

The Protocols of the Hierarchy

Politics

pg. 4

Levels of Intrigue

pg. 6

Legion vs. Legion, Anacreon vs. Anacreon, Anacreon vs. Legion, Citadel vs. Citadel, Rank vs. Rank, Social Class vs. Social Class, Old Guard vs. New Guard, Civil vs. Military, Hierarchy vs. Guild, Hierarchy vs. Wraith, Faction vs. Oblivion, Wraith vs. Self, Faction vs. Faction, Guild vs. Guild

Ranks of the Hierarchy

pg. 17

Branches: Military Branch, Civil/Administrative Branch

Positions: Anacreon, Overlord, Chancellor, Regent, Minister, Marshall, Inspector, Centurion, Adjustor, Legionnaire and Clerk

Standards of Behavior

pg. 25

Status, Sanctions, and Traveling

The Law

pg. 32

Justice System, Abasing, And The Unlidded Eye

The Anacreon Council

pg. 35

The Tribunal of Necropoli

pg. 38

The Others

pg. 41

Heretics and Renegades

Introduction



What follows is an OOC explanation of IC rules. These IC rules are the rules of the Hierarchy; what follows is a guide to them. Unlike OOC game rules, these are not meant to be quoted at people; none of these rules are hard and fast. Rather, they are representative of the society of the Restless Dead formed well before the Great Roman Empire.

Imagine the Society of the Dead, beings to whom time is meaningless, and yet to whom the passage of time brings immense power beyond anything imagined in mortal life. But as this power grows, also grows the realization that it will not get them what they truly desire...to live again. The members of this society may always look upon and even be able to manipulate the mortal living world, but shall never truly be a part of it. Yet beyond the obvious obsession with those still a part of the living world, wraiths must also constantly fight against the entropic forces of Oblivion, a power in their own world that is determined to destroy all existence. Each wraith knows that Oblivion is constantly gaining strength, and only in standing together as a society do they have a chance to prevent their total annihilation.

Let's start by examining the "official" Society of the Dead, the ever-present Hierarchy. Viewed by outsiders, or even by the very bottom rungs of the society, the Hierarchy often appears to be a cold, brutal, self-perpetuating system, interested only in amassing power and wealth for itself through the exploitation of its weaker members. Critics of the Hierarchical system abound, and an unhappy member can often find like-minded wraiths in one of the "unofficial" societies. Renegades, who seek the Hierarchy's overthrow for any number of alleged corruptions, and Heretics who claim it impedes their search for Transcendence, are more than willing to preach the evils of the Hierarchy to any wraith that will listen.

However, the burden of efficiently organizing and maintaining the society of the Restless Dead continuously falls upon the shoulders of Hierarchy wraiths. Bringing order to chaos is one thing; keeping it orderly is another. The self-indulgent Heretic Cults and the sneering Renegade Gangs owe their ability to exist to the presence of a stable government in the Shadowlands. Were it not for the sacrifice and discipline of the thousands of wraiths who submit themselves to the Hierarchy's authority and control, the lands beyond the Shroud would soon be lost to lawlessness and anarchy. Eventually the formless fog of the Tempest would overcome all that has been so carefully built and the entire society would be ultimately consumed by Oblivion.

As with any government though, some real villains exist within the Hierarchy. The motives and rationalizations for their actions are complex. After all, few individuals ever see themselves as "evil." Most, in fact, consider themselves heroes whose actions are justified, and whose critics simply fail to understand the real picture. For instance, Anacreons who implement some of the Hierarchy's most heinous policies often do so with the conviction that their actions are necessary.

Some Hierarchy wraiths act out of a desire for personal power, perhaps from a deluded sense of superiority or because they consider their actions noble and heroic. Opportunistic wraiths find ways to profit from the Hierarchical system and do so as often as possible by frequently responding to bribes, while others have a deep seated sense of honesty and pride and would never dream of cheating the system. Reluctant wraiths perpetuate the system because they fear reprisals if they refuse to carry out orders; these often make

the most implacable foes because they face personal retaliations if they waver in their duties. And then there are always those wraiths that simply enjoy inflicting pain on others.

Depending on how your character is played, Hierarchy wraiths are either the good guys or the bad guys. On the one hand, the Hierarchy stands for law and order, traditions, and stability. On the other hand, it represents imperialism, slavery, and submission. The kindly “beat cop” and the bludgeoning riot policeman, the idealistic civil servant and the self-serving profiteer all have a place within the framework of the Underworlds’ bureaucracy. Just as the Hierarchy represents many things to many people, so too do the individuals who make up this Underworld power.

This is the World of Wraith.

AN OOC NOTE ON GAME SETUP:

Wraith is played with the mindset that your Necropolis is made up of hundreds of wraiths going about the task of ...ummm... living. The main point of your Necropolis (or any Necropolis for that matter) is to collect the newly deceased souls and process them into categories of useful and non-useful. The useful ones are further divided into the respective legions. The non-useful souls are sent to the forges of Stygia. You (the player character) are neither at the top (Stygia) nor the bottom (the grunts) but rather right in the middle. You are the residing officials of the Necropolis. Your activities should include seeing to the duties of furthering your legion’s agendas, fighting for souls to increase your legion size, and general politicking within your own legion and the other legions of your Necropolis.

A Hierarchy Citadel legion consists of 2 branches: Administrative and Military sides. A single Anacreon oversees both sides. There are 5 positions on the administrative side and 5 positions on the military side, added with the Anacreon make a total of 11 positions in one legion. Each Necropolis has 8 legions in it for a total of 88 positions available for player characters. If this seems like a lot it’s okay. You fill the positions as people play. If there are any gaps (which there most assuredly will be) these are NPC’s played by the narrators and storyteller. These positions should be used sparingly so as not to tax the already stretched ST resources. A PC should attempt to interact with other PCs at the game and not badger the ST or narrators with trivial things that can be role-played around. Usually, the only person to come down on you in your legion is another PC character. (The Storytellers generally only pull the NPC positions in to enhance role-play or to further plot.)

The situation will undoubtedly come up where a legion consists of only one or two members. These should be played by confident role players who don’t need much help getting involved in plots or are able to go on their own agendas. Usually, the only level of intrigue missed out on by small legions is inter-legion strife. The PC should be able to get involved in all other areas. If you find you are the only member of a legion in a chapter, you will usually be the Anacreon, as most chapters will fill the positions starting from the top. The other option is to play in a legion that has more members to interact with.

The setting for a wraith game will usually be in the citadel, as this is where the bulk of decision-making takes place in a Necropolis. Here the PCs are free to interact with one another and the ST and narrators are free to throw whatever nasties they want.

Politics



ince the disappearance of Charon, the Hierarchy has had to adapt itself to leading without a visible and active leader. Rather than elevate one of their own to the throne of Stygia, thus implying that one of the Legions was in some way superior to all the others, the Deathlords elected to rule as a council. While many privately harbor a cynical attitude toward the idea of a Stygian rule-by-committee, this decision has many positive aspects that may not be immediately apparent to wraiths unfamiliar with political intrigue.

First of all, since no single Deathlord has supreme power, members of each Legion can rightly feel that their faction has an equal say in Stygian and Hierarchy politics. Second, the co-rulership of the Deathlords encourages the example of cooperation among the Legions within any given Necropolis (“...if they have to do it, we have to do it...”). Third, and most importantly, the illusion that the Hierarchy is keeping Charon’s rightful place ready for his return maintains the belief that one-day Charon *will* return. For many wraiths, this hope is all that keeps them within the Hierarchy – something the Deathlords are painfully aware of.

The disadvantages inherent in rule-by-council may, however, ultimately outweigh the advantages. Even within a group of equals, there will always be an attempt to be “first among equals.” The political maneuverings that go on within the council of Deathlords often take precedence over more critical matters – such as the survival of Stygia. Important decisions frequently depend more on political alliances within the council than on the actual factors affecting those decisions. Each Deathlord seeks to advance in power, usually at the expense of one or more of the other Deathlords, and these quests for personal advancement often have dire repercussions throughout Stygia and it’s Necropoli.

Regardless of their private ambitions, all the Deathlords realize the importance of maintaining at least the appearance of stability. They know that the solidarity of the Shadowlands depends upon a strong, orderly social structure that can stand as a bulwark against Oblivion and the Spectres who serve it. To this end, the Deathlords take extreme measures to prevent information leaks or rumors of dissent within Stygia’s highest circle. To a certain extent, this façade endures throughout the Necropoli as well, where the councils of Anacreons promote the public image of cooperation while privately following their own ambitious schemes.

Charon’s disappearance also served to accelerate a growing trend within the Hierarchy. From its origins as a social structure intended to guide wraiths toward Transcendence, the Hierarchy has evolved into a self-perpetuating organization that officially denies that Transcendence is possible or even desirable. The modern Hierarchy realizes that their power lies in keeping the Underworld populated with easily controllable wraiths. Thus, encouraging the groundlings toward Transcendence is not on their agenda.

Despite modernization in some areas, the Hierarchy has stagnated in its social evolution. It still rests at a level that corresponds to the feudal structure that developed during the middle ages. Originally its structure was based on the Greco-Roman model and depended heavily on the concept of citizen or soldier vs. non-citizen (slave). The ranks and titles of the Hierarchy’s military framework still reflect those origins: Cohort, Legion, Centurion, etc.

The rise of feudalism in the Skinlands offered a more viable pattern to the Hierarchy's social organization. Feudalism was inherently stable. Each person within the feudal society knew her place, and participated in the dynamic fealty, owing loyalty and obedience to those above her while expecting the same from those below her. This tight reciprocal construction helped strengthen the Hierarchy's ability to act as a bastion against Oblivion.

Although the living world has advanced in social structure far beyond the medieval stage, the Stygian Hierarchy shows a real reluctance to modernize, feeling that other political systems are too easily subject to uncontrollable change. The rulers of the Underworld fear that any change in government or leadership would leave Stygia vulnerable to attacks from opportunistic Spectral armies. The seemingly changeless nature of feudalism offers a constancy with which the Hierarchy cannot afford to tamper.

Levels of Intrigue



This section is designed to help the player see all the levels of political strife that take place within the Hierarchy and the game of Wraith. Don't let their number deter or frighten you. Every player will find his or her own niche in which to play the game from. Wraith has the potential to offer every player the opportunity to find satisfaction and reward from playing a political manipulator. Some players will only enjoy playing in two to three levels of intrigue. Others, depending on their ability to travel to other games, will try to get involved with many more levels of intrigue. It is up to you, the player, to find which one suits your character concept and style of play best. The important thing is to have fun.

Legion vs. Legion

Wraiths are divided into one of 8 Legions, depending on their manner of demise. Originally this was intended by Charon to bring those of similar deaths together under a Deathlord that could help them work toward spiritual Transcendence. Later Charon denounced the idea of Transcendence, but the Legions remained organized by death in order to maintain the order of the Hierarchy.

While the 8 Legions all operate under the Hierarchy umbrella, upon the disappearance of Charon each Legion became more inwardly focused. Thus while each still claims allegiance and loyalty to Charon's Hierarchy, each Legion is now nearly equally focused on their own gains and potential power in the Shadowlands. Souls are the currency of the Underworld, and as such the more souls a Legion can claim as their own, the stronger the Legion can present itself as a force to be reckoned with.

This very concept of souls as power causes a natural rift between the Legions, all the way from Deathlord to lowly Legionnaire. However, while these rifts and tension will be more pronounced in some Necropoli, in others it will be barely noticeable. Some Legions will have several members in any given area, while others will be hardly represented... if at all. There also is an intense need for forming 'working' relationships with other Legions. After all, if your Legion has alienated each of the other 7, it is unlikely that yours will succeed in its quest for ultimate power and control.

While ultimately each Legion member is supposed to swear loyalty to his or her own Legion, local Anacreon, and Deathlord, each Legion member is still just an average person-turned-wraith. As such, it will be natural for a wraith to form friendships (known as Circles in the Shadowlands) with other wraiths from similar backgrounds, with similar ideas, or common interests, regardless of Legion affiliation. This can be thought of in much the same way as if a member of the U.S. Republican political party forms a personal friendship with a member of the U.S. Democratic political party. While each has very different political outlooks and agendas, they might both share a love for roleplaying games and thus become good friends. Such personal ties can actually be powerful tools in the political arena. For instance, a friendship could be a very good reason for someone to sway his or her otherwise neutral vote to a vote in your favor. You have then established a favor system in which you may be expected to help out that person or their Legion if the need

arises. It very much becomes a system of “you scratch my back, I’ll scratch yours” between certain Legion members, all based upon a friendship formed from an unrelated common interest.

Thus a highly political balancing act is necessary. One must learn how to relate to and please other key Legion members, while at the same time not betraying the very ideas that your own Legion is based upon and promotes. If one is successful, it is likely that they will earn the respect of many regardless of affiliation, and thus more easily move up the political ladder of power.

Also, since souls are the currency of the Underworld, favors may be bought or sold with captured wraiths. Slavery is not an unheard of concept in the Underworld and Thralls abound. It is also key to note that if a Legion member is not particularly careful of those who they offend, he or she may end up as a Thrall for sale themselves!

Another political angle to consider, besides the favor system, is the Hierarchy’s policy on contact with the living, which is simple: Don’t do it, or we’ll turn you into a cooking utensil. However, each Legion is willing to bend the rules for its own – all the while coming down on violators from other Legions like a ton of soulforged bricks. The trick then, for most wraiths, is to break the *Dictum* only when there are friendly members of one’s own Legion around. In these paranoid times, accusations of *Dictum* violations fly as fast and furious as did accusations of Communism during the McCarthyism era of US politics. A well-timed charge of *Dictum* violations, even if the target is innocent – or acquitted – can take a wraith out of his stride for days, weeks or even years - getting someone who is “in the way,” out of the way.

Anacreon vs. Anacreon

The Anacreon of a Legion is simply one voice out of eight (assuming all legions are represented in the local Citadel) that governs and makes the laws for a Necropoli. Just because one Anacreon has firm ideas of what the Anacreon Council should do, which of course is usually in the best interest of his/her own legion, doesn’t mean she’s going to get the support of the other Anacreons when it comes time to vote. Herein lies the intrigue of Anacreon vs. Anacreon politics. It is inordinately difficult for one Anacreon to bully another Anacreon in or out of the council chamber based on the size of their local legion, even not withstanding the instruction of the Deathlords that all Anacreons are equal. The size of an Anacreon’s Legion has little relevance to power over other Anacreons, because an Anacreon must remember that he is only a small boat on a very big lake and so is his local Necropoli. Thus, even if your legion is the biggest in your Necropolis, it is dangerous for one to forget that the others are also represented in Citadels throughout the Shadowlands and Stygia... and the size of another legion may actually be massive.

If one Anacreon acts too harshly toward a Citadel favorite or enough of the other Anacreons, there is a significant risk that the other Anacreons will band together against him. Regardless of how much power and pull one Anacreon thinks he may have, it is doubtless that the combined influence of the other 7 legions will most certainly be bigger than his!

A smart and powerful Anacreon has learned to balance fortitude and bluff with the ability to compromise and gain the trust of the others. Sometimes it is necessary to take a small loss and be deferential to another Anacreon, in order to accomplish a greater long-term goal. Thus while Anacreons may seem to agree and find “working” relationships, most experienced Anacreons will always be wary of their counterparts and their motivations. After all, each Anacreon ultimately views his Legion and his own interests with utmost priority, and it would be wise for the others not forget it... no matter how nice and friendly he seems.

Anacreon vs. Legion

As quoted out of the Wraith Players Guide pg. 58 “...any Anacreon who finds herself suddenly without a job, and her position assumed by one of her staff of advisors, obviously did not choose her Overlords or Chancellors with enough care.”

That statement gives significant insight into the Anacreon vs. Legion level of intrigue. The Anacreon, for all intents and purposes, is God in their Legion of their Citadel. But only if your Legion will back you. You have to be certain who in your Legion is friend, and who has enough ambition to say “to hell with friends.” Sometimes the signs will be very subtle so an Anacreon must always be alert.

On the other hand, your subordinates must be careful as well. You DO have the power to order their branding, imprisonment or (gasp) their disorporation. The Anacreon is still ruler over his Legion in his Citadel, and if you can prove your strength and get rid of threats, then once again your Legion will be fully in your control.

For sake of explanation, let’s assume an overthrow has worked but the successor is unclear - don’t expect any help from the other Legions. An empty chair at the Anacreon council is one less hurdle for the others to get their agendas through. And even if the seat is filled, the other Anacreons may simply not recognize the “new” leader. If there is a new Anacreon at every council meeting it will signify the instability of your legion, and the entire legion loses. So, if you decide to make the grab for power, better make sure everyone is on your side first.

Citadel vs. Citadel

The disappearance of Charon, the erratic nature of the Tempest, and the constant threat of attacks from roving bands of Spectres, Renegades, or other bandits, have all contributed to make travel between Stygia and the Shadowlands less than reliable. This, combined with Stygia’s growing preoccupation with its own affairs, has left the Necropoli much to their own devices. Only the gravest of infractions, such as a complete cessation of tribute or a state of outright insurrection, currently elicits direct intervention of Stygia - and even that takes time.

The governments of most Necropoli have evolved into semi-independent entities, still bound by both loyalty and strong economical and political ties to Stygia, but are otherwise free of direct Stygian rule. The local Council of Anacreons and their Legions, usually made up of wraiths native to the area, constitute their own Hierarchies-in-miniature, and their policies and customs vary from Necropolis to Necropolis. One Necropolis is normally not “dependant” on another Necropolis unless they want to be.

A Citadel is comprised of nothing more than the eight Legions under the Hierarchy umbrella congregated in a certain location. Almost every city in the world where Western culture has left its stamp plays an unwitting host to a hidden city lurking just beyond the Shroud. Although each Necropolis shares some traits common to all Shadowland-based cities, regional differences make each Necropolis a unique environment for the local wraith population. Factors such as relative distance from Stygia, the “ambiance” of the host-city in the Skinlands, and the physical placement of Haunts within each city, all contribute to the overall role played by the Hierarchy in any given Necropolis.

Strife begins most commonly when there is a dispute over territory. The Anacreon council in the local Citadel determines a Necropolis’ boundaries. They usually correspond to the counterpart city in the Skinlands, but that doesn’t mean a Necropolis must stay stagnant. Territory may always be negotiable; it simply depends upon what the local Hierarchy can exert control over.

Another angle to the political intrigue of Citadel vs. Citadel is when one Citadel tries to extend their power base by encompassing another. Most Citadels do not take kindly to this and fierce trouble will almost

always arise. In such a case most wraiths, regardless of Legion, will view the offending Citadel as the enemy regardless of what Legion affiliation the attackers have. Significant amounts of inter-Legion ties can be damaged or broken, as well as those ties made under the Citadel umbrella of power.

Many wraiths will travel to neighboring Citadels to make allies, while still others make the trek to gain information. It is always a good idea to know what the other citadels are up to. Of course covert operations aren't entirely unheard of either, such as those to assassinate or secretly dispose of Anacreons from a competing Necropolis.

Occasionally a grab for power may happen in a Citadel in which one legion is not very heavily represented. Sometimes a successful overthrow to the current power base would mean damage to the smaller Legion's local influence and power. In such a case it's not unheard of for members of the less-represented Legion to call in assistance from their fellow Legion members in another Citadel. Thus wraiths technically from another Citadel may rush in to thwart plans and/or return the balance to their smaller counterparts. Herein lies the careful dance of politics in and between Citadels. Just because your Legion is bigger in your Citadel doesn't mean it's the biggest *PERIOD*. And alternately, just because your Legion has the smallest representation locally, doesn't mean it won't have the same amount of power as one with more local representation.

There are no rules governing how Citadels interact with one another as long as there is not open warfare – groupings of allies and enemies constantly come together or fall apart based on IC play. During a Tribunal (explained later) though, groupings of Citadels that vote the same way can be an awesome political force. If the faction is large enough it gives real power to the Citadels: One Necropoli carries only one vote, but if they are part of a block of 15 Necropoli with a particular outlook, this carries with it one heck of a political punch. They can be organized based on geographic terms, viewpoints towards wraithly society, or any number of other common interests/goals. Many younger Necropoli like to band together to form a moderate camp, while many older Necropoli form a more conservative grouping. So be it. As stated before, creating, joining, and leaving these agreements is the hearts blood of an Anacreon Councils life, outside of running their own Necropoli, and is the actual heart of Citadel vs. Citadel level politics. On occasion, certain groups of Necropoli take it upon themselves to formalize their relationship with treaties thus preventing betrayal (which is fine as long as the Hierarchy doesn't catch wind of it) or, on rare occasions, open integration.

What must be stressed is that in the United States, with the vast size of the campaign, regional groupings of Necropoli (based around regional campaigns) shall be the first to be formed and also the weakest. The truly important groups shall be those that transcend barriers and allow an alliance of Necropoli and their councils to come together across the vast nation. The true measure of their ability is not whether they can influence a Tribunal in their region, but if they are powerful enough to influence Tribunals in other Regions! Obviously, if they can cross international boundaries they are exceptionally powerful and rightly feared.

Rank vs. Rank

The old axiom “power corrupts, but absolute power corrupts absolutely” has never been truer than in Rank vs. Rank intrigue. The never-ending struggle between those who have power and those who want power continues to be played out daily here at this level. The key in the Hierarchy is to bide your time, make your connections, and when the time is right make your move. The ministrations between the ranks are subtle. After all, you're dead, why move too fast and make silly mistakes?

It is also best if you move up the chain in consecutive order. To be too low on the totem pole and make a grab for power that is several ranks above you, upsets the balance in the Hierarchy and gets everyone, regardless of Legion, on your tail to put you down. You are seen as a threat or a loose cannon and you could be branded as a renegade. For example:

Let's say a Centurion has been coveting the Regent's position for about a year now. The Centurion goes to the Overlord when he spies (what he thinks) is just the screw up he's been waiting for to replace the Regent.

Now, this can go several ways, and here are just 2 examples:

1. The Overlord hears his case, doesn't like the Regent, and sends his recommendations to the Anacreon to have the Regent replaced. Or...
2. The Overlord sees this upstart little Centurion trying to make his move up the ladder (the Centurion might just be a good citizen, but most higher-ups don't usually see it that way) and figures he'll nip a potential threat right now – so he replaces the Centurion.

In the first scenario, getting the Regent replaced didn't do the Centurion much good. Sure, the Regent is gone but now it's the Marshal moving up to fill the void, and a new Marshal will be chosen by the Anacreon who has no idea who the Centurion is. The chances of the Centurion gaining that promotion are pretty slim, however, if the Centurion bides his times and makes the proper connections and gains the proper support first... well, nothing is impossible...

But subordinates must remember to be wary as well; because the Hierarchy is based on the feudal system of swearing your allegiance to those higher than you, those lower on the totem pole are often at the mercy of their superiors. Higher-ups in a Legion can always "allow" their subordinates to cross the Shroud – or even order them to take Skinlands missions – and then later "discover" the *Dictum* transgression when blackmail material is needed.

All members of the Hierarchy should use extreme care and discretion in their actions or risk great repercussions later. Hey, no one said the system was kind!

Social Class vs. Social Class

For the most part social classes are distinguished by a combination of age, arcane power, and freedom of movement. Although social mobility and interactions are not unknown among wraiths, most wraiths ally only with those of similar social class, and trust only those who have proven themselves. Gaunts, who are able to leave the Shadowlands and return at will, are particularly notorious for their cliquishness. Gaunts are afforded considerably more respect than Domens who mainly reside in Stygia. Lemures occupy the lowest of the free-wraith social classes by neither being able to leave the Shadowlands for long periods of time, nor having sufficient age to be higher on the social ladder.

In the Hierarchy a wraith's age normally automatically bestows some social power because they've just flat been around that long. They know the ropes... been around the block... describe it any way you want. The fact is that the age of a free wraith usually indicates the presence of more knowledge and thus power. A Gaunt has more status than the other classes, usually has more money, and will have some amount of influence on higher members in the Hierarchy. Some Gaunts may even have the ear of officials in Stygia. Conceivably, a Gaunt could run the whole show of the Citadel from behind closed doors, especially since most Hierarchy leaders will at the very least listen to any opinions a Gaunt may have.

The biggest conflict between the social classes is when someone with decision-making power begins to weigh a wraith's words or opinions. For instance, if a younger wraith is brought up on charges (whether real or trumped up) the magistrate will almost always believe the claims of the wraith with the most status. Not good for someone new to the wraith scene.

Gaunts typically have higher levels of lore than most other wraiths. In order to learn many secrets and ins and outs of wraithly society, a younger wraith will have to curry the favor of a Gaunt. In fact, Gaunts tend to have the sway of the guilds and may even be the head of one, so even to perfect one of the arts a young wraith needs to be aware of the knowledgeable Gaunts.

Old Guard vs. New Guard

Over the centuries, changing attitudes in the Skinlands have given rise to many wraiths that, while they respect and support the idea of a strong ruling body in the Underworld, object to many of the Hierarchy's long-standing policies. This has led to an Old Guard/New Guard split within the government. In general, most Stygian wraiths (at least the long-time residents) belong to the Old Guard, while a growing number of Hierarchy members in the Shadowlands ally themselves with the New Guard.

Both groups agree that there is a need for the Hierarchy to maintain a strong presence in the Shadowlands, that the Hierarchy plays a crucial role in the war against Oblivion, and that it is important to root out Spectres wherever they may be encountered. The major issue, which distinguishes the Old Guard from more modern Hierarchy supporters, is that of the status of thralls.

Many of the Old Guard comes from a time when slavery was not only acceptable, but in which it formed the basis of the economic system of some of the world's greatest civilizations. These Hierarchs see thralls as chattel, valuable only in what they can be forced to produce.

The New Guard opposes both the use of the word "slave" (adopting the less perjurious term "thrall"), and the entire system whereby one wraith owns another. Some Necropoli in the Shadowlands have adopted the feudal model, proposed at one time by Charon but widely ignored in practice by most of the Stygian Hierarchy. Still others have banned the practice of keeping thralls as personal servants altogether, and have even gone so far as to offer sanctuary to escaped thralls. Despite strong feelings on both sides regarding the issue of thralls, both Old and New Guard agree that some measures must be taken to prevent weak and Fetterless wraiths from feeding the Void.

Other issues upon which the Hierarchy is divided include the matter of contact with the Skinlands, the contesting interpretations of the Code of Charon, and the question of how best to deal with Renegades, Heretics, and the Dark Kingdoms. The Old Guard, of course, opposes Skinriding or the use of any Arcanos that allows contact with the mortal world, upholds a strict interpretation of Charon's laws, favors the elimination of Renegades and Heretics, and considers the Dark Kingdoms as hostile powers with which they are in direct competitions for souls. The New Guard has a more relaxed attitude toward discreet forays into the Skinlands, claims that the Code of Charon needs to be updated, and favors limited cooperation with Renegades, Heretics, and the Dark Kingdoms where common ground can be found. Since most of the more radical elements within the Hierarchy dwell in the Shadowlands, far from Stygia's control, the existence of the two philosophical compasses has not caused a major rift in the government of the Underworld. Should Stygia once again take an active part in the affairs of the Shadowlands, the Hierarchy may very well find itself on the verge of civil war.

Civil vs. Military

When the need for non-military personnel became clear, shortly after the formation of the Republic of Stygia, Charon's advisors cautioned him against the danger of setting up a "second Hierarchy" that might one day seek to outmaneuver its parent organization. To emphasize their incorporation into a single governing body, they were accorded honorary military titles as well as administrative ranks or grades (*example – a clerk is an "honorary" Legionnaire, an Adjustor is an "honorary" Centurion, etc.*). The civil servants of the Hierarchy are, therefore, considered "reserves" and, as such, can be drafted into the Legions in the event of a military emergency. Most of these civil servants perform reserve duty not unlike that of the National Guard in the Skinlands, spending one weekend of every month in serving training, and are prepared to be called up at a moment's notice. This has led to friction between the "weekend warriors" and career soldiers who serve alongside these reserves, who, in their estimation, don't know which is the dangerous end of darksteel.

However these “weekend warriors” are the ones that control the paperwork of the Necropolis: orders for equipment, stationing orders and the like. It is not unheard of for that piece of equipment you requisitioned to just happen to be “misplaced”. Conversely, what if the newest shipments from Stygia came in and you have a friend on the inside that has information about it or better, can (through the paperwork or influence) get some of it diverted for you. On the flip side, it never hurts to have someone in the military to help you out since they have the inside on the safest places in the citadel, certain levels of access, etc.

Hierarchy vs. Guild

Since the Sundering and the formation of the Shroud in ancient times, when the ability to move freely between the land of the living and the dead was lost, wraiths began to experiment with ways to affect the lands of the living as well as their own lands of the dead. As they experimented they discovered they could affect and manipulate objects, beings, and even the reality around them by utilizing part practical craft and part spiritual path. Thus the first Arcanos were created.

As the experimentation continued, the way wraiths passed on the knowledge varied from charging fellow wraiths for lessons, to forming secret societies and even cults centering on their arts. During the middle ages as Stygia reinvented itself to adopt the feudal system, the Arcanos society followed suit, organizing into Guilds. The Guilds combined social and economic structure and served as loose colleges of a sort, as well as grounds for dividing people up into social and political factions.

Several Guilds found themselves in a sort of symbiotic relationship with Stygia. They provided services to the Empire in exchange for status, power, and wealth. As the Guilds began to compete against each other and the feelings of antipathy grew, an unofficial conflict developed - known prosaically as the War of the Guilds. This Conflict lasted from 1096 to 1354, and while there certainly were never any open hostilities on the streets of the Isle during that time, a great many wraiths found their way to the Void because of the conflict.

In 1354, the Compact of Guilds was ratified which called for an end to the conflict among the Guilds and a Council was formed to adjudicate any further disagreements between Guilds. The Artificers, as the Eldest Guild, were granted leadership of the Compact and the Council.

The Council served to unify the Guilds as a political force. But change was coming; as Heretic and Renegade unrest grew, certain Guildmasters saw the situation as an opportunity to seize power from Charon’s obviously loosening grasp. On April 6, 1598, the Guilds, led by the Artificers, attempted a *coup d’etat*. At the guilds disposal were the arts of every Arcanos known to wraithkind. Even the darksteel weapons of the Hierarchy were matched by arms the Artificers had been producing in secret.

The two sides were almost evenly matched and the battle that ensued was almost “too close to call.” But one by one each Guild retreated and the Hierarchy stood victorious. Charon, perhaps understandably, decided that entirely too much power was concentrated outside of his hands, and the Guilds provided a focal point for that power. He determined to remove that focal point and instated the decree that banished the Guilds: The Decree of the Breaking.

The Decree of the Breaking is a simple document. It states that the Guilds are outlawed in Stygian lands, that to belong to a Guild is a crime, that the Guilds were by Charon’s decree dissolved, and that Legionnaires would be instructed to take the place of the Guild members within Stygian society. In its own way, Charon’s decree was as preordained to fail as the coup. The disbanding of the Guilds had unfortunately alienated many existing freewraiths; driving some of them from Stygia into the distant Shadowlands and leaving others to wander discontented through the street of the Underworld’s capital. Charon moved to win back these disgruntled members of his Society, while the banished Guilds hamstrung his efforts to replace them. After a mere 20 years, Charon abandoned the experiment and reinstated “former” Guild members under the condition that they swore on Siclos that they had renounced the Guilds. However, the fiction that the Guilds were destroyed was maintained, and eventually the general populace of Stygia grew to believe it.

Since the Decree of the Breaking, the Hierarchy has incorporated wraiths with Arcanoi talents into the legions. Many previous guild members have been assimilated and now ply their skills under direct Stygian supervision. With the Guilds disbanded and freewraiths in hiding, many wraiths believe a certain amount of independence comes with beings able to use one's powers openly, and with the backing of the government. Of course, Arcanoi have to be used according to the Hierarchy's dictates, but an Overlord isn't always around to make sure that those rules are obeyed.

Although the Guilds have ceased to exist openly as independent entities, they continue to secretly thrive even to this day. Not everyone in Hierarchy territory is a member of a Guild, and most wraiths in Stygian lands are firmly convinced the Guilds don't exist. This makes life easier for members of the Guilds as they maintain their exclusive status, while preventing their activities from being examined too closely by neighbors on the lookout for the banned Guilds. It is tolerated and even expected in Charon's empire that Stygian citizens should know an Arcanos or three, and mere knowledge of a Guilds specialty is no longer considered sufficient evidence to convict a wraith of Guild membership. After all, the Guilds were banished, and belonging to one technically makes one a Renegade. And no member of the Hierarchy is corrupt or breaks the laws...do they?

Hierarchy vs. Wraith

Given all the dangers that a Legionnaire faces, it's difficult to imagine why a wraith would willingly fight on behalf of the Hierarchy. Membership in a Legion is mandatory, but not all Legion positions are military. So why would any wraith want to put his soul on the line? The Hierarchy makes it appealing.

Pay for Legionnaires is low – about an obolus a month before cuts for arming, outfitting and Pathos – but the fringe benefits are compelling. Duty as a military Legionnaire provides a wraith with a measure of authority and respect in the Hierarchy. Without the front-line Legionnaires, Oblivion's servants would consume the Restless masses as soon as they shed their Cauls, and the Legions are quick to remind troublesome or unruly souls of this. Having authority and winning respect is therefore important to continued existence in the Underworld, where people can be turned into ashtrays and floor tiles. Furthermore, the pride of place that comes from being part of Stygia's best line of defense often translates into a passion for dedicated soldiers, and the job becomes its own reward.

The Hierarchy also attracts military Legionnaires with promises of protecting the wraiths' Fetters. Indeed, high-ranking Legionnaires even arrange to have their Fetters gathered and protected in the Skinlands. That's a pretty good benefit in a realm where life is cheap because it's already over.

Military duty is an authorized means by which to use Arcanoi, and for the more venal, military service promises plunder. Relics and Stygian steel don't grow on trees, not even dead ones. Legionnaires can hope to get their hands on the possessions of their enemies, and gain some wealth in the Underworld.

The Hierarchy system of sanctions further strengthens many wraiths' allegiance to the Hierarchy and is usually what puts service to the Hierarchy over the top in most fence sitter's minds. Having the favors you've acquired recorded and repayment enforced by punishment of the law is a pretty nice benefit for the military, as well as the civil, side of the Hierarchy. In a realm where wealth is a rare commodity, it is sometimes the only form of wealth for those in the lowliest positions.

Faction vs. Oblivion

This level of intrigue is perfect for those who prefer combat to role-play. Many who play at this level of intrigue will become Helldivers, Doomslayers, or any one of the Orders of the Hierarchy that take the battle

to Oblivion and its minions directly. Players at this level often concentrate on defending the local Citadel and hunting Spectres for bounty.

Oblivion is a powerful enemy, and many are not strong enough to withstand it. These lost souls, called Spectres, terrorize the Shadowlands and fill the Tempest to bursting with their grotesque selves and malevolent desires. The war with Oblivion – and specifically Spectres – has been going on since everything began. The first wraith to enter the Shadowlands had to deal with her dark side. It probably wasn't long after that that the first Spectres appeared. So this battle has been going on for a long time, fought by Restless from all walks of life. It crosses faction boundaries, social boundaries, and financial boundaries.

Many think that all Spectres are like bandits and undisciplined mobs. Some are but what many forget is that Spectres are determined, and you should never be contemptuous of determination, or it will prove you yourself to be contemptible, yes? Even if history were not full of examples of careless and overconfident officers who were overwhelmed by troops far less well equipped and motivated than the average Spectre, there is still reason to be concerned.

Nobody knows how many Spectres there are, but there are a lot. Nobody knows where they're going to come from next, in what strength or with what powers and infernal devices. The only thing that is known about them is their intention: complete and utter destruction.

Though Spectres' weapons are poorly made, they are usually of Stygian Steel, and will do horrendous damage to a wraith if they connect. A Spectre does not care if he exists or does not exist, so you cannot frighten or bargain with him. He is in constant maddening torment, so you cannot make treaties with him. He is very aware of his surroundings and can talk with other Spectres nearby, so if you are seen by one Spectre you can assume that you have been seen by all of them.

Wraiths fear Spectres both for their actual horrifying actions and abilities, but also the final horror they represent: the negation of the Psyche. They have completely lost the battle with Oblivion, but are too strong or useful to be completely consumed, and this is the worst fate most Restless can imagine. Nothing can be more frightening than recognizing an old friend's face with a Spectres eyes.

Wraith vs. Self

This level of intrigue is easy to participate in because no wraith is special and all are affected. Each and every wraith, regardless of faction, stands at the gateway of a damnation that is very real. The condition and the discipline required to overcome it is based upon the regulation of their shadow and their level of Angst. If a wraith is lucky they will simply be forged after turning, if not they could end up crawling on their belly worshipping some Oblivion-spawn and throwing seizures of self-destructive ecstasy just thinking about the idea of destroying things they once loved. We're talking about becoming shadow-eaten: A Spectre.

The conflict between a wraith and their shadow is very real and very brutal. The prize is for all the chips, a wraith's very corpus. The key to understanding this conflict between Psyche and Shadow, then, lies in understanding the Shadow. This means coming to grips with what it wants, what it needs and where it wants to go.

There is a duality in every wraith. One side is represented by the Psyche, the other by her Shadow. These two aspects of a single wraith are always in conflict from the moment of their transition across the Shroud. There must be a Shadow for a wraith to exist; but without eternal vigilance by the psyche, a Shadow will slowly corrupt and destroy the wraith's Passions and Fetters until the wraith succumbs to Oblivion. Complicating matters, while it may be possible to weaken the power of the Shadow, to destroy it is suicidal. After all, the Shadow is as much a part of the wraith as the Psyche is; to destroy that aspect of a wraith's personality would be to lobotomize the wraith's soul.

The psyche rules a wraith's actions - if nothing else it's stated clearly in the rules. Yet, one of the core themes of the World of Darkness games is a striving to challenge one's perceptions of good and evil. Therefore, a Shadow cannot *just* be the evil side of the wraith. That's too easy.

Wraiths can be just as corrupt and as evil as living humans in the Skinlands. Why should death change that? There's no moral component to dying. More importantly, how can an aspect of a wraiths' personality be so neatly categorized as her "evil side" when she might already be evil by society's standards? How can one represent the repressed emotions of a sociopath as better or worse than her conscious desires? Not all who become wraiths are angels. In other words, the genesis of the Shadow is far too complex a moral conundrum to reduce to a case of "good wraith, bad wraith".

So if a Shadow isn't a wraith's "evil side", what is it? Simply put, a Shadow is the part of the wraith that wants the wraith to fail, the part that wants the wraith to be damned. This and this alone is what every Shadow has in common with every other Shadow. The Psyche may struggle for self-actualization, Transcendence or personal power, but every Shadow has the same end in mind for its other half.

The Shadow embraces the darker emotions of the wraith, feeding upon and strengthening them. It revels in ideas that represent excess and personal weaknesses, exploiting any that the wraith may have. While this sort of exploration of excess can be subjective, depending on the wraith's personality, background and beliefs, everyone has chinks in their armor (and the Shadow is very good at finding them). Greed, addiction, arrogance and prejudice are all good places to begin an assault on the Psyche, but they only serve as starting points for the Shadow. A Shadow knows some, if not all, of a wraith's most intimate secrets. More importantly, it knows exactly how the wraith works mentally. It knows best how to adapt its actions to greatest effect, as a Shadow is a tormentor with but one victim - itself. The Shadow will discourage success, exploit weaknesses, cause doubt, confuse the facts, and engender fear.

Every Shadow is unique. Each has a personal history to draw upon, an individual register of pain and humiliation to serve as inspiration in its quest to drag the Psyche down to nothingness. Even worse, each shadow is alone in its battle, trapped inside the mind of the enemy with only brief respites of freedom. It is a thankless war, and one that surely brings the Shadow little joy in its waging.....well, maybe not, but that's the way many of them feel about themselves.

Faction vs. Faction

The faction level of politics is where the external threat to the Hierarchy can be played. Those bent on the destruction of the Hierarchy and more importantly your Necropolis and Citadel. There are three major political factions that fight for dominance over the Underworld; they are the Hierarchy, Renegades and Heretics. Most people will be playing Hierarchy characters but rarely it does happen where some players will play either Renegade or Heretic characters.

The Renegades and Heretics share a common bond. They both see the Hierarchy as a bastion of evil whose fall would improve the Shadowlands and the Underworld. They will seek to cause its fall through any means possible. This can be anything from hit and run tactics to subtle covert infiltration. The latter has the best impact as direct assaults against the Hierarchy are usually met with dire results. There is no telling how far a heretic or renegade can climb in the Hierarchy, in fact it is rumored that there are both in some of Stygia's highest areas of government. However the commonalities end here.

The Hierarchy is not immune to the faction level of politics. Desperate times have given rise to desperate measures. With the disappearance of Charon and the subtle battle between the Legions, the Necropoli in recent years have often had to resort to seeking assistance from certain Renegade and even Heretic Circles. During this period of escalating political tension, wraiths outside the Hierarchy are frequently recruited to cross the Shroud. Many Renegades and Heretics have better contacts in the Skinlands than most Hierarchy wraiths and are far more adept at some of the forbidden Arcanos. Plus, through this way it is far easier for Hierarchy wraiths to disavow all knowledge of Skinland missions.

The general view of Hierarchy wraiths is that Renegades are traitors and rebels. It is also thought that though they set themselves in opposition, they are not free from the Hierarchy's claims upon their souls. Their greatest crime is not that they seek open opposition, but that they shirk their responsibilities to the

Legions to which they rightfully belong. Disagreeing with the Hierarchy is not in and of itself a crime, after all most legionnaires complain about the Hierarchy all the time. But desertion is a crime, and those who call themselves renegades, freedom fighters, dissenters or whatever else suits their fancy are nothing more than deserters.

But the general feeling in the Shadowlands and that of the local Necropoli can differ tremendously. Many wraiths feel their troubles with the Hierarchy apply more specifically to Stygia than to her Necropoli. While Necropoli don't belittle the potential danger they dissenters represent, they do recognize that most Renegades are very willing to join with them to defend their joint territory from Spectres and other Tempest-spawned creatures. So usually as long as they don't interfere with Hierarchy duties, they can be tolerated for the extra assistance they provide in an emergency.

Depending on the setup of your particular Necropoli, the renegades and heretics can be a real threat or not even show up as a blip on the radar. In some Necropoli the Hierarchy's hold over their Necropoli is less than absolute, and rather than bringing brute force to bear on the populace, your Hierarchy rulers might realize that the best they can do is keep a low profile. In response, many of your citizens will be content to accept such minimal government, realizing that outright rebellion might result in the arrival of troops from Stygia and the imposition of a harsher set of rulers. Yet other Necropoli will exert firm control over the local dissenters, while still other Necropoli will remain under constant siege from them. A wraith's relationship with Renegades and Heretics is often a direct result of the type of relationship his home Necropolis maintains with them.

Guild vs. Guild

Although the Guilds are not supposed to exist, they continue to thrive to this day. Due to the nature of their Arcanos, some Guilds are natural allies and others are natural enemies. Some have a deep-seated hate dating back to the War of the Guilds or the revolt against the Hierarchy, while others could care less. The Guilds basically have a love/hate relationship with each other. They're allies in their banishment and purpose, enemies in their methods and views.

The Spooks like the Haunters but hate the Monitors. The Masquers like the Usurers, Chanteurs, and Sandmen, but don't get along with the Solicitors or Monitors...and everyone hates the Mnemoi. It can get confusing who likes who and who doesn't. The Council of the Guilds is still together and meets regularly, and all Guilds have their own structure and still vie to out do the other. So, if you're looking to get into this level of intrigue you're going to have to do your homework because this could be a game unto itself.

Ranks of the Hierarchy



This section is designed to let the player know the full extent of power their position in the Hierarchy affords them and the responsibilities of these positions. There are two branches to every legion, the *Military* branch and the *Civil* or *Administrative* branch.

Military Branch

This branch is concerned primarily with the defense of the Necropolis (or at least that Legion's section of the Necropolis). The defense includes fighting against Renegades, Heretics, Spectres, and generally any minion of Oblivion. In addition, the military are the primary ones that keep the local byways clear, and they also maintain and control civil unrest.

Civil or Administrative Branch

This branch of the Hierarchy focuses on the vital – though often under appreciated – tasks of civil management and record keeping. Advancement from one civilian rank to the next requires a combination of skilled performance, personal drive and the right connections. Transfers between civilian and military branches of the Hierarchy are not uncommon. The lower echelons of the active Legions contain a fair share of bored civil servants, while some burned-out or shell-shocked Legionnaires temporarily seek out the relative safety of a desk job.

Anacreon (over all)

Military

Overlord
Regent
Marshall
Centurion
Legionnaire

Civilian (Administrative)

Chancellor
Minister
Inspector
Adjustor
Clerk

Anacreon

The goal of many Hierarchy wraiths (particularly those who were politicians or leaders of one sort or another in life) is to obtain the rank of Anacreon, thus becoming the commander of their Legion in their Necropolis. The Anacreon sets the tone for members of their Legion in any Necropolis. The amount of discipline exercised within a Legion depends on how strongly that Legion's Anacreon adheres to the rules.

Anacreons may arise from the highest levels of either the Hierarchy's military or administrative wings. Consequently, the degree of regimentation within any given Citadel may depend on whether the Anacreon comes from the military or civilian caste. In most cases, by the time a wraith has garnered sufficient power (and attention from Stygia) to ascend to this top post, they have also gathered a fairly realistic assessment of wraith society, including the best strategies for dealing with Heretics and Renegades within the Necropolis. Like living politicians, many Anacreons-to-be cultivate an image which they feel will impress the Hierarchy enough to gain them their coveted appointment. Once in power, however, most Anacreons drop the pose and reveal their true colors, for good or for ill. Stygia is too far away to keep constant tabs on the internal politics of all its Necropoli. As long as an Anacreon keeps the flow of commerce between their Necropolis and Stygia within acceptable limits, she is generally left undisturbed. In fact, many distant outposts have become mini-Stygia's, with the council of Anacreons in absolute control of their turf.

Responsibilities:

- Sets their Legion's bounty prices for Spectre corpses.
- Sets the prices for Reapers to ensure Enfants are brought to them.
- Ok's all appointments on both the military and civilian side within their own legion in their Citadel.
- Is the only one who can appoint someone to the military positions of Overlord, Regent, or Marshal.
- Is the only one who can appoint someone to the civil positions of Chancellor, Minister, and Inspector.
- Is responsible for maintaining a good relationship with Stygia by carrying out their respective Deathlord's wishes, or at least appearing to.
- Is responsible for maintaining good morale in its Legion's ranks in order to prevent defection from the Hierarchy.
- Is responsible for obtaining and sending Thralls to Stygia in order to obtain financial gain for their Legion. (OOC: Exact financial gain amounts are at your Storyteller's discretion)
- Has full authority (without recourse) to demote, deny, sentence to Thralldom, torture, imprison, brand, or disincorporate any member of their own Legion in their Citadel.
- Is expected to guide and direct their Legion members and subordinates in such a way as to keep the numbers of Wraiths lost to Oblivion low.
- Is expected to form 'working' relationships with the other Anacreons in their Citadel.
- Is expected to gain influence and earn favors in order to further their respective Legion's goals at opportune times.
- Has the final authority to repeal a Chancellor's decision. May receive requests for an audience from Legion members accused of transgressions against the Hierarchy or their Legion, but may refuse to give such audience without offering any explanation.
- At the cost of one temporary status may grant positive or negative status, or remove status, to any wraith in the Necropolis, including those visiting the Citadel.
- May bestow a Legion level Sanction.

Overlords and Chancellors

Some say that the real power in any Necropolis rests not in the hands of the Anacreons, but with their advisory councils of Overlords and Chancellors. These are the wraiths that have direct access to the Anacreon they serve, and whose advice often becomes policy. Their voices often reach the halls of Stygia itself – and truly ambitious Hierarchy wraiths see appointment to the position of Overlord or Chancellor as a sure means of gaining entry into the highest levels of Stygian politics, or perhaps even the halls of Stygia itself. Overlords and Chancellors make up the "cabinet" of the Anacreon, offering council and advice to the Anacreon of their

Legion. When either a Maelstrom or an invasion of Spectres threatens the Necropolis, it is the business of both Overlords and Chancellors to remain on top of the situation and formulate strategies for the Anacreon. Usually, the advice of an Overlord takes precedence in times of war over a Chancellor's recommendation, while in less stressful times the situation tends to be reversed.

Although all Hierarchy ranks above that of Centurion and Adjuster are theoretically direct appointments by an Anacreon, in reality most candidates for higher offices are brought to the Anacreon's attention by one or more of her trusted councilors. An Overlord or Chancellor can therefore stack the ranks of a Necropolis with wraiths who are loyal to them, while seeming to bring "talent" to the attention of their superior. Although the Anacreons – at least the savvy ones – realize this, there is little they can do to alter this system except exercise damage control by carefully choosing their advisors. It is said that any Anacreon who finds herself suddenly without a job, and her position assumed by one of her staff of advisors, obviously did not choose her Overlords or Chancellors with enough care.

Overlord

Overlords are based directly out of their Citadel and are the personal assistants of the Anacreon. Overlords are responsible for many of the strategic decisions faced by their Legion.

Responsibilities:

- Based directly out of the Citadel
- Responsible for military strategy for their Legion (in their respective Citadel).
- Responsible for directly orchestrating and carrying out the orders of the Anacreon that require military actions.
- Responsible for creating and maintaining information 'avenues' (intelligence operations) that may facilitate the advance warning of military attacks.
- Responsible for integrating a spy network in key areas of interest to their Legion.
- In the event of an Anacreon's mysterious disappearance the Overlord is responsible for either directly conducting the investigation, or appointing a military subordinate to conduct the investigation. After the investigation is completed the Overlord must present the information to the acting Anacreon (usually the Chancellor).
- Is always the primary Inquisitor in military situations requiring investigation, or in cases of an Anacreon's disappearance; but may temporarily appoint others to help. (See Inquisitor role description)
- Responsible for compiling reports from underlings (primarily the Regent) and presenting them to the Anacreon for review.
- May grant status in times of siege or military crisis (like a field commission.)
- May make recommendations to the Anacreon to demote or remove from office a lower ranking military member of the same legion in their Citadel.

Chancellor

Chancellors are the administrative equivalent of Overlords. In Stygia they serve as assistants and advisors to the Deathlords, and are among the few wraiths that are actually admitted into the presence of these enigmatic Underworld leaders. In the Shadowlands, Chancellors act as advisors (along with Overlords) to the

Anacreon of a Citadel. They are responsible for the everyday operation and management of a Citadel and oversee all shipments to and from Stygia. Chancellors hold the honorary rank of Overlord.

Responsibilities:

- Based directly out of the Citadel
- Responsible for directly orchestrating and carrying out the orders of the Anacreon that require civil actions.
- In the absence of the Anacreon, will assume the position of acting-Anacreon until either the return of the Anacreon or a new one assumes the position.
- Responsible for compiling reports from underlings (primarily the Minister) and presenting them to the Anacreon for review.
- Has the authority to recommend the demotion or removal from office a lower ranking civil member of the same legion in their Citadel.
- In the case of a Legion member being accused of a transgression against their Legion or the Hierarchy, the Chancellor is responsible for holding a hearing to determine guilt or innocence. The Chancellor is judge, jury, and executioner. The accused party only has one chance at recourse... they may request an audience with the Anacreon. If they are denied this request, then the ruling of the Chancellor stands and is carried out.
- Once a month the Chancellors of each Legion shall meet and share with each other the new sanctions and status granted that month, as well as those sanctions that were paid. A master database of all sanctions and status will be kept in the Citadel, and may be used for reference by any current Chancellor.
- Chancellors have the ability to grant positive or negative status to any member of their legion (except the Anacreon) at the cost of one temporary status.

Regent

Regents represent the higher authority not directly based within a Necropolis' citadel. Attaining these honored positions implies that a wraith has demonstrated their loyalty to the establishment of Stygia, while at the same time attracting enough favorable attention to warrant a substantial reward. The Hierarchy depends on its Regents to coordinate the activities of a number of Marshals. Regents must be able to work within their own Deathlord's Legions as well as maintain working relationships with their counterparts in the service of other Deathlords. They receive instructions directly from the Citadel, and it is their responsibility to see that the sectors of the Necropolis under their control remain stable. Given the current state of Stygian affairs, this is not an easy task. A Regent who manages to keep their neck of the woods even relatively stable will sometimes receive an invitation to join the ranks of the privileged few who serve as Overlords – advisors to the Anacreon of their Legion.

Responsibilities:

- Directly subordinate to the Overlord.
- Responsible for compiling reports from underlings (primarily Marshals) and presenting them to the Overlord for review.
- Responsible for making recommendations to the Anacreon concerning new appointments of Marshals.
- Rules a number of the perimeter Haunts around their Citadel and is based in one of them.
- Responsible for organizing and coordinating their activities with the other Legions in their area.

- Responsible for setup at the Anacreon council meeting and is the runner for the Overlord at council.

Minister

Ministers in Stygia serve as department heads and oversee the work of the Inspectors within their department. In the Shadowlands, they are in charge of the economy, the entry and egress of wraiths, and the collection of information in the Haunts around the perimeter of a Citadel, while not being directly based within it. In both Stygia and the Shadowlands, they often employ Adjusters (and occasionally Centurions) to act as their spies and informants, since the “need to know” is vital to the performance of their duties. This position is a training ground for the arcane politics of the higher ranks of the Hierarchy. Many Ministers use their positions to instill a healthy dose of fear in their underlings, with the design to improve the efficiency of their work. Ministers who display sufficient talent may become Chancellors. Ministers hold the honorary rank of Regent.

Responsibilities:

- Directly subordinate to the Chancellor.
- Is the primary Inquisitor in civil situations requiring investigation.
- Oversees and organizes the activities of the Inspectors.
- Responsible for compiling and presenting information/evidence gathered by all Inspectors and presenting it to the Chancellor for review.
- Responsible for making recommendations to the Anacreon concerning new appointments of Inspectors.
- Responsible for setup at the Anacreon council meeting and is the runner for the Chancellor at council.
- Is in charge of the economy and meets with the ministers of the other legions to help maintain it as well as the tribute that must be shipped to Stygia.
- Collecting information from the perimeter haunts.

Marshals

Marshals, in the Hierarchy’s quasi-feudal framework, occupy the place of minor lords. Many wraiths that have risen to the rank of Marshal fall prey to the complacency associated with being a big fish in a small pond. Others find they enjoy the idea of having power over a well-defined area (usually a Haunt of some significance) and use their small influence to implement their own particular philosophy of leadership. Marshals often find themselves beset by pressures from both above and below. They are close enough to the “troops in the fields” to be aware of their needs while they themselves are subject to orders from above – orders which are often at odds with the real needs or capabilities of the available patrols. Administrative Inspectors share the difficulties of their military counterparts, with whom they are expected to establish a cooperative relationship. When military and civil needs come into conflict, however, Marshals and Inspectors usually bear the brunt of the ensuing power struggles.

As the primary enforcers of local policies, Marshals and Inspectors are subject to criticism from both superiors and subordinates when things go wrong, although successes are more often attributed to the “wisdom” of their superiors in the Hierarchy. Nevertheless, a Marshal (or Inspector) skilled in manipulation can sometimes manage to reverse this perception. Failures can appear to result from poor conceptualization at

higher levels, while successes seem to come from their own tenacious efforts. Marshals who prove themselves, and who maintain favorable relations with their superiors, may become Regents.

Responsibilities:

- Are allowed to set the “plunder policy” within their legion, may allow Legionnaires the right to keep what plunder they find or take it away as they see fit. More lofty Hierarchy officials may intervene to confiscate any plunder only when word of its possession filters upward, and only if an item is specifically sought after by a bureaucrat or if a prize seems too powerful or dangerous to be in the hands of a grunt.
- Are responsible for the Barghests that are issued to them. A Marshal who loses Barghests repeatedly must answer to the Overlord eventually – not unlike how a rebellious policeman that keeps wrecking patrol cars is called into his captain’s office.

Inspectors

Inspectors are in charge of administering a particular area around a Citadel (in the Shadowlands) or a specialized sub-department of the government (in Stygia). They work closely with the Legions’ Marshals, and cooperation between the two parallel ranks is crucial to ensure that things run smoothly. Crossover between the civil and the military wing of the Hierarchy is fairly common at this level. Inspectors hold the honorary rank of Marshal.

Responsibilities:

- Is responsible for maintaining contact with inspectors from other Necropoli and help maintain information concerning Sanctions that are received/paid in the other Necropoli as well as status changes.

Centurion

For those fortunate enough to achieve promotion to Centurion and receive their own patrols, a whole new world of social and political maneuvering opens up. In theory, Centurions gain their position through superior performance (or judicious brown-nosing). Therefore, holding onto their ranks as patrol leaders becomes an endless struggle to stay one step ahead of the rank and file. A few wraiths seem to find their niche as patrol leader, the veteran “Sergeant” stereotype of many war films or the un-ambitious office or assembly line worker. However, most Centurions are intent on moving upward, and see their status as a convenient way to catch the attention of their superiors. Within the administrative arm of the Hierarchy, Adjustors see their roles as only the first step toward gaining real power within the Hierarchy. In corporate terms (and in some ways the Hierarchy can also be viewed as a vast corporation), the Centurions and Adjustors make up the lower – middle management, the talent pool from which a few individuals are chosen to fill openings higher up in the “company.”

Centurions who achieve recognition for their abilities or successfully maneuver themselves into their superiors’ good graces, may be promoted to the rank of Marshal and gain responsibility over a number of

patrols – and their Centurions. At this level of authority, true talent wins out over looks and charm, and most successful Marshals can point to exemplary track records to support their claim to power.

Responsibilities:

- In charge of groups of Legionnaires and making sure that roving patrols are kept up to secure the areas around the Necropolis.

Adjustor

Adjusters not only supervise the activities of several clerks, they also serve as staff aides to higher-ranking officials. They hold most of the “middle-management” posts in Stygia and the Shadowlands, and while they do not themselves wield enormous amounts of power, they have access to individuals who do. They hold the honorary rank of Centurion.

Responsibilities:

- Responsible for the upkeep of the master database of all sanctions and status that are kept in the Citadel.

Legionnaire

To see the Hierarchy as a faceless mass of regimented soldiers is to see them through a distorted lens of presupposition. In reality, the Legions of each Deathlord have their own unique structure, a structure that reflects the overall nature of the wraiths that fall under their control. Discipline varies among the Deathlords as well as within each Centurion’s patrol. Although the stereotypical image of units of de-personalized soldiers can still be found among the Hierarchy – particularly in Stygia, where the shadow of the modern world barely reaches – most Hierarchy patrols reflect the unique natures and talents of the individuals who comprise them. The general tenor of the Necropolis in which a Hierarchy wraith resides also affects their attitude. A Necropolis constantly under siege will tend to produce a more militaristic and discipline oriented Hierarchy branch, rather than one that only pays lip service to Stygia.

Most Hierarchy patrols contain a variety of individuals who serve as recruiters, educators, public relations experts, intelligence officers, social directors, quartermasters, liaisons, scouts, spies, and, of course, combat specialists. Specialized patrols do exist, but often these are assembled on an *ad hoc* basis (such as the need for a group of spies to infiltrate a suspected Renegade or Heretic stronghold).

Mobility is also possible (and in many cases encouraged) within the Hierarchy. Lemures recruited as lowly Legionnaires may eventually make their way up the ranks of the Hierarchy. Gaining the coveted position of Centurion, or patrol leader, occupies the time and effort of many Legionnaires who seek out every opportunity to shine in situations where their excellence will be noticed.

Responsibilities:

- Legionnaires have little power and have to listen to and obey their superiors. Legionnaires do not have regular duties but, are summoned to the Citadel and assigned duties as needed.

Clerk

Clerks form the lowest rung on the administrative ladder; these beginning civil servants perform the routine but vital tasks that make up the bulk of government work. They also act as “gophers” to anyone of a higher rank. Clerks need to learn the Byzantine convolutions of Hierarchy economics. They hold the honorary rank of Legionnaire.

Responsibilities:

- Clerks have little power and have to listen to and obey their superiors. They most commonly serve as secretaries and gophers to others in the Civil branch.

Standards of Behavior



Unlike Stygia, the Necropoli of the Shadowlands do not suffer from arrested development. The activities of wraiths in the cities near the Skinlands reflect the changing tastes and fads of the mortal world. Attitudes toward both work and play reflect the localized origins of the wraith populations as well as the fact that, in general, wraiths who remain in the Shadowlands tend to be younger by several centuries than Stygian wraiths. As such certain standards of behavior have developed throughout the Shadowlands that have become the expected norm that wraiths must follow.

Status

The dead can be as hidebound and status-conscious as the living. The use of Status is deeply ingrained in the Hierarchy, and the myriad social and class distinctions among the Restless amply demonstrate this truism. Status is a combination of your Social Class, Deeds and Rank. Everyone is fearful to ignore this system of social and bureaucratic classification, because it is considered deeply offensive and disrespectful to ignore the Status of another.

For the most part wraiths' Social Classes are distinguished by a combination of age, arcane power, and freedom of movement. Although social mobility and interactions are not unknown among wraiths, most wraiths ally only with those of similar Social Class, and trust only those who have proven themselves. Gaunts are particularly notorious for their cliquishness. Gaunts, who are able to leave the Shadowlands and return at will, are afforded considerably more respect than Domens who mainly reside in Stygia. Lemures occupy the lowest level of the freewraith Social Class by neither being able to leave the Shadowlands for long periods of time nor having sufficient age to be higher on the Social ladder. In general, the whole system of status is maintained by the Gaunts of the Hierarchy, who demand considerable respect from those under them. Gaunts receive +2 to their status pool for being Gaunts, Domens receive +1 to their status pool for being Domens, and Lemures don't get any additional status because they are not yet old enough.

The second factor to status is your deeds. The Hierarchal system rewards those who accomplish great things (while in service to the Hierarchy) by bestowing status. Any wraith may have a maximum of 4 status added to their status pool based on their deeds.

A legionnaire is walking with his patrol when they are jumped by a shade that harrows two of the legionnaire's patrol and wounds several others. While others run away the lone legionnaire destroys the shade. This is a great deed and the legionnaire can be recommended for status due to his actions.

Keep in mind that one does not have to be a great warrior to gain deed status. A clerk who finds corruption within the Citadel (say embezzling of funds) could be awarded deed status. Such awards are only dependent upon the recommendation and approval of one's superiors. This allows a manner for wraiths to be

recognized/rewarded even if there is no opening or strong cause for promotion. Some legions choose to add a little flair to their deed status awards by adding a special name or classification (courageous, loyal, ferocious). This is fine but in no way necessary, as the deed is recorded in the same manner regardless of the reason for award. After a wraith receives four status points for his deeds he will likely be expecting a promotion within a short time. Whenever a wraith is promoted to a higher rank his deeds pool is immediately cleared and he must begin anew. He will then be considered rewarded for his deeds and repaid by advancement. Often it happens that two or more wraiths are vying for the same promotion. The number of deed awards is one of the first things that their superior will check before deciding who will promote, because the wraith with more deeds will automatically be chosen. In the case of an equal amount of deed awards, the superior will have to decide based on other factors. Key to note, however, is that someone of higher rank is always superior regardless of deed awards.

The final factor to status is rank. The Hierarchies' use of military rank is more than just who salutes whom. Military rank is a badge of leadership. The responsibility for personnel, equipment, and mission grows with each increase in rank. To slight someone's rank is to say they are a failure at these things. Each level of rank adds one to your status. Legionnaires are +1 status for being a Legionnaire of the Hierarchy. An Anacreon is +6 because he is 5 ranks higher than a Legionnaire.

There is one last addendum to status: Deathlords and The Unlidded Eye. Deathlords have +2 added to their status pool simply for being the Deathlord of their Legion, plus an additional +1 because their rank is 1 higher than the Anacreons on the rank scale. (Don't get cocky if you're an Anacreon just because you're "only" one below your Deathlord. A Deathlord can crap bigger than you are any day of the week!) Deathlords are high-level NPC's but are still technically within the status system. But... The Unlidded Eye *never* does Status. They are above Status. They don't have ranks. They have their duty. They don't respect or acknowledge the status of anyone except Charon as the Emperor of the Hierarchy and their boss.

There are only three wraiths that may grant or take away status. That is the Anacreon, the Chancellor, and the Overlord. (*The Deathlords may as well but you won't run into them except for occasionally at regional and National events.*) If someone is deserving (or not) of status it must be passed up the chain of command until one of these 3 wraiths grants or takes it away. The Overlord bestows status to the military side and the Chancellor bestows status to the administrative side. The Chancellor and the administrators beneath him are responsible for the recording and tracking of the status for both sides. The Overlord does not have to keep track of status, he simply informs the Chancellor of who is to receive status and it is recorded. The Anacreon will not usually be bothered with status as it is the job of those beneath him.

| Rank | Status Bonus |
|---------------------|--------------|
| Legionnaire/Clerk | +1 |
| Centurion/Adjustor | +2 |
| Marshal/Inspector | +3 |
| Regent/Inspector | +4 |
| Overlord/Chancellor | +5 |
| Anacreon | +6 |
| Deathlord | +9 |

| Social Class | Status Bonus |
|------------------------------------|--------------|
| Gaunt (Wraith Power Class 5+) | +2 |
| Domen (Wraith Power Class 3&4) | +1 |
| Lemure (Wraith Power Class 1&2) | 0 |

Deeds: You may have up to +4 worth of deeds, which only comes into gameplay when comparing those of equal rank.

Example:

Envy the Gaunt Anacreon of the Silent Legion would have an effective status of 8. This is because he gains +6 from his rank as an Anacreon and +2 from his Social Class as a Gaunt.

In the case of comparing two similar positions lets take the following as an example:

Mort and Dwight have come to a situation where evidence is not present and both are accusing one another of the same crime. The residing Chancellor, holding a hearing to determine guilt or innocence, sees that both are Lemures as well as Centurions so must then take into consideration how many deed status traits each possesses. After consulting with the Adjustor in the Citadel's archives he discovers that Mort has 3 deeds on record but Dwight being recently promoted has none. In this case where no evidence is present the Chancellor summarily rules against Dwight thus upholding the status system of the Hierarchy.

But, granting status comes with its own set of problems. Sure, Bob did a good deed, so you grant him status to help earn him a top spot when promotion opens up. But, do you really know Bob? More importantly, do you trust Bob? These are the things one must ask before recommending status be granted. The chain of command is followed in order to grant status, and you are sticking your neck out when you request your higher up to tell his higher up to tell... and eventually for the Chancellor to authorize the granting of status. You can bet the paperwork will lead right back to you as the one who requested it, so let ole' Bob mess up and you know the old saying, "Shit rolls down hill." Odds are that a bad recommendation will come back to bite you, so you must make absolutely sure that the individual is actually worthy and trustworthy of it. On the flipside, a good recommendation in the right situation can actually you earn you a status point of your own.

Withdrawing status works in much the same manner. If the request is aimed at one of your own legion members, then the system of status withdrawal works in precisely the same manner as a status award. It's sent up the chain of command until it is either approved or disapproved. The disciplining wraith may request to pull from the deed status or from the rank status (demoting you), depending on the severity of the offense.

On occasion a member of a different legion may wish to request positive or negative status for a member in your legion. That wraith must first go to their own superior and send it up the chain of command in their own legion. When it reaches their Overlord or Chancellor, then *they* may choose to pursue it by discussing it with the Overlord or Chancellor in *your* legion. So it goes, Anacreons discuss with Anacreons, Chancellors/Overlords with Chancellors/Overlords, etc. To break chain of command and especially to risk tension between legions will result in no audience with the individual, and probably a reprimand from your superiors.

Lastly, on rare occasions a wraith from your legion may be visiting another Necropolis and do something (negative or positive) to warrant audience before your legion's Anacreon in that Necropolis. As an Anacreon of the same legion, albeit different Necropoli, status may be granted or withdrawn without contacting the home legion. In the event that the status-changed wraith returns to their home legion and their home Anacreon doesn't honor the status-change, serious problems can ensue. Reinstating or withdrawing status in this circumstance can cause serious issues between Necropoli, issues that the other Anacreons in your own Citadel will not usually appreciate. Causing such an issue more than once is often viewed as undermining the authority of the Hierarchy and the offending Anacreon may find himself out of a job. By the same token, in such a situation as this a Chancellor/Overlord does not have the authority to change the status of a wraith from a different Necropolis. Only an Anacreon, with their better knowledge of their relationship with the home Anacreon, has the authority to make changes to status that could affect the core relationship between the two Necropoli – something no Anacreon should take lightly.

Sanctions

Sanctions are another way that the Hierarchy makes it appealing and profitable to become one of them. Imagine someone owes you a favor, and not only do you expect it to be repaid; it can be punishable by your legion or citadel for not being repaid. Acquiring sanctions is another form of wealth for wraiths; after all, there isn't much wealth in the afterlife to begin with.

The breakdown of Sanctions is as follows:

Personal Sanction (Minor)

This is the most common type of Sanction. The favor usually does not cross Legion lines and is often repaid with just one action. This type of Sanction may include things such as: Allowing someone to use your haunt for a long period of time, or guaranteeing a wraith's safety in a domain your legion already controls.

Personal Sanction (Major)

This Sanction is owed when a wraith sacrifices greatly of his time and resources, and/or subjects himself to a significant amount of risk. Repayment of this type of Sanction may include supporting any political action the possessor of the sanction desires, even against your own Legion. However an action this large would repay the debt in full. Other actions may repay this debt as well, though depending on the type of repayment requested, it may take one or more actions to be repaid.

Personal Sanction (Life)

This Sanction is much higher than the previous two. The debtor literally owes his continued existence to the Sanction-holder, and the Sanction-holder can demand quite a bit before considering the debt paid. It often comes down to, how much does the debtor value his own "life"? In the case of a Life Sanction, the debtor has effectively made himself the Thrall of another wraith.

Legion Sanction

This Sanction is one in which an Anacreon may make his legion obligated to repay a debt to an individual wraith, legion or Necropoli. This Sanction quite literally means that the Sanction-holder has the backing of the individual Necropoli Legion who issued the Sanction. The issuing Legion (including the Anacreon) is then obligated to repay the debt, quite often not an easy task.

Citadel Sanction

The Citadel Sanction is the highest Sanction that can be bestowed upon any wraith or Necropolis, and may only be bestowed by a consensus from that Necropolis' Anacreon Council. This Sanction means quite literally: The Citadel owes me for a great deed or favor that was done. Be it large or small, ALL legions within this Citadel will aid me in whatever way they can.

Now let's put these into perspective. 95% of Sanctions should be between levels one and two (minor and major Sanctions). Level 3 (life) Sanctions should be RARE! As for Legion and Citadel Sanctions... Legion Sanctions should be rare to the point of a wraith being party to one only once every 100 years; Citadel Sanctions should be rare to the point that a wraith may hear of one occurring just once during his entire wraithly existence.

The best thing about advancing in the Hierarchy is that holding an elevated position automatically allows you to collect Sanctions. For instance, if a Chancellor has an Inspector who wishes to petition the Anacreon directly, he may charge the Inspector a Sanction. If a Legionnaire wants special permission for a normally unauthorized activity, his Centurion may charge a Sanction. After all, legion loyalty can only go so far -- the argument that members of a Legion should not charge each other Sanctions is a bit like saying no American should charge another American money, simply because they work in the same country. Sanctions are currency, and a Wraith must make a living!

Anacreons have the best position of all for collecting Sanctions. Someone wants to cross over to help a loved one? That's a Sanction. Someone wants to establish a new Haunt in your Legion's part of town? Sanction. In this way Anacreons can collect numerous Sanctions – it almost goes without saying that having many wraiths obligated to you affords a certain amount of protection and support when your actions are less than popular. Simply put, an Anacreon without Sanctions is a like politician without money. They look the part but have no power to back it up.

An important clarification: When an Anacreon requests you to do something, he can often avoid owing a Sanction by claiming it is for the good or security of the Necropolis. Running a portion of the Necropoli and keeping it safe is every Anacreon's concern, so it can be said that asking for a Sanction in return is undermining the Anacreon's right to rule... not a good thing. A wraith can only charge a Sanction to an Anacreon if he is doing a personal favor; though one should tread carefully when asking anything in return from a high-ranking wraith or he may end up with more than he bargained for. Obviously, a request simply for the "good" of the Necropoli never works *between* Anacreons, as they should all be working together for that cause. However, Sanction exchanges between Anacreons often occur.

Last but not least to note is that the Unlidded Eye *never* does Sanctions. They are above such things. They don't do favors. They do their duty. They don't accept favors. You help them because if you don't they will badly hurt you and/or turn you into a piece of lawn furniture. The Unlidded Eye doesn't need Sanctions because they have the right to do *whatever* they feel is necessary - with full authorization from Charon.

Compensation

Sanctions and compensation work hand in hand, and together frequently have a minimizing effect on violence. As previously mentioned, a sanction in the wraith world is a currency of sorts and can carry an immense amount of value. Since sanctions are basically "owed favors" of varying degrees, what happens if another wraith comes along and destroys your "investment" (i.e. kills the favor-owing wraith)?

According to the Hierarchy, any wraith that destroys an "investment" must then compensate the original sanction-holder. Thus if you hold a minor sanction against a wraith that is killed, you now hold a minor sanction against his killer (assuming you know their identity). By the same token, if you kill a wraith that owes a Sanction, chances are you will now be held accountable to repay the sanction. So the upshot is: Be careful whom you strike against, for you may find you have slain your worst foe only to become deeply indebted to someone else. If you fail to provide adequate compensation (repayment), you will undoubtedly be brought before your Chancellor and punished under Hierarchy law.

The real secret to sanctions and compensation is that clever wraiths may actually seek out powerful, hated, or influential wraiths and offer to be in their debt in order to use their name as protection. That annoying Lemure in the corner may be ripe for a good butt kicking -- but if he suddenly announces that he owes a (Minor) Personal Sanction to a Chancellor, a (Major) Personal Sanction to an Anacreon, or a (Life) Personal Sanction to a Deathlord, you must realize that if you destroy him you will owe those sanctions. Indeed, powerful wraiths may well find many seeking to owe them a sanction, in order to access their protection. Not all wraiths will want to collect many sanctions, but others will accept all petitions and thus also collect significant amounts of power and influence. Often Gaunts are perceived to have power so younger wraiths seek to owe them sanctions, their power grows because they are owed sanctions, which in turn makes them more powerful... the cycle perpetuates itself.

The only people who are immune to paying compensation are Anacreons and Chancellors while acting in accordance with Hierarchy law and issuing punishments, and members of the Unlidded Eye. (The same protection extends to any wraiths that are ordered by the Anacreon/Chancellor to actually carry out the sentence.) If a wraith is disincorporated as punishment for breaking Hierarchal law, then any investments in him are permanently lost.

Last but not least, if your Necropoli comes into Bad Standing with other Necropoli, all Sanctions owed to it's residents are invalidated until it is lifted. Making sure that your Citadel remains in good standing is vitally important.

Traveling: How Standards of Behavior Work across the Necropoli, Regions and Nations

The power of the Camarilla organization is the power of inter-game interaction. The fact that you can travel to games all over the country, and indeed the world, is one of the best things about the Campaign. But inter-game strife can and does cause conflict and intrigue. What's needed is a clear set of rules governing how this should be run.

The golden rule is this: travel to another Necropolis and you are under that Necropolis's rules and laws. Taking things into you own hands is bad, bad, BAD! If you travel to another Necropolis and break the laws of that Necropolis, for whatever reason, you are to blame. Always. Even if you just discovered that someone is a Doppelganger who killed your mother, the moment you take the law into your own hands for anything other than immediate self-defense, you're the criminal.

If you visit another Necropolis, make sure you know the laws. Ignorance is no defense. Remember, all visitors reflect upon their Anacreon. Sometimes visiting players cause an uproar in a game, only to return and say, "We think we did nothing wrong, so what do we care?" That won't carry any weight though, because if you upset the locals, the problem will fall to your Anacreon. Unless your Anacreon deals with it in a manner acceptable to the wronged Necropolis, it could become a very serious matter. If you go elsewhere and break the rules, you not only bring shame upon your Anacreon but ultimately your legion. Your Anacreon may love you or may hate you, but the moment you mess up you'll get the blame... and so will they!

The Anacreon of the visited Necropolis *could* just look to your own Anacreon to punish you when you get home. On the other hand, a good and helpful Anacreon wouldn't want his fellow leader to have to suffer the humiliation and shame of dealing with the matter... so maybe he'll just execute you then to end the matter.

Examine the following example, utilizing the protocols described above:

The Residents of Necropolis A turn up at Necropolis B and cause trouble and upset the locals. The Anacreon of Necropolis B can't kill them because they are too powerful and would slay him if he tried, so the Anacreon of Necropolis B decides to complain formally to the Anacreon of Necropolis A. The Anacreon of Necropolis A had better punish the visitors who caused the trouble. If he doesn't, a few months later Necropolis A will get into Bad Standing for the Anacreon's failing to do his job.

But imagine if the Anacreon of Necropolis A either doesn't want to punish them or maybe is too politically weak to punish them. What is there to do? A clever Anacreon simply orders the Chancellor or Overlord (whichever side of the legion the characters are on, civil or military) to deal with the members of the Legion. Having done that, he can turn to Anacreon B and say "Well, I've done my duty!" and it becomes their problem. If they don't act, Anacreon A can either replace them or punish them ("Yes, I know you love your Chancellor and Overlord, but they must become a chair so you don't have to... it's your fault I'm afraid!")

This removes some of the violence and threat of violence from game interaction. When traveling, wraiths have to remember that they are going somewhere that may not work under these rules. If a wraith is lucky it is a civilized Necropolis where the rules of protocol are easily understood and known to all. Wraiths who travel to these Necropoli will automatically band together to enforce these rules. They provide a constant; they give stability and security. A wraith that goes to a Necropolis that operates under these rules knows that any Citadel shall be a safe Citadel, and that rank is respected and enforced. They know that subordinates who speak out of turn will be punished by their Superiors, that the Anacreon will be respectful or else lose face with his precious newfound allies, and that most will think carefully before they open their mouths. This is a society where Status, Sanctions, Rank and all things have a due order and place -- a safe and orderly Hierarchy.

Anything that comes in to attack this society is a threat that must be destroyed, because if one Necropolis falls to the renegade nature then all can. Thus they band together. If there is a Necropolis that does not operate under these protocols, wraiths begin to complain to their Anacreons of the danger this poses. When enough complaints have been voiced, the Council may act and a Motion of Bad Standing could be brought against the offending Necropolis. Thus, the natural order of the protocols will spread.

The Law



he Hierarchy has its own system of laws, justice system and punishments for breaking those laws. The laws protect as well as punish, and the majority of the Restless quietly obey the dictates of their Deathlord without incident.

Justice System

Those who violate the laws may be called to stand trial before a Hierarchy magistrate. In theory, it is possible to appeal a judgment to a “higher” magistrate, although this is normally only permitted to wraiths with some degree of station or status within the Hierarchy. In some cases, a judgment may be appealed to the Hand of Fate, in which case the Hierarchy almost always accepts the alternative judgment. This normally only happens in cases where the jurisdiction of a case does not clearly fall to one or another Deathlord, although certain cases have proved to be exceptions. This is the Justice System of Stygia.

The Shadowlands work a bit different. The highest authority is the legion’s Anacreon but the Chancellor will conduct the “trial”. In the case of a Legion member being accused of a transgression against their Legion or the Hierarchy, the Chancellor is responsible for holding a hearing to determine guilt or innocence. The Chancellor is judge, jury, and executioner. The accused party only has one chance at recourse... they may request an audience with the Anacreon. If they are denied this request, then the ruling of the Chancellor stands and is carried out. Most wraiths with any sense will automatically appeal the verdict to the Anacreon. The only hope they have of gaining an audience is that they have a legion level sanction or higher. If this is the case the offending wraith may call in this sanction in the hopes of getting the sentence commuted or dropped unless he might be willing to owe the Chancellor a Sanction... but not for helping him out of this situation...of course not.

In the case of wraiths from different legions being accused of something, then each legion takes care of its own member. A legion does not have the right to judge a wraith from another legion. All crimes are kept “in house” of their own legion.

The last situation: two wraiths are accused of a crime...both claim the other one did it and there is no proof. The person with the highest rank is right; if both have the same rank then the person with the higher status is right, plain and simple. Be aware if you are a low ranking wraith and a high ranking wraith is accusing you of something, the best bet is to find an even higher ranking wraith, offer them a sanction, and let them offer you an alibi.

Crime and Punishment

Justice is meted out in the Shadowlands just as it is in the lands of the living. However, because it is virtually impossible to kill a wraith permanently, and exiling someone to the Tempest only strengthens

Oblivion, executions of any sort are simply not practical. Some of the more common methods of punishment are described below:

Enslavement – The most common form of punishment is enslavement of the offending wraith. Chains are placed around the offender, effectively making her the Thrall of another wraith.

Torture – Far surpassing anything imagined in the living lands, wraithly torture is designed to mark the offender. While wraiths easily heal most ordinary wounds, marks inflicted by devices of Stygian metal are infinitely more painful and are extremely difficult to heal. Of course, because wraiths are creatures of spirit, the most lasting pain involves mental anguish...

Imprisonment – Often the Hierarchy incarcerates criminals in Shadowlands reflections of prisons used by mortals, with reinforced walls and bars made of Stygian metal.

Branding – Branding is a way to mark criminals, thereby both ostracizing the criminal and deterring others from committing the same crimes. Serious criminals are branded upon their foreheads.

Discorporation – Certain criminals are taken to Stygia and hurled into the Artificers' forges, where they are smelted into goods.

Abasing

So how does one become the new Anacreon without the existing Anacreon's allies killing you? It's not as hard as someone might imagine. An Anacreon ceases to be one when he is killed, becomes shadow eaten (a spectre), is deposed by someone of higher authority, or resigns. A member of the Unlidded Eye may depose an Anacreon for breaking the law. The Anacreon Council may also depose an Anacreon if they en masse (ALL of them with not one vote of dissent) vote that the current Anacreon of a particular Legion is a threat to the Necropolis as a whole. The only exception to this is if there is no possible replacement for the Anacreon, as all Legions must be represented in Council. Typically the Chancellor moves up and the other ranks follow suit. If the Overlord or Chancellor attempts abasing, and no one in the legion will come to the Anacreon's aid, well... anything goes...

The Unlidded Eye

There are certain groups who still stand outside the Legions, orders of wraiths who reported only to Charon and who, even now, await his return. The Unlidded Eye is one such order, and no other grouping of wraiths strikes such fear into the hearts of all who dwell in Stygia or the Shadowlands. Simply put, the Unlidded Eye is the best of the best – and the worst of the worst. It is comprised of the brightest, most dedicated, most fanatical, most talented and most ruthless wraiths Stygia has to offer and it takes and molds these wraiths into the auto-immune system of the Stygian body politic.

The Eye was empowered by Charon himself, and to date no Deathlord has dared to try to rescind that authorization. So a member of the Unlidded Eye can requisition any Artifact or troops he needs. He can give orders countermanding those of an Anacreon. He can command that prominent wraiths be soulforged, or that thralls be raised from chains, all for the good of Stygia – and he will be obeyed.

For the Unlidded Eye exists to protect Stygia from all threats, external and internal, and it does so with a ruthless efficiency that makes even Spectres sit back and take notice. Any wraith that is perceived as being

a danger to the Empire by the Eye's innumerable informants and spies is summarily dealt with. The lucky ones are soulforged. The rest – well, simply say that the torturers of Stygia have had centuries in which to get creative.

Recruitment into the Eye is secretive. Supposedly, the *crème de la crème* of each Legion is taken every so often, when the Eye feels the need for reinforcements. Some say that Renegades and Heretics have been inducted as well, brainwashed by Mnemoides and honed like blades for their new existence. There are even those who say that the Eye has a few Spectres tucked away, for what purpose they alone know.

As might be expected, representatives of the Eye do not bother to answer these accusations.

Training to become a fully-fledged member of the Unlidded Eye is rumored to take between three and five decades. During that time, a new recruit is taught a host of Arcanoi, not to mention being trained in assorted weapons and unarmed combat styles. Furthermore, she is taken to other Dark Kingdoms and in some cases into the Labyrinth itself. Years are also spent in the bureaucracy of Stygia, as the Order well knows that the hidden enemy is the more dangerous one. The faceless clerk whose Shadow has tempted him to divert needed weapons to the black market can be more dangerous to the Empire than any Spectre ravaging at the walls, and every member of the Eye needs to know how to spot – and stop – that sort of traitor.

*OOOC: Members of the Unlidded Eye are NPC's **ONLY** and brought into play by high-level authorization. The best IC advice about the Unlidded Eye - avoid them at all costs. The kid gloves have been taken off. People complain at the treatment of their PCs at the hands of The Eye. This is the wake up call: these NPC's are designed to judge and to kill. They are not designed to provide detailed role-play encounters for your characters. They are not designed to give a damn about your PC. Your PC is an annoyance to them. If you are playing a PC and a member of The Unlidded Eye enters your story, be aware that from that moment until it leaves your character's story, you may be killed at anytime for any IC reason. And as many as need to be sent, will be sent to deal with the problem that summoned them. No one knows how many members the Eye has, but rest assured it is enough. You are now roleplaying with the underworld's most deadly creatures.*

The Anacreon Council



The Anacreon Council is *the* center of power. This is where all decisions for and that affect a Necropolis are made. Some Necropoli have one meeting a month, some once a week, and some daily (depending on the Necropoli's efficiency and activity). There are two main kinds of council meetings: *Routine Council* and *War Council* (discussed below).

Routine Council

An Anacreon that has issues that require the input and vote of the other 7 legions can call this Council. General business is discussed, arguments heard, and Legion level grievances lodged. The Anacreons are allowed to bring either their Overlord or their Chancellor to routine council. When the discussion of the council is military in nature, usually concerning the safety and defense of the Necropolis, most Anacreons will have their Overlord with them. If the meeting is about soul division and the general running of the Necropolis, most Anacreons will have their Chancellor with them. If neither is available then the Anacreon will usually take the next lower rank of the appropriate side (Military or Administrative).

Council begins with the Anacreon who called the council starting the discussion and presentation of the problem. The discussion continues until all votes are cast. As the topic is discussed, the Anacreons may place their paddles on the table casting their vote at anytime during the discussion. An Anacreon is also free to leave the council at any time, but their legion will not be represented in any further vote of that council meeting.

War Council

This council is convened during Maelstroms or major attacks on the Necropolis and both Overlords and Chancellors are allowed in this meeting.

The Meeting Room

The Anacreon Council is normally held in the safest and largest area of the Citadel. The Council Chamber **MUST** have a round table to show that no legion is above the other and that there is no "head" to the table. Each Anacreon will know their place by their appropriate voting paddles.

The Voting Paddles

The Voting Paddles consist of basically a round disc on a stick. Their ornateness is up to the individual Necropolis (extremely militaristic Necropoli tend to be simple and made of stygian steel where less militaristic tend to be very fancy with ornate carvings and such). Most of them are formed from either relic wood, moliated soul plasm (similar to relic torches), or forged from stygian steel. The paddles on one side are completely black and embossed with the symbol of the legion whose vote it represents. The other is completely white and embossed with the same symbol. Some Necropoli will have the symbol in the opposing color (example: white symbol on black side or vice versa). The paddle rests on its side in a cradle in front of the seat of the corresponding legion's Anacreon until they are needed to vote. A paddle at rest is never allowed to be placed with either white or black side upwards, unless it is the official vote of the Anacreon and hence the legion. To do so shows a flagrant disregard for the voting process and the Hierarchy in general, as well as being considered taboo by most legions.

The Paddles are held in almost a sense of reverence within most Hierarchy Citadels and only the Anacreon, Acting Anacreon or the Minister (during meeting setup) may touch them. While the paddles have no actual value (other than what the legion puts into it) they are the representation of that legion within the Necropolis, the equivalent of a nation's flag. The paddles are kept in individual locked areas within the council chamber (similar to a safe deposit box) and typically have a double lock system. The Anacreon & Minister are the only ones that have keys to this box and there are 2 Legionnaires from different legions guarding the doors of the council chambers (in some form of a rotational manner) at all times.



Featured is the Legion of Fate Voting Paddle, which though is present at the Anacreon Council, is rarely used because Fate, by choice, often abstains from voting.

Voting Procedure

The white side of a Voting Paddle represents true, yes, affirmative, agreed, for, innocent or any other term in the positive. The black side of the paddle represents false, no, disagree, against, guilty or any other term in the negative. Members of the council are allowed to discuss the topic or issue as long as they desire. Once an Anacreon feels he has heard enough he takes his paddle off of the cradle and places it to where the color facing upward shows his decision. However, then he must sit quietly for the remainder of the discussion because his choice has been made. An Anacreon must be totally committed to his decision because once his/her vote has been done via the paddle placement on the table, it must stay on the table until all remaining

paddles have been placed in voting position (unless the remaining Anacreons choose to abstain). Open discussion is over when all votes have been cast (or abstained from). Once a decision has been reached concerning the issue or topic, the Anacreon may then take the paddle and return it to its cradle until the next vote.

The Tribunal of Necropoli



The Tribunal of Necropoli is the highest meeting body in the Hierarchy in any national boundary. When the Necropoli were initially being formed it was much easier for Stygia to directly rule over them by making inspections and checking policy. As times have changed the erratic nature of the Tempest and the constant threat of attacks from roving bands of Spectres, Renegades, or bandits has made constant travel between Stygia and the Shadowlands less than reliable. This combined with Stygia's growing preoccupations with its own affairs, has caused the Necropoli to be left to their own devices. Since the disappearance of Charon, having the Tribunals based around national boundaries became accepted practice as Stygian officials became more preoccupied with other things. The Tribunal made the most sense and now allows the officials to be able to meet with all Necropoli in an area at once.

In terms of game play, a Tribunal has jurisdiction over the region(s) they are called in. In the UK, a Tribunal covers the entire nation and in the past covered Ireland as well. In the United States, a Tribunal in the Pacific Northwest would cover only the Northwest of the nation. The borders are the OOC regions of the US - this rule was implemented due to OOC game size. Truly national Tribunals in the US are only ever convened at national events.

An interesting side effect of this is that if an Anacreon Council of a Necropoli from a different nation or region wishes to attend another nation's or region's Tribunal, they can. If they wish to take part then they agree to stand by the rulings of that Tribunal. For example, a Council from Germany taking part in a Tribunal in Ireland agrees to stand by the rules dictated there; for definition's sake, taking part is the process of *voting* on any issue. One may speak freely and not take part – because the act of casting a vote is all that matters. It is still possible to influence Tribunals elsewhere in the nation outside your region. It is at the Tribunal gatherings that differences are settled, old scores paid off, complaints heard, common policy agreed upon... in short, it is the way that the councils of Anacreons get to interact, back-stab and generally have fun at each other's expense.

Given the size of nations and considering that within each region there will be at least one Tribunal a year, it is painfully obvious that not every Necropoli's Anacreon Council can reach every Tribunal. This can present a problem if they are part of the region (or nation) and a Tribunal that they cannot attend is debating something they feel passionately about, or that will affect them adversely. The Council could send representatives or have a nearby Necropoli cast their vote for them... but there is an easier way. They can form a political alliance with other Necropoli and take part in a major Citadel vs. Citadel level of intrigue.

Tribunal of Necropoli Rules

- The Tribunal of Necropoli can only meet at large gatherings (Regional event or national events). At least two Necropoli are needed to summon a Tribunal.

- The Agenda must be made clear ahead of time, to allow those Necropoli who are just forming to try and get their voices heard within the context of their own Necropoli.
- If any Anacreon cannot attend, they may send a Representative.
- Within the Tribunal, all Necropoli are equal. Each Necropoli has one vote on issues.
- The Council decides all political issues affecting the Shadowlands of that region/nation. The Council may decide upon legal matters and the Unlidded Eye will usually back them up, provided the laws do not deviate from Charon's original vision.
- There must be a minimum of five Necropoli present for it to be a legitimate Tribunal.
- If there are 10 or more Necropoli, the Tribunal's decisions are considered in effect for the area. If less, the decisions can be changed at another Tribunal. If less than Seven Necropoli meet, the decisions made there *must* be ratified at another Tribunal where there are at least seven. The *only* exception to this is when a Region or Nation has less than Seven Necropoli, at which time; the results of the Tribunal are binding if, and only if, every Necropoli in the Region/Nation attends.
- A Necropolis may give their vote to another Necropolis. In this event, that Necropolis is under no obligation to vote the same way as the Necropolis who gave them their vote. Necropolis holding more than one vote must make sure it is known and cleared by presenting an IC letter, or by an OOC letter or phone call to the ST of the event.
- The power of Tribunals is that they allow Necropoli to dictate to other Necropoli how they want things run. One Necropoli cannot openly undermine another Necropoli; rather, they can express their displeasure at the actions of another Necropoli by bringing about a motion of Bad Standing.

Representatives for the Anacreons

An Anacreon's Representative can be anyone from their home Necropoli, but they must also uphold the following:

- The Representative must be authorized by the Anacreon who is sending them. Proof is required in either an IC letter or an OOC letter/phone call to the ST of the event.
- The STs involved must know about the authorized representative.

Necropoli of Bad Standing

A Necropoli is judged by its fellow Necropoli. The worst thing that can happen is to be called a "Necropoli of Bad Standing."

Motion of Bad Standing

Acts which automatically qualify for a Motion of Bad Standing to be put against a Necropoli (it still has to be voted upon by the fellow Necropoli)...

- Harboring a criminal hunted by The Unlidded Eye or the Hierarchy
- Exposed to be aiding the enemies of the Hierarchy
- Bring a false accusation against a fellow Necropoli

- Bringing a Motion of Bad Standing that fails - this is a double-edged sword: Bring a Motion and it succeeds and you can make a Necropoli bow to your will. Bring it and it fails and you suffer.
- Not paying a Citadel Level Sanction
- Ignoring Status
- Any of your Anacreon Council is discovered to be not of the Hierarchy (spectre, renegade, heretic)

Other than this, anything can be used to bring a Motion of Bad Standing against a fellow Necropolis; it is just role-played out. Remember that if you bring a Motion and it FAILS, you automatically suffer one against you. You have dared to accuse another Necropolis of a transgression and possibly undermine the stability of the Hierarchy in the Shadowlands, and the majority of Necropoli will not support you. You are obviously unsuitable for the standards of the Hierarchy.

Effects

- All wraiths from that Necropoli are distrusted (down two ranks in Status Comparisons against those not of that Necropolis).
- No other Necropolis or its legions is under any obligation to help the offending Necropolis - better that the Renegades should destroy a city than the poison harbored there should spread!
- All alliances, deals and bargains done with the offending Necropolis are now null and void until the Bad Standing is revoked.
- All Sanctions made with Wraiths from that Necropolis are now null and void until the Bad Standing is revoked.
- Residents are made unwelcome in other Necropoli.
- The Chancellors or Overlords may topple their Council, if a simple majority votes them out.

As you can see, being a Necropoli of Bad Standing means increased political instability and the wraiths from there are treated terribly. This is how it is meant to be. Remember, to gain Bad Standing means the Anacreon Council has not acted in a manner expected by its peers.

Hopefully, this will create a situation of instability and upset and the Anacreon Council will be forced to make it up to the other Necropoli before the underlings decide to topple the Council, which is now MUCH easier to do (rank vs. rank intrigue).

Motions of Bad Standing and the Tribunals where they are discussed are the main IC way the Campaign is policed. It places the moderation of the society in the hands of the PCs. Henceforth, if a Citadel is faced with a nearby Necropolis which harbors (or seems to harbor) rogue Hierarchy members, renegades, heretics or any minions of Oblivion and is unhappy with this, they no longer bother the ST's about it. The Necropoli simply react IC- they call a Tribunal and place a Motion of Bad Standing against their fellow Necropoli. If enough Necropoli's agree then the Wraiths of that Necropolis shall suffer until either the Anacreon Council or someone else within that Necropolis sorts out the problem once and for all. All interaction is now regulated IC.

What is acceptable IC behavior? That is for the Councils of Anacreons throughout the Necropoli to decide. These Protocols do give a hint as to how it goes.

In short, a good Citadel is one who upholds the Status quo -- does not rock the boat, maintains a strong Necropolis and works with fellow Necropoli to enforce stability and security throughout the Shadowlands. To do anything else is leaving you open to a Motion of Bad Standing.

The main problem with Motions of Bad Standing is that if you call one and it fails you automatically have one brought against you.

OOC note: At this level of event it is not uncommon for high level NPC's to be present such as The Unlidded Eye and any number of the Deathlords of the Legions, so being on your best behavior is advisable. Once again, all these characters are NPCs and are not eligible to be played by any PC.

The Others



he protocols, it must be stressed, only apply to members of the Hierarchy. But what of those not of the Hierarchy? This can lead to some interesting situations. The first advantage of not being a member of the Hierarchy is that one does not have to follow these rules at all. You are free to act outside them. The main disadvantage is that outside the Hierarchy you are also outside its protection and thus must face the consequences.

Heretics

To be a Heretic is to believe. It is to believe in a state of being and existence beyond that of the bleak reality of existence in the Underworld, and after-afterlife, if you will. It is also to believe in a particular style of unlife, and to believe fervently in one particular method of Transcending to that higher state.

Heretics are intensely spiritual wraiths, most seeking the true path amid the swirling confusion of the Shadowlands. Their strong beliefs and commitment to their cause set them apart from the Hierarchy, the Renegades, and from each other. The many factions of Heretics are radically splintered, with each group following a different path in their pursuit of some higher purpose. They are similar only in the strength of their beliefs.

The dead are at a distinct disadvantage when it comes to matters of faith. After all, all the religious pabulum they were ever fed in no way prepared them for the Shadowlands. Heaven, hell, Nirvana, nothing: whatever they were led to believe lay just beyond life's veil is most definitely not here. It seems they have been sold a false bill of goods. Most wraiths, when faced with this dilemma, pull away from religion and most things religious, abandoning what faith they may have had soon after they rip away their Caul. How then do the Heretics, and their religions, prosper in the face of the great-granddaddy of religious party-poopers? More importantly, how do Heretics manage to form (or re-form) strong, even all-pervasive, religious convictions when everything they ever learned to expect from death has proven to be false advertising?

Each group of Heretics, and indeed each individual Heretic, has come to terms with the intense religious and cognitive dissonance death causes. Unlike most other wraiths, they have all resolved their anguish through the auspices of faith. When faced with a death they never dreamed of, in a spirit-world which they perceive as naught but continuing the pain and confusion, most wraiths reject utterly their former faith. After all, they were told that when they died some truth would be revealed, or that they would move back through the circle of life, or perhaps that they would know nothing. The Shadowlands, and all they represent, apparently refute all of these Skinlander religious themes.

Those wraiths who become Heretics, however, have held to a strong faith. They find their spiritual center – the answer to the initial crushing disappointment of their current existence – in their steadfast beliefs. Making the decision to embrace, or re-embrace, faith in the Shadowlands is a particularly difficult task,

requiring an enormous amount of will or imagination. Another key element is a willingness to commit totally to the care of another wraith who says there is a reason why the Shadowlands are here and the wraiths in them. In either case, each Heretic must hold on to her beliefs with a stranglehold never required by even the most foully abused and denigrated Skinlander martyr.

Heretics view their faith as their lifeline in a realm of death. It gives reason and purpose to the otherwise inexplicable realm in which they have been so rudely thrust. Thus, Heretics must invest themselves, indeed their identities, in their faith. To admit, for even a moment, that there is a chance that they have been tricked yet again is to admit to purposelessness, and to the triumph of Oblivion. This utterly terrifying prospect is anathema to almost all Heretics, and few are even willing to consider it for a moment. Of course, the rigidity of thought necessary to maintain their faith has its own dangers, and all too many Heretics fall prey to them. In attempting to cling to the ladder to Transcendence, the Heretics are in constant danger of forgetting that you must let go of one rung in order to climb to the next.

Unfortunately, the various Heretic Cults oppose each other almost as much as they battle the Hierarchy. They agree so little that there really is nothing that can be called the Heretic society, or a Heretic movement. Rather, there are countless tiny dissident movements, working secretly or openly towards a better (or at least different) tomorrow, each espousing a different path to that goal. The only trait essential to a Heretic is an unshakable belief system at the very center of the wraith's existence.

Heretics and the Hierarchy

The Heretic factions universally believe that the Hierarchy, its leadership, and many of the fundamental tenets of its society are “dead” wrong. In particular, they believe that the path of the Hierarchy will not lead to Transcendence. In their view, the Hierarchy has smothered the spiritual progression of the souls in the Underworld with corruption and decay. Tremendous misery and suffering have been the direct result, as well as the trafficking in souls by which each Hierarch has betrayed their original calling. Luckily for all wraiths, many Heretics also believe that they have found their solution, the philosophy which provides the answer to the ills of the Shadowlands.

Most Heretics believe that each individual soul must strive for Transcendence, usually by following the particular path which they espouse. These paths vary widely, for the beliefs of the Heretics are at least as diverse as those found in the Skinlands. However, the Heretic Cults are fighting an uphill battle against the Hierarchy, the Renegades and each other for survival and for converts to their respective causes.

A few more thoughtful Shadowlanders argue that by engaging in this very struggle the Heretics betray their ideals, sinking into the corrupt framework of the Hierarchy to pursue souls – the currency of raw power in the Underworld. However, most Heretics believe that it is necessary to do battle on these terms in order to survive. They know they must strike out against the Hierarchy in order to save the newly dead souls from miserable existences of slavery and stagnation.

While not all Heretic factions pursue violent tactics, all are fervent in their beliefs. Their complete faith in their own belief system, and absolute rejection of all other ideologies as flawed at best, lead many Heretics to conclude that they have a moral duty to at least attempt to show others the way. After all, some Heretics, through great strength of will and truly unshakable conviction, have maintained the faith they had in life even in the face of death. Still others have created, or fallen into, new belief structures to provide structure and purpose to their unlife. They naturally wish to aid the others, to calm the Restless Dead by providing purpose and hope.

Philosophical and religious tension among Heretic factions is very real. Many Heretic Cults loathe each other at least as much as they hate the Hierarchy. Yet while the Heretic factions spread competing messages of salvation, they have learned that they must sometimes bend to pragmatism and band together against the Hierarchy to survive. After all, the Deathlords will be satisfied with nothing short of total domination.

Unlike the Renegades, Heretics do not usually engage in random acts of violence or rebellion. Those Heretics who are violent always act with a concerted purpose. Nor do most factions and leaders seek personal

gratification, or at least they claim that such base motives are irrelevant to them. While a few openly seek power in the Shadowlands, most are motivated by faith and their version of the search for knowledge and truth (or by the belief that they have found *the* truth. These Heretics work to promote their own version of the Transcendence of the soul and their own brand of faith. As with many religions in the Skinlands, they look beyond the suffering of this existence to the promise of something better in the next.

Final Thoughts on the Heretics

Heretics are the true believers, who see themselves as the spiritual and moral compass of the Shadowlands. Yet they are many compasses, all pointing in different directions! Many of the Heretics fight the battle for Transcendence, seeking to return wraith society to its original purpose – a mechanism for an ordered life here in this interim realm while souls prepare to ascend to a higher reality. Other merely seek power in the Skinlands, or comfort in the face of an unknown even greater than before and a present even less comforting. They are not free of the corruption which permeates the Underworld today, yet Heretics in general do not seek personal power or dominion over their fellows. Nor are most caught up yet in a cycle of violence which engenders only more misery for the wraiths. Rather, motivated by a variety of faiths, they seek the truth. They strive to drastically reform the Hierarchy and fix the broken system, each offering a different solution, and indeed a slightly different analysis of the problem. The Heretics look around them and believe that they are the last, best hope for the Shadowlands. Perhaps they are.

Renegades

To be a renegade is to oppose the Hierarchy. Beyond that, very little can be said that applies to Renegades as a whole. It is probably safe to say that whenever a government or institution rises to prominence, there will always be individuals and groups who oppose it for one reason or another. Those whom the Hierarchy calls Renegades seem to have found all those reasons for opposition. And therein lies their problem.

Every turning point in Stygia's long history has produced its dissenters, from the wraiths who first disagreed with the choice of Charon as leader to those who objected to his formation of the Stygian Republic. Charon's assumption of the title of Emperor and his creation of the seven Deathlords, his policies regarding the treatment of thralls, his adoption of the feudal model for Stygia's government, his banishing of the Shining Ones from Stygia, his orders to disband the guilds – all these and subsequent decisions spawned the formation of groups of rebels.

These early Renegades were, for the most part, dealt with by Charon's armies or else fell prey to the Spectres that seemed to feed on the negative Passions inherent in the nature of dissension. A few of these hardy veterans, however, have survived to the present day. Their hiding places and continued plots against Stygia are the stuff of Renegade myth and folklore.

Since Charon's disappearance, the number of wraiths who identify with the Renegade movement (which is, apparently, the only criterion for membership in this faction) has grown enormously. Some of these Renegades have formed well-organized, highly disciplined groups or Circles which differ little from their Hierarchy counterparts. The majority, however, form a chaotic mass of ragtag rebels, outlaws, bandits, and anarchists who associate with each other only because they need the strength of numbers to survive assaults from Hierarchy patrols, bounty hunters, and Spectres.

Status among the Renegades is more a product of a notoriety than of rank, for no general categories exist which apply to the group as a whole. Tales of audacious actions against the Hierarchy, reports of uprisings within various Necropoli, rumors of hijackings of thrall-transports or goods caravans en route to Stygia, and individual acts of defiance (or foolhardiness) – all contribute to an individual Renegade's standing within the Renegade "community."

Despite the best efforts of the Hierarchy to quell news about the Renegades, tales of their escapades form the building blocks of status among those who oppose the establishment. Folk heroes have risen from the ranks of the Renegades, and the stories of their deeds serve as inspiration for other wraiths, driving them to bolder and bolder actions against the Hierarchy.

The Renegade Council

Over the course of Stygia's history, many Renegades have struggled to devise some means of bringing together as many of their number as possible under a single guiding authority. Numerous attempts to form a Council of Renegades have seemed to succeed, only to fall apart from internal dissension or outside assault. On rare occasions, powerful Renegade groups have actually managed to gather their leaders together long enough to plan an armed uprising against one of the Shadowlands' Necropoli, only to have their fragile alliance disrupted by the last minute defection of one or another of the allied groups. Despite all this, rumors continue to exist of a Renegade Council which keeps track of and directs the movements of the various Circles of wraiths opposed to the Hierarchy. Even darker tales are told of an elite group of Renegades, referred to as the Council of Cerberus, whose sole purpose is to purge the Renegade movement of anyone who might harbor sympathy for the Hierarchy. Even Renegades whose opposition to the Hierarchy stems from reasons unrelated to politics or issues walk carefully whenever they suspect that one of these inquisitors is in their city.

The truth of the matter is both more and less than it seems. Many individual Necropoli actually do have a functioning Renegade Council composed of at least one member from each Renegade faction within that Necropolis. The nature of these Necropolitan councils differs from city to city and depends largely on the types of Renegades present. In some Necropoli, the councils form little more than information or social networks, while in others they occupy more significant and potentially sinister (at least to the Hierarchy) roles. In a few cities far from Stygia's reach, the Renegade Council has gone so far as to set up its own "mirror" government rivaling the control exercised by the local Hierarchy troops. In other places, Renegades representing different interests gather in secret haunts and hatch plots against the resident Legions.

As the Hierarchy's control of its outlying Necropoli continues to erode, many Renegades – particularly those whose anti-authoritarianism stems from dissatisfaction with the current government of Stygia – feel that the time is right to begin organizing for a general uprising. Organizers purporting to represent the "Renegade War Council" have made overtures to known groups of Renegades within several cities. These wraiths, many of whom are superb public speakers and agitators, claim that there will soon be a gathering of Renegade leaders from all over the Shadowlands at a secret Haunt that exists within the Tempest. Rumors abound of the reappearance of many veteran Renegades, individuals thought destroyed by the Hierarchy centuries ago.

Skeptics among the Renegades suspect that this attempt to bring all the Renegade groups together under one organized Council is really a Hierarchy plot to identify and root out as many insurgents as possible. Still, many who dream of a life free of Stygian oppression are feeling the glimmer of hope that evolution may be just around the corner.

Final Thoughts on the Renegades

Renegades are the catalyst that keeps the Shadowlands from lapsing into stagnation. Although they are branded as rabble-rousers, troublemakers, and agents of destruction, their rebellions have sparked many necessary changes in the world of the Restless Dead. While many Renegades rebel for the sake of rebellion, others function as the social and political conscience in a society that is too prone to inertia and self-satisfaction. While many wraiths choose the Renegade "life," some find themselves thrust unwillingly into the role of outcasts. Renegades view themselves as martyrs, tragic heroes, and spiritual pioneers pushing the boundaries of the Shroud to its limits. Many of them believe that they are the true inheritors of Charon's legacy, and that through their efforts, his trailblazing example still illuminates the darkness of the Shadowlands.

And Finally...

The whole point of this protocol is to create IC rules of behavior. These are not OOC rules. PCs can and are expected to break them. PCs are expected to act how the hell they like and have fun. The rules you see here are the way the game is played, the game being the intrigue, fear, and sneakiness that generally pervades the Underworld. This doesn't mean you can't get away with running around and causing trouble, but you must know how to play the game before you can buck the rules.

These rules are here to make sure balance remains in all things. By applying strict codes of behavior, we now have the following situation: It doesn't matter how strong or weak your character sheet is, what your social station is, or what your legion is... if you decide to mess about you will be brought down. Got an Anacreon who's throwing his weight around and making your life hell? Make sure he crosses the line and you can bring him down. Got a Lemure whose disrupting everything? Now you can get rid of him without looking like the bad guy. In all things, please remember the golden rule... the players who win are those players who think nastier than the others, role-play harder than the others, and generally don't take part in lame ideas and get caught often. Play it straight and watch what happens.

Remember that the whole thing is about how one is presented in PUBLIC. The system we have is one where who you are decides what you can or cannot do and what you can or cannot say. Little people who hold no station have no political power, but they also have a lot freer reign than an Anacreon who is more tightly bound by the very system that enables his power.

(Greg Stuessel, the former ARST of Wraith for the South Central Region created the following document: The Protocols of the Hierarchy. I hope these Protocols will allow Wraith to be enjoyed by all and offer a more uniformed game experience. I would like to thank the original creators of the "Protocols of the Camarilla" because without their creation I would have had absolutely no idea what kind of format to put these in, Ricky Kramer for his help and input on these protocols which allowed me to refine them for gameplay, as well as Sultry for editing my writing because without her the document would have the content, but none of you would have been able to understand it. Thanks.)