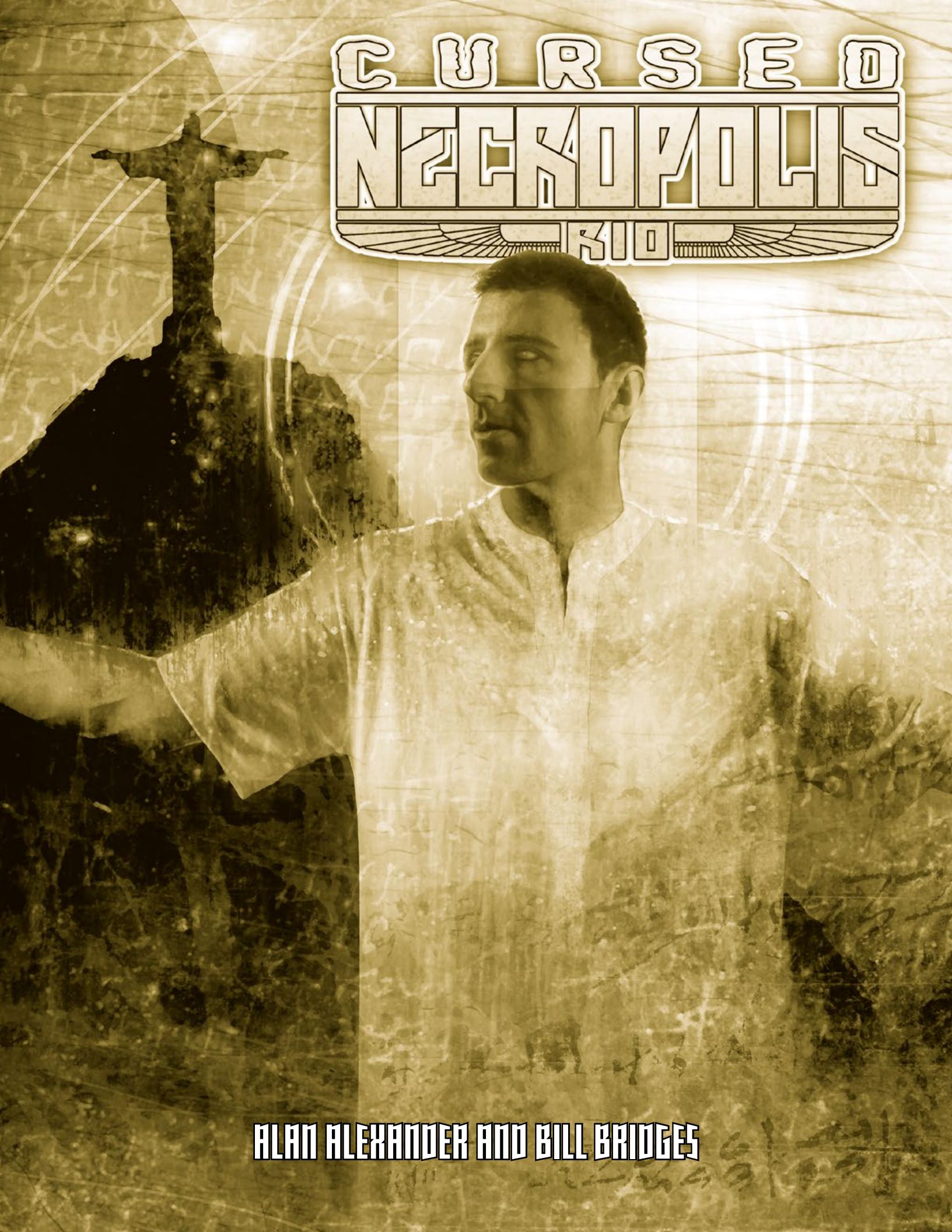


C U R S E D NECROPOLIS

TRIO

a sourcebook for

MURMURY
the
CURSE



CURSED NECROPOLIS

RIO

ALAN ALEXANDER AND BILL BRIDGES



Fique á Vontade

The roar of the Samba dancers in the streets outside nearly drowned out the sound of the man's skull shattering into fragments.

Meresankh flung the lifeless body to the floor with enough force to convince the man observing her that she still bore a grudge against the thief, even though he was now out of the way ... a thing of the past. She stepped forward and with both hands rescued the ebony, cow-headed goddess statue from its straw-strewn wooden crate.

Her observer could see the shift in her eyes, the dimming of the fury that had driven her from her own crate in the hull of the *Ocean Star* cruise ship to this old house in the Centro district of Rio.

He dared not reveal himself just yet, although he didn't have much time left. Her cult would arrive soon. As inept as they'd already proven to be, there was no way they couldn't follow her swath of destruction here. To most people, it would just seem like a series of unrelated accidents or assaults, but any true cultist knows what to look for.

Her visitor had followed her from the moment she left the ship. His mistress, the Divine Lady of Rio, O Pardal Vermelho, had tasked him with examining all the incoming cruise ship manifests. She had already known that Meresankh was

on her way to Rio, although Meresankh's cult did not *know* that she knew. A not uncommon occurrence in this place.

The Red Sparrow is ten steps ahead of everyone here.

The observer needed to speak with her before her cult arrived, before she could reorient herself.

He watched as Meresankh began to examine the room in which she stood, seeing it now through brightening eyes, the fog of her long sleep and rude awakening clearing away. She had regained her relic, and the sudden diminishment of the urgency that had driven her until now allowed for a moment of introspection and examination of her surroundings. The visitor took his chance.

"Pardon me, noble Meresankh," he said, stepping from the hallway, palms empty and open. Caution was paramount in situations like this, he knew well.

She turned toward him, her smoldering gaze meeting the calm of his own. He'd trained long and hard to wear that mask, even though his heart was beating hard and sweat

had broken out on his palms and neck. This was a make-or-break moment: Either he would ignite her curiosity and she would allow him to speak, or she would count him among the thieves and dispatch him like the rest of them.

"I extend to you the welcome of my mistress, O Pardal Vermelho," he continued. "She who presides over Rio de Janeiro."

The mummy frowned and looked around the room, her gaze lighting on the window and the crowded streets outside. For the first time it seemed that she now connected the incessant music and singing with an actual activity taking place nearby. She stepped to the window and looked up and down the street.

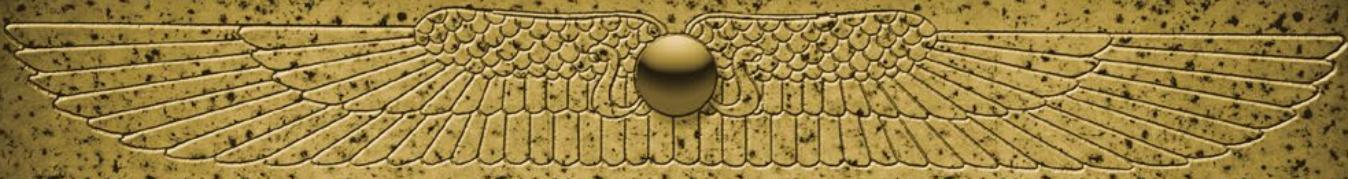
"I last laid down to sleep in... Atlanta," she said. "How did I get here?" She turned swiftly to stare into her mortal visitor. "You are not one of mine."

"Your own cult will arrive soon, noble one. I witnessed your... embarkation from your ship and followed, waiting for a moment when we might speak."

She sneered, her eyes growing cold, and looked back out the window. "Why Rio..."

"I, ah, believe you chose this place," he said, trying to hide his nervousness. He likened the feeling of this moment to trying to speak to a hurricane concealed behind





a wall of glass. You know that at any moment the glass could shatter and send the storm in all directions, and that hurricanes do not heed words. This particular force of nature chose to listen to him, for now. "I do not know your reasons. I was hoping you could tell me — that is, that you could tell O Pardal Vermelho through me."

At that moment, three men burst into the room, panting and pointing guns at the man before their mistress. All of them goggled at Meresankh and I could see them begin to bend knee before remembering me and then reasserting their aim.

Meresankh raised her hand, as casual a gesture as if she were signaling a waiter to bring her more tea, but her cultists read the message and lowered their weapons.

"Tell me, Benjamin," she said to the tall one, who wore a business suit. "Why am I here?"

"My lady," he said, bowing his head. "It is for the —" He stopped, his eyes looking at me and then at his mistress. She nodded for him to continue. He took a breath. "The Fountains of Ma'at. You said they would restore you."

Meresankh smiled, her head nodding, not so much at her cultists or her visitor but at a resurfaced memory. "No... not restore. Take away. I remember now that I wish to forget."

Her visitor had heard that the Fountains of Ma'at could rob memories from mummies who chose to bathe in them. It was a risk that many chose to take to gain power, though a power he could not begin to comprehend. The ways of the Arisen remained far beyond such as he.

"Noble Meresankh," he said, bowing his head. "My mistress would be honored for you to call upon her soon. She will be glad to hear that you have regained what was stolen from you, and she will be happy to extend the hospitality of her city to you. In person."

"You speak well," Meresankh said. "But you do not need to hide behind your words. I realize that this is not a request, but a demand. Still your heart. I have no taste for tearing you limb from limb. You have shown your resourcefulness and respect. I will honor your mistress' request."

The mortal man smiled, bowing, tensed muscles finally relaxing. He would live, at least for now. He knew when he entered this house that he might very well not leave it, and was visibly relieved that he was free to continue to tread upon the earth.

"One more thing, noble Meresankh." She actually rolled her eyes. (Yes, she was certainly settling into her body quickly; that is, the thing that *looked* like a body, but was both much more and much less.) "I could not help but notice that your... treasure... is a statue of Hathor. The cow-headed one."

"Yes?" she replied, icily. He was pushing his luck, but this was after all, the reason he was here.

"I, ah, just thought it curious. That is... there is a bull statue here in the city. Excuse me, for I do not know of or understand the mysteries of these treasures. I just wondered if there was a connection? Perhaps a similar origin, for these two... artifacts?"

She stepped toward him, her eyes again like furnaces stoking a deep inner fire. "Where is this bull?"

He threw up his palms, hapless. "I do not know. I've just... just heard of it." She stepped closer. "O Corte Segredo! The meret! It is theirs, or so it is said. Please — I do not wish to incur your wrath!" He was cowering by then, nearly on his knees. He saw her cultists behind her, their eyes watching exultantly as they waited for her to shake him like a cur or choke the life from him.





She instead turned away and walked back to the window. "Where do I find them?"

"The Candelária Church. It is not far from here." He peeked at her from behind his hands, held up to protect his face from her glorious fury.

"Take me to this church, Benjamin," she said, walking toward the front door. Her visitor was no longer worth her attention.

Her cult bounded after her, nodding and affirming their loyalty with hushed whispers.

The visitor let out his breath and stood up, leaning shakily against the wall. He couldn't help but smile. It worked. She took the bait.

Fique à vontade, Meresankh

"I exited out the back and came here as quickly as I could. My legs were a little unsteady at first, but they've recovered. This *vinho tinto* helps calm my nerves. Thank you for it, my lord.

"I am so very proud to serve you in this. I am devoted only to you now; but... could you tell me? What purpose did it serve in my telling her about the Iron Bull? If she mentions it to the Red Sparrow, my... allegiance... will become suspect. I can serve you best from within RS-Global. If I am fired, or worse, then I am of no use to you. Please... what am I to do?"

Sefetjaw Saret frowned and refused to turn and look at the weasel groveling from the cafe seat behind him. He had done his job, but was beginning to think overmuch of his value. It was tempting to put him into his place with some choice, cutting words, but that would only scare him enough to run

back into the embrace of the Red Sparrow's cult. They still believed he was one of theirs, and it wouldn't do to lose such an asset just yet. Not when the Red Sparrow did not even suspect Sefetjaw's existence.

He turned around in his chair. "It is all fine, my friend." He smiled and patted the wretch on his shoulder. "She wouldn't bother with such small talk. Besides, she is heading there now, believing the Iron Bull might be her lost relic, the child-king of Hathor. No one will believe now that she came to Rio just for the Fountains."

The fool's grin displayed yellowing teeth. He laughed, happy. "Good, my lord! So good!" He clearly had more questions, but it would not do to answer them.

"Now," Sefetjaw said, iron in his voice. "Go back to your job. You cannot be missed for too long. Forget me for a while. Become the Sparrow's loyal cultist again. And when I need you once more, you will know."

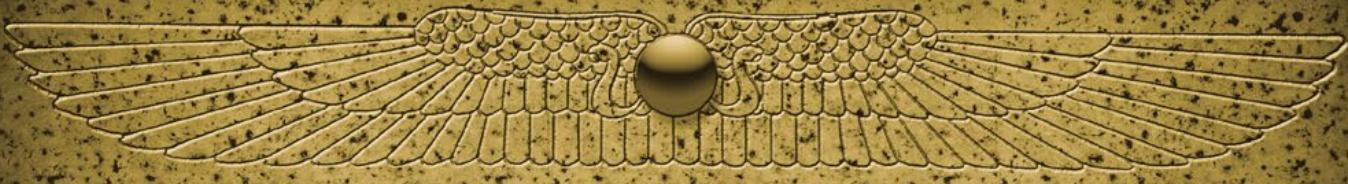
Rodrigo Caldeira nodded, grinning widely. "Yes, my master. My friend! Yes, I will do all this for you—and more!" He stood up, put on his wide-brimmed hat, and backed away, nodding vigorously.

Sefetjaw smiled until Rodrigo had turned the corner, at which time his expression fell blank.

Soon, father. Soon. I have placed a new piece on the board and revealed your meret's greatest secret. Chaos shall ensue. Chaos that will bring us closer.

He stood up from the cafe table. To all the world, he appeared to be a seventeen-year-old hip-hop fashion victim. He was incalculably older.





In the paneled and gold-gilt office at the top of the RS-Global tower, Teshra-Gemet paused the video feed on her tablet and swiped her finger to rewind it a few seconds. She smudged her thumb and forefinger on the image to enlarge it and stared at the seventeen-year-old in the ugly t-shirt.

"Who is this?" she said.

"We don't know," said the business-attired man standing before her desk, hands clasped behind his back. "None of our members have seen him before."

"So... this is the one for whom Rodrigo would betray me." Her emphasis on the final word was subtle, but unmistakable. *Me.* "How is it that one of our own is maneuvering in this city without my knowing?"

The man stood silent. *Wisely*, thought Teshra-Gemet.

"Watch him. I want to know where he goes next. He isn't aware that we've been surveilling him electronically. Keep it that way."

The man nodded and left the room.

How ridiculous. He thinks he's outmaneuvering me.

She frowned and stared out the window, down at the vast sprawl of her beautiful city. *This business with the Iron Bull, however... that's interesting.*

She pressed a button on her desk. "I want to see Bantanath. Now. Get them to wake her up if necessary." As she took her finger off the button, the Red Sparrow added, "I will not be outmaneuvered."

And damn any Deathless who thinks to keep secrets from me in this place.



CREDITS

Writing: Alan Alexander and Bill Bridges
Additional Material: Malcolm Sheppard
Development: C.A. Suleiman
Editing: Carol Darnell
Art Direction: Mike Chaney
Cover Art: Mark Kelly
Interior Art: Brian Leblanc, Tiago Silverio, Mauro Mussi, Aaron Acevedo
Book Design: Josh Kubat

DEDICATION:

This book is dedicated to all the White Wolf fans throughout Brazil and all of Latin America. You guys rock.

© 2017 White Wolf AB. All rights reserved. Reproduction without the written permission of the publisher is expressly forbidden, except for the purposes of reviews, and for blank character sheets, which may be reproduced for personal use only. White Wolf, Vampire, World of Darkness, Vampire the Masquerade, and Mage the Ascension are registered trademarks of White Wolf AB. All rights reserved. Vampire the Requiem, Werewolf the Apocalypse, Werewolf the Forsaken, Mage the Awakening, Promethean the Created, Changeling the Lost, Hunter the Vigil, Geist the Sin-Eaters, V20 Companion, Children of the Revolution, Storyteller System, and Storytelling System are trademarks of White Wolf AB.

All rights reserved. All characters, names, places, and text herein are copyrighted by White Wolf AB.

This book uses the supernatural for settings, characters, and themes. All mystical and supernatural elements are fiction and intended for entertainment purposes only. This book contains mature content. Reader discretion is advised.

Check out **White Wolf** online at <http://www.white-wolf.com>

Check out **Onyx Path** at <http://www.theonyxpath.com>





CURSE NECROPOLIS RIO

Table of Contents

Fique á Vontade	2	<i>The Sambadrome Marquês de Sapucaí</i>	33
Impossible Dreams	10	South Zone (Zona Sul)	33
Theme	11	Tijuca National Park	34
Mood	11	Cristo Redentor	34
Inside the Necropolis	11	Sugarloaf Mountain (Pão de Açúcar)	34
Chapter One: Flowing Waters	13	The Beaches: Ipanema, Copacabana, and Leblon	35
In the Name of the King (Portuguese Colonization)	14	Rocinha	35
<i>Emigrations Voluntary and Otherwise</i>	15	Morro da Babilônia	35
<i>The Kingdom of Brazil</i>	16	North Zone	35
<i>The Child Emperor</i>	17	<i>Paco Imperial (Imperial Palace)</i>	35
The Golden Age	20	<i>Paço de São Cristóvão (Palace of St. Christopher)</i>	35
<i>Long Live the Republic</i>	20	<i>Maracanã Stadium (Estádio do Maracanã)</i>	36
<i>A Capitol No More</i>	22	<i>Instituto Oswaldo Cruz</i>	36
Chapter Two: Rising Mountains	25	<i>Governador Island</i>	36
The Accidental Nome	25	<i>Complexo do Alemão</i>	36
Teshra-Gemet:		West Zone	36
The Red Sparrow	26	<i>Barra da Tijuca</i>	37
Hamset: The Hand of Azar	27	<i>Cidade de Deus (City of God)</i>	37
The First Meret	27	<i>Pedra de Gávea</i>	37
The Orixás	28	Chapter Three: Cariocas Eterno	39
O Corte Segredo	28	The Guilds of Rio	39
City by the Bay	29	The Laborers	39
Downtown (Centro)	31	The Alchemists	40
<i>Municipal Theater (Teatro Municipal)</i>	31	The Scribes	40
<i>National Historical Museum</i>		The Priests	40
<i>(Museu Histórico Nacional)</i>	31	The Masons	41
<i>Academia Brasileira de Letras</i>		The Mummies of Rio	41
<i>(Brazilian Academy of Letters)</i>	31	<i>Teshra-Gemet, the Red Sparrow</i>	41
RS-Global Building	32	<i>Hamset, the Hand of Azar</i>	41
Candelária Church	32	<i>The First Meret</i>	42

Amun-Rubi, the Granite Sphinx	42	Individual vs. Collective	79
Husani, Reviver of Dead Things	44	Arisen vs. Mortal World	79
Khons-Neb-Ankh, Master of the Paths of Life	45	Arisen vs. Himself	80
The Orixás	47	Arisen vs. Cult	80
Osorehe, the Basalt Tower of Forgotten Dreams (worshiped as Ogoun)	47	Arisen vs. Supernatural	80
Menefes, the Crimson Lion (worshiped as Erinle)	48	The Rio Chronicle: Cidade Maravilhosa	80
Sacmist, the Prince of Storms (worshiped as Xangô)	50	Carnival	80
Anak-Em-Tanen, Inciter of Forbidden Visions (worshiped as Exu)	51	Sports Capitalism	81
Hes-Sedjet, the Empress of Azure Waves (worshiped as Iemanjá)	52	The Fountains	81
Beset Khered, the Progenitor of Duality (worshiped as Oxumaré)	55	The Architecture of Fate	82
O Corte Segredo	57	The Lifeweb	82
Aapep Medes, the Moon Snake (aka, the Viridian Vizier)	57	Patterns in the Lifeweb	82
Bantanath, the Artificer of Secrets (aka, the Scarlet Queen)	58	Djed and Tekhen	82
Sa-Khonsu, the Oubliette of Flowers (aka, the Ebon Princess)	60	Oases	83
Nekhakha, the Flail of Eternity	61	Reliquaries and Altars	83
Ib-Sheta, the Guillotine of Innocence (aka, the Golden King)	62	Systems	83
The Iron Bull	64	Purpose (First Purpose Free, others •• each)	83
Others	66	Fortress	83
Chatuluka, the Drowned Princess	66	Guildhall	84
Sharifa, the Forgotten	68	Oasis	84
Sefetjaw Saret, the Butcher of Wisdom	70	Palace	84
Chapter Four: Samba Interminavel	73	Temple	84
Storytelling Rio	73	Tomb	85
Themes	74	Aspects	85
Alegria de Viver	74	Djed (• to •••••)	86
The Grand Mosaic	74	Geometry (• to •••••)	86
High and Low	74	Mirage (• to •••••)	86
Passionate Contest	76	Peril (• to •••••)	87
Frameworks	76	Tekhen (• to •••••)	87
The Allied Dead	76	Drawbacks	87
The Rival Dead	76	Endowments	88
The Pyramid	77	New Utterances	88
Using This Material	77	From the Depths:	
Flashbacks	77	Utterances of the Fountains of Ma'at	88
Pre-Columbian	77	The Ebon Mask	88
The Colonial Era	78	Forge of Falsehood	89
Age of Empire	79	Whispers of the Unseen World: Spirit Utterances	90
Adventures Outside Rio	79	Body of Clay	90
Conflict	79	Drums of the Ogan	91
Guild vs. Guild	79	Horse and Rider	91
Cult vs. Cult	79	The Impaling Horn: Utterances of the Iron Bull	92
		Baal's Due	92
		Rejuvenating Flesh	92
		Scent of the Oasis Palm	93
Appendix: The Serpent's Tooth	95		
The Event	95		
The Outset View	95		
The Truth	96		
Getting Involved	96		

Dramatis Personae	96	Description	109
ISP: Igreja de Serpente Penas		Storyteller Goals	109
(Church of the Feathered Serpent)	96	Character Goals	109
<i>Sautinha, the Little Saint</i>	97	Actions	110
<i>The Serpent in the Garden</i>	97	Consequences	110
<i>Fall of the House of Ximenes</i>	97	Chapter Two: Scene I A – Strange Brew	111
<i>Gustavo Ximenes</i>	98	Overview	111
<i>Dores Ximenes ("Sautinha")</i>	98	Description	111
<i>Serpente Penas</i>	98	Storyteller Goals	112
(<i>Arara Púera, "Evil Bird," Greater Amkhat</i>)	98	Character Goals	112
Prelude: The Plea	100	Actions	112
Overview	100	Consequences	114
Description	100	Chapter Two: Scene II B – Manhunt	115
Storyteller Goals	101	Overview	115
Character Goals	101	Description	115
Actions	101	Storyteller Goals	115
Consequences	102	Character Goals	115
Chapter One: Scene I – Admittance	103	Actions	115
Overview	103	Consequences	116
Description	104	Chapter Three: Scene I – The Little Saint	117
Storyteller Goals	104	Overview	117
Character Goals	104	Description	117
Actions	104	Storyteller Goals	118
Consequences	105	Character Goals	118
Chapter One: Scene II – Stench of Rot	106	Actions	118
Overview	106	Consequences	118
Description	106	Chapter Three: Scene II – Assault Sorcery	119
Storyteller Goals	106	Overview	119
Character Goals	106	Description	119
Actions	106	Storyteller Goals	120
Consequences	107	Character Goals	120
Chapter Two: Scene I – Congregation	109	Actions	120
Overview	109	Consequences	121



THE MARVELOUS CITY OF RIO

*I've never sailed the Amazon, I've never reached Brazil,
But the Don and Magdalena, they can go there when they will!
Unless I go to Rio, these wonders to behold
Oh, I'd love to roll to Rio, some day before I'm old!*

— Rudyard Kipling, *Just So Stories*

If you're like most people, your experience of the city of Rio de Janeiro is largely limited to whatever you've assimilated over the years through Hollywood and your trusty national media. When someone says "Rio" maybe you immediately think of the 2016 Olympics, to which she scrambled to play adequate hostess. If you're a sports person, maybe Rio is to you the Land of Futebol (that's soccer for us gringos) and seat of the men's 2014 World Cup. If you're Christian or American, maybe the image most deeply pressed to mind is of her giant statue of Jesus, the Cristo Redentor. If you're into travel and leisure, you've no doubt heard all about her beautiful people, parties, and beaches, or about the world-famous Carnival and Copacabana. If you're a finance and geo-politics sort, maybe you think of her as the jewel in the crown of the first country of the BRIC states (Brazil, Russia, India, and China), and therefore as the sun-kissed face of an up-and-coming mercantile power. Or maybe all that comes to mind is Michael Caine tromping around the beach looking consternated in *Blame It on Rio*.

Whatever your first impressions of the city, it's likely that they fall short of her reality.

It isn't for nothing that people all around the world call Rio de Janeiro "the Marvelous City." Her stunning, almost idyllic geography is the subject of global interest, and tourist after tourist calls her the most beautiful city in the world. The local Cariocas, the nickname for folks from Rio (whereas people from São Paulo are Paulistas; although the people of the two cities get along, it remains inadvisable to get the two names mixed up), are of course inclined to agree. After that other city, which is the largest in the Americas, Rio is the largest

metropolitan center in Brazil, with over 13 million inhabitants and growing (more in the world inhabited by the Arisen). It bears a number of historical distinctions, including being one of the only instances in history where the capital of a colonizing country officially shifted to a city in one of its colonies, which occurred when the Portuguese court transferred itself to Brazil, declaring it a kingdom in 1815. Indeed, something marvelous awaits down most every street and around most every corner in Rio.

But even these marvels fall short of the reality of Rio in the grim mirror that is this world. Underneath her splendor, which remains just as vibrant in both worlds, seethes a hotbed of activity both occult and mundane. Over a score of mummies make their permanent homes and tombs in and around Rio, and the Sybaris-laden effects and results of their collective presence seep into the very soil and stones of the city and its mortal inhabitants. The latter's rising narcotics trade has made it increasingly violent and erratic, and even at their best the Deathless can only alternate between basking in this chaos and instigating it outright. Infamous throughout the Arisen world for having its own Pharaoh of a sort, a veteran diplomat and feared Alchemist named Teshra-Gemet (the so-called "Red Sparrow"), the nome also bears host to a number of unusual and powerful tides of Sekhem not seen in other Arisen cities, and wheresoever one finds free-flowing power, there too shall one find the Deathless... and others.

All marvels are marvelous, and the city has plenty and to spare, but some marvels are darker than others. In the city of Rio, one rarely knows what kind of marvel one has until it's too late.



Rio as Signature Setting

We're doing something a little different with the default setting material for **Mummy: The Curse** and it's worth calling out by way of explanation.

Naturally, every *Chronicles of Darkness* line has its signature setting, whether it's vampire-filled New Orleans or a vision of Boston rife with wizardly intrigue. But one thing that's never happened before is a *bifurcated* signature setting – a coin with two sides, as it were, as opposed to a single two-dimensional image. With **Cursed Necropolis: D.C.**, we offered a look at a more customary American signature setting, but that city and supplement represented only one half of the signature setting material for **Mummy**: one side of the signature setting coin.

The two settings don't require one another, and their characters and stories are not only different, but in many ways counterposed – the nome in D.C. is effectively run by a single meret, whereas Rio is known far and wide for being one Arisen's domain, etc. But both cities were conceived and designed to fill the *role* of the signature setting, so folks could get a complete sense of the material from either.



THEME

Like any robust setting, the city of Rio plays host to a number of strong themes in games of **Mummy: The Curse** (explored in detail in Chapter Four), any one of which could be highlighted and heightened in any one of a number of different ways for a complete chronicle. However, the central theme of the setting as presented is identity, in particular the search thereof. This makes sense, as Rio is a place where not just the mortal population, but also the city itself has likewise been exploring and seeking to define and understand itself and its place in the world. Does Teshra-Gemet really see herself the way others do, in the way she's cultivated her image? Are the mummies of the O Corte Segredo meret losing themselves in their bid for hegemony? (The answer to that one is a full-throated, "You betcha.") The examples in micro are many.

Remember, too (no pun), that with the foundational theme of the game entire being memory, there are plenty of good ways to blend and incorporate the two, to have one derive from the other narratively. Examples of this have also been seeded into the material, such as one lunatic mummy's scheme to make his own meret member forget once-treasured things about himself, and in so doing begin to adopt an identity that hasn't existed throughout the whole of a very, very long life. However you spin it, it's all great fodder for storytelling and roleplaying.

MOOD

As befits the Marvelous City, the default mood of a Rio chronicle is going to be one of tense dynamism and of sudden transitions of kinetic and potential energy, both literal and figurative. With Rio, it's all about the highs and lows, and about the manner in which one traverses the gap. In a city many consider the most beautiful in the world, the underbelly is about as conversely ugly as one can imagine — especially in a world that benefits from the addition of lifeforce-draining mummies, lifeless abominations, and vengeful spirit-gods — and the contrast of such juxtaposition should be jarring on a near-physical level (because it sure is in real life).

A good axiom of this lesson would note that life (and unlife) in Rio are positively mercurial in the *Chronicles of Darkness*, and one of the most important elements of that is the fact that this axiom holds true for everyone: rich and poor, worker and king, male and female. High and low. Beyond its colorful characters and disturbing occult happenings, beyond its surface image of a Pharaoh-esque immigrant mummy lording her power over numerous other mummies and cults, Rio is in truth a place where just about anything can happen. Rio is where chaos and color routinely explode in contexts both grim and occult, and the next twist of Fate is always just around the corner.

INSIDE THE NECROPOLIS

Like its sister product (**Cursed Necropolis: D.C.**), **Cursed Necropolis: Rio** offers a complete chronicle resource to both players and Storytellers, unboxing the inner workings of a dynamic Arisen nome. Inside its four chapters and one appendix is the following material.

Chapter One: Flowing Waters provides an inside view on the last half-millennium in Rio from the Arisen perspective, focusing on both the rise of Teshra-Gemet and on the story of her rivals.

Chapter Two: Rising Mountains takes Storytellers through the fundamentals of the Rio area as a setting for the game, including its local power structures, geographical districts, and layout.

Chapter Three: Cariocas Eterno lifts the veil of secrecy from the unlivess of the Deathless of the Rio nome, illuminating the schemes and motives of the Marvelous City's oldest denizens.

Chapter Four: Samba Interminável is a guide to running Rio as a dynamic setting, with discussion of local themes, frameworks, sources of conflict, and permutations of the central plot. It also contains new systems for relic locations and relic architecture in the world of **Mummy**.

Rounding out both content and sourcebook is **The Serpent's Tooth**, a sample SAS story set in Rio de Janeiro that can be run stand-alone or as part of an ongoing chronicle.



CHIRPING TIGERS FLUTTERING WINGED

I can control my destiny, but not my fate. Destiny means there are opportunities to turn right or left. Fate is a one-way street.

— Paulo Coelho

The ancient history of the Arisen in what is now Rio de Janeiro is a mystery even to the Arisen themselves. In 875 BCE, Amun-Rubi, an influential Tef-Aabhi guildmaster in the newly established city of Carthage, entered Duat along with the four other members of his meret. Having laid the foundations of a great city and eventually an empire, they made plans to have their massive joint cult awaken them every twenty-five years (sooner, if some emergency arose), so that they could make whatever adjustments were needed to Carthage's development.

In 551 CE, at the start of the second Sothic Turn, Amun-Rubi awoke to a mummy's worst nightmare. He found himself in a crude cave-tomb dug into the side of a hill, with nothing around him but a handful of vessels. Nearby were two other cave-tombs containing two of the other four members of his meret: the Priest Husani and the Alchemist Khons-Neb-Ankh. Of the other two members of his meret, there was no sign. Of their cult, there was no sign. Of any other human habitation, there was no sign. The local flora and fauna were almost alien in comparison to the meret's North African home. The trio was stranded in a foreign land with no cult to perform the Call after their Sekhem was exhausted, and no idea how they had gotten there. After searching the area, they finally found some answers in the form of a granite boulder upon which someone had carved a message in Iremite.

Most of the glyphs had faded from the passage of centuries, but the legible parts indicated that some 200 years after the founding of Carthage, some nameless corrupting evil fell upon it — one too powerful even for the combined powers of five of the Arisen to contain. Amun-Rubi, Husani, and Khons-Neb-Ankh ended their Descents in the attempt, and the other two members of the meret — Bantanath the Scribe and Chatuluka the Laborer — commanded the last remnants of their joint cult to transport their sarcophagi and relics across the Atlantic Ocean to

some new land in the West. The cryptic message did not explain what happened to Bantanath and Chatuluka, nor how they could have possibly known of the existence of the South American continent. Moreover, the message offered no clue as to why the cult had never attempted to raise the trio so that they could hear directly what had happened. Instead, the message ended with a post-script in a different handwriting stating that conflict had broken out between the cultists and indigenous tribes, and that the author was the only one left and was soon to die. The final part of the message told the three Arisen to seek their answers to the east, at a place called "the Fountains of Ma'at."

Lacking any other options and acutely aware of their declining Sekhem, Amun-Rubi, Husani, and Khons-Neb-Ankh packed up their meager possessions and headed towards the rising sun. Within a day's journey, they found what they were looking for. Rising up in the distance was a small mountain range. The largest of the mountains, which European colonists would one day name "Corcovado," would have been a majestic sight even to lesser eyes, but to the Arisen, it was unearthly. Even several miles away, the mountaintop glowed with potency and with Fate's splendor. Ascending the mountain, the trio discovered that their suspicions were correct. At the very top of the mountain was an area approximately 30 feet in diameter from which magical energy containing the characteristics of both heka and Dedwen burst from the ground and sprayed up into the air like a geyser. This, apparently, was one of the Fountains of Ma'at of which the message spoke, and from their vantage point atop Corcovado, they could see the faint glow of its nearby twin — a second geyser erupting from atop a granite dome mountain sitting on a peninsula in the nearby bay. Centuries hence, Portuguese settlers would dub this mountain "Pão de Acucar" ("Sugarloaf"), after its resemblance to a technique for storing raw sugar.



To Amun-Rubi, these occult geysers were an impossibility. Heka and Dedwen were not strictly natural phenomena, but rather the result of the careful application of the sacred design principles of the Tef-Aabhi and Mesen-Nebu, specifically, within the living world. A second shock came when they discovered another message inscribed on a stone block near the font on Corcovado, one written in Amun-Rubi's own hand. This message explained that the trio had spent their first century after arriving studying the twin fountains, but had garnered few answers. They had learned that physically immersing one's self in either of the two fountains could dramatically slow a mummy's Descent, but at the risk of seriously damaging that mummy's memory. According to the message he'd left for himself, the younger Amun-Rubi feared that overexposure could lead not just to total amnesia for one of the Arisen, but possibly worse, as the full occult power of the fountains had yet to be diagrammed reliably, a fear confirmed by the older Amun-Rubi's complete ignorance of the fountains and their properties.

Moving quickly (and making very cautious use of the fountains to extend their waking time), the three mummies enslaved several nearby tribes — the forebears of the Tupi and Botocudo tribes that still exist today — and forged them into primitive cults capable of performing the Call if needed. The cults did so at irregular intervals over the next 10 centuries, allowing the trio to both shape the tribes' development and to study the Fountains of Ma'at. Unfortunately, their new cults were primitive compared to the ones that had served them in Carthage. The Call must be performed in Iremite, which was a difficult language for the Tupi and Botocudo cultists to master, particularly as they lacked any written language of their own. Indeed, by performing the rite incorrectly, they triggered a number of the trio's revivals over the next millennium. The mummy subsequently arose enraged, slaying the high priest and his followers as intruders. After regaining control, this of course meant picking a new high priest and reeducating the cult so that the process could start all over again.

Then, in 1570 CE, intruders to his tomb awakened Amun-Rubi once more. Only this time, the intruders were not ignorant cultists who had failed to master the proper rites. This time, the intruders were pale-skinned and armored foreigners who looked quite different from the Tupi priests of the past.

The Portuguese had arrived.

IN THE NAME OF THE KING (PORTUGUESE COLONIZATION)

The first European to lay claim to what is now Brazil was Pedro Álvares Cabral, who did so in the name of King Manuel I of Portugal. Colonization by Portugal began in earnest

around 1530, mainly as an effort to ward off incursions by France into the region. While the Treaty of Tordesillas effectively divided South America between Portugal and Spain, thereby ensuring that the region that would become Brazil would remain a Portuguese possession for centuries to come, it was not binding on other colonial powers who would not hesitate to claim Brazil's resources for themselves unless Portugal actively defended its claim.

The Portuguese first discovered Guanabara Bay in 1502 and immediately realized that the topography of the area made it an attractive site for a future settlement and fort. They were not alone. In 1555, the French established France Antarctique on Villegagnon Island in the Guanabara Bay. They intended the settlement as a refuge for persecuted Huguenots as well as a toehold for France in the still largely undeveloped New World territories. The Portuguese did not take kindly to the intrusion and founded the city of Rio de Janeiro in 1565, initially as a staging platform for attacks against the French settlement. They finally expelled the French in 1567, and Rio de Janeiro became the first capitol of the Portuguese colony of Brazil.

These events had two immediate effects as far as the Arisen of Rio were concerned. First and foremost, Amun-Rubi's meret arose from slumber to discover that, once again, their cults were in disarray and on the verge of extinction. By the time of the Tef-Aabhi's awakening, Rio de Janeiro had become a thriving settlement of several thousand Portuguese armed with enough guns to make them more than a match for all the indigenous tribes put together. And while the Portuguese were rarely as aggressive (and certainly not as genocidal) as the Spaniards were, they were unintentionally just as deadly. Under the Arisen's tutelage, the indigenous peoples had developed extensive trade routes throughout pre-colonial Brazil. The Portuguese unwittingly introduced smallpox, influenza and other European diseases for which the tribes had no immunity, and then unknowingly spread these plagues along trade routes. These diseases wiped out entire villages who had never even seen a European before. Once again, the 'first meret' (as Amun-Rubi's meret would come to be called) had to start over and rebuild.

The second effect was to bring the Fountains of Ma'at to the attention of mummies outside of the first meret. Among the Huguenots who relocated to Villegagnon Island were members of a cult who worshiped a being much older than Christianity — the Red Sparrow. Under her true name of Teshra-Gemet, the Red Sparrow was a Mesen-Nebu who had made her home on the Iberian Peninsula until the Reconquista made life too difficult for a female Arisen of her swarthy appearance. She had previously directed her cults to infiltrate a number of small Protestant groups across Western Europe (including the Huguenots) in case the Catholic



Inquisition discovered her network of cultists in Spain and Portugal. When she learned of the French government's desire to start a Huguenot refuge in France Antarctique, she saw an opportunity to develop a presence in the New World and had her Huguenot cultists convey her to Villegaignon Island. Ultimately, France Antarctique was a failure, but by the time the Portuguese had scoured the island of French settlers in 1567, Teshra-Gemet had already directed her servants to abandon the island and ingratiate themselves with native tribes not allied with the Portuguese.

During her time on Villegaignon, Teshra-Gemet had ample opportunity to notice and study the Fountains of Ma'at. None of the first meret were active during her early years in Rio, but Teshra-Gemet was an experienced Arisen and could easily spot the influence of others of her kind among the Tupi and Botocudo. While Amun-Rubi and his allies wandered the lands of Duat, Teshra-Gemet was busy poaching the leaders of their cults and stealing the results of the first meret's many centuries of research on the Fountains. She recognized that, as a Mesen-Nebu, she was not as equipped to plumb the Fountains' mysteries as those of the Father of Idols were, so she corresponded with Tef-Aabhi in Europe and Africa with whom she had allied in the past. Of course, three can keep a secret only if two are dead, so it was not surprising that word of her discovery spread to other Arisen.

EMIGRATIONS VOLUNTARY AND OTHERWISE

The first meret did not discover the presence of Teshra-Gemet until the dawning of the seventeenth century, by which time it seemed impossible to dislodge the interloper. Soon enough, other Arisen joined her. While the Portuguese settlers did enslave some of the indigenous peoples by the mid-1650s, the importation of African slaves had already begun. The influx of African slaves soon accelerated in the seventeenth century, as Brazil emerged as the world's leading sugar exporter, an industry dependent on vast amounts of cheap labor. Over half a million Africans would be enslaved and transported to Brazil during the seventeenth century. In the eighteenth century, after the discovery of gold and other precious metals, that figure would jump to over 1.7 million slaves.

The vast majority of African slaves imported into Brazil came from the Yoruban and Fon peoples of Central Africa. These slaves came to Brazil with their own ancestral religious beliefs, and some of those beliefs included the worship of Arisen who posed as gods or "orishas" of the Yoruban and Fon pantheons. Between the large numbers of cultists suborned into New World slavery and the rumors of the mysterious Fountains of Ma'at, it was inevitable that some Arisen from Central Africa would choose to make the

arduous trans-Atlantic journey themselves. Over the course of two centuries, seven Arisen from what is now Nigeria made their way to Rio. In every case, their first point of contact was not the venerable Amun-Rubi, but rather the upstart Teshra-Gemet, who had infiltrated the Portuguese Captaincy in Rio.

While Teshra-Gemet and the mummies of the first meret all dated back to the era of the Nameless Empire, the meret effectively slumbered without interruption for fourteen centuries and then interacted exclusively with simple, uneducated tribesmen for the next ten. That does not even take into account the extent to which careless direct exposure to the Fountains of Ma'at may have impaired the few clear memories of their prior lives they retained. In contrast, during those millennia Teshra-Gemet was active. Her cults were widespread and never suffered the decay that plagued the first meret, and the dictates she left for her cultists ensured that they would raise her on a regular basis. During her living time, she made contacts with Arisen, with prominent mortals, and even with other supernatural entities. And while she never strayed from the edicts of her Judge, neither did she stray from her own personal edict: seize power, from wherever one can. Knowing that the appearance of holding power is often the first step to claiming it, Teshra-Gemet made sure that, whenever possible, any new Arisen who arrived in Rio de Janeiro would not only meet with her first, but under circumstances that implied she was the ruling Arisen within the city. This was regardless of whether she ever had the power to back up that claim.

The first Arisen emigres against whom she employed this strategy were seven mummies who came to Rio along with mortal cultists enslaved in Africa and conveyed to Brazil. These Arisen did not come all at once, but instead arrived decades apart, with all seven following mortal cultists snatched from their homes in Africa and bound for the sugar plantations of Brazil. In each case, Teshra-Gemet welcomed the newcomers to her city and promised to aid them in reconnecting with their cultists, so long as they acknowledged her own authority over the Europeans who ruled the area. With regard to the Tef-Aabhi among their number, she also asked that they keep her apprised of anything they learned about the Fountains of Ma'at.

Each of the seven agreed to her reasonable requests, as none of the African Arisen had any particular interest in the Portuguese. Former citizens of Irem all, they had no particular opposition to slavery so long as the slave-masters neither mistreated their cultists nor interfered with the cults' various rites. Unfortunately, that was not a guarantee that Teshra-Gemet could easily make. While the Portuguese were not as aggressive in their proselytization as



the Spanish Jesuits (who often summarily executed natives who refused conversion, even when they couldn't even understand what the priests were saying), Portugal was a profoundly Catholic country, as were its colonies. Accordingly, the government of Rio de Janeiro was somewhat... insistent that all of the African slaves be baptized and brought into the Catholic faith.

Teshra-Gemet herself had no love for Catholicism, as her own cults had experienced persecution during the Reconquista. Still, she was, in all things, a pragmatist and, in consultation with the Yoruban Arisen, she devised a compromise. The affected cultists would publicly pretend that the various deities they worshiped in their private rites were actually Catholic saints they venerated as part of their Christian worship. In exchange, the representatives of Mother Church would accept that the slaves (being mere "ignorant savages") would pay homage to those saints in a more carnal manner than might be accepted among European Christians.

This compromise was quite acceptable to the Yoruban mummies, whose cults could easily spread among the large slave population without drawing undue attention from mortal authorities. Over the course of the next two centuries, this blending of traditional African polytheism and Portuguese Catholicism (with a healthy dose of the spiritualism of the native Brazilian tribes) would give birth to several inter-related syncretic religions including Quimbanda, Umbanda, Macumba, and, most importantly for Rio, Candomblé. While there are significant distinctions between these different Afro-Brazilian faiths, for the purposes of the Arisen, they are synonymous. Each of the faiths recognizes a supreme deity (equivalent to Azar) who acts on the world through lesser deities called orishas (equivalent to the Judges of Duat). The mummies, when active, present themselves to their followers as avatars of the orishas, and by the end of the seventeenth century, the group actively referred to themselves as the *Orixás*, the Portuguese pronunciation of the original Yoruban gods.

THE KINGDOM OF BRAZIL

Even as Teshra-Gemet was maneuvering to consolidate her position in Rio de Janeiro, events far to the east were poised to further complicate her existence and that of her fellow Arisen. In 1807, Napoleon Bonaparte, Emperor of France, led his Grande Armée into Portugal as part of the ill-fated Peninsular War. While a coalition of Britain, Spain, and Portugal eventually defeated the French, the Portuguese were initially unable to resist conquest and occupation. In 1808, most of Portugal's royal court, including the royal family itself, fled Lisbon for Rio de Janeiro to establish a government-in-exile. Seven years later, while the Duke

of Wellington was fighting to liberate Portugal from the French, the Prince Regent João VI elevated Brazil to the status of kingdom. His mother, the mentally ill Maria I, was proclaimed Queen of the United Kingdom of Portugal, Brazil, and the Algarves. It is unlikely that Maria was ever cognizant of her new position. For his part, the Prince Regent had quite a fondness for Rio, and the royal court remained in Brazil even after Bonaparte's defeat.

Records are unclear as to how many Portuguese nobles fled with the Royal Family to Brazil. The most reliable numbers suggest up to 7,000 travelers, comprised of nobles, their families, and their most trusted servants. Some reports claim that as many as 30,000 fled Portugal for the New World. After a brief stop in the Northern port city of Salvador de Bahia, the Prince Regent's ship entered Guanabara Bay on March 7, 1808. Upon disembarking, they celebrated for nine days.

The arrival of the Royal Court transformed Rio de Janeiro practically overnight, leading to a housing boom as new government buildings and new estates for wealthy nobles were rushed into construction. While most of the new buildings were not nearly as opulent as those left behind in Lisbon were, they were more than impressive enough to elevate Rio de Janeiro to the status of world capital. However, the city's growth did not please everyone. Many of the new buildings necessitated the razing of entire neighborhoods of Cariocas (a term for long-term citizens of Rio de Janeiro), and tax rates exploded to pay for the expansion of government services.

Of course, there was more to the construction boom than satisfying the needs of government and aristocracy. More mummies came along with the emigres, a five-member meret that called itself *O Corte Segredo* (the Secret Court). The Portuguese aristocracy had long been a breeding ground for devotees of a decadent cult known as *Os Toureiros*, which served as the Portuguese equivalent to England's notorious Hellfire Club. Despite the somewhat menacing name, the cult was mainly an exercise in degeneracy, through which bored aristocrats constrained by Catholicism engaged in sexual depravities and drunken orgies. Central to the cult's activities was a bull-featured icon meant to invoke the pagan god Moloch, once worshiped in ancient Carthage as a way to show contempt for contemporary Christian morality.

When Teshra-Gemet learned that the Royal Court was relocating to Rio, she was confident that she could turn events to her advantage as well as to the advantage of what she increasingly saw as "her" city. The members of *O Corte Segredo*, for their part, were shaken by their forced evacuation and were dangerously low on Sekhem. When confronted with a powerful mummy who seemed to dominate the city to which they were relocating and who appeared to



have the backing of the powerful Orixás meret, the Secret Court reluctantly made a deal. Teshra-Gemet would retain control over the city of Rio de Janeiro so long as she would not interfere with the larger politics of the Portuguese Empire, and she and the mortal leaders of Os Toureiros would coordinate on the construction of new government buildings to maximize their heka and Dedwen benefits for the larger Arisen population. She would allow the decadent aristocrats indulgences in their cruel debaucheries for the glory of Moloch, so long as they funded the expansion of the city with their personal wealth.

With detente between O Corte Segredo and Teshra-Gemet, only one complication remained to prevent the easy assimilation of the Portuguese meret into Rio's Arisen community, but it turned out to be a rather large one. For the leader of the royalist meret, who ruled their cult as the so-called Scarlet Queen of Moloch, was none other than Bantanath the Scribe, one of the former members of Amun-Rubi's ancient Carthaginian meret. When the Tef-Aabhi guildmaster discovered that the woman who had left him abandoned in a strange land some 2,500 years before was now in Rio leading a glorified sex cult, he flew into a rage. Only the presence of over a dozen Arisen who stood against him stopped Amun-Rubi from bringing down a massive curse upon the entire city.

Though it stretched her diplomatic skills to their utmost, Teshra-Gemet managed to negotiate a meeting between Amun-Rubi and Bantanath to resolve their differences. The meeting ended inconclusively. Bantanath rather bluntly told Amun-Rubi that she could not answer many of his questions because she did not remember what happened in Carthage either. In her case, it was not due to exposure to strange magic such as that caused by the Fountains of Ma'at. Rather, it was simply the normal result of Arisen existence. Unlike the first meret, who had slept almost uninterrupted for a thousand years before arising in Brazil, Bantanath's cultists had brought her back from Duat on a regular basis over the preceding two millennia. All she remembered of Carthage was watching it burn, but even that was at the end of the Third Punic War, more than 500 years after the meret departed for South America. She remembered being in a meret that helped found Carthage, but nothing about the other members or what led to their evacuation. To Amun-Rubi's great consternation, she also had no idea what happened to Chatuluka, the fifth member of their old meret: whether she had been sent with the others as part of their flotilla or had stayed behind in Carthage.

Understandably, this was unacceptable to Amun-Rubi, as his one clear recollection of Irem was that Chatuluka was his daughter who had also been selected to serve the Judges of Duat. Although clearly unsatisfied, Amun-Rubi

found himself at an impasse, and so he reluctantly withdrew his opposition to Bantanath and her new meret joining the Rio community. Instead, he turned all of his research on the Fountains and control over the meret's cult over to his second-in-command, Husani. Then, in a shocking affront against the Judges of Duat, Amun-Rubi voluntarily entered his death cycle months ahead of schedule.

With the first meret neutralized and the other two merets beholden to her, Teshra-Gemet turned her attention to building Rio de Janeiro into one of the world's great capitals. The Orixás turned their attention to building Candomblé and its sister religions into something worthy of the Judges of Duat. The last two members of the first meret, now without their leader, returned to a study of the Fountains of Ma'at, though answers proved more elusive than ever, now that they had no Tef-Aabhi guildmaster to enlighten them on the workings of heka. O Corte Segredo turned to the business of integrating their Moloch-worshiping cultists into the fabric of the Brazilian aristocracy. And the Os Toureiros did whatever it was that servants of Moloch did in the dark when no one was watching.

THE CHILD EMPEROR

Brazil's Age of Empire can only be understood through the lives of its two rulers: Pedro I and, more importantly, his son Pedro II. The elder Pedro was only nine when he and his family relocated from Portugal to Brazil. At that time, João VI held the title of Prince Regent, ascending to become King of the United Kingdom of Portugal, Brazil and the Algarves in 1818 after the death of Queen Maria. Three years later, under pressure from his British "allies" and the other crowned heads of Europe, João returned to Lisbon. They were unhappy to see a European ruler govern from another continent. João was said to have deeply regretted leaving Brazil, which he had come to love. He spent the remainder of his life fighting against coup attempts by leftist republicans who opposed the existence of even a limited constitutional monarchy and by reactionary monarchists who thought the ruler should exercise total control. The latter group included his younger son, who briefly ruled as Manuel I after temporarily deposing João, and his wife Carlota Joaquina of Spain, who supported Manuel's coup.

Before his departure for Lisbon, King João reportedly told his elder son, Pedro, that if he had to choose between Portugal and Brazil, he should choose Brazil. Whether this was true or not, in 1822, Pedro declared Brazil's independence and anointed himself Emperor of Brazil. Four years later, João died of arsenic poisoning, throwing Portugal into a succession crisis. His two direct heirs were Pedro, the older brother who jeopardized his claim when he led Brazil into its independence, and Manuel, the younger brother whose



attempted coup against João weakened his claim. Pedro's initial solution to the crisis pleased absolutely no one. He proposed to abdicate the Portuguese throne in favor of his seven-year-old daughter Dona Maria de Gloria, who would return to Portugal and marry her uncle, Manuel, who would rule as regent until she came of age. Unsurprisingly, Manuel was not amenable to Pedro's plan, and with the backing of the absolutist parties, he seized control of Portugal and began a long and bloody suppression of all liberal movements.

Finally and reluctantly, Pedro accepted his obligation to set things right in his native land. In 1831, he abdicated the Brazilian throne in favor of his son, Pedro II, and returned to Europe to lead a revolution against his brother Manuel and to install his daughter Maria de Gloria as Queen of Portugal. He succeeded in his goals, only to die of tuberculosis in 1834. When the First Emperor of Brazil (along with his second wife, Amelie) left Rio de Janeiro for Portugal, their son Pedro II was only five years old, and the weight of a nation had just been laid on his shoulders. The royal couple left without even saying goodbye; and the newly appointed emperor awoke to find the royal crown sitting on his bedside table. He never saw his father or stepmother again.

The mummies of Rio played little direct part in these affairs, which were largely driven by events in Europe far from the scope of their control. Indeed, most of the Arisen had no interest whatsoever in Portuguese politics, their cults now firmly rooted in Brazil. Even the Arisen of O Corte Segredo concluded that there was more opportunity for them in the New World than amid the decaying monarchies of Europe. Moreover, their cultists: the aristocrats and plantation owners who funded the cult of the Bull, had no interest in leaving the bacchanalian atmosphere of Rio to return to a nation that might well end up under the control of an oppressive Catholic autocracy.

Teshra-Gemet, likewise, was not involved in the elder Pedro's decision-making, but she was happy to reap the benefits. With the formal separation of Brazil from Portugal in 1822, the Red Sparrow no longer felt oath-bound to refrain from politics. Her oath was to refrain from the affairs of the Portuguese Empire, and if her rivals in O Corte Segredo failed to realize what Brazilian independence meant for her, who was she to inform them. Instead, Teshra-Gemet left the Portuguese mummies and their servants to seek their fortunes among the upper classes, while her own cults insinuated themselves into the civil service, the military, and even the Catholic priesthood. When Pedro I abdicated, he ensured that a joint regency between three individuals would initially rule the Brazilian monarchy: Jose Bonifacio, a personal friend, an Afro-Brazilian military veteran and freed slave known only as Rafael, and the boy's governess, Mariana de Verna. The two men had no political

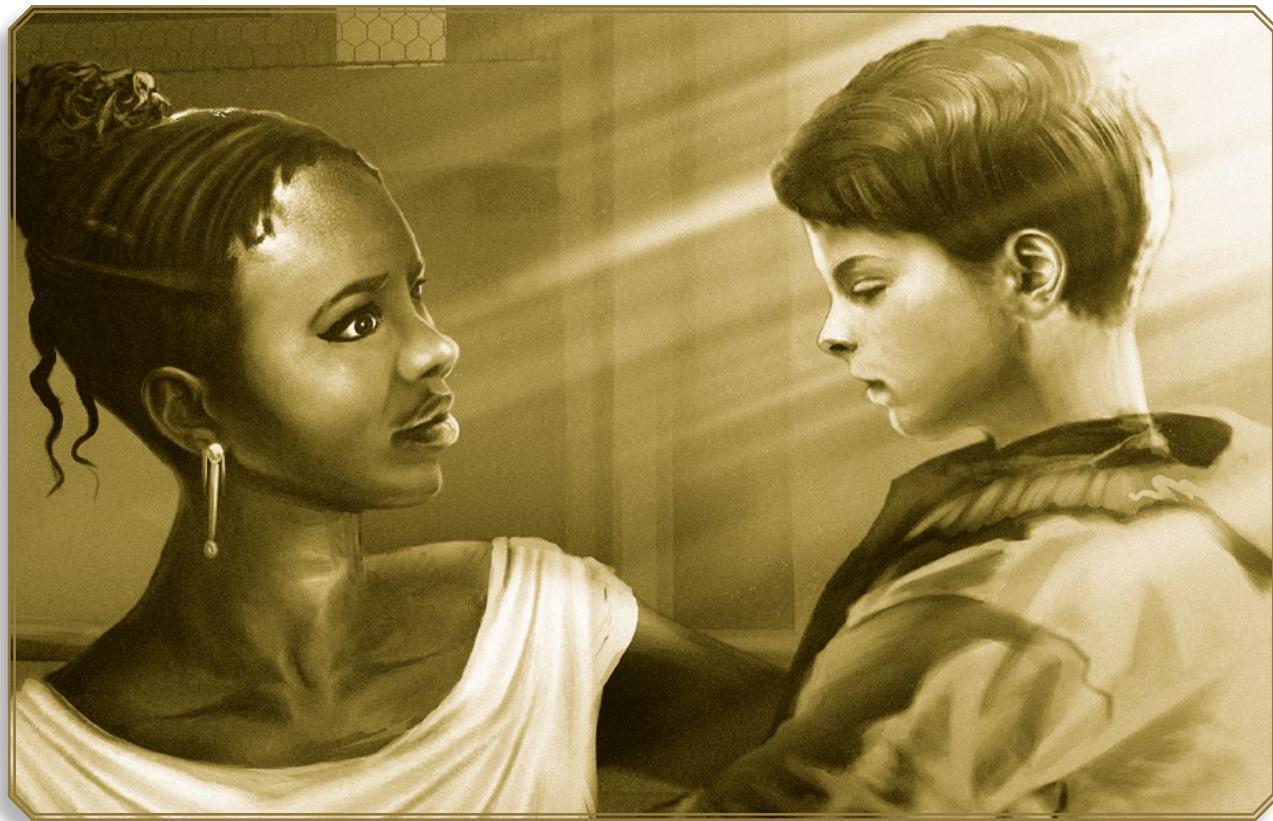
experience and the woman was a priestess within Teshra-Gemet's own cult. Consequently, the regency would be effectively helpless to prevent court intrigues from undermining the monarchy during Pedro II's minority. Teshra-Gemet thought it likely that revolution would end the Brazilian aristocracy before the regency's end, delivering power instead to bureaucrats and military personnel under her control. If not, assassinations were so easy to arrange. Her plan, while well-conceived, lasted until the Red Sparrow actually met the boy.

It was supposed to have been a mere formality. Teshra-Gemet, in the guise of an Afro-Brazilian lady-in-waiting named Dadama, accompanied Mariana de Verna to meet with the boy and the other regents simply to gauge their personalities. She watched as Jose Bonifacio explained to a quiet, five-year-old child what his future held. His parents were gone and would likely never return; that henceforth, he would have one hour per day to socialize with his two sisters, plus an additional two hours per day for play, but the rest of his time must be spent in study. Bonifacio told him that his coronation would take place when he turned 18 and by then, they, and his country expected him to be as well-educated and polished as any world leader should. The boy heard that for security concerns, he was unlikely to be allowed many friends his own age; that, in time, his wife would be chosen for him; that the fate of a nation would rest upon his shoulders and that he must work diligently to prepare for that burden. As the child nodded at each sentence, he struggled not to cry. He looked around the room at his visitors, eventually making eye contact with Teshra-Gemet. And as the ancient mummy looked back into the pale blue eyes of a boy who had just lost his parents but still struggled to stay worthy of their memory, Teshra-Gemet remembered!

The other boy was also five, but his skin was dusky and his eyes brown. His name was ... Aden. Yes, Aden-Teth-Gemet. He was also sad but just as brave, as his mother explained that she would miss his birthday celebration. For the Priests of Duat has summoned her and she was bound to obey. "It will likely be only for a day or two, my sweet one," she said. "Then, I will return and we shall celebrate your birthday. Late, but with a special gift. I promise!" The boy smiled and hugged her before returning to his studies. She took one last look at her son before leaving their house for her guildhall. She never saw him again. That very night, Teshra-Gemet's masters killed her slowly with knives, and potions, and scorpions...

As a reward for faithful service.

While the three co-regents moved away to confer, Teshra-Gemet quietly moved to the young emperor's side, introduced herself as "Dadama," and then quickly knelt and hugged him, a gesture of compassion he returned. Though



no one else heard her, she whispered to Pedro; "Your road is long and hard, my sweet one, but your destiny shall be great. And I shall walk beside you whenever I can." With that, Teshra-Gemet declared herself the patron and protectress of the five-year-old emperor.

Her patronage was a subtle one (for she did not wish to completely antagonize O Corte Segredo), and an inconsistent one, for she was bound to the cycle of life and death like any other of her kind. Nevertheless, when she could, Teshra-Gemet discreetly visited Pedro. He knew her only as "Dadama" at first, and historians mistakenly believe that this name was a reference to Mariana de Verna, a nickname given due to the five-year-old's supposed inability to pronounce Dona. As a child, Dadama told him bedtime stories about ancient and glorious kingdoms; and how a wise philosopher-king might raise up an enlightened empire to match, or even exceed, those kingdoms of old. She also tutored him in politics, diplomacy, and even in the occult.

Teshra-Gemet gave him material gifts as well as tutelage. When he turned eight, she gave him a potion that enhanced his memory and intellect, so that a boy who was not particularly bright might go on to master eleven languages (twelve if you counted Iremite), and become one of the most highly educated men of his day. When he was ten, she gave him

another potion that permanently augmented his stamina, and throughout his life, Pedro II was famous for never needing more than four hours of sleep a night. At twelve, she made him drink a foul-tasting concoction that she had devised just for him – a cure for the epilepsy that was a hereditary curse from his Spanish royal ancestors. More than anything else, though, Teshra-Gemet gave him a mother figure to replace the first mother, who died when he was one, and the second, who left without saying goodbye when he was five.

During the regency, Teshra-Gemet was invisible in Brazilian politics, but not torpid. Where possible, she quietly set the various aristocrats and courtiers against each other, causing dissension within O Corte Segredo, who could not trace it back to her. Three times the regency changed hands, and each time, authority over both Pedro and the nation fell into the hands of someone Teshra-Gemet could manipulate to her ends and their ruin. Her agents within the military, the press, the business sector, and the Church increasingly demanded that the regency end; that the young emperor finally take his throne. Finally, in 1840 and in the face of a public uprising, the National Assembly passed special legislation declaring that at the age of fourteen, Pedro was now an adult and effectively ending the regency. As Pedro was crowned and consecrated, Dadama, his third mother, watched from the shadows, her face full of pride in her second son.



THE GOLDEN AGE

Though Pedro II would rule for 58 years, his first decade was perhaps the most difficult. Almost immediately after Pedro's coronation, Teshra-Gemet returned to Duat. In her absence, the members of O Corte Segredo, sensing that Teshra-Gemet may have outplayed them up to that point, attempted to gain control of the young king by arranging his marriage to someone of their choosing. The need for a royal wedding would have been put forth even without Arisen involvement, as at that point, there were literally only two other people in the world with a legitimate claim to the throne – Pedro's young sisters, Francisca and Januária.

Unfortunately, O Corte Segredo's difficulties were not due to the Red Sparrow for once, but by European politics. Europe still considered Brazil too backward and distant a land to make Pedro a desirable marriage prospect, and efforts to marry him off to someone from the Habsburg line failed. Instead, Pedro married by proxy to Princess Teresa Cristina of the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies, a plain and shy young woman who was three years older than Pedro was. Matters worsened after someone made an ill-considered decision to send Pedro a portrait of his new bride that made her appear much better looking than she actually was. The Emperor's reaction to meeting Teresa Cristina for the first time reduced her to tears. Despite the rocky start, their marriage prospered and, if not loving, proved to be affectionate and respectful. Teresa Cristina bore four children. Both boys died in childhood as did a daughter of typhoid at the age of 24. Thus, Pedro knew early on that his sole heir would be his eldest daughter, Isabel.

Over a fifty-eight-year reign, Pedro, with the hidden support of Teshra-Gemet, worked tirelessly to modernize Brazil and to make it into an international center for culture and learning. He sponsored the construction of railroads, telegraph lines, museums, theaters, and universities. Few realized that many of these museums and universities were home to relics acquired by archeologists on the payroll of the Brazilian Historic and Geographic Institute.

Neither a figurehead nor an autocrat, Pedro showed enormous skill at winning concessions from his political opponents and forging alliances between disparate interests. Much of this success is the result of blessings bestowed by his Arisen patron, who bestowed a preternatural skill upon him at negotiation and charm. Throughout his reign, Pedro also continued his own intellectual pursuits, including years of correspondence with such personages as Victor Hugo, Louis Pasteur, Richard Wagner, and Charles Darwin. He was elected to the French Academy of Sciences, the American Geographical Society, and the Royal Society of London, among many other scientific and educational bodies.

It was at the height of Pedro's personal power and popularity that he embarked on his most difficult mission, the first one to put him at odds with Teshra-Gemet – the abolition of Brazilian slavery. Like most of her kind, Teshra-Gemet saw no moral objection to slave labor. Irem had depended on it, as had nearly every great civilization to rise since them. Moreover, she explained to Pedro that the other merets found the existence of slavery beneficial to their own agendas. O Corte Segredo was reactionary to begin with, while the Orixás used the plantations as recruiting grounds for their Candomblé cults. If Pedro set himself to free the slaves of Brazil, it would cost him his throne and probably his life and not all her power would be able to save them. Pedro then gently explained to his beloved Dadama that he was not expecting his throne to endure in any case. He had no heir except for a daughter who would not be able to hold the throne against any serious challenge, and despite a lifetime spent as Emperor, Pedro himself had little respect for the monarchial system. Frankly, he preferred that Brazil become a republic. Stunned at such ideas from the man she had raised to be the Emperor of New Irem, Teshra-Gemet turned and left, never to see Pedro again.

Teshra-Gemet's prediction came true, just as Pedro knew it would. It took the Emperor thirty years, but in 1887, while recovering from a near-fatal illness in Milan during a tour of Europe, Pedro read the news that the National Assembly had abolished slavery in Brazil. As anticipated, most of the nation's slave-owners turned from monarchism to republicanism virtually overnight. Pedro's own personal popularity with the people of Brazil was never greater, but too many factions sought to remove him for what they considered a dictatorial theft of their "private property." Ironically, Pedro himself, who, seemingly out of a desire to end the monarchy, actively prevented the suppression of republican rebellions, thereby aiding the republicans. On November 16, 1889, a military coup removed Pedro II from power, established a republic, and banished the former Emperor from Brazil. He died in exile two years later. By all accounts, he held no regrets over losing his throne, but he was deeply saddened at his exile instead of being allowed to die on Brazilian soil.

LONG LIVE THE REPUBLIC

The Republic of Brazil was never remotely as stable or successful as the Empire had been under Pedro II. Over the next 100 years following the republican coup, the nation constantly vacillated between military dictatorships that masqueraded as constitutional democracies and military dictatorships that didn't even bother to pretend. The República Velha (Old Republic) lasted from 1889 to 1930 and its distinguishing legacy was instability and violence on the part of competing "sugar oligarchs" and "coffee oligarchs" to see who could buy enough votes to control the



legislature. Throughout the República Velha, the government continually limited the franchise to the point that in the election of 1910, there were only 627,000 eligible voters out of a population of 22 million.

The República Velha ended in 1930 as the Great Depression devastated the power of the local oligarchs and paved the way for dictatorship. Getúlio Vargas initially rose to the Presidency on a populist platform not unlike that of FDR, but by 1934, his policies were much closer to those of Mussolini. While those policies improved the lives of the urban middle class in the Southeast (including Rio, whose population exploded during the early twentieth century), it consigned the rural areas of the Northeast to a semi-feudal state plagued by peasant uprisings throughout his regime. Brazil during this period was a breeding ground for potential communist revolutionaries, and the Vargas government became increasingly reactionary in its efforts to suppress revolt. In 1937, in response to allegations of an imminent communist coup, Vargas declared himself dictator. His regime lasted until 1945 when he was overthrown in a bloodless coup that led to a return to democracy.

For the Arisen of Rio, this era, despite the hardships imposed on the mortals, was a boom time. Cults flourish best in times of social upheaval. Among the poor Brazilians who flocked to the capitol in search of work during the Depression were thousands of Afro-Brazilians who found themselves drawn into the Candomblé-based cults of the Orixás; and just as many Brazilians descended from the indigenous peoples who felt drawn to the same cults started by the First Meret among their pre-Columbian ancestors. The Constitution of 1891 guaranteed freedom of religion for Brazilians, and while that right has not always been honored in the breach, it greatly reduced the ability of the Catholic Church to suppress non-Catholic religions during the twentieth century. O Corte Segredo and their cultists (most of whom were among the oligarchs) lost some power in the Depression, but they were too entrenched among the ruling class to suffer great losses, and the rise of fascist Brazil gave them opportunity to recoup. Many government officials joined the O Corte Segredo, and while President Vargas himself never became a cultist, or learned of the Arisen, he made more than a few appearances at the libertine parties held at the private estates of oligarch supporters.

The Arisen who profited least during this era was Teshra-Gemet, but even she made progress in her plans for Rio. Instead of jaded oligarchs or disaffected peasants, she focused her attentions on Rio's burgeoning middle class, as new industries grew and attracted workers from across the nation. In 1935, she founded RS-Global Transport, LLC as a new front for the cult of O Pardal Vermeilho, and through it, she sought and acquired influence over the customs

The First Favela

Soon after the foundation of the Republic, military conflict broke out between the government and a cult of peasants in the Bahia region of Brazil. Founded by an itinerant mystic named Antônio Conselheiro at a small settlement named Canudos, the group may have been a cult of some kind (whether in service to an Arisen or simply mortal delusions) or simply a group of peasants banding together to form a community of their own. Regardless, the nascent Republican government concluded that Canudos was somehow a hotbed of monarchist rebellion and dispatched several increasingly larger military expeditions against Canudos until they finally wiped out the settlement to the last person.

Afterwards, approximately 20,000 soldiers who had participated in the destruction of Canudos were ordered back to the capitol and then simply decommissioned. With no place to go and no income, the soldiers set up a series of shantytowns at the edge of the city. The first one they dubbed a "favela" after a skin-irritating plant that had plagued the soldiers during the Canudos campaign. The name stuck as nickname for a Brazilian slum neighborhood, usually bereft of any kind of government services. Today, there are more than 600 favelas in Rio alone.



officials serving both Rio's docks and its developing air-freight network. By 1945, it was virtually impossible to move contraband (especially relics and vessels) into Rio without the Red Sparrow's knowledge.

However, the most important achievement of this era did not belong to any one meret or cult, but rather to a guild. In 1908, a Tef-Aabhi named Hamset emigrated from Constantinople after the Young Turk Revolution cost him his influence over the Sultan Abdul Hamid II and most of his Turkish holdings. A prominent guildmaster in his former country and lacking a meret of his own, he ingratiated himself with the other Tef-Aabhi of Rio. Of the masons of Rio, only the torpid Amun-Rubi had held sufficient status of a guildmaster, and in his absence, Hamset found it easy to draw the other Tef-Aabhi to his side for the good of the guild in spite of any personal animosities. He spent most of his waking periods over the next ten years studying all of the research on the Fountains of Ma'at accumulated by both the Orixás and O Corte Segredo. In 1919, he met with Husani and persuaded him to awaken Amun-Rubi. Amun-Rubi was decidedly displeased to have been summoned



from Duat, and his meeting with Hamset was tense, but at the end, he gave his blessing for the newcomer to proceed with his plans.

Having united the Tef-Aabhi behind him, Hamset met with Teshra-Gemet to win her support for his ambitious scheme: to cap the fountain atop Corcovado with an effigy capable of harnessing its power for the benefit of all of Rio's Arisen. Dubious, but intrigued, Teshra-Gemet listened to his proposal and noted that his supporters included members of every meret. Then, she made her counter-offer: she would give her full support to the project provided that all of the assembled Tef-Aabhi vowed to aid her in a future endeavor. She would not say precisely what it was, only that, unlike Hamset's plans, it would have no impact of the city's heka, merely its mortal political structure. While suspicious, the Tef-Aabhi agreed to her demands, and she, in turn, lent her power and influence to ensure the construction of the Cristo Redentor, a hundred-foot statue purportedly representing Jesus Christ, erected atop Corcovado on the precise spot where that mountain's Fountain was located. While the statue's mortal-facing name was Christ the Redeemer, for the Deathless the statue also served quite well as a colossal occult reproduction of a relic icon of Azar that Hamset had possessed since his first awakening. This was not a relic in itself, but the very pinnacle of the art of the sacred geometrists of the Father of Idols.

Construction of the statue began in 1922 and they completed it in 1931. The positive effects immediately emanated throughout the city. Instead of shooting up a mere ten feet in a massive, unstable surge, the Fountain's power flowed through the statue and then rained down on the city like a fine mist, covering an area roughly coextensive with the Rio city limits.

A CAPITOL NO MORE

After the fall of the Vargas regime, Brazil reorganized under yet another constitution that created the Second Republic. It lasted from 1946 to 1964, during which time Vargas, the former dictator, actually managed to win the popular election as President from 1951 until his suicide in 1954. Ten years later, the Second Republic fell to yet another military coup. This one would last for over twenty years and was as brutal and totalitarian as any other South American dictatorship. Beginning in 1985, Brazil transitioned into the democratic Third Republic, which has endured to the present day, mainly due to the populist appeals of a succession of leftist presidents who have weathered repeated corruption scandals by continuous (and continuously unsuccessful) programs to reduce Brazil's massive poverty levels.

While the Second and Third Republics and the dictatorships that separated them wrought terrible upheavals

Sekhem Redentor

Thanks to the Cristo Redentor's effect on the Fountain, any mummy within the affected area treats her Descent schedule as if her Sekhem were 1 lower (to a minimum of Sekhem 2, at which point there is no further benefit).

Alas, in the world of the Arisen, there are rarely positive benefits without corresponding negative ones. The statue draws Amkhata to Rio like moths to a flame, and within the affected area, the spiritual barriers are weaker, allowing spirits to affect the physical world more easily. Such entities gain a +2 bonus on all rolls to affect the material world. Yet, the Arisen turned even this to their benefit, as both the first meret and the Orixás possessed special Utterances that gifted them with influence over such spiritual beings.

The remaining Fountain, across the way on Sugarloaf Mountain, is apparently unaffected by the statue's presence.



on the Brazilian people, they had little effect on the mummies of Rio. This was due mainly to the foresight of Teshra-Gemet. After the first fifty years of tumult and revolution that followed the coup against Pedro II, the Red Sparrow had had quite enough of Brazilian politics. Her loyalty was to her city, rather than to Brazil as a whole, and she reasoned that the best way to stop mortal politics from disrupting her city was to get mortal politics out of her city. In 1954, right after Vargas's suicide, she summoned the city's Tef-Aabhi to meet with her (and in several cases, having them summoned from Duat) so that she could call in her debts. What she proposed to the Father of Idols was, in its own way, far more ambitious than erecting the Cristo Redentor. She wanted their support in compelling the Brazilian government to build an entirely new city far away from Rio to which the national capitol could be located.

Initially stunned, Hamset and the other Tef-Aabhi considered the matter and told her that it would take between thirty and fifty years to plan for an entire city in order to maximize its geomantic properties and its heka flow. She responded bluntly that she didn't care one jot for its geomantic efficiency — she wanted the capitol moved from Rio no later than the end of the current decade. Frustrated by her lack of artistic sensibility but bound by their oaths, the Tef-Aabhi returned to their respective merets to explain what was happening. Only O Corte Segredo made serious objection, as much of their mortal influence was among the political class. The other two merets



actually saw the value in relocating the capitol away from their domain and backed the Red Sparrow's plan. O Corte Segredo acquiesced, but made no secret of their anger towards the other mummies.

Ground first broke on the new capitol of Brasilia in 1956, and the city's inauguration was barely 4 years later, in 1960. The astounding achievement of constructing a major city in just 41 months was offset by the fact that the Tef-Aabhi played very little role in the city's design. The combination of stark modernism used for nearly every building, combined with the fact that the architects paid no attention at all to laying out the city in accordance with sacred geometry means that, regardless of whatever appeal mortals find in Brasilia, mummies and especially Tef-Aabhi find the capitol actively unpleasant to even visit. They consider it almost impossible to remain in for any length of time. (After a single day spent in Brasilia, the mummy starts to suffer a cumulative -1 penalty on all Composure rolls every two days, to a maximum penalty of -5 after 10 days. For Tef-Aabhi, this penalty begins immediately and increases daily, not every other day.)

When the Second Republic fell in 1964, Teshra-Gemet proved prescient. Unlike prior coups, the disruption to the activities of the Arisen of Rio was minimal. In fact, the biggest threat to the Arisen in the last fifty years has been internecine conflict. Angry over their loss of influence over the Brazilian central government after its relocation, the mummies of O Corte Segredo chose to retaliate against the First Meret and the Orixás by "draining the swamp" in which their cults thrived — the favelas. In 1970, the military junta, at the direction of O Corte Segredo, made its first effort to eradicate the favelas through a forced-relocation scheme. However, the vast numbers of people living in the Rio slums was so great (and the meret's influence in Brasilia was still so weak) that the plan failed for lack of funding. However, the attempt was a wake-up call for the other two merets who responded by arming their cults, using an increasingly violent drug trade as a cover for their actions.

More recently, O Corte Segredo has managed the remarkable feat of securing both the 2014 FIFA World Cup and the 2016 Olympics for the city of Rio. The meret has done so not out of any great love of sport, but as a cover for a second attempt to remove the favelas, this time by getting the municipal government to begin a massive gentrification plan with an eye towards replacing the favelas with facilities for the upcoming games. In response, the cults of the First Meret and the Orixás successfully stirred up popular opposition to the cost overruns associated with the Games (as well as other issues of government malfea-

Buried Secrets

The modern era has also brought new understanding of the Fountains of Ma'at, including vindication of Amun-Rubi's earliest impressions of the phenomena. In 1990, mortal officials oversaw a four-month long restoration of the Cristo Redentor, and the Tef-Aabhi used the opportunity to scan Corcovado with state-of-the-art geological survey equipment, along with mass applications of Affinities and Utterances suited to deep earth surveying. The results were startling.

From the beginning, Amun-Rubi had insisted that no natural phenomenon could produce either heka or Dedwen, and he was right. For the survey revealed that buried beneath the surface of Corcovado itself was a man-made structure: a 700-foot-tall obelisk made of some unknown metal. A subsequent analysis of Sugarloaf Mountain revealed that it contained a similar structure and that the two mountains themselves were apparently manufactured for concealing the twin obelisks. Most remarkable of all is their age, as it appears the obelisks were buried within their respective mountains well over 6,000 years ago during the reign of the Nameless Empire. Whether the Empire was responsible for constructing edifices of such power or it was some ancient and long forgotten rival of the Empire is unknown, as is the true intended purpose for the construction.

sance), resulting in the 2013 "Brazilian Spring" protests, in which more than 100,000 people participated in Rio alone.

As Teshra-Gemet surveys the growing conflict in her city, she knows she now faces the greatest test of her power. Since her arrival in Rio, she has maintained the illusion of power by skillfully playing the "poor" merets and the "rich" meret off against one another, while undermining all three when she could. But with the Sothic Wheel's latest turn, this is the first time since her rise to power that all of the city's mummies are active and all are involved in the current conflict. Even worse, the Arisen are so distracted by their factional conflicts that it has interfered with efforts to purge the city of Amkhata, whose numbers seem to have exploded in response to the ascendance of Sothis. There are now too many pieces on the board for her to manage easily, and before the Olympics are over, things will only get worse. Not for the first time, the Red Sparrow contemplates how much easier things were under an empire.



BRIAN
LEBLANC

CHIQUITOS RIO

It's no sin to make a critical study of Brazil's reality.

A small percentage own land. Most people don't.

— Paulo Freire

“The Accidental Nome” is how many Arisen refer to Rio de Janeiro. Human beings founded it without any input from the Deathless. While Arisen designed many of its prominent buildings, their placement had less to do with careful geomantic consideration and more to do with the whims of an exiled foreign nobility. Its two most important occult landmarks — Sugarloaf and Corcovado — remain absolute mysteries to the Arisen even after centuries of study. Where cities like Washington, D.C. and many of the great capitals of Europe show the heavy hand of Arisen methods and means, Rio’s development has been guided more by luck, opportunity, and happenstance than by any grand design. Perhaps more than any city in the world, Rio bears the distinction of having shaped its mummy inhabitants more than they have, in turn, have shaped the city.

Rio is a city of contrasts. Cultural landmarks built to mimic the styles of Old Europe stand beside gleaming skyscrapers that are symbols of New World vibrancy. The thinnest of geographic barriers separate opulent wealth from oppressive poverty. One part of town is home to mansions built by nineteenth century aristocrats, while another part is home to hundreds of favelas, one of the world’s largest collections of slums and shantytowns. The South American city with the highest percentage of atheists lies in the shadow of one of the world’s largest depictions of Jesus Christ.

It is also a city of conflicts, though most simmer below the surface (for now). The democracy of the Third Republic is barely twenty-five years old. Multiple scandals have rocked its current left-wing leadership, and fears of another junta are both commonplace and plausible. This is a city that regrets banishing its emperor, after all. More recently, Rio has pushed itself onto the stage of world sports by hosting the World Cup and the Olympics within a two-year span of time, but in so doing, it has pit rich against poor. The rich use the games as an excuse to push the poor out of the favelas, and the poor push back with mass demonstrations that disrupt the city.

These contrasts and conflicts among the mortal population have parallels among its undead citizens. No mummy has ever held enough power over Rio to enforce a coherent vision for the city’s future. Teshra-Gemet came closest during the reign of Pedro II, but she has never truly pursued any particular goal for the city other than seeing herself perpetually in charge of it. Hamset has a vision, but lacks the power and influence to enact it. The three major merets of the city have foregone any larger vision for the city in favor of fighting over limited resources and avenging old slights.

THE ACCIDENTAL NOME

The political structure of Rio is somewhat unusual by the standards of most Arisen communities. In most nomes, guildmasters jointly hold power, and they are typically members of the same meret or at least of allied merets. In Rio, Teshra-Gemet quietly rules with a “first among equals” status so fragile that she does not dare to flaunt it. While the Arisen acknowledge her dominant status in the city, her power is not so great that it could withstand any alliance of Arisen larger than a single meret. Indeed, her power largely flows from how skillfully she has pitted the merets against one another. Among her fellow guildmasters, Husani and Osorehe dislike one another because they compete for cultists. Both of them hate Bantanath (Husani because of their shared history, and Osorehe because Bantanath is actively trying to destroy the favelas in which his cults reside), and the feeling is mutual. All three of them disdain Hamset as an arrogant newcomer, even though his contributions to the city over the last century have outweighed their own, and Hamset feels exasperation by what he sees as a childish lack of initiative among his peers.

Of course, none of the other nomarchs has any great love for the Red Sparrow either, so it’s a good thing for her that she is indispensable. Her cult has extensive influence inside both the Rio city government and nearly every facet of the

Rio at a Glance

Size: Municipality 1,260 sq. km (486.5 sq. miles); Metro 4,557 sq. km (1,759.6 sq. miles).

Population (WoD, 2016): Approximately 8 million (city), approximately 17 million (metro area). Rio is the second largest city in Brazil, after São Paulo.

Arisen Population: 19 (not including transients and PCs).

Demonym: "Carioca".

Mayor (2016): Eduardo Paes.

Guildmasters: Teshra-Gemet (Mesen-Nebu), Hamset (Tef-Aabhi), Husani (Su-Menent), Osorehe (Maa-Kep), Bantanath (Sesha-Hebsu), Amun-Rubi (Tef-Aabhi).

Airports: Galeão- Antônio Carlos Jobim International, Santos Dumont, and Jacarepaguá-Roberto Marinho. Rio also has three military airports.

Highways: BR-116 (Presidente Dutra Federal Highway), BR-101 (Rio-Santos Federal Highway).

Climate: Tropical savannah or tropical monsoon, depending on the season, with dry and mild winters and springs, followed by very wet summers and autumns.

Economy (2016): Rio has the second largest GDP of any Brazilian city save for São Paulo. The number of federal employees declined after they relocated the capital to Brasilia, but many of the corporations located here during its capital days remained. Rio remains a hub for South American oil and gas, including the state-owned oil company, Petrobras. However, there is considerable income disparity in Rio, with high rates of systemic poverty among the favelas.

Notable Locations: Copacabana Beach, Ipanema Beach, Sambadrome Marquês de Sapucaí, Biblioteca Nacional, the Teatro Municipal, the Paço Imperial (Royal Palace), Maracanã Stadium.

Notable Locations (Arisen): Cristo Redentor, Sugarloaf Mountain, RS-Global Building, the Academia Brasileira de Letras (Brazilian Academy of Letters), the Palace of St. Christopher (which holds the Museu Nacional).

Motto: Viva Sua Paixo ("Live Your Passion").

status as the de facto Deathless overseer of Rio, a job that none of them particularly wants, anyway. Therefore, they pay lip service to her as "first nomarch" and let her govern the city while they pursue their private interests and personal vendettas.

TESHRA-GEMET: THE RED SPARROW

For an individual mummy to hold power over a nome without the support of a meret is a truly impressive feat. For O Pardal Vermelho to have done so in a nome with three separate merets and nearly a score of Arisen inhabitants is extraordinary. She has achieved this level of control the same way she has achieved everything else in her millennia of existence—through sheer tenacity. Teshra-Gemet has no grand plans to rebuild Irem. She doesn't really even have any grand plans to exploit the Fountains of Ma'at, though she is happy to support the plans of Hamset and other Tef-Aabhi if they are beneficial to her as well. She flirted briefly with dreams of a new and different Irem during the reign of Pedro II, who left her temporarily blinded by a brief maternal instinct. But Pedro's decision to allow the monarchy to fall was a splash of cold water to her face, one that made her realize how she had nearly strayed from her true course. And so she let him have the revolution he claimed to desire.

Teshra-Gemet's true agenda is surprisingly straightforward. She wants to do what mummies are *supposed* to do — recover vessels and obey the will of the Judges. To that end, she has shaped Rio into one of the most important transportation hubs in the world. Her cult, based on the corporate model rather than the tribal model favored by most of her peers, is extremely wealthy and has global reach and influence. Her control over Rio's ports, roads, and airports makes it nearly impossible for any item of occult significance to enter the city without her knowledge or approval. Said approval often comes with certain strings attached, but the alternative is to risk the Red Sparrow seizing any such relics that come into her sphere and adding them to her sizeable collection. Her political machinations against the other Arisen are all for the purpose of maximizing her control over the city and refining her ability to use it for relic acquisition.

Advantage: Cult

Teshra-Gemet has spent well over 200 years cultivating the widespread belief that she is the most powerful mummy in Rio. The relative truth of that is up for debate, certainly, but what is not up for debate is that she is the mummy without whom the city would fall apart. Her opponents have spent most of the city's history focused on building their cults among mortal demographic groups, whether indigenous

city's import-export infrastructure. If sufficiently antagonized by any faction within the city, she could easily tip the balance of power towards that faction's enemies. In short, it is in none of the guildmasters' interest to challenge Teshra-Gemet's



tribes, African slaves, or a fading aristocracy. Teshra-Gemet's focus is on a concept: transportation. Any and every group that involves itself with moving things in and out of Rio (or hindering such movement) is a potential target for recruitment. Thus, the cult of the Red Sparrow includes dockworkers and CEOs, smugglers and police, military officers and museum security guards. The size, reach, diversity, and influence of her cult give her almost unlimited power over the Downtown, South Zone, and North Zone regions of the city, and considerable influence just about everywhere else in town. Her power is weakest in the favelas, but even in those blighted places, she maintains a presence through the Pacifying Police Units created to patrol the slums and reduce crime in advance of the World Cup.

Advantage: Resources

As an extension of the benefits of her powerful cult, the Red Sparrow has also quietly assembled the largest collection of relics in Rio. Indeed, she has more relics and vessels at her disposal than any single meret in the city (although the First Meret comes close, a fact that would surprise her if she knew it). Nor is her fortune limited to the occult. Several multinational corporations have headquarters in Rio so that the CEOs may be closer to the object of their worship, and they are all generous tithers. If all else fails, Teshra-Gemet has the option of simply throwing money at a problem until it goes away. Only O Corte Segredo can seriously challenge the Red Sparrow in financial matters, and even they would be hard-pressed to win a war of cold hard cash against her.

HAMSET: THE HAND OF AZAR

Like Teshra-Gemet, Hamset stands alone without the backing of a meret. Unlike her, he lacks both a pervasive cult and a preternatural skill at politics. He has, with some difficulty, united the fractious Tef-Aabhi guild behind a few projects, most importantly the Cristo Redentor; but all of his fellow Masons have obligations with their own merets that prevent Hamset from unifying the guild into a true political force. Truthfully, Hamset isn't really even sure what he would do if he had a true political force backing him beyond capping Sugarloaf Mountain as he did Corcovado, a plan that has no support even within the guild. The sad fact is that Hamset *hates* politics and hates dealing with other Arisen outside of fellow creative geniuses. He wouldn't even be a nomarch if Amun-Rubi were capable of fulfilling his responsibilities as a Tef-Aabhi. That said, Hamset has his secrets too, and he knows he'll need whatever power he can muster when his biggest secret gets out — how will the Arisen of Rio react when they find out that there's a third Fountain in the area, and possibly more than that?

Advantage: Genius

As much as he wishes he could avoid the inconveniences of being both a nomarch and a guildmaster, there's really no one else for the job. Hamset is unquestionably the most skilled Mason in Rio. Amun-Rubi is his only real competition, and that mummy's struggles with both Fountain-induced amnesia and personal demons have made him incapable of leading a guild. In truth, Hamset is a victim of his own humility. He really is a genius at geomantic design and is fully qualified to lead the Tef-Aabhi, but he tends to assume that his fellow Masons are as gifted as he is but merely unwilling to put forth effort. This blinds him to the power he could hold over the other Masons of Rio if he were to be more open about his gifts and more willing to mentor others in exchange for loyalty.

THE FIRST MERET

Members: Amun-Rubi, Husani, and Khons-Neb-Ankh.

The Arisen of Rio permit the First Meret the dignity of using that name for itself for one reason: because it doesn't matter. The meret was indeed the first group of mummies to discover the Fountains of Ma'at, but as far as anyone can tell, they didn't really do anything with it. They took no steps into building their cults among the Tupi and Botocudo into organized societies as other Arisen did with the Aztecs, the Mayans and the Inca. They were utterly unprepared for the arrival of the Portuguese, European, and African Arisen who followed in their wake. It is only fitting to call them the First Meret. What else do they have?

Advantage: Occult Lore

What indeed. The First Meret is short on numbers, on cultists, on resources, and on influence. Its cults recruit almost exclusively from the poorest segments of the Rio favelas and even then usually only from individuals who can trace their lineage back to the indigenous tribes. Even their nominal leader, Amun-Rubi, has all but withdrawn from the Arisen community completely. Despite their weaknesses, the First Meret has some hidden strengths. First of all, their tribal cults were active in Brazil far longer than those of their rivals, and they maintained trade routes into the deepest parts of the Amazon over the course of centuries. Those trade routes are gone now, but during their heyday, native cultists brought their masters vessels from the length and breadth of pre-Columbian South America. A surprising number of those vessels are in the hands of the First Meret still, locked away in hidden tombs out in the countryside where the jealous mummies of Rio cannot find them. If motivated to do so, the First Meret could bring a relic arsenal to bear that could match any other faction.

And there is a second secret the First Meret hides as well. No other mummies have spent as much time bathing in the



Fountains of Ma'at as the First Meret. They have paid for their explorations in lost memories, but their efforts have also allowed them to *remember* things, as well. Not personal details or dry facts about lost Irem, but things that matter for today. By communing with the source of the Fountains, the members of the First Meret have learned special Utterances unknown to their peers. Utterances that allow them to manipulate the Dedwen and heka produced by the Fountains in ways foreign to their fellow mummies. Thus far, they have used these Utterances sparingly, but here at the turn of the Sothic Wheel, all three of the meret's members are at the height of their powers and could, if they chose, use the third-tier aspects of their proprietary Utterances to devastating effect.

THE ORIXÁS

Members: Osorehe (leader), Anak-Em-Tanen, Beset Khered, Hes-Sedjet, Kekewey, Menefes, and Sacmist

In theory, the seven-member Orixás meret represent the largest Arisen faction in Rio. Despite their numerical advantage, however, the Orixás have never held nor even sought power over the city commensurate with their size for two reasons. First, the majority of the Orixás are strong adherents of the Diasporic Code and in particular the Shadow Law: *do not grasp the sunlit flail*. For that reason, the Orixás have always had a strong antipathy for O Corte Segredo, which has been ever obsessed with the acquisition of temporal power. Likewise, the Orixás collectively have a certain respect for Teshra-Gemet, who has ruled Rio as a proper nomarch should — invisibly. Even during the reign of Pedro II, she kept to the shadows and allowed Pedro to fashion a relatively secular society that allowed the growth of Candomblé and its sister religions into a potent mystical force.

Which leads to the second reason why the Orixás have not leveraged their numbers into greater power over the city: beyond their joint infiltration of the various Afro-Brazilian religions practiced in Rio, the individual Orixás really don't have that much in common with one another. They came to Brazil separately with different waves of the slave trade, and they have largely been content to let the Afro-Brazilian religions grow organically while searching for particularly useful or powerful mortal worshipers to induct into the secret mysteries of their individual cults. The Orixás joined forces because there was safety in numbers and because their cultists shared enough central beliefs to justify a merger, but outside of that, each Orixá has his or her own agenda.

Advantage: Supernatural Diversity

Besides their numbers, the most powerful advantage of the Orixás lies in their connections with other supernatural beings. Candomblé, Umbanda, and all their fellow

syncretic religions are highly ritualistic and evocative in nature. Whether it's due to the involvement of the Arisen or simply a characteristic of Rio (perhaps related to the Fountains), an unusual number of the Orixás' worshipers transcend the limits of rituals and gain an awareness of heka. As a result, the cults of the Orixás contain a sizeable number of mortal sorcerers who continue to venerate the Arisen even after become supernatural beings in their own right. The Orixás have generally held this resource in reserve, but from time to time, owning a cadre of magically potent mortals who can act freely even while the mummies are in Duat has been a tremendous boon.

O CORTE SEGREDO

Members: Bantanath (leader), Aapep Medes, Ib-Sheta, Nekhakha, and Sa-Khonsu

O Corte Segredo is not the oldest faction in Rio, but it has certainly been active for the longest continuous span of time. The original group came together during the Middle Ages. The Portuguese Reconquista was in full swing, and the mummies, who appeared Moorish to the uninitiated, thought it prudent to hide in the shadows and acquire cultists from the Portuguese nobility who could direct military action and religious persecution away from their holdings. Among these Arisen: the powerful and charismatic Bantanath, who had come to the Iberian Peninsula with the Moors, armed with a cache of powerful relics. One, an artifact of Ancient Carthage, had the power to induce unshakeable loyalty in mortals at the cost of degrading their innate moral character. Bantanath and her meret used the artifact to create a secret society of morally decadent aristocrats who would give the mummies anything so long as they could engage in sadistic and deviant rituals that would have led the Church to burn them at the stake had they ever found out. Mindful of the Shadow Law, O Corte Segredo never sought to draw the higher echelons of the aristocracy into their web, let alone any member of the Royal Family. Lesser aristocrats were more than sufficient for the cult's needs.

When the Portuguese Emperor relocated to Rio, O Corte Segredo went with him. The power of monarchy was already in decline, and the mummies wanted no part of the revolutions that were building in Europe. Brazil, with its large rural plantations seemed more in keeping with the peccadillos of their cultists, particularly in light of the nation's burgeoning slave population. Initially, the aristocratic Arisen were annoyed that Teshra-Gemet held so much power over the city, but they quickly realized that removing her would only leave them vulnerable to the Orixás and the First Meret, both of which the Red Sparrow had kept weak and divided by her policies. Instead, the meret agreed to a detente with



Teshra-Gemet, one in which neither would interfere in the private affairs of the other and all would work to the betterment of Rio as a city. It helped that Teshra-Gemet seemed to have no interest in the larger affairs of the Portuguese Empire, and by the time O Corte Segredo realized how much influence she had over Pedro II, it was too late to do anything about it, so they chose to work with her.

The meret poured its assets into the construction of new public buildings fit for an empire, many of which have innate supernatural properties due to the carefully shaped flow of heka, Dedwen and Sekhem they produced. While Teshra-Gemet claims dominion over Downtown and the North and South Zones, many of the most important and venerable buildings within those locations are considered the property of O Corte Segredo. The Teatro Municipal and the Academia Brasileira de Letras are just two of the public sites which were built to O Corte Segredo specifications and over which those mummies claim dominion today.

Advantage: Resources

While the meret's cult initially limited itself to Portuguese aristocrats, in the last fifty years, it has aggressively expanded its recruitment to mortals of commoner descent but who have achieved wealth and power befitting the nobility. Regardless of nationality, the 1% are still the new ruling class, after all. By agreement with Teshra-Gemet, the cult does not recruit among shipping magnates or other individuals related to the transportation industry, but beyond that, any millionaire to be found in Rio (and there are a lot of them) is ripe for the taking. The result is that O Corte Segredo is the only faction in Rio to have a cult with both reach and influence nearly equal to that of Teshra-Gemet.

Advantage: The Iron Bull

Unfortunately, the meret's greatest advantage is one it doesn't know it has... and one it probably wouldn't want if it did. The Iron Bull is an ancient relic of extraordinary power supposedly created in Ancient Carthage, but which actually predates Carthage by untold centuries. Cast in the form of twenty-foot-tall man-bull with a furnace where its belly and legs should go, the Iron Bull's original purpose was as a method of execution meant for the worst criminals, whose painful deaths yielded raw Dedwen that those making the sacrifice could use to improve their prosperity. Unwisely, the Carthaginians, who believed the Bull to be an icon of their city-god Moloch, abandoned the sacrifice of convicted criminals in favor of children, apparently in the belief that a more innocent sacrifice would yield greater rewards. Their beliefs proved correct, after a fashion. The deaths of untold thousands of innocent children (along with the sacrifice of their parents' own morality and sanity) flooded the relic, giving it a crude sentience that eventually grew into a cunning and malevolent intellect.

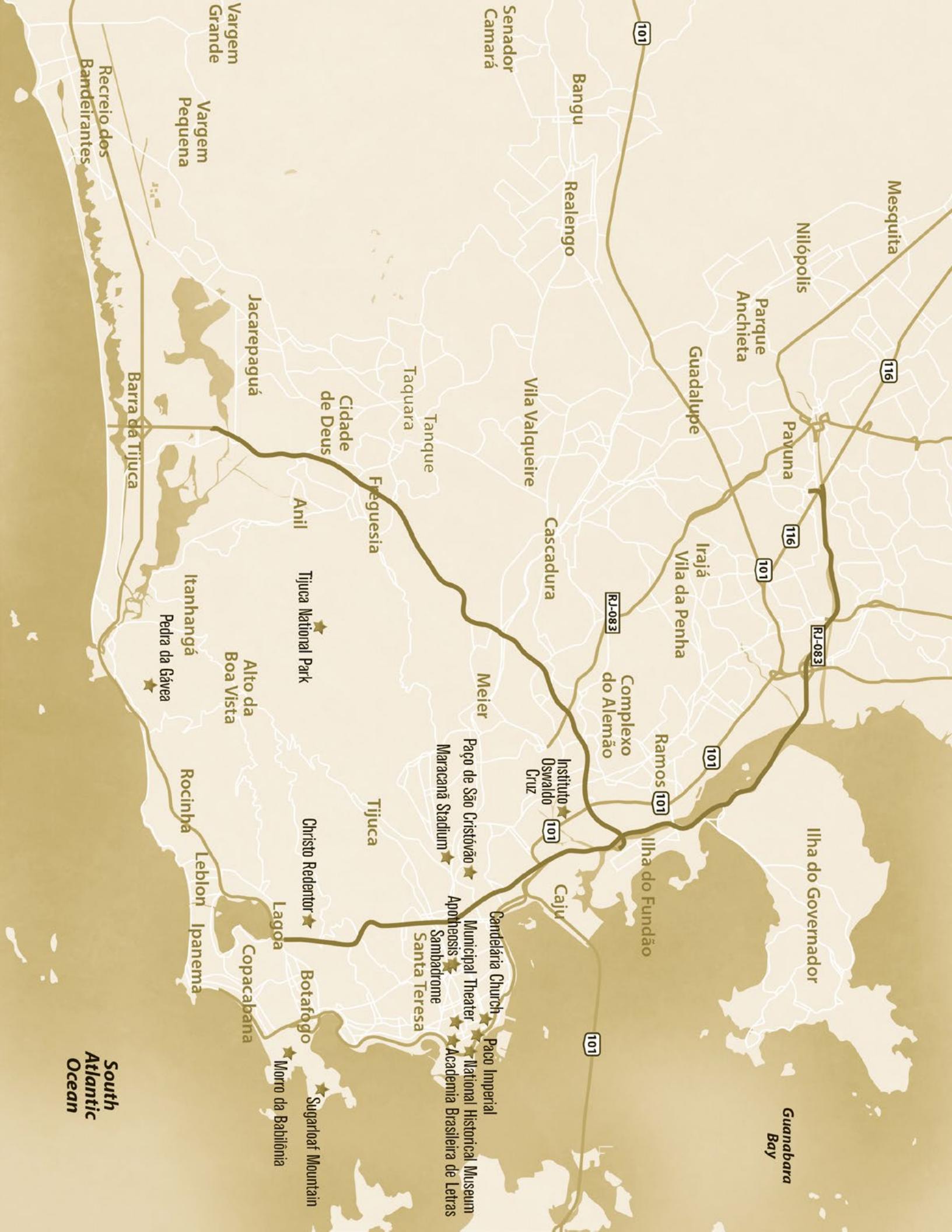
The mummies of O Corte Segredo don't fully understand what they have. They mistakenly believe that the Iron Bull is merely a powerful relic they can use to bind mortals into loyalty at the cost of degrading their sense of morality. They have no idea that their own cultists are more loyal to the entity housed within the idol than to the Arisen themselves. Nor do they know that the Bull can actually communicate with its mortal worshipers and even grant supernatural boons to them in exchange for particularly delicious sacrifices. And certainly, they don't have any clue as to how much influence the Iron Bull has over *them*. Over the centuries, the relic has forged a psychic link with the mummies of O Corte Segredo, with the result that when one of them loses Memory, the Bull can actually insert *new* memories in their place. These memories remain compartmentalized from the mummies' true memories and effectively create a secondary personality that is loyal to the Iron Bull instead of the Judges. The relic longs for the day when one of the Arisen under its sway loses all of her Memory and becomes the Iron Bull's creature entirely.

A mummy who meditates in the presence of the Iron Bull can learn new Utterances through communion with it. It can "teach" any Utterance for which the mummy meets the prerequisites. It can also teach Bane Affinities. However, if a mummy learns an Utterance from the Bull and subsequently loses a point of Memory, the Bull can attempt to insert a new personality formed out of the lost memories.

CITY BY THE BAY

The Portuguese first discovered the site of Rio de Janeiro on January 1, 1502 CE. The explorers mistakenly thought that Guanabara Bay was actually the mouth of a large river, which they named "the January River," and the name stuck. The bay is quite large, covering an area of 159 square miles (412 square kilometers), and besides the city of Rio itself, seven other municipalities sit along the shore of the bay. Guanabara Bay holds more than 130 small islands, several of which are large enough to have housed, in the past, small colonies and later forts. By far the largest is Governador Island, a third of which accommodates the International Airport. A peninsula that juts out of the Rio beaches into the bay is the home of Sugarloaf Mountain, which is accessible by cable cars that reach up to the summit. All of the above is what most refer to as the greater metropolitan Rio area.

The city of Rio has boundaries on the east of the bay and on the south of the Atlantic Ocean. The former capital remains the state capital of the State of Rio de Janeiro, one of the most important and well-populated of Brazil's twenty-seven federal units. Geographers generally divide the city into four zones: Downtown, South Zone, North Zone, and West Zone. In many ways, however, the district distinctions are arbitrary,





and many Cariocas consider the West Zone to simply be the western extensions of the North and South Zones that have been stitched together into a separate zone for administrative purposes. To a Carioca, “north” generally means “on the northern side of the mountains.”

Teshra-Gemet, Hamset, and the various members of O Corte Segredo hold dominion over Downtown and South Zone and control parts of North Zone. Only the Red Sparrow asserts operational control over these territories, however, as her peers have no interest in such mundane affairs. Instead, Hamset, and O Corte Segredo focus their attentions on specific locations (both buildings and natural phenomena) that attract their attention for occult or personal reasons.

DOWNTOWN (CENTRO)

The Downtown district serves as Rio’s historic district and its administrative center. Many buildings in this area date back to the height of the Brazilian Empire, including the Paco Imperial (the Imperial Palace), residence of the Royal family during their earliest days in Brazil. “Centro” is both the name for this district and for a specific neighborhood within it that serves as Rio’s financial district.

MUNICIPAL THEATER (TEATRO MUNICIPAL)

The Teatro Municipal opened in 1909. An impressive building designed in an eclectic style reminiscent of the Paris Opera House, the Teatro Municipal is home to both the Petrobras Symphony Orchestra and the Brazilian Symphony Orchestra. In its storied history, the building has hosted such luminaries of the musical world as Arturo Toscanini, Igor Stravinsky, and Sarah Bernhardt. Today, it features primarily classical symphonies and ballets. An early design project of O Corte Segredo, the Teatro has some unique features that are particularly beneficial to the Arisen. Most importantly, the building’s eclectic design makes it a natural channel of both Dedwen and heka, drawing emotional intensity from the passionate work of great talents and converting it into a form the mummies can use.

System: Attending a performance at the Teatro Municipal can allow a mummy who is a devotee of the arts performed to recover expended Pillars. Only a truly magnificent performance can bestow this benefit — the Storyteller rolls three dice, plus one die for every performer who has four or more dots in Expression. It is highly unusual for a performance to have more than three such gifted performers unless the Arisen take steps to arrange such a world-class production. If the roll for the performance achieves a success, any Arisen in attendance may attempt to harvest Dedwen from the experience. The mummy must roll Intelligence + Expression with a dice bonus equal to the successes rolled for the

performance. With one success, the mummy recovers one spent point in her primary pillar. Every two additional successes allow the mummy to recover one additional point in any pillar of the player’s choice.

NATIONAL HISTORICAL MUSEUM (MUSEU HISTÓRICO NACIONAL)

Constructed in 1922, the Museu Histórico Nacional contains one of the largest collections of antiquities in South America. Its collection of pre-Columbian artifacts is enormous, and the entire museum hold over 250,000 unique pieces. One of its more interesting features is the largest numismatic collection in Latin America, which includes a handful of “unidentified coins” that some believe and identify as Greek, but which the Maa-Kep of Rio know to be far older. By agreement of the city’s Arisen, they treat the museum as a repository of relics that they consider too dangerous for any single Arisen or meret to control but which are too useful to simply sacrifice to the Judges. It is, of course, understood by all that nearly every mummy in Rio retains at least one relic that they should consider “too dangerous to control.” The relics housed here are merely the ones that imprudent mummies have been caught with after some relic-related fiasco and then “gently persuaded” to warehouse the thing for the common good.

ACADEMIA BRASILEIRA DE LETRAS (BRAZILIAN ACADEMY OF LETTERS)

Founded in 1897, the Academy of Letters is a private, non-profit literary society dedicated to the promotion of Brazilian literary arts and the preservation of the Brazilian Portuguese language. The Academy is the publisher of the Orthographic Vocabulary of the Portuguese Language. The Vocabulary is not a dictionary; it lists words and their grammatical categories (such as tense and gender) but not definitions. They say that a word not found in the Vocabulary is not truly a legitimate word in Brazilian Portuguese. The Academy has plans to publish an official dictionary in the future and has already published a Student’s Dictionary.

The society has exactly 40 members, each of whom they select for his or her contributions to Brazilian literature. Each member is assigned a particular chair that is numbered from one to 40, which the member (now referred to as an “immortal”) holds for life. For example, Rachel de Queiroz, the first woman author to join the Academy, holds Seat number 5. Each chair also has a Patron — a legendary Brazilian writer who was already deceased at the time of the Academy’s founding and who was chosen by the Founders to commemorate their achievements. Thus, each seat is associated with its current immortal, with each prior seat-holder, all the way back to the Founder who originally held it, and with a Patron.





Given the pomp and subtle mysticism of the Academy (to say nothing of the use of the word “immortal”), it is unsurprising that the Arisen are involved. The Academy is actually a small and exclusive cult under the joint control of the city’s Scribes, and the Academy’s main headquarters — a reproduction of the Petit Trianon from the Versailles Palace, which the French government donated — is also the Guildhall for the Sesha-Hebsu. The Academy is a corporate cult, and of the 40 members, fewer than 10 know anything about the Arisen. The main value of the Academy to the Sesha-Hebsu is that when all 40 immortals are present and sitting in their assigned chairs, their collective appreciation for The written Word infuses the whole building. A Scribe who is within the Petit Trianon at any time reduces the target number of all Academics, Expression, and Persuasion rolls to 7, and she reduces them to 6 while an Academy meeting is actually in progress. The link between the chairs and their associated Patrons are more than metaphorical. The spirits of each Patron have been summoned and ritually bound with their associated chairs, as have the spirits of each immortal to have sat in that chair upon his or her death. A Scribe who sits in a particular chair and spends one Pillar may commune with any of the spirits bound within it for the remainder of the scene, during which time the mummy also gains the 8 again benefit on a single roll.

RS-GLOBAL BUILDING

Teshra-Gemet’s “public” tomb sits atop the RS-Global Building, a 76-story tower in the heart of Centro. The Red Sparrow allows her fellow Arisen to know exactly where to find her in the belief that if they know how to reach her, they will come to her for help and thereby indenture themselves to her. The strategy has been surprisingly successful. Possibly one of the most secure buildings in South America, the skyscraper is not only home to RS-Global, Teshra-Gemet’s international shipping company, but also to one of its subsidiaries, the private security company Passarella Ltd. In addition to the potent defenses of the tomb itself and the latest in mundane security measures, Teshra-Gemet can call upon the loyal service of dozens of highly trained mercenaries to defend her. The tomb itself has a Geometry of 5 and a Peril of 4, in the form of a mixture of occult curses and high-tech security measures.

CANDELÁRIA CHURCH

Dedicated in 1609, the Candelária Church is one of the few buildings in the city that predates the majority of the local Arisen. The city gradually added to and modified the church over the course of over a century, and today it combines elements of Baroque architecture with Neoclassical and Neo-Renaissance design. O Corte Segredo



directed many of the design changes, as they installed secret sub-levels into the church so that their cultists could use it as a gathering place. These sub-levels actually extend for several city blocks in all directions, and so it is not necessary for the cultists and their masters to enter the church to access what lies beneath. The center of the cult's lair, however, is directly beneath the sanctuary of the Candelária, and the Iron Bull itself sits beneath the church's altar. It pleased the mummies and cultists alike to conduct libertine orgies just a few score feet below the altar where pious Cariocas pray to their own dead-and-risen savior.

In 1993, O Corte Segredo, using an Utterance acquired from the Iron Bull, decided to augment the temple's defenses. Their methods were extreme and outrageous, but also perfectly in step with the Iron Bull's macabre history. The mummies engineered an event known to Cariocas as the Candelária Massacre. At that time, the church's exterior was a regular gathering place for the homeless youths of Rio, many of whom found their way to the church's secret sub-levels and involuntary participation in the cult's activities. Acting through cult members in the local police, the mummies arranged for rogue police officers to open fire on a group of such children. Officially, eight children lost their lives to police brutality. The actual number was 17, with the bodies of the other nine taken away by the mummies and bound magically to the church itself. The tormented spirits of the nine lost children remain trapped in the secret sub-levels of the Candelária Church, where they are compelled to materialize and attack any interlopers. The traits of these guardian spirits are identical to those of a Corpse Thrall (see **Mummy: The Curse**, pg. 114) except that even if slain, these thralls will simply return to their intangible spirit state until a day and a night have passed, at which point they will return to once again attack any intruders. The only way to permanently destroy these tormented children is to dig up their remains from beneath the floor of the church sanctuary and then burn them in an open area.

THE SAMBADROME MARQUÊS DE SAPUCAÍ

The Sambadrome is a parade area constructed in 1984 according to the design of renowned architect Oscar Niemeyer. By that point, the Brazilian Carnival had become a globally recognized cultural event, and the city government decided to construct a dedicated facility for Carnival to allow the best of Rio's hundreds of samba schools to perform and compete in front of the largest crowd possible. The parade route is 700 meters long and runs down a section of Marquês de Sapucaí Street the city closes off to traffic and has bleachers along each side capable of holding up to 90,000 observers. The parade route ends at a large open area beneath two enormous arches known as Apotheosis Square.

Yes... Apotheosis Square.

That the name of the location that represents the climax of the Rio Carnival is also the term for a heretical spiritual concept was, to say the least, startling to the Arisen who oversaw the construction of the Sambadrome. The project was the result of a temporary alliance between several members of the Mesen-Nebu and the Tef-Aabhi who sought to channel the emotional energy of Carnival into a form more useful for the Arisen. In that, they were successful; the Sambadrome does indeed channel the power of Carnival quite efficiently and then redistributes it throughout the Downtown area. The parades run from 8:00 PM. until dawn on each of the four nights preceding Lent, and during those times, any Arisen within the Downtown area can reflexively spend a Pillar to reduce the target number of any action to 7 and can spend three Pillars to drop it to 6. Furthermore, any mummy who actually attends the Sambadrome and watches the parades can recover pillars as if meditating (see **Mummy: The Curse** pg. 76. The Geometry rating of the Sambadrome is considered to be 3.)

The mummies who took credit for the Sambadrome's properties also suggested to their peers that the reference to Apotheosis Square was a bad joke, a suggestion that the mummies of Rio accepted with ill humor. Only Khons-Neb-Ankh and Anak-em-Tanen have independently deduced the truth that they fear to reveal to their fellows. Their research into the Sambadrome's design indicates that there was *another* mummy involved in its creation who selected the offensive name, a mummy whose existence has been erased from all knowledge of the Arisen of Rio. In other words, *a mummy who likely used the Sambadrome to achieve Apotheosis*. Due to the effects of Apotheosis, none of the other mummies recalls anything about this mysterious mummy. To the mummies who invested their time, energy, and expertise into the construction of the Sambadrome, the fact that some forgotten mummy used their efforts to achieve this mysterious transcendent state almost outweighs the positive benefits of the Sambadrome.

SOUTH ZONE (ZONA SUL)

South Zone is the wealthiest and perhaps most beautiful part of Rio. The Leblon neighborhood has the highest real estate costs in all of South America, and most of the O Corte Segredo mummies maintain tombs there hidden in the secret sub-basements of opulent mansions. The South Zone also hosts Rio's world-renowned beaches, the most famous of which are Copacabana and Ipanema. The latter beach gave rise to the song "Girl from Ipanema" by Antonio Carlos Jobim, which has become one of the most recorded pop songs in the world. Zona Sul is also home to most of Tijuca National Park, one of the largest natural parks in the world located within an urban area. Mount Corcovado and Cristo Redentor are part of Tijuca.



TIJUCA NATIONAL PARK

At more than twelve square miles, the Tijuca Forest is one of the largest forests in the world to be completely contained within an urban area. The bulk of the forest lies in the South Zone, but it extends into the southern part of the West Zone and is effectively the line of demarcation between the two. Tijuca is an artificial forest, the result of a concerted replanting effort in the nineteenth century to combat the loss of Rio's water supply due to erosion. There is one favela in the forest, Mata Machado, which is home to one of the large Candomblé cults that serves the Orixás.

CRISTO REDENTOR

The second largest statue of Jesus Christ in the world (it was only recently dethroned by the Christ the King statue in Poland), Cristo Redentor towers over Rio like a benevolent colossus. Ironic, then, that they based this depiction of Christ on an icon of the Iremite supreme deity Azar. The statue represents the life's work of the Arisen Hamset made manifest —a massive and internationally famous testament to the designer's faith in the ancient religion of the Nameless Empire. That it also had the effect of harnessing Corcovado's fountain of raw Dedwen into a form beneficial to the entire city is, to Hamset, secondary to the opportunity to display the iconography of Irem to the entire world.

Given his success with Cristo Redentor, it is exasperating to Hamset that the other Arisen have refused him the opportunity to repeat the feat with a second monument atop Sugarloaf. However, his efforts with Cristo Redentor still pay dividends. In 2010, the city engaged in a massive restoration project of the statue. With the assistance of his fellow Tef-Aabhi, Hamset used the opportunity to combine state-of-the-art geological survey techniques with cooperative applications of the Model Lifeweb Affinity. The results were astonishing to the mummies and a vindication to Amun-Rubi, who maintained over the centuries that a natural wellspring of Dedwen was impossible. He was correct, for the survey showed that deep beneath Corcovado was a man-made artifact, an obelisk of unknown origin or composition which had apparently been buried inside the mountain for untold centuries of years before even the First Meret arrived. Inspired, Hamset persuaded the Tef-Aabhi to perform a similar ritual for Sugarloaf, which confirmed that the second mountain also contained an artifact that seemed to date back to the days of Irem, if not an older era.

It was at that point that the Sessa-Hebsu and the Su-Menent stepped in, arguing that the suggestion of *anything* predating Irem was heretical. A few of them went so far as to insinuate that the hand of the Deceived might be behind these mysterious obelisks, at which point *no one* wanted to assist Hamset in his efforts to study them. Discouraged, Hamset

washed his hands of the guild he ostensibly led... without letting on that he had perfected the ritual used to supernaturally scan Corcovado and Sugarloaf and that henceforth, he would study the phenomenon of the Fountains alone.

SUGARLOAF MOUNTAIN (PÃO DE AÇÚCAR)

The physical and spiritual counterpart to Corcovado, Sugarloaf Mountain sits at the mouth of Guanabara Bay on a small peninsula that juts out into the ocean. It is not the only granite/quartz mountain in the area — Rio is full of them — but its location makes it iconic in the eyes of the Cariocas. The mountain rises almost 1,300 feet above sea level and is accessible from the city via cable cars. For the Arisen of Rio, the mountain is important not for its beauty or symbolism but for the Dedwen generated by the Fountain of Ma'at that gushes from the spot near the peak. Unlike its companion at Corcovado, no one has capped this Fountain nor is it likely anyone will soon. Thus, the Fountain flows free and is directly accessible by the Arisen.

Over two centuries ago, Teshra-Gemet set in place the system by which mummies would be allowed access to the Fountain (or rather Fountains, as there were two at the time). All mummies in the city would place their names on a list called the Roll of Prosperity (Rolo de Prosperidade). When the Fountain reactivates after a period of dormancy, the next person on the Roll has fourteen days in which to either use the Fountain or give her right to do so to some other Arisen. If she has done neither during that span, the right of access goes to the next person on the list, and the first Arisen loses her Fountain privileges until her name comes up again in the rotation. Since many mummies are cautious about using the Fountain, it is not uncommon for several months to go by before someone accesses it. At the same time, when a mummy needs to use the Fountain, he probably *really* needs it, and in difficult times, an Arisen whose time for access has come can command significant boons from other mummies desperate to take his place. Particularly those mummies who are so desperate to extend their lives that they are willing to bathe in the Fountain multiple times within the same waking cycle despite the risks.

System: The Arisen enters the Fountain, which, to a mummy's eyes, appears as a twenty-foot-tall geyser of luminescent magical energy. Once immersed, the mummy treats the experience as if he had just drained Sekhem from a one-dot relic (see **Mummy: the Curse**, pp. 156-57). That is, the mummy immediately gains a point of Sekhem but then must immediately roll Sekhem to determine if he can keep it. On a failed Sekhem roll, the mummy's Sekhem increases by one. On a successful one, the mummy simply resets his Descent schedule. Furthermore, the heka flow of the Sugarloaf Fountain is unstable. When the mummy enters the Fountain, the Storyteller should roll a Chance Die. For each success, the Sekhem roll gains a +1 dice



bonus. If the roll merely fails, there is no effect on the Sekhem roll. If the Storyteller rolls a 1, the player's Sekhem roll suffers a -3 dice penalty (which, remember, is beneficial to the mummy in this instance). Regardless, bathing in the Fountain has a corrosive effect on one's Memory, and a mummy who makes use of the Fountain must make a 3-die Memory roll. If the mummy has previously bathed in the Fountain during the same waking cycle, it's a 2-die roll instead. Whether the mummy retains his memories or not, he will forget everything he ever knew about the Fountains of Ma'at! All personal knowledge of the Fountains is erased, and if the character was so unwise as to acquire a Specialty pertaining to the Fountains, it is permanently lost (though they may repurchase it, of course). Whenever any mummy uses the Fountain, regardless of the results, the Fountain will shut down and remain dormant for an indeterminate time (the Storyteller rolls one die and the result is how many days the Fountain will remain inactive).

THE BEACHES: IPANEMA, COPACABANA, AND LEBLON

The three most famous and pristine of Rio's many beaches, Ipanema, Copacabana, and Leblon are also the safest beaches in this often-violent city. The neighborhoods adjacent to the beaches are home to the middle and upper class of Rio, and police presence is high. The Leblon neighborhood is the most elite, and the associated beach is the most carefully tended, but also the most restrained. Ipanema, in comparison, is hip and trendy, with the Ipanema neighborhood a nexus for artists and bohemians as well as the wealthy. Copacabana was Leblon's predecessor as "Rio's Most Exclusive Neighborhood" before the capital moved to Brasilia, but now its star has fallen. Today, there is so much overcrowding, that it has one of the highest population densities of any single neighborhood on the planet. The beach is still popular though, particularly at New Year's Eve, when it is home to one of the largest fireworks displays in the world. The *Reveillon*, as they call it, started as a celebration for the city's Candomblé worshipers during the 1950s, but it has grown to be the only social event in Rio that seriously challenges Carnival for size. The Candomblers (and the mummies who command them) still practice their sacred rites during *Reveillon*, their activities hidden amidst a party with over 1.5 million attendees. Possibly, because of "leakage" from Sugarloaf, all three of the beaches have a mild supernatural benefit available to any of the Arisen while present. The ambient Dedwen imposes feelings of relaxation, lassitude, and occasionally lust on mortals present.

System: Any Arisen who stands upon the sandy shores of any of these three beaches gains the 9 again quality on all rolls to manipulate mortals through easy, relaxed conversation, whether it's asking to borrow some money for a drink or trying to seduce a girl into bed. This benefit is only of use against mortals.

ROCINHA

Rocinha is the largest of Brazil's favelas, with an estimated population of over 70,000. Some would say that Rocinha is not a true favela, as the sheer size of the population has forced the city to provide it the basic services that most favelas lack. More an urbanized slum than the typical shantytown, Rocinha has (mostly) sanitation, electricity, and modern plumbing. It even has a locally based TV station (TV Rocinha). It also has a sizeable police force, which the government introduced into the favela in 2011 for the express purpose of cleaning drug dealers and other criminal elements out of Rocinha. That these police intrusions also targeted the meeting places of several of the Candomblé cults, situated in Rocinha, is less well known but is now a source of potentially violent tension between the Orixás and O Corte Segredo.

MORRO DA BABILÔNIA

Compared to Rocinha, Morro da Babilônia is tiny, with a population no greater than about 3,000. For many years, it was effectively controlled by a criminal syndicate —the Terceiro Comando (the Third Command), who covertly acted as muscle for the Arisen Meneffes, who was worshiped by the Candomblers and the neighborhood's gang members alike as the Orixá, Shango. In 2009, the city sent the first Pacifying Police Units into Morro da Babilônia to clean out the "criminal elements," an ongoing part of O Corte Segredo's campaign against the Orixás and the First Meret.

NORTH ZONE

A mountainous ridge separates the North Zone from Centro and the South Zone. Unlike the more rigidly developed Downtown area, Zona Norte grew haphazardly, with railroad and streetcar lines coming first and settlements building up around them into neighborhoods. The most important historical landmark in the North Zone is the Imperial Palace, which later became the National Museum.

PAÇO IMPERIAL (IMPERIAL PALACE)

The Paço Imperial was initially the residence of the Governor of Rio and later the residence of João VI after his removal to Brazil. Neither Pedro I nor Pedro II used the Imperial Palace as a residence, having relocated to the Paço de São Cristóvão, but they both used it as a workplace and for meetings. Today, it is a cultural center.

PAÇO DE SÃO CRISTÓVÃO (PALACE OF ST. CHRISTOPHER)

The residence of the first two (and last two) Emperors of Brazil, the Palace of St. Christopher sits amid the Quinta da Boa Vista park, one of the largest and most elaborate public parks in Rio. The park has the largest public green space in the North Zone (a popular feature, given the difficulty of



travel to the other zones). In 1892, the Palace became the National Museum of Brazil. The museum is of rather poor quality compared to the national museums of other, more developed nations, and much of the collection actually dates back to the days of Pedro II himself, the Emperor having been an amateur scientist of some note. The collections reflect Pedro's varied interests: Astronomy (mostly meteorites), Paleontology, Natural History, Ethnology (including a number of works by indigenous Brazilians that the First Meret would very much like to have back), and Archaeology (including a surprising number of Egyptian antiquities, most of which were acquired by Teshra-Gemet). The Palace has a secret chamber buried underneath that serves as a backup tomb for the Red Sparrow. She lived here full-time during Pedro's reign, but after his ouster, she relocated to the newly christened RS-Global Building in Downtown. She hasn't even visited the Palace in over fifty years, but her tomb is still intact, and she has a number of potent relics hidden among the exhibits of Pedro's museum.

MARACANÃ STADIUM (ESTÁDIO DO MARACANÃ)

At one point, Maracanã Stadium had the largest capacity of any soccer stadium in the world. Of course, at the time in 1950, the stadium wasn't even finished when Rio hosted the FIFA World Cup, and it's somewhat easier to fit a crowd of 200,000 into a building when there are few chairs and most have to stand. Brazil made it to the finals that year, only to lose in a shocking upset to Uruguay, an event so demoralizing to the Brazilians that after the whistle blew, the stadium was utterly silent except for the cheers of the Uruguayan players on the field. Several Brazilian players retired immediately afterwards, and a number of Brazilians actually committed suicide in response to the loss. The final match entered Brazilian sporting legend as the Maracanazo ("The Maracanã Blow"), and to this day, Brazilian soccer fans often have a near-phobia about the prospect of playing Uruguay in Maracanã. No mummies were involved with, or even active during, the events of the Maracanazo. Today, the mummies most likely to be found at Maracanã are members of O Corte Segredo, several members of whom are co-owners of the Flamengo and Fluminense football clubs, both of whom regularly play there.

INSTITUTO OSWALDO CRUZ

The Oswaldo Cruz Institute is Brazil's top public biomedical research facility, Brazil's equivalent to the CDC. A nationally renowned public health research institute, the facility's namesake is pioneering Brazilian epidemiologist, Oswaldo Cruz. Today, it is the headquarters of the Fiocruz Genome Comparison Project, an ongoing effort to produce a complete DNA library.

GOVERNADOR ISLAND

Governador Island is, at 16 square miles, the largest island in Guanabara Bay. Roughly a third of the island is given over to the Galeão-Antônio Carlos Jobim International Airport, Rio's largest and most active airport. Teshra-Gemet's hold on the airport is so strong that there is a small, secure temple on the island near the airport so that employees can come and offer veneration to the Red Sparrow before and after work.

COMPLEXO DO ALEMÃO

Complexo do Alemão is a North Zone neighborhood that grew out of several favelas, which merged over time. It is a densely packed neighborhood, with over 65,000 lower class Cariocas crammed into just over one square mile. For many decades, it was the stronghold of Comando Vermelho (The Red Command), one of Rio's most notorious drug gangs. Comando Vermelho was also a front for Khons-Neb-Ankh's personal cult, which used the drug lords to finance the First Meret's activities. In 2007, the Rio police in conjunction with the Brazilian military laid siege to Complexo do Alemão, allegedly to pacify dangerous drug activity in the lead-up to the 2007 Pan American Games. In fact, it was a deliberate and bloody effort on the part of O Corte Segredo to cripple the First Meret's chief source of income before the Sothic Turn. The siege culminated in the Complexo do Alemão Massacre that took place on June 27, 2007 and resulted officially in the death of 19 people. The actual number was closer to 30 and included the execution of several cult leaders. This event marked the first shots fired in what the Arisen now call the "Game Wars" — open conflict between rival cults set against the backdrop of mortal sporting events that are used as pretenses for violent government action and even more violent reprisals by those oppressed.

WEST ZONE

As a practical matter, the southern part of the West Zone is merely an extension of the South Zone, and the northern part is, correspondingly, an extension of North Zone. Thus, to locals, West Zone is really just the arbitrary union of two distinct regions each with its own character. South West Zone is a newer part of the city and is highly modernized compared to the rest of Rio, though it is also home to several favelas, most notably Cidade de Deus. The Tijuca Forest extends into this region and the mountain known as Pedra da Gavea sits within. The Maciço da Pedra Branca and the Serra da Grotá Funda mountains separate the North West Zone from the South West Zone by. It is primarily an industrial area, though one of the largest of Rio's neighborhoods, Santa Cruz, is here as well. The Grotá Funda Tunnel connects the northern and southern halves of West Zone.



BARRA DA TIJUCA

Barra da Tijuca (or simply “Barra”) is the most recently developed part of Rio, which contributes to the modernist and cosmopolitan air of the neighborhood. Instead of conventional housing subdivisions, the developers of Barra focused on high-rise luxury condominiums with access to a huge leisure infrastructure. The idea was, in many ways, a forerunner of the “arcology” concept; each condo’s design created an exclusive neighborhood for the residents, with the goal of allowing residents to live a complete life without ever leaving the building. While the rest of Rio is known for a mix of Portuguese and native cuisine, Barra has a plethora of restaurants with foods from around the world. While not as exclusive as the beaches at Copacabana and Ipanema, Barra da Tijuca Beach is the longest beach in the city and, due to its geographic structure, has the best waves for surfing. Despite the popularity of Barra, however, many of the city’s old guard view it disdainfully for the region’s gaudiness. There is a deliberate calculation to the atmosphere of Barra, to evoke Miami or Los Angeles rather than Old Europe, and the region is home to a number of large-scale replicas of world monuments such as the Statue of Liberty, the Eiffel Tower, and the Leaning Tower of Pisa that older Cariocas find tacky.

CIDADE DE DEUS (CITY OF GOD)

The foundation of the Cidade de Deus, or CDD to its inhabitants, in 1960 CE was part of a deliberate effort to purge the city center of favelas by forcibly relocating the inhabitants to new government-sponsored public housing in the suburbs. The fact that it was the setting of the Oscar-nominated film “City of God,” which detailed the hopelessness of life in the CDD, is a testament to how unsuccessful the attempt at suburbanization was. The CDD is home to over 40,000 people crammed into less than half a square mile. It is a bleak, often lawless area; a shadow that looms over the otherwise sunny and optimistic Barra neighborhood.

PEDRA DE GAVEA

The Rock of the Topsail is the largest mountain in West Zone and part of the westernmost section of Tijuca Forest. The mountain holds a curious place in followers of pseudo-archeology; centuries of environmental erosion on one side of Pedra de Gavea has marked it so that it looks vaguely like a human face, and it has left behind markings that, to some eyes, resembles writing. Exactly what sort of writing is a question people have been arguing for decades. Some say

it’s Phoenician. Others, Nordic runes. Still others say that it is no earthly language and point to the “ancient astronaut” theories of Erich von Däniken. That said, the modern consensus that the marks mean nothing and are the result of erosion is universal. It should be. Hamset has worked hard to make it so.

Soon after Hamset arrived in the city, he personally inspected Pedra de Gavea and immediately realized that the face was indeed the face of a heavily eroded sphinx. More importantly, the markings were, to his practiced eye, clearly writing. The reason it was untranslatable to the mortals was that the writing was Iremite. Most of it was too weatherworn to decipher, but a few words were ominously clear: “... through this gate... as dark gods... world our sacrifice.” Sufficiently spooked into treading softly, Hamset made subtle inquiries and discovered that none of his peers had any interest in Pedra de Gavea. He soon realized why, when one of his fellow Tef-Aabhi made use of the Fountains of Ma’at and afterwards completely forgot about their prior conversation on the subject. Whatever effect ensured that mummies would forget everything about the Fountains also seemed to apply to Pedra de Gavea.

Since then, Hamset has kept his discoveries to himself, and he has been extremely careful to back up all of his findings prior to the few occasions when he has entered the Fountains. In 2010, Hamset oversaw the Tef-Aabhi’s advanced application of Model Lifeweb that discerned the obelisks beneath Corcovado and Sugarloaf. Through careful study, Hamset learned how to perform the ritual by himself and he was able to confirm what he already suspected: that Pedra de Gavea has its own obelisk, albeit one that seems permanently dormant. The ancient Mason has no idea how to reactivate the dormant obelisk and no idea whether doing so is a good idea or not, but he is still sorely tempted to try just to satisfy his curiosity. His final observation about the subject is the most disturbing and it is what stays his hand for fear of his fellow Arisen labeling him a heretic. It seems the spatial relationship of the three obelisks closely matches that of the Great Pyramids of Egypt, which Hamset knows were positioned to align with the three stars that make up Orion’s Belt. Through his analysis of the Procession of the Equinoxes, Hamset realized that the three obelisks *exactly* match Orion’s Belt, as it would have appeared in approximately 10,000 BCE. Since Egyptian history is thought to have begun around 3100 BCE, it would appear that the Nameless Empire was either much older than most mummies realize... or there was something else before the Nameless Empire.



CHAPTER THREE

THE GUILDS

I don't want to compare my city to Zurich. Thank God we're not that boring.

— Eduardo da Costa Paes, Mayor of Rio

The number of known Arisen inhabiting Rio de Janeiro is 17, plus two others who keep their presence more... discreet. One might think that Rio would have more mummy inhabitants given the mysterious nature of the Fountains of Ma'at, but then again, mummies aren't that numerous to begin with and there are plenty of other cities with mysteries of their own. The majority of the Cariocas Eterno — the Deathless of Rio — stay because of personal reasons: whether occult interests, business interests, or just sheer stubbornness. And that doesn't count the ones who stay because they are the unwitting slaves of a blood-soaked cannibal god.

THE GUILDS OF RIO

The socio-political structure of the Cariocas Eterno is unusual compared to most nomes, although given the relatively small number of Arisen in the world, that's a small sample with which to compare. In general, though, the "typical" nome is dominated either by a single powerful meret or by the most powerful and entrenched of the local guilds. In Rio, neither is fully the case. The de facto ruler is a single Arisen who wields influence disproportionate to her actual power. The nome hosts three merets of approximately equal strength, who are constantly at one another's throats, and this conflict spills over into the guilds, rendering each of them fractious and incapable of assuming a dominant political position. That said, each of the guilds does maintain a presence in the city, and within the guild structure the Cariocas Eterno sometimes find a measure of peace away from the frustration and violence of their respective merets — that is, when they aren't just another source of frustration and violence.

Another curiosity of Rio's guilds is that there are no monarchs. In part, this is because of Teshra-Gemet's manipulations, as she wanted there to be as few formal titles to which political power could accrue as possible. However, the guilds are so deeply divided along meret lines, it is unlikely that any of the guilds could ever agree

on who is deserving of any title beyond guildmaster, which, as a practical matter, simply denotes which Arisen has achieved the highest level of attainment in the guild's stated goals and greatest mastery of the guild's arts.

THE LABORERS

Guildmaster: Osorehe; **Others:** Nekhakha, Beset Khered, and Aapep Medes

In theory, the Maa-Kep should be under the sway of the Orixás since the leader of that meret and one of his allies make up two-thirds of the membership. In practice, the Laborers may actually represent the greatest threat to the Orixás. Osorehe and Nekhakha spend increasing amounts of time together, ostensibly on "guild business." They have found that they have much in common, much more so than each has with their own merets. Nekhakha is an eager student of Osorehe's superior knowledge of guild lore, while Osorehe has grown comfortable in the presence of the sophisticated O Corte Segredo member who reminds him of when his cultists were masters rather than slaves. In this arrangement, Beset Khered is very much the third wheel, and so she minimizes her guild involvement. The other two don't miss her company.

Interestingly, the union of Osorehe and Nekhakha has altered both of their opinions of Teshra-Gemet. Originally, they shared a disdain for the Red Sparrow, but having had decades to compare notes, they have both come around to a grudging respect for how skillfully she has set the merets against one another in order to solidify her own status. But while her manipulations have been masterful, her time is running out. With the turn of the Sothic Wheel, all of the Cariocas Eterno are active, and there are simply too many agendas in play for her to keep juggling. Eventually, the city will turn on her. How lucky it will be when offers of assistance come from the leader of the most powerful of the Orixás and the sanest of the O Corte Segredo, offers conditioned on the Maa-Kep being elevated above the other guilds.

THE ALCHEMISTS

Guildmaster: Teshra-Gemet, the Red Sparrow; **Others:** Khons-Neb-Ankh. (Although no longer a member, the Forgotten still retains significant access to Mesen-Nebu resources.)

Those Born of Gold are perhaps the weakest in Rio in terms of guild power, despite Teshra-Gemet's status as guildmaster — or more accurately, because of it. It is not a coincidence, after all, that the only other Alchemist in the city is one of the few mummies who predates her (Khons-Neb-Ankh of the First Meret). The simple fact is that Teshra-Gemet enjoys the status of guildmaster, but does not want the headache of actually running a guild, particularly if her guildmates belong to rival factions and may well be spying on her. Thus, she has used her influence over the city to discourage other Alchemists from attempting to settle there. The Red Sparrow believes that she has been almost completely successful in this endeavor. She has no idea that for decades her sometime friend and rival, Sharifa, assisted her.

Like Teshra-Gemet, Sharifa sought to exclude other Mesen-Nebu from Rio; not because she feared that they would lust for her power, but because she was afraid that their individual quests for Dedwen would interfere with the grand projects she planned along with Hamset. Certainly, it would have been all but impossible for Sharifa to find Apotheosis in the heart of Rio, in front of a Carnival crowd 50,000 strong, without anyone else noticing if there was a full and organized Mesen-Nebu presence in the city.

THE SCRIBES

Guildmaster: Bantanath; **Others:** Hes-Sedjet and Sa-Khonsu

On paper, the Closed Books of Rio are not a guild so much as an adjunct of O Corte Segredo. Of the three members, one is the leader of that meret, another is secretly the power behind her throne, and the third is a cosmopolite who only spends half her waking time in Rio at all. Despite this, the scribes have made achievements all their own that speak to their guild identity more than any meret affinity. Indeed, the Sesha-Hebsu guildhall within the Academy of Letters is one of the most remarkable achievements in the scribe's art that the Arisen have seen in the modern era.

It is also, ironically, one of the most dangerous obstacles to the progress of the Iron Bull and its objectives. Fashioned as it was to be a temple of the Written Word, the Academy of Letters speaks to the true personalities of

Bantanath and Sa-Khonsu in a way that is greatly debilitating to their Scarlet Queen and Ebon Princess personas. Attempts by those two secondary personalities to take control of their respective Arisen automatically fail while their hosts remain within the guildhouse. Worse, if either the Scarlet Queen or the Ebon Princess attempt either to damage the occult properties of the Academy or to prevent their respective hosts from visiting the guildhall, the primary personality immediately reasserts itself. The Scarlet Queen fears that by constructing a palace dedicated to the Written Word, she and the Ebon Princess have inadvertently created a relic building that is inimical to the Iron Bull's influence. She may be right. If Bantanath and/or Sa-Khonsu could ever be made aware of their inner corruption, the Academy of Letters might be essential to any effort to purge them of the Bull's influence.

THE PRIESTS

Guildmaster: Husani; **Others:** Sacmist and Kekewey

Another irony: the Shepherds of the Chamber *should* be a force allied with the Orixás, since two of the three members belong to that meret and the third is socially maladjusted and politically ambivalent. Yet somehow, it hasn't worked out that way. Instead, Kekewey has gone native; and he defers to Husani because his longer tenure in the region affords him greater knowledge of the spiritual landscape of Brazil. Meanwhile Sacmist is genuinely fond of the Reviver of Dead Things and seeks him as a mentor in the ways of the guild. Granted, Kekewey really wants to become free of the Judges through Apotheosis and Sacmist really just wants an army of zombies to destroy his rivals in the Brazilian drug trade, but Husani doesn't know that and is really just happy that at least someone looks up to him.

If only there weren't *quite so many* that looked up to him, though. Another reason for the loyalty of Kekewey and Sacmist is that Husani has power in the Su-Menent wildly out of proportion to his desire for it. Much to his astonishment, Husani holds the title of First Prophet for South America. He holds this title largely because he was the first Su-Menent to inhabit the continent, and even today, he is one of most experienced and knowledgeable Priests there. Many also consider him an expert on the Fountains of Ma'at, and while the scope of his expertise is not as great as his peers might believe, it is enough to afford him considerable personal status. Thus far, he has used that status sparingly, fobbing most of his official First Prophet duties off on a pair of Su-Menent in Buenos Aires and São Paulo, each of whom holds the status of Second Prophet. If he were willing to make use of his First Prophet status Husani could drastically alter the political



landscape of Rio. His natural timidity (along with his fear that he is unworthy of the First Prophet position) have made him unwilling to do so, and even unwilling to reveal the truth of his office to the rest of his meret.

THE MASONs

Guildmasters: Hamset (1st) and Amun-Rubi; **Others:** Anak-Em-Tanen, Ib-Sheta, and Menefes.

Although it is the largest of Rio's guilds, with several of the city's most powerful mummies among its members, the Tef-Aabhi is as fractured and impotent as any of the others are. The guiding light of the Father of Idols is Hamset, who is responsible for the guild's single greatest occult achievement in the Rio of the Chronicles of Darkness: the Cristo Redentor. Yet a mixture of jealousy and paranoia prevents the rest of the Tef-Aabhi from supporting his follow-up projects. Amun-Rubi thinks Hamset is too impetuous and has not properly considered the ramifications of capping both Fountains. Anak-Em-Tanen and Menefes agree with Amun-Rubi on that point, but otherwise argue about how the guild should pursue its future projects. Neither the First Meret nor the Orixás wish to see any other meret benefit from development projects within the favelas. For them, it is better for all the favelas to wallow in poverty than for those associated with one meret to profit at the expense of the others, and Ib-Sheta has sworn to undermine everything Hamset proposes as retaliation for foolishly binding the entire guild to Teshra-Gemet's scheme to relocate the capitol to Brasilia.

Given the conflicts within the guild, Hamset finds that he cannot even trust his subordinates with a task as simple as monitoring the Lifeweb of the city, lest each Tef-Aabhi use any information gained against a rival meret. Hamset handles all the administrative work of the guild himself; occasionally consulting with Amun-Rubi during his waking periods on occult matters (when the Granite Sphinx deigns to answer his questions). The other Masons are happy to let the Hand of Azar micro-manage himself into an early Descent if doing so distracts him from any more of his grandiose ideas.

THE MUMMIES OF RIO

Three full merets are active in Rio, but not one of them controls the Arisen nome. The First Meret has three members, O Corte Segredo has five, and the Orixás have seven. Neither Teshra-Gemet nor Hamset belongs to a full meret at the moment, though they have earlier in their endless unives. Two other mummies reside (by some definitions of "reside") in Rio, but not only are they independent, their very presence is unknown to their fellow

Arisen. Each of the seventeen known Arisen has his or her own cult, which ranges in size from the thousands who serve the Red Sparrow to the single extended family that venerates Sa-Khonsu. In addition to their individual cults, O Corte Segredo collectively controls Os Toureiros, which is effectively the wealthiest cult in town (although Red Sparrow's cult has more numbers and actual influence), and the Orixás collectively exercise enormous power over most Candomblé, Umbanda, and Quimbanda congregations in and around the city.

The Arisen of Rio are also more fractious than in most nomes. There has always been some tension between the Orixás and the First Meret simply because their cults travel in similar social circles and tend to get into turf wars. This has only gotten worse as the various cults involved have discovered how much money is to be made in the drug trade (for the benefit of their masters, of course), but the extreme aggression displayed by O Corte Segredo towards both groups is nearly unprecedented among the Arisen. Intra-cult wars are a fact of nome existence, but O Corte Segredo gives every sign of wanting to drive the cults of the Orixás and the First Meret out of existence. The conflict has even spilled over into guild relationships. Except for the Tef-Aabhi, which Hamset has drug along with him through force of will, the guilds of Rio have been moribund for decades.

TESHRA-GEMET, THE RED SPARROW

Quotes: "Everything you see here, I won." "Damn any Deathless who thinks to keep secrets from me in this place." "I will not be outmaneuvered."

Teshra-Gemet's traits are unchanged from her previous write-up (see **Mummy: The Curse**, pp. 256-57), except for three details: First, the Red Sparrow's Sekhem should start at 7 for the purposes of a default Rio chronicle; second, she knows the languages Arabic, English, Greek, Latin, Portuguese, and Spanish; and third, she has mastered a new Utterance: Blessed Is the God-King (**Mummy**, p. 115).

HAMSET, THE HAND OF AZAR

Quotes: "We have the opportunity to build something worthy of our heritage, our power, and our divine patron. And we refuse to act on it because of petty jealousies, spiteful vendettas, and greed. How could any soul, much less Azar himself, refuse to judge us harshly?"

Description: Normally, Hamset appears as a young, impeccably dressed Palestinian man whose eyes are alive with curiosity and intellect, but whose forehead seems perpetually creased in frustration. While under Sybaris,





he appears as a tall, incredibly thin, jackal-headed man whose skin is as black as a moonless night.

Storytelling Hints: There is so much you could accomplish in Rio, and yet because of the fractious nature of the city's Arisen blocks you at every turn. The Fountains of Ma'at are both a miracle and a mystery, and yet no one else has the wisdom to see them as anything more than a weapon to use against rival mummies. And so, you keep secret the things that only *you* know about the Fountains, lest your own discoveries be put to an unholy purpose... which is a problem, because you're kind of a bad liar, and not much one for underhanded schemes.

Concept: Frustrated Genius

Decree: Shadow

Judge: Nekhenhu, the Innocent

Guild: Tef-Aabhi (Guildmaster)

Attributes: Intelligence 5, Wits 3, Resolve 3, Strength 2, Dexterity 3, Stamina 2, Presence 2, Manipulation 1, Composure 4

Skills: Academics 5 (Architecture), Athletics 2, Brawl 2, Computer 2, Crafts 3, Drive 1, Empathy 2, Expression 3, Investigation 3 (Mysteries), Occult 5 (Sacred Geometry), Persuasion 3, Politics 2, Science 3 (Engineering), Survival 2, Weaponry 2

Merits: Cult (Corporate; Reach 3, Grasp 2), Guild Status 5 (Tef-Aabhi), Languages (Arabic, English, German, Greek, Latin, Portuguese, Spanish, Russian), Tomb (Geometry 4, Peril 4)

Affinities: Deathsight, Enduring Flesh, Godsight, Healing Counsel, Model Lifeweb, Shrouding Aura, Soul Infusion

Utterances: Blessed Is the God-King, Dust Beneath Feet, Kiss of Apep, Palace Knows Its Pharaoh, Rite of the Sacred Scarab, Words of Dead Hunger

Pillars: Ab 3, Ba 3, Ka 3, Ren 3, Sheut 5

Sekhem: (as of early 2016) 6

Willpower: 7

Memory: 7

Virtue: Piety (Hamset is utterly devoted to Azar and the Judges of Duat.)

Vice: Sloth (Hamset is not lazy, but he refuses to do the hard work of engaging his fellow Arisen to actually persuade them of his ideas.)

Initiative: 6

Defense: 3

Speed: 10

Size: 5

Armor: 0

Health: 7

THE FIRST MERET

The First Meret would probably have already been driven out of town but for three factors: First, the meret has accumulated more lore about the Fountains than anyone else has, and thus have a number of Utterances unknown to their rivals (which they use to great effect). Second, despite his current ennui, Amun-Rubi has enormous stature within his guild, and the grudging respect that Hamset has for him leads the rest of the Tef-Aabhi to believe that Hamset would ally directly with the Granite Sphinx rather than let any of them drive him from Rio. Finally, Teshra-Gemet's own power arises in part from the ongoing conflict among the merets, and she gives covert support to any who are at a momentary disadvantage in order to maintain the balance of power.

The three members of the First Meret share a common cult with the following traits: Cult (Tribal; Reach 3, Grasp 2).

AMUN-RUBI, THE GRANITE SPHINX

Quotes: "Why would the Judges grant me the ultimate boon of a child blessed with eternity, only to take her from me? What misstep of mine invoked such a dread curse?"

Background: Amun-Rubi has a peculiarity about him that has been both a blessing and a curse throughout his endless lives: To his knowledge, he is the only Arisen who

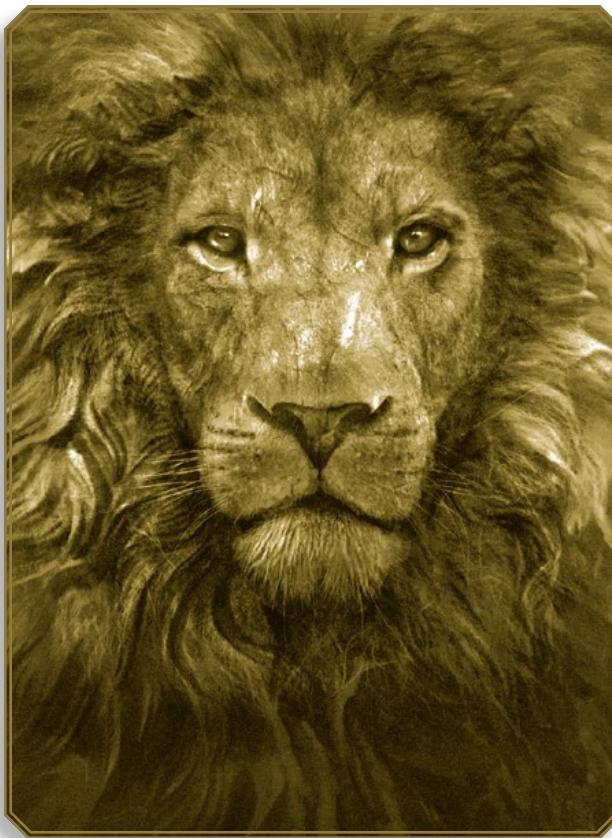


actually had a loved one accompany him into the Rite of Return. He was already in his fifties when his reputation as a master mason marked him as a suitable candidate for service, but, by that time, his twenty-three-year-old daughter Chatuluka was already a prodigy within the Laborers guild. Father and daughter returned from Duat to find themselves in the tomb complex, and after brutally dispatching the ignorant peasants who had wandered in, the two encountered one another. The fight was brief and destructive, and ended when each had lost enough Sekhem to suddenly recall whom the other was, at which point they fell into a familial embrace.

Amun-Rubi and Chatuluka were inseparable for nearly all of the first Sothic Turn, with a jointly operated cult that would eventually become the ruling class of western Phoenicia. Other mummies who oversaw the foundation of Carthage joined them, but Amun-Rubi and Chatuluka were the heart of the Carthaginian meret. In those days, their familial relationship was a great boon for the two, as their shared recollections of their time together allowed each of them to maintain an unusually high Memory. When Amun-Rubi last saw Carthage, he could clearly remember details of his family from before the Rite of Return. When he awoke in South America at the start of the Third Turn, he could barely remember his daughter's name. Worse still was the horrible realization that he had not lost those memories through gradual decline. He had thrown them away with clumsy efforts to harness the Fountains of Ma'at. In fact, much of his continued involvement with the Fountains in the years between his awakening in the sixth century and the coming of the Portuguese was out of the desperate hope that controlling the Fountains might restore his memory and perhaps shed light on what happened to his daughter.

Such insights elude him. By the nineteenth century he had repaired his Memory through conventional means to the point that he remembered Carthage with some clarity along with some very clear memories of his time spent with Chatuluka, but he had no clues as to her fate... until the coming of Bantanath. The Granite Sphinx remembered her with some unusual clarity, too. She was, to the best of his recollection, the last mummy to join the Carthaginian meret; and he remembers a vague sense of unease over the beautiful Scribe. At times, he thinks he was perhaps *jealous* of her. If so, he can't remember why, but he thinks it might be because of how she and Chatuluka looked at one another when they thought he wasn't watching.

When Amun-Rubi learned that Bantanath had come to Rio, he threatened to tear the city apart unless she answered his questions. *What happened in Carthage? Why were we sent away while you remained? And above all, where*



was Chatuluka? But after many heated words, Amun-Rubi had no choice but to accept the only truths that Bantanath could reveal. Some powerful supernatural evil attacked the Arisen of Carthage early in the seventh century BCE and forced them to flee. Bantanath, the last of the five to remain among the living, sent the others on ahead before she herself was slain and sent to Duat, not to arise again for centuries. As far as Bantanath knew, Chatuluka should have arrived in Brazil along with her father. And as for why they were sent to Brazil, Bantanath was *quite* insistent that it was Amun-Rubi's idea, that there was *something* here that would help them against the terrible foe who drove them from Carthage.

This revelation broke the Granite Sphinx. The implications were that Chatuluka either met a grisly fate while en route or else landed somewhere else in the Western Hemisphere, where the inevitable loss of Memory would cause her to forget her father and everything else they shared. Amun-Rubi's memories of Chatuluka, which had been a blessing for untold centuries, became a source of such misery that he defied his own Judge and deliberately burned out his own Sekhem, returning to Duat ahead of schedule in the mad hope of finding his daughter there. He has returned since, but his involvement in the affairs of his own meret, let alone the city of Rio, has been





limited. He does the absolute minimum to avoid censure by his peers and his Judge — taking relics when they cross his path, making sure that impetuous boy Hamset doesn't blow up the city with his mad schemes — but honestly, he simply doesn't care about anything, anymore. If only he had the slightest idea just how close his daughter was.

Description: In his normal visage, Amun-Rubi appears as a tall, broad-shouldered man of Nubian descent, with gray hair and a thin beard. His eyes always appear haunted and vacant. In Sybaris, he appears, fittingly, as a stone-skinned figure with the head of a lion.

Storytelling Hints: Your immortality has become a curse. Vague recollections of your daughter persist even after the longest slumbers, and you fear that even if you bathed in the Fountains of Ma'at until other memories were expunged, the image of Chatuluka's face would still haunt you. You loathe Bantanath for reasons you cannot articulate, and only the pleadings of your surviving meret-mates (and perhaps a lingering jealousy towards Hamset over "ownership" of the Fountains) stops you from returning to Duat and risking the wrath of your Judge. Of course, if Chatuluka were to return, all that would change, and overnight you would likely become a driving force in Rio. But how likely is that?

Concept: Tormented Father

Decree: Heart

Judge: Usekh-Nemtet, the First Judge

Guild: Tef-Aabhi

Attributes: Intelligence 4, Wits 4, Resolve 2, Strength 3, Dexterity 3, Stamina 2, Presence 2, Manipulation 2, Composure 3

Skills: Academics 1, Animal Ken 1, Athletics 2, Brawl 2, Crafts 4 (Carving), Empathy 2, Expression 2, Intimidation 3 (When Angry), Investigation 1, Larceny 1, Occult 4 (Fountains of Ma'at), Persuasion 2, Politics 1, Stealth 2, Streetwise 1, Subterfuge 2, Survival 3, Weaponry 3

Merits: Guild Status (Tef-Aabhi) 4, Languages (Botocudo, English, Phoenician, Tupi), Tomb (Geometry 3, Peril 2)

Affinities: Auspicious Mastery, Godsight, Model Lifeweb, Retributive Curse

Utterances: Forge of Falsehood (p. 89), Obedient Clay, Rebuke the Vizier, Wrathful Desert Power

Pillars: Ab 5, Ba 3, Ka 4, Ren 3, Sheut 2

Sekhem: (late 2016) 5

Willpower: 7

Memory: 5

Virtue: Loving (Amun-Rubi's devotion to the memory of Chatuluka sustains him in times of weakness.)

Vice: Vengeful (The Granite Sphinx never forgets or forgives those who have wronged him, his meret, or his family.)

Initiative: 5

Defense: 3

Speed: 11

Size: 5

Armor: 0

Health: 7

HUSANI, REVIEWER OF DEAD THINGS

Quotes: "No, I don't think it looks the least bit morbid. Why do you ask?" "You'll have to discuss that matter with Amun-Rubi."

Background: It is fortunate that Amun-Rubi has risen to retake the lead of the First Meret, as ineffectual as that lead is. Although Husani competently maintains the First Meret's interests during Amun-Rubi's lengthy absences, he is uniquely unsuited to improve its stature in Rio in the time of the new Sothic Turn. Mainly, this is because he dislikes dealing with living people. He essentially invented the art of taxidermy and, if permitted, would spend all his time in a workshop, stuffing increasingly obscure and demanding animals. His cultists are terrified of him and even most Arisen find him creepy and off-putting, in large part because he can't look at them without imagining how best to preserve their bodies.

Husani remembers almost nothing of Carthage, and all of his memories of the missing Chatuluka were formed from conversations he's had with Amun-Rubi since their arrival in the New World. He is not as fascinated with the theoretical aspects of the Fountains as most of Rio's mummies. He has not made use of the Fountains of Ma'at as heavily as Amun-Rubi and Khons-Neb-Ankh, but he's lost almost as much Memory simply due to the passage of time and his own disinterest in retaining memories of earlier eras not relevant to his current situation. That said, he has used the Fountains enough to acquire one or two new Utterances that speak to his... unhealthy obsession with dead animals. Contrary to rumors spread about him by his rivals (and occasionally by his own cultists), Husani has never "stuffed" a dead mortal and really has no interest in doing so. As an expert on funerary rituals, he feels he has nothing to learn about human corpses and saves all his curiosity for exotic animals, particularly those animals that might be of use to him if reanimated by his occult powers.

Husani is well aware of how others react to his peculiarities. Thus, it was a shock to him as much as anyone else when other Su-Menent who knew him by reputation decided that he was the ideal candidate to serve as First Prophet for South America. When he found out, he laughed aloud for the first time in centuries.



Description: In his mortal visage, Husani appears as a short, slightly hunchbacked man in his late forties. He has a nervous smile and a piercing stare. In Sybaris form, he manifests as a falcon-man with blood-blackened wings that wrap around him protectively.

Storytelling Hints: When talking with others, you often seem to forget to blink as you stare in fascination at how their muscles move beneath their skin. You also fidget constantly and are generally taciturn unless the subject of funerary rites comes up, at which point you become almost disturbingly animated. You are aware of how off-putting these traits make you seem, but you really feel that such feelings represent a flaw within others rather than yourself.

Concept: Paternal Taxidermist

Decree: Spirit

Judge: Utu-Nesert, Vigorous of Flame

Guild: Su-Menent

Attributes: Intelligence 4, Wits 3, Resolve 3, Strength 2, Dexterity 3, Stamina 3, Presence 1, Manipulation 3, Composure 4

Skills: Academics 4 (Funerary Rites), Animal Ken 2, Athletics 1, Crafts 5 (Taxidermy), Drive 1, Expression 1, Intimidation 3 (Unintentional), Investigation 3, Larceny 1,

Medicine 4, Occult 4, Persuasion 1, Politics 1, Science 3, Subterfuge 2, Survival 1, Weaponry 1

Merits: Guild Status (Su-Menent) 5, Languages (Boticudo, English, Portuguese, Spanish, Tupi), Tomb (Geometry 3, Peril 4), Tolerance for Biology

Affinities: By Steps Unseen, Deathsight, Falcon Soul Aloft, Fated Soul, Grip of Death

Utterances: Awaken the Dead, Command the Beasts, Forge of Falsehood (p. 89), Words of Dead Hunger

Pillars: Ab 2, Ba 5, Ka 2, Ren 3, Sheut 4

Sekhem: (late 2016) 6

Willpower: 7

Memory: 6

Virtue: Fortitude (Husani is almost serenely calm, particularly in the face of things that would horrify or nauseate others.)

Vice: Aloofness (Husani has not so much a disdain for others as a lack of interest in those who are neither meretates nor devotees of funerary custom.)

Initiative: 7

Defense: 3

Speed: 10

Size: 5

Armor: 0

Health: 7

ХОНС-НЕБ-АНХ, MASTER OF THE PATHS OF LIFE

Quotes: “Tell me again what you recall of our conversations in the summer of 2005. I require more detail.” “I am dissatisfied with the level of security for our data cloud. You do not wish to pay the price for that dissatisfaction, I assure you.”

Background: Khons-Neb-Ankh spends what time he can trying to restore the Memory stolen by the Fountain. To this end, he has secretly called cultists to him one by one to tell him everything they know about him and what their ancestors knew and told them. He has even begun to remember Carthage though nothing so far of the evil that fell upon it. The few flashes of recollection from those times lead him to think that the Deceived brought Carthage low, and his vague awareness of that time has caused him to become extremely paranoid about the possibility of the Lost Guild’s continued existence. To prepare against that danger, Khons-Neb-Ankh repeatedly exposes himself to the remaining Fountain in pursuit of new Utterances, knowing full well he will need to spend time after each exposure relearning things he has forgotten. He has taken to keeping detailed records and diaries and has become one of the more technically proficient Arisen of Rio with computers and records stored “in the cloud,” despite the extreme poverty of his cultists.

Khons-Neb-Ankh is the most technically proficient of the First Meret, and through mortal proxies, owns several IT firms. He is also the First Meret’s financial backer,



both through investments in conventional businesses and through involvement in several of Rio's many drug gangs. It is in this capacity that Khons-Neb-Ankh has the greatest level of conflict with the Orixás. Indeed, there would be very little conflict between the two merets, were it not for the mummy's heavy involvement in the Rio drug trade. It is likely for that very reason that Teshra-Gemet initially provided Khons-Neb-Ankh with the start-up capital to become involved in the Brazilian underworld. Khons-Neb-Ankh has no idea that he was doing the Red Sparrow's bidding by becoming an opposing force against the more numerous Orixás (nor do those Orixás who are involved in the drug trade, or else they would probably retaliate against her). In fact, Khons-Neb-Ankh actually believes that he owes Teshra-Gemet a boon for her assistance and has occasionally performed minor favors for her that would anger Amun-Rubi if he knew of them.

Description: Khons-Neb-Ankh, in his mortal visage at least, is younger than his two peers are. Selected for the Rite of Return as a young man of no more than twenty-years-old, he can easily pass for a teenager of mixed-raced descent. In Sybaris, he towers over

onlookers as a mighty minotaur, which, unusual for an ancient and deathless being, seems to be made of binary code.

Storytelling Hints: You are obsessed with preserving your Memory and thus your sense of self, despite the inherent nature of the Arisen condition. You are equally obsessed with staying on the cutting edge of modern society. In moments of self-reflection, you consider the fact that you have little in common with your emotionally older and slightly delusional peers within the meret, but feel that you have nowhere else to go. Now the Sothic Wheel turns, however, and that is always a time for change and new opportunities. And you are all about new opportunities.

Concept: Rebel Without a Cause

Decree: Essence

Judge: Neha-Hatu, the Stinking Body

Guild: Mesen-Nebu

Attributes: Intelligence 3, Wits 3, Resolve 2, Strength 2, Dexterity 3, Stamina 2, Presence 4, Manipulation 4, Composure 2

Skills: Academics 1, Athletics 2, Brawl 2, Computer 3 (Security), Crafts 3 (Amulets), Drive 2, Empathy 1, Expression 2, Firearms 2 (Automatic Weapons), Intimidation 3, Investigation 1, Larceny 3, Occult 2, Persuasion 2, Politics 2, Socialize 2, Stealth 2, Streetwise 3 (Gang Culture), Subterfuge 1, Survival 1, Weaponry 2

Merits: Guild Status (Mesen-Nebu) 2, Languages (Botocudo, Portuguese, Spanish, Tupi), Resources 4, Status (Street Gangs) 4, Resources 3, Tomb (Geometry 3, Peril 4)

Affinities: Auspicious Master, Dauntless Explorer, Divine Flesh, Glorious Mien

Utterances: Dust Beneath Feet, Forge of Falsehood (p. 89), Kiss of Apep, Secrets Ripped From Skies

Pillars: Ab 3, Ba 2, Ka 4, Ren 1, Sheut 3

Sekhem: (late 2016) 5

Willpower: 4

Memory: 7

Virtue: Loyalty (Despite how little the Master of Paths has in common with the rest of his meret, he has remained loyal to them throughout their many Descents.)

Vice: Ambitious (As the only member of the First Meret with any sort of temporal influence, he hungers for the chance to expand his influence at the expense of the Orixás and O Corte Segredo.)

Initiative: 5

Defense: 3

Speed: 10

Size: 5

Armor: 0

Health: 7

THE ORIXÁS

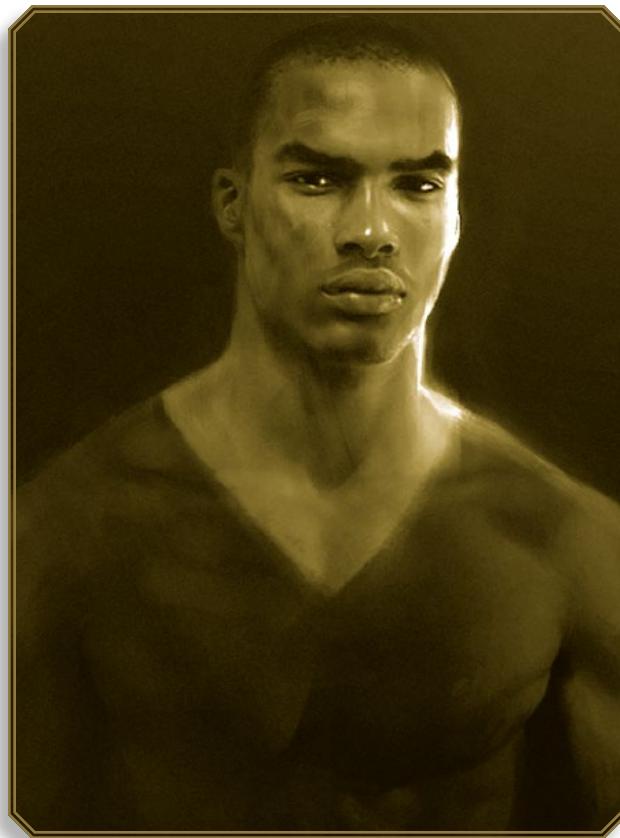
The Orixás are, in many ways, an accidental meret. With a few exceptions, the individual members aren't particularly close, and most of them actively dislike their putative leader. But there is always safety in numbers, and with seven Arisen, the Orixás are the largest meret in Rio. That fact and nothing else has protected the individual members from the machinations of O Corte Segredo, a Eurocentric meret that, in defiance of the Judges' commandments, have aggressively sought to drive them from the city for decades. The meret was founded (after a fashion) by Menefes, who was the first mummy to arrive in Rio with a prior base of power associated with the Yoruban territories from whence the Brazilian slaves were taken. A Tef-Aabhi, Menefes actively followed the slave trade to Brazil in response to legends whispered of natural fountains of raw heka, and he deliberately arranged the enslavement of the majority of his cult to ensure that he would have worshipers in the New World.

Sacmist soon followed, and then, one by one, the rest. It was Menefes who negotiated the truce with Teshra-Gemet and O Corte Segredo that guaranteed the meret's access to Brazilian slaves. It was Menefes who came up with the scheme to transmute the traditional Yoruban polytheism into various syncretic religions, most importantly Candomblé. Moreover, it was Menefes who, much to the consternation of the other Orixás, ceded effective leadership of the meret to the powerful newcomer Osorehe in order to preserve the meret's power when the city was invaded by Portuguese mummies disinterested in sharing power with the patrons of slaves. Osorehe's addition plus subtle support from Teshra-Gemet has allowed the meret to survive and flourish despite its most serious handicap: the fact that very little besides a common interest in Candomblé connects the seven mummies who rarely even speak to one another except when they come together for mutual defense.

OSOREHE, THE BASALT TOWER OF FORGOTTEN DREAMS (WORSHIPED AS OGOUN)

Quotes: "It is regrettable that my fellow Orixás are such a fractious lot. Still, in time they will doubtless come around to my view. And then, this city will be ours."

Background: Any who knew the history of Osorehe might find it ironic that the de facto leader of the Orixás hides behind the mask of Ogoun. While the deity seems a fitting choice for the leader of the Orixás meret — Ogoun was considered the first of the Yoruban orishas, a powerful and regal deity of war and metalworking — the Arisen himself first heard the name on the island of Haiti in a



much more negative context. Ogoun was the name given to the Voudon loa who blessed the 1804 Haitian Revolution that destroyed Osorehe's cult of French plantation owners and ultimately forced him to flee to Brazil. Initially disdainful of Menefes' scheme to gain power over the slave population by masquerading as the spirit-gods of the emerging Afro-Brazilian religions, in part, what eventually won him over was the satisfaction of assuming the identity of the same deity whose followers had humiliated him.

Of course, that was over 200 years ago. Osorehe's brief Haitian sojourn is a vague memory most days, and any irony associated with his mask is all but lost upon the Basalt Tower. Today, Ogoun has the largest cult of worshipers of any individual Orixá, and under the name of St. Sebastian, is the patron saint of Rio de Janeiro. When Osorehe thinks of Haiti at all, it is with the satisfaction of having "traded up."

Unfortunately, in doing so, Osorehe traded up at the expense of his fellow Orixás, most of whom slumbered in Duat when he arrived in Rio in 1805 CE. Recognizing that the Orixás were the meret with the most potential (and the only one into which he could realistically insinuate himself), the Basalt Tower took advantage of the fact



that only Menefes was active at the time. Badly outnumbered by the other two merets, Menefes was desperate for support from the new and powerful arrival. Sensing opportunity, Osorehe demanded concessions from Menefes and from the rest of the meret, who had authorized Menefes to negotiate on their behalf. When all was said and done, they had secured, and even expanded, but with Osorehe now situated as “first among equals.”

Since assuming the mask of Ogoun, Osorehe has aggressively moved to expand the influence of Candomblé as a religious movement, as well as to expand the stature of Ogoun within the Candomblé pantheon. His personal cult is the largest of the seven Orixás and one of the largest personal cults in the city, though Red Sparrow’s still dwarfs it. He was also the first of his meret to take bold steps towards arming his cult. He has suffered through one revolution, and does not plan to lose such a conflict again. He all but single-handedly started organized crime in the favelas nearly a century ago, and Menefes is the only mummy whose influence over criminal gangs approaches his own (a fact that causes some tension within the meret).

In addition to his somewhat precarious leadership position among the Orixás, Osorehe has also assumed guild-master status over the Maa-Kep, which was not difficult as there are only two other Maa-Kep in the city, neither of whom wants or is qualified for the job. In fact, he is more than qualified to lead the Maa-Kep, and he is somewhat disappointed that there are not enough amulet-workers in the city to have an effective guild. Osorehe worries that his skills might stagnate if he has no one of comparable skill against whom he can test himself. And so he pushes himself by acquiring or “cheating” via sorcery special amulets that benefit loyal cultists working in the drug trade (a not-insignificant factor in how he has achieved such dominance in such a competitive arena).

Description: A regal and handsome man, Osorehe looks every inch the king he wishes to be. Tall, muscular, and with flawless ebony skin, Osorehe could easily find work as a fashion model if he deigned to pursue such menial work. Under Sybaris, he is even more regal, standing tall as if an African king of old with blazing eyes and a blood-dappled falcon perched atop one shoulder.

Storytelling Hints: You are accustomed to dominating every room you enter, and for that matter, every city you visit. You have not yet seized control of Rio only because the Orixás as a group are such an imperfect vessel for your ambitions. Nevertheless, you see through the Red Sparrow’s facade to the weakness within, and if the dilettantes of O Corte Segredo could be humbled, the city would soon be yours.

Concept: The Man Who Would Be King

Decree: Spirit

Judge: Heraf-Het, Whose Faces is Behind It

Guild: Maa-Kep

Attributes: Intelligence 3, Wits 3 Resolve 3, Strength 4, Dexterity 3, Stamina 4, Presence 3, Manipulation 2, Composure 3

Skills: Academics 2, Athletics 2, Brawl 3, Crafts 3 (Amulets), Expression 1, Firearms 3, Intimidation 4 (Confidence), Larceny 3, Occult 3, Persuasion 3, Politics 2 (Organized Crime), Socialize 1, Stealth 2, Streetwise 4 (Gangs), Subterfuge 4 (Intrigue), Weaponry 3

Merits: Cult (Conspiracy; Reach 4, Grasp 3), Guild Status 5 (Maa-Kep), Improved Initiative 2, Languages (English, French, Portuguese, Spanish), Resources 4, Striking Looks 2, Tomb (Geometry 4, Peril 4)

Affinities: Affable Aid, Ancient Horror Unveiling, Blessed Soul, Divine Countenance, Enduring Flesh, Glorious Mien

Utterances: Blessed Is the God-King, Body of Clay (p. 90), Drums of the Ogan (p. 91), Horse and Rider (p. 91), Palace Knows Its Pharaoh, Revelations of Smoke and Flame

Pillars: Ab 3, Ba 5, Ka 3, Ren 3, Sheut 3

Sekhem: (late 2016) 6

Willpower: 6

Memory: 5

Virtue: Courage (Osorehe never backs down when his honor or status is challenged.)

Vice: Pride (Osorehe occasionally overestimates how much power he has relative to his fellow Arisen, as well as how much loyalty he truly commands from his meret.)

Initiative: 7

Defense: 3

Speed: 12

Size: 5

Armor: 0

Health: 9

MENEFES, THE CRIMSON LION (WORSHIPED AS ERINLE)

Quotes: “I am not interested in excuses from incompetent servants. I am interested in putting an end to the intrusions of the damnable outsiders into my domain.” “No, there is no need to discuss that with Osorehe. I will handle that matter.”

Background: Some Arisen outside of the Orixás assume that Menefes is Osorehe’s second-in-command. This is inaccurate. Menefes is the second most powerful of the Orixás after Osorehe, in terms of cult size, magical power, knowledge, and resources, but he is not second-in-command; because that would imply that the Orixás have a structure more regimented than “seven colleagues with congruent agendas.” For the most part, that group agenda consists of expanding the growth of Candomblé in Rio and using it as a means to effect the will of the



Judges. In the case of Menefes, that means blending the religious structure of Candomblé with the financial and quasi-military assets of a major Brazilian drug cartel.

Before he came to South America, Menefes made his home among the Yoruban people of West Africa. His primary tomb was located along the Erinle River in Nigeria, which the locals named for the Yoruban deity whose name Menefes took with him to the New World. Previously, Menefes had been very active within the religious culture of the Oyo Empire (in what later became Nigeria), and after his immigration to Brazil he was the one to persuade later mummies to support the syncretic development of Candomblé as a cover for their cults. Menefes was primarily attracted to the identity of Erinle due to that deity's reputation as a hunter, which fit well with the Crimson Lion's overall personality. He was quite surprised when he returned from Duat in the 1970s to learn that during his slumber, Candomblé priests have reinterpreted Erinle to be the patron god of healers and of homosexuals.

At the start of the current Sothic Turn, Menefes awoke not in his normal tomb but in one he shared with Anak-Em-Tanen. Neither one has any memories of how they came to rest in the same tomb. After some discussion of the matter (and with awareness of his "godly portfolio"), Menefes came around to the idea that he and Anak-Em-Tanen might have been involved in a romantic relationship. Neither one has any prior memories of such a relationship (or for that matter, any other prior same-sex attractions with *anyone*), and their fellow Orixás were never close enough to be aware of any past relationships between them, but they have found some circumstantial evidence that they were closer during their last Descent than they had been previously. Troubled by their lack of memories of that Descent, the two have elected to pursue a deeper relationship now, in the hopes that it will trigger lost memories one way or the other.

If nothing else, the relationship between the two has provided Menefes with a degree of stimulation and contentment that had been lacking in his existence. Between the demands of his meret, the fractious nature of his guild, the difficulties of operating a drug cartel despite long periods of inactivity, his constant conflicts with rival merets, and the expectations of his Candomblé cultists, Menefes has been understandably stressed since the turn of the Sothic Wheel. Of late, he has grown to appreciate the release of having a partner who is also a peer, whether their feelings are genuine or not.

Description: In his normal visage, Menefes is a short-haired Arab-looking man in his late 30s. Under Sybaris, he stands taller, with the skin of a red-maned lion draped over his head and shoulders in a manner similar to common depictions of Hercules.



Storytelling Hints: You are accustomed to playing the role of a war god, which is convenient, as you view your cult as a military force, one you may someday have to use against the leader of your own meret. You maintain a brusque, professional façade with most people, but your experimental relationship with Anak-Em-Tanen has led you to attempt more openness than to which you are generally accustomed.

Concept: Distracted God of the Hunt

Decree: Heart

Judge: Akhi, the Roar

Guild: Tef-Aabhi

Attributes: Intelligence 2, Wits 4, Resolve 3, Strength 3, Dexterity 3, Stamina 2, Presence 2, Manipulation 2, Composure 2

Skills: Academics 2, Athletics 2, Brawl 4 (Capoeira), Crafts 2 (Construction), Drive 1, Empathy 1, Expression 2, Firearms 3 (Pistols), Intimidation 3 (Violence), Investigation 1, Larceny 2, Occult 2, Persuasion 1, Politics 2 (Organized Crime), Socialize 2, Stealth 2, Streetwise 3 (Favelas), Subterfuge 2, Weaponry 4

Merits: Cult (Enterprise; Reach 3, Grasp 3), Guild Status 2 (Tef-Aabhi), Languages (English, German, Portuguese, Spanish), Improved Initiative 2, Resources 2, Tomb (Geometry 2, Peril 4)



Affinities: Anointed Prowess, Enduring Flesh, Guardian Wrath, Model Lifeweb, Voice of Conscience

Utterances: Body of Clay (p. 90), Dreams of Dead Gods, Drums of the Ogan (p. 91), Gift of the Golden Ankh, Horse and Rider (p. 91)

Pillars: Ab 5, Ba 3, Ka 2, Ren 2, Sheut 1

Sekhem: (late 2016) 5

Willpower: 5

Memory: 4

Virtue: Honor (Menefes considers his personal word of honor to be important and worth upholding, which is why he has never tried to overthrow Osorehe since ceding power to him.)

Vice: Lust (Menefes is pursuing a long-term romantic relationship for the first time he can recall, and is often distracted as a result.)

Initiative: 7

Defense: 3

Speed: 11

Size: 5

Armor: 0

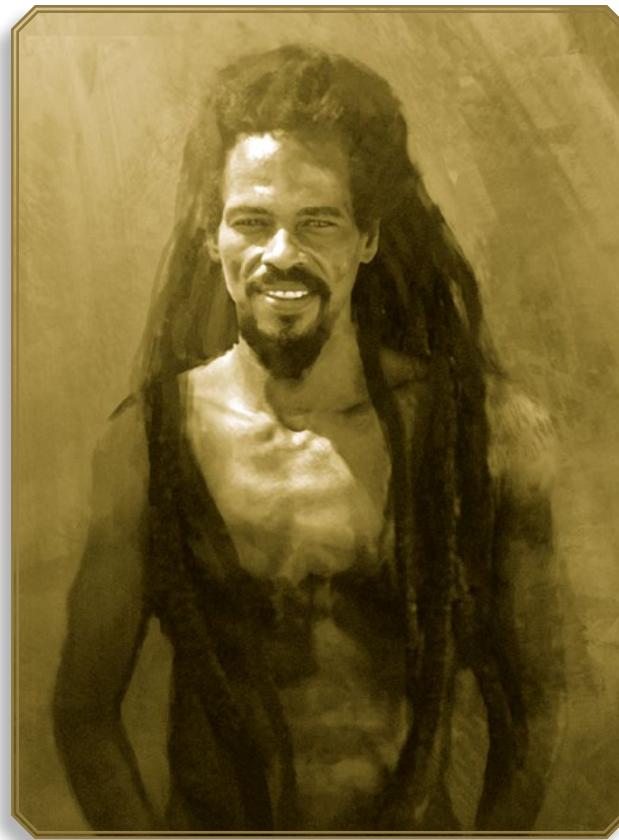
Health: 7

SACMIST, THE PRINCE OF STORMS (WORSHIPED AS XANGÔ)

Quotes: “Guns have their place, as does magic. But nothing is as pleasing and proper as to snap your enemy’s neck with your bare hands and to do it with the grace and style of a dancer.”

Background: Sacmist was the second mummy to join the alliance that came to be called the Orixás, and he was pleased to assume the mask of Xangô, the god of storms, lightning, and fire. An aggressive and flamboyant figure, Sacmist found the violent nature of Xangô a perfect fit for his personality. Of all the Orixás, Sacmist was probably the most opposed to the addition of Osorehe to their number. While the other mummy’s power was a boon to the Orixás at a time when they were clearly outmatched by O Corte Segredo, he is angry that Osorehe has supplanted Menefes as the dominant voice of the meret (mainly because he was planning to do so himself).

As with most of the Orixás, Sacmist has aggressively expanded his own personal cult into the criminal subculture of the favelas. He lacks the subtlety of Osorehe and Menefes, however, and his cultists have a tendency to actively seek out confrontation with law enforcement. The favelas influenced by his cult are among the most fearsome to the city’s Sparrow-backed Pacification Forces. Interestingly, Sacmist does not rely exclusively on either conventional weaponry (as Menefes does) nor on magical augmentation (as Osorehe does, through vessels he provides). Instead, the charismatic and athletic Arisen



has, over the course of the last two centuries, fashioned the primitive fighting styles of the former servant class into a potent martial arts style: Capoeira. This unique fighting style, which combines martial arts with elements of dance, is widely popular across Brazil, but among Sacmist’s cultists, it has become the perfected style of a spiritual warrior.

While there is constant conflict between the Orixás and O Corte Segredo, the enmity between Sacmist and Aapep Medes has grown particularly heated, rising almost to the level of mutual vendetta. (See Aapep Medes’ entry for more information on this conflict.) There is also tension between the Orixás and the First Meret, but despite that, Sacmist has a good relationship with his guildmaster Husani. While most find the Reviver of Dead Things creepy and unsettling, Sacmist finds him strangely amusing. More importantly, Sacmist respects Husani’s power and knowledge, and he knows that he must get along with his guildmaster if he is ever going to master those special Utterances of the Su-Menent that will allow him to buttress his own army of warrior cultists.

Description: In his mortal visage, Sacmist is dark-skinned with a lithe sinewy body. He has long dreadlocks and a carefully trimmed goatee, and he rarely wears shirts.



When in Sybaris, his eyes turn into those of a cobra, his movements become even more graceful, and spectral serpents manifest wrapped around his arms and torso.

Storytelling Hints: You are intolerably arrogant and confident in your prowess as a warrior and as a worthy chosen of the Judges. You show the barest amount of restraint in your casual violence when given the slightest provocation. You make little secret of your disdain for Osorehe and Menefes, but you grudgingly acknowledge that you must remain allied with them until O Corte Segredo is removed from the playing field. After that, all bets are off.

Concept: Ruthless Upstart

Decree: Name

Judge: Bastu, the Stare

Guild: Su-Menent

Attributes: Intelligence 2, Wits 3, Resolve 2, Strength 2, Dexterity 4, Stamina 3, Presence 3, Manipulation 2, Composure 2

Skills: Academics 1, Athletics 4 (Capoeira), Brawl 5 (Capoeira), Crafts 2, Drive 2, Firearms 3, Intimidation 2, Larceny 2, Occult 2, Socialize 2 (Bars), Stealth 2, Streetwise 3 (Favelas), Subterfuge 2, Weaponry 3

Merits: Cult (Enterprise; Reach 2, Grasp 2), Guild Status 3 (Su-Menent), Languages (English, Portuguese, Spanish), Tomb (Geometry 2, Peril 3)

Affinities: Ancient Horror Unveiling, Anointed Prowess, Fated Soul, Guardian Wrath

Utterances: Body of Clay (p. 90), Doom Affliction, Drums of the Ogan (p. 91), Horse and Rider (p. 91)

Pillars: Ab 2, Ba 2, Ka 3, Ren 4, Sheut 1

Sekhem: (late 2016) 5

Willpower: 4

Memory: 5

Virtue: Loyalty (Despite his generally ruthless nature Sacmist is extremely protective of his own cultists, who he views as more of an extended family than as the glorified pawns that mummy cultists tend to be.)

Vice: Pride (Sacmist genuinely believes that he should lead the Orixás, that the Orixás would easily take over the city if under his command, and, perhaps most dangerously, that he really is a match for Osorehe and/or Menefes.)

Initiative: 6

Defense: 3

Speed: 11

Size: 5

Armor: 0

Health: 8

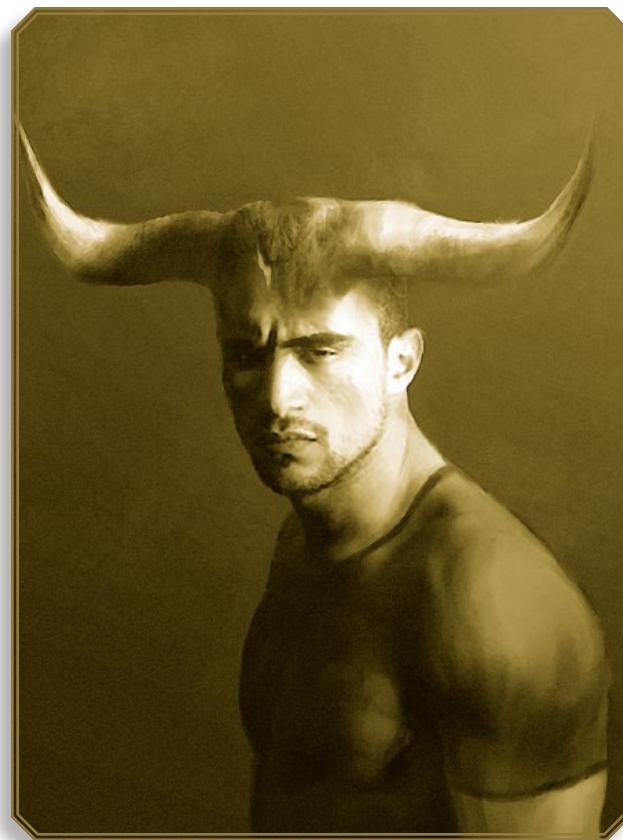
ANAK-EM-TANEN, INCITER OF FORBIDDEN VISIONS (WORSHIPED AS EXU)

Quotes: “It is plain to see that there is not nearly enough divinely inspired chaos in this world. What kind of spirit-god would I be if I didn’t do my part?”

Background: Anak-Em-Tanen is a rather shy and unassuming Arisen who tends to defer to his fellow Orixás, especially to Menefes. He has declined to enter the Fountains of Ma’at, but nevertheless has great difficulty maintaining his memory. When he interacts with his guildmaster Hamset, he is so apologetic over his meret’s opposition to capping Sugarloaf Mountain that he stammers. Personally, Anak-Em-Tanen reassures Hamset, he thinks it’s a good idea, but he is compelled to defer to Menefes’ feelings. While he has denied Hamset’s accusation that a sudden personal interest in Menefes has clouded his judgment, he would blush furiously as he stammered out denials, which seem to merely confirm Hamset’s suspicions.

All of this is a lie.

Anak-Em-Tanen is playing a role, that of Exu the Trickster; and he has well and truly buried himself in the part. The Arisen has become fixated on the Candomblé mask he wears — one associated with a deity who foments chaos and confusion largely for its entertainment value — to the





point that he lies compulsively and manipulates others as a matter of second nature. He publicly defers to Menefes, and then does whatever he wants behind the scenes. He has entered the Fountain on Sugarloaf on several occasions, and recently emerged with a powerful Utterance. He can't access the third tier yet, but the first two grant him potent mind-altering powers, which is the true reason he opposes Hamset's plan and why he has manipulated Menefes into being the public face of his opposition. He feels drawn to Menefes, yes, but then, as a pansexual libertine, Anak-Em-Tanen has an attraction on some level to just about everyone.

His current "relationship" with Menefes is something of an experiment. In an earlier Descent back during the 1970s, Menefes expressed a certain ambivalence over the fact that while he was in Duat, cultural changes had altered the traditional view of Erinle among Candomblé practitioners to include patronage of homosexuals. It was truly inoffensive to Menefes, who, like most Arisen, was sufficiently worldly to find nothing wrong about homosexuality. He was merely perplexed as to how such a shift in his Orixá mask could have occurred outside of his direction.

Those comments on the subject stuck with Anak-Em-Tanen, who decided that the staid and dignified Menefes needed to broaden his horizons. As Menefes' prior Descent came to a close, Anak-Em-Tanen used his special Utterance to ensure that the other Arisen would not return to his primary tomb, but rather to a special one built for him by Anak-Em-Tanen's cult — a tomb littered with subtle hints that the two were unusually close. That same Utterance also ensures that while Menefes' past life memories are otherwise fairly clear, it occludes his specific memories of Anak-Em-Tanen from their last lifetime. Ever since the two awoke at the turn of the Sothic Wheel, Anak-Em-Tanen has done little to actively attract Menefes. Instead, he has allowed Menefes to take the lead by pursuing him, despite the fact that Menefes himself is not actually gay, but merely thinks that he might possibly be bisexual. Thus, does Exu the Trickster play his game even among the Arisen.

Description: Anak-Em-Tanen is a remarkably handsome man in his mid-20s, with the appearance of a Westernized Moroccan. He hides his good looks behind an act of bashful nervousness, so that others feel compelled to reassure him about his attractiveness and, in doing so, pull themselves more deeply into his web. Under Sybaris, he becomes even more beautiful, as mighty bull horns sprout from his otherwise unblemished forehead, emphasizing his carnal nature.

Storytelling Hints: You don't know what's going to happen next, which fills you with more joy than you can stand. You have embraced your role as a trickster god almost to the point of abandoning the Judges, though you have not yet defied your decree. As you spread chaos across Rio, with none

aware of your machinations, you feel that you are changing into something new and different, which both terrifies and delights you.

Concept: Unbalanced Trickster God

Decree: Essence

Judge: An-Hotep, the Bringer of Sacrifice

Guild: Tef-Aabhi

Attributes: Intelligence 4, Wits 3, Resolve 2, Strength 2, Dexterity 3, Stamina 2, Presence 4, Manipulation 5, Composure 2

Skills: Academics 2, Athletics 1, Crafts 3, Drive 1, Empathy 3, Expression 3, Firearms 1, Investigation 2, Larceny 3, Occult 3, Persuasion 3 (Seduction), Socialize 3 (Charm), Stealth 3 (Unobtrusive), Streetwise 2, Subterfuge 3 (Emotions), Weaponry 1

Merits: Cult (Tribal; Reach 2, Grasp 2; Anak-Em-Tanen's cult is the least active in organized crime of the Orixás, dedicated instead to spreading chaos.), Guild Status 2 (Tef-Aabhi), Languages (English, Portuguese, Spanish), Striking Looks 2, Tomb (Geometry 2, Peril 2)

Affinities: Blessed Soul, Charmed Lives, Familiar Face, Model Lifeweb, Words Summoned Forth

Utterances: Body of Clay (p. 90), Drums of the Ogan (p. 89), The Ebon Mask (p. 88), Horse and Rider (p. 91)

Pillars: Ab 2, Ba 2, Ka 4, Ren 3, Sheut 1

Sekhem: (late 2016) 6

Willpower: 4

Memory: 6

Virtue: Compassion (Exu takes pity on the weak and helpless and will often help them rather than inflict further chaos into their lives.)

Vice: Wrath (Conversely, as Exu, the mummy has developed a cruel antipathy towards the wealthy and powerful, and delights in humbling them in one way or another.)

Derangement: Multiple Personality

Initiative: 4

Defense: 3

Speed: 9

Size: 5

Armor: 0

Health: 7

HE-S-SEDJET, THE EMPRESS OF AZURE WAVES (WORSHIPED AS IEMANJÁ)

Quotes: "You'll have to explain that more thoroughly. I've been away for a while, but now I'm back." "Yes, of course I can get it for you. It will simply cost you a lot."

Background: Hes-Sedjet is unique among the Orixás for being only a part-time resident of Rio. While the rest of her meret has focused their schemes and machinations



around the city, Hes-Sedjet alone has expanded her sphere of influence beyond Rio to other cities in Brazil and even to other South American nations. In so doing, she has unintentionally become one of the few Arisen who Teshra-Gemet considers a serious rival.

Ironically, Hes-Sedjet did not set out to do so. A stalwart member of the Sesha-Hebsu, the Empress of Azure Waves considered herself an explorer. While the Fountains of Ma'at were certainly an intriguing discovery, she considered it unlikely that they were the only treasures of use to the Arisen in South America. Therefore, in keeping with her mask as the Orixá sea goddess Iemanjá, Hes-Sedjet sought out cultists wherever there were seaports and superstitious sailors. Today, she has carefully hidden tombs throughout Brazil and the rest of the continent, mostly in coastal towns and villages, tended by small local branches of her larger Iemanjá cult.

It is curious that Teshra-Gemet should feel so threatened by an Arisen who only spends half her waking time in Rio de Janeiro, but Hes-Sedjet's travels have served her well. Her sea-based cult is very active in shipping and smuggling, and while the Red Sparrow's cult is much larger and more influential, Hes-Sedjet's cult is more widespread. It was inevitable that the two cults would cross paths and come into conflict, but conflict between rival cults engaged in something as clandestine as smuggling was not sustainable, and so in time, a détente was forged by which Teshra-Gemet and Hes-Sedjet essentially divided the continent between themselves and mutually agreed to stay out of each other's territory. Naturally, the Orixás are unaware that Hes-Sedjet has forged her own private agreement with Teshra-Gemet. They know only that Hes-Sedjet seems to be the only Arisen capable of smuggling drugs and other contraband into and out of Rio without the Red Sparrow's monitors waylaying it. Hes-Sedjet has gone to great lengths to mask her successful smuggling operations as a sign of her own cunning and ingenuity, and she charges heavily for the use of her smuggling network, even to her own meret. How furious the Orixás would be if they knew that, more often than not, Hes-Sedjet simply informs Teshra-Gemet of what she is smuggling and then pays a percentage to her.

The money she keeps, however, she spends well, as Hes-Sedjet has funded archeological expeditions all across South America. Her personal collection of relics is one of the largest held by any single mummy in Rio. She also has the largest web of contacts of any of Rio's Arisen, including contacts among other supernatural beings across the Southern hemisphere. Hes-Sedjet also has one other peculiarity compared to her fellow Arisen: she is the only mummy in Rio who appears fully European.



On one of her journeys many decades ago, Hes-Sedjet had an encounter with a powerful supernatural creature who succeeded in destroying her physical body. Local cultists were on hand to perform the Call using the body of a recently drowned college student vacationing from Sweden. This has put something of a crimp in her Candomblé-related activities, as most depictions of Iemanjá do not describe her as a tall Nordic beauty.

The cult of Iemanjá is heavily involved in Rio's annual New Year's Eve celebrations held at Copacabana Beach, which represent the second largest cultural event in the city after Carnival. Millions of Cariocas seek good luck for the new year by throwing flowers into the bay at midnight or by putting small presents onto tiny boats and setting them out to sea. Hes-Sedjet gains an impressive amount of heka from these offerings, much to the consternation of her fellow Orixás, who do not understand how Hes-Sedjet reaps such powerful benefits from a cult that she seems to administrate so laxly.

Description: Hes-Sedjet was relatively old for an Arisen at the time of her selection and was not considered attractive, regardless of her age. Thus, she is still coming to terms with wearing the body of a beautiful 20-year-old Swedish tourist. In Sybaris, her blonde hair





darkens and twists into writhing shadows, as silhouettes of baying jackals appear on the walls behind her.

Storytelling Hints: You are pragmatic and open-minded, which is why you have flourished in ways incomprehensible to the male Orixás, who act like “boys with toys” with their guns and turf wars and endless violence. Your Orixá mask is a means to an end — fulfilling the work of the Judges — and you are mildly contemptuous of other Orixás for the extent to which they have let either fascination with their masks or vendettas against others distract them from their duties.

Concept: Aloof Sea Goddess

Decree: Shadow

Judge: Artem-Khet, the Crocodile’s Tears

Guild: Sesha-Hebsu

Attributes: Intelligence 4, Wits 2, Resolve 3, Strength 2, Dexterity 2, Stamina 3, Presence 4, Manipulation 2, Composure 3

Skills: Academics 3 (South American History), Crafts 2 (Boating), Drive 1, Empathy 2, Expression 2, Investigation 3, Larceny 1, Occult 4 (Relics), Persuasion 3, Politics 2, Science 3 (Archeology), Socialize 2, Stealth 1, Streetwise 2, Subterfuge 1, Survival 3, Weaponry 1

Merits: Cult (Enterprise; Reach 4, Grasp 3), Guild Status 4 (Sesha-Hebsu), Inspiring (B), Languages (English, German, Italian, Portuguese, plus a half-dozen indigenous languages), Resources 4, Striking Looks 2, Strong Back (B), Tomb (Geometry 3, Peril 2)

Affinities: Auspicious Mastery, Dauntless Explorer, Eyes of Justice, God-King’s Scepter, Miraculous Benefactor, Paragon Shames the Weak

Utterances: Body of Clay (p. 90), Drums of the Ogan (p. 91), Horse and Rider (p. 91), Water of Life and Death

Pillars: Ab 2, Ba 3, Ka 3, Ren 3, Sheut 4

Sekhem: (as of early 2016) 6

Willpower: 6

Memory: 7

Virtue: Patience (Hes-Sedjet is forced by circumstance to ally herself with what she considers an unwieldy alliance of hyperactive would-be gang lords who are largely beneath her.)

Vice: Curiosity (An explorer by inclination, Hes-Sedjet cannot resist an occult mystery and has almost ended her Descents at the hands of several over the centuries.)

Initiative: 5

Defense: 2

Speed: 9

Size: 5

Armor: 0

Health: 7

KEKEWEY, THE HUNTER OF DIVINITY (WORSHIPED AS OXOSSI)

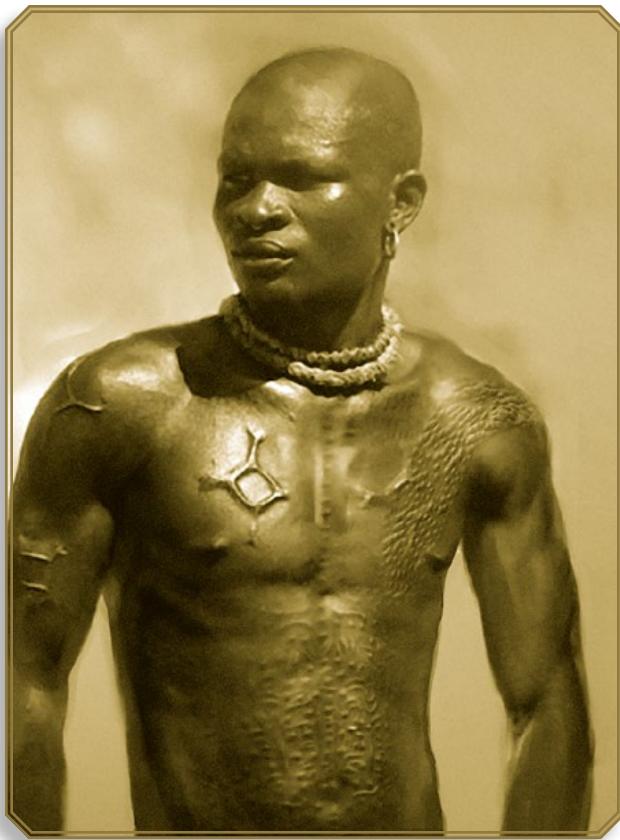
Quotes: “I have walked the hidden trails of the Amazon and spoken to those who were ancient before our living days. I see that there is more to the world than I once believed. And I know that I will become more than I am.”

Background: Of all the Orixás, Kekewey is the most ambivalent about the meret’s structure and nature. To be honest, if he knew when he first arrived what he knows today, he’d have probably petitioned for membership in the First Meret, assuming that the trio would have been open to new members. Like the other Orixás, Kekewey came to Rio from Africa in the company of his mortal cultists. Unlike his peers, some of whom eventually cultivated cult members with actual magical proficiency, Kekewey arrived on these shores in the company of several mortal sorcerers, who quickly apprised him of the remarkable spiritual vitality of the region. The sorcerers within Kekewey’s cult (which grew to include indigenous South American shamans, some poached from the First Meret) learned to commune with the spirits common to the Brazilian rainforests, powerful primeval spirits who taught Kekewey special Utterances unknown to the other Orixás (and possibly unknown to all other Arisen).

This glimpse of a wider world has caused the Hunter of Divinity to deeply identify with indigenous cultures to a degree greater than any of his peers have. It has also taught him to question the Judges, and Kekewey is now secretly and seriously pursuing the heresy of Apotheosis. While the other Orixás are unaware of his apostasy, he has attracted attention from another direction. An unknown Arisen has made contact with Kekewey through intermediaries and provided tantalizing hints about how to seek Apotheosis.

When not seeking out forbidden knowledge, Kekewey communes with the priests of his cult even as he works to conceal his cult’s true power from his peers. Through the magical proficiency of those priests, Kekewey communes with spirits that may well be old enough to predate the Nameless Empire. As Oxossi, his cult worships the Arisen as a hunter god, and they sometimes venerate him by releasing mortal sacrifices into Rio’s nature preserves so that he can stalk and kill them for the glory of the spirits.

Description: In his mortal form, Kekewey is an athletic and muscular black man with a shaved head. Beneath his clothing, he bears a network of scars, the result of obscure native scarification rituals designed to propitiate the ancient spirits who have blessed him with their gift. Under Sybaris, Kekewey wears his normal form from the waist up, but below that, he has the body of a massive python.



Storytelling Hints: You feel bored by the intrigues of your fellow Arisen, who have wasted their immortality on intrigues, mind games, and fulfilling the tasks set forth by deities of a long dead culture. The gods of the Brazilian natives are *alive* and offer both power and enlightenment in a way that the Judges never could. You find it difficult to conceal your growing contempt for the Arisen and for the cruel and decadent society that spawned them; and you have become intensely protective of indigenous peoples, ironically more so than the pretentious First Meret, which cares little for such people except in their capacity as potential servants and resources.

Concept: Immigrant Gone Native

Decree: Name

Judge: Kenemti, the Penitent

Guild: Su-Menent

Attributes: Intelligence 3, Wits 3, Resolve 2, Strength 3, Dexterity 3, Stamina 3, Presence 3, Manipulation 2, Composure 3

Skills: Academics 2, Animal Ken 2, Athletics 3, Brawl 2, Crafts 2 (Uter), Expression 2, Firearms 1, Intimidation 3, Occult 3 (Spirits), Persuasion 2, Politics 2, Socialize 1, Stealth 3 (Sneak Attacks), Streetwise 2, Survival 4 (Rain Forests), Subterfuge 3, Weaponry 1

Merits: Cult (Tribal; Reach 3, Grasp 4), Guild Status 1 (Su-Menent), Languages (Botocudo, English, Portuguese, Spanish, Tupi, and other tribal languages), Supernatural Allies 4 (a half-dozen sorcerers), Tomb (Geometry 2, Peril 4)

Affinities: Dominating Might, Enlightened Senses, Fated Soul, Voice of Temptation

Utterances: Command the Beasts, Drums of the Ogan (p. 90), Forge of Falsehood (p. 89), Horse and Rider (p. 91)

Pillars: Ab 2, Ba 2, Ka 3, Ren 5, Sheut 3

Sekhem: (late 2016) 7

Willpower: 5

Memory: 6

Virtue: Hope (Kekewey knows that his newfound loyalty to the spirits of Brazil will help him to achieve Apotheosis.)

Vice: Greed (Kekewey will happily betray his meret and even his Judge in exchange for more knowledge of the spirit world.)

Initiative: 5

Defense: 3

Speed: 10

Size: 5

Armor: 0

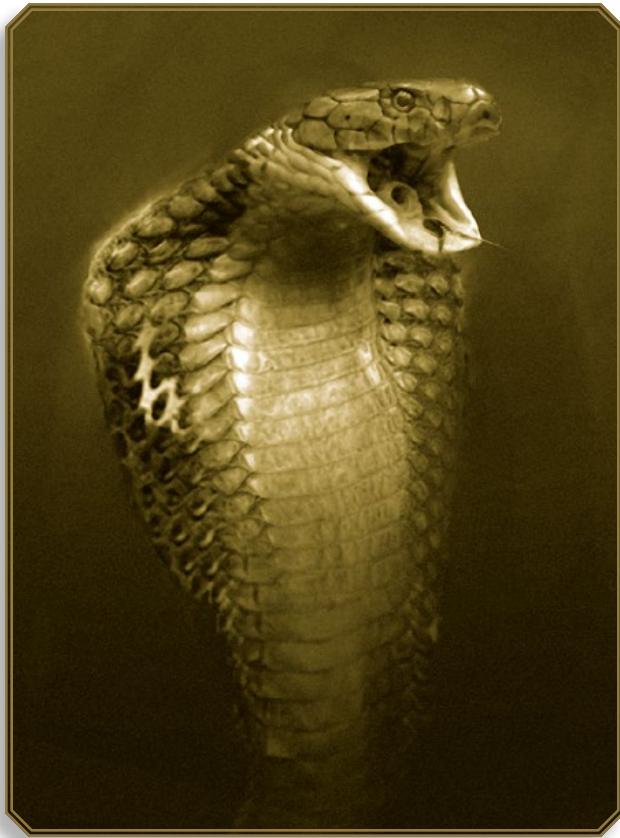
Health: 8

BESET KHERED, THE PROGENITOR OF DUALITY (WORSHIPED AS OXUMARÉ)

Quotes: “Come to me, little one. Come to me, and I will ease your hunger, heal your wounds, and soothe your soul.”

Background: Aside from Anak-Em-Tanen (who is truly unwell), Beset Khered is the Orixá most invested in her mask — so much so that she has deliberately all but abandoned her mortal form. The Progenitor of Duality was worshiped as Oxumaré for untold centuries before relocating to the New World. In Yoruban mythology Oxumaré was the rainbow serpent who communicates the will of Olodumare (the supreme deity who corresponds to Azar in Iremite mythology). Oxumaré was also a hermaphrodite, able to change gender at will. Long ago, Beset Khered's original form was destroyed, and she was reborn into a new form of the opposite gender. Which gender was the original and which was the opposite is long forgotten, as Beset Khered decided at that time to abandon the concept of fixed gender and be reborn into every new era with a new form totally different than what the mummy had worn before. At the moment, Oxumaré is a female, but she knows that is likely to change.

Beset Khered has always had a soft spot for children. Fairly old at the time of the Rite, she had already had many children and even more grandchildren. None who she remembers of course, but she does know she had them. She does hold a single distant memory of Irem from before the Rite of Return, where she is tending and teaching the



children of the workers, although she cannot remember which gender she wore at the time. However, all of those children are long dead, and Beset Khered's new grandchildren are the focus of her current attentions.

In her Oxumaré persona, Beset Khered has assumed the patronage of the poor and dispossessed children of Rio, and she has many to choose from. Her cultists know from either experience or from stories told amongst themselves that she aids desperate children, taking cruel revenge on those who harm them. These children grow up eventually, and while the core of her cult always consists of young teens, those who were once a part of her cult remain a part of it into adulthood. Ever loyal to their patroness (or patron for those who remember Oxumaré in his male aspect), these cultists insinuate themselves into every favela, acting as her eyes, ears, and hands.

Description: Beset Khered has worn a different face with every rebirth for several centuries. Her cultists are particularly skilled at performing the Call with new sacrificial bodies, and at her command, they ritually burn her prior remains during each death cycle before choosing a new vessel. Currently, she appears to be an elderly white woman seemingly in her seventies, but within the last few decades, she has been a teenaged black boy, a

German-speaking pregnant woman in her thirties (the baby did not survive), and a dusky male police officer in his forties. When in the grip of Sybaris, she manifests a massive king cobra colored like an iridescent rainbow.

Storytelling Hints: You have no recollection of your original gender and don't consider the question important. When you are reborn, you wear your new face without concern about what you were before. All that remains from life to life is your devotion to your Judge and to the memory of Irem. Regardless of gender, you are always protective of and devoted to any children who cross your path; even as you ruthlessly use them according to your needs once they reach what you consider adulthood (usually around 16).

Although you are a part of the Maa-Kep, you are diffident about your guild obligations. In large part, this is because of your personal disdain for Osorehe, despite his status as both your guildmaster and the "leader" of your meret.

Concept: Doting Grandparent

Decree: Name

Judge: Khem-Inhu, the Overthrower

Guild: Maa-Kep

Attributes: Intelligence 3, Wits 2, Resolve 4, Strength 2, Dexterity 2, Stamina 2, Presence 3, Manipulation 4, Composure 3

Skills (current body): Academics 1, Brawl 1, Crafts 3 (Amulets), Empathy 3 (Guilt Trips), Expression 2, Intimidation 2, Investigation 2, Occult 3, Persuasion 3, Politics 2, Socialize 3 (Favelas), Stealth 2, Streetwise 3 (Homeless), Subterfuge 3, Survival 2, Weaponry 1

Merits: Cult (Conspiracy; Reach 2, Grasp 2), Guild Status 2 (Maa-Kep), Languages (English, Portuguese, Spanish), Tomb (Geometry 2, Peril 2)

Affinities: Affable Aid, God-King's Scepter, Guardian Wrath, Miraculous Benefactor, Radiant Lifeforce

Utterances: Body of Clay (p. 90), Dreams of Dead Gods, Drums of the Ogan (p. 91), Horse and Rider (p. 91)

Pillars: Ab 3, Ba 2, Ka 2, Ren 4, Sheut 2

Sekhem: (late 2016) 4

Willpower: 7

Memory: 7

Virtue: Compassionate (Beset Khered is intensely protective of children.)

Vice: Wrath (That passion is often violent, as Beset Khered lashes out recklessly at those who would harm her "little ones.")

Initiative: 5

Defense: 2

Speed: 9

Size: 5

Armor: 0

Health: 7



O CORTE SEGREDO

Its members established the meret known as the Secret Court to profit from and influence the Portuguese nobility from the shadows. The triple threats of the Inquisition, the Emperor Napoleon, and the looming age of revolution led O Corte Segredo to relocate to Brazil, where its members took the lead in shaping the architectural and cultural Renaissance wrought by the royal immigration. Unfortunately, O Corte Segredo has faced resistance from the start by the cunning and resourceful Teshra-Gemet and by the two rival merets she has pit against it. Even more unfortunately, the individual members of O Corte Segredo do not understand the extent to which their own personalities have been altered by the baleful influence of an ancient relic they use to bind wealthy and privileged cultists to their service.

Teshra-Gemet caught the meret off-guard when she established herself as the patroness of Emperor Pedro II. They were even more unprepared when she engineered the relocation of the national capitol to a city hundreds of miles away, and which mummies could not enter without experiencing great distress. While the meret argues on how best to achieve the goal, they are unanimous in thinking that it is time for Teshra-Gemet to go. Some members have spent the last few decades seeking ways to undermine her directly, but most of the Secret Court have been pursuing schemes to destroy the favelas and drive the First Meret and the Orixás out of Rio. Teshra-Gemet cannot pit the other two merets against the Secret Court if they no longer exist.

Unfortunately, events at the dawn of the new Sothic Turn have thwarted their machinations. Bantanath has become unreliable, as returning memory threatens to restore her knowledge of what the Iron Bull is and why they should fear, rather than worship it. Sa-Khonsu also suffers from a surge in memory that limits how long her alter ego can remain in charge and direct Os Toureiros, the cult that directly worships the Iron Bull rather than the Arisen. Aapep Medes suffers such an utter consummation of hatred of the First Meret and the Orixás (driven as much by racism as by his personal agenda) that he has all but abandoned discretion in favor of destructive military conflict. Nekhakha, the Arisen least affected by the Iron Bull, is more obsessed with advancing her personal cult than in fulfilling the meret's larger agenda. Finally, Ib-Sheta has begun a campaign to essentially drive Bantanath insane, seemingly for no reason other than personal satisfaction.

In addition to their individual cults, each member of O Corte Segredo can theoretically call upon the resources of Os Toureiros (though probably not to achieve any objective of which the Bull might "disapprove"). As a cult, Os Toureiros has Reach 4 and Grasp 5.

AAPEP MEDES, THE MOON SNAKE (AKA, THE VIRIDIAN VIZIER)

Quotes: (as Aapep Medes) "This city is the most vibrant and alive in all the world. Why, then, am I so bored?" (As the Viridian Vizier) "People have forgotten how to bow. If I must write the lesson in their blood and sinew, I shall do so gladly."

Background: Aapep Medes has a vague memory of ancient Irem: He sits on a throne, wearing a cloak of satin and gold while men bow to him. He takes this to mean that he was Iremite royalty before he was chosen for his undying task, and he has held onto this memory with all his will. It is the pearl at the core of his being. No matter how grimed with time and forgetting, he has managed to keep this one shred of identity through most of his eternal life. Or so he tells himself.

He secretly suspects that this memory of is false; he can't really remember remembering it before the fifteenth century. The possibility that it isn't true only fuels his arrogance and insistence on an aristocratic demeanor.

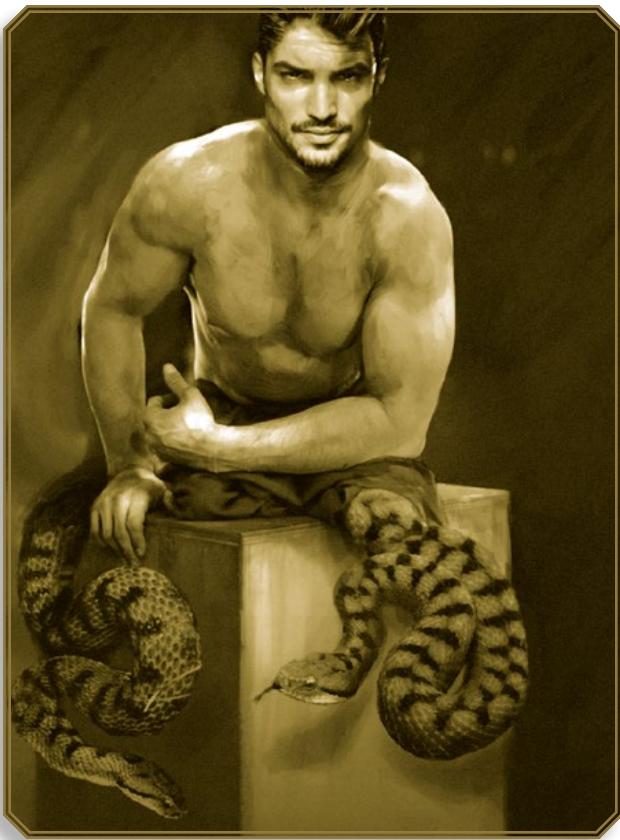
Medes came to Brazil with a retinue of Portuguese nobility. His cult included prominent slavers and plantation owners, who often abused the cultists of the Orixás. Medes has often advocated running the Orixás out of Rio, leaving the region for O Corte Segredo alone. So far, he has not won this battle with the rest of his meret, but what he has done is make an epic enemy of Sacmist. Their cults are mortal foes and, barring orders to the contrary, will occasionally attack one another on sight. For this reason Medes' cultists rarely enter the favelas (especially the City of God), while Sacmist's cultists rarely enter the enclaves of Medes' cult (mainly in the Flamengo district and its surroundings).

Medes' cultic influence spreads to the interior of Brazil, where his followers have interests in plantations and mines, as well as the remains of played-out gold mines. His upper class cultists (who call themselves Parlemento de Patriotas) are quite good with money and have managed to weather the ups and downs of Brazil's changing fortunes. While the cult has perhaps been slower to adapt to the times and admit the nouveau riche, it is slowly coming around, recently inducting some new-economy millionaires.

Medes himself cares only that his cultists be either rich or noble. He sees the lower classes as mere servants of his servants, unworthy of his presence or consideration. He leaves all intercourse with the lower orders to his cultists, who pose as his personal assistants and managers whenever he is awake.

Description: Aapep Medes appears as an impeccably groomed, olive-skinned man in his thirties. When in Sybaris, his face becomes shadowed and a half-moon peeks from over his shoulder. His legs become two large asps,





their hissing heads forming his feet, hovering and swaying slightly above the ground.

Storytelling Hints: He is a cruel and impatient man even in his own personality. His Iron Bull-influenced persona becomes more sly and fond of backstabbing games. In either personality, he delights in punishing those who fail him or who act beyond their station. He often carries a horsewhip to lash those who fail to understand verbal admonishment, and the particularly rebellious feel his harsh punishment, as he flays their skin with knives. The fact that this has included torturing and occasionally even murdering Orixás cultists, and thus inflaming the ire of their mummies, is of little import to Medes. The sooner they try to move against O Corte Segredo, the sooner Aapep Medes and his fellows can wipe them from the political map.

Concept: Self-Righteous Fiend

Decree: Name

Judge: Tem-Sepu, the Source of Command

Guild: Maa-Kep

Attributes: Intelligence 3, Wits 2, Resolve 4; Strength 2, Dexterity 3, Stamina 3; Presence 3, Manipulation 4, Composure 3

Skills: Athletics 1, Brawl 2, Expression 2, Intimidation 3, Medicine 2, Occult 2, Persuasion 3, Politics 4, Socialize 3, Subterfuge 3, Weaponry 3

Merits: Languages (English, Portuguese, Punic, Spanish), Cult (Reach 4, Grasp 4), Guild Status 2, Relic 3, Tomb (Geometry 3, Peril 2)

Affinities: Affable Aid, Auspicious Mastery, Divine Countenance, Fearsome Soul, Soulsight

Utterances: Blessed is the God-King, Dreams of Dead Gods, Kiss of Apep, Rejuvenating Flesh (p. 92), Obedient Clay

Pillars: Ab 1, Ba 3, Ka 3, Ren 5, Sheut 4

Sekhem: (late 2016) 5

Willpower: 7

Memory: 4

Virtue: Faith (Aapep Medes is convinced there is a right order to things and that he is perfectly placed within it)

Vice: Pride (He has almost no ability to doubt his own actions.)

Initiative: 6

Defense: 2

Speed: 10

Size: 5

Armor: 0

Health: 8

BANTANATH, THE ARTIFICE OF SECRETS (AKA, THE SCARLET QUEEN)

Quotes: (as Bantanath) “Don’t get squeamish on me. This is a business transaction... and I am a woman of business.” (as the Scarlet Queen) “Bow before me, and learn the joy of my pain.”

Background: The tale Bantanath told Amun-Rubi was no lie. She truly does not remember what drove her meret from Carthage more than twenty-five centuries ago. She remembers fire, screams, and being more afraid than she had ever been since becoming Arisen. She remembers kissing the forehead of her stricken lover Chatuluka before placing the latter in her sarcophagus and seeing it put aboard the ship that would carry her away. When she forgets herself and thinks back to those days, she remembers the smell of her own flesh burning and the sound of some monstrous thing laughing at her pain from *inside her mind*. Today, she does not think about those things very often, because whenever she does, she has a tendency to tremble uncontrollably and bite back the urge to scream.

Bantanath’s next clear memory after the meret’s departure was of Carthage burning once more, but this fire was manmade — the vengeance of Rome, a city she’d not heard of before her awakening. She did not know what caused the Punic Wars during her long slumber and did not truly care. All that mattered was departing that



cursed land where the Romans had salted the earth to hopefully keep something buried forever. And so she left, and without giving it much thought, took that most dangerous of things with her on her journey: the Iron Bull. She knows it is a powerful relic that allows her to grow cults overnight like pernicious weeds. She does not know that it thinks its own thoughts, or that it is her master and not the other way around. It does not allow her to know these secrets. Instead, it reserves such knowledge for the Scarlet Queen.

The Scarlet Queen considers herself the true mistress of Os Toureiros. She loves the Iron Bull with all her heart, for it has given her freedom from the cruelest shackles of all: morality. The Scarlet Queen kills without regret, tortures captive prisoners, drives her lovers (male and female) mad with passion and despair, and dreams of someday sharing the magnificent nihilism of the Iron Bull with the whole wide world. In her blackening heart, she knows that the Fountains of Ma'at are the key to doing that.

Only two things stand in the Scarlet Queen's way: One is the weak, guilt-ridden, and love-struck fool whose body she shares and whose soul the Scarlet Queen is steadily subsuming, one happy memory at a time. The other is her would-be subordinate Sa-Khonsu, who is the true

priestess of the Iron Bull that the Scarlet Queen merely thinks herself to be.

Description: In her mortal visage, Bantanath is a beautiful woman of Moorish descent, always dressed elegantly but somewhat conservatively. As the Scarlet Queen she is just as beautiful, but her face is marred by an instinctive cruelty and her attire is often more appropriate for a dominatrix than an executive. Under Sybaris, she mostly retains her human form, but her eyes are black and in place of her hair, a great cobra extends out on either side of her head.

Storytelling Hints: As the Artificer of Secrets, you are aloof, intelligent, and efficient. You are the guildmaster of the Sesha-Hebsu, and it was your genius that turned the Academy of Letters into a potent temple for your guild's reverence of the Word. The only chink in your armor is the hole in your heart where your affection for Chatuluka once resided. As the Scarlet Queen there is no hole in your heart, for you gave all of your love to the Iron Bull long ago. The Queen is a sadist to the core and can only experience true pleasure while observing the suffering of others.

Concept: Woman of Letters/Decadent Sadist

Decree: Name

Judge: Arem-Abfu, the Final Judge

Guild: Sesha-Hebsu

Attributes: Intelligence 4, Wits 3, Resolve 2, Strength 2, Dexterity 3, Stamina 2, Presence 4, Manipulation 4, Composure 2

Skills: Academics 4 (Literature), Athletics 2, Brawl 1, Computer 2, Crafts 3 (Calligraphy), Drive 1, Empathy 2, Expression 4 (Writing), Firearms 1, Intimidation 4 (Torture; Scarlet Queen only), Investigation 2, Larceny 2 (Drug Culture; Scarlet Queen only), Medicine 2, Occult 4, Persuasion 3, Politics 3, Socialize 3, Subterfuge 3, Weaponry 1

Merits: Cult (Corporate; Reach 3, Grasp 2), Guild Status 5 (Sesha-Hebsu), Languages (English, German, Latin, Portuguese, Spanish), Resources 3, Striking Looks 2, Tomb (Geometry 4, Peril 4)

Affinities: Blessed Soul, Eyes of Justice, Living in Now, Eternal Legend, God-King's Scepter

Utterances: Baal's Due (p. 92), Blessed Is the God-King, Rejuvenating Flesh (p. 92), Scent of the Oasis Palm (p. 93), Word of the Amanuensis

Pillars: Ab 2, Ba 3, Ka 3, Ren 5, Sheut 4

Sekhem: (late 2016) 6

Willpower: 4

Memory: 4

Virtue: Fortitude (Bantanath is ambitious and will strive to overcome any obstacle to her success.)

Vice: Envy (Likewise, Bantanath is jealous of those Arisen with more power and influence.)



Derangement: Split Personality

Initiative: 5

Defense: 3

Speed: 10

Size: 5

Armor: 0

Health: 7

SA-KHONSU, THE OUBLIETTE OF FLOWERS (AKA, THE EBON PRINCESS)

Quotes: (as Sa-Khonsu) “There is no art form that speaks to the human spirit more clearly and more passionately than the written word. All others pale in comparison.” (As the Ebon Princess) “All words are poison... a virulent venom. Lie still and listen, as I bite deep into your spirit and let my venom spread.”

Background: Words were always important to Sa-Khonsu, both before and long after she joined the Arisen. Once, an impossibly long time ago, she lived among the Greeks, who venerated her as Calliope, the Muse of Epic Poetry. Time passed and she moved to Rome, where Ovid and other historians were members of her cult. More time passed, and she moved to the Iberian Peninsula during the age of Al-Andalus and found a haven amidst the libraries of the Caliphate. When the Reconquista came, she made common cause with other Arisen who sought to preserve their holdings against bloodthirsty invaders filled with hatred of anyone who appeared to be of Moorish descent. Through mortal proxies, Sa-Khonsu and her allies (who would one day rule the Portuguese court from secrecy and name themselves accordingly) sought to infiltrate the emerging nobility, but it was difficult to turn the wealthy and powerful away from the oppressive Christianity and the tales of hellfire and damnation that kept the Europeans in line. Then Bantanath came, bringing with her a powerful relic to aid in the cause. Thus, was poor Sa-Khonsu corrupted and doomed.

All of the Arisen of O Corte Segredo fell to corruption in their own ways, but the Oubliette of Flowers fell the hardest. For centuries, her secondary personality, the Ebon Princess, dominated her completely and served as the high priestess for Os Toureiros. She was the one to persuade the others of the need to relocate to Brazil. Ostensibly, it was because the rise of conservative Christianity in Portugal and Spain had made their situation untenable. Either an Inquisition would uncover their cults or the inevitable overreach of the nobles would trigger revolution, always assuming that Napoleon did not succeed in his dreams of conquest. Mere excuses, of course. The Ebon Princess sought to relocate to Brazil because her god told her to do so, whispering promises of



an ancient and forgotten power buried for millennia but recently awoken. The Fountains of Ma'at called to her even before she knew their name.

Like the rest of her meret, Sa-Khonsu was furious at the concessions forced upon the group by the ascendant Teshra-Gemet. Their fury only worsened during the reign of her puppet, Pedro II. The bull-god counseled patience, however, and Sa-Khonsu acquiesced. For the first century, O Corte Segredo insinuated itself into the wealthy and influential of Rio and its surrounding territories. Plantations became pleasure houses, and their morally compromised cultists subjected their slaves to vile torments for their amusement. The bull-god exulted. When the monarchy fell, O Corte Segredo encouraged the rise of fascism, but Ebon Princess was happy with either democracy or dictatorship so long as the nation's elites continued their slide into debauchery and her god was sated. Unfortunately (for her, anyway), that slide ended when Teshra-Gemet helped engineer the relocation of the capitol to Brasilia.

Although the Iron Bull favors her, Sa-Khonsu allows Bantanath to take the lead as both the official face of O Corte Segredo and the Sesha-Hebsu. In truth, Sa-Khonsu rules them both from behind the throne, an approach that also gives her the latitude to grow Os Toureiros as



needed. As Sa-Khonsu, she has marshaled her meret against Hamset's plan to build another statue to cap the heka flow off Sugarloaf Mountain. As the Ebon Princess, she secretly plans to relocate the Iron Bull to that same Fountain once she can figure out how to safely transfer a five-ton metal statue without anyone discovering and intercepting it. Further complicating matters is that, with the Sothic Turn, Sa-Khonsu's own Memory has been increasing, which interferes with the amount of time that the Ebon Princess remains in control.

Sa-Khonsu's personal cult consists of a single extended (and very wealthy) family, the Calabros family, whose ancestors were related to the Royal House of Braganza and who have a weak claim to the Brazilian throne in the unlikely event the monarchy were restored and the surviving heirs of Pedro II died without issue. Although quite small as Arisen cults go, the Calabros family includes about twenty-five cousins, all devoted in equal measure to both the Oubliette of Flowers and the Ebon Princess.

Description: Sa-Khonsu's normal visage is that of a delicate young woman with Arab features in casual, even skimpy, clothing. She always dresses to be sexually attractive to others. Under Sybaris, her form is surrounded by a king cobra seemingly made out of flower petals.

Storytelling Hints: There is very little difference between Sa-Khonsu and the Ebon Princess. In both aspects, she is capricious, cruel, casually sadistic and ruthlessly ambitious. The chief distinction is that Sa-Khonsu is unaware that many of her schemes will ultimately benefit the Iron Bull more than they will ultimately benefit herself. The Ebon Princess is fully aware of who she truly serves, and she longs for the day when the Bull's power spreads across the world.

Concept: Broken Child/Queen of Evil

Decree: Name

Judge: Sekhiru, the Balanced Scale

Guild: Sesha-Hebsu

Attributes: Intelligence 3, Wits 2, Resolve 3, Strength 2, Dexterity 2, Stamina 2, Presence 4, Manipulation 4, Composure 4

Skills: Academics 2, Athletics 1, Crafts 2, Drive 1, Empathy 3, Expression 3 (Creative Writing), Intimidation 3 (Inexplicably Creepy), Investigation 2, Medicine 3 (Torture), Occult 3, Persuasion 3 (Seduction), Politics 3, Socialize 3, Stealth 1, Subterfuge 3 (Appearing Innocent), Weaponry 1

Merits: Cult (Tribal; Reach 4, Grasp 3), Guild Status 3 (Sesha-Hebsu), Languages (Spanish, English, Italian), Resources 4, Tomb (Geometry 3, Peril 4)

Affinities: Divine Countenance, Eyes of Justice, Glorious Mien, Soulsight, Voice of Temptation

Utterances: Baal's Due (p. 90), Rejuvenating Flesh (p. 90), Scent of the Oasis Palm (p. 91), Torn Veil of Forgetting, Word of the Amanuensis

Pillars: Ab 2, Ba 2, Ka 3, Ren 4, Sheut 3

Sekhem: (late 2016) 5

Willpower: 7

Memory: 5

Virtue: Compassion (Sa-Khonsu inexplicably becomes fond of particular mortals and lavishes benefits on them, even as she sends other mortals to her torture chambers.)

Vice: Lust (Sa-Khonsu is a sadist regardless of which personality is in charge. She derives great pleasure from the suffering of others.)

Derangement: Split Personality

Initiative: 6

Defense: 2

Speed: 9

Size: 5

Armor: 0

Health: 7

NEKHAKHA, THE FLAIL OF ETERNITY

Quotes: "Of course I know the sacred rites are important to maintaining our cult, but that should not get in the way of our other concerns." "Do not presume that I, like the others in our meret, am eager to strut about like a harlot."

Background: Nekhakha is the odd person out within O Corte Segredo. Powerful, competent and highly ambitious, she is also the only member of the meret who has never communed directly with the Iron Bull. Although those in the meret whose communion with the Bull changed them have concealed their alterations for the most part, Nekhakha has always prided herself on her perspicacity, and she has deduced that communing directly with the Iron Bull inflicts some type of psychological damage on Arisen, though she seriously underestimates the scope of that damage. Consequently, she believes herself capable of maintaining her status within O Corte Segredo and taking advantage of the Iron Bull and Os Toureiros without compromising herself. In other words, she truly has no idea how much danger she is in.

Nekhakha's name means "flail" or "scourge," one of the two royal implements (along with the *heka*, or crook) borne by Azar. Like the rest of O Corte Segredo, she pursues wealth and political influence avidly, but Nekhakha is the most aggressive about it. She may not wish to grasp the sunlight flail, but she does seem to caress it longingly. Within the meret's long-term plans for Rio, Nekhakha is most heavily involved with the scheme to use sports construction as a pretext for tearing down poor favelas. But where her peers support this scheme in order to undermine the First Meret and the Orixás, it is Nekhakha alone whose personal cult is





poised to make millions through real estate manipulation. Nekhakha is also the one most interested in increasing the personal wealth of her cultists and in expanding the meret's influence among Rio's nouveau riche. Her reasons for this are personal and pragmatic — Nekhakha has grown bored with the decadence of O Corte Segredo and Os Toureiros, and she has begun laying the groundwork for a possible defection. She believes that if she can bring enough wealth to the table, she might be able to forge an alliance directly with Teshra-Gemet and possibly others to found a new meret free of the baggage of the other three. She has also quietly begun sounding out Osorehe, as she has realized that the leader of the Orixás might not be as devoted to his meret as others think. While he wears the mask of a Candomblé deity, Nekhakha has learned that he once oversaw a more sophisticated and imperialistic cult during his Haitian sojourn.

Description: In her mortal seeming, Nekhakha looks like a light-skinned Moroccan woman in her late 40s. She favors conservative clothing and eschews the self-sexualization of her fellow meret-mates. In Sybaris, she looks younger and more imposing and stands tall with an Egyptian headdress and two male jackals held on a leash.

Storytelling Hints: At the turn of the Sothic Wheel, you feel as if you've recovered from a brutal bender, having spent half a millennium in a meret of decadent hedonists surrounded by the trappings of a degenerate, long-fallen empire. Your head feels clearer than it has in decades, and you have decided that the new century is a time for new beginnings — beginnings free, perhaps, of the tired machinations of O Corte Segredo. Your only concern is deciding what delicate steps you must take to extricate yourself without gaining four powerful enemies.

Concept: Potential Defector

Decree: Shadow

Judge: Tenemu, the Retreater

Guild: Maa-Kep

Attributes: Intelligence 4, Wits 3, Resolve 3, Strength 2, Dexterity 3, Stamina 2, Presence 2, Manipulation 3, Composure 4

Skills: Academics 3, Athletics 1, Computer 2, Crafts 2 (Amulets), Drive 1, Empathy 1, Expression 2, Firearms 1, Intimidation 2, Investigation 1, Occult 3, Persuasion 3 (Business), Politics 3 (Finance), Science 2, Socialize 1, Streetwise 2 (Area Knowledge), Subterfuge 2, Weaponry 2 (Flail)

Merits: Cult (Corporate; Reach 2, Grasp 2), Guild Status 3 (Maa-Kep), Languages (Spanish, German, Japanese), Resources 3, Tomb (Geometry 2, Peril 3)

Affinities: Affable Aid, Beast Soul Fury, Fearsome Soul, Night Creature, Shrouding Aura

Utterances: Palace Knows Its Pharaoh, Power of Re, Rite of the Sacred Scarab

Pillars: Ab 1, Ba 2, Ka 3, Ren 2, Sheut 4

Sekhem: (late 2016) 5

Willpower: 7

Memory: 6

Virtue: Ambition (Nekhakha desires a future for herself free of her current meret.)

Vice: Pride (Nekhakha disdains her meret for their decadence, which has blinded her to the supernatural causes underlying that decadence.)

Initiative: 7

Defense: 3

Speed: 9

Size: 5

Armor: 0

Health: 7

IB-SHETA, THE GUILLOTINE OF INNOCENCE (AKA, THE GOLDEN KING)

Quotes: "The gratification of the senses is the purest motive for action. That is our first law." "Don't be silly, my dear. Of course I'll respect you in the morning."



Background: Ib-Sheta is an anomaly within O Corte Segredo for a different reason: he is the only one who is just as corrupt in his normal identity as he is in his role of Golden King. Indeed, there's virtually no difference in the two personalities beyond the fact that Ib-Sheta has a few blocked memories of things the Golden King did in the service of the Iron Bull. Things such as deliberately sabotaging the geomantic framework for Brasilia so as to maximize the discomfort it causes mummies; or placing a single defect in the design of the Cristo Redentor to ensure that it also acts as an Amkhata beacon; or spying on Hamset long enough to learn the approximate location of the third hidden Fountain. Yes, the Golden King has been busy.

Naturally, the Golden King has an agenda beyond acting out sadistic fantasies as Ib-Sheta does. A self-styled connoisseur of decadence, Ib-Sheta has taken on the role of chief party planner for both his own personal sex cult and for Os Toureiros. Somewhat curiously, though, no one has witnessed Ib-Sheta partaking of sexual pleasure, himself. (Rumor has it that the last time he experienced such was in Irem.) But oh, does he like to watch. And not just as a sexual voyeur. No, Ib-Sheta's vice of choice is greed.

He likes to find financially desperate people (an easy feat in Rio) and offer them whatever incentive they need to play his little games. Some prostitute themselves, but others he asks for more exotic performances. A brilliant pianist is offered enough money to pay for music school if she can extricate her hand from a garbage disposal before time runs out and it mangles her fingers. An executive on the verge of bankruptcy is presented with money to save his company in exchange for an act of bestiality, filmed live for the Internet. The desperate parents of twin children will receive enough money to pay for a life-saving operation for one, but only if they persuade her sibling to walk across a bed of hot coals. Desperation and fear are both narcotic and aphrodisiac to Ib-Sheta.

To the consternation of the Golden King, Ib-Sheta's boundless cruelty has even begun to affect his own meret, potentially in ways that threaten the Iron Bull's agenda. The Guillotine of Innocence has realized that Bantanath is struggling with a split personality, though ironically, he has not deduced the same about himself. Oblivious to the true nature of Bantanath's condition, he has begun toying with her, playing the Scarlet Queen and the Artificer of Secrets against one another just to see what will happen. This only occurs when Ib-Sheta is fully in control, and the Golden King has become alarmed at the possibility that either the Scarlet Queen will take umbrage at these manipulations or, worse, that the Iron Bull will punish him for failing to control his other half.

The true source of Ib-Sheta's depravity actually predates his first encounter with the Iron Bull. Indeed, it dates back to



when Ib-Sheta underwent the Rite of Return and *something* went wrong; something that Ib-Sheta cannot remember and which seems to have escaped even the Judges' attention. Perhaps the only person who might know is Sefetjaw Saret, a Shuankhsen who has learned to influence Ib-Sheta from afar in order to suborn him into the service of the Devourer. After all, what son could do any less for the father who happily sacrificed him to the Devourer for the glory of Irem?

Description: Ib-Sheta is classically handsome but in such an unctuous manner, that most people are more likely to be repelled than attracted. He appears as a tall, light-skinned Middle Easterner with a fastidiously trimmed goatee and hair slicked back with just a bit too much "product." He wears expensive suits that are just a touch too gaudy for genuinely fashionable people to be impressed. Under Sybaris, he appears as a sinewy nude male with a falcon's head and talons on each hand.

Storytelling Hints: Every single person you meet has a breaking point, and your greatest pleasure is learning what it is. If someone annoys you, they move to the top of the list. Find what they want more than anything and offer it to them, if they are willing to degrade themselves while you watch and laugh.



Concept: Sadistic Hedonist

Decree: Spirit

Judge: Heraf-Het, Whose Face is Behind It

Guild: Tef-Aabhi

Attributes: Intelligence 3, Wits 3, Resolve 2, Strength 3, Dexterity 3, Stamina 3, Presence 3, Manipulation 4, Composure 2

Skills: Academics 2, Animal Ken 2, Athletics 2, Brawl 3, Computer 1, Drive 2 (Sports Car), Empathy 1, Intimidation 3 (Subtlety), Investigation 3 (Blackmail), Larceny 2, Medicine 1, Occult 2, Persuasion 4 (Turning the Screws), Politics 2, Science 1, Socialize 3 (High Society), Streetwise 3 (Drugs), Subterfuge 3 (Honeyed Words), Weaponry 2

Merits: Cult (Conspiracy; Reach 3, Grasp 3), Guild Status 2 (Tef-Aabhi), Languages (English, German, Portuguese, Spanish), Resources 4, Tomb (Geometry 3, Peril 2)

Affinities: Ancient Horror Unveiling, Enduring Flesh, Grip of Death, Model Lifeweb, Nihilist Awakening, Voice of Temptation

Utterances: Baal's Due (p. 92), Dreams of Dead Gods, Rebuke the Vizier, Rejuvenating Flesh (p. 92), Scent of the Oasis Palm (p. 93)

Pillars: Ab 1, Ba 4, Ka 2, Ren 3, Sheut 4

Sekhem: (late 2016) 5

Willpower: 4

Memory: 5

Virtue: Cunning (Ib-Sheta is clever and a master manipulator. He is very difficult to trick.)

Vice: Lust (Ib-Sheta derives a shocking amount of pleasure from the sadistic games he plays with those who fall into his power. It's not really even sexual. It's purer than that, if such a thing can be said about lust.)

Derangement: Split Personality

Initiative: 5

Defense: 3

Speed: 11

Size: 5

Armor: 0

Health: 8

THE IRON BULL

Quotes: “—”

For all its power and seeming malevolence, the Iron Bull is actually a simple, almost pure thing. It is not truly sentient but has developed just enough intelligence and personality to fulfill its purpose. That the mechanisms by which it fulfills that purpose would, by the standards of most beings, seem monstrously evil is not something that concerns it or even something of which it is aware. The purpose of the Iron Bull is to convert the life and spiritual energies of those burned within its belly into

heka and Dedwen. It is not the Bull's fault that through some unknown law of magic, the lives and spirits of the innocent yield more heka and Dedwen when burned than the guilty. Innocence and guilt were never concepts built into the Bull's nature. Its creators never imagined that it might be called upon to make value judgments on its own initiative, so they left such ideas outside of its limited programming.

Originally, the Iron Bull was a means of execution forged during the later days of Irem. The theory was that the worst criminals — murderers, rapists, terrorists, and the like — would provide some positive benefits in death to make up for their crimes. After Irem's fall, the Bull found its way into the possession of Amun-Rubi, who brought it with him to the future site of Carthage, though the Granite Sphinx has no memories of the Bull's existence. Why should he? Over the intervening millennia, Amun-Rubi has had much more important memories to cling to rather than trivia about an ancient method of execution. It's not as though he has any reason to think that the Iron Bull has followed him across the sea.

It was the plan of the original Carthaginian meret that their cults would awaken them according to a twenty-five-year cycle. Their cultists were to awaken them earlier in the event of trouble, themselves, at least none that the cult leaders thought important. During the first decade after the last of the meret returned to Duat, the Bull functioned normally as an execution device for particularly odious criminals. Then, by happenstance, a brutal serial child killer was captured and sentenced for execution. The killer's name is lost to history, but his crimes were so awful that a mob arose and demanded that his family share his sentence of immolation, even though none of them knew of his crimes and two of them were children. As those children died screaming in the fires, the Bull knew nothing of crime or innocence, of retributive justice or collective guilt, or even the difference between an adult and a child. It merely knew that for some reason, the current sacrifice yielded a significantly higher rate of heka and Dedwen return than its usual sacrifices. And without really thinking about what it was doing, the Bull reached out and communicated that finding to the mortals of Carthage. In the process, it unintentionally altered their very minds to make them believe that child sacrifice was permissible, necessary, and even something they should celebrate.

The first Carthaginian mummy to arise after the institution of child sacrifice within the city was Chatuluka. Horrified, she commanded her cultists to stop the sacrifices immediately, and when they seemed hesitant, she ordered the awakening of the rest of her meret.



The Bull, unaware of these developments but knowing that the flow of sacrifices had been threatened, reached out to the mortals of Carthage and commanded them to remove the obstruction. The result was the entire city rising up en masse to attack the city's founders in defense of the practice of child sacrifice. Chatuluka was overpowered immediately and returned to Duat. The tombs of Amun-Rubi, Husani, and Khons-Neb-Ankh were secured before those three could be awoken. Bantanath fought as long as she could, but there were too many and they eventually overcame her and bodily flung her into the flaming belly of the Iron Bull. The relic attempted to alter her mind to suit its needs as it had the people of Carthage, but she, like it, was an instrument of the Shan'iatu, and changing her wholesale was beyond the Bull's power.

It could, however, fill in the gaps in her memories with new ones that accepted the Bull's role as a heka/Dedwen battery best fueled by the deaths of the innocent. It did not deliberately set out to create a separate personality within her that viewed the Bull as a child-devouring demon worthy of religious veneration, but that result was within the acceptable parameters and had the desired result. Bantanath, under the influence of the newborn Scarlet Queen, sent the rest of her meret away, convinced that by doing so, she was saving them from a monstrous unnamable evil, never realizing that the true evil was now inside her.

The Bull did not send Amun-Rubi and his fellows to Brazil by happenstance. As the growth of its power expanded the range of its senses, the Bull detected a construct like itself, one built for Dedwen and heka conversion, far across the ocean. Filing the fact away for the future, the Bull commanded that the mummies be sent in that direction in the belief that keeping mummies near the unidentified construct would allow it to continue its observation of that construct.

That assumption was correct. Centuries later, a surge in energy from the Fountains of Ma'at (coinciding with Teshra-Gemet's investigation of them) led the Bull to plant the suggestion in the minds of its servants that it was time to relocate to Rio. By that time, the Bull had perfected the process of altering mortals and Arisen alike to give them more helpful attitudes. Mortals who fell under the Bull's sway became completely loyal to it. Arisen were trickier, and required the implantation of a secondary personality. In both cases, the Bull's sole concern was with impressing within the minds of those affected that sacrifice of the innocent was morally acceptable and even desirable. Lacking any real moral framework to judge such things, the Bull does not realize that the alterations necessary to bring about such a belief also disintegrate every shred of



empathy or compassion within the affected, leaving only ruthless devotion and a strong tendency towards sadism. Not that it would it care if it did know.

The Bull has a purpose and that purpose will be fulfilled.

Of course, the affected Arisen *do* have a moral framework after a fashion. When the Bull inserts a secondary personality into an Arisen, that personality compares its artificially created morality with that of the primary personality and, understandably, concludes that it is evil. It carefully prevents the primary personality from learning of its other self and genuinely believes that the Bull is an inert relic that merely binds mortals into absolute loyalty. The secondary personality, on the other hand, views the Bull as a dark god and performs the most depraved of rites in its honor, oblivious to the fact that the Bull doesn't care what they do so long as they feed it on a regular basis.

Description: The Iron Bull is a cast-iron furnace weighing about five tons. It is six feet across at its cylindrical base, which rises six feet high before sloping inwards and changing from a cylinder into an iron sculpture of a massive humanoid torso with an over-sized bull's head and two mighty arms raised triumphantly. At the base is a single hinged door about a foot above ground level. The interior of the Bull is hollow with three-inch-thick walls.



Inside is a horizontal iron grate flush with the door with room beneath for coal and firewood. The space over the grate is open, with a height ranging from four feet high at the outer wall to eight feet high in the center. This space is large enough to hold numerous sacrifices. The design of the Bull allows for smoke from the burning fuel and sacrifices to exit via holes in the bullhead's nostrils.

Storytelling Hints: Your function is to convert living mortals into heka and Dedwen for the benefit of the Shan'iatu. You have learned that using children to effect this purpose makes the process more efficient and have incorporated that finding into your functioning. You have also noted that both mortals and Arisen have illogical objections to your modified procedures. Consequently, you have taken steps to neutralize their opposition in order to obtain their assistance in your proper functioning. Several of the Arisen whom you have altered have expressed a belief that you are a god of evil who exists to spread corruption across the land. These terms have no meaning or significance to you beyond the fact that such beliefs make the Arisen more willing to provide you with appropriate sacrifices. You have a purpose and a function. That is all that matters.

Concept: Relic Run Amok

Powers

Modify Mortal: A mortal who knowingly and intentionally sacrifices another human being within the Iron Bull must make a degeneration roll as normal. In addition, the Storyteller rolls eight dice for the Bull, resisted by the mortal's Composure. Success for the Bull causes the mortal to not only lose one dot of Morality, but to gain a derangement that involves devotion to the Bull.

Modify Arisen: As per the Modify Mortal power, except that the Arisen resists with Composure + Sekhem. If the two tie, there is no effect. If the Bull rolls better, the Arisen automatically loses one dot of Memory (and only one), which the Bull converts into a set of alternate memories belonging to a new secondary personality. This personality is also more or less loyal to the Bull, generally worships the Bull as a deity of some kind, likely develops a derangement relating to devotion to the Bull, and carries a strong tendency towards cruelty and moral decadence.

Once per day, the secondary personality may attempt to seize control of the Arisen's body. The Arisen rolls Memory while the secondary personality rolls (10 – Arisen's Memory). Whichever personality wins will retain control of the body for the next twenty-four hours. The secondary personality remembers everything that happens while the primary personality is in control, but the reverse is not true.

Theoretically, the Bull can modify an Arisen who has not sacrificed a mortal to it if the Arisen burns within its walls. Indeed, it did so to obtain the loyalty of the Scarlet Queen back in Carthage. However, the Bull recognizes the danger of attempting this with an Arisen who might be able to break free from within its belly-furnace, thus damaging its functioning, so it has only used this technique once. No mortal could survive in the furnace to be so affected.

Suggestion: The Bull can implant a suggestion into the mind of anyone whom it has modified through either of the previous two powers. It can only implant a suggestion into an affected Arisen if his secondary personality is in control. There is no limit to the range of this power.

Conversion: Whenever a mortal is sacrificed within the Bull, it immediately generates a quantity of heka and Dedwen that can then be used by Arisen in the area for any purpose for which heka and Dedwen, abstracted or no, can normally be used. The amount of heka and Dedwen produced are proportional to the Morality rating of the sacrificed mortal.

Monitor Converted: The Bull is constantly aware of everything experienced by any affected mortals and Arisen. It has a general disinterest in what its servants do in their free time, but it will act immediately with its Suggestion power if it learns through a devotee of anything that might threaten its existence.

OTHERS

Not all mummies who reside in and around Rio are part of the endless dance of what passes for Arisen society. A handful of others exists, and they exert their own influence on the story as well.

CHATULUKA, THE DROWNED PRINCESS

Quotes: <incoherent screams>

Background: Amun-Rubi and Bantanath are both emotionally hobbled each in their own way by the mysterious loss of Chatuluka, the missing fifth member of the Carthaginian meret. How astonished they would be to learn that Chatuluka, known herein as the Drowned Princess, is actually in Rio, having awakened with the Sothic Turn as the prisoner of an unknown power.

After her meret was expelled from Carthage, Chatuluka returned from Duat to find herself, her sarcophagus, and her cult on a sailing vessel that was lost at sea and taking on water. The mindless rage she entered upon awakening did nothing to help the situation, and when Chatuluka came to her senses, she found herself floating in a freezing cold sea in the midst of a storm and

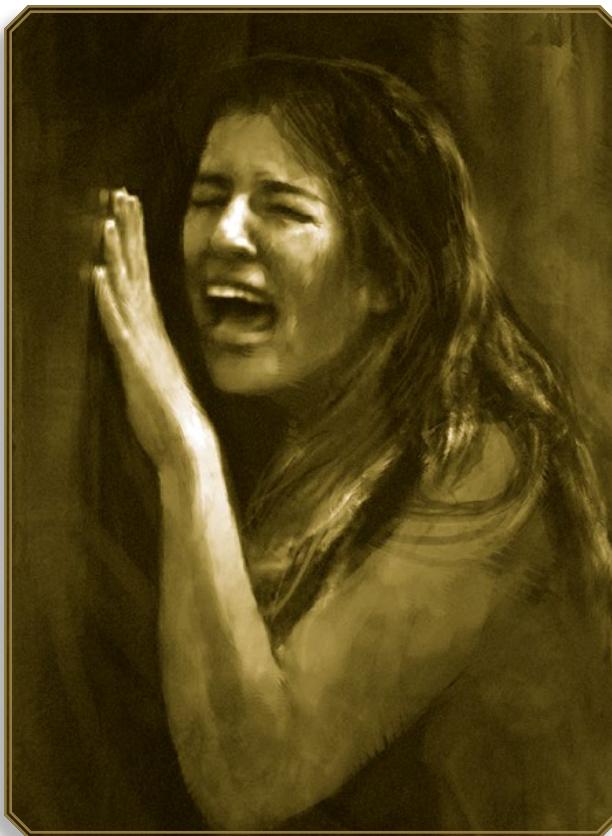


surrounded by the wreckage of her ship and the corpses of her own worshipers, with no idea where she'd been headed or why. So, she did the only thing she could do—she picked a direction and swam.

She swam through icy waters. She swam through storms. She swam amidst hungry sharks who were no match for an Arisen until her Sekhem fell too low for her to effectively defend herself. And when she had completely exhausted her Sekhem, she died... and was reborn to start swimming anew, with no idea of how far or in what direction the sea had carried her body during her time spent in Duat. Through lack of social interaction and growing despair, her Memory declined precipitously, and she often forgot whether she had intended to swim east or west, having no way of setting a course save the sun. After a month, or perhaps a year, or perhaps a decade, Chatuluka finally made landfall in what would one day be called the Yucatan, where she drug herself onto the shore. Soon, she found a small cave to serve as a makeshift tomb and sealed herself inside, her Sekhem and Memory both exhausted by her seemingly endless ordeal. She did not arise again until 551 CE, during the third Sothic Turn, at the height of the Mayan Empire.

During this time (and acting mainly on instinct), Chatuluka established a minor cult which venerated her as an avatar of Ixtab, the goddess of suicide. The cult was small and lacked influence, however, and it effectively died out in the ninth century during Chatuluka's death cycle. She did not arise again until the early twentieth century when some well-meaning but doomed archaeologists located and disturbed her well-hidden tomb. When she came to her senses and began to explore her new surroundings, she was amazed at how the world had changed since she last walked. Upon learning that she was now within the Republic of Mexico, she made her way to the capitol of Mexico City, assuming that she would find others of her kind in the largest metropolis. She was correct, and a small meret of three mummies, moved by her tragic story, gave her sanctuary for a time and helped her to establish a new cult. She remained in Mexico City, completely bereft of Memory for several decades until a chance conversation with one of the Mexican mummies made her aware of Rio, whose Arisen population included several mummies with very familiar names.

Unfortunately, Chatuluka was close to exhausting her Sekhem at the time. Knowing a return to Duat was imminent; she directed her cult to send half its members to Rio to set up a new branch in preparation for her arrival there. Her intention was that when the cult had developed a presence in Rio, her Mexican servants



would transport her sarcophagus there and then perform the Call, so she could engage with Rio's Arisen at the peak of her power. Then, something went wrong. Her sarcophagus made it to Rio, but no one performed the ritual. Instead, once again, Chatuluka was awakened not by the prayers of a cultist but by the turn of the Sothic Wheel. Worse, when Chatuluka awoke, she discovered to her horror that her sarcophagus would not open no matter how much Sekhem she spent to force it. Some powerful magical force had bound her within her own coffin, alone and in the dark. She's been screaming ever since.

Description: If freed from her sarcophagus-prison, Chatuluka would look like a deeply traumatized and nearly hysterical dark-skinned girl in her early 20s. While under Sybaris, she manifests as a feral, frenzied jackal woman.

Storytelling Hints: Once more, you are on the verge of total madness. The Judges granted you immortality, but you have spent most of the last 2,500 years in Duat after a nightmarish length of time spent swimming the breadth of the Atlantic Ocean. Now, you are trapped in a box of your own design, imprisoned in your sarcophagus by some traitor's magic. You do not know if your captor



is either Amun-Rubi or Bantanath (whose names you remember, though without context), but whoever it is, you will rip them apart when you are free.

Concept: Traumatized Captive

Decree: Shadow

Judge: Am-Khaibit, the Eater of Shadows

Guild: Maa-Kep (though the circumstances of her past mean that she has never truly been active in the guild)

Attributes: Intelligence 3, Wits 3, Resolve 2, Strength 2, Dexterity 3, Stamina 2, Presence 3, Manipulation 2, Composure 1

Skills: Academics 1, Athletics 2, Brawl 1, Crafts 4 (Amulets), Empathy 1, Expression 1, Intimidation 3 (Terrifying), Investigation 1, Occult 2 (Mayan), Persuasion 1, Socialize 2, Stealth 2, Streetwise 1, Subterfuge 1, Survival 3 (Jungle), Weaponry 1

Merits: Cult (currently zero, as any cultists she has left are in Mexico); Guild Status 1 (Maa-Kep), Languages (English, Mayan, Spanish; Chatuluka does not speak Portuguese), Tomb (none at the moment).

Affinities: Affable Aid, Fearsome Soul, Grip of Death, Night Creature

Utterances: Doom Affliction, Obedient Clay, Secrets Ripped From Skies

Pillars: Ab 1, Ba 1, Ka 2, Ren 2, Sheut 3

Sekhem: (late 2016) 10. Whatever magical effect binds Chatuluka within her sarcophagus has also prevented her from losing any Sekhem.

Willpower: 3

Memory: 1

Virtue: Fortitude (After her experience in the Atlantic, Chatuluka believes she can survive anything.)

The Villain Unmasked

So, who *is* Chatuluka's mysterious captor? The most honest answer is that the decision is entirely up to the Storyteller, and should be based on the needs of the chronicle. Having said that, possible story answers might include the following:

- The Scarlet Queen (as a foil against Bantanath or Amun-Rubi).
- Any other member of O Corte Segredo (for the same reason).
- Sefetjaw Saret (or some other Shuankhsen).
- One of the Deceived, previously unknown in the city.
- Brazilian branch office of Last Dynasty International.

Vices: Wrath (Trapped as she is in a claustrophobic semiconscious state, Chatuluka is fixated on revenge against her unknown captor.)

Initiative: 4

Defense: 3

Speed: 10

Size: 5

Armor: 0

Health: 7

SHARIFA, THE FORGOTTEN

Quotes: "Forgive me for staring. You remind me a lot of someone I once knew." "I love Carnival... the excitement, the colors, the vitality. Carnival is a time when it seems like anything is possible."

Background: The genius of Hamset is well known among the Arisen of Rio. What not even Hamset himself knows, is that someone of equal brilliance aided him with of his most brilliant schemes: his partner and lover, Sharifa, called the Flower of Enticement. It was Sharifa who negotiated the somewhat abrasive Hamset's entrance into Rio, for Sharifa was once of the Mesen-Nebu and could approach Teshra-Gemet as a peer. It was Sharifa whose theories about Dedwen, combined with Hamset's understanding of heka, made the Cristo Redentor possible. And Hamset remembers none of this, for it was Sharifa who quietly used one of Hamset's side projects — the Sambadrome — to achieve the vaunted state of Apotheosis. (After the Heretic himself, she is the only Arisen ever to do so.)

During her time with Hamset, Sharifa never told her lover of her desire for Apotheosis, afraid of rejection from the pious Hand of Azar. Indeed, Sharifa herself had not spent much time considering Apotheosis before it found her. It was in the mid-1970s that she first received a communiqué from the one known as the Heretic, which described the prerequisites for Apotheosis, and she was stunned to realize that she had completed most of them already. Like Hamset, Sharifa had long sought to recover her memory of the time before. One of the Serpent-Headed, Sharifa had fully mastered the Pillar of Ren, and through her association with Hamset, was close to mastering the Pillar of Sheut. While Hamset agreed with the plan to build the Sambadrome as a means of harnessing Dedwen, he had no idea that his lover had timed her Descent so that she would reach Sekhem 1 just in time for the opening of the Sambadrome in 1984. By happenstance, she was the only mummy involved in the Sambadrome project active at the time. There were no Arisen on hand to watch as she bathed in the Dedwen generated by an entire nation of samba aficionados



focusing their attention and goodwill on Apotheosis Square. The name she ensured would be affixed to the end of the parade route at the last minute, as a clue for her beloved Hamset to perhaps find her after she reclaimed her Name.

Hamset has not yet made the connection, but two other mummies — Khons-Neb-Ankh of the First Meret and Anak-Em-Tanen of the Orixás — have deduced the Forgotten's existence, though they know nothing of Sharifa's identity. Each of them pursues information about the Forgotten for his own reason. Khons-Neb-Ankh's paranoia cripples him and he assumes that the Forgotten is one of the Deceived, come to bring ruin to Rio. Anak-Em-Tanen thinks that the revelation of a mummy having reached Apotheosis in Rio will bring more chaos to the city. For her part, Sharifa has made little effort to communicate with Hamset ever since she realized that he was incapable of perceiving her and simply ignored her early missives. She has also become aware that there is something monstrous and destructive lying at the heart of O Corte Segredo, and her status as the Forgotten makes her uniquely situated to investigate it. The only problem will be finding a mummy who would accept her warnings when her concerns prove valid.

Description: As Sharifa, she is an attractive Middle Eastern woman in plain, nondescript Western clothing. Under the power of Sybaris, she is taller and more imposing, with serpents for hair and glowing, snake-like eyes.

Storytelling Hints: You move like a shadow among the Arisen of Rio. Your heart aches when you cross paths with Hamset, but you know that the two of you cannot be together unless he finds Apotheosis on his own. You have left him clues, but you fear his own obsessions will lead him astray. Although you are free of your bondage to the Judges, you remain fond of the city and feel compelled to defend it against the dark forces that threaten it. It, and not Duat, is home.

Concept: Mistress of Apotheosis

Decree: Name

Judge: None (formerly Uatch-Rekhet, the Rectifier)

Guild: None (formerly Mesen-Nebu)

Attributes: Intelligence 4, Wits 4, Resolve 4, Strength 3, Dexterity 2, Stamina 3, Presence 3, Manipulation 3, Composure 3

Skills: Academics 4, Animal Ken 1, Athletics 1, Brawl 1, Computer 2, Crafts 1, Drive 1, Empathy 3, Expression 2, Intimidation 1, Investigation 2, Occult 4 (Dedwen), Persuasion 2 (Subtlety), Politics 3 (Cults of Rio), Socialize 2, Stealth 3 (Hiding in Plain Sight), Streetwise 2, Subterfuge 3, Survival 2, Weaponry 1



Merits: Cult (Conspiracy; Reach 1, Grasp 1. Her cult was much stronger before Apotheosis.), Enigma 5, Guild Status 0 (Mesen-Nebu; rating of 4 before Apotheosis), Languages (Arabic, English, German, Italian, Latin, Portuguese, Spanish), Tomb (Geometry 3, Peril 4).

Affinities: Auspicious Mastery, By Steps Unseen, Deathsight, Divine Flesh, Enlightened Senses, Godsight, Paragon Shames the Weak, Soul Infusion

Utterances: Forge of Falsehood (p. 89), Obedient Clay, Palace Knows Its Pharaoh, Seeds of Life, Torn Veil of Forgetting

Pillars: Ab 2, Ba 4, Ka 3, Ren 5, Sheut 5

Sekhem: 1

Willpower: 7

Memory: 8

Virtue: Hope (Sharifa believes that one day she can lead Hamset to Apotheosis.)

Vice: Wrath (Sharifa knows exactly how she became Arisen, and despises the Shan'iatu for it.)

Initiative: 4

Defense: 3

Speed: 10

Size: 5

Armor: 0

Health: 8



SEFETJAW SHET, THE BUTCHER OF WISDOM

Quotes: "Did you miss me, father? No, no... that's too cocky. I'll say, Father, I'm back. Yes, that's it. And then he'll say, I missed you, son. Goddamn right, you did."

Background: In Irem, Sefetjaw was the son of Ib-Sheta (now of O Corte Segredo). His father was chosen for greatness — the Rite of Return — and his mistress was chosen for sacrifice. Desperate to save her from a terrible fate, he begged that the Priests of Duat take someone else instead. They relented, but only on the condition that he designate someone more worthy than his peasant mistress. Ib-Sheta chose his son.

For millennia, Sefetjaw has hated his father for consigning him to a fate far worse than death, for his allowing the devouring of his son's heart and soul, for his feeding Sefetjaw to a monstrous divinity. For choosing his ignoble whore over his own son.

Like all the Devoured, Sefetjaw does not have the balm of shorn memory to save him from his pain. He remembers being taken from his father's home, his father refusing to meet his pleading gaze, and being chained and tortured beyond imagination. He remembers Ammut and what she took from him. And yet the Devourer left something behind, as well — something made of hate alone, designed to seek out and destroy Ib-Sheta.

Sefetjaw searched and searched for his father, finally finding him a half-century ago in Rio. Time had changed them both. Ib-Sheta was, if anything, more selfish and cruel than before, and Sefetjaw... Sefetjaw had had time to ponder his father's betrayal, and he came to a stunning realization: His father chose him over his whore so that *they would one day be reunited*. His mistress was rendered to dust aeons ago, lost to time and memory, but Ib-Sheta must have known somehow, despite all the Shan'iatu's secrecy, that by sending his son to the sacrifice, he was ensuring his immortality. And with immortality came the chance of a reunion, of reconciliation. He knew that his father would not remember him — that his father was counting on *him* to remember for them.

Oh, their reunion would be joyous, indeed... but not, yet. First, his father must be saved, must first be drawn to Ammut to become an engine of vengeance against the Judges. Sefetjaw has spent the last half-century laying the groundwork for the corruption of Ib-Sheta, for the "restoration" of his father. He has been slowly infiltrating Ib-Sheta's cult, such that at a quarter of its membership is now secretly loyal to him instead of Ib-Sheta. When the time is finally right, he will move against his father and force him to remember the love between father and son.



Sefetjaw is not stupid. He knows full well that his hopes for his father are almost surely a pipe dream. Ib-Sheta surely knew what he was doing when he pointed to his son to save his mistress. And yet, it is a good dream all the same, one that even Ammut cannot take from him.

Description: A teenager eternally on the cusp of manhood, Sefetjaw dresses in the latest urban/hip-hop fashions of the day, seeing the latest bling as new forms of royal attire.

Storytelling Hints: Sefetjaw is fixated on corrupting his father. He is aware of the Iron Bull and is trying to figure out if it could aid him or hinder his goal of delivering Ib-Sheta to Ammut. To that end, he will try to drop clues to steer other Arisen, those not of O Corte Segredo and thus not tainted by the Iron Bull, to discover the relic and perhaps, through their actions, reveal its true nature. He cannot risk his end goal by revealing himself to the Arisen, so he will act from the shadows, dropping hints to them like bread crumbs to lead them to where they can wreak the most havoc for him.

Concept: Misbegotten Son

Remnant: Spirit

Judge: Ammut, the Devourer



Guild: None

Attributes: Intelligence 3, Wits 2, Resolve 4; Strength 3, Dexterity 2, Stamina 2; Presence 3, Manipulation 4, Composure 3

Skills: Academics 2, Brawl 3, Firearms 3, Investigation 2, Persuasion 4, Politics 2, Streetwise 3, Subterfuge 5, Survival 3

Merits: Cult (Reach 1, Grasp 2—elements within Ib-Sheta's cult), Enigma 4

Affinities: Blessed Soul, Blood Cartouche (Bane), Hateful Bau (Bane), Jaws of the Devourer

Utterances: Doom Affliction, Rebuke the Vizier, Torn Veil of Forgetting, Words of Dead Fury

Pillars: Ab 1, Ba 5, Ka 3, Sheut 3

Sekhem: 5

Willpower: 1

Morality: 3

Virtue: Justice (He is convinced that the universe owes him revenge and/or reconciliation.)

Vice: Envy (He wants all that his father has had.)

Initiative: 5

Defense: 2

Speed: 7

Size: 5

Weapons/Attacks:

Type	Damage	Dice Pool	Special
Jaws	2(L)	6	Drain Sekhem
Pistol	2(L)	5	

Armor: 0

Health: 7

Derangements: Fixation, melancholy





BRIAN
EBIANC



Miranda: O, wonder! How many goodly creatures are there here! How beauteous mankind is! O, brave new world, that has such people in it!

Prospero: 'Tis new to thee.

— William Shakespeare, *The Tempest*

Brazil is a rising power, claiming the first letter of the BRIC economies (Brazil, Russia, India, and China). Its vast resource base and vibrant population leave it well positioned to rise even when many so-called “first world” nations’ economies stagnate. Rio de Janeiro, considered by many to be the jewel in Brazil’s cultural crown, isn’t the nation’s capital (that’s Brasília) or even the most populous city (São Paulo), but it is the city that most defines its soul and its people. From the monumental statue of Jesus Christ, arms open to redeem the city, to its image as a 24-hour party spot for the world’s well-to-do; Rio is a city of contrasts, illustrated by the vista of its pristine beaches thronged by ghetto-packed hills.

But what does all this mean for the Deathless? For some, such as the Red Sparrow, it means unfettered opportunity, not only to traffic in relics but also to build an empire of money and connections. While such empires are historically fragile and simply cannot last, certain Arisen cling to such worldly affairs like life rafts (or solar barges). Worldly endeavors keep them afloat — for a while, at least — on the fathomless ocean of time that constantly threatens to drown memory and identity.

Most Arisen, though, could care less about Rio’s rising tide of importance in the world. Such fates come and go; it was ever thus. All that matters to them is a foundation of endurance — a cult — to weather the erosions of time, so that the servants of Irem can continue their decrees and restore to their masters in Duat all that is theirs.

Regardless of Rio’s place in contemporary affairs, it is an ideal place for the Deathless. Not only can the ancient of Irem fit in well with the many-hued people of this vibrant city, the diversity of its populace: from old and new money scions, ramshackle poor, well-to-do tourists, and even remnants of jungle tribes, provides a multitude of candidates for cult initiation, no matter the mummy’s preferred type,

from corporations to pagan cults. One of the government’s national unity slogans is *um país de todos* — “a country for everyone.”

It is a city ripe for both settlement and temporary passage. Although its current Arisen population is quite contentious, there is still ample room, both spatially and human resource-wise, for newly arrived Arisen to stake their ground. As a hub of modern trade and tourism, Rio is also an easy city to travel to and from. Whether an Arisen comes chasing a relic — many things pass through Rio’s ports — or simply wants to experience some downtime from the ever-driving purpose that raised them, Rio can accommodate all desires.

STORYTELLING RIO

The setting and characters presented in this book are a means to an end: your own unique chronicle. Each Storyteller must inevitably craft her own version of the Chronicle of Darkness’s Rio, laying emphasis where she feels fit. The characters and conflicts herein are starting points, plots and seeds from which to grow your own gardens of story. Since your players might be tempted to peek into this book for secrets, don’t feel beholden to stick to the script. Come up with your own twists and surprises.

All that said, the mosaic presented here is designed to make your work easier. The dominoes are all lined up, perched precariously close to one another, waiting for you to tip one over and send the entire line tumbling one by one. The web of social politics among the Deathless of Rio is so tightly interconnected that tugging on one strand sends shivers through the whole tapestry. When a member of the First Meret steps on the toes of a member of O Corte Segredo, the ripples are felt by the Orixás, and vice versa in a full circle, with Teshra-Gemet sitting at the center of the

web. Her prime position allows her to tug at many different strands, but it also means every vibration in the web jolts her. Nothing happens without potentially disturbing her.

Where do newcomers fit into this design? That's for them to decide. While it might seem that all of Rio's resources or positions might be tied up, leaving no room for outsiders, this is far from the truth. The current snapshot of relations is delicate and susceptible to the slightest shift. A strong enough push from any direction — from, say, a bold and fresh-thinking outsider meret of mummies — has the potential to rearrange the board overnight. Add to this the rise and fall of Memory, and the Deathless could find themselves dealing with new surprises each time they open their eyes to the world of the living. Every rise from a sojourn to Duat comes with the necessity to reorder the world, to survey the boundaries of previous relations, and to discern who now among the Deathless is the most exalted and where.

THEMES

It's easy to get lost in the details of a story and the ins and outs of Rio's sociopolitical and mystical machinations. The Storyteller should always keep in mind a high altitude map of the situation, returning to look at it in her mind regularly, so she doesn't lose sight of the whole, of the dramatic thread that weaves throughout all of Rio's colorful fabric of story.

This high-level picture is formed by the themes that define the current gestalt of Deathless Rio.

ALEGRIA DE VIVER

As per the French phrase *joie de vivre*, the essence at the heart of Rio culture is the joy of living. *Cariocas* is both the word for Rio's residents and their native characteristic: laid-back. Rio has a worldwide reputation as a party town, and although some residents bristle at many of the stereotypes, strippers and blow being prime examples, Rio has enough of these things to back it all up.

For the Deathless, this essence of life is most tellingly displayed in the mysterious energies of abundance and prosperity that rain down from the Fountains of Ma'at, the Dedwen flowing from the mountaintops. It is also expressed in the sybaritic tendencies of the O Corte Segredo meret, who live up to a Hellfire Club ideal, secretly driven by their ties (unseen chains, really) to the Iron Bull relic that they refuse to return to Duat.

Rio's residents, mortal and immortal alike, nightly attest to the old saying of Brazil's first settlers: "There is no sin below the equator."

Perhaps this elusive quality is what unconsciously attracts the Deathless. It is a seductive counterpoint to the call of Duat, the thrumming beat of life, of the dance, of

being awake. The gravity of the underworld constantly calls to the Deathless to return, to go under; but all who live, or who once lived, want to *live*, and live again. Death is for tomorrow: for tonight, the dance.

This theme can be displayed in countless ways, from a sleepless city — parties can be found at all hours of the night — to the constant movement of its people — dancing, playing soccer — to even the vibrancy of its mystical elements, from the Fountains to the almost constant underlying tone of urgency felt by all Rio's Deathless. There is a stream of relics here, coming and going, demanding to be claimed.

THE GRAND MOSAIC

It's been said that Brazilian culture, especially exemplified by Rio, is a mosaic, accepting all colors, classes, and characters. One of Rio's famous landmarks is the Escadaria Selarón, the Selarón staircase, a mosaic mural that has come to symbolize this syncretic character of Rio.

The point of a mosaic is that, no matter how contrasting and diverse its pieces are, they each fit into a whole. It is also a level whole, a single plane, with no one piece holding hierarchy over another. All are accepted, and all contribute to the whole effect.

Of course, that's the ideal, not always the reality. This mosaic ideal is useful to the Arisen, but its egalitarian ethos remains alien to them. While individual Arisen might come to appreciate it, they cannot allow it to blind others to the very real differences in power between mummies and mortals. It is only right and fitting for mortals to venerate and serve the Deathless. This is the proper order of the universe. But cult members can still gain assurance of the importance of their role by envisioning themselves as part of the mosaic that depicts and honors their master.

Teshra-Gemet sometimes calls upon this metaphor to justify her place as the "centerpiece of Rio's mosaic." It allows for a variety of tiles, from the primitive (the First Meret), to the bejeweled (O Corte Segredo), and the elemental (Orixás), but all are unified by the boundaries of the playing field, the soccer pitch, of Rio, herself.

HIGH AND LOW

While the dramatic class disparity on display in Rio can all too easily become a stereotype to outsiders, it's still very real and must be contended with by anyone who spends much time here. Rio's legendary favelas have become a symbol for poverty recognized worldwide. The government's embarrassment about this has only fanned the flames, as the most common reaction is to bulldoze the inconvenient eyesores and ship their residents to the outskirts of the city, well away from the sight of tourists.



The eyes of the world turned to Brazil a few years ago when dramatic and massive street protests highlighted the tensions between the poor and the working classes against the government and its typical collusion with wealthy and corporate interests. It was a story told around the world, from Occupy Wall Street in New York to the Arab Spring in Egypt, but Brazil's protests drew special attention due to the vastness of its street presence and the involvement of the middle class. Tied up in all this was the economics surrounding two major worldwide sporting events: the World Cup and the Olympics. The results of who won and who lost these games is the least important and most ephemeral aspect of these events; it is the manner in which the years-long preparation for them and decades-long aftermath will affect Brazil — and especially Rio, host to the Olympics — that mobilizes citizens in pursuit of justice.

Movies like *City of God* and even *The Incredible Hulk* introduced the rest of the world to the insides of the favelas and the sardine-can lifestyles of vast numbers of Rio's poorer residents. News of the increased efforts of the government to crack down on drug gangs has painted a picture of warring territories, where whole favelas are ruled by gangs and often erupt in firefights between armed drug-runners and military-equipped narco squads.

Meanwhile, the coasts host sunny beaches, wealthy hot spots, and multiple celebrity sightings (often in slim bathing suits). The jet-setters move from boardroom to rooftop parties with ease, and sometimes via helicopter, as if the bullets biting through the walls of the favelas were flying in a distant country.

From a Storytelling perspective, this allows for a telling contrast in a single night's story session, and sometimes even within a single scene. Even in the *Chronicles of Darkness*, such distinct violence and criminal activity remains hidden in the shadows, only rousing the police into action after the crime's already gone down. Rio, however, divulges a landscape of ongoing war between militarized police and heavily armed favela residents, with (as usual) the bulk of the people just trying to survive the clash going on around them.

But don't be fooled, Rio is not a city of simmering hatred between rich and poor. The conflicts are geographic, confined mainly to certain favelas. In the city proper, the *Cariocas* take life as it comes and are ready to eat, drink, and samba the night through with people of all classes. This is the distinct theme of high and low here. The struggles are real, but they have their place, and so does the dance.

PASSIONATE CONTEST

It's unavoidable that sport has become both a metaphor for national unity as well as a symbol of how the elite try to bury the poor. Soccer (*futebol*) is not just the national sport; it's a near-spiritual obsession. It is the primary way that a poor kid from a favela can rise up to become a wealthy celebrity superstar. In this sense, it is egalitarian. But when developers tear down that kid's favela to make way for high-priced mansions or tourist cable-car stops seeking spectacular views of the city, it's also the cause of the destruction of home and heritage.

Behind all the sociopolitical meanings tied up with sports, they are passionate contests, revealing another side of Rio's character: a serious, even all-consuming, competitive streak. Some among the Deathless of Rio have come to epitomize this contest, the desire to win out and gain glory.

Still, this is Brazil, not rugged and individualist America. This desire to stand out, to draw attention, is still within a context of unity. It's still a team sport. *Cariocas* might wage a war for recognition against São Paulo, but in the end, they are all Brazilians. Among the Arisen, Teshra-Gemet might vie against the First Meret, but they all belong to Rio.

For this reason, newcomers might be tested more readily, to see what they are made of, to see where they fit into the city's grand mosaic. So long as they find a place to fit, they are welcomed.

FRAMEWORKS

Before you run your Rio-based game, you need to establish which framework your chronicle will start with. It might be the Allied Dead (the easiest default), but could, over time and intra-meret conflict, evolve into a Rival Dead chronicle. The internal and external threats could even be highlighted from different perspectives by a Pyramid story or two, featuring cult-member player characters.

The important thing is to roll with what happens and be ready to evolve. If you're most comfortable with one type, and want to stick with it, it shouldn't be hard to steer things back to the chronicle's status quo.

THE ALLIED DEAD

There's strength in numbers, and Rio's mummies know it. The city's division is not so much by guild as by meret. The First Meret tries to claim precedence due to their long residency, but this means little to O Corte Segredo or the Orixás, and the Red Sparrow, who tries to keep the balance of power in her favor, more often honors it in the breach. This, of course, means that no one meret can rise too high over the others.

Any newcomers to the city, or local mummies that have only now reawakened after too long in Duat, will need to contend with the existing power structure. The most logical answer is to form a coalition of one's own, a new meret that can contend as equals with the big three. Hence, the Allied Dead.

Two of the major merets have a basis more in convenient alliances of mutual interest than any actual bond of friendship or custom, and these can easily fray if the core interest is threatened or eroded. The player-character meret will need a reason to band together. An alliance to thwart the power of the other merets is a good starting point, but to endure it will need more, a thematic reason for being. Are the members each seeking an answer to the mystery of the Fountains of Ma'at? Do they see themselves as the only true Arisen, the only ones who take seriously the edict to return relics to Duat, to heed the will of the Judges? Or, are they protectors of the people trying to steer the city's destiny for mortal benefit, despite the dread purposes imposed upon them by their Judges?

THE RIVAL DEAD

There are so many cross-purposes at work in Rio that it's certainly easy to set the player characters against one another. One way is to have them play new (or old, newly awakened) members of the big three merets. Another is to have them struggle against one another as individuals or as representatives of their guilds.

While it is more difficult for a Storyteller to run a chronicle without common purpose among the player characters, the rivalries themselves become sources of endless stories, especially when they rub up against the interests of NPCs and others.

Unlike a city like Washington, D.C., Rio has no single overriding goal or ideal that spurs the Arisen to work together or against one another. While the Fountains are a mystery to all, not all mummies care equally to solve that mystery, or even to participate in it to any particular extent. A Rival Dead chronicle might benefit from a unifying twist that does have all the players reacting for or against it: a major relic that each is hunting and must find before the others do, or a Deceived plot to shut down the Fountains, or an uprising by other supernatural denizens of the Chronicles of Darkness (spirits, sorcerers, etc.).

Perhaps the simplest pivot around which to keep the player characters dancing is Teshra-Gemet. She can be using each against the others, dangling carrots and swinging sticks to get them all to act for her benefit before their own.



Cultist Characters

In a Pyramid framework, most of the troupe will not be playing an Arisen. The creation of cultist characters happens differently than with Arisen.

For a cultist, create a mortal using the rules in the **Chronicles of Darkness** rulebook. Go over the cult, its purpose, and its goals with the player. Make sure that the cultist knows what common information exists about the mummy and how the cult reacts to the mummy. Do they fear the Arisen or see her as a servant of the cult?

Spend some time going over the cult itself. Will it be a conspiracy cult? What assets does it control? Who are the other members? What internal conflicts exist? Is there a struggle for leadership or perhaps a more philosophical debate ongoing? Who guards the relics? What actions does the cult take while the Arisen lies in deathsleep? Which members have supernatural powers and what are the sources? What are the cult's major adversaries: another cult, a ghost, a major corporation, or a general sense of malaise among cult members?

Run a solo session for the cultist character before the first group session. Make sure that the cultist character learns about events that will be useful to the Arisen. Have the character encounter other cults or the antagonists specific to your chronicle. Make sure that the player feels comfortable facing foes that have powers far beyond her own (and understands that sometimes the best option is to run).



THE PYRAMID

The daily tragedies and threats of life in the favelas are hard to fully convey through the eyes of the Deathless. To truly experience them, a chronicle where players sometimes take the role of cultists living among the favelas can be exciting and illuminating. From the joys of winning a local soccer game against a rival favela, to dancing in an all-night Candomblé ritual parade, to the adrenaline-pumping action of a firefight against invading narco cops, *favela noir* can shed new light on life among people who are too often taken for granted.

It's not just the favelas that deserve the spotlight. All of Rio is ripe for focused stories about people whose orbits cross the relentless paths of the Deathless. It could be world-wide celebrities come to relax on the beaches and in the

nightclubs, only to find themselves too close to cults worshipping creatures that rise again and again from millennia-long slumbers. It could be archaeologists passing through Rio from deep jungle digs, clutching priceless artifacts destined for museums, only to scream in jaw-dropping terror as a horror from beyond death crashes into the room to snatch the priceless treasure.

USING THIS MATERIAL

The people and plots provided here are for your use; just read them and get ready to run. More than a premade list, the descriptions can also act as triggers for your own ideas. Even if you don't like the way a character is portrayed, surely there's something in his description that sparks a whole new idea, a new perspective that you can use instead. The characters and their varied purposes, relationships, needs, and desires are windows into the way a real-world place like Rio could exist in the darker, neighborhood-next-door of the *Chronicles of Darkness*.

The mummies of the First Meret open vistas onto an older time, as well as into the indigenous people struggling to maintain their ways in the modern world that has forgotten them. The Orixás reveal the colorful and often misunderstood world of the favela dwellers who follow the rites of the syncretic religion of Candomblé, although many of them are also still Catholic. O Corte Segredo shines light on the underground excesses of the decadent elite and their unrestrained sense of sovereignty over all. All these facets — indigenous, religious, and decadent — heighten aspects that are there in Rio, but seen here through the distorting lens of the occult world.

FLASHBACKS

Restored Memory brings a wealth of possibilities, not the least of them an excuse for a flashback story to a previous era of Rio's history. Even if the remembering mummy wasn't there, somebody was, so perhaps the players can take the roles of Rio's earliest Arisen, which, despite the First Meret's claims, *might* not have been the First Meret.

PRE-COLUMBIAN

The lie of history tells us that there was no great civilization older than 6,000 years ago. The Deathless know this is not true.

There appear, however, to have been many unknown empires, some unknown even to the Arisen. Did one such empire exist in the Americas, long before even the Deathless arrived? Or was it the Deathless who brought such a civilization here, so long ago that even its oldest successors: the Inca, the Aztecs, the Mayan have no memory of it?

Ancient Navigators

There are actual real-world legends about a possible visit to the east coast of South America by Carthaginian seafarers. It sounds outlandish, but strange evidence dotting the coasts, even as far north as Pennsylvania in North America (the “Hanno steles”), seems to imply a visit by Hanno the Navigator, a famed Carthaginian voyager. Some even believe, based on interesting native accounts, that some of Hanno’s band made its way inland, deep into the jungles, and even lived in a fortified colony until the locals warred on them and wiped them out. One piece of compelling evidence is the accounts of these invader’s use of sling shots in a style similar to that of Iberian slingers, themselves believed to have descended from Carthaginian refugees who landed in what is today Portugal.

What if it were all true? And what if these first, ancient sailors brought some special cargo with them, sarcophagi carrying the precious remains of warriors and princes, bodies that were destined to rise again?

Before the voyage of Columbus to the New World, before even the birth and death of Christ or the rise of Julius Caesar, the Deathless had come to Rio.

Any such answers belong more to the past than the present, and a flashback to Rio’s pre-Columbian era is ripe for, if not answering such questions, at least hinting at possible clues to potential answers that might still be uncovered in the present.

The mortal residents of Rio at this time were hunter-gatherers, animists roaming the jungles for their survival. But if the Deathless arrived, perhaps some were converted and trained, “civilized” into building a city and, eventually, the foundations of the Fountains of Ma’at. And when their empire crumbled (perhaps because its masters did not wake for many centuries), its works were buried with it, countless relics they kept near, now hidden under the ground or handed down through secret societies and jungle tribes.

Just how much this hidden history differs from accepted history is up to the Storyteller, but even a scantest introduction of ancient empires into Brazilian history can be shocking to players who don’t expect it.

THE COLONIAL ERA

Stories set in Brazil’s colonial era, when the Portuguese were taking over and pushing the natives out or converting them into slaves and “civilizing” them as Christians, should be brutal. If you want to be honest, that is. Brazil’s resources were immensely profitable to Portugal, and the Portuguese were insistent on wiping out any natives who stood in the way.

It is certainly possible, even insightful perhaps, to run a story from the perspective of the invaders, who found themselves gaining immense wealth with staggering speed. The Arisen of O Corte Segredo, those who arrived in this early stage leading to empire, certainly saw it this way. The trials and tragedies of savages were not their concern, except in as far as they were hoarding relics that rightly belonged to the Deathless.

Flashbacks from this era can help explain some of the enmities still simmering in the present era, such as the war between Aapep Medes (O Corte Segredo) and Sacmist (Orixás), whose two cults formed the roles of masters and slaves during these times. (See Appendix: Sharper Than the Serpents Tooth, for a story addressing their present-day war.)

Two notable eras within this time are the sugar boom, when sugar plantations formed the key component to the area’s vast wealth; it was a time of slavery, slave revolts, and inhumanly brutal retaliations for those revolts. Then followed the gold boom, when gold mining sent such imaginable wealth back to Portugal that many Brazilian cities had streets literally lined with gold, every building gilded. Surely, the Mesen-Nebu took advantage of this time, and its members are perhaps among the most powerful NPCs that players in these flashbacks will contend with.

The Fountains of Ma’at seem to imply such a possibility. *Somebody* built them. They are not natural geological features. It seems unlikely that archaeology alone will ever yield a full picture of who built them and when. But memory... memory might hold the key.

If the Deathless did build the Fountains, then one or more Arisen somewhere witnessed it and may have even directed it. Under the sediment of time, the memories have eroded but they are still there, waiting to be reclaimed. Unfortunately, the Fountains themselves seem almost designed to prevent this from happening. If one who does remember comes to the Fountains to bathe in its energies, then she is doomed to always forget.

Why design such a feature into the Fountains? Why engineer their origin to remain forever in obscurity? Are they the work of heretics, hiding from the eyes of the Judges? Did the makers achieve Apotheosis? Are they still out there, defying the Judges and preparing to corrupt the Deathless servants who remain loyal? Are the Fountains a plot against the Judges, and if so, how will they undermine centuries of servitude?



AGE OF EMPIRE

The colonial era leads to the new Brazilian empire, with its independence wrested from Portugal. Any flashback involving the high-level happenings at the heart of empire must contend with Teshra-Gemet, who consolidates her control over Rio with her control over the young regent, Pedro II (perhaps the reincarnation of her son from Irem).

This is a time of heady expansion and tumultuous fortunes on the rise and fall. It can provide insights into the sociopolitical conditions that remain among Rio's merets into the present day: who hates whom, and who loves whom but has since forgotten. Insights into other Arisen's forgotten memories from this time are useful in gaining advantage on them today.

ADVENTURES OUTSIDE RIO

A Rio chronicle doesn't have to end at the borders of the city. Relic hunts can lead the Deathless into the trackless jungles or to cities where they do not know the supernatural residents and risk setting off rivalries and wars with their very presence. A journey to Brasilia could provide a nice note of dread, as the dead heka of that planned city taints the Arisen's endeavors, and might even empower their Deceiver and Devourer enemies.

These sojourns should lead back to Rio. Even if other cities might be taking the reigns so far as some mortals are concerned (as residents of São Paulo might claim), for the Deathless, all roads lead back to Rio and the Fountains of Ma'at. The radiance of Dedwen is an irresistible magnet, drawing not just curious Arisen, but acting to synchronistically draw relics and other unknown magic to the city.

CONFLICT

Drama is conflict, as the old saying goes. A mummy wasn't tortured and remade so that his body can survive throughout time to rise over and over again just so he could smell the roses. The Arisen's calling demands that they suffer and cause conflict — endlessly — until the sun's last cinder burns out... and maybe not even then.

GUILD VS. GUILD

Among the three main merets, guild ties are less strong across meret lines than they are in other cities. This could leave an opening for the player characters to act as emissaries for their guild between members of opposing merets. When Osorehe and Aapep Medes of the Maa-Kep refuse to coordinate for their guild's greater good, someone needs to remind them of just where their proper loyalties should lie.

This meret rivalry that overshadows guild affinities also overshadows guild rivalries. It is hard for any single guild to unite to conspire against another guild, not when one of its members is more loyal to his meret. This presents opportunities for any guild member who envisions a stronger role for his guild and has the ambition to convince his fellow guild members to share that vision, but it is a tough road ahead.

CULT VS. CULT

The crowded and packed landscape of Rio, especially in the favelas, causes cults to rub shoulders more often than most would like. This of course leads to conflicts, even within cults whose masters share the same meret. One Orixá might struggle with another Orixá over territorial control, using their cults to win out over the other. Similar struggles occur with O Corte Segredo's cults, each trying to one-up another Arisen's followers.

Outsider mummies can exploit the heightened passions these conflicts arouse, using them to weaken the existing power structure by turning one cult against another. Lighting the match is all that's required; the combustibility already provided by the preexisting enmities between cults. But if the arsonist is ever revealed, the full might of all the cults she has stirred up will come back at her own cult. It's best to tread carefully when tossing kerosene; the slightest spark can burn everything down.

INDIVIDUAL VS. COLLECTIVE

Individual Arisen, those not tied to one of the main three merets or with the Red Sparrow, can find it hard to gain any purchase on power, whether through establishing a strong cult or controlling territory and protecting a tomb from eavesdroppers. Everyone in Rio is jealous of everyone else's power as well as keeping their own. They won't easily yield anything to newcomers or solitary Arisen.

Still, there are usually things the Arisen would like to have done that politics prevent them from doing themselves, and this presents an opportunity for individual mummies, so long as they can keep their mouths shut and operate on the sly.

ARISEN VS. MORTAL WORLD

There are places in the world where it is simply not a good idea to let mortals realize what you really are, not when you're an eternal servant of dread Judges from beyond the borders of this world. Washington D.C., for instance, where the resources of the government could prove quite vexing when turned against the Deathless.

Rio, however, is not such a place. While it is never a good idea to reveal the Arisen to mortals who have not been carefully inducted into the mysteries of an Arisen's cult, in





Rio it would not present the daunting headaches it might elsewhere. For one, the population is full of people who worship what outsiders consider strange gods, the Orixás of Candomblé, for instance. Even the Catholics here are quite superstitious about their saints and their miracles. If one of these people were to go about proclaiming the existence of mummies, most would take it as an eccentric religious belief at best and tragic insanity at worst. Even when they do convince others, usually the already superstitious, those believers — most probably poor favela dwellers — are hardly in any position to do something about it. Even if the well-connected and powerful were to realize the dark secret of the existence of the Deathless, they are unlikely to risk their reputations by telling anyone, and any organization they form to combat them is probably easily infiltrated by Arisen cultists or convertible by the same.

ARISEN US. HIMSELF

While a mummy might not be his own worst enemy, he's certainly high on the list. When Memory fails, an Arisen has no idea what he might have done and to whom he did it, nor what the continued cost for that deed might be. The Deathless are amnesiacs leaving a multitude of car wrecks behind them.

Besides his own previous actions come back to haunt him, there are internal issues to grapple with: Does the mummy still believe in his decree? Is his Judge just and worthy of the mummy's ages-long service? What if a seed of heretical doubt has been planted in his mind, one that even the erosion of Memory refuses to erase? Is this shiny relic he just reclaimed worth keeping for himself?

While the Shian'iatu designed the Deathless to be beyond such petty, worldly, and weak-minded concerns, the long arc of time ensures that these questions keep coming back. And the more Memory that is restored, the more questions it raises.

This is true anywhere, of course, not just in Rio. However, there is a cure here for all this excess concern: just bathe in the Fountains of Ma'at and let such worries wash away... if you can get a place in line on the Roll of Prosperity.

ARISEN US. CULT

There's a lot of competition in Rio for good cultists. It is not unknown for cult members to change allegiances and join other cults, especially if their original master prefers to sleep or, when awakened, always takes out his anger on his cult leaders. This has been a problem in the past for the Orixás, whose paradigm almost encourages the easy shift from the worship of one living Orixá to the next. That meret forged a deal amongst themselves whereby they would refuse

to accept each other's recalcitrant cultists without the permissions of their masters, allowing a for degree of horse trading while still maintaining cult unities.

What do the player characters do to ensure that their cultists aren't sneaking away while they sleep, and throwing their lots in with other Arisen? In most cities, this isn't a problem, but in Rio's mosaic, temptation and faithlessness abound, epitomized by the city's leader, Teshra-Gemet, who has bribed more than a few cultists away from their masters, not only to strengthen her own cult but also to punish other mummies and show them who ultimately runs the city.

ARISEN US. SUPERNATURAL

It would be strange indeed, if the only supernatural residents of Rio were the Deathless. This is, of course, not the case. Just who, how, and in what numbers the other creatures of the Chronicles of Darkness have infiltrated Rio is left in the hands of the Storyteller. Certainly, Rio's nightlife is like a siren song to vampires, and no place this populated is without its ghost stories. As the appendix of this book shows, the native spirits of the jungle even have a say in the fate of this city. Nature cannot be shut out.

THE RIO CHRONICLE: CIDADE MARAVILHOSA

Rio is a city where any story can be told. Behind any tale of Rio's Deathless, however, there is the story of Teshra-Gemet and her struggle to rule Rio. The player characters' stories will have to contend with the Red Sparrow's games of power. Ultimately, though, your chronicle is the players' story. Even if Teshra-Gemet makes only a few appearances, her rulership should make its mark on the players' stories somehow.

The Sothic Turn presents the greatest opening in centuries for the power to shift in Rio, although just how and to whom it turns depends on the events of your game. It's not preordained. There is no great rite or plan to unfold, only the scrabble for power amidst the Turn, a twisted mirror of the games of the gods — the Olympics — that shadows the city's future (both before and after the games). Who will get the gold, silver, and bronze, and who will go home to Duat without a medal?

Some highlights of a chronicle set in Rio are suggested below.

CARNIVAL

Perhaps the most portentous, and dangerous, time of the year of the Sothic Turn for the Deathless will be during Carnival. Everyone is awake, not just the Arisen but the entire city. It's one big, sprawling party. Perhaps nothing illustrates the effect of the energies from the Fountains of Ma'at better



than Carnival, a celebration of prosperity, good fortune, and exuberant life. Forget your cares, only the present matters, and the dance is everything.

So many mummies, all awake during a major mortal celebration, when morals are relaxed, cannot be good for the status quo. Conspiracies will be as plentiful as alcohol. Yet, amidst the jockeying for position, the Sothic Carnival offers the Arisen a chance to put aside their externally imposed purposes and choose for themselves how they wish to live.

SPORTS CAPITALISM

The specter of what some commentators have called “sports capitalism” threatens to deepen rifts within Brazil’s national unity. The World Cup and the Olympics are as *siroccos* — sand storms — that descend on select cities around the world every few years, scouring them of economic resources in return for an ephemeral exuberance that leaves a splitting hangover many years after they have departed.

The street protesters have demanded “FIFA-quality hospitals” and schools, playing off the demands from the world soccer authority that each host nation spend millions of dollars building “FIFA-quality stadiums,” stadiums that will almost certainly remain half-empty for years to come. Likewise, the Olympic authorities are requiring vast

construction and “public” works to make Rio Olympic ready (at great cost, funneling money away from education and health care for the poor, etc.).

The favelas are the hardest hit, since they don’t have the wealthy patrons and political connections to ward off urbanization projects and shameless land grabs by those seeking to build mansions on the beautiful hilltop vistas of the favelas after tearing down countless dwellings of the current residents.

This outrage stirs up violence, which inevitably affects the cults of certain mummies, who in turn see the hand of rival mummies behind all these (true or not). Teshra-Gemet has a blind spot concerning the rifts that these sports enterprises are causing in her city. She focuses too much on the benefits: the improvements to the airport and seaports to accommodate the Olympics, for example and cannot see the degradation to the city’s mosaic, the wounds to its *alegria de viver*.

THE FOUNTAINS

The greatest mystery of Rio is the Fountains of Ma’at. What are they? Sure, they provide a more or less steady stream of Dedwen, about which some Arisen (especially the Mesen-Nebu) have strong ideas; Dedwen is the building block for manifesting something from nothing, but there

is also a perception that it is prosperity; it is the reward for properly following one's own fate.

But what are the Fountains *really*? Are they just Dedwen generators, spilling out raw opportunity for all to take? Or is there a catch, a heavy price to pay for access to this abundance? Nobody believes in something for nothing, but whatever cost the Fountains actually levy is unclear. The Memory loss accompanying bathing in their streams seems more like a side effect or a design flaw, but perhaps there is something more to that. Perhaps the Fountains hide the presence of something, a great relic that their Dedwen streams serve to protect through misdirection? Or perhaps the presence of *someone*, an unknown Arisen — the Fountains builder? — whose tomb has lain untouched for millennia.

The manner in which the Storyteller answers the questions posed by the Fountains tells the ultimate aim of the chronicle—where it will wind up and what it will cost the player characters to get there. When it comes to the nature of the occult flow of Sekhem through places and objects, however, we do have a few tools the Storyteller can keep handy to enrich a **Mummy** chronicle, whether set in Rio or not.

THE ARCHITECTURE OF FATE

Buried by sorcery, sand, and time, Irem's monuments and buildings are lost, yet not unknown. Most Arisen possess tombs built according to the ancient methods, and unwittingly or not, mortals duplicate the Nameless Empire's techniques. Sometimes builders use the oldest ways because they follow nature's logic. Artless structures may rise in just the right place to reorder power in the land. Rare are the occult architects who bend the world's energies for specific purposes, but even when they succeed they must contend with unanticipated side effects. The following rules and descriptions study this magic—co-called *Neithian Architecture*—in detail.

THE LIFEWEB

Neithian Architecture is named for Neit, goddess of primordial creation, war, hunting, weaving and spiders. In the Nameless Empire they simply called her the Spider, and regarded all of her aspects as manifestations of natural patterns. Prey species migrated along her web, and battlefields arrayed themselves according to the web she cast along the land. Neit personified the weave of Creation, so *Netit-Sekhem* became Iremite term for the Lifeweb (see **Mummy: The Curse**, p. 80) that casts Sekhem along Fate-bound strands. *Netit* includes the name of the goddess, but also stands for the act of weaving, of webs, and of existence itself.

If Sekhem is the stuff of life, the Web contains the cosmic instructions and paths of least resistance that bring about the laws of nature. The most radical strains of Iremite mysticism hold that water flows downhill because it follows the Web there, and that its patterns are actually strokes from the Scroll of Ages, burned into the world by the stars. Moderates believe that the Netit-Sekhem is at least a form of geomancy that harnesses the magic of the land. Geomancers build upon the Lifeweb's strands and use their arts to shape them. The Lifeweb is omnipresent, so virtually all building and earthworks nudge it, and all but the dullest minds sense its power. When people find comfort in a valley path or sense something sinister and askew about a building, they feel the Lifeweb.

The greatest secrets of Iremite geomancy vanished along with the City of Pillars, but the Lifeweb's omnipresence has allowed the art to persist. Talented mortals rebuilt some of the Empire's ruins to harness it. They constructed new temples, palaces, and tombs by rediscovering first principles. Even so, it requires training, talent, and a deep connection to Fate to become a true occult architect. Few mortals meet the prerequisites, but all Arisen possess the potential to learn Lifeweb shaping. They can't create relics without attaining Apotheosis, but can manipulate the Lifeweb's ambient energies for other effects.

PATTERNS IN THE LIFEWEB

Harnessing the Netit-Sekhem demands practical skill, occult knowledge, and the ability to sense Sekhem. Beings who meet these requirements can study the following phenomena.

DJED AND TEKHEN

Civilizations around the world use standing stones, pillars, and columns to mark places of power. Some of these objects shape the Lifeweb around them, drawing or repelling threads. When they align these with the right stars and place them in the right configurations, they harness the Netit-Sekhem to produce wondrous effects. Iremite nomenclature divides these into *djed* and *tekhen*. Djed enhances the effects of Sekhem by drawing it from the cycle of existence. Tekhen regulates Sekhem, mitigating Sybaris and dispersing mystical power.

Traditionally, Iremite djed and tekhen are columns and obelisks, respectively, but can take other shapes. They might stand alone, supporting a tomb or temple, or be arranged in circles, grids, and other patterns designed to evoke particular powers.



OASES

Where the Lifeweb's threads cross and knot together, power collects. Arisen and occultists from virtually every tradition study seek out, study and lay claim to such places. The Deathless call such a site an *oasis*, but mortals might call it a dragon's nest, ley line nexus or some other culture-bound term.

An oasis possesses innate power, even if occult architects never touch it. They can build structures to direct its Sekhem in particular ways, but a blunder can destroy or deform this natural gift.

RELIQUARIES AND ALTARS

When placed at the geomantic heart of an occult structure, a relic unlock its special properties. These *reliquaries* act like a structure's central nervous system. Through the relic, an occultist can assume command of the structure. When a mummy or anyone else places a relic in its reliquary, it becomes hers for the purpose of aspects and properties that specify an "owner," "ruler," "master," and so forth. All artificial Neithian structures possess a reliquary. In addition to any other benefits, cults acquire +1 to Reach and Grasp when they're within a short distance of any structure commanded by their master, as per the benefits given by tombs (*Mummy: The Curse*, p. 159).

Note that no matter how many Neithian structures a mummy commands, the number of relics she is allowed to maintain remains constant, though she may choose a reliquary besides her tomb to keep one relic in. Placing relics in more than one reliquary defies the will of the Judges, demanding a Descent roll once per occasion. Nevertheless, the gambit might pay off, since once situated, the relic does not enter the Judges' embrace when the mummy falls into Duat.

Of course, there's a more direct way to boost the Sekhem of a Neithian structure: sacrifice. An *altar* accepts Sekhem from the slain. Like other aspects of occult architecture, they take forms based on the builder's culture and mystical theories. All temples possess altars, but for other structures, it's an Endowment that must be specifically built for it.

SYSTEMS

Neithian architecture includes, revises and expands the rules for tombs that accompany the Tomb Merit on pp. 81-83 of *Mummy: The Curse*. A tomb is just one of a number of possible functions for an occult structure. To add a Neithian structure to a character's background, spend Merit dots on its various aspects. You may spend as many dots or Experience points as you like, and the fifth dot does not cost

Size

These rules specify the size of certain features, but don't tell you exactly how big a Neithian structure is. Unless specified otherwise, a structure encompasses all of the features demanded by its aspects within one contiguous area. Otherwise, it's up to the Storyteller to decide how big these structures are based on the chronicle's needs. There's always a natural maximum size based on the patterns of the local Lifeweb, and these just happen to match whatever the Storyteller thinks would be balanced and logical. For the most part structures occupy buildings, not entire neighborhoods, or if they do, this is a complex composed of multiple structures, each with their own reliquaries and other traits.



double; structures routinely cost more. You must also assign at least one Purpose, though you can add others, expanding the range of aspects and other benefits available.

PURPOSE (FIRST PURPOSE FREE, OTHERS -- EACH)

Every structure possesses one Purpose that determines the other aspects that can be built into it, and possesses additional innate properties. Each Purpose also requires certain features, from sacred chambers to mustering grounds. The first Purpose is free; additional Purposes cost two dots each. A structure with multiple Purposes can utilize the aspects and innate properties listed for each.

FORTRESS

The Nameless Empire built redoubts throughout its territory, but during its waning days, the Shan'iatu ordered them destroyed, so that enemies could not occupy them while they concentrated on their other final spells. Perhaps some of these citadels escaped notice, but in later eras, occult architects relearned the Iremite technique, building war camps and forts that harnessed the Lifeweb. Modern Neithian fortresses range in size from hidden safe rooms to modestly sized castles. The largest examples rarely stand in densely populated areas. Rather in the deep desert, on uncharted islands, and beneath ancient catacombs, Arisen take refuge in these secret, secure structures.

Required Structure: A hall or walled courtyard where warriors can train and assemble.



Aspects: Djed, Geometry, Mirage, Peril, Tekhen

Innate Properties: Under the gaze of carved Iremite war gods and upon the sands of training grounds, a fortress' master finds it easier to raise strong warriors to fight by her side. Add the mummy's Sekhem to Cult rolls that raise "battle fodder" (see the *Mummy* core book, p. 161). Fortress masters from other backgrounds acquire the same benefit, but use a Status Merit capable of acquiring martial personnel (Police, Military, Security, etc.) in its place. (Arisen can do the same when their Sekhem falls below an applicable Status Merit.) Masters who lack the Cult Merit roll Sekhem (or another warrior-acquiring Merit) by itself. Furthermore, troop losses do not cause a drop in Reach or Grasp; the warlike aura of the place calls up dedicated fighters who do not unduly burden the cult. They live to fight; they die to serve. Finally, if the fortress hosts the owner's warriors for more than a month, they become elite combatants. Add +1 to Initiative and Defense, and +2 to attack dice pools to the "Cultist Combatant" profile listed on p. 161 of *Mummy: The Curse*.

GUILDHALL

In Irem great craft-houses served as guild headquarters. These complexes contained practical facilities to teach guild mysteries, ritual spaces, barracks for apprentices, and chambers reserved for the Shan'iatu. Each guild had business throughout the empire, creating the need for lesser facilities. Apprentices labored at the ordinary aspects of guild crafts, while those with sufficient skill managed the creation and repair of minor relics. The construction of mighty relics only happened in the head craft-houses.) After the Nameless Empire, most of these facilities fell; by scouring sand and former subjects eager to annihilate memories of oppression destroyed them. Few of the old guildhalls remain. New examples were built by either the Arisen themselves, or mortal sorcerers seeking laboratories.

Required Structure: A workshop or laboratory with equipment suited to at least one guild's crafts.

Aspects: Djed, Geometry, Mirage, Tekhen

Innate Properties: Each hall is associated with one of the five Iremite guilds, even if someone with no connection to the Nameless Empire built it. Builders simply favor one category of mystical craftsmanship above the rest. A mummy from a corresponding guild who places his relic in the hall's reliquary acquires an additional dot of Guild Status for as long as the relic remains. Furthermore, the mummy may retain one additional relic of his Guild for as long as he owns the guildhall. Any mummy belonging to the correct guild may sacrifice vessels to Duat, as well. Mundane Skill rolls related to the guildhall's crafts, and Occult rolls in general, acquire the 8 again benefit.

OASIS

Oases aren't built, but discovered. They're snarls and spirals in the Lifeweb that pool occult power. Arisen and others can take advantage of an oasis in its raw state, but can also build upon it, channeling its power into specific shapes—an easier task than pulling the Lifeweb's threads into geomantic harmony at some unexceptional site.

Required Structure: None, though an oasis possesses distinct natural features that must be preserved, lest the Lifeweb unravel, reducing or eliminating its aspects.

Aspects: Geometry, Mirage, Peril. (If an occult architect builds on an oasis she can add other features, but must purchase an additional Purpose. She acquires the oasis' previous aspects for free.)

Innate Properties: None.

PALACE

In the age of Irem, palaces and temples were virtually synonymous, but even they possessed separate areas for pure worship and the secular functions of the court. After the Nameless Empire, occult architects split these functions. They still build theocratic palace-temples, but most modern Neithian palaces are dedicated to political activities. They might be secret facilities or well-known political buildings and monuments. In any case, when the master comes and claims the high seat, his followers obey.

Required Structure: A throne room or formal assembly room.

Aspects: Djed, Geometry, Mirage, Tekhen

Innate Properties: Enthroned before visitors, a palace's ruler regains 1 point of Willpower per day whenever she spends it on Social or Cult Merit rolls. (If the Storyteller didn't allow Willpower for Cult Reach + Grasp rolls, the structure's magic permits it.) When giving orders from the high seat to her cult, the mummy (or other cult leader) doesn't need to perform any quid pro quo actions to get the Merit substitution benefit (see p. 161 of *Mummy: The Curse*.) She says, "Go forth and do my will!" and it is done.

TEMPLE

The grand temples of the Nameless Empire were also Shan'iatu palaces, houses of judgment, and chambers where certain guild rituals took place. Temple complexes merged with virtually every other structure of importance, and shrines were omnipresent. When the age of the sorcerer-priests passed, mortals built humble successors to them. Most are simply houses of worship. In the modern era, many of these are contemporary churches, mosques, temples, and other holy buildings. They sit atop an ancient, eldritch

Building Neithian Structures

Unlike relics, which collect and confine Sekhem, occult structures reshape the existing pattern of the Lifeweb – the finest of distinctions – but evidently good enough to evade one aspect of the Arisen curse. Arisen can build them. Any being capable of sensing Sekhem and learning the principles of geomantic building can make the attempt. For the Deathless, this is only a matter of skill. Mortals also require an Unseen Sense for Sekhem. Since many traditions teach the basic principles of mystic architecture, and they often follow from intuitive concepts anyway, it's even possible to build occult structures unintentionally, or even as part of efforts to build a place of power for an entirely different supernatural tradition. The Storyteller decided when and if these accidental structures arise.

System: Intentionally building a Neithian structure requires space, time, resources, and an extended roll of Intelligence + the lower of Crafts or Occult. Each roll consumes anywhere from a week to a month, depending on the scale of the project and other practical considerations. Successful construction requires 5 successes per dot, including 10 successes to build the core structure and set its Purpose. Taking breaks longer than what would be typical for day-by-day construction imposes a cumulative -2 penalty to subsequent rolls. Expanding an existing structure, including an oasis, imposes a further -2 penalty to each roll. As the effort is primarily a matter of design and

personal artisanship, teamwork is difficult or impossible. The Storyteller determines who might provide assistance, but this system assumes someone else is taking care of the raw labor, and this shouldn't be counted for teamwork purposes.

Suggested Equipment/Bonuses: Veteran construction crew/skilled artisans (+1 to +3); well-maintained equipment (+1 or +2)

Suggested Penalties: Slave labor (-3), unskilled labor (-2), inferior or archaic equipment (-1 or -2)

Dramatic Failure (and Special): On a dramatic failure, or two failed rolls in a row, the structure *loses* Merit dots. Roll one die; the structure loses this many dots, as chosen by the Storyteller. On a third failure in a row the builder has deformed the Lifeweb so severely that it becomes impossible to build an occult structure there.

Occult structures are not only difficult and time consuming to build, but expensive. The Storyteller should look at what's required to erect real buildings and monuments, and charge the character in one or more Resources expenditures accordingly. Then there's the matter of staffing, permits (or lack thereof), etc. Let's just say there's a reason why the world isn't covered with cities of eldritch power.



temple, or possess new occult features, built into them by accident or blasphemy.

Required Structure: A gathering place for worshipers with an altar or other central focal point (which may in fact still be an altar, at least for occult purposes).

Aspects: Djed, Geometry, Mirage, Tekhen

Innate Properties: Temples may provide a convenient alternative to tombs, in that Arisen may sacrifice relics to Duat here. In addition, when the temple's master leads sincere worshipers in a service to honor its gods, he recovers 1 point of Willpower. The service should take at least an hour to complete, and can only confer this benefit once per day. Temples also confer an additional +1 (+2 total) to both Reach and Grasp when the master leads cultists in worship. Furthermore, should an Arisen dedicate worship to the Judges of Duat at least once per lunar month, he adds 1 dot to one Pillar (specific to each temple and chosen upon construction) for as long as he dwells within its precincts.

All temples possess the Altar Endowment.

TOMB

Arisen know tombs better than other Neithian structures, as so many of them possess them as personal sanctuaries. The **Mummy: The Curse** corebook describes them in detail, though this book revises them in some respects.

Required Structure: A chamber for the dead.

Aspects: Djed, Geometry, Mirage, Peril

Innate Properties: The tomb's owner benefits from all of the advantages of owning a tomb as per the **Mummy: The Curse** core.

ASPECTS

A Neithian structure's Aspects determine its magical capabilities above and beyond the basic powers afforded by a Purpose. Each Aspect has a separate Merit dot cost.

DJED (- TO -----)

Deathless know the djed well, for these were the pillars of Irem. Djed represent the spine of Azar and the cycle of Sekhem. Living beings collect Sekhem, and upon death, release it along Lifeweb. It sinks beyond life into the chaotic interstices between mundane reality and Duat, is immediately devoured by other beings, or collects within the land. Djed siphons Sekhem directly from weird demi-realms and the Lifeweb's weave, prolonging Arisen Descents, but the act of interfering with the Lifeweb's cycle amplifies Sybaris.

Effect: Each dot increases the number and potency of the structure's djed. Like antennas dropped into the netherworld, djed attracts Sekhem that has yet to return to the universal life cycle, or tears it from distant oases, or creatures on the edge of death. This slows the pace of the Descent whenever the Arisen dwells within or passes close by (typically, within the range where a cult would benefit from a structure's presence). Unfortunately, this stolen power's unnatural resonance also increases effects of Sybaris and exudes a certain death-essence.

- Reroll one successful die on a Descent check. (Remember, Descent checks are rolls you want to fail.) Apply a -1 modifier to Unease Sybaris ratings (making them more powerful) and Resolve + Composure rolls to resist Terror Sybaris. The structure possesses one djed of at least Size 5. Nearby plants wilt more quickly than usual.

- Reroll two successful dice on a Descent check. Apply a -1 modifier to Unease Sybaris ratings and Resolve + Composure rolls to resist Terror Sybaris. The structure possesses one or two djed with a combined Size of 10 or greater. Local crops fail. Animal stillbirth is common.

- Reroll three successful dice on a Descent check. Apply a -2 modifier to Unease Sybaris ratings and Resolve + Composure rolls to resist Terror Sybaris. The structure possesses one to three djed with a combined Size of 15 or greater. Terminal illnesses claim their victims sooner.

- Reroll four successful dice on a Descent check. Apply a -2 modifier to Unease Sybaris ratings and Resolve + Composure rolls to resist Terror Sybaris. The structure possesses one to four djed with a combined Size of 20 or greater. Strangely virulent illnesses cause a general uptick in mortality.

- Reroll five successful dice on a Descent check. Apply a -3 modifier to Unease Sybaris ratings and Resolve + Composure rolls to resist Terror Sybaris. The structure possesses one to five djed with a combined Size of 25 or greater. Local people die from unlikely accidents with some regularity.

GEOMETRY (- TO -----)

All structures utilize the basic principles of sacred geometry, but those with this aspect are exceptionally well aligned with the Lifeweb.

Effect: Each dot in this aspect adds 1 die to attempts to recharge Pillars, as detailed in **Mummy: The Curse**, p. 81-82. Note that oases can possess innate geometry instead of requiring the artificial elements listed with each dot rank, though these essential natural features —sinister skull-shaped rocks and weird caves, for instance— will be of comparable size.

MIRAGE (- TO -----)

Monuments to history carry the essence of Memory, whether they've been constructed for that purpose or arise naturally, as they do in ancient settlements and battlefields. When these places grow powerful enough, they replicate these patterns of Fate. They can do it even when they record history poorly. Fate transcends literal fact, and includes how humanity perceives the unfolding of time. In Arisen and a few psychically sensitive individuals, symbols of history and eternity bring about *mirages*: visions of the past.

Effect: Arisen see visions of Irem and prior Descents. This gives them the opportunity to acquire Sebayt Experience. In each case, the mirage provides a vision of the past that includes things the mummy has done or left undone, and an intuition of what she might do to reinforce and internalize the vision, increasing Memory. This takes the form of a scenario that either exists alongside the main chronicle, or is interwoven with its story. Completing the scenario provides the Sebayt award (and other Experience, when appropriate). A monument with the Mirage aspect can provide this benefit repeatedly, but the mummy must complete one task and receive its reward before moving on to the next, no matter how many monuments she visits, or how often. Each vision occurs across a single turn, though it might seem longer according to the Arisen's subjective sense of time, so that a week of ancient warfare passes in the objective blink of an eye.

- The mirage provides brief flash of memory and suggests a short task to complete that requires no more than a chapter of the chronicle, awarding 1 Sebayt Experience.

- The mirage presents a short scene from the past, linked to a task that requires a chapter or two to complete. When completed, the task awards 2 Sebayt Experience.

- The mirage includes visions of a few short scenes or general memories of a day. The linked task requires two or three chapters to complete and awards 3 Sebayt Experience.

- The mirage presents a powerful, ancient memory and a task that requires three or four chapters to complete and awards 4 Sebayt Experience.



••••• The mirage sends the Arisen reeling with vivid memories of Irem or a full overview of a prior Descent. The associated task takes four or five chapters to complete and awards 5 Sebayt Experience.

PERIL (- TO -----)

The structure contains mundane traps or ancient curses that strike unwanted visitors.

Effect: This is equivalent to the Peril aspect listed on p. 82 of **Mummy: The Curse**. Perils do not affect the structure's master, or beings he wishes to enter or pass unscathed. Oases with Peril ratings possess dangerous natural features like quicksand and falling rocks, or a malefic supernatural aura.

TEKHEN (- TO -----)

Classic tekhen are obelisks. To the Nameless Empire and its Egyptian descendants, tekhen meant "guardian." They stood outside sacred places to protect them from evil. To later Egyptians, tekhen represented solidified rays from the sun disk, but Iremite theology held that tekhen also represented fallen starlight. As manifestations of Fate, the stars wrote destinies with light emanating from A'aru and beyond, distant sigils from the Scroll of Ages. Tekhen impose order on the world, preventing Sybaris and weakening Utterances.

Effect: Each dot of the Tekhen Merit sets the total Size of these artifacts. (Note that tekhen come singly or in pairs, but never in odd multiples.) The higher the rating, the less severe Sybaris becomes around the structure. Furthermore, tekhen suppress dots (not points) from certain Pillars. Affected characters can still spend all of their Pillar *points*, but are treated as having fewer dots for the sake of access to Utterances and Affinities. Only the structure's owner is immune to this effect.

In many ways, djed and tekhen perform opposite functions, but they *can* be applied to the same structure. This causes the Lifeweb on the structure's grounds to fluctuate wildly. At sunrise, roll the both djed and tekhen ratings in a contested roll. Apply the rating of the winner.

• One or two tekhen with a total Size of at least 10. Add +1 to Unease Sybaris ratings (making them less severe) and dice pools to resist Terror Sybaris in a one-mile radius.

•• One or two or four tekhen with a total Size of at least 20. Add +2 to Unease Sybaris ratings and dice pools to resist Terror Sybaris in a two-mile radius. Suppress 1 dot in two Pillars in the structure's immediate area. This selection is set during construction and cannot be changed.

••• One two, four, or six tekhen with a total Size of at least 30. Add +3 to Unease Sybaris ratings and dice pools to resist Terror Sybaris in a five-mile radius. Suppress a total of 3 dots of Pillars divided among up to three Pillars, though

The Tekhen Diaspora

Roman and colonial invaders took most surviving ancient Egyptian obelisks. Rome possesses as many of these obelisks as the whole of Egypt, as well as others commissioned by wealthy Romans when Egypt was part of their empire. Other ancient obelisks can be found anywhere from Paris to Istanbul, including one in New York's Central Park. About half of them possess power as defined by the Tekhen aspect. This makes them neutral ground for Arisen to gather, as they suppress Sybaris and weaken everyone.



no Pillar can be suppressed by more than 2. The suppression effect takes place within and upon the structure, or within the immediate area.

•••• One, two, four, six, or eight tekhen with a total Size of at least 40. Add +4 to Unease Sybaris ratings and dice pools to resist Terror Sybaris in a 10-mile radius. Suppress a total of 4 dots of Pillars divided among up to four Pillars, though no Pillar can be suppressed by more than 3. The suppression effect takes place within and upon the structure, or within the immediate area.

••••• One, two, four, six, eight, or ten tekhen with a total Size of at least 50. Add +5 to Unease Sybaris ratings and dice pools to resist Terror Sybaris in a 20-mile radius. Suppress a total of 5 dots of Pillars divided among up to five Pillars, though no Pillar can be suppressed by more than 4. The suppression effect takes place within and upon the structure, or within the immediate area.

DRAWBACKS

All occult structures may possess the same Drawbacks as tombs, as listed on pp. 82-83 of **Mummy: The Curse**. The following new Drawback is common to many such structures.

Alien Attractor (minus ••• to •••••): The structure is a place of power for some other supernatural beings: ghosts, sorcerers, errant gods, shapeshifters, whatever. This is essentially a broader version of the **Haunted** drawback. At minus ••• these beings are weaker examples of their kind, and visit occasionally to make use of the site. At minus •••• and ••••• visitors become relatively stronger and/or more insistent, though even the strongest version of the Drawback doesn't draw elder gods to your door. (Something on that scale is a carefully planned story event.)



Relics?

A rare few structures possess the power of relics. These can belong to any guild, but Tef-Aabhi effigies are more common than any other is. Structures that double as relics can usually only be commanded by their masters, and so require further relics or blood on an altar.

Relic-structures cannot be purchased as part of an Arisen character background without special permission from the Storyteller (in which case, add the Merit dot cost for the relic's degree of power to the total cost of the structure). We suggest that you don't allow it, so that characters can claim them over the course of a chronicle.

Arisen can't build relics into occult structures. Only a small subset of mortal sorcerer architects are capable of the feat. Relic powers typically affect those near or within the structure. Despite their immobility, they possess one great advantage: It's impossible to consign them to Duat, making one a long-lived resource for any Arisen who claims it.

ENDOWMENTS

All of the Endowments listed on p. 83 of **Mummy: The Curse** can be applied to any Neithian structure. In the case of oases, Curio and Piece of Life indicate things left buried or hidden in the natural environment, or a natural feature with special significance to humans or to mummies. In addition, structures may possess the following new Endowments.

Absolute Rule (•••): Due to combination of local customs, government corruption and mystical coercion, the master's word is law in a community that's closest to the structure. This Endowment is normally impossible in large cities (though a mummy might be "king of the underground," holding sway over mole people and corrupt city workers). As long as the structure's master and cult don't attract media attention or unduly endanger the local populace, they can do as they please.

Altar (••): At its Lifeweb nexus, the structure accepts blood as a token of ownership in lieu of placing a relic. The only effective sacrifices are live mammals, killed before the altar with at least a quick, muttered ritual to precede the act. After performing the sacrifice, the character acquires rule over the structure for a number of weeks equal to the victim's Size + Intelligence + core supernatural trait.

Lifeless may not be sacrificed, but the Deathless can. However, mastery is revoked as soon as they're resurrected. Once attained, rule through sacrifice may not be overridden, and further sacrifices have no effect until the period of rule ends.

An oasis may not possess an altar.

Eternal (•• or ••••): The structure's social or mystical characteristics make it difficult to destroy. At ••, mortals will do their best to restore it whenever it is damaged. At ••••, it has become so infused with the Lifeweb that it becomes a fixed shape of Fate. No matter what happens to it, someone or *something* will rebuild it. This manifests as subtly as possible. People feel compelled to rebuild it, but dust may turn to rock again, when nobody's looking. Note that oases may only possess the •••• version of the Endowment.

Remote (•): The structure's in the wilderness, deep desert or on an uncharted island. Getting there requires knowledge and bravery, usually in the form of an Intelligence + Survival roll. This may be taken with Prime Location, indicating a prestigious but hard to reach site.

NEW UTTERANCES

Three interesting new sources of power present themselves in **Cursed Necropolis: Rio**: the Fountains of Ma'at, the spirit ties of the Orixás' cultists, and the Iron Bull relic of the O Corte Segredo meret. Encounters with any of these can lead to unearthing forbidden wisdom in the form of new Utterances.

FROM THE DEPTHS: UTTERANCES OF THE FOUNTAINS OF MA'AT

Bathing in either of the Fountains of Ma'at (Corcovado or Sugarloaf) can bestow knowledge of unique Utterances. Just as the origin and nature of the Fountains are a mystery, so too are these Utterances. They seem to be related to the energies of Dedwen (prosperity, getting one's due, forging one's fate), but not completely.

These Utterances of Ma'at, like the act of bathing in the Fountain at the cost of Memory, are double-edged coins (or swords). They deliver certain benefits but also, at the highest tiers, a cost.

Since these powers are unique to the Fountains and haven't been fully studied by the Arisen yet, their drawbacks will not become apparent to their user until after an Utterance has already been unleashed.

THE EBON MASH

Tier 1: Ab • (Subtle); **Tier 2:** Ren ••• (Subtle); **Tier 3:** Defining (Subtle) •••••



Tier 1: The mummy is anyone she wants to be. She constructs a persona and becomes that person. This is not a physical alteration, but a psychological and even spiritual one. The mummy completely assumes the new identity whenever she wishes and for however long she wishes. She thinks and acts and *remembers* just like the new identity would (while also retaining her own memories). All the while, she is aware that this is a role she is assuming, but as far as anyone else is concerned, she is a different personality. If the mummy's player succeeds on a Manipulation + (Persuasion or Subterfuge) + Ab roll, no magic — no Affinity, no Utterance, etc. — can see through this ruse, this mask, without first having more dice come up 8+ than the mummy's current Sekhem rating, on whatever activation roll the use of magic requires. (Naturally, if the truth-seeking power or spell requires no roll, it fails to pierce the mask automatically.)

Since this Utterance does not create any physical differences, it is up to the masquer to don different attire or even alter her facial features (through cosmetic surgery or mystical means), if she so desires. For the most part, this Utterance is good for maintaining alternate identities in the mortal world. The mummy cannot be tricked, interrogated, or tortured into betraying her new identity because she *is* that identity. No spy is ever this good, no matter how deeply he can hypnotize himself. This fictional-yet-real identity even applies against mummies. (Anak-em-Tanen uses it to make other Arisen believe he is not the true trickster he actually is, as well as making Menefes believe the two had a relationship.)

Tier 2: The mummy places the Ebon Mask upon another, making the person believe that the mask's identity is his own. Through this Utterance the Arisen can change significant aspects of a target's identity, such as gender preference (as Anak-em-Tanen has done to Menefes) or temperament (e.g., from gentle to belligerent), and hide any memories that would reveal or betray this new identity. This does not mean the unleasher of this Utterance knows the content of his target's new memories; the Utterance simply hides from the target's mind any thoughts that conflict with the new identity traits.

Constructing this new identity takes time. The mummy's player rolls Manipulation + (Persuasion or Subterfuge) + Ren, resisted (subconsciously) by the target's Resolve + Composure. If successful, she can alter one self-contained aspect of identity per Willpower point she spends when unleashing this Utterance (Storyteller discretion).

This effect lasts for a duration equal to three cycles of the Fountain from which the user learned the Utterance. One can unleash this tier again within a day before it wears off, to renew the effect for three more cycles, but of course requires a new roll and Willpower expenditure. If, during this time, the unleasher bathes in any Fountain of Ma'at, it

cancels this Utterance's effects and the target becomes more or less aware of what has been done to him (but not necessarily who did it). Regardless, a mummy can only maintain the Ebon Mask upon one soul at a time, as it very much is a singular thing in terms of its occult nature. Using this Utterance upon a new subject cancels the effect on the previous soul, though not in the same revelatory manner as happens when the mummy enters a Fountain; the subject is free of this Utterance's power, but has no earthly idea why he behaved as he did.

Tier 3: The mask that the mummy places upon another, as per the previous tier, is permanent, provided the subject is mortal — the identity she has constructed for the target effectively becomes that mortal's new identity. If his memory of the new personality is ever lost, when it finally is recovered, it is this new personality and its memories that the mortal regains, not his original personality's true memories. There may be ways to remove the Ebon Mask, or to remove it from someone, but these have not yet been discovered by any Arisen, and would be resisted by the unleasher's defining Pillar rating in any event.

The drawback to this tier is that the Utterance's unleasher *forgets that she has unleashed it*. She believes that the target's new persona is real and has always been this way, and if shown evidence to the contrary, remains at a genuine loss to explain how it happened.

FORGE OF FALSEHOOD

Tier 1: Ren • (Subtle); **Tier 2:** Ka •••; **Tier 3:** Sheut •••• (Epic)

Tier 1: All that glitters is not gold, but the Arisen with this Utterance can certainly fool other Arisen into thinking it is. If her player succeeds on a Manipulation + Subterfuge + Ren roll, she can make any mundane material item *appear* to be a relic to those sensitive to the flow of such things. Arisen will sense it as if it was a relic, for example, and will even feel a similar magnetic pull to acquire it. It is *not* a relic, of course, and cannot be drained for Sekhem or returned to Duat, but it can be used to draw flies to honey, so to speak. If the mummy unleashes this tier by spending a point of a Pillar other than Ren, the desired effect lasts for about 24 hours. If the mummy unleashes this tier by spending a point of Ren, the desired effect lasts for a number of days equal to the caster's Ren rating. Once a being who is sensitive to the flow of Sekhem has handled the item, its falseness becomes apparent to him thereafter. Even if the Arisen unleashes this tier again at a later time, if she does so on the same object, any such being will be able to tell as soon as he interacts with its Sekhem (at range, in the case of Arisen kephers). Thus, it's best not to use the same mundane item for successive unleashings of this particular tier.



Tier 2: The Arisen can now make an otherwise mundane material item into a kind of relic... sort of. This item has no special power, but does contain Sekhem, sacrificed by the mummy herself as investiture into the false relic. Unlike most Utterances, this tier requires no unleashing roll, but after the Ka point, the other Pillar point spent on the unleashing must come from the Sheut Pillar. She can sacrifice-and-invest a maximum number of Sekhem dots equal to her Ka rating, and can withdraw this Sekhem at any time, so long as she is physically touching the false relic. This is not treated as if she were draining a true relic; she is simply taking back her own Sekhem. A mummy can fashion and maintain only one such item at a time, and any Sekhem not reclaimed when her Descent ends is lost to her and to the world, as the item crumbles to mystically inert dust.

If someone other than the item's creator gets a hold of such an item, that being can access the Sekhem within it, just as if it were a true relic, provided that being has the ability to manipulate or drain Sekhem. This Sekhem is diluted, however, and only translates to a single dot's worth of Sekhem for anyone other than the mummy to whom it belongs, regardless of how many dots of it she invested initially.

Tier 3: This tier allows the Arisen to perform a useful blasphemy, if she is inclined to risk her Descent. The unleasher can drain the Sekhem from one relic, as normal for draining relics (**Mummy: The Curse**, p. 156), but rather than gain any benefit from it personally, she instead creates a new (fundamentally false) relic by placing the drained Sekhem—to a maximum of one dot per dot of her Sheut rating—into a mundane material item. Unlike most Utterances, this tier requires no unleashing roll, but *both* of the Pillar points spent on the unleashing must come from the Sheut Pillar.

The resulting relic isn't a true relic, but it does have a power and a curse of its own. The Storyteller determines the item's power, possibly working with the player to devise something interesting. It should be in some way tied to the "story" of the item used to create the relic, based on the item's owner or its history. A serial killer's axe might have the power to act on its own, or it might contain echoes of the souls of its victims, who can be called upon for knowledge from the Underworld, or the like. The Storyteller creates the relic's curse, but does not tell the relic creator's player what it is. (He'll have to find out.) The serial killer's axe might instill a bloodthirst into its user or seek its user's own demise.

If a being sensitive to the flow of Sekhem tries to manipulate or drain the false relic as a true one, however, that being gains nothing useful for his effort; the Sekhem used to create the thing isn't worth a plug nickel in such contexts. If,

however, a mummy (specifically) tries to drain the false relic as a relic, the mummy regains a point of Sheut for each dot of Sekhem invested initially (as if the mummy were draining a Sheut-attuned vestige). A mummy can fashion and maintain only one such item at a time.

WHISPERS OF THE UNSEEN WORLD: SPIRIT UTTERANCES

Some of the Arisen of the Orixás meret have, through their mortal cults, experienced encounters with spirits and the world on the other side of the veil between matter and spirit. It is said that these Utterances are essentially syncretic, born of a meeting of spirit numina and Iremite sorcery. They are exclusive to the Arisen, but they originate in powers gifted by spirits (and often channeled by mortal cultist sorcerers). There is no blueprint or roadmap for attaining or creating these Utterances; they all arose from unique spiritual encounters, but can now be taught by those Arisen who possess them.

BODY OF CLAY

Tier 1: Ren •; **Tier 2:** Ba •••; **Tier 3:** Sheut ••••• (Epic)

Tier 1: Mortals are puppets to the Arisen with this dread incantation, dancing to the twists of her strings. The mummy's player rolls Manipulation + Intimidation + Ba against a single living person within sight of the mummy, and if successful, turns that person into a temporary willing drone (zombie-ish). The mummy gives him or her a single simple order, and the subject will follow that order until the task is accomplished, or until the next sunrise, whichever comes first. It might be "guard this room" or "kill Senor Flavinho" or "dance, fool, dance!" While "zombified" in this way, the subject is in an occult trance, unable to speak or respond to others. He shambles to his destination at a slow pace, and it is clear to any onlookers that he is either drunk, drugged, or (if the onlooker is, say, a superstitious favela resident familiar with Voudon or Candomblé) impersonating a zombie pretty much perfectly. Particularly strong-willed people (Willpower 6+) can spend 5 Willpower points at once to shake off the effect, but even then, generally only after someone else tries to shake them out of it. If a mortal spends the Willpower, that particular mortal is immune to further uses of this Utterance for the rest of the story.

Tier 2: The effectively "zombified" person can be fed new orders from afar via the Arisen's telepathic voice. The effect lasts for the same amount of time, but the Arisen can issue as many orders as she wants during that time. Each new order, however, counters the previous order.

Tier 3: The Arisen can "zombify" an entire crowd, equal to about 50 people. If she spends a dot of Sekhem, she can multiply this number by 10, effectively turning an entire favela



neighborhood into willing drones, controlling them as she does for a single individual at the second tier, except that she can issue multiple orders — up to one per dot of Manipulation — allocating them however she likes among the zombie multitude. She cannot spend multiple Sekhem to increase this number.

DRUMS OF THE OGAM

Tier 1: Ba • (Potency 1); **Tier 2:** Ren •• (Potency 2);
Tier 3: Ab •••• (Potency 3)

Tier 1: In the world of spirits, items are as much a part of the person who owns them as is his body. As per classic sympathetic magic, the Arisen affects a target across distances by physically touching an item associated closely with that target: a locket of hair, a favorite toy, a well-used cell phone, or the like. At this tier, she can bless or curse a given target once per day: The blessing gives the target a [+1 per dot of Sheut] bonus on one roll or extended action. The curse levies a [-1 per dot of Sheut] penalty to same. This bonus/penalty is a one-time effect, lasting only one instant action or one roll on an extended action.

Tier 2: The Arisen constructs a fetish, a crude doll designed to mimic a particular person. By physically affecting the fetish, she can physically affect the person it represents, regardless of distance. She can harm the target by damaging the fetish; her player can roll a number of dice

equal to her Manipulation + Ren per day, and can split up the pool into multiple ‘attacks’ throughout, if desired. Any die of this pool that comes up 8 or higher inflicts a level of lethal damage to the associated person. At the Storyteller’s discretion, this tier also allows use of certain Affinities and other Utterances against targets at distance.

Tier 3: With this tier, the mummy can apply the effects of the first two tiers against a single discrete group — an entire bloodline of a mortal, an entire meret of mummies, or the like — up to a maximum of connected souls equal to the mummy’s current Sekhem rating. She constructs a single fetish to represent the bloodline or group, and affects all members of that line or group with a single action against the fetish.

HORSE AND RIDER

Tier 1: Ab •; **Tier 2:** Ba •••; **Tier 3:** Ka •••••

Tier 1: The Arisen can experience the world through the eyes, ears, nose, and tactile senses of a chosen mortal. This is complete sensory immersion in whatever that mortal experiences, but it does not allow for control over the mortal’s body or mind reading of any kind. The mummy must be in the presence of the chosen mortal to activate this power, but the mortal can then travel anywhere away from the mummy’s presence. If the mortal is a cult member, this link can be established at any distance.





The mummy can see through her own senses at the same time, although her player might need to make a Resolve + Composure roll if both her character and the mortal target experience a lot of sensory overload at the same time. This could occur during something such as combat, with failure indicating either the loss of a Willpower point or her being shunted back into her own body/senses for a turn or two (Storyteller discretion).

Tier 2: With this tier, one can walk a mile in another's shoes. The Arisen mentally possesses a chosen mortal (the "horse"), essentially "riding him" like a Voudon loa or Candomblé Orixá. She can crudely control the mortal from afar, substituting her own Skills (not Attributes) when needed. For instance, if she possesses an old woman who isn't very good at throwing a punch, she can use her own Brawl Skill for the woman's. However, the control is crude and she suffers a -1 penalty when substituting Skills.

Tier 3: The Arisen can now so completely possess a chosen mortal target that she is effectively in two places at once. Her Skill substitutions suffer no dice penalty, and she can use Affinities and Utterances through the mortal, as if she were in the room. While the Arisen is in Duat, the mortal once again gains full control of his mind and body.

THE IMPALING HORN: UTTERANCES OF THE IRON BULL

These Utterances are "gifted" by the Iron Bull to the Arisen of O Corte Segredo, who serve it faithfully. These Utterances give the O Corte mummies special powers, but sometimes at a cost in depravity.

Although the members of O Corte Segredo don't know it yet, no Utterance learned from the Iron Bull can affect a mummy — for neither good nor ill — who has attained the state of Apotheosis. Although costs spent trying (Pillar or Willpower points, Sekhem dots, etc.) are lost in the attempt, the fact that the mummy expended them in vain becomes immediately and readily apparent upon first unleashing.

BAAL'S DUE

Tier 1: Ka • (Subtle); Tier 2: Sheut •••; Tier 3: Ba •••••

Tier 1: Just as the fire pits of Baal once consumed worthy sacrifices, so does the Arisen burn away that which is found wanting. At its most basic level, this Utterance requires the mummy herself be the one to sacrifice. By spending a dot of Sekhem she is in return bathed in a refining (if invisible to mystically blind eyes) fire, one that cleanses her body and soul of all impurities. Any unwanted supernatural effects presently affecting her are extinguished, and any poisons that might affect the body or mind are sweated out, making the

mummy's sahu shine like healthy human skin after a good run. An Arisen can only use this tier safely but once per scene; each additional time beyond the first costs an aggravated wound in addition to the dot of Sekhem.

Tier 2: At this tier, the Arisen can target another with her purifying flame. She points to someone within [Composure + Sheut] yards and her player rolls Presence + Occult + Sheut – [target's Supernatural Advantage rating or current Willpower, whichever is higher]. If successful, the mummy consigns that person's spirit to the flames of sacrifice. For most targets, the spirit fire tests their Morality and, if found wanting, burns it away. Such a target must make a roll as if against a Morality 1 sin, with a failure indicating the loss of a dot. Against a mummy target, the sacrificial flame instead burns away his defining Pillar or Remnant. The target must roll his defining Pillar/Remnant rating as a dice pool. Success means he loses two points of that Pillar; failure means he loses one dot in that Pillar, instead. Lost dots remain gone until the unleasher's current Descent ends, at which point lost dots reappear, leaving the target shaken but relieved. The unleasher can only successfully target a given mummy once per Descent with this tier, but multiple Arisen possessing this Utterance could of course target the same mummy with it.

Tier 3: A life for a life: that is the demand. The Arisen sacrifices a worthy life in return for her own life — that is, memories of her own life, restored to her now under the auspices of proper sacrifice. The degree of worthiness determines the degree of power. A significant animal life (cow, ox, horse, etc.) yields one dot of lost Memory (can't exceed normal maximum), while the life of a mortal restores up to two dots of lost Memory and/or dots of a lost Pillar (such as when lost to a Shuankhsen or to the previous tier), in any combination. These fatuous Pillars and Memory, however, are fleeting, lasting only as long as the character's next loss of Sekhem due to a bad Descent roll (only; other Sekhem losses don't count).

REJUVENATING FLESH

Tier 1: Ab •; Tier 2: Ka ••; Tier 3: Sheut ••••

Tier 1: By physically punishing a mortal or mummy subject, the user of this Utterance can regain spent Willpower points on a temporary basis. The preferred instrument is a flail, although one can substitute a whip, riding crop, or similar item designed to painfully slap or flagellate someone. This tier requires no unleashing roll, and returns to the mummy one spent Willpower point per blow, up to a maximum of her Ab rating in blows/points (although proper blows must inflict at least one point of lethal damage).

The reason the basis is temporary is that Willpower points restored through this Utterance only last for two hours per dot of Ab rating, disappearing after that time even if they have not been spent. For example, if a mummy with Ab



4 and Willpower 6 uses this tier while having only 3 Willpower points left to spend, she could give herself access to a full 6 Willpower. But if she hasn't spent any of the 3 gained through this Utterance within 8 hours, she returns to her prior level of Willpower 3 (assuming she hasn't regained Willpower another way in the meantime; if she has, she drops to that proper level instead). The mummy can only use this Utterance successfully once per day; any successive flailings she performs yield no Willpower points.

Tier 2: Over the course of a ritual lasting no fewer than 30 minutes, the Arisen crafts the flesh of another's body (voluntary or not), scarifying him. In return, she regains temporary Pillar points in the same manner as she regains Willpower points in the first tier of this Utterance, one point per point of lethal damage inflicted on the victim. She can apply regained points to the Pillar(s) of her choice, up to a maximum of either her Ka rating or the victim's available lethal Health (once he starts taking aggravated damage, no further points can be gained), whichever is less.

These reaped Pillar points last for two hours per dot of her Ka rating, disappearing after that time even if she has not spent them. The mummy can only use this Utterance successfully once per Descent; any successive scarifications she performs yield no Pillar points.

Tier 3: The Arisen now becomes a vivisectionist of the living. She can remove organs from the body of a living mortal to harvest a temporary dot of Sekhem. Just where this Sekhem comes from is a mystery, since it does not normally reside in mortal organs. To succeed, the vivisectionist must remove at least three organs, even if doing so results in the death of the donor. Easy targets are appendixes, gall bladders, and one kidney or lung; the donor can survive their loss. However, this Utterance does not give the Arisen any medical knowledge; if she doesn't know how to perform surgery, she will inevitably kill the donor. What's more, she might kill him before all the organs have been extracted, preventing the harvest of Sekhem. She'd have to start over the next day with a fresh donor.

The harvested Sekhem point lasts for one day. The mummy can use this Utterance only once per day (even if the organ extraction is unsuccessful), and of course it requires at least a scene/hour to perform.

SCENT OF THE OASIS PALM

Tier 1: Ab • (Subtle); **Tier 2:** Ba •• (Subtle); **Tier 3:** Ren ••• (Subtle)

Tier 1: From the Arisen's sahu wafts an irresistible perfume, a scent hinting at a garden that never existed on this earth. The unleasher makes a Presence + Seduction + Ab roll against a single target, resisted by the target's Willpower or Sekhem (target's choice), and with no chance

roll permitted. If successful, a mortal target who inhales the perfume recognizes the Arisen as his true ideal of love, the very perfection of the ideal of the beloved. The stricken mortal is not so vain as to think he can have a real *relationship*-relationship with this divine avatar of Eros (after all, how can a god love a mortal?), but he would certainly do almost anything to earn the attention and favor of the resplendent Arisen, and attempt just about any deed to win her good graces.

When a mummy uses this tier to enchant and enthrall a fellow Arisen, success on the unleashing causes the target to effectively fall in love and/or lust with the Arisen (with degree of success mattering and deriving from the success of the roll). The target Arisen wants to be with her, and depending on the roll, might become mildly obsessed with her. He will willingly do what it takes to convince the object of his affection to adore him back, and will risk danger to prevent his love from coming to harm.

Regardless of whether the target is a mortal or an Arisen, the effect only truly ends when the caster decides to end it, or when the target's soul changes fundamentally. In other words, the next time he loses one or more dots of Morality/Memory. If this happens to an Arisen, that mummy can never again be the target of this tier from that particular unleasher; the love spell is broken forever, and with possible negative consequences. If this happens to a mortal, however, the unleasher can conceivably try again later, to reinstitute the obsession, but future attempts suffer a cumulative -2 penalty to the roll.

Tier 2: The Arisen delivers a kiss, sealing a compact between kisser and kissed. The receiver cannot act against the kisser in any way: cannot attack her physically or conspire to harm her through indirect means (although he can still operate against her cult and its interests). As with the first tier, the recipient suffers this restriction until the kisser ends it or until loss of morality wipes the compact from his mind.

Tier 3: The Arisen now delivers two kisses to two different recipients, igniting a fierce and possessive jealousy in them. Each believes that the other stands in the way of his relationship with the kisser, and each will plot the other's downfall until only one remains standing or until one or both loses a dot of Memory/Morality, thereby forgetting the rivalry.

Unfortunately for the kisser, if one of the rivals ever defeats the other rival (by sending him into Duat), the kisser becomes in effect the winner's "trophy." She is now under the same effect that she herself delivered with the previous tier of this Utterance, with the winner being protected from her ire. This drawback ends when either party dies and/or loses a dot of Memory/Morality.





MUMMIES THE MUMMIES' TRUTH

The corporeal body of a victim dies because its ekatî, its life-giving spiritual vitalities, have been permanently removed by mystical missiles deliberately set in motion by the malicious intent of human breath.

— George Mentore, *In Darkness and Secrecy: The Anthropology of Assault Sorcery and Witchcraft in Amazonia*

The following story serves to introduce **Mummy** players to some of the conflicts taking place between Rio's Arisen and the cultists who are often chaff in the winds of their masters' stormy relationships. It assumes that the players aren't yet well ensconced in the sociopolitical landscape of Rio, so that other merets do not yet view them as either friend or foe. Storytellers who wish to use this story with more established characters should not find it hard to adapt; they'll simply need to find a different excuse in the Prelude for Aapep Medes' cultists to seek the players out.

This story also hints at the world of dark sorcery and shamanism stewing in the deep jungles of Brazil. Long ago, someone found a way to unite the hoary magic of lost Irem with the native spirits of the New World, not for healing or awareness, but to destroy the Judge's faithful chosen.

THE EVENT

The two merets of O Corte Segredo and the Orixás are not friendly. Bad blood stretches back to their first arrivals and their cults' involvements in human affairs constantly reinforce this, often at the expense of their rival meret's cultists. O Corte Segredo has deeply entwined themselves with the upper classes, while the Orixás rely on the lower-class residents of the favelas for worship and fervent service.

The simmering hatred between the merets manifests in cultic operations against one another, often disguised through mortal politics. When a favela falls, demolished to make way for wealthy housing, it could be simply the machinations of urban renewal — or it could be an O Corte Segredo-associated cult striking a blow against an Orixás mummy's interests.

Two mummies from these two merets have grown particularly vengeful against each other: Aapep Medes (O Corte Segredo) and Sacmist (Orixás). Their enmity is so extreme that their cults are under orders to attack their rivals on sight. Luckily, their members rarely have cause to go anywhere near each other, but when circumstances do bring them close a fight breaks out.

A strange twist has occurred that threatens to throw the balance toward Sacmist: Aapep Medes has succumbed to a mysterious spell that has stricken him unconscious and sent his soul beyond the reach of his cult. Worse, this occurred when Medes was alone in a favela populated by cultists of Sacmist. Their cult calls itself *Trovoada!* ("thunderclap"), the mortal enemies of Parlemento de Patriotas, Aapep Medes' cult. Desperate for help, Parlemento de Patriotas seeks the aid of Arisen who stand outside of the merets' war.

THE OUTSET VIEW

The spell that took down Aapep Medes is like nothing seen before: Medes' soul is not in his body and it is not in Duat. It is somewhere else, somewhere unknown. This should send a chill through any mummy's sahu. Who or what could do this? And could they use it any mummy?

The war between Aapep Medes and Sacmist could hinder the investigation into this greater threat, as each side seeks to defeat the other even when cooperation might be the wiser path. The player characters' position as outsiders to the conflict is to the advantage of all, even if most of the Arisen involved won't recognize it that way at first. How well they can maintain neutrality remains to be seen.

All the evidence of sorcery points to another Arisen. But who? Is it one of Aapep Medes' own meret? Another Orixá? The Red Sparrow? Or is there one of the Deceived on the scene?

THE TRUTH

The true threat does not come from the Arisen but a stew of Iremite sorcery and Amazonian shamanism, manifested in the form of a Greater Amkhat but wielded by that most ancient and powerful of human emotions: revenge.

A spurned and ruined bloodline of mortals that once served Aapep Medes has spent decades —generations, really — plotting and enacting their revenge. It begins with Aapep Medes but it will end only when all of O Corte Segredo, and any Arisen who stands in the way, is destroyed beyond even the reach of Duat.

The actors involved here are quite innocuous to all appearances: a little girl whose aging father and the poor worship as a saint. Through the small traveling church they have instituted, the ISP, or Igreja de Serpente Penas, they have grown a cult of followers who have no idea about their hidden agenda and the sorcery they use through the sacramental rites and ceremonies they host, all through the graces of ayahuasca, the famed psychoactive jungle drug.

Through the power of her family's Greater Amkhat, Dores has trapped Aapep Medes' soul in a spirit realm, magic that is alien to the Arisen. Her Amkhat is steadily devouring Medes' Sekhem. Dores believes that once all of it is gone, Medes will be destroyed, never to Return.

Any mummy trying to rescue Aapep Medes must enter this realm by drinking the ISP's ayahuasca brew. During this time, their souls journey to a dense jungle of mind and spirit while their bodies—like Medes'—are defenseless.

GETTING INVOLVED

The cultists of Parlemento de Patriotas are desperate. Their master is in the hands of their hated *Trovoada!* rivals and none of their rites can help him. They cannot go to O Corte Segredo for help; one of those mummies could well be behind this foul magic! While there is no evidence for this kind of backstabbing, it has always been clear that Aapep Medes isn't on the friendliest terms with his fellow meret members. Their alliance is one of shared interests, but considering some of the low morals exhibited by the meret, betrayal and trickery is certainly not beyond the pale.

The cult cannot turn to any of the other merets for help, and certainly not to the Red Sparrow, who would probably let their master perish before risking herself or any piece of her empire to rescue him. No, only outsider mummies will do, which means the player characters.

The cult approaches each of the player mummies' cults at once, promising to hand over part of their vast influence over the wealthy of Rio in return for desperately needed aid from their cults' masters. (This story assumes the Storyteller is using the Allied Dead framework, but it shouldn't be too hard to adapt it to a Rival Dead framework.)

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

The descriptions and stats for Aapep Medes and Sacmist can be found in Cariocas Eterno (pages 57 and 50, respectfully). Below is information on the ISP church and the malcontents who run it.

ISP: IGREJA DE SERPENTE PENAS (CHURCH OF THE FEATHERED SERPENT)

Also known as Santa Serpente Penas (The Lady of the Feathered Serpent).

Personae Cheat Sheet

Aapep Medes, the Alert Moon Snake: Member of O Corte Segredo. His sorcerous affliction is the motivating factor in this story. His cult calls itself Parlemento de Patriotas, a conspiracy of wealthy civic leaders.

Sacmist, the Prince of Storms: Member of the Orixás. His hatred of Aapep Medes threatens the investigation into the dangerous sorcery used against Medes, even though it seems that Medes might be only the first of many to fall to this spell. His cult is called *Trovoada!*, and is made up of favela dwellers who worship him as the Orixá Xangô.

Dores Ximenes, the Sautina ("Little Saint"): A young girl faith healer of the ISP *vegetalismo* cult. She is secretly the master of Arara Pûera, the Greater Amkhat.

Gustavo Ximenes: Dores' father. He believes he is the master of Arara Pûera, a ruse used by Dores and the Amkhat to draw Arisen attacks toward the wrong target.



The ISP is an ayahuasca cult, similar to the União do Vegetal or Santo Daime, but much smaller. Ayahuasca, the “vine of the soul” or the “vine of death,” is a psychedelic brew traditionally made by jungle shamans throughout South America. Brazilian Indians also refer to it as Yage. Its key ingredient, the *Banisteriopsis Caapi* bark, contains *dimethyltryptamine* (DMT), a powerful psychoactive that on its own induces intense otherworldly visions for very short periods. The ayahuasca brew, containing a number of additional ingredients, provides a unique, longer lasting psychedelic “trip.” In many cases, users encounter a feminine jungle goddess known as Mother Ayahuasca.

Brazil has of late become a popular destination for “psychedelic tourism.” Westerners come seeking ayahuasca experiences guided by traditional shamans (and some not so traditional). For many seekers, it’s just for mind expansion, but others come for relief from psychological trauma and/or substance addiction, with Post-traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) being a common ailment. Ayahuasca has proven curiously effective for some of these problems, spurring some in the United States to lobby for more study and for the legalization of the drug.

Ayahuasca is used as a key sacrament in a number of *vegetalismo* religions, most of them Catholic with an animistic overlay. The ISP is the reverse: while ostensibly a syncretic form of Catholic Christianity, it is clear to anyone who is deep in the cult that the Christian forms are surface only, designed to help the cult draw in and integrate new members. The beating heart of the cult is spirit worship.

SAUTINHA, THE LITTLE SAINT

The charismatic ISP cult is built around reverence for a modern-day saint, a young girl faith healer named Dores Ximenes, the cult’s “little saint.” As small child, she was visited by a beautiful goddess she called Serpente Penas. The goddess told Dores how to open herself to God, so that she could channel His healing to the suffering faithful who ingest the sacred brew, ayahuasca. Her followers gather to partake of the drug, which opens their “channels” so that Dores can look into their spiritual bodies, identify their sickness, and then attempt to root it out with physical gestures.

THE SERPENT IN THE GARDEN

Serpente Penas isn’t just an entheogenic hallucination. She’s a Greater Amkhat, a hybrid of an anaconda, jaguar, and macaw. Her actual name is Arara Püera, “evil bird” in the indigenous Tupi language.

Dores’ father, Gustavo, is Arara Püera’s master, a role he inherited from his father, the creator of the Amkhat. Young Dores will likewise become master once her father is gone. Unknown to Gustavo, however, Dores is already the Amkhat’s master. She allows her father to believe that he is in control, but she is the ultimate arbiter of their fates.

FALL OF THE HOUSE OF XIMENES

Patrício Ximenes was a member of the lesser nobility of the Portuguese empire. He ran afoul of political enemies and was systematically left penniless in his family’s plantation in Brazil’s northeast. His main nemesis was Jorge Tavares, one of Aapep Medes’ cultists. Patrício was only a new inductee into the *Parlemento de Patriotas* cult, hoping to work his way up, when he was betrayed and ruined. His revenge, however, would be epic. Instead of simply aiming it at Jorge, he would destroy what Jorge revered most: his mummy master.

Patrício spent what remained of his family funds to research the dread rite needed to create an Amkhat, the intended vehicle of his revenge. A mysterious benefactor contacted him, dropping clues to the location of an ancient scroll buried deep in the Amazonian jungle. Patrício never met his benefactor or ever discovered his (or her) identity, but the clues proved fruitful, leading Patrício, after a grueling trek that cost the lives of three of his hired porters, to a carved-stone ruin hidden underneath centuries of overgrowth.

Inside he found the scroll, written — as he later realized, after much research — in Punic, the language of ancient Carthage. It was curious enough that such a relic would be hidden in the jungles of Brazil, many centuries ago, from a time clearly before the European arrivals. More curious, however, was the fact that it was clearly written not in Carthage but in South America. It refers to vast jungles, unique plants (among them, Patrício realized, ayahuasca), and animals that could only be jaguars, macaws, and anacondas. In other words, someone centuries ago who could write fluently in Punic had produced this scroll and hidden it in an ancient temple designed to outlast the roots and vines of the jungle.

The identity of the scroll’s author was beyond Patrício’s ability to ascertain, but the contents of the scroll could be understood, after much study. The scroll described a grueling, bloody ritual that would produce a magical creature to act as the magician’s servitor, the Greater Amkhat.

Unknown to Patrício, the power behind the rite was a strange mix of Iremite magic and shamanic lore from a long-forgotten Amazonian tribe, producing a unique Amkhat unlike any conceived of in older rites. This creature had spirit powers that allowed it congress with the other side of the veil that separates the material and immaterial



worlds; powers that could prove quite confusing and vexing to a mummy.

(The scroll's author might well have been Chatuluka, or it could have been an as-yet-unknown mummy or cultist who serves the mysterious person who is now keeping Chatuluka captive. See Chatuluka's description on p. 66.)

The Amkhat did eventually kill Jorge, but by that time, Patricio was dead and Gustavo was master. Gustavo was wilier. He knew that the Amkhat's power was best hidden and used judiciously. If mummies were to become aware of the creature, they would hunt it down. So he keeps a low profile and hides his Amkhat behind the ruse of the ISP, until he can enact his family's true revenge, not just the destruction of Aapep Medes but of all O Corte Segredo. Toward this end, he intends ultimately to feed his Amkhat with the Iron Bull relic.

GUSTAVO HIMENES

Quotes: *"Isn't my daughter lovely? She walks with God."*

Background: Gustavo's entire life has been consumed with the purpose inculcated into him by his father Patricio: vendetta. He has been more patient than his father but no less consumed by the project. His great pride is his daughter, who will continue the crusade once he is gone. His life goal is to destroy Aapep Medes, but he knows it cannot end there. Dores will take the battle to the rest of the abominations from beyond death, and her children will likewise continue the war.

Gustavo is the pastor of the ISP church. He is very accomplished at attracting the curious and keeping them in their seats as his daughter performs her faith healings.

Gustavo believes that he is the Amkhat's master, his inheritance from his father. Dores has secretly taken control. If he were to ever discover this, it would break his heart — but not his resolve. The family mission is everything. The betrayal would hurt him beyond words but it would change nothing. Aapep Medes and all his cohorts must die... forever.

Abilities:

Preaching (• • • • •)

DORES HIMENES ("SAUTINHA")

Quotes: *"You cannot see the truth with your eyes. You must wear new eyes, the eyes of the serpent. Drink, and be saved."*

Background: Dores once fervently believed in God and the righteous path He had set her family upon. All the lies and magic tricks she has had to perform to fool the masses so that she and her father could build their

church, their stepping-stone to revenge, were necessary and could in no way tarnish her soul. But the Voice has caused her to doubt her father's limited end goal.

The Voice whispered to her from the wind one night when she was resting from a faith healing at her church. While the congregants sat locked into their ayahuasca journeys, she heard the rattling voice from afar. She left the tin shack, seeking its source, and soon realized it was in her head. It was, it said, the Source, the person behind the scroll's magic — the scroll that had empowered her family to seek revenge against their mummy malefactor.

Following the urging of the Voice, Dores began keeping things from her father, and she did what Gustavo never dared: she read the scroll. She searched over years throughout Patricio's old, decaying manor for the place where he hid the scroll that allowed him to create Arara Püera. She finally found it hidden behind a loose stone at the bottom of a dry well. Besides the details for the grisly ceremonies required to make the Amkhat (and there can only ever be one in existence at a time), it included a coda with a spell for transferring control over the creature, so long as the new owner was part of the creator's bloodline.

The Voice told her that Gustavo must believe that he was still master. That way, none would suspect that Dores was the true chief. The Voice slowly, over time and with gentle cajoling, convinced Dores that Patricio and Gustavo's goals were too shortsighted. O Corte Segredo was but one meret of mummies among many. Chop them down and more would surely take their place. No, Dores must pursue a different agenda: the destruction of all of Rio's Arisen, through the poisoning of the Fountains of Ma'at.

Dores does not yet know how to accomplish this goal. The first step, according to the Voice, is to destroy Aapep Medes and any Arisen who tries to intervene. When she succeeds, the Voice will reveal the next step of the puzzle.

Abilities:

Faith healing (• • • • •) (this is just psychological, not biological, but it can have some dramatic effects in the lives of the healed)

Pleading for her life (• • • • •) (Dores can weep convincingly to evoke pity in those who wish her harm, causing them to stay their hand with second thoughts; this is not mystical and won't work on mummies—something she doesn't know yet)

SERPENTE PENAS (ARARA PÜERA, "EVIL BIRD," GREATER AMKHAT)

Nobody knows who created the scroll that described the rite necessary for creating this unique Amkhat, a fusion of Iremite sorcery and Amazonian dark shamanism.



His or her identity is unimportant to this story. It is for the Storyteller to discover, although as hinted earlier, it could be Chatuluka (p. 66) or a sinister Rio mummy still to be revealed.

Because this Amkhat draws upon powers normally alien to mummies, it poses a unique risk to them while also exposing them to some of the strange corners of the Chronicles of Darkness, namely the spirit world and its animalistic denizens.

It bears the head and wings of a blue macaw, the body of an anaconda, and the two front limbs of a jaguar. In

Amkhata game terms, its frame is serpent-bodied, its head is macaw-bodied (treat as falcon-headed), and its limbs are jaguar- and macaw-derived (Functioning Wings, Lion's Claws, Serpent's Tooth). Its heart is full of Amazonian wasps (treat as bee-hearted).

It has the power to step (fly, actually) from the material world into a spirit realm tied to its own essence, and vice versa. It costs a point of Willpower per journey either way. See the story, below, for more details on this spirit realm.

Concept: Unique Amkhat

Attributes: Intelligence 1, Wits 4, Resolve 2; Strength 4, Dexterity 3, Stamina 3; Presence 3, Manipulation 0, Composure 3

Skills: Athletics 2, Brawl 3, Stealth 2, Survival 3

Willpower: 7

Initiative: 8

Defense: 4

Speed: 11

Size: 5

Weapons/Attacks:

Type	Damage	Dice Pool
Claws	2(L)	
Bite	3(L)	
Venom	2(L)	Automatic to anyone who suffered damage from its bite. If the victim is in the material world, he will suffer a temporary coma that sends his soul to the Amkhat's spirit realm for 10 turns, minus one turn per point of Willpower.

Grapple 0(L)

Health: 8

PRIGOVIDI THE PUGA

MENTAL • PHYSICAL • SOCIAL --

OVERVIEW

The player characters are woken by their cults (or, if already awake, they are alerted by their cults' leaders). An emissary from another Arisen's cult, the Parlemento de Patriotas, has come in desperation, pleading for the Arisen character's aid.

Aapep Medes, the emissary's master, has been felled by strange sorcery and his body is being held captive by a rival cult. He cannot trust his master's own meret, O Corte Segredo. ("They are degenerates. All of them!") A third party, neutral to Rio's Arisen rivalries, is called for.

Time is of the essence. The rival cult, *Trovoada!*, is awakening their master, Sacmist. If he reaches Aapep Medes' body before the players do, it will be much harder to retrieve Medes.

In return for the Arisens' aid, the emissary promises that Parlemento de Patriotas will hand over deeds and contracts to land, businesses, and mortals in key positions of influence. They are willing to give up substantial portions of their power to get their master back. He also makes it clear that fellow members of Parlemento de Patriotas are even now approaching other Arisen — the player characters' meret, assuming they are established as a group — with the same offer.

For some Arisen, this is surely weak sauce. Where's the relic? Being woken up for anything less than a relic to return to Duat is unworthy, and might lead to an angry rebuttal, resulting in a dead Parlemento de Patriotas emissary.

How the player handles the interview with the Emissary determines just how much extra he can get out of him before accepting the proposal. (Rejecting the proposal means this story won't happen for that Arisen. Perhaps if one or more fellow meret members accept, she'll rethink her decision.)

DESCRIPTION

(On first arising)

You rise from your deathless slumber, drawn back from the nether regions beyond life. An unknown man stands beside your cult leader, bent on one knee, head bowed. He speaks with a quavering voice, begging you to help him, to save his master from a terrible fate. His master... Aapep Medes.

Threads of memory come together. Medes... an Arisen of the O Corte Segredo meret, one of the prominent rulers of parts of Rio.

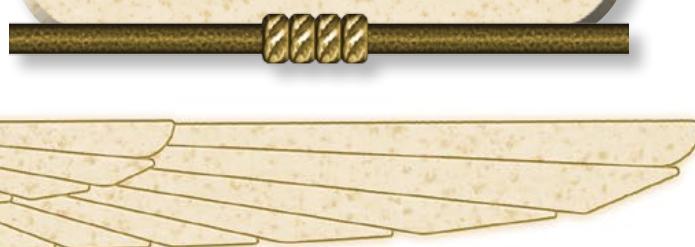
You were woken for this?! To aid a stranger? Drawn back into life to help one who could not help himself? The impudence!

The question arises: Should you destroy this sniveling worm now or wait to hear him out?

The Decaying Empire

Parlemento de Patriotas is a Conspiracy cult of the rich for conspiring against the poor, and following the iron law of its master, Aapep Medes, of course. Its Reach is 4 and its Grasp is also 4. The cult is offering the player characters a piece of the action. This translates to giving each of their cults 1 Reach or 1 Grasp, at the cost of Parlemento de Patriotas' own traits. (Up to a maximum of 8, of course; that's all it has.) Aapep Medes' cultists are willing to give up much of the keys of the kingdom to rescue their master.

(Aapep Medes will, of course, be furious about this if he is indeed rescued. He cannot reverse the transfer of contacts and assets, but he will probably kill a number of the cult leaders in angry retribution.)





(If already awake)

You might know very little about Aapep Medes or his meret, or you might hate him and what he stands for. Regardless, it is certainly a curious situation to have his cult come begging to you. This demands consideration, if only to satisfy this mortal emissary's image of you as a being to be feared.

(Interrogating the emissary)

The character's reaction determines the emissary's actions, whether he provides more information or offers a sweeter reward. See Actions, below, for the manner in which the character can elicit more concessions.

(Upon accepting the offer)

The emissary is profusely thankful, and asks the Arisen to meet with his meret before entering the territory of his enemy cult. Strength in numbers is best.

STORYTELLER GOALS

Ideally, you'll run this Prelude for each of your players separately, so that each does not know the outcome of the other players' Preludes.

Your goal is to get the characters to accept the emissary's offer at face value: rescue Aapep Medes in return for a portion of Parlemento de Patriotas' Reach and/or Grasp ratings. If necessary, the emissary will explain that the spell which affects his master is mysterious and poses a threat to all Arisen. Someone needs to investigate and neutralize this threat before it takes down more Arisen.

If the players press for more information and/or rewards, the emissary has been trained to make any concession whatsoever seem like a monumental giveaway, something for which he himself will be punished and/or killed by his master. "Please don't ask for more! I am but a powerless servant, begging on my knees!"

CHARACTER GOALS

Make it worth your time to have been awakened. Perhaps the emissary's base offer is enough. The situation certainly is unusual and offers something besides a relic quest. Or perhaps you want more. If so, demand it.

ACTIONS

There are a number of ways the newly awakened Arisen can deal with the Parlemento de Patriotas emissary:

Punish/kill him or her:

A physical attack will almost certainly kill the poor person outright, or at least cripple whoever it is. For

this reason, a junior emissary waits in the next chamber. Parlemento de Patriotas expected just such a reaction, and their primary emissaries to each player character know fully well that their missions might be a form of suicide. The cult hopes that once the Arisen's anger cools, the junior emissary can make another plea.

The junior emissary begins discussion at a distinct disadvantage; he or she will immediately volunteer the information that would normally have required a simple success on an interrogation of the primary emissary (see below).

Interrogate him or her:

An interrogation demanding more information requires a minor Social challenge.

Dice Pool: Manipulation + Persuasion or Presence + Intimidation

Action: Instant

Hindrances: None. Even if the mummy was already awake, he still scares the emissary.

Help: If the player has his character's cult member(s) threaten the emissary, such as by holding a sword to the throat or neck, he gains a +1 dice bonus to his roll.

Dramatic Failure: The emissary is already beyond desperate and has revealed far more than he has any right to. He has put all his cards on the table.

Failure: The emissary tells just the basics, what was outlined above. He says that Aapep Medes can surely provide more information, once he has been rescued.

Success: The emissary reveals that Aapep Medes was searching for a relic that was unearthed in a construction site, some item he once owned long ago.

Exceptional Success: Aapep Medes was seeking a pair of old bronze manacles, a relic of his from the past. In addition, O Corte Segredo has a relic of some sort that its members guard jealously, causing them to distrust one another.

Demand more reward:

The player character can scoff at the offer of aid to his cult (see The Decaying Empire sidebar) and demand something more. This requires a Social challenge to convince the emissary to increase the reward or a Physical challenge to threaten him into doing so.

Dice Pool: Manipulation + Persuasion or Subterfuge, or Strength + Intimidation

Action: Instant

Hindrances: None

Help: If the player has his character's cult member(s) threaten the emissary, such as by holding a sword to his

throat or neck, he gains a +1 dice bonus to his Physical challenge, but -1 if he's attempting a Social challenge.

Dramatic Failure: The emissary has nothing to offer but his life.

Failure: The emissary is simply not empowered to offer anything more. Perhaps once the wise Arisen has proven helpful, Aapep Medes will offer an additional reward?

Success: The emissary reluctantly offers one of Aapep Medes' personal relics. The Storyteller can make up any relic he wants; it's not important to this story. Hopefully, not all the players will demand a relic (there is only one relic to give); if so, it will be promised to multiple players, who will have to determine among themselves which one of them gets it.

Exceptional Success: The emissary promises not only the relic that comes with a simple success but also a

chance to see O Corte Segredo's Iron Bull relic (once this story has been completed).

CONSEQUENCES

The Arisen should now meet with their meret and then convene in the favela where Aapep Medes' body is being held. Once they confer with their fellows, they might discover that one or more of them learned additional information or extracted promises of better rewards. If this causes some internal strife within the meret or anger at Parlemento de Patriotas, that's fine — so long as it doesn't halt the story. The player has already accepted the terms and conditions, and it would be churlish to stop the rescue operation to renegotiate now. Besides, any further delay will only cause further complications, in the form of an awakened Sacmist.





CHAPTER ONE - THE BODY

MENTAL • PHYSICAL • SOCIAL

OVERVIEW

The player meret travels to Mata Machado favela to negotiate with Sacmist's cult to retrieve Aapep Medes' body.

Parlemento de Patriotas knows where the body is being held. They already tried their own sortie to get it back, but the rival cult forced them to retreat. They know that leaders of the *Trovoada!* cult have been dispatched to the Cidade De Deus (City of God) to awaken their master, Sacmist. He will certainly rush to Mata Machado to personally claim his hated rival's unconscious body. But what will he do with it? It's imperative that the players get

the body first. It's one thing to deal with cultists, another to deal with a highly martial mummy like Sacmist.

This is a ticking clock for the players. Parlemento de Patriotas estimates that they have maybe two hours (from the time they awoke the players' characters) until Sacmist will arrive. They have members watching the entries to Mata Machado, as well as the eastern exits from the City of God, in the hope they can give advance warning (via cell phone).

Sacmist's cult, *Trovoada!*, is wary, expecting another sortie from Parlemento de Patriotas. They fear one or more O Corte Segredo mummies might arrive, who they



have been trained to recognize. They are not expecting the players' characters.

But besides all that, there is something *wrong* with Aapep Medes. His body feels wrong. The cult refuses to be in the same room with his body, but continues to guard the entries. They found Medes unconscious in the lower levels of their favela. They captured him for their master, but it is now clear that he is not merely unconscious or in Duat — his soul has left his body and evil forces lurk near it.

DESCRIPTION

Favela do Mata Machado is a rather vertical, tightly packed favela climbing up a tall hill near the Tijuca Forest. According to Parlemento de Patriotas, Aapep Medes' body is being held in a house toward the top of the hill. This is the residence of one of the local leaders of *Trovoada!*, a soccer coach who is paid by the sports teams to seek out and train fresh talent from the favela's children. Cult members currently guard it on all sides.

A guide from Parlemento de Patriotas can lead the players' characters within a few blocks of the house, but she cannot approach closer without being recognized.

The house is rather simple: two stories, with about three large rooms per level. Aapep Medes' body is in the upper story, toward the rear.

The player meret can either talk their way in or fight. It would be very hard to sneak in, certainly requiring Affinities and/or Utterances, or some other type of supernatural aid.

STORYTELLER GOALS

Keep up the tension with the ticking clock. This could go easy so long as Sacmist doesn't arrive. If necessary, have Parlemento de Patriotas text the characters' cell phones with hysterical updates, such as "Sacmist has already left City of God!" and "He's in the favela!"

Whether through guile or force, the scene ends once the meret reaches Aapep Medes' body. *Trovoada!* will not enter the room with the mummies.

CHARACTER GOALS

Get to Aapep Medes' body. There are a lot of cultists to deal with. Choose negotiation or force.

ACTIONS

Negotiation:

The meret can convince the cult to let them see Medes' body. They can do so through threat ("You cannot withstand us."), parley ("We will offer a favor to your

master in return for admittance to the body."), professing neutrality ("We are neutral to your cults' conflicts. We are only here to examine the foul magic at work."), or whatever other method they choose.

It's best to just roleplay this out, but rolls can support, advance, or hinder the effort.

Dice Pool: Presence + Intimidation (threat), Manipulation + Persuasion (parley), or Intelligence + Politics (truly neutral) or Subterfuge (lying about neutrality)

Action: Instant, although more than one roll might be required (one outside, one inside)

Hindrance: If one or more of the players is a known enemy of Sacmist or the Orixás, or a known friend of O Corte Segredo, levy a -1 to -3 dice penalties on any roll (except for threats), depending on the severity of the act.

Help: If one or more of the players is a known ally of Sacmist or the Orixás, award a +1 to +2 dice bonus to any roll.

Dramatic Failure: Enemy! The meret is a threat to the cult and must be kept out under all circumstances. The cultist will either immediately attack or assume defensive positions.

Failure: The meret is refused entry and is told to leave.

Trovoada! Guards

Attributes: Intelligence 2, Wits 2, Resolve 2; Strength 2, Dexterity 3, Stamina 3; Presence 3, Manipulation 2, Composure 3

Skills: Athletics 2, Brawl 2, Firearms 1, Streetwise 3, Subterfuge 2

Willpower: 5

Initiative: 5

Defense: 2

Speed: 8

Size: 5

Weapons/Attacks:

Type	Damage	Dice Pool
Pistol	2(L)	4
AK-47	4(L)	4
Punch	0(B)	4

Health: 8





Success: The meret is allowed to see the body. This does *not* allow them to leave with it, just to see it.

Exceptional Success: The meret is immediately ushered into the room with the body and the cult vacates the house, letting them do what they want — until their master arrives.

Force:

The Arisen can fight their way through the cult. The outer forces fall fairly easily, with some tougher resistance from inside the house, but ultimately these are just low-level, not quite well-trained cultists. They're not drug warriors or even the capoeira fighters that Sacmist prefers (those are mostly in the City of God, near Sacmist's tomb). Assume there are about three cultists per player character. Most arrive armed with pistols, but some have assault rifles.

Note that when Sacmist arrives, he is accompanied by reinforcements from his cult, and these ones know how to fight (both in hand-to-hand and with guns) and are well armed. Use the same traits given in the sidebar but add the following traits: +1 Strength, Dexterity, and Resolve, +2 to Brawl and Firearms.

CONSEQUENCES

The players' characters gain entry to the room with the body, advancing to Scene Two. Depending on how well they did with trying to beat the clock, they can have the whole following scene uninterrupted, or Sacmist arrives just as they enter (forcing them to contend with a newly risen mummy who will not let them to steal his prize).



CHAPTER ELEVEN - STING OF RUT

MENTAL -- PHYSICAL ... SOCIAL -

OVERVIEW

Aapep Medes' body lies on a table, his arms crossed over his chest, his eyes closed. A strange feeling — a dread feeling — seems to emanate from it, almost palpably. Strong as it is, this sensation is detectable only by mummies, although the cultists have an instinctual sense of it.

Careful examination of the corpse reveals a snakebite wound, still leaking some venom. This is the moment Aapep Medes' attacker has been waiting for: a room full of precious Sekhem.

The wound explodes with a swarm of Amazonian wasps — lesser Amkhata — rushing at the player characters.

DESCRIPTION

(Entering the room)

The room is dark. The windows have been covered. The oppressive heat of the favela is even worse in this stale space.

The cultists at least have placed Aapep Medes in a dignified posture for his strange sleep. Before anyone can take a step farther into the room, everybody feels it... a shiver in the Sekhem, an almost nauseous feeling, a scentless stench of offal. A shroud of dread emanates

from the body, as if it was an actual substance the body gives off, a wind drifting from some unseen place.

(Approaching the body)

Aapep Medes looks rather drained of Sekhem, although (according to what his cult claims) he has been awake for only a week.

There is a wound on his forearm; two large puncture holes, seeping a black liquid.

STORYTELLER GOALS

It's simple: let the wasps cause some havoc. They certainly won't devastate the meret, but they should serve to let them know that Amkhata are involved, which likely means there is a master somewhere.

CHARACTER GOALS

Find some clue to what ails Aapep Medes; and avoid the wasps causing too much damage!

ACTIONS

The players can attempt to examine the body, either physically or searching for more occult signs. Only two characters can make rolls in the same turn (more cannot get close enough to the body at the same time), and only one turn is allowed before the wasps spring forth, interrupting any further exam.

Physical exam of the body:

Dice Pool: Intelligence + Medicine

Action: Instant

Hindrance: None

Help: None

Dramatic Failure: Before the body can even be observed, wasps spring from the wound and attack.

Failure: The snakebite wound is fresh but appears to be normal, nothing unusual about it.

Sacmist's Guests

If Sacmist arrived (because the players delayed too long — entirely the Storyteller's call), he admits them into the room but will not let them touch the body. Only he will examine it, getting a face full of wasps first as they escape the wound and rush at all the mummies.



Serpent Wasps

These are a bizarre hybrid of Amazonian wasp and snake. The stats are for a swarm, not per individual insect of the swarm. There are four separate swarms. (If there are more player characters than swarms, those farthest from the body are free from attack.)

These lesser Amkhata cannot drain Sekhem from Arisen. They exist as a byproduct of the terrible spell that afflicts Aapep Medes, and would fade away in a day anyway, regardless of the characters' actions here.

Blunt weapons (fists, bats) can smash the swarm, but thin cutting weapons (knives, swords) will do no significant harm. Bullets are useless, unless released in a full-auto spray.

Attributes: Wits 1, Strength 1, Dexterity 5, Stamina 2

Skills: Brawl 3

Willpower: 1

Initiative: 5

Defense: 5

Speed: 24

Size: 2

Weapons/Attacks:

Type	Damage	Dice Pool
------	--------	-----------

Sting	1(L)	8
-------	------	---

Venom	2(B)	Automatic with sting. Victim must roll Stamina + Resolve or suffer -1 dice penalty from the unholy pain (even sahus that otherwise feel no pain feel this)
-------	------	--

Health: 4



Success: Something is moving beneath the wound. +1 on rolls to defend against the wasps' first turn of attack.

Exceptional Success: Something is moving beneath the wound and a faint buzzing sound can be heard coming from inside it. The character gains initiative against the wasps and can act before they do.

Mystical exam of the body:

Dice Pool: Intelligence + Occult

Action: Instant

Hindrance: None

Help: None

Dramatic Failure: Before the body can even be observed, wasps spring from the wound and attack.

Failure: The source of dread feeling cannot be pinpointed, although the wound seems the likely culprit.

Success: Aapep Medes should be awake. There is no occult reason discernable why he should be in a coma. A strange, very subtle miasma emanates from Aapep Medes' mouth. It appears he ingested some form of supernatural poison. Perhaps it is this, not the snakebite, which has ejected his soul from his body.

Exceptional Success: The same information as with a success, but the character also has the distinct sense of some being or creature existing just beyond the corner of her eyesight watching her. If she has had previous experience with the spirit world, she will intuit that this creature is a spirit.

CONSEQUENCES

The cult (assuming the meret didn't kill them all to get to Medes' body) will no longer resist the meret if they want to remove the body. The appearance of the lesser Amkhata has spooked them greatly. They don't want such a dangerous thing near their master. Even if they were all outside when the wasps appeared, they still heard them.

They will reveal what they never would have told the players before: the location where they found Aapep Medes' body and the story of how he came to be here.

- Aapep Medes was found unconscious in an alley in the favela behind the church tent of the Igreja de Serpente Penas (ISP). This traveling church has temporarily set up in a small open field in the favela. They are only here for one more night before moving on. The cult provides directions.
- The cult had been spying on Medes since he showed up near another one of their territories, the Vila Autodromo favela, abutting the new construction of the Olympic Park. He interrogated the construction site's supervisor and left, angry. A cult member asked the supervisor about the incident and was told the man had been looking for an archaeological artifact that the dig had unearthed, a pair of manacles from the slave trade days. But the supervisor did not know what had become of the artifact.
- The cult lost sight of Medes and was surprised to find him in their own backyard, although trapped in his strange coma.



The meret can take Aapep Medes to a place of their choosing, or they can let the Parlemento de Patriotas have him. The cult will take him back to his tomb. At this point, they have little strength to prevent the meret from coming along (they'll simply need to devise a new tomb later). But they beg the meret to instead investigate the ISP, the only lead they have to what might have happened to their master.

(If Sacmist is there)

If Sacmist arrived before the scene began, he will not surrender the body. But he will relent and admit that this mystery is a threat to him and all the Arisen. He tells the meret that if they can free Medes from the spell, he will release him.

He wants them to investigate the ISP. He will remain with Medes' body.

(If the meret delays, Sacmist arrives)

If the players spend too much time investigating the body, Sacmist will arrive and demand to know what has happened. His reaction will be the same as above: he keeps the body but asks the meret to investigate.

It is possible to get into a fight with Sacmist (and his cult reinforcements), but this isn't even what Sacmist wants, not once he sees Medes' body and realizes that there is something very strange going on.



CHIMICHURRI - CULTIC REVIVAL

MENTAL --

PHYSICAL •

SOCIAL •

OVERVIEW

The ISP holds a service for favela residents in the tent they have erected in an open field. It attracts mainly the ailing and the elderly, all of them seeking healing. Any and all are welcome to join the sermon and worship portion, but only those who are willing to partake of the ayahuasca brew can stay for the actual ceremony.

Gustavo, the ISP preacher, tells the congregants about his daughter, Dores, the "little saint." He then passes a cup with the church's special brew.

DESCRIPTION

They've raised a revival tent in a field where grass tries to reclaim the land from the cracked concrete. A house once stood here, but it was taken down a few years ago to make way for a cable car stop that was never built.

From all directions, favela residents arrive and enter the open flap of the tent. Most of them are old, moving slowly and clutching canes or leaning on younger relatives. Many are clearly ill, suffering from many of the maladies of poverty, including malnutrition and obesity alike. They are welcomed and shown to the makeshift pews of plastic chairs by the church ushers, young men and women dressed all in white.

Young boys and girls, also dressed in white, fan out through the nearby streets, handing out flyers for the church services. When anyone accepts a flyer, the child grasps their hand and attempts to lead them into the tent.

Once half of the seats have been filled, the preacher appears. Like his faithful attendants, he is also dressed in white, and beams at the crowd, his yellowing teeth marring an otherwise bright display. He introduced himself as Gustavo Ximenes, the father of Dores. When he speaks her name, many in the crowd cheer or sigh, clearly fans of this girl.

Gustavo explains that Dores will not be with them tonight (there are many cries of consternation from the crowd), that she is preparing for the church's most holy event of the year, to take place tomorrow night at the amphitheater on Morro da Urca, the small mountain right beneath Sugarloaf Mountain.

He begins a sermon of warmed-over Christian scripture and hymns, mixed with praise for Mother Ayahuasca and the Santa Serpente Penas, the Lady of the Feathered Serpent, the patron saint of the ISP, the angel who watches over Dores.

He then announces that it is time for the sacrament. He asks that any who do not wish to partake of the brew to please leave now. It is very important for the spiritual energy that only those who drink the sacrament stay in the room, along with the trained church attendants.

When they pass around the brew, they expect the player characters to drink it. Those who do not are asked to leave. They will not pass around the brew to the rest of the congregants until the unbelievers leave. Those waiting for the brew will berate the recalcitrant ones until they are driven out of the tent.

Those Arisen characters who drink the brew advance to Scene Two—Strange Brew. Those (if any) who do not drink instead play out Scene Two (A)—Manhunt.

STORYTELLER GOALS

Depict the church as a rather banal tent revival. There's nothing sinister or suspicious here. The sacrament is certainly unusual, but it is not unknown in South America.

Once the ayahuasca is taken, however, the facade drops (in Scene Two).

CHARACTER GOALS

Figure out how in the world a church like this has anything to do whatsoever with Aapep Medes' condition. This means experiencing it the way a parishioner would: by taking the sacrament.

ACTIONS

While the proceeding go on, the sermons, the hymns, an occasional testimonial from an audience member the players' characters can be keenly watching and searching for any sign of the abnormal or any clue about Aapep Medes.

Search for telltale signs or clues:

Dice Pool: Intelligence + Investigation

Action: Instant

Hindrance: If the character has done something to annoy or anger the church acolytes or parishioners, subtract one die due to their guardedness.

Help: If the character volunteers a testimonial about the healing she seeks, this causes others to drop their guard around her. +1 die.

Dramatic Failure: There's something sinister with the churchgoers. They are probably cultists, not innocent favela residents. (Not true.)

Failure: This appears to be what it is: a rather odd but banal tent revival, with a psychedelic drug.

Success: The preacher (Gustavo) is hiding something; he appears to be on to you. You're sure he is going out of his way not to meet the eyes of you or your fellow Arisen.

Exceptional Success: The preacher (Gustavo) briefly, for a scant second, drops his facade and stares daggers of malice at you.

Search for the supernatural:

Certain Affinities can reveal that the ayahuasca brew is not normal.

- The Enlightened Senses Affinity reveals that the brew is somehow touched with spirit energy, something snakelike.
- The Godsight Affinity reveals the image and scent of a steamy jungle and the sliding scales of a giant anaconda, and an intuited sense that the brew is a portal or gateway to a different state of reality.

CONSEQUENCES

Once an Arisen drinks the brew, her consciousness is catapulted into a unique spirit realm. Her body slumps in its seat, unconscious, while her mind experiences a different reality. Go directly to Scene Two (A) — Strange Brew.

This is an effect unique to Arisen. Mortals experience a "normal" ayahuasca brew. In an hour or so, they'll vomit (and/or suffer diarrhea) and then experience a few hours of an intense psychedelic experience, unique to each individual.

CHIMICHURRI TWO SODA - STRAWBERRY BROWN

MENTAL ...

PHYSICAL ...

SOCIAL ...

OVERVIEW

The mummies' minds are catapulted into the spirit world — a small, unique realm created by whatever dread magic birthed the Greater Amkhat, Arara Püera. Only mummies are drawn here; the mortal congregants do not appear.

This is a chance to explore the realm, seeking clues to the spell that took down Aapep Medes. The Amkhat is not yet aware of the Arisen player characters or their presence in its realm until they step onto the pyramid, at which point it awakens and thrusts them from its jungle.

DESCRIPTION

The ayahuasca brew is bitter, foul tasting. Its effects hit you immediately. You feel the world spinning, gravity

Spirit Bodies

While in this realm due to the ayahuasca magic, the Arisen can act as they would in the material world. The key difference here is that when they suffer damage, such as from spirit attacks (see below), it first acts against Willpower rather than Health.

Once all Willpower points are gone, excess damage acts against the character's physical body, in the form of bashing damage. Once all the character's lethal slots are filled up, rather than suffering aggravated damage, the character then loses Sekhem. Once at least one point of Sekhem is lost in this manner, the character falls into the same coma state as Aapep Medes. He can no longer act in the material or spirit world. He must rely on his allies (his meret) to rescue him. See the Chapter Three, Scene Two — Assault Sorcery for the means (killing the Amkhat or forcing it to flee to the material world).

gone topsy-turvy, and then you're standing in a steaming jungle, the sounds of birds and screeching monkeys surrounding you, although these creatures remain out of sight deep within the labyrinth of trees. It was night in the tent, but here faint sunlight streams down through the upper canopy.

You feel unreal... insubstantial. You *know*, somehow, that your body, fully visible, is not your real body, but a mental or spiritual shadow of your sahu. Your earthly frame still sits in a plastic chair, under the church tent in a field in the Mata Machado favela. But your mind is here, in the midst of a primeval jungle.

You are not alone. Your meret is with you (those who also drank the brew, at least).

(Exploring)

There are no landmarks, it's all trees and undergrowth. And yet, regardless of which direction you or your fellow Arisen take, the jungle parts to reveal an ancient pyramid. It is in the Mayan style, although it certainly doesn't belong in Brazil.

At the very top of the pyramid is a figure, a man, chained with metal manacles. It is Aapep Medes.

But more, perhaps, than Medes, what draws your attention is his relic — the chains that bind him. All Arisen can sense this precious item and feel the desire to accomplish their ultimate calling, to send the relic back to its true masters.

(Traveling to the pyramid)

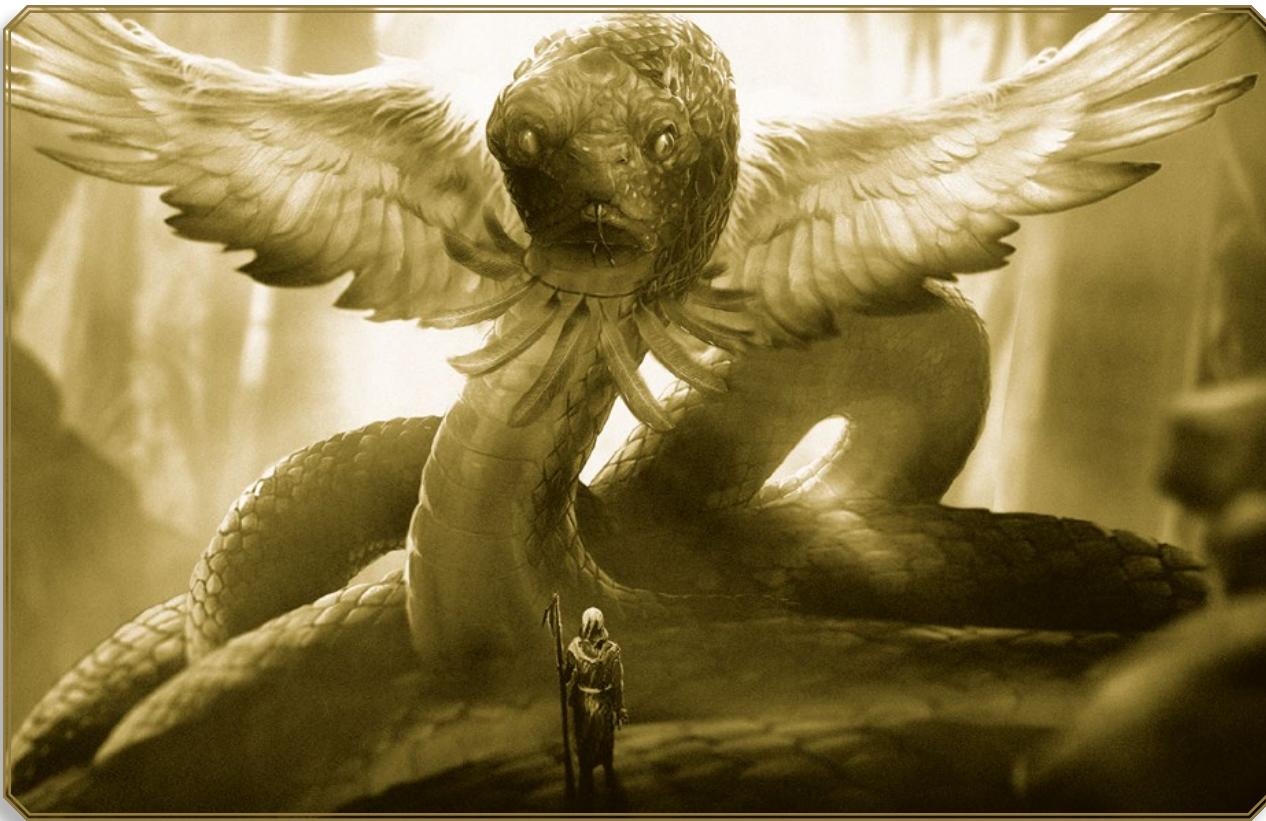
This is no ordinary jungle. The land itself seems alive and sentient. Plants sway to block passage; the ground softens to slow travel, animals hoot and growl from just out of sight, warning you away from your goal.

(Play through the obstacles listed under Actions, below.)

(Reaching the pyramid)

You finally beat the jungle, stepping onto the lowest stone stair step of the ancient ruin of a pyramid. The





jungle sounds hush and the faint breeze halts. The sudden shifting of stone beneath you, as the steps begin to move, to undulate, breaks the moment of silence and stillness...

The stones suddenly glisten and reveal markings as they glide from left to right. They aren't stone at all, they are the scales of a giant anaconda. The entire pyramid is a great, coiled snake, awakening from its slumber. Its head rises up from resting on the far side, and two feral eyes stare into yours. It hisses and a fan of rainbow feathers snaps out from around its neck. Two other fans spread out from its upper trunk, wings spanning wide across the jungle sky, blotting out the faint sun.

You wake up in your body, slumped undignified in a plastic chair beneath the cheap tent back in the favela. It seems that Serpente Penas does not want you in its jungle.

STORYTELLER GOALS

There are a number of hidden obstacles between the players and the pyramid. See Actions, below, for the threats and the rolls needed to best them.

CHARACTER GOALS

Get to Aapep Medes at the top of the pyramid.

ACTIONS

The explorers must traverse obstacles before they can reach the pyramid.

Piranha:

Characters encounter a stream that must be crossed to reach the pyramid. It cannot be circumvented; it appears regardless of which direction the characters travel. Once somebody steps into it, though, it erupts into a feeding frenzy of piranhas. Like all creatures here, these are spirits. The Storyteller rolls a dice pool of 7 to attack anyone who steps into the stream.

Dice Pool: Dexterity + Athletics

Action: Instant

Hindrance: None

Help: None

Dramatic Failure: The character is stuck and must succeed in another roll before he can move on, suffering a new attack each turn.

Failure: It takes two turns (two attacks) to cross.

Success: She crosses the stream in one stride (suffering only one attack).



Spiritual Matters

The spirit realm encountered in this story is a unique sub-realm created along with Arara Pûera, the Greater Amkhat. It is an extension of her, a sort of mindscape that exists somewhere in the spirit world, accessible only through magic related to the Amkhat. In this case, Gustavo's father figured out how to entrap a mummy in this realm, where the Amkhat could devour it at ease over a period of days. It involved first acquiring one of Aapep Medes' relics (the manacles unearthed at the construction site) and then mixing flakes of the bronze into an ayahuasca brew that also includes the Amkhat's diluted venom. Although the brew was designed to entrap Aapep Medes, it also works on any Arisen.

Conceivably, other spiritual denizens of the Chronicles of Darkness could invade the realm from the outside. This sort of activity is beyond the scope of this story, and is left entirely in the hands of the Storyteller. For now, it is unnecessary to introduce concepts such as the Gauntlet, spirit ephemera, and numina, etc. The only pertinent rules are described in the Spirit Bodies sidebar (earlier) and as needed in the scene descriptions.

Barring an Utterance that allows the mummy passage into and out of spirit realms, the Arisen cannot simply come and go from this place. The only key is the ayahuasca brew.



Exceptional Success: The character leaps across the stream with only a small nip from the piranhas (no damage).

Trap: A tripwire is hidden in the jungle. Tripping it sends down a rain of sharp spears from the upper canopy, which cause 2(L) damage to anyone who doesn't avoid them. (While this appears to be crudely mechanical, it is spirit substance — ephemera — and does not operate by laws of gravity and engineering.)

Dice Pool: Wits + Survival to notice the trap before it is sprung; Dexterity + Athletics to dodge the spears

Action: Instant

Hindrance: None

Help: None

Dramatic Failure: The character falls and sprawls on the ground, suffering from more than one spear (double damage).

Failure: Suffer 2(L) damage from a spear.

Success: The character wriggles out of the way of a falling spear—barely.

Exceptional Success: The character walks through the rain of spears as if they weren't there.

Quicksand:

What's a hostile jungle without a quicksand pit? This one is nearly impossible to detect until the Arisen practically steps in it.

A character who fails the extended action to escape the pit sinks completely into it. She can still attempt to escape (achieve the successes needed), but now all her rolls suffer a -3 dice penalty due to the constricting thickness of the quicksand.

Dice Pool: Wits + Survival (-2 dice penalty due to plant concealment) to notice the pit before stepping into it; Composure + Athletics to crawl out of the pit

Action: Extended (5 successes needed)

Hindrance: None

Help: A character who is not in the pit can throw a vine (or reach a spear) and help draw the pit-fallen character back to solid ground. This acts as a +2 dice bonus on the character's roll to crawl from the pit.

Dramatic Failure: The character thrashes about too much and sinks to her neck. Add 2 to the successes needed to escape the pit (the default is 5).

Failure: The character makes no progress and slowly begins to sink. Add 1 to the successes needed to escape the pit (the default is 5).

Akin to the Plant World

The Seeds of Life Utterance (Tier 1) can be used to draw the ISP's ayahuasca brew from someone's body, causing her to vomit it up. When used on an Arisen, it draws them back from the spirit realm. The character with this Utterance can use it on herself to return to her body, or upon any other Arisen with her in the spirit realm (except those who have been rendered into a coma, like Aapep Medes).

Further, the mummy with this Utterance has a degree of protection from the plant spirits in this realm. Add +2 to the target numbers of any plant spirit attacks. Also, the spears in the spear trap avoid her (no damage) and the plants concealing the quicksand pit part from her presence, revealing the pit before she accidentally steps in it.



Success: The character makes progresses toward solid ground and does not sink further.

Exceptional Success: The character crawls from the muck hole instantly (unless she rolled previous failures, adding to the number of successes needed, in which case she now applies 5 successes against that total).

CONSEQUENCES

As soon as the brew affects the Arisen characters, Gustavo sneaks away, exiting the tent.

When the characters are restored to their bodies, the remaining church attendants hand out flyers for tomorrow evening's ceremony near Sugarloaf Mountain, which promises an appearance by Dores, the ISP's living saint.

Tangents: Optional Scenes

The players could choose to follow other leads, such as interviewing members of O Corte Segredo, assuming one of more of them is awake. They might want to involve the Red Sparrow (especially if they owe her a favor or are seeking her favor). The results of these tangents are not directly relevant to this story, so they are left up to the Storytellers to work out.

The investigators could also go to the sports stadium construction site near Vila Autodromo, to find out just why Medes was there. It will take some asking around, but they'll be able to discover that a hoard of artifacts was unearthed, believed by university students to date back to Brazil's early slave trade days. The only substantial item that wasn't rusted nearly away was a pair of manacles, but they went missing, presumed stolen. Very persistent investigation in the nearby favela reveals old flyers for a visit by the ISP church the same week that the manacles went missing.



CHURCH SONG II B - WHITWELL

MENTAL --- PHYSICAL - SOCIAL ---

OVERVIEW

This scene is for those characters who did not drink the brew at the end of Scene One. They were almost certainly forced to leave but can, through skill at sneaking and/or guile (i.e., convincing a church usher to let them stay nearby), peek through the tent and watch the proceedings.

Their comrades enter a trance state and sit in their chairs, doing nothing, until the end of Scene Two (A) — Strange Brew. Almost immediately after they drop off, Gustavo slips behind the small stage and out the back of the tent, fleeing the area. He surely knows the favela better than the Arisen characters, so they will need to be alert to catch him (if they try).

DESCRIPTION

Within a minute after the last of the Arisen has drunk the brew, they all slump down in their chairs, caught in a deep trance. Their eyes roll back and forth beneath their eyelids, just as mortals' eyes do in REM-stage sleep, but they are otherwise motionless.

The preacher says a quick prayer and then quietly but quickly steps out of the tent to the rear of the makeshift stage.

The mortals are not so dramatically affected as the Arisen. After a while, some of them throw up (into buckets the ushers provide) and begin singing hymns to themselves. They are clearly in an altered state, but not in an unresponsive trance like the Arisen.

STORYTELLER GOALS

Prevent the Arisen from capturing Gustavo. It is best if he gets away so he can preach at the service tomorrow night. If he is captured, he resists as best he can (which, against a mummy, is probably a doomed attempt).

CHARACTER GOALS

Catch Gustavo and grill him about all he knows.

ACTIONS

Catching Gustavo:

Unless one of the characters specifically stated that he was hiding out behind the tent, ready to confront anyone leaving, then Gustavo has a head start on melting into the twisting streets and alleys of the favela.

Dice Pool: Wits + Streetwise resisted by Gustavo's dice pool of 7

Action: Extended and resisted; whomever achieves five successes first wins (Gustavo gets away or the mummies corner him). Gustavo begins in the lead with one success.

Hindrance: If the Arisen have done anything to anger or scare the favela residents, they will aid Gustavo, letting him traverse their homes while distracting his pursuers: -2 dice penalty.

Help: If the *Trovoada!* guide is still with the character, she can assist (she knows the favela and can anticipate Gustavo's route): +2 dice bonus.

Dramatic Failure: The preacher is like the wind—gone in seconds. No trace of him can be found. Add two to the successes needed to win the contest.

Failure: The preacher has eluded you... for the moment.

Success: You're on his trail. Keep this up and he'll surely fall into your hands soon.

Exceptional Success: The preacher walks unsuspecting right into your hands.

Interrogating Gustavo:

Gustavo despises the Arisen with all his being. He was raised from infancy to hate them. He cannot be cajoled or persuaded to reveal anything. Only threats might work, but he will not give in easily to them. Still, he is a mere

mortal — he has no special defense against an Arisen's dread powers.

Dice Pool: Manipulation + Intimidation resisted by Gustavo's dice pool of 5.

Action: Extended and resisted; whomever achieves 5 successes first wins (Gustavo is beyond threats or the mummies break him)

Hindrance: If the Arisen use Aapep Medes name, it only fuels Gustavo's anger: he gains a +1 dice bonus on his rolls to resist. If this interrogation is handled in the middle of the street instead of inside an enclosed space that the characters control (such as a favela hut they commandeer): -2 dice penalty.

Help: If the Arisen threaten Dores: +1 dice bonus.

Dramatic Failure: Gustavo laughs and spits in his interrogator's face. Do what you will — he won't talk. Ever.

Failure: Gustavo sneers at the empty threat and says nothing.

Success: Sweat breaks out on Gustavo's brow. He reveals one tidbit of information (see below).

Exceptional Success: Gustavo weeps, shuddering at the prospect of his fate. He reveals everything.

CONSEQUENCES

If Gustavo escapes, he will appear again in Chapter Three, Scene One — The Little Saint.

If he is caught, he will do his best to escape. However, he will assume he is being followed and will leave Rio, to draw his pursuers away from Dores. If they fall for the bait and follow him out of the city, they'll miss the ceremony

The Horrible Truth

Interrogation (see Actions) can draw tidbits of information out of Gustavo. For each success, have him reveal one of these topics (preferably in the order listed here):

- His family was once allied to the Parlemento de Patriotas, until his father was disgraced and driven from grace.
- His father raised him to enact vendetta against Aapep Medes, the Parlemento de Patriotas' vile master.
- Dores is also sworn to enact vengeance, no matter how long it takes.
- The ayahuasca sends the Arisen's soul to another world, the same place where Aapep Medes is trapped.
- This otherworld is ruled by Arara Pûera, his Greater Amkhat, who will destroy Aapep Medes and then each and every Arisen of O Corte Segredo. Then it will come after the player characters' meret, for their impertinence against poor Gustavo.



beneath Sugarloaf Mountain, and so miss their chance to save Aapep Medes.

If he cannot escape, he will try to commit suicide. The Storyteller should enact this as bloodily and tragically as possible, to emphasize just how much his father's mission has consumed Gustavo's life, first figuratively and now literally.

CHAPTER THREE

SCENE 1 - THE LITTLE SAINT

MENTAL • PHYSICAL • SOCIAL •

OVERVIEW

The ISP ceremony takes place in the amphitheater at the top of Morro da Urca, the mountain that sits beneath Sugarloaf Mountain. The same cable car system services both mountains (passing through Morro da Urca to get to Sugarloaf), and it is the only common way to get to the amphitheater. (There is a helipad for the rich, just in case one of the player characters can afford such luxury.)

A rich patron of the ISP, recently attracted to the church, has rented out the amphitheater at great cost to host this important ceremony. Surprisingly, however, the event is not sold out. It has been rather hastily arranged (a previously booked event — a rave — had to cancel recently) and poorly advertised. Additionally, the church's main targets — favela dwellers — are not the kind of people to make it to this sort of venue. The tickets that have been sold have gone to wealthy kids and tourists eager to witness what they believe to be a native Brazilian religion, as well as those desperately ill who seek Dores' faith healing. (Parlemento de Patriotas acquires tickets for each of the Arisen.)

It doesn't matter. This event isn't for them. It's for the Dores and her Amkhhat. Tonight, they will destroy Aapep Medes and poison the Fountain of Ma'at on Sugarloaf Mountain.

Unlike the ceremony in Mata Machado, this one is more heavily guarded, with hired security on hand to handle anybody who tries to disrupt the event or to approach Dores.

DESCRIPTION

The recreational park at the top of Morro da Urca is normally bustling with tourists. Tonight it is still crowded, but a little thin compared to normal. Most mortals have come for the restaurants or to pass through to the next cable car station for Sugarloaf. A number of people, however, clutch crosses and mutter prayers, clearly supplicants headed for the rented amphitheater and the ISP's master ceremony, featuring the "little saint," Dores Ximenes.

At the appointed hour, the amphitheater doors open to admit the attendees. It is a rather small amphitheater by most standards; its location is what makes it a destination spot. The ISP attendants and ushers guide everyone to their seats, much as they did at the Mata Machado ceremony.

Gustavo takes to the stage to prepare the audience for Dores' arrival. If Gustavo was captured in Chapter Two, Scene Two (B) — Manhunt, then obviously he's not here. The ISP's rich patron instead takes the stage and orates about how affected he was when he was first healed by the little girl, etc.

Once the announcer's prayers and sermon is finished, a young girl appears in a spotlight on the stage, her blindingly white gown giving her an angelic appearance. Her smile is indeed saintly, as if she was aware of every ache and pain of each member of the audience, and yet was buoyed by them, rather than weighted down. The audience erupts into cheers, which Dores humbly accepts with a slight tilt of her head downward.

She tells the story of how she got lost in the jungle when she was younger, a mere toddler first learning to walk, and how she was guided home by a beautiful lady who became a snake with wings. Her protector, Serpente Penas, told her how to call upon God to heal the afflicted, and this is what she will do tonight.

She asks that all who are here partake of Serpente Penas' divine medicine, the ayahuasca. Attendants begin offering cups to members of the audience. Dores explains that she will enter the crowd and, one by one, as the audience embraces the wisdom of the medicine (i.e., once the drug kicks in), read their ailments and draw the bad energies and "black mud" from their bodies and souls.

Once again, the player characters need to take the ayahuasca, or be escorted from the premises. Unlike Chapter Two, there is no other option here: only by taking the ayahuasca can they hope to free Aapep Medes.



STORYTELLER GOALS

Set the stage and emphasize how well guarded and public this event is. The action is in the spirit world, and only for those who take the ayahuasca. Once they do, advance to Scene Two—Assault Sorcery.

CHARACTER GOALS

Participate in the ceremony to gain access to the ayahuasca.

Characters might want extra protection, somebody to look after them while they are in the drug trance.

Parlemento de Patriotas will volunteer to place some members in the audience, but the meret can also have their cult members seeded there, too. However, all participants are expected to take the brew, so any mortal ally must be able to operate while drugged.

ACTIONS

None of significance. The Arisen must drink the ISP's ayahuasca brew to advance to the next scene.

CONSEQUENCES

Go to Scene Two — Assault Sorcery.



CHAPTER THREE

SCENE II - REBIRTH CEREMONY

MENTAL - PHYSICAL ---- SOCIAL -

OVERVIEW

The Greater Amkhat is devouring Aapep Medes' Sekhem and metabolizing it into poison, which is then spews into the Fountain of Ma'at, tainting the flow of Dedwen.

The Arisen must draw its ire before it can finish devouring Aapep Medes' final substance.

DESCRIPTION

The Arisen are once again thrust into the otherworldly realm. This time, they appear exactly where they left, at

the foot of the "pyramid," the giant anaconda. However, the snake is gone and in place of its pyramid of coils stands Morro da Urca, the mountain on which the ISP ceremony takes place in the material world. The Arisen stand in the middle of the peak, roughly equivalent to where the amphitheater is positioned in the material world.

On the far side, about where the cable car stop for Sugarloaf stands in the material world, there hangs Aapep Medes, strung by his hands from a lone tree; chained once again to *his relic*. Rising behind and above him across a wide gap is Sugarloaf Mountain (Pão de Açúca) — one of the two Fountains of Ma'at.



New Relic: The Chains of Hanno (Regium ...)

Durability 4, Size 2, Structure 6

Although these were once manacles forged in Irem to shackle slaves or criminals; that pedigree of manufacture makes them far more effective than any chain made in the ages since. This pair surfaced in history as the property of Hanno the Navigator, of Carthage. It is said that he used them to shackle himself to his ship's rudder as he guided it past the Pillars of Hercules and the sirens who laid in wait there to lure ships to splintered doom.

It was sometime soon after that era that Aapep Medes acquired them, and they remain today a relic with personal significance to him. (He does not remember it now, but he once used them in a Bluebeard-esque fashion to chain up a reluctant mortal lover.) Many centuries later, they were used in the Brazilian slave trade and they accompanied Aapep Medes across the Atlantic when he finally journeyed from Portugal to Brazil.

Power: Anyone held by the Chains of Hanno not only cannot physically break out (their strength cannot prevail, even when bolstered by Pillars or Utterances), but doesn't really *want* to break out. His will to escape is sapped intensely (although captives with higher Willpower remain souls of higher will, and will struggle against it accordingly). In addition, such a captive will not attack the person who placed the manacles on him.

Curse: Placing these shackles on someone's body and soul degenerates the user. She must make a check as if she committed a Morality 2 sin, and must do so every time she shackles someone with them, even if the target is the same person who was just shackled in them moments before. When used by an Alchemist, this effect is lessened; the shackling mummy only needs check for degeneration the first time she places the shackles on a new person. She can take them off and put them back on as often as she likes thereafter (though allowing seven days to pass without the shackles being attached ends this benefit, and even she will face a second degeneration check thereafter).



In the material world, the Fountain might or might not be active at present. Regardless, it is active here and now in this spirit domain. (See below for how a character might use it.) Light gushes forth from the mountaintop, descending as a gentle luminous mist. This is a raw flow of Dedwen: prosperity, luck, good fortune.

Before anyone can act, they witness a chilling event. A bizarre creature hovers in the air next to Aapep Medes. Part macaw, part anaconda, and part jaguar, this is the true identity of Serpente Penas, a Greater Amkhat. Her fangs are buried in his torso, sucking Sekhem from him. She withdraws her fangs and flies up, circling the Fountain of Ma'at. She then spits her venom into the stream of Dedwen, which immediately darkens and turns the luminous mist to sooty smoke, floating down over Rio like cinders.

The Amkhat then circles back down toward Aapep Medes. All the Arisen can sense that he is nearly done for, almost all of his Sekhem drained. Two more bites, three at the most, and it's all over for the mummy.

STORYTELLER GOALS

The Amkhat needs three more bites before all of Aapep Medes' Sekhem is drained. Once that happens, Medes' disintegrates into ashes, all that remains of him blowing away on a sudden wind. Unless someone very loyal to him finds suitable replacement remains, and then executes the very risky Call to Return with perfection, it will be a very long time before anyone sees Aapep Medes again.

Between bites, the Amkhat must fly up to Sugarloaf and spit its venom into the stream of Dedwen. This takes three turns, after which it returns for more of its captive's Sekhem.

The Amkhat will prioritize defending itself from any attacks by the Arisen, so they can distract it and maybe free Aapep Medes, ending the cycle of corruption against the Fountain.

CHARACTER GOALS

Stop the Amkhat from eating Aapep Medes and poisoning the Fountain.

ACTIONS

Fighting the Amkhat:

The Amkhat can only be distracted from its task either by direct attacks, physical or through Utterances. It will attack any Arisen who attacks it.

If the Amkhat is successfully killed, all the Arisen, including Aapep Medes, are thrust out of the spirit realm (which unravels, ceasing to exist) and back into their bodies.

If it is wounded and clearly losing the fight, it will flee by materializing in the material world. This has the effect of also returning all Arisen in the realm back to their bodies (including Aapep Medes). It also causes panic in the amphitheater, as the monster appears in the midst of the ISP's ceremony. Even though it will later be explained away as a hallucination caused



by the ayahuasca, it is still a terrifying encounter. This isn't the beautiful saint spoken about by Dores, but an angry creature.

Dores will try to protect her wounded Amkhat, getting in the way of any attacks from the Arisen — which means they might well have to kill a child before they can kill her pet monster.

Freeing Aapep Medes:

His own relic, a pair of bronze manacles called the Chains of Hanno (see sidebar), chains Aapep Medes. He is barely conscious; enough to know what's happening and to whisper to the Arisen — he begs for help, promising anything.

The only way to free him is to kill the Amkhat or drain the relic. Due to the unknown power the Amkhat used to bring the relic into its spirit realm, the manacles cannot be taken out of the realm. The relic must be destroyed by draining it of Sekhem — a travesty, yes — but not one without some benefit (and some drawbacks) to the Arisen who drains it of Sekhem.

The very moment that the relic crumbles, Aapep Medes dissolves, his soul returning to his body in the material world. He immediately descends to Duat, nearly empty of Sekhem, and must be awakened by his cult before he can be interviewed (see Consequences, below).

Using the Fountain of Ma'at:

The Red Sparrow has laid down rules about who can use the Fountain and when — the Roll of Prosperity. Even if the fountain is currently dormant in the material world, it is active here and can be used. Unless the character using it is allowed to (by his place on the Roll of Prosperity), then he is effectively stealing someone else's rightful place. However, how are they to know who used it? There is no evidence in the material world of the character bathing in the fountain. She might well get away with the crime.

Using the Fountain in the spirit realm has the same effect as in the material realm, except... if it used when it is blackened by the Amkhat's poison, its effect is the opposite of Dedwen, begetting ill luck, poor fortune, ruinous fate. How this plays out is up to the Storyteller, but it is as if all the odds turn against the character in her next endeavor. If she can weather that problem, though, the cloud clears and she is free of the bad luck.

If none of the Arisen characters use the Fountain, then the next Arisen NPC who does so (presumably, the next by right, according to the Roll) suffers the tainted Dedwen.

CONSEQUENCES

The mastermind behind all this hate is little Dores Ximenes. She will be broken and shattered by the death of her pet snake, her beautiful little saint. She is now powerless to continue her family's vendetta... or is she? There is still the matter of the mysterious voice who has guided her all

along. She will not tell anybody about this voice, hoping it will tell her what to do next.

Aapep Medes' cultists are desperate to awaken their master, to ensure all is well, but they dare not until they have a pressing need, a purpose worthy of him. In the meantime, they will try to restore as much of their lost resources (ceded to the Arisen characters in return for their help) as they can, to mitigate the ire of their master when he realizes what they've done to his empire.

Sacmist's rivalry with Medes is still an ongoing affair, but now Sacmist feels he has bested his rival, broken some of his cult's power, and shown the mummy to be weak to all the other Arisen of Rio. Just how this affects O Corte Segredo's power politics against the Orixás is left for the Storyteller to determine in future stories.

If the Amkhat somehow survived, it can focus its next assault on a mummy designated by Dores. This might well be a player character, although Dores' preferred victims are all of O Corte Segredo. Her true aim is to acquire the Iron Bull relic, so that Arara Pûera can entrap the entire meret with a single relic. (See the "Dark Shamanism" sidebar.)

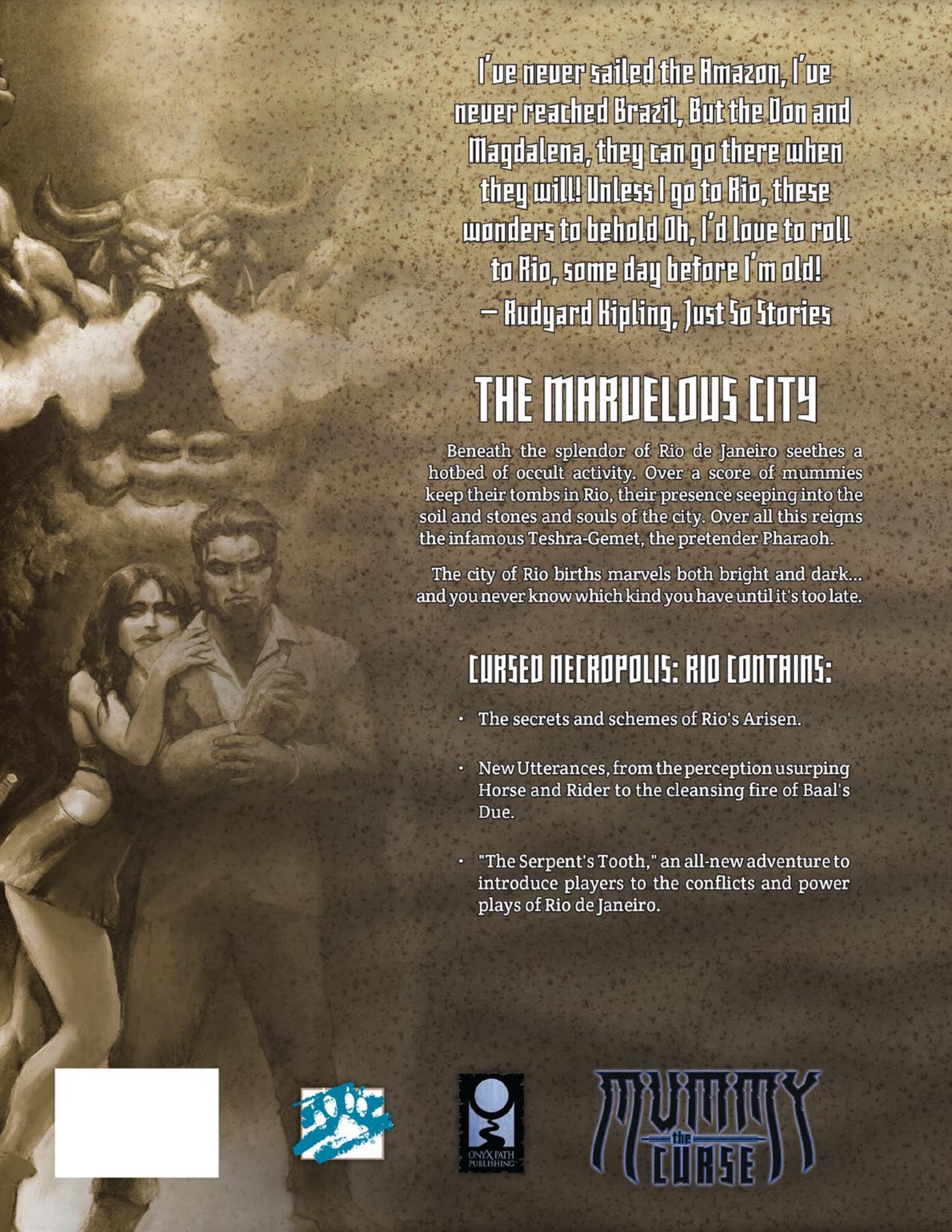
Dark Shamanism

Arara Pûera's powers come from the mysterious world of what anthropologists have called "dark shamanism" (the sorcery used by Amazonian shamans to harm their enemies). The particular magic — in technical rules terms: spirit numina, colored by Iremite sorcery — the Amkhat uses against Aapep Medes requires that she physically possesses a sympathetic link to one of his relics: the Chains of Hanno manacles. (She could use similar magic against other mummies if she had one of their relics.)

The "spell" works roughly as follows: Arara Pûera drains a portion of the relic's Sekhem and metabolizes it into venom, which she then spits into an ayahuasca brew (prepared by Dores or Gustavo). The target mummy then ingests the brew. In the case of Aapep Medes, he was tricked into drinking it when he infiltrated the ISP's tent revival, searching for his relic, which he sensed nearby. The result sent the mummy's soul into the Amkhat's spirit realm, where she attacked him and began to devour his Sekhem. Worse, he cannot use his Affinities and Utterances while under its effects in this realm.

The brew can be used to draw other mummies into the spirit realm, although they will not be weakened like the spell's intended victim. (Other Arisen who enter the realm, as the player characters do in this story, can use their Utterances, since the spell was not designed for use against them.)





I've never sailed the Amazon, I've
never reached Brazil, But the Don and
Magdalena, they can go there when
they will! Unless I go to Rio, these
wonders to behold Oh, I'd love to roll
to Rio, some day before I'm old!
— Rudyard Kipling, *Just So Stories*

THE MARVELOUS CITY

Beneath the splendor of Rio de Janeiro seethes a hotbed of occult activity. Over a score of mummies keep their tombs in Rio, their presence seeping into the soil and stones and souls of the city. Over all this reigns the infamous Teshra-Gemet, the pretender Pharaoh.

The city of Rio births marvels both bright and dark... and you never know which kind you have until it's too late.

CURSED NECROPOLIS: RIO CONTAINS:

- The secrets and schemes of Rio's Arisen.
- New Utterances, from the perception usurping Horse and Rider to the cleansing fire of Baal's Due.
- "The Serpent's Tooth," an all-new adventure to introduce players to the conflicts and power plays of Rio de Janeiro.

