



*Autumn Eternals*  
*A Basic Primer*  
*By Magister Tideborn*

*Collected Works from  
the Imperial Canon.*

*"In the Realm of intrigue and influence everything interweaves in a great shifting web of favour and debt.  
The horned lords and ladies compete in savage games of wealth and power.  
They welcome mortals to their councils - but beware the bargains of Autumn for in the Labyrinth, nothing is simple."*

# Eternals of Autumn

- *Estavus the Forge Mistress, The Prince of Shikal:*

*Crafting, building, artisans, the forge*

- *Callidus, Prince of the Argent Tontine:*

*Greed, Money, indulgence,*

- *Prince Prospero – The Golden Prince:*

*Favours, grudges, influence*

- *Ephisis, Lady of the Counting House:*

*Trade, commerce, trade, value, profit*

- *Basileus Kade, the Traitor-Lord:*

*Intrigue, Espionage, Treachery, Control*

- *“Their Grand Majesties” the Eternal Mazer of the Many Faces:*

*Ambition, Deception, Connivance, Powerlessness*

*The Lictors: Law, binding, rules, constraint, rigidity, structure, power, authority*

## Estavus

**Sobriquets:** Most commonly, she is known as The Forgemistress. She may also be called The Prince of Shikal and The Bronze Artisan.

**Appearance:** Estavus is a powerfully built woman with bronze skin and curling steel horns. Her left arm appears to be made of metal, and she is usually clad in a metal breastplate wielding a two-handed hammer. She is often marked with soot - either from her infernal volcanic home or from her work at her forge. The Forgemistress is often accompanied by lesser Eternals and Herald's who serve her as guards or assistants, but she is often found with magical metal constructs such as brass minotaurs; warriors crafted of living dragonbone; or bejeweled courtiers of ivory and porcelain who converse in gentle, soothing terms and appear quite intelligent.

**Concerns:** The Prince of Shikal dwells in a great city that occupies an active volcano of immense size. The Forge of Shikal holds the immense workshop of Estavus, suspended above the living magma of the volcanic caldera. Her city is inhabited by artisans and labourers, and riddled with deep delves that drop down far below the surface of the Realm into great mines.

Estavus is driven to build, construct and create. Her ambition is to reshape entire worlds; she seeks to encourage others to do the same by mastering nature and building great cities and fortresses. If she had her way, the wilderness would be tamed with roads and cities, and natural things would be found only in parks. She is especially driven to create artificially living things that mimic natural plants and beasts.

She constantly desires raw materials from the mortal Realm; while she has access to strange metals from the mines around her domain, she has no ready source of the magical materials found in the mortal Realm.

While she is somewhat singleminded, she is still an Eternal of Autumn. She is fascinated by, and well versed in, the ways that crafters can exert power. Being able to make something for someone else is potentially an incredible source of influence. The rarer the things a crafter can craft, the more power they wield. She supports and encourages the formation of artisan guilds that create monopolies to protect their interests and influence their fellows, and she is known to have a special interest in League carta, Dawnishweaver cabals, and both Marcher and Winterfolk smiths. She is said to have a great deal of interest in the guilds of the Sarcophan Delves and the Skourans - unsurprisingly - the scant rumours of their underground home speaks of many Autumn regio's that lead to Shikal.

**Boons:** Estavus has made numerous bargains with mortal ritualists and offers her power directly to rituals such as The Anvil of Estavus and Before the Throne of Estavus and indirectly to Timeless Hammer Rhythm or Smooth Hands Shape The World. She can offer several boons related to artisan skill. She may be called on to provide any of these boons, or to craft unique weapons and armour in her forge as well as larger structures such as castles, bridges or

roads. She is also known to lend her constructs to mortals for a short time, sometimes as additional troops and sometimes in a more personal capacity. She can even create unique constructs, and several heroes have replaced lost limbs with enchanted metal equivalents that possessed potent magical powers.

What she can create she can also destroy - she can reduce anything created by crafters or artisans to its component parts. Likewise, she can destroy constructs and offer assistance in the form of shattering blows or weapons.

### **Known Heralds of Estavus:**

- *uniTitan* - a messenger construct, with delicate horns and a thin, fox-like face. *uniTitan* is said to have once negotiated with the Empire on the matter of *Holberg*.
- *Yallick* - most senior courtier of the forge mistress. Recently known to be dealing with the Thule Dragon *Orobus the Chained*; *Bedelaar Huisbaas Annike (Sarcophan)* and the *Asavean Galel Parlincanto* of the *White Owl Faction*. *Yallick* also holds love poetry on *Estavus'* behalf from a Leaguer by the name of *Carabella*.

# Callidus

**Sobriquets:** Known as the Prince of the Argent Tontine, Callidus is most concerned with greed. He is also called Sovereign-Lord of the City of Chains, a fanciful reference to the many deals and agreements he has made - as far as anyone knows he does not rule an actual city at all (despite rumours that he owns a portable citadel of iron and white basalt), preferring to remain a peripatetic instigator.

**Appearance:** Callidus is a potent horned male with fine clothing. He is rarely encountered without a ledger or two, and never without the ability to create a contract.

He is usually accompanied by one or more of his secretaries - clever Eternals in their own right who serve as his proxies and advisors. His massive appointment tome, the Iron Ledger, is kept by his meticulous Heralds, who often appear as Freeborn cambions. Scrupulous and precise, Callidus sometimes sends Heralds to offer bargains, or to follow-up on bargains made by others.

**Concerns:** Callidus seeks to control everything through greed and desire. He exemplifies the idea that everyone wants something, and that by identifying their desires and being able to supply their needs, an individual can wield immense power. He also sees greed itself as the primary motivating force of living things, and supports and extols philosophies that highlight the influence of avarice and wealth.

While all Autumn Eternals enjoy bargains, Callidus revels in them. He invariably creates a contract to cover any agreement he makes, and is the Autumn Eternal most likely to invoke the Lictors to witness an important agreement. He invariably sticks to the letter of a contract, and some bargainers have met unfortunate fates due to not reading their agreement carefully enough. He can and has been bested in his bargains, and tales are told of heroes who dealt with the Silver Prince and came away rich, but his nature is such that a bargain that seems fair at first often grows more constrictive and dangerous as time goes by... Callidus is quite pragmatic; he does not hold those who best him in contempt; he often tries to arrange an audience with them to discuss how they bested his contract, so that he can avoid the same mistakes another time. However, he is absolutely ruthless in hunting down anyone who breaks a bargain they have made with him.

Callidus has no single home within the Autumn realm, but instead cultivates an ability to be in the right place at the right time. While his movements seem random, through synchronicity he often finds himself in the right place at the right time to offer someone what they desperately want. His secretaries share this ability to some degree, but for some reason they are limited to appearing at crossroads; literal crossroads as well as figurative crossroads, however.

While the massive amount of business engaged in by his army of scribes and secretaries would necessitate a palace of bureaucracy, instead all such paperwork is contained within the single Iron Ledger. The Ledger itself seems to operate on much the same principles as Callidus himself; simply by inserting his hand he seems to be able to pull out the document he is seeking.

Callidus must surely have an enormous collection of religious items, after centuries of buying such things from mortals, but where he keeps this vault is unknown. Fanciful tales claim that his immense wealth is stored by the Lictors, while others say that his Ledger can be "unfolded" to reveal a massive citadel of iron and white basalt that is his true domain.

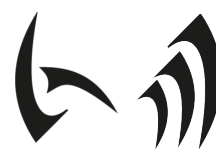
While undoubtedly the equal in power of any of the rulers of the cities of Autumn, Callidus does not compete with them directly. Rather he acts as a broker for such beings, supplying their desires, acting as a notary and occasionally offering advice. Beings of such scope are too clever to deal with Callidus lightly, and only utilise his services when completely necessary. However, by long standing tradition Callidus is generally free to meet and bargain with any of their underlings, and thus passes across the Labyrinth unmolested.

Traditionally Callidus uses a Fleur-de-Lys type symbol as his seal, the three points symbolising the three Secretaries that he is currently using. Competition to remain at such a level is fierce, and his underlings constantly scheme to advance themselves.



The Prince of the Argent Tontine is fascinated with mortal religions. Callidus understands that faith is a powerful force, but one that is extremely ephemeral. One of his personal desires is to understand the value of faith, and the need it satisfies in the faithful, the better to manipulate others using their beliefs. An extremely patient Eternal, he has been studying mortal religion for centuries, and often appears to tempt or bargain mortals away from their faith. Over this time he has amassed a great trove of lore on faith, and is said to possess several relics of the Imperial religion. His knowledge is best described as being 'technical' - he understands the politics of religion much better than he does individual faith.

Callidus is associated with both the rune Lann, and the rune Queros.



**Boons:** Bargains themselves fascinate Callidus, and he has several supernatural powers relating to creating and sealing them. He is known to possess many favours with other Eternals, and to draw on them to fulfill bargains on his behalf. He is particularly keen of getting bargainers into his debt, and reinforcing his ability to call those debts due with curses. His bargains are more likely to involve the bargainer doing or not doing something in return for a favour or service - it is less likely to involve mere payment with materials.

His most potent abilities deal with the manipulation of desire and greed, and guiding serendipity to increase wealth. He also possesses several abilities that deal with bonds, especially bonded items, and is said to be able to locate highly desired items in the material world with sufficient inducement, especially those that are unique or exotic.

Some priests are interested in the religious artefacts Callidus has gathered, but they tend to be very leery about entering into a bargain with the Eternal. Callidus appears to take particular delight in challenging and testing priests and other strongly religious characters who come to deal with him.

### *The Secretaries of the Argent Tontine*

Unlike Eternals such as Basileus Kade, Callidus runs a tight ship. The Eternals who serve him do so out of a belief in his creed and a desire to increase their own wealth and service their own needs. There are few stories of incidents where one of them attempts to overthrow or betray Callidus, and many scholars theorise that all the Eternals of the Argent Tontine are bound with oaths and contracts that keep them loyal.

The Secretaries - literally secret keepers - who serve Callidus are lesser Eternals rather than Herald's. They sometimes deal with the Empire directly, either pursuing their own agenda or operating as proxies for Callidus. They may arrange audiences in the Hall of Worlds, or send Herald's on their own business. The three best known of Callidus' secretaries, who have dealt with the Empire in the past, are Numis, Malleas and Zand.

#### *Numis*

A female Eternal who is fascinated by the role of coins and hard currency in agreements. She occasionally likes to take credit for inventing the idea of currency, or spreading it across the mortal realm - it is not clear if she expects this claim to be taken literally. She is the longest serving of Callidus' secretaries and is acknowledged as the entity who designed the iron coins used in many parts of the Autumn realm. It's unknown whether this has more than tenuous links to Stannery Candidium - the internal currency of the City of Locks/

#### *Malleas*

A male Eternal who favours gamblers and wagers. He is known to send Herald's to arrange wagers on important events, and often creates bargains that involve gambles or risky ventures - he is also known to lend money but demand extortionate rates of interest for the repayment of the debt with dire consequences for forfeiture. He has been Callidus' secretary for the shortest time (barely longer than a century or so) and is known to favour both gaudy displays of wealth and allowing others to make a pitch as to why he should invest some of it in them. He often seems to lose out on deals, but never seems to grow any less wealthy.

## Zand

A lawyer, and usually dresses in the style of a wealthy Freeborn scrivener, but in colours few Freeborn would choose. His robes and tagelmust are the dull metallic colours of well-handled coinage, and the deep black of oxidised silver. Scrupulous and precise, he is fascinated by the way contracts are created and used to regulate behaviour. He effects the air of a stereotypical bureaucrat – obsequious to Callidus, polite to those he wants something from, and relatively rude to those he has no use for. He is the Eternal most frequently sent forth to make deals with mortals at present, but this is subject to change at Callidus' whim.

One or more of the secretaries tends to attend Callidus when he deals with mortals, and may make their own bargains at the same time.

### Notes:

- Zand - Callidus' minion-Eternal, recently attempted to do a series of complicated deals with the Empire recently. It was meant to be 'suck them in and then hit them with the doozy' but he never seemed to get to the second part -then he had a breakdown. Callidus has been understandably reluctant to go anywhere near the Empire again for a while after that. Moreover, it's currently uncertain whether Autumn Eternals actually have any capacity to steal or otherwise remove souls in the first place – Moreover, no Eternals actually 'take souls' or really interact with them as far as I can tell - they can make you a herald and in some sense there you lose your soul, they can trap you and your soul somewhere, but as far as I understand it, they never directly interact with your soul as a separate entity, and there's nothing they can use it for or do with it. Which begs the question – what was Zand doing, apart from potentially profiting off of the contracts held, or the nature of contracts, rather than the 'soul'.
- Much more interesting is the current rumours that Callidus is currently working a series of communications in the Sumaah Republic, subverting The Way with some kind of Greed cult. Quite how this happened is unclear, but I would be fascinated to find out how or why this is the case. Callidus is definitely not on the list of Eternals permitted by the Sumaah High House of Wisdom, unlike Prince Prospero.



# Prospero

**Sobriquets:** Known as the Golden Prince, Prospero is the master of influence, favours and serendipity. He is commonly also referred to as the Weaver, and the Lord of the Loom. He is the Sovereign Lord of the City of Bridges and the Prince of Ties. He is sometimes referred to as the Reckoner of Ebony and Bone in reference to the ledgers in which he records his favours and enmities. His love of influence sometimes leads to him being called the Golden Spider or the Thread-weaver. Very old sources sometimes call him Cloven-hoofed, apparently a metaphor for the mountain-goat-like dexterity with which he navigates the difficult terrain of the halls of power.

In Asavea he is called *Polymitarinus* or *el tejedor*; in Jarm he is called *Jemný Pavouk* which translates a something akin to *Subtle Spider*. The magicians of the Sumaah Republic consider him, along with Estavus and Ephisis to be an acceptable Eternal to treat with, and they call him *Skredqeren* - yet while they may communicate with him, it is illegal for any citizen of Sumaah to owe Prospero a favour.

Prospero always appears to be male, and uses male pronouns.

**Appearance:** Prospero is always finely dressed; he displays his wealth, power and influence in his garments and accoutrements. His curving horns are often gilded, and he drips with fine jewelry. He is invariably friendly, affable, gregarious and loquacious. He enjoys verbal fencing and clever conversation, especially when it is accompanied by food or drink. Debate and discourse are his meat-and-drink. He is slow to anger, but utterly implacable when his ire is raised. The angrier Prospero becomes, the colder his demeanour and the more cutting his comments. On the few occasions Prospero has genuinely lost his temper, he is said to turn his entire will to ruining the target of his ire.

Prospero rules the City of Bridges. Built on a thousand small islands, connected by bridges in an impossible variety of styles, it is a city-sized maze of white marble and gold. Said to be one of the richest and most beautiful cities in the Autumn Realm, it is an urban wonderland of well-maintained parks, plazas, fora, public buildings and princely villas. Travelling between islands is possible only via the bridges - no boats ply the dark waters of the allegedly bottomless lake. The layout is unchanging but incredibly intricate, and is said to be impossible for visitors to navigate without assistance from the residents - who of course demand favours or services in return for their guidance. While the majority of buildings are single storey affairs, the impossibly tall towers of Prospero's palace dominate the skyline, a visible reminder to all the inhabitants of who rules here.

The Weaver is not a warrior, but is said to be the most potent magician of the Autumn Eternals, at least on par with Meraud in Summer, Sadogna in Night and Kimus in Day. He is always equipped with potent magical items that enhance his already formidable supernatural powers; the nature of these items changes regularly. On occasion he lends one to a mortal in return for some valuable service. The **Bondblade** is such a one - a blade that is said to be able to cut through magical bonds.

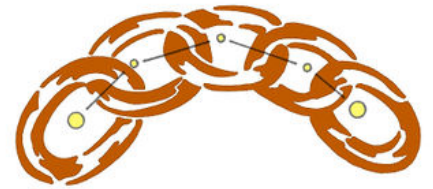
Prospero never appears alone. He is usually accompanied by two or three "nobles" from his city, chosen for their talents and unique skills. These courtiers share their Prince's love of conversation, and may have boons of their own to offer.

The Golden Spider is known to project an aura similar to the Chamber of Pallas, encouraging everyone in his vicinity to engage in discussion and eschew confrontation. This power is especially potent when combined with a feast or banquet.



The Lord of the White City is associated with Hirmok, rune of dominion and with Lann rune of bargains.

Unlike many Eternals he is also associated with astronomantic constellations; in this case the Chain, Spider and Web. According to Prospero and his heralds, these constellations can be seen in the sky above the City of Bridges just as they can in the mortal world.



**Concerns:** Prospero prides himself on being the image of a wise ruler, who exerts the maximum amount of influence with the minimal amount of effort. He is well loved by the inhabitants of his city, and respected even by his enemies. He stands at the centre of an impossibly complex web of favour, patronage and influence - what he cannot achieve by calling in a favour directly, he can often manage by calling in a favour from someone who is owed a favour by his target.



Wealth is useful to Prospero, but it is not an end in itself. As far as the Sovereign Lord of the City of Bridges is concerned, being prosperous and secure allows one to security allows one the freedom to focus on politics and personal ambitions - the poor and powerless are trapped in cycles of desperation that prevent them achieving their goals. "There are few things more depressing than a farmer," he is often quoted as saying, "unless it is a slave. I would always choose the company of the landowner or the merchant over the farmer."

Prospero is also disdainful of the trade of goods - it is a useful tool, but objects are nothing compared to the talents of individuals. Gold and silver are cold and worthless compared to the talent that lies in the hands and mind of the jeweller and the silversmith. It is the merchant who creates wealth, not the goods they traffick in - and the best merchants wield the subtle tools of influence to increase their prosperity. He has several times expressed scorn for the Imperial Bourse while praising the Imperial Senate as "a good idea, for all that it still has a little way to go."

The Echoing Market, which lies at the heart of the City of Bridges, is a unique bazaar where no goods change hands - rather, the merchants here trade in favours. Many Eternals associated with Prospero insist on writing down favours owed on strips of paper, which they treat as the physical manifestation of the favour. Anyone who presents the paper can claim the favour - and there is a brisk exchange with a complex rate. Two favours from a soldier might equal a major favour from a grocer, or a minor boon from a lesser Eternal; the favour of a Cardinal of the Way might fetch a price of six minor favours from various diplomats to the courts of Jarm. Mortal magicians may sometimes engage in trade for favours, but woe betide anyone who attempts to avoid or welch on an owed favour. A favour recorded on the papers of the Echoing Market is said to be able to reach beyond death, to call back a spirit or perhaps even to influence a mortal who has been reborn from the Labyrinth again.

When someone makes an agreement with Prospero (or angers him), he has one of his scribes or aides make a note of it, and the paper is dispatched to the City of Bridges to be entered in one of his ledgers. He rarely bothers to invoke the Lictors to safeguard his agreements - but anyone who attempts to betray Prospero is likely to find that offending someone with an innate understanding of synchronicity can be extremely painful. Prospero is not cruel, particularly; only the most heinous offenses against him cannot be at least partially resolved with a heartfelt apology and an offer of favours.

The Golden Prince aspires to be a scion of subtlety. Where his rival Basileus Kade rules with a fist of iron, Prospero weaves threads of favour and patronage to influence the members of his court - and indeed anyone else who interacts with them. Despite his emphasis on subtlety and influence, Prospero has little time for either deception or treachery. Wherever he can he encourages honest dealings, where everyone involved knows what they are getting in to. Only in the realm of trading favours does this honest approach begin to break down a little - but the assumption in the Court of Flowers is always that someone who offers a favour without placing limitations on it or defining how the favour can be spent - or traded - deserves everything they get.

Within the Empire, Prospero is known to favour the League's style of favour and influence, and appears to have a great deal of respect for the Net of the Heavens philosophy as practised by the Urizeni. He is believed to be fascinated by the Marches, and on several occasions has attempted to increase the power of the market towns over that of the Stewards - although always through proxies rather than direct action. When it comes to the Freeborn Prospero appears conflicted; he appreciates their directness and honesty, but finds their "obsession" with money to be a little off-putting.

The Imperial Synod is said to intrigue Prospero - he sees a lot to approve of in the teachings of Loyalty and Ambition, while viewing the virtues of Wisdom and Vigilance in particular as being largely irrelevant. His Heralds are always careful to remain polite to priests they encounter, and Prospero appears more than happy to assist those priests who treat him with respect.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, Prospero is fascinated by the Imperial favour, and it is believed he will offer a valuable boon to anyone who willingly gives an existing favour into his control.

**Boons:** Prospero is the master of bonds. He can effortlessly create and dissolve bonds between people and magic items, and between groups of people. He is known to be able to exert his will to forge bonds that are extremely difficult to unravel, or to carefully unpick complex bonds created by others. From time to time he demonstrates the ability to manipulate the bonds between members of a band in remarkable ways - for example, he once wove the bonds of the Whisper of the North cabal with an enchantment that allowed them to perform more rituals than other covens, although the price he required in return allegedly involved the magicians influencing the Varushkan senators in some profound (but secret) fashion.

This facility for bonds also manifests in the ability to employ an effect similar to Ties that Bind at will, and to empower mortal magicians to perform the ritual with greater facility.

His understanding of the connections between people, places and things gives him an innate sense for synchronicity and serendipity - the way that events can combine to influence seemingly unrelated circumstances. This takes a number of forms, but he is known to be able to grant boons that empower rituals such as Streams of Silver, Rivers of Gold, Art of the Deal and Gift of the Wily Broker. Furthermore, his fascination with influence sometimes manifests in boons that strengthen the ties of loyalty between individuals such as Circle of Gold or Mantle of the Golden Orator.

This perception of synchronicity means that those who cross Prospero often find themselves cursed in ways that turn fortune against them. The most common effect is something similar to the ritual effect *Like Water Through Your Fingers*, although often more powerful. Prospero is also able to reduce or even remove the effects of this kind of curse - but generally requires a major favour for doing so. Prospero sometimes accepts payment for his boons, but is much more interested in services or favours. An agreement to gain a boon regarding Rivers of Gold for example might include a requirement to perform the ritual once each season in a certain way for certain targets or types of targets. The exception is that Prospero has a weakness for orichalcum, and may agree to accept payment in ingots of this golden material.

### *The Spiders of the City of Bridges*

Prospero is said to control a small army of metallic spider-like creatures who live in the City of Bridges. These creatures are rarely seen, but defend the city from attack. They are said to be able to entangle enemies in strands of metallic thread, quickly wrapping them into cocoons and rendering them immobile and powerless. While Prospero has never been known to grant control of these spiders to others, he has occasionally been known to offer boons or magical items that draw on their abilities in some way.

## *The Books of Ebony and Bone*

Prospero keeps two immense ledgers in his palaces. One book is bound in ebony with black pages written in golden ink, in which Prospero records all the favours he is owed, and who he has traded them to. The other book, which is covered in a thin layer of dust, is bound in ivory with white pages written on in red ink. This is where Prospero records all his grudges. The book of ebony is said to fill up quickly - there are said to be twenty-three volumes of favours carefully curated by Prospero's heralds. The book of bone, however, is unique; it is no more than half filled with grudges, many of which have been expiated in one way or another.

Recently, a Herald by the name of Genedam – a herald of the *Eternal Price of Folly* – was the target of a hunt by Prospero. I believe that the bounty on Genedam is still outstanding.

## *The Loom of Stars*

The Loom of Stars is an immense artefact that Prospero keeps in the centre of his palace in the City of Bridges. An incredibly complex machine made up of thousands upon thousands of coloured threads that criss-cross the chamber, sometimes crossing, sometimes tied in knots. Prospero claims that every strand represents the life of a single influential entity, and that by identifying which thread corresponds to which entity he can learn much about their relationships. The loom is ever-changing, and some Urizen stargazers say that it is a model of a part of the Net of the Heavens. According to Prospero himself, the loom contains strands connected to mortals, eternal and "other creatures" and even he does not know where it came from, nor precisely what it does.

## *Known Heralds of Prospero*

- Drayfuss – Prospero's Majordomo.
- Balthazar – minor herald of the city of Bridges
- Simone – another minor herald.
- Finn Tumbler – very low in the pecking order.

Notes: In Autumn of 378, Prince Prospero held a feast, to which Mortals and Eternal alike were invited. I would pay good money to any citizen who can provide a clear and full report of what transpired at this party.

# The Hidden Prince – Ephisis

**Sobriquets:** Known as the Hidden Prince, Ephisis is a mistress of trade, barter and fair exchange. She is sometimes referred to as the Accounter, and the Lady of the Counting House. She is the Sovereign Lady of the City of Gold and Lead and the Prince of Scales. She is sometimes referred to as the Invisible Hand in reference to both her sequestration and to certain economic theories. Her love of trade sometimes leads to her being called the Merchant Queen. Her great wealth is often referenced in the title Grand Plutocrat.

In Asavea she is sometimes worshipped directly as a patroness of merchants, traders and wealth; in both the Jarm and Axos she and her heralds are courted for the various mercantile boons they offer. The magicians of the Sumaah Republic consider her, along with Estavus and Prospero to be an acceptable Eternal to treat with; that said it is illegal for any citizen of Sumaah to deal with Ephisis without the assistance of a priestly intermediary from the High House of Prosperity or the High House of Wisdom. The Sarcophan have something of a love-hate relationship with Ephisis; their tendency to seek a profit without regard for ethics, and to engage in piracy, occasionally grates with this fair-minded Eternal.

Ephisis is always referred to as being female. Her heralds are often referred to as chamberlains or senechals in reference to the role they have in managing the City of Gold and Lead on her behalf.

**Appearance:** No mortal in living memory has proveably interacted directly with Ephisis. She does not host audiences in the Hall of the Worlds, and deals entirely through intermediaries. This has lead to a lot of speculation – but nobody has met a herald who has met her, either. She apparently never leaves her citadel – a pyramid of polished gold at the centre of the sprawling city she rules.

The City of Gold and Lead is built on the Plains of Aggido, framed between two great mountains. Some texts refer to it as the City of Five Rings, referring to the five great concentric walls that have been built to contain the city as it grows. The closer one gets to the central citadel, the richer and more influential the citizens. The central ring is said to be a place of wonders where some of the wealthiest of the Autumn Eternals can be found – along with the embassies from the other Eternals. Almost all the buildings in and around the City are businesses – Ephisis rules the greatest trade hub in the Realm.

The High Merchant is closely associated with the rune Lann, which represents bargains, and the rune Pallas which represents wealth. Her sigil is the balanced scale, and appears on many official documents and banners of the City of Gold and Lead.



**Concerns:** While nobody has ever met Ephisis directly, scholars can theorize about her philosophies and concerns based on the actions her Heralds take.

Ephisis is fascinated with trade in all its forms. She encourages trade across the Realm and the mortal world - from a bartered exchange of goods, to the most complex financial schemes of the League or the Sarcophan Delves. She opposes attempts to restrict or control trade, but equally is fascinated by them and by what they can teach her about her obsession. She is known to be ambivalent about taxes - and the citizens of the City of Gold and Lead are known to pay a tenth of their profits to the Accounter's coffers. Of taxes, she has repeatedly expressed the opinion that taxation is a form of trade - the government provides services and facilities, and the citizens contribute to their upkeep. That said, she has also praised systems where citizens voluntarily donate to the state, and those anarchies where the individual has no responsibility to the state at all.

Ephisis is immensely rich. In her opinion, wealth is both a means to an end (securing happiness), and a way of recognising talent and ambition. People who make themselves wealthy in their society deserve to be more powerful because they have worked hard to gain their wealth. Wealth is also an equaliser - anyone can become wealthy, and unwise investments can plunge a complacent plutocrat into the gutter.

Core to her philosophy, however, is the belief in ethical behaviour. This quality is sometimes seen as being at odds with her obsession with trade. Ephisis expects trade to be 'honest' and absolutely despises cheats and con artists. While profit is integral to many trading models, it is up to the merchant, the customer and their society to determine what is a 'fair' profit on a transaction. She dislikes business practices that involve tricking, or deceiving customers or workers and despises the use of force to take wealth from others.

While Ephisis mostly focuses on the trade of material goods. She dislikes trades involving 'future favours'; she dislikes attempts to turn economic interactions into social interactions, and absolutely despises welters and those who fail to pay their debts. She views many social exchanges in terms of trade. Whether it is a stonemason sculpting a statue for a client, a mercenary fighting for an employer, or a mine-worker extracting ore, all these activities are trades of time and skill for recompense. A common phrase used by the Eternals of the City of Gold and Lead is that the only real commodity of any value is time.

Her heralds are often used as advocates by other Eternals and mortals alike, and view mediation as another form of trade. She would always rather mediate a dispute than fight, but that is not to say that she is weak. She employs brotherhoods of mercenary soldiers to guard her city, and they are very well paid indeed.

In the Autumn Realm, Ephisis remains neutral. She is believed to have close ties with Estavus, but to keep the other Eternals at arm's length. There is particular rivalry between Ephisis and Prospero over the Echoing Bazaar - a mirror of her own marketplaces but one where favours and influence are used rather than good hard coin.

Many of the other powers of the Autumn realm come to the City of Gold and Lead to trade, and none are interested in losing access to her services. A Prince who attacked Ephesis would risk drawing the ire of all the other Princes. Ephesis and her heralds regularly invoke the Lictors. Given they are invariably dealing from an open and honest position, they see no harm in using magic to ensure that anyone they are dealing with is incentivised to be likewise honest.

Within the Empire, Ephesis is known to favour the Freeborn especially, being impressed by their commitment to honesty in business dealings. The murky practices of the League are a source of constant frustration, and she is known to be interested in the slow struggle between market towns and households in the Marches. On the whole, Ephesis is a quiet supporter of the Empire, especially impressed by the institution of the Imperial Bourse. Indeed, her Heralds have directly intervened to assist or protect the Bourse on the rare occasions where it has been threatened. Boons: Ephesis is the mistress of exchange. She is a source of many boons that enhance trading ventures – and can weave potent enchantments to improve businesses and fleets. She is also fascinated with the idea of open trade. Her Heralds often demonstrate the ability to quickly evaluate the magical properties of an object offered for trade. She is known to share this ability with some mortals, although the boon often comes at a steep price.

Most magicians know the Eternal through the ritual Ephesis' Scale. Beneath her citadel, Ephesis has vaults of unimaginable size, containing all the valuable items she has accumulated through trade with her fellow Eternals and the mortal world. It is impossible to guess what lost treasures, secrets and objects of incalculable worth are contained in those vaults. "Mundane" trade with Ephesis is very common – she has an encyclopaedic knowledge of everything she owns, and queries to the Eternal regarding specific items have sometimes been remarkably successful.

This connection with the preservation of wealth means that Ephesis has access to some of the finest vaultsmiths and lockmakers in the Autumn Realm. She is known to be able to create secure containers similar to those made with the night pouch incantation or the Secrets for the Shadow Courier ritual, and may share them with magicians.

Ephesis seems to have no interest in cursing anyone. Indeed, she is much more likely to trade for something that can help remove a curse than to help a magician in placing one. Curses that disrupt trade are particularly abhorrent to her – a single malediction can disrupt the economic activity of an entire region.

Ephesis does not deal in influence. She never does something for a promised favour in the future. This does not mean that she does not understand intangible trades – only that she avoids trades where someone promises to do something unspecified at a future date. A deal in which one party agrees to perform a specified task for payment is eminently acceptable to the Eternal.



*Reed - The Reckoner of Time*

*A known herald of Ephesus*

## The City of Locks

**Sobriquets:** Known as the Sovereign Lord of Locks, Basileus Kade is the master of intrigue, espionage and brutal power plays.

While he sometimes appears in female or monstrous guise, Basileus Kade is generally referred to with masculine pronouns. He is sometimes known as the **Patron of Spies and Traitors** due to his role in keeping people's secrets. Kade is dubbed *Prince of the Black Vaults*, in recognition of the role that espionage and military defence play in his realm - and of the oubliettes to which those who fail or displease him are consigned.

He is also known as the *Keeper of the Weir*, due to his interest in fleets and sea trade and to the great canals that run like a web through his Eternal city. A mistake over the nature of Eternal politics had him known as *Nightbane* due to the belief that his role in keeping secrets secure put him in direct opposition to the eternals of Night and Sadogua in particular; more correctly he has a great deal of interest in extending his influence to include the Eternals of other Realms, especially those of the Whisper Gallery.

**Appearance:** Basileus Kade has three distinct forms, and swaps between them as he wishes. Most commonly he appears to be a powerfully built man dressed in the well-tailored clothes of a professional of some kind. He also appears as a striking woman, dressed in less formal attire, and sometimes presenting himself as Basileus Cadence, the wife of Basileus Kade. Those who go along with this charade often find the Eternal to be a more generous and gregarious host - although whether this is an act or a consequence of the supernatural bonds involved in taking on a role, scholars are unclear.

He also appears as the *Beast of the Locks*; a monstrous horned creature reserved for the darkest of Kade's moods. He often wears the tattered remains of a fine suit of clothing, and while he rarely carries a weapon in his other guises, as the Beast he may wield a brutal double-edged gladius and a main gauche. When he is encountered in this form Kade is at his most dangerous. All pretence of civilisation is abandoned, and he appears entirely consumed with the ruthless application of power to achieve one's goals. All the scholars agree - deal with the Beast of Locks extremely carefully.

Regardless of form, he wears discreet yet obviously valuable jewelery to reinforce his appearance as a man of station. Regardless of his attire, he always wears a belt with a lock and set of chains worn over the buckle. His demeanour is that of a stern disciplinarian, direct talking, decisive and intimidating. However else he appears, Kade is always wealthy, powerful and in control.

It is not common for an Autumn Eternal to change shape so freely, and scholars of the Eternals theorize that he has access to an item of power, possibly a mask or the belt of locks he wears at all times - a tool that helps to keep those he deals with uncertain and off-balance.

Kade never appears alone. He may remain aloof, allowing his heralds to do the talking for him (especially when he is in the guise of the Beast of the Locks). Other times he plays the gracious host, entertaining his guests with conversation and fine food - but a guest should never forget that this creature is a being of intrigue and power, and that very little he says or does should be taken at face value.

**Concerns:** Ultimately, Kade is manifestation of raw, naked ambition and control. He is a power-monger, a figure who decides who will prosper and who will be ruined within his domain. Everything has a place within his grand scheme, and the world is divided into those who support him, and those who are yet to support him.

In his own realm, Kade is concerned with the never ending politics of the charter houses of the City of Locks. These brutal displays of dog-eat-dog politics are continuous and never ending, as the citizens constantly vie for the blessing of their Lord Sovereign. These concerns inevitably spill over into the temporal realm and into the Empire. Kade encourages the charter houses to look for sources of power and influence outside of the Realm of Autumn to give them an advantage in their constant competition against each other.

Kade is always reaching outwards, looking to extend his influence from his centre of power to envelop and encompass everything else. In this regard, he embodies the idea of trade as a tool of control, and many of his Heralds function as both traders and spies; gathering intelligence that can be used to extend the power of both Kade and the City of Locks.

While the enmity between Kade and the Night Eternal Sadoqua is a myth, the Lord of Locks has spent an eternity attempting to master and harness the Eternals of the Whisper Gallery. Unfortunately, he believes that every action taken to achieve this goal increases the chances of Basileus' own secrets being used against him by the Whisper Gallery. He engages in convoluted schemes to bring them under his control, but dearly wishes to know precisely what they know about him. His goals are further hampered by the various problems that trying to exert influence over the Eternals of another Realm present to the Autumnal lord; not least the fact that while he understands the power of secrets to blackmail and influence others, he cannot really comprehend the more mystical and philosophical concepts in the way the Night eternal do. For their part, the Night eternal pretend to neither know nor care about Basileus Kade, and this drives him to distraction - he cannot fathom their wider plans, and until he can understand them he cannot influence them.

**Boons:** Kade gathers secrets; not mystical secrets like the Eternals of Night, but the secrets gathered by spies and agents who watch and record what the people around them are doing. He spreads his influence by influencing those

who seek influence and control over those around them - anyone could become a node in his web of power and control. He helps those who want to protect their investments, build on the assets and alliances and increase their share of whatever market they are competing in - all the time ensuring that he increases his own share of that market through the person he is aiding. Magicians prepared to make a strong deal, and willing to accept the risks of a continuously changing foreign and possibly alien market can get access to the incredible resources and assets in the halls and vaults of the City of Locks.

Kade encourages his Heralds to make deals with magicians, and those who are clever enough can reap great rewards; but they must be careful not to be crushed by the rapidly changing politics of the city. This is especially true when you consider that the magician will not be able to directly get involved in the management of any assets they gain in the city and will have to trust that the Charter House will protect their interests. The most common way of achieving this goal is to have plenty of resources to draw on in the Empire to be used as capital, and to ensure that any agreements are carefully worded. The representatives of the Charter Houses will never break the word of a contract, but they have no regard for the 'spirit' of an agreement - only the actual words on the paper. Those dealing with Kade should take care to remember that trade is not his primary goal; it is a means to increasing his power and control over the world. While some Autumn Eternals engage in trade for the love of the deal and its subtleties, ultimately Kade is concerned only with power over others. Playing the game with the Sovereign Lord of Locks is not for the faint hearted, and although the rewards are great, the possibility of the Lictors - or worse - collecting on debts owed cannot be ignored.

#### Notes:

- Over the past three years, bitter in-fighting between the Black Sigil (rampant Libertarians) the Golden Lamb (Conservatives) and the Crimson Hounds (Mercenary Police Force) has led to an almost total upheaval of politics in the City of Locks.
- There used to be bestial minotaurs in the city as well as cambion-esque ones, but Thelonius went on a mad rampage and slaughtered them all. It is unknown if many survive in other cities in the Realm.
- There are two kinds of cambion-ish minotaur - silver and gold skinned - with bitter rivalries between the two. The gold ones have historically been on top of this arrangement, with some of the silver ones ("Tin-skins") using dangerous drugs sourced from the mortal realm to melt their faces and make them look golden. I am unsure what combination of herbs they are using, or what the cure is.
- There's an internal currency, Stannery Candidium, but whether it's worth anything any more is somewhat uncertain with the mess the City's been in.
- Basileus Kade has been missing for three seasons - presumed dead? Rumour is that Thelonius Kade had something to do with this. In Autumn 379, an Election is to be held, to elect a new Sovereign Lord of Locks.

## *Major Heralds of the City of Locks:*

- *Carolinus*
- *Thelonius*
- *Lycellius*
- *Ulven Stryfe*
- *Gallagen Mercy, a lawyer - missing, presumed dead.*

## *Minor Heralds of the City:*

- *Architect Foxton - an Architect.*
- *Theodolite - Foxton's Undersecretary.*
- *Pix and Pox: Minor Heralds, of little note.*

## *“Their Grand Majesties” the Eternal Mazen of the Many Faces*

**Sobriquets:** Known invariably as the Many-Faced or Mazen of the Many Faces. They are also sometimes referred to as the *Unseen Hand*, and a handful of Urizeni texts cryptically refer to them as the *Price of Folly* (there are arguments as to whether this is a misprint of 'Prince') or occasionally the *Gull-Catcher*. In the League, Mazen is sometimes called the *Lord of the Masks*, owing to their physical appearance and the nature of their boons. In Highguard the most common epithet for Mazen is *False-face*; in Varushka and Wintermark they are more commonly termed *No-face*; magicians from all three nations tend to be very cautious when dealing with them, but there are several stories of both Kallavesi and Ushka mystics exploiting Mazen's love of manipulation to gain valuable power in time of need.

In the Sumaah Republic, Mazen is called *Logner* which literally means *liar* and contact with them is absolutely proscribed. The Asaveans call them *comduas caras* or "with two faces", referring both to their multiple features and their manipulative nature. Unlike the Sumaah the Asaveans consider Mazen to be largely harmless; indeed in some places they are viewed as a minor god of trickery and ambition, and offerings are burnt before statues of the creature. The Jarmish have a number of names for Mazen, the most prevalent of which is *Lutkar*. While some magician princes are known to make bargains with Lutkar to gain power, doing so is often seen as an act of foolishness or desperation.

A few old League plays feature Mazen, usually as a gently comic figure who helps both villain and hero at different points in the story. There are persistent rumours that one of the thousands of theatrical masks in the Facio Hall of the Armetto Theatre in Sarvos is Mazen's, but if this is true, nobody has found it.

Mazen is often associated with **Queros**, rune of plots.

*“When you know what someone believes, you know who they are, and how to move them.”*

**Appearance:** Mazen of the Many Faces is an Autumn Eternal of uncertain form. While other Autumn eternals generally appear to be horned humanoids, Mazen usually appears as the 'Lord of the Masks'; an inhuman creature with a head comprising at least four masks or faces, each of which speaks with its own voice, and with a varying number of limbs. In this form they tend to dress garishly, forsaking the understated elegance of Callidus and the classier denizens of the Labyrinth in favour of displaying their wealth. This form tends to seat themselves on a high throne, so that they speak down to their mortal visitors.



While this is their common form, they have been encountered in a variety of other guises. On occasion they appear as the Chorus - a collection of their Heralds speaking with the same voice; or as the Gallery of Masks - a room full of framed masks which glow with an eerie light and speak with many voices.

They refer to themselves using plural pronouns, and eschew any particular gender.

There is a great deal of speculation among Imperial magicians as to the nature of Mazen. Their masks are clearly not actual faces; they have been known to remove them to hand out as boons. On occasions, magicians treating with Mazen have reported that upon removing one mask, another was present beneath it, as if the Eternal had no true face. Others have pointed to the fact that the many forms Mazen takes are at odds with the traditional appearance of Autumn eternal as horned humanoids - they speculate that nobody has ever met the real Mazen, assuming it even exists. Rather, they suggest that all the multifarious shapes Mazen takes are masks, presumably constructed through the cunning artifice of the creature itself or perhaps by the Eternal Estavus given their tendency to include metallic substances. Indeed Daniella Vassa di Sarvos at her trial put forward the supposition that Mazen is in fact a constructed being, perhaps made by Estavus, who freed himself and now pursues their own agenda - while this seems unlikely it goes some way towards explaining the slightly alien and unpredictable nature of the Many-Masked. It is said Daniella had a ring, given to her by the Many-Faced.

*Just because something isn't a lie does not mean that it isn't deceptive. A liar knows that he is a liar, but one who speaks mere portions of truth in order to deceive is an artificer of outcomes.*

**Concerns:** Mazen appears less interested in advancing their own power than in encouraging others to do pursue their own goals. They generally encourage mortals to use any tool at their disposal to advance their agenda; subtle action; misdirection; conspiracy; naked power grabs; the use of lies, deception and misdirection; accusations against political rivals; blackmail, bribery and threats; using dupes, pawns and patsies; and the manipulation of sentiment, pride and perceived bonds of loyalty or obligation. To Mazen, power over others is an end in itself, and there is no method too unethical or immoral to achieve that end.

Mazen claims to be interested in what will motivate mortals to put aside their squabbles and work together. They claim that their shape is a metaphor for a nation or other great body of people: greater than the sum of its parts, yet still formed of every individual therein. In an address before the Imperial Conclave in 2864E their Herald Jannam argued that Mazen could make a powerful ally for those in positions of power, especially a great unifying figure prepared to do their work. In passionate rebuttal Nero of the Dreaming Spires - then Grandmaster of the Celestial Arch - reminded everyone that Mazen was an Eternal of Autumn; that their words were not to be trusted; and that they had no interest in the glory of empires, but the glory of Empresses. Mazen's petition for Amity was defeated by a narrow margin.

Mazen's expression of interest in mortal pride, loyalty and co-operation is generally seen as a slightly unconvincing veneer over a deep-seated fascination with silver-tongued manipulators who use these sentiments to control others. They enjoy the antics of ruthless politicians, corrupt leaders and vicious warriors alike - as long as they are charismatic or cunning enough to build up a following; but they reserves a special place in their 'heart' for the artist of the long-con. Mazen is always interested in aiding a truly spectacular con, and the more convoluted the hustle, the better. Confidence tricksters are cautioned that Mazen is equally happy with a trick that ends in spectacular failure as they are with one that ends in spectacular success; it is the spectacle in which Mazen revels.

The most famous recent example of Mazen's patronage was that of Daniella Vassa di Sarvos, a corrupt Master of the Imperial Mint in the reign of Emperor Barabbas. A razor-sharp long-con artist, she convinced many of her victims that she was their friend and ally and that she would use her influence and resources to aid their cause. So thoroughly were many of her victims gulled that they defended her vehemently at her eventual trial, even inventing elaborate theories to account for the evidence against her. Mazen sent Heralds to her funeral, and occasionally refers to her in tones of apparent fondness.

Mazen regularly expresses the opinion that they are the greatest of all Autumn eternal. They consider themselves wiser than Basileus Kade, whom mortals fear; more subtle than Callidus, who invokes naked greed; wealthier than Estavus who wastes her time on creation when she would be better served to control creation. Those who follow such paths, they claim, will find themselves easily betrayed, manipulated or used as tools to advance the agenda of another. The Freeborn scholar Serval i Riqueza, when opposing the suggestion that the Unfettered Mind support the development of a ritual to allow trade with Mazen, pointed out that Mazen is quite clearly much less powerful than the Eternals it claims to despise - "Perhaps," he said "It still hasn't had its chance to betray them?" Indeed, while they are often contemptuous of the others, they seem to have little problem co-operating with them - apart from Basileus Kade. Mazen despises Kade, due to a matter of dispute over an Autumn Construct.

- During the reign of Giselle; Mazen loaned her an Autumn Construct - unwisely; given they contractually belonged to the eternal Basileus Kade. Giselle died before Mazen could reclaim them all; and the Construct was lost in the world. When Kade discovered this, the resulting dispute involved the Lictors, and was very messy. Kade used it as leverage against Mazen; who was forced to hand over their Brass Votes and swear that they would keep out of Imperial affairs "as long as there was a ruler on the throne". Mazen seized on the wording - they have been dealing with both foreigners and barbarians - particularly the Asaveans and the Faraden. During the few months between Hugh and Britta, Mazen tried to hire a group of Imperial treasure hunters to find the missing construct, but they were unsuccessful.
- The construct was recently found, in The League, but was destroyed. All my research points to the remains making their way to the Arratan Gamble, however when I inquired there, the report was very clear - the Green Iron Construct has been destroyed, smashed beyond repair, and the tiny pieces scattered across the



Empire. Any hope of repairing it has been lost – but perhaps the Eternal Estavus might be able to give assistance in crafting a new one? Alternatively, a sharp mage could find another method of freeing Mazen – possibly by getting the Lord of Locks to break off the contract with Mazen; by getting the Lictors to overturn their decision, or by organising some kind of metaphysical break-out? That is, of course, assuming we want Them to be free in the first place.

Beyond the drive to manipulate and gain power, Mazen is also fascinated with questions of identity. On occasion they have claimed that knowing someone else is the first step toward binding them to your cause. They warn against expressing one's true identity to others, who might be able to find weaknesses to exploit; whenever they offer patronage they recommend concealment and misdirection. Some scholars have suggested that Mazen is trapped in a quest to uncover their own identity – that they lack some fundamental self-knowledge that mortals take for granted. Given they are said to express an irrational dislike of mirrors, there may be some truth in this theory.

*'Truth; hear it at all times but speak it only when it does not matter.'*

**Boons:** Mazen of the Many Faces is fond of magicians, claiming that (in their experience) they are the best-placed to control others. Their boons often come in the form of masks which grant powers to their wielders – ritual power, knowledge of ritual magic and potent auras similar to those created through hallowing are all common boons. They also have a soft-spot for priests of all faiths and religions, sometimes opining that priests are the most effective wielders of sentiment and the best exploiters of weakness in the mortal world. They offer boons appropriate to the faith of the priest – and while the faithful tend to view Mazen's interest as suspicious, those more interested in political power than the spiritual well-being of others are quick to accept. When dealing with priests of The Way, Mazen is known to make gifts that enhance the Mantle of the Golden Orator as well as objects that increase the ability of the wielder to employ Religious skills. The latter has raised some eyebrows in the Imperial Synod and questions about where Mazen acquires these talismans have never been satisfactorily answered.

Mazen never gives a boon of power directly to a mortal; the boons it offers are always physical objects, and invariably require bonding. Mazen appears to find it appealing that any gift of patronage or power they give can be stolen, traded, given, taken, lost or found.

*'Control another's actions and you must forever watch your back;  
control another's heart and they will watch it for you.'*

### The Forgotten Stair.

The Lost and Found is located in the Forgotten Stair, which is itself located in the Tower of Winds – Mazen's territory. Over the past 50 years, The Tower of Winds has been subsumed by The City of Locks – a location belonging

to the Traitor Lord. The Lost and Found is where things go when they fall through the cracks in the world. It is said that is where poorly-addressed Winged Messengers go; odd socks and quill pens. Word is that it was breached a few months ago by mages of the Imperial Conclave, who stripped it of anything useful. Their Grand Majesties have been uncharacteristically close-lipped about the affair. Part of me thinks that it was breached without their knowledge or consent. I would pay good money for a list of what was taken from The Lost and Found, and what transpired within its walls.

### Jannam

It is not clear whether Mazen of the Many Faces has many Herald's or only one. When its Herald's appear, they tend to be stone-faced or stone-masked creatures, dressed in a variety of costumes and with a variety of personalities – yet they all claim to be called Jannam, and to be the same entity. Stories from Asavea, Jarm and Sumaah alike all agree that this entity pursues Mazen's goals all over the mortal world.

As with Mazen itself, this appearance is very different to the usual appearance of Autumn Herald's - speculation suggests they are "made things" rather than living creatures. Darker theories suggest that it is the masks that are Mazen's herald's, and that the bodies that wear them are somehow enslaved or subordinate to the mask. Mazen appears to give Jannam free rein, apparently confident that they cannot be betrayed or outwitted.

They are wrong – the Jannam is fundamentally stupid.

### Other known Herald's of Their Grand Majesties

- Genedam – lost to the world, and the target of a Grudge by the Eternal Prospero. Genedam was active before Giselle's reign, but not after.
- Duman – keeper of the Lost and Found – a silver-skinned herald, whom I have conversed with twice. She is terse, but fair.
- Mixim the Garrulous – lost to the world, this herald supported Crescencia i Marusa's revolt in Montane.. However, Crescina's revolt was at odds with the Empire, which damaged Mazen's reputation with the Archmage of Autumn of the time. It is said Mazen punished the Herald in some way. Certainly Mixim was not heard of again. Destroyed, maybe?

### The Talking Mask and the Feeding Mask

Following the great conjunction of 378, these masks were created by Mazen in an attempt to communicate with their allies. The Talking Mask is a method by which missives can be delivered to Mazen; and The Feeding Mask is a method by which tribute can be sent – in much the same manner as the Winter ritual "Tribute to the Thrice

Cursed Court". I have had very little opportunity to attempt to use the Feeding Mask, but it passed through my hands briefly. Initial study suggests that it particularly likes Green Iron. (Also cake, for some reason.)

**Notes:** There's something distinctly odd here. Eternals don't, by their nature, have down-days. If Their Grand Majesties are imprisoned, there must be something in their fundamental nature which is to do with imprisonment or powerlessness. Perhaps, in the great hierarchy of Autumn, it is necessary for somebody to be on the bottom of the pile? There's also something interesting about their relationship with the Kade – there are a number of parallels that bear comparison. The unchanging nature of Eternals of Autumn leads me to believe that there is a fundamental link between the two Eternals somehow.

Moreover, they are rapidly growing tired of the Empire's promises – particularly promises that ring hollow. I know they are actively courting the Faraden and mages from the Asavean Archipelago – a faction in the Plenum known as The White Owl, who are seen as Cambion troublemakers. They are also being courted by the Thule dragon Orobus the Chained – which is deeply worrying. Orobus is also known to treat with Estavus the Forgemistress. Were it not for the fact that Their Grand Majesties have, until recently, seemed almost desperate to treat primarily with The Empire, I would be petitioning the Conclave for far swifter action on this matter. I believe we have The Thule on the run, however.

News that Mazen is supporting rogue mages from the Iron Confederacy cannot be substantiated, currently, but if true, they might be a possible weapon should we come to war with our close neighbours – should we manage to keep them on side.

Most worrying, however, is the news that Mazen is being actively petitioned by mages from The Grendel – either orc or Cambion. It is a known fact that The Asaveans and the Grendel have a burgeoning allegiance; and a concerted effort from the two of them might put an increasingly desperate Autumn Eternal straight in to the pockets of one of our fiercest enemies – I honestly believe that The Grendel are the greatest threat to currently face the Empire.

## The Lictors

**Sobriquets:** Most commonly, Lictors are referred to as The Punishers or The Hunters. They may also be known as The Chainbound, The Binders, the Brass Magistrates and occasionally The Furious Ones. In The League they are sometimes called The Reckoners. Individual lictors bear names such as 'Implacable', 'Inescapable', 'Traacherhound' and 'Wordbinder'.

**Appearance:** The Lictors are hooded figures and cloaked, armoured wrapped in heavy iron and green iron chains, with razor-sharp brass claws and horns, and iron face-masks. Armed with scourges, whips, flails, ropes and nets they stalk the dark places of the Autumn Realm, looking for miscreants. Their voices are said to be very quiet, except when they are pursuing their prey when they are said to give voice to deafening metallic cries that chill the blood and may even paralyse a weak-willed target.

**Concerns:** The Lictors hunt oath-breakers, and those who refuse to honour agreements, contracts or obligations. In the Autumn Realm they are viewed with some suspicion or fear, and even deadly political rivals think twice before breaking sworn agreements. They can be invoked, apparently, by any of the other Eternals of Autumn to officiate over agreements or oaths. Those who break such oaths are mercilessly hunted and either destroyed or carried back to the green iron citadel that the Lictors use as a prison. The Lictors are individually quite potent, but in a group they are almost irresistible, even by the powerful Eternal lords of Autumn. Some Eternals will simply invoke their name when making a promise, indicating that they consider themselves bound, although to what degree this is actually binding, mortals are uncertain.

Magicians who have studied the lictors disagree as to whether they are an order of Eternals, possibly lead by a single powerful figure, or some sort of product of the Autumn Realm itself, an expression of the role that agreements, favours and grudges play in a realm so thematically linked to deception and manipulation.

**Boons:** The Lictors are rarely encountered by mortals, but there are said to be rituals that can summon them to the Mortal Realm as well as chambers where they can be encountered, or where the outskirts of their green iron citadel can be visited. They can be persuaded to offer boons that deal with binding and holding prisoners, especially oathbreakers and those who have debts to pay. They can oversee mortal covenants, oaths, promises and contracts, placing powerful curses that may fall on those who break their agreements - or even calling down the ire of the Lictors themselves.

They may sometimes accept prisoners; how they transport a mortal prisoner to the Autumn Realm is unclear, and it may be that they simply kill them. They can also allow access to some of those creatures and beings imprisoned in

their citadel. They appear to value green iron especially, although they have never explained why and simply ignore questions - it is theorized that they may use it to expand their citadel, or even to craft new Lictors. They also very occasionally offer bounties - although what someone would have to do to come to the attention of the lictors is unclear and has lead to much nightmarish speculation.

### Known Names of the Lictors

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**Notes:** I firmly believe that much of what we know about the Lictors is wrong and I think we are ascribing to much in the way of anthropomorphic qualities to them. What we have encountered in the past are, no doubt, heralds perhaps - or even something more akin to Tulpas? Their citadel is a place, certainly, which can be found - I have seen it from a Chamber opened by one of the razor-clawed things that manifest to hunt. Certainly, we know that they take prisoners there. There are scattered notes that I have found that allude to somebody called "Antigoni Ankarien" - a prisoner of the Lictors, presumably Urizeni, given the name.