

The Infant Starts with a Blank Slate

Night Magnitude 12

Performing the Ritual

Performing this ritual takes at least 2 minutes of roleplaying. This ritual targets a willing individual who must be present throughout. If they are unwilling or unaware of the general nature of the ritual, their mind remains closed and the ritual fails.

Effects

The target of this ritual forgets *all* rituals they currently have mastered. Their ritual slots are now empty and they can now learn rituals in those slots via the usual means. The target cannot pick and choose which rituals they lose – all rituals are lost.

At the completion of the ritual the target experiences a roleplaying effect: *you feel a great sense of release, as if a weight has been lifted off your shoulders. You feel liberated, freed from unnecessary constraints. The idea of mastering rituals feels like a denial of opportunity and possibility – there are so many rituals why master just a handful of them?*

This roleplaying effect persists for at least ten minutes, and may last longer at the discretion of the target.

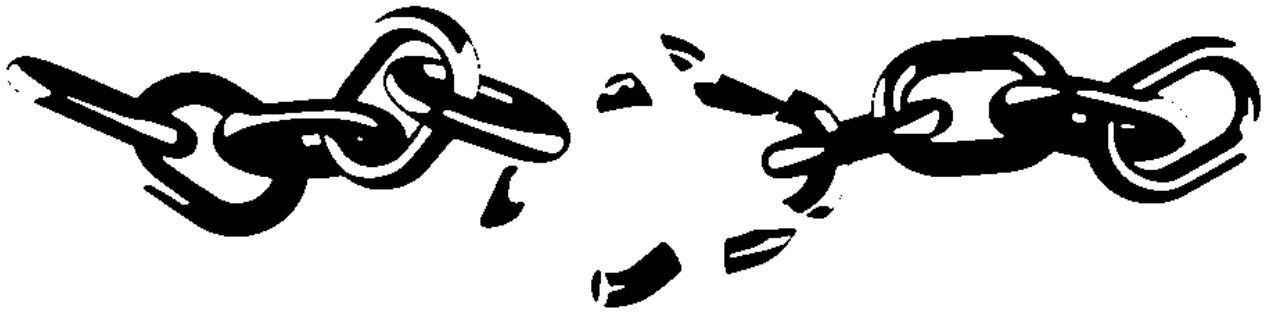
OOO note

This item is a ritual text.

Any character with the Night 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.

Ribbon ID: 16346



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Ritual of the Realm of Night

Codified Spring 381YE at the Halls of Knowledge, under
supervision by Provost Octavius of the
Spire of the Auric Horizon



Developing the Ritual

This ritual was developed at the Halls of Knowledge under the auspices of Provost Octavius of the spire of the Auric Horizon. Work was completed shortly before the disappearance from Zenith (and subsequent reappearance in Morrow) of the Halls themselves after the Autumn Equinox 381YE. It was based on an arcane projection devised by Aquillian Effugere.

This was the last ritual overseen by Provost Octavius before his own disappearance; rumours persist that the wise mage sacrificed himself in some fashion to whichever power allowed the removal of the Halls of Knowledge from the threat of the barbarous Droj.

Formula, Mastery and Memory

Formulaic rituals are rituals whose techniques and practices have been successfully refined to make the ritual as efficient and easy to cast as possible. Formulaic rituals are highly focussed – the caster gives up flexibility to gain reliability and efficiency. Magicians can only learn to master formulaic rituals; a valuable investment of time that makes those rituals even easier to cast.

Mastery of a ritual represents focus and practice, and is often seen as a practical demonstration of the Urizen concept of *arête*. Any magician of the Empire can contribute to the performance of any ritual in Imperial Lore; by attaining mastery the magician is able to wield that magic much more efficiently. It is also possible to master rituals that are not in Imperial Lore, provided one has access to a ritual text. This presents one of the challenges some Imperial magicians face.

More potent rituals require more magicians to cast, and the ritual text is not always available. As mastery is the goal most magicians aspire to, it becomes increasingly valuable to ensure that everyone contributing to a rare or secret ritual has sufficiently practiced the rote actions required to work that magic. Because a magician can only master so many rituals – generally dependant on their mastery of associated magical lores – it is sometimes impossible for a magician to master a ritual that there is great need of.

This ritual helps to resolve that problem – but it can present a dilemma. The ritual works by freeing the mind from the structures and constraints placed by mastery – in a similar manner to which rituals such as *Cast off the Chains of Memory* and *Transmogrify the Soul's Echo* allow a willing subject to make changes to their memories and even identity.

Unlike these other rituals, however, *The Infant Starts With A Blank Slate* is indiscriminate. This makes it less than ideal when dealing with magicians who have mastered valuable rituals for which they no longer have access to a ritual text.

Freedom of the Mind

The ritual draws on resonances of obfuscation, and transformation, but also uses the Night realm's resonance for freedom, spontaneity, and intuition. The experience of removing mastery is one of liberation – as if a metaphorical weight has been lifted. For the recipient, it can feel as if grand new vistas of opportunity have opened up. There are literally hundreds of possible rituals simply in Imperial Lore – when one considered all the rituals that exist or could exist the possibilities are literally endless.

To then constrain oneself with a handful of rituals again, to focus so excessively on a single idea or rote actions, becomes almost painful to consider. Mastery is valuable, but in theory one can perform more powerful magic by becoming more adept with the realm lore itself. Of course, this is expensive in terms of crystal mana and the like, but the Night realm rarely concerns itself with the penny-pinching more relevant to the practitioners of Day magic.

During the formulation of the ritual this desire among the subjects to avoid restricting their opportunities by mastering new rituals was frustrating – and while its effect could be lessened it proved impossible to remove the profound sense of liberation the ritual inspires.

Performing the Ritual

Masks or items that represent the magical mastery to be forgotten are resonant with this ritual. The target may begin wearing a mask, which is removed during the performance and then destroyed. The mask represents the weight of their mastery, and when their face is naked again they are refreshed and (metaphorically) reborn.

As with many rituals of Night magic, a drink or foodstuff may be consumed, especially one with mildly narcotic effects. This should be done cautiously – one target of the ritual during formulation, after consuming a Kallavesi nostrum, not only abandoned the mastery of magic but vowed to never master another ritual, putting aside their studies and leaving Urizen for Varushka where they are believed to have started a new life as a volhov.

Open flames resonate with this ritual; the target may name the rituals they have mastered while speaking into a flame, or write them on paper which is then burned. This may be combined with a goetic evocation of the *Shadowed Fire* (the eternal Janon, who is a patron of freedom and liberation as well as passion). Likewise, hypnotic music or dancing relax the recipient, letting the chain of mastery fall gently away.

The rune Aesh is resonant with this ritual, especially when combined with Diras and Xun. Another possibility is the rune Evrom, which represents new beginnings. A dramaturgist who worked on the codification of the ritual suggested the Witch and the Mountebank both lend themselves well to its performance, especially in a scene which involves the loss of a Lantern. Finally, an obvious astronomic connection is to the constellation of the Door which represents transitions. When the recipient forgets their mastery, they can be seen as standing on a threshold between their old knowledge and the new knowledge they seek.