O.D.I.N.

Occult Dynamics Intelligence Network

THAUMATURGE

CLASS BOOK

by David Ger

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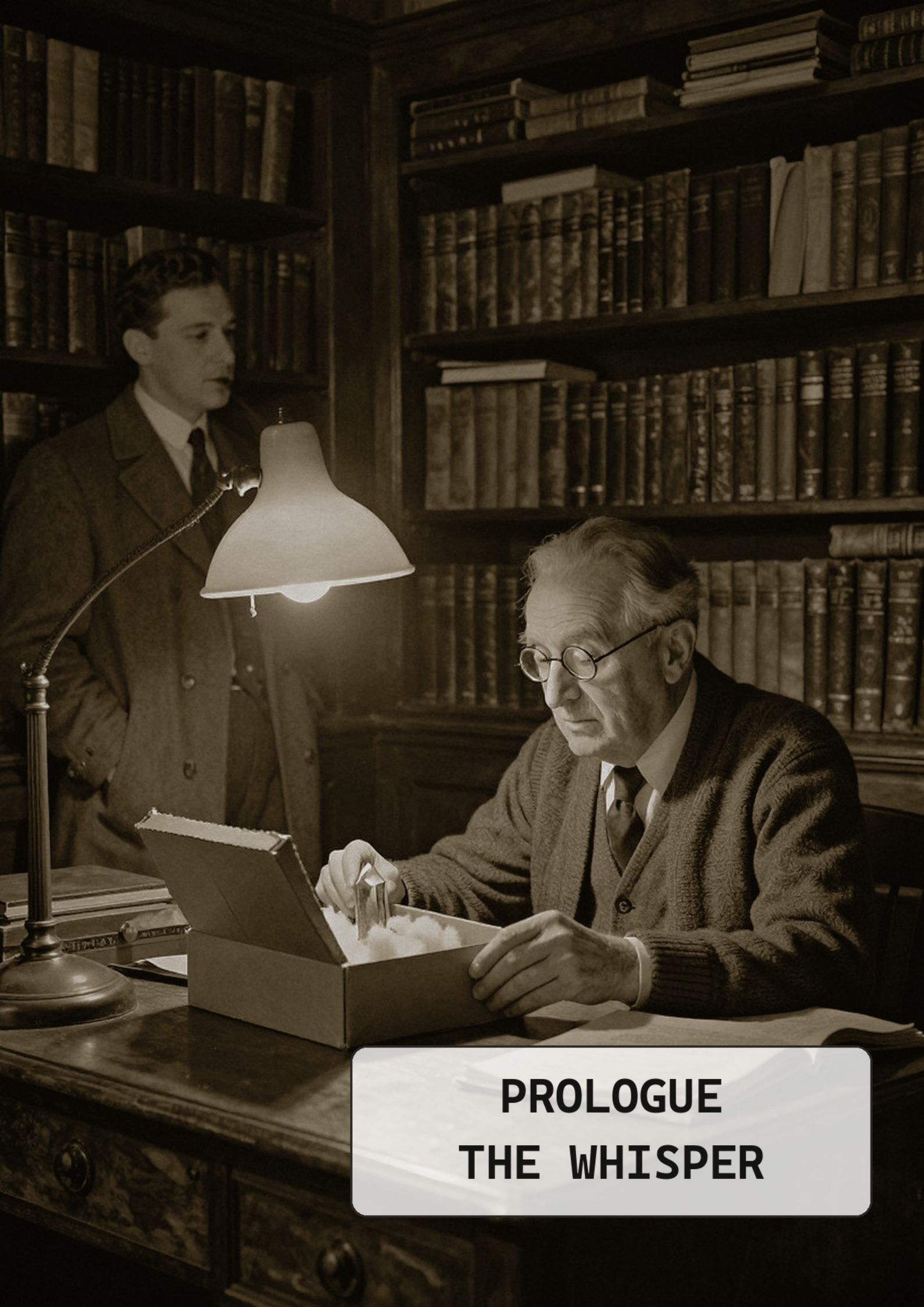


PROLOGUE
THE WHISPER

Prologue: The Whisper

"Most people who touch a crystal only feel that it is warm. The others come to us."
Margaret Holloway, 1931

Konstantin Hale had worked in a basement for 31 years, and he had never regretted it. The basement belonged to a library in Oxford, and on its shelves lay manuscripts that nobody requested because nobody could read them. Hale could not either. But he liked them. He liked the signs that fit into no known script, the circles that recurred at the edges of the pages, the ink that had not faded in some places even though the parchment was already crumbling.

On a Tuesday in November, a man stood at his desk who had not been announced. He wore a grey coat and held a cardboard box under his arm, like a delivery man.

"Mr. Hale," he said, "you catalogued a manuscript three weeks ago. Shelfmark MS Arcana 114."

Hale remembered. A narrow book, bound in wood, fourteen pages, a circle on each page. He had written in the catalogue field for the content: *not determinable*. And then, on a whim that had embarrassed him afterwards, in the field for remarks: *The circles seem to have an order.*

"You wrote something in the remarks," said the man. "How did you come to that?"

"I don't know," said Hale, and that was true. "They looked as if they were answering each other."

The man smiled for the first time. He placed the box on the desk and opened it. Inside, bedded on cotton wool, lay a stone. It was no larger than a walnut, clear as glass, and it caught the light of the desk lamp in a way that Hale did not like and yet could not stop looking at.

"Touch it," said the man. "Please."

Hale could have refused. Later he often thought about why he had not done so. The most honest answer was that the stone wanted it.

It was warm. Warmer than a stone in a basement in November was allowed to be. And then, as Hale's fingers closed around it, he heard it.

It was not a sound. It was more as if someone were speaking in the next room, very quietly, in a language he did not know, and yet he understood every third word. Or not every word, but the form behind it. The circles. The whisper had the same form as the circles in MS Arcana 114. It was not like a language. It was like a grammar.

Hale opened his eyes. He did not know when he had closed them. The man in the grey coat sat on the visitor's chair and smoked, which was strictly forbidden in the basement.

"What did you hear?" he asked.

"I believe," said Hale slowly, "I heard how one reads the seventh circle."

The man stubbed out the cigarette on the saucer of Hale's teacup. "Then you are one of us," he said. "We call ourselves the Collegium. We have existed since 1926, and for decades we have known this book only from copies. You almost packed it into a box and sent it to the storage facility in Swindon."

"What kind of stone is that?"

"A very good question," said the man. "We ask ourselves that too."

Konstantin Hale left the library three weeks later. He told his colleagues he was taking early retirement. His sister, that he was moving to Scotland. Neither was entirely a lie.

On the first night in his new quarters, a room beneath a Hold with a view of a concrete wall, he placed the crystal on the bedside table and tried to sleep. He did not sleep. The stone whispered. Not loudly, not insistently. Only constantly, like a radio in a neighbouring flat.

At around three in the morning, Hale got up, sat down at the table, and began to write it down.

In the morning the Crystal Master came. His name was Wren, he was barely younger than Hale, and he had the habit of finishing each sentence before starting the next, as if he were copying it out in his head beforehand. He took the sheets from the table, fourteen pages, closely written, and read them standing, without changing his expression.

"Did you read any of it aloud?"

"No."

"Good." Wren placed the sheets in a folder, the folder in a lead cassette, and the cassette under his arm. "You will learn a lot in the coming months. The most important thing you learn today: you never repeat aloud what you do not understand. Never. Not even when the stone asks you to."

"Does it ask?"

Wren looked at him, properly for the first time. “At some point,” he said, “it always asks.”

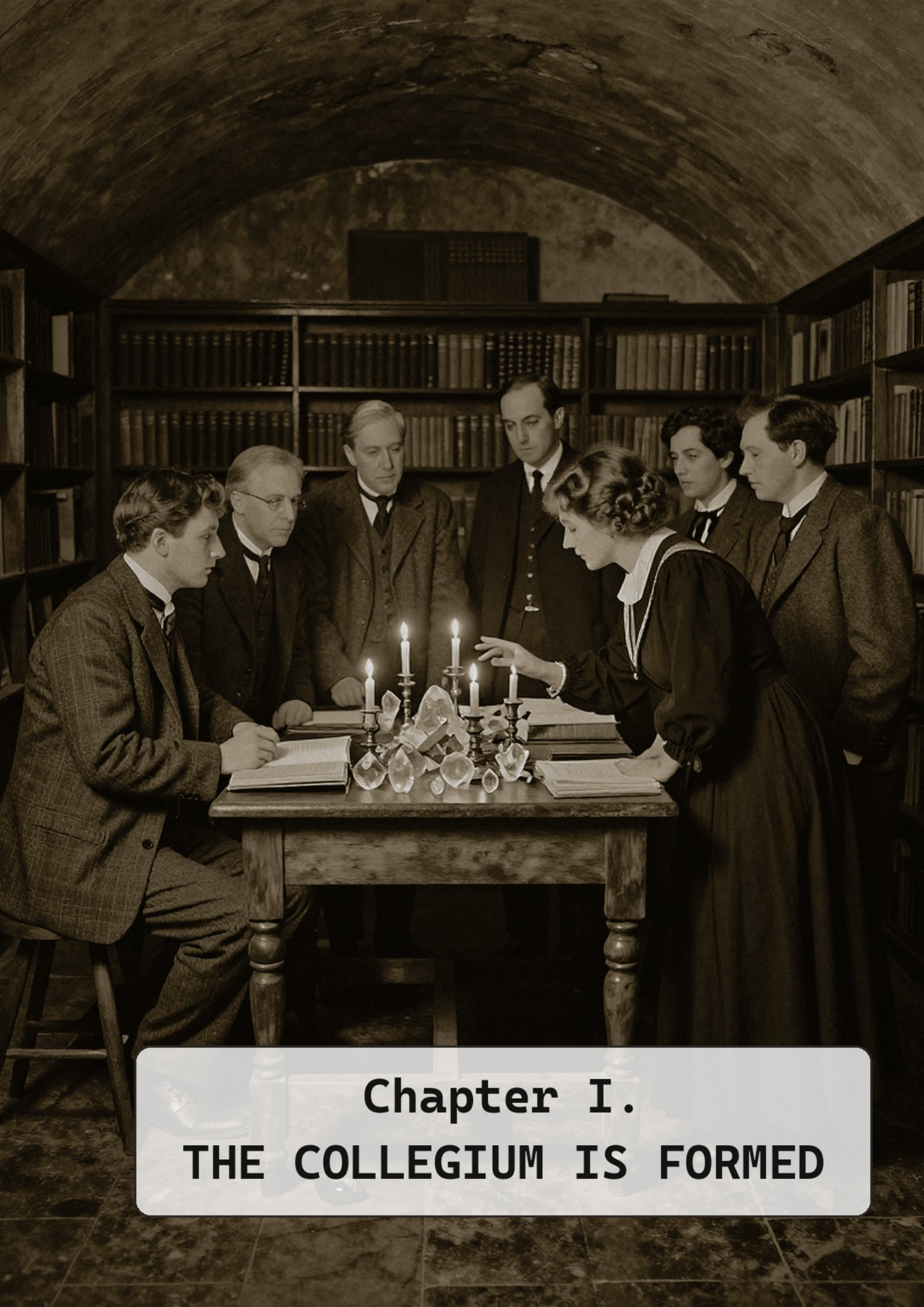
The training lasted two years. Hale learned to draw circles until they were round with his eyes closed. He learned to write down the Whisper without repeating it aloud. He learned that the candle on his bedside table lit when he said a certain line half aloud to himself, and that it could only be extinguished again when he spoke the line backwards. And he learned that the other apprentices, all thirty years younger, first smiled at him and then asked for help.

He never got back his notes from the first night. Once, in the second year, he asked Wren about them. Wren did not answer. But when Hale received his codename the following spring, it was written on an index card, the index card lay in a folder, and on the folder was a number he recognised.

Folio.

A leaf. A page in a book that someone else writes.

```
O.D.I.N. / ARCANE BRANCH / CRYSTAL LEDGER
Entry 7.114
Crystal: shard, clear, 11 g, find site
Anatolia, 1923
Transferred to: HALE, K. / Title Apprentice
Note from the Crystal Master: Subject
transcribed 14 pages in the first night. The
transcription matches MS Arcana 114 to 83 %.
Subject has never read MS Arcana 114 in full.
Remark: Transcription under seal. Forwarded to
the Black Library.
Addendum, two years later: Codename FOLIO. A.
W.
```



Chapter I.
THE COLLEGIUM IS FORMED

The First Stones

"We did not look for them. They were simply lying there, as if someone had laid them out for us."
Margaret Holloway, diary, 1923

The official chronicle of O.D.I.N. keeps it brief: Between 1921 and 1923, crystals that correspond to no known mineral are found independently during excavations in Anatolia, Peru, and the Himalayas, and a few people who touch them hear voices. In the Arcane Branch, every training begins with the question of who these few people were.

The best known among them was **Margaret Holloway**, an Orientalist from Oxford, who in the summer of 1923 crawled into a collapsed chamber during an excavation in central Anatolia because the workers refused. The chamber was empty except for a flat stone in the middle, into which a circle was carved, and at the centre of the circle lay, as in a bowl, seven clear crystals.

Holloway picked one up to hold it against the light of the lamp. She heard the Whisper for the first time, and she described it in her diary with a sentence that today stands above the entrance of every Arcane Archive: *It sounded as if someone were searching for a door in my head.*

Peru and the Himalayas

In Peru, a mining engineer named **Tomás Quispe** found three crystals in a disused silver mine. He kept one, sold two, and regretted it for the rest of his life. In the Himalayas, a porter named **Pemba Dorje** brought a crystal from a monastery that had been abandoned after a landslide. He gave it to a British officer because the stone frightened him at night. The officer passed it on to a curator, the curator to Holloway.

Holloway, Quispe, and Dorje met for the first time in London in 1925. None of them spoke the others' language well. But when they laid their three crystals on a table, all three heard the same thing. Not the same words. The same grammar.

From Holloway's Diary

"I am writing this for those who come after us. They will be wiser than we are. Hopefully not too wise."
Margaret Holloway, 1924

Margaret Holloway's diaries lie in the chamber, 31 volumes between 1923 and 1959. The first twelve are accessible to every Magister. The following excerpts are read aloud to every apprentice in the first week.

14 August 1923, Anatolia

The workers refuse to enter the chamber. I understand them. Last night I dreamed that the seven stones were talking to each other, and that one voice was missing.

3 March 1925, London

Quispe, Dorje, and I. Three stones on a table. We speak no common language, but we hear the same thing. Dorje wept. Quispe prayed. I wrote along. I believe I made the worst choice of the three of us.

11 November 1928, Oxford

Arthur burned for three minutes. He says it did not hurt. He says he saw someone in the flames who nodded at him. I advised him not to tell anyone else. I am writing it down anyway.

2 December 1938, Oxford

Last night all the stones in the cellar whispered at the same time. At 3 o'clock in the morning. There was no word in it, only a tone, very long. I do not know what that was. Tomorrow I will read the newspapers.

The entry of 2 December 1938 is the only one that apprentices do not get read aloud. They usually find it themselves, eventually. And eventually they notice that it was the night before the morning of Solberg.

The Collegium

In the autumn of 1926, Holloway and two colleagues from Oxford rented a cellar room beneath a bookshop, carried a dozen books and eleven crystals into it, and gave themselves a name: **the Collegium**. It was not a secret society in the romantic sense. It was a working group of scholars who investigated a phenomenon that no one else took seriously, and who quickly realised that it was better if it stayed that way.

For the crystals did more than just whisper. Whoever understood the Whisper could repeat it, and whoever repeated it changed the world. Candles ignited. Water froze. Once, in the winter of 1928, a student of the Collegium stood in flames for three minutes after a failed attempt, without burning. His name was Arthur Penhallow. He became the first Magister of the Collegium and later its chairman.

The first rules of the Collegium date from these years, and some of them still apply today:

- Every crystal is recorded, every transfer is noted.
- No one works alone with a crystal they do not know.
- What one does not understand, one writes down. One does not repeat it.

> **FROM THE FOUNDING CHARTER OF THE COLLEGIUM, 1926**
>
> § 1. The Collegium serves the understanding of the stones, not their use.
>
> § 2. Use is permitted insofar as it serves understanding.
>
> § 3. The Collegium decides on exceptions.
>
> Marginal note, handwriting Holloway: “§ 3 will kill us one day.”

War and Treaty

In the thirties the Collegium was discovered, not by the public, but by people looking for weapons. Several states sent envoys, buyers and finally burglars. Between 1936 and 1939 the Collegium lost eleven crystals, two members and its innocence.

In 1940 it evacuated its entire holdings to a disused slate quarry in Wales. The operation took three nights, and the crystals travelled in lead boxes because someone had noticed that lead dampens the Whisper. The slate quarry was called **the Chamber** in the files. To this day it is the oldest archive of the Arcane Branch.

In 1947 the Collegium signed a treaty with an organisation that did not yet have a fixed name. The oldest document on which the abbreviation O.D.I.N. appears is a waybill for a lead box to an address that does not exist. In the Arcane Branch everyone knows what was in the box: a crystal from the Chamber, the Collegium’s pledge. **The Treaty of 1947** exchanged crystals for protection. The Collegium contributed its knowledge and its stones to O.D.I.N. In return it retained **crystal sovereignty**: No crystal at O.D.I.N. is moved without the Collegium knowing.

This clause is the reason why the Arcane Branch remains the most independent of all branches to this day.

Nordlicht

The official chronicle mentions the Nordlicht base in northern Norway, the Collegium’s crystal archive, which stopped reporting in 1977: 41 staff vanished without trace, the coffee cups were still warm, the crystals grey as slate. What the chronicle does not say: Nordlicht was the Collegium’s largest archive. Its vaults held 212 crystals.

The search party found them all. They lay in their places, catalogued, packed. And they were all dull and grey as slate, exhausted, as if someone had spoken every word that was in them in a single night.

Since Nordlicht the **Rule of Distribution** applies in the Arcane Branch: No archive houses more than 30 crystals that still speak. And since Nordlicht Thaumaturges ask a question that no one can answer: If the crystals contain words, who spoke them that night?

The Crystals Grow

Until 2011 there was a find every few years, a dig, a cave, a cellar, with a handful of stones, rarely a few dozen. Since 2011 new finds have been added every year, sometimes a dozen. They appear in places where a rift has opened, in ruins, in cellars, once in the aquarium of a zoo in Lyon.

And there are reports that the Collegium does not make public, not even within O.D.I.N.: Exhausted crystals, grey as slate, that have lain in the archives for decades, are beginning to become clear again at the edges. Slowly. But measurably.

The crystals grow back. No one knows from what.

CHRONICLE OF THE ARCANE BRANCH, CLEARANCE ADEPT

1921 to 1923: The first finds. Holloway, Quispe, Dorje.

1926: Founding of the Collegium in Oxford.

1928: Penhallow burns for three minutes without burning.

1940: Evacuation to the Chamber.

1947: The Treaty. The Collegium becomes part of O.D.I.N.

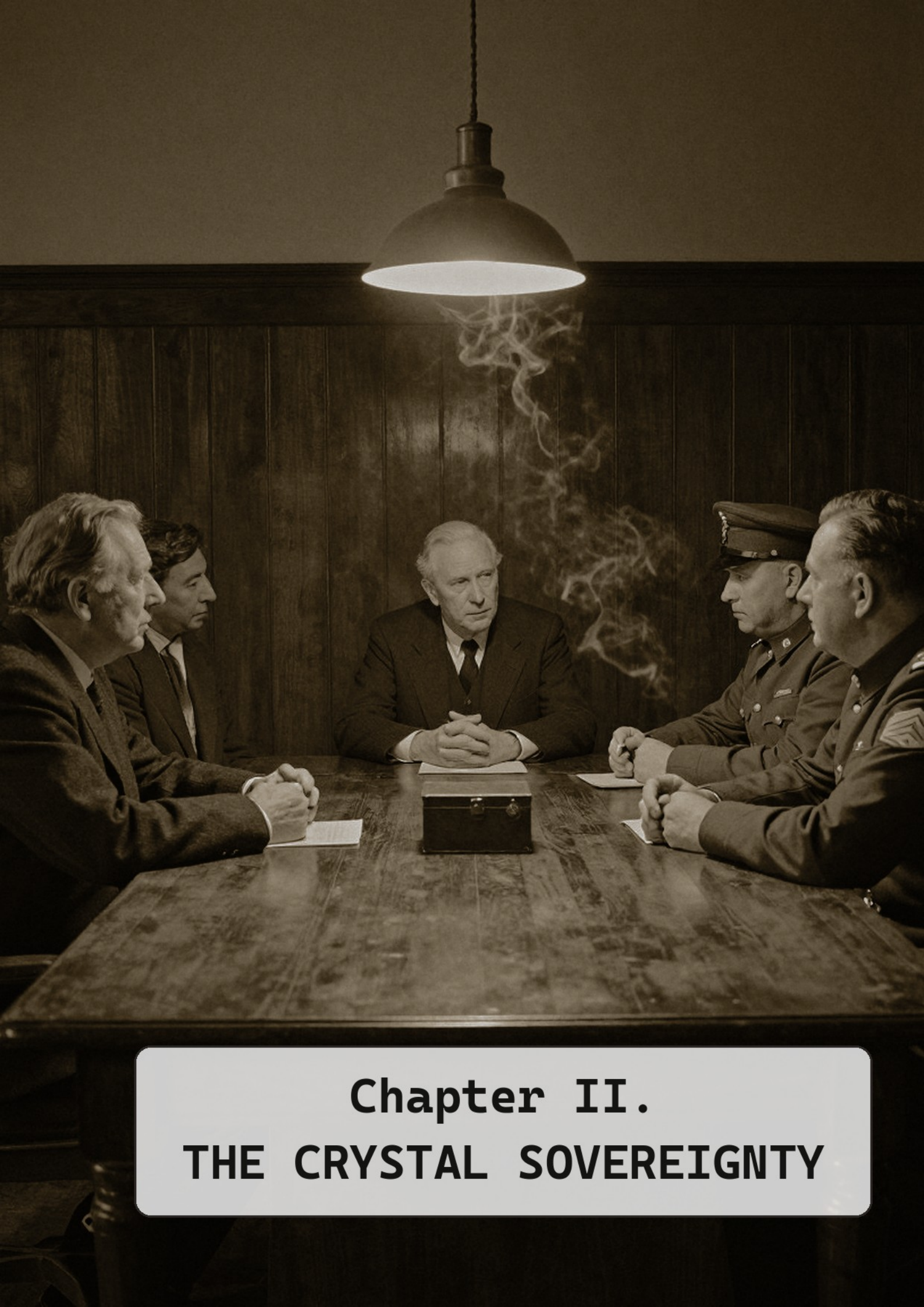
1953: Kiruna. Evan Pryce develops the incendiary ammunition with Ashgrove.

1955: The first ashsilver from Pryce’s workshop.

1977: Nordlicht. 212 crystals exhausted. Rule of Distribution.

1989: The Collegium ceases production of ashsilver.

2011: The crystals grow.



Chapter II.
THE CRYSTAL SOVEREIGNTY

O.D.I.N. from the Collegium's Perspective

"The Council gives the orders. We give the stones. You don't have to think long about who has the last word in the end."
Magister, Arcane Branch

No branch of O.D.I.N. is as self-confident as the Arcane. There are three reasons for this. The Collegium is older than O.D.I.N. in its current form. It joined the alliance voluntarily in 1947 and was not, like the psions, collected. And it administers the only resource without which there is no magic.

Thaumaturges therefore see O.D.I.N. less as an employer than as a partner. A powerful, often suspicious, sometimes dangerous partner, but one who needs them. They wear no helmets and have no Observers. They have something else: the Crystal Ledger.

The Crystal Ledger

Every crystal at O.D.I.N. has a number, a find location and a history, and all of that is in the **Crystal Ledger**. The book is kept by the **Crystal Masters** of the Collegium, in several copies at different locations. Every handover is recorded, every use on an operation, every loss.

For a Thaumaturge this means: their crystal does not belong to them. It is entrusted to them. Anyone who loses a crystal must account for it. Anyone who withholds a crystal is considered a thief. And anyone who finds a crystal, whether on an operation or on a walk, reports it within 24 hours.

In play, the Crystal Ledger means that the game master knows exactly which crystal each Thaumaturge carries. A crystal that is not recorded is a story in itself.

The Circles

Within the Arcane Branch, an older order applies alongside the ranks of O.D.I.N. It dates from the early days of the Collegium and is based on how deeply a Thaumaturge has penetrated the art. They are called **circles**, after the circles in the old manuscripts.

Circle	Title	Corresponds to Rank
I	Apprentice	Cadet
II	Adept	Agent
III	Magister	Senior Agent
IV	Archivist	Veteran
V	Seal Keeper	Shadow Officer

The titles are taken more seriously in the Collegium than the ranks of O.D.I.N. A Magister is addressed formally by an Adept, regardless of which of the two has the higher rank in the cell. The Seal, the class tree of the Thaumaturges, also follows these circles (Chapter IV).

The Black Library

Beneath one of the oldest archives, whose location only Archivists and Seal Keepers know, lies the **Black Library**. It contains the manuscripts, transcriptions and records that the Collegium considers too dangerous to read and too important to destroy. MS Arcana 114 lies there, together with the nightly transcripts of Folio. Since 1965, an assessment by cryptanalyst Greta Sundqvist from the Investigation Branch about the circles of Solberg has also been there. Whoever requested it is in no catalogue.

No Apprentice has ever entered the Black Library. Adepts know that it exists. Magisters may request individual texts, with justification and under supervision. What is written there, a Thaumaturge usually learns not from the books, but from what happens to colleagues who have read them.

Collegium and Council

The relationship between the Collegium and the High Council is polite and cool. The Council needs the crystals. The Collegium needs the protection. Both know that the other has secrets, and both pretend that this is all right.

Prometheus, the First Advisor to the Council, is responsible for magical threats and is therefore the most important contact for the Collegium. The Seal Keepers meet him once a year. What is discussed at these meetings is not even known to the Archivists. But after each meeting, something changes in the Crystal Ledger: some entries are blacked out, and some crystals change location.

A Visit to the Black Library

The lift had no buttons. Pendel stood with the Archivist in the narrow cabin, hands behind her back, and watched as he inserted a key into a lock that she had taken for a ventilation slot. The cabin went down. For a long time.

“You may request one book,” said the Archivist as the door opened. “One. You’ll read it at the table I show you, under the lamp I switch on for you. You won’t copy anything. You won’t speak aloud. And if you hear something that doesn’t come from the book, close it and raise your hand.”

The Black Library was smaller than Pendel had expected. A low room with shelves of dark wood, no windows, air that smelled of lead and old paper. There were no signs on the shelves, only numbers. Behind each shelf stood a lead plate, as tall as a person.

She had requested her mother’s spellbook. Astrid Solheim, died 2009, entry in the Black Library since 2010. Pendel had needed three years to get the authorisation.

The archivist laid it down in front of her. A slim booklet, blue linen, worn. He switched on the lamp and went to his place by the door.

Pendel opened it. She knew the first pages, her mother’s handwriting, neat and small, notes on time distortion, on cycles, on pendulums. She turned the page. 1977. A blank page. Then, from February 1977, a new handwriting. The same hand, but different. Tighter. More hurried. And again and again the same time in the margin: 22:10.

On the last written page there was a single sentence, in Norwegian.

They are not gone. They are only too early.

Pendel read it three times. Then she closed the booklet, because in the silence of the library she heard something that did not come from the book: a soft ticking, faster than a clock, from the pocket of her coat, where her mother’s pocket watch lay.

She raised her hand.

The Unwritten Rules

Even the Collegium has rules that are written nowhere, but every apprentice knows them after a few weeks.

- **Never repeat what you do not understand.** The oldest rule of the Collegium and the one most often broken.
- **Never lend out your crystal.** Not even to a Magister.
- **Write everything down.** A Thaumaturge without a notebook is a Thaumaturge who has something to hide.
- **If your crystal calls you by name, go to an archivist.** At once. Alone.
- **Do not ask where the new stones come from.**

The last rule is younger than the others. It dates from the time after 2011.

```
RUMOURS FROM THE ARCHIVES (D6)
1: Holloway is still alive. She lives in the Chamber and speaks only in circles.
2: In the Black Library there is a book that writes itself onward.
3: Nordlicht was not an accident. Someone deliberately drained the 212 crystals.
4: The Psions hear the same as we do. They just call it something else.
5: There is a crystal as large as a human. The Council keeps it hidden.
6: A Seal Keeper read the seventh circle years ago. No one has heard him laugh since.
```

Living with the Art

The Spellbook

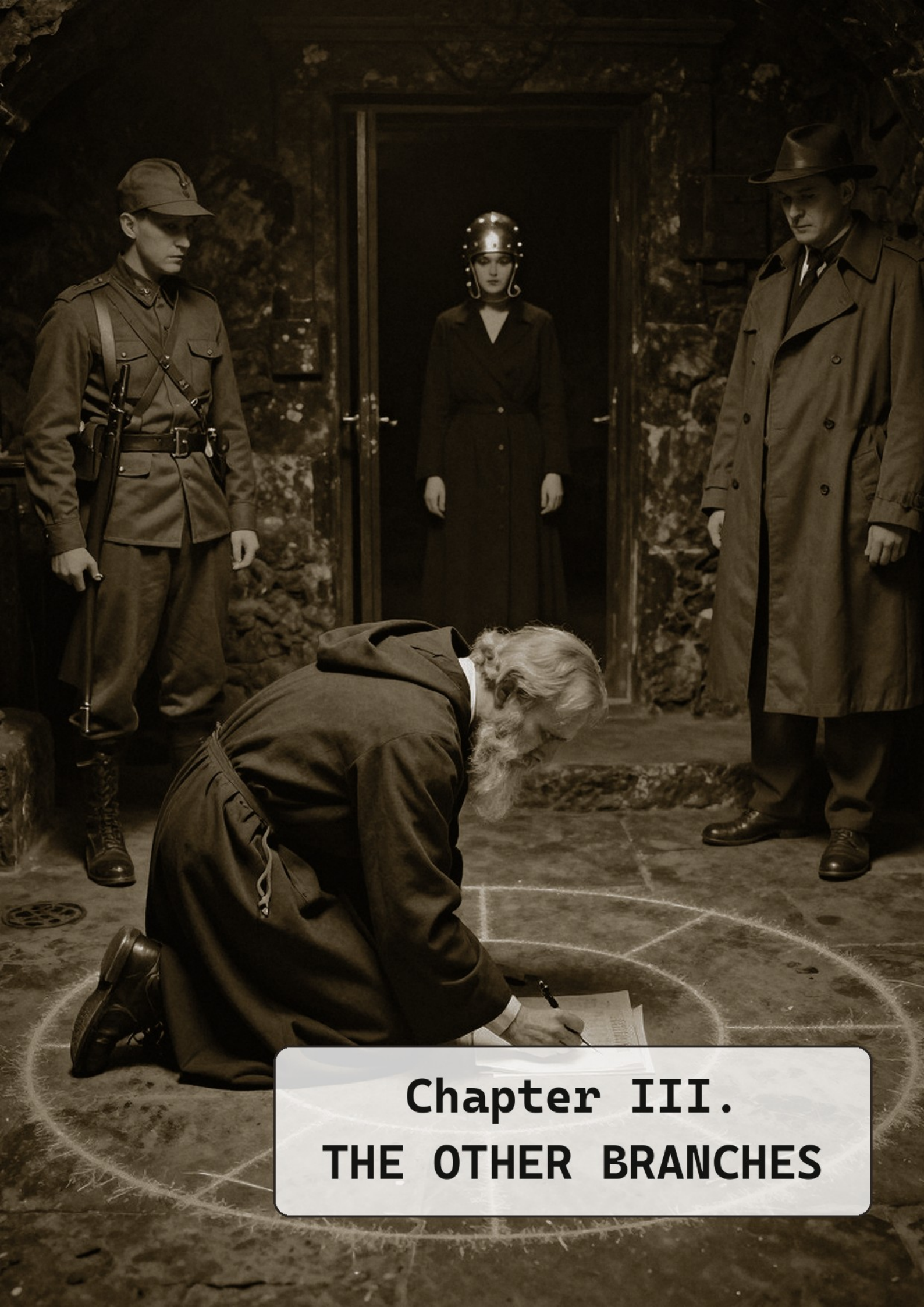
Every Thaumaturge keeps a spellbook. It is not a textbook, but a working journal: notes of the Whisper, their own formulas, notes on operations, sketches of

circles. No spellbook is like another, and most Thaumaturges would rather give up their weapon than their book. When a Thaumaturge dies, their book goes to the Collegium. So the statutes require. And so does every Thaumaturge who has ever read another's book.

The Price

Magic is exhausting. After an operation, Thaumaturges feel as if they have not slept for days, and some indeed have not. Headaches are normal, nosebleeds frequent. Many Thaumaturges report that after a major spell, colours are missing for a few minutes, as if the world had briefly lost saturation.

And then there is the Whisper. It does not grow quieter with the years, only more familiar. Most Thaumaturges sleep with their crystal in a lead box. Some can no longer sleep without the Whisper.



Chapter III.
THE OTHER BRANCHES

The Collegium and the Others

"They think we're arrogant. That's unfair. We're just usually right."
Magister, Arcane Branch

The Collegium has a reputation at O.D.I.N., and it is not only flattering. Thaumaturges are considered well-read, proud and difficult to lead, and as people who remind everyone at every opportunity that without their stones there would be no magic. At the same time, every cell is glad to have one along when something comes through a rift.

The Operations Branch: Agent

"An illusionist in the cell is like a second set of papers. You never know when you need him, but you're glad when you have him."
Agent, codename Moth

How agents see Thaumaturges: as valuable but loud colleagues. Magic leaves traces: smell of burning, frozen water, confused witnesses. Agents who work with Thaumaturges spend a lot of time cleaning up. Illusionists are the exception. They are treated almost like their own people in the Operations Branch.

How the Collegium sees agents: as the only ones at O.D.I.N. who understand what a secret is worth. Many Thaumaturges secretly admire agents for their discipline. No one would say so openly.

The Tactical Branch: Soldier

"He needed two minutes for his spell. In that time I would have changed the magazine, solved the problem and had a coffee."
Soldier, codename Bastion

How soldiers see Thaumaturges: as slow, complicated and occasionally very, very useful. A fireball at the right moment ends a fight. A fireball at the wrong moment ends the cell. Soldiers like to stand in front of Thaumaturges, but never directly in front of them.

How the Collegium sees soldiers: with more respect than one might think. Without soldiers, no Thaumaturge could finish a ritual. The wiser Thaumaturges know this and say so too. Since Kiruna 1953, both branches have been closely linked: Evan Pryce developed the incendiary ammunition with Ashgrove, and from 1955 to 1989 the soldiers' ashsilver came from his workshop. The first kinetic shields, built after the second prototype of the Physicist Martin Hofer, also contained crystal shards, until the Collegium insisted in 1990 that this stop.

The Science Branch: Scientist

"I showed him a spectral analysis of his crystal. He explained to me that my machine only measures the echo, not the voice. I hate it when they're right."
Scientist, codename Kepler

How scientists see Thaumaturges: as colleagues with questionable methodology. The Science Branch wants to understand how crystals work. The Collegium wants to understand what they say. Both consider the other's question to be the wrong one.

How the Collegium sees scientists: as competitors for interpretive authority and as indispensable partners. Alchemists and biochemists often work so closely together that one no longer knows who belongs to which branch.

The Psionic Core: Psion

"When a Thaumaturge casts a spell, the whole Choir listens briefly. Most of them don't notice that."
Psion, codename Sibylle

How psions see Thaumaturges: with envy and unease. Thaumaturges have no observers and no helmets, and they can put their power in a lead box in the evening. And psions sometimes hear a Whisper when a Thaumaturge casts a spell, one that is suspiciously similar to that of their thirteenth voice. Many Thaumaturges do not know this. Some archivists do.

How the Collegium sees psions: as competition, as a danger and, if one is honest, with pity. Psions pay for their power only afterwards, and they always carry it with them. The Collegium considers this reckless, and some Magisters consider psions to be what happens when one can no longer put a crystal down.

The Investigation Branch: Investigator

"The Thaumaturge says the circle at the crime scene is an invocation. I say someone drew it with chalk and started on the left. Together we get further."
Investigator, codename Raven

How investigators see Thaumaturges: as experts one needs at every occult crime scene and better leaves outside at every witness interview. Antiquarians and

Paranormal Detectives work closely with the Collegium, often more closely than the Collegium likes.

How the Collegium sees investigators: as natural allies. Both branches read signs that others overlook. Antiquarians enjoy a respect in the Collegium that is otherwise reserved for Magisters. Some of them have seen the Black Library.

One Cell, One Circle

How a Thaumaturge works in interplay with other classes is shown by this short excerpt from an operation. Spiegel, the illusionist, works with Moth, the infiltrator, and Brandt, the soldier.

“Three guards at the gate,” whispered Moth. “Two cameras. And something in the basement that Brandt doesn’t like.”

“I don’t like anything in basements,” said Brandt.

Spiegel had the crystal in the lining of his top hat and his eyes half closed. The Whisper was quiet today, friendly, almost playful. He let it pass through him and step outside.

At the gate stood a delivery van that did not exist. A driver that did not exist got out and began to argue with the guards about a delivery note. The cameras swung to the gate. Moth was already over the fence before the first guard had raised their torch.

“How long does that last?” asked Brandt.

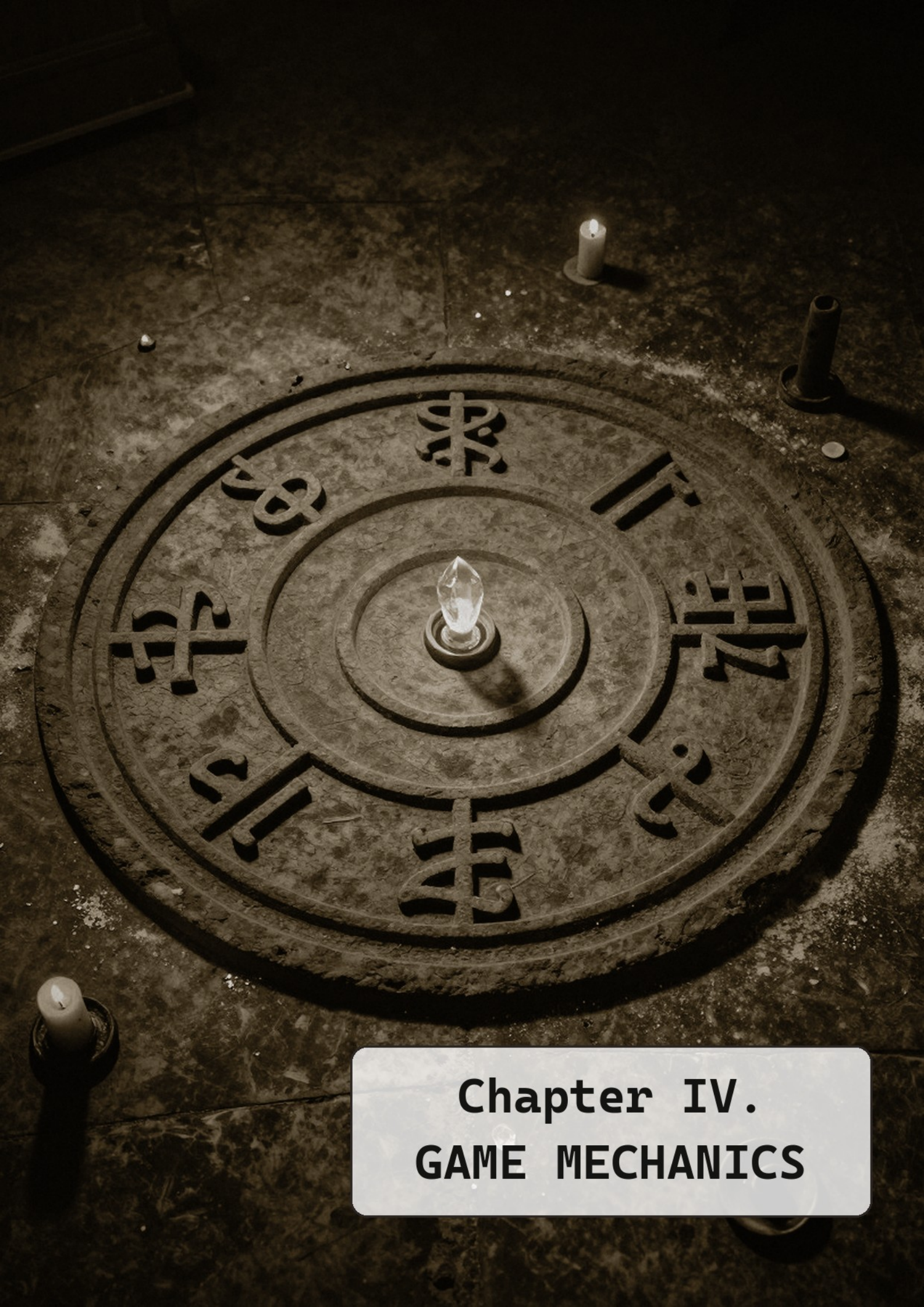
“Three rounds,” said Spiegel. “Four, if the driver argues well.”

“And the cellar?”

Spiegel opened his eyes. The Whisper had changed pitch. Somewhere below them another stone answered. It did not answer him.

“We’ll leave that to the Thaumaturgist who comes tomorrow,” he said. “With a great deal of chalk.”

This excerpt shows what Thaumaturges accomplish in a cell: they create opportunities that others use. The illusionist makes no noise and incapacitates no one. He gives the infiltrator three rounds, and the infiltrator does the rest.



Chapter IV.
GAME MECHANICS

The Five Schools

"There is only one art. But there are five ways to misunderstand it."
Arthur Penhallow, 1934

This chapter summarises everything you need to create and develop a Thaumaturge. The basic rules of thaumaturgy are in the Core Rulebook, Chapter IX. Each of the five schools has its own chapter in this book with its history, playstyles, an example character, and its sector of the Seal.

School	Chapter	Focus	Attributes
Thaumaturgist	VII	Rituals, warding circles, counterspells	INT, WIS
Alchemist	VIII	Elixirs, transmutation, explosives	INT, WIS
Illusionist	IX	Illusions, camouflage, invisibility	INT, CHA
Chronomancer	X	Slow time, speed it up, look back	INT, WIS
Invoker	XI	Summoning, protection, pacts	WIS, CHA

Creating a Thaumaturge

Thaumaturges are created according to the rules in Chapter III of the Core Rulebook. Two things set them apart from other agents: they need a crystal, and they begin as an **Apprentice** in the first circle of the Collegium. Also consider how your character first touched a crystal. The character generator at odin-rpg.pages.dev/generator/en/ is quicker. It guides you through creation question by question, knows all five subclasses of this book with their backgrounds, and produces the character sheet as a PDF at the end.

The Calling

"Everyone talks about the first spell. I remember the first night after, when I couldn't sleep because the stone wouldn't be quiet."
Thaumaturge, codename Retorte

Unlike Psions, Thaumaturges do not carry their gift around like an open wound. Most know nothing of it until they first touch a crystal. Many never touch one and live perfectly ordinary lives. The Collegium calls the moment of first touch **the Calling**.

Since 2011, the Calling has happened more often, and more often by chance: crystals appear in places where no one expects them, and people pick them up because they look pretty. The Collegium now has people whose sole job is to follow up on such individuals.

D6	How your character first touched a crystal
1	**Heirloom.** A stone in a grandmother's casket, who never told where she got it.
2	**Find.** On the beach, in the forest, in a construction pit. It glittered.
3	**Profession.** As an archaeologist, geologist, restorer, or jeweller.
4	**Theft.** They stole it. Or someone wanted them to steal it.
5	**Recruitment.** A stranger placed a stone in their hand and asked what they heard.
6	**Rift.** They were there when reality opened, and afterwards the stone lay in their hand.

D6	What they heard the first time
1	A whisper in a language they did not know
2	Their own name
3	A melody without words
4	Numbers. The same numbers over and over
5	The voice of someone long dead
6	Nothing. But the candle next to them suddenly burned blue

The Path to the Collegium

Anyone who touches a crystal and hears something will sooner or later attract attention. The Collegium has its own ways of finding such people, and not all of them are friendly.

D6	Who brought them to the Collegium?
1	A man in a grey coat who stood in their office without an appointment
2	An antiquarian who sold them a stone and came back a week later to ask what they heard
3	A doctor to whom they told about the voices and who called a number not in any directory
4	A Crystal Master who pursued a stolen stone and found an apprentice instead of a thief
5	A collector who wanted to use them. O.D.I.N. arrived just in time.
6	They themselves. They followed the whisper until they stood before the door of a bookshop that did not exist.

```
RULE: CHECKLIST FOR THAUMATURGES
Magic Energy: CHA + WIS + INT. It is also the capacity.
Spells at creation: the three abilities of the school, plus cantrips equal to capacity ÷ 3 and Minor Magica equal to capacity ÷ 6, each rounded down.
Equipment: crystal shard, spellbook, amulet of concentration, magical robe, alchemist's kit, plus the school's equipment.
Title: Apprentice in the first circle of the Collegium. Seal: no nodes yet.
Tip: Set your school's attribute to 4 or 5 and don't leave CHA and WIS at 1. Every point in them is also a point of Magic Energy.
```

Why They Stay

Thaumaturges are with O.D.I.N. voluntarily. That does not mean they could easily leave: without the Collegium they have no crystals, and without crystals the whisper in their head is only a memory. The following archetypes describe why Thaumaturges remain loyal to the art.

The Scholar

He wants to understand. The crystals are for him the greatest mystery in human history, and he is one of the few who are allowed to work on them. Missions are field research for him. The question for his game: How far will he go for an answer?

The Keeper

He has seen what a crystal does in the wrong hands. He is with the Collegium so that it does not happen again. He takes the Crystal Ledger more seriously than any Crystal Master. The question for his game: What does he do when an ally withholds a crystal?

The Addict

He loves the feeling when the world obeys him. He casts spells more often than necessary and longer than is wise. He would never call it that, but he experienced his last day without a crystal in his pocket years ago. The question for his game: What remains of him when the stone is taken from him?

The Heir

His family has belonged to the Collegium for generations. He grew up with circles and crystals, with table talk about Nordlicht and Holloway. He never wanted anything else, or never dared to want anything else. The question for his game: Who would he be without his name?

The Doubter

He does not trust the stones. He uses them because he must, and he considers every voice he hears a possible lie. He is the most cautious Thaumaturge in the cell. The question for his game: What happens when the stone tells him something true?

The Caller

He hears more than others. The Whisper speaks to him more clearly, more personally, and sometimes he answers. He is with O.D.I.N. because the Collegium is supposed to help him understand it. Or because he hopes that no one takes it away from him. The question for his game: Who is actually calling whom?

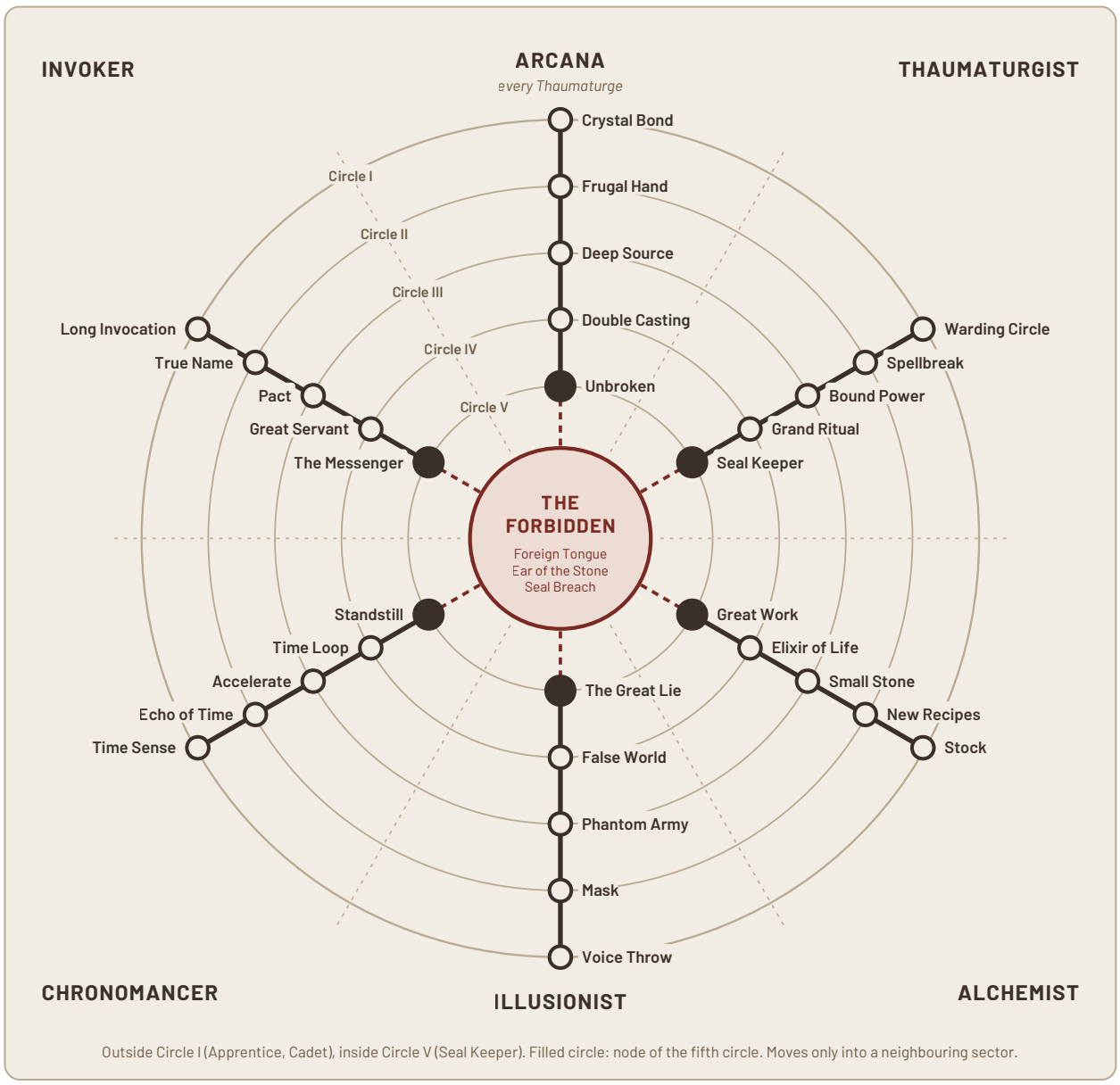
```
RULE: ARCHETYPE AND DRIVE
A Thaumaturge can use their archetype as a drive instead of a drive from the Core Rulebook. They reduce 1 strain once per mission when they make a difficult decision in accordance with their archetype.
```

The Seal

"The art has no summit. It has a centre. And the closer you come to it, the quieter you should become."

From the Handbook of Circles

The class tree of the Thaumaturges is not a tree, but a circle: the **Seal of the Collegium**. It shows how a Thaumaturge, with growing experience, penetrates deeper into the art. Whoever grows does not go upward, but inward, from Circle I at the edge to Circle V near the Center. And in the Center lies what the Collegium forbids.



Outside Circle I (Apprentice, Cadet), inside Circle V (Seal Keeper). Filled circle: node of the fifth circle. Moves only into a neighbouring sector.

Structure

- **Six sectors.** Each of the five schools has its own sector. The sixth, the **Arcana**, is open to every Thaumaturge.
- **Five circles.** Each sector has one node per circle. The circles correspond to the titles of the Collegium and the ranks of O.D.I.N.
- **One path per sector.** Unlike with the Psions, nothing branches here. The path only leads deeper.
- **Neighbourhood.** The sectors lie in a fixed order in the circle. Anyone who wants to learn another school can only switch to a **neighbour**.
- **The Center.** The forbidden. Three nodes that every Thaumaturge can reach and none should reach.

Rules for Nodes

Circle	Title	Rank	Cost
I	Apprentice	Cadet	4 XP
II	Adept	Agent	6 XP
III	Magister	Senior Agent	8 XP
IV	Archivist	Veteran	10 XP
V	Seal Keeper	Shadow Officer	12 XP

- A node can only be purchased once the Thaumaturge has reached the rank and possesses the node of the previous circle in the same sector.
- The Arcana are open to every Thaumaturge at the normal cost.

- **Neighbourhood:** The order in the Seal is Arcana, Thaumaturgist, Alchemist, Illusionist, Chronomancer, Invoker, and then Arcana again. A Thaumaturge may acquire nodes from **one** neighbouring sector of their own school, each for 2 XP more, and there at most up to the circle they have reached in their own sector.
- **Active nodes** use the attribute listed with the node and Thaumaturgy, unless otherwise stated, and have difficulty Doable (2). ME costs are listed with the node. If a node with a test names no attribute, the first attribute of its school in the table at the beginning of this chapter applies. Overcasting applies as in the Core Rulebook.

The sectors of the five schools are each at the end of their chapter, from Chapter VII onwards. Here follow the Arcana, which are open to every Thaumaturge, and the Center of the Seal.

Arcana

Circle	Node	Effect
I	**Crystal Bond**	Passive. With their own crystal, entered in the Crystal Ledger for them, +2 ME capacity.
II	**Frugal Hand**	Passive. Once per scene, a cantrip costs no ME.
III	**Deep Source**	Passive. A short rest restores 50% instead of 25% of ME.
IV	**Double Casting**	Once per scene, the Thaumaturge casts two cantrips with one action.
V	**Unbroken**	Passive. When overloading, only every second missing ME point costs 1 strain, rounded up.

The Forbidden

"In the Center of the Seal stands no spell. There stands a question. Whoever answers it does not come back entirely."
Seal Keeper, name redacted

The Collegium does not teach the Center of the Seal. The three nodes there are in no textbook, only in the Black Library, and most Thaumaturges who master them have learned them from the Whisper itself. The Collegium knows of everyone who has acquired them. Mostly.

Node	Prerequisite and Effect
Foreign Tongue	*Veteran, Circle IV in own sector, 10 XP.* Once per mission, the Thaumaturge casts a known spell without a crystal.
Ear of the Stone	*Veteran, Circle IV in own sector, 10 XP.* Once per mission, the Thaumaturge asks a crystal a question. The game master answers truthfully, but not necessarily completely.
Seal Breach	*Shadow Officer, one of the two other nodes, 12 XP.* Once per campaign, the Thaumaturge casts any Grand Major Magica without ME and without a test, as a critical success. Afterwards, a rift opens nearby.

Whisper

Each node from the Center increases the Thaumaturge's **Whisper** by 1. Also each Nexus crystal and each Nordlicht stone that they carry with them for longer than one night increases it once by 1. The Whisper is noted on the character sheet and never decreases. Whisper that an artefact adds as its price, however, applies as in the Core Rulebook only until the end of the mission, unless stated otherwise for the artefact.

Whenever the Thaumaturge uses a node from the Center, overloads, or botches a spell test, the game master secretly rolls a D6. If the result is equal to or less than the Whisper, **the stone answers**. What that means is decided by the game master. The Game Master's Book gives them suggestions.

Play Example: The Seal Grows

Retorte, the alchemist, has collected 22 XP after four missions and has thus reached the rank of Agent. Her player considers what to buy.

The Options. In her own sector she has nothing yet. The Circle I node Stock costs 4 XP. After that she may buy New Recipes for 6 XP, because she is now an Agent and possesses the node below it. The Arcana are also open to her: Crystal Bond for 4 XP. And a neighbouring sector, Thaumaturgist or Illusionist, each for 2 XP surcharge, but only up to the Circle she has reached in her own sector.

The Decision. The player takes Stock (4) and New Recipes (6), plus Crystal Bond (4), and increases Medicine from 2 to 3 (6). That is exactly 20 XP. Two remain.

The Consequences. Retorte can now carry three elixirs for a week, knows Antidote, Night Eye, and Flame Skin, and her Magic Energy increases with her own crystal from 12 to 14. In the next mission, she brews an Antidote and a Flame Skin before departure. The cell will need both.

Frequently Asked Questions

Can a Thaumaturge carry two crystals at the same time? Yes. But they always cast with only one, and switching costs an action. The crystal setting with the modification Second Stone from Chapter VI cancels this.

What happens if the crystal is lost in combat? The Thaumaturge can no longer cast spells until they find it again or touch another one. After 24 hours, the restlessness from Chapter V begins.

Can I take a node from the Center of the Seal without anyone noticing? In the game, yes. The Collegium knows of everyone who reaches the Center. Mostly. The game master decides whether someone notices this time.

Do I have to note Whisper if I never take a node from the Center? Only if you carry a Nordlicht stone or Nexus crystal for longer than one night. Or if you use an artefact whose price is Whisper. That then applies until the end of the mission. Otherwise your Whisper remains at 0.

Do the spells from this book also apply to spellcasters of other classes? No. Only Thaumaturges can cast spells.

Do Thaumaturgists and Invokers have only one neighbour? Practically yes. One of their two neighbouring sectors is the Arcana, which is open to everyone anyway. Therefore, the Arcana are the natural second path for them, and the Collegium considers both schools to be the most closed.

New Spells

"Every spell in this chapter has cost someone their life. Mostly the one who first spoke it."
Archivist, Chamber

The following spells supplement the lists from the Core Rulebook, Chapter IX. They are learned as there. Major Magica are available from the rank of Senior Agent, Grand Major Magica from the rank of Veteran. Some of the spells have been reconstructed by the Collegium from old manuscripts. The game master may require that a Thaumaturge first studies them in an archive.

Cantrips (1 ME, Easy)

Crystal Chime (WIS, 10 m, instant). The Thaumaturge recognises whether there is a crystal within range, and whether it is clear, cloudy or depleted.

Ink Shadow (INT, touch, one hour). A written page becomes unreadable to everyone except the Thaumaturge.

Candle Call (CHA, 10 m, instant). All candles and open flames within range ignite or extinguish themselves.

Minor Magica (3 ME, Doable)

Lead Skin (INT, touch, one scene). The target is invisible to psionic detection and mind reading, as if wearing a lead box around their head.

Retrospection (WIS, touch, instant). The Thaumaturge learns who last held an object in their hand, and sees their face for a moment.

Frost Seal (INT, 10 m, one scene). A door, a window or a hatch freezes shut. Opening it requires STR + Athletics against the Thaumaturge's successes.

Circle of Silence (INT, 3 m radius, one scene). No sound escapes the circle. Anyone casting a spell or performing a ritual inside is also not heard by psions.

Major Magica (5 ME, Hard)

Crystal Breaker (WIS, 20 m, instant). A crystal within range shatters. Anyone using it to cast a spell at that moment suffers 2 strain and loses the spell. Nexus crystals are immune.

Wandering Circle (INT, self, one scene). A warding circle moves with the Thaumaturge. Beings from rifts cannot come closer than 2 m to them.

Second Sight (WIS, self, one scene). The Thaumaturge sees rifts, crystals and bound spells within sight. They recognise illusions as such, and invisible beings as shimmering outlines.

Grand Major Magica (8 ME, Very Hard)

Holloway's Door (INT, touch, once per mission). The Thaumaturge opens a door in a wall, a floor or a rock and connects it to another door they have touched in the last 24 hours. The connection lasts three rounds. Afterwards 2 strain.

Banishment (WIS, 30 m, once per mission). A being from a rift or a summoned being is sent back to where it came from. Opposed test against its WIL or its attack. If the test succeeds, the being disappears and cannot return during this mission.

EXAMPLE: A SPELL GOES WRONG

Pendel has only 2 ME left after a long mission when a cult leader prepares a fireball. She casts Counterspell, a Major Magica for 5 ME against Hard (3). The three missing points become 3 strain.

She rolls WIS 5 white and Thaumaturgy 5 coloured dice, plus 1 white bonus die from her Nordlicht stone. White: 1, 1, 3, 2, 5, 1. Coloured: 1, 2, 3, 4, 3. That is 2 successes and four ones: the test fails, and because more ones than successes are rolled, it is a botch.

On the Crystal Rift table (Core Rulebook, Chapter IX) she rolls a 5: rift in the crystal. Until she has it healed (Chapter V), she casts with −1 die.

Because she overextended and botched, the game master rolls secretly against her Whisper of 1. A 1 is rolled: the stone answers. The game master notes something and says nothing. Pendel only notices that her stone becomes warmer for a moment, even though it has just cracked.

Chapter V.
THE CRYSTALS

The Crystals

"A Thaumaturge without a crystal is like a translator without a book. He still knows how the language sounds. But there is nothing left to translate."
Archivist Elara Voss

Without a crystal there is no magic. This sentence is in the Core Rulebook, and it is the most important rule in the life of every Thaumaturge. The crystal is not a tool like a weapon or a scanner. It is the source, the counterpart, the voice that the Thaumaturge translates. No Thaumaturge at O.D.I.N. is operational without one, and none parts with it voluntarily.

The Last Look

The Crystal Master of Hold-4 was called Aldous Wren, and he had been in service for 31 years, and in that time he had received 212 exhausted crystals. He knew the number exactly, because it reminded him of Nordlicht every time.

Today the 213th came.

The Thaumaturge who brought it was in her mid-forties, with grey streaks in a braid and hands that trembled slightly. She placed the lead box on the counter and did not open it.

"Entry 3,408," she said. "Clear crystal, found in Peru, 1951. Handed over to me in April 2004."

Wren opened the Crystal Ledger. He did not need to search. He remembered the handover. She had been an Adept then, young, very serious, and she had looked at the stone like someone holding a child in their arms for the first time.

"Exhausted?" he asked.

"Since yesterday evening." She opened the box. The crystal inside was grey, through and through, like a piece of slate from the roof of a Welsh chapel. "I drew a warding circle, in Rotterdam. It held. And then the stone stopped whispering. Just like that. Mid-sentence."

Wren nodded. It was almost always like that. The stones did not announce it. They stopped, like a clock whose spring has run down.

He entered the record. Date, time, place of exhaustion, last spell. He did it slowly and carefully, with the fountain pen he had used for 31 years. Then he pushed the book towards her so she could sign.

She did not sign immediately. She took the stone out of the box again, between thumb and forefinger, and held it up to the light of the lamp above the counter. Just as everyone did. The last look, they called it in the Collegium, and no one remembered who had started it.

Wren looked away. He always did that. It was only proper.

"He once saved my life," she said quietly. "In Antwerp. I spoke him wrongly, and he still did it."

"They do that sometimes."

"Do you think he knew? That he would stop?"

Wren did not answer immediately. In 31 years, no one had asked him that, at least not so directly. He thought of the 212 stones from Nordlicht that had fallen silent in a single night, and of the reports he was not allowed to read, and of the entries of recent years that were becoming clear again at the edges.

"I believe," he said finally, "that they know more than we do. And say less."

She put the stone back in the box, closed the lid, and signed. Her new crystal was already ready, a shard from a rift find, entry 9,117. She took it without looking at it.

Wren carried entry 3,408 down to the archive, to the third basement level, where the exhausted stones lay in long rows, each in its box, each with its number. He placed the box in its place and stood still for a moment.

He could have sworn that something whispered softly in one of the rows behind him. But that could not be. Down here lay only those who had already said everything.

What a Crystal Is

After a hundred years of research, the Collegium knows astonishingly little. Crystals look like clear quartz, but are harder than diamond and lighter than glass. They always feel a little warmer than their surroundings. They react to lead, which dampens their whispering, and to Alloy S, which swallows it entirely. They cannot be cut, melted, or artificially produced. And they exhaust themselves: a crystal that has spoken too much becomes cloudy and grey like slate.

What they are, no one of the rank of Apprentice, Adept, or Magister knows. The Archivists remain silent. The Seal Keepers too.

How a Crystal Feels

Anyone who has never held a crystal imagines something cold, glass or ice. It is the opposite. A crystal lies in the hand like a stone that has lain in the sun all day, and it becomes warmer the longer you hold it. You do not hear the whispering with your ears. Most Thaumaturges describe it as something in the breastbone, like the hum of a ship's engine below deck.

When casting, this changes. The Whisper becomes clearer, then suddenly silent, and into this silence the Thaumaturge speaks. Experienced Thaumaturges say that in this moment they do not cast, but listen, and that the spell is only the echo. Afterwards the stone is cool for a moment. It is the only time it feels like that, and many fear this moment more than any crystal rift.

The Types of Crystals

The Core Rulebook distinguishes four types. The Collegium also knows crystals of special origin, which are requested through the Crystal Master. The game master decides whether one is available.

Crystal	Effect
Crystal shard	No bonus. The standard for every apprentice. *Commonly via O.D.I.N., €1,500.*
Clear crystal	+1 die on casting tests. *Rare, €6,000.*
Resonance crystal	+2 dice, rolled separately. Each 1 on these bonus dice costs 1 strain. *Very rare, €15,000.*
Nexus crystal	Not controllable. A plot device. *Unique.*
Anatolian shard	A shard from one of the seven stones from Holloway's chamber in Anatolia. Like a crystal shard, plus +1 die to interpret circles, signs and old manuscripts. Barely a dozen recorded. Sometimes the Crystal Master gives one to an apprentice as a first stone. *Very rare.*
Andes crystal	+1 die on all tests with Alchemy. Smells slightly of silver. *Rare.*
Monastery stone	+1 die on Ritualism. Whoever carries it sometimes dreams of prayers. *Rare.*
Nordlicht stone	One of the 212 exhausted crystals from Nordlicht, become clear again at the edges. Like a clear crystal, +1 Whisper. *Very rare.*
Rift find	A crystal found at a rift since 2011. Like a resonance crystal, but each 1 on the bonus dice costs 2 strain. Origin unclear. *Rare.*

The First Night

"One forgets the first spell. Never the first night."
Magister, Hold-4

A crystal belongs to no one, but it gets used to someone. The Collegium calls this the **bond**, and it always begins the same way: The Thaumaturge takes the new stone into their room, does not put it in the lead box, and sleeps next to it, or tries to. Most lie awake until morning and listen.

The next day, they fill in the column "Voice" in the Crystal Ledger: what they heard, in their own words, as precisely as possible. No Crystal Master corrects these entries, and no one comments on them. But everyone reads them.

```
RULE: THE BOND
Whoever casts with a new or unfamiliar crystal
rolls with −1 die, until they have spent a
night with the stone and filled in the column
"Voice".
Only after that does the crystal count as
their own, for example for the node Crystal
Bond and for the rule "Those Without a Stone".
A Thaumaturge is always bound to only one
crystal. If they bind a new one, the old bond
dissolves.
```

D6	What is written in the column “Voice”
1	An old woman counting slowly, always up to seven, then from the beginning.
2	Rain on a tin roof. Beneath it, very quietly, someone spelling my name.
3	A child humming the same four notes. I know the song. I do not know from where.
4	A man dictating in Latin, patiently, as if waiting for me to keep up.
5	Nothing. But around three in the morning the room became colder and the stone warmer.
6	My own voice, a second too early.

The History of the Crystal Ledger

The first Crystal Ledger was a school exercise book. Margaret Holloway began it in 1923 in Anatolia, on the back of her excavation diary, with seven entries: number, size, colour, find location, and in a separate column, what she heard when touching. This column still exists today. It is called “Voice”, and every Thaumaturge who receives a new crystal must fill it in after the first night.

In 1926 the Collegium transferred the booklet into a bound register. In 1947, with the treaty, it became an obligation for all of O.D.I.N. Today there are five copies in five places, and the Crystal Masters compare them every month. A discrepancy between two copies is the worst incident a Crystal Master can experience.

Every Thaumaturge knows some peculiarities of the Crystal Ledger:

- **The numbers are never reassigned.** An exhausted or lost crystal keeps its number forever.
- **The column “Voice”** is never evaluated, not officially. But it is read.
- **The entries from the night of Nordlicht** are the only ones in the whole book where under “Exhaustion” the same time is written: 22:10.
- **Since 2011** some new entries carry only an abbreviation under “Find location”. Crystal Masters do not ask what it means.

The Crystal Ledger in Practice

Every crystal is recorded in the Crystal Ledger, and every Thaumaturge has more to do with the Crystal Master of their Hold than they would like.

- **Requesting.** A new crystal is requested with justification. The Crystal Master checks whether the Thaumaturge can control it and records the handover. This takes days, sometimes weeks.
- **Carrying.** The Thaumaturge always carries their crystal on them. At night it lies in the lead box.
- **Using.** After each operation, the report notes which spells were cast with which crystal. Crystal Masters recognise from these entries when a stone is becoming exhausted.
- **Losing.** A lost crystal is reported immediately. A questioning follows. Anyone who loses a crystal twice does not receive a third.
- **Finding.** Every found crystal is reported within 24 hours. Anyone who finds one and remains silent is considered a thief.
- **Returning.** An exhausted crystal goes back to the archive. It is never thrown away, never.

In play: The game master always knows which crystal a Thaumaturge carries. A crystal that is not in the book is a story in itself, and usually a dangerous one.

The Crystal Master

In every Hold with a crystal archive there is a **Crystal Master**, usually a Thaumaturgist with the rank of archivist. They keep the copy of the Crystal Ledger, issue crystals, take back exhausted ones and sign every handover. They are the only person in the Hold who knows which Thaumaturge carries which stone, and they never forget it.

Crystal Masters are considered pedantic, suspicious and incorruptible, and most are all three. Anyone who gets on well with their Crystal Master receives a new shard in three days instead of a week. Anyone who lies to them receives no more.

O.D.I.N. / ARCANE BRANCH / HANDOVER PROTOCOL

Entry 9.301

Crystal: shard, clear with grey rim, 6 g, found in Marseille, in a house wall, 2019

Handed over to: HADDAD, N. / codename RETORTE / title apprentice

Column “Voice”, after the first night: A woman reads a recipe aloud in Arabic. After each step she pauses, as if waiting until I am finished.

Note by the Crystal Master: Handover regular. The recipient asks whether the stone is poisonous. No.

Exhaustion

No crystal lasts forever. The Core Rulebook is silent on when a crystal becomes exhausted. The Collegium has empirical values, and the following rule represents them. It is optional.

RULE: EXHAUSTION OF CRYSTALS

Every crystal has a hidden value, its depth. The game master sets it or rolls: crystal shard 3D6, clear crystal 4D6, resonance crystal 5D6.

Each Grand Major Magica and each overcasting with this crystal lowers the depth by 1.

When the depth reaches 0, the crystal falls silent. It is exhausted.

The game master may have a stone announce beforehand that it is growing tired: the Whisper becomes quieter, the colour duller. But they do not have to.

Damaged Crystals

A crystal is harder than diamond, but not indestructible. A botch while casting can trigger a **rift in the crystal** (Core Rulebook, chapter IX), and the spell Crystal Breaker makes a stone shatter. A cracked crystal continues to whisper, but brittle, with dropouts, like a radio with a loose connection.

RULE: RIFTS AND SHARDS

Healing a rift: a ritual in the workshop, one night, 3 ME, test INT + Ritualism against Hard (3). If it succeeds, the penalty disappears. If it fails, the rift remains.

A broken crystal breaks into shards: a clear crystal into two, a resonance crystal into three. Each shard counts as a crystal shard and receives its own number in the Crystal Ledger.

A broken Nexus crystal is not a standard case, but an emergency. The game master decides what happens.

Crystal Masters repair reluctantly. A healed stone, they say, never whispers quite as before. Most Thaumaturges still want it back.

Requesting and Trading

A new crystal is requested through the Crystal Master. The waiting time depends on the type of stone and the rank of the Thaumaturge.

Crystal	Apprentice to Adept	Magister and higher
crystal shard	one week	three days
clear crystal	not available	three weeks, with justification
resonance crystal	not available	only with permission from an archivist
special crystals	not available	at the game master's discretion

Trading is allowed, but frowned upon. Two Thaumaturges who want to trade their crystals must both appear before the Crystal Master, and each must fill in the "Voice" column for the new stone anew after the first night. Most never trade. One does not trade one's voice either.

Customs

"One never places one's stone on metal. One never speaks about it in the same room where it sleeps. And one says thank you. Quietly, but one says thank you."
Thaumaturge, codename Retorte

Like Psions with their helmets, Thaumaturges have customs in handling their crystals. Most are superstition. Some are not.

- **The Lead Casket.** At night the crystal sleeps in lead. Whoever forgets this hears it until morning.
- **No Metal.** A crystal is placed on wood, cloth or stone, never on metal. Otherwise it is said to tire more quickly.
- **The Thanks.** After every major spell, many Thaumaturges thank their stone. Quietly, so no one hears.
- **The Name.** Many give their crystal a name. The Collegium dislikes this. No Thaumaturge says it aloud.
- **The Last Look.** Before an exhausted crystal goes to the archive, its bearer holds it up to the light one last time.

Your Crystal

D6	What makes your crystal special
1	It has a number in the Crystal Ledger that should not actually exist
2	It becomes warmer when someone lies
3	It previously belonged to a Thaumaturge who has disappeared
4	It whispers only when you are alone
5	It has a tiny inclusion that looks like an eye
6	It sometimes hums the same melody you knew as a child

The Chamber

"Whoever descends into the Chamber for the first time hears nothing. Whoever descends for the second time hears that it is too quiet."
Crystal Master, Wales

The slate quarry in Wales, to which the Collegium evacuated its crystals in 1940, is to this day the oldest archive of the Arcane Branch and, since Nordlicht, once again the largest. The tunnels reach almost a kilometre into the mountain, and in them are stored most of the exhausted crystals the Collegium has ever recorded, along with manuscripts, tools and crates whose contents only the archivists know.

Apprentices usually see the Chamber once during their training, on a guided tour that always ends at the same spot: a steel door in the third tunnel, behind which the path continues. What lies beyond is learned only from the rank of archivist. The guides like to say that the oldest crystals are stored there. That is true. It is just not everything.

For decades, an old man who never speaks and knows the archive better than any Crystal Master has lived in the Chamber. He is called the Keeper. He was Holloway's assistant. When apprentices pass him, he nods to them, and some swear that he hums a melody as he does so.

In Play: The Chamber is a good place for a mission in which something must be found, secured or brought back. And for one in which the cell goes too far into the mountain.

Those Without a Stone

A Thaumaturge whose crystal is taken from them loses not only their magic. They lose a voice with which they

have spoken every day for years. The first days are hard: sleeplessness, restlessness, a feeling of emptiness behind the forehead. Some describe it as withdrawal.

Rule: A Thaumaturge who is separated from their own crystal for more than 24 hours suffers 1 strain per day until they get it back or bind a new one to themselves. A foreign crystal does not still the restlessness, it only allows spellcasting.

The Collegium rarely uses this rule as punishment. But every Thaumaturge knows that it exists.

WHAT IS SAID ABOUT THOSE WITHOUT A STONE (D6)

1: There are Thaumaturges who can cast spells without a crystal. The Collegium calls them renegades. They call themselves free.

2: A Magister from Prague threw his stone into the sea twenty years ago. He still hears it today, every night when the tide is in.

3: The Crystal Masters keep the stones of those who have left. They continue to whisper, only for no one anymore.

4: Whoever lives long enough without a stone begins to whisper themselves in their sleep.

5: In the Pyrenees there is a house where former Thaumaturges keep silence together. They are recognised by the empty lead caskets they always carry with them.

6: Holloway never returned her last stone. It disappeared with her.

Chapter VI.
EQUIPMENT OF THE COLLEGIUM

Equipment of the Collegium

"A Thaumaturge carries little. But everything they carry has a history, and most of those end badly for the previous owner."
Crystal Master, Hold-4

The following equipment supplements Chapter X of the Core Rulebook. Most items are not bought, but requested from the workshop master, crystals from the Crystal Master (Chapter V). The equipment of the individual schools is in their chapters.

Basic Equipment

Every Thaumaturge receives the basic equipment from the Core Rulebook after training. The Collegium issues it in a wooden crate, on the lid of which the apprentice's number is written. Many keep the crate for life.

- **Crystal shard.** The stone with which every apprentice begins, usually the fragment of a larger crystal that shattered decades ago. It gives no bonus, but it is the first, and nobody forgets that.
- **Spellbook.** An empty book with a linen cover and a number on the spine. Without a spellbook, a Thaumaturge learns no new spells (Core Rulebook). What is written in it belongs to the Collegium as soon as they die.
- **Amulet of Concentration.** A flat pendant made of horn with an incised circle. +1 die on Concentration. With the amulet, the meditation of a short rest takes 5 instead of 10 minutes.
- **Magic Robe.** No Thaumaturge wears a robe on the street today. The Collegium sews the same threads into coats, jackets and waistcoats. The values remain: armour 1, +1 armour against spells and psi damage.
- **Alchemist's Kit.** A leather case with a spirit stove, three glass flasks, a small mortar and a set of scales. Necessary for elixirs and potions, even for Thaumaturges who are not alchemists.

Requesting Instead of Buying

The items in this chapter are in no catalogue. Some of them could be bought somewhere, but no Thaumaturge would think of it. You request, you justify, you wait.

```
RULE: REQUISITION
Items of the Collegium cost no money. The
Thaumaturge requests them from the workshop
master.
Common items are given to everyone. Rare from
the title Adept, very rare from Magister,
artefacts from Archivist and only for one
mission.
The game master decides whether the request is
approved. A good reason helps, a poor
relationship with the workshop master harms.
Consumed items are replaced after the mission.
Anyone who consumes more than they can explain
gets questions asked.
```

D6	What the Workshop Master Wants in Return
1	A detailed report. A really detailed one.
2	A sample from the mission: ash, water, a splinter, a feather
3	A night shift in the workshop, without asking what is being stirred there
4	That you take a parcel to another Hold, unopened
5	The "Voice" column of your own crystal, read aloud, loudly
6	Nothing. That is the most unsettling.

```
O.D.I.N. / ARCANE BRANCH / REQUEST
Applicant: SOLHEIM, I. / Codename PENDEL /
Title Magister
Requested: 1 hourglass with crystal sand, 2
sets of chalk, Holloway's lamp.
Reason: Echo recording in a building where
crystals from Nordlicht were stored until
1977.
Decision: Hourglass and chalk approved. Lamp
rejected, artefacts only from Archivist.
Note from the workshop master: She did not ask
why. That speaks in her favour. I. P.
```

The Workshop of the Collegium

In every larger Hold there is a workshop of the Arcane Branch, usually in the basement, usually next to the crystal archive, usually with a sign on the door forbidding entry to unauthorised persons. Here alchemists work on tinctures, craftsmen on settings and staves, and sometimes a Thaumaturgist on a circle that is too large for their room. The most famous workshop is that of Evan Pryce in Wales: there the incendiary ammunition was created in 1953, and there the ashsilver was forged from 1955 to 1989.

The workshops are run by **workshop masters**, usually alchemists of the rank of Magister. They manage tools, ingredients and chalk, and they decide who may work at which table. A Thaumaturge who gets on well with their workshop master receives better chalk, faster repairs and occasionally an item that is not on the list.

In play: The workshop is the place where modifications take place and artefacts are prepared. A visit there can be a small scene of its own, with a workshop master who asks questions.

Protection and Focus

Item	Effect
Lead box	Dampens the whisper of a crystal completely. Recommended at night. *Common.*
Horn crystal setting	Holds the crystal on the wrist, so that it does not have to be held while casting. Both hands remain free. *Rare.*
Collegium coat	Heavy wool coat with lead threads sewn in. +1 armour against magical damage, crystals in the pockets cannot be located. *Rare.*

Rituals

Item	Effect
Collegium chalk set	Consecrated chalk for warding circles and rituals. +1 die on Ritualism. *Rare.*
Ritual carpet	A roll-up carpet with a woven circle. A ritual can be started immediately without drawing a circle. *Rare.*
Incense from the Chamber	Rituals in its smoke are one step easier when dealing with beings from rifts. Enough for three rituals. *Very rare.*

Reconnaissance

Item	Effect
Crystal monocle	Shows crystals within 20 m as glowing dots, even through walls. *Very rare.*
Crystal pendulum	Swings in the direction of the nearest crystal within a radius of one kilometre. *Rare.*
Penhallow's Handbook (copy)	+1 die on tests to interpret foreign circles and signs. *Rare.*

The Alchemists' Dispensary

Every workshop has a cupboard to which only the workshop master has a key. Inside are remedies that are not elixirs in the sense of the rules, but household remedies of the Collegium, tested over decades. Some help. Some help in a way one should have thought about beforehand.

Remedy	Effect
Lead tincture	A drop on the tongue dampens the Whisper for one night. The Thaumaturge sleeps, but they cast spells with −1 die until morning. *Common.*
Chamber chalk	A bag of chalk dust from the Chamber, scattered into a warding circle: beings from rifts roll against this circle with −1 die. *Rare.*
Smelling salts after Pryce	Whoever smells it may immediately repeat a failed perception test against an illusion. *Rare.*
Tea from Cusco	A long rest lasts 4 instead of 6 hours. One dreams of silver while doing so. *Rare.*

Remedy	Effect
Nightshade essence	Removes 1 strain once per mission that was caused by overexertion. Afterwards for one hour −1 die on all tests with WIS. *Rare*.
Crystal oil	A drop on an exhausted shard lets it speak once more for a single cantrip. Afterwards it is permanently silent. *Very rare*.

Modifications

Wands, settings and ritual knives can be adapted in the workshop. Each modification takes one week and requires a test INT + Craft against the stated difficulty. An item can bear at most two modifications.

Modification	Effect	Difficulty
Silver core	A wand with a silver core gives +1 die on warding spells and spellbreaking.	Doable (2)
Lead sheathing	A crystal setting with a lead jacket. The crystal cannot be located as long as it is not used.	Doable (2)
Second stone	A setting for two crystals. The Thaumaturge switches between them without an action.	Hard (3)
Engraved circle	A ritual knife with an engraved warding circle. A circle drawn with it is immediately ready, the minute of preparation is omitted.	Hard (3)
Resonance bridge	Connects two crystals so that a spell is cast with both simultaneously: +1 die, but double ME costs.	Very hard (4)

A botch during the modification damages the item. The crystal itself does not lose any depth in the process.

Artefacts of the Collegium

Some items are only issued to Archivists and higher, and only for one mission. The skulls indicate the **danger** of an artefact, from one to five (Core Rulebook, chapter X). Whoever uses an artefact pays its **price**, regardless of which class they belong to.

Artefact	Effect
Holloway's Lamp ☠☠	The miner's lamp from the Anatolian chamber of 1923. In its light, every illusion becomes visible and every invisible being recognisable. Must be returned after the mission. **Price:** Whoever looks into its light hears a woman reading from a library: +1 Whisper per scene.
The Seventh Leaf ☠☠☠	A copy from MS Arcana 114. Whoever reads it may cast a spell they do not know once per mission, provided it is a Minor Magica. **Price:** +1 Whisper on first reading, and the spell costs 2 ME more.
Penhallow's Ashes ☠☠	A small casket with the ashes of the first Magister. Whoever carries it suffers no fire damage. Nobody knows why. **Price:** Whoever carries it freezes. Each night with the casket costs 1 strain.
Magister's Ring ☠	Identifies the wearer to other Thaumaturges as Magister or higher. Cannot be bought. **Price:** None, as long as the wearer deserves it. Whoever wears it without title is sought by the Collegium.

The Legacies of the Founders

Artefact	Effect
Quispe's Mortar ☠☠	The stone mortar in which Tomás Quispe ground his first tinctures. Elixirs prepared in it are automatically good. It still smells of silver. **Price:** Every elixir from the mortar costs the brewer 1 Whisper until the mission ends.
Lavigne's Music Box ☠☠	A small music box from the sisters' estate. While it plays, illusions in the room last twice as long. It plays a tune no one recognises. **Price:** Until the end of the mission, a woman the bearer did not summon stands in every illusion of theirs.
Dorje's Bell ☠☠	A small temple bell from the monastery in the Himalayas. Whoever rings it releases every summoned being within 30 m immediately. Invokers hate it. Invokers carry it. **Price:** Your own bonds tear as well. An Invoker within earshot suffers 1 strain.
Solheim's Pendulum ☠☠	A brass pendulum with a splinter from Nordlicht. It swings when a rift opens within a kilometre, and points in its direction. **Price:** It whispers in Norwegian. +1 Whisper for each day you carry it.

Artefacts are issued only to Archivists and above, only for one mission, and only with an entry in the Crystal Ledger, even if they contain no crystal. Anyone who loses one had better not come back, say the workmasters. They mean it as a joke. Mostly.

What Else Is in the Bag

Thaumaturges carry, besides their crystal and their book, a few things that appear on no equipment list. Everyone in the Collegium recognises a colleague by their bags.

D6	What You Always Have with You
1	A piece of chalk, too short to write with, but too important to throw away
2	An empty lead box, in case you find something on the way
3	A pencil stub and a notebook for what the stone says at night
4	A candle, a box of matches, and a thread of silver
5	A slip of paper with the number of the first crystal you ever had
6	Peppermint against the taste of metal after a major spell

O.D.I.N. / ARCANE BRANCH / LOSS REPORT

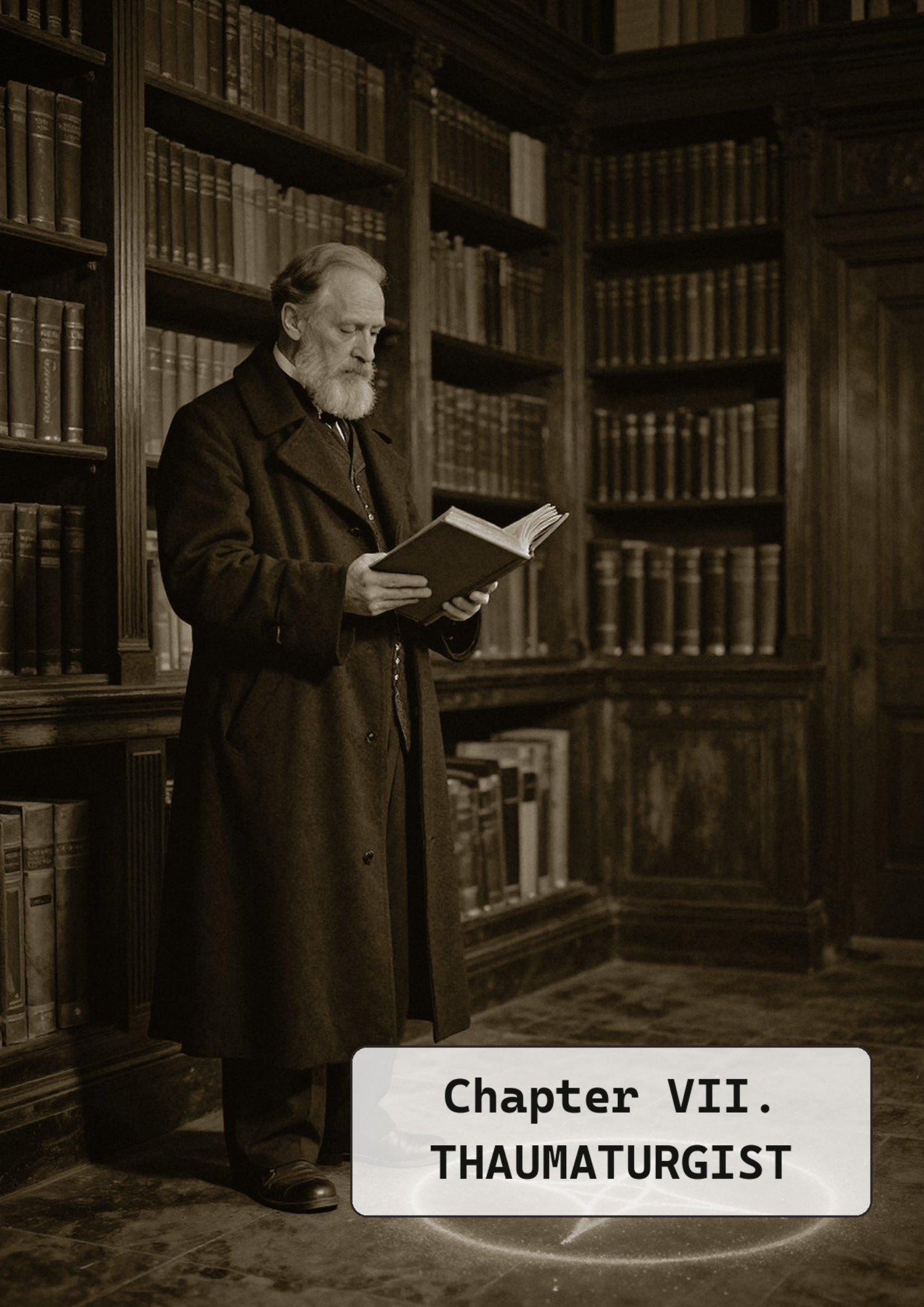
Item: The Seventh Leaf, copy 3 of 5.

Issued to: Magister, codename [REDACTED], for Operation GA-2077, Lisbon.

Whereabouts: According to the Magister, left in the hotel room to have both hands free for a warding circle.

Addendum: The copy turned up three months later in an antiquarian bookshop, pasted into a cookbook. The antiquarian bookseller had read it. His candles have burned blue ever since.

Measure: Issue copies only in lead folders. To the Magister, not at all.



Chapter VII. THAUMATURGIST

Thaumaturgist

"A spell is a contract with the world. Read the fine print."
Thaumaturgist, codename Folio

The Nature of the Art

Thaumaturgists are the classic mages of the Collegium. They understand the Whisper as grammar and spells as sentences that must be formed carefully. They work with circles, formulae and rituals, and their greatest strength is preparation. Whoever gives a Thaumaturgist ten minutes should not be standing in the same room afterwards.

THAUMATURGIST AT A GLANCE

Bonuses: +2 INT, +1 WIS. **Skills:** +2 Thaumaturgy, +1 Ritualism, +1 Alchemy. **Equipment:** spellbook, ritual knife, wand (+1 die on Thaumaturgy).

Ritual Master (passive, costs no ME): Rituals are one level easier for them and take only half as long.

Spell Amplification (INT + Thaumaturgy, self): The next spell in this scene deals +1 damage or lasts twice as long.

Magical Barrier (WIS + Thaumaturgy, 10 m, 3 rounds): One target gains +2 armour against physical damage.

Full rules: Core Rulebook, Chapter IV.

The Circle in the Stairwell

The stairwell smelled of floor polish and cold smoke. On the fourth floor of a prefabricated block on the edge of Leipzig, someone had been at work with chalk, and the building management had called the police, and the police had called a number that was on no list.

Folio knelt on the landing and looked at the circle. It was almost two metres wide, drawn cleanly, with seven signs at the edge. Behind him stood Brandt, rifle lowered, chewing on a piece of gum as if he could crush the silence with it.

"Well?" asked Brandt.

"One moment."

Folio pulled his notebook from his coat pocket and opened a page he had written three weeks ago at four in the morning. The same seven signs. The same order. Only that he had copied them from the Whisper back then, and here someone had painted them on a linoleum floor.

"It is not an invocation," he said slowly. "It is a door."

"A door to where?"

Folio did not answer. He had the crystal in his left hand, and the crystal had become warm, warmer than usual, and the Whisper inside it had changed pitch. It sounded as if someone on the other side of a corridor was tapping a fingernail against a wall. Quietly. Patiently.

"Brandt," he said, "would you please take two steps back?"

Brandt took three.

From his pocket, Folio took the chalk the Collegium had given him, consecrated in a ceremony he had thought silly until he had seen what a circle without consecrated chalk had done at a rift in Bristol. He began to draw a second circle around the first. Slowly. Steadily. The way Penhallow described it in his manual: not with the hand, but with the shoulder, so that the line does not tremble.

The tapping grew louder.

"Folio," said Brandt.

"I know."

In the flat to the left of the landing, the light went on. Someone came to the door, an old woman in a dressing gown and curlers. She looked through the peephole, saw two men in the stairwell, one with a rifle, one kneeling with chalk, and went back to bed. Folio would later write in his report that this woman had been the only sensible person in the whole building.

He closed the circle. The chalk broke off in the process, exactly in the last centimetre, and he pressed the stub with his thumb onto the floor until the lines touched.

The tapping stopped.

The crystal in his hand became cool, then cold, then as warm as always again. The Whisper returned to its usual pitch, like a radio switched on again after a thunderstorm.

"That was it?" asked Brandt.

"For tonight." Folio stood up, and his knees cracked. "Tomorrow morning someone from the Collegium will come and do it properly. Until then, no one should step over this line. Not even you."

"And who drew the inner circle?"

Folio looked at the seven signs. The handwriting was clean, practised, almost beautiful. He did not know it. But he recognised the order, and that disturbed him more than anything else that night.

“Someone who hears the same voices as I do,” he said.

The Keepers of Tradition

The Thaumaturgists are the oldest school of the Collegium. Holloway was one, Penhallow too, and for the first twenty years there was no other school at all. Everything the Collegium knows about the Art, Thaumaturgists have written down: the manual of circles, the foundations of banishment, the grammar of the Whisper.

After the war, Penhallow divided the Collegium into schools because he noticed that not everyone heard the same thing. The Thaumaturgists remained the core. To this day they provide most of the Crystal Masters, most of the archivists and all the keepers of the Black Library. Whoever wants to make a career in the Collegium cannot get past them.

That makes them powerful and unpopular. The other schools accuse them of treating the art as their property and the other schools as deviations. The Thaumaturgists would never say that. They would say that someone must preserve the rules so that the others can break them without dying in the process.

In recent years a split has emerged. The older Thaumaturgists, the so-called **Keepers**, adhere to Penhallow’s rule: You do not repeat what you do not understand. The younger ones, who call themselves **Readers**, believe that you understand the crystals faster if you try more. Since 2011 and the new crystals, the Readers have been gaining followers. The Keepers say they experienced the same thing once before in 1938.

Legend: Penhallow

Arthur Penhallow stood in flames for three minutes in the winter of 1928 without burning, and afterwards became the first Magister of the Collegium. He wrote the “Handbook of Circles”, according to which every apprentice is trained to this day, and he invented the warding circle, which has been drawn at every rift since then. He died in 1961, on the day the Veil Protocol came into force. His spellbook lies in the Black Library. The last page is empty, except for a single circle that no one can interpret.

The First Touch

Thaumaturgists hear the Whisper from the beginning as order. Many say that they were not frightened at first contact, but relieved, as if someone had finally finished a thought they had been starting all their lives.

D6	The First Touch of a Thaumaturgist
1	You heard how a sentence in a foreign language was constructed, and you could write it down immediately.
2	The circles on an old engraving suddenly formed a sequence.
3	You unconsciously drew a circle on the table with your finger, and the candle next to it went out.
4	A professor gave you a stone and said, “Read that.” You could.
5	You spoke formulas in your sleep. Your roommate recorded them.
6	You heard nothing. But you knew where the stone lay in the room, even though it was in a drawer.

A Day in the Life

A Thaumaturgist’s day begins early and quietly. Most get up before sunrise, because the Whisper is clearest in the morning hours, and spend the first hour with their spellbook: they read what they wrote down during the night, cross out what makes no sense, and transfer the rest into neat handwriting.

Afterwards come exercises. Drawing circles, with chalk, with the finger in sand, with closed eyes. A Thaumaturgist who has not drawn a circle for a week notices it in their hand. In the morning many work in the archive, read transcripts, compare signs, write reports for the Investigation Branch.

Missions come rarely and suddenly. Then the Thaumaturgist packs their chalk, their ritual knife, their book, and drives with a cell somewhere where someone has painted signs on a wall that they should not understand. In the evening, when they are back, they write everything down. And at night, when the stone lies in the lead box, they usually lie awake for a while and still listen.

Training

Thaumaturgists train the longest of all schools. An apprentice spends their first year almost exclusively with Penhallow's "Handbook of Circles", with transcripts and with exercises in which not a single spell is cast. They draw circles with chalk until they become round even with closed eyes. They learn to write down the Whisper without repeating it. Only then do they receive a crystal with which they may work.

The examination for adept is notorious: the apprentice receives an unknown sheet from the chamber, a crystal, and one night. In the morning they must be able to say what is on the sheet, and why they did not read it aloud.

Play Styles

The following play styles are suggestions, not requirements. The nodes mentioned are at the end of the chapter, new spells in Chapter IV, all others in the Core Rulebook, Chapter IX.

Play Style	Description
The Ward Master	Protective circles, seals, counterspells. They are the reason the cell survives a night at an open rift. *Nodes:* Warding Circle, Spellbreak.
The Ritualist	They rarely cast spells in combat, but when they have an hour of preparation, they change an entire mission. *Nodes:* Bound Power, Grand Ritual.
The Scholar in the Field	They are more investigator than fighter, read circles at crime scenes and know what a cult is planning. Combines well with Occultism and Academic Knowledge.
The Shield	Magical Barrier, Magical Armour, Counterspell. They do not stand at the back, but next to the Soldier and ensure that they survive the fight. Combines well with the Arcana Frugal Hand.

RULE: READING FORMULAE

A Thaumaturgist can learn a spell from a foreign spellbook, a manuscript, or a circle at a crime scene.

Extended test INT + Occultism, one roll per hour. Required successes: cantrip 5, Minor Magica 10, Major Magica 15. Grand Major Magica only in the Archive with permission.

If the test succeeds, the spell costs only half the usual XP, rounded down.

A botch costs 1 strain. The Thaumaturgist read a line aloud.

RULE: CIRCLE WORK

If a Thaumaturgist takes more time than necessary for a ritual or a warding circle, he receives bonus dice.

Double time: +1 die. Quadruple time: +2 dice.

If he is disturbed in the process, he must start over.

The Price

Thaumaturgists pay with time. They spend nights with their books, and many have hardly a life outside the Collegium. Their rituals require calm, and whoever denies them this calm gets an irritable, exhausted mage. The older Thaumaturgists also often speak in half sentences, as if they expected the other half from the stone.

OPTIONAL RULE: THE HALF SENTENCES

After a mission in which a Thaumaturgist has performed a greater ritual or a Grand Major Magica, he rolls WIL + Concentration against Doable (2).

If the test fails, he speaks in half sentences until the next long rest and waits for the rest that does not come: −1 die on all social tests.

D6	What the books have cost you
1	A marriage. She eventually stopped asking what you write at night.
2	Your eyes. You need stronger glasses than anyone else your age.
3	Your handwriting. It has become so small that only you can still read it.
4	Friendships outside the Collegium. There are none left.
5	Sleep. You sleep four hours and listen for the other four.
6	Nothing, you say. Your colleagues see it differently.

In Play

- **You are the expert on everything magical.** Warding circles, seals, counterspells. Ask the game master what you know about a phenomenon before the cell walks in.
- **Plan.** Your rituals are powerful but slow. Give the cell a reason to buy you time.
- **The question for your character:** How much of what you know did you understand yourself, and how much did the stone merely dictate to you?

For the game master: Give a Thaumaturgist opportunities to prepare and make them visible: a circle on the wall, a manuscript in the estate, an hour of calm before the storm. He is strongest when he can read something before it happens. Do not constantly take this time away from him, otherwise he only plays a weaker mage. Take it away sometimes so that he knows what he is planning for.

EXAMPLE: FOLIO DRAWS A WARDING CIRCLE

Folio, now an Agent, draws a warding circle around the cell in a cellar vault. He rolls WIS 4 white dice and Ritualism 5 coloured dice, plus 1 white bonus die from the Collegium's chalk set.

White: 6, 5, 2, 1, 5. Coloured: 4, 6, 3, 4, 2. That is 3 plus 3, so 6 successes against Doable (2). He pays 2 ME, the circle stands.

Shortly afterwards, a being from the rift presses against the line. The game master rolls 5 successes for the being. That does not exceed the 6: The circle holds, and Brandt has time to aim calmly.

Playing with Other Classes

A Thaumaturgist unfolds his strength when the cell buys him time. With a **Soldier** holding the corridor, he can draw a warding circle in peace. With an **Investigator** he reads crime scenes, and together they find more than either alone. An **Agent** can give him access to archives, collections, and cellars where the most interesting signs hang. And a **Psion** nearby is an early warning system: When the telepath hears the thirteenth voice, the Thaumaturgist should already have drawn his circle.

From the Files

MISSION REPORT, EXCERPT

Case GA-1877, Bristol. Rift in a decommissioned brewery.

Warding circle drawn with unconsecrated chalk, as chalk set was lost.

Circle held for four minutes. Afterwards [REDACTED].

Losses: 1 apprentice. Measure: Chalk set is to be carried in duplicate from now on.

MISSION REPORT, EXCERPT

Case RA-2044, Prague. Cult ceremony in a cellar vault.

Spellbreak against the celebrant successful. He then burst into tears and asked who had taken the word from him.

Remark by the Thaumaturgist: He did not have it from a book. He had it from a stone he should never have had.

Questions for Your Thaumaturgist

D6	What your character does not yet know
1	Why one page in his spellbook is written in a handwriting that is not his
2	Who drew the circle in the stairwell, and why they knew the same sequence
3	What is on the last page of Penhallow's spellbook
4	Whether he belongs to the Keepers or the Readers
5	Why his Crystal Master never looks him in the eye
6	What happens if he ever speaks aloud what he writes down at night

Equipment of the School

In addition to basic equipment, every Thaumaturgist receives a spellbook, a ritual knife, and a wand from the Core Rulebook. The wand grants +1 die on Thaumaturgy. In the Collegium, it is usually an inconspicuous ash staff with a silver ring, barely longer than a forearm. The ritual knife is not meant for fighting: it draws circles in earth, wood, and wax, and it cuts the threads of a bound spell when it is no longer needed. Most Thaumaturgists use the second spellbook as a fair copy.

Item	Effect
Handbook of Circles (copy)	+1 die on tests to interpret foreign circles and signs. *Rare.*
Collegium chalk set	Consecrated chalk. +1 die on Ritualism. *Rare.*
Ritual knife with silver inlay	Draws circles even in wood and stone. A warding circle drawn this way lasts one hour instead of one scene. *Very rare.*

The Others and Us

About the Alchemists: "They cook, we write. Both are needed, but only one of them is science."

About the Illusionists: "Talented people who waste their talent on variety shows."

About the Chronomancers: "When a Chronomancer gets nervous, I tidy up my circle."

About the Invokers: "We read what the stones say. They answer them. That is a difference one should not forget."

O.D.I.N. from the Thaumaturgists' perspective: a young, loud partner with an old, silent associate. The Thaumaturgists negotiated the treaty of 1947, and to this day they read it more carefully than the Council. They consider O.D.I.N. necessary and short-sighted at the same time: the organisation wants to know what a crystal can do. The Thaumaturgists want to know what it says.

Figures of the School

Magister Eleanor Birch. Head of training in Hold-1, a Keeper, strict, dry, fair. In thirty years she has not lost a single apprentice, and she mentions this at every opportunity. A good mentor for player characters who respect rules, and an unpleasant one for everyone else.

Adept Tomasz Wierzbicki. One of the leaders of the Readers, late twenties, brilliant, impatient. He believes that the Collegium has been treading water for a hundred years, and he tries out spells that he copies from new crystals. So far nothing has happened. So far.

Archivist Hugo Penhallow. Grandson of the first Magister, keeper of the Black Library, almost seventy. He knows the empty last page in his grandfather's spellbook better than anyone else, and he has a suspicion what the circle on it means. He does not speak it aloud.

Example Character: Folio

Thaumaturgist, Cadet. Konstantin Hale, 58, was a librarian in Oxford and secretly collected manuscripts that no one could read. He could. When he touched the first crystal, he knew what he had been reading all those years. His story is told in the prologue.

Folio	Thaumaturgist, Cadet
Attributes	STR 1, DEX 2, CON 2, INT 5, WIS 4, WIL 3, CHA 4, MAN 1, COM 2
Skills	Thaumaturgy 5, Ritualism 4, Occultism 4, Mental Resistance 4, Concentration 3, Academic Knowledge 3, Dodge 3, Perception 3, Alchemy 2, History 2, Toughness 2
Values	HP 10, strain threshold 9, initiative 2, defence 2, ME 13
Abilities	Ritual Master, Spell Amplification, Magical Barrier
Spells	Cantrips: Light Flash, Magical Flame, Invisible Hand, Trembling Hand. Minor Magica: Magical Armour, Flame Jet
Archetype	The Scholar

Equipment: Anatolian shard (entry 7.114, see prologue), spellbook, ritual knife, wand, Penhallow's handbook (copy).

How to play Folio: You are polite, thorough, and slow until it matters. You write down every night what your stone whispers, and you do not know who reads your notes in the Black Library. By the way, there is a second Folio: in the Investigation Branch, Folio is an inherited codename series of the Antiquarians, currently Folio-7 (class book Investigator). The two have never met.

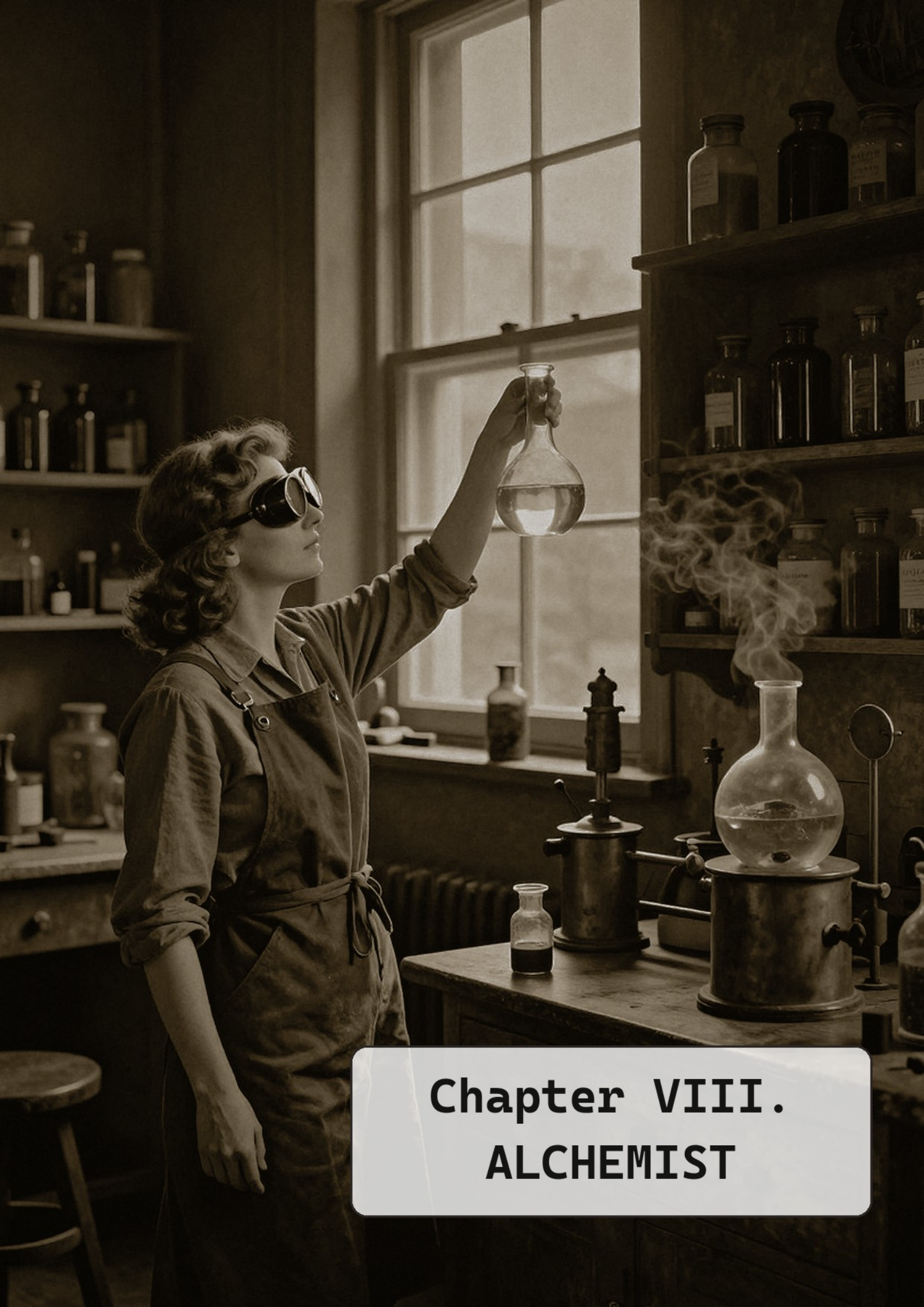
The Path Through the Seal

This is how Folio could grow over the next few years if his player sticks with tradition.

Rank	New Nodes and Advancements
Agent (20 XP)	Warding Circle 4, Spellbreak 6, Ritualism to 5 for 10. He is now the man the cell takes to every rift.
Senior Agent (50 XP)	Bound Power 8, Major Magica Counterspell 10, Crystal Bond 4, Frugal Hand 6. He always carries a bound protective spell in his ritual knife.
Veteran (100 XP)	Grand Ritual 10, Deep Source 8, Occultism to 5 for 10, Concentration to 4 for 8, he saves the rest. He may enter the Black Library. The question is whether he does.

The Sector in the Seal

Circle	Node	Effect
I	**Warding Circle**	1 minute, 2 ME, WIS + Ritualism. A circle 3 m in diameter that beings from rifts cannot enter as long as they do not exceed the Thaumaturge's successes in an opposed test. Lasts one scene.
II	**Spellbreak**	Reaction, 2 ME, INT. A spell cast within 15 m fails if the Thaumaturge scores more successes in an opposed test.
III	**Bound Power**	10-minute ritual. The Thaumaturge places a known spell into an object. Later they trigger it without a test and without an action, using the ritual's successes. Only one bound spell at a time.
IV	**Grand Ritual**	With one hour of preparation and three helpers, the Thaumaturge casts a Grand Major Magica for 4 ME instead of 8, even if they do not know it, provided they have its text before them.
V	**Seal Keeper**	Once per mission, 10 minutes, Very Hard (4). The Thaumaturge permanently closes a rift. Afterwards 3 strain.



Chapter VIII. ALCHEMIST

Alchemist

"Lead to gold is beginner stuff. Try turning fear into courage."
Alchemist, codename Retorte

The Nature of the Art

Alchemists bind the Whisper into substances. Instead of speaking a spell in the moment, they pour it into a liquid, a powder, an ointment, and store it until it is needed. Their art is craft, chemistry, and patience. An alchemist in the field carries their arsenal on their belt, and the cell quickly learns to ask before departure what they have brewed.

ALCHEMIST AT A GLANCE

Bonuses: +2 INT, +1 WIS. **Skills:** +2 Alchemy, +1 Thaumaturgy, +1 Craft. **Equipment:** Alchemist's kit, vials of essences, protective goggles.

Elixirs (INT + Alchemy, outside combat, 10 minutes): They brew an elixir of their choice: healing potion (heals 3 HP), strengthening potion (+1 die on tests of one attribute for one scene) or clarity potion (+2 dice on the next horror test). Per day at most as many elixirs as their Alchemy score. Elixirs lose their effect after 24 hours.

Transmutation (INT + Alchemy, touch, one scene): An object up to 10 kg changes its material: metal becomes brittle, wood becomes hard as steel, glass becomes flexible.

Alchemical Explosion (INT + Alchemy, throw 15 m, immediate): An explosive mixture. Damage 3 + margin in 3 m radius, also hits allies. Armour applies.

Full rules: Core Rulebook, Chapter IV.

Recipe 212

The ferry from Marseille to Ajaccio had been lying still for two hours, and no one on board knew why. The engines were running. The sea was calm. But the lights on the upper deck flickered in a rhythm that seemed familiar to Retorte, and for half an hour the corridors had smelled of sulphur.

She sat in a toilet cubicle on the lower deck, her rucksack on her knees, and mixed.

Outside the door lay Bastion, the cell's techno-stormtrooper, with a wound in his thigh that would not stop bleeding. Something had caught him in the engine room. He said it had been a man. Retorte had seen the wound. It had not been a man.

"How much longer?" he asked through the door. His voice was too calm.

"Three minutes."

"You've been saying that for five minutes."

"Then stop disturbing me, and it really will be three."

She had set up the field laboratory on the toilet lid. Glass flasks, a spirit stove, three vials of base essences, a mortar. The crystal shard lay beside it on a piece of felt, because metal made it tired and the washbasins on this ferry were made of stainless steel.

Recipe 212 from Quispe's foundational work. Wound closure. She had brewed it twenty times in the workshop, just as every apprentice brews it twenty times before they are allowed to try it with crystal dust. But never in a ship that rocked in a rhythm that did not come from the sea, and never with a stormtrooper outside the door whose blood ran under the door gap onto the tiles.

She counted. Temperature. Order. Patience. The Whisper in the shard was louder than usual, more insistent, as if it wanted to tell her to hurry. She did not hurry. Quispe had written two recipes on opposite pages, one that had saved his daughter, and one that had killed his dog, and the difference between the two was taking it off the fire half a minute too early.

The liquid became clear. Then golden. Then clear with a golden shimmer at the edge, and that was the moment.

She tore the door open. Bastion sat leaning against the wall, his face grey. She knelt down, poured half into his mouth and the other half directly into the wound. He did not scream. He was a stormtrooper, and stormtroopers do not scream. He only cursed, very extensively, in Czech.

The wound closed. Not quickly, not like in a film, but slowly, from the edges, like ice on a pond.

"That smells of silver," Bastion said when he could speak again.

"Andean crystal would have been better. I only had this one."

He looked at her. "And what do we do about the thing in the engine room?"

Retorte reached into her rucksack and took out a second vial, smaller, darker, with a wax stopper. Recipe 213. The opposite page.

“That,” she said, “none of us drinks.”

The Craftsmen

Alchemy was long a marginal phenomenon in the Collegium. Quispe was the only one who worked seriously on it in the twenties and thirties, and he lived in Peru, far from Oxford. His letters with recipes arrived months late, and the Thaumaturgists in England considered them folk medicine.

That changed during the war. In 1942 a tunnel collapsed in the chamber in Wales, and three members of the Collegium were buried. They survived because a young chemist from Cardiff, who had only been with them for a year, mixed an ointment according to Quispe’s recipes that healed broken bones in days. His name was **Evan Pryce**, and after the war he founded the first alchemical workshop of the Collegium. After Kiruna in 1953, he developed there with Major Ashgrove of the Tactical Branch the incendiary ammunition, projectiles with the dust of depleted crystals. From 1955 to 1989 his workshop produced the **ashsilver** of the Soldiers, each piece by hand. In 1989 the Collegium stopped production without giving a reason.

Since then the Alchemists have a fixed place, but not a high one. They are considered practical, useful and a little dirty. No Seal Keeper was ever an Alchemist. In the Holds they are nevertheless the most popular Thaumaturges, because they always have something for headaches in their pocket.

Since 2011 their position has changed. The new crystals have a peculiarity that no one can explain: their dust is twice as effective in elixirs as that of old crystals. The Alchemists were the first to notice this, and they are the only ones who are pleased about it.

Legend: Quispe

Tomás Quispe, the mining engineer from Peru who found three crystals in 1923, was the first Alchemist of the Collegium, long before he knew that he was one. He cooked tinctures from crystal dust in his kitchen in Cusco, because the Whisper told him that it works. One of them healed his daughter’s tuberculosis. Another killed his dog. He wrote down both recipes, and both stand today in the foundational work of the Alchemists, on opposite pages, so that no one forgets how close they are to each other.

The First Touch

Alchemists rarely hear the Whisper as words. They feel it in their hands, as a sense of which substance wants to change in what way. Many were previously craftsmen: pharmacists, cooks, chemists, goldsmiths.

D6	The First Touch of an Alchemist
1	You let crystal dust fall into a glass of water, and the water became heavy as mercury.
2	An ointment that you mixed by feel closed a wound overnight.
3	You polished a ring, and the silver became warm and soft like wax.
4	You brewed a tea after which a friend could sleep through the night for the first time in years.
5	Something in your laboratory exploded, and afterwards all the shards lay in a perfect circle.
6	You dreamed how to brew something, and in the morning the jar stood finished on the table.

A Day in the Life

Alchemists often wake up with the smell of the previous night in their hair. Many sleep in a room next to the workshop, because a potion that must steep overnight should not remain unattended. The day begins with checks: checking temperatures, labelling vials, disposing of expired elixirs.

After that, brewing begins. Healing potions for the infirmary, antidotes for the next mission, tonics for agents who have not slept for three nights. An Alchemist in a large Hold is a pharmacist most of the time, and he likes it. In the afternoon, visitors come: Soldiers with headaches, Scientists with questions, Thaumaturgists who need something but do not want to admit that they need it.

Before an operation, the Alchemist packs his belt. Each vial has its place, and he can find each one in the dark. That is more important than any recipe. Because on an operation you do not brew. On an operation you reach for something, and you should reach for the right one.

Training

The Alchemists of the Collegium train in workshops, not in libraries. An apprentice spends months re-cooking recipes from Quispe's foundational work, without crystal, just to learn the manual skills. He learns that temperature, order and patience matter more than any formula. Only when he has brewed a recipe twenty times without error may he try it with crystal dust.

The examination for Adept consists of a single potion that the apprentice must drink himself. He knows the recipe. Whether he has done it correctly, he finds out afterwards.

Play Styles

The following play styles are suggestions, not mandatory. The mentioned nodes are at the end of the chapter, new spells in Chapter IV, all others in the Core Rulebook, Chapter IX.

Play Style	Description
The Field Apothecary	Healing potions, antidotes, tonics. She is the supply of the cell. *Nodes:* Stockpile, New Recipes, Elixir of Life.
The Demolition Expert	Explosive mixtures, acids, smoke. He works closely with Soldiers and saboteurs. Combines well with Explosives and Chemistry.
The Transmuter	She changes matter. Doors become brittle, walls become glass, bonds become dust. *Nodes:* Small Stone, Great Work.
The Poisoner	He does not brew to heal. Sleeping agents, acids, poisons in vials that look like perfume. He works closely with assassins and infiltrators and is shunned in the Collegium. Combines well with Chemistry and Stealth.

RULE: QUALITY OF ELIXIRS

The margin when brewing determines the quality of an elixir.

No margin: standard, effect as described.

1 to 2 margin: good. Healing potions heal 1 HP more, other elixirs last one scene longer.

3 or more: masterful. The effect doubles.

A botch when brewing: The elixir works in reverse, or it explodes when opened (damage 2). The game master decides and only says so when someone drinks.

RULE: CRYSTAL DUST

An exhausted crystal shard can be ground into dust and used in elixirs. It gives +1 die when brewing, for up to three elixirs. Dust from crystals found after 2011 gives +2 dice.

Every shard used must be struck off in the Crystal Ledger beforehand. Whoever forgets this gets a visit from the Crystal Master.

The Price

Alchemists pay with their bodies. Anyone who inhales crystal dust for years gets grey fingernails, a metallic taste in the mouth, and sometimes dreams that smell of sulphur. And every alchemist has a scar they talk about, and one they keep silent about.

OPTIONAL RULE: DUST LUNG

If an alchemist brews more elixirs in one day than their CON value, they then roll CON + Toughness against Doable (2).

If the test fails, they cough crystal dust until the next morning: −1 die on all tests with DEX and CON. A botch means a night in the infirmary.

D6	The scar you keep silent about
1	A burn scar on the wrist, from a recipe you did not write
2	The grey fingernails. You wear gloves, even in summer.
3	A spot on the neck that glows very faintly at night
4	The taste of metal that has not gone away for years
5	The scar of a colleague who drank your elixir
6	No visible one. Since the accident, you dream in a foreign language.

In Play

- **You are the cell's preparation.** Before the mission, ask what awaits you, and brew accordingly.
- **Think in substances.** What can be transformed, strengthened, dissolved? A steel door is just a door made of a material you have not worked with yet.
- **The question for your character:** What have you mixed wrong once?

For the game master: At the start of each mission, ask the alchemist what they have brewed, and write it down. Reward good preparation, but also let the mission come differently than expected once, so that transmutation and explosion have their place. And do not forget the crystal dust: Every shard they grind up is in the Crystal Ledger, and eventually someone asks where all the shards are going.

EXAMPLE: RETORTE BREWS A HEALING POTION

Before setting out, Retorte brews a healing potion. She rolls INT 5 white and Alchemy 5 coloured dice, plus 1 white bonus die for crystal dust from a shard struck off in the Crystal Ledger.

White: 6, 3, 5, 2, 1, 6. Coloured: 4, 5, 2, 6, 1. That is 3 plus 3, so 6 successes against Doable (2) and 4 margin. She pays 2 ME.

According to the rule for quality of elixirs, the potion is masterful, its effect doubles: It heals 6 HP instead of 3. Retorte writes "212, m." on the label and puts it in the third loop from the left.

Playing with Other Classes

Alchemists are the most generous members of any cell. A **Soldier** with a strengthening potion hits better, an **Agent** with a clarity potion sees through lies faster, a **Psion** with an antidote survives the next psionic attack. The connection to the **Scientist** is close: biochemists and alchemists often work together, and the boundary between science and art blurs. Before each mission, plan with the cell what you should brew. That is your most important contribution.

From the Files

MISSION REPORT, EXCERPT

Case GA-1990, Lyon. Aquarium in the municipal zoo.

Crystal found between corals, 14 g, clear. Alchemist recommends securing the water of the tank.

Addendum: The fish in the tank have not aged since the find. Sample handed over to Hold-4.

WORKSHOP LEDGER, HOLD-2

Entry: Healing potion according to recipe 212, quality masterful, with dust from rift find 9.044.

Note: The patient is healed. Since then, they speak a language in their sleep that no one knows.

Recommendation of the workshop master: For the time being, use dust from rift finds only for non-humans.

Questions for Your Alchemist

D6	What your character does not know yet
1	What was in the second vial that she never opened on the ferry
2	Why dust from new crystals works twice as strongly
3	Who first tried the opposite page in Quispe's foundational work
4	Why her crystal becomes warmer when someone lies
5	Whether a tincture can silence a voice
6	Why the Collegium stopped ashsilver in 1989, and what happened to Evan Pryce when he left the workshop

Equipment of the School

In addition to basic equipment, every alchemist receives an alchemist's kit, vials of essences and protective goggles from the Core Rulebook. This gives them two kits, and most use the second as field equipment that is never fully unpacked. The vials contain the base substances of every elixir: salt, mercury, spirit of wine, crystal dust and a fifth essence whose label bears only a circle. The goggles are not a disguise. Every alchemist knows someone who lost an eye without them.

Item	Effect
Field Laboratory	A case with everything needed for elixirs. Elixirs can be brewed in half the time. *Rare.*
Asbestos Gloves	No damage from your own explosions and acids. *Common.*
Quispe's Primer	+1 die on Alchemy when brewing. Do not mix up the opposite pages. *Rare.*

The Others and Us

On Thaumaturgists: "They write a thousand pages about a spell that we pour into a vial."

On Illusionists: "Their art lasts three rounds. Ours lasts until you drink it."

On Chronomancers: "I would like one more day for every recipe. They would have it. They will not give it up."

On Invokers: "We transform substances. They negotiate with what stands behind. I know which I prefer."

O.D.I.N. from the Alchemists' Perspective: the greatest customer the workshops ever had. Alchemists view the organisation soberly. It supplies ingredients, laboratories and patients and demands results. They have little to do with the Council, all the more with the infirmaries of the Holds. Many alchemists feel more closely bound to O.D.I.N. than to the Collegium, and the Collegium knows it.

Figures of the School

Workshop Master Idris Pryce. Grandson of Evan Pryce, runs the workshop in Hold-2 and knows every alchemist in the Collegium by first name. He is friendly, generous and notes down every favour he grants. Player characters who have him on their side get almost everything. The others get a waiting period.

Magister Lucía Quispe. Great-granddaughter of Tomás Quispe, lives in Cusco and runs a small archive there. She is the only one who possesses the original manuscript of the Primer, and she claims that it contains a third recipe that appears in no copy.

Adept Mei Tanaka. A young alchemist who researches dust from rift finds and achieves results that no one can explain. She works at night, alone, and lately she talks in her sleep.

Example Character: Retorte

Alchemist, *Cadet*. Nadia Haddad, 31, was a pharmacist in Marseille. A customer brought her a stone he had found in the wall of his house and asked whether it was poisonous. She did not know. She knows today.

Retorte	Alchemist, Cadet
Attributes	STR 1, DEX 3, CON 2, INT 5, WIS 4, WIL 3, CHA 3, MAN 1, COM 2
Skills	Alchemy 5, Thaumaturgy 3, Occultism 3, Concentration 3, Academic Knowledge 3, Craft 3, Chemistry 3, Dodge 3, Perception 3, Medicine 2, Toughness 2, Explosives 1, Mental Resistance 1
Values	HP 10, Strain Threshold 9, Initiative 3, Defence 2, ME 12
Abilities	Elixirs, Transmutation, Alchemical Explosion
Spells	Cantrips: Magical Flame, Touch of Cold, Invisible Hand, Puddle Spell. Minor Magica: Transmute, Magical Armour
Archetype	The Scholar

Equipment: crystal shard, spellbook, alchemist's kit, vials of essences, protective goggles, asbestos gloves.

How to Play Retorte: You are practical, quick and a little too curious. Before every mission you ask what awaits you and brew accordingly. Your crystal grows warmer when someone lies, and you have not told anyone about it yet.

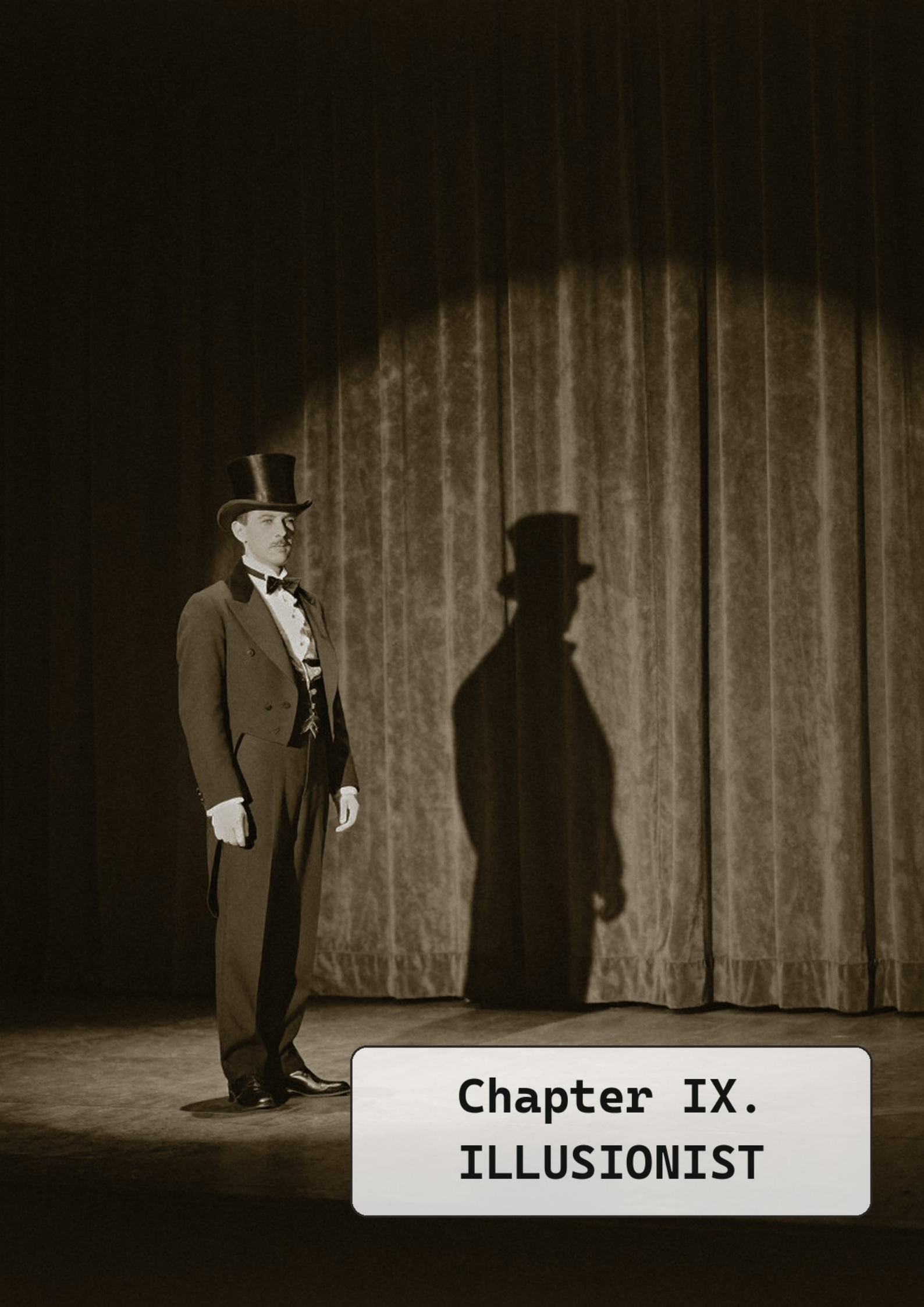
The Path Through the Seal

This is how Retorte could grow if she focuses on supplying the cell.

Rank	New Nodes and Increases
Agent (20 XP)	Stock 4, New Recipes 6, Alchemy stays at 5, Medicine to 3 for 6, Crystal Bond 4. She now always carries three elixirs.
Senior Agent (50 XP)	Small Stone 8, Major Magica Body Transmutation 10, Chemistry to 4 for 8, Biology new at 1 for 3. From a shard that she sacrifices for it, she now brews back her power.
Veteran (100 XP)	Elixir of Life 10, Frugal Hand 6, Alchemy to 6 for 12, Craft to 4 for 8, Medicine to 4 for 8. She saves the rest for the Great Work.

The Sector in the Seal

Circle	Node	Effect
I	**Stock**	Passive. Elixirs last a week instead of a day. The alchemist can carry up to three at once.
II	**New Recipes**	Passive. Elixirs can additionally be: antidote (ends a poisoning), night eye (see in darkness for one scene), flame skin (+2 armour against fire for one scene).
III	**Small Stone**	Once per day. The alchemist dissolves a crystal shard in a tincture and drinks it: 5 ME back. The shard is then exhausted and must be removed from the Crystal Ledger.
IV	**Elixir of Life**	Once per mission, one hour. An elixir that heals all HP and reduces 2 strain.
V	**Great Work**	Once per mission, 5 ME, Hard (3). The alchemist transforms up to one tonne of material or one room for one scene: walls become glass, steel becomes wood, water becomes stone.



Chapter IX. ILLUSIONIST

Illusionist

"The truth is what you believe you saw."
Illusionist, codename Spiegel

The Nature of the Art

Illusionists do not change the world, but its image in the minds of others. They speak the Whisper softly, almost only to themselves, and let it emerge as light and sound. Their magic is the most inconspicuous of the Collegium and often the most effective. An illusionist can make a cell invisible, distract a guard, or show a cult leader the form of their god.

ILLUSIONIST AT A GLANCE

Bonuses: +2 INT, +1 CHA. **Skills:** +2 Thaumaturgy, +1 Deception, +1 Performance. **Equipment:** Mirror of Deception (+1 die on illusions), Illusion Flask, Robe of Confusion.

Deception (CHA + Thaumaturgy, 10 m, 3 rounds): A visual and acoustic illusion up to the size of a car. Anyone who wants to see through it needs a Perception test against the illusionist's successes and rolls with −2 dice.

Shadow Play (INT + Thaumaturgy, 10 m, 3 rounds): Only in dim light or darkness. The illusionist and up to two allies receive +2 dice on Stealth, attacks against them roll with −1 die.

Invisibility (WIS + Thaumaturgy, self or touch, 1× per scene): The target becomes invisible until it attacks or three rounds have passed. It receives +2 defence and +2 dice on Stealth.

Full rules: Core Rulebook, Chapter IV.

Two Sisters

Paris, November 1958. The street behind the Gare de l'Est was wet and empty, and Margot Lavigne stood in a doorway counting lorries.

There were four. Green tarpaulins, French number plates, drivers in work jackets. In each lay twelve lead boxes, and in each lead box lay a crystal from the chamber, on its way to a new archive in the Vosges. The Council had kept the route secret. It had not been enough. At the other end of the street, in a black Citroën, sat two men who had been following the convoy since the station, and in a side street two more were waiting.

"Are you ready?" asked Odile beside her. She whispered, although no one could hear her. She had done that on stage, before every performance, since they were twelve.

Margot nodded.

They took each other by the hand. That was the only trick of their art that they had never revealed to anyone: that they mastered it best together. Alone, each of them could make a rabbit appear out of nothing. Together, they could make a street disappear.

The crystals in their coat pockets grew warm. Margot heard the Whisper of her own stone and beneath it, more quietly, that of Odile's, and as always they sounded for a moment like two voices singing the same song in different keys. Then they found each other.

The lorries continued straight ahead. That was the image the men in the Citroën saw: four green tarpaulins rolling slowly down the Rue d'Alsace, stopping at a red traffic light, continuing. The real lorries turned left, into an alley that did not exist in the illusion.

For three days the men in the Citroën followed four lorries through France that did not exist. The sisters held the image, taking turns, day and night, in a hotel room in Reims, their hands clasped, their eyes closed. On the morning of the fourth day, the false lorries drove into a forest and dissolved among the trees.

Margot opened her eyes. The hotel room was bright and silent. Her right hand was empty.

She never told anyone what she saw in that moment. Not the Council, not the Collegium, not her husband, whom she married two years later. Only her granddaughter, shortly before she died, and even to her only one sentence: that Odile had not left, but had gone along. With the lorries. Into the forest.

Since then, an illusionist in Vienna carries in his top hat a photograph of two women who look confusingly alike, and does not know which one was his grandmother.

The Mountebanks

Illusionists were long unwelcome in the Collegium. Penhallow considered them charlatans, and in the thirties two members were expelled because they showed their art in variety theatre. Only the war changed that. The Operations Branch needed camouflage, and no one camouflaged better than an illusionist.

After 1958 and the Lavigne convoy, the illusionists became the school with the closest ties to the Operations Branch. Many of them work almost exclusively with agents, and some have more cover identities than any spy. The Collegium views this with mixed feelings. Illusionists are often on assignment for months, rarely write reports, and carry their crystals in places where no Crystal Master can check them.

Within the school there is a tradition that goes back to the Lavigne twins: illusionists like to work in pairs. Many find a partner during training, and the best pairs stay together for life. The Collegium encourages this, even if it never speaks openly about what happened to Odile Lavigne.

Legend: The Lavigne Sisters

The twins Odile and Margot Lavigne performed as stage magicians in Parisian variety theatres in the 1950s, and no one in the audience suspected that their tricks were real. In 1958, at the request of the Council, they made an entire convoy carrying crystals disappear before the eyes of a foreign service. The agents followed an empty road for three days. The sisters never performed together again after that. It is said that one of them disappeared with the convoy, and the other has played both roles ever since.

The First Touch

Illusionists hear the Whisper as an image. They see what the stone says, and often only realise later that the others in the room saw it too.

D6	The First Touch of an Illusionist
1	You imagined a dove flying up on stage. The audience saw it. You had no dove.
2	A man who was following you ran past you, even though you were standing right in front of him.
3	Your reflection once smiled a second too late.
4	You told a child a story, and it saw the characters dancing on the wall.
5	In a photo of you, there was another person in your place. You remember that you wanted that.
6	During an argument, the person you were arguing with suddenly saw someone else in you and left crying.

A Day in the Life

There is no typical day for an illusionist, and that is what is typical about it. Those on assignment live for weeks as someone else: as a waiter in a hotel where a collector lives, as a nurse in a clinic where a cult recruits its followers, as a musician in a band that happens to play at events where crystals change hands.

Those not on assignment practise. In front of the mirror, on stage, in the canteen. Many illusionists perform in small theatres on their free evenings, under false names, with tricks that are real and that no one believes are real. They say it keeps the art alive. The Collegium says it is a security risk. Both are right.

And every illusionist has a ritual for the evening after a long assignment: the moment when they take off the last mask, look in the mirror, and make sure that the face in it is their own.

Training

Illusionists learn in two places: in an archive and on a stage. The Collegium sends every apprentice for a few months to a variety theatre, a theatre, or a circus that works with O.D.I.N. There they learn what every stage magician knows: people see what they expect. An illusion that contradicts expectations stands out. One that confirms them is believed.

The examination for adept takes place in a canteen of a Hold. The apprentice must sit among the agents for an hour as someone else, without anyone recognising them.

Play Styles

The following play styles are suggestions, not requirements. The nodes mentioned are at the end of the chapter, new spells in Chapter IV, all others in the Core Rulebook, Chapter IX.

Play Style	Description
The Shadow	Invisibility, Mask, Voice Throw. They are a second agent in the cell and often the better one. *Nodes:* Voice Throw, Mask.
The Confuser	They bring chaos to every fight. Illusions, false opponents, blinding. *Nodes:* Phantom Army, False World.
The Impostor	They use illusions for social situations: a false ID that looks real, a uniform, an apparition that forces a cultist to their knees. Combines well with Deception and Performance.
The Screen	They hide not themselves, but the others: shadow plays for the whole cell, invisibility for the wounded, a phantom army between the cell and the guns. *Nodes:* Phantom Army. Combines well with Time Sense from the neighbouring Chronomancer sector.

RULE: CREDIBILITY

An illusion that matches what observers expect gains +1 die. A guard expects a colleague, a cultist their god.

An illusion that contradicts every expectation gains −1 die. A dragon in the office is seen through more quickly.

Anyone who touches an illusion sees through it immediately, unless the illusionist has used The Great Lie.

RULE: IN PAIRS

Two illusionists holding hands can cast an illusion together. The second illusionist rolls as a helper according to the rules for cooperation, and the duration of the illusion doubles.

Both pay the ME costs. If one of them botches, both suffer 1 strain.

RULE: YOUR OWN FACE

If an illusionist wears a mask for longer than an hour, they then roll WIL + Concentration against Easy (1). If the test fails, they suffer 1 strain. They must search for their own face in the mirror.

The Price

Illusionists pay with their certainty. Anyone who puts images into other people's heads for years eventually begins to doubt what they themselves see. Many illusionists touch things before they trust them. Some regularly ask their colleagues whether the room really looks the way they see it. And some forget for a moment which face is their own.

OPTIONAL RULE: MISTAKEN IDENTITY

If an illusionist botches while wearing a mask or casting, the game master rolls a D6.

On a 1, someone in the scene really takes them for the person whose face they are wearing, with everything that goes with it: old debts, old friendships, old enemies. The mistake lasts until the illusionist clears it up or exploits it.

D6	What you no longer remember
1	The colour of your eyes. You check every morning.
2	Your mother's voice. You have imitated it too often.
3	Your real name, on some nights
4	The room you grew up in. You rebuilt it for a mission, and now only the copy is left.
5	A face you once wore and that never belonged to you
6	Whether you are really you in the photo next to the colleague

In Play

- **You are the magician nobody notices.** Covert operations, distraction, escape. Work closely with agents.
- **Describe what the others see.** Your magic lives from telling the game master exactly which image you create.
- **The question for your character:** How much of yourself is real?

For the game master: Illusions live from description. Let the player say exactly what they create, and then decide how the spectators react. The rule for credibility helps with this. Anyone who examines an illusion does not roll on every glance, but only when they have a reason: a detail that does not fit, a touch, a psion nearby. And sometimes let illusions show a little more than the illusionist wanted.

```
EXAMPLE: SPIEGEL SENDS A RELIEF

Spiegel makes a colleague of the guard appear
at the gate of a warehouse, coming for the
relief. This fits what the guard expects: +1
die from the rule for credibility, +1 from the
Mirror of Deception.

He rolls CHA 4 white and Thaumaturgy 5
coloured dice, plus 2 white bonus dice. White:
5, 1, 6, 3, 2, 5. Coloured: 4, 2, 6, 5, 3.
That is 3 plus 3, so 6 successes. He pays 2
ME.

The guard is surprised that the relief comes
too early, and rolls Perception with −2 dice.
They achieve 2 successes. That is not enough
against 6. The guard waves to the colleague
who does not exist, and leaves.
```

Playing with Other Classes

The illusionist has the closest partnership with the **Agent**. Together they are unbeatable in covert operations: the Agent knows people, the illusionist changes what they see. With a **Soldier**, the illusionist becomes a confuser in combat, directing opponents to false targets. Caution with **Psions**: A Telepath often sees through the illusion because they hear the thoughts behind it, and that also applies to hostile Psions. And with a second **Illusionist** in the cell, you can work in pairs, like the Lavigne twins.

From the Files

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MISSION REPORT, EXCERPT

Case RA-2112, Hamburg. Raid on a crystal
smuggler in the harbour.

Illusionist creates a phantom army of ten
customs officers. Smuggler surrenders
immediately.

Addendum: During interrogation, the smuggler
states that they saw eleven officers. The
eleventh winked at them.
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PERSONNEL FILE, EXCERPT

Illusionist, codename [REDACTED], back after
14 months of covert operation.

Psychologist's note: Subject asks three times
a day whether the canteen really looks like
that. Subject has failed to recognise their
own face in the mirror twice.

Recommendation: six weeks without a mask.
```

Questions for Your Illusionist

D6	What your character does not yet know
1	Which of the two women in the photo is their grandmother
2	Where Odile Lavigne went with the lorries
3	Why their illusions sometimes contain a detail they did not create
4	Who the eleventh customs officer was
5	Whether they find a partner with whom they can work in pairs
6	What their face really looks like when they stop remembering

Equipment of the School

In addition to basic equipment, every illusionist receives the Mirror of Deception, the Illusion Flask and the Robe of Confusion from the Core Rulebook. The Mirror of Deception gives +1 die on illusions and is an inconspicuous pocket mirror in the Collegium. The Illusion Flask holds a prepared image: when opened, an illusion appears as if the illusionist had cast it, with the successes the master craftsman achieved when filling it, usually three. The Robe of Confusion counts as a magical robe, and in dim light its outlines blur.

Item	Effect
Mirror of Lavigne	Hand mirror from the sisters' estate. +1 die on illusions that depict a face. *Very rare.*
Variety Deck	The cards show who in the room has seen through an illusion. *Rare.*
Mask Powder	After application, a mask lasts twice as long. *Rare.*

The Others and Us

About the Thaumaturgists: "They look at the page. We look at the people. Guess who finds the truth faster."

About the Alchemists: "Good colleagues. You should just never drink anything they offer you without asking."

About the Chronomancers: "They are the only ones we cannot deceive. They were already there before."

About the Invokers: "We make images of things that do not exist. They summon things that do exist. Both cause fear, but only one rightly so."

O.D.I.N. from the Illusionists' Perspective: the best employer a magician ever had, and the most dangerous. The illusionists know the Operations Branch better than the Collegium, and many see O.D.I.N. the way an agent sees it: as a stage whose scenery must never be fully dismantled. They rarely ask what stands behind it. They know that every stage has a backstage.

Figures of the School

Magister Anouk Lavigne. Granddaughter of Margot Lavigne, head of training on the stage, a woman with dry humour and a collection of two hundred masks. She knows what her grandmother saw in Reims. She has told no one, except perhaps a cousin in Vienna.

Adept Rafael Ortiz. The best young illusionist in the Collegium and without a partner for three years. He is looking for one, and he tests every candidate by showing them an illusion that no one but him should see.

The Waiter. An illusionist whose real name no one knows. He has worked undercover for nineteen years in a hotel in Geneva where collectors meet. The Collegium no longer knows exactly whether he still works for O.D.I.N. or is only a waiter now.

Example Character: Spiegel

Illusionist, Cadet. Leon Marchetti, 27, was a magician in a variety theatre in Vienna until he noticed that his tricks worked even though he had prepared them incorrectly. He has a stone in the lining of his top hat, inherited from his grandmother, together with a photograph of two women who look confusingly alike.

Spiegel	Illusionist, Cadet
Attributes	STR 1, DEX 3, CON 2, INT 5, WIS 3, WIL 2, CHA 4, MAN 2, COM 2
Skills	Thaumaturgy 5, Deception 4, Dodge 4, Performance 3, Concentration 3, Stealth 3, Disguise 3, Occultism 2, Academic Knowledge 2, Persuasion 2, Toughness 2, Mental Resistance 1, Perception 1
Values	HP 10, Strain Threshold 8, Initiative 3, Defence 2, ME 12
Abilities	Deception, Shadow Play, Invisibility
Spells	Cantrips: Light Flash, Flickering Apparition, Enchanting Melody, Invisible Hand. Minor Magica: Shadow Cloak, Ray of Light
Archetype	The Heir

Equipment: crystal shard, spellbook, Mirror of Deception, Illusion Flask, Robe of Confusion, a deck of cards.

How to play Spiegel: You are charming, vain and better than you admit. You prefer to work with agents because they understand your art. The question that will not let you go: Which of the two women in the photograph was your grandmother?

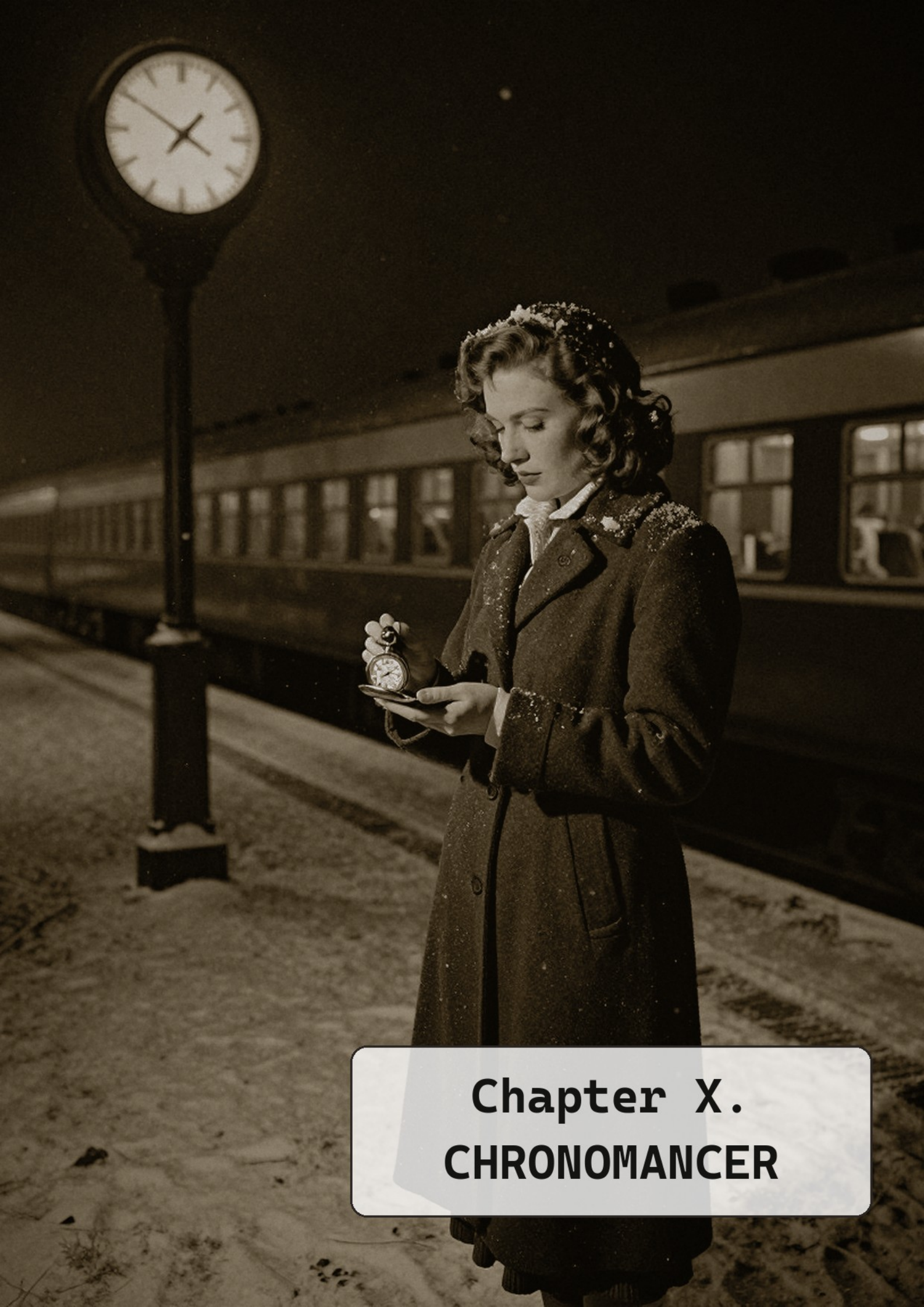
The Path Through the Seal

This is how Spiegel could grow if he focuses on covert operations.

Rank	New Nodes and Increases
Agent (20 XP)	Voice Throw 4, Mask 6, Disguise to 4 for 8. He is now the second agent of the cell.
Senior Agent (50 XP)	Phantom Army 8, Major Magica Darkness 10, Stealth to 4 for 8, Time Sense from the neighbouring Chronomancer sector for 6.
Veteran (100 XP)	False World 10, Deception to 5 for 10, Crystal Bond 4, Frugal Hand 6, Performance to 4 for 8, Echo of Time from the neighbouring sector for 8. He is looking for a partner with whom he can work as a pair.

The Sector in the Seal

Circle	Node	Effect
I	**Voice Throw**	Costs no ME. The illusionist creates voices and sounds at a distance of up to 30 m.
II	**Mask**	2 ME, one scene. The illusionist takes on the appearance of a person they have seen. Anyone who knows that person well may roll a Perception test against the illusionist's successes.
III	**Phantom Army**	3 ME, 3 rounds. Up to ten illusory figures. Opponents in sight must roll WIL + Mental Resistance against the illusionist's successes each round or attack an illusion.
IV	**False World**	5 ME, Hard (3), opposed test. One target perceives a completely invented environment for three rounds.
V	**The Great Lie**	Once per mission. An illusion becomes real for one round: it bears weight, stops bullets or deals 4 + margin damage. Afterwards 3 strain.



Chapter X.
CHRONOMANCER

Chronomancer

"I don't have time. I only have what I borrow from it."

Chronomancer, codename Pendel

The Nature of the Art

Chronomancers hear in the Whisper a beat that lies beneath everything, and they have learned to speed it up and slow it down. Their art is the rarest and the most uncanny in the Collegium. It changes nothing visible, and yet everyone in the room senses that something is wrong. Chronomancers age unevenly. Some look sixty at forty, others the reverse.

CHRONOMANCER AT A GLANCE

Bonuses: +2 INT, +1 WIS. **Skills:** +2 Thaumaturgy, +1 Ritualism, +1 Tactics. **Equipment:** Chronomancer's hourglass, time focus amulet (+1 die on Thaumaturgy for time spells), robe of time distortion.

Time Distortion (INT + Thaumaturgy, 10 m, 3 rounds): An ally gains +2 initiative and +1 die on all tests, or an opponent gains −2 initiative and −1 die (opposed test against WIL + Mental Resistance).

Time Stop (INT + Thaumaturgy, self, 1× per combat): The Chronomancer immediately gains an additional action while everyone else is frozen.

Short Time Travel (WIS + Thaumaturgy, 10 m, 1× per scene, reaction): A failed test by the Chronomancer or an ally within range is repeated. The second result applies.

Full rules: Core Rulebook, Chapter IV.

Three Hours Too Late

The train to Narvik was late, and Astrid Solheim counted the minutes.

It was 14 February 1977, half past nine in the evening, and outside the compartment window lay a landscape consisting only of snow and darkness. Her daughter Ingrid, three years old, slept on the seat opposite, wrapped in a blanket, and clutched her mother's pocket watch because she liked the ticking.

Astrid was on her way to Nordlicht. Her husband Gunnar had been working there as a technician for half a year, and she was to set up the new timekeeping system in the crystal archive, which she had designed herself. The train should have been in Narvik at seven. Then came a points failure, then a change of locomotive, then snow on the tracks.

At ten past ten, all the clocks in the train stopped.

Astrid noticed it first on her own. Then she saw the conductor in the corridor look at his watch, shake it, hold it to his ear. The clock above the compartment door stood still, the second hand on the twelve. Only the pocket watch in Ingrid's hand kept ticking.

She carefully took the watch from her daughter's fingers and held it to the light. It ticked, but wrongly. Faster. Much faster. The minute hand moved like a second hand, the hour hand like a minute hand, and Astrid sat there and watched as an entire night passed on this watch, in less than a minute.

Then it too stopped.

Outside it was still dark. The other clocks in the train were running again, as if nothing had happened. The conductor shrugged and moved on.

In her bag, her crystal had become ice-cold. She took it out. It was no longer clear. It was grey, from the centre outwards, like slate, and the Whisper she had heard every day for twenty-three years had fallen silent.

The train reached Narvik at half past twelve. At two she called the number she had been given for emergencies from a telephone in the station. By four she knew that Nordlicht was no longer responding.

She never repaired a clock again after that. But she kept the pocket watch that had run an entire night in one minute that night, and she gave it to her daughter when Ingrid received her first crystal. Ingrid wears it to this day. It ticks quite normally.

Mostly.

The Uncanny Ones

The Chronomancers are the youngest of the classical schools. Before Astrid Solheim, there were Thaumaturges who occasionally touched time, but no one who could do it deliberately. Solheim found her first crystal in a pocket watch in 1954 and realised that she did not hear the Whisper as words, but as a beat. She taught herself time distortion before she even knew of the Collegium.

The Collegium admitted her in 1956 and initially did not know what to do with her. Penhallow considered time magic the most dangerous of all arts, and he insisted that every Chronomancer work only under the supervision of a second. This rule applies to this day.

Nordlicht shaped the school like nothing else. Solheim was not the only one who lost a crystal that night. Every Chronomancer who lived then tells the same story: at ten past ten their clocks stopped, and their stone turned grey. Since then, many Chronomancers believe that their art has something to do with what happened at Nordlicht. Some believe they could have prevented it. Some, that they caused it.

Today there are fewer than thirty trained Chronomancers at O.D.I.N. Most work as investigators, because their ability to look into the past of a place is invaluable. And almost all wear more than one watch.

Legend: The Watchmaker of Bergen

Astrid Solheim was a watchmaker in Bergen when she found a crystal in a pocket watch in 1954 that someone had brought in for repair. She became the first Chronomancer of the Collegium and developed the time distortion that every Chronomancer learns to this day. In 1977 she worked at Nordlicht. On the night the Hold disappeared, she was on her way there, three hours late because her train was delayed. She never repaired a watch again afterwards. Her daughter Ingrid is a Chronomancer today.

The First Touch

Chronomancers hear the Whisper as a beat. For them, every crystal has a rhythm, and many notice at the first touch that the world around them has fallen out of time for a moment.

D6	The First Touch of a Chronomancer
1	All the clocks in the room stopped and started again simultaneously one minute later.
2	You heard a sentence before someone said it.
3	A falling glass hung in the air for a moment, long enough to catch it.
4	You fell asleep and dreamed a whole night in one minute.
5	In an old photo you saw yourself in the background.
6	After the touch you did not sleep for three days and were not tired.

A Day in the Life

Chronomancers live by the clock, more than any other person at O.D.I.N. Most wear two or three, and they compare them several times a day, because they know that clocks near them sometimes deviate. The day begins with this check, and it ends with it.

In between, most work as investigators. A Chronomancer who looks into the past of a place with Echo of Time replaces an entire team of forensic investigators. They see who entered the room, what they did, in what order. The work is exhausting, and after three or four looks back in a day, most are exhausted and need silence.

Many Chronomancers spend their evenings alone. Not out of shyness, but because conversations are sometimes strange for them. One does not always know whether one has already heard a sentence or will only hear it. Chronomancers understand this among themselves. That is why they often spend their evenings together, in a silence that would be uncomfortable for others.

Training

The training of Chronomancers goes back to Astrid Solheim and is the strictest in the Collegium. Apprentices first work with clocks without a crystal: they take them apart and put them back together, they learn beats, pendulums, balance wheels. Solheim believed that only those who understand the small time may touch the great one. Only then do exercises with crystals follow, always under supervision, always with a second Chronomancer in the room who can pull back if something goes wrong.

The examination for adept is simple and feared: the apprentice must look back into a room with Echo of Time and afterwards describe exactly what happened there a week ago. The examiners know it. The apprentice does not.

Play Styles

The following play styles are suggestions, not mandatory. The nodes mentioned are at the end of the chapter, new spells in Chapter IV, all others in the Core Rulebook, Chapter IX.

Play Style	Description
The Investigator	She sees the past of places and objects. No crime scene remains hidden from her. *Nodes:* Time Sense, Echo of Time.
The Pacemaker	He accelerates allies and slows down opponents. In combat he is the most important support of the cell. *Nodes:* Accelerate, Standstill.
The Correction	She intervenes when something goes wrong: a repeated test, a rewound round. *Nodes:* Time Loop, combined with Short Time Travel.
The Chronicler	He documents: Echo recordings at places where crystals were found, at rifts, at old crime scenes. He works more for the Collegium than for the cell and knows things about the past of O.D.I.N. that are in no file. *Nodes:* Echo of Time. Combines well with History and Occultism.

RULE: PARADOX

If Short Time Travel, Time Loop or Standstill are used twice in the same scene, by whomever, the game master rolls a D6.

On a 1 or 2, something is remembered differently than it was: a witness saw something that did not happen. A door that was open is now closed. An opponent knows a name they should not know.

RULE: UNEQUAL AGEING

After every mission in which a Chronomancer has used Time Stop, Time Loop or Standstill, they roll a D6.

On a 1 they have become noticeably older, by weeks or months. On a 6 younger. The rule has no game values. But colleagues notice it, and Observers do too.

RULE: THE SECOND CHRONOMANCER

If two Chronomancers work in the same scene, each of them may prevent one paradox roll by the other once per scene.

The Price

Chronomancers pay with their own time. They age unevenly, some faster, some slower, some in bursts. Many lose their sense of the time of day and therefore wear several watches. And almost all experience moments in which they are not sure whether something has already happened or will only happen later.

OPTIONAL RULE: LOST MINUTES

Each time stop costs the Chronomancer one minute of their own memory.

The game master may determine one moment per mission that they do not remember, although everyone else does: a conversation, a promise, a name.

D6	Which watch you wear and why
1	A pocket-sized station clock. It has been running slow since you bought it, always by the same three minutes.
2	The watch of a dead person. It stopped at their death and started again on you.
3	A digital watch. You no longer trust anything with hands.
4	Two watches, one for here and one for the time you sometimes come back from
5	A small hourglass on a chain. You turn it when someone lies.
6	None. You always know the time, and that frightens you.

In Play

- **You are the cell's most powerful support.** Your powers make others better. Speed up the Soldier, slow down the opponent.
- **Look back.** The past of a place is often the best clue. Chronomancers are excellent investigators.
- **The question for your character:** Which moment would you turn back if you could?

For the game master: Echo of Time is a powerful tool for investigations. Plan missions so that it provides answers, but not all: Those who look back see what happened, not why. People wear masks, even in the past, and some things happened more than a day ago. Use the paradox rule sparingly and with humour, and let the clocks in the room occasionally do something that no one can explain.

EXAMPLE: PENDEL LOOKS BACK

Pendel stands in the flat of a missing archivist and wants to know what happened here five days ago. For this, Echo of Time needs 2 margin.

She rolls WIS 5 white and Thaumaturgy 5 coloured dice, plus 3 white bonus dice: Time Focus Amulet, Nordlicht stone and her mother's pocket watch. There are no more than three bonus dice.

White: 6, 2, 5, 1, 3, 5, 4, 6. Coloured: 4, 1, 5, 3, 2. That is 4 plus 2, so 6 successes against Doable (2) and 4 margin. She pays 2 ME and sees the flat run backwards in time-lapse. On the fifth day, the archivist stands at the window and speaks with someone she does not see. The watch in her pocket ticks faster.

Playing with Other Classes

A Chronomancer makes every class better. An accelerated **Soldier** acts twice, a slowed opponent misses their turn. With an **Investigator**, the Chronomancer is an ideal investigative duo: One sees the past, the other interprets it. With a **Precognitive** among the Psions, there is a peculiar tension: Both touch time, from different sides. Many report that they get headaches near the other.

From the Files

MISSION REPORT, EXCERPT

Case GA-2139, Bergen. Echo of Time in an empty watchmaker's workshop.

The Chronomancer sees the last 24 hours. No people. But all clocks in the room run backwards in time-lapse.

Note: The workshop belonged to Astrid Solheim. It has been closed since 1977.

MISSION REPORT, EXCERPT

Case RA-2201, Warsaw. Time loop during a firefight.

Round rewound, loss of an agent prevented.

Addendum: The rescued agent remembers both versions. They ask which was the real one.

Questions for Your Chronomancer

D6	What your character does not yet know
1	What happened on the night of Nordlicht at 22:10
2	Why their mother's pocket watch sometimes ticks too fast
3	Whether the man in the blue jumper is still somewhere
4	Why their Nordlicht stone becomes clear at the edges
5	Whether they themselves are older or younger than their passport claims
6	Which night they would turn back if they could, and what it would cost

Equipment of the School

In addition to basic equipment, every Chronomancer receives the Chronomancer's hourglass, the Time Focus Amulet and the Robe of Time Distortion from the Core Rulebook. The Time Focus Amulet gives +1 die on Thaumaturgy for time spells. The hourglass is the training device of every apprentice: three minutes of sand, and whoever stretches it to four minutes with time distortion has passed the first test. No one wears a robe today, but every Chronomancer has an item of clothing whose hem blows a trace too late in the wind. It counts as a magical robe.

Item	Effect
Solheim pocket watch	Shows the time in two places. Used with Echo of Time: +1 die. *Very rare.*
Pendulum made of Nordlicht stone	Swings faster when a rift opens nearby. *Very rare.*
Hourglass with crystal sand	A time spell lasts one round longer. Once per scene. *Rare.*

The Others and Us

About the Thaumaturgists: "They spend their lives preparing. We know it'll turn out differently anyway."

About the Alchemists: "Nice people. They just never understood that a potion has a time."

About the Illusionists: "They deceive the eye. The eye is not the problem."

About the Invokers: "They summon beings that don't live in our time. I've seen time tremble around them. I don't sit next to them."

O.D.I.N. from the Chronomancers' point of view: an organisation with a hole in its history, and the hole is called Nordlicht. Chronomancers like working for the Investigation Branch and dislike working for the Council, which to this day has not told them what happened in 1977. Many believe that O.D.I.N. itself does not know. Some believe that the Council has been waiting for something ever since, and that it has to do with the time 22:10.

Figures of the School

Archivist Henrik Dahl. The oldest living Chronomancer, a student of Astrid Solheim, over eighty and physically like sixty. He lives in Bergen, in the flat above Solheim's workshop, and he has never entered it. He says he is waiting until the clocks inside stop by themselves.

Magister Yusuf Karaca. The best investigator among the Chronomancers, almost as respected in the Investigation Branch as in the Collegium. He has solved more murders with Echo of Time than any profiler, and he always wears a watch that is exactly three minutes slow. When asked, he says it is intentional.

The Sørensen Twins. Two Chronomancers who always work together and protect each other from paradoxes. They are forty years old and look as if one were thirty and the other fifty.

Example Character: Pendel

Chronomancer, Senior Agent. Dr. Ingrid Solheim, 52, is the daughter of the watchmaker of Bergen. She was

three years old when Nordlicht disappeared, and her father, Gunnar Solheim, was one of the 41. Officially he died of heart failure, in a hotel in Bergen, three streets from his own flat. Therefore the family knows the official story and still knows that it is not true. She studied physics to understand what happened back then, and became a Thaumaturge when she realised that physics was not enough for that.

Pendel	Chronomancer, Senior Agent (50 XP)
Attributes	STR 1, DEX 2, CON 2, INT 5, WIS 5, WIL 3, CHA 3, MAN 1, COM 2
Skills	Thaumaturgy 5, Concentration 4, Mental Resistance 4, Ritualism 3, Tactics 3, Occultism 3, Academic Knowledge 3, History 3, Dodge 3, Perception 3, Toughness 2, Medicine 1
Values	HP 10, Strain Threshold 9, Initiative 3, Defence 2, ME 15
Abilities	Time Distortion, Time Stop, Short Time Travel
Spells	Cantrips: Light Flash, Invisible Hand, Trembling Hand, Touch of Cold. Minor Magica: Magical Armour, Magical Rope. Major Magica: Counterspell
Seal	Crystal Bond, Time Sense, Echo of Time, Accelerate, Voice Throw (neighbouring sector Illusionist)
Archetype	The Doubter

Her 50 XP: Crystal Bond 4, Time Sense 4, Echo of Time 6, Accelerate 8, Voice Throw 6, Counterspell 10, Concentration to 4 for 8, Medicine new at 1 for 3. 1 XP is left over.

Equipment: Nordlicht stone (become clear, Whisper 1), Chronomancer's hourglass, time focus amulet, robe of time distortion, her mother's pocket watch.

How to play Pendel: You are calm, precise, and distrust every stone, including your own. You carry a crystal from Nordlicht that is becoming clear again, and you do not know whether that is a gift or an invitation. When you look back at a place with Echo of Time, you always search, without wanting to, for a man in a blue jumper.

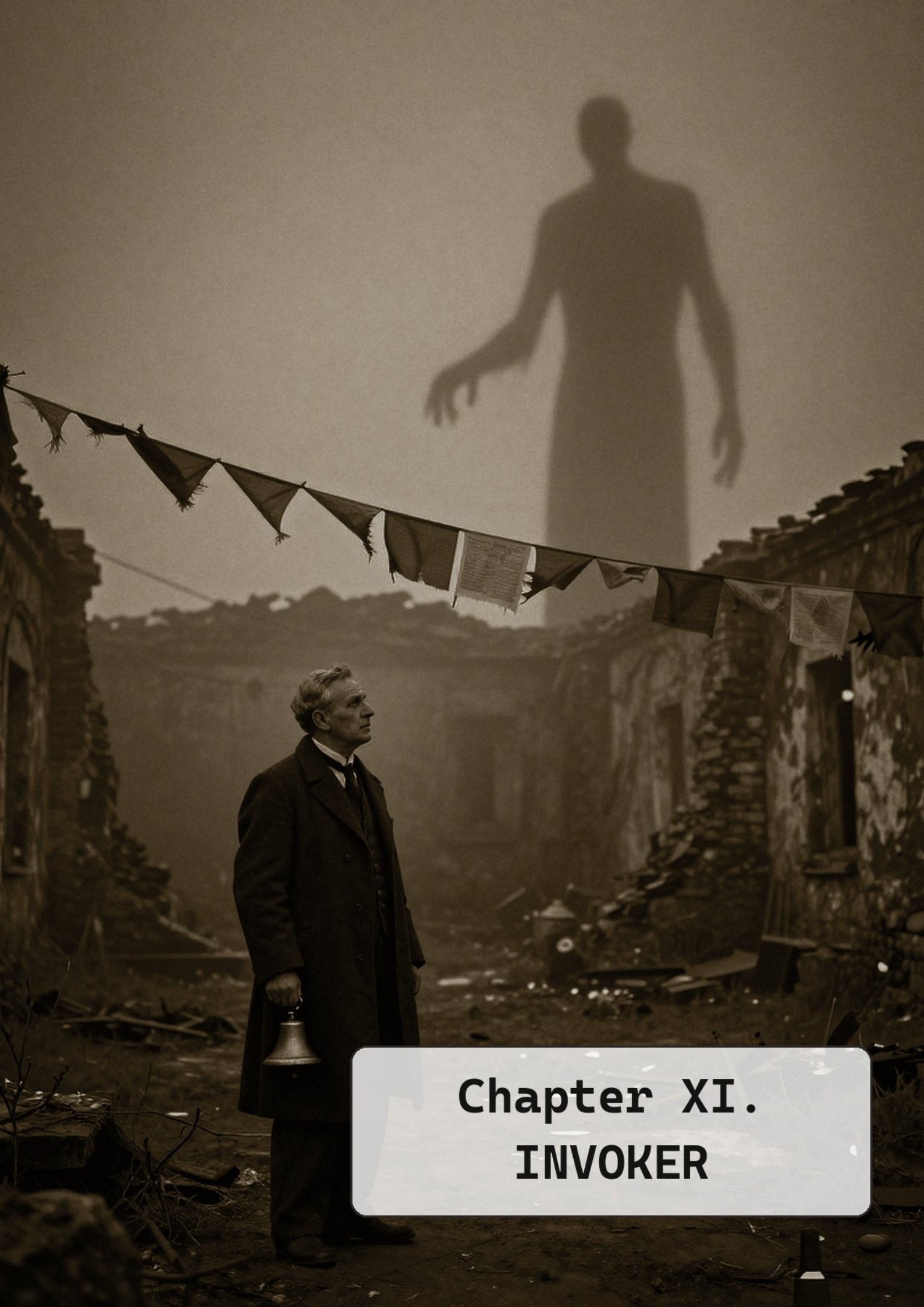
The Path Through the Seal

Pendel is already a Senior Agent. This is how she could continue to grow if she pursues her past.

Rank	New Nodes and Increases
Veteran (100 XP)	Time Loop 10, Frugal Hand 6, Mask from the neighbouring sector Illusionist 8, Perception to 4 for 8, Occultism to 4 for 8, WIS stays at 5. She collects Echo recordings from every place where a Nordlicht stone was found.
Shadow Officer (175 XP)	Standstill 12, Deep Source 8, Double Casting 10, Thaumaturgy to 6 for 12, Grand Major Magica Time Reversal 15. She can now undo one round. She cannot turn back a night. She has done the maths.

The Sector in the Seal

Circle	Node	Effect
I	**Time Sense**	Passive. +1 initiative. The Chronomancer always knows the exact time.
II	**Echo of Time**	2 ME, one minute, WIS. The Chronomancer sees what happened at a location in the last 24 hours, in time-lapse. With 2 margin, up to a week back.
III	**Accelerate**	3 ME, touch. An ally gains an additional action this round.
IV	**Time Loop**	Once per mission. The entire last combat round is rewound and replayed. Only the Chronomancer remembers. Afterwards 2 strain.
V	**Standstill**	Once per mission. For everyone except the Chronomancer and one ally, time stands still for three rounds. Frozen beings cannot be injured, but can be moved, disarmed or tied up. Afterwards 3 strain.



Chapter XI.
INVOKER

Invoker

"I don't ask for help. I negotiate the price."
Invoker, codename Bote

The Nature of the Art

Where others hear words in the Whisper, Invokers hear voices. They believe that beings stand behind the crystals, and they have learned to call these beings. What comes then fights for them, protects them or heals them, and it always demands something in return. Invokers are the most powerful and feared Thaumaturges. The Collegium tolerates them because it needs them, and watches them more closely than all others.

INVOKER AT A GLANCE

Bonuses: +2 WIS, +1 CHA. **Skills:** +2 Ritualism, +1 Thaumaturgy, +1 Occultism. **Equipment:** summoning book, summoner's relic (+1 die on Ritualism), priest's robe.

Divine Summoning (WIS + Ritualism, 10 m, 1× per scene): Summons a being that fights on the Invoker's side for 2 rounds plus margin. Stats: attack 3 white + 3 coloured, damage 3, defence 2, armour 1, HP 8. While it exists, the Invoker cannot cast other spells. Each summoning costs the Invoker 1 strain.

Protective Prayer (WIS + Ritualism, 10 m radius, 3 rounds): All allies in the area gain +1 armour against physical and magical damage.

Holy Aura (WIS + Ritualism, 10 m radius, 3 rounds, 1× per scene): All allies in the area heal 1 HP per round and gain +1 die on horror tests. The Invoker can only move during this time.

Full rules: Core Rulebook, Chapter IV.

The Empty Church

Samuel Okonkwo had spoken thousands of prayers in his life, and none had ever answered. He had not expected that. He was a priest, not a fool.

On a Tuesday evening in March, he sat alone in St. Barnabas, a small Anglican church in Southwark that had been half empty for years and would soon be completely empty because the diocese wanted to sell it. He had lit the candles, as he did every evening, and knelt before the altar, and prayed for the people from the parish who had died, and for those who still lived but no longer came.

In the pocket of his cassock lay a stone. A woman from the parish had brought it after her mother's funeral. It had been in the estate, she said, in a casket, together with a photo of a monastery in the mountains. She did not want to keep it. It frightened her.

Samuel had pocketed it, intending to give it to the museum later, and then forgotten.

He prayed the Lord's Prayer. He got as far as "Thy kingdom come".

"Which one?" asked a voice.

It did not come from the room. It came from his pocket, or from his head, or from the place in between, and it was very calm and very friendly, and it was the most frightening thing he had ever heard.

He stopped praying. The candles flickered, although there was no draught. In the smoke above the altar, for a moment there was a shape, large, too large for the church, which turned towards him.

Samuel Okonkwo could have run away. He could have crossed himself, spoken a psalm, switched on the light. He did none of that. He had been a priest for twenty years, and for twenty years he had waited for someone to answer.

"I don't know," he said. "Which one do you mean?"

The being in the smoke was silent for a long time. Then it said a name. Samuel did not understand it, and yet he knew that it was a name, and that he must never speak it.

"You asked," said the voice. "Not many do that. I will remember you."

The candles burned calmly again. The smoke was only smoke.

Three weeks later, a man in a grey coat stood in his sacristy and asked whether he had a stone that asked him questions. Samuel resigned his office in the summer.

Not his faith. He has only found out that there is more to believe in, and that each of them has a price.

In his ledger, on the first page, there is a single entry. No name. Only a date, and next to it: *remembered me.*

The Dangerous Ones

The Invokers trace back to Pemba Dorje, the bearer who returned to the abandoned monastery in the Himalayas in 1931. When he came back in 1940, he could call, and the Collegium faced a problem. The charter said that the Collegium serves the understanding of the stones, not their use. Dorje did not understand the stones. He spoke with what stood behind them.

Penhallow wanted to expel him. Holloway pushed through that he could stay, under supervision, and that he could train students, under even stricter supervision. This rule applies to this day: Every Invoker is trained by two teachers, and one of them is not an Invoker.

The school is small. It has never had more than two dozen members, and mortality is high. Invokers rarely die in combat. They die from debts that become too large, from pacts they misunderstood, or from nights when something sits at their bed and does not leave.

Since 2011, Invokers have reported a change. The beings they call answer faster. They come before the call is fully spoken, as if they had been waiting. Some Invokers consider this a good sign. The older ones do not.

Legend: Pemba Dorje

The bearer, who in 1923 brought a crystal from an abandoned monastery in the Himalayas because the stone frightened him at night, returned in 1931. He had understood what the stone had told him: that someone was waiting in the monastery. He stayed there for nine years. When he came back, he could call what had been waiting before. The Collegium accepted him and never let him travel alone again. He died in 1968 in a house of the Collegium in Scotland. His last word was a name that no Invoker has dared to speak since.

The First Touch

Invokers hear the Whisper as a voice. Not as grammar, not as an image, but as someone speaking. Many hear a question at the first touch.

D6	The First Touch of an Invoker
1	A voice asked what your name is. You answered before you could think.
2	In a church, a prayer you spoke answered.
3	Something offered you a deal in a dream. You refused. It laughed.
4	The stone told you the name of a deceased person you never knew. His family knew it.
5	You sensed that there was someone else in the room besides you. No one was there. The dog still growled.
6	You heard nothing. But since then, something that is not your shadow sometimes sits in your shadow.

A Day in the Life

Invokers live more withdrawn than all other Thaumaturges. Many live on the edge of the Holds, in rooms with thick walls and few neighbours. Their day begins with the debt book: which debt is open, which will soon be due, which favour is still outstanding. Some pray afterwards, to whomever. Some meditate. Some do both.

During the day they study. Names, above all names. In old manuscripts, in church registers, in records of invocations that took place decades ago. A name an Invoker knows is a weapon. A name he knows wrongly is an invitation.

At night, the Invoker often wakes up. Not from fear, mostly not. But because he senses that someone is in the room. The experienced ones then turn to the other side and continue sleeping. The young ones sit up and ask what is wanted from them. That is a mistake every Invoker makes exactly once.

Training

No Invoker is trained alone. Every apprentice has two teachers: an Invoker and a Thaumaturgist who makes sure that he does not speak names he is not allowed to speak. The training consists for the most part of negotiation. The apprentice learns what one may offer a

summoned being and what never, how to recognise a price before it becomes due, and how to end a pact.

The examination for adept is a single summoning, before the assembled circle. Whoever calls must also release what was called. Most manage it.

Play Styles

The following play styles are suggestions, not mandatory. The mentioned nodes are at the end of the chapter, new spells in Chapter IV, all others in the Core Rulebook, Chapter IX.

Play Style	Description
The Caller	He summons beings that fight for the cell, and he keeps them longer and stronger than anyone else. *Nodes:* Long Invocation, Great Servant.
The Priest	Protective Prayer and Holy Aura. He is the shield of the cell against horror. Combines well with Mental Resistance and Stress Management.
The Negotiator	He does not call to fight, but to ask. Names, pacts, favours. *Nodes:* True Name, Pact, The Messenger.
The Counsellor	He calls rarely, and when he does, for others. He speaks with what has settled in a house, calms beings that do not know where they are, and sits at night with agents who can no longer sleep after a mission. Combines well with Insight and Stress Management.

RULE: DEBTS

Every pact, every messenger, and every summoning with Great Servant creates a debt. The game master notes it secretly.

An Invoker can settle a debt by fulfilling a favour determined by the game master. This can be a gesture, a task, or a renunciation.

If an Invoker has more open debts than his Willpower, he rolls all tests on Ritualism with −1 die.

RULE: FINDING TRUE NAMES

Finding a true name is an extended test WIS + Occultism with 10 required successes, one roll per day of research. In an archive of the Collegium +2 dice.

A botch means: The being has noticed that someone is searching for its name.

The Price

Invokers pay with obligations. Every being they summon wants something: a gesture, a promise, a favour, sometimes something they must redeem only years later. The most experienced Invokers keep a debt book that they never let out of their hands. And almost all have nights when something sits at their bed and waits.

OPTIONAL RULE: DUE DATE

The game master may call in an open debt at a moment that is as inconvenient as possible.

The Invoker can settle it immediately or postpone it. Postponing costs 1 strain and doubles the price.

D6	What sits at your bed at night
1	A woman in a wet coat who asks what time it is
2	A dog without a shadow. He only wants you to stay awake.
3	No one. But the mattress is dented on the other side.
4	A child who recites to you the names of those who sat at your bed before them
5	The priest who baptised you. He has been dead for twenty years.
6	Something you yourself summoned and never fully released

In Play

- **You are the big gun, but it costs.** Your summonings change fights. The game master may demand something from you for it, and you should enjoy that.
- **Ask for names.** Beings whose names you know obey better. The search for names is your adventure.
- **The question for your character:** Whom do you owe something?

For the game master: The price is the heart of the Invoker. Note down every debt and call it in, but not as punishment, but as story: a candle in an empty church, a name they must never speak again, a task that leads them into another mission. Summoned beings are not tools. Give them a voice, a quirk and a memory of earlier summonings, and occasionally let them ask questions that have nothing to do with the mission.

EXAMPLE: BOTE SUMMONS

Bote stands in a cellar vault, three cultists between the cell and the exit. He summons. He rolls WIS 5 white and Ritualism 5 coloured dice, plus 2 white bonus dice from the summoner's relic and the monastery stone.

White: 5, 6, 2, 1, 5, 3, 4. Coloured: 6, 4, 1, 5, 2. That is 3 plus 3, so 6 successes against Doable (2) and 4 margin. The being stays 2 rounds plus 4, so 6 rounds. With the node Long Invocation it would be 8.

Bote pays 2 ME and 1 strain. As long as the being fights, he does not cast anything else. He watches as it brings the first cultist to the ground, and hears how it asks for his name in a language he almost understands. He does not answer. He has learned that.

Playing with Other Classes

Invokers need a cell that has their back. As long as a summoned being exists, the Invoker cannot cast anything else. A **Soldier** at their side prevents anyone from reaching them during this time. With a **Psychic Healer** among the Psions, the Invoker has someone who can share their strain, and they need that. And with a **Thaumaturgist**, they have someone who can banish a being that does not want to leave. Every Invoker should know which member of their cell can do that in an emergency.

From the Files

MISSION REPORT, EXCERPT

Case RA-2090, Glasgow. Summoning to secure a retreat.

The summoned being fights for three rounds, then it turns to the cell and asks the Invoker about his father.

The Invoker has never mentioned a father. He does not answer. The being leaves.

DEBT BOOK, EXCERPT (SUBMITTED VOLUNTARILY)

Pact of 3 May. Answer received to the question about the cult leader's hiding place.

Price: On 3 May of next year, I am to light a candle in an empty church and not pray.

Addendum, one year later: done. The candle did not burn, it glowed.

Questions for Your Invoker

D6	What your character does not yet know
1	Which realm the voice in the church meant
2	Why a being voluntarily revealed a second name to him
3	What sits at his bed when he wakes up at night
4	Who placed the stone from the monastery in his estate
5	Whether Pemba Dorje's last word was a name or a warning
6	When the first debt becomes due

Equipment of the School

In addition to basic equipment, every Invoker has the summoning book, the summoner's relic and the priest robe from the Core Rulebook. The relic grants +1 die on Ritualism. It is different for every Invoker, a bone, a bell, a rosary, a piece of cloth from a monastery, and almost always it belonged to someone else before. The summoning book is not a spellbook, but a list of names with notes, kept in a script that only its owner can read. The priest robe counts as a magical robe. In the field, few wear them, but none throw them away.

Item	Effect
Debt Book	Anyone who carefully records their pacts gains +1 die to recognise a price beforehand. *Common.*
Dorje's Prayer Cord	+1 die on Ritualism for invocations. Sometimes one hears soft murmuring when wearing it. *Very rare.*
Seal Candle	A summoned being cannot leave the circle of the candle while it burns, for at most one hour. *Rare.*

The Others and Us

About the Thaumaturgists: "They are afraid of what we do. That is good. One of us should be afraid."

About the Alchemists: "They have no idea who they are talking to when they brew. We do."

About the Illusionists: "They play with masks. We know that sometimes something looks back from behind them."

About the Chronomancers: "They avoid us. They have seen how it ends."

O.D.I.N. from the Invokers' perspective: one being among many with which one has made a pact. Invokers understand contracts better than anyone else in the Collegium, and they read the 1947 treaty differently: not as a protection agreement, but as a debt. The only question is who owes whom something. Most Invokers serve O.D.I.N. loyally. None of them believes that the bill has already been settled.

Figures of the School

Magister Nima Dorje. Great-niece of Pemba Dorje, head of the Invokers in Hold-1 and the only one who has visited the monastery in the Himalayas since 1968. She is calm, humorous and the most dangerous person in the Collegium. Everyone knows this, and everyone likes her anyway.

Adept Oskar Sjöberg. A young Invoker who made a pact two years ago that he does not speak about. Since then he has been very successful and very tired. His colleagues wonder what price awaits him.

The Woman in the Sacristy. A being that lives in a church in York and has been summoned by several Invokers. It appears as an older woman in a cardigan, makes tea and answers questions. It only names the price at parting.

Example Character: Bote

Invoker, Cadet. Samuel Okonkwo, 44, was an Anglican priest in London. In an empty church, one of his prayers was answered. He resigned his office, but not his faith; only the one in whom he believes has changed.

Bote	Invoker, Cadet
Attributes	STR 1, DEX 2, CON 2, INT 3, WIS 5, WIL 4, CHA 4, MAN 1, COM 2
Skills	Ritualism 5, Occultism 4, Mental Resistance 4, Thaumaturgy 3, Concentration 3, Dodge 3, Academic Knowledge 2, Intimidation 2, Insight 2, History 2, Toughness 2, Stress Management 2, Perception 1
Values	HP 10, Strain Threshold 10, Initiative 2, Defence 2, ME 12
Abilities	Divine Summoning, Protective Prayer, Holy Aura
Spells	Cantrips: Light Flash, Enchanting Melody, Touch of Cold, Magical Flame. Minor Magica: Holy Breath, Ray of Light
Archetype	The Caller

Equipment: Monastery Stone (his own find from the church, registered to him by the Crystal Master as an exception), Summoning Book, Summoner's Relic, Priest Robe, Debt Book.

How to play Bote: You are calm, friendly and very serious when it comes to promises. You keep every one you make, even to beings that are not human. The question that accompanies you: To whom did you actually answer in that church?

The Path Through the Seal

This is how Bote might grow if he follows his path as a negotiator.

Rank	New Nodes and Increases
Agent (20 XP)	Long Invocation 4, True Name 6, Occultism to 5 for 10. He now knows the first name, not the one from the church.
Senior Agent (50 XP)	Pact 8, Crystal Bond 4, Major Magica Counterspell 10, Thaumaturgy to 4 for 8. A being revealed a second name to him, voluntarily. He wonders why.
Veteran (100 XP)	Great Servant 10, Frugal Hand 6, WIL to 5 for 25, Concentration to 4 for 8. He has three outstanding debts. One of them will soon be due.

The Sector in the Seal

Circle	Node	Effect
I	**Long Invocation**	Passive. Divine summoning lasts 2 rounds longer.
II	**True Name**	Passive. +2 dice on Ritualism against beings whose true name the Invoker knows. Finding out a name is an extended test on Occultism.
III	**Pact**	Once per mission. The Invoker asks a summoned being for an answer or a service outside of combat. The game master sets the price before they agree.
IV	**Great Servant**	Passive. Summoned beings have attack 4 + 4, damage 4, defence 3 and 15 HP.
V	**The Messenger**	Once per mission. The Invoker summons a powerful being that ends a threat: an opponent, a fire, an open rift. The price is high. 3 strain and a favour that the game master later calls in.

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