

Crown of Phoenix Fire

Summer Magnitude 32

Performing the Ritual

Performing this ritual takes at least 2 minutes of roleplaying. The ritual targets up to five characters. Each character must be present throughout.

This ritual is an enchantment. A target can only be under a single enchantment at a time.

Effects

The ritual targets up to five characters from the same banner. Each target gains two additional ranks of endurance.

While under the effect of this enchantment, each character experiences a roleplaying effect: *you feel driven to take responsibility for others, to take charge, and get things done. You are supremely confident in your ability to achieve your goals if you simply apply yourself, and are willing to take risks to get things done.*

This ritual lasts until the beginning of the next Profound Decisions Empire event.

Additional Targets

This ritual can affect additional characters from the same banner. Every additional character increases the magnitude by 5. Additional characters must be present throughout.

Options

Any caster who has mastered the ritual may choose to substitute Orichalcum for crystal mana when contributing to it. Every 2 ingots of Orichalcum spent counts as 1 crystal mana when contributing to the ritual.

Special

A magician who is bonded to a Captain's Mask gains two ranks of lore for performing this ritual, subject to the normal rules for effective skill.

OOO note

This item is a ritual text.

Any character with the Summer Ritual Lore skill can master this ritual. You must have a free slot or experience point to master a new ritual. After an appropriate period of roleplaying spent studying these pages, it should then be brought to a referee who will add the ritual to those you have mastered. Doing this does not 'use up' the ritual text.

This ritual cannot be learned by other means; it cannot be taught by a character who knows it unless the ritual is added to the body of Imperial Lore by the Conclave.

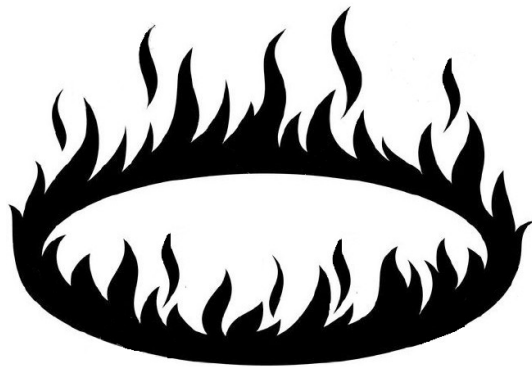
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CROWN OF PHOENIX FIRE

RITUAL OF THE REALM OF SUMMER

CODIFIED WINTER 381YE AT THE ICY CRAG OF THE ETERNAL SUN, UNDER
SUPERVISION BY BROTHER LUKE OF THE SHATTERED TOWER OF HIGHGUARD
WHO SERVES AS MASTER OF ICE AND DARKNESS



Developing the Ritual

This ritual was developed at the Icy Crag of the Eternal Sun under the direction of Luke of the Shattered Tower. Work was completed shortly before the Winter Solstice 381YE. The original work to create this ritual was undertaken by the Urizen Ioseph, building on concepts embodied by the Splendid Panoply of Knighthood.

The ritual was the first to be completed while Eleonaris was the patron of the Icy Crag. Several of her heralds contributed suggestions, and in some cases their support helped the scholars at the college to find ways to incorporate more streamlined versions of elements from the Splendid Panoply into the final version. They were particularly helpful in adapting the ability to use orichalcum in place of crystal mana to the more powerful ritual.

Phoenix and Firebird

The phoenix is sometimes used as another name for the firebird – a great bird that burns with the light of the sun – but they may actually be two different species of creature. There are no phoenix or firebirds in the Empire, although there are plenty of stories that suggest firebirds at least may once have lived in the wooded mountains of Varushka, Wintermark, and Urizen. It has been over a hundred and fifty years since the last verifiable sighting of an Imperial firebird however.

In some versions, the creature is composed entirely of flame while in others it is "simply" a massive bird with feathers the colour of polished gold. In some Jarmish incarnations, it is depicted as a peacock the feathers of whose tail rather than bearing the images of eyes are tipped with burning fires. This dichotomy – sometimes a bird of prey, sometimes a bird-of-paradise – is common throughout depictions of the beast.

In stories, the firebird is able to burn enemies with its gaze or the slash of its talons. It is also common for tales about phoenix to speak of a flaming aura that no corrupt creature can bear. Regardless, the wrath of this noble creature is terrible indeed.

Stories that deal specifically with the phoenix are less common than those of the firebird. They tend to focus on the creature's allegedly great lifespan and the claim that when it dies at long last its body is instantly consumed in a conflagration of irresistible fire. The bird is then later reborn – although stories differ as to how this occurs. In some, the ashes of the bird contain a golden egg from which a new phoenix hatches. In others, the bird is instantly restored to life as a young adult form the very flames that consumed its elderly form.

Finally, both the firebird and the phoenix possess incredible healing abilities – in some case restoring a dying person to full health with a touch of their feathers. They are especially adept at removing sickness, or malign curses of disease and weakness.



Ambition, Courage, Wisdom, Nobility

The firebird and phoenix have strong symbolic connections to three of the virtues. In many tales, a courageous questor seeks to find or sometimes capture a bird without being consumed by its fires – such quests are fraught with danger and obstacles and often involve an ambitious goal towards the achievement of which the firebird is a key element.

In many stories, the phoenix has a human voice and possesses great stores of wisdom granted by centuries of unbroken, continuous life. Securing the advice or wisdom of the phoenix often requires an additional quest, one which demonstrates the courage and good spirit of the questor. Phoenix are invariably depicted in such stories as benevolent creatures who wish to end suffering – but whose wrath is terrible to behold.

In one story, told in several versions in many places, a quester seeks magical healing for a loved one that only the phoenix can provide. After many trials they find the beast, and are charged with fighting a terrible cockatrice – a corrupt creature of poison and death in the form of a lizard-like bird. The quester fails, dying in the process, but so moved by their bravery is the phoenix that it comes to the dying loved one and heals them nonetheless. In one old Navarr version, the purity of the quester's sacrifice is so great that the act undoes the pure corruption of the cockatrice, turning it to stone.

Priests of the Way argue about the symbolism of the phoenix. To some it is a symbol of reincarnation; to others a blasphemous icon that suggests physical, instantaneous resurrection – continuity of the self without the auspices of the Labyrinth. In some parts of Axos, they adopt this symbology but identify the idea of continuous death and resurrection as being an ideal to strive towards rather than a dire trap for the consciousness.

Performing the Ritual

As with many echantments, common elements include the consumption of wholesome food and drink (especially red wine), and the use of tokens and gifts. With this ritual, the image of the crown is especially resonant – much of the original work included the use of a crown or circlet, sometimes of red or white flowers, as part of a girding ceremony performed on the warriors who will bear the power of the ritual. Painting a rune on the forehead, or anointing the brow with the blood of a champion, ruler, or general are also highly resonant with this ritual.

Unlike similar rituals, the power used here is resonant with majesty and nobility rather than the raucous songs of warriors or quaffing of beer and mead. This ritual grants strength and potency, but it is the strength of the focused champion not the common soldier. For a Summer ritual, it lends itself well to a more restrained, quiet ritual – in which nonetheless great oaths and vows are made as the targets commit themselves absolutely to a desired course of action.

Any or all of the runes of Summer – Feresh, Jotra, Tykonus, and Verys – might be evoked, or painted carefully on the forehead or shield. Likewise the constellation of the Oak or the Stallion may be used – but the most resonant constellation is likely the Stork (rather than the Phoenix). The Stork represents choices, and in this ritual it empowers the choices of heroes.

One of the options with this ritual is the use of orichalcum in place of crystal mana; some of the contributors to the formulation of the ritual suggested that first working the orichalcum into the form of a circlet or crown and using it as part of the performance, was particularly resonant.