

A Game of Words



A Nobilis Scenario

For

Warpen 2010

How to run this game in 10 minutes

So, you've just been handed the scenario and your players are already at the table. What you need to know:

a) The Plot

There are two, possibly three - which ultimately means one - plot in this game. I did some research on noir and it listed convoluted and twisting plots as a staple, I took that to heart.

So, The Phaistos Disk is a chancel belonging to an Emperor called Lady Petunia Slay. Lady Petunia is a non-entity as far as all of Nobilis society are concerned. As she should be because both she and Lord Entropy have worked very hard to make it so. Petunia has no nobles; she is virtually powerless because every essence of her being is centred on restraining several thousand mad nobles inside The Phaistos Disk.

Basically, her power is imprisoning mad nobles. More significantly, the madness is not due to fault of the noble. The madness is caused by the shard that was placed in them being flawed/becoming flawed and any entity that bears it will become mad. Petunia slips up behind such nobles and swipes the shard and imprisons it within the disk.

There are several thousand imperators missing one of their shards; they would not be best pleased with Petunia, which is why she and Lord Entropy have worked very hard to keep her secret. She ventured through the Weirding Wall and there she forged the disk itself. Since the disk is not constructed in either prosaic or mythic reality, noble powers cannot directly affect it. The disk is a curiosity in Nobilis society. Nobles and Imperators not knowing what exactly it is have been intrigued over its indestructibility and immunity against noble powers.

However, Petunia has adopted a confused elderly lady as her manifestation, and unfortunately for her, she's too weak to fight off that becoming a reality. Oh, she'll still live forever if no one interferes but she's just not what she used to be and her control over the disk is slipping, hence the mad nobles being able to flex their muscles within their prison and causing heads to explode.

During the meanwhile, an Excrucian deceiver – something like a stealth Excrucian – has managed to slip through the war effort and heard about the disk. She is pretending to be just an ordinary noir character in the PCs' chancel and when she gets the disk she'll shatter it with an Excrucian weapon, setting the mad nobles free and set about killing the PCs.

Lord Entropy can't very well tell the imperators exactly what's going on. So, he's decided on a stalling strategy. He's going to bring the disk into The Chancel of Noir.

Now The Chancel of Noir, in chancel terms, is probably one of the most powerful and unruly chancels in existence. None of the PCs have any realm, they are pawns to the chancel itself. The chancel loves to throw noir stories their way and make them play out the stories to get what they want. Lord Entropy knows what the disk is, he knows the direct assault will do nothing but an indirect assault might slow it down. The chancel will love having such a mysterious object and

will immediately weave a noir story around the disk, indirectly manipulating the disk into being a prop in a story.

This means the PCs will have to trace the story to retrieve the disk, and before they actually find the disk investigate what it is outside the chancel. Two plots interwoven. Now, if the chancel hears what the disk actually is, it will fall head over heels in love with such a crazy prop and will start interfering with the PCs investigation outside the chancel. It will send its minions out of the chancel to weave havoc for the PCs while they're busy investigating. Gun men, women in dire need of help, murdering and kidnapping vital witnesses – that sort of thing, throw it in every now and then or if it looks like the game is going too quickly, use this to flesh it out.

The noir plot itself is typical.

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A woman in distress comes to the office – this is the deceiver in disguise – and states that a racketeer named McKinley is blackmailing her with her sister's gambling debts, this sister has the interesting name of Scrawl. While the woman in distress is called Cadence. She also mutters about The Thin Man.

They then find out that McKinley and Scrawl are engaged and Scrawl is an only child. They also find out that Scrawl only has one arm – the other is an artificial arm woven out of raven feathers and stuffed by a taxidermist – the other arm she lost when she was in Budapest retrieving an ancient artifact for The Thin Man. Bonny, who was McKinley's wife, was her partner and double crossed her and The Thin Man and kept the artifact for herself. Scrawl followed Bonny to this city, and stole McKinley from her in revenge.

In the mean time the PCs find out that McKinley is running an illegal lottery racket, that he's a widower and that he blames Cadence for his wife's suicide. Apparently, after a night on the town with Cadence, Bonny killed herself because it was for the best. McKinley has it in for Cadence and won't be too polite to the PCs when he find they're working for her.

The Thin Man has also traced Bonny to The City and is working with Cadence to try and find the artifact. Now The Thin Man knows Cadence is an Excrucian and will tip the PCs off if he can but his top priority is getting his hands on his artifact. Both The Thin Man and Scrawl will mention that the coroner seems inept and lost Bonny's body.

However, the coroner, Jacob was having an affair with Bonny and the two of them were planning for Bonny to fake her death, sell the artifact and live somewhere sunny. Bonny posted the key and address of where she had hidden the artifact to Jacob as planned but something went horribly wrong after that. Bonny's body was wheeled in stone cold. He's never had the heart to go near the artifact but will help the PCs if he thinks that it will help Bonny find peace.

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How the PCs deal with the Excrucian and what they do to stop the mad nobles screaming is something that will be resolved in game. I think enough info is thrown at them for them to come up with something.

b) The World

Nobles are charged with three main duties: defend the aspects of reality related to yourself and your Emperor (which includes those aspects related to your fellow PCs); guard and govern the Emperor's chancel and its inhabitants; and (when it does not interfere with those two duties) help in the general defense of earth.

Nobles cannot use their magic to directly affect other Nobles: if you are the Lord of Hair, you cannot cause another Noble's hair to grow, although you could do so with your own. This is because Nobles, and the things of which they are composed of, are not part of any Domains. However, Nobles can be affected indirectly by the magic of other Nobles: you could strangle another Noble with living ropes of hair you cause to materialize out of the air. Nobles do have natural resistance even to this, however, and you would need to break through this natural magic resistance first.

Emperors and their Nobles are fighting a war against beings called Excrucians, whose goal is to erase the Universe. Already, they have removed many aspects of the Universe, but no one remembers what they were, because once they're gone, they never were at all.

The World of Nobilis is divided into several different places:

- A) The Spirit Realm where much of the war is being fought.
- B) The Chancels, these are the private kingdom of the Emperors and are the home of the nobles.
- C) Earth: Earth is two worlds simultaneously; Prosaic reality which is pretty much the world outside your window; and Mythic reality, where everything is alive and can be argued with, time works in a fairy tale way and the door can lead to the loo as much to The Palace of The Sun. Yet the two words are not separate, killing a dryad in Mythic Reality will shatter a tree in Prosaic Reality and vice versa. In mythic reality, the earth is a flat disc which hangs in the branches of the world ash tree, with heaven at the top of the tree and hell at the bottom, and other worlds hanging in other branches.
- D) The Realms Beyond: The lands beyond the Weirding Wall which surrounds the World Ash. This is where the Excrucians come from, and where some of the Wild Lord Emperors are also said to originate.

C) The System

Nobilis is diceless. The PCs are immensely powerful beings, they can do what they generally like and not fail until it comes to dealing with other nobles, emperors or Excrucians, and even then they are bound by the laws set down by Lord Entropy:

Nobilis Laws:

Thou Shalt Not Love Another. Thou Shalt Not Harm One Who Has Done No Harm. Treat No Beast As Your Lord. Protect No Power From The Justice Of The Code. Aiding The Cammora Is No Crime.

A PC can do any action equal to or less than their level in their attributes and use their miracle points to bolster any one of powerful stunts they want to do. If the PCs do anything that brilliantly embodies the code they follow reward them with a suitable number of miracle points. The PCs do each have restriction, which if it comes up in play then give that PC an x number of miracle points back (the number is listed on the character sheets). One character has the Rite of Nettles, which means if they know and damage the bond of a noble, imperator or Excrucian they can reap the number of miracle points the power had invested in it. You decide the degree of damage their action inflicts and reward with a corresponding number of miracle points.

The PCs all have gifts, with the attribute the gift works under listed beside it; explain that they need to spend miracle points from that attribute to use their gift.

This is a general rough guide to the power scale of the miracles for Domain and Realm:

- Level 0: driven divinations
- Level 1: Ghost Miracles
- Level 2: Lesser Divinations
- Level 3: Lesser Preservations
- Level 4: Lesser Creations
- Level 5: Lesser Destructions and Major Divinations
- Level 6: Lesser Changes and Major Preservations
- Level 7: Major Creations
- Level 8: Major Destructions
- Level 9: Major Changes

And for Aspect:

- Level 0: Easy for everyone.
- Level 1: High-level human.
- Level 2: World record performance.
- Level 3: Improbable Feats.
- Level 4: Very Improbable Feats.
- Level 5: Impossible for humans.
- Level 6: Universally Improbable.
- Level 7: Impossible for Anyone (local effects)
- Level 8: Impossible for Anyone (non-local effects)
- Level 9: Fabled

The **Phaistos Disc** (also spelled **Phaistos Disk**, **Phaestos Disc**) is a disk of fired clay from the Minoan palace of Phaistos, possibly dating to the middle or late Minoan Bronze Age (2nd millennium BC). It is about 15 cm (5.9 in) in diameter and covered on both sides with a spiral of stamped symbols. Its purpose and meaning, and even its original geographical place of manufacture, remain disputed, making it one of the most famous mysteries of archaeology. This unique object is now on display at the archaeological museum of Heraklion in Crete, Greece.

The disc was discovered in 1908 by the Italian archaeologist Luigi Pernier in the Minoan palace-site of Phaistos, on the south coast of Crete, and features 241 tokens, comprising 45 unique signs, which were apparently made by pressing pre-formed hieroglyphic "seals" into a disc of soft clay, in a clockwise sequence spiraling towards the disc's center.

The Phaistos Disc captured the imagination of amateur and professional archeologists, and many attempts have been made to decipher the code behind the disc's signs. While it is not clear that it is a script, most attempted decipherments assume that it is; most additionally assume a syllabary, others an alphabet or logography. Attempts at decipherment are generally thought to be unlikely to succeed unless more examples of the signs are found, as it is generally agreed that there is not enough context available for a meaningful analysis.

Although the Phaistos Disc is generally accepted as authentic by archaeologists, a few scholars have forwarded the opinion that the disc is a forgery or a hoax.

Discovery

The Phaistos Disc was discovered in the Minoan palace site of Phaistos, near Hagia Triada, on the south coast of Crete; specifically the disc was found in the basement of room 8 in building 101 of a group of buildings to the northeast of the main palace. This grouping of 4 rooms also served as a formal entry into the palace complex. Italian archaeologist Luigi Pernier recovered this remarkably intact "dish", about 15 cm in diameter and uniformly slightly more than one centimetre in thickness, on 3 July 1908 during his excavation of the first Minoan palace.

It was found in the main cell of an underground "temple depository". These basement cells, only accessible from above, were neatly covered with a layer of fine plaster. Their content was poor in precious artifacts but rich in black earth and ashes, mixed with burnt bovine bones. In the northern part of the main cell, in the same black layer, a few inches south-east of the disc and about twenty inches above the floor, linear A tablet PH-1 was also found. The site apparently collapsed as a result of an earthquake, possibly linked with the explosive eruption of the Santorini volcano that affected large parts of the Mediterranean region in mid second millennium BC.

Handout 2

It seems to me that The Phaistos Disk is the most significant mystery in existence. This is even more so evident when examined through the lens of Mythic Reality. The object cannot be affected by any power. The only thing that behaves in such a manner are powers themselves. Yet no Emperor claims the disk, they are as baffled as I as to its origins.

It acts as if it is independent of existence, which flies in the face of all the properties of existence we hold dear. There has been speculation that it might be some object made by the Excrucians but that seems unlikely. I have placed it in the sun; suspended it in acid; placed in front of a glacier and sped the glacier up to roll over it; I've given it to the Noble of Physical Strength to shatter and it remains undamaged and just continues to weep.

It is my belief that the secret to understanding the disk is translating it. The Noble of Cipher has examined it for decades at a time and then gone upstairs to weep on his bed. Some have suggested going beyond the Weirding Wall to see if it comes from there but that would be insanity as that is strongly believed the Excrucians came from The Weirding Wall.

No, it seems that the disk is to remain a mystery. Perhaps there is some new noble that has yet to walk amongst us who can manipulate and understand this most curious of items. Until that day comes, it is still amusing to watch the most powerful beings in existence walk around a small stone disk that refuses to bend to their will and just weeps with the voice of several thousand souls in despair.

Lord of Curiosities, Immanual Blythe-Kenning.



Scene One: A Shadowy Silhouette

The PCs are all sitting in their office. It's dark and it's raining, and everything is in black and white. The office is littered with cheap wooden furniture, old newspapers and the scent of even cheaper whiskey. The wallpaper has yellowed and blood stains from yesteryears' brawls can be found be, not infrequently, on the walls.

The PCs have little control over their realm, being little more than the centre pieces of the story The Chancel of Noir wants to tell, and this chancel loves a story that peels open the dark despair of humanity, the smell of cigars and the overly ripened smell of cheap perfume – in other words this chancel has no problems about putting its highest echelon into danger. And if the PCs try to change, clean up or alter the classic Noir feeling to their realm, the realm will just shift and return to its state of nature: black and white, always night, always raining, and always ready to throw a gunman at the PCs to distract them.

The PCs have all been brought to their office by the chancel. It doesn't matter what they were doing, where they were going. They open the door of their cheap apartment and walk into the office. They open the door of the office to leave and they walk into the office. Lead the PCs to meeting in this room in such a way. Let me them play with it and enjoy their first flexing of what their character's feel like.

When you're ready a tall, shadowy outline of a man appears behind the door. The doorknob turns and in strides Lord Entropy, complete with trench coat and fedora, and in black and white. He'll catch a glimpse of himself in the mirror, raise an eyebrow and the coat, fedora, and black and white will bleed off him. He'll eye the PCs, pour himself a glass of that cheap whiskey and lean against the door and will convey the following to the PCs:

- 1) The Phaistos Disk used to reside in the Archaeology Museum of Heraklion in Crete. In Mythic Reality it used to emit the sound of several thousand souls weeping.
- 2) Three days ago those several thousand souls started screaming. An anchor belonging to a Noble from the Chancel of History was nearby when the screaming started, his brain exploded. So, did his Noble's. The shard the Noble carried within him has been obliterated and some essential piece of history is no more. Three more Nobles fell within the first seven hours.
- 3) The screams are getting louder and the range at which it can affect Nobles is increasing proportionally.
- 4) The Phaistos Disk contains 45 unique signs in a clockwork sequence towards the centre. It has been dated and is from the middle or late Minoan Bronze Age (2nd millennium). It is considered to be undecipherable. The Noble of Cipher, himself, is baffled.
- 5) In fact, the disk has remained untouched by any Noble who tried to directly affect it with their powers.

6) The situation is not advantageous to the war. So, Lord Entropy has orchestrated it so that the disk will arrive in The Chancel of Noir at the precise instant he leaves.

7) Their chancel is notoriously strong, and will receive The Phaistos Disk with welcoming arms, such a dangerous and mysterious object. It will immediately circle a story around the disk, never directly affecting the disk but indirectly swarming it. Giving the PCs enough time, hopefully, to figure out what's going on with the disk and then to try and find the disk inside their own chancel and neutralise it.

8) If they fail then they've bought the other nobles some time to gather and come up with a fail-safe plan, and Noir is dying in Prosaic Earth by all accounts. This would be just speeding up their inevitable decline by a century or two.

9) If they succeed then Lord Entropy will reward them, within reason, and within the guidelines of the laws.

10) He, Lord Entropy, has been able to contain their conversation within this room. It is imperative that their chancel not catch wind of what is actually going on, otherwise it will adopt the existing mystery to its own story and Nobles will pay the cost in blood.

Lord Entropy will not waste time with social chit chat but will answer whatever questions he can regarding the entire situation.

GM Note: So, what basically is going to happen is two plots, one being a classic troupe filled noir plot created by the chancel in which all PCs will have to play along with to actually find the disk and the plot outside the chancel about what is actually going on.

Scene Two: A Shadowy Outline of a Curvaceous Figure

As soon as the door clicks behind Lord Entropy. A shadowy silhouette of a curvaceous figure – if they enquire, we mean the exaggerated hourglass type – appears behind the door.

GM Note: When the door clicks open the game is on, so to speak. If the PCs utter a single word about the greater plot then the Chancel of Noir takes over.

The door opens and a beautiful woman with smoky eyes enters the room. Her name is Cadence Black – artfully flirty, prone to gazing at walls and muttering gibberish about The Thin Man in a husky voice, wears gloves made from raven feathers. She’s in dire straits, has no one else to turn to but a lot of dough to secure all their services.

Her story will unveil as such:

She’s a jazz singer at The Fisherman’s Jazz Club on Ropewalker’s Street. There’s a man there, a real hard soul of a brute named McKinley. He’s been blackmailing her with her sister Scrawl’s gambling debts. He’s demanding she pay him \$5, 000 in cash or she’s to extend her job description to a seedier nature. Bursts into tears, poor Scrawl only has one real arm. Cadence tried to help her out by weaving a second one out of raven feathers and getting a taxidermist to stuff it but Scrawl decided to try her luck at the gambling table instead. It rains all time and the stench of wet, stale raven feathers was more than poor Scrawl could bear.

But she knows that real hard brute of a soul McKinley is running some sort of racket in the kitchen of The Fisherman and if they blow the whole thing wide open and get him jailed, then she and Scrawl will be free from the blackmail.

She’ll pay \$2, 000 for this to happen. She’ll leave her name and contact number, and exit, swaying hips.

GM Note: So, the PCs have two plots to start investigating. If they decide to split the party so to speak, then let them away with it for half an hour or so but eventually the chancel is going to extend its influence and not so softly yank all the PCs into the plot.

If at any point the PCs mention their real mission while in the chancel – there will be an instance, when everything around them freezes, then the city will blur around them while in the distance a screaming is heard, which bleeds 1 D10 worth of miracle points from each of the PCs, GM chooses where the points are taken off. The city will stop and will have changed, e.g. the PCs are in a pharmacy rather than in a car chase etc.

So, the PCs have a number of options. Presumably, they are going to get some information on The Phaistos Disk. They’ll need to leave the Chancel and they can find from Handout 1 what is known about The Disk on Prosaic Earth. The museum on Prosaic Earth will reveal nothing bar an unidentified man’s brain exploded, an extreme aneurism apparently.

The PCs have two options open to them to gain more information about the disk: a) visit the scene

of the crime in Mythic reality and b) try to research what Mythic Reality knows about the disk.

Scene Three: What the Myth reveals

If they PCs look to Mythic Reality for some answers they can either go to something like The Chancel of Libraries and gain Handout 2 or they can go the Archaeology Museum in Crete in Mythic Reality. At the museum when they start asking questions they'll get a number of remarks about being the second person asking about the disk. Although the first one was more interested in where it went. Whoever they talk to will be slightly wide eyed, they'll mention that an elderly lady with a cat had been asking questions and when she was told that Lord Entropy had moved the disk, she started muttering about, "Young fools not knowing where they should and should not tread." The lady had left her name, Lady Petunia Slay.

The PCs can also return to the Chancel of Libraries and look up the Registrar of Nobles; a document that lists all Imperators, their Nobles and domains, and chancels. All Powers are required to sign the registrar by order of Lord Entropy. The list is vast, but any high aspect can get through it quick enough and find Lady Petunia's name. It states:

Imperator: Sealed by Lord Entropy.

Nobles: None.

Domain: Sealed by Lord Entropy.

Chancel: Sealed by Lord Entropy.

GM Note: Let the PCs talk a bit more about what this might entail and then drag them back into the noir plot.

Scene Four: In The Fisherman's Maws

The city is dark, it's raining and a cold mist surrounds the docks. The Fisherman is at the end of the docks; drunks, drug fuelled addicts and loose women frolic down on the docks, the sound of frenzied jazz seems to drive the reveries to new heights of abandonment, gun shots, screams in the night, all are part of the music that leads to The Fishermen.

Inside smoke curls through the air, the jazz band plays, people with glassy eyes jerk their bodies in movement.

What the PCs do here is pretty much depending on how they're going to go about things. So, if they do a convincing job at lying to the Barman, Peterson, they find out that McKinley runs a lottery racket – illegal lottery. They can use this as an excuse to get into McKinley's backroom and talk to him without making a fuss.

a) They will also notice a sinister woman steeped in mystery with on one arm stuffed and woven with raven feathers playing cards. At the card table a game with heavy stakes is taking place. If the PCs join up, they'll discover one thing, Scrawl Black is an expert card player – plays cards as if she has aspect 4.

Scrawl will talk to the PCs, and her information to disclose is: she doesn't have a sister and has never heard the name Cadence Black. She and McKinley are happily engaged. If any of the PCs refer to her arm, she'll respond by smoking a cigarette and declare that she declares she has no idea as to what they are referring to. If they mention The Thin Man, she'll be very, very interested in knowing what they know about The Thin Man and stick a gun at the PC nearest to her. If the PCs move to harm her, the entire bar will erupt into the 100 or so drunks against the PCs. It really, really should be a quick fight for the PCs.

If the PCs do get her to talk about The Thin Man she'll tell them that The Thin Man took her arm in Budapest after she was hired to track down and find an ancient archaeological artifact for him. She found it and the blaggard paid her back by cutting off her arm and leaving her to die in the gutter. The artifact was a disc.

b) When they enter McKinley's office he'll be willing to take their money and put it in the lottery. \$2 to enter, one goes to him and the other goes to the pot.

If they confront him about Cadence, he'll be shocked. He's never heard of such a woman, Scrawl doesn't have a sister, he'd certainly know because Scrawl's his fiancée. If the PCs give him a description, he'll dramatically throw his drink into the fire. Yeah, he knows her. She's the woman who convinced his wife to kill herself. He doesn't know how, all he knows is that Bonny left a suicide note saying that it was all for the best after having a girl's night out with Cadence, or whoever she calls herself. He can't prove nothing but he's suspicious all right. Scrawl is a comfort to him; she introduced him to Bonny, when the two of them were traveling in Budapest together.

If Scrawl's still chatty, and the PCs are being persuasive, she'll tell them that Bonny was her partner in Budapest but double crossed her and The Thin Man and she was the one who cut off her arm, and took the artifact for herself. Scrawl tracked her to this dirty little town and deliberately stole McKinley from her in vengeance. Scrawl's only regret was the coroner, Jacob, wouldn't allow her to look at the body or tell her where it was buried.

GM Note: Now the PCs have several options available to them in this noir storyline. They might follow the Bonny angle and go to the coroner and more importantly they're going to have to locate The Thin Man. However, they shouldn't want to confront The Thin Man until they know more about the plot involving the disk in the first place. And of course they could consider going straight to Cadence and confronting her.

Scene Five: The Coroner's hidden it

If the PCs decide to follow up on Bonny, they will have to go to The Coroner's Office or indeed phone the coroner's office to get some information. Bonny McKinley's death came under the term of the present coroner, Jacob Scaffle-Wright. .

Jacob Scaffle-Wright is bitter and an alcoholic. He was deeply in love with Bonny. If the PCs search his room while he isn't there or get him to confess, they will find out that Bonny sent him a letter before she died. She told him that she had something that would make them both rich. She needed to fake her death to get away from McKinley, mail the package to a safety deposit and then the two of them could be together forever. On the night that Bonny was supposed to have faked her death, her corpse was wheeled in. Beyond any doubt she committed suicide. Jacob has never had the heart to go to the deposit box and open it up.

He will however give the PCs the key and tell them it's in the Post office. The PCs can go and retrieve the disk if needs be. While the disk is still a prop in the story it will be safe for the PCs to approach.

Scene Six: The Thin Man

If the PCs ring Cadence she will arrange for them to meet her at The Silverthorn Hotel.

If the PCs track down The Thin Man from contacts and such they will discover that he has a suite at The Silverthorn Hotel.

Whether the PCs are there to meet Cadence or The Thin Man, when they go to the suite they will find both there.

If the PCs confront Cadence she will use choose one of them, take them aside and promise to confide all in that one PC. She'll then use *The Blind Lie* on that PC, basically she will tell a lie i.e. that she is telling truth and everyone else is obscuring the truth, and the PC cannot see any evidence that the lie is false, for about half an hour of real time game play.

The Thin Man is thin, very, very thin and small, a svelte midget. He meets every action from the PCs with praise such as, "Right to the point, you're the man for me. I do like a man who can judiciously set aside social dogma. Oh, yes, the man for me," etc. He will be eager to get his hands on the disk and offer insane degrees of money for the disk. If the PCs question his relationship with Cadence or why she is there, he won't be able to give a straight answer and he eyes flick towards her, checking her every movement constantly. If he gets the opportunity – such as when Cadence leaves one of the PCs from the room, he'll pass a note to one of the PCs while rambling on about his dreams of owning this beautiful and priceless artifact. The note will say one thing: Deceiver – game terms explain it to the PCs as a Stealth Excrucian, and The Thin Man will mention Cadence's name and give a significant nod of his head.

If the PCs are smart they will leave right now. If not and they decide to confront Cadence, then they will more than likely all die. Pull out her Character Sheet and let the games begin.

The one thing the PCs shouldn't count on is cooperation from The Thin Man at all. He wants the disk above all things and will deal with an Excrucian and double cross the PCs if he thinks he can get it. If the PCs mention Scrawl or Bonny to The Thin Man, he'll snarl at the double crossing bits of useless lace. He'll offer the PCs insane amounts of money if they can locate Bonny's body. Someone stole it before he did. This should hopefully lead the PCs to the Coroner's office.

Scene Seven: Where do you put the Slay in Petunia?

If the PCs have followed the Noir plot to this point then they really need to find out how to stop the disk exploding their brains when they follow the noir story to its end point. So, if they haven't already tracked down Petunia now is the time to do so. Any attempt to contact Lord Entropy will be blocked. He really doesn't believe the PCs are going to solve the crisis. They are stalling time while he tries to figure out what the hell to do.

Now, the PCs have a number of options when it comes to tracking down Petunia. They can go back to the museum and speak to the animas there. She's been back searching and the PCs can leave a message that they urgently need to talk to her about the disk. She will find them. Or they could just spread the word among the chancels and Mythic Reality, etc.

When they do find Petunia, she is a quaint wonderful old lady who's very upset about her disk being swiped by that young fool Entropy. Have fun with this character. When the PCs mention the exploding brains and obliterating shards, she'll mutter that she isn't as young as she used to be. If the PCs enquire about why she's looking for the disk, she'll smile and say, "Well, because it's mine dear."

Information that Petunia may give if she genuinely believes that the PCs are going to help her get the disk back, and come up with some solution to stop the disk killing off nobles and essences of existence:

- a) Petunia is an odd Emperor. She holds madness at bay; in particular, she's built an asylum, her chancel so to speak, in which she holds mad nobles imprisoned.
- b) Her existence has been kept a secret because the madness is a result of a flaw within a shard placed within a Noble and not the Noble itself. She effectively takes shards belonging to other Emperors and seals with away from existence. Something not all the Emperors would be happy about.
- c) The Phaistos Disk is her chancel, she forged it beyond the Weirding Wall, and seals all mad shards into her portable asylum.
- d) Her control over the disk has been getting weaker and weaker, and she can feel the mad horde of Nobles straining to get out. Something needs to be done to contain them. Although what, she'd not actually sure.

Scene Eight: What in the world did we do to deserve this?

So, the PCs now know what The Phaistos Disk is and they know where it is. They know they've an Excrucian who's hell bent on looking for it. It's not a huge degree of deduction to figure out the Cadence wants to break open the disk and unleash a horde of angry, insane Nobles upon Mythic Reality and Prosaic Earth; it would be something of a distraction blow to the war for existence that is currently going on.

The PC who is under Cadence's Blind Lie might attempt to contact her and warn her either about Petunia or about where they found the disk.

Or when the PCs enter the post office and walks towards the safety deposit boxes, Cadence and The Thin Man will storm in. Cadence will unveil a nasty Excrucian weapon and go to war (and if she hasn't already Blind Lie one of the PCS). See her character sheet.

Or if the PCs have not yet located the disk and seem unlikely to do so, and Cadence has found out about Petunia, then she'll come after Petunia. If Petunia dies the mad hordes are unleashed.

If the PCs do kill Cadence and have the disk, then they have a couple of minutes to act before their brain explodes. Whatever shall they do? Well, that is quite frankly up to the PCs. Any number of things could happen – they could decide to throw it back through the Weirding Wall. Or maybe throw it at The Excrucians on the front lines of the war and have a horde of mad Nobles explode on top of them. Or they might think of adding the disk to their chancel permanently, as in giving Petunia a safe and stable location for which she and her chancel could reside within, for a fee of course. At this point, the Excrucian weapon could be used to carve out a piece of the chancel and there Petunia will shapeshift while holding the disk and an asylum filled with mad Nobles becomes a permanent fixture in the Chancel of Noir and for those who dare venture close enough can see 45 unique signs spiraling along the door, in a clockwork sequence towards the centre.

Or their brains could explode and a horde of mad Nobles released to do as they will.

Nobilis : A Game of Words

Basic Information

Name: Jonas Sinclair

Imperator: Lord Falcon

Physical Description

Age: 42 Gender: M

Looks: stocky and weather beaten

Code: The Dark

Attributes

Aspect 3

Domain 2

Realm 0

Spirit 2

Miracle Points

○ ○ ○ ○ ○

○ ○ ○ ○ ○

○ ○ ○ ○ ○

○ ○ ○ ○ ○

Estate: Shadows



Gifts

Glorious: You have a physical appearance that if you choose commands an enormous impact on the emotions and behaviours of mortals and Powers, to a lesser extent - fear and terror in your case.

(Aspect)

Immutable: Your body is maintain to some degree by your power.

You can survive indefinitely without food, water or even air.

Bonds

Sanctity of his estate - 5

Rivalry with Sam - 3

His unending chainsmoking - 3

Being ugly - 2

The Chancel of Noir - 6

Always has a filled hip flask - 1

Handicaps

Affiliation to The Code of The Dark

Cannot not enter a home uninvited (1MP)

Wound Levels

Surface ○ ○ ○

Serious ○ ○

Deadly ○ ○

Jonas Sinclair: Intelligent, methodological and polite

You pride yourself on being an intelligent man. You enjoy the outdated niceties such as eloquence, politeness and an analytic disposition. You never fit into society, even as a child, you watched and were confused as to why people acted contrary to their beliefs and even self-interests. You shook your head bemused and poured your being into books.

You excelled in academia, and soon observed society from the sidelines with a detached and intelligent methodology. You came to one conclusion, humanity is doomed and more importantly humanity's greed and ignorance have doomed humanity. Consequently, you truly believe creation would be better off without humanity, and the quicker they destroy themselves the better. Even though it would invariably mean your own destruction.

That was one of the topics you were discussing at a think tank in France when you met Lord Falcon. He seemed... entertained by your ideas and initially he offended you, but you would never let it show. However, he knew, and he leaned forward and told you everything: about the war for existence, the nobles, mythic and prosaic earth. You, of course, thought he was off his head on some new fangled drug, but then he took you to his chancel, The Chancel of Noir.

Then he pushed his hand into your chest and set your soul on fire, without so much as a, "By your leave." And through this baptism of fire you became The Noble of Shadows.

The Excrucians want to end existence, you just want humanity to end and to destroy itself in the process. You are loyal to your family, although there are some questionable members who could be replaced with a more suitable candidate. You adore living in The Chancel of Noir, the more immoral and reprehensible it gets, the more you can seep through to prosaic earth and hasten the destruction of humanity.

You are the embodiment of shadows, which suits you very well. You like to lurk in the shadows, sow seeds of discontent. However, Lord Falcon has made it perfectly clear that he can take what he has given quite easily, and your loyalty to him, his chancel, your family and the war must come above all.

Your Family:

Sam: He tries to stop all your moves. If you can find a solid reason to remove him, then you just might be tempted.

Kate: Shares most of your opinions and ambitions, but she takes far too much enjoyment in it.

Laura: Is beautiful but that is beauty of artifice and dreams, it has no correlation to the human condition as it is.

Gabriel: A wild card who adds much to the chancel but he's not reliable for any long term partnerships.

The Code of The Dark:

Humans should destroy themselves, individually. Humanity should destroy itself, collectively, except for a few toys. Ugliness to human eyes shows that one is worthy.

Nobilis Laws:

Thou Shalt Not Love Another. Thou Shalt Not Harm One Who Has Done No Harm. Treat No Beast As Your Lord. Protect No Power From The Justice Of The Code. Aiding The Cammora Is No Crime.

Aspect: Physical and mental skill.

Domain: Control over your Estate.

Realm: Control over your Chancel.

Spirit: Your resistance to miraculous attacks and other benefits.

The World:

Nobles are charged with three main duties: defend the aspects of reality related to yourself and your Imperator (which includes those aspects related to your fellow PCs), guard and govern the Imperator's chancel and its inhabitants, and (when it does not interfere with those two duties) help in the general defense of earth.

Nobles cannot use their magic to directly affect other Nobles: if you are the Lord of Hair, you cannot cause another Noble's hair to grow, although you could do so with your own. This is because Nobles: and the things of which they are composed of are not part of any Domains. However, Nobles can be affected indirectly by the magic of other Nobles: you could strangle another Noble with living ropes of hair you cause to materialize out of the air. Nobles do have natural resistance even to this, however, and you would need to break through this natural magic resistance first.

Imperators and their Nobles are fighting a war against beings called Excrucians, whose goal is to erase the Universe. Already, they have removed many aspects of the Universe, but no one remembers what they were, because once they're gone, they never were at all.

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D) The Realms Beyond: The lands beyond the Weirding Wall which surrounds the World Ash. This is where the Excrucians come from, and where some of the Wild Lord Imperators are also said to originate.

Nobilis : A Game of Words

Basic Information

Name: Gabriel Wright

Imperator: Lord Falcon

Physical Description

Age: 29 Gender: M

Looks: Handsome and untidy

Code: The Wild

Attributes

Aspect 3

Domain 2

Realm 0

Spirit 1

Miracle Points

○ ○ ○ ○ ○

○ ○ ○ ○ ○

○ ○ ○ ○ ○

○ ○ ○ ○ ○

Estate: Illusion

Gifts

Luck (Spirit)

Invisibility (Aspect)

Bonds

Sanctity of his estate - 5

Not being mundane - 4

His unending chainsmoking - 3

Give in kind with a gift received - 2

The Chancel of Noir - 6

Handicaps

Affiliation to The Code of The Wild

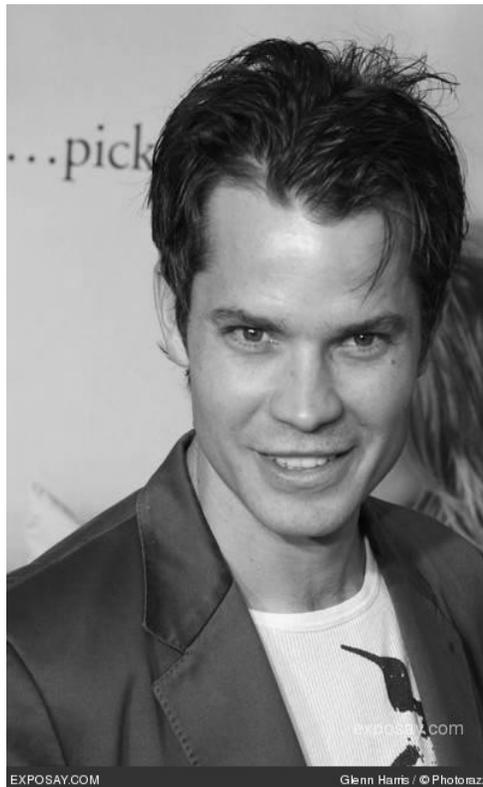
Doomed (3 MP)

Wound Levels

Surface ○ ○ ○

Serious ○ ○

Deadly ○ ○



Gabriel Wright: Reckless, Impulsive and polite

You've been a dancing teacher, a mime, a bricklayer, served tea at Buckingham Palace, been a striper in a cross-dressing night club, a researcher for The Financial Times, a poet and a bouncer. Life is a canvass of experiences, moving from one moment to the next. There is no past, it's a concept people created to put structure into their experience, coagulate them together, assign an arbitrary meaning and call it 'self.'

It's a joke, and you refuse to even be in on it. You go from one experience to the next acting how the moment takes you, bitter one minute, an optimist the next. The one sustainable fact about yourself is your love of playing cards. You cannot resist a game with high stakes.

That's how you entered the greatest experience of your life, being a noble. You sat down to play a game of poker. It came down to you and another guy, names Falcon. You were all out of money but you had a great hand, plus you've always been lucky. Unwilling to leave the game you asked Falcon if he'd accept an IOU. He said, "No, but I let you wager yourself." You laughed, you'd a winning hand and agreed. He trumped you, and then he put his hand inside your chest and your soul was on fire.

And now you're the embodiment of illusion. You live in The Chancel of Noir and it's the craziest place in all of creation. You have no control over the chancel and it spins wild scenario after wild scenario to wrap you up in it. You're very attached to this crazy city. You are one aspect of Lord Falcon, your imperator, the rest of your family make up the rest. They are an odd collection but that suits you just fine. Each one has a different attitude that's fun to run along with.

Your Family:

Sam: This guy is a straight up good guy and probably the most dangerous person in the group.

Kate: Kate is fun, very fun. She gets up all sorts of sneaky and not so moral things, and lets you tag along for the ride.

Laura: She's the dream to your illusion and yet you can't really stand her.

Jonas: This guy is straight up not a good guy but he's polite. That has to count for something.

The Code of The Wild:

Freedom is the highest principle. Sanity and mundanity are prisons. Give in kind with a gift received.

Nobilis Laws:

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Aspect: Physical and mental skill.
Domain: Control over your Estate.
Realm: Control over your Chancel.
Spirit: Your resistance to miraculous attacks and other benefits.

The World:

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Nobilis : A Game of Words

Basic Information

Name: Kate Winters

Imperator: Lord Falcon

Physical Description

Age: 23 Gender: F

Looks: Waif

Code: The Fallen Angels

Attributes

Miracle Points

Aspect 1 ○ ○ ○ ○ ○

Domain 4 ○ ○ ○ ○ ○

Realm 0 ○ ○ ○ ○ ○

Spirit 1 ○ ○ ○ ○ ○

Estate: Mists



Gifts

Elemental: You can replace your body with a constact of mist

The Rite of Passage: Looking through a broken crystal you can see a glowing road for the direction between words and chancels.

The Rite of Holy Fire: You are immune against purely mortal assaults.

Bonds

Sanctity of his estate - 5

Maintaining the power you deserve - 4

Her unending chainsmoking - 3

Her whistle made bone - 2

The Chancel of Noir - 6

Handicaps

Affiliation to The Cod of The Fallen Angels.

Hated by Animals (1MP)

Wound Levels

Surface ○ ○

Serious ○ ○

Deadly ○

Kate Winters: Cynical, manipulative and intelligent

From a very early age you learned that corruption was what a gal needs to get along in this world. If you're already corrupt no one's going to take advantage of you, and if you can corrupt someone else... well you make them a little harder and you get something out of it on the way.

You've never been given something for nothing, you've always had to fight, to seize the power you need to take what you want. But there's always an exception and that exception is Falcon. He saw you pickpocketing an old lady and smiled. He offered to buy you coffee. You went along. And he explained everything. All about Mythic Reality, the war, his chancel, everything. And he offered you power which mortals never dream exists. You scoffed, and asked, "Why me?"

Because a war for existence is going on, because much of existence is defined by humanity, and much of being human is defined by suffering. And suffering is what corruption brings. He needs someone who will make the hard choices, who can make someone suffer and see the beauty within it. However, some intelligence is needed because at the end of the day power is everything, and you will be just one aspect of his power. For you to function properly, the other powers need to function properly, they are your family. Without them, you are powerless. And he can take away what he's given you any moment he wishes. You defend your family, you defend his cause, you defend his chancel, and you fight the war, in your own way, first and follow your nature second. You agreed. Then he put his hand inside your chest and your entire being was on fire – it was a beautiful moment.

You're bond by your word to Lord Falcon; you're bound to follow the laws of Nobilis society. But when you can, you flex your nature.

Your Family:

Sam: You'd always laughed at the idea of someone who exists that refuses to be corrupted, then you met Sam. He unnerves you and you think he understands your nature better than anyone else. That makes him very dangerous.

Kate: Hmm, half the time you're in perfect accord and the other half you're on opposite sides. You think with a little negotiation you may be able to corrupt her in time.

Gabriel: Gabriel is very, very fun. If you wouldn't slit your own throat before uttering the sounds, you'd call him your BFF.

Jonas: A kindred spirit, that means you really need to watch him and what he's doing.

The Code of The Fallen Angels:

Corruption is the highest principle. Suffering is a form of corruption. Power justifies itself.

Nobilis Laws:

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Aspect: Physical and mental skill.
Domain: Control over your Estate.
Realm: Control over your Chancel.
Spirit: Your resistance to miraculous attacks and other benefits.

The World:

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Nobilis : A Game of Words

Basic Information

Name: Laura Stone

Imperator: Lord Falcon

Physical Description

Age: 27 Gender: F

Looks: Hourglass Femme Fatale

Code: The Angels

Attributes

Aspect 2

Domain 3

Realm 0

Spirit 2

Miracle Points

○ ○ ○ ○ ○

○ ○ ○ ○ ○

○ ○ ○ ○ ○

○ ○ ○ ○ ○

Estate: Dreams



Gifts

Glorious: Your physical appearance can command an enormous impact on the emotions and behaviour of mortals and powers, to a lesser extent.

You have a beauty that no one could desire to harm. (Aspect)

Gatemaker: you can step freely from any chancel to earth and back

The Nettle Rite: You can damage bonds and take the miracle points invested, works on Nobles, Imperators and Excrucians

Bonds

Sanctity of his estate - 5

Maintaining the respect you deserve - 4

Her unending chainsmoking - 3

Her Mercedes, Pandora - 2

Being beautiful - 3

Making sure that justice is always adhered to - 3

Handicaps

Affiliation to The Code of The Angels.

Cigarette Bond: Befriends anyone she shares a cigarette with and cannot refuse a cigarette (1 MP - 3 MP)

Wound Levels

Surface ○ ○

Serious ○ ○

Deadly ○ ○

Laura Stone: Vain, reckless and daring

You wanted to be a star. Nothing like the modern starlets who gush at the camera, pose with their children and talk earnestly about their opinions on world government and why peanuts are bad for the complexion. No, that is most definitely not for you. You wanted to be like the greats from yesteryear, people like Gloria Swanson. Stars whose beauty shown down and inspired. Women who knew that the enigma of being a star would be so much more compelling and commanding.

Reality isn't inspiring, transcending reality and creating beauty is. But the world of Hollywood and Celebrity Big Brother has no room for mystery and allure; instead they want to watch celebrities pee. You had a small part in a B movie retro noir story, days after it was released you got a call from your agent, some bigshot had spotted you in the movie and had a job opportunity.

You entered the meeting, ready to seize whatever you could from it – your rent was three months overdue and the repoman had already taken your car. The guy introduced himself as Falcon and said he's a long term job that needed filling. He needed someone who could embody the dream, almost surreal images of classic noir. You jumped at the chance, this you could do. Then he smiled, reached over and put his hand inside your chest, your soul burst into flames and an agonizing pain swamped your entire being.

Lord Falcon made you a noble, you are the extension of dreams or dreams are an extension of you, you're not really sure. However, you can manipulate and control dreams, in any function of the word. You're bound to The Chancel of Noir and to your new family, the other nobles chosen by Lord Falcon. You can't stand it. Beauty is tarnished at every step, justice is a dirty word and you've evolved, you are a higher being and therefore better than the inhabitants of the chancel, and they do not show the respect that they should. Change is going to happen, even if it's just in their dreams.

Your Family:

Sam: He's an ugly man but his heart is in the right place. You think that with his help you could really make the changes the chancel needs.

Kate: Hmm, half the time you're in perfect accord and the other half you're on opposite sides. But if you find something to blackmail her with, she might side with the changes you want.

Gabriel: Is unpredictable, you're not sure of his code but you think you might be able to convince him to come over and join you.

Jonas: Is ugly, a bit nasty. He'll never agree to your changes. He has to go.

The Code of The Angels:

Beauty is the highest principle. Justice is a form of beauty. Lesser beings should respect their betters.

Nobilis Laws:

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Aspect: Physical and mental skill.

Domain: Control over your Estate.

Realm: Control over your Chancel.

Spirit: Your resistance to miraculous attacks and other benefits.

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Nobilis : A Game of Words

Basic Information

Name: Sam Cray

Imperator: Lord Falcon

Physical Description

Age: 48 Gender: M

Looks: Beaten, weathered face.

Code: The light

Attributes

Miracle Points

Aspect 3

○ ○ ○ ○ ○

Domain 2

○ ○ ○ ○ ○

Realm 0

○ ○ ○ ○ ○

Spirit 3

○ ○ ○ ○ ○

Estate: Black and White

Gifts

Durant: Difficult to injure, your skin turns aside daggers, bullets and chainsaws alike, when wielded by mortal hands.

This Gift comes under Domain.

Bonds

Sanctity of his estate - 5

Continual success of the chanel in their investigations - 4

His unending chainsmoking - 3

His engraved whiskey flask - 2

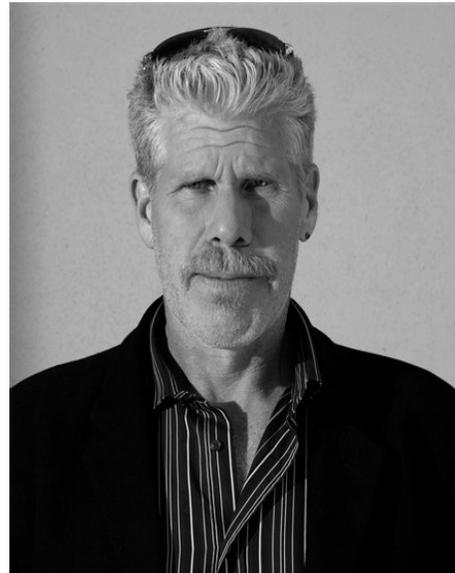
His rivalry with Jonas - 3

His success at protecting the citizens within his chancel - 3

Handicaps

Affiliation to The Code of The Light.

Cannot refuse a beautiful dame in danger (1MP)



Wound Levels

Surface ○ ○ ○

Serious ○ ○

Deadly ○ ○

Sam Cray: Determined, incorruptible and tenacious

Once upon a time you really were a PI. It was inevitable when you look back; as a kid you would stay awake till the early hours of the morning, and sneak downstairs to watch old noir movies. Beyond any doubt Humphrey Bogart and the multitude of hardboiled detectives he played fired your imagination. You would memorise a room, and then close your eyes and imagine it in black and white, nothing seemed more mysterious and exciting than a dark, rainy night, a dame in distress and a murder to solve all playing out in monochrome. As soon as you could you did the exam, and got your PI license.

Then one day in walks the craziest client you've ever had. He asked you whether you'd be willing to take on a real long job, beautiful girls, racketeers and murders with so many twists that you'd end up thinking you did the damn thing yourself. You didn't hesitate; you barely smiled but inside you felt as if your soul was on fire. Then the bastard put his hand inside your chest and your soul was on fire.

Next thing you know you're a Noble in The Chancel of Noir. Black and White are an extension of your being or you're an extension of Black and White, you're not really sure. You can absorb and reflect light, extend your will to the most complex theories and manifest the bullet points of the essence of what's important, you can blacken the sun and illuminate the darkest night and whole other myriad of things beside. That's what Lord Falcon gave you.

At first it was great, living out your boyhood fantasies but you're really just a pawn to your chancel and to Lord Falcon. Every second of everyday thousands of people are being murdered, blackmailed and beaten. You and your family, do what you can to help. It's what drives you but just once you'd like to know that when you catch the serial killer, another two aren't going to pop up in his place for a least a day.

And you wish you knew what codes the other members of your family are following, some of them of late have been making decisions that seem to worsen the cesspool of crime and inhumanity. And that you won't stand for.

Your Family:

Laura: Besides being a bit too self-involved she seems like a good kid, but then being vain can be forgiven when you've got looks like hers.

Kate: Looks like an innocent waif, though you think she's got a distinct stench of a rotting cesspool of sin and corruption around her. The Chancel could definitely do without her, if you could find a judicious reason.

Gabriel: Seems as nutty as a fruitcake. You're not entirely sure what his game is.

Jonas: Needs to be cleansed from existence. You need to find something solid. You know that if you can catch him out, you'll earn the degree of respect you need from Lord Falcon to change things around here.

The Code of The Light:

Humanity must live, and live forever. What must be done ought to be done cleanly. Humans must be protected, particularly from themselves.

Nobilis Laws:

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Aspect: Physical and mental skill.

Domain: Control over your Estate.

Realm: Control over your Chancel.

Spirit: Your resistance to miraculous attacks and other benefits.

The World:

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Emperors and their Nobles are fighting a war against beings called Excrucians, whose goal is to erase the Universe. Already, they have removed many aspects of the Universe, but no one remembers what they were, because once they're gone, they never were at all.

The World of Nobilis is divided into several different places:

A) The Spirit Realm where much of the war is being fought.

B) The Chancels, these are the private kingdom of the Emperors and are the home of the nobles.

C) Earth: Earth is two worlds simultaneously; Prosaic reality which is pretty much the world outside your window; and Mythic reality, where everything is alive and can be argued with, time works in a fairy tale way and the door can lead to the loo as much to The Palace of The Sun. Yet the two words are not separate, killing a dryad in Mythic Reality will shatter a tree in Prosaic Reality and vice versa. In mythic reality, the earth is a flat disc which hangs in the branches of the world ash tree, with heaven at the top of the tree and hell at the bottom, and other worlds hanging in other branches.

D) The Realms Beyond: The lands beyond the Weirding Wall which surrounds the World Ash. This is where the Excrucians come from, and where some of the Wild Lord Emperors are also said to originate.

Cadence Black – Deceiver

Aspect: 3 7MP

Domain: -

Realm: -

Spirit: 4 10MP

Gifts and Virtues:

Eternal – can die but won't die of natural causes.

Durant – turns aside wounds inflicted by mortal hands.

Glorious.

The Blind Lie

Shapeshifting (Any animal or human)

Focus: Abhorrent Rifle, illicit Desire, it contains 9 DMPs.

This Gift sets a bullet on fire as it leaves the Abhorrent Rifle and it does not stop burning until it enters a level 5 Auctoritas (Spirit) or an appropriate miracle of 7 or higher.

Virtue: Cruel.

Restrictions: Cant of the Deceivers; lies before poison, poison before the dagger, the dagger before the sword.

Wound Levels: 2 deadly Wounds

2 Serious Wounds

3 Surface Wounds.