

GEIST

THE
SIN-EATERS
SECOND EDITION



KICKSTARTER MANUSCRIPT PREVIEW

Part 2

Chapter Three: One Foot in the Grave

“If you are silent about your pain, they’ll kill you and say you enjoyed it.”

Zora Neale Hurston

You’re not born expecting death. You can’t even grasp the concept until you’re a few years in, and it’s even longer before you think to apply it to yourself. Understanding your own death means understanding you’re vulnerable, that all the worst rules of the world apply not just to some faceless other, but to you. It means accepting that everything you spend your life building has an expiration date. Someday, whether or not you’re ready, it ends.

The big reveal, the one not everybody gets to, is that stopping for death isn’t your only option.

Character Creation

You need a character to play **Geist**. This character doesn’t need to be anything like you — in fact, it can be more fun to spend the game walking in someone else’s shoes. They just need to be someone you’ll enjoy inhabiting for hours. You’ll speak with their voice, think with their logic, and make decisions based on their beliefs and experiences.

To help create your character, you’ll go through a series of steps to decide what they’re good at and what abilities they gained when they became a Sin-Eater. You can find more details on each of these steps on the page referenced in their section headers.

Step One: Concept

Even the best, most memorable characters start with a single idea. The concepts in the previous chapters can help you start thinking about who you want to play, but your character really comes to life when you choose some of those big ideas and shape them to fit a person. The only limit is your imagination; every choice you make in later steps will be shaped by the original idea you create.

Think about who your character was before they died. Did they live a comfortable life surrounded by family and friends, where death came as an unwanted shock? Did they live a life full of insurmountable hurdles from the time they were born, where death was a last insult after a string of injuries? What were the best and worst things they can remember? What forces — religious, cultural, personal, even traumatic — shaped the way they thought about their life, and their eventual death?

Now that they’re dead, what has changed about the way they see the world? What kind of *geist* found and Bound them, and how do they feel about their new companion? Do they try to seek out any parts of their old life, or are they all too happy to leave it behind? Perhaps most importantly, how do all those factors come together to turn them into a Sin-Eater?

Try describing your character with two phrases, one for before they became a Sin-Eater, and one for after. Are they a frustrated nurse who became a fearless advocate for the dead? Are they a pessimistic ex-con who became a paranoid hunter in the Underworld? The transition from one to the other could be minor, or entirely unexpected. It all depends on the experiences they lived.

Aspirations (p. XX)

Once you've decided where your character is coming from, it's time to think about where they're going. These serve as goals for your character, and they'll help you and your Storyteller plot out an arc for them within the larger context of the chronicle. Clear Aspirations help your Storyteller pin down the kind of game you want to play – a character who wants to hone her street-fighting technique will do better in a combat-heavy chronicle, while a character who wants to track down information about her missing brother will thrive in a game that lets her use her social skills.

Don't worry about making them perfect; as your character achieves their starting Aspirations, you'll give them new ones to fit the way the story is progressing. Short-term Aspirations let you watch your character grow from moment to moment, while long-term Aspirations remind you where their arc is ultimately headed.

For a more thorough discussion and examples of Aspirations, see the **Chronicles of Darkness Rulebook**.

Aspirations

- **Define Three:** Define three Aspirations for your character: two short-term and one long-term.

Step Two: Attributes (p. XX)

Attributes are the foundation for what your character is capable of. They're sorted into three categories: Mental, Physical, and Social, and rated from one to five dots. The Mental category includes Intelligence, Wits, and Resolve; the Physical category includes Strength, Dexterity, and Stamina; and the Social category includes Presence, Manipulation, and Composure. An Attribute with only one dot represents a significant weakness for your character, something that they're particularly bad at. An Attribute with two dots assigned to it means your character performs at about an average level. Three is above average, four is excellent, and five is the best of the best.

Attributes

- **Base Competency:** You start with one dot in all Attributes for free.
- **Priorities:** Prioritize Mental, Physical, and Social Attributes as high, medium, low.
- **High Priority:** Assign five dots, any way you like, to the Attributes in the high priority category.
- **Medium Priority:** Assign four dots, any way you like, to the Attributes in the medium priority category.
- **Low Priority:** Assign three dots, any way you like, to the Attributes in the low priority category.
- **Trait Maximum:** No Attribute may have more than five dots at character creation.

Step Three: Skills (p. XX)

While Attributes are ingrained, Skills are things your character has learned during their lifetime. Like Attributes, Skills can have up to five dots, but unlike Attributes, characters don't receive free dots in Skills. Every character has some degree of intellect or wit, but not every character knows how to drive, or lie their way out of a tough situation.

Like Attributes, Skills are grouped into Mental, Physical, and Social categories and rated from one to five dots. Any Skill without dots means your character has absolutely no experience with it, and they will suffer a penalty if they try to use it. One dot is a layman's proficiency, two marks a professional, and three shows specialized training. Four and five dots mark a character who is incomparably proficient, whether through natural ability or intensive study.

Rather than choosing the Skills you think would be most universally useful, try to pick Skills that make sense for your character. A doctor might have dots in Medicine to reflect her training; she might also have dots in Brawl from years of kickboxing classes after work.

Skills

- **Priorities:** Prioritize Mental, Physical, and Social Skills as high, medium, low.
- **High Priority:** Assign eleven dots, any way you like, to the Skills in the high-priority category.
- **Medium Priority:** Assign seven dots, any way you like, to the Skills in the medium-priority category.
- **Low Priority:** Assign four dots, any way you like, to the Skills in the low-priority category.
- **Trait Maximum:** No Skill may have more than five dots at character creation.

Step Four: Skill Specialties (p. XX)

Specialties further refine your character's Skills. Unlike Attributes and Skills, there's no fixed list of Specialties; you'll define them as any specific application of a Skill that makes sense for your character. For example, your character might have been a cardiologist before they died — they could have three dots in Medicine, with a Specialty in Heart Surgery. A skilled marksman might have four dots in Firearms with a Specialty in Sniper Rifles.

Skill Specialties should be specific enough to illustrate your character's talents, but not so specific that they will only apply in one or two rare situations. Conversely, they shouldn't be so broad that they apply on virtually every roll. If you're unsure whether a Skill Specialty is appropriate, check with your Storyteller and work together to come up with something that fits.

Specialties

- **Define Three:** Define three Skill Specialties for any Skills. You don't need to have dots in a Skill to have a Specialty in it.
- **Multiple Specialties:** You may choose multiple Specialties for a given Skill, as long as they're all unique.

Step Five: Sin-Eater Template

Now that you've created a human being, it's time to turn them into a Sin-Eater.

Burden (p. XX)

Your character's Burden is the lingering echo of their life that pushes them to accept the Bargain and return to the living world. Their Burden haunts them, drives them, makes them the Sin-Eater they are. Each Burden provides three Haunt affinities, along with an extra Aspiration, allowing

you to define your character's specific expression of the Burden. Resolving this Aspiration grants you a measure of spiritual power.

When defining your Burden Aspiration, work with your Storyteller and take into account the planned length of the chronicle. If your game is going to be a one-shot or a short arc, you'll want a relatively straightforward Aspiration: "Punish Hannah" or "get my paper published." For a longer chronicle, you might want a longer-term Aspiration, possibly even one with multiple stages: "Find my killer" or "Make sure Ahmed gets into a good college."

Burdens

- **Burden Aspiration:** Choose a Burden Aspiration.
- **The Hungry:** Your character is called back by something rooted in the living world. It's something they can't let go — or something they don't want to give up. Their Haunt affinities are *the Boneyard*, the Marionette, and the Caul.
- **The Bereaved:** Your character lost someone they loved, and they need to find them again, even it means making a Bargain and returning to the living world. Their Haunt affinities are the Curse, *the Oracle*, and the Shroud.
- **The Vengeful:** Your character was wronged by someone during their life, and they return to the world to get their revenge. Their Haunt affinities are the Curse, the Memoria, and *the Rage*.
- **The Abiding:** Your character wants to continue existing in whatever form they can. When presented the opportunity to make the Bargain and return to the world of the living, they took it. Their Haunt affinities are the Caul, the Memoria, and *the Tomb*.
- **The Kindly:** Your character hurt someone while they were alive, and they want to make the amends they couldn't — or wouldn't — in life. Their Haunt affinities are *the Dirge*, the Marionette, and the Shroud.

Root and Vine (p. XX)

Sin-Eaters exist in both the world of the dead and the world of the living, a citizen of neither and both. Your character's Root and Vine are traits that help describe their relationship to these dual worlds. Root defines your relationship to the dead, while Vine defines your relationship to the living.

Touchstones (p. XX)

Your character starts the game with two Touchstones — two things that pull them between the world of the dead and the world of the living, between their Root and Vine.

Synergy (p. XX)

Your character's Synergy represents their Bond with their geist. The higher the Synergy, the more in tune the two are.

Haunts (p. XX)

Your character receives three dots in Haunts at creation. These abilities stem from the Bargain between the Bound and their geist, and allow your character to tap into their geist's powers to affect the physical world.

Keys (p. XX)

Keys allow your character to strengthen their Haunts by channeling the power of the Underworld.

The Geist (p. XX)

Geist creation has its own section, but if you haven't already, this is when you should create your character's constant companion, and think about the relationship they're beginning to build.

Remembrance Skills (p. XX)

While your character carries their Burden, their geist carries echoes of its own life. As your character grows to better understand their geist, they can begin to share their own knowledge and skills with it, and benefit from some of its expertise in return.

Plasm (p. XX)

Plasm is the stuff ghosts are made of, the stuff Manifestations generate, and the stuff your character uses to fuel their powers.

Sin-Eater Template

- **Burden (p. XX):** Choose one Burden and note its Haunt affinities. The Haunt affinity in *italics* is unique to that Burden.
- **Burden Aspiration (p. XX):** In concert with your Storyteller, define an additional Aspiration that reflects your character's specific Burden.
- **Root and Vine (p. XX):** Choose (or define your own) one Root and one Vine.
- **Touchstones (p. XX):** Choose (or define your own) two Touchstones: one associated with your Root, and a second with your Vine.
- **Synergy (p. XX):** Your character's Synergy begins at 1.
- **Haunt (p. XX):** Assign three dots to Haunts. At least two must go into a Haunt or Haunts you have affinity with.
- **Key:** Choose a Key that reflects the circumstances of your character's death.
- **Plasm:** Your character begins play with a full pool of Plasm, based on their Synergy.

Step Six: Merits (p. XX)

Merits define your character's knowledge, their natural affinities, and their assets, both social and financial. They're defined as Mental, Physical, or Social, like Attributes and Skills, and they have dot ratings, but only certain Merits have the same one to five dot progression; many others simply have a flat dot cost.

Merits

- **Free Merit:** All Bound characters gain the Tolerance for Biology (p. XX) Merit free of charge.
- **Assign Dots:** Assign 10 dots however you like to Merits. You don't have to prioritize them by category.

- **Synergy Increase:** You may spend five of your Merit dots to begin with a Synergy of 2, or all 10 dots to begin with a Synergy of 3.
- **Ceremonies:** You may spend Merit dots to purchase Ceremonies as well as Merits.

Step Seven: Advantages (p. XX)

To finish off your character, use the dots you've allocated to calculate their Advantages.

Advantages

- **Defense:** The *lower* of Dexterity + Athletics or Wits + Athletics
- **Size:** 5, unless modified by a Merit
- **Health:** Size + Stamina
- **Willpower:** Resolve + Composure
- **Initiative:** Dexterity + Composure
- **Speed:** Strength + Dexterity + 5

Geist Creation

Once you've finished creating your Sin-Eater, it's time to create the geist she's bound to. (You can do this step alongside creating your character, if you like.) Geists use a simplified set of Traits compared to Sin-Eaters, and Bound geists are simpler even than other ephemeral entities (p. XX).

Step One: Concept

You've probably already come up with a concept for your character's geist as part of creating your Sin-Eater, but it's still a good place to start. Geists are archetypal, atavistic beings, their humanity submerged deep below the surface. They don't have names — or, more accurately, they've long since forgotten them — and so consequently they're often known by titles that evoke mythology or urban legends. They are strongly tied to a particular cause or concept of death, and echo that in their appearance and abilities. Though their appearance is often monstrous, even the most horrific of geists retains a basic, recognizable humanity; they are never wholly alien or bestial.

The Snow Queen represents slow death by exposure: she resembles an impossibly emaciated figure, skin black from frostbite, trailing wisps of mist that resemble a wedding veil.

Remembrance

Every geist has a Remembrance, an image or powerful sense memory that holds a clue toward discovering who they were in life and how they might be granted peace. As part of creating your character's geist, you'll come up with the first such image; the Storyteller devises the rest for you to discover in play. Remembrance should be a simple, straightforward image presented mainly in sensations: sights, smells, tastes, etc. It should also provide a suggestion of where and how to start investigating it.

The Snow Queen's Remembrance is crisp winter cold, the crunch of snow underfoot, the scent of pine needles, and the sound of a scratchy recording of the "Wedding March" played on an organ. That's enough for her Sin-Eater to start narrowing down a list of wedding venues that

perform outdoor ceremonies in the winter, or try to identify the approximate date of the ceremony based on the recorded music.

Step Two: Remembrance Traits

Geists don't have Skill or Merit ratings like Sin-Eaters do, but they do have Remembrance Traits. These are powerful sense and muscle memories associated with their Remembrance. As the bond between geist and Sin-Eater grows stronger, the Bound can call upon her geist's Remembrance Traits to improve her own abilities.

Remembrance Skills

- **Skill or Merit:** Choose a single Skill, or a Merit with a dot cost of three or less.

The Snow Queen's Remembrance Skill is Intimidation.

Step Two: Attributes

Geists use the three simplified Attributes common to ephemeral entities (p. XX). A bound geist only uses its Attributes when it is Unleashed (p. XX).

Attributes

- **Base Competency:** You start with one dot in all Attributes for free.
- **Assign Dots:** Assign 12 dots, any way you like, to the Power, Finesse, and Resistance Attributes.
- **Attribute Maximum:** No Attribute may begin with a rating higher than 9.

The Snow Queen's Attributes are: Power 7, Finesse 3, Resistance 5.

Step Three: Virtue and Vice

Whereas Sin-Eaters have Root and Bloom (p. XX), geists, like ghosts, have Virtue and Vice (p. XX). These Traits represent the best and worst elements of the geist's nature.

The Snow Queen's Virtue is Empathetic, and her Vice is Implacable.

Step Four: Crisis Point Triggers

Certain things set the geist off and cause an extreme reaction; even the geist herself might not understand (or be able to communicate) why. Reining these responses in is part of the role of Synergy (p. XX). Choose (or devise your own) a crisis point trigger (p. XX).

The Snow Queen's trigger is Betrayal: a crisis point is triggered when her Sin-Eater suffers harm from someone she considered a friend or ally.

Step 5: Ephemeral Entity Traits

Bound geists have some Traits in common with unbound ephemeral entities. Ephemeral entity Traits not listed here are subsumed by the Bargain (p. XX); you can use the full ephemeral entity rules (p. XX) to devise those Traits if you want, but they'll only come into play if your character's geist becomes unbound during play.

Rank

Your character's geist is Rank 3, unless you take the Dread Geist Merit at character creation.

Ban and Bane

Your character's geist has a Ban and Bane appropriate to a Rank 3 ghost (p. XX).

The Snow Queen's Ban is fresh pine boughs: she cannot cross barriers made with them or harm those who wear a sprig of fresh pine. Her Bane is yellow roses.

Innate Key

Your character's geist has an innate Key, just like a Sin-Eater. Your character can unlock Haunts with this Key. When the geist is Unleashed, they treat this Key as an Influence with dots equal to their Rank.

The Snow Queen's innate Key is, unsurprisingly, the Key of Cold Wind. Her Sin-Eater can use this Key to unlock Haunts, and when the Snow Queen is Unleashed, she treats it as Influence: Cold Wind ...

Step Six: Advantages

As with Attributes, these Traits are only used when your character's geist is Unleashed. Most of the time, you won't even need them then, but you may want to have them handy in case they come up.

Advantages

- **Defense:** The *lower* of Power or Finesse
- **Size:** 5
- **Initiative:** Dexterity + Composure
- **Speed:** Strength + Dexterity + 5

"Missing" Traits

Bound geists do not have the following Traits. Here's a brief summary of what they use instead; for full details, see *The Bargain* (p. XX).

- **Willpower:** Bound Geists share Willpower with their bound Sin-Eaters.
- **Numina:** Unleashed Geists can use the same Haunts their Sin-Eaters use, but they cannot unlock them with Keys.
- **Essence:** Bound geists share a Plasm pool with their Sin-Eater, and spend Plasm any time a rule says they spend Essence.
- **Influences:** Geists treat their innate Key as an Influence with dots equal to their Rank, but only while Unleashed.
- **Manifestations:** Bound geists can only be Unleashed in certain circumstances; otherwise they only project an image of themselves in Twilight.

Character Advancement

Characters in **Geist: The Sin-Eaters** advance through a system of "Experiences." Experiences are spent to increase and buy new character traits. Experiences are earned by accruing "Beats," which are small elements of drama in the plot. These Beats come through fulfilling Aspirations,

through good and bad things happening to characters, and resolving minor plot hurdles called Conditions.

Beats

Beats are measures of drama in the Storytelling system. They represent small but significant moments in your character's personal arc, the slow growth that leads to bettering oneself. You receive Beats for multiple things in the course of the story. Aspirations and Conditions are the most common ways to achieve Beats, but numerous others exist.

Some specific events give you special kinds of Beats such as Synergy Beats or Krewe Beats, which in turn become Synergy Experiences and Krewe Experiences. These work just like regular Beats, but you're more restricted in what you can spend them on.

Beats

- **Aspirations:** Any time you resolve or make significant headway toward an Aspiration, take a Beat.
- **Chapter:** At the end of every chapter (game session), take a Beat.
- **Conditions:** Any time you resolve a Condition, take a Beat.
- **Dramatic Failure:** When you fail a roll, you can opt to make it a dramatic failure and take a Beat. You also take a Beat if you roll a dramatic failure on a chance die.
- **Other:** Any major dramatic event the Storyteller deems appropriate can award a Beat.
- **Scene Limit:** You may only earn one Beat per category per scene.
- **Conversion:** Five Beats of the same type automatically become one Experience of the same type.
- **Exclusive:** Different kinds of Beats do not combine with each other for purposes of becoming Experiences.

Experiences

Experiences are the culmination of the small moments that Beats represent, and serve as the currency for your character getting better. You may spend Experiences at any time to improve your character's Traits — it's assumed you've been practicing or studying in your down time.

Experiences

- **Restrictions:** Krewe Experiences may only be spent on your krewe's Traits. Synergy Experiences may only be spent on improving Synergy. Normal Experiences have no restrictions.
- **Cost Splitting:** You may split the cost of an advancement between different types of Experiences as long as you don't violate the above restrictions.

Experience Costs

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Trait	Cost per Dot
Attribute	4
Skill	2

Skill Specialty	1
Merit	1
Haunt (Affinity)	3
Haunt (Non-Affinity)	4
Ceremony	2
Synergy	5

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Non-Experience Based Advancement

In certain circumstances, your character advances without you having to spend Experiences.

Non-Experience Based Advancement

- **Burden:** Resolving your Burden Aspiration grants a dot of Synergy and increases your geist's Rank by 1 (to a maximum of 5).
- **Remembrance:** Resolving your geist's Remembrance (p. XX) grants a dot of Synergy for every scene resolved. Resolving the entire Remembrance increases your geist's Rank by 1 (to a maximum of 5).

Character Creation Quick Reference

Step One: Concept

Choose your character's concept. Determine three Aspirations.

Step Two: Attributes

Prioritize categories. Spend 5/4/3 dots by category.

Step Three: Skills

Prioritize categories. Spend 11/7/4 dots by category.

Step Four: Skill Specialties

Choose three Skill Specialties.

Step Five: Bound Traits

Assign Burden, Root and Vine, Touchstones, Haunts, Passion, Remembrance, Remembrance Skills, Keys, and Plasm.

Step Six: Merits

Add 10 dots of Merits. Merit dots can also be spent on extra dots of rites, or increasing Synergy. Take two free additional Sin-Eater merits, Medium and Tolerance for Biology.

Step Seven: Advantages

Willpower is equal to Resolve + Composure. Size is 5. Health is Size + Stamina. Speed is 5 + Strength + Dexterity. Defense is the lower of Dexterity or Wits. Initiative is Dexterity + Composure.

Synergy

Synergy starts at 1. Additional dots may be purchased with five Merit dots each. A character cannot start with Synergy higher than 3.

Krewe Creation

Now that you've made Sin-Eaters and their geists, it's time to consider who they are together. A single Sin-Eater and their geist partner is a powerful force, but when backed up by an entire community they're capable of just about anything they put their minds to. Krewes are created from the innermost circle of the founding Sin-Eaters to the least initiated living celebrants who can hardly imagine the sorts of mysteries that the afterlife holds.

During this process, try to think what sort of krewe your character would become involved in. Are they the sort of person who believes that the afterlife needs to punish those who are wicked eternally? Maybe their death has them skeptical of this entire death thing altogether — maybe it should be scrapped entirely because that's worked for them so far. How does your character navigate those beliefs with the other players' characters if their philosophies on it don't quite overlap? It's good to keep these kinds of conflicts and ideas in mind.

The creation of the krewe is a conversation and everyone needs to be on the same page with what they want out of the krewe as well as what everyone at the table is comfortable with. **Geist** is a game about community, and the most important one in this game is the one sitting around the table.

You're going to be making a few characters per player: the Sin-Eater main characters (with maybe a ghost or two), an iconic dead celebrant, and a handful of living ones. Who is going to be playing them? They're typically played by the person who creates them, but you might hand one off to somebody else at the table when two of your characters are in the scene together. Maybe you'd feel more comfortable if the Storyteller takes over roleplaying. The krewe is an ensemble cast and if a character needs to be picked up for a scene everyone at the table should be able to pick up the character. It is, however, good form to check with the "owner" of the character before having them take major story- or character-changing actions.

Finally, krewes have a character sheet just like any Sin-Eater, with Traits that measure their ability to act as a group and their collective resources. You'll be defining those Traits in this step as well.

The Sin-Eaters

The first step of krewe creation is the core cast. The game assumes most players will create Sin-Eater characters (p. XX), but if a player is interested and the table is willing they can choose to make a ghost their main character (p. XX).

If you haven't made a Sin-Eater yet, this is the time to make one. It might be a good time to ask everyone else what kind of krewe they'd like to make as well. A former Fortune 500 CEO might not really fit into a game about founding a Fury krewe with a group of mostly street-level activists.

Step One: Introductions

Once you have your characters built, go around the table and introduce your finalized character. A lot can change in character creation between stating a concept and filling out their sheet. Give their name, introduce their geist, share how they died, talk about what they're good at, reveal anything else interesting about them, and talk about how they might relate to the krewe. Everyone should ask questions, make suggestions that could tie the krewe together, and find something about the character to be a fan of.

Step Two: Connections

Now that you've met all the characters, it's time to go around again and build some starting connections. You've just started a mystery religion with these people, so you must think *something* about them. When it's your turn, make a proposal how your character is connected to another. It's up to everyone at the table, but especially the other player whose character is involved, whether a proposal is appropriate or not. If an idea gets vetoed for any reason, move on and don't try to force it.

If you don't have an idea at the moment that's okay. You can tell the table that, and maybe suggest some inroads to connecting with your character. Talk about family they might have, experiences they've gone through, or even silly hobbies. Things that lead to other players yelling out "Wait, that's it, both of our characters have that in common!"

If you're still not sure about it, these things tend to change in play. It's kind of like how television show pilots may feature an actor as a character, but once it's broadcast they're played by somebody completely different.

The Dead

Next you'll create the members of the krewe that died but didn't get a second chance at life.

Go around the table and come up with ideas for ghostly celebrants. Even if you don't want to create one, everyone should contribute ideas for at least a few ghosts that are part of the krewe. After all, this is a game about the Underworld as much as the living world, and it'd be a shame if there was no supporting cast for half of the game world.

Aspirations

Each of the dead receives two Aspirations. They're both free for you to decide, but one should probably be about how they feel about all this death.

Virtue and Vice

Choose a Virtue and Vice (p. XX) to help flesh out the character's drives.

Anchor

Dead celebrants have two Anchors. One is always their remains but the other can be a person, place, or thing. Something mobile is useful for allowing ghostly members of the krewe to join in the action.

Attributes (p. XX)

A ghostly celebrant is a Rank 2 ghost. They have nine dots of Attributes to distribute between Power, Finesse, and Resistance.

Manifestation (p. XX)

Pick a Manifestation. This is the ghost's main way of interacting with the physical world. Note that it is very rare for Rank 1-2 ghosts to have the Materialize Manifestation.

All ghosts get Twilight Form for free.

Influences (p. XX)

A celebrant has two dots of Influences over their Anchors.

Numina (p. XX)

Ghostly celebrants begin with three Numina.

Derived Traits (p. XX)

A dead celebrant has the standard derived Traits for ephemeral entities.

Finishing Touches

Once you've filled out character sheets for the ghosts you can go around the table again and establish connections between them just like you did with the Sin-Eaters. They can also have relationships with the Sin-Eaters or even their geists.

The Living

You're going to create the living celebrants of the krewe now. They might be aware of the existence of ghosts or they might just be along for the trip. Living celebrants might be occultists, specialists, or just plain religious. It's just as likely that they're friends, family, and coworkers of the Sin-Eaters from their life before they died. Every player should make at least one human but feel free to make more than that — krewes get big, especially as they grow more powerful.

Creating a living krewe member is easy. Give each character a name, a concept, and an Aspiration. Next choose three actions that support their concept — not Skills, but general tasks that the character is good at. An occultist, for example, might have Archive Access, Academic Connections, and Ghost Facts. Now give one of those actions a rating of five dice, one a rating of four dice, and one a rating of three dice. If the character ever has to take other actions alone they roll two dice.

Living celebrants are ordinary people; they might describe themselves as psychic or sensitive, but unless the krewe has the Exceptional Membership Merit, they don't have any supernatural Merits.

Background Players

Of course, your krewe almost certainly consists of more than these few faces, but for right now making a few iconic faces helps keep the game from getting mired down in minutiae. When there are too many characters in the krewe, it starts to dilute the main characters' story, be they Sin-Eaters or ghosts. If several members of a Sin-Eater's former gang are in the krewe, then make a living celebrant who is representative of that group of people. There's a reason most popular media has a starship being run by six people or a hospital where a three-person team of diagnosticians are also technicians and surgeons.

If you need a character and all your current characters are indisposed then maybe it's time to flesh out another member of the krewe. If something happens to the characters you've already fleshed out — like a particularly grisly death — then you might need to promote a new character or, if they're formerly living, reintroduce them as a ghost.

Creating the Krewe

Once you have a few main and supporting cast members to use as a base, it's time to fill out your krewe sheet. Krewes are represented by Traits and Advantages, much like individual characters, but these Traits represent the group as a whole. Unlike the previous steps, where each player contributes individual characters, the entire group should work together to assign Traits everyone

can agree on. The Storyteller's role during this stage is to mediate any disputes and help the group agree on a compromise that everyone is happy with.

Step One: Krewe Archetype (p. XX)

The first step is deciding what sort of krewe this is if you haven't already.

Step Two: Doctrines (p. XX)

Doctrines are the core tenets of the krewe's faith, statements of its beliefs and its actions. Good doctrines are active, emphasizing the krewe's actual works over rote catechisms. Strong Doctrines keep a krewe coherent, while weak ones inevitably lead to infighting and internal struggle. If that is the sort of game that interests you, that's fine, but everyone at the table should agree they want a game about struggling to define the krewe from the outset.

If the group isn't sure of what sort of Doctrines the krewe believes in yet, that's fine. Maybe the krewe is very young, coming together more for mutual protection than any high-minded ideals. Maybe their only Doctrine is the krewe's promise to each other they won't let the others be lost in the Underworld, or that no ghost they meet will go hungry. Further Doctrines can be applied in play.

Doctrines

- **Choose Three:** Define three doctrines for your krewe.

Step Three: Virtue and Vice (p. XX)

A krewe's Virtue and Vice represent, respectively, the highest ideal to which the krewe holds itself and the common, earthly distractions that hold it back. In concert with Doctrines, they help to shape *how* the krewe acts on the core beliefs defined by its archetype. A Fury krewe with a Virtue of Merciful and a Vice of Superior looks very different than one whose Virtue is Wrathful and whose Vice is Hesitant, even if they have similar Doctrines. The former never employ violence as a tool for redressing wrongs, and are probably pretty smug about that fact. The latter are slow to act, always wanting to be certain of the facts before they act — but when they do, they bring a terrible, perhaps disproportionate, response down on wrongdoers.

Step Four: Attributes (p. XX)

Krewes use the same simplified Attributes as ephemeral entities: Power, Finesse, and Resistance.

Power represents the krewe's ability to effect change through direct action.

Finesse is the krewe's "soft leverage," the ability of its celebrants to employ their own influence and talents for the krewe's benefit.

Resistance is a measure of how committed the krewe's members are to the cause: Low Resistance means you're more vulnerable to desertion or members not following through, high Resistance means you've got a core of fanatics at your beck and call. It also serves as a yardstick for number of members: Not counting the main characters, a krewe typically has $(10 \times \text{Power})$ members.

Attributes

- **Base Competency:** The krewe starts with one dot in all Attributes for free.
- **Additional Dots:** Assign six dots to the krewe's Attributes, divided however you like.

Step Five: Merits (p. XX)

Merits represent the collective belongings and talents of the krewe, not necessarily individual members. Status (Local Politics) might represent a prominent City Councilwoman who is a celebrant, but it can also mean that the krewe as a whole is considered an influencer in the local political scene. Resources might be the result of a rich celebrant or just the congregation pitching in when one of their number needs something.

Also at this point, you should design a Mystery Cult Initiation Merit for the krewe (p. XX). Assume that most celebrants have access to the first dot; more advanced celebrants can be created with the Exceptional Membership Merit (p. XX).

Merits

- **Krewe Merits:** Choose seven dots worth of Merits, all of which must have the Krewe or Krewe Only tag.
- **Safe Place:** All krewes begin with one dot of Safe Place, representing their center of worship.

Step Six: Ceremonies (p. XX)

Krewe Ceremonies are the principal rituals of the faith. Unlike Ceremonies purchased by individual characters, krewe Ceremonies can be used by any character with a sufficient understanding of the krewe's mysteries.

Krewe Ceremonies

- **By Archetype:** Krewes begin with a one-, two-, and three-dot Ceremony determined by their archetype, and with the Bestow Regalia Ceremony.

Step Seven: Advantages (p. XX)

Krewes have two Advantages: Esotery, which represents how well the krewe's religious tenets convey mystical understanding of the Underworld and the cycle of life and death, and Congregation, which serves the krewe in a manner similar to Health for individual characters.

Advantages

- **Esotery:** 1
- **Congregation:** 5 + Resistance

Krewe Advancement

Just as individual characters take Beats and Experiences at significant moments, krewes earn Krewe Beats and Experiences through the discoveries of their celebrants and their own actions. Their simplified Traits have different Experience costs.

[A SIDEBAR TABLE]

Attribute	6 per dot
Merit	1 per dot
Ceremony	2 per dot
Esotery*	5 per dot

* Esotery may only be increased with Krewe Beats.

[EXIT TABLE]

The Krewe Prelude

A prelude helps everything come together and cement itself into a cohesive whole. These scenes help the players figure out the few remaining questions about the krewe so they can make any adjustments that might be important to the flow of the game. It also helps get everyone on the same page about how the krewe functions. There should be minimal or no dice rolling during this prelude if you can manage it.

The following are some questions that the prelude should seek to answer:

- How is the krewe organized? Are they strictly hierarchical with an inner circle of founders being served by less initiated members of the krewe subservient to them? Is the krewe entirely democratic choosing to bring all actions before a committee to vote? Is there an undisputed leader that everyone is subservient to?
- What are the great works the krewe performs? For example if they're a krewe of Mourners do they attempt to record the teachings of the dead or do they try to directly fill the dead's requests for their descendants?

Anchors

The dead aren't bound by gravity or momentum — they're bound by the memories of such ideas. In order to act upon a world that can no longer reach them, the dead need a mooring point. Anchors are the ties that bind, vivid reminders of a ghost's life and state of death. They're conduits by which ephemeral matter can influence a living world. And never forget that the Bound *are* dead.

A Sin-Eater's Anchors distinguish them from the living, but separate them from the dead. Their Anchors are not nooses around their necks or chains biting into their ankles. Instead, they give them a sense of place and purpose. The Bargain gives the power to act, but Anchors explain why.

Anchors of the Bound are not the same as a ghost's, and a Sin-Eater might find ghosts less than sympathetic. It's important to remember the difference: While the Bound are self-contained, ghosts are chained. Serve the dead, stand among the living, do both or either, but the Sin-Eater gets a *choice*. Whether she lives as a living soul with a few complications or one of the dead with better luck than most defines her Anchors and how they relate back to her efforts.

Root

The Root is the affirmation that you are well and truly dead. It's the admission and submission to the change that's come over your flesh, your blood, and your point of view. That truth is proven by the choices you make as one of the dead. Do you speak for the voiceless? Do you wander through Avernian Gates in search of secrets or answers? Your Root is how you face death itself.

The Root keeps the Bound grounded in a very real sense. It reminds her of the privileges she carries: a body, vitality, powers of Plasm, of ceremony, and of her krewes. Every day you walk past those who cannot touch the world. What will you do with the death that you've been given?

Root Basics

- **Quick and Easy:** Once per scene, when your Root leads you to give precedence to the dead or your own death, regain 1 Willpower.
- **Grand Gestures:** Once per story, when your Root leads you to risk your life or your status in the living world for the dead, or to protect the dead from the living at great risk or cost to yourself, regain all spent Willpower.

Bloom

The Bloom is the living, flowering, and public soul of the Bound. It's where he goes to work. It's his house, his car, his neighbors — it's each of those things and all of them. The Bloom is the sum total of how he lives his life after losing it. It's what he's retained or what he aims to cultivate.

Do you use your power and perspective to get rich? Did death give you a drive to leave a legacy, or did it help you slow down and see the little people? Do you take like a weed or give back like a ripening fruit? After buying a life and cheating death, what does the Bound actually *do* with it?

Bloom Basics

- **Quick and Easy:** Once per scene, when your Bloom leads you to ignore the dead or your own death to tend to the living, regain 1 Willpower.

- **Grand Gestures:** Once per story, when your Bloom leads you to risk your life or your status among the dead to tend to the living, or to protect the dead from the living at great risk or cost to yourself, regain all spent Willpower.

Setting Down Roots and Flowering Fruits

Here are several example archetypes for your character's Roots and Blooms. You can select from these, or work with your Storyteller to create your own. Each archetype includes a brief description and sample actions that could recover a character's Willpower.

Not all of these archetypes are healthy on the surface — some are downright concerning. That said, none of them have to be once fully explored. Through interaction with the living, the dead, their geist, and their krewes, a Sin-Eater may take on new interpretations of their Anchors over time.

Advocate

Someone has to speak for the unheard — it might as well be her. From lawyer to community leader, protest organizer to matriarch, she sees to it that her people are heard and felt. That voice comes from a place of power and opportunity — is it the power or the purpose that drives her on?

Single Willpower: Gain a significant concession for people who would otherwise go ignored.

All Willpower: Create a secure, lasting benefit to the community or stakeholders you serve.

Antihero

The antihero embodies a culture's unsung virtues or noble vices while still performing clearly "heroic" deeds. She takes the power of the Bargain and delivers evil unto evil. She isn't anybody's role model, but by embracing her flaws and the ugly kinds of justice or freedom we all ache for? She takes a place of power, outside but alongside the dead and living worlds.

Single Willpower: Apply an unconventional, ignoble, or blunt solution to a current problem.

All Willpower: Take major risks to establish your reputation as the right kind of trouble.

Casual

The casual doesn't really give a damn in the most sociable of ways. Not only does he try to do as little difficult work as possible, he recommends others do the same. From the jaded to the serene, he knows just how short life can be — shorter if you mess with a good thing. The casual abides.

Single Willpower: Show someone that their duties, schemes, or troubles aren't really worth it.

All Willpower: Undermine or subvert an impending climax in a satisfactory way to all (relevant) parties.

Cowl

The cowl has lost much and fears more. To deal with that fear, she's chosen to embody it. She confronts others with the trappings of the dead or challenges the dead to embrace the harder truths. By projecting that fear, she hopes to conquer it. By embracing that fear, it defines her.

Single Willpower: Remind someone in power of their mortality or morbidity in a significant way.

All Willpower: Crack the composure of a powerful foe or potential ally in a very public way.

Enabler

By giving others either the tools or simply permission to work out their doubts or desires, the enabler gets to experience a little secondhand living. She is the devil on their shoulder... or, with a little more effort, the angel who knows what she wants and how to indulge safely.

Single Willpower: Convince someone give in to their dark side.

All Willpower: Lead an ally or enemy to a major breaking point and through to the other side.

Gardener

The gardener believes that careful grooming can change the nature of the world — or the Underworld. By applying the right leverage from an unexpected angle, she can make a legacy that will outlast her and sustain her community. If that involves pulling a few weeds? So be it.

Single Willpower: Set up a win-win situation, setting one problem against another.

All Willpower: Set another major player down a path you've predetermined for the long term.

Pollyanna

Dying once can take the bite out of pessimism. To cope or by conscious choice, the Pollyanna has decided to be radically positive. At its best, this can mean taking life and death with open eyes and a focus on better outcomes. At its worst, he buries the bad so he won't have to see it.

Single Willpower: Take a risk, a detour, or a gamble on trusting someone else's motives.

All Willpower: Put everything on the line for what you want to see over what you fear.

Saved

Not everyone gets a second chance, but the saved doesn't intend to waste it. She takes the knowledge of the life she used to live and applies it as a lever to open doors for others. While many are kind, others define themselves by what they've overcome and scorn those who failed.

Single Willpower: Apply hard-earned knowledge from your old life to improve your new one.

All Willpower: Pay it forward, risking what you've gained to give someone else a fresh choice.

Servant

It's all easier to handle if she just does what she's told. Her krewe has needs. Her geist has needs. The dead and living both have things they need — things that she can readily provide. As long as the relationship is clear, it doesn't have to be equal. Isn't being worth something enough?

Single Willpower: Follow through with a command or request despite the personal costs.

All Willpower: Put someone else's catharsis or satisfaction above your own needs or safety.

Surrogate

A surrogate serves as a replacement parent, child, lover, or emotional teddy bear to the deprived — living or dead. By being available and reliable, he's made a secure, safe niche for himself.

Single Willpower: Dedicate your time and energy to resolve someone else's needs or concerns.

All Willpower: Devote yourself to helping someone else resolve a Condition caused by a breaking point.

Touchstones

While the Bound's Root and Bloom represent a communal bond or a role they play to the living and the dead, more direct ties bind them to the world. A personal Burden led them to return. Strange desires led the geist to offer a second chance. As time and a sort of life go on, they start to notice that life may not be fair, but death is worse. The lucky ones vanish. The unlucky ones linger. And the doomed? Have only the hungry depths of the Underworld to look forward to.

You've been given not just an opportunity, but power. Will you serve yourself or fix the scales?

Touchstones are more than links — they're promises. Making and keeping them is the heart of the bond between Bound and geist. These promises can and will conflict, so balancing those needs will impact and limit their power to influence the diverse worlds they walk.

The Bound gains her first Touchstone at Synergy 1 — a representation of her Burden. It's a reflection or a person that sums up why she couldn't just die. Was she in love? Was she a parent? Was she an inch shy of a dream achieved or that last big score against the odds? Whether it's her redeeming quality or a damning grudge she won't relinquish, it's the chain that keeps her tied to this world. She should resolve it. She should *want* to resolve it. But if she does — what then? Is it over for her? Does she lay down to a final rest? If she does, who will carry on her other work? When choosing this first Touchstone, consider the scope and length of the chronicle and work with your Storyteller to set reasonable obstacles. The longer the story, the more narrative barriers need to be between a cathartic use of the Rage and the broken body of your former abuser, for example. Maybe they're protected. Maybe they have someone you love wrapped up in their dark deeds. The longer the span of the story, the more tangled a knot the Bound's Burden becomes.

At Synergy 3, the character gains a second Touchstone — this one tied her geist's Remembrance. As unsettling as the geist can be, it still once was and in many ways is *human*. This Touchstone is the key to that humanity, the lost story of a perhaps-ancient ghost. It's why the Bargain was worth making to the geist. It's a path you must walk alongside it to honor the deal. As you walk that path, the relationship between you grows stronger and you become a greater beacon among the worlds of the dead.

At Synergy 6, they gain a third Touchstone. The character now has both the power and the perception to see the wretched state of the Underworld and the laments of the forgotten dead. The dead see them in turn and *expect something*. This Touchstone represents that conflict or cause that she can't ignore. She has seen and cannot ever unsee a larger world, but has obligations both to herself and her partner — the good fight is great, but can she afford to fight?

Touchstone Basics

- **Burden Touchstone:** At Synergy 1, you have a Touchstone tied to your Burden.
- **Remembrance Touchstone:** At Synergy 3, you gain a Touchstone tied to your geist's Remembrance.
- **Cause Touchstone:** At Synergy 6, you gain a Touchstone tied to your desire to enact change against the Underworld.

- **Losing Touchstones:** Should your Synergy drop below the level associated with a Touchstone, you lose access to that Touchstone. You regain access when your Synergy rises to the associated level again.
- **Willpower Gain:** Any time you defend your attachment to a Touchstone against a significant obstacle, regain 1 Willpower. If that defense comes at serious risk or major cost, regain all spent Willpower.
- **Synergy Boost:** While you are actively pursuing one of your Touchstones, increase your effective Synergy by 2. If you are actively pursuing multiple Touchstones, increase your effective Synergy by 3. This effective Synergy increase does not give you access to new Touchstones or allow you to buy Traits above your normal maximum, but in all other ways functions normally.
- **Clashing Touchstones:** If pursuing one Touchstone actively hinders another, you gain the Indebted Condition.
- **Resolving Touchstones:** When you resolve the issue at the core of a Touchstone, your geist gains 1 Rank.

Example Touchstones

Here are a few example Touchstones, starting points to develop your own for your character. Many of these can apply to personal, Remembrance, or even service-driven Touchstones, so take time to consider the ties that bind the Bound. These links are emotional, but also a part of dying.

9 to 5

It doesn't matter if the gates tear open, if the skies bleed Plasm, if you're alive, dead, or neither — someone's got to open up the shop every morning at six. Maybe you love the routine. Maybe this is the last inheritance of your geist's Remembrance. Maybe it's the last safe place for local kids. It doesn't matter. You're going to show up at 6 AM in one piece — or in a dozen, if you have to.

Albatross

Some mistakes, we never let go. You messed up and there's a testament to that failure. A survivor. A bitter ghost that has you as one of its Anchors. A person with a record of your geist's worst misdeeds. Resolving or destroying them would be too easy. Remembering is hard.

First Friend

Insight into a larger world is lonely. Even if events pull you away, you never forget the first being you interacted with as one of the Bound. An EMT? A troubled ghost? Are you the first one in your geist's long history? This tie to the beginning gives you a reason to keep going forward.

House Keys

Whether you've gone back to your life or had to start over from scratch, something about the clink of keys calms you. These bear no relation to your Haunts — they unlock a sense of safety or the secrets that you — or your geist — once kept safe. What happens when they change the locks?

Inherited Anchor

You've picked up some person that's a piece of someone else's story. Maybe your geist's Remembrance led you to a curious descendent. Maybe your Twilight awareness or your treks into the Underworld left you with a ghost's old obligations. Either way, *you* haven't let go yet.

Murder Weapon

Something about holding the implement of your destruction keeps you centered. Maybe it's literal — a knife, a gun, a broken bit of steering column. Maybe a certain brand of booze will do it. Maybe your old medicine or vices still settle your nerves. Odder if they're your geist's vices.

New Neighbor

Settling in to a new haunt means brushing shoulders with unexpected people. Do your neighbors or roommates remind you of your old life? Did your geist lead you to a safe haven with a secret or two in the attic? Does a different neighborhood than your upbringing call to your new power?

Our Song

Whether you need to hear it, play it, or just hum a few bars? You share a link by music to better days. In the case of your geist, it may be a song you've never heard, but something in that music reminds you of something — and betraying the themes or feelings of that song cuts you deep.

Replacement Love

Love them or hate them, this new presence in a loved one's life makes the one you left behind happy. Seeing you again? Might not. The ways they love so differently inform different ways that you can live and love... or maybe you just want to prove that your way is the *right* way.

Roadside Memorial

Out along familiar roads, there's a small cross that gets the occasional flowers, maybe a framed photo that falls out of sight more often than not. Someone remembers where you died. And as long as that cross stays standing? You haven't been forgotten. But how many others have been?

Merits

The following Merits are available to **Geist** characters.

Merit Tags

In addition to their dot cost, some Merits have special tags that denote additional rules. These tags are:

- **Krewe:** These Merits can be purchased and used by a krewe (p. XX). Individual characters may also purchase these Merits for themselves.
- **Krewe Only:** These Merits may only be purchased by a krewe, not an individual character.
- **Multiple:** These Merits may be purchased multiple times; the individual Merit description explains how to differentiate multiple instances.
- **Style:** These Merits provide a unique advantage at every dot level. When you purchase a Style Merit, you gain the benefits of all abilities at your dot rating or lower.

- **Shared:** These Merits may be purchased by multiple characters; add up the total dots in the Merit purchased by all contributing characters; every character who contributed dots may use the Merit at the total level. Characters may withdraw their share of a Shared Merit at any time.

Note that the Shared tag is usually accompanied by the Krewe tag; in a typical **Geist: The Sin-Eaters** game it's more beneficial to purchase these Merits as Krewe Merits. The Shared tag is for groups without the unified backing of a krewe.

Sanctity of Merits

Merits represent in-character resources to which your character has access. Sometimes, these things come and go. But in game terms, they're dots on your character's sheet. When your character loses those resources, you don't inherently lose those dots. They're refunded as Experiences, one Experience for one dot. This also counts if you decide to abandon a Merit that no longer makes sense for your character.

However, you can't just "buy back" lost Merits. For example, if your character with Resources •••• has her stock portfolio take a dive during a recession, stripping three of her five dots, you get three Experiences. But you can't just spend those three Experiences to buy Resources •••• right back. Normally, you have to wait until the end of the game session to buy back one Merit. And each following session, you can purchase an additional dot.

Allies (• to ••••, Krewe, Multiple)

Effect: Allies help your character. They might be friends, employees, associates, or people your character has blackmailed.

Each dot represents a layer of sway in the group. One dot would constitute small favors and passing influence. Three could offer considerable influence, such as the police overlooking a misdemeanor charge. Five dots stretches the limits of the organization's influence, as its leaders put their own influence on the line for the character. No matter the request, it has to be something that organization could accomplish.

The Storyteller assigns a rating between one and five to any favor asked. A character or krewe can ask for favors that add up to her Allies rating without penalty in one chapter. If she extends her influence beyond that, her player must roll Manipulation + Persuasion + Allies, with a penalty equal to the favor's rating. If successful, the group does as requested. Failed or successful, the character loses a dot of Allies. This dot may return at the end of the chapter (see Sanctity of Merits, p. XX.) On a dramatic failure, the organization resents her and seeks retribution. On an exceptional success, she doesn't lose the dot.

Multiple Instances: Each instance of this Merit represents one type of ally. This could be an organization, a society, a clique, or an individual. Each purchase has its own rating. Your character might have Allies (Middle Class Anarchists) ••, Allies (Stolichnaya Crime Family) •••, and Allies (Methodist Church) •.

Architect (• to ••••)

Effect: Your character must create things that last. She's particularly good at this; she pours her all into everything, every institution, every relationship she can. When taking an extended action to create something your character finds significant, you gain a number of additional dice equal to your Merit dots. You can divide these dice as you see fit across any number of rolls. Any roll benefiting from these dice gains the 8-again quality.

Notes: If your character's Burden is Abiding, also add her Merit dots to her unmodified dice pool for determining how many rolls she's allowed in her extended actions.

Cenote (• to ••••, Krewe, Multiple, Shared)

Prerequisite: Safe Place •+

Effect: Your character has access to a haunted house, cemetery, or other place she can freely spend time and recharge Plasm. Every chapter, this Cenote generates Plasm equal to its dot rating.

Each instance of this Merit must be tied to a Safe Place Merit (p. XX) of at least one dot.

Multiple: Each instance of this Merit reflects a different place.

Common Sense (•••)

Effect: Your character has an exceptionally sound and rational mind. With a moment's thought, she can weigh potential courses of action and outcomes.

Once per chapter as an instant action, you may ask the Storyteller one of the following questions about a task at hand or course of action. Roll Wits + Composure. If you succeed, the Storyteller must answer to the best of her ability. If you fail, you get no answer. With an exceptional success, you can ask an additional question. With dramatic failure, the Storyteller can give you a piece of false advice. If you follow that "intuition" regardless of risk, take a Beat.

Questions

- What is the worst choice?
- What do I stand to lose here?
- What's the safest choice?
- Am I chasing a worthless lead?

Contacts (•, Krewe, Multiple)

Effect: Contacts provide your character with information. Each instance of this Merit represents a sphere or organization from which the character can garner information. Contacts do not provide services, only information. This may be face to face, via email, by telephone, or even by séance.

Garnering information via Contacts requires a Manipulation + Social Skill roll, depending on the method the character uses, and the relationship between the characters. The Storyteller should give a bonus or penalty, dependent on how relevant the information is to that particular Contact, whether accessing the information is dangerous, and if the character has maintained good relations or done favors for the Contact. These modifiers should range from -3 to +3 in most cases. If successful, the Contact provides the information.

Notes: Each instance of this Merit represents a different point of contact.

Dread Geist (•••)

Effect: Your geist is Rank 4.

Fast Reflexes (• to •••)

Prerequisite: Wits •••or Dexterity •••

Effect: Gain +1 Initiative per dot.

Fleet of Foot (• to •••)

Prerequisite: Athletics ••

Effect: Gain +1 Speed per dot, and anyone pursuing your character suffers a –1 per dot to any foot chase rolls.

Good Time Management (•, Krewe)

Prerequisites: Academics •• or Science ••

Effect: Your character has vast experience managing complex tasks, keeping schedules, and meeting deadlines. When taking an extended action, halve the time required between rolls.

Krewe: Reduce the amount of Effort required for krewe actions by 1. Krewe actions always cost at least 1 Effort.

Grave Goods (• to •••••)

Effect: Your character wants and wants and takes and takes. To her, the phrase “you can’t take it with you” just means you’re not trying hard enough. She has gathered a cache of ghostly objects, perhaps snatched from the Underworld or given to her by ghostly lovers or even buried in her own empty tomb.

In every chapter, your character can produce equipment whose total Availability is equal to or less than her dots in Grave Goods. This equipment is ephemeral — Sin-Eaters and ghosts can interact with it normally, but it is invisible and intangible to the living. Ephemeral devices like phones and computers can still connect to ordinary networks, though they are prone to bizarre interference.

Ghosts and Sin-Eaters can consume any equipment produced with this Merit, gaining Essence or Plasm equal to the item’s Availability.

Notes: If your character’s Burden is Hungry, once per session when your character procures an item, she regains all spent Willpower.

Language (•)

Effect: Your character is skilled with an additional language, beyond her native tongue. Your character can speak, read, and write in that language.

Notes: Choose a new language each time you buy this Merit.

Library (• to •••, Krewe, Multiple, Shared)

Effect: Your characters have access to a plethora of information about a given topic. When purchasing this Merit, choose a Mental Skill. On any extended roll involving the Skill in question, add the dots in this Merit.

Multiple: Each instance of this Merit applies to a different Mental Skill.

Manic States (• to •••••)

Prerequisite: This Merit must be tied to a Persistent Condition that’s generally negative. You may take a relevant Condition when purchasing this Merit, or you may purchase this Merit when your character acquires a Persistent Condition in play.

Effect: Once per game session, reflexively spend a point of Willpower to bring about a manic state for the scene. Ignore the negative effects of the Persistent Condition for the scene. Additionally, take a pool of dice equal to your Merit dots, and divide them among any rolls during the scene as you see fit. Any roll where you used these dice gains 8-again.

However, after the scene, your character “drops.” In addition to the Condition’s effects returning, she loses 10-again on all rolls until she achieves a dramatic failure *or* an exceptional success on a later action.

Notes: If your character’s Burden is Bereaved, this Merit grants exceptional success on three successes instead of five on any action benefiting from the additional dice.

Memento (••, Multiple)

Effect: Your character has a Memento (p. XX).

Multiple: Each instance of this Merit reflects a different Memento.

Mystery Cult Initiation (• to •••••)

Cults are far more common than people would like to admit. “Mystery cult” is the catch-all term for phenomena ranging from secret societies couched in fraternity houses, to scholarly cabals studying the magic of classical symbolism, to Sin-Eater-led krewes.

Mystery Cult Initiation reflects membership in one of these esoteric groups. The dot rating dictates how deeply immersed in the cult’s mysteries a character is and their standing within the cult. In newly created cults, even the leadership might only have one or two dots in this Merit, while in old, powerful cults no one takes you seriously unless you have at least three or four dots.

Designing a mystery cult requires three things, at bare minimum. First is a Purpose. This is the defining reason the cult exists. Usually it’s tied in with the cult’s history and recent background. Second is a Relic. This is an item that grounds members’ faith. For example, a piece of the God-Machine, an ancient text bound in human flesh, or the mummified flesh of a saint. The last is a Doctrine. Every cult is defined by its rules and traditions.

In addition to standing, a Mystery Cult Initiation Merit offers benefits at each level of influence. Develop these as well. The following are guidelines; use them to craft your cults:

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- A Skill Specialty or one-dot Merit, pertaining to the lessons taught to initiates.
- A one-dot Merit.
- A Skill dot, or a two-dot Merit (often a supernatural Merit).
- A three-dot Merit, often supernatural in origin.
- A three-dot Merit, or a major advantage not reflected in game traits.

END CHART

Notes: Sin-Eaters who begin play as members of a krewe receive one dot of Mystery Cult Initiation for free. In addition, krewe celebrants automatically know all krewe Ceremonies whose dot rating is equal to or less than their Mystery Cult Initiation rating.

No member of a krewe can have more dots in Mystery Cult Initiation than the krewe's Esotery rating (p. XX).

Sample Krewes

Sample Krewe: The Forty-Third Nome

Based out of Cairo, this Pilgrim Krewe practices a variant of Ophian Gnosticism crossed with Middle Kingdom Atenism, which posits the Underworld as the decaying corpse of the Biblical Serpent, slain by the sun god, and that only by finding the serpent's heart can it be restored to life and the cycle of death and rebirth made whole again.

- Initiates are expected to prepare for long sojourns in the Underworld. They gain a Caving Specialty in Survival.
- Full members must learn to read and write Coptic. They gain the Language (Coptic) Merit free of charge.
- Snake handling is a common feature of worship within the Forty-Third Nome, and members must gain a tolerance for their poison. They gain two dots of the Hardy Merit (**Chronicles of Darkness**, p. 47).
- Delvers into the Underworld, the Forty-Third Nome has established numerous base camps and waystations in the Great Below. Members gain access to up to three dots' worth of Safe Places in the Underworld per story.
- The high priest of the Forty-Third Nome has honed his instincts to such a degree that even the Underworld cannot fool him. All rolls to navigate in the Underworld (p. XX) take half as long.

Reconciler (• to •••)

Effect: Your character is an expert at bringing closure to issues and making amends. When undertaking a Social Maneuver to right a wrong or broker peace, remove a number of Doors equal to her dots in this Merit.

Notes: If your character's Burden is Kindly, acts of reconciliation fulfill her as well. When your character accomplishes an applicable Social Maneuver, take a Beat and replenish Willpower points equal to your dots in this Merit.

Resources (• to ••••, Krewe)

Effect: This Merit reflects your character's disposable income. She might live in an upscale condo, but if her income is tied up, she might have little money to throw around. Characters are assumed to have basic necessities without Resources.

The dot rating determines the relative amount of disposable funding the character has available. One dot is a little spending money here and there. Two dots is a comfortable, middle-class wage. Three is a nicer, upper-middle-class life. Four is moderately wealthy. Five is filthy rich.

Every item has an Availability rating (p. XX). Once per chapter, your character can procure an item at her Resources level or lower, without issue. An item one Availability above her Resources reduces her effective Resources by one dot for a full month, since she has to rapidly liquidate funds. She can procure items two Availability below her Resources without limit.

(within reason). For example, a character with Resources •••• can procure as many Availability •• disposable cellphones as she needs.

Retainer (• to •••••)

Effect: Your character has a friend, employee, cultist, sycophant, or other thoroughly loyal person at her disposal. The dot rating reflects the retainer's relative competency. One-dot retainers are barely functional, children, or otherwise not very effective. Three-dot retainers are typically professionals, with some impressive but not overwhelming abilities at their disposal. Five-dot retainers are true experts, the best in their class.

If a retainer must roll for an action, double the Retainer Merit dots and use them as a dice pool for any action core to his primary focus or concept. For example, an auto mechanic would get that on Crafts or perhaps Drive rolls. For other rolls, use the Merit rating by itself as a dice pool. Additionally, a Retainer can have access to twice the Merit dots in her own Merits. These are limited to Merits that don't create additional Storyteller Characters — your Retainer can't have a Retainer, who then has another Retainer, for example. But he could have Resources, Status, or a fighting Style Merit.

Retribution (• to •••••, Style)

Effect: Your character isn't necessarily a practiced, learned fighter, but when she sees injustice, she gets a mean strike like nothing else. To use these abilities, your character must suffer or witness harm to someone she cares about or feels responsibility toward. This doesn't have to happen in the same scene, but she must be actively pursuing retribution or the effects end. With loved ones whose lives were in true danger, she does not need to directly witness the harm — she simply has to be made aware of it.

Note that this Merit doesn't draw a "right and wrong" distinction with what your character must witness or suffer to use these abilities — villains can be just as vindictive as heroes. Also note that these abilities aren't all for direct combat; with Storyteller discretion, any act of retribution is valid.

Unerring Pursuit (•): Your character tracks and finds assailants with the ferocity of a predatory animal. Add +2 to all rolls to track or pursue assailants. Add +2 to her Speed as well.

And Taking Names (••): Your character's fueled not just by muscle and adrenaline, but by righteous indignation. When making an all-out attack (p. XX) don't add +2 to her roll. Instead, add +1 damage (if she's attacking unarmed, her attack counts as a weapon). If an effect would add dice to her normal all-out attack bonus, add +1 damage for every two dice, rounded down.

Outside of direct combat actions, damaging effects like traps, explosives, or car crashes she causes cause an additional 2 damage.

Fight Through (•••): Your character is unstoppable in pursuit of justice. She gains Armor 2/0.

Eye for an Eye (••••): Your character's vengeance has taken on a level of dramatic appropriateness. This requires the avenged source of harm to have caused a Condition or Tilt. The first time your character damages her target, apply that Condition or Tilt. If multiple Conditions or Tilts existed, choose which to apply. This will not replicate purely supernatural effects, unless your character can reproduce them.

Guns Blazing (•••••): Your character is able to swallow all fear and apprehension when enacting vengeance. She can take the benefits of all-out attacks each turn while maintaining her Defense (or allowing her to use it on other effects). She could, theoretically, go all-out “twice,” sacrificing her Defense for +4 instead of +2. Also, this can be used with the effects of And Taking Names.

Notes: If your character’s Burden is Vengeful, any rolls to use Retribution abilities benefit from the 8-again quality.

Safe Place (• to •••••, Krewe)

Effect: Your character has somewhere she can go where she can feel secure. While she may have enemies that could attack her there, she’s prepared and has the upper hand. The dot rating reflects the security of the place. The actual location, the luxury, and the size are represented by equipment. A one-dot Safe Place could simply be out of sight, out of mind, or feature minor security systems. A five-dot Safe Place could have a security crew, infrared scanners at every entrance, or trained dogs. Either place could be an apartment, a mansion, or a hidey-hole.

A Safe Place gives all owners an Initiative bonus equal to the total Merit dots.

Any efforts to breach the Safe Place suffer a penalty equal to the Merit dots invested. If the character desires, the Safe Place can include traps that cause intruders lethal damage equal to the Merit dots, or bashing damage equal to twice the Merit’s dots. The traps may be avoided with a Dexterity + Larceny roll, penalized by the Safe Place dots.

Notes: Each instance of this Merit reflects a different place.

Status (• to •••••, Krewe, Multiple)

Effect: Your character or krewe has standing or membership in, authority or control over, or respect from a group or organization. This can reflect official standing, or merely informal respect. No matter the source, your character enjoys certain privileges within that structure.

Status only allows advantages within the confines of the group reflected in the Merit. Status (Organized Crime) won’t help if your character wants an official concealed-carry firearms permit, for example.

Status provides a number of advantages:

- Your character can apply her Status to any Social roll with those over which she has authority or sway.
- She has access to group facilities, resources, and funding. Depending on the group, this could be limited by red tape and requisitioning processes. It’s also dependent on the resources the particular group has available.

Drawback: Status requires upkeep, and often regular duties. If these duties are not upheld, the Status may be lost. The dots will not be accessible until the character reestablishes her standing. This shouldn’t be markedly costly, but should be a relatively regular show of loyalty or authority.

Multiple: Each instance of this Merit reflects standing in a different group or organization. Your character may have Status (Baron Samedi’s Gang) •••, Status (Occult Researchers) ••, and Status (Freemasons) •. Each affords its own unique benefits.

Striking Looks (• or ••)

Effect: Your character is stunning, alarming, commanding, repulsive, threatening, charming, or otherwise worthy of attention. Determine how your character looks and how people react to that. For one dot, your character gets +1 on any Social rolls that would be influenced by his looks. For two dots, it's +2. Depending on the particulars, this might influence Expression, Intimidation, Persuasion, Subterfuge, or other rolls.

Drawback: Attention is a double-edged sword. Any rolls to spot, notice, or remember your character gain the same dice bonus. Sometimes, your character will draw unwanted attention in social situations. This could cause further complications.

Supernatural Membership (• to ••••, Krewe Only)

Effect: Your krewe has various living members with exceptional abilities. When defining living members of your krewe (p. XX), you may create characters with Supernatural Merit dots (p. XX) equal to twice the krewe's rating in Supernatural Membership. Such characters always roll their best dice pool to activate their Supernatural Merits. If a Supernatural Merit has a Willpower cost, they ignore it, but may only use the Merit once per chapter.

Notes: This Merit only applies to the minor living celebrants created during krewe creation. If a player wants to play a living psychic as their primary character, or if a character has a gifted krewe member as a Retainer or the like, the krewe doesn't have to purchase this Merit.

Additional Supernatural Merits can be found in the **Chronicles of Darkness Rulebook** or supplements like **Hurt Locker**.

Sympathetic (•)

Effect: Your character has a pitiful face, a well-honed sob story, or is just otherwise really good at letting others get in close. Once per Social Maneuver (p. XX), you can opt to become Leveraged, Swooned, or take another relevant Condition to immediately eliminate two of the subject's Doors.

Notes: If your character's Burden is Bereaved, the subject gains the same Condition, directed at you.

Tolerance for Biology (•)

Prerequisite: Resolve •••+

Effect: Most people turn away at the sight of blood, other bodily fluids, or exotic biology. Your character has seen enough that nothing turns her stomach. When other characters must resist shock or physical repulsion from the disgusting and morbid, your character stands her ground. You do not need to make Composure, Stamina, or Resolve rolls to withstand the biologically strange. This doesn't mean she's immune to fear; she's just used to nature in all its nasty forms.

Notes: Sin-Eater characters receive this Merit for free, even if they do not meet the prerequisites.

Supernatural Merits

These Merits require the character remain human (non-supernatural.) If the character becomes a vampire, ghoul, mage, or any other supernatural character type, these Merits disappear. Per the Sanctity of Merits (p. XX), these Merits can be reallocated.

Automatic Writing (••)

Your character can enter a trance of sorts, in which she's temporarily overtaken by a spirit or ghost, and compelled to write mysterious things.

Effect: Your character must meditate for at least one minute. Spend a point of Willpower and roll Wits + Composure to enter the trance. For every success, your character writes a single statement or clue about something occurring in the area or relating to a pertinent issue. The Storyteller provides these clues, and they may at first seem completely nonsensical. Characters may attempt to interpret the clues with Wits + Investigation or research efforts.

Drawback: If the roll fails, or the character does not employ a personal item of a local spirit in the meditation, she's haunted afterward. Any time she fails a roll for the next week, it's considered dramatic as the spirit intervenes in complicating and sometimes dangerous ways.

Medium (•••)

Prerequisite: Empathy ••+, living character with no supernatural template.

Effect: Your character hears the words and moans of the dead. If he takes the time to parse their words, he can interact with them verbally.

Your character has more than just a knack for knowing when ephemeral beings are lurking nearby, he can reach out and make contact with them. By conducting a ritual, meditating, or otherwise preparing to commune with the unseen, and succeeding at a Wits + Occult roll, he temporarily increases the relevant Condition one step along the progression from nothing, to Anchor, Resonance, or Infrastructure, to Open, and finally to Controlled (see p. XX for more on Conditions as they relate to spirits). The effect lasts until he spends a Willpower point, but if an Influence has been used to progress the Condition further, doing so only reduces it by one step.

Drawback: Speaking with ghosts can be a blessing, but your character cannot turn the sense off, any more than he can turn off his hearing. The character hears the words of the dead any time they're present. Once per game session, usually in a time of extreme stress, the Storyteller may deliver a disturbing message to your character from the other side. You must succeed in a Resolve + Composure roll or become Shaken or Spooked.

Phantom Limb (•, ••, or •••, Multiple)

Prerequisite: This Merit must be tied to a permanent Tilt related to the loss of a limb or organ (see below). You may take a relevant Tilt when purchasing this Merit, or you may purchase this Merit when your character acquires a permanent Tilt in play.

Effect: One of your character's limbs or sense organs left behind a Doppelgänger (p. XX) when it was lost, and you can tap into its ephemeral nature. Choose one of the following:

- **Ghost Eyes (•):** Requires Blind. Your character can see Twilight as though she were sighted, and loses Blind in the Underworld.
- **Ghost Ears (•):** Requires Deaf. Your character can hear Twilight as though she were not deaf, and loses Deaf in the Underworld.
- **Ghost Leg (••):** Requires Leg Wrack. Your character can kick open Avernian Gates: Picking the Lock (p. XX) becomes an Instant Strength + Stamina + Phantom Limb action with no time requirement. Her ghost leg can interact with ghosts in Twilight. In the Underworld or Twilight, your character loses Leg Wrack.

- **Phantom Arm (•••):** Requires Arm Wrack. Choose one: your character has full control of her ghost arm and can touch and manipulate things in Twilight, *or* your ghost arm points toward sources of ghostly Essence or Plasm. Normally it points toward the nearest such source, but extremely large sources of Essence or Plasm, such as a Rank 5+ ghost or a Sin-Eater spending 20 Plasm on a Haunt, might draw your arm's attention from anywhere in the same city.

Multiple: Each instance of this Merit represents a different phantom limb. You may not have more than one instance of the same phantom limb.

Synergy

Synergy is the measure of a Bound's connection with her geist. With low Synergy, a Sin-Eater has no significant connection; her geist is a separate actor who occasionally lends her its power. High Synergy, on the other hand, reflects the living and dead halves of the Bound working in concert; the Sin-Eater picks up on the geist's mannerisms and attitudes while the geist in turn becomes more human.

A Sin-Eater's connection to her geist grows as she understands what drives the little god of death, following its passions and in turn helping — or forcing — it to understand what drove her to accept the Bargain in the first place. Geists understand the need for release better than most, and so a Sin-Eater who helps the restless dead grows closer to her spectral half.

To lose Synergy is to tear the Sin-Eater's constituent beings apart, literally as well as figuratively. As with any kind of grievous wound, it isn't easy. The geist can give up some of the bond in order to bring the Sin-Eater back from death, while the human side can weaken the bond by showing her disrespect for the dead by consuming them. Finally, a Sin-Eater can choose to sacrifice some of the bond by imbuing its power into physical objects.

Weakening the bond is difficult, but that doesn't mean that things are otherwise fine between the constituent halves of the Bound. Geists have their own wants and needs, their own personality that all too often is a slave to the Sin-Eater's needs. The added autonomy that comes with the Bargain also leaves the geist free to pursue its own agenda. It's all a matter of control — those Bound who have only a weak connection with their geist find that it acts with a mind of its own in all manner of circumstances, while those whose personalities have started to bleed into one another find themselves acting at cross purposes only rarely.

Effects of Synergy

Synergy ranges from 1-10. Each dot has specific effects, detailed on the chart below.

- **Maximum Plasm/Per Turn:** A Sin-Eater can only hold so much Plasm. Synergy determines how much she can store at once, and how much she can spend per turn. Effects that require spending more Plasm take multiple turns.
- **Trait Maximum:** At Synergy 6+ a Sin-Eater's Attributes and Skills can be increased above five dots up to a maximum of her Synergy.
- **Touchstones:** At Synergy 1, 3, and 6, the Sin-Eater unlocks a new Touchstone (p. XX).
- **Liminal Aura:** A Sin-Eater stands out whether she wants to or not (p. XX). Her Synergy dictates the base Manifestation Condition she creates around herself.
- **Relationship:** A character's Synergy limits how she can respond to crisis points, based on her relationship with her geist and how well she knows what her geist is doing. She always

knows where her geist is; a Positional relationship tells her its general emotional state, a Sympathetic relationship grants its specific emotions, and an Empathetic relationship gives the basic reasons for its emotional state.

- **Haunts:** Haunts include the Sin-Eater's Synergy in their dice pool.
- **Rank:** A Sin-Eater's Synergy limits how much of her geist's spiritual pull she can access. She has an effective Rank (p. XX) of the *lower* of her Synergy or her geist's Rank. This Rank only works against ghosts, geists, and spirits aligned with death and decay (see Physical Medium, p. XX). It also acts as a bound on some Synergy-related effects, including Remembrance Traits and Liminal Aura.

Synergy Effects

CHART ME

Synergy	Max Plasm/Per Turn	Trait Maximum	Touchstones	Liminal Aura
Relationship				
1 10/1	5	1	N/A	Coercive
2 11/2	5	1	Anchor	Positional
3 12/3	5	2	Anchor	Positional
4 13/4	5	2	Anchor	Positional
5 15/5	5	2	Anchor	Sympathetic
6 20/6	6	3	Open	Sympathetic
7 30/7	7	3	Open	Sympathetic
8 40/8	8	3	Open	Empathetic
9 50/9	9	3	Controlled	Empathetic
10 100/10	10	3	Controlled	Empathetic

UNCHART ME

Crisis Points

A crisis point is the moment when the geist wants something but the Bound is unwilling to relent. Driven by passion and memory, the geist lashes out — and if the Sin-Eater can't use his relationship with his geist to calm the spirit, it wreaks havoc while he looks on, helpless to stop the chaos.

Some Sin-Eaters let their geists run free when a crisis arises, understanding (or merely believing) that the geist will be easier to deal with once it has burned off some of its emotional anguish. Others try to keep a tight rein on their geist, though how successful they are depends on how strong the relationship is between the two halves of the Bound.

Each geist faces crises in a different fashion, and to what extent the Sin-Eater has any understanding or control is based on the relationship between the two. Some lash out in pain or fear, some terrorize their victims, while others try to control their surroundings. As such, crisis points have both *triggers* and *responses*.

Crisis Points

- **Trigger:** When you encounter one of your geist's unlocked *triggers*, a Crisis Point occurs.
- **Response:** Your geist is Unleashed (p. XX) and acts in accordance with a *response* chosen by the Storyteller, unless you choose to *intercede*.
- **Intercession:** By rolling your *relationship* dice pool, you can keep your geist from lashing out.

Triggers

A trigger is the condition that causes the geist to lash out in the first place. As the connection between Sin-Eater and geist grows closer, the geist understands more of the world through the Sin-Eater's perspective, so crisis points only trigger in specific circumstances that resonate with the geist.

Triggers always come in sets of three, starting very broad and ending up in specific situations tailored to the geist as the Sin-Eater moves along the journey of Remembrance. Several examples are presented below, but these are only suggestions: while Hazy triggers are vague enough to be universal, the Storyteller should absolutely tailor the Vague and Specific triggers to the individual geist.

In addition, all geists share a set of Universal triggers. These triggers are *not* tied to Remembrance; all geists suffer a crisis point when faced with one of these triggers.

Triggers

- **Unique Trigger:** Every geist has a unique set of triggers. At the start of play, the *Hazy* trigger is unlocked.
- **Unlocking Triggers:** When you successfully complete your first Remembrance tableau (p. XX), you unlock the *Vague* trigger. When you successfully complete your final Remembrance tableau, you unlock the *Specific* trigger.
- **Mutually Exclusive:** Only one trigger may be unlocked at a time.
- **Universal Triggers:** These triggers affect all geists and do not change based on Remembrance.

CHART THESE LIKE THE DEATH RAGE TRIGGERS IN FORSAKEN 2E

Universal Triggers

- Take damage from your geist's bane.
- Deliberately ignore the geist's ban.
- Suffer a wound in one of your rightmost three Health boxes.

Betrayal

- **Hazy:** Suffer a significant loss (of social standing, of opportunity, of money, etc.) due to the actions of someone you considered a friend or ally.
- **Vague:** See a friend or ally fulfill one of your Aspirations in a way that robs you of the ability to do so.

- **Specific:** See your Burden undermined by a friend or ally.

Helplessness

- **Hazy:** Face a situation that harms you (materially, socially, or physically) that you cannot mitigate or control.
- **Vague:** Dramatically fail a contested action.
- **Specific:** Watch a loved one die despite your best efforts to save them.

Jealousy

- **Hazy:** Neglect pursuing your geist's Remembrance to spend time with the living.
- **Vague:** Intercede in a crisis point specifically to protect a loved one.
- **Specific:** Actively pursue ways to sever the Bargain between you and your geist.

Malice

- **Hazy:** Be the victim of a deliberate attempt to discredit, harm, or disempower you.
- **Vague:** Lose access to Social Merits due to a deliberate attempt to block your use of them.
- **Specific:** See one of your Aspirations thwarted by the deliberate action of another.

Misfortune

- **Hazy:** Be the victim of freak circumstances — nearly hit by a car that runs a red, pickpocketed in the street, or similar.
- **Vague:** Suffer material harm from bad luck — losing hundreds or thousands of dollars in a card game, suffer significant injury in a car crash.
- **Specific:** Suffer material harm from bad luck in the same form that happened to your geist.

STOP CHARTING

Geists Are Not Omniscient

Geists do not have an automatic knowledge of events surrounding crisis points. They rely on their own perceptions, filtered through the emotional bond they share with their Sin-Eater. If a Bound's business partner manages to screw her over without her ever finding out (and without doing anything untoward where an invisible, intangible, and curious geist might have seen), the event wouldn't trigger a betrayal crisis point.

The flip side of that is that sometimes, if the Sin-Eater and/or her geist have strong reason to suspect the root cause of a trigger, that can trigger a crisis point *even if it's not true*. If the screwing-over was due to an outside competitor, but the Sin-Eater jumped to the conclusion it was her partner, her geist might very well experience a crisis point.

Responses

Each geist handles crisis points differently, in a similar way to how different people handle stressful situations differently. Unlike humans, geists are far better able to realize their base needs in the face of stress.

Unlike triggers, a geist's response to a crisis point can be different each time it encounters a crisis. Often, a Sin-Eater won't know what her geist is about to do until after she tries to calm it, though as her ability to identify with her geist increases, she can gain a level of insight.

Responses

- **Storyteller Chooses:** The Storyteller chooses which response the geist enacts, based on the situation in the fiction and the specifics of the geist's personality and Remembrance. The geist's Sin-Eater does not receive any knowledge about what her geist is about to do.
- **Sympathy and Empathy:** If the Sin-Eater has a Sympathetic or Empathetic relationship with her geist *and* chooses to forego intercession, she may choose her geist's response.
- **Unleashed:** If the geist's response is not curbed by intercession, it is Unleashed (p. XX). This does not count against the normal limits on how often your geist can be Unleashed.
- **Player Control:** The geist must act in accordance with the chosen response, but the player maintains control of her character's geist.
- **Duration:** The geist remains Unleashed until the source of the crisis point is destroyed or no longer present, or until the end of the scene.
- **Exclusive:** While a geist remains Unleashed in response to a crisis point, it ignores any other triggers it encounters.

Defend

The geist does its level best to protect the Sin-Eater from the situation. The geist gets between the Sin-Eater and the trigger (or whoever looks most threatening), acting as a human shield (p. XX). It proactively attacks anyone or anything it perceives as a threat to the Sin-Eater.

Escape

The geist gets itself and its Sin-Eater the hell away from whatever caused the crisis point. It runs from the cause if it is able, attacking anyone who doesn't get out of the way and destroying any obstacle that would prevent its Sin-Eater from following. As with lashing out, it will only attack for as long as they continue to oppose her. If its Sin-Eater refuses to follow, it attempts to bodily carry her to someplace it considers safe.

Lash Out

The geist does its level best to destroy whatever caused the crisis point. If the trigger is near enough it attacks, otherwise the geist moves toward the trigger, attacking anyone who doesn't get out of its way. It only attacks people in its way who continue to oppose it; once they're down it no longer cares.

Obsess

The geist ignores the rest of the world, focusing on the trigger above everything else. It will attack anyone that tries to distract it, including the Sin-Eater, but as long as it is not disturbed it will not take further action. Humans studied in this way suffer a breaking point.

Intercession

A geist in crisis is unpredictable and dangerous — which can be a useful ace in the hole when fighting a necromantic cult, but is a considerable liability at a co-op board meeting. When a Sin-Eater feels her geist about to lose control, she can intercede, attempting to soothe, distract, or simply browbeat it into calming down.

The Sin-Eater's ability to intercede is determined by her relationship to her geist (p. XX). In a coercive relationship, where both sides of the Bound must cajole or otherwise bribe the other into helping, it's almost impossible to placate the geist. When the Sin-Eater can't just understand the geist, but feels sympathy for it — or even allows herself to understand its emotional response — she has a better chance of talking it down.

Requirement: Your geist is currently experiencing a crisis point.

Action: Reflexive

Dice Pool: Relationship (p. XX)

Roll Results

Failure: The geist responds to the crisis point, *or* the Sin-Eater gains the Wavering condition.

Dramatic: The Sin-Eater says or does the wrong thing. The geist responds to the crisis point unless she sacrifices a dot of Synergy. Her next crisis point is resolved as though their relationship were one step lower. Replaces Failure.

Success: The geist does not respond, and the Sin-Eater gains the Bonding condition.

Exceptional: The Sin-Eater adds two dice to her next Synergy roll.

Relationships

So much of how a Bound responds to a crisis relies upon the relationship between Sin-Eater and geist. Her Synergy determines the nature of this relationship — a Bound with low Synergy has very little shared understanding between the two halves, while those with higher Synergy fully comprehend one another's emotional responses.

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Relationship Intercession Dice Pool

Coercive Chance die

Positional Synergy

Sympathetic (Lower of Presence or Manipulation) + Synergy

Empathetic (Higher of Presence or Manipulation) + Synergy

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Coercive

A Coercive relationship includes almost no fellow-feeling. Instead, both sides trade favors, threats, or bribes to get the other to go along with them. Neither particularly understands the other's emotional state or long-term goals, and so while a Sin-Eater may know what her geist wants her to do, she's in the dark about *why*. Likewise, when the Sin-Eater wants her geist to do

something for her, the geist being unable to understand her motivations means it may end up doing the wrong thing entirely, or resenting what is (to the Sin-Eater) a perfectly reasonable request.

Positional

When a Bound is in a Positional relationship, both Sin-Eater and Geist know what the other wants (in general terms), though the relationship is contractual rather than based on shared understanding. Both sides have set out their stakes, and they can get along as long as each sticks to what they have already set down. This relationship does away with some of the friction of a Coercive relationship, but is still focused on goals rather than understanding; when something happens that the geist reacts to on an emotional level — a crisis point — the Sin-Eater doesn't understand it, and can make things worse.

Sympathetic

In a Sympathetic relationship, the two halves of a Bound begin to understand the underlying drives of the other. A Sin-Eater recognizes the emotions behind his geist's actions and responses to crisis points, while the geist in turn has more insight into how and why the Sin-Eater does what he does. While both understand the emotions of the other, they do not have the degree of fellow-feeling that comes from an Empathetic relationship, and that disconnect can still cause problems, especially when one half thinks that the other should react to stress in a different way based on past observation rather than shared feeling.

Empathetic

The closest relationship a Sin-Eater can have with her geist, an Empathetic relationship goes beyond each half of a Bound understanding the others' emotional state. They imagine themselves in the other's position — sometimes subconsciously — and feel what the other feels. Getting to this point requires a great deal of trust and insight between the two, and significant shifts of perspective can damage that bond. While the Bound remains two distinct beings, the Sin-Eater and the geist, at this level of relationship the two think like one another enough that some mistake it for the two actually beginning to merge together.

Losing Synergy

Sin-Eaters only lose Synergy in circumstances that force the geist into a situation that can cause it to rethink the Bargain. Most often, this happens when the Sin-Eater dies. The geist again brings the Sin-Eater back from the dead, but she has to pay the price: Someone nearby will die instead.

Eating ghosts, on the other hand, shows a base disrespect for the dead — and puts the Sin-Eater's geist in fear for its existence. After all, if the Bound eats ghosts for power or consumes a geist to gain a Key, she's effectively forcing the geist into cannibalism.

Even worse is forcing the geist to drink from a River of the Underworld, weakening its connection to the world of the living. Doing so damages the relationship between the Bound, and demonstrates a fundamental lack of understanding.

Finally, Sin-Eaters can externalize their understanding of death, setting what they know in concrete form in order to make a memento. Doing so demonstrates a plateau in his understanding, a focus on how his relationship with his geist is now rather than how it will be in the future.

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Event Synergy Loss

Return from the Dead 1 dot

Drink Underworld Rivers 3 dots

Ectophagia 1 dot per Rank consumed

Memento Creation 1 dot per Memento created

UNCHART

On the Edge

If the Bound puts the Bargain in trouble too often, she can lose the relationship with her geist entirely, reducing her Synergy to 0. In this sorry state, a Sin-Eater has only three options open to her:

The first is the simplest: she can die. At Synergy 0 her geist will not bring her back (p. XX). That's it. Discuss with the Storyteller whether your character can come back as a ghost (see Appendix 1, p.XX).

If she doesn't *want* to die, however, she's got to reconnect with her geist. She has to make significant process towards resolving her geist's Remembrance.

Finally, she can choose to impose her will on her geist, ignoring its needs. She destroys her geist's Touchstone, in doing so forcing it to obey her. She loses her Synergy Trait, replacing it with Tyranny (p. XX), and becomes a Storyteller character.

Synergy 0

- **Flatlining:** At Synergy 0, the Bound gains the Flatlining Condition.
- **Remembrance:** Completing a Remembrance tableau raises Synergy to 1 and removes Flatlining.
- **Tyranny:** By ritualistically destroying her geist's Touchstone (p. XX), the Bound *removes* the Synergy Trait and replaces it with Tyranny (p. XX) at one dot, becoming a Storyteller character. The Sin-Eater must have discovered her geist's Touchstone (i.e. reached Synergy 3 at some point) to take this option.

Plasm

While Sin-Eaters have no problem interacting with ghosts, they cannot tap in to the Essence that powers the ephemeral dead. Instead, they require Plasm — a physical substance suffused with the power of the dead. Anyone can reach out and touch Plasm, but only those who have accepted the Bargain can put it to use as the geist draws on the Essence within.

Plasm is always visible for what it really is — though some people who haven't had much contact with the supernatural may think that it came from a joke shop or a special-effects house. Most Plasm is a milky-white, viscous fluid that flows like molasses. Other times it manifests as blocks of jelly the purple of flesh rotting from snakebite, lumpy sludge the putrid yellow of rotten fruit, or a thin liquid the pale blue of a drowned child's lips.

Sources of Plasm

- **Keys:** Unlocking with a Key grants Plasm equal to the character's rating in that Key's Unlock Attribute.
- **Materialization:** Ghosts that Materialize leave residual Plasm equal to their Corpus.
- **Other Manifestations:** Ghosts that use other Manifestations in the living world leave a trail of Plasm equal to the Essence cost of the Manifestation.
- **Moving On:** Ghosts that resolve their Anchors and move on (p. XX) produce a concentrated form of Plasm that completely restores a Sin-Eater's pool regardless of size.
- **Underworld Feasts:** Just as ghosts can gain Essence by eating the weird "food" of the Underworld (p. XX), Sin-Eaters can gain the same amount of Plasm.
- **Rites:** A krewes's religious rites (p. XX) draw Plasm forth from the Underworld, in a form suitable for the Sin-Eaters of the krewes to ingest.
- **Ectophagia:** A Sin-Eater can feast on ghosts and geists, literally eating the dead and transforming their ephemera into Plasm (p. XX).

Gaining Plasm

Because Plasm is a physical, visceral substance, the Sin-Eater can't just draw it into her body. She has to consume it. Some of the Bound prefer to do so in its natural state, feeling the Plasm flow down their arms and slipping into their bellies even as they retch from the taste of month-old fish. In many cases, Sin-Eaters gain much more Plasm for their buck if they consume it in a manner resonant with their own death. A junkie who died on the street with a needle hanging out of his arm gets the biggest kick from shooting Plasm straight into her veins, while someone who burned to death might roll the Plasm into a cigar and smoke it. Many of the Bound find a black humor in this relationship, but for some — especially those who have only just recovered from their first death — the experience is too traumatic.

Gaining Plasm

- **Consumption:** The Bound must physically consume Plasm to add it to her pool. Eating, drinking, smoking, injecting, inhaling, etc. are all possibilities.
- **Per Turn Limit:** A Sin-Eater may consume as much Plasm in a turn as she can spend (p. XX). Sources of Plasm that completely refill her pool can be consumed in a single turn.
- **Instant Action:** Consuming Plasm is an instant action.
- **Thematic Resonance:** Consuming Plasm in a manner appropriate to the Sin-Eater's death gives two extra points. This can take the Sin-Eater above their normal maximum, but excess points vanish at the end of the scene.

Using Plasm

Plasm is the fuel for a number of the Bound's abilities. It is the key to unlocking the geist's Remembrance Traits, and Haunts infuse Plasm into her body and environment. She can also bolster her body with Plasm, knitting together wounds while her body heals. She can even use her Plasm to give succor to the dead, though converting Plasm back into Essence is less efficient.

- **Plasmic Healing:** Plasm can downgrade damage from lethal to bashing, and can resolve physical Tilts by repairing the Sin-Eater's body (p. XX).

- **Haunts:** A Sin-Eater must spend Plasm to use Haunts (p. XX).
- **Remembrance Traits:** Spend Plasm to access Remembrance Traits (p. XX).
- **Extrusion:** The Bound may expend Plasm from their pool simply to create Plasm, which other Sin-Eaters can then consume.
- **Open:** The Bound may spend (target's Size) Plasm to coat an object or creature with Plasm, giving it the Open Condition until the end of the chapter or until the Plasm is washed off. If the Sin-Eater can spend enough Plasm to cover the target in a single turn, she may coat an unwilling target with a touch attack (p. XX); otherwise the target must be willing, inanimate, or otherwise unable to avoid the Sin-Eater.
- **Feeding:** Spend 3 Plasm to give a ghost 1 Essence.
- **Reflexive Action:** Spending Plasm is always a reflexive action.
- **Per Turn Limit:** A Sin-Eater's Synergy dictates how much Plasm she can spend in a single turn. If an effect requires her to spend Plasm in excess of that limit, she must spend multiple turns expending Plasm. The effect (and any actions associated with it) takes place in the turn where the Plasm cost is met.

Sin-Eater Abilities

Sin-Eaters share a range of otherworldly gifts, all drawn from their place straddling the boundary between life and death. Able to tap into the memories of their geists, to return from death, and even to consume the very essence of another geist, they are never far from reminders that the dead are all around.

Physical Medium

The presence of a geist means a Sin-Eater is forever touched by death. She cannot help but see and hear ghosts, putting her in a liminal state between medium and necromancer. While not all Bound *like* the constant attention of the dead, over time it becomes a comfort. Even if she can't be around living people for a time, she's always got someone to talk to.

A Sin-Eater sees the dead constantly. She sees ghosts, creatures from the Underworld, and other ephemeral beings with sway over the dead, and can both hear and speak with them as she might a living person. Her sight isn't as broad as that of other supernatural creatures, and she remains unable to see the alien creatures that lurk in a Twilight state that have nothing to do with death. One byproduct of this sight is that the Bound can always see when a ghost is possessing someone. Hiding in a living being is no disguise.

While living mediums can speak with the dead, a Sin-Eater can reach out and touch them. Ghosts are as solid to her as living people; she can punch, grab, or kiss a ghost as she would anyone else. This only extends as far as her body and clothing; she can't stab or shoot a ghost, at least not without a weapon created for that purpose.

The constant presence of the Underworld inures a Sin-Eater to the presence of death. Mutilated corpses, apartments filled with animals feasting on people's remains, and other gory scenes don't shock or disturb the Bound — after all, it's nowhere near as bad as some of the sights they see in the Underworld. Where others would shy away, a Sin-Eater instead is drawn by curiosity.

Physical Medium

- **Free Merits:** Sin-Eaters all possess the Medium and Tolerance for Biology Merits.
- **Ghost Touch:** The Bound can see, touch, and interact with ghosts and other ephemeral beings with death-related Influences or Numina as easily as they can with the living. This ability extends to anything they wear or use, including ranged weapons.
- **Effective Rank:** Sin-Eaters have an effective ghost Rank (p. XX) equal to the lower of Synergy or her geist's Rank.
- **Second Sight:** Sin-Eaters can perceive ghosts possessing humans, and recognize other Bound by the presence of their geists. This effect is automatic unless some supernatural effect conceals the possessing ghost (or Bound geists), in which case it's a Clash of Wills (p. XX).

Possession Immunity

A Bound geist is a jealous houseguest; ephemeral entities or stranger things that attempt to possess a Sin-Eater find that their efforts are rebuffed by a maelstrom of Plasmic fury where the Bound's soul should be. This immunity does not extend to effects that merely control the Sin-Eater's body or mind — she's every bit as vulnerable to a vampire's mesmerizing gaze or the Plasmic puppet strings of the Marionette as anyone.

Possession Immunity

- **Automatic Failure:** Any attempt by another being to possess a Sin-Eater's body automatically fails. This includes the Possess and Claim Manifestation effects, body-swapping rituals, and any magic that replaces a Sin-Eater's mind with another's.
- **Not Covered:** Sin-Eaters are *not* immune to magic that controls their mind or their body by other means.

Plasmic Healing

Perhaps understandably, geists are protective of their Sin-Eaters. Fortunately, they have more options available to them than most living creatures. As a result, Sin-Eaters are hard to kill — and even then, they rarely stay dead for long.

By suffusing her body with Plasm, the Sin-Eater can mitigate even the most terrible injuries. What would be lethal wounds fill with milky-white ooze, pulling separated tissue back together and reconstituting elements of the Bound's body. The Plasm keeps her alive, even to the point of linking severed body parts, stretching across the gap between a wrist and a hand — or between neck and head.

Even if a part of her body is crippled or destroyed, she can reconstitute it with Plasm. Someone who feeds a Sin-Eater's arm into a wood chipper will no doubt get a surprise when the Bound grabs her by the throat with a hand made of ghost-stuff. The geist knows how the Sin-Eater's body should be, so Plasm can hold bones together when they would shatter, and replace gouged-out eyes.

Plasmic Healing

- **Downgrading Damage:** 1 Plasm downgrades the wound in a single Health box from aggravated to lethal *or* lethal to bashing. The same wound can be downgraded more than once.

- **Tilt Negation:** A Sin-Eater may remove any Tilt caused by physical damage. This costs 2 Plasm if the Tilt was inflicted by bashing damage, 4 Plasm if it was inflicted by lethal damage, or 8 Plasm if it was inflicted by aggravated damage.
- **Reflexive Action:** Downgrading damage is a reflexive action.
- **Per-Turn Limit Exemption:** When downgrading damage or negating Tilts as it is inflicted, the Bound ignores her normal per-turn limit on Plasm expenditure. Downgrading damage or negating Tilts after the fact is still bound by per-turn limits.
- **Bane Exemption:** Plasmic healing may not be used on any damage inflicted by the Bane of the Sin-Eater's geist.
- **Hard to Kill:** The Bound do not fall unconscious from damage or bleed out (p. XX). They still suffer wound penalties.

Death

Sin-Eaters don't die easy. They made a bargain with a little god of death, and it drives the Bound to keep going for as long as she can. Even killing one of the Bound won't put her down for long. The geist doesn't make her immortal, far from it. Rather, the Sin-Eater is serially mortal, returning once more to life every time she is killed. Some forces, however, are beyond even a geist's ability to defeat — old age claims Sin-Eaters normally, and a death that mirrors their original can kill the Bound for good. Likewise, the Bound cannot recover from a killing blow dealt by the geist's Bane.

After she dies, the Sin-Eater awakens at the next dawn or dusk, her face shrouded with an ectoplasmic caul. Tearing this lump of Plasm free so she can take her next first breath, she finds her body is whole again, even if it was dismembered when she died. If she has time, consuming the caul can help refill her drained reserves. Any parts of her that were removed for research (or transplant) wither to grave dust as she awakes. She is battered and bloody, but alive.

Returning from the dead comes with a price: Nobody can cheat the universe, and as much as it can demand anything, it must have a life for a life. Someone near to the Sin-Eater dies when she comes back, and the first thing the Bound sees is the last minute of her surrogate's life. She chokes with the chest pains of a man who drowns in his own blood after a massive hemorrhage. She feels the knife as it slices through the veins of a woman who had never thought of suicide before.

These deaths are often both unexplained and noticeable, but sometimes only the Sin-Eater has any real idea of the cause. A chronically depressed man whose husband leaves him chooses to jump off a tall building. Someone who would otherwise have survived a house fire dies of smoke inhalation. Whatever the case, the Sin-Eater lives the last few minutes of the unwitting victim's life — an experience that many find so traumatizing that they would rather never return. Unfortunately, that's not an option. A geist clings to life harder than many humans. Unless the Sin-Eater and geist are particularly close, the geist may swear on everything it holds dear to let her die, but it will still bring her back.

If the manner of her death mirrors her original death, her geist cannot bring a Sin-Eater back. How specific the new death has to be depends on the circumstances of her original passing. A Bound who died as a result of a knife through the heart will only die if stabbed through the heart in similar circumstances or with the same knife, while one who died from the venom of a

specific type of snake may die as a result of any similarly venomous snakebite, rather than only the original breed. The player and Storyteller should discuss what counts as a “resonant death” during character creation, so it doesn’t cause arguments later on.

Systems

- **Dead:** When the Sin-Eater dies, she gains the Dead Condition unless otherwise specified.
- **Synergy 0:** If the Sin-Eater dies with Synergy 0, she does not gain the Dead Condition.
- **Resonant Death Exemption:** If the Sin-Eater dies in a manner that resonates with her original death, she does not gain the Dead Condition.
- **Bane Exemption:** If the Sin-Eater dies due to her geist’s Bane, she does not gain the Dead Condition.

Remaining Dead

A Sin-Eater can beg for her geist to let her remain dead, but she only stands a chance of succeeding if she has an Empathetic relationship (p. XX). Roll (Synergy – 7); on a success the geist will let her remain dead.

Liminal Aura

As a hybrid of living and dead, a Sin-Eater stands out as something *other* to the people and ghosts around him. To the living, he carries with him an aura of death. Everything feels slightly cold, sensitive people may hear whispers just at the edge of hearing, and recording devices pick up instances of EVP. People nearby catch flashes of the world through the eyes of the dead — for just a moment, food looks rotten and nearby animals look withered and close to death.

The dead, by contrast, see the Sin-Eater as a beacon of life. She stands out to ghosts as though glowing, and they know where she is by instinct even if they cannot see her. Around her, the sensory impressions of Twilight fade: Physical objects appear more solid, lights are brighter, and sounds clearer. Weaker-willed ghosts flock to her if they have some need among the living — or even just to experience something closer to the living world — driven by a primal understanding that the Bound are liminal beings, conduits between the dead and the living. Around one of the Bound, Manifestations come easier and the gnawing hunger of Essence Bleed is held at bay.

Liminal Aura

- **Recognition:** Other Bound, ghosts, and other ephemeral entities with death-related Influences or Numina recognize the Bound on sight within their aura.
- **Manifestation Condition:** The Bound creates a Persistent Manifestation Condition (p. XX) around herself. Her Synergy determines the Condition created. Any ghost can make use of this Condition as though it were tagged to him.
- **Increasing or Reducing Condition:** The Bound may spend 1 Willpower to increase the “level” of the Condition by one (from no Condition to Anchor, Anchor to Open, or Open to Controlled), or to reduce the level by one. She may do this multiple times, but the effects end at the end of the scene.
- **Area:** The Sin-Eater’s aura extends (10 × Synergy) yards around the Sin-Eater. The Condition it creates applies to both the area as a whole and to any creature or object within it.

Aura Flare

A Sin-Eater can focus on her nature, expanding the momentary glimpses of death or the light of the living, flaring her power into a beacon that draws ghosts, or reminds the living of the inevitability of death and the proximity of the afterlife. She can also use her aura to contest the aura of other Sin-Eaters or even stranger supernatural beings.

Aura Flare

Requirement: Have not flared your aura in the current scene.

Cost: 1 Willpower

Area: (10 × Synergy) yards

Action: Instant and contested

Dice Pool: Presence + Synergy vs. highest Composure + Synergy among affected targets *or* the dice pool of another supernatural being's aura.

Roll Results

Success: Living targets gain the Spooked Condition, while dead targets gain the Inspired Condition. When contesting another's aura, this effect supersedes the other aura's effects.

Exceptional: Affected targets improve their impression level by one for Social Maneuvering.

Failure: The target is unaffected by the Sin-Eater's aura.

Dramatic: The targets gain a +2 bonus on their next action against the Sin-Eater *or* worsen their impression level by 1 for Social Maneuvering.

Ectophagia

Strictly speaking, ghosts are made of ephemera unless they Materialize, but through her role as a physical medium the Sin-Eater can manipulate ghostly ephemera with the same ease as she can Plasm. Most only go so far as to touch ghosts. A few go further, either out of desperation or a misplaced sense of right and wrong. After all, the Plasm of a ghost may only exist in Twilight, but it's still Plasm — and the Bound can consume it like any other, in an act called *ectophagia*.

Ghosts aren't uniform blobs of Plasm in human shape: A Sin-Eater who decides to consume one must tear the ghost open and eat the viscera and organs directly, choking down Plasmic muscle and offal that tastes disturbingly authentic.

The Bound don't just eat ghosts. Some go one further and eat geists. Eating a geist provides a material benefit to the Sin-Eater depraved enough; she can learn the geist's innate Key as her own geist absorbs the poor bastard's essential being. Those Sin-Eaters who would consume another Bound's geist must first kill the Sin-Eater. If they manage to do so, the Sin-Eater remains dead.

Ectophagia

- **Helpless Target:** The ghost to be eaten must be incapable of fighting back.
- **Corpus Damage:** The ghost suffers 1 aggravated wound for every Plasm consumed. A ghost slain by ectophagia does not reform.

- **Unbound Geists:** Only Unbound geists, or those whose Sin-Eaters are Dead, may be consumed.
- **Full Consumption:** A geist slain by ectophagia does not reform. The consuming Sin-Eater fully replenishes her Plasm pool and gains the geist's innate Key.

Remembrance Traits

Each geist has memories of what it was in life, though its memories remain a mystery to the Sin-Eater, at least until he discovers more about this geist's identity. As he learns more about the mysterious being with whom he made the Bargain, he can encourage it to assist in areas where the geist was once skilled.

For some, this knowledge comes in the form of expertise that the geist possesses but the Sin-Eater does not — how to read a crime scene or fire a gun. Others benefit from a geist's knowledge of finances or how to talk to people in a field, getting access to ready cash or contacts.

Remembrance Traits come in the form of either Skills or Merits, initially defined at character creation. While Social Merits are the most appropriate for most geists, the player and Storyteller should work together to determine how a facet of your geist's past life might grant access to another Merit.

Remembrance Traits

- **Plasm Cost:** Spend Plasm to gain dots in the Trait, up to the Sin-Eater's effective Rank. These extra dots can go above her Trait maximums.
- **All or Nothing:** For Merits with a fixed dot cost, you must spend enough Plasm to gain all the Merit's dots in order to benefit from it.
- **Duration:** Remembrance Traits last for one scene.
- **Echoes:** After using a Remembrance Trait for the first time in a scene, gain the Echoes Condition.

Unleashing the Geist

The geist half of a Bound is an independent entity, a little god of death with memories of life. It isn't under the Sin-Eater's control — far from it. The geist has its own wants and needs, and its own desire for freedom. The Bargain holds it in check just as it grants the geist access to the living world through the Sin-Eater. Neither side has to hold tight to the other, though. The Sin-Eater can choose to release her geist, giving up her own spectral power in exchange for a tsunami of horrors. She weaves it a body made of Plasm, opens the gates, and lets her geist do what it will.

Pulling the geist into the physical world is taxing, and Sin-Eaters can attempt it relatively rarely. If she wants to summon it frequently, she needs to hurt, to feel the proximity of death. While some of the Bound inflict these wounds upon themselves, most — especially at low Synergy — have a stronger survival instinct.

On the Leash

When it's not Unleashed to wreak havoc, where does a Sin-Eater's geist go? The Bargain replaces the Bound's soul, which departs at the moment of death — and that's where the geist's ephemeral form “lives.” It's not the same as Possession or Claiming — the geist shares sensations and sensory information with their host, but has no control over the shared body.

However, bound geists *can* (and often do) project an image of themselves in Twilight near their Sin-Eater. This projection is immaterial even to other beings in Twilight and in the Underworld, but ghosts and other Bound can see it.

A Sin-Eater can touch her own geist (and vice versa), but no matter how violent their interactions, neither can actually inflict damage on the other.

Unleashing

- **Once Per Chapter:** A Sin-Eater can Unleash her geist once per chapter.
- **Instant:** Unleashing the geist is an instant action.
- **Conditions:** The geist gains the Unleashed Condition; the Sin-Eater gains the Weakened Bond Condition.

Haunts

The Bound are not merely people possessed by the dead. A Sin-Eater's geist is a conduit through which she can draw on the power of the Underworld itself. She unleashes tendrils of Plasm that take physical form as bleeding walls, flying knives, and skeletal apparitions. She lays deadly curses, draws her geist into her flesh to transform her body, or infuses her voice with the keening wails of the dead.

All Haunts draw their power from the Underworld, the Sin-Eater (or her geist) weaving Plasm into a form that befits the Haunt, whether that's invisible strings that fling objects around a room, or black-iron talons wrapped around her fingers. How visible the effects are depend on the Sin-Eater. Once she releases the power of the Haunt, the Plasm dissipates. Other Sin-Eaters cannot consume it.

Haunts

- **Dot Rating:** Each Haunt is rated from 1 to 5 dots.
- **Dice Pool:** A Haunt's dice pool is always Synergy + Haunt. Unlocking the Haunt with a Key adds that Key's Unlock Attribute to the dice pool (p. XX).
- **Plasm Cost:** Using a Haunt costs Plasm, the amount dependent on the effect the Sin-Eater desires. The Sin-Eater cannot add Plasm to the basic effect of an already-active Haunt.
- **Enhancements:** Higher dot levels of Haunts offer Enhancements to the base effect for additional Plasm. Unless otherwise specified, Enhancements may be added to an already-active Haunt. Unless otherwise specified, applying an Enhancement is a Reflexive action.
- **Duration:** The Haunt's effects, including all Enhancements, end when the Condition created by the Haunt does.

- **Pick and Choose:** A Sin-Eater does not have to spend Plasm on every level of a Haunt. If she only wants the effect of Rage •••, she does not have to use any of the effects of Rage •• or •••.
- **Per Turn Limit:** Haunts that cost more Plasm than the Sin-Eater can spend in a turn require her to spend the Plasm over a number of consecutive turns. Only roll to activate the Haunt after spending all the Plasm.

Learning Haunts

A Sin-Eater gains her first Haunts when she accepts the Bargain. The fusion of human and geist presents a certain affinity for some means of manipulating the power of the Underworld, and the knowledge of how to draw on that power is almost instinctive. Once he knows a Haunt, the Bound can develop his talents naturally, coming up with new ways to manipulate Plasm.

Unlocking new Haunts isn't as easy, however. That knowledge comes from the Underworld itself, and the Sin-Eater has to explore the lands of the dead in order to find it. Sometimes the means of unlocking a new Haunt is on a scroll lost in a Dominion, other times it requires the Sin-Eater snatching a key out of one of the rivers of the dead. The means of developing those Haunts that resonate with her Burden are often easier for her to find than others; one of the Bereaved can find a means to unlock the Curse far easier than one of the Abiding. The means of discovering a new Haunt is specific to the Bound themselves; what works for one will not work for another.

The good news, as far as the Bound are concerned, is that a Sin-Eater only has to do that once per Haunt. Once she knows the basics, she can develop new techniques on her own through a mixture of practice and instinct.

Supernatural Conflict

Sin-Eaters mostly interact with ghosts, but they're not the only creatures in the world that deal with the dead — and some of those creatures have their own agenda for the Unbound, too. Some Haunts use a character's Synergy as part of a contested roll; when they are unleashed against other supernatural creatures instead use the closest equivalent — a werewolf's Primal Urge, or a Promethean's Azoth. This only applies to contested rolls, not when Synergy is subtracted from the Haunt's dice pool.

The same protection applies to Sin-Eaters when they would be the victim of a supernatural power. Add Synergy to all contested dice pools that use a supernatural power Trait.

Clash of Wills

When two Sin-Eaters bring their geists' powers to bear against one another, it's not always clear which ability trumps another. Likewise, a Haunt's power may have effects that oppose the effects of a vampire's Discipline or a mage's spells. When the effects of two supernatural abilities clash in this way, it's a Clash of Wills.

Each player involved rolls their character's Haunt + Synergy, or Ceremony dice pool. Whoever scores the most successes wins; their power takes effect as normal while the conflicting abilities fail. Characters can only spend Willpower on the clash roll if they're both physically present and aware that two abilities are in conflict. Other supernatural creatures have their own dice pools for clashes, detailed in their respective books.

Long-lasting effects have a level of supernatural endurance, per the following table.

Duration Modifiers

- +1 Effect would last a night
- +2 Effect would last a week
- +3 Effect would last a month
- +4 Effect would last a year

The Boneyard

The Boneyard allows Sin-Eaters to perform the most common trick of ghosts — the haunting of a location. Plasm leaks into the environment, staining it with the Sin-Eater's deathly essence and allowing them to spread their consciousness across a building or similarly sized landmark. At its most basic level a Sin-Eater instinctively knows both the layout of his Boneyard as well as who is currently within it. He can tell if they are living or dead as well as where they are, but without a greater expenditure of Plasm he's left unaware of precisely who or what they are. Cautious Sin-Eaters know that just because somebody is alive doesn't mean they're harmless, or even all that human. Given a great enough expenditure of Plasm, a suitably skilled Sin-Eater may become a true master of his Boneyard, learning to bend the domain to his will.

The domains of Sin-Eaters are as varied as those that take on the Bargain, limited only by their imagination to cause havoc for rival krewes and organizations. Some Bound make soft uses of the Boneyard for personal gain, performing mock exorcisms for the living or casing a building for an easy burglary. Others use their powers for more extreme ends, trapping their enemies and consuming them within their own hideouts or causing phantasmagoric nights of revelry, allowing the living and the dead to rub shoulders as equals.

Bound that have explored the Great Below sometimes share rumors of the strange effects of claiming portions of the Underworld. Some claim the stone walls of the Underworld actively resist those that seek to twist them, answering to another unseen master that is unwilling to share. Others report that the lands of the dead were enthusiastic to be shaped by the Sin-Eater, as though waiting for their new master to define them.

Raise the Boneyard (•)

Cost: 1-3 Plasm (see Area)

Area: Determined by Plasm spent:

CHART

Plasm Spent Area

- 1 Several rooms, or a single floor of a house
- 2 A ballroom or small house
- 3 A large house or building

END CHART

Action: Instant to infuse environment; contested by Composure + Synergy to influence targets within the Boneyard; contested by Synergy + Boneyard to seize control of another Sin-Eater's Boneyard.

Dice Pool: Synergy + Boneyard

Roll Results

Success: The area becomes infused with the Sin-Eater's consciousness per point of Plasm spent, giving it the Boneyard Environmental Tilt. While the Boneyard exists the Sin-Eater may roll Synergy + Boneyard contested by Composure + Synergy to impose the Guilty, Shaken, or Spooked condition on a target within the Boneyard.

Exceptional: When the Haunt ends without resolving, the Sin-Eater regains half the Plasm spent on Raise the Boneyard.

Failure: The Sin-Eater fails to establish their domain.

Dramatic: The Sin-Eater invests too much of themselves within the Boneyard and binds themselves to it. They gain the Lost Condition (p. XX) for the rest of the chapter whenever navigating anywhere but back to the place they tried to create the Boneyard.

Boneyard Enhancements

- All Boneyard Enhancements may be added to an already-active Boneyard.

So You Want to Haunt Dead Man's Curve

For stretches of highway, forests, or other empty areas of land where measurements in terms of architecture aren't helpful, measure it as the stretch of land between two landmarks. On roads this may be the Historic Route 66 exit and the Phantom Racer's road memorial, while in the woods it could be the limit of the woods between Buzzard's Roost and the freshwater marsh.

Eyes in the Paintings (••)

The Sin-Eater can project her awareness to any point within the Boneyard, allowing her to listen, look, or even taste the situation as if she was there herself. She can even place her perceptions in places her physical form could never reach or fit into, like the eyes of a painting hanging high above the great fireplace.

This extrasensory perception leaves some telltale sign of the Sin-Eater's presence like ripples in a pond. In a Boneyard unlocked with the Primeval Key, the singing of birds or insects accompanies its master's awareness as she scours her domain looking for the one that has wronged her, while those unlocked with the Sanguine Key may create electronic voice phenomena of the Sin-Eater's own voice as he watches an unfaithful member of his krewe.

Prying Eye's Boneyard focuses on reinforcing and strengthening the Boneyard through the infusion of Plasm. Rather than altering the rules of the haunted grounds, it allows the Boneyard to spread and further refines the Sin-Eater's ability to sense those moving through what they have claimed as their own.

Enhancements

1 Plasm: The Sin-Eater transfers her perception to any location within the Boneyard, seeing, hearing, smelling, and tasting as though she were physically present. Returning her perceptions to her body does not cost Plasm. This Enhancement may be applied more than once.

No Escape (•••)

The Boneyard is vast and inescapable. The environment becomes infused with the same will as its master, preventing those that have entered the Boneyard from escaping again. Doors made from flimsy particle board stand up to the strength of professional athletes. Hallways that once led to exits lead back to the rooms from which the victim just fled. Power lines tear themselves free and fall across footpaths while trees uproot, blocking entire roads to the outside world. Boneyards created with the Pyreflame Key may fill with phantasmal infernos that drive their victims back from exits while those created with the Primordial Key may find any attempt to leave the house defeated by a vicious murder of crows.

Enhancements

Free: The Sin-Eater may spend up to 5 Plasm on Raise the Boneyard. Raise the Boneyard affects an area determined by Plasm spent:

CHART

Plasm Spent Area

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1 | A small warehouse or parking lot |
| 2 | A large warehouse or supermarket |
| 3 | A small factory or shopping mall |
| 4 | A large factory or city block |
| 5 | A university campus, small town, or city neighborhood |

1-5 Plasm: Any attempt to leave the area of the Boneyard suffers a penalty equal to Plasm spent, and any attempt, no matter how seemingly trivial, requires an action.

Earthquake Weather (••••)

The Sin-Eater floods the domain with their Plasm, allowing them to warp and contort the physical landscape to their will. Air grows blazing hot then cold enough to freeze skin to metal, rains of blood pour indoors, or the whole house rattles in an unseen wind. These manifestations only grow more violent when the Boneyard is unlocked with a Key. Phantom faces and hands strain against solid walls within a Boneyard unlocked by the Key of Grave Dirt, manifestations of those that have been smothered under the shale and dirt of the world. The Key of Disease causes the odor of rot to fill the air of its Boneyards as the walls begin to drip with tainted blood.

This aspect of the Boneyard is as much a tool of intimidation as it is a weapon. When a Sin-Eater lets themselves go on a victim it is a promise that no matter how many walls or locks they put between them and their enemies they will never be safe. Those Sin-Eaters that prefer the less violent approach to the problem find that the aspect makes them especially adept at driving out troublesome mortals that are a threat to local ghosts or just making sure that the living stay that way by keeping them away from a particularly dangerous shade.

Enhancements

3 Plasm: Create an Environmental Tilt in the Boneyard with a Severity equal to the Bound's dots in Boneyard. Choose from the following: Blizzard, Extreme Heat, Extreme Cold, Heavy Winds, Heavy Rain, Ice, or Earthquake. The Bound can end any Tilt she creates as a reflexive action. This enhancement may be applied more than once.

The New Law (•••••)

A Sin-Eater's Boneyard can be a place of absolute safety for the dead that come to them looking for solace, or it may be a nearly impenetrable fortress for those trying to enter it without their permission. Under the Bound's rule nothing happens within the Boneyard of which its master doesn't approve.

When the Boneyard is created, the Sin-Eater may create a single rule they consider inviolable, and their Boneyard enforces its owner's will on the land. Plasmic chains weigh down the limbs of offending ghosts, or flakes of their Corpus fall away and turn into ghostly butterflies or maggots to warn their master of the offense. Boneyards created with the Key of Cold Wind create horrific wailing winds that warn those within the Boneyard of what fate awaits those that violate its masters laws, while those invoked with the Key of Disease cause the air around those foolish enough to violate the Boneyards laws to fill with the sickly sweet odor of rot. Some who use this power see it as a necessary tool to have a true neutral ground for negotiations between two parties, while other Sin-Eaters just feel they're doing the right thing.

Enhancements

2 Plasm: The Bound states a rule that must be followed by all that enter the Boneyard. A target that violates the rules of the Boneyard gains the Defiant Condition (p. XX) for the duration of the Boneyard. Any roll to violate the law of the Boneyard receives a penalty equal to half of the Sin-Eater's Synergy. Those entering the Boneyard do not automatically know the rules. This Enhancement may be applied more than once, but only when the Boneyard is created.

2 Plasm: The Bound gains the rote action quality to all rolls to punish occupants of the Boneyard that break her law and counts as a Bane for all ghosts that violate the rule.

The Caul

The first words a new Sin-Eater often hears about the Caul are, "you want to do *what*?" Sin-Eaters may be fusion of a dying mortal and a geist, but they are still two separate beings capable of disagreeing, conversing, and even someday coming to understand the differences between the two of them. While the Caul is invoked, all of those possibilities die. The Sin-Eater and the geist are one being, not just Plasm and flesh melded in a loving union but of one mind as well. Their bodies fuse together as Plasm permeates every layer of fat and muscle, transforming it into rubbery Corpus or fibrous ectoplasmic flesh that begins to sag when the hybrid's attention lessens. From the outside the Caul is the literal stuff of nightmares. From the inside, it is the most intimate a Sin-Eater can ever be with their geist partner. Some of the Bound speak of the peace both feel when they are one being, no longer tormented by the hungry pangs of what the geist has sacrificed nor the anxiety about what lies in the Sin-Eater's future.

While bound together the Sin-Eater and geist share more than just a body. Memories, passions, relationships, and even ambitions flow across the connection. Even when separated some Bound cannot help but seethe with rage at a betrayal by men long dead while the geist can't help but feel a longing for the love shared between a Sin-Eater and her wife. As horrifying as these moments can be, some truly believe they are the first step to understanding and communicating on common ground with their geist. If nothing else, it gives the two of them more to talk about.

Other Bound tend to look askance at those who have become masters of the Caul. No other Haunt demands so much of its practitioner, nor leaves them so exposed to even the potential for

manipulation by their own geist. There are those that spread rumors of krewemates that came back from the transformation not quite themselves, rumors of Sin-Eaters that seem more than willing to bend to their geist's every demand even as they grow more sinister. Many respond that if a Sin-Eater can share an apartment with their krewie without losing it, they can tolerate 10 minutes together with their geist.

Extrude the Caul (•)

Cost: 1-5 Plasm

Action: Instant

Dice Pool: Synergy + Caul

Roll Results

Success: The Sin-Eater dons the Caul, becoming one with her geist. She gains the Caul Condition, with a number of charges equal to the Plasm spent.

Exceptional: When the Haunt ends without resolving, the Sin-Eater regains half the Plasm spent on Extrude the Caul.

Failure: The Sin-Eater fails to entice the geist into her body.

Dramatic Failure: The merging of Plasm and flesh goes horrifically wrong as bodies distort and fail come together. The geist pulls away, trapping the Sin-Eater in Twilight for the duration of the scene.

Cold Flesh (••)

The Sin-Eater's skin quivers and grows cold as she takes on the pallor of a cadaver. Rather than blood, all that manages to drip from her wounds is viscous Plasm that evaporates as it touches the pavement. The fire sizzles as the Sin-Eater walks through inferno but the dead nerves barely register the pain of the act. Sarin gas? She kicked that like a bad habit years ago.

Each Sin-Eater has personally tasted death, and for some it's a reminder of the few physical advantages that being dead has over being alive. This is an expression of the most obvious common ground between the Sin-Eater and his geist: their mutual shuffling out of life. Both remember what it was like to feel their limbs growing cold and the feeling of death looming. Now instead of terror they both feel satisfaction — nothing can take anything away from them that they haven't already lost before.

Enhancements

3 Plasm: The Bound gains a general Armor rating equal to her Caul rating, and a ballistic Armor rating equal to half her Caul rating (rounded up).

Vitiate (•••)

As the Sin-Eater grows more comfortable in communion with their geist, they find it easier to eschew strictly humanoid body plans. With a thought his arms grow longer, giving him a quadrupedal gait like a horse, or skin unzips from his chest and back allowing him to take to the air like a literal bat out of hell. His body swells to grotesque proportions, or he scuttles about as a spider made exclusively of human corpses. These are the stories that make Sin-Eaters pass on rumors about the sort of person that learns the Caul, the kind that begin with growing extra limbs and end with opening a locked door by unspooling their own body into hundreds of feet of

bloody, millimeter-thin worms. For some practitioners of the Caul, there is a playfulness to these actions — the sort of person that delighted in finding something gross to show off in his mortal life or possessed of a fascination with the morbid. For others it may be a personal discomfort or dislike of their own body that makes the transformations of the Caul seem no worse than what life already gave them.

These transformations are unpalatable enough to people that regularly spend their time around the dead, but the living witnessing the transformations are quite another matter. Simply seeing a Sin-Eater using this level of the Caul is cause for a breaking point in most circumstances.

Enhancements

Free: The Caul Condition has two charges per Plasm spent on Extrude the Call.

1-4 Plasm: The Sin-Eater's body swells and bloats, gaining Size equal to Plasm spent. For every 2 Size gained, he also gains a dot of Strength.

1 Plasm: The Sin-Eater warps his body into a scuttling thing, all spindly limbs and gripping fingers. He moves at twice his normal Speed on the ground, and can climb walls and ceilings at his normal Speed.

1 Plasm: The Sin-Eater's next unarmed attack inflicts lethal damage. This Enhancement may be applied more than once.

2 Plasm: The Sin-Eater grows wings, allowing him to fly at his normal Speed.

4 Plasm: The Sin-Eater transforms into a swarm of tiny animals or a viscous mass of flesh capable of seeping through any crack wide enough to permit light through. Passing through cracks takes one turn per point of Size.

Disarticulation (••••)

The Sin-Eater becomes a fountain of nightmarish potential, spewing forth impossible unlife that move with a purpose and instinct all their own. Her body may create a homunculus of a dead friend then slowly consume it again, or shed limbs like autumn leaves littering the area in obedient watchers made from their former extremities. Nor are all homunculi created from the Sin-Eater strictly organic — the ephemeral flesh cast off from the gestalt is just as likely to look to viewers like cold stone or dry, rustling paper as anything that should come from a human being. A Caul unlocked with the Key of Grave Dirt may create desiccated wraiths who leave a trail of dust-like Plasm where they move, while the creations of the Key of Blood may be monstrosities of enamel, cloth, and whatever equipment the Sin-Eater was holding at the time of the merging, held together by dried sinew.

Enhancements

1-5 Plasm: The Sin-Eater creates a homunculus with (Plasm spent) Health levels. This homunculus follows simple commands (e.g. "Carry this," "Kill her," "Guard that") and has a dice pool equal to $(2 \times \text{Plasm spent})$ for all physical actions, and a chance die for social and mental actions. Commanding any number of homunculi is an instant action. This Enhancement may be applied more than once, but only to a limit of the Sin-Eater's Synergy.

The Hungry Dead (•••••)

Death is emptiness. It is hunger and need and raw, aching yearning. By tapping into her geist as a conduit to that emptiness, the Sin-Eater can fill that void, at least for a time, with the lives of others. His jaw distends grotesquely, or his flesh unfolds like an opening flytrap, and consumes his victim whole. As long as the memory remains fresh, the Bound can mimic the form and abilities of his unfortunate meal.

Enhancements

(Victim's Size) Plasm: The Sin-Eater wholly consumes a recently-dead being or recently-incapacitated ghost of Size no greater than 7. If the Sin-Eater consumed the target via ectophagia (p. XX), this Enhancement costs no Plasm.

Add the following effects to the Caul Condition. These effects last until the duration of the Caul ends or the Sin-Eater uses any other Caul Enhancement. Once that happens, the Sin-Eater permanently loses the ability to mimic the consumed victim.

- Spend one charge to mimic the appearance of the consumed victim for five minutes. You may extend the duration by spending more charges. If used on a ghost, the Sin-Eater appears as the ghost did in life.
- Spend one charge to use the Attributes and Skills of the consumed victim in place of your own on a single action. If used on a ghost, the Sin-Eater uses the ghost's relevant Attribute + Rank.

The Curse

The Curse doesn't strike against its victim directly. It instead leaves a tiny amount of Plasm as a mark on the victim, and that Plasm twists the world around him. The trace of Plasm summoned when using the Curse becomes a mark only visible in Twilight. The poor sap on the receiving end may notice a weird stain on her jacket or an odd bruise on her shoulder, but will likely write it off. Little does she know that it's just the physical remnants of the Curse's mark, and it does not wash off easily.

Some Curses are soft — neither directly harmful nor particularly long-lasting. Sin-Eaters use these Curses to shore up their reputation as occultists or cunning-men; easier to prove your supernatural credentials by making someone unable to make flame for a week than manifesting the Rage and tearing them apart. Other Curses laid through this Haunt are *terrifying*. A Fortune 500 CEO watches as his family goes about their life completely unaware of him, sees his assets seized and his company stripped, and when he does finally force someone to notice him, she can't understand a word he says. While the Curse didn't kill him directly, he still dies when he jams a needle in his arm after six months of the world treating him like he doesn't exist.

Many Bound hold that people who die as a result of the Curse are more likely to make the Bargain than others — they know that *something* about their death wasn't right, and they want to find out what happened. Others claim that the Curse's victims have a hard time attracting the attention of a geist, who likely wants nothing to do with someone who is already on the wrong side of a Sin-Eater.

Lay the Curse (•)

Requirement: The Sin-Eater must touch the victim to lay the Curse.

Cost: 1-4 Plasm

Action: Instant and contested

Dice Pool: Synergy + Curse vs. Resolve + Synergy

Roll Results

Success: The victim is plagued with bad luck. She gains the Curse Condition, with a number of charges equal to the Plasm spent.

Exceptional: When the Haunt ends without resolving, the Sin-Eater regains half the Plasm spent on Lay the Curse.

Failure: The Curse does not manifest.

Dramatic: The Bound leaves a trace of Plasm on the victim, but not in the way he intended. The victim regains a point of Willpower; the Sin-Eater suffers the effects of the Curse until the end of the scene.

Removing a Curse

Any Sin-Eater who knows the Curse can remove hexes inflicted by other Bound. They must find the Curse's mark on the victim, then wipe it clean, passing the power back through their geist into the Underworld. It only takes a few minutes, but most don't like to admit that it's possible — doing so only proves that other Bound can remove their own Curses.

A Sin-Eater removing another's Curse rolls Synergy + Curse vs. the original Sin-Eater's Synergy + Curse. On a success, resolve the Cursed Condition. On an exceptional success, the Sin-Eater removing the Curse also takes a Beat.

Dismissing your own Curse is a reflexive action.

Gremlin (••)

For people suffering under the Curse of the Gremlin, technology just doesn't work. Computers flake out and crash, ATMs eat cards, cars won't start, and forget trying to pay for anything with a credit card. Even simple tools like knives or hammers twist in her hand. If someone else try to use the same computer or car, it works just fine when the victim isn't around — it's very much her problem to deal with. A Sin-Eater who infuses this Curse with Plasm can prevent her victim from making fire, or even extinguish fires in her vicinity — bad news for someone with a gas stove. Even living off the grid is no protection for someone who cannot make fire.

While anyone can evade the Gremlin Curse for a while if she can work out what's going on and has friends who are willing to help her out, relying on other people to interface with the modern world for too long is a surefire way to strain friendships and drive acquaintances away.

Enhancement

2 Plasm: Add one of the following effects to the options available from the Curse Condition. This Enhancement may be applied more than once.

- A piece of equipment goes haywire. Its equipment bonus becomes a penalty for the rest of the scene when the Cursed character uses it. For a second charge, the equipment inflicts damage equal to its equipment bonus the next time the Cursed character tries to use it.

- The victim cannot start fires for the rest of the scene, and any fires she has lit during the scene extinguish themselves.

Malady (•••)

The Sin-Eater's Curses grow in strength, becoming more prominent in the victim's life. What was once just a split grocery bag becomes a dropped pickle jar that bursts into 100 razor-sharp glass shards, lacerating the victim's leg. Tripping over a paving stone tears ligaments in the victim's ankle. If unlocked with the Primeval Key, she may be savaged by a stray dog, while the Key of Stillness means she does not hear an oncoming bus until it is too late. All Keys except the Key of Chance shape the misfortune that befalls the hex's victim; the Bastard's Key instead adds even more randomness to events.

Enhancements

Free: The Curse Condition has two charges per Plasm spent on Lay the Curse.

2 Plasm: Add one of the following effects to the options available from the Curse Condition. This Enhancement may be applied more than once.

- The victim suffers 3 points of lethal damage, then the Curse Condition resolves.
- Inflict one of the following Tilts: Arm Wrack, Blinded, Deafened, Insane, Knocked Down, Leg Wrack, Poisoned, or Sick. The effects of the Tilt last until the end of the scene.

Exhaustion (••••)

This Curse inflicts the victim with both physical and psychological exhaustion. He can't sleep, but is never truly awake. He always feels too cold, even at noon in the Sahara. Doing anything takes a toll, but staying in bed is just as tiring, and when he does go out his limbs feel like they're filled with concrete. He feels sullen and bitter when he feels anything at all, no longer able to find joy in life, and it's worse when he's around people who don't understand what he's feeling or why. For people who already suffer from mood disorders, the curse of exhaustion magnifies any extant depression, while those who have never felt the black dog's touch finally understand. The combination of depression and exhaustion leads some to self-harm, or even suicide.

Enhancements

2 Plasm: Add one of the following effects to the options available from the Curse Condition. This Enhancement may be applied more than once.

- Turn the victim's next Social roll into a chance die.
- Prevent the victim from gaining Willpower from one event.

Forgotten (•••••)

While the victims of other aspects of the Curse can write off what happens as bad luck or happenstance, perhaps never knowing that their foul moods and terrible luck are the result of supernatural intervention, a victim of the Forgotten Curse knows full well what's happening to him. It's as if the world simply writes him out of existence. People ignore him unless he grabs them or screams at them. In a club, his wife hits on another man until the victim reminds her that he's sitting next to her — then she shrugs and goes right back to flirting. Old friends forget to invite him to social functions, then look at him in the street like a stranger. His bank accounts close, his house may be repossessed, and even when he does manage to speak to someone they

soon forget everything he says. Particularly cruel Sin-Eaters pair this disconnection with the mundane world with a touch of the Underworld, leaving the victim unable to differentiate living and dead even as he remains incapable of making anyone see or hear him. The victim becomes a ranting, raving lunatic, having to dodge invisible people and conversing in a language that only he understands.

While the effects of this Curse are temporary, the longer-term consequences are not. He may no longer see the dead as real, but he's spent days, weeks, or even months not knowing who can see whom around him. He'll likely never fully trust that he is no longer under the Curse.

Enhancement

3 Plasm: Add one of the following effects to the options available from the Curse Condition, each of which lasts for the rest of the scene. This Enhancement may be applied more than once.

- The character must spend a Willpower point to have anyone other than the Sin-Eater who cursed him register his presence.
- Block one of the victim's Social Merits.
- The victim can see, touch, and interact with ghosts as though they were living.

The Dirge

The Underworld takes all, given time. It is the inevitable entropy that strips away identity and purpose just as surely as it grinds away at the physical beings of the dead that live there. The Dirge is the reminder that other things yet remain. It is the song of hope in the realm of apathy and resignation, the reminder that things exist beyond the slow deterioration of self over decades. When the Sin-Eater sings or speaks her voice gains an otherworldly quality. The voices of the dead speak with him, turning each sentence into a chorus, or the music of the grave joins him in accompaniment. His features grow serene, like a body prepared for viewing or a sculpture of a saint. For Sin-Eaters who enjoy a less subtle approach, these changes might be accompanied by Plasmic limbs that sway and play ghostly instruments or the growth of flightless cricket wings for the purposes of stridulation. Those Bound wielding the Key of Stillness with the Dirge cause a tinnitus that drowns out anything but even the quietest whisper from the Sin-Eater or an atmospheric.

Some Bound question if the Dirge is really a tool for good or simply another cruel feature of the Underworld. What good is hope in a world without change? What good is inspiring anyone but delighting in the last aspirations of escape slowly shriveling and dying? Perhaps this is all just a grand prank, a phantom to delude those who feel entitled to something more than what they've gotten. Most Sin-Eaters who encounter that opinion just know that the speaker has never actually heard the Dirge.

Sing the Dirge (•)

Requirement: You must sing a haunting, wordless song at conversational volume or louder. You must also choose a simple emotional state or action the Dirge urges its targets toward (e.g. "calm," "stop fighting," or "come to me").

Cost: 1-5 Plasm

Action: Instant and contested

Subjects: (Plasm spent) targets who can hear the Sin-Eater.

Dice Pool: Synergy + Dirge vs. Composure + Synergy.

Roll Results

Success: The subject gains the Dirge Condition.

Exceptional: When the Haunt ends without resolving, the Sin-Eater regains half the Plasm spent on Sing the Dirge.

Failure: The target is no more touched by the Sin-Eater's music than they are by elevator Muzak.

Dramatic: The listener isn't moved by the song in the slightest and becomes unreceptive to the Sin-Eater's power. The Bound takes a -3 penalty to using the Dirge on the target for the rest of the story.

Exaltation (••)

Music exists in the Underworld, but not like the Dirge. For the dead, when a Sin-Eater sings it is transcendent, a reminder of all the things death strips away in one wonderful package. It is the feeling of breathing, the sensation of sun on skin, and the warmth of intertwined fingers. All the Keys shape the memories remembered of sensations now denied to the dead of sustenance, companionship, and belonging.

For the living to experience this level of the Dirge is to remember the dead as if he stood right beside him. A Sin-Eater can rekindle that fire within the living, reminding them of how they felt and what those individuals meant to them. For some it can be jarring to so deeply remember again somebody she hadn't thought of in years.

Sin-Eaters use this aspect for a variety of things — trying to keep a ghost from sinking into the great below a little longer or aiding them in resolving an Anchor that wouldn't be right for the krewe to do itself. Some less-scrupulous Bound use it in a trading game, as there is a lot of information about the Underworld they don't know and a few extra days where a granddaughter can remember their Oma is a desirable fix no matter the shade.

Enhancement:

1-5 Plasm: The Sin-Eater distributes Essence equal to Plasm spent to any ghosts with the Dirge Condition.

2 Plasm: A living character with the Dirge Condition also gains the Inspired Condition. This Enhancement may be applied more than once.

Communion (•••)

The Sin-Eater's song transcends language, speaking directly to the heart. With this level of mastery they may express themselves with a purity of purpose, moving others to act with nothing but the power of their song.

Additionally, the power of the Sin-Eater's Dirge grows, allowing her to reach large crowds with her song.

Enhancements:

Free: Sing the Dirge affects anyone capable of hearing within an area determined by Plasm spent. If rolling for each target becomes unfeasible, contest the power with the highest Composure + Synergy of all targets.

CHART

Plasm Spent Area

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1 | A small room |
| 2 | A large room |
| 3 | Several rooms, or a single floor of a house |
| 4 | A ballroom or small house |
| 5 | A large house or building |

END CHART

2 Plasm: The Sin-Eater has a Perfect social impression, and may roll Synergy + Dirge to open Doors in a Social Maneuver, against any character with the Dirge Condition.

Exaltation (••••)

All Haunts are ultimately derived from the Underworld and thus from death. The music of the Dirge allows the Sin-Eater to project the serenity and grace of a peaceful death onto those who hear the song, or invoke shattering grief of a life snatched away. Through her song, a wielder of the Dirge can let a shade communicate through the grief or rage that anchors them in the afterlife. With the Sin-Eater's presence, communities of the dead can even work up the courage to face off against the likes of one of the Reapers.

Enhancement

2 Plasm: The Sin-Eater removes (without resolving) one of the following Conditions from a subject with the Dirge Condition: Beaten Down, Broken, Deprived, Guilty, Madness, Obsession, Shaken, or Spooked. Persistent Conditions are suppressed until the Dirge Condition ends. This Enhancement may be applied more than once.

3 Plasm: The Sin-Eater gives one of the following Conditions to a subject with the Dirge Condition: Beaten Down, Connected, Deprived, Guilty, Inspired, Obsession, Shaken, Spooked, or Swooning. This Enhancement may be applied more than once.

Visitation (•••••)

The Bound's song is otherworldly even by the standards of ghosts. Sometimes this particular talent is called the Voice of Orpheus. A Sin-Eater who has mastered the Dirge has the power to bring forth those ghosts unwilling or unable to enter the physical world on their own. Her song ties unbound ghosts to objects and just as easily creates Plasmic flesh for the dead, bringing them fully into the world. Some Sin-Eaters use this aspect to allow a final meeting among family or lovers. Others realize there are few problems that can't be solved by sufficient amounts of ghosts, and Sin-Eaters are rarely lacking in ethereal accompaniment.

Some Bound have found less-compassionate uses for this aspect of the Dirge. By invoking this power, they can tie unwilling ghosts to sights of their greatest crimes to atone for what they have

done. Some use it to steal the bodies of the living, handing over a mortal life for a day to the ghost willing to pay the body trader what they desire.

Enhancement

1-5 Plasm: The Sin-Eater spends Plasm equal to the Rank of a ghost with the Dirge Condition. That target gains a Manifestation Condition of the Sin-Eater's choice. This Enhancement may be applied more than once.

The Marionette

The Marionette puts the Sin-Eater in control of the people and things in her environment. She spins tendrils of Plasm that connect her to objects, animals, even people, and through those connections she can manipulate whatever she possesses. Initially, her control is limited to jerking on those connections, sending objects flying across the room. With time and a suitable investment of Plasm she can raise zombies, control armies of vermin, and puppet human beings like toys for her amusement.

Some of the Bound, especially those who did not have much control over their lives before making the Bargain, lean heavily on the Marionette as a way to make the world do what they want. While possessing and manipulating items is not in and of itself harmful, animals and people seized by the Marionette remain fully aware of their surroundings even as their bodies refuse to do what they want. Some victims liken it to locked-in syndrome, only far worse — those afflicted with LIS cannot move their bodies, while victims of the Marionette can see and feel their bodies doing things completely outside of their control.

A lot of Sin-Eaters focus on the Marionette as a way to control animals and people, but in the modern world perhaps its most effective use is the ability to control and possess items. Possessing a smartphone allows the Bound to do anything that the phone normally could. While possessing her own phone is of no benefit, she could possess an enemy's phone to dial back to her own as a crude listening device, share his location, or rifle through his email and message history. Tech-savvy Sin-Eaters keep their personal electronics away from anyone with the Marionette, even within their own krewes.

The Marionette lifts and controls objects, and the Key used to unlock it affects the form of the animating Plasm. Thin traces of blood seep across anything manipulated by the Stigmatic Key, vanishing only once the Marionette ends, while the Key of Cold Wind tosses anything so puppeted about in ghostly winds that only the victim can feel, while objects moved by the Scrivener's Key seem to blink from one place to the next while observers aren't watching.

String the Marionette (•)

Cost: 1-3 Plasm

Dice Pool: Synergy + Marionette

Action: Instant against unattended objects or animals, contested by Stamina + Synergy against conscious humans or other animals.

Roll Results

Success: A target creature or object of (Plasm spent) Size gains the Marionette Condition.

Exceptional: When the Haunt ends without resolving, the Sin-Eater regains half the Plasm spent on String the Marionette.

Failure: Tendrils of Plasm fail to take hold.

Dramatic: The tendrils of Plasm latch on to the target, but tear off, leaving a thick layer of ectoplasmic slime behind. For the rest of the story, attempts to use the Marionette on the same target fail automatically.

The Puppetmaster

The Marionette Condition defines the effects of the Marionette on the target, but the Sin-Eater also has specific rules:

- Controlling a puppeteered subject for a turn is an instant action.
- The Sin-Eater rolls Synergy + Marionette any time she needs to roll to take an action with a puppeteered target.
- The Sin-Eater can command a puppet to do whatever it could do normally — if she controls a car, she can make it drive, and if she puppeteers a bird, she can make it fly.
- Puppeteered targets can be moved around telekinetically with a Speed equal to Synergy × Marionette.
- Heavy, sharp, or dangerous objects can be thrown as an attack (and puppeteered creatures can be thrown into dangerous objects). Treat the damage as an improvised weapon (p. XX) and the range as a thrown weapon (p. XX), substituting Synergy + Marionette for Strength + Athletics – Size.

Swarm (••)

The Sin-Eater's tendrils of Plasm stretch out and latch on to more than one object, allowing her to puppeteer multiple objects at the same time. Powerful Bound can fling rooms full of people around with wild abandon, or create whirlwinds of flying knives, commanding them all with one mind. She retains as much control over every puppeteered creature as she has over a single target. Sin-Eaters who develop more control over the Marionette can use this ability to affect more than one target at once.

Enhancements

2 Plasm: String the Marionette affects a number of targets equal to the Sin-Eater's Marionette dots. Multiple targets may be commanded as a single instant action, as long as all of them do the same thing (e.g. several dolls all pointing at the same character, multiple televisions turning on at once). Attacking with multiple Puppets halves the target's Defense.

Phantom Strength (•••)

The Sin-Eater's control over the Marionette expands. Her Plasmic tendrils grow stronger, able to lift and move larger objects and bend them to her will. While previously she could lift a cop's gun from its holster and shoot it, now she can manipulate the policeman directly. She can rip open a car like a tin can or slam a door as someone tries to walk through it. Using this ability with Swarm allows her to puppeteer multiple people at once, making entire groups dance to her own tune or hefting multiple large objects.

A Sin-Eater can, with the investment of enough Plasm, wrest control of cars and trucks, flinging them around without regard for the desires of the driver. Such showy displays are beneath most Sin-Eaters, who instead use Phantom Strength to take control of a car in far subtler ways, suddenly jerking the steering right as her target tries to negotiate a dangerous bend, or stomping on the gas rather than the brakes so her puppeteered SUV plows into a crowded street and leaves the driver at the tender mercies of human authorities.

Enhancements

Free: String the Marionette affects targets of Size up to (Marionette + [2 × Plasm spent])

2 Plasm: The next attempt to resist the Sin-Eater's control of a puppet suffers a −3 penalty. This Enhancement may be applied more than once, but only once per action.

Servant (••••)

By infusing Plasm into an animal, object, person, or a recently dead body, the Sin-Eater can use the target as a semi-independent servant. Unlike other uses of the Marionette, creatures raised in this way remain under her control but do not require her focus — tendrils of Plasm flow into the brain of the puppet, allowing her to give simple commands that the victim cannot resist. The Marionette does not bring dead creatures back to life; even the most powerful Bound can only raise a corpse to obey simple commands rather than a replica of whoever the person was when he was alive, and she cannot stave off the effects of decay.

Enhancements

2 Plasm: Replace the Marionette Condition on a single target you control with the Servant Condition. This Enhancement may be applied more than once.

4 Plasm: The Servant Condition (on all targets) ends without resolving after 24 hours. This Enhancement may be applied more than once.

Traitor Flesh (•••••)

One of the most invasive and terrifying uses of the Marionette, Traitor Flesh reaches deep within a living person's body and takes total control. The Sin-Eater can pilot another person, leaving the victim watching helplessly as his body does whatever the Bound wants. She could make him strangle his husband, stab his child — or go through a perfectly normal day, but with the Sin-Eater in the driving seat. Traitor Flesh is a means for the Sin-Eater to control another person's every move, and it is a profoundly horrifying experience for the victim.

Anyone possessed by the Traitor Flesh remains fully aware of everything going on around them. No matter what tricks or Keys the Sin-Eater uses, she can't prevent her victim from the feeling of total violation as his body does things without him wanting — and doesn't do things that he desperately needs it to.

Enhancements

2 Plasm: The next time a sapient Marionette takes lethal damage or suffers a breaking point, they do not resolve the Condition. This Enhancement may be applied more than once.

3 Plasm: The next time a Marionette tries to fight against something the Sin-Eater wants to do, he suffers 2 lethal damage. This Enhancement may be applied more than once, but only once per attempted resistance.

The Memoria

The Memoria allows the Sin-Eater to give body and substance to the events of the past. If the Oracle is flashes of insight into the surface of a problem, Memoria is the process by which one of the Bound can crawl deep into the mystery, experiencing it firsthand. She might witness a coal mine collapse as it happened 20 years ago or the tense family Thanksgiving that marked the last time a local crime lord's son was ever seen. Any memory of death, or of an event that led to a death, can leave stains in Twilight. As long the Sin-Eater can enter a place where the memory still lurks, they can coax it back to life. At the most basic level, this allows the Bound to experience it firsthand, from the perspective of the dead.

The Memoria only works on events that actually happened — false memories or lies can't produce a revelation. The Bound must know what memory they're trying to draw forth to have any chance of success, requiring at the very least the premise of the memory and when it occurred, such as the murder of Emile Robinson on that cold winter night in 1959. The Memoria is a fickle power and the practice of "channel surfing" in historic buildings rarely succeeds, drawing forth only a confused Plasmic miasma of hundreds of minor tragedies. This can of course be the cause of some difficulty, as not everyone remembers an event the same way and more than a few of the Bound have had to attempt to console a ghost whose entire conception of their untimely demise was based on a mistaken premise.

Some krewes retain a Memoria specialist simply because they're afraid of what they may leave behind. It's disturbing enough to think about being recorded by a camera on the end of every block and in every pocket, but it's another for your actions to be bled into the walls themselves. Others coming along and harvesting moments of hard choices without knowing why the krewe had to make them can be a source of frustration. What inscribes a memory can be difficult to say. It might happen when there is a tragedy, but some theorize that any sufficiently emotional moment should be sufficient. The fact that Sin-Eaters rarely ever find events caused by joy or happiness goes unsaid.

The Memoria is not a pleasant experience even for the most jaded Sin-Eater. When the Memoria is unlocked the memories surge forth, inundating the Bound in a life that seems to supersede their own. It's hard to focus on mundane things when ancient passions play out around them. With so little information given, it's up to the Sin-Eater to personally decipher the mystery of the event. Who is the dark-eyed woman and why is she protecting the teenager who will become the Keyless Boy? Why does she look that way at him? It's common for some Bound to become obsessed with these visions, playing them over endlessly in their mind. Some of them even develop attachments and fondness for the people they watch, yearning to find them (or at the very least their ghosts) so they can ask what ever became of them? Why did this moment matter to them? Who are they?

Recall the Memoria (•)

Requirement: You must be at the site of a traumatic death, or in the presence of a ghost's Anchor that relates to the memory, and you must know at least three details of the memory you're trying to invoke (e.g. the name of the dead, the date and time of the event, the killer's identity, the specific murder weapon, etc.). The memory must be of a ghost's death, or of a significant event that led up to the death.

Cost: 1-5 Plasm

Action: Instant

Dice Pool: Synergy + Memoria

Roll Results

Success: The Sin-Eater is able to find a memory of the event in question. She gains the Memoria Condition for the scene with a number of charges equal to Plasm spent during activation.

Exceptional: When the Haunt ends without resolving, the Sin-Eater regains half the Plasm spent on Recall the Memoria.

Failure: The Bound gains no insight into the past they didn't already know.

Dramatic: The Sin-Eater becomes trapped in the vision, unable to interact with the real world.

Dénouement (••)

The dénouement is often the end of a film, the point of revelation that will tie the story together with a satisfactory revelation. Whatever Bound popularized the name for this aspect of the Memoria clearly had a dark sense of humor. The Sin-Eater can weave their Plasm into illusionary duplicates of the memory as it was recorded. A condemned hospital wing is restored to the way it was in 1980, or a burnt-out Victorian manor is restored to its pristine condition at the end of the war. These scenes are populated by illusionary actors that were present at the time, reliving the moment as if the viewers weren't even present. Though these illusions look solid, they are no more real than a trick of light. A person attempting to walk down the illusionary grand staircase will plummet to the ground below if the stairs have rotted away over the years, and a knife in the memory is no more tangible than a shade.

Enhancements

1-5 Plasm: The visions of the past are clearly visible to anyone present, though nothing in the scene can be interacted with and only the Sin-Eater receives the Memoria Condition. Characters may attempt a reflexive Wits + Composure action to recognize the scene's intangibility before inadvertently harming themselves. The Plasm cost depends on the size of the scene to be recreated:

CHART

Plasm Spent Area

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1 | A small room |
| 2 | A large room |
| 3 | Several rooms, or a single floor of a house |
| 4 | A ballroom or small house |
| 5 | A large house or building |

END CHART

Memory in a Bottle (•••)

Once a Sin-Eater has found a memory, they can keep the vision for later viewing by storing its essence in a container, pulling the delicate strands loose from their Anchor and placing the

imbued Plasm somewhere safe. The type of vessel doesn't particularly matter — some Bound use ritually prepared containers carved with mystical runes, while those who buy less into the entire mysticism angle might just use empty plastic soda bottles. The Plasmic memories stored within the container can be drunk or eaten, allowing another to experience the memories as if they had activated the Memoria at the place that spawned it.

The uses of a stored memory vary from individual Sin-Eater to individual Sin-Eater. Some cities have a thriving trade of stored memories, using them as a sort of esoteric currency or part of an inter-krewe exchange for locations that some krewes just can't gain access to. In some places the Bound keep collections of memories hoping to find the ghosts they belong to someday, just in case they can one day make it right or find living family that need to know what has happened to their missing loved ones. Then there are Sin-Eaters who have learned that these sorts of memories make damn fine weapons and if he bottles one up he's made a nasty surprise for somebody he doesn't like.

Enhancements:

Free: The Memoria Condition has two charges per Plasm spent on Recall the Memoria.

3 Plasm: The Sin-Eater resolves the Memoria Condition and fills a container with Plasm charged with the memory itself. Anyone who consumes this Plasm gains the Memoria Condition, with as many charges as it originally had when placed in the container. Sin-Eaters don't gain Plasm from this; the metaphysical energy of the Plasm is tied up in the memory.

While the memory is bottled, attempts to invoke it through Recall the Memoria fail automatically. If the container is destroyed or the Plasm poured out, the memory is lost forever.

Mystery Play (••••)

The Sin-Eater can drag others into the visions created by Dénouement. The actor becomes bound to a role in the vision, their mannerisms and posture changing to take on the qualities of someone else. Some Sin-Eaters use this to clear out the living in a hurry — after having been drafted into a grim tableau of the past, regular people tend to run. More vengeful Bound use this aspect of the Memoria to give a grim lesson to those that have committed wrongs in the past. People drawn into an illusion experience it as if it were a dream, feeling the hunger, the frustration, and even the pain.

This aspect of the Haunt may look as if a death mask of solid Plasm has been affixed to victim's face. Unlocked with the Tearstained Key it may appear as a frozen brand clinging to frostbitten skin, while with the Stigmatic Key it appears as though blood staining their hands forms shackles that bind an actor to their past.

The use of this aspect also allows the dead to be infused with the Sin-Eater's Plasm and reclaim their original role in the memory. For some, this can be a cathartic experience allowing them to understand why they are still trapped or realize they were mistaken about the situation that happened the first time around. For others it can be torture, as they are forced to relive the mistake that cost them everything. The reactions of ghosts may vary, but Sin-Eaters are generally of the opinion that forcing the dead to relive one of the last moments of their life without a lot of preparation tends to go poorly.

Enhancements

1-5 Plasm: Draw one target per Plasm spent into the illusionary scenario. They gain the Actor Condition. Unwilling participants may contest the roll with Resolve + Synergy. The Sin-Eater cannot create more Actors than there were people present in the actual memory.

Break the Cycle (•••••)

History and truth rarely do more than intersect. With this ability the Sin-Eater can empower the actors of the illusion, allowing them to generate entirely new psychodramas from stale old psychodramas. They can recast a victim, allowing them to stand up to his tormenter, say no, and this time finally leave. They can try to prevent a confrontation between two brothers from escalating to violence and, for one, his accidental death. These additions can be to aid either the living or the dead, giving them a chance for closure or just really messing with the head of someone the Sin-Eater hates.

Another use of Break the Cycle is attempting to try out counterfactuals, trying to find some piece of information the Sin-Eater's missed about the man who will someday die and become the Doe-Eyed Beauty, or the right combination of words that will get a daughter to forgive a mother. Sin-Eaters try to be careful when using this ability "live" on a ghostly participant. It's traumatic enough just reliving the past but having to relive it several times looking for the right set of elements that helps a ghost achieve catharsis is nothing short of an unliving hell.

Enhancements

2 Plasm: Add the following effects to the Actor Condition for all Actors in the scene:

- The character may go "off-script" with a reflexive Resolve + Synergy roll, making actions or statements that are not part of the original memory and altering its outcome.
- When the Actor Condition resolves, the target immediately resolves another Condition related to a breaking point or other trauma related to the memory.
- A ghost that resolves the Actor Condition may immediately resolve an Anchor relevant to the memory.
- A Rank 1 ghost that resolves the Actor Condition rises to Rank 2.

The Oracle

The dead have always held secrets treasured by the living. Traditions seeking to contact the dead have existed as long as Underworld itself. The Bound are hard pressed to meet a necromancer not making some claims out of the classics, like Odysseus seeking Tiresias or Saul invoking Samuel. Real amateur-hour Ouija board stuff. Those Bound that practice the Oracle are different. Why bother the dead when they're already one of them? Practitioners of the Oracle are those of the Bound that have realized a single truth — each and every member of the Bound is dead, meaning they have a perfectly serviceable ghost waiting to answer all sorts of questions. The Sin-Eater just needs to die. Again.

Each practitioner of the Oracle has their own method of releasing their ghost. Some perform meditations or actions that are evocative of their own deaths, rituals like leaving lit cigarettes on mattresses as they slumber or playing a one-woman game of Russian roulette. Other Sin-Eaters prefer to draw on sensory-deprivation techniques by isolating themselves in caves, tombs, or underwater. The Bound most in a hurry skip past all the mysticism and will themselves to die, stopping their heart through sheer determination. No matter the method, the end result is the

same if performed successfully. For a brief moment, the Sin-Eater dies and his ghost is released. Plasmically severed from all Anchors and ties that would keep such a being in the world, the Sin-Eater's ghostly form is barely more than a spectre.

As long as the Oracle is active, bystanders can question the Sin-Eater's body, which will do its best to answer based on what its ghost sees. Sometimes this comes as a slurred response through a jaw locked with rigor mortis or sudden spasms as the body begins a frenzied bout of automatic writing. When unlocked with the Pyre Flame Key the body may spontaneously combust, rising smoke forming a representation of the Sin-Eater's ghost. The Key of Blood causes the ghost's answers to be scrawled across the closest available surface in the blood of the Sin-Eater.

Most find extended periods in the distant and diminished senses an unpleasant experience, but the ghosts are capable of perceiving the world in ways that don't naturally occur while the Sin-Eater is bothered by more worldly issues like community, safety, and oxygen. Sin-Eaters cannot argue with how efficacious the results are, especially for those Sin-Eaters who prior to their death were not trained detectives or forensic investigators. With a few seconds of communion the Sin-Eater can find a new lead in a murder that happened years ago, or a connection opaque to even the most widespread federal investigation. Unfortunately, the Sin-Eater's ghost is too trapped in the circuitous thinking and solipsism of death to give fully contextualized answers. Rarely is the spectre able to answer questions for the Bound such as "who murdered you?" or "who committed this crime?" instead providing only snippets of sensory information and ancient memories, leaving the Sin-Eaters to ponder through vagaries and clues themselves — but, as many of the Bereaved have claimed, that's a whole lot more than nothing.

The Oracle allows the Bound to find another way to puzzle out the mysteries of the dead, both those they are trying to aid and the ones they wish to harm. As he becomes more powerful the Bound learns how to better control his spectre, training it to seek out information that no simple ghost should know, learning deep mysteries that exist within the very bones of the Underworld. The Bound who possess the Oracle may seem gripped by the minute details of death, even obsessive, but why not? The Oracle is a key to understanding the secrets the Underworld — and it's not like they haven't died before.

Consult the Oracle (•)

Cost: 1-4 Plasm

Action: Instant

Dice Pool: Oracle + Synergy

Roll Results

Success: The Sin-Eater gains the Oracle Condition with a number of charges equal to Plasm spent.

Exceptional: When the Haunt ends without resolving, the Sin-Eater regains half the Plasm spent on Consult the Oracle.

Failure: The Sin-Eater comes out of his trance unharmed and unfortunately alive. The Oracle is not activated.

Dramatic: The Bound's spirit breaks free of the Plasmic bonds that connect it to his body and becomes lost. The Sin-Eater gains the Dead Condition.

Wandering Shade (••)

The Oracle gives the Bound insights into the connections of life and death, but they must still be present at the scene of the crime. For some Sin-Eaters this simply isn't enough, and they learn to project their spirit far beyond themselves to hunt down information. Some krewes use this to do as much good as they can across their territory, tracking down ghosts that would never have been able to approach the Sin-Eaters normally. Other Bound use this aspect for personal gain, searching for weak links across a city to enrich themselves.

At this level the Oracle may learn information from across the region, learning of events that might be happening miles away from where the Sin-Eater currently lies dead and cold. The ghost is too weak to survive crossing over into the Underworld unless the Bound uses the Haunt while already past an Avernian Gate. When the Oracle is able to answer a question it doesn't come as a direct answer but flashes of insight or experiences that lead the Sin-Eater on to what will help them gain their desires.

Enhancements

1 Plasm: Add the following questions to the Oracle Condition's list of questions:

- What is the biggest threat to me and mine? *The revving of a diesel truck engine and the sight of a license plate as someone new drives into town.*
- Who is most in need our aid? *The sight of an emaciated man ringed by a circle of salt.*
- Who is guilty of crimes against the dead? *The scent of begonias and powdered bone accompanied with the vision of a dinner table strewn with ectoplasmic flesh.*
- What has been forgotten here? *The sound of trickling water turning into a roaring river from behind a cement wall in the local morgue.*

Spirit Reading (•••)

Assuming an ephemeral form aids the Sin-Eater in understanding the invisible cues between ghosts that inform their nature. They see the way the Candle Man shields flames from cold breezes and the way the Doe-Eyed Beauty shies away from unpaved paths instinctively. The clarity of vision unfettered by flesh allows them to probe more deeply and more broadly.

Sin-Eaters often use this aspect of the Oracle to assist the dead with resolving their Anchors or to learn more of their nature. Less community-minded Bound often hunt down Anchors of the dead they want a favor from, threatening to put the torch to it or throwing their body to the dogs. When unlocked with the Pyre Flame Key these clues often appear in the Bound's vision as brands seared into the Corpus of the ghost, while the Key of Beasts gives its users a literal nose for it, smelling out the limitations in their target.

Enhancements

Free: The Oracle Condition has two charges per Plasm spent on Consult the Oracle.

2 Plasm: Add the following questions to the Oracle Condition's list of questions:

- What is the Ban of [a ghost I know]? *The patter of rainfall. The sharp medicinal smell of quinine.*
- What is the Bane of [a ghost I know]? *The touch of silk that burns like fire. Salt, bright and terrible as uranium.*

- What ties [a ghost I know] to the mortal plane? *A wedding ring heavy as a millstone. Chains studded with photographs of the same person, from infancy to manhood.*

Descent (••••)

Using this power, the wandering spectre is released deep into the Underworld, left to naturally descend as if the Bound had died and been snared in the cruel system of death.

The ghost is unharmed by the descent into the Lower Mysteries, too far gone to be worth the energy of preying on by most denizens of the Underworld and already descending deeper just as the Reapers desire. Some Bound share rumors, though, of carelessly leaving a doppelgänger behind, wordlessly screaming at a toll it can't afford, or endlessly toiling under the arcane laws of some cruel Dominion.

Enhancements

3 Plasm: The Sin-Eater can answer a single question about the Underworld. This Enhancement may be applied more than once.

Sample Questions

- Does one of Irkalla's Gates bar travel deeper through this Avernian Gate? *The rattling of ancient coins. A hawker's call for trade of descendants in exchange for passage.*
- What are the laws of this Domain? *A vision of the Domain's stone slate.*
- Does this Ferryman trade fairly? *The rushing cry of someone falling through the false bottom of a vessel.*

Nekyia (•••••)

The Underworld is old, certainly older than anything still alive or any ghost that the Bound have ever encountered. It is older than the Kerberoi or the laws they slavishly enforce, more ancient than the alien Chthonians that crawl and scurry through its tunnels. It is the place of things that have been, so it is little wonder to the most powerful practitioners of the Oracle that even the scars of future events can be scavenged and intuited from the ancient place.

The process of divining the future for Sin-Eaters is never encountered the same way twice. Most practitioners of the Oracle could hardly explain if their subterranean dream quests are entirely real or just the product of the fraying Plasmic connection between the Sin-Eater and his spectre. Some of the Bound describe their ghosts entering the Underworld in vast boneyards of ylem where shattered artifacts of the Sin-Eater's own life are laid out in front of them. Others talk of being consumed by the very walls of the Underworld, only to find themselves in cavities filled with slumbering, unliving things that whisper what will be to the trapped ghost. The experiences go on — ghostly actors, drinking from secret wells of stagnating river waters, grisly fates chiseled into the wall, or passing conversations with long-lost family members. However the Underworld journey manifests, when the Sin-Eater returns to his body he comes back wiser of the future.

Sin-Eaters react very differently to the ability to stare into the future. Many Bound can fall into the trap of obsessive cross-referencing, trying each and every variable against the future to avoid a tragic end. Others, disgusted at the process of receiving the information, seek to use the aspect as little as possible, seeing the information as unreliable at best. Some Sin-Eaters worry, for if

their struggles really are the true path to fixing the Underworld, how could their futures be so easily seen in its broken cycles?

Enhancements

4 Plasm: The Sin-Eater may answer a single question about future events.

Sample Questions:

- Who amongst my krewe will betray me? *The cheap stink of the signature cologne of a member of the krewe. A vision of one of the celebrants placing a death masque over their face.*
- What trial awaits us in the Underworld? *The vision of a great obsidian gate layered in the flayed skin of traveling ghosts. The sound of one of the Kerberoi reciting the Old Laws over and over again.*
- When will our enemies be at their weakest? *The sounds of heavy bass and the taste of cheap whiskey. A “get well soon” card and a novelty stuffed animal.*
- Is this course of action going to get me killed all over again? *The warm blush of a gunshot wound to the stomach. A vision of the Sin-Eater being torn apart by angry shades.*

The Rage

Some Haunts are subtle tricks, drawing the geist into the Sin-Eater or sketching curses on a victim's flesh in Plasm. The Rage isn't subtle. It *cannot* be subtle. The geist wraps around the Sin-Eater's body, lashing out in terrible violence against someone. The simplest manifestation turns the Sin-Eater's hands into deadly weapons, while infusing more Plasm might allow her to spit flocks of carrion crows, stretch her limbs into barbed whips, or sprout wicked spikes from her body. The Bound can choose how her Rage appears, as long as her chosen form would have the effects that she requires from her geist.

The Rage does not have much application outside of violent conflict. While some Bound use the Curse to teach their victims and the Marionette to make their own lives easier, the Rage is inherently destructive. Only the most skilled Bound can ensure that their blows will not kill — and even then, all too often their use of the Rage makes the victim *wish* they were dead.

Sin-Eaters proficient in the Rage may be cocky, even arrogant in their dealings with the living. After all, in any fight they have the winning card: an easy way to deal hideous damage to anyone stupid enough to cross them. Others use their proficiency with the Rage as a reason to explore nonviolent ways to resolve conflicts. A Sin-Eater who *can* kill those who stand in his way only stands to make more of the unquiet dead, many of whom will bear him ill will, so it's to his benefit to find ways to avoid that. And if it turns out that violence is the *only* answer, he will not be found wanting.

Vent the Rage (•)

Cost: 1-4 Plasm

Action: Instant

Dice Pool: Synergy + Rage

Roll Results

Success: The Sin-Eater gains the Rage Condition.

Exceptional: When the Haunt ends without resolving, the Sin-Eater regains half the Plasm spent on Vent the Rage.

Failure: The Plasm coalesces around the Sin-Eater's body but does not solidify.

Dramatic: The Plasm running through the Sin-Eater's body tears out of her skin, shredding her flesh. The Sin-Eater suffers one point of lethal damage, plus another for each Enhancement she applied. These injuries cannot be downgraded with Plasm.

Black-Iron Blade (••)

Plasm infused into the Rage allows a Sin-Eater to deal horrific injuries to her victims. Those Sin-Eaters who manifest the Rage through gross physical transformations change their limbs into blades of black iron or pillars of obsidian. The fires unlocked with the Burning Key are a conflagration compared to a candle flame, while the Key of Stillness grips the victim's heart with ice-cold fingers and grows cataracts over his eyes in a second. Some use the Rage to cripple their enemies, pulverizing arms and legs or clawing out eyes.

This is the first way that Sin-Eaters learn to focus the Rage for it is the most obvious expression of Rage itself. The Haunt is an expression of the Bound's anger and need to hurt — the best way to express that is by making her attacks hurt more, and quickening her enemy's demise.

Enhancement

2 Plasm: The next time the Sin-Eater inflicts damage, he also inflicts one of the following Tilts: Arm Wrack, Blinded, Deafened, Knocked Down, Leg Wrack, or Poisoned. This Enhancement may be applied multiple times.

Maelstrom (••)

The Sin-Eater lashes out at her foe at a distance. Some of the Bound simply strike their victims down without apparent cause; a Sin-Eater who unlocks the Rage with the Key of Deep Waters may flood her victim's lungs with water, while one who uses the Key of Pyre-Flame causes her opponent to spontaneously combust. Others have an obvious component to their attacks: vomiting swarms of venomous insects, forging Plasm into blood-stained knives that fly through the air, or summoning spectral crows to claw at their victims.

Some Bound do not use intermediaries to wound their foes at range, instead warping their bodies in new ways. Arms and legs disjoint and lengthen into flailing whips, flesh imbued with Plasm tearing to reveal black bone and pulsing muscle. Barbed hooks of rusty iron shoot from the Bound's chest and face, connected by whips of sinew to her bloody flesh.

Enhancements

Free: The Sin-Eater may make unarmed ranged attacks out to 30 yards.

2 Plasm: The Sin-Eater's next unarmed ranged attack is treated as a medium-burst autofire attack (p. XX). This Enhancement may be applied more than once.

Shatter (••••)

The Rage is a manifestation of pain and hatred, but it is not limited to the Sin-Eater sprouting wicked claws or otherwise physically striking her opponent. Her hatred can take many forms, attacking the victim's mind as much as his body. She might create a mask of a man's dead wife from Plasm that screams all of his hidden fears back at him or send spectral rats to bite the flesh of a woman with musophobia. Less creative Sin-Eaters simply make the manifestations of the Rage visible to their victim or to everyone in the vicinity, showing them the true horror of a raging Sin-Eater. The terrifying wounds inflicted by this Rage can easily rot the flesh from a limb or rot eyes to nothingness, even though the victim can still feel and see as though (relatively) undamaged.

This power enhances the Rage such that it has lasting effects on the victim's mind as well as his body. Certainly, wounds caused by other forms of the Rage take time to heal, but the psychological injuries can last years — or for the rest of the poor bastard's life.

Enhancements

3 Plasm: The Sin-Eater's next unarmed attack inflicts aggravated damage. This Enhancement may be applied more than once.

2 Plasm: The next character who suffers a breaking point caused by taking damage from the Rage gains the Fugue Condition. This Enhancement may be applied more than once.

Breaking the World (•••••)

The Sin-Eater lets out an ungodly shriek that twists the world around her. The Plasm exuded by her cry infuses the whole area. One Sin-Eater's Rage coats all of the nearby surfaces in thick, slippery ichor, while another rives spectral chains that make the very ground shake, and a third vomits hundreds of gallons of brackish water to flood the area. Some Sin-Eaters don't go for such showy displays, instead infusing the very air with Plasm to summon buffeting winds or drop the temperature enough to cause a blizzard even in a Texan summer.

The Sin-Eater strides through the chaos she has created untouched, while her enemies and allies both must deal with the consequences of her wrath. This Rage makes her the ultimate killer, the yeti in the snows or Jenny Greenteeth in the flooded desert.

Enhancement

4 Plasm: The environment in the scene suffers one of the following Tilts: Blizzard, Earthquake, Flooded, Heavy Rain, Heavy Winds, or Ice, even if it is otherwise unlikely for the location (e.g. Heavy Rain while indoors). Where the Tilt requires a severity, use the Rage's weapon modifier. The Sin-Eater is immune to this Tilt.

The Shroud

The Shroud wraps the Sin-Eater in his geist. He exhales Plasm in a thick fog that clings to his body, leaving him coated in a thin layer of dark ichor. Wrapped in its embrace, he becomes a spectral figure, never quite entirely *there*. His appearance matches what most people would consider "ghostly" — paler than normal, the color of his hair and clothes muted, his eyes gray and cloudy. He flickers in and out of existence, here one moment, gone the next. With effort, he can further loosen his ties to the living world, reach across the border from Twilight, and even slip free of the world altogether to plummet into the Underworld.

Of all Haunts, only the Caul can compare to the Shroud for the level of integration between Sin-Eater and geist. Others involve the geist, certainly, but that's as much to shape and manipulate Plasm as it is to directly affect the Sin-Eater. By inviting the geist to completely surround his body, they become more of a fusion even than other Bound. Many who don't know the Shroud find the idea of being totally encased in Plasm slightly scary, while others desire the connection with their geist that the Haunt provides.

The integration between both halves of the Bound leaves its mark on the ghostly result of this Haunt. Whichever Key the Sin-Eater used is quite obvious to any other Bound who sees her. If she uses the Primeval Key her ghostly form may have a bestial cast, or look like it has been savaged by wild animals. The Key of Deep Waters makes her appear soaking wet, with the blue lips and swollen flesh of a drowning victim.

Don the Shroud (•)

Cost: 1-4 Plasm

Action: Instant

Dice Pool: Synergy + Shroud

Roll Results

Success: The Sin-Eater coats himself in a thin layer of Plasm containing the essence of his geist. He gains the Shroud Condition, with a number of charges equal to the Plasm spent.

Exceptional: When the Haunt ends without resolving, the Sin-Eater regains half the Plasm spent on Don the Shroud.

Failure: Plasm fails to coalesce around the Sin-Eater.

Dramatic: The coating of Plasm seals the Sin-Eater's face, leaving him unable to see, hear, or even breathe. He will suffocate (p. XX) unless he takes an instant action to clear the ooze from his airway.

Vision of Mist (••)

Enshrouded in her geist, the Sin-Eater remembers what it is to be dead. She becomes a phantasm in the mist, half-glimpsed and barely there. While her flesh still anchors her to the living world, she touches it only lightly.

Enhancements

1 Plasm: Your body registers no temperature, and you don't set off motion detectors, laser tripwires, or similar sensors.

2 Plasm: You can hover and fly in any direction at half your Speed.

Haunting Presence (•••)

Entwined with her geist, the Sin-Eater can influence the world around her in the same fashion as a ghost. While she lurks in Twilight, she may project her image to the living, disincorporate in a burst of Plasm, or even manipulate the minds and bodies of the living.

Enhancements

Free: Spending a charge on the Shroud Condition allows the Sin-Eater to spend (Shroud rating) minutes in Twilight.

3 Plasm: The Sin-Eater gains one of the following Manifestation effects or Numina, usable while she is in Twilight:

- Disincorporate (In lieu of ghostly hibernation, the Sin-Eater reforms in a gout of Plasm 24 hours later at the last place she died. She reforms with no Plasm.)
- Fetter
- Image
- Possess
- Sign (Numen)
- Hallucination (Numen)

This Enhancement may be applied more than once. In all cases, the Sin-Eater rolls Synergy + Shroud and spends Plasm instead of Essence.

Anchors Aweigh

Since Sin-Eaters don't have Anchors (or Influences to increase their Condition levels), using Manifestations granted by Haunting Presence requires some extra

work. A Sin-Eater's liminal aura provides a base Condition to work with, while spending Willpower allows them to create more potent Conditions. Finally, while it's not subtle, remember that anything coated in Plasm has the Open Condition.

Harrow (••••)

As easily as the Bound slips between Twilight and the material, that journey is denied to others. No longer, with this power the Bound may drag others across the veil and into Twilight, whether to give tragic lovers one last night together or to hand a murderer over to the tender mercies of the dead.

Enhancements

2 Plasm: Add the following effect to the options available from the Shroud Condition:

- Bring another person you are holding on to with you into Twilight. If they're resisting, you must grapple them (p. XX) first.

Descent (•••••)

The Bound can use the ghostly nature inherent in this Haunt to slip between the Underworld and the land of the living. She can make this passing without an open Avernian Gate, and as long as she has an idea of where she is going, she can emerge in any place that has a strong emotional tie — either somewhere she has lived for more than a year, or a place of a major life event (such as her death). If she has no real destination in mind, she emerges in a random point of the Upper Reaches, or near to the last place she entered the Underworld if she is returning to the living world. The Key unlocking this Haunt colors her travel, with the Stigmatic Key seeing the Bound dissolve into a pool of blood, while the Key of Cold Wind has her blow away into fragments as she crosses.

Some Sin-Eaters go so far as to use this ability for fast travel, dipping in to the Underworld and reemerging at their childhood home, or the first apartment they lived in after graduation. Other Bound believe that doing so profanes their duty to the dead — or at least makes them more likely to draw the attention of the kind of Underworld dwellers that no Sin-Eater wants to encounter.

Enhancements

3 Plasm: Add the following effect to the options available from the Shroud Condition:

- Cross into or out of the Upper Reaches of the Underworld. For an additional charge, you may bring one person you're holding into (but not out of) the Underworld. If they're resisting, you must grapple them (p. XX) first.

The Tomb

The Tomb is the Haunt of things lost to time, allowing a Sin-Eater to spin Plasm into things touched by death, returning to a prior state. She might restore a torn painting, repair her father's Mustang, regrow her sister's missing arm, or create a perfect physical replica of her son from a lock of his hair. She can make broken things whole once again, but she must have some symbolic representation of the object in order to use the Tomb at all — a powerful Sin-Eater can recreate the gun used to murder her brother from just a shell casing, or her brother's finger bone, but could do nothing with a piece of a new gun. The Bound doesn't need to know about the precise electronic components in a laptop to restore it from a smashed wreck; the Plasm she

infuses will return it to full functionality even if she has never used or even seen a computer before. She can also restore parts of an item, restoring the blood stains in the trunk of a murderer's car, even if the killer has completely replaced the lining.

The Tomb can also restore — or at least create a reasonable facsimile of — living beings. The Sin-Eater needs nothing more than the wounded party to heal someone, but to recreate a dead person, the Sin-Eater needs something of them to work with. Not even the most powerful Sin-Eater can summon a simulacrum of her ex-wife *ex nihilo*. Had he a lock of hair or the cremated ashes of her body, he could trust the rest to the Tomb, but without that physical connection to her memory, the Plasmic constructs of the Tomb wash away like tears in the rain. One thing remains constant: She cannot cheat death. Nothing that she repairs with the Tomb is truly permanent — no matter how much she tries to reinforce something, Plasm is the residue of death, and everything has its time.

The Key used to unlock the Tomb changes how the Sin-Eater effects repairs. The Key of Beasts sees insects swarm and blur together until they coalesce into the object, while the Key of Chance builds the result of the Tomb from tokens of luck and ill-omen. The end result is always the same: after the infusion of Plasm, the object is what it was. The knife that murdered her, recovered through the Tomb, has the same blood stains — and they have the same DNA markers as the blood on the actual knife.

Open the Tomb (•)

Requirement: The subject must come from an object that has been destroyed or a dead person or animal.

Cost: 1-4 Plasm

Action: Instant

Subject: A piece of one object or creature whose original Size was up to (Tomb + Plasm spent).

Dice Pool: Synergy + Tomb

Roll Results

Success: The subject gains the Tomb Condition.

Exceptional: When the Haunt ends without resolving, the Sin-Eater regains half the Plasm spent on Open the Tomb.

Failure: Plasm fails to coalesce.

Dramatic: The Sin-Eater's memories grow clouded as she struggles to differentiate what is and what was. She can remember faces, but has no idea to whom they belong; she remembers an address but has no idea that it's her home. She suffers the Addled Condition.

Headstone (••)

The headstone is not the dead. It is a reminder, a symbol of the life that is no longer, a convenient repository for the memories and the grief of the living. With this power, the Sin-Eater applies that same metaphysical connection to the Tomb. Now, a representation, or an object linked to the thing she wants to recreate, is enough. With the jacket of a dead biker, a Sin-Eater can recreate the deceased's treasured Ducati, while a photograph of a long-dead child suffices to give her a semblance of form.

Enhancements

2 Plasm: The Sin-Eater may use Open the Tomb on a representation of an object or creature (e.g. a photograph or recording), or on an object closely linked to it (e.g. a man's wedding ring or the keys to a house). The representation must still be of a specific object or person — a drawing of “a policeman” won't work. In the case of a representation, the Plasmic recreation represents the object as it is depicted. This Enhancement must be applied when Open the Tomb is activated.

Empty Graves (•••)

The Bound feel loss even more keenly than most people, seeing as they do what happens to the dead. Some Sin-Eaters, especially those who have watched their family and friends die, long for just a little more time. Others use Empty Graves to put others off their guard — making a facsimile of a mob boss' dead husband in order to get close to her, or bringing an assassin's victims back to life. Still others use their ability to create replicas of people to capitalize on others' grief. Offering a grieving son another day with his father is a powerful gift — and one for which many people will pay handsomely. Most are so grateful they don't even bother asking if it's really their father looking out from behind his eyes.

Enhancements

Free: The Tomb creates objects with Size equal to $([\text{Tomb} + \text{Plasm spent}] \times 2)$. In addition, the Tomb Condition becomes Persistent.

Free: Replicas of living beings are capable of following simple instructions. They have their original Physical Attributes and Skills, but all Social and Mental actions are reduced to a chance die.

3 Plasm: The Plasmic replica created by Open the Tomb has the Open Condition. For replicas of people or animals, the ghost of the original can Possess the replica, even if the ghost doesn't have the Possess Manifestation.

Stygian Treasures (••••)

The Tomb restores objects touched by death to how they were in life, but that isn't enough for some of the Bound. The shadows that gather when the Tomb is unlocked can bring a touch of the Underworld with them — if the Sin-Eater is willing to invest the Plasm. A reconstituted Dodge Charger makes ghosts visible when they're caught in its high beams, while the cellphone of a murdered child allows the user to speak to ghosts when they dial #86.

The Underworld claims all things, no matter how vast. By calling on its Chthonic Power, the Sin-Eater may recreate things far larger than she could before.

Enhancements

2 Plasm: Pick one of the following effects for the item. This Enhancement can be purchased multiple times, but it must be applied when Open the Tomb is activated.

- Anyone using the object can see the dead.
- Anyone using the object can hear the dead.
- Anyone using the object can speak to the dead.
- The object can communicate between the living world and the Underworld.

Terra Cotta Soldiers (•••••)

The dead are often buried with symbolic representations of the things they will need in the next life, from joss paper money to ushabti servants. Imbued with the magic of funerary rites and the laws of the Underworld, those signifiers would become the signified in the afterlife, giving the deceased a leg up in the land of the dead. Rather than restoring that which has been destroyed, this level of the Tomb allows the Sin-Eater to reach into that same semiotic space and spin truth from metaphor.

Enhancement

1-5 Plasm: The Sin-Eater may use Open the Tomb on a wholly symbolic representation of a person, animal, or object, creating a piece of equipment or an appropriate Merit (e.g. Retainer, Library, etc.). The Plasm cost of this Enhancement is equal to the cost of the Merit or the Availability of the object. This Enhancement must be applied at the same time Open the Tomb is activated.

Keys

The gates of the Underworld are locked. Everyone knows that. They open only to admit the shades of the dead — but over the millennia, common motifs wear grooves in the fabric of death itself. Every bloody-handed murder, every plague, every senseless accident that snatches away a life, leaves an impression on the land of the dead. It's a process not unlike taking a wax impression of a lock, but in reverse: Instead of the tumblers imprinting on the soft wax of the key, the Key shapes the lock to fit itself.

While anyone with the proper knowledge can use these Keys to open Avernian Gates (p. XX), the Bound, standing as they do on the borders between the land of the living and the land of the dead, are themselves doors to the Underworld. Unlocking *themselves* yields a rush of power and Plasm. That power doesn't come free; each Key bears a Doom that afflicts those who call on its power. If there's an argument for the active, thinking malevolence of the Underworld, it may well be these.

The Door Has Many Keys

Is every drowning a candidate for the Key of Deep Waters? Will every gun death gift the Key of Blood? These are questions that may be raised at the table and it's up to you to decide. It's entirely possible that even though a Sin-Eater died by drowning after falling from a bridge they may find they resonate with another Key. Perhaps the bridge and the deaths on it are part of a larger history (Grave Dirt) or they were pushed (Blood) or all of this was entirely coincidental to the fact that plummeting headfirst into the water was part of a ritual that was needed to feed the bridge (Chance). It's up to the players and the Storyteller to agree what makes sense for the chronicle they are playing.

Sources of Keys

- **Innate:** Each of the Bound has one innate Key, representing the manner in which they died. Every geist similarly has an innate Key, which they share with their Sin-Eater as part of the Bargain.

- **Mementos:** Every Memento (p. XX) has a Key. Possessing a Memento allows a Sin-Eater to use its Key.
- **Ectophagia:** Wholly consuming a geist with ectophagia (p. XX) grants the geist's innate Key as a new innate Key.
- **Multiple Instances:** The Bound may have multiple instances of the same Key, either as innate Keys or through Mementos. This allows them to use the Key more often.

Using Keys

Keys enhance the power of a Sin-Eater's Haunts. The Bound may elect to "unlock" a Haunt with a Key as part of the Haunt's one-dot power. Unlocking a Haunt is a reflexive action with the following effects.

- **Unlock Attribute:** Add the Key's Unlock Attribute to the power's dice pool. Any Enhancements that call for a Synergy + Haunt roll also benefit from the Unlock Attribute.
- **Free Plasm:** Gain Plasm equal to your character's rating in the Key's Unlock Attribute. This can exceed the character's maximum Plasm pool, but excess Plasm is lost at the end of the scene.
- **Per Turn Limit Exemption:** Free Plasm ignores the normal limit on how much Plasm you can spend in a turn.
- **Resonance:** If the Haunt's usage matches the Key's Resonance, the Haunt gains an exceptional success on three successes instead of five.
- **Doom:** Unless the unlocked Haunt rolls an exceptional success *or* the Sin-Eater pays an additional 1 Plasm, she gains the Doomed Condition (p. XX).
- **Multiple Unlocks:** Characters may only unlock a Haunt with one Key at a time. They may unlock a Haunt with multiple instances of the same Key, but only the free Plasm and the Doomed Condition stack.

Unlocking Without a Haunt

Sin-Eaters desperate for Plasm (for example, to downgrade incoming damage) may unlock a Key without activating a Haunt as a reflexive action. They gain the free Plasm and Doomed Condition.

Doomed

The Bound drinks too deeply of the Underworld's mysteries and finds their own fate controlled by the Old Laws that first created the Keys. They can't help but find themselves drawn to situations that reflect the deaths they now draw on for power. A sense of malaise and hunger grows at the back of the Bound's mind as they go about their lives, unaware of the well-trod steps they find themselves following.

Effects:

- Note this Condition as Doomed (Key, Source). A character may be under the effects of multiple Doooms at once, even from the same Key.
- You cannot unlock Haunts with the same Key from the same source (i.e. the same Memento or the same instance of an innate Key).

- This Condition ends (without resolving) at the end of the story.

Possible Sources: Unlocking a Haunt.

Resolution:

- Resolve the Condition as described in the Key's Doom.
- Help a ghost whose death fits thematically under the Key to resolve an Anchor.

The Key of Beasts

The Primeval Key, the Key of Tooth and Claw, the Key of Verdant Savagery

The Primeval Key is the feeling of adrenaline coursing through the veins. It is the discharge of the sympathetic nervous system at the feeling of teeth or hooves or horns entering the body. This is the Key of whatever it takes to be safe, to escape, to eat, to breed, to have one more day. The Primeval Key opens when humanity is reminded they are just part of the game of life and they don't always get to win it.

Unlock Attribute: Wits

Resonance: The Key of Beasts is resonant when called upon in a place where humanity is no longer the dominant force: abandoned buildings inhabited by nothing but rats and roaches, untrammelled wilderness, or city parks after dark, for instance. Additionally, using a Haunt on an animal target always counts as resonant.

Doom: Automatically fail an action targeting an animal, or any action an animal could plausibly hinder (e.g. a barking dog could foil a Stealth action) to resolve this Doom.

The Key of Blood

The Stigmatic Key, the Key of Veils and Shades, the Key of Crimson Agony

Turning the Key of Blood is the numb feeling of chambering one last round, only to feel the hornet sting at the back of your skull. It is the knife sliding home between that drunken bastard's ribs like a bird coming home to roost. The Stigmatic Key is the memory of passion and the lives lost because of that passion. Not all deaths that fall under the Key's dominion are premeditated: a crazy scheme, a malicious rumor, or an irritated phone call may have never meant to kill somebody, but the tumblers of the lock turn nonetheless and the gate opens.

Unlock Attribute: Presence

Resonance: When situations spiral out of control the Key of Blood is at its strongest. If the Bound finds himself in a violent situation that *wasn't* premeditated or intended, the resonance of the Key applies.

Doom: The next time the character tries to avoid a violent confrontation, whether by de-escalating a situation, running away, or some other means, she suffers an automatic dramatic failure and resolves this Doom (taking a Beat from the dramatic failure as well as the resolution).

The Key of Chance

The Bastard's Key, the Key of Jinx and Hex, the Key of Black Humor

Who knew the weather would turn like that? I guess you're really not supposed to operate those on a ladder? It turns you really have to be that tall to ride. The Key of Chance is the call and

response of “hey y’all, watch this” and the million to one death that follows. This is the Key of the absurd, unfair, and improbable. When expectations fail, when the tools of civilization turn on you, when probability turns a blind eye, when rumors becomes truth — those are when the lock comes undone.

Unlock Attribute: Dexterity

Resonance: The Key of Chance is resonant when the Bound is risking something important, like a treasured belonging, a friend, or her life on a single action. It also has Resonance when the subject of the Haunt is a machine with at least three moving parts capable of inflicting lethal damage (e.g. a gun, an industrial press, a wood chipper, etc.).

Doom: The next time your character makes a roll with a +3 or greater bonus, roll a chance die for that action instead and resolve this Doom. If the action succeeds, it counts as an exceptional success.

The Key of Cold Wind

The Breathless Key, the Key of Gale and Garrote, the Key of Ivory Sorrow

Exposure and execution: these are the deaths that feed the Breathless Key. They are deaths of things lost to the formless and ephemeral, robbed of a simple breath of air. To turn the Key is to hear the breathless whispers of prisoners with the noose around their necks and the roar of tempests that wiped villages from the face of the living world. It is the cold whispers of your community as they turn their backs on you, and the loneliness that comes from being a pariah.

Unlock Attribute: Resolve

Resonance: The Key of Cold Wind is resonant when the Bound is within an Environmental Tilt like Blizzard, Extreme Cold, or Heavy Winds. Additionally, if the Bound is in a setting where ambient noise makes it impossible to have a spoken conversation, the Key has resonance.

Doom: The character gains the Extreme Cold Tilt (p. XX) that lasts, in spite of other environmental conditions, for (10 – Synergy) hours *or* until the character actively reveals a damaging personal secret. When the Tilt ends, resolve this Doom.

The Key of Deep Waters

The Tear-Stained Key, the Key of Wave and Whirlpool, the Key of Azure Futility

The feeling of turning the Tear-Stained Key is, ironically, the sensation of air leaving the lungs, not water entering them. It is the experience of loss as cool, uncaring water drives the last vestiges of consciousness from the body. It is the emptiness that extinguishes sorrow, fear, and hope alike.

Unlock Attribute: Manipulation

Resonance: The Key of Deep Waters is resonant when the Bound is in an environment where breathing is impaired: a carbon-dioxide-filled garage, an industrial farm feedlot, or submerged in water, for example. Additionally, if the target of a Haunt is at least half submerged in water, the Key has resonance.

Doom: The next time your character would fully replenish her Willpower, gain only 1 Willpower and resolve this Doom.

The Key of Disease

The Wasting Key, The Key of Plague and Pestilence, The Key of Bilious Despair

No turn of the Wasting Key is quite like the last. Every user has experienced the burning fevers and the clogged airways that marked so many childhood illnesses, but everyone has a story to tell. Some talk of the invisible pains of archaic poisons used by ancient alchemists, or phantom bleeds from bacterial species that have been extinct longer than penicillin has been cultivated. Yet just as many Bound have felt the pains of diseases all too common today, of growths measured in metaphor and hacking coughs. The deaths of people that didn't quite get better, that couldn't catch it early enough, who were just a little too unlucky.

Unlock Attribute: Stamina

Resonance: The Key of Disease is resonant if it is used in a place or on a target that resonates with illness or poison, such as a hospital, malarial swamp, or a person suffering from the Sick Tilt.

Doom: Your character suffers the Sick Tilt until the end of the *next* scene. When the Sick Tilt ends, resolve this Doom.

The Key of Grave Dirt

The Crushing Key, the Key of Stone and Barrow, the Key of Slate Bereavement

All things must die. Yet humanity struggles on, forever trying to leave a reminder of itself on the planet. The Key of Stone and Barrow is the jealous owner of all who perish in that task. Those who are buried in kingly tombs and crushed by heavy girders. The ones left stranded in the bottom of empty mine shafts and trapped in the decrepit monuments of yesteryear. Nothing is created without spending something: time, resources, lives. The Crushing Key keeps them all, a small payment for the immortality of another.

Unlock Attribute: Strength

Resonance: The Key of Grave Dirt is resonant when the Bound unlocks a Haunt in a place, or on a target, dedicated to the past: a graveyard or memorial, of course, but also something as prosaic as an abandoned building or an antiquated business such as a VHS repair store. Additionally, any time the character is below ground, the Key of Grave Dirt is resonant.

Doom: For the rest of the story, any time the character wishes to roll for an extended action (p. XX), she must spend 1 Willpower. She may resolve this Doom by sacrificing a living being in the name of accomplishing her goal.

The Key of Pyre Flame

The Burning Key, the Key of Ash and Brand, the Lover's Key, the Key of Golden Annihilation

To unlock the Burning Key is to understand being consumed, to feel the skin peel and run while the lungs fill with hot particulates that burn, then cool. A fire does not begin from nothing, though. They are created, fed, encouraged to cook, to warm, to protect. Yet those reasons may change as the flame is fueled and stoked. Maybe it was for the money? For beauty? For revenge? For love? The flame is an apathetic medium though — all it knows is how to consume and how to spread.

Unlock Attribute: Intelligence

Resonance: The Pyre Flame Key is resonant when it's used in an area, or on a target, that is on fire or subject to the Extreme Heat Tilt.

Doom: The character gains the Extreme Heat Tilt (p. XX) that lasts, in spite of other environmental conditions, for (10 – Synergy) hours or until the character deliberately destroys a valued personal possession. “Valued” can refer to monetary value or personal significance. When the Tilt ends, resolve this Doom.

The Key of Stillness

The Silent Key, the Key of Shroud and Shadow, the Key of Jet Uncertainty

Deaths under the Silent Key are those punctuated with the statement “I didn’t know,” or “It’s such a shame,” if they’re discovered at all. They are the deaths of ignorance, powerlessness, and apathy of individuals who were treated like ghosts long before they ever drew their last breath. They are deaths caused by a valve being turned off, a zero being shuffled off of a budget, or talking on the phone being just a little too much of a hassle.

Unlock Attribute: Composure

Resonance: The Key of Stillness is resonant when the target of a Haunt is unaware of the Bound’s presence, helpless, or if there is no one present in the scene except the Bound and the target.

Doom: The next time your character speaks even a single word, resolve this Doom and the Condition from the Haunt she unlocked with the Key of Stillness. If she unlocked the Key without a Haunt, she instead gains the Mute Condition until the end of the chapter; when that Condition ends, resolve this Doom.

Ceremonies

An Imam leads his congregation in the Salat al-Janazah, praying for Allah to forgive the recently departed before burial. In the basement of a haunted prison, giggling teenagers try to contact the spirit world with an Ouija board. After the funeral, family and friends gather to eat and drink, to laugh and weep at the memory of the dead. On the shore of an underground river, a magician pours out a libation of blood, compelling answers from the shades that linger there.

Humankind has always turned to ritual and ceremony in its attempts to process and understand death. Spells and prayers ensure a peaceful rest for the dead, taboos avoid drawing their ire, and offerings encourage them to intercede on behalf of the living. It’s so ingrained in our culture it’s hard to even term it “magic;” it’s just the way things are. You don’t whistle past a graveyard, you cover all the mirrors in the house when someone dies, and you pour out some rum for the departed.

Sin-Eaters catalogue these formalized interactions between the living and the dead as Ceremonies, and syncretize them into their own faiths and works.

The Root of Power

Although Sin-Eaters and their krewes make the most frequent use of Ceremonies, they aren’t unique to the Bound. Ceremonies don’t draw their power from the Bargain or the geist — as near as anyone can tell, they don’t draw their power from *anywhere*: they’re just a part of how the world works.

The truth is, anyone can learn Ceremonies, and indeed many people know and perform at least a few regularly, even if they don't think of it as doing a "magic spell." Virtually every religion's funerary rites include the Pass On Ceremony, for example, and the Warding and Exorcism actions described in the **Chronicles of Darkness** Rulebook are effectively Ceremonies that have become such common knowledge that they don't have a dot rating any more.

Symbolism and Sacrifice

Ceremonies take time, they require symbolic objects, and the most powerful ceremonies call upon community and sacrifice.

Symbolic objects and actions are how Sin-Eaters converse with the Underworld and draw on its powers. Many practitioners would like Ceremonies to be simple, consistent, and clear, but rituals are about relationships and are rarely as simple as $A + B = C$. Even Ceremonies conducted under exactly the same circumstances produce slightly different results, one time producing the smell of brimstone as a side effect and the next a howling wind that flings sand into the practitioners' eyes.

Because of their connection to the Underworld, Sin-Eaters are compelled to make their Ceremonies personal. They modify their Ceremonies with symbols that reflect their backgrounds, emotional needs, krewes Doctrines, and their own personal understanding of life and death. If you've seen one Sin-Eater lead a ceremony, you've seen one Sin-Eater lead a ceremony.

Symbolic Objects

Symbolic objects or movements serve specific roles within the ritual. Circles protect, chanting and open mouths create openings, images reflect relationships, colors evoke elements, glyphs draw on ancient stories.

The nature of symbols means that yellow, to one Sin-Eater, can mean cowardice, while it means great power to another. This potential of objects and movements to take on a multitude of meanings does not mean the symbolism is arbitrary. Rather, it means that, as many rivers run to the same sea, a multitude of symbols can lead to the same supernatural effect.

[THE SYMBOLIC IDEA STARTERS BELOW COULD BE IN TEXT OR AS A TABLE, BUT I LIKE THE IDEA OF THEM AS SIDEBARS SCATTERED THROUGHOUT THE CEREMONIES SECTION SO THAT PEOPLE CAN GET IDEAS THROUGHOUT, IT MIGHT BE A MORE EFFICIENT USE OF SPACE AS WELL]

Symbolic Idea Starters — Body

- Precise movements or hand gestures
- Dancing
- Pilgrimage (Walking from one place of power to another)
- Parades
- Piercing, bloodletting, or tattooing
- Extremes of hot or cold
- Fasting

- Sleep deprivation
- Immersion in water
- Walking on coals
- Extreme physical suffering
- Ecstatic fainting or seizures
- Wearing specific clothing
- Observing taboos (avoidance of objects or actions that are profane in the context of the ceremony)

Symbolic Idea Starters — Visual

- Circles: Geometric shapes bind the Underworld with logic and certainty, which is why they are often deeply embedded into ceremonies. Often used to bind and protect.
- Writing: Words of power, naming words, phrases in dead tongues, writing Blake's *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* over and over.
- Colors: Red can evoke blood, fire, or luck; black or white for death; yellow for courage or cowardice.
- Stars: Specific constellations visible, planetary alignments, pentacles for binding and focusing.
- Specific environment with an evocative visual aesthetic
- Body paint, powder, or texture: Paint yourself to look like death to reach death, powders to open up specific channels of connection, daubed with cotton fluff to evoke newborn chicks.

Symbolic Idea Starters — Objects and Substances

- Drugs that induce altered states, LSD, peyote, puffer fish venom, ecstasy, or snakebites.
- Powders or odors associated with cleansing, saltpeter, ash, sage, rosemary, or eucalyptus smoke.
- Objects made from or touched by different primal aspects of humanity, bone, blood, tears, semen, or urine from an ovulating woman.
- Objects representing elements, jugs, candles, incense, tree branches, swords, or clay. Sin-Eaters often make sure they include water in their Ceremonies to make an easier connection with the rivers of the Underworld.
- Make an object as part of the ritual.
- Destroy something of value as part of the ritual.

Symbolic Idea Starters — Vocal/Auditory

- Monotonal chanting that includes words of power
- Singing Madonna's "Like a Prayer" or polyphonic Belarusian folk songs
- Ringing bells, setting off fireworks or explosives to disperse ghosts or negative influences

- Playing instruments, the breath of erhu or violin, the thunder of a church organ or whistling on a leaf
- Animal sounds, banishing ghosts is often easier if a rooster crows.
- Speaking in tongues
- Prayers and poems

Symbolic Idea Starters — Animistic

Drawing on the power of the non-human to hack the Underworld can be powerful, but deeply dangerous and unpredictable. Animistic forces have their own agenda, and god knows just what you're adding to the mix. Animals are more than symbolic and have lived their own lives that have influenced the Underworld. Where they have interacted with humans, they can be even more potent. Animism can connect to life beyond human centeredness, or be a fast path to eating a power source larger than your head and finding yourself in more trouble than you thought possible. Context and understanding is important: A lucky rabbit's foot has never caused trouble, but calling on Coyote has disappeared more than a few Sin-Eaters.

- Rooster — Honest, power, protector, demonic, sacrificial
- Rabbit — Luck, promiscuity, modesty, fertility, kindness, stubbornness
- Dog — Loyal, hardworking, trusting, unclean, lying
- Pig — Good luck, fertility, filth, laziness

The Working

A Ceremony is largely comprised of symbolic elements that represent every aspect of the desired outcome. Each Ceremony presented here has some example elements, but those are by no means exhaustive or restrictive. Different krewes teach different versions of the same Ceremony, reflecting their own unique faiths, while self-taught necromancers stumble through their own symbolism in search of meaning.

Every Ceremony requires the following symbolic elements:

The Actor: The person or persons enacting the ritual. *Your name, the phase of the moon you were born under, a favorite pen, a dram of your blood.*

The Target: Who or what you're trying to affect. (If the target of the ritual is physically present, that counts.) *Her name, a bit of dirt from the bottom of her garden, pages torn from her favorite book, a tooth from a beloved family pet.*

The Stage: A prepared space in which to perform the Ceremony. *A basement on a moonless night, with no light coming in or out, save for one anointed beeswax candle. The grave of an unjustly murdered man, ringed round with salt and rue.*

The Effect: The intended outcome of the Ceremony. *Black thread, tied around the representation of the target. A broken mirror.*

The Ritual: The sequence of action that ties it all together. *Bathe the symbolic elements in the light of the candle, then eat each one while speaking the names of Chthonic Gods. Chant your target's name and those of her close family members as the midnight hour passes, while pouring maggots over a corn poppet holding her fingernail trimmings. Make a paste of your blood and*

the shredded pages of your target's favorite book, stir it into a cup of souring wine, and drink the whole right down.

Performing a Ceremony

Requirements: Assemble symbolic elements and perform a ritual as described above.

Duration: As described in the specific Ceremony.

Subjects: As described in the specific Ceremony. Ceremonies cannot reach subjects in another world than the ritualist (e.g. the living world, the Underworld, or stranger places) unless specified in the Ceremony.

Action: Instant, specific Ceremonies may be resisted or contested; takes 15 minutes per dot level of the Ceremony. Additional ritualists can help with teamwork actions (p. XX).

Dice Pool: As described in the specific Ceremony.

Success: The Ceremony's effect takes place, as described in the specific Ceremony.

Exceptional: The Ceremony provides startling new insight into the nature of the Underworld; take a Krewe Beat.

Failure: Nothing happens.

Dramatic: You touch the Underworld, the Underworld touches back and it takes. You gain the Deprived Condition (p. XX), which you can resolve by visiting the Underworld or performing a more powerful Ceremony.

Suggested Modifiers

Ceremony uses a rare, expensive, or dangerous symbolic element +2

Ceremony takes an hour per dot +1

Ceremony takes a day per dot +2

Ceremony takes a week per dot +3

Innate Sin-Eater Ceremonies

All Sin-Eaters can perform these Ceremonies. Other characters may purchase them as normal.

Bestow Regalia (•••)

Reenact the mysteries of your krewe's faith, enrobing a celebrant in mythic power.

Requirement: Ritualist must be a member of a krewe that has at least one Regalia (p. XX).

Subject: One celebrant of the ritualist's krewe.

Duration: One chapter or until resolved.

Symbols: Symbolic representations of the myth to be reenacted.

Ritual: Reenact a parable or myth that illustrates a key tenet of the krewe's understanding of the mysteries of the Underworld.

Dice Pool: Presence + Occult

Success: The subject gains the relevant Regalia Condition.

Krewe Binding (••)

Form a new krewe, bind someone to a krewe, or expel a member.

Duration: Permanent

Subject: Any number of willing participants.

Dice Pool: Presence + Manipulation

Symbols: Geometric shapes. Acts of endurance. Oaths and promises.

Ritual: Use physical objects or actions deeply connected to the krewe's values. Dance all night, smear each other with mud sanctified with cool stuff you scavenged and pinky swear to have each other's backs. Endure a grueling exam about the finer points of Socratic thought and the virtues of different types of encryption as you work together to draw a perfect triangle in the sand. Do it in reverse to excommunicate a celebrant, stripping them of power and office.

Success: All participants who do not have any dots in the krewe's Mystery Cult Initiation Merit gain one dot free of charge. If the Ceremony is to create a new krewe, the players work together to design the Merit first.

Alternately, revoke a celebrant's membership in your krewe. They still keep their Mystery Cult Initiation dots, but lose access to any benefits that rely on the krewe's goodwill or shared resources. They may redesign any lost dots per the Sanctity of Merits rule (p. XX)

Speaker for the Dead (••)

Offer yourself as a conduit for the dead, allowing the ghost to speak from your mouth in their own voice.

Subject: One ghost within earshot.

Duration: Scene

Symbols: Fresh rainwater, a clay pot made by hand under a full moon, the ghost's iPhone

Rituals: Sanctify an open vessel or body of water and place an object that belonged to the ghost at the bottom of it, then call to the ghost and offer the service of your tongue. Smear your lips with a mixture of ash and bitters and invite the ghost to speak. Call the ghost's disconnected phone number on a cell phone that gets no service.

Dice Pool: Stamina + Composure

Success: The target ghost can speak through your mouth for as long as you allow it. Your voice is recognizably that of the target ghost.

Pass On (••••)

Help a ghost that has resolved its Anchors move on — past this world, past the Underworld, to whatever awaits it beyond.

This Ceremony can only be performed outside the Underworld, once a ghost that has resolved all of its Anchors.

Symbols: A circle of white salt. Doorways and liminal spaces. Emotional farewells.

Rituals: Perform the last rites of the ghost's religion. Take one last shot "for the road" as the bar closes out. Burn the ghost's remains on a pyre of sacred woods and holy oils, that the ghost might climb to heaven on the smoke.

Dice Pool: Manipulation + Empathy

Success: The ghost passes on, leaving behind an afterimage evocative of the life they led. Often it is quite pleasant, tinged with a sense of closure and their best self, but occasionally the shade vanishes with a noxious gas or an earsplitting scream.

Any Sin-Eaters present regain all spent Plasm.

Other Ceremonies

The following Ceremonies can be purchased by individuals or by krewes. The specific names, suggested symbols, and rituals are all examples — if you like the effects of a Ceremony but not its aesthetics, you are free to come up with your own. For example, maybe you want a Ceremony to remove a magical curse, but Crow Girl Kiss doesn't fit with your krewe's mythology. Rename it "Ritual Ablution" and describe the symbols and rituals as a religious washing or baptism, keep the dice pool and success result, and you're good to go.

Dead Man's Camera (•)

Since the invention of photography, cameras have been utilized to capture photos of the ephemeral spirit world that lurks just beyond.

Subject: One camera and its film. Digital and video tape cameras don't work.

Duration: Permanent, but only the film in the camera when the Ceremony is performed is enchanted.

Symbols: Veves painted on the lens cap or scratched directly into the lens. A burned-out flashbulb. Developing chemicals cut with water from one of the Rivers of the Underworld.

Rituals: Expose the film stock to the light of a full moon and load the camera as you repeatedly chant "Eye of silver, eye of glass, reveal to us what now has passed." Deface the camera in ways that should make it impossible to take photos. Clean the lens with a dead man's handkerchief.

Dice Pool: Intelligence + Science

Success: The camera takes photos normally, no matter how damaged. When the film is developed, objects and entities in Twilight are visible in the photos.

Death Watch (•)

Slow time and buy a few more precious moments when someone is at the edge of death. Sometimes this allows a grievously injured person hang on until help comes. More often it buys a little bit more time so loved ones can say goodbye.

Special: This Ceremony takes only three turns to perform.

Subject: One being the ritualist can touch.

Duration: As long as the ritualist maintains physical contact with the subject.

Symbol suggestions: Dirt. Blood. Red silk ribbon or thread. Amber. An hourglass.

Ritual: Anoint the subject with blood and dirt. Bind your hand to theirs with ribbon or thread. Tip the hourglass on its side. Pass a chunk of amber over the subject's wounds.

Dice Pool: Stamina + Medicine

Success: Time ceases to pass for the subject's body. She does not bleed out (p. XX) or risk losing consciousness due to injuries, she doesn't age, she doesn't get hungrier or thirstier, and she doesn't suffer ongoing damage from suffocation. She also does not heal damage or Tilts, and cannot resolve physical Conditions. This only applies to the subject's body itself — external factors (such as extreme environments, being set on fire, or being stabbed) can still injure or kill her.

The Diviner's Jawbone (•)

Subject: One skull, human or animal

Duration: One week

Symbols: Sayings from the *I Ching* or Exodus 28 etched into the skull. Yarrow stalks placed in the skull's mouth. Questions you wish answered written in cinnabar ink across the forehead.

Rituals: Kill the owner of the skull and flense the flesh away with a sacred knife. Cast the skull into a fire and watch how it cracks and blackens. Place it beside your pillow and listen to it whisper in your dreams.

Dice Pool: Wits + Empathy

Success: As long as you can consult the skull, you gain the benefits of the Common Sense Merit.

Ishtar's Perfume (•)

Scent lingers like nothing else, triggering sense memories deeply rooted within the psyche. Perfume clings to flesh and clothing alike for days, changing each time and revealing new layers to anyone that might happen to catch a whiff.

Death lingers in much the same way.

Subject: One corpse, or at least the eyes thereof.

Symbols: Holy oils. The deceased's favorite incense. Plasmic ambergris harvested from the things that swim the Rivers of the Underworld.

Rituals: Make a perfume out of Underworld ambergris and alcohol into which the deceased's favorite food has been infused, then spray the mixture into a cloud around your head. Anoint the corpse's eyes with holy oils, then pierce them with burning incense.

Dice Pool: Presence + Occult

Success: The Sin-Eater sees the last minute of the corpse's life. She sees everything as the corpse saw it, but she only gains its sight: she cannot hear, feel, smell, or taste anything during the vision.

Lovers' Telephone (•)

Twilight is full of the victims of jealous lovers, their communications with secret paramours uncovered via caches of love letters or anomalous entries on phone bills. Forbidden loves,

clandestine messages, and tragic death are all snarled up together, and by pulling on those threads the ritualist can reach out to the otherwise unreachable.

Subject: One person whose name you know.

Duration: One phone call

Symbols: A broken rotary telephone, its cord long-frayed, wound with red string strung with charms, baubles, and things that chime and dance. A smartphone with a smashed screen, its wallpaper a photo of a jilted lover in happier times.

Rituals: Dial the address of the place your intended recipient lost their virginity. Paint the phone with images sacred to Ishtar, Aphrodite, or Mictecacihuatl. Bury one end of the phone's cord in the grave of someone murdered by a jealous spouse.

Dice Pool: Manipulation + Computers

Success: Your phone call connects to the nearest phone to the subject, even if that phone is long since disconnected or never functioned at all (e.g. a child's toy phone or the Plasmic memory of a phone in the Underworld). It's their choice whether to answer or not, but as long as you keep the line open, whatever phone is closest to them keeps ringing. If the subject is a ghost, they can answer the call even if the phone isn't in Twilight.

Crow Girl Kiss (••)

A brush of lips and a bit of verse draws out black magic and casts it away.

Subject: One person suffering from a deleterious supernatural effect.

Duration: Permanent (but see below)

Dice Pool: Manipulation + Expression vs. the dice pool that created the curse.

Symbols: Black lipstick laced with psychoactive drugs. Black feathers. A song about Crow or Raven from your own culture or the subject's.

Rituals: Pace around the subject singing a song about Crow or Raven. Brush a feather over the subject's chakras while repeatedly chanting "Bad magic get out!" End the ritual with a kiss to draw out the curse.

Success: The curse is lifted, its magic transferred into a feather or similar talisman. If the talisman is ever destroyed, the effect returns in full force. Its duration continues from the point at which this Ceremony was performed.

Gifts of Persephone (••)

Name an obstacle you must overcome, and gaze deep into the Eleusinian mysteries to learn of something in the Underworld that will help you face it.

Subject: Self

Duration: Story

Dice Pool: Wits + Craft

Symbols: Fire. Blood. Water. Creation.

Rituals: On ground made sacred to Persephone, burn sheaves of wheat while chanting the Homeric hymn to Demeter. Hold a willow basket you made yourself to the sky while it fills with rainwater. Prick your thumb with Saint Brigid's Cross and let a single drop land in your eye.

Success: Gain the Informed Condition related to something in the Underworld that will help you overcome a specific obstacle.

Ghost Trap (••)

Seldom used by Sin-Eaters or their krewes, this Ceremony is common among living occultists, necromancers, and eaters of the dead.

Subject: A ritual object designed to catch spirits or trap magical effects.

Duration: One week.

Symbols: A devil's trap. An agimat. Slow-smoldering tobacco. A palindrome written in a circle.

Rituals: Place your spirit trap in a place you suspect ghosts frequent. Anoint it with blood, or rum, or tobacco smoke. Whisper the palindrome into a half-full bottle of whisky and bury it beneath the cemetery gate.

Dice Pool: Manipulation + Subterfuge

Success: Any ghost within 10 yards of the trap must, upon seeing it, succeed on a Resistance + Rank roll or become fascinated by it, gaining the Ban "Must stop everything to stare at the ghost trap." Blocking a ghost's line of sight removes the Ban for that ghost, while destroying the trap ends the ceremony's effects immediately.

The Absent (p. XX) may spend 1 Willpower to replace the Ban with the Obsessed Condition.

Skeleton Key (••)

Locked doors can't keep death out, and they're no better at keeping out the holder of an Skeleton Key.

Subject: One key

Duration: Permanent

Symbols: A key whose lock no longer exists. Purified water and mercury. A VHS copy of 1961's *The Cat Burglar*.

Rituals: Soak the key under the dark of a new moon. Dip black thread in your own blood and wind it along the length of the key, then wait for the blood to clot and harden. Leave the key to bask in the light of the climax of the movie, projected on Charles Peace's gravestone.

Dice Pool: Resolve + Investigation

Success: The key opens the first lock it's used on, even if the key shouldn't fit the lock — it will even open electronic locks. The magic is permanent: Until it's destroyed, the Skeleton Key will always open the lock in question. Attempts to make copies of the key automatically fail, due to mechanical errors or similar mishaps.

Black Cat's Crossing (•••)

Superstitious people will cross the street to avoid letting a black cat cross their path. This binding ritual gives superstition teeth.

Subject: Either one being, living or dead, or a location no larger than a small single-family home.

Duration: Until the next new or full moon.

Symbols: Jezebel root, cloves, and chicory. Whole dried chilies to be burned into a fine ash. A photo of the subject bound with black thread. Something representing the specific Ban you're inflicting.

Rituals: Bury the symbolic elements in a jar under the threshold. Wrap and re-wrap the image of the subject with thread while chanting "I bind you to (suffer this Ban)." Sprinkle the powdered remains of the symbolic elements across the target's path, or in their footprint.

Dice Pool: Intelligence + Intimidation (vs. Resolve + Synergy if the subject is an individual)

Success: If the Ceremony's subject is an individual, that person gains a Ban (p. XX), equivalent to a Rank 2 ghost's, determined by the ritualist. The Ban must be something the subject is physically capable of (e.g. a living person's Ban cannot be "discorporate when confronted with holy water" or "stop breathing"), and the subject may spend 1 Willpower to suppress the Ban for one action. Bans like "cannot eat or drink" or "must fling himself in front of any bus he sees" are possible and likely fatal unless resisted.

If the Ceremony's subject is a location, the ritualist defines a group or category of beings (e.g. the living, the dead, redheads, members of the Church of Edison, Psychopomps). All members of that category treat "Cannot enter the subject location" as a Ban. They may spend 1 Willpower to suppress this Ban for (Resolve) turns.

Bloody Codex (•••)

Blood carries more than oxygen; it carries thought and will and history. Press it to a page and see what you can read.

Subject: One book (or tablet computer, or scroll — anything that can be written on)

Duration: Permanent

Symbols: A blank book, preferably handmade and bound in ancient leather. Fountain pens with sharpened nibs. An unread diary, buried with its writer.

Rituals: Bury the book for one month in fertile soil, and burn a single tallow candle over the spot every night. Play a game of "never have I ever" while you prick your thumbs with sharpened pens. Email your private thoughts to the email address of someone you know to be dead.

Dice Pool: Wits + Investigation

Success: Anyone who presses a bloody thumbprint to one of the pages of the book (or an open text file, or the equivalent) finds their surface thoughts recorded on the page, appearing and disappearing as their minds wander. Tearing someone's page out of the book (or deleting the text file, etc.) ends the effect for that person.

Dumb Supper (•••)

Subject: Up to 13 individuals.

Duration: 5 days

Symbols: Stale crusts of bread on fine china. The last bit of a borrowed Eucharist. Pan de muerto and sugar skulls. Rum.

Rituals: Prepare a meal out of the crumbs left over from a feast. Serve a multi-course meal in reverse. Smear blood and tears on the plates, and pantomime eating in perfect silence.

Dice Pool: Stamina + Expression

Success: A phantasmal feast appears, sufficient to feed all participants in the Ceremony, living or dead. The living who partake in the feast completely refill their Willpower, while the dead need not spend Essence to remain active for three days, and do not suffer Essence Bleed during that time.

Forge Anchor (••••)

When the Great Below threatens to drag them down like a riptide, it's not a life preserver the dead need — it's an Anchor.

Requirement: The ritualist must be one of the Bound or one of the living.

Subject: One ghost and an object or being that will become an Anchor

Duration: Permanent

Symbols: Blood. Pure water. Fruits and flowers. Bright colors, whether in clothes or props. Joyful music.

Ritual: Wash the intended Anchor in blood and water. Braid flowers into a chain and pass them through the ghost's Corpus before wrapping them around the Anchor-to-be. Sing, dance, and play music in defiance of the Underworld's grip.

Dice Pool: Resolve + Persuasion – ghost's Rank (vs. Resolve + Rank if the subject is unwilling)

Success: The subject ghost gains the object or being as an Anchor.

Maggot Homunculus (••••)

Temporarily summon a ghost, even from the Underworld, and give it something approximating a physical form. Reapers *really* don't like this Ceremony, but since it temporarily creates a new Anchor, they technically can't do anything about it. Technically.

Subject: One ghost, who may be in a different world from the ritualist.

Duration: Scene

Symbols: Blood, sweet bread, or liquor for the dead. Meat and honey — a whole lamb carcass that a swarm of bees has made a hive in is best, but a lot of steak and a plastic bear will do in a pinch. A protective circle drawn in 11 colored powders, representing the Rivers of the Underworld. The target ghost's jawbone.

Ritual: Place the meat and honey in the circle and sing a hymn in Attic Greek. Fill a trench with blood, rum, and gunpowder and perform an ecstatic dance, leaping over the trench again and again.

Dice Pool: Presence + Occult (vs. Resistance + Rank if the ghost is unwilling to be called)

Success: Maggots boil up from the ground, swarming into a roughly humanoid shape. The subject ghost is drawn from wherever it may be to inhabit the maggot homunculus (treat this as

though the ghost used the Materialize Manifestation). When the Ceremony ends, the ghost returns to wherever it was summoned from.

Ghost Binding (•••••)

A tool of last resort, and one looked on with repugnance by many Sin-Eaters, this Ceremony traps a ghost in the prison of one of its Anchors. It can be used to bind away vicious shades too powerful to deal with any other way...or as a quick route to power.

Requirement: The ghost to be bound must be in hibernation (p. XX).

Subject: An object with the Anchor Condition.

Duration: Permanent until the object is destroyed.

Symbols: Chains. Locks. Rue. Apotropaics and binding symbols. The Seal of Solomon.

Rituals: Place the Anchor in a circle of chains and bathe it in the smoke of burning rue. Chant the names of God and binding rituals from the *Lesser Key of Solomon*. Deface the Anchor with sigils that represent imprisonment or binding.

Dice Pool: Composure + Intimidation vs. Power + Resistance

Success: The ghost is bound into her Anchor, in a state of hibernation (p. XX). The Anchor becomes a Memento. If the bound ghost had an innate Key, the Memento has that Key, otherwise it's determined by the Storyteller based on the bound ghost's death and Influences.

Persephone's Return (•••••)

Create a new Avernian Gate or reopen one that has been destroyed.

Symbols: In the living world: Mourning clothes. Fasting. Natural clefts in the earth. Scythes, hourglasses, or symbols of death. In the Underworld: Pomegranate seeds. Flowers and spring crops. Snowmelt. Laughter and dirty jokes.

Rituals: In the living world: Dress in mourning clothes and make overt displays of grief. Spill blood into the earth while destroying beloved possessions. Sacrifice a living being. In the Underworld: Sing planting songs. Dance around a maypole. Eat, drink, and make love with consenting partners.

Success: With a thunderous crash, the earth splits open and creates a new Avernian Gate at the ritualist's location. The Gate is open when created, and remains so for 13 minutes. This ritual does *not* give the ritualist any control over where the other side of the Gate appears.

Dice Pool: Stamina + Occult

Mementos

Sin-Eaters borrow the term Memento from the Latin phrase *memento mori*, "remember that you must die." People have been finding or making tokens by which to remember death for nearly as long as they've been dying, but to the Bound they are something more. A Memento is a physical object with a Twilight presence, transformed by the resonance of death into something that's no longer entirely of the living.

Death Trinkets

Most Mementos are ordinary objects that were transformed by playing an important role in someone's death, or by acting as one of a ghost's Anchors. The Bound have never been able to figure out exactly what turns one object into a Memento while another remains untouched; one grisly murder might result in the murder weapon itself becoming a token of death, while another death, just as violent, leaves the murder weapon unaltered, but creates a Memento out of the porcelain doll sitting on the shelf next to where the victim died.

Mementos can also come from more unusual sources. Objects brought back from the Underworld often become Mementos, resonating with the purpose for which they were returned to the world of the living. With effort, the Bound can even create Mementos, infusing an object of their own creation with Plasm and deathly inspiration. Geists can also create Mementos, through their own demise: A geist that's torn apart or otherwise ended leaves a physical token of their existence in the form of a mask, and certain Ceremonies can create Mementos by trapping a ghost in one of its Anchors.

Some Sin-Eaters claim to own even stranger Mementos: the bones of a Kerberoi, bottled souls, undead hearts, and more. Such stories are exactly as fanciful as they are impossible to prove, but if nothing else they turn a common Memento into a great conversation starter.

Death Trinkets

- **Touched by Death:** All Mementos are inanimate objects that have been touched by death.
- **Liminal:** Like Sin-Eaters themselves, Mementos are solid to both material and ephemeral things.

Deathmasks

You can't exactly kill a ghost, but you can certainly make the end of their existence more final. When a geist is destroyed, the power it accumulated twists and writhes and refuses to die completely. One of the Bound can consume the corpse, internalizing the geist's Key, but if left uneaten it settles into an unusual sort of Memento: a twisted sculpture of the geist's own face. A Deathmask.

When held or worn by a Sin-Eater, a Deathmask functions exactly like any other Memento, providing a Key and an effect. When a ghost puts it on, however, the geist's power can be revived, transforming the ghost into a Reaper (p. XX).

Sin-Eaters don't like Deathmasks. They're creepy, and that's not an adjective the Bound use lightly. Other Mementos feel deathly, but Deathmasks simply feel dead. Worse, they have a sense of the Chthonic about them. Whatever the geist was like while alive, or dead, the destruction of one always feeds the Underworld, tying the Deathmask to it and its strange gods. No matter how fancy it looks, carrying a Deathmask around never counts toward the Memento Collector Condition, and is instead met with apprehension and disgust by the Sin-Eater community. Many krewes will hide any Deathmasks they come across, or throw them back into the Underworld where they belong.

Strange Keys

Practically speaking, the Bound use Mementos in two ways. First, they hold Keys. Every Memento resonates with a single Key, appropriate to how or why it was created. While a Sin-Eater is wielding a Memento: holding it, wearing it, or using it in some appropriate way, she may use its Key to unlock a Haunt. Sin-Eaters who collect many Mementos with the same Key can use them to unlock several Haunts with that Key simultaneously, taking full advantage of resonance to combine multiple potent effects.

Second, Mementos are never entirely normal. Touched by the energy of death, they interact with the living world in strange ways. The stub of a wax candle never completely burns down, no matter how long it stays lit. An antique mirror reflects the viewer back as if they were 10 years older. A set of teeth in a jar rattles when the temperature drops below freezing. Memento effects are seldom earth-shaking, but clever Sin-Eaters find uses for their collection of haunted objects.

Strange Keys

- **Key:** Every Memento has a Key. A Sin-Eater who holds or wears a Memento can Unlock with that Key (p. XX).
- **Effect:** Mementos have one or more, usually minor, unnatural effects.
- **Identification:** Sin-Eaters and ghosts can instinctively identify a Memento and its Key by sight.

Greater Mementos

While most Mementos have weird, but ultimately minor, supernatural effects, rumors abound of those with truly staggering power. A watch that stops you from aging as long as you wear it. A perfectly-preserved Roman trireme that can sail to any port in the Mediterranean in one night. A date book that tells you exactly when, where, and how you're fated to die.

No one can seem to agree on what makes these Mementos, if they even exist, so powerful. Is it because they're associated with famous deaths, like Caesar's assassination or the plane crash that killed Buddy Holly, Ritchie Valens, and the Big Bopper? Is it because they're very old, like the 430,000-year-old skull of the first known murder victim? Or is it just sheer dumb luck and random cosmic convergence?

Whatever the truth, even the rumor of a greater Memento can set the occult world on edge, and an actual, verifiable greater Memento is the sort of thing krewes and cults go to war over.

Enduring Symbols

Mementos cannot be broken by mistake. They cling to their own existence, shrugging off scrapes and scratches that would render ordinary objects unusable. Accidents can still damage them; plastic melts at the edges, glass cracks, paper crinkles and browns, but a Memento always survives well enough to serve its original purpose, and to act as a Key. Even deliberate attempts to destroy a Memento find them surprisingly durable. Clever Sin-Eaters can use this toughness to their advantage, as armor or shields.

Destroying a Memento on purpose is simple enough for the Bound: Their geists can eat them. With spectral teeth or stranger maws, a bound geist can devour any Memento, chewing through

it regardless of its size or material and rendering it down into nothingness. This act of consumption is incredibly satisfying to the geist and their Bound, but completely and irreversibly destroys the Memento. Most Sin-Eaters eat their Mementos only as a last resort, or when the Memento itself has proven to be dangerous.

Enduring Symbols

- **Accident Immunity:** Mementos are never damaged by accidents or environmental hazards.
- **Durability & Structure:** No matter their nature, all Mementos have at least Durability 5 (p. XX), and twice the Structure (p. XX) of a mundane object of the same type.
- **Armor:** Apparel Mementos count as armor (usually a Kevlar vest, but especially large garments or full suits might count as riot gear), while a Memento of the appropriate size and shape (e.g. an umbrella or a large dish) can be used as a shield.
- **Consumption:** Sin-Eaters may feed a Memento to their geist as an instant action to completely refill their Plasm pool.

Collectibles

Besides their utility, Mementos are treasured by Sin-Eaters and their krewes simply for being what they are. A Memento is a holy relic, a trophy, and a fashion statement all rolled into one. Krewes gain prestige by showing off the most dramatic Mementos they can find, or failing that, the overwhelming quantity of their collections. Famous Mementos are considered especially valuable: Owning a token of some preeminent figure's death is sure way to turn heads.

Since they must be kept on hand at all times to be effective, boring-looking Mementos are ripe for customization. The art of decorating a Memento can be as traditional as painting a real skull to look like a calavera, or as tacky as dying an old coat black and gluing on plastic studs. In dressing to impress, Sin-Eaters develop their own style, turning mismatched objects into a cohesive fashion statement with paint and dye, fabric and steel, and anything else they can get their hands on.

Showing up to a Sin-Eater party with a collection of Mementos is a great way to make a good first impression. Any set of Mementos is a start, but a curated collection is the surest way to turn heads.

Collectibles

- **Collector:** A Sin-Eater who owns, and openly displays, five or more Mementos with the same Key, nine Mementos each with a different Key, or a single famous or greater Memento, gains the Memento Collector Condition (p. XX).

Creating a Memento

Mementos the Bound craft themselves are sometimes called Vanitases, named for the 16th-century European tradition of still-life paintings that reflected on the fleeting nature of life through imagery of death and decay. They are works of art, created by someone exploring her personal relationship with death. As such, they can take nearly any form, though they have to have a physical form: A poem or a song by itself can't be a Memento, but a custom-bound chapbook of poetry or a recording of the song absolutely can be.

Because they come from such a deep, personal place for the Bound who create them, only innate Keys can be worked into a Memento. Likewise, as personal expressions of a Sin-Eater's philosophy, most Bound take a certain amount of pride in making their Mementos as functional or attractive as possible, but that's not actually required; a shoddily-restored '68 Charger that belches smoke and throws a belt every 100 miles can be just as much as a Memento as one that was lovingly rebuilt bolt by painstaking bolt.

Creating a Memento

- **From Scratch:** Mementos must be created from scratch, or at least built up from simple components. Restoring a vintage car from the frame is fine, buying a used Camaro and sticking a spoiler on it is not.
- **Time:** Depending on the exact nature of the Memento, the Storyteller defines how long it takes to make, but it should never be less than a week.
- **Optional Creation:** If you want, you can use the building equipment rules (**Chronicles of Darkness**, p. 100) to create the base object.
- **Cost:** Creating a Memento costs a dot of Synergy.
- **Result:** The new Memento has one of your innate Keys. Work with your Storyteller to discuss an appropriate effect.

Example Mementos

Designing New Mementos

Every Memento begins with a ghost story: a death, a passing on, or something even stranger. Fortunately, a **Geist** campaign is full of interesting ghost stories, which a Storyteller can look to for inspiration when creating new Mementos for his game. Ghosts with which that the players have interacted are a common source of new Mementos, while other Mementos might give hints about their geists' Remembrances or their own Burdens.

Once you've determined how the Memento is formed, give it a Key that fits with the circumstances of its creation. Some Mementos might suggest multiple Keys: the bloody knife used in a kidnapping/murder might be tied to Blood, but it could also resonate with the Key of Deep Waters for the tears its victim shed, or Stillness for the gag and blindfold he wore. When in doubt, try to pick a Key that complements the most interesting part of your Memento's story. An unusual Key pick, like the Stillness Key on a violent murder weapon, helps get players interested in the object, wondering how it came to resonate in that way.

The effect of a Memento should also help to tell its story, and encourage clever thinking or planning from its owner in order to be useful. Mementos do not usually generate mechanical bonuses, or mimic the effect of a Haunt or Ceremony. Instead, they should provide their wielders with new, strange little powers, helpful in certain circumstances but not liable to make a Sin-Eater universally better at something she can already do. Ideally, no one Memento should be so incredibly useful that its owner would never consider trading it for a different one, under the right circumstances.

Bone Music Vinyl

Key: Disease

Description: In the 1950s, western rock ‘n’ roll was censored or banned in the USSR. Long before digital piracy, underground fans used discarded x-ray films as blanks to produce illicit copies of their favorite songs, called “ribs” or *roentgenizdat*. This knock-off record is printed on an x-ray of someone’s chest, in which the ribs appear to suffer from an extreme form of bone cancer.

Effect: The Bone Music Vinyl plays a different song every time it’s placed on a turntable. It’s always a piece no one’s ever heard before, and always unmistakably in the voice and style of a rocker who’s long dead.

The Cold Harbor Diary

Key: Stillness

Description: A small, bloodstained, leather-bound book, filled with notes written by a Union soldier during the American Civil War. Despite being made in the 1860s, it looks almost new. The pages are a uniform cream, the blood on the cover barely dry. The entries begin cheerfully, but become increasingly nihilistic and distraught as the diary goes on. The final entry is uncharacteristically short and to the point: “June 3. Cold Harbor. I was killed.”

Effect: The body of anyone who dies holding the Cold Harbor Diary cannot be identified. Fingerprints, DNA, dental records, and more all fail. Even the deceased’s loved ones can’t do better than “It sort of looks like him, maybe, but it’s hard to tell.” This effect does not extend to the deceased’s ghost.

The Digger’s Mojo Bag

Key: Grave Dirt

Description: An antique red silk handkerchief tied into a bag with black twine. Inside it’s filled with sweet herbs, clay, and written spells. A twist of cord is pulled through the twine, turning the Memento into a necklace.

Effect: When left to swing freely from its cord, the bag twists and sways to point toward the nearest open or unmarked grave.

The Drowned Phone

Key: Deep Waters

Description: A banged-up smartphone a few years out of date. Drops of water under the screen and behind the lens of the back camera create weird distortions in the display and in any photos taken with it. Despite that, the phone functions perfectly, though the operating system refuses to update to the latest version.

Effect: The phone can make calls and access the internet from anywhere, regardless of reception, provided it is at least partially submerged in water (which doesn’t affect it the way you’d expect). Audio sent this way is raspy and distorted on the other end, but usually still comprehensible. The phone can even make — and, according to one previous owner, receive — calls from the Underworld.

Everest Oxygen

Key: Cold Wind

Description: A compressed oxygen tank with a mask attached by a hose, of the type used by mountain climbers in the early 1960s. A small hole in the hose constantly hisses a stream of oxygen, though the pressure gauge remains at 0 psi.

Effect: Anyone who breathes through the mask immediately begins suffocating (p. XX), while simultaneously experiencing vivid hallucinations and an altered mental state similar to high-altitude cerebral edema. These visions are, according to survivors, highly addictive.

The Offal Rosary

Key: Beasts

Description: A rosary necklace made of silver and patterned, white glass beads, stained with offal and marred with rats' teeth marks. An expert in religious antiquities could date it to the early 1630s, probably of Venetian make. The air around it smells of fresh-cut lilies and decay.

Effect: Praying the Rosary with the Offal Rosary attracts all vermin within a few city blocks (or the equivalent area) to the holder. Praying the Rosary in reverse drives away all vermin in the same area.

Mourning Dove

Key: Blood

Description: A cracked porcelain Deathmask of a beautiful woman, her expression locked in an endless scream. The back is made of stained glass, wrought and painted with intricate geometric patterns and icons of bleeding martyrs.

Effect: Despite being backed by porcelain, the glass lining glows as if daylight shines through it. When worn by someone other than a ghost, the wearer can clearly see the Virtue and Vice (or equivalent Traits) of anyone he looks at, though his eyes will begin to bleed after a few hours' use.

The Glass Martyr

If a ghost dons Mourning Dove, she becomes the Reaper known as the Glass Martyr. She gains the following Traits:

- Rank 4
- Aspiration: Drag ghosts back to the Underworld.
- Power +8, Finesse +8, Resistance +4 (all to a maximum of 12); adjust Advantages accordingly.
- Maximum Essence: 25
- Influence (Pain) ••
- Manifestations: Descend, Discorporate, Engulf, Possess
- Numina: Blast, Emotional Aura (Self-Sacrifice)
- Ban: The Glass Martyr cannot act in a way that contravenes its Virtue.
- Bane: A *libellus* (a Roman certificate confirming that the bearer has sacrificed to the Roman gods).

Tricked-Out Hearse

Key: Chance

Description: The Sin-Eater who put this car together started with a 1941 Cadillac hearse. She spent years restoring the vehicle to its former glory, and then some. The finished Memento is painted a deep, matte purple, with ornate bone imagery picked out in gloss finish. The inside is all fresh black leather and chrome, embroidered and engraved with grinning skulls and faces that could be laughing or crying.

Effect: So long as it's driving at full speed, the Tricked-Out Hearse can pass through any Avernian Gate it can reach, regardless of the Gate's size and without any roll. In the living world, the hearse's wheels leave behind a trail of black, sulfurous powder, while in the Underworld it leaves a trail of white salt.

The Witch's Finger

Key: Pyre Flame

Description: The charred bones of a human index finger, wired together with copper wire and studded with small capacitors at the knuckles.

Effect: Combustible materials that come into contact with the Witch's Finger ignites after a turn.