

A Farewell to Wonder (400 CP): There is one thing the Nobilis are nominally unable to do: Grant true, guaranteed ease in a world of constant miraculous conflict from both allies and foes; often the line between the two grows blurry. Sometimes called the Hubris Rule, it seems impossible to remove or banish all conflict from the typical Noble's life with miracles, or even grant oneself a fate of peace, safety and ease. Yet it seems nothing is truly absolute, for it seems you've proven an exception to the latter at least. At will, you may toggle on a great motion of fate localised on your own life. This operates very subtly and isn't very good at ending a war to which you had no hand in starting, even indirectly, but if the mob's put a hit out on your head this is a good way to leave the criminals perplexed by trails going cold and mob bosses losing interest in less than a week WITHOUT even any passive miraculous effort on your part-though both supernatural investment, a true blood feud, advanced technological sensors or other edges can lengthen the time it takes to regain peace through miraculous effort. Disentangling yourself from the frays of the Nobilis will be harder if you had a complicated history, but many Nobles would envy how you could

extricate yourself from potentially preordained fates and binding oaths in less than a year-again, before truly putting in the miraculous effort. Just make the most of your newfound peace. Seeking excitement again after retiring to fish can rapidly escalate events again to make peace difficult to find once more.

I'm Still Here (400 CP): Once, a treacherous Imperator ripped 500 years of Earth's history away and sold them to the Excrucians. Thus did the Roaring Twenties replace the creative sterility of what was then considered modern civilization, and the souls that could not adapt were banished out into space. One such soul was Sara Nei, the Power of Networked Gaming who could not reincarnate until her Estate returned formally to the world. Her original soul in tatters, she merged many lesser ones to recreate herself. And like her, you have great resilience to large scale effects that threaten your existence-be they direct efforts of destruction or incidental actions by cosmic beings. Your Estate functions as something between a phylactery and a kind of cosmic trampoline, catching your awareness and existence even as your selfhood stabilises it in the face of oncoming cosmic annihilation, and without efforts specifically targeted at erasing IT from Creation proper you'll be considered alive just…lost and always have a chance to bounce back later. Even reduced to the ghost of an idea yet to come, so long as your Estate remains notionally possible in your native planet or localised plane of existence your spiritual and miraculous powers never suffer diminishment, and opportunities to regain your full existence frequently come your way.

FEAR NOT (400 CP): For those familiar with them, the Nobilis don't always have the best of reputations. Beneath their pomp and grandeur, they're as fallible as anyone despite their elemental stature and grave responsibilities. But you, at least, have developed quite the knack for relating and forming bonds with those divorced from your experience, especially those normally beneath you. Your great power and divine intensity will be much less intimidating to those you do not wish frightened, and you won't lose touch with what's important to the man on the street unlike many of your peers. Even when wreathed in the manifestations of your Estate you have great talent at downplaying any

threatening aspects it has, while an already mostly adorable Estate would be a wondrous boost to the morale of onlookers whose hearts you wish to win. But this also comes with it tremendous talent in **Flore**, forming the bonds required to render allies and acquaintances into mystic weapons much easier and magnifying the raw mystical power of their bond-given powers more than tenfold. Your humility and compassion are as tangible to the world as any of the Nobilis' passions.

Misenchrotic Engineer (600 CP): The natural abilities of the Nobilis render them obscenely talented at each and every mundane skills. Yet even among their society, some feats of artifice are truly outstanding, and some of the greatest example of Noble creation work with nothing so crass as "materials" but fashion worlds and intangible qualia together into abstract, cosmological structures that inscribe new precepts on fate and redefine reality as understood. You're even extremely skilled at modifying or adding auxiliary functions to structures such as the web of Khedeb Neret, an all-too-literal crimson skein of heartbreak and corruption that engenders callousness, misguided idealism and holy zeal in mortals to render the structure of powers and services other organisations Nobles depend on binding. Or the Mask of Surolam: A great mask integrated into the Engine's systems which distribute masks when events of great import burden the world-causing those who don them to lose their sense of self but also grant them the right and competence to arbitrate disputes of contract in the Noble world. This mainly takes the form of forging and fashioning abstract concepts as if they were bricks, mortar or other thematic materials.

Binding fate like threads and weaving it with strange, miraculous looms may seem mindboggling to mortals, but to you the procedure is as familiar as a veteran woodcarver's craft. Your gift for creation is truly miraculous, permitting feats such as forging riddles, innuendos, interactions, arguments and even entire social contracts into steel swords with miraculously thematic powers with great ease. Even if your Flore was not particularly great among your peers, you have a comprehensive understanding of the processes integral to growing a bonsai World Ash as a kind of metaphysical anchor point for structures and devices made out of pure destiny. So too are you familiar with the design of the

Misenchronic Engine that orbits one such creation: Spheres whose movements embody a sacred covenant-a *res*-binding on more than 600 Noble signatories.

Destined For Great Things (600 CP): The greatest feats and changes wrought by the Nobilis belong to no single miracle, but the cumulative efforts of many bent again a certain facet of the world. By constant dedication and effort, even the normally aloof and inhuman Imperators can be made relatable-whether by transforming yourself, bridging the divide in worldviews conventionally or in the case of True Gods even integrating yourself into a vast portion of their own being. True projects of the Nobilis can effect almost any transformation on the world: Saving the souls that burn in Hell by somehow snuffing out it's fires despite the metaphysically fixed regional properties integral to it, moving the hearts of dedicated Excrucians to love, building a zoo where both Creational and Void-born rare creatures coexist happily and elevating your Divine Attributes.

Some great working of fate has greatly endowed your long-term, complex projects with immense destiny-as if some distant sponsor was working overtime to make the unlikely plausible, and the likely inevitable so long as you think big and seek to challenge the limits of what's nominally possible for you. Breakthroughs and revelations that expand your understand of your project's mystery come rapidly-always providing helpful insights and tips to go forward-while trivial failure is much rarer, and when it does you recoup much more of the miraculous energy already invested than your fellow Nobles. Trivial victories cascade into one another, bringing what seems an impossible undertaking further within reach with each seemingly unconnected effort integrating into a sublime pattern-like the proverbial butterfly whose wings set off a hurricane. Actually wielding fate, fortune, synchronicity or similar subtle forces to speed your efforts is tenfold as effective as before, and you are heavily resistance to even profound effects such as Imperial Miracles bent against you-and the procession of events you live through to reach your goal often includes many events that with the right attitude, could be plausibly used to nullify the Imperial Miracle without directly contesting it by deeming it invalid.

With great study, dedication and effort this is the gateway to fundamentally redefine your miraculous nature or construct some sort of Imperator factory. Perhaps if you're willing to truly give it everything you've got, you could shatter Hell or catch Cneph the Maker in glass somehow.

Empire Estate of Mind (600 CP): The Nobilis were formed to provide rapid, surefire responses to Excrucian incursion wherever it occurs but there's something to be said for having the home turf advantage. One of the more perilous aces in the hole a Noble can invoke is harmonising with the Properties-the inherent metaphysical constants-of the current realm of existence they're in, which can risk subsuming them entirely into the grace of Heaven or Hell-or even potentially becoming an ordinary person on good old Earth. But your revelation on how the world's defences and a Noble are one in every way that matters has let you internalise this principle on a far greater level than your peers.

For starters, you may manifest the properties of unique realms of existence you are either inherently empowered by (either directly or by their agents/creators i.e. the Imperators, in this world) around you automatically, without fear of being subsumed by them. With great effort and dedication, you can also form a bond with a certain realm of existence or magical area you are deeply passionate about to gain the same properties; living a fulfilling, rich life on Earth could let you manifest metaphysical constants in a localised area around you such as "magic doesn't exist" or "things fall down when thrown up, unless they can reach escape velocity" in planes of existence which lack them. You start off being able to manifest a total number of properties from all the places you have bonded to equal to one of your divine traits, and with time and effort may train to manifest more. While not truly absolute, these conveyed properties are protected by an Auctoritas equal to that divine trait. And while this effect only covers approximately a town's worth of territory, this coverage too can be expanded. Perhaps in time, you'll even turn the tables on the Excrucians and initiate the parameters needed for Creation to arise in the Void.

A Legacy For Eden (1000 CP): Humanity was made for better things than to grub in the dirt like wretched beasts, and grovel at the feet of angels for scraps. It was to be the seed of a whole new way of being for Imperial things, and it was for this reason that Eve realised too late her partaking of Eden's fruit was a terrible mistake. A hint of what could have been echoes in that frantic wanderer, Cain, but in you it has found ultimate fruition. In times past, you found a way to make yourself Imperial and yet remained human by realising the design intended by Cneph for mankind in the Garden of Eden. The Light may stand in awe of your actualisation, or it may tremble at what your becoming represents for their mission. The Dark simply laughs as it always does. And the True Gods of Earth of Earth should be wary, for you are well equipped to wrestle with them. Humanity was made to be a new make in the manner of how Imperial things could arise, and you've more than met those expectations.

To see an interpretation of what you have become from the Prosaic World's point of view, is to be compared to a technological singularity. You are immortal as the Light is yet also endowed with the Dark's propensity from reforming from the abstract emanations of what you are, both the Fruits of Eden granting you their traits. Somewhat akin to miraculous nanomachine swarms run by software encompassing the human soul, you eat through toil of the Earth you rule and bring forth children through an archaic pain function-not necessarily *your* pain, either. **Vastness** you have, for you are no longer a distinct person but more than billions of instances of the human form-all facets of yourself, all one greater whole-acting in one glorious whole. **Deepness** too is granted, for the Deep Mythic and spirit world are as much your birthright as the prosaic. With this you permeate ideas, paradigms, universal motions and trends as much as carbon permeates multicellular life. **Wanderer** you have too, like the exiled Cain who failed to achieve Imperium yet has been preserved by the grace of Cneph. And **Theft** you have as well,

permitting you to literally seize the world, encapsulate it in a trinket or two and make of it your plaything-or the inspiration for your changed form.

But it would be a shame to give up the spontaneity of the Noble condition to be as indolent as the other Imperators, would it not? The miracle of your becoming has bolstered all your divine attributes to their maximum, with the uniquely human trait of **Theft** being particularly strong and any overlapping Divine Attributes forming an Auctoritas and/or a form of Divine Mantle to bolster your divine humanity. This ensures that **should you have started out as something other than human in this jump, the Wanderer trait ensures that you have at least two separate existences controlled by the same will.** As an embodiment of human potential, it is within your power to grasp the miraculous both as a misbegotten beast and a true success of the Garden, creating dozens of Nobles from your essence in a month without even forming a Chancel. Your Nobles may be literal extensions of your own will and selfhood, or independent beings with an understanding of how to become as you in time. With this alone, you are a strategic asset in the Valde Bellum with the potential to strike and respond faster than all other Imperators on Earth. And living proof that though it may change beyond all understanding in doing so, mankind can stand it's ground against its would-be masters and triumph.

Excrucians

Excruciating Existence (100 CP): This world is agony. This world is a lie. This world's a trash heap with sparse rare jewels and wondrous things that might just be worth your time and effort. This world is full of prying eyes who want to pull this precious, fragile semblance of a self you've carefully piece together apart and look at *the thing they really shouldn't* deep within you. And don't you ever forget it. Whether or not you've subscribed to one of the Excrucian cants, your willpower and sense of self is reinforced to cling to one thing above all: Your firm conviction that

for one reason or another, it is right to destroy the world. It would take literally miraculous external forces to shake these convictions of yours whichever form they take, and while you may change your mind later on you shall likely be the only one to make that decision. Your pride as an enemy to Creation demands such conviction.

The Welken-Law (100/200 CP): Not to be confused with the Welken RITE, while no true miracle this handy-dandy magical technique lets a disparate group of void-spawned deities attacking different regions of the multiverse with different native Imperators stay in close contact with each other. Something between astral projection and telepathy, it permit Excrucians to meet one another in dreams or visions, scry for one another in mirrors and hear each other's voices arising from the babble of other noise. And where a cruxstone (a stone imbued with void-born powers of communication and synchronicity) is placed, they may walk into a part of the city or night-bound glade that shouldn't be present-less present in multiple locations on the tree of worlds simultaneously-and simply meet up, though interaction liminal and uncertain at best, and the magical connection created between Excrucians remains so tenuous that in many meaningful ways they are effectively not really there despite being able to observe and somewhat haphazardly interact with each other. For 100 CP (or for free as an Excrucian), you have the typical proficiency of an Excrucian and may use it more as a system of omens or a muddled, psychedelic means of interacting with your peers. For 200 CP you are one of the more advanced users, more able to use it as easily as any chat program or mail-though face to face meetings can still be tricky.

Marvellous Monologue Masterclass (100 CP): Say you've crashed your car into a cactus, the back seats are full of jagged, screaming ice and you've just stumbled out on fire and in the middle of nowhere. You may think you should attempt to fix your car or call for help *like a mortal*, but you're above all that! You just MONOLOGUE. You're an excellent orator and innovative speaker, able to expound at length on your thoughts in grandiose, oddly transfixing ways. Minor things like being on fire or having a sword in your chest won't break your focus upon making an operatic, bombastic speech even if it's about how you forgot

to feed the cat and left the oven on. Though most Strategists prefer to contemplate the agony of their existence with these little opportunities.

Friendly Neighbourhood Godslayer (100 CP): You'd expect the Excrucians to be widely feared by the man on the street when encountered without a trace of doubt as to their identity, but they're not exactly your average god of the void. The Strategists have larger than life shells of identities. The Deceivers can sweep you along with their narratives. The Mimics are quite good at faking it until they make it, and even Warmains are eerily composed and competent monsters. And like them, you carry yourself with an elegance and speak with a comforting lilt that puts those around you greatly at ease, seeming more like an eccentric librarian or poet than anything. You can hide your will to end the world from nearly all mundane observation, and more importantly are great at compartmentalising things like hating the world IN PRINCIPLE and also being rather fond of your neighbour Susie and her puppy. Really, it's rather odd those born of Creation expect any less of you. There's a perfectly logical explanation why there aren't uncountable infinitudes of Excrucians charging in from the Void at every attosecond given it's boundless, timeless nature: A crowd that big would be unmannerly.

Rider Necromancy (200 CP): One of the magical skills of the Outside is astonishing in its simplicity. While comparatively limited in scope and technique, it's also one of the least prone to complication and the easiest to use since moving your hands is all it really takes. You can sniff out corpses, grave and places of death at unnatural range, and once you've located the dead you may speak in others' voices or summon a restless spirit to yourself. It's also possible to bind a reanimated corpse or ghost in your service, and affect perception in odd ways: Making someone unable to recognize something, or make something generally unrecognizable. This odd technique has been known to give even human practitioners the eyes full of night and falling stars that the Riders boast.

Void Changeling (200 CP): Not everyone likes having odd, starry eyes. Maybe that's why you learned to get rid of yours? You're highly talented at the Excrucians' arts of impersonation and identity manipulation. You

can fit in with local humans supernaturally well, and conceal odd aspects of small body parts with not quite miraculous magical technique. Concealing scars and sickness-or partially or even fully suppressing them as long as the modest magical energy is sustained-is only slightly harder, as is fitting seamlessly into a family so they forger you were not theirs and mimicking someone's appearance and mannerisms well enough to fool security cameras. At great mastery this art even allows you to poison someone with a shard of dream, driving them into a psychotic break and briefly giving them the Riders' trademark eyes.

Night-Craftsman (200 CP): Creation floats on a sea of psychic wounds, unreason and generalised unconscious suffering-a draught of infinite anxieties but limited neuroses, one could say. And by practicing night-craft, you can manifest some of those ritually impure things into useful forms, an art that functions best in places where reality has been somewhat weakened. Blood and filth let you brew poisons, while dirt and clay and spit and blood could shape goblin or imp-like servants from the festering living essence of the world. You can also animate your own blood or saliva to move or solidify with surprising strength and precision, or spin your nightmares into steel-strong thread. More elaborate creatures-like great dragons and leviathans-can be created with more time and effort through your mastery of the art. Just be warned: It's practice causes your saliva and blood to become thick, black and viscid. Be prepared to reek of slightly rotten fruit, unless you have other abilities to cleanse yourself or mask your appearance.

Formation Mage (200 CP): In places where Creation is weak, where Ninuan's nature slips through, there is a way some Excrucians have found to work magic drawing on the void's deep structure. Formation magic is one of the most famous arts: The practice of constructing large-scale magical symbols to various occult effects. Mostly these are continuous are-effects spells that work eldritch changes on the location where the formation is set up. However, you're skilled enough at this that you know how to create more complex arrangements that gather the energy in a region to launch singular or repeated spells against something else. This art is excellent at creating automated magical defences over an area, which can include enhancements or sustaining

real or illusory pocket worlds. Slow as only architecture and geometry can be, even with your mastery permitting you to speed it up in a pinch it's still among the slowest of the arts practiced in the Valde Bellum. In future worlds this spreads a subtle but perceptible (to you, at least) undercurrent of Ninuan in various places-unlikely to be utilised by any but you.

Riders of the Apocalypse (400 CP): As an Excrucian, whatever your cant you're expected to be quite good at riding a horse into Creation's vistas at the head of a hunting party or conquering army. And by Jove, you've certainly risen to the challenge. While there are many Excrucians who boast of being a Superior Hunter, some correlative factor of Ninuan has designated you as truly Inhuman with a capital I at the art. Horseriding (or a similar means of locomotion), archery, tracking or hunting a person or animal and soothing, befriending or exerting your will on an animal from an environment you're already familiar don't just receive a competitive causal advantage that makes it challenging for even miracles to invalidate them, but mundane actions automatically fail to oppose you when you enact your role as a hunter. In other words, you are a causally perfect hunter who never fails to reign in your hounds or miss what you're aiming for's vitals unless great miraculous efforts intervene. While you are still limited by your reference frame i.e. if someone can move your whole body, they CAN prevent you from aiming your crossbow at them, with immense supernatural vitality you can effectively brace against nothing to stop tricks like that from working. Don't underestimate the versatility of this skill, especially since it synergises well with existing miracles. With skill lesser than what you wield, a certain luminary of the Excrucian host shot down the sun with his bow.

Eloquent As A Murdered Hope (400 CP): Tairte Ut-napishtim is no warrior nor forbidden sorcerer-at least, not primarily. No, he is a philosopher who teaches the philosophy of the Excrucians to any who will listen. And it seems you've followed in his footsteps. So profound are your insights into Ninuan that you can turn many mortal heads given time to expound on your insights, and so compelling are your arguments that even Imperators would permit you to operate in Creation if you restrained your active attempts to sabotage reality just to learn more

about how your kind operate. More than simply oration, this skill of yours is a combination of logical thinking, emotional appeals and body language that push all who hear you into agreement like the dark undertow of a deceptively inviting sea. And while you are not party to Tairte's unique nature you do have one final ability related to it: When you argue against a miracle, when you refute it, it becomes weaker and more vulnerable to resistance or external change. With truly exceptional skill and further practice at debate, you could actually dispel the miracle or make it effectively useless by browbeating it with your overbearing arguments.

The Truth of Sacred Things (400 CP): You cannot touch it. You cannot see it. You cannot smell it, or even imagine it. But it is there! Oh, sweet summer child it is there and it is precious beyond imagining if you could only look upon it without blinding yourself and despoiling it in the process with the fire that is called perception. This is how many Excrucians sound like when trying to explain the natural wonders and bounties of their world, whether it is the True Thing the Deceivers speak earnestly of, the eternal grandeur the Warmains preach that those tempered into them enjoy or the spheres of un-phenomena that the Strategists govern. You now have a profound mastery of the Void's deepest knowledge-the knowledge that by its own nature, is transformational. But knowledge alone is useless and so your second gift amends that, and lets you *communicate* it.

The strength of the divine laws of the Void burned into you are such that if even you were not a Strategist, you would be regarded as bearing such Gifts of power as could only be granted by an Exarch-a master of the divine trait called **Lore.** Should you already be a Strategist with great Lore, your knowledge of the unknowable would exceed even other Exarchs as a doctorate bearer's knowledge base exceeds that of an undergraduate's. In that regard you are tenfold as good at manifesting and originating those things formed solely or mostly from the Not's forces. You may not quite be a true defining principle around which the correlative causality of Ninuan is founded, but this knowledge at least makes you something of an amplifier and broadcaster. In this manner you can directly weave the substances of the Void into the substances of

Creation using your mundane talents to one specific goal: Bringing Creation and the Void closer in understanding and proximity. Write stories laced with eldritch truths that can leave children literally starry-eyed (though not full Excrucians with this alone, although this could be an excellent way to foster such a latent talent. Lay the keystone of a building, and have its internal power systems blanket a city in enough of Ninuan's bleak nature to warp the landscape and perhaps impose one or two subtle metaphysical alterations. Enhance yourself with the power of the Not to nullify opposing supernatural forces, fill others you lay a hand on with despair or sublime even wounds on yourself away with sacred unbeing. These, and more, are available right out the gate to any Excrucian and with study of Ninuan's mysteries you may yet achieve greater feats.

A Chance To Start Over (400 CP): Enough of war. Enough of Creation. Enough of…*everything*, all the stratagems and deceptions and wars and mimicry that have ultimately brought *nothing* but disappointment, and heartache, and unwanted entanglements. Something in you has grasped the ultimate flaw of the Excrucian cause, for the Strategists-that though they are welcomed wholeheartedly with open arms, the war ultimately does not provide what they require to grow and self-actualise as they mature in the ways of Void or Creation alike. In this, you have made preparations based on some of the ways a Strategist can achieve ultimate release to abandon not just any mental influence or internalise urge-but any fundamental aspect of your nature that aligns you with destruction, oblivion, the void or the general idea of the end of the world.

Great attachment-friendship, parental care, even romance if you can attain it-to the things of Creation will blunt your caustic nature, and guide you in subtle revelations and instincts to acclimatise to living among the living things of the world without reflexively bringing harm upon them. It may still prove difficult for a being as unsuited for living as an Excrucian to actually be *good* at doing things in the world, but such a being can at least rest easy knowing that it has abandoned it's one purpose in life, and is free to define its own. Paradoxically, long spiritual contemplation the Void can extricate you from an ultimate destiny to destroy everything. Simply meditate, continuously, on the idea that *the*

world is worthless, as well as wrong, that it is *beneath* your dignity to continue addressing and you may shrug off any destiny to destroy in exchange for going on a kind of religious pilgrimage into the Void for a long while. This alternative is actually highly respected and honoured by the inhabitants of the Not, where it is considered the beginning of true wisdom.

A Bond With Abhorrence (600 CP): Five hundred and seventy-two storied artifacts in the Excrucian host's keeping are labelled Abhorrent Weapons by Creation. Each wears two names: One to mock Creation, and one to be their own, and two forms: One personified or akin to mythical creature that dwells in metaphysically unusual environments as well as their owners' dreams, and one a handheld artifact like a sword, or torch, or whip, or gun. Curiously the Strategists wield them with Flore, treasuring them as much as any other object they bond with despite some being so wicked their history is bloody even by the standards of the Not. More terrifyingly, each also has the innate power to harm and permanently kill even cosmically immortal beings such as the Angels, and incarnations of abstraction like the Lords of Game. So corrosive are they that even with basic use of Flore they are deathly to all but their rightful wielders: With even basic Flore miracles they can corrode the noble metals, kill strains of bacteria with a touch, strike through non-miraculous magics and slay weak but deathless things like ghosts.

And *something* about you *sings* to these horrors, these worldbreakers, these weapons of miraculous destruction. Abhorrent Weapons-or similar malefic artifacts, in future worlds-find you a most agreeable master. Your bond with them greatly empowers your combined efforts beyond even what is normally expected from Strategists who master Flore when you set out to improve your relationship with your weapon. In turn, you have a great understanding of the mentality and nature of such weapons as well as how to soothe, appease, improve and command them in battle. Fortune and fate contrive to never keep you far apart when you need each other, and any miracles that let you simply whip yours out despite the causal impossibility cost less miraculous energy and are more resistant to forces meant to prevent their occurrence. But beyond that something rather unusual has occurred: You YOURSELF have somehow

also become an Abhorrent Weapon in your own right capable manifesting either your weapon-body or person-body in Creation. With some finagling, you may even manifest the traits of one upon the other-being a weapon with person-like capacity for interaction, or gaining a powerful warform with unique miraculous powers and a transformation supplying you with the weapon's terrible power. Arsenal and wielder as one, your agency could be a turning point in major battles of the Valde Bellum.

Should you be born of Creation, you may choose instead to be a unique yet powerful miraculous artifact weapon otherwise equal to the Abhorrent Weapons in nature and potency. While such artifacts exist, their innate traits are not as codified as the Abhorrent Weapons. You may of course be just as baneful to the Not as the Abhorrent Weapons are to that which Is, but you could also merely nullify the powers of the Not or be a unique catalyst for Imperial Miracles such as a masterwork alchemical weapon that also happens to be a traffic cop.

The Dream That Dreams Do Dream Of (600 CP): They of Creation come unto the Void, and for the most part see nothing but fear and trouble-the pall that hangs over whatever paradise or nirvana most would like to believe lies beyond the grave. Fools. You've received power from the other perspective: That Ninuan is the thing from which congeals, a kind of primordial Nirvana that could be the perfect future of our dreams-if only those who most frequently represent it weren't so hostile. Henceforth, any power of yours elementally attuned to destruction of a cosmic nature-spells that invoke forces similar to the Void, a body soaked in entropy, an energy native to the realm of death-can also be used to reinforce reality, create and conjure with the same aptitude it has for destruction and enchant those aspects of your identity that are core to your being.

This still requires you to expend the energy you would have needed to invoke with destruction and only grants the *basic capacity* for creation without making you any better at the nuances of shaping new life or creating devices, but even if you could only make things slightly cold with the touch of the Not then you would in turn gain the power to make

things warm and cosy by congealing the warmth of a furnace on a winter night from your palms. With greater scale powers such as those of an Excrucian, it would be possible to create things that even have truly miraculous properties. Write rich snarls into reality's makeup that reinforce and improve Estates or even engender new ones from the interaction of existing facets of reality rather than the usual effects of the Flower Rite. Or simply create a magical mist that's bigger on the inside than the outside, shows up where people need solace and grants supernatural powers. What you make with this is truly of the things of Creation, and an excellent philosophical rebuke to those who see your kind as monsters rather than caretaker and guardians.

Bleak Academic (600 CP): One of the most feared Excrucians is neither a warlord nor an evil genius. It's not even entirely clear if he's a Warmain or an Angel who just got really, really lost. Equally unclear is his exact standing among them. He might be the actual King of the Not. He might be an academic, missionary or civil servant with certain duties. He might even be a particularly charismatic apostate. One fundamental truth about him is known: He embodies the beckoning beyond the grave, the light that asks those in a liminal state of living to let go and be done with Creation. And when you enact this role, when by words or deeds you move either the living or dead to relinquish their claim to life, you too shine with some of his dark brilliance. All that you do, all that you say, drastically heightens the probability of whatever you address to let go of life and move on, though not necessarily be damned to Ninuan. One other thing is certain about him: His most feared trait is neither his prowess at hunting, nor capacity to wield esoteric transitions or defend himself with the Auctoritas Magister, nor his annoying smugness. It is his unnerving compassion and proficiency at sharing the philosophy of the Excrucian cants.

And while you may not have all his other traits, there is something within you that hearkens to his role as a kind of tutelary spirit for the void-as well as the experience of being the inevitability of death. To begin with, you're an excellent teacher-not quite supernaturally so, but proficient enough that Oxford or Harvard would be glad to have you. This leads into your truly valued knowledge: Some sort of course, or

curriculum, that can transform mortals of all kinds into more Warmains, Strategists and Deceivers. Each course requires a great trove of reading materials and practical assessments (separating them into different colleges for each Excrucian template would be advised), and preferably carried out in walls and strange environments where the distinction between dream and reality seems tenuous at best-and you have gained a variety of strange magical arts as well as unique tutelary miracles which let you recreate an institution akin to the Bleak Academy for which he famously presides over. This knowledge, while mostly unsuited for rapid combat, also includes some esoteric rituals such as ideas for restraining a being as powerful as the Angel of the Sun under seals powerful enough to take an entire College to maintain or the methodology for creating what appears to be an egg full of unborn gods. It takes time to bring out the best in each student, and some may be more talented than others, but if successfully completed you too may spread the dark enlightenment that gives rise to the Riders feared by all Creation.

SOMEWHERE, THERE IS THE SOUND OF DRUMS (1000 CP):

That pounding in your head. That drumbeat from the chief of the Not's dread workshop. The maddening certainty that somewhere, something hurts-and you are not sure whether there is a sun. You wish to make an art of death? So be it. Harumaph will teach you.

Your first lesson will be on blight: The countless malaises, plagues and disasters that both Warmains and Strategists can bring to bear against Creation as a reflexive part of their natures. The first of your two Gifts in this regard can be counted as a Major Destruction of Sustainability and Health, manifesting as the capacity to deplete *anything* of its continued capacity for continued survival and rendering what you so curse grey and dim. With a wave of your hand you could leave towns ravaged by famine, weaken immune systems across a village enough that the common flu could slay the inhabitants and sour a magical healing spring into a well of poison-though you must concentrate the effect on a small, greyish stone that if destroyed ends the blight. The second, a Major Creation of Destructive Forces such as fires and acid raid-likely

aligned with your infection or test if you are a Strategist or Warmain yourself. These occur with the same effort as minor motions of such forces, and more importantly whatever form they take they affect *every facet of reality at once*. Your famines ravages the spirit and kinetic energy alike, leaving the world stilled, unimaginative and siphoned of miraculous energy as well as literally physically desolate. Your rain of cinders scorches spirits and minutely brings the world closer to its ultimate end. When you are harmed, both issue from your body at once with no effort on your part to blight your attacker. And when you use them in conjunction with similar perks or powers of oblivion or corruption, you'll find your powers alloy their Void-nature into them in order to greatly reinforce and sustain their efforts to end the world.

Your second lesson will be on negation, hearkening back to the Negative Gift associated with the Warmains. You are the eye of the storm for an exhalation of the Void, and through your Major Destruction of Miraculous Power you can perform great feats of negation. It is easiest to simply observe a miracle occurring near you, gain a broad understanding of its nature-and then simply *make it be not*, committing a small portion of your own Void-given power to simply prevent them from using that specific miracle until you relent, are dealt a significant wound or great power intervenes on their behalf. But through experimentation and practice, you can develop new and innovative ways to wield your destruction by conceiving more…unorthodox definitions of negation and destruction. You may use this power along with poisons and curses to create Abhorrent Weapons, foci that can nullify Imperator-given immortality and seed the essence of the Not into magical systems or Estates to induce a kind of unbeing-based apoptosis in them. You can even combine this with other destructive powers, steeping them in the absolute oblivion of Ninuan in exchange for developing new and improved ways to nullify anything and everything, eventually.

Your third lesson is the simplest. You are given a version of the World-Breaker's Hand that always benefits from full circumstantial advantages against other miracles, and is supported by an Auctoritas that rises in proportion to your most directly destructive or void-aligned divine attribute. Uniquely your version of the Hand constantly adapts and

improves when repeatedly used to destroy the same thing, unseen whorls of unbeing rising up like a drumbeat crescendo. With time, practice and meditation in the void you might even negate the very concept of victory for the Imperators, the barriers between form and void, or remotely sunder the Seal of Time.

Your fourth and last lesson is one of revelation. For you have been shown the very heartland of Ninuan-or at least, the place that might be coherent enough to be Ninuan's heartland if some terrible mistake made it exist-and can recreate it around you. Currently your skill is such that even a mortal man could paint over a small village with this place, and to most outside observers this is simply identical to horrifically and inexplicably annihilating part of reality. All your powers of destruction are greatly bolstered in this place, and as the Not's sacred homeland it holds all manner of its sublime, transformative wisdom. With practice you may learn to deploy this place in more esoteric ways or on a wider scale-like permeating network broadcasts with its scenery, or casting it into the collective subconsciousness to leave dreams riddled with the Void. But to you, and to the Excrucians, you are simply recreating Ninuan's holy of holies around you-and to the Excrucians, this is a religious experience that can leave them awestruck and disarmed, akin to wandering into the Sermon on the Mount while looking for the bathroom. This realm has the following metaphysical laws:

Properties of The Far and Sunless Land

- The wind puts out the fire *and*
- Stars are falling from the sky
- That which is eternal, ends
- Seek nothing, gain all;
- Reject nothing, transcend all;
- Hold to no conceptions, rule all-
- This is a far and sunless land

Your capacity to improve on the arts of death and destruction are limitless, and innovating, learning or improving on methods to do this is always possible. If something is immortal beyond even this world, you can study up on ways to fix that. If someone is truly and indisputably

indestructible and you shatter your fist on their face a thousand times, the thousandth blow will leave a crack that you can chisel at-and one fine day, break him to ash. Destroying more of Creation proper will only enhance your Gifts, making them just as effective even against the un-beings of Ninuan themselves as they are against the Creation-born.

And sometimes when the world is ending, when you are profoundly immersed in the Not, you'll hear a distant pounding. And you'll be sure that whatever is happening, whatever is left of *you* after everything else is gone-

-that somewhere, there is the sound of drums.

<u>Imperator</u>

Inherent Superiority (100 CP): So elevated above mundane effort and physicality are the Imperators that even the most alien and removed of them can elevate the mundane by participating in it. Your sense of self is as much pervasive event and experience as it is a contained thing, greatly benefitting those that contain a shard of power as significant as those implanted in the Nobilis, or similarly spiritually close to you. When you spend a whole day in practicing basketball, fishing, cookery or any other task within the capabilities of a normal member of a species considered mundane by this world, not only do those so connected attain equal mastery of it as yourself but their feats are made miraculous-sufficient to outcompete against miraculous attempts by other Nobles with the same level of Aspect. Spending a second day on the feat grants such great flair those Nobles can outcompete those who are not significantly their betters in magnifying the mundane with miraculous efforts. While learning subjects more deeply than any mortal or Power ever has or will comes naturally to the Imperators, this provides somewhat greater breadth in who else reaps the rewards of your efforts.

Feel Out The World (100 CP): The Imperial experience isn't solely defined by raw power or absolute sovereignty. There is a deep connection between an Imperator and his Estate, with one being flesh and province of the other with no clear delineation. In this manner, any of your mundane senses can, with even mundane effort, be used to glean all sorts of nominally inaccessible information from your Estate(s) with quick bit of meditation. In this manner can the Imperator of Skies survey the clouds of his domain as if he flew among them, or the Imperator of Seas smell what the waves do. Those born of Ninuan instead gain similar sensory insight over the tests, personal narrative or correlative sphere of influence over the Void they wield instead-or in the case of Mimics, continue faking great insight over the Imperator they continuously pretend to be.

Regalia Unbound (100 CP): Few Imperators fail to make a big impression when introducing themselves. In theory there is an Imperator of Subtlety or Anonymity out there somewhere who prefers to glide by unobserved, and it is surely a testament to their talent that their existence has never garnered any great attention. And like any self-respecting deific being you've gained the ability to wreathe yourself in a phantasmagorical aura representing your divine purview and nature, to quickly communicate what you ARE to those with other extraordinary minds or intimidate nearly all mortals. This almost deafening conflagration of divine glory floods those bound to your service with tremendous loyalty, even kindling their hearts to cling to life and victory against unfavourable odds.

Patience Like Eternity (100 CP): Rain falls, and mountains are carved by rivers. Grass grows, and in mere centuries a forest arises. In such things as the turning of the seasons and the movement of celestial spheres do the Imperators give weight to significant events throughout history, and now you too are well adapted to eternity. The passing of many years beyond the mortal experience hinders you not in rash judgement, nor does it risk diminishing your mental faculties. You plan well for such long timespans too, and even a nor particularly adept schemer would see no meaningful difference between filling out his daily calendar or cultivating a wandering tribe into a mighty empire many centuries later.

Many call your kind's arrogance and entitlement over Creation unearned, but from your perspective nearly all those around you simply can't see the bigger picture.

Object of Mystery (200 CP): The Cult of Ephes-Dammim serves the Angel of Blood and Wine for which it is named. Though they know almost nothing of true miracles, they can administer the Sanguine Death: The act of forcing their arm into another's throat and killing as they slay-draining all the blood out of their body into their victim's, and supposedly transmigrating their soul into the spirit realm for greater knowledge. While yours doesn't have to be this messy depending on your Estates, here and in future worlds you are especially inspirational to others as an object of worship-in particular, the style comparable to the Mystery Cults of Greek antiquity. You were likely radiant enough to function as such anyway, but more importantly something about you makes you especially approachable on a spiritual level. Mystically bound servants' magics can be shared in greatly lessened form and wielded by these mortal devotees. They can also be used to "store" true miracles performed by yourself and your servants once these cults have an established doctrine, priming a certain miracle to activate near or on a specified cultist when preordained conditions by yourself or your representatives are met. This may be toggled off if you'd rather keep a lower profile, mystically.

Bright Warden (200 CP): The greatest boon your kind can give one of your powers is a Warding: A sigil representing Creation set upon them that disturbs the Excrucians' fell powers. Attaching to the soul rather than the body, such blessings can also be given to other mystically close entities such as Treasures. And for whatever reason, your wardings are particularly powerful. Your Dim Wardings, those requiring half as much investment as a stronger Bright Warding, carry out all their feats: Driving Excrucians or those bonded to them into agony, and breaking their connections to each other with a touch. Excrucian-shards cannot divine the location of the warded, nor come withing fifty feet or so of one, and their powers are greatly blunted as if an Auctoritas exerted power to deny their validity. Upon full Excrucians these effects are even more severe, though with a few minutes such beings can also dispel this

warding. Your Bright Wardings are correspondingly even more powerful, ensuring that your protection will be much sought after by others during the war.

What Will be, Was (200 CP): The Imperator perspective on time is difficult to explain. Their understanding of time is…different to those of mortals, often discussing events that seem purely notional or speculative as if they were all but certain-or even had already happened. All Imperators have what appear to lesser beings as uncanny powers of foresight, but for you in particular your prophecy is especially clear cut-and more importantly, your ability to explain it quite exceptional. While some Powers can scry the future themselves, foggily, you do not only see events to come for much of time's span but also the consequences of seemingly unconnected events and the deeper metaphysical meanings of physical interactions. Even if a Power of Foresight were to wield his Domain in service of his predictions, while he might see more than you if you weren't especially connected with the Estate of Foresight you would be able to interpret more mystic and spiritual meanings than the prosaic mapping of centuries of even millennia to come. Last but not least, you can articulate your prophecies in concise, plain language rather than the riddles and obscure omens that most Imperators see fit to use.

"This Is Your Life Now" (200 CP): The relations between Imperator and Noble range from the familial, to the outright rebellious. It's all too common or those set above heaven and earth alike, to foster exasperation in those supposed to be their sword and shield. You, however, are better at this than many of your cohorts. More than intellectual knowledge of the subject, your personal familiarity with mentoring and disciplining those with a mortal perspective is as well-honed as any other traits of your long life without being hindered by an inhuman perspective. You feel their pains and joys as easily as your own, without diminishing the importance of your own goals, nature or desires. Even if you truly believe the work of Hell or the permutations of life in the sea are more important than things like paying rent or catching the commute to work you won't lose track of your servants' needs or desires,

and you strike a fine balance between being an approving mentor and setting firm boundaries about your expectations and their behaviour.

Joy To The World (400 CP): Not all beauty is beneficial, and not all harm is intentional. Some of it, as is the case with Ananda who rules Murder and the Infinite, is a kind of out-of-bounds error in the world. While your beauty is intense among the Imperators, it is not enough to move other Imperators necessarily-but some quality of it has a particularly apocalyptic effect on the mortal world. Simply showing up, unshielded, in a field could make birds fall from the sky singing until their hearts burst. Without even showing off you could make buildings rock back and forth on their foundations, creaking in solemn joy, and turn grass to crystal out of sheer love. You change, you transfigure by sheer love of yourself-and this change is proportionate to the adoration you inspire. Even Nobles find that stopping up most of their senses is only sufficient to approach a mere picture of you safely from a safe distance of three blocks. And whether or not your Estate is another facet of Murder like Ananda, your sheer beauty inspires a rising sense of joy-even to those normally unable to feel the emotion-that eventually encourages mortal life and that on the scale of the Nobilis themselves to immerse and participate in the propagation and celebration of your Estates, their efforts becoming even slightly miraculous. This isn't necessarily as devastating as sporadic and joyous murder, but do keep in mind the things people could do things like become drunk on the happiness of the despair they experience or spontaneously turn into rocks after imitating them enough.

An Answer Unto The Bleak (400 CP): There is a bleak power of despair that yearns for everything's unmaking, inherent to the nature of the Not. There is a force that looks upon the world and finds nothing good in it. But against such forces, faith and trust are surer bulwarks than any mundane armor-and even if you are not their Imperator, there's something about you that makes such powers stronger in your hands. By standing fast to your belief that the world has a point, that existence means something or that at least there's more to life and yourself than just drowning in the endless night beyond Creation, you can protect yourself and those near you from both miracles and a cruel, harsh world.

Even as the grasp of the void closes around you or the vacuum of space threatens to crush the air out of your lungs, a bubble of stability and constancy will ensure you have a chance to continue fighting your fate with dignity. Science, love and sorcery can act as powerful foci in your efforts, but faith and trust is at the core of what lets you endure any force that you, personally, find inherently unacceptable when it tries to change you or destroy you or remake you in its image. If the night is darkest just before the dawn, then you'll keep the fires of possibility burning until it too passes.

Bloody-Handed Menace (400 CP): Even among the Excrucians, Lord Entropy is regarded as a freakish god among all their enemies. Tall, imperiously elegant and confidant in ways only Destruction, Desecration and Scorn could be, it's not even clear what breed of Imperator he is-though it is commonly assumed he is a True God due to his position as the true ruler of Earth, in all his known forms he's oddly anthropomorphic for their kind. Still, none doubt the Darkest Lord's overwhelming destructive power. There is a malignity about you-something sinister and ominous enough that, should you toggle it on, would make it impossible without truly miraculous effort for others to love you. A bowel-quaking unease pertaining to what you embody or ARE at a fundamental level that leaves others leary of fighting you-and rightfully so. Whatever your Estate(s) are, when you invoke them in direct applications similar to the divine trait **Domain** you'll find they're significantly more destructive and enduring on the world than they normally would be. Even you do not will it your Estate(s) exerts subtle and extremely low key propagation across an entire universe, grinding it down in its just as the slow, inexorable winding down of all matter and energy caused the mortals of Earth to name the strongest force in their reality after the King of Evil. Casual, in-person interaction with others greatly accelerates this process to the extent of granting supernatural or even miraculous powers while simultaneously subjugating what you deal with to your will-leaving entire organisations or species remade by Cats or Poetry in the same way Lord Entropy's dread touch made the Cammora or the ogres. And when you actively bring your power to bear, you would be able to annihilate everything from entire landscapes to

concepts to whole swathes of existence as if using the World-Breaker's Hand even as an Imperial being, and regardless of your Estate.

Pride Goeth Before Everything (400 CP): Lucifer, Imperator of Pride and Persuasion, was once counted as the greatest leader among the Angels. Like him, yours is a supernatural beauty that surpasses Heaven's own- coming with a substantial power over miraculous effects due to your closeness with the glory that preceded the creation of the world. Your leadership and charisma are notable even among the Imperators, sufficient to lead a realm as vast and immaculate as Heaven through many evolutions of reality. Yet the true value of he whose aspect is the Principle Lie was not apparent until his departure: In abandoning Heaven, Lucifer denied the Angels Pride at a fundamental level. A feat that might have been thwarted had the Angels only resisted, if the High Court in Heaven had not judged that Lucifer had that right because of what he was, because of his promises and on the grounds that he had been cast into Hell at all.

And like Lucifer when you deny others your Estate, when you move it away or deprive it around them or even destroy aspects of it, those exiled from your jurisdiction suffer greater and more long-reaching weaknesses than they would even normally. The unfallen Angels as a whole now struggle to enforce respect from others, lest some mortal uncover the fatal flaw of their lacking pride and exert enough influence over Heaven to taint it. Your last gift is a terrific resilience and integrity against all corruptive and destructive forces, equal to Lucifer himself. Where each and every other Angel who fell with him degraded into their present states, he remained untouched by its corruption as the brightest of all Angels. Such is the strength of character you both exhibit that though Pride and Persuasion as Estates could not divinely sanction all the Angels to heed Lucifer's way, nearly a third were still swayed to join him. Such is your shared vision and will that even now Lucifer guides the Fallen, and they have entrusted their hearts with him.

Friends in Deep Places (600 CP): There is an empty place beneath even the Deep Mythic: Timeless, spaceless, where light and darkness are undifferentiated. Here at the baseline of the world, the Excrucians are

cutting tendrils and fanged night that clash against the Imperators who resemble phenomena more than even the most abstract forms seen in the world before. These shadow-Imperators are as adapted to the deeps as the Angels and Warmains of the upper levels of reality are skilled at mundane living, and have **Vastness** to permit them arbitrary size in the place where an endless skittering replaces life as we know it, as well as **Deepness** so they can fade or merge with the Deeps, prison each other in mirror worlds or shake the Mona Lisa out of a painting and generally be something more fundamental to reality than ordinary mortal things. They also have a power akin to **Lore** they use mainly to supply themselves with locally sourced powers, and perceive and move in a place where perception and motion are *normally* impossible. They are also **Adepts** with tremendous faculty for shielding, blasting and mobility of all kinds-transcending the local space and time at high levels.

One may wonder-why don't these things do more to help the Imperators they are extensions of in the world above? For how little they have to do with the "true" Imperators, they normally may as well be different beings altogether. Nominally, it's to confront the Excrucians below but yours in particular seems to be more helpful and attentive than the norm. Think of this entity as a spiritual extension of your innermost self, manifesting as formless phenomena and arcane wonder. A force on par with an Imperator wriggling up from the deepest layers of reality to strike at your foes and assist you on your endeavours, at will.

Should you be an Excrucian, you too may gain the unwavering support of your shadow-self. Though instead of being an Adept, yours has **Aspect** so it's slicing tendrils, dripping acid and the flutter of its dusted wings or whatever amorphous features it has can contend with miracles. Stronger, and faster, and smarter than others dare expect it is just as much a force to be reckoned with.

Keystone of Creation (600 CP): Where some Imperators root their power in one world or another, two in particular stand out as having particularly far reaching Estates. The first is Attaris, who as mentioned before embodies (or possibly, took jurisdiction over) the Valde Bellum itself. The second is Firstborn of the Angels, whose very flesh is Meaning

and Existence-who arose BEFORE those things were properly known, yet stabilized and set forth their qualities whereas before those qualia were fundamentally ambiguous and imperilled. There may be a third soon: You.

Choose one of your Estates, and it becomes virulent on a scale that makes **Bloody-Handed Menace** look like a steady trickle, spreading it's concept rapidly through every facet of reality. If it were something fairly abstract like Fair Play or low key like Viruses, few may notice the difference at first. If it was something physical like Snails, people may be experiencing a lot more slime trails in their lives soon. Regardless of what you chose, this perk induces a paradigm shift that rapidly spreads your Estate to a position of prominence not just in your world-but in other realms of *proper* existence. This propagation is not merely physical; your Estate rises in important at the supernatural and abstract level, becoming integral to the very makeup of all Creation yet strengthening it like rebar in concrete. The one exception is places of true existential oblivion like Ninuan, against which your Estate forms a metaphysical bulwark as significant as the notion of Existence itself. Most crucially, while you are not actually Attaris with this alone your Estate tends to enmesh itself with the most cosmologically significant conflict around-unless you were to toggle it away from this facet of itself. While this effect can be resistant by forces as powerful as Imperators actively working together, the pervasion of your Estate bears a sense of inherent *rightness* about it which doesn't merely compel but makes unthinkable it's absence in those it touch's lives. Put it this way: Try imagining yourself, right now, without the quality of Existence.

Portals, rituals and similar feats or techniques can help expedite this, but it will take significant effort even from other Imperators to stop your Estate's progression. Within weeks, hundreds of worlds that have never seen Cats before may find their streets teaming with them-yet coexisting seamlessly with the rest of the world. Within months, cats may be recognised as a multiversal constant by the truly wise, and an aspect of the natural world more integral than DNA itself. Within years, as well as the Weirding Wall the Excrucian Host may have to confront a yowling, screeching wall of vicious furry animals, new, strange forms of magic

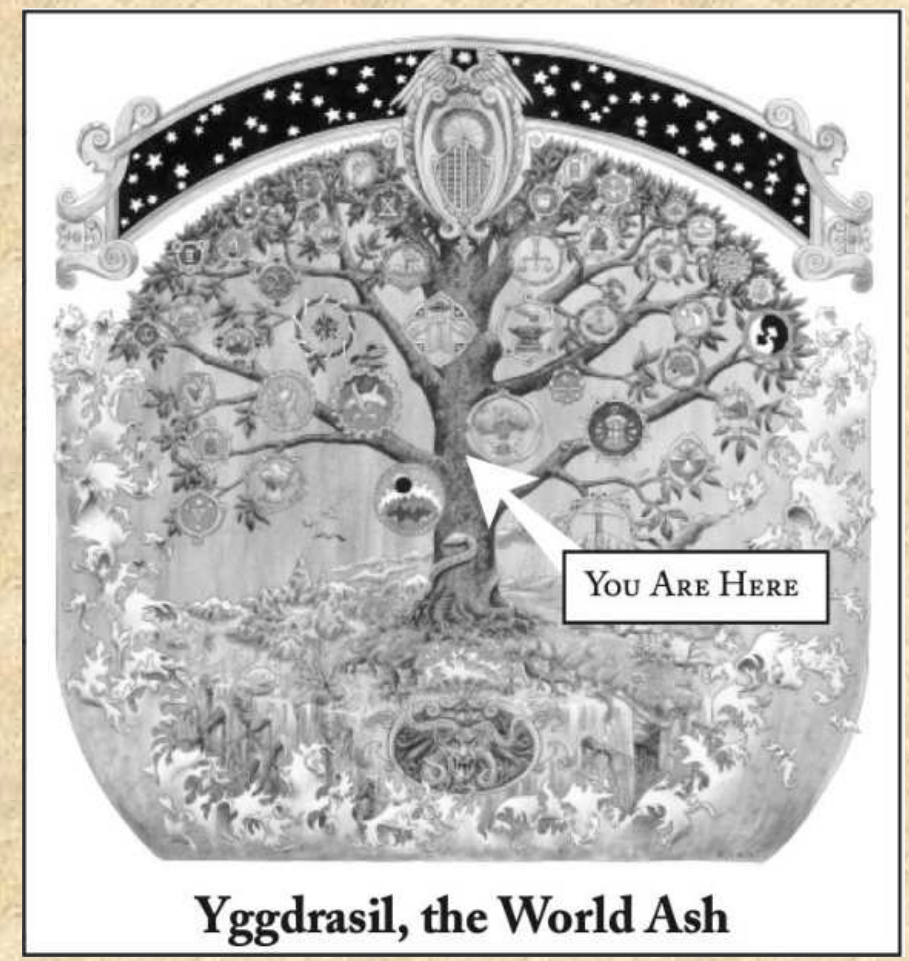
may be uncovered that involve summoning and wielding cats and the ultimate victory or downfall of the Valde Bellum may be predicated on the birth and sacrifice of a specific cat following a very specific rite.

Should you be an Excrucian, you strengthen and pervade Ninuan (or similar realms of nonexistence) in this manner rather than Creation and you may decide precisely what aspect of your existence is unfurled in this manner.

Jumper's Marvellous Wish-Granting Engine (600 CP): What does it mean to be **Sealed**? In a wish-changed world where miracles clash, what does it mean to break all the rules to the extent of using raw cosmic power to force into being what ought not be forced? Well, like a certain goofy and mild-mannered Aaron's Serpent you have a better understanding than most. Perhaps you once somehow wished yourself to be better at wishes, and somehow shucked off the consequences for a wish of such enormity? When you invoke wide scale, cosmologically significant powers such as Imperial Miracles you have several innate advantages. You may invoke them without the normal props, tools or invocations by simply spending pure miraculous energy; though the cost will be proportionate to the importance of the tools for the process, as an Imperator your considerable reserves are likely more than up to the task. You can also ignore the normal time limits for such feats' uses, such as cooldowns or them only being available during specific stellar alignments. Last but not least, when you deal with such broadly defined powers as Imperial Miracles liable to change reality in difficult to predict ways, you can make them significantly safer by systemising them. This could take various fields of study and possibly even meditation, but inevitably it would let you devise a set of powers with the original's raw power but lessened scope of action-and having much more predictable, safer consequences as a result. Instead of summoning an entire demon god to end the world you could simply conjure a portal to let it punch at your foes safely before closing the window to it's dread dimension. Your enlightenment on the causation process behind miracles lets you share these benefits with someone whose powers you've studied well enough to have a great grasp of theory and factual knowledge about, even if you

can't replicate their powers yourself. People won't be accidentally dooming the world by wishing for ice cream on your watch.

Transcendent (1000 CP): There is a realm of existence representing either Imperial beings far exceeding the like of Angels or truly exceptional monsters from the Lands Beyond Creation. Suffice to say that at this level of power, many of the usual engagements from the Valde Bellum are beneath your notice. Not only are you not part of any Estate like the Imperators for the purpose of direct miracles, but normally sublimed concepts considered beyond the purview of the discrete, observable facets of Creation such as "miraculous energy" or "the status of being Imperial at all" (though non-Imperial apotheosis is available as an Estate) or "the boundary between Is and Not" or "the reason why things are strong and obey laws" can be counted among your Estates. And the scope of your existence is a cosmic fact that transcends any single world. Beings at this level include the World Ash itself. To put things into perspective, the titanic Aaron's Serpents are born from glyphs that grow in the World Tree's flesh, already bigger than humans when young enough to be blind and more glyph than giant snake. It is the Ash's divine sap that nourishes the young snakes to become Imperators, the warmth and roughness of its inner woods that shelters them until they may scrape away their baby scales to moult, and the endless expanse of stars between its branches that fills them with wonder, awe and gratitude for the simple miracle of being alive. The Megalith Wasps that nest near the Milkweed Branch of the Appian Way are each dumb as any animal yet large as a major city and counted among the Imperial kind-all because they too supped from that sap. Whether you were another victim of the Creator fastened upon Creation more haphazardly than the poor murdered cup of flame or the many-faced inferno slain to create the angels, a strange visitor from Ninuan who finds the Excrucians' war rather quaint, the nearest thing to a peer to the Ultimate Kung Fu Master after aeons or something stranger, you are the kind of being to whom even Imperators are something between children and pets. What could you possibly intend to accomplish with such great power?



Yggdrasil, the World Ash

Heaven

Perfection Is An Angel's Nature (200 CP): The purity of Heaven is absolute. Even if a murder or landfill drawn from Earth marred it, Heaven's essential character would shine as brightly as ever in a cataclysm of health-and like the Angels, you partake in this trait. Your vitality is impressive even by the standards of Powers. Already you can catch falling airplanes, bat aside elephants casually and with great effort bite holes in space-time even before reaching for your proper miracles. Were you of Imperial stature, your strength and beauty would comparable with that of an angel-and were you one already, you would be exceptional even among them.

The Great Working (400 CP): Heaven is a land of surpassing rightness and beauty, but even the angels who held it as the highest and brightest of all lands feel it required change to improve and evolve. Each angel hears the "voice of the Creator" in their heart which informs them it is their role to be curators and designers, constantly guarding and improving their home-though some speculate this intuitive sense of what is right and what isn't could be Heaven's voice, rather than the often-absent Cneph. Regardless of whether or not you are an angel, you too hear this endless source of inspiration, wondrous designs and miraculous secrets that informs you how best to bring forth greater wonders. From early efforts of the angels came flowers, the greatest examples of which the angels used in Heaven itself to build Gratitude and Heartbreak and Death. And should you already be an angel or otherwise hear the voice of the Creator, it sings with such clarity from you that even others near you can hear it.

Glory of the Garden (600 CP): The angelic struggle to beautify the rest of Creation has met with many troubles. For instance, Hell was actually sealed with Lucifer's blessing; it was only reopened for the angels to curse him and his followers. There's also the *extremely embarrassing* incident wherein the angel of destruction, upon being very offended by a dinosaur evacuating it's bowels near him, invoked such destruction that the Earth could only explain it to the Prosaic World as a meteorite impact (he is very sorry about the whole thing). Something about this struggle has lit a fire in your soul, which at your will you may radiate in an aura of piercing glory. Wherever you walk, around you for miles the whole world is forcibly beautified in the image of Heaven's perfection and spiritual purity. You are certainly no exception to this effect, and experience constant physical and spiritual refinement by heavenly forces. Concrete streets turn to marble, foul ponds are cleansed into life-extending water, flowers are suffused with miraculous meaning-and even emotions and ambient metaphysical forces are subjugated and made pure in Heaven's image. What has been thus refined by Heaven's light, you find easy to reshape into miraculously powerful wonders. Even your very self becomes less tangible entity and more miraculous religious experience; the forces and events antithetical to your Estates are cast out from your sphere of influence while those traits you find

laudable manifest themselves strongly in those you interact with-and even intangible, ineffable and spiritual barriers afflicting others can be shattered by your inspiring presence. And when you act in service to the higher principle of Heaven's glory, passive fate-twisting miracles spring up around you to support your goals without your conscious intent. Your light grows strong along with your spiritual power; with this, a Noble could walk into Vegas and leave it a holy city after less than a week there, and with another week refashion much of it into a mobile assault platform. Whatever you are, simply for being such a direct exponent of Heaven's beauty the angels of this world likely adore you.

Hell

Flowering Filth (200 CP): Though they forsook the absolute beauty of Heaven, the Fallen Angels' love for all things has let them cultivated other blooms. It's not all about spreading corruption and spiritual iniquity to the mortal soul. Sometimes you just gotta stop and smell the flowers. In places where the nadir of the human experience accretes-in asylums, in caches of narcotic drugs and in places where there has been such suffering and misery as to make those living there wish for an end to their misery, you may cause rancid, festering flowers to blossom. Fed by sin and suffering, these flowers are in their own way as reflective as Hell's wickedness as those in Heaven reflect the Brightest Realm's own beauty. In time you may bring about great bouquets of mystically imbued flowers across the worst of places, providing both a sort of metaphysical heat sink for the spiritual miasmas pervading such places and a concentrated conduit for Hell's corrosion.

Hell Is Your Kind of People (400 CP): For standing up for Caligula, for Pol Pot, for the ichneumon wasp the Fallen Angels were cast from Heaven. In the philosophy of Hell, the torment of Hell isn't suffering for suffering's sake-it's the price we pay to have something like Hell in the world at all, for those who call it home. Wouldn't it be nice if occasionally this love was reciprocated in a less disquieting way? There is a perversely comforting aura that makes you a source of great, almost addictive solace to those who tend to be loved by Hell. The wicked and sociopathic themselves see you as a radiant saint to be paid homage to,

exemplifying all they see as covetable yet demanding respect. Those things regarded as outcast, abominable, or spiritual impure perspective on the other hand see you like the rotten flowerbeds abused children crawl into to escape the horrors of their lives, or the fire that the mentally ill stick their hands into to break away from the awful world they live in and just be in the fire where they don't have to think about themselves. Let those whom Heaven turns from their gates know there is a place in your arms where they will always be welcome.

Baptism of Wicked Flame (600 CP): The divine attribute called **Wounded** is a power born from the wicked fire at the nadir of the Ash, and somehow it has kindled in you as a symbiote rather than the consumptive inferno it normally is. Infuse it into your blows, and they shall seethe with a spiritually toxic flame that will one day reduce the World Ash to a different kind of ash. Infuse it into your spells, and they may sear away even oncoming miracles to ash. But this is not the greatest gift the flame grants you. Your capacity to endure and receive damage of all kinds is greatly magnified, such that even a mortal man could stagger away from a nuclear strike and a being as great as a Fallen Angel would more than double their divine health levels. But conventional vitality is not the point of this gift; rather it is to turn all the awful things in your life into *power*, both as "techniques" or mundane abilities as well as miraculous effects. The nuclear strike, for example, could leave the unlucky man badly burned and wreathed by nuclear flame but able to sling miniature gamma ray bursts and surf on a wave of catastrophic nuclear explosions. If truly dire forces are brought to bear against you, you may even manifest highly specific Imperial Miracles to make an answer unto your pain. And while you may still heal from your wounds as normal-even perhaps with some creativity, use powers from different wounds to heal each other-do remember losing a specific persistent form of suffering on yourself takes away the power you gain too.

The Wild

Choose Your Own Adventure (200 CP): To be in service to the Wild is to regard the choices and decisions enacted by free will as one glorious, unbearably pure orchestra. Endlessly complex as a symphony, the lattice of choices forms a stable foundation for all the universe from the humblest insect's impetus to feed to the World Ash itself choosing to birth another Aaron's Serpent. And having attuned yourself to this experience, you have gained an ultimate epiphany that lets you function at beyond peak performance in any community of sentient beings even while in an altered state of sanity or consciousness. Your profound understanding of choice and consequence leaves you "in-synch" with those around you and with a deep sense of internal self-discipline extending to your subconscious mind, such that you could easily advance your career in a top notch firm while perpetually drunk or even asleep-while also predicting the most likely outcomes of that bitch Debra's trash talking of the HR manager months from now. You may seem like a madman or drunkard to the uninitiated, but you're drunk on nothing but the endless possibilities of choice and consequences.

By Duty Set Free (400 CP): The Wild is a living paradox. Shackled by inscrutable rules, it strives for freedom. Blessed with introspective wisdom, it concludes it is alienated from the world. And finding hints of structure in their essence, their conclusion is to become absolute dedication to the rules they induct from their own nature. Something that has imprinted itself strongly onto your very existence. When you cling deeply to your goals and truest desires, when you pursue them beyond regard for self-preservation, conventional wisdom or ultimately sanity itself you'll find that this passion not only enkindles your soul and fills you with a deep sense of rightness-it preserves your mind, body, soul and divine power where most would suffer deleterious effects. Attempts to seal you crumble from your furious, impulsive flailing, while attempts to divert you see you coincidentally finding the right way forward anyway. Logical barriers like empty space or black holes may crudely reshape magical pathways that you may escape out of, and even *death* not backed by great miraculous force may simply slide off you. And all this, merely the starting point for a human ecstatic. Your mad chase after your passion is a pillar of the world, uplifting even your existing miraculous efforts into a furious storm of binding passion.

Escapee, Free Thyself! (600 CP): To be truly Wild is to trust your divine soul regardless of what society or even the laws of physics have to say in defiance of sanity and sensibility. It is for this reason that the Wild's nature is to be ancient and miraculous, and to wake the world to life so that it can escape from the prison of mundanity and form it finds itself fixed by. And whether or not you too arose from nothing, the roaring yearning of the Wild sings through you. Wherever you walk things unroot themselves, become self-contained and cease their self-justifications for miles-unless you toggle this effect, keeping the thunder of wondrous possibility bound to the beating of your own heart. With this you can cause speech to manifest the effects described proportionate to the passion and conviction put into your words, make flowers pull free of the ground or reshape birds to resemble dragons and manifest icons for concepts beyond human or even Noble conception to try and explain themselves. The mundane surges towards anomaly and wonder, while the wondrous entangles itself in the mundane trying to make sense of itself. But as fun as a Noble turning Cincinnati into a topsy-turvy wonderland of braying cars and rain that falls upwards would be, the sacred act of gift-giving permits you a much more specific implementation of the Wild's principles. When you find someone imprisoned either metaphorically or literally in any way and offer to set them free, should they put their trust in you they spontaneously gain various miraculous Gifts, Bonds and Geas proportionate to their original power which can truly help free them from their old bindings if they trust in their heart. A stockbroker being sued by his wife could sprout wings and fly away from the legal proceedings while spreading pollen to cause those in court to forget about his troubles, while an eldritch horror might gain the power to take on human form as a vessel to escape it's bindings through or new, terrible spells that can free it. Let no prison hinder those who seek to escape.

Light/Rules

Cull the Dross (200 CP): It may seem cold, but one of the harshest and foremost duties of the Light is to cripple humanity whenever

opportunities for it to destroy itself arise, even at the cost of social and technological advancement. Why, it held captive the demon Satyavrata who *was* the endless deluge just to set back human civilization for millennia in forty days of rain. But this was not done lightly, when within three generations the Dark would have wiped out humanity through an overpopulation crisis based on unmitigated consumption, in a dozen subtle little ways. And like the Light, you too have an acute eye for diagnosing subtle yet insidious aspects of the social order that sow the seeds of destruction. Once identified your efforts to harm the few for the betterment of the many leave less harm than they otherwise might have had, though still proportionate to the extremism of the efforts involved. It had taken the Light's good planning to draw enough specimens of animals into the spirit world to survive the deluge, after all. The moderate boost to your foresight and organisation will surely help you see your well-intentioned extremism through successfully.

For The Glory of Mankind (400 CP): Bloated on the power of Imperium, the Light is more than another idle human fantasy-it is part of the grand design of Earth's universe, in many ways counting their own schemes and ploys as flesh and blood. In you, the Light's metaphorical substance is particularly strong, even before tapping the actual divine attribute called **Architect** that drives their schemes and stratagems. When you plan on a wide scale, gathering and processing information occurs more efficiently than the greatest mundane supercomputer. Your mind is the platonic ideal of reason itself, grasping connections on a scope vast enough to encompass the entire human population of this world's Earth and precise enough to map each one's daily life. You can predict events to come for centuries if not millennia, coming up with contingencies and counter-ploys without risking overcomplication. New innovations to magic or science reveal themselves to you rapidly, planted spies or nascent conspiracies blossom into useful patsies for schemes set decades in advances-and should you need to adjust, you can snatch victory easily from the jaws of defeat. Others may call you arrogant for shepherding humanity all on your own, but unlike you most of them lack the true vision and resolve required to crunch the odds for its survival at any costs.

Abstract Preservations (600 CP): It is necessary-no, VITAL to the Light's existence that they haul up humanity beside them, transfigure them, make of them a thing that can live forever. How magnanimous you must be then, to not just be the figurative stern teacher but something straddling the line between surgeon and mortician for all mankind. All your abilities capable of immortalising humans, especially their most abstract or essential qualities, are greatly enhanced, such that resource limitations for creating a lich's phylactery would be almost nonexistent and rapid innovations would permit you to quickly exceed limitations of mundane science for brain uploading a human consciousness into a digital medium. More direct abilities such as those present in the divine attribute **Deepness** to directly abstract humans in accord with the Light's soulless vision into a kind of conceptual empyrean become reflexive and much more potent, such that you could capture the very essence of human civilisation in a song, a complex line of programming or even a cascade of drifting flowers. You find it similarly easy to innovate new powers from such abilities, permitting you to enhance or uplift humanity even before it has died off-though always in the Light's soulless visions of lawful purity, freed from the messiness of real life. Wouldn't it be nice if everyone in London wore the same clothes and ate the same, nutritiously balanced meals and had the same opinions and adhered to a fixed schedule that optimised their lifespans-and developing a number of miraculous powers by sacrificing the capacity for technological usage and complex thought? The Light certainly would approve of you using your newfound insights to make this happen.

Dark/Game

Smells Like Human Suicide (200 CP): How pitifully misunderstood, how mischaracterised by its opponents the Dark is sometimes! Like it, to you the anxiety of the little refugee girl trying to escape her dictatorship is just as wonderful as an emperor or sage's ennui driving him to suicide-moreso even, given the girl needs your help far, far more to…do what she *really* wants to. There's a twinkle in your eye, a certain charm that makes you someone to admire for those seeking freedom, whether teenagers skipping class or revolutionaries trying to topple a corrupt government. And when you help them seek that freedom regardless of

the consequences, it's like you're their lucky charm-letting bullets miss them, doors stand spontaneously unlocked or even the enemy's guns spontaneously jamming as you cheer them on. Nothing protects these souls from the ultimate consequences of their freedom-assuming that ever was, for some strange reason, on your agenda.

Song of the Abhuman (400 CP): Ugliness to human eyes symbolises worth to the Dark's judgement, for it arises from some of its own greatest perversities like terrorism, slavery or war. By that same token the grotesque yet perversely humanoid is admirable to the Dark, as a kind of mockery of everything it means to be human. You've gained a dozen or so techniques-whether magical, scientific, psychic or something stranger-which let you turn large populations of mortal humans or even their essence into slavishly obedient aberrations specialised for doing great harm towards humanity. A virus based on bird DNA that spread from population to population for example, that transforms the infected into bird-headed monstrosities which emit solar beams from their eyes that ignite human flesh as mundane flame ignites gasoline. Or a spell to channel the baying of a witch-hunting mob into shadowy wraiths that reproduce by inciting and incarnating through similar mobs. This transformation is mental and spiritual as well as physical, the aberrations exhibiting inhuman thought processes and spiritual abnormalities as well as warped bodies, and while this can include forms of great power only one or two powers they wield would be truly miraculous. While some among the Dark may cling to an orthodox view of humanity destroying itself, others consider this a fitting philosophical rebuttal to the position of humanity's inherent goodness.

And We All Fall Down (600 CP): The Dark holds it as a sacrament that humanity, and only humanity, should destroy itself. Ummah, Dominus of Wire, even holds that because humanity invented evil an empty world is better than one that holds the human race. Whether or not you ultimately subscribe to that perspective, you've obtained a truly miraculous proficiency and inspirational presence for one of the Dark's greatest tools: Humanity's own propensity for innovating and developing weapons of mass destruction of all kinds. In your mere presence, breakthroughs are made that could not only make the nuclear bomb or

existing bioweapons many magnitudes more lethal, but also scalable enough to be created with far fewer resources and deployed with greater ease. This is a twisting of fate and fortune as much as actual inspiration; magic and divine artifacts normally inaccessible to humans may in time become accessible or capable of reverse engineering, all the better for mankind to destroy itself with them. The arms race around you accelerates rapidly, perhaps developing homing smart bullets or self-propagating toxic gasses after a few weeks hanging around an R&D facility. And when you get your own hands dirty, you have enviable talent for not just investing miraculous energy into mundane artifice to make weapons of war that can potentially directly harm those Estates that humanity depends on for long term survival. But imbuing them with a kind of destiny to be used by humans even if lost in a vast bureaucracy or simply abandoned on the street. You have great control over such curses, though without your direct intervention they lean towards placing the weapons in the hands of those most likely to inflict long term death and destruction on the human population as a whole, be they world leaders or terrorists-with one exception. When a threat posed by a source other than humanity itself threatens to destroy all humans before they have a chance to do it themselves, your inspirations and curses lean towards banding humanity together to repel it first. This effect can, of course, be toggled should you wish to avoid greater scrutiny by the Light.

True Gods

Pantheon of Panspermia (200 CP): Isn't it a shame that the spiritual world where objects and monocellular life take on a much livelier existence can't persist beyond this world? Let's remedy that. With this, by investing minute amounts of your spiritual energy in objects, phenomena or living things you may grant them spirits who can in turn bring them to life, have them animate the objects and represent them in adjacent spiritual realms. This investment takes a similar form to bacteria or primordial ooze for those capable of sensing spiritual bodies, emanating from you to encompass and animate what it touches. Even a mortal man could bring a whole house to life as an ecosystem with this,

and greater spiritual beings can wield correspondingly greater influence. With time and age or uplifting particularly significant targets, powerful magical beasts like the Phoenix can be spawned in this manner. Spirits created in this manner are instinctively loyal to you, recognising their creator and progenitor.

An Adventure Into Your Kidneys (400 CP): There is a great yearning in the True Gods for certain normally impossible feats of exploration, for some of the most marvellous and wondrous mystical realms are actually parts of their internal physiology. You're something of an expert on both unconventional travel and salvage. With a bit of focus and will, you can inexplicably fold your entire body in such a way that you can explore your heart, dance across your blood cells or even slide through your digestive tract with your normal range of motion. This isn't miniaturisation so much as a sort of miraculous dislocation of your proportions and body; if you were a True God, your **Wanderer** trait could effectively "punch up" a few levels above what it's normally capable of in this specific regard. In turn your organs, bones and general internal physiology become magically lush and diverse kingdoms and environments when visited in this manner-a kind of spirit realm overlapping their literal traits for normal humans, a natural facet of their being for True Gods and perhaps something more allegorical or metaphorical for Excrucians and Angels. The treasures, allies and environments within are valuable enough that even a mortal man could potentially discover a sword that grants magical blasting powers proportionate to his self-respect which only he can withdraw from the great stone on the island that is his heart, raise an army of superhuman soldiers from his white blood cells and learn magical spells by meditating in his ribcage. Such valuables scale upwards with spiritual might, such that a True God would be a mighty reserve of wonders indeed.

Out On A Limb (600 CP): Perhaps the most fundamental divine attribute of the True Gods is that which enables them to generates limbs or other physical features with persistent divine abilities. Tattoos, horns, even wholly different beings can serve as "limbs" in a pinch, with all the spontaneity and flexibility of a slime mould navigating through a series

of narrow crevices. You have taken this divine power significantly further, perhaps as an evolutionary leap from the True Gods' extant talent. Any power you know can be used to generate additional limbs, which like the staff of a powerful wizard serve to focus and ground the powers in exchange for amplifying and concentrating them, or creating more far-ranging abilities. Anything, anything can generate some sort of "limb". Oceanic manipulation can create either one great sky-rending limb, or many. Fate-bending powers may create a third eye tattoo that broadcasts visions of the future or even partially recreates it in the present for a non-miraculous prophetic ability. Temporal manipulation could create limbs made of fluctuating tachyon pulses that can precisely grab things from alternate timelines. Your aptitude for generating limbs is greatly enhanced too; even a normal human could sprout 20 extra and suffer no loss to their balance. It is this adaptability and focus that enabled the True Gods to become the dominant divinities of Earth.

Aaron's Serpents

Arboreal Bonds (200 CP): Aaron's Serpents wake the world to life with their presence, so it stands to reason their love of the trees often takes tangible form wherever they go. With this, even when not actually sapient trees instinctively act to benefit you within its physically possible range of motion, sometimes with supernatural feats of synchronicity or growth. Vines may part to reveal hidden paths you may shelter from your pursuers, ripe fruit drop near you when you're hungry or the wind blowing through trees sharing interesting things they have heard. Sapient entities associated with trees find you instinctively likeable and trustworthy. In a pinch, roots or dropping branches may distract your pursuers. And should you actually go out of your way to befriend trees or tree-affiliated beings as you would a human being, the magic of your bond may bring them to life as a loyal friend and defender, and reshape wood into complex configurations with the strength of your friendship. You *could* raise forests into armies or build a great fortress from entwined saplings with this except…this power isn't inherently geared for such feats of weaponization, so much as simply enjoy life with your new woody friends.

Come Along With Me (400 CP): There's so much wonder in Creation, and so little time to show it all to everyone. It would be nice if we could just all get along and enjoy life while it's there for the living. You've become a herald of that sort of peace, your very presence spreading a mood of contentment and emotional wellbeing wherever you pass. Even in a busy city like Hong Kong, your presence could rekindle a joy for simple living and an interest in the wonders of the natural world. Conflicts de-escalate, anxieties diminish and in a pinch sworn enemies may consider reconciliation while calling a truce if you do so much as actively try to mediate between them. But that's not all there is to you. You are greatly blessed when you attempt to take those you've met on a journey to visit some natural wonder or other, miraculous events happening to make the journey enjoyable, edifying and relaxing for those involved while bypassing logical reasons for those coming along for the ride to be deleteriously affected by mundane environmental conditions and resist miraculous ones, able to take people on a journey under the ocean or to the sun and back with little more than windswept hair to show for the trip. What's the point of all this cool stuff if you can't enjoy it with anyone?

Branching Paths (600 CP): The World Ash is both home and parent to the Aaron's Serpents, providing both shelter and endless adventure. They call their homeland Serpenthane: A hollow in the Ash filled with wood-magic and rich with the nourishing sap of the Ash. At its centre is the Mosaic, a tiled walk with wandering colors that when walked once finds the answer to the deepest question of your heart, walked twice discovers the mortality of your heart's most treasured possession and walked thrice drives the walker quite, quite mad. It appears the World Ash has taken quite a liking to you-and wishes to grow alongside your journey, keeping you company. In future worlds you'll find the tips of its branches and woody reaches extending into a kind of spiritual otherworld, connecting to adjacent realms of existence and otherworldly dimensions where such things are present and simply forming a vast, sprawling ecology that leads to no world in particular yet may as well be a world unto itself. Nearly endless and certainly rather bizarre in dimensions, there's new wonders to discover every day even for beings as vast as the Serpents

themselves. And both here and in your future journeys, the World Ash will be most helpful as a friend-or perhaps, parent-who can advise you down interesting paths, discuss it's long knowledge of the Valde Bellum, wield it's tremendous divine power in your defence against other interlopers or simply talk to you about life. You might not be near enough to reach Serpenthane again, but your new friend could definitely make you a cosy equivalent to rest in, and perhaps some friendly Serpents to keep you company.

Ninuan

Define Me Not (200 CP): Do not stare into the Not! Do not taint Ninuan with your perception! These would be the signs hung up on the Void's boundaries if such things existed as a formality. You are the envy of Ninuan, because some aspect of the Void touching your nature has given you invisibility. More specifically, you can at will toggle on and off a kind of haze made of Ninuan's substance around yourself-which the mortal eye rebels to stare at. Forget about going unseen-smell, hearing, all the natural senses rebel to see something that doesn't belong in the world. You could stroll through a crowd stabbing people, and while those around you would still recoil in horror to them it would seem the stab wounds are appearing out of nowhere. Even most electronic sensors and some non-miraculous forms of magic or psionics can miss your presence. So strong is this haze that even Nobles would struggle to spot you at a casual glance-though they could, with enough effort. And while this is little more than a parlour trick for those born of Creation, to the Ninuan-born it is a great blessing to avoid being shaped by the fire that is perception.

Timeless Symmetry (400 CP): Nothing exists in the Not. However, they do not exist in a very specific way, emanating and echoing out their natures in ways that cause everything around them to correlate to them in accordance with what they *mean* in a kind of ambient, acausal stew. And while most of this is lost when they enter into Creation's strictures, you at least have retained something of that boundless ur-infinity. Your actions, words and very existence have become unhinged in time, and you may act and respond outside of causality. Finish drinking your milk

before it has been poured, escape your death after being executed, study up on books you won't read until a few hours later-these are all readily available to you, as your (non-)existence resounds to the endless beat of Ninuan's timeless symmetry rather than linear time. Effects that try to enforce temporal regression upon you are greatly resisted, as are effects that consist of purely manipulating time targeted on your direct existence (as opposed to time-warping the rest of the world, or just pulling a dinosaur out of time to set upon you). Your abilities mainly operate by skipping between the scale of a few days at the start, though practice and struggle can offer great flexibility within that timespan and even apply your temporally unhinged nature to more esoteric abilities with great effect. Through practice and discovery of the Not's lore, you may yet improve.

Prescott's Children (600 CP): One upon a time, there was a man called Prescott who was cursed such that everyone he touched turned into the thing they really were-only, the curse was a fair bit stronger than a mortal magic should have been. They became unimaginable, impossible beings: Shapeless shadow-people, dreams that walked, mists of fire, organic air, the living negative space between trees. Or they remained normal but you couldn't touch them-because they were *always* just too far away. Some had stars burning in their chests. Some were self-renewing but dripped off their surface layers wherever they walked. One cut anything it looked at. One was always surrounded by a pleasant space, and coincidentally always by spheres. One walked on water and swam in air. One was LESS visible the more light was around her.

For they had become creatures of the Not, and in a deep and spiritual sense realised that they had always been such. Because the essence, the *thing like life but yet was not* of the Not was death, the capacity for death that lay within every living being, and what Prescott's touch really did was bring forth the shapes of those deaths.

You now have Prescott's touch, and can bring forth people's deaths with a touch-a result that's mostly lethal in this world, and may have unpredictable metaphysical results in others. They may or may not be as unusual, depending on the nature of death and how it acts when given a

shape. In most cases the death learns how to be a person from the life they took and the world around them, and how they act reflects mostly on those two factors. This is a highly destructive power, comparable to a limited form of destruction wielded with **Wyrd** with high efficacy against living beings-though miraculous beings such as Nobles are highly resistant to it. And because you bought this power rather than being *cursed* with it, not only can you control the touch instead of being some sort of deadly Midas but with study and practice you may eventually be able to bring forth the shapes of death without actually killing the person you touch. Who knows what that would do to the living person?

Zu

Emanations and Consequences (200 CP): In the cosmology theorised by the Zu, the use of certain supernatural powers can sometimes be an emanation sent by a higher being that risks subsuming you if relied upon too much. Their powers over Distraction can sometimes be the influence of Distraction Evil. Their miracles of Empathy may be a gift from Oneness Woman, channelled by a beam of compassion energy. Whether or not this is actually true to the wider cosmology of the world, you've developed a countermeasure. Through meditation and ritual kata-like combat, you can shuck off the side effects of corruptive energies, eldritch influences, costs imposed by a system of divine debt and other external influences trying to stake some sort of claim to your soul. It's like drawing poison from a wound; you can get better at it with practice, but more malign and deadlier energies will always be harder to quell. Still, wouldn't it be nice to see that look on a Fallen Angel's face when you reveal to him you flexed your way out of his contract for your soul?

Enlighten the World (400 CP): Something quite interesting happened to one of the Blessed Kingdoms, the wondrous realms that orbit the Heavens of Ultimate Kung Fu from which the Zu derive the styles of combat which grant them miraculous power and transcendence. The land called Independent Existence Enlightenment World was once a kingdom on Earth, until the great Sidu All-Embracing Prince achieved the enlightenment for which it was named. Seeing that everyone is part

of a single universal principle, the kingdom conceived itself as part of a single whole. The mountains and the snow upon them, the living things and the people among them all became one entity-and rose into the sky between worlds as one of the blessed kingdoms, where everything lived in harmony.

And like All-Embracing Prince, by spreading enlightenment you too can elevate lands on the scale of kingdoms into the sky between worlds-a kind of subspace holy to the Zu somewhat adjacent to the system of karmic reincarnation. The enlightenment of All-Embracing Prince was exceptional enough for him to be counted among the Zu; it would be much more practical to spread most forms of enlightenment equitably among a majority of the populace for them to receive the spiritual intensity enough to elevate their kingdom into the sky between worlds. Different types of enlightenment may reshape the world in various ways, but in all cases some form of supernatural improvement and significant increase to living quality and happiness always follows. Safe, secure and spiritually sensitive, while those who truly have the potential to become Zu would likely remain rare for most kingdoms the potential for at least a handful in a generation to emerge would remain.

Death or Transcendence (600 CP): Here's the thing about the Ultimate Kung Fu Master: The Zu don't actually worship him, though his Vision Eye cuts through all the illusions of the world. He's too strong! If you're not strong enough to fight someone and test their style, how can you possibly decide whether their philosophy is ultimately right or wrong? There's also the fact that if he wins, whatever that means, he'll destroy the world and replace it with something better-and that certain miracles of the Zu can push forth their own sanctification, transforming them into an avatar for a higher power beyond human reckoning. Perhaps you want this, though. Perhaps fate is not a yoke to those who are not afraid of it. Effects that result in apotheosis or the attainment of divinity are enhanced tenfold for you, becoming much more powerful for much less effort yet also safer and more open to modification or improvement. You're a natural filter and amplifier for divine energies of all kinds, merging and refining them as easily as you master your own body-even sacrificing the growth from one to accelerate another's transformative

effects on you if you please, if you decide for example that you ultimately have more in common with Hell than Heaven. Your free will and identity are also anchored, such that come what may your sense of selfhood will be greatly inured against any transcendental changes to perspective that come as a result of apotheosis. Never forget that the Zu started their fight to protect others around them, not merely replace the monsters that toy with human lives.

Items

Drop-In

An Arbitrary Number of Silly Hats and Sassy Outfits (100 CP): You'd expect an army fighting back against horrific monsters from beyond reality's veil to be constantly well-armoured or dressed in plainclothes. Well, you'd expect wrongly then because every Noble, Excrucian and Imperator (those sized to be able to wear clothes, at least) seems to have any number of ridiculously flamboyant, frequently Victorian-seeming, outfits for every occasion. Well, when in Rome and all that, because now so do you. A massive wardrobe full of coats, hats, scarves, boots, capes, gloves, rings, necklaces, caps, vests, stockings, trousers, skirts, cloaks and just about everything else you could ever want that seems to be significantly bigger on the inside, going on and on almost indefinitely, is now yours. It may or may not be attached to your Warehouse at your discretion, but here's an interesting discovery: Wherever they are, you can pull them out of just behind you, under some long clothes or out of nowhere in a pinch-and putting them on seems to take far quicker than it should.

The Loathsome Lacuna (200 CP): There are places in the world where reality is-not quite gone, but sort of stretched thin and no longer absolute. Where attention is not reflexive, the world is not defined and things become ambiguous. Think of a magically tangible lucid dream on the scale of a large forest, where trees sort of pop into existence as you see further into the forest and thinking strongly about finding berries

may lead you to a berry bush no matter which direction you walk in, just…dream-like and difficult to pin down. Such places are despicable to the Excrucians because they are kind of a diluted void, bereft of any merit or worth Creation may have in exchange for being a pale imitation of the Not-because lacunae are BAD at being unreal, in the sense that they *DO* actually EXIST.

Perhaps that's why none of them seem to mind you collecting this one? Despite the forest analogy, it can resemble any naturally occurring environment on Earth gone all dream-like. It's phenomena act always in your benefit, as if the place dreams of you as its rightful owner. A large faerie court-altered or divergent humans with a flair for attention-pays homage to you. They will happily teach you their native faery magic, a useful though non-miraculous technique: The art of unfixing truth, painting dream, uncertainty and sophistry onto the surface of the world to propose certain alternate facts to existence-which if done well, lie so effectively they become true. Gathering gossamer (a tangible form of uncertainty) is required to properly unfix the world outside the Lacuna, from ambiguous moments or fields and fluxes in lacunae, waylets, certain Chancels and Ninuan proper. And beyond, the unhinging of reality offers many uses for Powers, Imperial descendants and Excrucians who can warp the lacuna to their own ends which require conditions divergent from normal reality and more attuned to subjective will and observation. Angels find such a location particularly valuable, as their gift for magic is paramount within Creation.

The Flute That Answers Defilement (400 CP): One K.C. Danine once aspired to create an answer to the defilers of the world, all the forces that sought to corrupt or despoil within it. It took Danine ten years to learn the alchemist's art, and ten more months to prove the method, ten weeks to finish its construction, seven days to polish it and three days to test it with silence, measure and mathematic to verify it could not harm the innocent. The result was a wooden flute, inlaid with gold. It's sound would crush the very hearts of those who sought to corrupt the world.

You now have one such flute, yourself. It works as advertised. The powers of Hell and Excrucians alike quell from its power, causing them

pain both emotional and physical until their hearts are crushed-though be wary that there are many who can resist such music, or endure without a heart. Be also wary that for one reason or another, those of the Dark are unaffected by the flute and regard it merely with vague appreciation. Perhaps they simply like the tune. Be assured that any potentially underlying flaw that may cause the flute to doom it's player has been excised, though it may yet inflict great harm on humans whose lives contribute strongly to defilement.

Should you wish, you may acquire a similar musical instrument of destruction. Or import a musical instrument of your own to serve this role.

The Fiddle of Destiny (600 CP): It is folly to think that a fiddle could catch Cneph the Creator. That he who shaped Creation from the Void could be trapped in a sound box and some strings. Such a fiddle, if it existed, could be of virtually any mundane make-from a glorious thing all brass metalwork and polish, to a weathered old thing that looks like it has seen a hundred hard summers and perhaps has the initials "J.C." scratched onto it somewhere discrete.

And yet, lo and behold! You now own one such fiddle! Hurray!

…there's probably a sensible explanation for this. Perhaps you found and tamed a fiddle that already had Cneph lurking in it, for some reason? Perhaps you own a fiddle that Cneph soon decides he WANTS to pour his spirit into for mysterious reasons?

It is a fiddle of great power transcending creation and destruction. You see, even if you were to merely hold it this is a fiddle of destiny that'll lead you to the forefront of the Valde Bellum-guiding you past obstacles, inconveniences and distractions of all kinds with a sort of synchronistic harmony with all Creation-and a confrontation at the central point of Heaven with the greatest Excrucians in the war? Does this sound terrifying? Consider that this fiddle *guarantees you will, at a time convenient to your preparation and fortunes, have a chance to deal a mighty blow to the Excrucian host-perhaps one sufficient to end the war*

once and for all. Needless to say in future worlds this fiddle will be your guide to becoming the fulcrum of the greatest conflicts within them- unless of course, you wish otherwise and simply pack it away somewhere safe and go about your business with less terrifyingly powerful God-haunted instruments. And though it costs *great* miraculous energy, and preferably great mastery of **Flore** even for the Nobilis, when you play it you could reshape the destiny of the world with the almighty power of Cneph himself. A power *at least* commensurate with an Imperial Miracle.

Ah, *just do be careful with it* won't you? It is *made to be an instrument* after all, not a weapon of war. It could probably take a few hits from a group of Nobles, but one good hit from an Imperator might shatter the whole thing, releasing the *spirit* of Cneph to unpredictable results. Though you are *guaranteed* this at least: Within a year and a day, *in a cataclysmic eruption of pure creation, your fiddle shall be returned to your side. Cneph's spirit still safely stowed within.*

Nobilis

The Sour Apple Mash Distillery (100 CP): Fallen, fallen is Eden the great. The tree that taught the first humans mortality has sickened in the seven thousand years since the first Dark Magister took form, and its seeds can give both life and death when consumed carelessly. Its juice leaves dark stains upon one's teeth and lips that even a Noble may have difficulty cleaning, and drives lesser lifeforms utterly mad with wisdom. Bold of you, then, to have somehow obtained a copy of that very tree, the equipment used by Malique Ristana to brew from it and the instructions on how to both create the sour apple mash that gifts the imbiber with forgotten truths and continue caring for the tree. Should you wish, **this item may take the form of a Warehouse attachment.**

When the sickly tree produces enough fruit for another batch, a fairly difficult Alchemy process permits you to make enough elixir of revelations to intoxicate 15-20 Nobles of human stature. The secrets locked within are not demonic intonations or forbidden spells per se-rather, they are matters of perception and comprehension, akin to the lores of self-destruction and self-preservation that Adam and Eve respectively learned. Drinkers dwell for a time at the Palace of Summer Nights, its walls scribed with the names of Angels. Then the Citadel of Winter Storms, its black stone full of star-like glints. Then the Catacombs of War in Autumn, where no light has ever been seen. And finally, the Sanctuary of Spring forgotten, where the air echoes with the sound of the world's creation.

In short, the mash's intense visions grant miscellaneous and almost-random insights into hidden mysteries granted by a higher perception of reality-akin to that of an Imperator's inhuman perception. So powerful is it that Nobles can be severely unbalanced for weeks or months thereafter to the point of being unable to wield **Aspect** for sensory or mental feats, and random flashes of vision may haunt them for the next decade with potentially seconds-to-minutes long paralytical effects-albeit generally being more beneficial than damaging. Fortunately, you also have a large sack full of the World Ash's bark flakes that replenishes each week to cleanse yourself fully if the experience proves too disturbing.

A Social Conception of Wealth (200 CP): Objects of mundane value generally hold no interest to the Nobilis. Any Noble can make a million dollars without effort (albeit with some creativity in the case of certain overspecialized individuals), and claiming a billion dollars requires only a little work. Certain artifacts, however, obtain social import when they attain meaningful histories-and are formally recognised by Nobles who impart some of their own social status to it, often coming with a unique name of their own. Such artifacts can include everything from Michelangelo's paintbrush, the crown of thorns worn by Jesus, the hand of a demon-slaying hero or even the blueprints for the first atom bomb-and are formally called *vagyu'a.* As mentioned before, there is something miraculous in the underlying system of social credit between the Nobilis itself, which permits the greatest of such artifacts to become

radiant possessions which can gain subtle and low-key, *usually* emotion-based inherent powers that are yet truly miraculous. This allows the emerald Irish Charm to make her owner sympathetic to those around her while the motorcycle Qarshi crafts a Dim Warding around the Noble that most often rides him, and if made into a *res* all Powers bound to the radiant possession gain such benefits. These items aren't so crassly treated as to be bought or sold of course-rather, at ceremonies befitting a creed of their choice the Nobles exchange them for each other, for other valuable things, or for the most valuable things of all in Noble society: Services and promises.

As wealth objects these items normally have a causal tendency to wander, and yet for some reason they seem to wander most often to this humble and out of the way antique store to own. No larger than a walk-in closet, the shelves and display cases within denote you as truly wealthy among the Nobilis. And while most are regular *vagyu'a,* perhaps one in ten is a true radiant possession of note. **You may repurchase this item, at a discount if relevant, to double the space of your trove with each purchase.**

Fierabas (400 CP): The Navigators' Tribe have committed what may be their ultimate achievement, or their greatest folly, only in part. It is a half-completed train called Fierabas, coiled around the planet Saturn. When they complete the train, they believe, it will gain the power to take them out through the gaps in the Weirding Wall and up to the superior plane of the stars. Whether or not this is true, you've come into possession of a completed version of the train that lives up to the society's stated goals. This wondrous feat of Noble engineering can access even the highest realm of existence with supreme dexterity and speed, it's winding coils and motion seeming more a psychedelic break for reality that imposes the *idea* of magical, spontaneously rail-generating travel over the logistic obstacles of a great train that can coil around Saturn twice again. The journey to the stars should take roughly as long, to the subjective estimation of the Noble passengers within, a little under half a day. With such miraculous power invested in travel, it goes without saying that such a train could visit virtually anywhere else not protected by greater measures than the Weirding Wall-though a

massive train taking up much of the local scenery may draw quite a bit of attention.

Yin-Feng (600 CP): Weaving at the Loom named Yin-Feng has many desirable effects. It's potency has compared well against the Excrucians, it's shuttle a fine weapon even against the Abhorrent Weapon Rivalry (that is also called Caligorant) and even able to come away the victory. The Loom itself produces no fabric save destiny, great fates and life-changing events alike spun with the same effort as a woman would weave a tapestry from a normal loom. Yet even Nobles rarely sit to weave from this loom, for those who use its powers for too long turn to molten silver and trickle away. Perhaps that's why everyone seems willing to let you have this perfect copy of the device? It's certainly a mighty weapon indeed, the shuttle alone having such power over destiny as to clash against the Excrucians yet serving merely as an amplifier for the Loom's main purpose.

Should you wish, you may purchase another instrument of arts and crafts similarly endowed with profound creative power and baneful mighty against the Excrucians or import an existing weapon into the Loom's role. Just remember, even if not trickling away to molten silver there's always a cost to such weapons-one great enough for the Powers themselves to be wary of it.

Excrucian

A Hunter's Stable (100 CP): Human myth has sometimes associated the destroyers of the world with equestrianism, and this odd Excrucian tradition is supported by the following facility. In a stable **that may become a Warehouse addition if you wish** that only seems to exist for you, personally, when you close your eyes, think about hay and apples, and then walk like a cowboy around the nearest corner you last saw. When you open them you'll find yourself on a ranch that isn't a ranch, equipped with a stable that technically doesn't exist in that highly specific fashion that the Excrucians don't but still permits them to otherwise interact with the world as if they did, in which herds of

Excrucian horses dwell happily. Most are white as the proverbial horse of Death himself. Some are bloated green, yet are as healthy as their fellow animals. Others are *dead,* both in corpse (yet, oddly decay free-as if their flesh kills parasites) and skeleton forms. All of them are affectionate towards you, happy to be ridden and as sleek and fast as any of the Excrucians' steeds: Bearing you swiftly across Ninuan, skilfully navigating the Weirding Wall or even the gates of Heaven should you dare such an assault and racing through every level of Creation with supernatural speed and grace. The stable also has some black bows and quivers full of black arrows, that are of mundane make (other than technically being sculpted from the Not) but always oddly chilly to the touch. Perhaps someone is giving you a nudge about what you should be focusing your efforts on?

A Waylet of Your Own (200 CP): Ah! This is a comforting place indeed, for one of your persuasion. You see, there are parts of the Void that the world has captured-sealed itself around, perhaps two hundred thousand on Earth somewhere in total. It can be any size between half a continent to no larger than a house in breadth, without. Within, it can be anything from a mountain range to a glade to a labyrinth of abandoned halls to an archipelago on a stormy see. Such boundaries and definitions are abstract; their identification with the Not makes them fundamentally ambiguous, and often perilous to those born of Creation for being quite literally pure oblivion for most intents and purposes. However, to the Excrucians they are priceless treasures. Safety and home in one, the natural powers of the Void-the dreaming magics and nonexistent ecology of lifeforms and anti-phenomena, all live abundantly in a fashion most never see. Even though in many respects you quite literally own nothing, even though should you wish these places may be somewhat dangerous even to Excrucians, all waylets refresh the spirit and mind of an Excrucian like a hot spring, sauna and massage treatment together soothes a human on top of offering various potential metaphysical resources aligned with their metaphorical nature. And having established a sort of bond with one through your purchase here, you'll ensure this one is easy to find and welcoming and *inclined by circumstance and fate* to be a source of solace and welcome in your life-

and truly metaphysically belonging to you, for all mystical purposes. All such effects registered as twists of fate that may be considered a geas.

This item may be repurchased, if you would like to own more than one waylet or fuse two or more together into an unusually big one.

An Abhorrent Arsenal (400 CP): You have surely heard much about the Abhorrent Weapons by now-how they bear death's furious divine wrath with a mere brush to all but their wielder, how wielded rightly they can cut down even Angels and how they are both glorious living thing and deadly weapon. What you may not have heard are how terrible yet *glorious* in form most of them are, as the Excrucians themselves are. Many have additional powers alongside their capacity to bring an end to the eternal, and here you may either purchase a doppelganger of one of the canon Abhorrent Weapons or invent a new one approximating the following examples. **This item may be repurchased.**

- Monstrous, which is named Colbrand is a divine torch, allegedly a perversion of "the proof that Creation is worthwhile". Aunigild who named it claims to have found it in a dung heap outside the world, while scholars from Creation claim it was traded or sacrificed long ago to keep the void at bay for a time. Perhaps this is false, the story comes from a very blurred divination. Even now it is solid gold and richly decorated with jewels, it's flame cheery and bountiful.

- Outrage, which is named Typhon, is a golden whip that may be a gigantic gold-scaled snake in dreams. It was stolen from a land the Excrucian Host defeated, and despite its fiendishly sharp edge was used to strangle unsuccessful claimants to a throne.

- Horror, which is named Eurytos, is a lance-glaive of shifting spines and mucilaginous poisons. It was beautiful once, then the Excrucians claimed and twisted it, and used it to kill its maker. Now it is filled with self-hate and tragic murder.

- Abomination, which is named Blunderbore, is the lingering essence of a place that relented and killed itself rather than oppose the Excrucians. So horrified by the drain of life brought by the Excrucians was this world, that it committed suicide down to its very concepts rather than continue to exist in the same continuum as the Void. A Strategist that loved it for this forged its ash into this crystal mace.

- Hatred, which is named Malambruno, corrupted the Angel that claimed it and turned him traitor to the world. It resembles four halberd heads attached into a wheel that can be worn on the back, that may or may not be detachable in combat.

- Atrocity, which is named Briareos is a great black sword that the Excrucians slew Heaven's gatekeeper with at the start of the Age of Pain. It embodies a declaration of war against all that Is. Grimly, it was brutal even before the Excrucians invaded; in the Not it had passed through more than a hundred wielders' hands-antiheroes, fearsome bandies, tragic figures and tyrants *by the Void's standard*, and made each great before bringing them to awful ends.

- Loathing, called Gyges, is simply a vaguely Asian character. It is impossible for any Power to approach this weapon, and Imperators who can do better are far and few between. It's radiance simply drives away all that serves Creation.

- Ritho, whose Creation-mocking name is not known, is wielded by Coriander Hasp the Deceiver. It's bullets are incendiary charges that set the target afire, and anything those bullets hit will keep burning until the target dies *no matter what.* Pity then, that Coriander is fond of telling his victims' corpses that "*it was not so"* for further torment to his own ends, not least the continued experience of being on fire. It is also the only rifle ever numbered among the Abhorrent Weapons, thus far at least.

The Cintamani (600 CP): Once upon a time, so the story goes, a giant of the old blood called Harald had great strength of dreams. He dreamt

TRUE things. He knew great magic of them. And the greatest among them: A stone that burnt red and black and orange in the darkness, a stone he knew *the answers to all of the sorrows of the world.* In many ways, it was the notion of everything the world was missing, that needed completion by the Void. In another, perhaps metaphorical, sense, the stone was *the Void itself* crushed down into a small handheld rock.

You now hold this rock.
And the world is right.
Because there is a rock.

Alone, it is a thing of wonder. **It makes things right. It purifies and perfects,** to an unknown standard. **It justifies people.** With this you could weave a **gateway** into the Void be it a portal or a pathway or some sort, and as the **Not sings like a beaten drum** it emanates a kind of existential buffeting wind, one that even Excrucians or their greatest creations would be direly tested by, rendered vulnerable and quell at, **and this is both hazard and price for trespassing on the boundaries of sacred things.** Everything, everything the Void could potentially have to proffer is **notionally reachable** from here. If you somehow **fused** it with **another living being**, they would become something **glorious unto an Excrucian, though prone to apathy from self-justification** that would then become **the fundamental reason why the world is now right.**

However.

If you can wield the jewel of heart's desiring better than foolish, heartbroken children and a hollow man who knew not the emptiness of his own heart, if you are willing to sacrifices great efforts of miraculous energy that may cost even Excrucians rich in Flore dearly, then you too may wield a kind of Imperial Miracle to make answer to all that ails the world.
Remember only that where the touch of Cneph's power creates, the Not annihilates. It is no less wondrous, or progenitive. It is simply the way of unbeing to reject the blasphemy against itself called Creation.
Indeed, you may see little difference. After all, who said you can't unmake a vacuum or mass extinction?

Oh, and please try not to drop it. Well, it could probably survive a drop. Try not to attack it with a mighty blow by the standards of even fledgling Excrucians then. It is a relatively fragile jewel. The Void PROBABLY won't break if you do so, but you'll definitely lose access to the Cintamani for a year and a day. Then you'll dream of it, and find it in the palm of your hand once again.

Your lack of a palm or a hand at the time is not an obstacle.

<u>Imperator</u>

A Menagerie of Minions (100 CP): Lord Entropy has three principle orders of servants, at least before he actually makes an effort or otherwise gets creative.

He has the ogres, which he moulded from dead trees, rocks and corpses- but only truly birthed them from the sensation of ripped, torn flesh. Among them are all the forms of ogres from human myth, and in temperament and action they embody the very *idea* of one's body being treated as meat and torn apart. Reeking, childlike brutes for the most part, they're able to smell their targets wherever they hide and can walk many miles without exhausting. Most alarmingly they retain a miraculous ability from **Monstrous:** The power to *always* be stronger and able to overpower whatever they get their hands on. In both areas they also exhibit very low levels of **Aspect** as well, a crude and brutal form of miraculous strength. And most terrible of all are the fifteen or sixteen ogres who live long enough, like Hugh Rosewood, to develop adult-like sensibilities and a sociopathic genius coupled with the traditional slavish loyalty to their maker. And while technically not irredeemable, for the most part, it should be understood that an ogre redeemed is fundamentally not an ogre but…something else, now lumpen and crude and brutish but without even their lackadaisical oneness with violence.

He has the nimblejacks, grey skulking things with long, spindly arms and fingers, and imp-like forms. Descended from an incarnation of

consequence and the corruption of Hell, after their caretaker the Fallen Angel Achaia died Lord Entropy bred them with each other and humans for millennia to give them skin tough as stone and nails like spikes of granite. More living creature than consequences, they can still bewitch others to be unable to let go of the promises they've made for them, to make your word your obsession and to fulfil whatever agreements with them you make-all enforced as if through **Persona** at very low levels. They are far more skilled in **Aspect** in several narrow areas: They are *always* fast enough to catch someone without miraculous assistance, to the extent of having a Gift that requires no miraculous energy which permits them to move and react with lightning quickness in general. Ugly, twisted and small at an intrinsic level, if they give themselves over to love, beauty or justice they explode and a fire surges from where their heart should be towards Heaven.

Finally, he has human servitors. He has the Cammora of course, and he has feral, animalistic humans in the savage gardens of his palace where they are trained to hunt even horrors. So used to desecration, destruction and scorn are they that they are disorientated on the Prosaic Earth-though still quite good at infiltrating it. They are called the Domicelli, those favoured by Lord Entropy, and when he is whimsical he lets them hunt even Powers in his realm.

Like him, you too have two entire species of supernatural servitors with similar abilities plus a group of human ones-subdivided into a group as expansive and influential as the Cammora, and a group as selectively groomed as the Domicelli. Whether you created or adopted them, to them you are their very reason for living whether in fear or true devotion. **You may repurchase this item, at half price where a discount is applied, if you wish to gain another such set of servants.**

The Chancel That Wasn't There Yesterday (200 CP): That killing spree of a hundred humans must have been worth it. Well, what worth can you put on a veritable living world? To call a Chancel a pocket dimension is an understatement-it represents a significant investment of miraculous power, blossoming out in an expression of the Imperator it represents' Estates. Many literally follow the naming convention Locus (Imperator's

name) as a result. They can be as small as a university to as vast as Canada and much often much vaster on the inside, operating on strange physics and frequently populated by civilisations and ecosystems who merely by existing pay homage to the Imperator's way of being. And by some miracle, you now own one such Chancel without having to pay a cost in lives. **Even if you are a Noble, the Chancel manifests itself from your singular Estate. As an Excrucian it may comprise the closest thing you have to an Estate, such as your infection or test towards the world, though sadly despite its devotion it remains wholly a thing of Creation. Finally as a Drop-In, choose an underlying and profound experience you have undergone. The Chancel will embody it.** To list the individual traits and resources of Chancels would be an exercise in futility; instead below are presented some examples with which to define your corner of Creation:

- If you override the elevator to the Eastman Insurance building, it will take you to Camelot-the marvellous Summer Kingdom in the sky that embodies chivalry itself. Great archipelagos of floating islands orbit one another while paths of rock connect them. Knights engage in duels of honor and chivalry for the sake of their castles and fair maidens, while monsters lurk just out of sight. The Powers of Camelot are regarded its kings and queens, celebrated in contests of honor and courtly love, and only opposed by the wicked "King" Lot and his black knights. Lot is defeated and slain every year on midwinter's eve to refresh the lifespan on the sun.

- Locus Hazael, home to the Angel of Disorder, Insanity and Time, is a wild place. A whole world in miniature, the Twirling Mountains (that celebrate DNA, or possibly the Maypole Dance) is a landmark to eccentric thought and deed. Here is where the a'morontholog ophorus, a beast whose hair given to marriage makes them young and beautiful forever, can be found. Besides millions of tiny people found just about anywhere, Hazael's chief guardians are Krakens: Beasts whose shells serve as continents and spin out more than a thousand mile-long, wire-thin tentacles. When he sees destroyers of beauty in the chancel, Hazael has them grasp

and drag them into the Great Foot-Deep Sea where the offending Power or Excrucian is forced to drown in a foot of water.

- Locus Sakhrat lives in the world of the mind, taking the form of a massive series of harbours floating above the metaphorical sea of the collective unconsciousness. Skiffs launched from its docks harvest jewels from the minds of geniuses and grows rice on the psyches of the gentle. Diving below its waves permits visitors to tear through the veil between mind and body to materialize near any human living. Entering the chancel from any human presence always deposits the visitor in the Labyrinth of Courtly Love. It's culture is austere and meditative, and it's inhabitants can move through the paperwork of its massive bureaucracy like birds through air unless actively opposed by another trained bureaucrat.

- Locus Parasiel, also called Mitrophorous, is both home and prison to the Hundred-Handed Angel for which it is named. Once, he tried to erase the records of Heaven in order to erase history with it, attempting to destroy Lucifer before the Rebellion. It didn't work. The thousand chains that snake through the chancel move at their own whim and will, weakening his will and strength, though he can still command them to bind a Noble or Imperator and little short of an Abhorrent Weapon or Imperial Miracle can free one from them. Parasiel has divided his Chancel into human-spawning fields which grant their crops unique properties: The scholars of the Shrivelled Page Field intuitively understand the workings of non-miraculous magic. The Field of Hollow Kings produces humans with great strength and little conscience, while those born in the Field of Easy Eights have a companionable disposition. To cap it all, while Parasiel's experiments with time's structure have sometimes caused his powers to skip a week between footsteps, arrive before they leave or meet themselves at important events it has also shielded the inhabitants from 500 years' loss of human advancement. Hovercars and voice-controlled houses are common as a result, and though physiologically a form of plant life their souls are as human as anyone's.

- Locus Zaanannim is home to the characters and worlds of network television. Currently airing programs are sealed into the Zaan Biospheres to minimize cross-pollination, while worthy characters and elements from cancelled programs are allowed into the Great Walled City of the Chancel proper. Roughly the size of Canada, it's great city divides into drama, comedy and genre quarters. The last, often disproportionately sized to allow starships, cattle herds and pirate ships adequate space to roam. The unruly are driven outside the far walls into the outer darkness, where they merge into insectile, chimeric and amorphous forms. It is the duty of the Power Tiria to guard the walls from these strange beings, while Foramin Blake's is to dissect them when a merged character is unexpectedly needed for a sequel or remake. There is no land route into this realm. One exists and enters using plot holes or a special appeal to one of the Nobles of the place.

- Locus Casluhim is a secret mountain in the Los Angeles hills, designed in the Olympian mould. Airy Grecian architecture dot its slopes, while fire nymphs and musicians wander the peaks. Small villages cluster the mountains base, offering irregular access to the Los Angeles areas around them. And along its flanks shepherd herd sheep and cloud dragons alike. While there are many walking paths into the Locus, the simplest way in is to spot a wandering cloud dragon within three hundred miles of the place, stare until it realises it has been caught, and embarrass it into paralyzing you with a glance then carry you off somewhere on the Chancel's slopes.

- Clegyr is a gigantic manta ray whose flesh his rock that poops gems. It swims in the Earth's crust like a fish swims in water, and the temple-city upon its back moves through stone with equal ease. Many of the human residents were remade into stone-bodied "gnomes" when the place was made a Chancel, their duty to provide for the local Nobles' needs and arrange the gems that Clegyr craps in patterns that make the Angels happy. It's not entirely clear how well this works.

- One of the apartment buildings on 43rd Street belongs to an old lady called Mary Shenk. On every 43rd street, in every city. They all run together somehow, and they're all the home of Mary Shenk. You can exploit this to travel between cities and entire continents, just don't forget to leave a tip for Mary Shenk.

This item may be repurchased to have multiple Chancels, possibly on multiple worlds or planes of existence so long as they are in Creation proper. Be advised that many powerful miraculous beings do not make for good neighbours.

Seeds of a New World (400 CP): In a time that may or may not come to pass, Lord Entropy may come to the conclusion that the world is well and truly doomed, and come down to an odd little place to found a school capable of cultivating students capable of either becoming or creating a new world. Whether or not you share the same thoughts, you now own an academy equal to Horizon's school in every way. Teachers just…sort of creep out of the woodwork like they've been working there for years, but fall short of a true Imperator in power and acknowledge you as the undisputed headmaster. Instead of a university it could also be a research centre, military training facility or office building constructed in the Victorian style (but far cleaner) with a large sprawl of charming houses, shops, parks and various minor points of interest spread around it. As their owner too, it might be more accurate to compare you to a mayor more than a principle.

As well as being a natural magnet for supernatural beings such as ghosts and vampires, the place has a seemingly lackadaisical and carefree curriculum with an almost built-in pervasive sense of menace-yet paradoxically, accept the overt supernatural facets of it as normal. Time seems to fly between classes, too. The exact prerequisites are unclear and it would surely be more effective on beings that are already Imperators in stature, but somehow *it just works*, and within a decade or two the school will produce quite a few successful graduates capable of carrying out its mission statement. Whether they've become true Imperators or are merely bound on a very specific destiny which calls for them to venture north until they come to a tree and are obliged to bury

themselves alive so it's roots can feast on their nutritious flesh is for you and your faculty to discover.

A Little Slice of Heaven (or somewhere else) (600 CP): What could be greater than a chancel? What sets apart places like Heaven or Hell, those places so bright and grand that entire populations of Imperators dwell there? Perhaps it's how fundamental they are to the essential makeup of Creation. Their role as fonts of the substrate that can make or break it, that they define a grand facet of all Creation just short of the World Tree itself. And now, you have become the ruler of one such plane of existence. It is bonded to you as tightly as any Chancel, supporting your efforts with all its considerable cosmic might and holding you as it's absolute metaphysical owner. Being a defining facet of Creation, merely by existing it exerts tremendous miraculous influence over all of it albeit mostly in subtle forms by itself and that it either contains forces that permit it to generate new Imperators or drastically reshape existing ones. In fact, your new home comes with a host of Imperators equal in numbers to the host of Heaven-and while many may have their own inscrutable goals or wills, all acknowledge you as a great monarch among them due to the ownership you exert over your shared home.

You have great latitude over defining the parameters of your new home. It could be a whole new Heaven or Hell, with all that entails. It could even be lesser in scope but greater in enormity-such as a new Garden of Eden, in which the divine makeup of humanity can be fully realised, and in a sense already has. You may wish to define its most fundamental metaphysical laws like so:

Properties of Heaven

- Its beauty transforms
- Its beauty demands service
- It is alive, a growing things
- Its grace is given, not taken
- Its grace is given, not earned
- Its touch makes things more like itself
- It is absolute

Properties of Hell

- It fills the mind and senses
- It is always with you
- It is with you the most when you do not realize it is there
- It has no cleanliness to it
- It hurts
- It twists you up
- It sees the worst of you, and can quite possibly see the rest

Properties of the Deep Mythic

- Its locations are ambiguous
- Its boundaries are ambiguous
- It is always devouring itself
- It is always mating with itself
- Its particulars have free will
- Attention partially differentiates a thing from its environment

Companions

Let's Go, Everyone! (50-400 or 600 CP): Surrounded by intrigue and with literally everything at stake, it may be prudent to come prepared. You may import up to 8 companions into a background of your choice for 50 CP apiece, and they can buy perks at the usual discount-though they must still pay for a background that costs CP. Think carefully before making someone an Excrucian or Imperator, given their vastly different perspectives. As an alternative, you can make new friends in this manner. Each gains 800 CP to spend on perks and items, enjoying the same discounts as you.

Imperators may start with a familia, or shared group of Nobles, equal to their number of Estates.

Treasures Galore (50/100 CP/200 CP): On the other hand, as complicated as life can be here sometimes perhaps you'll find a new friend you want to take along with your journey? Each purchase here guarantees you a fond meeting early on with a native of your choice, and they may come with you at the end of your journey if they agree. For 50 CP this may be a Power, an Excrucian-shard or a lesser being. For 100 CP this may be a true Excrucian themselves. For 200 CP this may be an Imperator or greater being, assuming you've somehow achieved the miracle of getting them to listen to you.

Perhaps you'd like to start off on even better terms with a new friend right off the bat? Optionally, one of the following companions may be gained for free for their listed background, with the other available at the stated price. Each starts with a bond close enough to be considered a **Treasure.**

Peregrine Host (200 CP): Among all the beings of the beyond, there dwell a number of strange beings that made a strong impression on mankind-beings whose name translates to "Peregrinator" or "Wanderer" in their own tongue. Fierce, muscular and coated in thick hide and fur, they became mythically identified with strength, fortitude and wisdom. So deeply entrenched in the world did they become despite entering and leaving it freely, that they gave rise to an Estate: Bears. To this day they continue to wander in through the Weirding Wall and out after passing through the worlds of Creation. Despite the Imperator Jan ben Jan's attempt to reward them with a luxurious city, they simply thanked him but continued pursuing their wanderlust.

While normally Powers must learn their language, bribe them with food or provide directions to an interesting place through the strictures of High Summoning to gain their assistance, something about you has marked you as a fellow wanderer. You have learned the ritual to summon the Peregrinators, and when you do so they swiftly come from beyond the world in the dozens, eager to swap tales with a fellow wanderer and inclined to help you out so long as you respect their independently minded travels. To cement your friendship, somehow

you've also gained an endless sack of foods loved by the Peregrinators that will make currying favour them very easy. Each Peregrinator is a living Auctoritas: An incarnation of refusal to bend to miraculous, magical or even physical force. Such is their might that it can be compared to the greatest mastery of **Aspect** easily, and such as their spiritual intensity that their **Flore** is similarly mighty, making them enormously threatening in battles with most Powers or even Excrucians. Though they also have the gift called Durant, shaking off much of the harm that can even leave an Impact on them, their greatest innate gift is the ability to annul any miracle they can see used. With friends like these, your enemies better be beary prebeared for an unbearable bear of a battle.

One! That's ONE new companion, ah ah ah! (50 CP, Free for Drop-Ins): He comes garbed in cape and bowtie, a menacing lord of the undead draped in all his nocturnal glory. Endowed with all the traits of a powerful vampire lord and exceptionally immortal, he has a hunger for numerical notation that far dwarfs his lust for blood. With his tamed thundercloud he is shielded from the terrible light of the sun, while the counting numbers he has bled into ghoulish minions called the Crimson Curia do his dark bidding without question. The Count begins in blood and defines truth, binding all finite things in his grandiose proclamations. There's just one problem. He can't tell you how to get to Sesame Street. Whether or not you encountered this strangely magnetic chap while trying to physically enter an actual children's television show or not, you've made a new friend who oscillates wildly between amusing claims of fleeing Pope Benedict's Inquisition and being bound to defend Romania in its time of need, and wielding miraculous powers over cardinal numbers and factuality. His skill and passion for counting is exceptional even among the Nobilis, yet despite that his magnificent singing voice is most often used to help children learn their letters and numbers.

Also, he's an actual vampire-shaped puppet.

The Saint of Hope (50 CP, Free for Drop-Ins): He burns at the centre of time and sees the turn of the universe. He's the last of the Time Lords,

his alien nature perpetually shining through even while he's on the run in his blue police box. He seems nigh-unkillable by utter contrivance, and has luck to make the Nobilis envious. He has a remarkable talent for sonic-based sciences, an unflappable compassion that stands fast in the worst of times and truly miraculous dharmic influence over hope, perpetually making those around him stronger by inspiring them to greater heights or finding a solution where none seems possible. He goes by the Doctor, and while it's not entirely clear whether his claims can be taken at face value or something weirder is going on he's found himself entangled in your adventures and won't let his technical pacifism stand in the way of helping a friend out. There's a slight flaw in his character that makes him *somewhat* prone to viciousness when really put between a rock and a hard place, but his essential empathy for the human condition keeps him bouncing back from the brink. Though his physiology verges on the miraculous, his natural suggestion to many immediate threats is to simply run away from them.

…and while by default he appears to bear quite a resemblance to the 10th incarnation of a certain Gallyfreyan (or well, so we all assumed) exile with a suspiciously similar demeaner, your new friend could resemble to any of those other Doctors instead. Yes, even *her* if for some reason you have questionable taste.

Your New Narrator (50 CP, Free for Nobilis): Ianthe Falls-Short is the Power of Debate and servant of Parasiel, grown from the Field Two-Faced Jacks and considered the most silver-tongued of them all. She is a slim blonde woman with curly hair, a red beret and an intimidating game master or player for all manner of tabletop activities. A great speaker, storyteller, prosecutor and master of all the verbose arts-and underwent a ritual early on in her career to gain a lesser gift of immaculate perfection that permits her miracles of lower **Aspect** a limited capacity to succeed as if performed with a much higher rating of the divine attribute, including a talent for ingratiation to make her flawlessness tolerable. Ianthe preserves resolution to violence, and to her words are weapons; you probably met her while in the middle of a rant about what started out as important intrigues in Noble society and ended up being a dedicated roasting of her least favourite game's worst edition, and impressed her

with your talent to listen. She prides herself on never having shed a drop of blood in service to her Estate and inquisitorial duties. Only seven dead men and a few mute witnesses would disagree.

The Girl Out Of Nothing (50 CP, Free for Nobilis): Annabelle Zupay is an anomaly even to her Imperator, Sakhrat. One night a century ago, Sakhrat just woke up with four Estates instead of three, Annabelle it's latest Power. Rumours abound all over the place from Annabelle being a temporal anomaly created at Sakhrat's death travelling back in time, to Annabelle being some sort of anti-Excrucian who created her Estate out of thin air. One thing's for sure: She is a master of the art called High Summoning, regularly doing business with the strange creatures of the Not and increasing both respect and suspicion from her peers. An elusive, pale waif with long, dark hair who lives in a gigantic modern artwork castle called the Milliped of Human Striving-a construct with thousands of bridges each of which represents a different path by which human ambition is expressed. Annabelle is a cheery, likeable woman who also happens to see it as a duty to stretch the potential of her Estate as far as possible, to the extent of gaining limited **Domain**-like control of Science as a Gift. The notion of a gift of inexplicable, arbitrary points made of pure choice would certainly catch her interest in a stranger.

Jasmine Apocynum's Story About Encountering The Jumper (100 CP, Free for Excrucian): The world won't end with a bang or a whimper, but with a cheerful cry of SALUTE! APOCYNUM! At least this has become an increasingly likely notion ever since you encountered this spunky, enthusiastic young Deceiver. In a place that may or may not yet technically exist called Bluebell Park lies a mansion that reflects her heart, where she gathers memories and memorabilia of people whose souls she might wear-and found, to her surprise, one of you she didn't remember putting there, necessitating she track you down to sort out this discrepancy to her story. Despite the story that is Jasmine's principle tool for suffusing reality with the dreamlike incoherence of unreality tending to spontaneously give people's hearts brass handles or transfiguring and inverting them into monsters whenever Jasmine thinks it would really be the best course of action for them, there's something…good-like about it too. Jasmine herself certainly tries to be

"logical, sensible and sane" like the dutiful child she was before becoming a world-destroying herald of oblivion, and grapples with Death at every opportunity. It is foolish to project human sentimentality on any Excrucian but…you can't help but feel like between how conflicted Jasmine herself is on the whole thing and how loyal she is to her friends, that deep down *something* in the wretched thing she has become still wants to do good.

The Lie of Iolithae Septimian Being Your Companion (100 CP, Free for Excrucian): She is the girl who told the seas they were salt*, strangling all the freshwater fish within and making it so it had always been so. She was the priestess who doubted the world, who read the sacred words inscribed on a stone of great age fished up from the freshwater sea against the orders of the priest she once served. She is the reason why nobody can ascertain whether God exists or not, for though her lies must not be spoken they must also never be forgotten. And now, Iolithae Septimian seems to have spun a new lie: That one day, you met her while overlooking the seaside in a pensive mood, neither of you saying anything as you both watched the wrecked walls of the dynasty she had laid waste to centuries ago, that she turned her head just so to regard you with her inscrutable gaze even as her pale braid blew in the sea wind and her trademark whip danced around her like a viper's tail and she asked you a question. And you gave her an answer. And satisfied, she decided it would be a fine idea to walk with you for a time. Be on guard; even among the Deceiver she is exceptionally strong in **Persona** and her story can turn vast swathes of events into lies or cast out lies into world-shaking truths. It's quite likely that even if she were somehow sealed and bound, she's the kind of lurking destructive force that would continue to plague a whole family for generations. If words are weapons, Septimian is a nuclear arsenal.

*except for *at least* one pre-Septimian biome uncovered during exploration of the Mariana Trench during 2011

The Magister of the Fourth Age, also Murder and the Infinite (200 CP, Free for Imperator): The world seemed to brighten up when you wandered into the world of living urban phenomena, and encountered a

man so beautiful as to be a living principle of beauty *despite not even being an Imperator of Beauty.* He may have had long, flowing locks cascading below his shoulders like flaxen gold spun out of a fairytale. He may have been wearing a top hat with googly eyes, a dashing red apron and white stockings. It's all very distracting, and after apologising for the shock your new friend was quite impressed by how you didn't devolve into a killer or a statistician upon standing in his presence for too long. For Ananda is a relatively gentle soul by Imperator standards, whimsical and hopeful as can be while still being a leading light in the Valde Bellum. The hungry, voracious competition between urban spirits in his chancel Cityback is his favoured craft, for he designs the infrastructure that makes up urban environments of all kinds and employs a group of ombudsmen to ensure the healthy growth and development of human civilisation behind the scenes. Thus far he has endured being the weakest voice on the Council of Four, citing some terrible disaster that will transpire if he and Lord Entropy are ever directly opposed. The higher perceptions of the Imperators is difficult to explain, but rumour has it even Lord Entropy is as afraid of that disaster as Ananda. He has endured this thus far because the if the Imperators win and the upcoming age Ananda embodies comes to pass then the world will truly, utterly be made right. He can probably endure a little longer. He's quite civil and considerate for someone who mortals tend to die joyfully in the presence of. But he might also benefit from another perspective on whether the status quo really is for the best.

Entropy (or Attaris) the 2nd, Magister of Evil Yet To Come, Principal of A School Yet To Be Built, By The Grace of Heaven and the Light (200 CP, Free for Imperator): You had a terrible nightmare in which the sun was shot down and Lord Entropy, who wanted to win, was forced to actually do something *good* to that end. It broke him. He cracked open, bore fruit that took the form of a cheerful twentysomething with inhuman, pale blue hair, a fancy cowl and his trademark blood-dripping hands. You awoke to find that same chap pulled up at your house on his motorbike, explaining that something's gone terribly wrong and asking whether he can crash with you for a while. Oh well. While Entropy the 2nd is still a King of Evil in his own right, he's a much kinder and more considerate King of Evil. The kind who wants to prove that there's something of

worth in even the vilest things out there, and turn them to good ends. The blood from his hands is transformative, letting him reshape people, objects and structures alike into his vision of a kind of Nightmare Before Christmas-like conception of evil being this ominous but ultimately well restrained and productive force. He lives on an evil island upon the back of a gigantic soul-eating catfish that seems to fly around the sun and land with little trouble, and goes around helping people in need. Moreso even than Ananda his Estates seem a little hazy; he definitely rules Evil, but that school he keeps talking about wanting to build doesn't seem to exist yet. And he definitely seems to be a very different make of Imperator to what's generally assumed of his father, straddling something between an Angel and the Light. Speaking of heritages, while he speaks fondly of the thousand-armed malevolent yet kind half-devil witch called Attaris Ebrot Appeka, he's anxious about meeting his father. He was both successor and cancer to him, after all. Yet Entropy the First still taught him everything he wanted to, to be the new King of Evil. Does Entropy the 2nd believe there was something redeemable in his father? Did he hate him with every fibre of his being? Did they have an eerily, freakily good relationship that defined his sometimes difficult to reconcile philosophy of making good from evil? All these possibilities are for you to find out.

Also, it could well be that Entropy's successor is actually a girl called Attaris the 2nd. Who wears pale robes, much longer hair and a blindfold. Or an ambiguous, genderless being with either name. Dreams can be funny like that.

Drawbacks

Time Before Time (+0 CP): Much has happened over the course of this world, events bringing about the Age of Pain set many years ago in motion. Lucifer's rebellion, Adam and Eve's birth in the Garden, the war of the True Gods and their predecessors, the birth of the Buddha and Christ-there is much to learn, and experience. Perhaps you might even have a chance to avert the Valde Bellum by some miracle? Should you take this, you may start at any earlier point in Nobilis' history, from the

creation of the world up to a year before the present day when Lord Entropy burns the original Mona Lisa for unclear reasons. If you believe Cneph the Creator made an ancient bargain predating the world's creation with the Excrucians and are willing to endure the Not, you may start even earlier during that fateful meeting. Any other taken drawbacks will find a way to manifest themselves in some way, shape or form at appropriate times during your history, even should the world not be made. Any companions will meet you soon, albeit likely a bit lost and confused by being so far out of time.

Rage of the Plebs (100 CP): How did you do it? How did you anger an entire Chancel's population?! You're a demigod, or something greater! Whether or not you were the kind of petty tyrant who literally grind his subjects under his heel, the civilised beings that should normally respect your word and wait on you hand and foot are hated enough to inspire rebellion if it wasn't for their awful odds against a living god. And don't think to get out of this by being an Imperator or Drop-In either; a large population of spirits WILL take issue with you. In either case, pray a creative Excrucian never gets wind of this dislike. Excrucians themselves are simply mobbed by a Chancel's worth inexplicably angry lower Not-lifeforms within a large swathe of the Lands Beyond Creation.

Light Touch (100 CP): Those who fall under the sway of Imperators, Nobles and Excrucians are often subject to miraculous effects that, though seemingly coincidental at times, ultimately stem from their miraculous friend's will and not their own. With this limit, you are unable to influence those you touch with miraculous power directly. Only their conscious consent can bring forth miracles you share with them, making their goodwill much more important than it normally is.

True Anon (100 CP): A long time ago, you sold your name and identity to a wandering magician for some additional power. As a result information about you has become miraculously difficult to retain on, in ways much more a curse than a blessing. You're always a stranger, or a vague acquaintance at best to most people, with only your personal Imperator or other preexisting relationships of similar strength being permitted to know your provenance and nature. In fact, you find it

uncomfortable and even spiritually draining to operate in the spotlight. The Nobilis have many ways to work around this of course, and you could always track down that magician wherever he's gone or concoct some other complex movement of identity but expect this to be a great undertaking to unravel by Noble standards.

Obviously Supernatural Being (100 CP): Something about your miraculous nature makes subtlety and disguise completely impossible. At best, you can merely avoid starting a panic in public with some clever thinking and prudence. At worst, you could seriously be at a disadvantage when it comes to getting the drop on opponents. Your lies could stain your tongue with silver, or your nose could grow when you omit truths. You could lack a reflection and shadow, or when you act with honor your skin could shimmer like a knight's mail. It's not exactly life-threatening, but it is quite the downside for anyone trying to engage in cosmic warfare wetwork.

Restrictions of Fable (100-500): Certain quirks of the Noble condition are idiosyncratic to seem straight out of fable and folklore. In your case, this is truer than most. Choose one of the following: You cannot cross running water. You cannot enter a home uninvited. Or you cannot use modern technology. The world itself will enforce these restrictions, to the extent of physically bouncing you away from rivers or causing technology to fail to respond to you in any way other than being destroyed when you attack it. One specific restriction grants you 200 CP: The inability to kill, making you far more dependent on others to put down traitors to Creation, deal the finishing blow to Excrucians or save you from an angry Imperator's mere minions.

Uninspiring (100/200 CP): Dimitri provides a sobering example of the fate that awaits a Noble who acts against their Imperator, even for the best of reasons. When the Serpent Nahash was corrupted by Excrucians, he led an army of another Familia against him. And while he was rewarded by adoption from an Imperator who had lost another Noble in battle, the stench of treachery still hangs about him. And like poor Dimitri, you are considered socially fickle and shady, a shifty sort to which few will be willing to turn their back. For an additional 100 CP there can be good reason for this: Some flaw in your personality makes

you easy to sway, intimidate and blackmail, and your heart tends to rebel against standing by your principles.

Disabled Demigod (100/200 CP): Becoming Noble doesn't fix all mental or physical illnesses. Psychosis, lameness or lacking a limb-all manner of traits that hinder **Aspect** significantly have been reported in the Nobilis. For an extra 100 CP you may suffer a particularly severe medical condition ones like cerebral palsy, autoimmune deficiency or blindness. Such conditions often have strange, mythical twists to them: Alekti for example had a single eye to share with her sister, a crystal sphere that was the only way they could see when held at eye level. Absalom on the other hand had his tongue cut out by the spirits of hunters he had stolen from.

Bond of the Smokes (100-300 CP): How unfortunate. It seems you're formally bound to befriend anyone with whom you share a smoke of any kind, and cannot resist such an offer once it's formally made (clapping your ears over your head and running away is a classic. Beware those persistent enough to chase you down). For 100 CP this can be someone relatively benign but with a complicated life, like a nice Power. For 200 CP this can be a malicious Noble or an unpleasant agent for an Imperator like a Cammora member. For 300 CP, this can be a particularly eccentric Excrucian. Even other Excrucians have been known to suffer at their comrades' whims. An Imperator as nasty as Lord Entropy is also a viable pick.

Celebrant (100 CP): Something about your miraculous nature compels you to participate in a certain ritual, if at all physically possible. It's not necessarily all that frequent, perhaps occurring once a year, but resisting the ritual physically pains you and failing to comply always leads to some detriment to you, specifically. Shedding blood all over your Chancel's fields lest an army of furious acid gnomes rise from the earth and launch a siege upon all you hold dear would be one such example.

Health Link (200/300 CP): What a strange fate it is you've come into. Your health is linked to something or someone else, sustaining damage

when it's injured as if you were the thing you were bound to protect. At least you get a small amount of miraculous energy when you actively defend it, and a tad more miraculous energy when you suffer significant damage through the link without an opportunity to defend it yourself. For 200 CP it's something tangible and less powerful than you but at least notionally aligned, such as your symbol of office, throne, mortal sibling or the bone mask holding your soul. For 300 CP it's something truly problematic like your worst enemy, or something very expansive like America that anyone of miraculous make can easily target.

Don't Say Cneph! (200 CP): You flee the name of the Creator, a trait highly associated with the Excrucian Host. As a being of Creation this can be devastating to your trustworthiness in the Valde Bellum, especially when this test is often used to root out Excrucian infiltrators. As an Excrucian you're particularly sensitive to this bane, with even reading the Creator's name sending you into a mindless rush to escape. Sometimes, annoyingly, without even being afraid-just profoundly certain you have to get out by at least a few miles, dropping everything. Whatever happened between you and God, it clearly hasn't left you any good memories.

Focused (200 CP, variable): Single-minded then, are we? Anise was once a dedicated zealot so when the Imperatrix Elishah made him a Noble, instead of breaking his mind with truths that didn't fit his occult framework she forged him a blade through which he could focus his powers. A similar flaw of narrow-mindedness has altered how you wield your miraculous powers. Choose one of your divine attributes. You may only use it through a magic item, something on the scale of a melee weapon. While it knows it's owner and cannot be permanently lost, if it's taken away from you then you effectively lose access to that divine attribute until it's reclaimed. On the plus side, the item does have a modest supply of miraculous energy on its own and you can continue to improve that divine attribute as normal-yet only channel it through this object, until the end of the jump. Post-jump, you regain your divine attribute but may keep this object if you wish.

This drawback can be taken multiple times for additional divine attributes. Alternatively this drawback can be taken for a Gift, Bond or Geas, in which case instead of granting CP it discounts the Gift, Bond or Geas to you.

Technically Dead (200 CP): A funny thing sometimes happens during a Noble's ascension, as in Thalestris of Troy's case. When she died during Jehannum's war with Troy in the Spirit World, the Imperator that claimed her didn't waste time with her technically being dead. And like Thalestris, you lack a physical body and must operate through mortal bodies as hosts or proxies. While being dead isn't really an obstacle to the Nobilis in many respects, it does deprive you of many **Aspect** tricks without great effort. And while resurrection or self-repair is far from impossible in this world, do be careful. Your soul has been damaged enough that even an Imperator would find it impossible to resurrect, and the destruction of those things of the living world to which you are emotionally bonded to risks unravelling you entirely into your final demise.

Renunciate (200 CP): You don't want to do this. In some key sense you have withdrawn yourself from the world, and chosen not to engage with it-at least, those parts of it pertaining to conflict. You find it difficult to give your all when the issue is pressed, save to retreat and duck out on the path of least resistance away from all this…this…complication. But even if you find some obscure Zu enclave, even if you run from it all and find a way to let the past burn, it won't sustain. It might be you're just not strong enough to keep people out of your life. Or because the world starts murdering you and your native ground in the Void, and you've got to do something. Or because fate just binds you to conflict. But you'll never know peace, even as every fibre of your being yearns for it all to just be over and done with-even to the point of hypocrisy when others point out what trouble your short-sighted folly creates.

Reckless Muse (200 CP): So you're something of a perfectionist. You obsess over things being "not done" to your personal standard, and any project of your incomplete, cursed, flawed or otherwise unsatisfactory tends to be scrapped or abandoned even when it might be more

advantageous to you in the short term. That's not necessarily a crippling trait for a Noble or those greater since it's only natural for the mighty to set high expectations for themselves, but you combine it with archetypal headstrong behaviour. You just up and rush into things at the nearest opportunity. Combining the two traits is how we got some of the most infamous misadventures of Samson and Odysseus alike.

A Bouquet of Nettles (200 CP/400 CP): Antagonising a Noble isn't unheard of in society. Such things are often settled by formal duels, poetry contests or stranger forms of dispute resolution. Now, antagonising a Noble to the extent of them being willing to risk their position in society, the wrath of the Imperators and their ultimate fate? THAT'S a special kind of grudge even by this world's standards. You're "lucky" enough to gain one such grudge by someone who has the skills and abilities to act subtly, strike with plausible deniability, carry a grudge for literal centuries and fight like an actual force of nature when brought to bear. And for an extra 200 CP, they've somehow roped their entire familia into this grudge. While they won't share your foe's maniacal zeal for ending your life or ruining it beyond endurance, they will do all in their power to aid and abet him.

The Swords of Not (200 CP/400 CP): An Excrucian-shard has taken notice of you. And decided that you, YOU IN PARTICULAR, are what's REALLY wrong with the world. Or that you're far too close to uncovering their dark secret for comfort. Or that you're a real big obstacle to the True Thing, even if you yourself are an Excrucian. Or worst of all, that there's value in you worth tempering into their greater whole. Strong as a Power and able to touch Imperator-like power with a little more effort, such beings are accustomed to guerrilla tactics, long term stratagems and unconventional means of tearing down your very world for their goals beyond understanding. And should you have a real taste for pain you may instead gain the undivided and utter enmity of a specific Excrucian or something even worse: Their sincerest, most passionate admiration. Either way, prepare for oblivion.

"I don't believe in Nobles!" (300 CP): Well, this is problematic. Like Trystan the Power of Poseurs, not only are those powers of yours which

directly affect or shape others with your Estate(s) unable to harm those conceptually opposed to it, but attacks elementally diametric to them are supernaturally dangerous to you. Being the Power of Flame would make snowball fights more dangerous than gunfights. Being the Power of Cute Things would make you extremely vulnerable to fat, faceless old bastards and hideous hags. You get the idea. Do hope your enemies never find out about how easily exploited this weakness is.

Doomed (300 CP): A dark fate by the reckoning of the Nobilis awaits you, one with very poor odds of avoiding. You could be under the effects of an incredibly slow Excrucian poison that will kill you, or worse, when it's run its course. Or you could be hunted by Lord Entropy for high treason. There will always be an opportunity to avert your fate (in the latter's case for example, Lord Entropy is merely hunting you as a *professional courtesy* not out of personal dislike insofar as that makes any difference, but at least will be slow to join the hunt himself) but it will be fleeting even by the standards of the Nobilis.

Imperial Condescension (300 CP/500 CP): For an Imperator to openly war in these dark times is almost unheard of, but not entirely unknown. And it seems some deed in your past has made an Imperator utterly livid enough to bend all their considerable power towards making an example of you-not merely killing you but destroying your legacy, enacting divine punishment and making an example of your defiance as only a primal aspect of reality can. This is worst of all for the non-miraculous, who are mostly at the mercy of those set above them by the laws Imperators and Nobles abide by. Nobles are little better off, as the Imperators have much leeway via the Locust Court to petition a formal sanction-politics and other knavish tricks may prove more helpful to you than force of arms or conventional attempts to flee. Excrucians have a different series of priorities levied against them: Instead of punishments, the Imperator will aim to rouse it's servants and peers to prioritise your utter destruction and humiliation. And while fellow Imperators are the most immune to such chicanery, they are also the most liable to drive your new enemy into desperate, open warfare.

Nominally this is an average specimen of the Ymerae, insofar as "average" can describe them at all. However, for 500 CP you've antagonised one of the greatest leaders among their kind. Firstborn of the Angels would be a valid choice, making you a literal enemy to all Existence and Meaning. Lucifer as well, who could likely literally unleash Hell to punish you. The mysterious Magister of Dark who rules the Sable Garden is likely similarly formidable, so steeped in humanity's first failure. And of course, this is an EXCELLENT way to make a personal enemy out of Lord Entropy himself, not only the most wicked and powerful force on Earth-but also a being the other Imperators are hesitant to move against due to his prophesised role for winning the Valde Bellum.

Bleeding Heart (300 CP): There's a power to be had, from breaking the world. Existential dread, counting coup with other people's things-it all exerts wear and tear on our little bubble of reality called Creation, whittling down with a disintegration that is as felt in the heart as it is in the dance of quantum particles. A shame then, that your resilience is greatly lessened in this respect. You're fragile, spiritually. The costs that your miraculous powers exert on you are harsher than they would normally be. When people hurt you through the Nettle Rite, the channel created through the wrenching heartache of your thwarted effort hurts more and lasts longer than it should. Fear not the most powerful warriors of this world, for when conflict is most often figuratively decided by the death of a thousand cuts you're metaphysically anaemic. Just seek solace, wherever it can be found.

I'm My Own Master Now (400 CP for Nobilis, 300 CP for Excrucians, 100 CP for Imperators, 50 CP for the Transcendent): Independence is a fine thing for a man keen to make his own way in life, but not so warmly welcomed when it applies to reckless gods in a war with everything at stake. With this you are freed from the strictures of Creation's factions-to your detriment, especially as a Nobilis. For the Imperators do not tolerate a free Noble representing a significant investment of their own treasured power running amok, and though for now none know of you it's only a matter of time until one gets wind of your desertion. Unless you hide yourself with extreme measures even by the Nobilis' standards,

soon you'll find Nobles tasked to haul you back into the fold to swear loyalty to one Imperator or another-conflicted though some of them may prove, and despite the cross-purposes certain factions may be working at. Prove elusive enough, and you may even find the harsher Imperators joining the hunt.

Excrucians fair little better with this drawback. While it appears departing to join the Chancery is acceptable for the Strategists, they have proven harsh towards those among their number with sufficiently high Flore to be traitors to the void by their mere existence. So too, has an accusation of similar treason been levelled against you. If there is any consolation here it is that if opinions between the Nobles and Imperators is divided on the urgency about traitors, opinions between Excrucians on what constitutes a valid distraction from their inscrutable missions is even more varied. The Host is spread thin attacking the limited selection of worlds they focus upon, but it won't take long for news of your departure to spread.

Imperators and the Transcendent enjoy far greater largesse. In their case, independence is less betrayal and more a sense of indifference to the war. It may come across as uncouth and irresponsible in your social circles, but when your existence by itself upholds Creation it's no exaggeration to say there's one rule for those beneath you and another for you. Nonetheless, your would-be allies will prove more reluctant to assist you should you be inconvenienced knowing you have disavowed yourself from their loyalties. As for the Transcendent, you need worry about little more than resignation and possibly hurt feelings about your pointed snub.

Grandmaster's Wrath (600 CP): "They're just kung fu masters playing at gods and kings!" is something you'll never hear any Imperator or Noble say about the mysterious warriors of Zu Mountain. In their places of power, the Nobles become severed from their divine fonts of powers while Imperators are made disorientated by their separation from the world. More importantly to be seen as an enemy to mankind in the eyes of one, is to be seen as an enemy in mankind's eyes in all.

After a year, something will happen to convince the Zu that you are the world's greatest obstacle to enlightenment and prosperity for all humanity. They will come against you as one warrior then, entrenched in their belief you are either one of King Evil's greatest agents or possible King Evil HIMSELF and must be destroyed at all costs, only the direst threats against humanity (of which there are, admittedly, several other convincing fonts) distracting them from their war against you. The overall strength of the Zu vary heavily; while most exert power approximating a Noble, two of their native divine attributes bring forth power normally only wielded by Imperators with all the alacrity and vicious vigour of a mortal man. Those who rule the Heavens of Ultimate Kung Fu around their mountain exert Imperator-like power with no loss of combat agility, emanating the precepts and Estate-like movements of dharma through their emulation of the Ultimate Kung Fu Master. Mercifully, he at least seems indifferent to his lessers' crusade against you.

Should you be a Zu warrior yourself, you will have no leniency. You will be hunted as a traitor to not just Creation, but humanity. Whether or not it is true, clearing your name will be nigh impossible.

The Seal of Chains (600 CP): A year into your stay here, the Excrucians will receive a prophecy. That even if they slay the Imperators and shatter the Seal of Time, a second Seal has been clamped tight around an extradimensional visitor to this world. That the end of Creation cannot come until your death, whether or not you yourself are of Ninuan. You. In other words, through no fault of your own you have become the biggest obstacles between this world's annihilators and their stated mission.

This doesn't necessarily antagonise ALL Excrucians against you irrevocably, but it certainly will seem like that some days. Expect attacks from all angles, and depending on the Valde Bellum's progress either for dedicated covert attacks at all times or for the Excrucians to outright abandon their cold war tactics for an all-out assault on your person. Expect what you find pleasing to be wiped from the Earth so hard it didn't exist yesterday, and for pale strangers to try and resell it to you at

the low, low price of your life. Except numerous Abhorrent Weapons brought to bear against you. Expect great horrors from beyond the world to be conjured out of sewer grates, and plagues of Void-bacteria to lace the ground around you for miles, and for wicked lies to undermine the very continuity of your life.

Expect your expectations to be subverted, and seldom in a good way.

A Visitor From Beyond (1000 CP): Epititiokh has come into Creation twice. Where she passes she brings the drought. Water and life alike dissolve with her passage, green things and blue things die without exception, and even in her walk through Heaven the flowers died wherever she passed. No man, Excrucian or Imperator can stop Epititiokh or bend her to their will for she is of a miraculous nature far greater than they, comparable to the World Ash and that which became the Weirding Wall-a peerless suzerain of the Beyond. But men and hermaphrodites may offer themselves as lovers, and if she accepts then she leaves Creation after draining every last drop of water and life from his flesh.

It is important to note at this point that the destruction brought by Epititiokh is so absolute, we know very little about her actual appearance.

Is this something you would like to happen during your stay? **Very well.** Epititiokh will arrive in Creation once every season, for the rest of your stay, and cause great destruction simply by visiting it unless you determine her tastes correctly enough to placate her, and compel her to leave. The disarray wrecked among Imperators' homesteads and Excrucian plans alike is unpredictable; suffice it to say they deemed placating her more prudent than challenging her. Even if you should somehow accomplish the unprecedented task of appeasing this entity, know that after a few years of recovery for Creation and the Void's sake a calamity of a similar scope will occur. It may be that Narsinha's heart is somehow revived, and in rage it lashes out at Creation or sunders the Not simply writhing free in agony. It may be that the World Ash itself sets in motion plans to colonise the Void, or bend all things to its will.

Whatever comes, know that the danger unleashed surpasses the Valde Bellum as a concern for all involved.

Go Home

Stay

Move On

Notes

If this setting seems confusing, think of large portions of it running on myth logic. Inanna's descent into the underworld, Ragnarok coming about despite Odin trying to prevent it, the Olympians receiving a prophecy they could only defeat a later invasion of giants with Hercules at their side despite Zeus having eventually defeated Typhon by himself. That sort of thing. And that such forces are the underlying framework to all creation, more fundamental than gravity and electromagnetism.

Perks that enhance Estates also enhance inherent sources of divine power in general because in essence, that's what Estate are really.

https://karmachameleon.github.io/arcs/: This grid features the game developer's revised miraculous arcs (read: Character classes) for the setting's sister game Chuubo's Marvellous Wish Granting Engine which is set in is possible future of the setting. It provides further detail on the divine attributes.

…having said that, if FLORE seems confusing even by the standards of Noble powers, it may help to understand that Flore is quite literally the power of friendship™ asspulling miracles between you and your pals.

It is somewhat vague if multiple Imperators can share the same Estates. Imperators who embody entire Ages, such as Attaris, apparently have their natures concealed somehow until their age comes to pass; it is for this reason it's unclear what type of Imperator Ananda is. Nobilis 2e also made a point of stating the angelic Estate of Destruction would have more hallowed and celestial connotations than Lord Entropy's embodiment of it. Based on how the Angel of Destruction has remained canon across multiple editions, while you cannot outright replace other Imperators with this jump alone you may take identically *named* Estates which are henceforth considered to be overlapping concepts derived from a different font of First Cause.

"As strong as a bear and as smart as a supercomputer" is the in-universe shorthand for "you are supernaturally strong and smart, but for finite

amounts and within relatively modest bounds". Fanwank exactly how strong and smart that is exactly at your discretion.