

Banishing requires a Complex Action. For more information, see p. 180.

Binding

The Binding skill is used to compel spirits into a longer period of service. Bound spirits can perform a wider variety of services for magicians. Binding is an Opposed Test pitting the character's Magic + Binding against the spirit's Force x 2. This test requires a number of hours equal to the spirit's Force.

If the magician gains one net hit, the spirit is magically bound to him. The services it owes from its original summoning will remain until expended, rather than expiring at sunrise or sunset. Each additional net hit after the first further increases the number of services owed by the spirit by one.

For more information on binding spirits, see p. 180.

DRAIN

The effort of manipulating mana can exhaust or even injure a magician. As mana is a form of energy, channeling greater quantities of that energy may strain the body and mind. The effect of this strain is referred to as *Drain*. Magical actions that cause Drain have a *Drain Value*, much like a weapon's Damage Value.

All magicians use Willpower plus another mental attribute appropriate to their tradition to resist Drain. For example, most hermetic mages use Willpower + Logic to resist all Drain while shamans use Willpower + Charisma.

Salamander has just cast a manabolt and must now resist the Drain (Drain Code 3). He's a hermetic mage, so he uses his Logic 5 in addition to Willpower 3 to resist Drain. Rolling 8 dice, he gets only 2 hits, so he suffers 1 box of Stun damage from Drain.

The base Drain Value for Spellcasting is listed in the spell's description (see p. 195.) For Summoning and Binding spirits, the Drain Value is twice the number of hits (not net hits) generated by the spirit during the Opposed Test.

Each hit on the Drain Resistance Test reduces the Drain Value by one. Any remaining Drain is suffered by the magician. Drain is usually Stun damage, though there are situations in which it can be transformed into Physical damage (see the *Sorcery* and *Conjuring* sections).

MAGICAL LODGES

In order to progress in her studies, a magician must have a collection of symbols, writings, tools,

THEORIES ON THE NATURE OF MAGIC (Cont.)

flow that allows them to exist in both the physical and astral planes at the same time. These are called dual beings. Much as mana reflects auras into the astral, the reflection of dual beings into the astral is strong enough to create an astral form for these beings. Dual beings exist on both sides of the barrier simultaneously, and their astral and physical forms are connected. Awakened entities who astrally perceive are also striking this chord of resonance and creating astral forms; they too are dual beings. Spells are never dual-natured, because they are created through mana, and mana permeates both planes.

Because the astral plane is fueled by life force, it is lit with a glow that emanates from the gaisphere itself. Things that exist on the physical can be seen and heard from the astral, though any non-living objects appear as gray, faded semblances of their physical appearance. The auras of living things are vibrant and colorful.

Anything that exists on the astral plane has an astral form—projecting full magicians, spirits, dual beings, and so on. Astral forms are solid and substantial on the astral plane and are more colorful and brighter than auras. Astral forms cannot pass through each other. The earth itself, as a source of life, has an astral form.

On the Manipulation of Mana

Magical skills are defined as the manipulation of mana. Sorcery is the manipulation of mana to create effects known as spells; Conjuring manipulates mana to call forth, create, or affect spirits.

Sorcery involves the intuitive manipulation of the mana field by a magician, who shapes it in certain ways for certain effects. A good metaphor for this is to equate the mana field with the airwaves, making the use of Sorcery the transmission of certain radio signals that create different effects. To cast a spell, a magician channels mana through herself and transmits it on a specific frequency. The act of channeling is fatiguing to a magician, and causes drain. The signal that the magician creates is based on a spell formula that the magician has learned, determining its form and effect. The target of the spell is the radio signal receiver, and the signal is sent on the target's frequency. When the signal is received, it channels mana through the target to create a specified effect (thus Direct Combat spells bypass armor, because they affect the target from within). All of this occurs on the same plane—physical or astral—as the magician and the target.

Area-effect spells work roughly the same way, except that instead of transmitting a signal to one target, the caster sends the signal out on multiple frequencies corresponding with the targets within the area of effect. If there are targets within the area that the caster cannot see, they will not be affected, because the caster cannot synchronize with them to transmit the spell signal on a frequency they will receive.

The metaphor continues with counterspelling, which equates to "jamming" the mana field, disrupting all frequencies within an area of effect so that a spell is jammed and thus disrupted.

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