

BOUND SPIRITS

Spirits are powerful entities and the ability to call on their potent skills is formidable. Whereas unbound spirits are limited in the services they can offer, bound spirits are compelled by the magical bond to do their utmost on the magician's behalf, even if it means draining their own Force to the point of disruption. Spirits also dislike being bound, as it forces them into a level of servitude they find distasteful, and so they sometimes fruitlessly struggle against the bond.

As a result, bound spirits can be an effort to handle, especially when more than one is on hand. If the gamemaster chooses, the strain of controlling a bound spirit that is on hand or actively performing a service (in other words, not on standby), can impose a -2 dice pool modifier to all tests, similar to sustaining a spell. This represents the concentration and magical power the magician must devote to channeling into the bond, allowing and compelling the spirit's enduring service. This modifier may apply per bound spirit, or alternately the gamemaster may decide to allow one bound spirit to be in service without requiring special effort.

This modifier should only be applied when roleplaying calls for it, such as when a magician has been abusive towards her bound spirits or has repeatedly put them at risk or forced them to undertake draining tasks like *Spell Binding*. Alternately, it can be used as a way to keep a player from abusing spirits in gameplay.

This magical power drain is the compelling reason why most magicians keep their bound spirits at rest. The magician can dismiss a bound spirit with a Simple Action, allowing the spirit to return to its home in astral space, where it awaits a summons from its master. Calling the spirit back simply requires another Simple Action—no test is involved. While the spirit is resting in astral space, the bond between magician and spirit has no effect on the magician.

Spirit Range: Spirits must remain within the summoner's Magic x 100 meters (if forced out of this radius, they will return as quickly as they can). If a spirit is sent beyond this range, it counts as a remote service.

Remote Services: Spirits can also be commanded to undertake a *remote service*, allowing it to leave the summoner's immediate area. Remote services forfeit any other services the spirit might owe. The magician sends the spirit off to perform a

particular task (or set of tasks, if more than one service is owed), which the spirit will single-mindedly pursue until it completes the task(s), is destroyed, or its time of service ends (at sunrise or sunset). A spirit can perform a remote service in either astral or physical form, and may switch between the two as needed. Once a spirit has been given a remote service, it is technically released. Spirits on remote services no longer count against the limit of summoned spirits.

Bound Spirit Services

Binding is the method of compelling long-term services from a spirit (see p. 180). A bound spirit will not vanish at sunrise or sunset—its services remain until they are used regardless of how long it takes. A bound spirit may perform any of the types of services listed in *Spirit Services*, above. In addition, the services of a bound spirit may be given to another character, and bound spirits can assist the magician with magical tasks.

Remote Services: A bound spirit performing a remote service acts in the same manner as an unbound spirit. It will pursue the course of the service until it is complete. A bound spirit's terms of service do not expire at sunrise or sunset, however, so the spirit can continue on for a considerable time. A bound spirit that still owes services will go on standby when it finishes its remote task, unless specifically instructed otherwise.

Loaned Services: By ordering a bound spirit to obey another character, magical or mundane, a magician may effectively grant one or more of the spirit's services to the other character. Naturally, a mundane cannot use a spirit to learn, cast, or sustain spells. Any other type of service may be demanded of the "borrowed" spirit. Even if the spirit is loaned out in this manner, it is bound to the summoning magician, not the character she ordered it to serve (and the summoner can reclaim those services without penalty if she desires). Since the character loaned the services cannot call the bound spirit, the spirit must remain in her vicinity to receive orders (usually meaning that it will follow the character astrally until needed).

Magical Services: The magical services available from a bound spirit are *Aid Sorcery*, *Aid Study*, *Spell Sustaining*, and *Spell Binding*. A spirit intended to assist the magician with magic must match the category of magic, according to the magician's tradition. That is, a hermetic mage may use a fire elemental to *Aid Sorcery* for the magician's combat spells, while a shaman may call on a spirit of the sky to maintain an illusion spell such as *Invisibility*. A bound spirit may provide any of these magical services to its summoner while remaining in astral form.

When a spirit performs the *Aid Sorcery* service, it adds its Force to the summoner's dice pool for any Spellcasting, Ritual Spellcasting, or Counterspelling attempt, regardless of the time required for the test. In the case of Spellcasting and Ritual Spellcasting, the spell being cast must be of a type appropriate to the spirit and the magician's tradition. With Counterspelling, the spell being countered must be of the appropriate type.

Spirits can provide extra dice to help magicians learn new spells through *Aid Study*. Doing so costs a service. The spirit adds its Force in dice to the Extended Learning Test (see *Learning Spells*, p. 172). Note that since the test to learn a new