

Knight of the Order of the Stars

DESCRIPTION: The character is a Knight Stellar, called or driven into the service of the stars.

HOW IT MIGHT AID YOU: You need to find evidence in an investigation. You use your role as a knight to gain special privilege. You are performing some action characteristic of the knights and the Order.

HOW IT MIGHT HINDER YOU: Someone brings up the Knights' bad reputation. The terrible doom of all knights confronts you. You discover something terrible about the past of the Order. You are fighting the Frost Maiden or the Solaris Knight.

SPECIAL RULES: Automatic Aspect

Matriarch of Yildun

DESCRIPTION: The Yildun are a numerous clan, particularly influential in the Southreach orchestra, and you are their senior member, due great respect and appreciation.

HOW IT MIGHT AID YOU: Using the support of your family. Ordering family members around. Taking care of family business. Using the prestige of your family name to your advantage.

HOW IT MIGHT HINDER YOU: You are betrayed by a family member. You have to deal with your family's bad reputation. You have to take care of an irresponsible family member.

Sole Heir of Kaus Borealis

DESCRIPTION: You are the only Kaus Borealis left living, the sole heir of the ancient heritage of royal philosophers that was near exterminated by their cousins, the Kaus Australis.

HOW IT MIGHT AID YOU: Calling on the strength of your ancestors. Reciting your lineage to impress others with your ability. Recalling bits of family history.

HOW IT MIGHT HINDER YOU: You are alone, without kin in the world, and your solitude is turned against you. Someone brings up a mad relative in conversation. Someone mentions that Kaus Borealis was involved in the construction of the First Calendar.

Aide to Senator Altair

DESCRIPTION: You are employed as a clerk and aide to the aging and senile Senator Altair. While he was reknowned in his youth for his political savvy and dashing rhetorical skills, he is long since past his prime, and in truth much of the work of his senatorial appointment falls into your hand.

HOW IT MIGHT AID YOU: You utilize the power of your employer to call on a favor. You intimidate someone with your office. You use your busy schedule as an excuse to escape a boring conversation. You find a secret bill of law amongst the senator's papers. You can turn the senator's interests towards your own.

HOW IT MIGHT HINDER YOU: The job takes up too much of your time. You are pinned for a scandal. Senator Altair comes under attack. Papers that need signing follow you everywhere (even into battle). The aging man suffers from a wasting disease. In his senility the senator mistakes you for a demon. Your hands are grimy with the sly manipulations of the political realm. Someone mentions that no modern person really cares about politics.

SPECIAL RULES: If you lose this position, this aspect either becomes Former Aide to Senator Altair or perhaps something else.

Exile

DESCRIPTION: Whatever your crime or supposed crime, perhaps as simple as unfashionable gossip or perhaps so terrible that there are not words to speak of it, you have been exiled from the society of your remnant, or perhaps the society of the people altogether. Bitter and alone, you wander the wastes. None, not even your fellow knights, will take you in or give you solace. Perhaps you have considered a desperate voyage south, or a desperate strike into the heart of the Mistake, for either death would be preferable to this slow torment. Or perhaps you have reconciled yourself to your solitude, and draw strength from it.

HOW IT MIGHT AID YOU: You are called upon to be alone. Since you are separated from society and its judgements only you can do what is right. You maintain a quiet dignity even in your solitude. You have learned from your mistakes. Your desperation spurs you to do great things. You need to survive alone.

HOW IT MIGHT HINDER YOU: All that look upon you fear and hate you. Even your brother knights turn from you. You must flee from the sight of people. You are depressed and moody about your past. You take vengeance upon the remnants. You believe the Frost Maiden when she whispers that she alone still loves you.

SPECIAL RULES: If the character is ever accepted into society, this Aspect vanishes.

Reknowned Champion

DESCRIPTION: You are hailed amongst the greatest of knights, a wonder of the Sun Age, true hero to the people and champion of the stars. Those that love the knights decorate the ground you tread with tears and cries, and even those that hate your order give you a grudging respect and even genuine concern. Your brother knights love your company, and are honored to serve next to you if they get the chance, for you have rescued them time and again from the clutches of the Mistaken. The stars themselves shine with your glory. Romantic youth faint at a taste of the air that has run through your hair, and poets are dumbstruck by your valor.

HOW IT MIGHT AID YOU: You must perform the greatest of tasks. You are called upon to speak in public. You must help the needy or lift up the fallen. Your reputation precedes you. You go courting. You lead a thousand knights into battle and execute it perfectly. You seek the help of those that call themselves your enemies and find it despite your differences. You are beloved by everyone.

HOW IT MIGHT HINDER YOU: You are beloved by everyone. All you want to do is get some rest. All you want to do is handle your own affairs, without assistance. You are pestered by a thousand relentless suitors. Everyone is so concerned for your well-being that they will not let you risk yourself in battle. You doubt yourself. You have nightmares about failure. All the things that are said about you are lies. Across a crowded battlefield, the Solaris Knight points his blazing blade at you, smiles, and beckons you to a duel.

Keeper of the Leftmost Museum

DESCRIPTION: You are, at least in theory, charged with the care and keeping of the priceless artifacts housed within the Leftmost Museum at Tallstar remnant.

HOW IT MIGHT AID YOU: Use the mysterious lore of those Dark Age artifacts. Grant or take away access to the Museum. Any conflict that occurs within the Museum. Leverage your position for political favor.

HOW IT MIGHT HINDER YOU: Your duties distract you. Someone mentions that no one goes to museums in these modern times, anyway. Your underlings are stealing items and replacing them with fakes.

SPECIAL RULES: If you are ever stripped of your rank, this Aspect becomes "Former Keeper of the Leftmost Museum".

Event: Betrayal of the People

DESCRIPTION: You are a Knight of the Order of the Stars, and your doom lurks closer by the hour -- those among you who do not fall in the bloody sieges of spring and the bloodier crusades of autumn will turn against the people, becoming demons yourselves. Once, that fate was long-off and easily ignored, but now it lurks within your heart and nightmares. The turned faces of friends confront you on the battlefield, and you cannot dare to hope that you will be more valorous.

HOW IT AIDS AND HINDERS YOU: You are fighting a fallen knight. You are tempted to turn against the people. You are preventing a knight from falling. One amongst the people or the mistaken names your doom.

SPECIAL RULES: All knights obtain this Aspect when they become Veterans.

Event: A Mysterious Disappearance

DESCRIPTION: No one knows what became of poor Altinak, that day she visited your study and vanished before she could return. It seemed that she had vanished like mist before sunlight, here one moment and gone the next. Do you already know the truth? Are you committed to uncovering it? Perhaps you will learn that Etzlitotec is at fault, or perhaps it was you who caused her vanishing. Is she dead or in hiding or something stranger?

HOW IT MIGHT AID OR HINDER YOU: You are investigating the disappearance. Other ask you about it. There are others who are disappearing in similar manners. The demon that confessed to you was a ruse within a ruse. You know the truth, but no one will believe you.

Event: The Fall of Kerhah

DESCRIPTION: Kerhah was a knight, a guide in the outer wastes, a slayer of great demons, and a credit to her order. But in one moment something changed, and she will be remembered by the people not for her great deeds but for her horrific betrayal and the terrible price she paid for it.

Has it already come to pass, or does it lie in the future? Were you the cause of her downfall, her antagonist as she turned, the witness to her failure, the bard of her corruption; or were you the last to love her, even as she fell? Perhaps you were all this, and more. As we start to play with this aspect, we do not know.

HOW IT MIGHT AID OR HINDER YOU: The seeds of Kerhah's downfall are revealed. You confront Kerhah about her corruption. You defend her against the charges and accusations, even when they are true. As you hold her hand in yours, there is a cold pink slime beneath the surface of her skin. You give her the water, anyway.

Event: Reuniting the Kaus

DESCRIPTION: Torn by ancient but not forgotten feuding, the Kaus families have split into the Borealis, Australis, and Media branches, all of whom violently hate each other. Despite the fact that the Kaus Australis slew all of our clan in a petty power-play, you have nonetheless vowed that, as the last of the Kaus Borealis, you will reunite your wayward family and turn their strength and anger against the mistaken.

HOW IT MIGHT AID OR HINDER YOU: You have an ally for your noble goal, a member of the Kaus family think kindly of you for it, you have a good opportunity to achieve your goal. You suffer ridicule for your idealism. The members of Kaus Australis oppose your goals. Your single-mindedness drives you onward, ignoring or deserting other crises.

SPECIAL RULES: If this Aspect is rendered impossible or completed, it may be changed into another similar sort of goal, preferably an appropriate one.

Relationship: Rischia, Maiden of the Midmost Hall

DESCRIPTION: Rischia, hailed in song and poetry as the greatest beauty of the Sun Age, has had suitors travel two remnants and gift her with priceless rubies merely for the privilege of a moment in her sight. But she cares not for these suitors, wealthy and powerful and handsome as they may be, for she already has found her true love -- you, a common knight. But, although you know she is beautiful and kind, you cannot find it within yourself to love her back, and so your romance lingers, unspoken and rotting, between the two of you.

HOW IT MIGHT AID OR HINDER YOU: Rischia is involved in the conflict -- either she is in danger, or is fighting you, fighting alongside you, or is, in some other manner, at stake in the conflict.

Relationship: Asmidike, Your Father

DESCRIPTION: Your father was a knight. Though you never saw him, and only heard tell of his exploits from others in the Order, you always imagined that he was the greatest among the champions and, even as your mother disparaged the Knights Stellar, you came to love them even more through the absent image of your father.

HOW IT AIDS AND HINDERS YOU: Your father is involved in the conflict -- either he is in danger, or is fighting you, fighting alongside you, or is, in some manner, at stake in the conflict.

Etzlitotec, the Princess of Spring

DESCRIPTION: Clad in the skins of the people she has slain, wielding a knife of burning obsidian, Etzlitotec is a great princess among the demons, the first to emerge from the Mistake come springtime, slaughterer of ten thousand people, all victims of her fecund savagery. Plants and flowers sprout behind her as she walks, and while her masks are capable of deception, her true face is always curled into a scream of terrible agony. She has lived in secret among the people from time to time, and in that time has come to know you, just as you have come to know her. Once, you swore that you would rid the ice of her corruption, but as you hunt her, you have come to understand her. And, perhaps, she has also come to understand you. In your darkest dreams, you fear that she is the only one.

HOW IT AIDS AND HINDERS YOU: You are fighting Etzlitotec, you are tracking her schemes, you are talking to her, she is assisting you, or tempting you.

Idea: The Greatest Knight

DESCRIPTION: It is not enough to be a great warrior, defending your people from the Mistake, and sacrificing yourself for the good of the whole. You must be the best knight, at whatever cost.

HOW IT AIDS AND HINDERS YOU: You strive to fight on even when all your companions have failed. You volunteer for the most dangerous mission. On Crusade, you plunge headlong into the Mistake. You pick fights with your fellow knights, testing who is stronger. You cannot abide defeat lightly. The Solaris Knight smiles as he lays his hand on your shoulder and tells you of true power.

Idea: The South

DESCRIPTION: The mysterious South! Tales of its contents and myths of its nations have haunted the people since before the Mistake. Now, afterwards, these things that were once whimsical fantasies of the exotic have taken on a tone of desperate hope and desperate fear. Perhaps those people in the South will come to the aid of your people, or perhaps they are simply another form of demon.

Perhaps you will be called to go, perhaps you will discover ancient artifacts brought from there in a forgotten age, perhaps you have already been and come bearing tidings from it. Whatever its nature, the south tempts you, haunting your dreams and your waking life. It will be important.

HOW IT AIDS AND HINDERS YOU: The south comes up in conversation. Someone enquires about your travel or travel plans. You are headed towards the south. You are in the south. Someone has come from the south, with a desperate message for you. You are bearing a message from the south. You find evidence of old and forgotten treaties with the Empire of Tass.

Starlight Sword

DESCRIPTION: A shimmering, transparent sword of starlight appears in your hand whenever you need it (faintly colored red, blue, or white). It is perfectly sharp, and sings slightly as it moves. (Some knights keep their swords hung at their belts. No one knows why some knights have permanent swords and others don't.)

HOW IT MIGHT AID YOU: You are fighting someone in melee combat. You gesture with your sword and all conversation stops at the pure tone. You hold up your sword as a symbol of your knighthood.

HOW IT MIGHT HINDER YOU: The demon you are fighting is immune to your sword. You accidentally hurt a companion with your sword.

SPECIAL RULES: Automatic.

Breathsuit

DESCRIPTION: A thin jumpsuit with a heavy visor and breathing mask. The food and water stores inside allow you to survive for a great time.

HOW IT MIGHT AID YOU: You need to breath in a hostile environment. You need protection against the elements. You need to survive for a long time without food.

HOW IT MIGHT HINDER YOU: The breathsuit has a leak. The ugly image of the mask frightens a would-be ally. The taste of food has become dry and dull to you. You choke suddenly.

Loyal Steed Shackleton

DESCRIPTION: You have in your possession one of the great steeds of the people, a creature by the name of Shackleton, a trained jumper with long, graceful legs and chitin proof against demon claws. He carries you swiftly over the ice and fights beside you in battle with terrible claws and mandibles. But most importantly he is a silent, listening companion in your darkest hours.

HOW IT MIGHT AID YOU: You need to get somewhere fast. Shackleton aids you with his sharpened claws. A mighty leap takes you to the top of some ruin. He provides comfort in a long journey.

HOW IT MIGHT HINDER YOU: Shackleton needs to hibernate, eat or mate at an inconvenient time. He is easily distracted. His armor and visage scare off the more delicate amongst the people. He will not obey your commands, and bolts.

Greater Starlight Weapon

DESCRIPTION: Your starlight weapon takes the form of a larger sword, or some other sort of weapon, or a bow and arrows, or is bolts of starlight that you throw from your hands.

HOW IT MIGHT AID YOU: Just as a Starlight Sword might aid, but take into account the different form. A starlight bow will be useful at different times than a starlight sword.

HOW IT MIGHT HINDER YOU: See above.

SPECIAL RULES: Replaces the Starlight Sword Aspect.

My Father's Sword

DESCRIPTION: Your father's fall is still unspoken amongst the knights, whispered about only in the darkest parts of the dawn, when neither sun nor the stars can see those that speak of the terrible things that he did, and the black marks it put upon the sword that you now wield. It is tainted, even to look upon: It casts a rippled and shadowy light and is shot through with crystals the color of obsidian. Can you redeem the blade or are you lost to it already?

HOW IT MIGHT AID YOU: Just as a Starlight Sword might aid you. The insatiable hunger of the darkness devours your foes. As you kill the demon, the taint begins to wash away. You are killing the people. The darkness blots the sun from your vision. Despite it all, you act with honor. Though the sword screeches for murder, you do not touch it.

HOW IT MIGHT HINDER YOU: The sword is recognized and feared. Your father haunts your waking. In battle, you turn on your allies. As you draw it forth, the horde of Mistaken look upon it and each cowers in honor of the blade.

SPECIAL RULES: Replaces the Starlight Sword aspect.

Wings of the Stars

DESCRIPTION: You have a great glider, a pair of wings crafted out of ice, rigid and smooth, and with them you soar through the skies like the gulls of the south. Though your flights cannot last forever, many hours can pass before you finally have snow beneath your feet again.

HOW IT MIGHT AID YOU: In battle, you circle around, perhaps bombing, perhaps fighting those things that haunt the air. You escape by leaping from a high place. You must travel far, and quickly. From the high angle, you can see what others cannot see. As the demon dies, the ground gives way, and you are left floating in the air.

HOW IT MIGHT HINDER YOU: The wings crack or crumble at some odd moment. You are too close to the sun, and they melt. You are too close to the stars, and are driven mad by their beautiful songs. Bulky and awkward, the contraption makes it hard to maneuver on the ground.

Memory Crystal

DESCRIPTION: Beginning as a clear crystal, it gradually turns blue or red as information is stored in it. It can return the information as text, images (both flat and spatial), or even as a dull, flat speech.

HOW IT MIGHT AID YOU: Use the crystal to recall something important. Use the crystal as a trick.

HOW IT MIGHT HINDER YOU: The crystal contains foul things. The crystal contains incriminating information about you. The crystal lies.

The Call of Home

DESCRIPTION: A tiny contraption of gem and metal, it contains a miniature star that helps the Knight navigate the treacherous wastes.

HOW IT MIGHT AID YOU: You need to find something in the wilderness. You need to keep up hope.

HOW IT MIGHT HINDER YOU: The star points you towards the Mistake.

Bound Companion Arrakis

DESCRIPTION: Bonded to you since birth, Arrakis is your friend and servant, the perfect handmaiden, attendant on your every need before you even wish it in your heart. She followed you into knighthood as your squire and serves you still in that capacity. She is clever, quick, and pretty -- ultimately useful and perfectly loyal.

HOW SHE MIGHT AID YOU: She leaps in front of the black knight's sword, protecting you from the final blow. She throws your sword to you from across the room. A sudden cry of "look out!"

HOW SHE MIGHT HINDER YOU: She will not let you go into danger. She clings to you even in the night. She is jealous of your lovers. Others regard your relationship as strange.

Four Bird, Lord of Carrion

DESCRIPTION: Ranked among the twenty-nine fearsome dukes of battle, Four Birds is a demon, foul and miserable, the enemy of the people and the slave of the Mistake. After each battle, he sates himself on the flesh of the weak and the dying, cracking open their marrowy bones while they still live, eating their eyes while they still see, defiling their corpses so that people will not let them into graveyards. He is terrible and proud and not above mockery, but you have mastered him and bound him into your service with a strange and sunlit ritual. Now, he serves you as your steed and servant, and although he is still a demon and enemy of the people, he is subject to your will.

HOW HE MIGHT AID YOU: He lifts you into the air, out of danger. He gives you passage through demon-held territory. He advises you about the customs among the Mistaken. You see through his eyes. Four Birds descends and pecks out the eyes of your enemies.

HOW HE MIGHT HINDER YOU: He demands a price that you are not willing to pay. When you see through his eyes, it is blood and madness. You acquire his custom of eating carrion. Other knights do not trust you. You have unknowingly let a spy into your midst. He was not so bound to you, after all.

Lore of Demons

DESCRIPTION: You have learned from the Knights about the nature and types of demons, and how to fight them.

HOW IT MIGHT AID YOU: You recall something about a demonic weakness, and exploit it. You use your lore to diagnose a demonic possession, or perform an exorcism.

HOW IT MIGHT HINDER YOU: Your lore is incorrect. Demons use your knowledge to manipulate you. Your knowledge separates you from the people.

SPECIAL RULES: Automatic.

Lore of the Stars

DESCRIPTION: You are learned in the paths and tones of the stars, their colors and the tunes they weave across the sky. Even the alien stars that rise only in the south are not strange to you, for you have read texts smuggled from those hidden kingdoms in the ancient age of starlight, copied wholesale in their foreign scripts that none among the people can understand.

HOW IT MIGHT AID YOU: If you can see the stars, you will know without question or hesitation our time, position, and the conditions of the knights that bear their burdens. You must give a lecture on the topic before the senate. You are familiar with the ancient libraries. Even in the depths of the wastes, you are never alone. You must comfort a star that is dying in the sky. You are called upon to lead a wedding or a funeral.

HOW IT MIGHT HINDER YOU: Your preoccupation with studying the stars prevents you from paying attention to the matters at hand. You make a mistake in your calculations. The stars make a mistake in their motions across the sky. Someone mentions that no one has yet done a study of the sun, and you are fascinated by the challenge.

Lore of the Outer Wastes

DESCRIPTION: Those rugged wastes that lie further south than even the Remnants remain mostly unexplored by even the knights, but you are not cowed by such things. You are intimately familiar with the makeup and geography of the southern wastes. Even the changes that they go through every winter are not completely random to you -- you have a certain understanding and intuition which pierces through that veil of winter.

HOW IT MIGHT AID YOU: You must guide others through the wastes. You must survive in the wastes yourself. You use your knowledge of the wastes to duck into a crevasse, avoiding the flood of poisoned gas. You are the first to see them coming from the south.

HOW IT MIGHT HINDER YOU: You spend so much time in the wastes that you have forgotten how to live among the people. Your love and your friends are abandoned. The geography around the demonic citadel is strange, and you stumble. Even all your lore cannot save you in this barren, hostile land.

Technique: Strike from the Shadows

DESCRIPTION: You attack from hiding, allowing yourself more time to study your opponent, and so striking more effectively.

HOW IT MIGHT AID YOU: You are fighting someone and can use the trick.

HOW IT MIGHT HINDER YOU: Your target sees you coming. Someone uses the same trick against you.

Technique: Song of Truth

DESCRIPTION: When you sing, it is a glorious song, and right in the eyes of the empyrean. Lies have no power before your tune -- indiscretions are admitted, betrayals exposed, and disguises torn off like ragged flesh. When you are done, no falsehood remains.

HOW IT MIGHT AID YOU: You must root out a web of lies and corruption. You are called before a senate committee on false charges. Your superior has become corrupt. Your father finally tells you how your mother died.

HOW IT MIGHT HINDER YOU: Even you cannot resist your own song. Your wife tells you that she loves another. They blame you and not those that told the lies. You accidentally expose a tactical deception in the midst of battle. You discover that your entire life has been a carefully crafted illusion.

SPECIAL RULES: When the Heart invokes this ability, he must sing, at least a note.

Attribute: Refined

DESCRIPTION: You are, at your core, a refined and distinguished member of the people. You have little taste for the rugged life of the knight, and are capable of appreciating the subtleties of music and food that surpass even the artist that create them.

HOW IT MIGHT AID YOU: Your recognized refinement bring you social benefit. You notice something subtle about music, food, or art that is an important clue. You refuse a temptation that is not sophisticated.

HOW IT MIGHT HINDER YOU: You miss something important because of your refinement. You are placed in an unacceptable situation. You get flustered.

Attribute: Big

DESCRIPTION: The people are usually small and thin, slight like rays of starlight, but you are different. You stand nearly two heads taller than the others, and are thick and muscular. You barely fit through the smaller doorways within the remnants, and can carry three other people on your back with ease. Even the Mistaken are mostly smaller than you.

HOW IT MIGHT AID YOU: You need to pick up or move something large. You intimidate someone. Alien armor, brought from the south in some forgotten age, fits you perfectly. You stand out in a crowd. Your sword is longer than someone else's. You shatter the ice with a single crushing blow. You barely feel the claws as they strike you.

HOW IT MIGHT HINDER YOU: You are bulky and awkward. You stand out in a crowd. Other people think you are terrifying, or maybe even demonic. You must kneel to see eye-to-eye with him.

Musician

DESCRIPTION: You are a musician of no mean skill, attuned to the music of the spheres.

HOW IT MIGHT AID YOU: The sound of the stars gives you some warning. You play music to impress people. The pure sound of your star-music drives back some demon.

HOW IT MIGHT HINDER YOU: You are overwhelmed by the screaming of the sun. You must stop to play a song and are distracted from your task. Your playing ability proves unworthy to the composition that you have chosen to perform.

Sculptor

DESCRIPTION: You ken the ice. It moves through your guidance to reveal its true and beautiful forms, shaping our hands into shaping its forms -- people, cities, stars, and other things that have not been seen before and shall not be seen again. And, just as the ice gives them likeness and shape, the light within reveals something more personal and true, a form beyond shape, a meaning to the thing you have made and what you have made it after. Once, people clamored and waited to be sculpted by you, but now they are afraid of the insight you will show.

HOW IT MIGHT AID YOU: You recognize a form through touch. Your sculpture is renowned. You make a beautiful thing. Your art gives you insight into the nature of some thing. You feel your way effortlessly, even when blind. You speak silently to the ice, and it responds.

HOW IT MIGHT HINDER YOU: Something terrible lurks beneath the ice. Your art is scorned, and no one will look at it. Poseurs badger you about unimportant minutia. You make a horrible mistake. Your art gives you insight into the nature of the Mistake. They take your hands. You speak silently to the ice, and it lies to please you.