

# The Riddle of Steel

## Book Six: Sorcery

KNOW ME AS OIJHA, the last of the Nine.

Here begins the era of my 10,000th year of life. The dawn burned the sky with colors and shone down on my humble abode. Thunder broke the sky later that afternoon. Dust speckled mud fled the sudden impact of the rain. A torrent raged that day, yet I found my mind at peace. Images swirled and formed in my mind a glittering black universe, in which...

Crashing lightning broke my mental reverie, timed in tune with the splintering door. The hallway swirled with darkness as torchlight projected his shadow amidst the splinters. The smell of heat was vanishing from the air. The torrent thundered on oblivious to my smashed door.

I looked impassively on whilst the hulking barbarian boldly strode into the room.

"WIZARD! I wesh ahn oudience witch yue. I kom doo see yue avoud ze Reddul! Vhat deez it, 'Longvhered'?" His accent was unbearable.

"And if I refuse to tell ye, cretin? Nehummhh?"

"Zhen yue DHIEH!" He grunted, hefting his blade.

"Go away, ye already have it." I dipped my pen, and returned to my scrolls.

"Vhat?"

"Fool, Ye lack insight."

"Tell mi ore dhieh!"

I focused a fragment of my energy towards him.

"Vhh... Vhuttttttt? Eeeeeeee eeeep!" screeched the small figure suddenly floating at the end of my fingertip. He flailed wildly about, desperately trying to land a killing blow to my outer cuticle. "Knowledge of the Riddle means ye are no longer afraid of death. Ye must already have this knowledge to be foolish enough to

threaten me. Behold the error of thy thinking."

I placed my fingertip over the flickering candle atop its ancient wooden desk. The little fellow screamed a little scream as the fire ripped the flesh from his body. The smell of burning blood wafted up on black waxy smoke. The barbarian smoldered and sizzled away, dropping small chunks of burnt flesh into the wax.

As the candle hissed, a low voice slithered behind me.

"Yet I know the Riddle all too well. A pity, for now you die." An assassin, or an apprentice...either way not the first.

The intruder's sword passed cleanly through my neck, blood trickling down the blade.

"Indeed, it seems ye do. However ye know nothing of the Sorcerer's Rule," I noted unimpressed. "Thy next assassination shall fare better if ye don't speak."

My bloody illusion vanished, as well as the man's weapons. The assassin quickly glanced about, searching for me.

"Stay if ye like, I could use an apprentice. But thy attempt to slay me shall have to wait until thou hast better learned thy arts. Steel is no match against magic, only flesh."

The man stood there as if puzzled, considering my words.

His sword appeared at my neck, as his illusion vanished.

"Very well, Longbeard, but never underestimate me again." Power glowed from his blade as it sat frozen, flashing the candle's light.

I sent him to the kitchens... the fast way.





inevitably cost the character his youth. Every spell cast has the potential to age the character, as well as to knock the sorcerer unconscious from the strain. Sorcerers must temper their actions with wisdom, patience and cunning in order to retain their vitality and often their lives. The payoff is unparalleled, however, for there are no “weak” sorcerers. Undoubtedly, all this is terrifying—or should be...really.

## II. Mechanics of Magic

All Gifted (or Fey) characters create their own spells using fast, accessible rules. These rules, however, required a degree of interpretation. The preferences and goals of your gaming group and the Seneschal will often determine how hard and how demanding a spell will be. Magic can be one of the most rewarding elements of play in *The Riddle of Steel*, but only if everyone is working under the same set of assumptions.

### I. Magic with a Bite

In *The Riddle of Steel*, magic is unshackled. Sorcerers wield incredible power, and have the unmistakable ability to disrupt the balance of anything and everything. These are no mere mages, nor practitioners of “hedge magic” and simple incantations. These are the Gifted men and women that wield the power of the Fey. Such individuals are rare, secretive, patient and dangerous.

Each sorcerer learns and uses magic differently. Magic is a precious gift so rarely bestowed that only one in a many tens of thousands may wield it. For those Gifted few, only a handful of books on magic are available in the entire world, treasured and guarded in secret places by those who wish the knowledge kept secret. Most sorcerers must, therefore, be responsible for their own advancement and development.

Magic in *The Riddle of Steel* is both dangerous and powerful. In contrast to what many players are accustomed to, magic in this game can prove dangerous to a reckless user. Wasteful and thoughtless use of magic will

### 1. Derived Attributes for Sorcerers

Sorcerers, as stated in **Book Two: The Birth of a Legend**, have an additional set of Derived Attributes. These are used in magic-related Tests and in formulating your *Sorcery Pool*. After assignment of Priorities and Attributes in the character creation system (again, see **Book Two**), a player

**TABLE 6.1: DERIVED SORCERY ATTRIBUTES**

KAA	$(TO + HT + WP) / 2$ . Kaa is the amount of raw energy a sorcerer is capable of producing from his body.
FORM	$(WT + PER) / 2$ . Form stratifies a sorcerer's skill and ability to cast spells.
ART	$(MA + EN) / 2$ . Art measures a sorcerer's competence at resisting the harmful effects of magic.
DISCIPLINE	$(WP + EN) / 2$ . How cautious and detailed a sorcerer is in performing rituals.
DRAW	$(ST + WP) / 2$ . The rate at which a sorcerer can replenish his vagaries.





**TABLE 6.2: THE SORCERY POOL AND ITS BONUSSES**

SORCERY POOL = KAA + FORM

Provided there is at least one die in the Sorcery Pool, additional bonus dice are added when casting either Spells of Three or Spells of Many:

Spells of One	= Sorcery Pool
Spells of Three	= Sorcery Pool + Art
Spells of Many	= Sorcery Pool + Art + Discipline

must calculate their derived sorcery attributes based on the Table 6.1.

**2. The Sorcery Pool**

Just as bladeslingers have a Combat Pool and archers have a Missile Pool, sorcerers have a Sorcery Pool. Once proficiencies have been assigned, the Sorcery Pool (SP) must be tallied. Calculate your Sorcery Pool using Table 6.2. The Sorcery Pool represents the number of dice used when casting spells and resisting the harmful effects of magic (self inflicted or otherwise). The sorcery pool can also be modified based on the kind of spell being cast, but more on that will come later.

**3. The Nine Vagaries of Magic (or Sorcerous Proficiencies)**

Next the player assigns scores to Proficiencies in the magical arts. Henceforth referred to as the nine Vagaries, they represent facets of what can be done using magic. Up to three points may be placed in each Vagary; the number of points available is based on the Proficiency assignment in character creation. Remember that these points come from the same place as Weapon Proficiencies, and trying to put a lot in both weapons and magic will quickly deplete a character's available Proficiency points.

Vagaries should be selected on the basis of the type and manner of spells a player wishes to use. What are you as a player going to enjoy doing most with magic?

How will your selection of Vagaries further the philosophy of the character? How do your Spiritual Attributes reflect upon your Vagary choices, and your Vagaries on your Spiritual Attributes? Deciding who and what you want your character to be should take priority in defining the style the character will inherit. Consider as well which Vagaries are compatible and might make an interesting or useful spell, as multiple Vagaries may be combined into a single spell. Table 6.3 lists the Nine Vagaries.

A word of advice when choosing Vagaries: Summoning is an important Vagary for all sorcerers, as the creation of a Constant Spell (explained below) requires its incorporation in order to be effective. The capability of refreshing a character's Sorcery Pool dice through the use of the Instant Spell "Mana" is an additional reason for the selection of Summoning.

**The Rules of Three**

The "Rules of Three" were discovered and codified by Xanar Stormbringer, said to be the first of the Gifted. They state that all concepts and energies of magic fit within a three-sided polyhedron. This is found in all aspects of the universe, and applies to gods, men, and the Siehe.

Following the Rules of Three, the Nine Vagaries of Sorcery produce thrice as many effects and are contained in three categories. Three are based in the Temporal (or physical) realm, three in the Mental, and three in the Spiritual. The number of Vagaries that may comprise a spell are varied according to the type of spell cast and the desired effect, although using more than three Vagaries requires the construction of a Ritual spell, described later on.

TABLE 6.3: THE NINE VAGARIES	
Sculpture	
Growth	
Movement	
Conquer	
Glamour	
Vision	
Summoning	
Banishing	
Imprisoning	

**The Nine Vagaries Described**

Vagaries have three levels of proficiency: **Novice** (1) – **Apprentice** (2) – **Master** (3). Each Vagary is broken down







into three effects, which in turn have three level-based characteristics. The more points placed in a Vagary (between 1 and 3), the greater the Level of Effect a sorcerer may use. Novice level (1) is a rudimentary familiarity with the vagary and its capabilities. Apprentice level (2) is most common. Spells generated by this proficiency level are generally the core of a sorcerer's repertoire. Mastering a Vagary (3) includes a number of benefits, especially when creating a Ritual Spell.

Both the Vagaries chosen by the character and the spells he selects define his role in the magical community. The player is responsible for creating all of his character's spells. Thus a sorcerer who wishes to be known as a necromancer would focus on creating spells that utilize spirits in some dark and spooky fashion; sorcerers going for the "battle-mage" approach should design spells that are best used in combat and war. If your campaign revolves around combating an advancing horde, your character may be essential in repelling them. Spells may be patterned after the example spells (at the end of Book Six), though a personal touch—in title or in function—should be added to each. As always the Seneschal has the final say in all spell creation.



**Temporal** realms are those that affect physical matter in some tangible fashion. They generally change, move, or alter the size of the target. As they may affect large areas as well, these spells are useful for both offense as well as defense.

**SCULPTURE:** Magic that changes the physical form or shape of matter.

*The use of Sculpture assumes that the materials sculpted are already present. Miniscule/cellular uses of Sculpture require Vision3 (clairvoyance 3) to see the reduced area clearly. Some Seneschals may require the use of an Artistic Skill when using Sculpture for complicated shapes.*

***Intricacy** is the level of detail that the sorcerer can shape the target into.*

- 1) The sorcerer can create basic geometric shapes. Pyramids, cubes and spheres, for instance.
- 2) This level of mastery allows complex polygons and surface structures of inanimate objects.
- 3) A sorcerer can replicate the complex forms of living things.

***Composition** defines the number and type of materials a sorcerer may use to combine or separate.*

- 1) Two types of materials may be joined or separated, affecting inanimate objects.
- 2) Ten different materials may be affected, including plants and inanimate objects.
- 3) 100 various elements may be integrated into a composition, finally effecting animals. This level of skill allows a target to be disintegrated as well.

***Concept** stratifies the complexity of the creation.*

- 1) The sorcerer can duplicate something that he is currently viewing.
- 2) The sorcerer is capable of duplicating something that he or another has seen and described.
- 3) The sorcerer is able to create things from his imagination.

**MOVEMENT:** Magic that enables a target to defy Newton's laws (albeit Newton isn't around in this world) and animate things.

*Movement spells may be the most useful and deadly of all spells. The effects of rapid movement and acceleration realistically affect a target, including any harmful side-effects from sudden acceleration/deceleration or being tossed about like a doll.*

***Speed** is how fast a target may be accelerated or decelerated, and the maximum rate of movement it may achieve. This also includes the element of Lift, or how high a target can be moved from its current location.*





- 1) A target may be pushed up to 10 yards per second/ combat round (About 20mph). Acceleration/ deceleration are 2x of the target's current speed. Lift is 10 yards.
- 2) A target can reach up to 50 yards per second (about 100 mph), or slowed to a crawl. Acceleration/ deceleration is 10x target's current speed. Lift is 100 yards.
- 3) A target may be instantaneously transmitted through open space. Acceleration/ deceleration is instantaneous. (327,857,019 yd/s, the speed of light) A decelerated target is incapable of movement. Lift is 1 mile.

*Maneuverability* allows a sorcerer to manipulate the direction in which a target is moving.

- 1) The target may only make directional changes in one plane of direction (up/down or left/right).
- 2) The target may change direction swiftly in all three planes.
- 3) The target may change direction instantly and reverse course.

*Animation* controls fine manipulation and complex movement of the previously inanimate.

- 1) Target can walk at a shamle and extend limbs.
- 2) Target moves with the coordination of a normal human.
- 3) Target can move with the grace of a finely-tuned athlete or predatory cat.

---

**GROWTH:** Magic capable of regenerating or expanding a target. Lesser increments may always be used. Affecting any microscopic target demands the conjunctional use of Vision.

*Expanding or contracting a target increases or decreases its size.*

- 1) A sorcerer may double the target's size, or shrink it to half.
- 2) The target size is multiplied or divided by 10.



TEMPORAL : MOVEMENT, GROWTH





- 3) The target size is multiplied or divided by 100.

*Maturing a target causes it to grow if it is living, decompose if dead, and corrodes (if possible) objects. (As time may not be reversed, making things younger is impossible.)*

- 1) Target ages as though a month had passed.
- 2) Target ages as though a year had passed
- 3) Target ages as though a decade had passed.

*Dividing a target causes it to reproduce a smaller, duplicate version of itself.*

- 1) Divides an object on a chosen axis.
- 2) Divides a common group of cells, effectively causing them to reproduce themselves.
- 3) This level splits molecules into equally proportional divisions.



**Mental** realms are used to affect the minds of others. The sorcerer uses these vagaries to create illusions, dominate the wills of others and see what was, is and will be. The TN for the "Volume" variable of a mind-affecting spell is zero.

**GLAMOUR:** The magic of illusions.

*Illusions must be programmed beforehand or actively controlled. Some Seneschals may optionally rule that truly realistic illusions must have a Vision 3 requirement.*

*Realism quantifies an illusion's duplication of reality*

- 1) The illusion is shadowy and vague, or blurry with few details.
- 2) The illusion is recognizable but lacks sincerity.
- 3) The illusion perfectly simulates reality.

*Tangibility reflects how real the illusion feels to the mind.*

- 1) The illusion has no form and can be passed through.





- 2) The illusion is solid and makes ghostly sounds, but has no thermal or real tactile components.
- 3) The illusion has thermal and audio components simulating reality.

*Interactivity allows others to manipulate or experience the illusion.*

- 1) The illusion cannot be moved or felt.
- 2) The illusion has to be interacted with in order to move.
- 3) The illusion is as animate as the target it is duplicating.

---

**CONQUER:** The use of magic to control or manipulate the mind of a target.

*Implant means a sorcerer is capable of placing a thought, image or entity into the mind of another.*

- 1) The sorcerer may place a short thought or simple image into the mind of the target.
- 2) The sorcerer may place an experience or emotion into the target.
- 3) The sorcerer may implant a SPIRIT, DEMON, or dormant spell into the target.

*Control defines the sorcerer's ability to influence the actions of another being.*

- 1) The sorcerer may coerce the target into performing a reasonably simple action. This action may not threaten in any manner the life of the target, nor may it be an action that the target would normally find offensive.
- 2) The sorcerer may manipulate the target's actions, forcing it to act as the sorcerer wishes. However, the target is aware and likely to resent this manipulation.
- 3) The target is completely dominated by the will of the sorcerer, happily acting according to the instructions it is given, regardless of the consequences and with no memory of the period spent under control.

*Repress will eliminate some aspect of the target's memory.*

- 1) The sorcerer causes the target to forget a recent occurrence. This can be no longer than a day past. The target may remember the experience as déjà vu.
- 2) The sorcerer may delete all information associated with a specific person, place, or event.
- 3) The sorcerer may completely wipe the mind of the target, reverting it to an infantile state.

---

**VISION:** This Vagary enables the sorcerer to see other places, other times, or into the minds of others.

*Divination reveals the events of the past or possible events of the future. Divining the future only reveals the most probable event as the future is constantly rewritten. Vision heightens the mind's ability to represent or recreate reality through imagination. It does not alter the physiology of the eyes in any way. Vision is necessary in the creation of spells involving miniscule targets as well.*

- 1) The sorcerer is capable of seeing a day into future or past.
- 2) The sorcerer is able to see events that have occurred or that may occur within the time frame of a year.
- 3) The sorcerer may prophesy events as far reaching as his lifeline.

*Clairvoyance allows the sorcerer to remotely view the events unfolding around him.*

- 1) The sorcerer can see the events occurring within 1 mile of his position at a magnification of 10X if so desired.
- 2) The sorcerer may view events in the radius of 100 miles at a magnification of 100X.
- 3) The sorcerer may view any event anywhere in the world, providing he has some form of a link to the event.

*Telepathy is used to read the minds of others. Time is often needed to find the information.*

- 1) The sorcerer may scan the surface thoughts of a target.





- 2) The sorcerer senses the needs and desires in addition to the surface thoughts of the target.
- 3) The sorcerer can dive into the mind of the target, experiencing any of its memories.



**Spiritual** realms tap into forces beyond the limits of human understanding. They deal with magic and beings thereof. Many spiritual Vagaries impose a cost for their use.

**SUMMONING:** Calling magical beings or forces (that contain their own magic) into the physical world, for a price. (This Vagary does only that, however, and controlling these beings is a whole other matter.) It is advised to select the Vagary of Summoning, as the creation of a Constant Spell—any spell with a duration longer than instantaneous—requires its incorporation in order to be effective.

*Spirits are remnants of beings, the residual copy of a life force. Spirits must be seen through the use of Vision.*

- 1) A sorcerer may summon a minor Spirit. Cost: A service to the spirit, such as a host body or other offering.
- 2) A sorcerer may summon a Spirit. Cost: An extensive service.
- 3) A sorcerer may summon a Greater Spirit. Cost: An epic quest.

*Demons are magical beings generated by belief in Gods, and are either good or evil in nature. Conquer3 is needed to implant them into a living creature.*

- 1) A sorcerer may summon a lesser Demon. Cost: 8 Spiritual Att. points.
- 2) A sorcerer may summon a Demon. Cost: 16 Spiritual Att. points.
- 3) A sorcerer may summon a greater Demon. Cost: 24 Spiritual Att. points.

*Magic is life force without direction. It exists, nothing more. Raw magic must be summoned and imprisoned in order to enchant items, grant spells extended duration (i.e. to produce Constant Spells), and quickly refresh the Sorcery Pool.*

- 1) A sorcerer may summon enough magic to sustain a Novice level spell.
- 2) A sorcerer may summon enough magic to sustain an Apprentice level spell.
- 3) A sorcerer may summon enough magic to sustain a Master level spell.

**BANISHMENT:** Exiling unwanted magical creatures or effects from the physical plane.

*Spirits are beings created by the life force of living creatures.*

- 1) A sorcerer may banish a Minor Spirit.
- 2) A sorcerer may banish a Spirit.
- 3) A sorcerer may banish a Greater Spirit.

*Demons are magical beings generated by belief in Gods, and are either good or evil in nature.*

- 1) A sorcerer may banish a Lesser Demon.
- 2) A sorcerer may banish a Demon.
- 3) A sorcerer may banish a Greater Demon.

*Magic is life force without direction.*

- 1) A sorcerer may banish the magic of a Novice level spell.
- 2) A sorcerer may banish the magic of an Apprentice level spell.
- 3) A sorcerer may banish the magic of a Master level spell.

**IMPRISONMENT:** Trapping magical creatures or forces in the physical plane. A focus (such as a talisman) must be created in order to bind the energy to the physical world.

*Spirits are beings created by the life force of living creatures.*

- 1) A sorcerer may imprison a Minor Spirit. Cost: 2 Spell Pool dice (SP); this is not a permanent expenditure,





and these dice refresh normally.

- 2) A sorcerer may imprison a Spirit. Cost: 5 SP; this is not a permanent expenditure, and these dice refresh normally.
- 3) A sorcerer may imprison a Greater Spirit. Cost: 10 SP; this is not a permanent expenditure, and these dice refresh normally.

*Demons are magical beings generated by belief in Gods, and are either good or evil in nature.*

- 1) A sorcerer may imprison a Lesser Demon. Cost: 7 Spiritual Attribute points for permanency.
- 2) A sorcerer may imprison a Demon. Cost: 13 Spiritual points for permanency.
- 3) A sorcerer may imprison a Greater Demon. Cost: 21 Spiritual points for permanency.

*Magic is life force without direction.*

- 1) A sorcerer may imprison the magic of a Novice level spell. One Sorcery Pool die is irrevocably lost if the imprisonment is to be made permanent.
- 2) A sorcerer may imprison the magic of an Apprentice level spell. Two Sorcery Pool dice are irrevocably lost if the imprisonment is to be made permanent.
- 3) A sorcerer may imprison the magic of a Master level spell. Three Sorcery Pool dice are irrevocably lost if the imprisonment is to be made permanent.



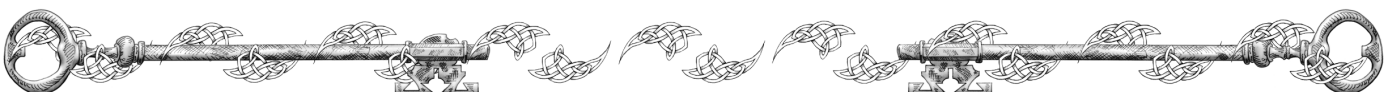
## Limits in a Limitless World

Each Vagary has an endless—but not limitless—diversity of uses. Magic in *The Riddle of Steel* is based on the concept that sorcery can bend the laws of nature to an exorbitant degree, but completely breaking them is simply not possible. There are no fireballs or similar “comic book magic,” as a general part of the “feel” of magic in *The Riddle of Steel*. A list of sample limitations follows: Your Seneschal may modify this list, adding to or taking from it, at will.

- Spells may not create matter from nothing.
- Spells may not give life to an object (though they may move and animate it, change its composition



SPIRITUAL: IMPRISONMENT; LIMITS OF MAGIC







and structure, or blow it to smithereens...).

- Life may not be restored to the dead.
- Time may not be reversed.
- Beings may not get younger. (Though they may appear as though they are...)
- Souls, Spirits, and Demons may not be destroyed (but may be banished or controlled).
- Fire may not suddenly appear and burn on nothing (but can be started on flammable material...).

As a general guideline sorcery is scientific in its application but not in its effect. Magic is still magic, weird and scary, but its practitioners (the players and Seneschal) are encouraged to use reality as a mitigating force in the application of its fiction. Within such guidelines, each player/character may create and cast *any number or variety of spells*.

Each time a spell is cast, a player must describe and justify how his energy alters reality, what sensations it causes, and any perceptible effects the magic creates.

Emphasis should be placed on style and description, and should never be as simple or basic as “I cast a ‘Lightning-bolt.’”

### III. Spells

#### 1. Freedom & Power (the Diversity of Magic)

The whole concept of a “spell” in *The Riddle of Steel* is a nebulous thing. Just as Combat is a fluid, creative thing, so is magic. You don’t need to have a spell written down in one of your character’s spellbooks (in fact, you don’t even need a spellbook), though bonuses are given for having spells transcribed, as formalizing any process makes performing it easier. Instead, spells may be created on the fly utilizing whatever Vagaries you have chosen within the constraints of the Nine Vagaries and the spell creation rules that follow. The only exceptions are the highly complex Ritual Spells, which must have a documented pattern to follow. Even the weakest magic-user has a numberless selection of spells at his fingertips!

#### 2. Spell Types and Casting Times

Following the Rules of Three, there are three types of spells: **Spells of One**, **Spells of Three**, and **Spells of Many**. Spells of Many, or “Ritual Spells” are the safest, but at the cost of time; Spells of Three are general use spells—effective, timely, and low-risk; Spells of One—the fastest and riskiest kind of sorcery—are spontaneously generated freeform magical effects. Spells of Many and “Formalized” Spells (which may either be Spells of One or Spells of Three) are the transcribed results of perfected experimentation. Unformalized Spells of One and of Three are generated based solely on a character’s individual Vagaries and his player’s imagination.

“**Spells of One:**” Only one Vagary may be used when casting Spells of One. These spells render faster but heavily draining effects. This is because the sorcerer lacks both the peace and time needed to correctly draw and shape the effects generated by this type of magic. Consequently, as the character is forced to draw on latent reserves of energy (the Sorcery Pool), Instant Spells tend to quickly deplete the characters supply of magic. No





**TABLE 6.4: THE FIVE MAIN VARIABLES IN CALCULATING A CTN**

T...Target
R...Range
V...Volume
D...Duration
L...the Level of Effect (1-2-3), or the minimum Vagary mastery level necessary to produce the desired effect

bonus dice are allotted when casting Instant Spells.

*The casting time for “Spells of One” is the CTN of the spell in seconds.*

**“Spells of Three:”**

Allowing for the incorporation of up to three Vagaries in their composition, these spells are both versatile and advantageous to

cast. Incorporating Vagaries takes time to be done correctly, but the strain on the character’s magic reserves is not so great, because a slim portion of energy is gained while casting. When casting Spells of Three, the Sorcery Pool is increased by the ART attribute due to the additional mental preparation and time. These bonus dice are just that though, and there must be at least one die left in the Sorcery Pool in order to gain them.

*The casting time for “Spells of Three” is 10 seconds per CTN of spell.*

“Spells of Many,” also called **Ritual Spells**, are feasible only in a laboratory, sacred place, or other undisturbed area. A sorcerer is capable of combining any Vagaries he knows in the creation of Ritual Spells. This

is the safest and most powerful form of casting, granting the sorcerer a once-per-spell increase of ART + DISCIPLINE in dice to the Sorcery Pool. Again, these are only bonus dice and there must be at least one die in the Sorcery Pool in order to receive them. Also, because casting Ritual Magic takes so long, the sorcerer is able to refresh his Pool somewhat while casting. As the sorcery Pool refreshes at a rate of one dice per hour, at the end of the spell, the sorcerer gains as many dice as the TN of the spell he cast.

*The casting time for Ritual Spells is one hour per CTN of the spell.*

### 3. Calculating Spell Casting Target Numbers (CTNs)

The most important part of creating and casting a spell is its **Casting Target Number**, or CTN. This number must be matched or exceeded by the result of any roll of the Sorcery Pool dice. Likewise, its value denotes how many months of aging a character must resist when casting a spell.

The complexity of any given spell is represented by its CTN. High CTNs increase the likelihood of aging and unconsciousness dramatically, and wise sorcerers will seek ways to increase the number of dice available in their Sorcery Pool in order to offset these risks.

The highest Level of Effect (1-3) from each incorporated Vagary is added to the TARGET, the RANGE, the VOLUME, and the DURATION values (0-3) to create the Casting Target Number (CTN) of the spell. This sets the minimum CTN of a spell to 1,

**TABLE 6.5: SPELL CASTING TARGET NUMBERS**

CTNs for...	CTN components
Spells of One	$T + R + V + L$
Formalized Spells of One	$(T + R + V + D + L) - 2$
Spells of Three	$T + R + V + D + L (+ 1 \text{ per additional Vagary used})$
Formalized Spells of Three	$T + R + V + D + L$
Spells of Many	$T + R + V + D + L (+ 1 \text{ per additional Vagary used}) - 2$



and the maximum CTN to 15 (Ritual Spells excluded). All Vagaries and Spell Types utilize the same tables in figuring Target, Range, Volume, and Duration (see Table 6.4). Table 6.5 presents the formulas for figuring CTNs for different types of spells and Table 6.6 outlines the Target, Range, Volume, and Duration Values used in those same calculations.

#### 4. CTN Circumstantial Modifiers

CTNs may likewise be increased or decreased due to circumstantial modifiers. Many, such as meditation or using dialogue in casting, are done at the caster's option. Others, such as a disruptive environment or being wounded while casting a spell, are to be avoided because

of possible adverse effects. Table 6.7 displays several fundamental CTN modifiers.

##### Positive Modifiers:

- **Dialogue** involves chanting, singing, or otherwise commanding the forces of magic with the aid of a verbal component. Roll Form/Ritual Magic for chanting, Form/Singing to "sing" spells, Form/Musical Instrument if playing them, etc. Unless the Seneschal rules otherwise, Sorcerers must choose one form of "Dialogue" for casting all spells, and stick to it throughout. A successful roll lowers the CTN by 1. This bonus does not apply to Ritual Spells (where dialogue is expected) or to those with the

TABLE 6.6: CTN VARIABLES AND VALUES

Variable	Value
<b>Targets:</b> Multiple targets may be specified, provided they are within the concurrent volume constraint. Objects on someone other than an enchanted creature can be affected without a spell-resistance test. A player may split his targets in a number of ways equal to the characters MA.	(0) incorporeal (a "target" of zero is also possible if the spell affects the caster exclusively) (1) inanimate objects (2) plant life (3) animals (including humans)
<b>Range:</b> The caster must have access to vision to designate ranges beyond the line of sight.	(0) self (the spell effects the caster exclusively) (1) touch (2) line of sight (3) unlimited
<b>Volume (or Size):</b> Any value of a target's composition may not exceed any one of the three variables below by any amount without raising the TN.	(0) incorporeal (1) 3 gallons / 20 pounds / 1 yard (2) 30 gallons / 400 pounds / 10 yards (3) 300 gallons / 2000 pounds / 100 yards
<b>Duration:</b> This variable is only used when composing <i>Constant</i> spells (see V. <b>Spell Duration</b> ). Every success in casting increases the duration; 3 successes with a Duration of 3 creates a spell that will last for 3 weeks. Remember that the effects of Instant spells may be lasting without the Duration Variable.	(0) instant (Instantaneous spells have a value of zero, even when constant) (1) one hour (2) one day (3) one week

A spell's variables are calculated independently of each other. For instance, a spell that directly effects an opponent requires a Target of "Animal" (3 points to the TN), but depending on the Vagary used, may have a Volume requirement of less than the targets weight. If the spell was comprised of the Conquer Vagary, and only affected the targets' mind, then the volume requirement would be 0. This is true for any of the above variables.





TABLE 6.7: CTN MODIFIERS

Event	Roll	If Successful	If Failed	Notes
Dialogue during casting	Form/Ritual Magic	-1 CTN	N/A	No bonus when used with Ritual Spells
Gestures during casting	Form/Ritual Magic	-1 CTN	N/A	
Meditation before casting	Discipline/Meditation	-1 CTN (-3 CTN with 5 successes)	N/A	Ritual spells only
Cooperation	See in-text description			Ritual Spells only
Symbol Drawing in the area of a Ritual Spell	Art/CTN	+1 Target's resistance TN	-1 target's resistance TN	Spells of Three and Ritual Spells only
Noisy environment	WP/Meditation	No change	+1 CTN	+3 CTN if fumbled
Interrupted	WP/CTN	No change	+2 CTN	+3 CTN if fumbled
Wounded	No roll	N/A	N/A	Apply shock and pain modifiers SP

“Dependent on Dialogue” Flaw (including most beginning Gifted).

- **Gestures** involve physical movement associated with spell casting, through arm motions, dance, symbol drawing or similar means. Roll Form/Ritual Magic for “normal” wizardly gestures, or Form/dance, Form/Symbol Drawing, or Form/ (appropriate skill) for other forms of gestures. This bonus does not apply to Ritual Spells (where gestures are expected) or to those with the “Dependent on Gestures” Flaw (including most beginning Gifted).
- **Meditation** is an option for casting Spells of Many (Rituals). To obtain the bonus for this option half the casting time of a spell must be spent in quiet meditation immediately prior to incanting the spell (roll Discipline/Meditation). Success lowers the CTN by 1; five or more successes lower the CTN by 3.
- **Symbol Drawing**, in an advanced form, can be used to improve the effectiveness of a Ritual Spell on a target by raising its resistance TN by 1 for every success on an Art/Symbol Drawing roll. Failure on this test lowers the target's resistance TN by 2 (or 5 in the case of a botch).
- **Cooperation** with other sorcerers can increase one's SP when casting Ritual Spells. Add the Discipline of the first additional wizard, plus one

additional die for each additional sorcerer. As many other magicians may cooperate in a Ritual as the primary caster has WP. An extra die is added if the total number of sorcerers present in the circle is a multiple of 3. These dice are cumulative, but only if the total count is exactly a multiple of 3 (thus 9 wizards in a circle gain 3 bonus dice in addition to the second sorcerer's Discipline and the 7 dice from the other seven participants, but either 8 or 10 wizards in the circle would gain no bonus dice). All dice are given to the lead wizard casting the spell, who must decide how to divide those dice between casting and aging. Any and all aging incurred falls onto the lead wizard. If any wizard pulls his support or is removed before the aging roll is made, the dice that his presence provided are immediately lost, and the spell is considered “interrupted” (a roll must be made—see below). The danger of false friends using this against the lead wizard between casting and aging rolls is enough to ensure that most sorcerers only cooperate with those that they truly trust.

• **Formalization of Spells** (see 5, below) is a valuable process allowing sorcerers to reduce the CTNs of commonly used spells with a great deal of preparation.



**Negative Modifiers:**

- **Noisy Environments**, or other significantly distracting surroundings, call for a WP/Meditation roll. Failure modifies the CTN by +1, a fumble by +3. Success allows the spell caster to continue unaffected.
- **Interruption**, causing the spell casting to break for even a moment, requires a WP/CTN roll. Failure modifies the CTN by +2, a fumble by +3. Success allows the spell caster to continue unaffected.
- **Wounding**, in addition to being considered an Interruption (above), also applies any *Shock* or *Pain* modifiers to the Spell Pool.

**5. Formalization of Spells**

Within the tomes of a sorcerer's notes and spell books

are those spells that he has *Formalized*. The Formalization of a Spell is a lengthy but valuable process, involving heavy research, experimentation, and practice—all resulting in a transcribed spell.

Formalized Spells provide many advantages. They may be passed on from one sorcerer to another so long as the spell is transcribed in a mutually understandable script (many wizards invent their own secret cipher for writing their spells so that they cannot be stolen). The Formalization process also refines a spell, lowering its CTN without injuring its effectiveness. This bonus is found in Table 6.8, above.

Both Spells of One and Spells of Three may be Formalized by Extended Skill Tests of Form/Arcane Theory and (for Spells of Many only) Discipline/Ritual Magic for as many success as the CTN of the unformalized spell. Each roll takes one week to complete (thus Formalizing a spell





can be a lengthy process). Once these Extended rolls are complete, a single Per/Read & Write Skill Test must be passed to write the spell down. All of this must be done in a library, laboratory, or other environment where experiments may be safely conducted. Especially fine facilities (such as giant libraries or laboratories) may provide bonus dice to the Extended rolls at the Seneschal's option. The difficulty of Formalizing a spell—due to time, expense, and lack of proper resources—often leads sorcerers on life-long quests to hunt down the notes and spell books of the ancients.

Any Spell of One or Spell of Three may be Formalized. Spells of Many, or Ritual Spells, are Formalized by definition as they cannot be cast without the aid of a transcription.

**At the Seneschal's option a character may begin play with a number of Formalized Spells equal to the total number of points in their Beginning Vagaries.** These spells are contained in the character's spell book, and may be any combination of Spells of One, Three, or Many. They must be composed of those Vagaries the character knows and at mastery levels that the character can cast.

*Example of Spell Formalization: Omar the Cruel wishes to Formalize the following spell:*

### PAIN

Spell of One

CTN = 7 (casting time: 7 seconds)

T) 3 R) 2 V) 0 D) 0 L) 2

Vagary(s): Conquer 2

Effect(s): Implant 2

*Instantaneous* (but maintainable)

The target is wracked with pain, as if struck with a weapon with a DR of 7 (plus casting successes; use the "generic" damage table). The target may lower the level of pain by rolling its WP/TN 7. Each success lowers the number of SP dice lost by 1.

*Having gained access to a laboratory, some "test subjects," and a few books on the subject of human anatomy and the physiology of pain, Omar begins rolling an Extended Form/ Arcane Theory Test. Omar's Form is 8, and his Arcane*

*Theory SR is 6 (he's done this before). At the end of the first week he rolls 1, 1, 4, 4, 4, 5, 5, 8...one success. Week two is better, as he rolls 1, 3, 5, 6, 6, 7, 8, 8, 0...six successes! After two weeks of intense study and experimentation the spell is ready for transcription. Omar rolls Per/Read & Write (Per 5/SR 8): 1, 3, 6, 0, 0...two successes and the spell is successfully Formalized and written into his spell book. If he had failed that Read & Write Test he would have had to tear out any used pages and start over; if he had fumbled he would have had to start the research all over again! Yikes!*

*Omar's new Formalized Spell now looks like this:*

### PAIN

Formalized Spell of One

CTN = 5 (casting time: 5 seconds)

T) 3 R) 2 V) 0 D) 0 L) 2 (-2 for Formalization)

Vagary(s): Conquer 2

Effect(s): Implant 2

*Instantaneous* (but maintainable)

The target is wracked with pain, as if struck with a weapon with a DR of 7 (plus casting successes; use the "generic" damage table). The target may lower the level of pain by rolling its WP/TN 7. Each success lowers number of Pool dice lost by 1.

## 6. Physical Damage Caused by Spells (if any)

Many spells are created with the purpose of harming others. Whenever magic takes the place of a conventional weapon (such as a rock, sword, or lightning blast) its DR is:

*CTN of the spell cast + the number of casting successes.*

The injured party's TO (and sometimes armor) is subtracted from this value, leaving the difference as the final Wound Level. For most wounds the standard Cutting/Piercing/Bludgeoning Damage tables, found in the Appendix, will do. For others (like electrical or fire-based damage) the Generic Damage charts will provide specific information regarding wounds. Shock and Pain affect Sorcerers as well, applying all negative Pool Modifiers to the Sorcery Pool.





## IV. Using the Sorcery Pool

Three events are simultaneously resolved via Sorcery Pool dice: Casting the spell, avoiding aging, and resisting the adverse effects of any incoming spells.

### 1. Spell Casting

The Sorcery Pool's first use, casting spells, is accomplished by rolling an allotment of SP dice against the given spell's CTN. Any success from the SP, when rolling, allows the spell to function. Multiple successes can reduce spell maintenance costs, effect damage, or even allow spells to become Constant (self-sustaining). With some spells, the successes generated may increase the difficulty of resisting their effects.

### Casting "Spells of One"

#### STEP 1

As soon as the CTN is calculated, the spell is ready to cast. The player decides how many dice from the character's Spell Pool will be devoted to casting the spell (making the spell take effect) and how many dice will be devoted to resisting the effects of aging (the character will age as many months as the CTN of the spell, minus the number of successes rolled to resist aging). Always consider devoting a large amount of dice for resisting aging. Reckless use of magic will transform your character into a prune in very little time...

#### STEP 2

The player then rolls the dice devoted to spell casting, attempting to meet or exceed the CTN of the spell with at least one die. Regardless of the Margin of Success in this roll, the player must then roll the dice allotted towards aging, and try again to meet or exceed the spell's CTN. If the character ages at all, a Knockout Roll must be made. The TN of the Knockout roll is 5 plus the number of months aged. Once again, a single success will allow the sorcerer to remain conscious. If the roll fails, then the sorcerer is rendered unconscious for 1d10 minutes or until revived by a friend's successful Per/First-Aid roll.

All Spells of One represent the sorcerer slamming against reality with all the force he can muster in a minute

amount of time. Consequently, botches are devastating to the caster. The Seneschal may rule that any botch or fumble causes some unexpected catastrophe, including the possibility of the botched spell turning on its caster. This effect is in addition to increasing the CTN for all spells (and aging) for the next spell cast by the number of botches rolled, regardless of the time elapsed.

#### *Sample Spells of One:*

### DWARFING GIANT OBJECTS

Spell of One

CTN = 9 (casting time: 9 seconds)

T) 3 R) 2 V) 2 D) 0 L) 2

Vagary(s): Growth 2

Effect(s): Expanding 2

*Instantaneous*

The target object suddenly shrinks to one tenth of its size, or grows to ten times its norm. At caster option this spell may affect all items on or surrounding the target, provided they are within the limits of the spell's variables. This spell is useful for crushing opponents in their armor, or making their swords too large to swing.

### FLIGHT

Spell of One

CTN = 5 (casting time: 5 seconds)

T) 0 R) 0 V) 2 D) 1 L) 2

Vagary(s): Movement 2

Effect(s): Speed 2, Maneuverability 2, Lift 2

*Instantaneous* (but maintainable)

The sorcerer is capable of flight. Flying faster than 200 MPH is dangerous unless the sorcerer also eliminates the impact of the wind on his eyes and lungs, as well as any loose gear.

### Casting "Spells of Three"

Spells of Three are cast in the same manner as Spells of One, except that the "Level" variable is tallied differently, increasing the CTN of the spell by 1 for each Vagary beyond the first. This means that the Level variable for a Spell of Three is 2 to 5, instead of the 1 to 3 of an Instant Spell.





### *Sample Spell of Three:*

#### **FLIGHT**

Spell of Three

CTN = 6 (casting time: 60 seconds)

T) 0 R) 0 V) 2 D) 1 L) 3 (2 + 1)

**Vagary(s):** Movement 2, Summoning 1

**Effect(s):** Speed, Maneuverability 2, Lift 2, Magic 1

*Constant Spell* (Margin of Success x 1 hour duration)

The sorcerer is capable of sustained flight. Flying faster than 200 MPH is dangerous, unless the sorcerer also eliminates the impact of the wind on his eyes and lungs, as well as any loose items and gear.

*Note that the only difference between the Spell of One version and the Spell of Three version of Flight is the inclusion of Summoning which allows flight for Constant Duration (in this case for a few hours). This has raised both the CTN and the casting time. Note also that only two Vagaries were used in the formulation of this spell—Spells of Three have up to three Vagaries involved, but are not required to.*

### **Casting “Spells of Many” (Ritual Spells)**

The dark laboratories of academic sorcerers and the ominous stones of Celtic Druids are home to the most powerful breed of magic—Rituals. The preparation involved and the sheer nature of such spells provides this strength. Though Spells of Many are best cast in the comfort of a sorcerer’s home, he may cast Spells of Many anywhere that he is free to prepare the necessary arrangements undisturbed. Casting a Ritual Spell requires as many hours as the spell’s CTN.

Beyond the large SP bonus added when casting Ritual Spells, Spells of Many have one other primary advantage: the ability to combine more than three Vagaries into a spell. Spells devised solely for use in rituals may incorporate any quantity of any Vagaries in which the sorcerer has a Master level of proficiency (although the Master Level of the Vagary need not be used—just available).

The sorcerer must have the spell intended for use in the ritual transcribed in some fashion, and must maintain ready access it. Preparation and research are crucial to casting such spells, which often have very high CTNs (and can therefore cause a lot of harmful aging to the caster). Generally a sorcerer should be well rested and fed, and at full health. A sorcerer should begin by spending half as many hours in meditation as the CTN of the spell.

After resting, the character must eliminate any form of corruptive intrusion from the immediate area. It must be quiet, calm, and peaceful in order to begin drawing the appropriate diagrams and ritualistic symbols. These actions allow the sorcerer to focus his mind completely. Any other preparations should be finalized before initialization of casting (e.g. in the case of a Summoning, a vessel must be prepared).

Immediately prior to casting the spell, the player tallies his character’s Sorcery Pool + Art and Discipline Attributes (as per Table 6.2), and divides the dice in a desired fashion. One need not spend all his Sorcery Pool! It is wise, if summoning for example, to give thought to retaining dice for defense if necessary—one never knows how a summoned entity might react...it is best to be prepared. Following previous guidelines, notes and







research, the sorcerer then casts the spell. Successful spell casting is determined by meeting or exceeding the adjusted spell's CTN with a roll of allotted SP dice. Any successes past the first are only counted in a contest of opposing magics. Botching the ritual casting roll results in doubling the TN (and number of months) for the Aging roll.

### *Example Ritual Spell*

#### REGROWTH

Spell of Many

CTN = 11 (casting time: 11 hours)

T) 3 R) 2 V) 2 D) 0 L) 4 (3+1+1+1-2)

**Vagary(s):** Sculpture 3, Growth 3, Conquer 2, Vision 3

**Effect(s):** Composition 3, Intricacy 3, Concept 2, Division 2, Expanding 2, Maturing 2, Implant 2, Repress 1, Clairvoyance 3

*Instantaneous* (but with permanent effect)

Regenerates a severed limb, slowly and layer by layer. Without the use of Conquer the pain would be excruciating. The sorcerer must make a successful Per/Surgery Skill Test. The caster uses Vision to remotely view the individual division and growth of cells, using the Sculpture Vagary to align them correctly. The target loses 1 point of HT, as the matter needed to generate the appendage is mainly taken from existing tissue. Failure to cast this spell creates a useless appendage.

## 2. Aging Rolls and Overdraw Knockout

Secondly, a portion of Sorcery Pool dice is used to *resist aging*. Every time a sorcerer casts a spell, he is forced to exert his life energy in order to alter reality. This practice must be done perfectly, less the expenditure partially curtail the sorcerer's own life. The Aging TN is the same as the Spell's CTN. If the number of successes is equal or greater than the aging TN then any and all effects of aging are negated. If not, then the sorcerer ages a number of months equal to the aging TN minus the margin of success. Players are advised to devote a lot of dice to this if they wish

**TABLE 6.8: AGING AND OVERDRAW KNOCKOUT TNs**

SPELL CTN = AGING TN

AGING TN – # of successes = AGING in months. (Marked off on the boxes on the character sheet.)

KNOCKOUT TN = 5 + # of months aged. Failure results in 1D10 seconds of unconsciousness.

their characters to live long. Table 6.8 outlines Aging and Overdraw TNs.

Suddenly aging even a month is a massive strain on one's system. Each time the character ages, a Knockout Roll (an Attribute Test) at a base TN of 5 must be made. This TN is increased one point per month aged. At least one success must be generated in order to remain conscious. *If a spell is successfully cast, but the caster is then rendered unconscious, the spell is still considered to have "gone off" right before any loss of consciousness.* Maintaining spells when involuntarily knocked unconscious, however, is impossible.

## 3. Resisting Magical Attacks

Eventually most sorcerers end up at odds with other people. This often leads to one person throwing a spell at another person and—if both parties are wizards—the other person throwing back. Sooner or later resisting the harmful effects of an attacker's spell will come into play. The third use of the SP allows a sorcerer to bolster a defense against magical attack. There are three ways to resist a spell.

The first is to get the heck out of the way. *External, projectile, object, and energy-based magic may only be dodged.* Such attacks might include magical projectiles, explosions, and so on. Any "area of effect" spell or any spell that requires use of the Missile Pool roll may be dodged. Dodging is done through the use of the Combat Pool or Reflex Attribute as discussed in Book Four: The Codex of Battle. Using many instantaneous missile-based Spells of One is the same as firing a bow, but without the weapon proficiency and against an ATN assigned by the Seneschal on the basis of difficulty. Spells of Three and Spells of Many allow





enough time to ebb so that an attack roll is unnecessary.

Any spell that attacks a living target *internally* (mind control, disintegration, etc.) calls for a Contest based on the type of spell. Generally any spell that has a “target” variable of “animal” will allow an appropriate contest to defeat the spell. Resisting a spell in this manner is handled on a spell by spell basis. For example, the spell PAIN allows the opponent to Test WP, with any successes lowering the spell’s effect. This is the second way to resist a spell.

The third is available only to sorcerers and other Gifted or Magical beings, who may resist any spell with a Contest of Art plus any available SP dice spent against a TN (equal to the incoming spell’s CTN) verses his opponent’s number of successes from when he originally cast the spell. Nullification of the attacker’s successes constitutes a resisted spell. If the spell is not resisted, sorcerers are still allowed any contest normally prescribed (such as the WP Test for the PAIN spell). Seneschals may allow other player characters to resist magic with their highest spiritual attribute (fate tends to step in for heroes, after all). (The target must generate as many successes as the caster in order to remain unaffected.) *This resistance applies only to the character. It does not aid in resisting physical attacks of any kind.*

#### 4. Refreshing the Sorcery Pool

Normally the Sorcery Pool will refresh at the rate of one die per hour, or two per hour spent in meditation. In an emergency, however, a sorcerer may refresh his SP by Drawing in energy. This is done through the use of certain Spells of One called *Refreshing Spells*. Refreshing Spells are special instantaneous Spells of One that allow a character to replenish part of his Sorcery Pool very quickly for a high price.

**Be sure to leave at least one die in your Sorcery Pool at all times.** Without it, your character will be incapable of refreshing your SP on demand and may find himself in need of shovel and a headstone.

#### Refreshing Spells

##### MANA I

Spell of One

CTN = 1 (casting time: 1 second)

T) 0 R) 0 V) 0 D) 0 L) 1

Vagary(s): Summoning 1

Effect(s): Magic 1

**Instantaneous**

Increases the caster’s Sorcery Pool by his DRAW attribute in SP dice. If unused after the sorcerer’s EN in rounds, the summoned magic dissipates. *Casting this spell automatically ages the sorcerer one month in addition to any aging incurred in casting.*



RESISTING MAGICAL ATTACKS, REFRESHING THE SP



**MANA II**

Spell of One

CTN = 2 (casting time: 2 seconds)

T) 0 R) 0 V) 0 D) 0 L) 2

Vagary(s): Summoning 2

Effect(s): Magic 2

*Instantaneous*

Increases the caster's Sorcery Pool by 2 x DRAW in SP dice. If unused for the sorcerer's EN in rounds, the summoned magic dissipates. *Casting this spell automatically ages the sorcerer two months in addition to any aging incurred in casting.*

**MANA III**

Spell of One

CTN = 3 (casting time: 3 seconds)

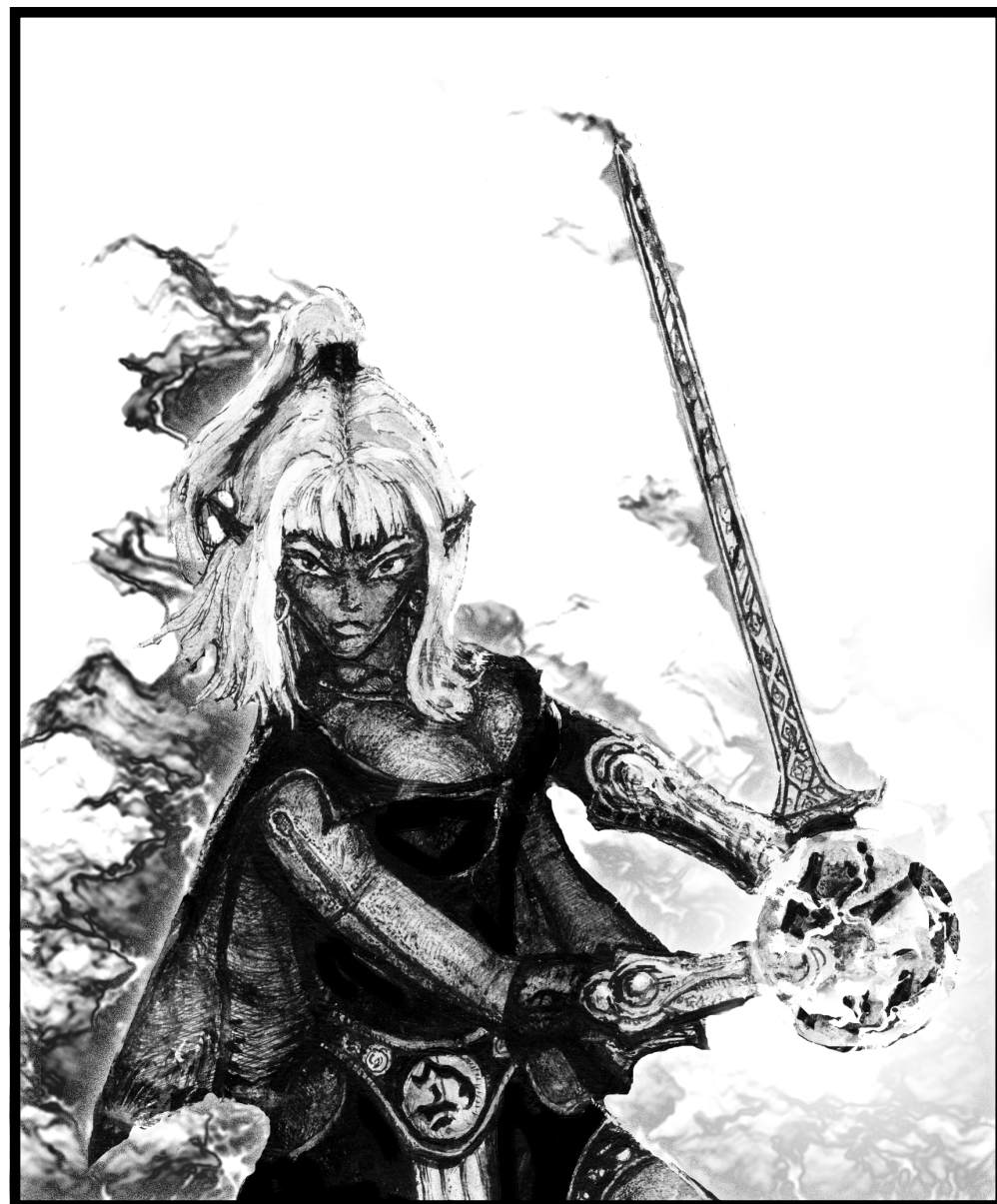
T) 0 R) 0 V) 0 D) 0 L) 3

Vagary(s): Summoning 3

Effect(s): Magic 3

*Instantaneous*

Increases the caster's Sorcery Pool by 3 x DRAW in SP dice. If unused for the sorcerer's EN in rounds, the summoned magic dissipates. *Casting this spell automatically ages the sorcerer three months in addition to any aging incurred in casting.*



REFRESHING THE SP; DURATION

The Sorcery Pool may never exceed its maximum value through the use of these spells or by normal hourly refreshing.

**V. Spell Duration**

A spell's duration refers to how long the spell lasts. Some spells need no duration—their effect takes place and the work is done. Others—such as illusions—must be kept up, or sustained, for a length of time. All spells have a duration that fits into one of the following categories:

- **Instantaneous Spells** have a duration of *zero*. Their power comes and goes, leaving only its own after-effects. Many (if not most) Instantaneous spells will have permanent effects, such as a Instantaneous spell that dissolves a door—the door is gone for good, but the execution of the spell was





instant. Spells of One are always considered Instantaneous or Maintained due to their single-Vagary nature. All Instantaneous spells can be Maintained, however, as described below.

- **Maintained Spells** are sustained with dice from the Sorcery Pool. To Maintain a spell a number of dice equal to the spell's CTN minus the number of casting successes must be set aside. These dice do not refresh into the Sorcery Pool, however, until the Maintained spell is released (after which they refresh at the normal rate). Other spells may still be cast while maintaining a spell and the sorcerer may undertake any actions normally allowed in the interim. Spells may not be maintained using the bonus dice granted for casting Spells of Three and Spells of Many. Maintained spells may be "dropped" at any time. Additionally, if a Sorcerer's SP drops to zero through wounds or other outside influences, the Maintained spell to breaks and drops.
- **Constant Spells** have a definable duration. This duration is chosen as a variable *when creating the spell and through the use of the Vagary of Summoning*. Each success in casting allows the spell to function for the chosen time frame without concentration, essentially creating a self-sustaining spell. Because Constant spells are effectively "tied off," the sorcerer need not be conscious, healthy, or even alive to ensure their pre-established duration.
- **Dormant Spells** are cast for another to use, or in the enchantment of talismans and other spell-casting items. They must be implanted via the Vagary of Conquer into the subject, in addition to successfully casting the spell (doing this as part of a Ritual spell will reduce the risk of aging considerably). When a spell is given to another, Sorcery Pool dice used in casting are transferred with it. Once a Dormant spell has been passed to a subject, the carrier may cast it using those SP dice passed along with the spell for casting and

aging rolls. The subject only has the spell (not the Vagaries) to use, and must use all dice received in the casting. The spell-bearer must resist aging as though he or it was a sorcerer upon casting the spell, or suffer the consequences (in the case of talismans and other magical items, the item must make an aging roll. Seneschals should assign the number of months or years that an item can endure to "age" before it is destroyed or otherwise rendered useless, withering away or turning to dust—2 or 3 d10 months is a reasonable amount for most items). Once cast, the spell acts as normally as it would for the sorcerer. Though these dice remain in the carrier until the spell is cast, the sorcerer that imbued those dice originally refreshes his own SP normally. A sorcerer can only have as many Dormant spells "out" as he has dice in his full Spell Pool.

*Example: Ghandul decides to implant "Regrowth," from the above example, as a dormant spell into his walking-stick. The spell remains unchanged, except that the Vagary of "Conquer 3" has now been added to the mix (raising the CTN by 1 to become 12). He spends the full 12 hours in Ritual, including 6 hours of pre-casting meditation and symbol drawing (-2 CTN, making the final CTN 10) and the cooperation of another sorcerer (who has a Discipline 5, or +5 SP for Ghandul when casting the spell). His SP for this is 28 (13 + Art 4 + Discipline 6 + 5). At the end of the ritual he rolls 10 dice to cast the spell (he rolls 1 success, a 13) and uses the other 18 dice to make his Aging Roll (He rolls 3 successes, a 10, 13, and 17). He ages 7 months (CTN/ Aging TN = 10, minus 3 = 7), but has successfully imbued his staff with the Regrowth spell and 10 dice (at a CTN of 10, the same CTN used when casting the spell. When he uses the staff to re-attach an arm or leg (anyone's), he can choose how many of those 10 dice will go to casting the spell, and how many will go toward protecting the staff from aging. Either way the staff will be doing all the work next time. Note that he could have tried to implant a simple "Spell of One" or "Spell of Three" using a ritual spell as well (or in a pinch, without).*





## VI. Sorcerers and Sorcerous Characters

The Fey and the Gifted are challenges for even the most advanced gamer or RPG veteran. Beyond the mechanics inherent in a sorcery system that allows so much freedom and grants so much power is the issue of race, culture, balance, and tone. These items, along with direction and advice for creating a sorcerous character, are outlined below.

### 1. Race and the Gift

Three races allow player characters to wield the dreadful forces of Weyrth's most ancient power: The Gifted, the Fey, and Faeries.

*The Gifted* are those humans born with the ability to channel, control, and direct the energies of magic.

Such power usually surfaces at the time of puberty, but doesn't reach maturity until young adulthood. Most human nations are superstitious and fearful of magic. Many religions and cultures hunt down those that have such power in inquisitions and purges. The Gifted hide their coveted "gift" with all that they have. Though generally solitary in the practice of magic, many of the Gifted have small networks across their homeland, passed on to each apprentice from his master.

The Gifted are magically inferior to the Fey and other magic-using Siehe in one way: all human sorcerers must take either the "Dependency on Gestures" or "Dependency on Dialogue" Flaw in its minor version. This is in addition to any Flaws gained during the Priority phase of Character Creation (see Book Three: Training). Those Gifted willing to take the major version of either Flaw may do so if they please, counting it as a minor Flaw for the purpose of Priorities during character creation. This Flaw





may be bought off through Spiritual Attribute points later in play. This is due to the fragile bond between mortal man and the god-like power of sorcery.

*The Fey* are those ancient Siehe Elves that ruled the whole of Weyrth before the coming of man. They are revered in Celtic pagan circles, feared by commoners, and considered superstition by the wealthy and educated. Elves make powerful sorcerers, but are wary to use more power than they can handle. Unlike humans, the Fey have no life-span—they are immortal, except for the aging effects of magic (discussed below). Any aging that an Elf character undergoes affects him exactly as it would a human, causing the effects of age to plague the eternally young Fey. It is considered a sign of great power and wisdom (or foolhardiness) amongst the elves to be advanced in years, as only great (or foolish) elves channel so much magic as to endure sorcery's adverse effects.

*Faeries* are those lesser Siehe (be they Seelie or Unseelie) that can use magic. They are not uncommon amongst the Siehe, and are constantly by the side of the Fey. Most Faeries disdain and taunt those other Siehe that cannot wield sorcerous powers, considering them to be little more than ugly humans or dwarfs. Due to their chaotic nature, most faeries may never take the "Mindful" Gift, though some wood-sprites may be exceptions.

## 2. Gifts and Flaws for Sorcerers

These Gifts and Flaws are available only to the Gifted, the Fey, and to Faeries. They apply to the realm of magic only. Rules for selecting them and buying the off are the same as for mundane Gifts and Flaws as found in **Book Three: Training**.

### Sorcerous Gifts Described

- **Gift of the Ancients (major)**

Every few decades one is born—descended from the Nine. The Gift is strong in such sorcerers, be they elf or man. Most destroy themselves and everyone around them as their power is too great for the untrained to control;

the rest come to be feared and admired by the world. Sorcerers with the Gift of the Ancients gain three (3) extra dice in their Sorcery Pool, reflecting a natural acumen for magic.

- **Mindful (major)**

Those magic-wielders that survive to a ripe old age by natural means often write books of the deep sense of insight and enlightenment that their lives and journeys have brought them. Few actually attain this oneness of mind and body that the elders once possessed—some say it parallels the elusive Riddle of Steel. Characters with this Gift are on the brink of such enlightenment, having aligned their thoughts and consciousness with their physical form. All spell casting Target Numbers are reduced by one (1) point when the character is well rested.

- **Sleepless (minor)**

The unification of the corporeal, the mind, and the soul that sorcery creates allows the body to do fantastic things. This Gift has different effects for different races. The Fey (are considered to have this Gift automatically) never sleep at all unless they so choose. Some faeries (who must buy this Gift) are accredited with the same ability. Human and Halfling Gifted must enter a powerful and ancient form of meditation that allows them to remain conscious and aware (though in a meditative state) instead of sleeping.

- **Weires and Familiars (minor)**

Weires are those sorcerers bonded to a companion; familiars are the animals which act as that companion. Small creatures, such as ferrets, cats, hawks, bats, and rats are popular, though any kind of animal may be bonded. Characters with this Gift begin play with a familiar of their choice (assuming Seneschal approval).

The benefits of such an arrangement are many, though not without risk. The familiar grants the sorcerer one automatic success on all Aging rolls. The character's mind is linked to that of the animal, constantly sharing thoughts, sights and feelings. The sorcerer is effectively two beings, and may use either body as a vessel for his/their mind. Entering the mind of the animal deprives







the sorcerer of his own body, and for the duration it lies in a catatonic slumber. A Weire would be wise to take the necessary precautions....

- **Talisman (major or minor)**

Since the days of the ancients and of the elders, sorcerers have been looking for ways to increase and store power. Talismans, physical objects that contain their own magical energy, are the result. Though smaller, portable objects are most popular, any physical non-living thing may be a talisman. These powerful artifacts add bonus dice to any spell cast, not unlike the bonuses provided by non-instant spell casting.

A major Talisman provides two dice for use with the SP, while a minor talisman provides only one. Up to three talismans may be used at once, though finding or creating more than one may be impossible.

## Sorcerous Flaws Described

- **Dependence on Dialogue (major or minor)**

This common disability amongst sorcerers forces them to speak aloud when weaving the threads of magic and sorcery. Each spell is performed by reciting ancient chants attached to the Vagaries that compose it. Spells must be enunciated properly, and may be uttered at any volume above a whisper. This allows other sorcerers to detect what Vagaries you are using and to determine the Casting TN of your spell as you cast it by rolling a successful MA/Arcane Theory Test.

The minor Dependence on Dialogue Flaw carries only the disadvantages listed above. The major version forbids the casting of any Spells of One as well.

- **Dependence on Gestures (major or minor)**

Focusing the random energies of magical power is a difficult thing to do for many sorcerers. Some, in compensation, have learned to use their hands as a method of visualizing these channeled energies through flashy movements. While enabling such weaker or less developed casters to wield magic, it comes with certain limitations. Sorcerers with this Flaw cannot cast any spell if their hands are bound or—worse yet—cut off.

The minor version of this Flaw allows sorcerers to cast magic with only their hands. The major version is much more debilitating, requiring the use of both hands and feet, and removing any possibility of casting any Spells of One.

- **Impotent Blood (major)**

Sometimes the Gift surfaces in generations where it probably should have lain dormant. Characters born with this Flaw lose two dice from their Sorcery Pool.

- **Haunted (major or minor)**

In their dealings with the “other world,” many sorcerers attract the attention of restless ghosts and spirits. These angry, drifting souls plague the days and nights of any character with this Flaw. Sorcerers with the minor Flaw are mostly irritated and bothered by a single ghost or small group. Such characters will often find it hard to sleep at night and may face interference in daily matters. Those with the major incarnation of Haunted are tormented almost constantly by many spirits or by one very cranky troublemaker. These sorcerers awaken each morning tormented and bleary-eyed and find it difficult to do anything about the “voices” and the “visions” that seem to barrage them constantly. Many such persons are deemed mad.

- **Tortuous Magic (major)**

Some sorcerers’ bodies don’t take well to channeling the forces of magic. For such characters casting any spell ages the caster by one month in addition to any aging that might be received normally. Don’t forget to roll Overdraw Knockout!

- **Volatile Magic (major)**

Sorcery is a fickle thing that both man and Fey have been trying to understand for thousands of years. Many methods for teaching and using sorcery exist, passed on from master to student. Some of these methods are wild and undisciplined with deadly results for those that lose control over their powers. Magicians with the Volatile Magic Flaw receive 1d10 – TO electrical Wounds (from the Generic Damage Table in the Appendix) whenever they fumble or botch a casting roll. These Wounds are applied randomly to the whole body as with a fall (see **Book Five: The Laws of Nature**).







## VII. Sorcery in Combat

### 1. Swords and Sorcery

With everybody running around swinging swords, it's almost inevitable that the target of these blades will eventually be one who wields the mysterious powers of magic. That is, if the sword's owner hasn't already soiled his armor and ran off crying for his momma after discovering who and what you are.

To be effective in melee, sorcerers must limit their casting to spells with a CTN of 2 or less as each exchange of blows only lasts for 1 to 2 seconds and the shortest of casting time for any spell is 1 second per CTN. As a result, a sorcerer is less than effective in melee. Any spell with a higher CTN requires

too long to cast, leaving the sorcerer a sitting duck. Combat runs regularly, with the sorcerer's spell acting as his offense or defense. Any other actions taken use the dice allotted by the Reflex Attribute or any combat pool that the caster might possess. Sorcerers are well advised to avoid such direct confrontations.

### 2. Mage to Mage

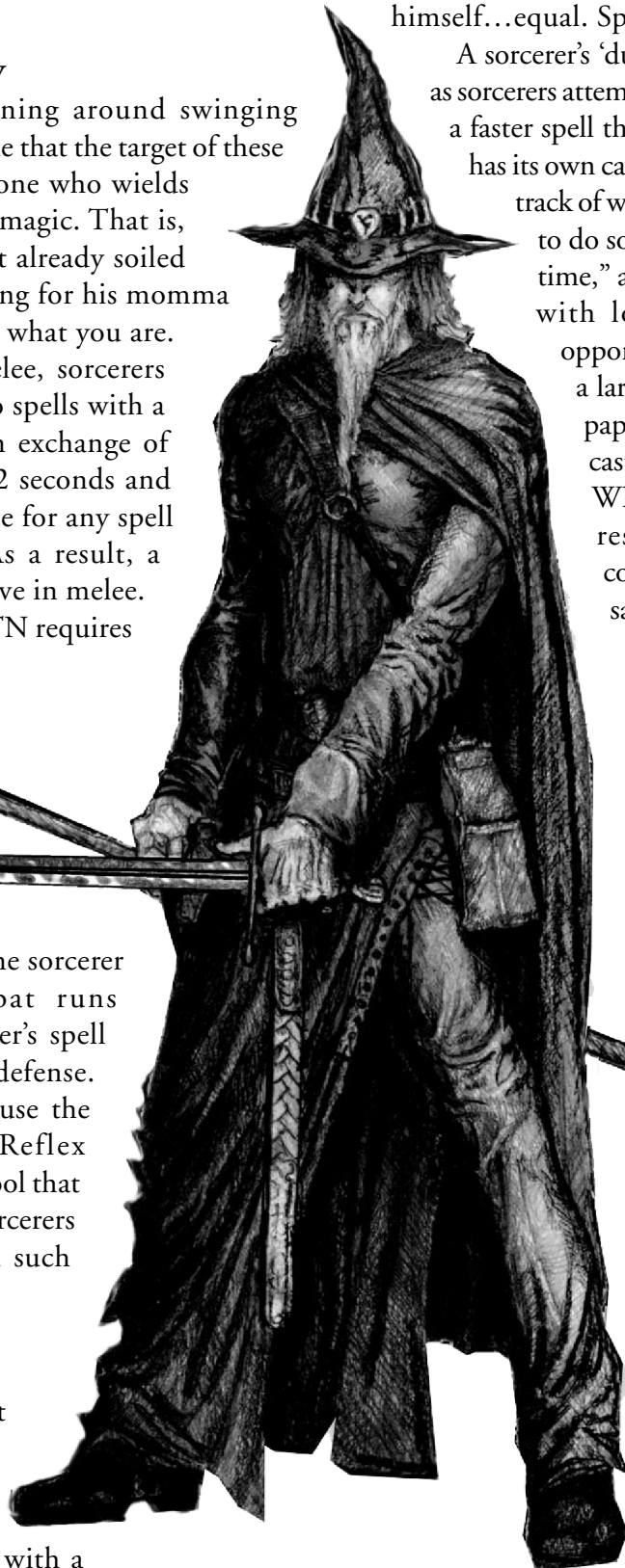
Just as inevitable, but even rarer, is the moment when a sorcerer finds himself in the arena of combat, not with a

bladeslinger, but with one who dares call himself...equal. Spectators take heed.

A sorcerer's 'duel' is primarily an issue of time, as sorcerers attempt to disable each other by casting a faster spell than their opponent. As each spell has its own casting time, all involved must keep track of what they cast and how long it takes to do so. Thus, running the duel in "real time," a sorcerer may cast multiple spells with low CTNs in contrast to an opponent who is casting one spell with a large CTN. Using a piece of graph paper is an easy way to chart spell casting times in a duel. A contest of WP vs. each caster's own CTN will resolve any ties, should both combatants' spells "go off" in the same round.

### 3. Inverting Spells

This is an application of the Vagaries that applies to many situations, not just combat. Many Vagaries have opposite effects, or may at least be "cancelled out" by inverting the effects of a spell. Inverting a spell is accomplished by using the same Vagaries (at the same level of master or higher) as a deliberate counter to another spell. Thus, counter-casting the same spell in reverse will nullify the original spell, *provided casting successes equal or exceed those of the opponent*. You must know which Vagaries your opponent is using in order to effectively do this, as you are essentially casting the same spell as your opponent, only backwards.





## VIII. Example Spell Casting Scenario

### 1. Ghandul Makes a Spell

*Ghandul has written a spell (after making an Arcane Theory and Read & Write Skill Test). He decides to name the spell "FOLD."*

*He must have MOVEMENT master rank (3) in order to transmit his molecules instantly. The volume level is 2 (his weight), and the target value is zero (as the spell effects only the caster). The range of the MOVEMENT component is 0, but the range of the VISION vagary is 3. SCULPTING 3 is needed to prevent damage to him during transport, disintegrating him before travel, and reintegrating him afterward. Ghandul also incorporated VISION into the spell so that he could go anywhere his friends needed him. Master level is needed for a clairvoyant scan of the target area.*

All this totals up to a spell with a TN of 8

+0 for Target – Animal (but in this case it's the caster)  
 +3 for Range – Linked to target.  
 +2 for Volume – 10 liters 77 kilos (his weight)  
 +0 for Duration  
 +3 for Level [the Vagary of MOVEMENT]  
 [+0 each for the Vagaries of VISION and SCULPTING  
 because this is a Formalized Spell of Three]

TOTAL CTN of spell = 8 (A hard spell!)

AGING = 8 months maximum

KNOCKOUT = 5 + months aged, if any

#### FOLD

Formalized Spell of Three

CTN = 8 (casting time: 60 seconds)

T) 3 R) 0 V) 2 D) 0 L) 3

Vagary(s): Movement 3 Sculpting 3 Vision 3

Effect(s): Speed 3, Composition 3, Clairvoyance 3

*Instantaneous*

The sorcerer disintegrates his molecules and transports them to a preordained destination at the speed of light, reassembling them upon arrival.

*Ghandul's available Sorcery Pool dice for this spell are 17 (SP 13 + ART 4).*

### 2. Ghandul Uses his New Spell

*One day he needs to get into an enemy castle nine counties away immediately or his friend will be beheaded at the hands of a mad king. He decides that the risk is sufficient to use this newly written spell.*

*To cast the spell, Ghandul splits his whole Sorcery Pool except for one die (so that he can use a Refresh Spell if things get ugly once he arrives at the mad king's castle). He decides to use both Gestures and Dialogue to lower the CTN by 2. After successfully rolling an Attribute Test of Form (5)/TN 8 (the spell's CTN) for both Gestures and Dialogue, Ghandul focuses his energy, takes one minute (60 seconds) to cast the spell, and rolls his dice. He devotes 7 SP dice towards casting the spell and 9 dice towards resisting aging. Fortune grants him 5 successes in casting and 6 in resisting aging. He ages 2 months but still casts the spell. He rolls Knockout/TN 7 (5 + the 2 months he aged) successfully, and remains conscious. He's now aged 2 months (and will likely need a shave and a haircut), but is going to surprise the hell out of that evil king when he shows up.*

### 3. Ghandul Casts that Same Spell in a Hurry

*Same spell, another situation. Ghandul does not have time to waste. The ceiling of a cavern is collapsing around him. As he needs to get out quick he's going to cast FOLD as a series of Spells of One.*

*Ghandul's Spell Pool for this spell is 13, his unmodified SP.*

FOLD (Vision Component)

Spell of One

CTN = 7 (casting time: 7 seconds)

T) 3 R) 3 V) 0 D) 0 L) 3 (-2 for Formalization)

Vagary(s): Vision 3

Effect(s): Clairvoyance 3

*Instantaneous*

The sorcerer's inner sight is instantly guided to the person or place that is sought.



**FOLD (Sculpture Component)**

Spell of One

CTN = 3 (casting time: 3 seconds)

T) 0 R) 0 V) 2 D) 0 L) 3 (-2 for Formalization)

**Vagary(s):** Sculpting 3**Effect(s):** Composition 3*Instantaneous*

The sorcerer disintegrates his molecules for a second, after which they reintegrate

**FOLD (Movement Component)**

Spell of One

CTN = 4 (casting time: 4 seconds)

T) 0 R) 3 V) 0 D) 0 L) 3 (-2 for Formalization)

**Vagary(s):** Movement 3**Effect(s):** Speed 3*Instantaneous*

The sorcerer transports his molecules to a preordained destination at the speed of light.

*In order to pull this off, he will have to cast all three parts of the spell separately. Each part of the spell must be Held while the next is cast. It's going to be tricky to say the least.*

*Begining with the Vision portion of the spell, Ghandul splits his Spell Pool evenly, saving one die.*

*He flares up his energy, casts the spell, and rolls his dice. The first spell is the hardest, CTN of 7, so he devotes seven to cast and five to aging: generating 2 casting and 3 aging successes (he ages 4 months). He rolls his Knockout vs. a TN of 9, and passes. Ghandul is maintaining the spell with 5 of his cast dice (CTN 7 - # of casting successes), so though his pool is 1 right now, it can only refresh up to 8.*

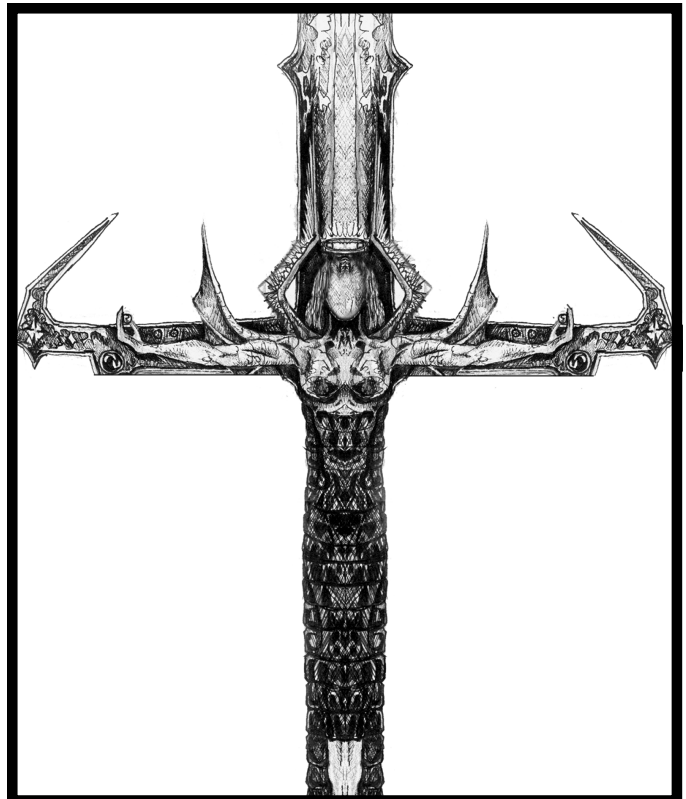
*Next Ghandul uses MANA III (TN of 1, he's Formalized it). He gets 3 x Draw (4) dice—12 total—but as he's maintaining a spell with 5 SP dice, he only refreshes to a maximum of 8 SP.*

*He then casts the second part of the spell. The Sculpture portion has a TN of 3, so he allots 3 SP to cast and three to resist aging, with 2 casting and 3 aging successes the result (he doesn't age on this one!). He must devote 1 die to*

*maintaining the spell (holding it for later), after which he refreshes his Spell pool again. This time he uses MANA II, as he won't need more than 8 dice (TN 0), and it goes off without a hitch. He now has a 7 die maximum in his Spell Pool (13 – 5 to maintain the first spell, – 1 to maintain the second = 7).*

*Again he splits his dice with one to spare. Using 3 dice to cast the Movement portion (CTN 4) and 3 to resist aging he rolls 2 successes for the spell and 3 against aging. He ages another month! He luckily passes his Overdraw Knockout Roll once again.*

*With the final component prepared he releases his maintained hold on the previous two spells and whoosh! Ghandul's body is immersed with energy, and time seems to stop. The pain he feel as his molecules are shredded asunder is exceeded only by the nausea caused by flying through space. White light blinds his mind for a split second, followed shortly by the buzzing feeling of reintegration. Gravity once more pulls him toward the earth as his senses return to their normal state.*



EXAMPLE SPELL CASTING SCENARIO





In total he has aged 4 months from the first spell, 1 month from the third, and 5 months from using refresh spells, or 10 months in all. When he re-appears outside of the cave he'll have long hair and a wicked looking beard. On the other hand, it only took him 16 seconds to do what would have taken 60 if cast as a Spell of Three.

## IX. Example Spells

These spells are only examples, so create your own! Any spell here can easily be modified for Range, Duration, or any other Target Variable for a variation on the stated effects.



### 1. Spells of One

#### SCULPTURE SPELLS

##### DESTRUCTION

Spell of One

CTN = 6 (casting time: 6 seconds)

T) 1 R) 1 V) 1 D) 0 L) 3

Vagary(s): Sculpture 3

Effect(s): Composition 3

*Instantaneous*

Disintegrates any object touched. Resistance is N/A unless the item is in the possession of an enchanted creature, in which case the creature has its ART score in dice plus any devoted SP dice to resist with.

##### WALL

Spell of One

CTN = 6 (casting time: 6 seconds)

T) 1 R) 1 V) 2 D) 0 L) 2

Vagary(s): Sculpture 2

Effect(s): Intricacy 2

*Instantaneous*

A 4" inch thick wall of earth or stone rises from the ground, its mass detracting from the surface area around it.

##### MINE SHAFT

Spell of One

CTN = 8 (casting time: 8 seconds)

T) 1 R) 2 V) 3 D) 0 L) 2

Vagary(s): Sculpture 2

Effect(s): Composition 3

*Instantaneous*

Creates a pit in the earth 10 yards deep. If created below someone, an Agility test against a TN 8 + casting successes is needed to avoid falling in.

##### RAPIERS OF BONE

Spell of One

CTN = 10 (casting time: 10 seconds)

T) 3 R) 2 V) 2 D) 0 L) 3

Vagary(s): Sculpture 3

Effect(s): Composition 3

*Instantaneous*

The target's bones project spurs through the skin causing DR 10 (+ casting successes, minus TO) to every part of the body on the Generic damage table. The pain is excruciating and remains until the wounds heal (replace Pain values with Shock). If this spell is modified to become constant, no healing begins until after the duration of the spell.

#### MOVEMENT SPELLS

##### FLING

Spell of One

CTN = 4 (casting time: 4 seconds)

T) 1 R) 1 V) 1 D) 0 L) 1





**Vagary(s):** Movement 1

**Effect(s):** Speed 1, Lift 1

*Instantaneous*

The sorcerer upon touch causes an object of light weight to be flung into the air. Use the Missile Pool for attacks. Damage is 4 + casting successes. Damage type (cutting, piercing, bludgeoning) is determined by the object flung.

## FROZEN

Spell of One

CTN = 7 (casting time: 7 seconds)

T) 1 R) 2 V) 1 D) 0 L) 3

**Vagary(s):** Movement 3

**Effect(s):** Speed 3

*Instantaneous*

This spell suspends the movement of the air around the target at a distance and depth of an inch. The air solidifies and arrests all movement of the target. The target may make an AG test at a TN of 7 + casting successes in order to escape an instant before being frozen. If caught the target is afforded an AR of 7 + casting successes against oncoming physical attacks, but is incapable of movement and cannot breath.

## GROWTH SPELLS

### CYCLE OF THE SUN

Spell of One

CTN = 9 (casting time: 9 seconds)

T) 3 R) 2 V) 2 D) 0 L) 2

**Vagary(s):** Growth 2

**Effect(s):** Maturing 2

*Instantaneous*

The target of this spell ages as though a year had passed. This spell forces two rolls for those with a

Sorcery Pool, one for everyone else. The first roll allows the target of this spell to resist with dice from the SP. Any success cancel out one month of aging per success. The second roll is to remain conscious, and applies to any target of this spell. The victim uses his Knockout attribute to best a TN of 5 plus 1 per month aged. Note: canceling out all the months on the first roll negates the second one.

### PLAGUE OF THE DWARF (OR GIANT)

Spell of One

CTN = 9 (casting time: 9 seconds)

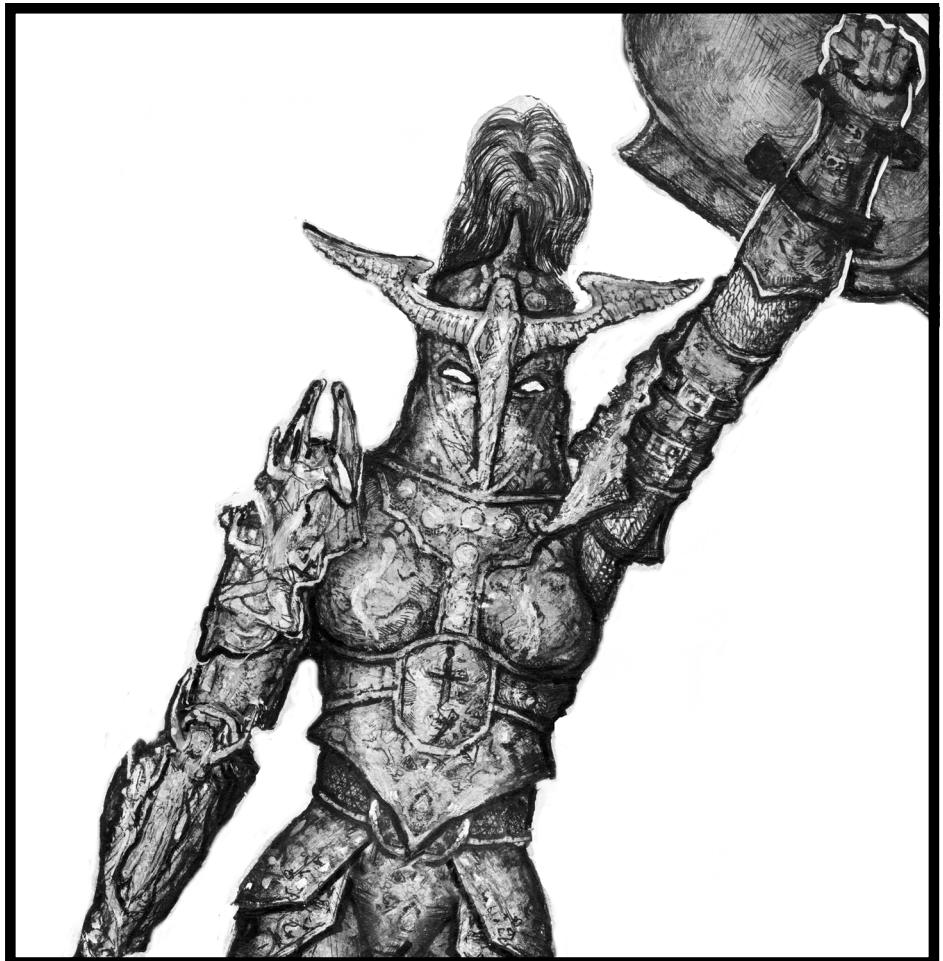
T) 3 R) 2 V) 2 D) 0 L) 2

**Vagary(s):** Growth 2

**Effect(s):** Maturing 2

*Instantaneous*

The target suddenly shrinks to a tenth of its size (or grows to ten times its norm). The target loses one point



EXAMPLE SPELLS OF ONE





of ST and TO for each 30% of reduction in size; the target gains one point of ST and TO for every 50% increase in size. Resisting the spell is accomplished by nullifying all casting successes with a contest of TO against a TN of 9.

## GLAMOUR SPELLS

### SMOKE

Spell of One

CTN = 6 (casting time: 6 seconds)

T) 0 R) 2 V) 2 D) 0 L) 2

Vagary(s): Glamour 2

Effect(s): Realism 2

*Instantaneous*

A thick "smoke" obscures the area (up to 10 cubic yards). PER tests are penalized by 2/3.

### DUPLICATE

Spell of One

CTN = 7 (casting time: 7 seconds)

T) 0 R) 2 V) 2 D) 0 L) 3

Vagary(s): Glamour 3

Effect(s): Tangibility 3

*Instantaneous*

An illusion of the sorcerer appears anywhere in the line of sight. Defeating this spell requires a successful contest of PER at a TN of 7.

### VANISH

Spell of One

CTN = 7 (casting time: 7 seconds)

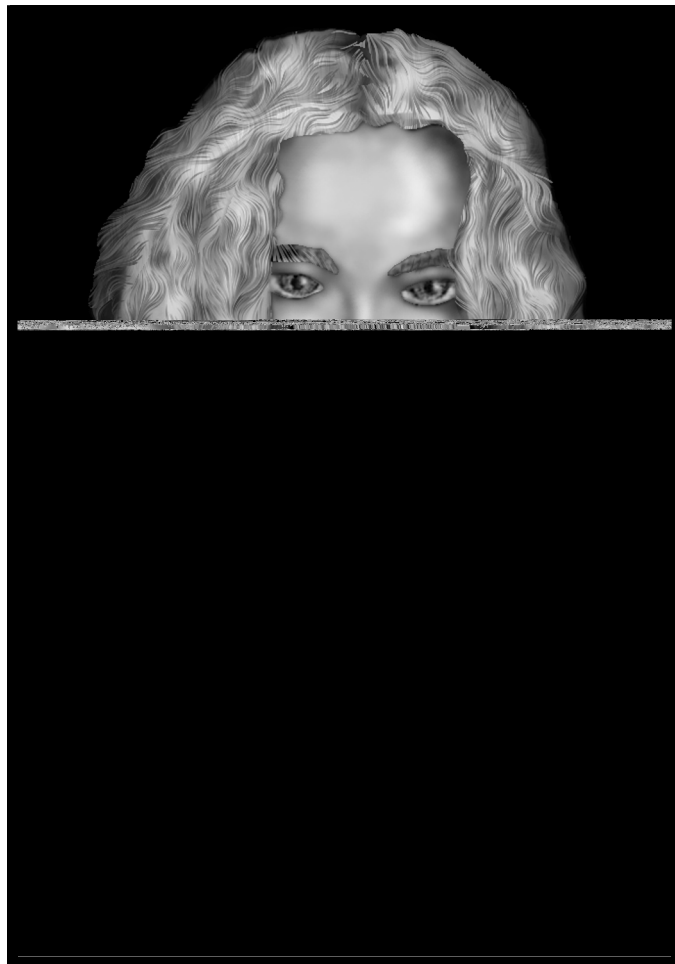
T) 1 R) 1 V) 2 D) 0 L) 3

Vagary(s): Glamour 3

Effect(s): Tangibility 3

*Instantaneous*

The sorcerer wraps the area directly around him in an illusion, effectively making him clear. Movement is not possible though, as the sorcerer will reappear outside the field of the spell.



## CONQUER SPELLS

### LURE OF THE GLASS

Spell of One

CTN = 6 (casting time: 6 seconds)

T) 3 R) 2 V) 0 D) 0 L) 1

Vagary(s): Conquer 1

Effect(s): Implant 2

*Instantaneous*

The victim believes and feels as though he is drunk. Resisting the spell requires a contest of WP; the caster adds any casting successes to those of the contest.



**MESMERIZE**

Spell of One

CTN = 6 (casting time: 6 seconds)

T) 3 R) 2 V) 0 D) 0 L) 1

**Vagary(s):** Conquer 2**Effect(s):** Implant 2*Instantaneous*

The sorcerer peers into the eyes of his victim, assuring the person that everything is fine and there is no cause for alarm. Resisting the spell requires a contest of WP; the caster adds any casting successes to those of the contest.

**QUIVERING BOWELS**

Spell of One

CTN = 7 (casting time: 7 seconds)

T) 3 R) 2 V) 0 D) 0 L) 2

**Vagary(s):** Conquer 2**Effect(s):** Implant 2*Instantaneous*

The victim of this spell suddenly needs to find a secluded area.... Resisting the spell requires a contest of WP; the caster adds any casting successes to those of the contest.

**SUICIDE**

Spell of One

CTN = 7 (casting time: 7 seconds)

T) 3 R) 2 V) 0 D) 0 L) 2

**Vagary(s):** Conquer 2**Effect(s):** Control 2*Instantaneous*

Unless the target resists the spell via a WP contest against a TN of 7 plus 1 per the caster's successes, it is forced kill itself in the swiftest manner possible.

**TRANSFIXION**

Spell of One

CTN = 8 (casting time: 8 seconds)

T) 3 R) 2 V) 0 D) 0 L) 3

**Vagary(s):** Conquer 3**Effect(s):** Control 3*Instantaneous*

The target's mind is blanked, causing it to do nothing but stand and stare blankly at the sorcerer. The target is granted a contest of WP against the TN of the spell, attempting to cancel out the sorcerer's casting successes.

**VISION SPELLS****PROPHECY**

Spell of One

CTN = 6 (casting time: 6 seconds)

T) 0 R) 2 V) 2 D) 0 L) 2

**Vagary(s):** Vision 2**Effect(s):** Divination 2*Instantaneous*

Peering into the intricate tapestry of time, a vision of the future solely dependent on overwhelming probability is unfurled, portraying the major events relevant to the sorcerer for the upcoming year. The accuracy of this spell is enhanced with an increased duration. Received as a sudden flash of images, events may be distorted, jumbled, merged, or completely obtuse. In reality, the Seneschal will only reveal events pertinent to the adventure, with a little flavor thrown in for drama.

**MINDGATE**

Spell of One

CTN = 8 (casting time: 8 seconds)

T) 3 R) 2 V) 0 D) 0 L) 3

**Vagary(s):** Vision 3**Effect(s):** Telepathy 3*Instantaneous*

The use of this spell allows the sorcerer to read the thoughts swirling through the mind of the target. An opponent may recognize his mind is being scanned if a PER test at a difficulty of 7+ casting successes is made. If the intrusion is detected, the target may willingly jumble his thoughts (successfully







accomplished or not at the discretion of the Seneschal, based on an MA)

automatically ages the sorcerer three months in addition to any aging incurred in casting.

## SUMMONING SPELLS

### MANA I

Spell of One

CTN = 1 (casting time: 1 second)

T) 0 R) 0 V) 0 D) 0 L) 1

**Vagary(s):** Summoning 1

**Effect(s):** Magic 1

*Instantaneous*

Increases the caster's Sorcery Pool by his DRAW attribute in SP dice. If unused after the sorcerer's EN in rounds, the summoned magic dissipates. Casting this spell automatically ages the sorcerer one month in addition to any aging incurred in casting.

### MANA II

Spell of One

CTN = 2 (casting time: 2 seconds)

T) 0 R) 0 V) 0 D) 0 L) 2

**Vagary(s):** Summoning 2

**Effect(s):** Magic 2

*Instantaneous*

Increases the caster's Sorcery Pool by 2 x DRAW in SP dice. If unused for the sorcerer's EN in rounds, the summoned magic dissipates. Casting this spell automatically ages the sorcerer two months in addition to any aging incurred in casting.

### MANA III

Spell of One

CTN = 3 (casting time: 3 seconds)

T) 0 R) 0 V) 0 D) 0 L) 3

**Vagary(s):** Summoning 3

**Effect(s):** Magic 3

*Instantaneous*

Increases the caster's Sorcery Pool by 3 x DRAW in SP dice. If unused for the sorcerer's EN in rounds, the summoned magic dissipates. Casting this spell

The Sorcery Pool may never exceed its maximum value through the use of these spells or by normal hourly refreshing.

## BANISHMENT SPELLS

### EVAPORATE

Spell of One

CTN = 3 (casting time: 3 seconds)

T) 0 R) 2 V) 0 D) 0 L) 1

**Vagary(s):** Banishment 1

**Effect(s):** Magic 1

*Instantaneous*

This spell reduces an opponent's spell pool by the caster's Draw Statistic in dice.

### VANQUISH

Spell of One

CTN = 3 (casting time: 3 seconds)

T) 0 R) 2 V) 0 D) 0 L) 1

**Vagary(s):** Banishment 1

**Effect(s):** Magic 1

*Instantaneous*

This spell disperses the sustaining dice of a singular spell of novice level. The spell attempts to match the number of dice sustaining the opposing spell

## IMPRISONMENT SPELLS

### CHAINS OF FATE

Spell of One

CTN = 5 (casting time: 5 seconds)

T) 0 R) 2 V) 0 D) 0 L) 3

**Vagary(s):** Imprisonment 3

**Effect(s):** Magic 3

*Instantaneous*





In the manner of a lightning rod, the sorcerer redirects incoming magic to its point of origin. The spell “sucks” the magic back at whatever source originated it, forcing said origin to become the target of the spell. This spell is spell sensitive, and must have both a visible source of origination as well as a magical emanation to redirect.

## SEVER

Spell of One

CTN = 5 (casting time: 5 seconds)

T) 0 R) 2 V) 0 D) 0 L) 3

**Vagary(s):** Imprisonment 3

**Effect(s):** Magic 3

*Instantaneous*

Successful use of this spell imprisons the opponent’s magic inside of him. Best to cast with as many dice devoted towards casting as possible, an opponent has only his Art score and reserved SP dice to contest this spell with. Basically it either works or it doesn’t. If the opponent’s magic is imprisoned and is attempting to escape, he must invert the spell to break free. No other spell may be cast until the sever spell is inverted.



## 2.Spells of Three

### LEVITATION

Spell of Three

CTN = 5 (casting time: 50 seconds)

T) 0 R) 0 V) 2 D) 1 L) 2 (1+1)

**Vagary(s):** Movement 1, Summoning 1

**Effect(s):** Speed 1, Lift 1, Magic 1

*Constant* (1 hour/success)

The sorcerer may float up to 10 yards off the ground and hover. Horizontal movement may be accomplished

by the exertion of force in the desired direction. (The sorcerer must push himself along...)

### BROOMSTICK

Spell of Three

CTN = 6 (casting time: 60 seconds)

T) 1 R) 1 V) 1 D) 1 L) 2 (1+1)

**Vagary(s):** Movement 1, Summoning 1

**Effect(s):** Speed 1, Maneuverability 1, Lift 1

*Constant* (1 hour/success)

A small object is used to bear the sorcerer a short distance above the ground. The sorcerer must concentrate on the direction he wishes to go, as well as the velocity. Inattention will allow the object to carry on in the direction and speed it was last oriented towards.

### FLIGHT

Spell of Three

CTN = 6 (casting time: 60 seconds)

T) 0 R) 0 V) 2 D) 1 L) 3 (2+1)

**Vagary(s):** Movement 2 Summoning 2

**Effect(s):** Speed 2, Maneuverability 2, Lift 2, Magic 2

*Constant* (1 day/success)

The sorcerer is capable of sustained flight. The sorcerer may change directions at a bearing up to a ninety degree angle in a single motion. Danger to the sorcerer is based on the speed at which the sorcerer is traveling, forcing WP and EN rolls at a TN of 8+ based on the current circumstance. (Generally +1 to TN for each 50 MPH the sorcerer is traveling at). Flying faster than 200 MPH is dangerous, unless the sorcerer also eliminates the impact of the wind on his eyes and lungs, as well as any loose items and gear.

### ANIMAL

Spell of Many

CTN = 7 (casting time: 70 seconds)

T) 3 R) 0 V) 2 D) 1 L) 4 (3+1+1+1-2)

**Vagary(s):** Sculpture 3, Growth 2, Vision 3, Summoning 3

**Effect(s):** Composition 3, Expand 2, Magic 3

*Constant* (1 week/success)

Transforms the caster into an animal of choice. While in the form, the sorcerer acquires all Temporal attributes





associated with the animal, as well as its method of attack. Familiarity with the form however, is learned only through practice. Speech is not possible unless the animal possesses the appropriate vocal chords. The Seneschal may require a MA or PER test at a difficulty of 9 in order to use the form correctly.

### STAUNCH BLEEDING

Spell of Three

CTN = 7 (casting time: 70 seconds)

T) 3 R) 1 V) 1 D) 0 L) 2 (1+1)

Vagary(s): Growth 1, Conquer 1

Effect(s): Maturing 1, Repress 1

*Instantaneous*

Seals and eliminates the pain and blood loss of a single level 1 or 2 wound.

### ARMOR OF AIR

Spell of Three

CTN = 8 (casting time: 80 seconds)

T) 1 R) 1 V) 1 D) 1 L) 4 (3+1)

Vagary(s): Movement 3, Summoning 3

Effect(s): Speed 3, Magic 3

*Constant* (1 week/success)

This spell suspends the movement of the air around the sorcerer at a distance and depth of an inch. The air solidifies and stops anything physical save the sorcerer that contacts it. This grants the sorcerer an AV of 8 + casting successes, without having to wear armor. This can be used in conjunction with normal armor.

Spell of Three

CTN = 10 (casting time: 100 seconds)

T) 3 R) 0 V) 2 D) 1 L) 4 (3+1)

Vagary(s): Glamour 3, Summoning 3

Effect(s): Tangibility 3, Magic 3

*Constant* (1 week/success)

The sorcerer wraps himself in an illusion duplicating the space he is occupying, effectively making him clear. An opponent is allowed a Perception test against the sorcerer's Wit to notice his presence. This test is modified accordingly for any situation that would lend an advantage to either contestant.

### DOMINATE

Spell of Three

CTN = 10 (casting time: 100 seconds)

T) 3 R) 1 V) 0 D) 2 L) 4 (3+1)

Vagary(s): Conquer 3, Summoning 2

Effect(s): Control 3, Magic 2

*Constant* (1 day/success)

The target's will is suppressed, making the target the happy puppet of the sorcerer. The target may contest the sorcerer's will by rolling WP against a TN of 10; the sorcerer does the same. The party with the most successes emerges as the victor.

### FOLD

Spell of Three

CTN = 10 (casting time: 100 seconds)

T) 0 R) 3 V) 2 D) 0 L) 5 (3+1+1)

### DISAPPEAR

EXAMPLE SPELLS OF THREE





**Vagary(s):** Movement 3, Sculpting 3, Vision 3

**Effect(s):** Speed 3, Composition 3, Clairvoyance 3

*Instantaneous*

The sorcerer disintegrates his molecules and transports them to a preordained destination at the speed of light, reassembling them upon arrival.

### MINDSHAPE

Spell of Three

CTN = 10 (casting time: 100 seconds)

T) 0 R) 0 V) 2 D) 3 L) 5 (3+1+1)

**Vagary(s):** Movement 3, Glamour 3, Summoning 3

**Effect(s):** Speed 3, Tangibility 3, Magic 3

*Constant* (1 week/success)

The sorcerer appears as whatsoever he imagines for the duration of the spell.

### SEAL WOUND

Spell of Three

CTN = 10 (casting time: 100 seconds)

T) 3 R) 1 V) 1 D) 0 L) 5 (3+1+1)

**Vagary(s):** Sculpture 3, Growth 1, Conquer 1

**Effect(s):** Composition 3, Concept 1, Intricacy 1, Maturing 1, Growth 1, Repress 1

*Instantaneous*

Heals a deep slash, gash, or other trauma, eliminating the Pain, Shock, and BL of a level 3 or 4 wound

### FEAR OF FIRE

Spell of Three

CTN = 11 (casting time: 110 seconds)

T) 3 R) 1 V) 0 D) 3 L) 4 (3+1)

**Vagary(s):** Conquer 3, Summoning 2

**Effect(s):** Control 3, Magic 2

*Constant* (1 day/success)

All living beings within 1 foot per casting success react to the target of this spell in the same manner as they would react to the existence of a large fire in their stead. They are in no way harmed, but treat the target of the spell with the same manner of caution, apprehension and respect as that they would a raging inferno. The Seneschal may call for rolls of WP if a brave individual attempts to close in on the target.

### LUST

Spell of Three

CTN = 12 (casting time: 120 seconds)

T) 3 R) 2 V) 2 D) 2 L) 3 (2+1)

**Vagary(s):** Conquer 2, Summoning 2

**Effect(s):** Implant 2, Magic 2

*Constant* (1 day/success)

The target suddenly finds the sorcerer, another person, or another thing unbelievably attractive and covets attention, love and physical contact with him. The spell is resisted with a WP roll against a TN of 12 + casting successes.

### SMITE

Spell of Three

CTN = 12 (casting time: 120 seconds)

T) 3 R) 2 V) 3 D) 0 L) 4 (3+1)

**Vagary(s):** Sculpture 3, Vision 3

**Effect(s):** Composition 3

*Instantaneous*

Disintegrates any target. Living targets are of course afforded the opportunity to resist. A contest is rolled by the defender using their highest spiritual attribute in dice against the TN of the spell. The defender attempts to generate more successes than the sorcerer had upon casting the spell. If successful, the target avoids being destroyed. All gear and items in the area of effect are obliterated unless the target is an enchanted creature and successfully resists for them.

## 3.Spells of Many (Rituals)

### TRANSFORM

Spell of Many

CTN = 12 (casting time: 12 hours)

T) 3 R) 2 V) 3 D) 3 L) 4 (3+1+1+1-2)

**Vagary(s):** Sculpture 3, Growth 3, Vision 3, Summoning 3

**Effect(s):** Concept 3, Expand 3, Magic 3

*Constant* (1 week/success)

The target physically becomes whatsoever the sorcerer imagines for the duration of the spell. The spell caster must make any skill the Seneschal deems necessary





to accomplish a successful form (Craft, Surgery). A favored spell to punish unruly opponents with, better an acquaintance's appearance, or make your allies into more formidable opponents. The form cannot be more than ten times the caster's size, but may be one hundred times smaller. Speech in the new form is only possible if the vocal chords of the form allow it. The Seneschal has the responsibility of adjudicating any changes to Attributes as they see fit within the scope and confines of their campaign.

Resisting the spell is accomplished by nullifying casting successes in a contest; wherein the target rolls his TO in dice against a TN of 12. As this is a ritual spell, the target may be afforded the opportunity to escape before the spell is completed.

## REGROWTH

Spell of Many

CTN = 11 (casting time: 11 hours)

T) 3 R) 2 V) 2 D) 0 L) 4 (3+1+1+1-2)

**Vagary(s):** Sculpture 3, Growth 3, Conquer 2, Vision 3

**Effect(s):** Composition 3, Intricacy 3, Concept 2, Division 2, Expanding 2, Maturing 2, Implant 2, Repress 1, Clairvoyance 3

*Instantaneous* (but with permanent effect)

Regenerates a severed limb, slowly and layer by layer. Without the use of Conquer the pain would be excruciating. The sorcerer must make a successful Per/Surgery Skill Test. The caster uses Vision to remotely view the individual division and growth of cells, using the Sculpture Vagary to align them correctly. The target



EXAMPLE SPELLS OF MANY (RITUALS)





loses 1 point of HT, as the matter needed to generate the appendage is mainly taken from existing tissue. Failure to cast this spell creates a useless appendage.

#### 4. Spells of None

Spells of None are not actually spells as they do not channel energy through the nine Vagaries, but rather they are fundamental uses of raw magical power. However, being an action which uses the power of magic, they function as such. The two below are the only known spells of exception. The existence of others is still debated in the dark corners of secret circles.

##### LIGHTNING OF THE SOUL

Spell of None

CTN = 2 (casting time: 2 seconds)

T) 0 R) 2 V) 0 D) 0 L) n/a

Vagary(s): n/a

Effect(s): n/a

*Instantaneous*

The last ditch spell of the sorcerer, lightning is only used when there is no course of action left. (i.e. A sorcerer is dropped into melee rounds with a warrior) This spell may only be accomplished by completely releasing the sorcerer's energy in a chosen direction. Lightning ensues, arcing one foot per die released. Casting this spell releases all of the remaining dice from the Sorcery Pool, causing

a level 2 (+ casting successes) electrical wound (use the Generic Damage Table). Only one target may be selected, and must be within the allotted range. As the SP is completely drained, resisting aging is not possible with this spell. The caster automatically ages two months, and is forced to roll knockout.

##### SPITE

Spell of None

CTN = 4 (casting time: 4 seconds)

T) 0 R) 2 V) 2 D) 0 L) n/a

Vagary(s): n/a

Effect(s): n/a

*Instantaneous*

Usually the last act of a dying wizard, this spell is often a final desperate act of vengeance. The sorcerer wishing to execute this spell begins to focus his remaining magical energy in upon its self over and over until a critical event is reached. When this happens, a spherical release of raw energy is emitted, dispersing the mage's atoms and annihilating everything in its wake. The sphere has a radius of 3 yards per casting success and causes 3 wound levels per casting success. Those Gifted and others with Spell Pools may resist the discharge with their ART attribute plus any SP dice designated for such a purpose against a TN of 4 with every success lowering the wound level by one. Armor and TO are factored normally.





## OBSERVATIONS ON SORCERERS IN THE RIDDLE OF STEEL

By Ron Edwards, author of the *Sorcerer* RPG, with some help from Christopher Kubasik



Look at those sorcery rules ... they seem pretty dangerous for traditional fantasy role-playing. If you allow a sorcerer character in your game, then blood, death, destruction, storm, and much more seem very likely to follow. The player has the ability to change so much, so fast - he can blow the head o

ff of your favorite villain, he can bring a hurricane into the sky, he can stand your pre-planned scenario on its head. It seems like a Seneschal's nightmare. Or turn the issue around - the player might be a bit reluctant too, once he finds out that any spell, successful or not, might drain the character's very life away.

Does sorcery seem like a bad idea?

Here's a character to consider: von Salm, a Stahlnish sorcerer. That might seem odd, since his culture rejects the possibility of such things ... except that it's easier to hide your sorcery when people are blind to it.

Who'd possibly let such a character loose in a traditional fantasy game? von Salm is a Master of Movement, Summoning, and Conquer. He can reverse a sword in an opponent's hand and drive it through his body. He tell just about anyone to jump off a cliff, and they'd do it. Given time, he can conjure up a pterodactyl and ride it against his enemies.

Sorcery in *The Riddle of Steel* was not written with any sort of "game purpose" in mind. It's not an alternative way to "advance" on an equal par with "fighters." It's not a justification of any sort of

technology or culture in the setting. It's not a disguised excuse to bring personal artillery into combat.

Instead, sorcery is designed as another, very dramatic means of getting Spiritual Attributes into play. Sorcerers are men and women working within the realm of these attributes. They will be casting magic for passionate reasons, and thus will have five to seven more dice available, for those purposes, than is immediately obvious from just looking at sorcery pools.

Just as fighting physically carries its risk of being maimed by one's opponent, spell-casting carries its risk of draining your life. Both of these things put life and limb at risk. Both of them are the only means, in a harsh and low-tech setting, of expressing one's wishes and values in a situation of crises. Both ask the question: "What is worth the harm that I can bring to others, and the risk I incur for myself?"

### Von Salm's Spiritual Attributes

Drive 1 - to bring peace to his home province

Passion 0 - hatred for the traditional feudal lord of his home province

Passion 3 - love for his son

Faith 2 - Xanar is real, and his call is now - especially in Stahl

Luck 0

We're talking about a guy who is willing to stand against the official decrees of his culture in order to preserve his faith. Stahl is a warlike place, with lordlings riding against one another all the time, and







he wants peace. He knows why he wants it, too - because he loves his son, and even though sorcery may damn his soul according to his own faith, he's willing, if his son can know a future that's better than the present.

Look especially at the attributes' potential, regardless of their current values. His hatred slumbers, but it can fan into flame, as might his Drive, which is currently just being born.

One must ask, of a particular character, why is he or she a sorcerer at all? These men and women have devoted years of study to a secret and fearful profession that involves tapping strange forces that can

literally kill them if used incorrectly. Why? What it is about magic that draws them? To what end? Just as a non-sorcerer player-character in this game must be more than merely a guy who can kill, let's assume that there's more to a sorcerer player-character than the ability to destroy a tower wall or take over someone's mind. He can do these things ... but for this particular character, at this particular time, the real question is why?

How are his Spiritual Attributes actually lined up? That will be what he's up to. And it isn't going to be the same-old fantasy-game thing, either. How many sorcerers have a Passion for Serving Military Big Wigs? How many of them have a Destiny to be a Court



OBSERVATIONS ON SORCERERS IN THE RIDDLE OF STEEL





Monkey Boy? I suggest not many, if any at all. Real sorcerers will have other goals, plans, Drives, and Destinies, much more personal ones. That's where their magic is going to go, and that's how they'll get tons of extra dice for their rolls - including age-resisting rolls.

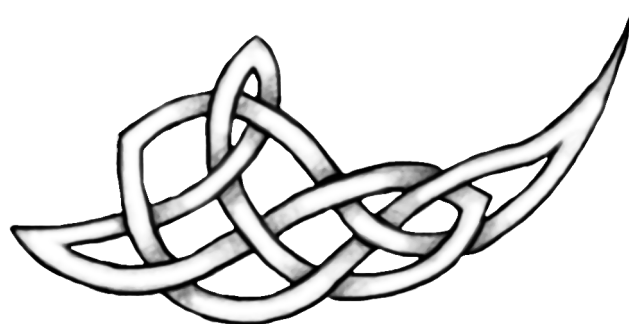
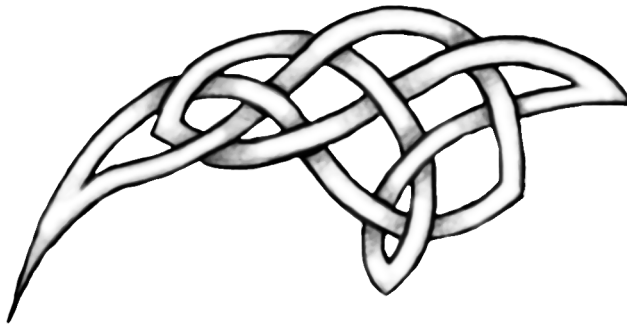
Much, much better: now it's not a question of "what von Salm can do," in terms of disrupting pre-planned scenarios. The question is not the spell he casts, but what he casts it about. Is it about some footpad who comes at him with a knife? Is it about some yotz insulting him in a bar? Is it about a stranger who offers him a job?

No. When von Salm casts a spell, I can tell you that it will be about the fate of his home province. It will be about peasants persecuted for their faith. It will be about his son's education. It will be about that Drive and that Hatred flaring into higher values. It will be personal.

A sorcerer, by definition, is someone with an agenda. This is another point where story kicks in, both for the player of that character, for the other players in the game, and for the Seneschal. How might that agenda be brought into full fruition? Alternately, how may it be negotiated, altered into new paths, or scattered?

Therefore, sorcery is about drama - passions in action, promises kept and betrayed, and all the ties of family, friendship, loyalty, and ideals. It brings these things into play with all the chilling, dark power one can imagine, with no immediate restrictions beyond its price. Sure, it's unbalanced - so is the human heart. Sure, it's dangerous - so is the human mind. Sure, it could well be the death of the one who uses it - so might a sword.

To sum it all up: *sorcery is steel too*. The Riddle resides there as well.





Character: \_\_\_\_\_  
Player: \_\_\_\_\_

## SORCERER'S REFERENCE

### SORCERY ATTRIBUTES

Kaa  
Form  
Art  
Discipline  
Draw

### SORCEROUS GIFTS & FLAWS

Spell:  
CTN  
T) R) V) D) L)  
Vagaries:  
Effects:  
Duration:  
Description:

Spell:  
CTN  
T) R) V) D) L)  
Vagaries:  
Effects:  
Duration:  
Description:

### VAGARIES

Sculpture	0	1	2	3
Movement	0	1	2	3
Growth	0	1	2	3
Glamour	0	1	2	3
Conquer	0	1	2	3
Vision	0	1	2	3
Summoning	0	1	2	3
Banishment	0	1	2	3
Imprisonment	0	1	2	3

Spell:  
CTN  
T) R) V) D) L)  
Vagaries:  
Effects:  
Duration:  
Description:

Spell:  
CTN  
T) R) V) D) L)  
Vagaries:  
Effects:  
Duration:  
Description:

Spell:  
CTN  
T) R) V) D) L)  
Vagaries:  
Effects:  
Duration:  
Description: