

## Custom Mortals and Promethean

In the interests of assisting members in both creating and applying for custom items, and to allow storytellers access to the mechanics and descriptions of custom material so they may be better able to fairly adjudicate scenes, all known custom approvals have been compiled and are available to download off the MST website.

All custom powers, refinements, lineages, and other similar items on this list are still Global approval to develop independently and High approval to learn from a PC, as per the Camarilla Addendum. Custom organizations can be joined with the approval level listed in their Status sections.

If your custom approval is not listed here, please contact AMST Mortals / Promethean - [amst.mortal.promethean@gmail.com](mailto:amst.mortal.promethean@gmail.com).

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## MORTAL ORGANIZATIONS

### SHIRO

The great nation of Japan has a vast history of spiritual worship and guidance. Those who have looked to the spirits for protection and knowledge realize a darker reality exists still. Even the most humble Japanese realizes the potential for misfortune if one gains the notice of a supernatural. Words like Juon and Oni are words commonly whispered in the dark corners. To the Japanese these creatures walk freely among them. They take what they like and are to be avoided at all costs. Some even believe that if you attract the attention of these creatures, you should just leave your family and die honorably alone. Not all believe so, however...

Shiro is an organization that has put itself between its people and the supernatural. The Shiro Corporation has come a long way through Japan's history, from learning and discovering the truth about the supernatural; all while trying to protect those they love and care for from the truth. Some speculate that Shiro is as old as Japan. Some more free thinking modern Japanese believe older. The truth is that Shiro has been around in one form or another since the world existed. It was only after the fall of Oda Nobunaga that Shiro took such a large assembly. In the mid 16th Century, many believed that Lord Oda was a demon or at least one gaining powers from the demon worlds. His military strategy was discredited by talks of rituals and communion with the Oni. Whether Lord Oda Nobunaga was a demon or not he was marked by the organization. Warriors of the time gathered much information on the day to day life of the Lord and planned their precise time to strike. His suicide in 1592 left Shiro without a target or an answer. All was not lost though. Shiro had been formed, and their job and mission was clear.

It is true that many incidents throughout Japan's history could be accredited to Shiro, but for the most part they are a shadowy branch of the larger Shiro Communications Corporation. To the world, Shiro Corporation is the leading Japanese Manufacturer of Satellite Communication. They are also one of the forerunners for weapons development for the Japanese Self-Defense Force. Communication and weapons make them very formidable to the supernatural.

The truth is that Shiro accepts the supernatural and their place in this existence. Through culture forefathers were taught to respect and honor the spirits or incur their wrath. Those that appease the spirits, however, would gain much wealth in return.

Modernization changed everything...

In the last 200 years, Japan has seen major development be deeply influenced by Western Culture. Try as they might, the Japanese could not change it, nor stop it. Shiro's job became harder as new threats and terrors began to cross the seas at their home. Monsters without cause began to take advantage of their people's spiritual hospitality. Children came up missing. Blood cults of all sorts haunted old tombs and houses. Creatures stalked the night. Shiro believes that the moon-beast and blood drinkers existed in their country long before the Westerners came but thought that culture made them more civilized and honorable than their Western cousins. Shiro, unlike what most believe, accepts change. They believe that without Western influence, Japan would be left in the dark. Shiro has no illusions of resurrecting the kingdom of the past, but they do wish to adjust quickly to all threats so that Japan can exist in a better future.

### MISSION STATEMENT

I, as a Shiro Operative, swear to protect my family, personnel, home and country from all natural and supernatural threats. I would build a better world by setting an example of honor and humility in the faces of those I watch over. I realize my job is thankless, but that life itself is the greatest payment for job completed.

### STANDING ORDERS

#### Information is the Key.

The more we know, the better we may protect. Discredit those not of the organization, and bring in those worthy of the cause.

#### Protect the Weak

We are warriors and scholars alike. Protect those in need then be as the wind. You are just a face in the crowd, a helping hand, a passerby.

#### Protect the Veil

The people must not know the truth. Protect the secrets with your life. Minds can be weak. The less the enemy knows, and the more we know, the better.

## ORGANIZATION

Shiro used to be a very close knit Japanese Organization, but after World War II, they found Western influence to be unavoidable. Instead of fighting the Western ways, they incorporated them. Who better to know their ways than the Westerners themselves?

Shiro is a very family oriented group in which personnel are supposed to put complete trust in each other in a moments notice. Only through this trust can its members put aside differences and focus on the goals at hand.

Shiro chooses its members based on a variety of talents. A college professor of occult sciences, an ex-US Marine, or even a detective might be considered a potential member. The one thing these people must all have in common is trustworthiness and honor. Shiro under most circumstances will not hire those of less than credible backgrounds, for those that cannot respect mortal code could never understand the supernatural one. That's not to say Shiro doesn't have its share of "information obtaining specialists" or "former thugs." It comes down to principle, and such members are likely to have a long surveillance records with Shiro that justifies their hiring.

### Ranks and Specializations

Once an operative arrives on station they are immediately put to work in the public in whichever job best fits their skills. Shiro operatives are anything from Corners to Doctors, anywhere the supernatural existence can be found. Some operatives of higher status even work directly for the Shiro Communications and its subsidiary western companies. Not everyone who works for the company is an operative, but those in management, or a member of their family, are almost always an operative.

The most important aspect of Shiro is communication and self-reliance. Operatives are never assigned a location if they can not handle the work load. An Informant does not need to reside in the same city as its Manager, but they are required to be in constant contact by either phone or email. Likewise, a person of higher status gained their station by being fully trained in the jobs of their subordinates. When those of lower station are not available, those of higher are expected to be able to do not only their duties but the duties of the positions below them.

Certain benefits of membership and rank in the Shiro Corporation are listed below. Note that benefits are cumulative. A Manager continues to receive the reduced price for the Sanctum Merit even though he is no longer an Informant, and etc.

#### Status 1 : Informant

Informant is the first level of an operative's career. The member is expected to work hard and find a supernatural specialization and to look out for their fellow Informants. Some operatives never excel past this point and remain comfortable Informants. This is okay as long as they remain active. On the other hand, stagnation is met with job performance reviews. Shiro tries to maintain their contact with these individuals and encourage them to better honor their friends and family by being a devoted worker. Shiro also rewards their personnel with a safe place in which to stay and organize their business. All Shiro members receive the Resources and Sanctum Merit at half cost. Shiro makes sure it's operatives have a good job and a safe place to stay.

(If the player decides to later leave Shiro they will receive XP debt which will be expected to be repaid for any Resources or Sanctum dots purchased at reduced cost.)

If an operative of this level decides they wish to be let out of the organization, they are politely allowed to do so. They are made aware it would be in their best interest to remain a hard worker in any job Shiro has secured for them even if they wish not to be an operative. Former operatives are never allowed back into the organization and few extremist are never seen again. Protect the veil at all costs.

Most Shiro Operatives aspire for greatness and it doesn't take long to prove this. Once a superior feels you're ready and settled in you will be sent on many tasks with other informants in your area. You will do everything from information and research gathering to management and stake-outs. At this level you are not expected to get directly involved with the dealing of the supernatural, only observe and report back to your Manager.

This Status level is LOW Approval. It is HIGH Notification to leave Shiro if you are a Manager, with all members being made aware of their departure on the IC List

#### Status 2 : Manager

A Manager has only been in the organization for a couple of years and are trying to secure good information for their higher ups; this in turn makes them look good for promotion. They coordinate stake outs and delivered important information as it is gathered by the Informants. With recent expansion of western influence and Shiro's recent attempt to gain the Round Table's notice, there have been many management opportunities among the operatives.

This Status level is LOW Approval. It is HIGH Notification to leave Shiro if you are a Manager, with all members being made aware of their departure on the IC List

#### Status 3: Agent

Being an Agent is by far the pinnacle of working for Shiro. At this level, an operative leaves the position of Manager and swears an oath in front of the Shiro Council in Kyoto. They have now become a self reliant member of Shiro. You are now on the organizations personal payroll and gain access to all researched information.

Most operatives do not see this position until 4-5 years of dedicated service have been achieved. These members report to a Commander that has been placed over their region. During larger missions, an Agent might form a team of Managers and Informants to assist him in his operation. Most Informants and Managers jump at this opportunity, for those experienced in this work are more likely to get promoted.

This Status level is MID Approval.

#### Status 4 : Commander

Commanders are controllers for all agents in their particular area. Where Managers coordinate reconnaissance, the Commanders coordinate the attack. Whether an operation consists of extraction or the quarantine of a particular subject, the Commander leads the operation. These personnel have usually been with the organization for at least ten years and have shown nothing but dedication to the cause. The Commander is also responsible for reporting to the Board of Directors every month and in person once a year for an evaluation. This job is very serious to Shiro as it is the last personable position within the organization, let alone the last line of defense in any particular area.

This Status level is HIGH Approval.

#### Status 5 : Board of Directors

The Board of Directors is the one that all the commanders report to in the end. These members have been a part of Shiro for a minimum of twenty years and are well respected among their ranks. There are currently no official numbers on how many Board Members there are, but it is assumed that one exists in every major city that Shiro operates out of. For most, to ascend to this level is the highest honor an operative can receive. The Directors

coordinate together hundreds of operations world wide in hopes to better understand all supernatural. Directors act as field commanders for larger scale operations where many agents are needed.

The most different aspect of this position is that it also oversees the day to day activities of the commercial company and its overseas affiliates as well. The Board of Directors is supposed to carefully balance the research and expenditures of the company to better suit its true mission. The Board leaves much of the locale work in the hands of its Commanders as they look to the much bigger agendas and missions of the company.

This Status level is TOP Approval.

Let it be noted that leaving Shiro as an Agent, Commander or Board of Directors is not only HIGH Notification, but the Council may take action to silence this character. PCs swear an oath of fealty to the Council in which its rejection is often met with deadly consequences.

## The Council

The Council is the most wise and eldest operatives in all of Shiro. Honor and glory are all these members know as they watch over Japan and the Board of Directors. Some believe the Council is more of a tradition than an actual job. Few Board members know the true purpose of these individuals, and most believe they are the surviving generations of the past. In truth, the Council concern themselves with only things of a grand scale and thus the Board of Directors operates almost independently of them. Only in times of extreme crisis has the Council issue forth orders. These missions were carried out with swift fluidity. It is said that they commune with the spirits of their ancestors to guide Shiro into the future. Surely there is some form of truth in all stories.

PCs cannot by Council members and the RST of the Japanese Region controls all activities regarding them.

## TRAINING

(Players are to notify the Japan RST that their character is entering training so that they may coordinate your proxy and also help you get in touch with others of the organization)

### Training Requirement: Language (Japanese)

No matter which branch of Shiro hires you, you are sent to Okinawa for self defense and coordination tactics. It is there you will meet up with your fellow operatives under the pretense that only after proving yourself of sound mind and body will you be made aware of the darker parts of the world. After three months of rigorous training, you will need to prove yourself. The following skills are requirements showing that training:

- Athletics 1
- Brawl 1
- Weaponry 1

This will cover the basic requirements needed to be a field operative for Shiro. During this time, trainees will not be allowed to leave the installation and will leave and arrive by private plane.

The following 3 months will be spent in Kyoto for Occult Training, as well as the familiarities of Western and Eastern Culture and how they are represented in the modern world. All attendees will be expected to learn Japanese and English. During this time, all trainees are expected to have a partner for all off-installation activities. Anyone who violates this rule is fired and sent home courtesy of Shiro, only to be monitored for years to come. You are assigned to your installation after you have shown aptitude in the following skills:

- Computers 1
- Investigation 1
- Medicine 1
- Occult 1

Let it be noted that these points should be on their sheet at character creation or at time of application, whether "gained" through training, or already possessing them. The RST of the Japanese Region controls all training in a "safe proxy location" for all operatives that join Shiro within game play.

### A note on "Self Defense" and "Firearms" within the organization

Let it be known that during this training the personnel are taught many offensive arts from all over Japan, but the one thing that is missing from their training is firearms. Archery is acceptable. Guns are not. Shiro operatives are taught to defend themselves in times of firefights, but in no way encourages the use of firearms. In fact, many Shiro personnel carry batons and asps as reasonable methods of portable martial weapon and self defense. Some individuals have even honed themselves to where they can draw and strike, with two of these weapons, in the blink of an eye. This fighting technique is coined, "Shiro Style" by its personnel and is considered a highly effective means to defend oneself.

It is rumored that some operatives use firearms while in the field, but these members take full responsibility for themselves if ever arrested by local law enforcement. Japan is different than the rest of the world in its harsh anti-firearm laws. If you are arrested for possession of a firearm, you can guarantee your employer will be contacted, as with any harsh offense committed on Japanese soil. In other parts of the world, where gun laws are more relaxed, it is acceptable for Shiro personal to carry firearms. Shiro still looks down on this practice, but it does not hold its members in contempt like it does on their home soil.

There are rumors that circulate through the organization that a "Ronin Division" exists that utilizes firearms and modern SWAT tactics against the western threats of Japan. Such an organization isn't supported by other members of Shiro, nor has it been clarified if they are truly sanctioned by the Council.

## STEREOTYPES

### Round Table

"The Westerners learn from example, it seems, maybe honor and loyalty will rub off on them."

"We have secrets and so do they, get what you can with only a grain of rice to repay."

### Priory of Scions

"Christianity has no place in this. Faith I can accept. Fanatics I cannot."

"Their faith in their god gives us pause; they must have it harder than all of us."

### Project GARNET

"Do these people realize that this isn't a joke? I respect what they do, but not how they do it."

"The few of these I ran into reminded me why our hiring system is so strict."

### **The Circle of Hermes**

"If you need something these are the people to find it. Don't be downplayed though; I'm sure there is much we can teach them even if they won't admit it."

"Wayward minds have made them weak in body. You can't defend your family with books."

### **Scarecrow**

"You have to be joking. Don't humor them with visions of supernatural destruction. Those more educated know this mission is already long failed."

"They are chained up dogs at best. Just know where to point them, and for your own sake, don't get in their way."

### **Division 10**

"I really respect what they do. I just wish they would see the bigger picture. The United States isn't the center of everything and supernatural are issues everywhere."

"I have never been to America, but they sound a lot like us. Any group that dedicates themselves to the protection of their home is okay by me"

### **Vampires**

"Some are civilized, some are cultured, but they are all blood drinkers, and that's why we must watch them while they tend to their imaginary flock."

### **Werewolves**

"No form of training can prepare you for these creatures on a warpath. We find it is easier to just give them room and when they take too much, get them in their sleep"

### **Mages**

"How is this possible? As if we hadn't enough issues. I heard bullets work just fine, just might want to make sure they are dead."

## **A NOTE ON THE COUNCIL AND THE RONIN DIVISION**

(This section will be exclusively in the hands of the RST of Japan)

The Ronin Division is run by Commander Ichiro Asakura under strict secrecy of the Council. Not all members of the Council believe that such methods are needed, but the results of the group have been very successful. Very few members of this group have been cornered by locale law enforcement, let alone other Shiro operatives. If one was ever captured, they would surely do the honorable thing and take their own lives before any information could be gleaned from them; each member is issued cyanide capsules for just this purpose. No member to date has ever been traced back to Shiro's shadow organization, let alone the commercial company. They continue to be a valuable asset to the council even if their methods are less than honorable. Most Shiro operatives of Japan believe they are a misguided group that needs to be detained at all costs, while others see them as a necessary evil. This group is nothing more than a rumor for those outside of Japan, and nothing to date has proven that they exist outside of Japanese soil.

Ronin members are expected to excel in combat and group tactics. No member with less than Athletics 2, Brawl 2, Firearms 2, Stealth 2, and Weaponry 2 would even be considered for the position by Commander Asakura. Members must have a clean criminal record as getting caught by locale authorities could prove dangerous to the mission. For all purposes of Rank and Status, Ronin Division can hold any of the three top ranks, though it is unlikely that any Directors are members.

The Ronin Division, like the Council, is not available for PCs. They are more likely used in other venues as antagonists where those supernaturals are making themselves overly apparent. They are usually only sent if the Council gets involved. They are at the Japanese Regional Storytellers disposal for special plot missions that require just a bit more force than unusual, and may be called for proxy play if the character resides outside of Japan.

## **CUSTOM THAUMATURGY TEMPLATES**

### **AN-NAZIAT NECROMANCER**

In the name of the Creator do I bind you and enslave you, unclean shade.

Heirs to a 2,000-year-old tradition of Gnostic necromancy, the An-Naziat (Arabic, "The Soul-Snatchers") traffic in the ghosts of the dead, believed by the family to be souls damned and forsaken by the Creator. Through long centuries of persecution and hardship, they held fast to their self-appointed sacred obligation. Compelling restless shades to yield up their secrets, the family amassed considerable wealth and influence along the way. Over time, if one is to believe the tales handed down from father to son, and mother to daughter, they became the unseen sorcerer-kings of the Holy Land.

Eventually, however, as with all things, the prosperity and power of the An-Naziat faded, eroded by schisms within, the changing of the ages, and the swift rise of the lower classes. Ancestral holdings were sold off or abandoned, while repositories of ancient lore were lost or lessened with the passage of the years. Finally, the last of the An-Naziat to dwell east of the Atlantic made the crossing to America, there to reestablish themselves through a careful integration into the bloodlines of New England's gentry.

### **A WAY OF LIFE**

Most An-Naziat thaumaturgists are raised to their vocation, trained from childhood by the family in the arts of summoning, binding and controlling the shades of the dead. They grow up knowing the Dicta and learning what it means to be one of the necromancer-princes of the Earth. They are education in the house's centuries-old obligation, and in its history, both for good and for ill, so that they might be inspired by the successes of the An-Naziat and cautioned by its failures. To these children, the powers that they wield are as normal and natural as the sunrise, the changing of the seasons, and the force of gravity.

Of course, it is difficult at best to determine who will possess "the gift," and the family, now much smaller than it once was, even as its numbers spread among the affluent bloodlines of the American Northeast, occasionally misses a promising necromancer until adolescence, or even early adulthood. In such a case, the An-Naziat usually make subtle attempts to bring the lost sheep back into the fold, but will not compromise their secrecy for the sake of one, no matter how much potential she might seem to possess. In the worst case, it is rumored that some members of the family are tasked with

disposing of those sons and daughters of the house who, through either intent or ignorance, debase the arts or sacred duty of their line.

## SACRED NECROMANCY

An-Naziat thaumaturgy is rooted in the Gnostic belief that this world, the realm of flesh, is evil; a prison for the luminous and eternal human soul, which is called home throughout life and at the moment of death, to the Creator. In the family's cosmology, ghosts are the souls of humans who have, for whatever reason, chosen (usually unconsciously) to deny the light of the transcendent world for a chance to linger in this one. Thus, these souls, damned and accursed, are unwitting slaves to Ialdaboath, the monstrous Demiurge in whom material existence has its origin. Having forsaken the grace of the Creator, these lost souls are fit only to be used as tools by the faithful, thus turning the weapons of the Enemy to just and righteous purpose.

Specifically, the Gnosticism practiced by the An-Naziat is that of Simon Magus, a ritual sorcerer who converted to Christianity upon witnessing the living miracles of the Messiah. Thus, An-Naziat necromancy involved highly ritualized metaphysics, and makes use of sacred geometry; material, linguistic and numerical correspondences; chant, prayer and ceremonial uses of holy relics and Gnostic texts unknown to the modern world; as well as various other elaborate mystic arts. It is a precise, deliberate and often time-consuming form of thaumaturgy. Central to the family's sorcerous practices, however, is the power to forcefully compel service from the shades of the dead; when it comes to restless ghosts, An-Naziat do not ask – they take.

## ON THE TREATMENT OF GHOSTS

One of the most critical things to understand about An-Naziat necromancers in their interactions with the dead is that they view unquiet ghosts as beneath even the meanest form of life; such souls have chosen, whether consciously or otherwise, to forsake heaven's design, in favor of the selfish desire to linger in this earthly prison. As property of Ialdaboath, the ghosts of the dead are without rights or freedoms of any sort, and, to the family, exist only as instruments of evil that might be, with some effort, turned to the cause of goodness. Thus, the An-Naziat steal the resources of the Enemy, using and discarding them as the situation demands. Such a practice does not endear them to the dead, but they have nearly two thousand years of expertise and lore to call upon, and, in the course of that time, have become very skilled, indeed, at what they do.

In short, An-Naziat necromancers don't help ghosts to get their lost necklaces into the hands of living descendants, or to perform services that, at long last, grant them peace; they mercilessly enslave such entities, wholeheartedly convinced that those souls are damned and that they are, in part, the reckoning justly deserved by the accursed dead. While such a perspective might seem cruel or excessive to outsiders, it is a thoroughly justified one for some of the last living practitioners of an otherwise long-dead faith, in which earthly existence is seen as a trap for the wicked, the unwise, and the unwary.

## AN-NAZIAT TRAINING

### Defining Merit:

Evocation (Ghosts only) 4

### Path Merits:

Communion (2 or 4), Countermagic, Divination, Dream, Geomancy, Library, Magical Nexus, Psychic Projection, Second Sight, Visionary Trances (2 or 4), Warding

### Strengths:

An-Naziat necromancers are deeply spiritual people, firmly convinced of the inevitability of the Creator's triumph over evil in this and all other worlds. Whenever use of magic in a scene would play out in a manner appropriate to the necromancer's Virtue, he receives a +1 bonus to his draw for the Merit or ritual used. Note that the character may also regain all of his spent Willpower if the scene reflects his Virtue (see *Mind's Eye Theatre*, p.118.) The necromancer may only benefit from one +1 bonus per scene.

### Weakness:

Deliberately cultivated over the course of centuries to prey upon the shades of the dead, the necromancy of the An-Naziat marks them to the sight of restless ghosts as enemies to be avoided, placated or even harmed if possible. All opposed social draws made by an An-Naziat necromancer against a ghost that do not involve Intimidation, thaumaturgy Merits or rituals, abjurations or exorcisms, or the gathering of facts (such as using Empathy to gauge the shade's mood) suffer a -2 penalty.

### Character Creation:

The thaumaturgists of the An-Naziat run the gamut from cloistered scholars, to social dynamos, to hardened crusaders, and everything in between. Thus, no Attribute category tends to be favored, though An-Naziat are often hardy and resolute, and many have strong Resistance Attributes; also an asset in the abjurations and exorcisms that the family favors as a means of controlling the dead.

Mental Skills are often primary, as the work of an An-Naziat necromancer is greatly aided by sound scholarship of many varieties, particularly Academics, Investigation and Occult. Physical and Social Skills tie for second in the necromancer's repertoire, and are commonly necessary in the effort to combat evil on all of the world's many battlefields, both subtle and overt.

As far as Merits go, An-Naziat don't tend to overwhelmingly favor any one type. Danger Sense, Language and Meditative Mind are common Mental Merits, while Allies, Contacts and Resources are often their strongest Social Merits. Those necromancers skilled in the arts of combat could have almost any Physical Merit. Lastly, the Ghost Ally Merit is tremendously common to An-Naziat necromancers, though the shades bound in the family's service are not allies so much as slaves, compelled and subjugated through the use of their Anchors and various other forms of "persuasion," both mystic and mundane.

Many members of the family are firm in their conviction as the Creator's chosen, and so embody the Vice of Pride. Others become obsessed with the riches and material comforts afforded by their worldly affluence, and succumb to Gluttony or Greed.

### Concepts:

Antiquarian, embittered crusader, family genealogist, New England royalty, obsessed sorcerer, poor little rich kid, righteous soul, two-fisted exorcist.

## CHRISTIAN SHAMAN (THAUMATURGIC VARIANT)

Contemplatives, visionaries, anchorites, recluses, ecstasies. Whereas the shamanic template in Second Sight mentions the possibility of Christian shamans, citing St. Francis of Assisi as a likely candidate, it states that to be shaman one must uphold a "form of pantheism" (92). This template claims, perhaps not the reverse, but at least the converse: whilst acknowledging, as part of a long tradition of philosophers, Christian, neoplatonic, Hermetic, Romantic and otherwise, that spirits of nature may exist, they are not the paramount authority in and of themselves. (This can fit in with knowledge of spirits courts, which hold a hierarchy similar to that of the angels in Judeo-Christian tradition.) They are subject to the supreme authority; namely, God. God is not

a manifest deity. The path to Him is obscure and difficult in this day and age, but those Christians who follow the shamanic path seek above all to know Him through their actions and prayers. The merits found in this section, only slightly altered from the core template, mimic those "miracles" and capabilities which outstanding members of the church—saints and otherwise—manifested during their lives and often afterwards.

A note. I am mostly drawing on much earlier traditions than today's post-Vatican II world. I am looking back to the contemplatives of Late Antiquity of the Middle Ages: the Desert Fathers, Julian of Norwich, Hrotsvit, Hildegard of Bingen, Bridget of Sweden, St. Teresa of Avila, Catherine of Siena, et al. These people passed their lives in pursuit of God, and often achieved immortality in the form of literature or even a place in the temporal history books while they did it.

The Christian shaman, unlike the shaman of Second Sight, is concerned not only with the world of spirits but the state of the soul. Thus they possess the ability to act upon and interact with those souls (ghosts) who are lost in Twilight, which can be seen as the Purgatory of the modern world. The downside is that these souls can recognise a Christian shaman and often seek them out for help, which most shamans' Christian charity demand be given if at all possible. Spirits, on the other hand, may not be perceived as other shamans see them. Whilst spirits of nature, as in the example of Francis of Assisi, will be seen as they appear, spirits of abstractions (abstract nouns: time, imagination, evil, good, faith, chastity, light, etc.) will tend to manifest as either angelic or demonic forms.

What the Christian shaman achieves, she achieves through prayer. This prayer tends to put them into a state of trance or even ecstasy, both of which are covered by the free Visionary Trances merit the template achieves. The ritual which puts them into trance may be as simple as telling an entire rosary, lying cruciform upon the floor, or kneeling wherever they are and seeking union with God.

Another note. If you read such texts as The Cloud of Unknowing or Julian of Norwich's Revelations of Divine Love, you will come to realise that the point of prayer is union with the divine. Contemplatives do not pray for anything. They merely pray, and send their thoughts and souls winging towards God. When they achieve union with the divine, they are rewarded with visions and, occasionally (in a WoD context) powers. But none of them work without God's will. Praying for something is the job of the less advanced soul. Thus, all the Christian shaman's powers are dependent upon God's good will and thus on the behaviour of the shaman towards God and their fellow man. Thus merits may be suspended or even lost if the shaman drops to a morality level below 7. This makes it much more difficult to play a Christian shaman, especially if the character has a good many secret society contacts or even just a variety of contacts in the workaday world.

## SYSTEM

### Defining Merit:

Visionary Trances 4

### Path Merits:

See Spirits (mandatory purchase), Second Sight (mandatory purchase), Communion 2, Healing, Invocation (2 or 4), Psychic Projection, Sacrifice, See Auras, Dream Travel, Familiar (3 only)

### Strengths:

As per Second Sight, only the Christian shaman's inherent connection with the world of the soul allows her +1 on social rolls dealing with ghosts as well.

### Weaknesses:

In addition to attracting attention from spirits as a normal shaman, the Christian shaman may attract attention from ghosts in the same way. A Christian shaman also finds it difficult to access their connection to the divine if their soul is stained with sin, they take a -1 to all thaumaturge rolls for each point their morality is below 7.

### Virtue/Vice:

Faith is standard, but any Christian virtue is possible. Any Vice may be chosen, each of which represents a demon to be wrestled with as St Anthony wrestled with the Devil in the desert. Christians shamans should not expect to regain much willpower by indulging in their vice, as it represents straying from the path. It is recommended that any character who regularly indulges in her vice be given occasional degeneration checks.

### Concepts:

Contemplatives, visionaries, anchorites, recluses, ecstasies

## NOTES

*[on spirits appearing as "angels" and "demons"]* This occurs by the strength of the shaman's belief. Any interaction with true angels and demons must acquire a Global approval.

*[on communion]* Again, the character can have communion with a greater intellect (highly ranked spirit of faith, for example) without approval. However, for communion with the truly angelic, demonic, or God, the player must submit a Global approval.

Sacrifice may not entail the sacrifice of any living creature. Fasting, mortification of the flesh and the burning of plants, herbs, and incense may qualify as sufficient sacrifice.

*[on familiar]* This is more a "guardian spirit" than a servant, and may have numina which mimic psychic or other effects.

## ATHANOR

## MODIFIED DRAGON (ULGAN)

*NB: The modified effects of this Athanor only take effect after Redemption, and thus have no mechanical impact while the character is a Promethean.*

### Proposed Form, to replace text on page 33, Strange Alchemies:

**Redeemed Boon:** The dragon departs when the Promethean completes his Pilgrimage, fulfilling the deal made when first they met. When the Promethean becomes human, the dragon marks the new soul, making the human body immune to being possessed by spirits or ghosts without the soul's consent.

**Unmodified Form, from page 33, Strange Alchemies:**

**Redeemed Boon:** The dragon departs when the Promethean completes his Pilgrimage, but has grown fond of the Promethean during their time together. When the Promethean becomes human, the dragon marks the new soul, making the human body immune to being possessed by spirits or ghosts.