

Sorcerer's Symposium

OR

**A Simple yet Sophisticated Simulation of Strange Shenanigans
in a Setting of Spells, Strangers and Surreal Situations**

A Role-Playing Game by Ben Wright

SORCERER'S SYMPOSIUM

You, Gral-Braxis the Purulent, are cordially invited to attend Al-Kazzam's Symposium in Current Affairs in Magic, at Kazzam's Wonderful Flying Palace. You have been selected from the most notable and powerful mages in the world. You are asked to present a paper on the subject of 'Improving the Durability of Dead Tissue to Create Abominations of Superior Value in War'.

Food and board will be provided. For the duration of the Symposium you will have the opportunity to meet the finest magical minds in the world and you will also have unlimited access to Al-Kazzam's personal library of magical lore. Should you wish to attend, please present yourself at Kazzam's Wonderful Flying Palace on Midsummer's Day. The Palace will be found just off the coast of Lower Tremboline, north of the mouth of the Jafrassic River. Please enter the Palace through one of the arrival halls to avoid injury. You have also been timetabled to chair a panel discussion featuring representatives from the Holy Knights of Perfect Order and the Blessed Priests Militant of Lodax. The great Al-Kazzam looks forward to your attendance at this, the most respected of all magical conferences.

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Al-Kazzam". The letters are thick and expressive, with a crown-like flourish above the final "m".

SORCERER'S SYMPOSIUM

table of contents

The Mystery of Albert 'Kazzam' Talwar.....3	Magic Gone Wild.....35
The Symposium.....4	The Role of the Game Master.....36
Playing the Game.....5	More About the Palace.....37
Invitation.....5	General Layout.....37
Arrival.....6	Porters.....38
Unpacking.....6	Arrival Halls.....38
Opening Ceremony.....6	Attics.....38
Conference Sessions.....7	Cellars.....39
Mid-Conference Entertainment.....8	Dining Hall.....39
Keynote Address.....8	Dormitories.....39
Conference Dinner.....9	The Long Gallery.....39
Departure.....9	The Short Gallery.....39
Character Creation.....10	Great Hall.....40
1) The Basics.....10	Greater Hall.....40
2) Magical Tradition.....10	Greatest Hall.....40
3) Why You Attend.....12	Laboratories.....40
4) Your Enemy.....13	Lecture Theatres.....40
5) Abilities.....13	Library.....41
5a) Abilities: Magical Schools.....13	Orrery.....41
5b) Abilities: Other.....18	Quad.....41
Arcane Diagrams.....20	Sanatorium.....41
More on Magic.....25	Other Attractions.....41
The Scope of a School.....25	What can Go Wrong?.....42
The Power of Spells.....25	Spell Gone Bad.....42
How To Cast a Spell.....25	Open Hostility.....42
Other Useful Information.....26	Skulduggery.....42
How the Rules Work.....27	Just Plain Strange.....43
Making a Roll.....27	Bad Luck.....43
Character Against Character.....28	A Patsy is You.....43
Character Against the World.....29	Maelstrom.....43
Pushing Your Luck.....30	Repeat Customers.....44
The Outcome.....31	Example Characters.....45
Complicated Situations.....32	Apprentice Miranda Lesson.....45
Death and Beyond.....33	Runs With White Horses.....46
Risking Injury.....33	Wu Ra.....47
Taking Injuries.....33	End-Matter.....48
Recovery.....33	Timetable.....49
Death.....34	Blank Character Sheet.....50
Certain Death.....34	
Beyond Death.....34	

The Mystery of Albert 'Kazzam' Talwar

The legendary wizard, Albert Talwar (or Al-Kazzam, as he would introduce himself) was undeniably the most powerful sorcerer who ever lived- or is still living. No-one is sure if he ever actually died.

Facts about the man himself are few and far between. There are stories told all over the world about his incredible power and quick temper. Annoyingly, no two stories seem at all consistent with one another, and they always end with all tangible evidence being destroyed. Naturally, this makes it impossible to work out through patient study what parts of the stories are true, if any. Arcane means of discerning the truth are also useless. Mages attempting some form of divination about them typically suffer a month-long migraine and develop a burning desire to not try again.

In fact, Al-Kazzam might be considered a myth, were it not for one singular piece of evidence to attest to both his existence and his magical prowess.

'Kazzam's Wonderful Flying Palace', as it is called, is the size of a city and floats serenely a thousand feet off the ground. It has no visible means of suspension or locomotion. It travels around the world, seemingly at random, but it usually avoids looming over large conurbations.

Attempting to approach the palace, by any means, results in an instant and pyrotechnic death. Fortunately this is so fierce that birds are consumed entirely, but history records the fateful day an inquisitive dragon tried to investigate the palace and its smouldering carcass landing on the royal box at King Leggy XIII's annual joust, killing the entire royal family.

For one week a year, however, the doors of the Palace are metaphorically thrown open and it plays host to the annual Sorcerers' Symposium.

FUN FACT!

Whenever a person says 'Kazzam's Wonderful Flying Palace', anywhere in the world, it is immediately followed by a brief snatch of harp music.

SORCERER'S SYMPOSIUM

The Symposium

Every year, the mightiest wizards in the world are invited to a week-long Symposium at the Palace. Mightiest wizards in theory, anyway. In actual fact the delegates seem to be picked on a more-or-less random basis, although more famous mages seem to be favoured on the guest list. Each invitee will also be tasked with delivering an academic paper, participating in a panel discussion or some other scholarly activity. Directions to where the Palace will be for the first day are provided in the invitation.

The total attendance and its regional make up varies, but typically the Palace plays host to around 600 wizards from all over the world, plus assorted apprentices and familiars. The largest and most prestigious magical societies can have a presence of over a dozen wizards. For mages who spend the rest of the year in isolation, this may be the only time they ever encounter other sorcerers.

The Symposium attracts a mixed bag of delegates. Some revel in the pomp and ceremony, taking the opportunity to show off their power and opulence. Others attend with rather more trepidation, given its reputation for danger. Still others spend the entire week watching their colleagues with barely concealed contempt, there only for the opportunity to filch magical knowledge from other attendees.

There is a very solid myth amongst wizards that snubbing an invitation to the Symposium will result in a year's worth of terrible luck. Some even go so far as to say that bad luck will follow anyone who's presentation at the conference does not go well.

The Symposium itself is a week of grand dinners, stimulating discourse and cold-blooded murder.

On its final day, there is a desperate scramble to get out of the palace in case it suddenly becomes deadly ahead of schedule, which has been known to happen.

Once someone has attended the Symposium, they will be invited to ones in future years for as long as they live.



Playing the Game

To play this game, you need a bunch of friends, some paper and pencils, and some six-sided dice. There are blank character sheets you can photocopy if you like, but they're not essential. You shouldn't ever need more than 12 dice.

The first step is for each of the players (except the Game Master or 'GM') to create their sorcerer. Full rules for this are provided in their own section later on.

The GM then entertains the other players during the Symposium, taking the roles of any characters not played by other players. The GM sets scenes for players, and is the final arbitrator for resolving conflicts and moving between scenes. The game runs over the entire week of the Symposium, but concentrates only on the most interesting events. The first day is given over to letting the delegates arrive and unpack their belongings, and then the traditional opening ceremony in the Great Hall. The final day has no events scheduled, but the delegates are asked to leave in a timely manner.

Each game starts with three important scenes, which help set the mood for the Symposium and serve to introduce the characters to the GM and each other.

FUN FACT!

The terms 'sorcerer', 'wizard' and 'mage' are completely interchangeable, despite the great many attempts to codify them. However, calling someone by one when they prefer another is a great insult, worse than slapping someone with a glove.

Invitation

The GM describes what form this year's invitation takes. Previous invitations have included delicate flying paper birds that seek out the delegates and unfold into the invitations, magical spirits that deliver the letter by hand, and even personal appearances by one of the porters. The invitations are always written in a language that the receiver can understand, but not necessarily their mother tongue. In what are termed 'bad years', the invitations have taken the form of huge stone tablets dropped from a great height, an arcane voice shouting in the ear at extreme volume or the lettering appearing as indelible marks on invitees' bodies.

The GM should also let each player know what conference business they are expected to participate in. Each player should present a paper, participate in a panel discussion or debate, deliver a demonstration or attend a workshop. Lucky characters may be asked to do more than one. The invitation also says whether any apprentices are included- if a character has spent points on an apprentice, the invitation should include them. Each player should also have to chair one of the sessions during the week.

SORCERER'S SYMPOSIUM

Arrival

Each player can then describe the arrival of their character at the palace. There are many means of arrival, but they should all be at one of the 'Arrival Halls' which are the only parts of the palace safe to visit at first. The arrival halls consist of a balcony for flying mages to land on, a chamber where mages can teleport to, and a more mundane room where flying gondolas swoop down to pick up mages on the ground and bring them up to the Palace.

FUN FACT!

If a delegate doesn't wear their name badge, for whatever reason, every porter that encounters them will give them another. The porters can tell if a mage is wearing the wrong badge, and will silently provide them with the correct one. Naturally, wizards who refuse to wear one leave with a large collection of badges. Just leaving them lying around for anyone to use to impersonate you is not a wise move.

On arrival, the delegates will be greeted by one of the porters, who will give them their conference pack, a dormitory key, the Seal of the Palace and a smoked fish.

The dormitory key and the smoked fish are unremarkable.

The conference pack contains directions to the attendee's dormitory, a schedule for the conference and a name tag. The name tag can tell when someone is trying to read it and change language accordingly.

The Seal of the Palace is applied with a simple ink stamp to any bare flesh the delegate proffers to the porter. Once stamped, it is safe for the sorcerer to wander through any part of the Palace. The Seal remains in force even if the ink is rubbed off.

Unpacking

All the players happen to share the same dormitory. When they find their way to the room, they can introduce themselves to each other and unpack their belongings. The dormitories vary greatly in size and quality, independent of the actual number of beds in them. The better rooms have en suite facilities. If any character has an apprentice or familiar, there are also appropriate accommodation for them in the dormitory. There is no guarantee that a dormitory will have single-gender occupancy.

FUN FACT!

Although the doors to the dormitories are proof against any attempt to force them without the proper key and the walls are highly resistant to magic, there are no such protections in place on the windows. The keys can also be lost, be stolen or become sentient.

Opening Ceremony

The first proper event of the conference is the opening ceremony, held in the Great Hall. One of the most well-known delegates is called upon to deliver an opening speech twenty minutes long. Although intolerably dull, enduring the speech is rewarded by the second-best meal of the conference. For this reason, the hall is usually at capacity. Players are free to attend or not. If they do, they usually encounter their Enemy at least once during the meal. If they choose not to attend,

SORCERER'S SYMPOSIUM

they are free to wander the Palace where they will encounter their Enemy in less safe circumstances. If they choose to stay in their room and be boring, the GM will give them a pitying look.

Conference Sessions

The main five days of the conference are mostly given over to conference sessions. In each conference room there is a morning session and an afternoon session. If a character has nothing scheduled for that half of the day, they are free to attend one they find interesting (they can suggest titles to the GM if they like) or just wander the Palace. Dormitory-mates who get on well may attend each others presentations out of solidarity and (if necessary) to provide back-up firepower. Each conference session has a number of different events running simultaneously in different rooms. This allows the delegates to choose a room with something of particular interest to them.

The GM will work out which session of which day each player's presentation falls on, and which session they are supposed to chair. This is normally done to avoid any two players having different commitments at the same time, so if the players wish to spend the conference as a group they may do so. A time-table, with the sessions the character is supposed to participate in already indicated, is included in each conference pack. There is also a full list of all the conference events on a rather large scroll.

There are five main types of session.

Presentations

A session of presentations consists of 6 half-hour talks. Each talk is presented by a different delegate (assuming the scheduled delegate accepted the invitation to the Symposium and has bothered turning up to the session). Each talk lasts for 25 minutes, followed by 5 minutes of questions from the audience. Presentations are conducted in lecture theatres. Some mages use fancy tricks to provide visual aids for their talk, such as casting a spell to make colourful shapes in the air, but many others fall back on the humble blackboard and chalk or simply don't bother with any embellishment of that kind.

Panel Discussions

Panel discussions last nearly the full 3 hours, and have a panel of experts on a given topic who are tasked with talking about it entertainingly at length. Questions and comments are invited from the audience. The goal of a panel discussion is to further the understanding of both the audience and the panel members, and definitely not to provide a means for the panellists to slate rivals that aren't there to defend themselves. These sessions usually take place in lecture theatres, too.

Debates

A debate is rather like a panel discussion, except that there are two opposing viewpoints on the topic and the panel argue about it for three hours. Sometimes, the chair of the session will ask the audience which view they subscribe to at the outset by a show of hands, then ask again at the end to see if, against the odds, the debate has made any difference at all. Given the famously volatile nature of wizards, arcane violence usually breaks out. Often the

SORCERER'S SYMPOSIUM

session is ended early with a simple notice on the door- 'Smoking Boots'. Other times, the argument avoid violence but runs dramatically over time, throwing the timetable into disarray.

Practical Demonstrations

A practical demonstration needs a laboratory, and they are often put in labs with tiered seating so the audience can see better. A single delegate will demonstrate one particular advanced technique of magic to astounded (and perhaps terrified) on-lookers. There is usually an explanation beforehand, and time for questions afterwards. The casting of the spell itself may only take a few seconds, or can take up most of the three hours. Many of the spells demonstrated represent years of research, and can have a magnitude of effect far greater than other spells manage. In game terms, the preparation and ritual may increase the ability of the demonstrator far beyond what is normally allowed for a character.

FUN FACT!

There are no safeguards anywhere in the Palace to prevent magical energies from spiralling out of control and causing mayhem.

Workshops

A workshop is similar to a practical demonstration, but in this case those attending the session are split into groups and each group has to copy the magic the instructor is performing as a learning exercise. While such sessions provide the best opportunity to improve magical skills, they are also the most likely to get badly out of control. The spell may be much weaker, but a number of the novices attempting to cast it may be attempting something far beyond their skill.

Chairing

All the discussion-based sessions require someone to chair them, making sure they run to time and asking questions if no-one else present does so.

Mis~Conference Entertainment

There is no afternoon session on the middle day of the conference. Instead, there is 'entertainment', provided by the Palace. This varies from year to year, both in content and in quality. One year the entire Palace teleported itself to a remote tropical paradise island and some delegates were very surprised when it returned to its original location without them. Another year there was a display of fireworks so intense that no-one left with their retinas intact. Usually, though, it's just another dull, four-hour, epic opera performed by the porters. Attendance at the entertainment is not compulsory, and many wizards choose to spend the afternoon relaxing or pursuing their own agendas. Players can freely choose to do either, or may take the opportunity to split up and spend some time away from their dormitory buddies.

Keynote Address

On the penultimate day of the conference, there is an evening speech by a specially selected speaker who delivers an address summing up the state of magic that year in the Greater

SORCERER'S SYMPOSIUM

Hall. In practice, sorcerers are so insular and mired in local politics that no keynote speaker ever knows much about the global situation. Instead the speaker traditionally delivers a polemic against anyone they feel has stood in their way over the last year, talks up their own accomplishments and tells bafflingly irrelevant anecdotes. The one saving grace of this self-indulgent and shameful display is that it is mercifully short, followed as it is by the-

Conference Dinner

-which for many is the highlight of the Symposium. In particular, impatient wizards have been known to kill the keynote speaker if they are taking too long to wind up their speech. The Conference Dinner is also held in the Greater Hall, with seating for all the delegates. The courses are nearly beyond counting. The dinner only stops being served at noon the next day, and there are wizards who have the gastronomic endurance to reach that horizon. Others retreat to their dormitory to sleep it off, then return in the morning when they get their second wind. The quality of the food is considered to be among the best available anywhere in the world. The dishes themselves are culled from the cuisine of dozen different cultures, so everyone finds something they are familiar with. Extinct animals are also served sometimes, to general delight. This is also the only meal during the conference at which alcohol is available.

FUN FACT!

The lack of available alcohol during the conference leads some sorcerers to bring their own. This does not go well for them if they get into an argument with a Fire Mage. Others embark on expeditions to find where the booze is stored before the conference dinner. Some are even seen again.

Departure

From the early afternoon of the final day, the delegates will begin to depart. They leave from the Arrival Halls, usually by the same means they arrived (unless their magic carpet was stolen or lost during the conference). On the dot of 6pm- all being well- there will be no-one left in the Palace except the porters. It is at that time that the usual protections of the Palace are raised again, and any remaining Seals of the Palace expire. Of course, there is nothing to stop delegates simply taking off from wherever they want, or teleporting straight home from their dormitories. But many wizards wish to make as grand an exit as they did an entrance.

Character Creation

Each player apart from the GM will need to create a character for themselves by going through the following steps. They don't have to be done in any particular order, and it can

FUN FACT!

The survival rate for 'first-timers' to the Symposium is around 3 in 4.

be useful to read through all your choices before setting anything in stone. There is not requirement for players to generate characters as a group, although they can do so if they want their characters to know one another from the outset.

1) The Basics

Name

Every character needs a name. For a wizard, this is particularly important as a great deal of the respect they receive comes from what titles they can claim. Some magical traditions have a codified system of titles with appropriately brutal punishments for claiming one you're not entitled to. Most don't have such rules, but wizards often take a descriptor with their name- as in 'Silla the Black' or 'Rorthron the Wise'.

Gender

The world at large may be regrettably sexist, but the world of magic is somewhat better off. However, some cultures have strict rules as to who is allowed to practise magic- unmarried women, celibate men, eunuchs and so on. Encountering sorcerers from countries with different restrictions (or none at all) can be a potent dose of culture shock.

Appearance

Although the appearance of a character has little or no bearing on the game, it can be a good short-hand for expressing key facets of the character quickly. Stating that your character is wearing a close-fitting shift of leaf green and a delicate silver tiara and leaning on a gnarled oak staff says a lot about their connection to nature and what their likely magical abilities will be. You can also reference films or books to conjure an entire picture to mind economically. If you describe the character as looking like a Hong Kong cinema wandering scholar or an Unseen University wizard, anyone familiar with the source will already have a complete picture in mind.

2) Magical Tradition

There are several different ways magic is practised around the world. Each character will belong to one particular tradition, having learned the craft in that field. Some traditions are more prevalent in some parts of the world than others, but all can be invited to the Symposium. This list should provide some inspiration for the kind of magic the character works, and what is involved in casting a spell.

SORCERER'S SYMPOSIUM

Academic

In parts of the world that like to think of themselves as being more civilised, the study of magic is conducted in centres of learning. Education in the arcane arts is through a series of examinations on both theory and practice, with titles awarded based on progression through them. Colleges exist that specialise in particular schools of magic, and new discoveries are generally shared freely with other practitioners in order to advance the discoverer's reputation, and this influence. A well-respected wizard may have up to a dozen apprentices at one time, and wizards from this tradition often claim that the existence of the Symposium is evidence that Al-Kazzam followed their pattern. The academic tradition often uses lengthy lists of magic words and elaborate gestures as the primary means of casting spells.

Altruistic

The wizardly altruist is possibly the rarest tradition in the world. They are typically travellers, with a knowledge of many different schools. Humble and trusting, they only wield their power to put corrupt rulers in their place or prevent evil sorcerers from running rampant. They usually only take on one apprentice in their life-time, usually for an exceptionally long tutelage. The apprentice only usually becomes a wizard in their own right after their former master has died of arrow poisoning. The greater community of wizards often refers to Altruistic wizards by their other designation: 'suckers'. Altruistic mages generally cast spells by folding their arms and looking smug.

Cultic

Mystery cults, such as druids, are wide-spread and dangerous. They pursue arcane knowledge solely for the benefit of the cult itself, and guard their knowledge jealously. Cultic wizards will never willingly reveal any of their secrets, but do take a keen interest in the Symposium to be on the look-out for anyone outside the cult with information about their rites. This is usually in order to kill them so the knowledge stays secret. Progress in a cult is slow, and mostly through time served rather than any actual talent for magic. Spell casting is heavy on chanting with body parts as ingredients.

Imperial

Some wizards believe that their arcane power is a tool to be used to give them political power and influence. These 'Imperial' wizards are typically self-serving and mercenary. There are at least three major countries run almost entirely by wizards, but they seldom have much opportunity to engage in empire-building due to all the in-fighting and assassination that goes on. Ambitious mages have more success when they install themselves as the power behind the throne. The Ardent Empire is the most well-known, although the Emperor is far from a puppet. A master will take on many apprentices and teach them only the secrets they need to be effective servants. There is little co-operation between wizards, but plenty of espionage with regards to magical treatises and theory. Imperial spell casters generally use exotic and peculiar ingredients (kept hidden in their hands at all times, of course).

SORCERER'S SYMPOSIUM

Shamanic

The Shamanic tradition usually goes hand in hand with magic based around nature or natural forces. A shaman generally eschews large population centres and instead spend most of their time in the wilderness. Some shamans act as guardians of nature, whereas others merely seek out its solitude. Most shamans will, at one point in their lifetime, take on an apprentice and teach them all they know to carry on after them. They also usually have familiars. Ordinary people will rarely encounter a shaman, although they often come to the aid of rural communities in times of disaster or fear. Shamanic magic makes heavy use of plant ingredients and rhythmic motion.

Spiritual

Religion and magic have much in common. Both are poorly understood by the general population, and both are said to be able to work wonders. Some wizards approach magic solely from a spiritual basis. For most, their magic is a gift from the object of their worship. For others, performing magic is itself a form of devotion. In either case, they take a very dim view of magic outside their spheres of knowledge- considering it heretical. Some spiritual wizards are part of a holy order assembled to combat some great danger. These include necromancy, demons and people who leave the sermon early. Spiritual spell casters often sing short paeans and focus their magic through a holy relic or icon.

Philosophical

Esoteric orders that emphasise discipline and self-improvement often spill over into magical ability. When quizzed, such adherents do not acknowledge any fundamental difference between breathing exercises and setting people on fire with the mind. These mages are often compelled to follow some opaque code of behaviour that makes little sense to anyone else. It is easy to tell when you are dealing with a philosophical wizard- ask them a simple question and count the non-sequiturs in the reply. The primary means of spell casting looks a little like callisthenics, or hurried writing on specially-prepared pieces of paper.

3) Why You Attend

The reason for your character wishing to attend the Symposium is an important facet of their character, and can reveal a great deal about them and their attitude to the world at large. Some suggestions are given below.

Fear of the Curse - You don't want a year of bad luck. If only you can get through the week intact, everything should be fine.

You Have No Choice - Your order wants you to go. If you don't they'll black ball you. This may involve killing or torture, depending on your affiliation.

Career Enhancement - This invitation gives you a golden opportunity to get one over on your rivals. You may have access to more magical knowledge while there, and get valuable 'face time' with your superiors.

For the Cachet - You love to swank. And for wizards, it doesn't get any swankier.

SORCERER'S SYMPOSIUM

To Settle Old Scores - You know who is going to be there. When else will you get a crack at putting them in their place once and for all?

To Loot the Place - The most magical location in the world, and hundreds of wizards will be bringing their own magical accoutrements with them? Score!

You have No Idea what You're getting into - You've never heard of this Al-Kazzam fellow, but his Symposium sounds delightful.

4) Your Enemy

You cannot be a wizard without making enemies along the way. They may be rivals in magical power, people you have betrayed or left behind, or even organisations utterly opposed to whatever school of magic you practise. For the purposes of the game, you need to define an Enemy that meets two requirements:

- They must hate you and wish you ill.
- They must have a presence in the Palace.

The obvious choice is to have a wizard, or organisation of wizards, that dislike you. You can have an enemy that is not invited to the Symposium as long as this enemy has an agent that is going to be there. For example, if the Kingdom of Kirkgard has declared you a traitor, it may send a court wizard to the Symposium with orders to eliminate you.

You should write on your character sheet the name of your Enemy and the reason they are your enemy. You will almost certainly encounter them during the Symposium.

5) Abilities

Each character has 10 points to spend on abilities. It is highly recommended that characters emphasise magical abilities in order to improve their chances of survival.

5a) Abilities: Magical Schools

Magical abilities have very broad definitions. These abilities include the practical use of that form of magic (generally referred to as 'casting spells') but also knowledge of it. A character can spend points in as many different schools as they wish.

Each school can also be strong or weak against other schools. The effect of this is described later, but the weakness can be 'bought off' in one of two ways. The first is for the wizard to also spend at least one point on the school against which they are weak. The second is to become an Exemplar (described in the next section). Some weaknesses may seem strange, but rely on the circumstances in which two schools may be in opposition. For example if two mages are in competition, one casting a spell using Long-Speaking and the other using Teleportation magic, then everything else being equal the former has an advantage as Long-Speaking spells are marginally quicker to cast. Some weaknesses are just strange, with no readily apparent explanation.

Magical schools are often grouped into informal categories, depending on local interpretations of their role and significance. One widely-used pragmatic categorisation is used here. Descriptions are given only where the definition of the school is not obvious.

The maximum number of points that can be spent on any single school of magic is 5.

SORCERER'S SYMPOSIUM

Elemental

Elemental magic centres around the conjuration and manipulation of one of the five elements. Or four elements, or possibly six. The fact is, different parts of the world have different ideas as to what are elements and what are not. Where two traditions meet, arguments abound.

Aetheric Magic

The negation of elemental magic, composed of utter nothingness. Also used as a generic 'anti-magic' in some traditions.

Weak against: Air Magic, Earth Magic, Fire Magic, Steel Magic, Water Magic, Wood Magic.

Strong against: Quintessential Magic.

Air Magic

Air magic includes lightning.

Weak against: Fire Magic, Quintessential Magic.

Strong against: Aetheric Magic, Earth Magic.

Earth Magic

Weak against: Air Magic, Metal Magic, Quintessential Magic.

Strong against: Aetheric Magic, Ice Magic, Water Magic.

Fire Magic

Weak against: Ice Magic, Quintessential Magic, Water Magic.

Strong against: Aetheric Magic, Air Magic, Steel Magic

Ice Magic

Weak against: Earth Magic, Quintessential Magic.

Strong against: Aetheric Magic, Fire Magic.

Quintessential Magic

Elemental magic in its purest form, representing a combination of all subsidiary elements that is more than the sum of its parts. It burns, stings and rumbles all at the same time.

Weak against: Aetheric Magic.

Strong against: Alchemy, Air Magic, Earth Magic, Fire Magic, Steel Magic, Water Magic, Wood Magic.

Steel Magic

Although called 'steel magic' it applies equally well to any metal.

Weak against: Fire Magic, Quintessential Magic.

Strong against: Aetheric Magic, Wood Magic.

Water Magic

Weak against: Earth Magic, Quintessential Magic.

Strong against: Aetheric Magic, Fire Magic.

Wood Magic

Living or dead plant matter can be created or controlled- unless it has become part of an animal or mineral.

Weak against: Insect Control, Metal Magic, Quintessential Magic.

Strong against: Aetheric Magic, Earth Magic.

SORCERER'S SYMPOSIUM

Control

Control magics centre around the movement, summoning and control of physical objects or creatures. Sometimes these things can be summoned from nothing, but the more ordinary ones must be present, or spend time arriving from wherever they may be found normally. Where these schools summon a single creature, it can perform tasks as if it had dice equal to the magical ability that summoned it. Where it summons a swarm or collection of creatures, they act as if they were a single creature of the same strength.

Animal Control

Up to and including elephants.

Weak against: Insect Control, Puppetry.

Strong against: Bird Control, Fish Control.

Bird Control

If you think this seems weak, go and look up the word 'roc'.

Weak against: Animal Control, Transformation.

Strong against: Fish Control, Insect Control.

Demonology

Unlike most other control magic, demons do not exist in the world except where summoned by demonology. True to their stereotype, they will wheedle and tempt anyone who summons them. Although they are strong and nearly impossible to kill, it is possible to disperse their energy and send them back where they came from. They also fight for their master in a rather lacklustre fashion, making them no more powerful than any other controlled creature.

Weak against: Aetheric Magic, Mindreading.

Strong against: Illusion, Necromancy.

Fish Control

Don't laugh. Sharks have lots of teeth and can crop up in all sorts of unexpected places.

Weak against: Animal Control, Bird Control.

Strong against: Divination, Insect Control.

Illusion

Illusion magic controls the sensory input of a living creature. Demons, being deceitful by nature, are less prone to it.

Weak against: Demonology, Scrying.

Strong against: Mindreading, Self Control.

Insect Control

Gives a whole new meaning to the word 'infestation'.

Weak against: Bird Control, Fish Control.

Strong against: Animal Control, Wood Magic.

Necromancy

The act of placing simple, constructed souls into corpses. It's not pleasant, but it can be powerful.

Weak against: Demonology, Healing.

Strong against: Decay, Puppetry.

FUN FACT!

Some observers have wondered why, if the Seal of the Palace is required to avoid the normal defences of the Palace killing a person or animal, that creatures summoned to or into the Palace do not appear to need it. This is a very good question.

SORCERER'S SYMPOSIUM

Puppetry

People cannot be controlled or summoned entirely. However, it is possible to take control of a persons' limbs using magic. They still have control of their voice and head, but the rest of their body can be worked like a marionette.

Weak against: Necromancy, Self Control.

Strong against: Animal Control, Magnetism.

Self Control

Self control is odd in that it affects nothing except the caster's body. This includes changing the properties of the body to make it, for example, innately able to fly or tough enough to turn sword blades aside. Any such changes are temporary.

Weak against: Kinetic Force, Illusion.

Strong against: Empathy, Puppetry, Transformation.

Change

Change magic is a rather loose grouping of magic centred around turning something into something else.

Alchemy

At its base level, alchemy is turning one substance into another. Apart from turning lead into gold, it can also turn a staircase into soft cheese.

Weak against: Decay, Quintessential Magic.

Strong against: Dowsing, Transformation.

Decay

Weak against: Healing, Necromancy.

Strong against: Alchemy, Growth.

Growth

This covers both the process of growth, and the manipulation of the size of an object.

Weak against: Decay, Transformation.

Strong against: Healing.

Healing

Weak against: Empathy, Growth.

Strong against: Decay, Necromancy.

Transformation

This magic turns one living creature into another living creature. The intended target need not be a living thing that would exist naturally.

Weak against: Alchemy, Self Control.

Strong against: Bird Control, Growth.

Perception

All of these magical school extend the mage's senses in some way when a spell is cast.

Divination

Despite the word's origins, divination is entirely concerned with finding out about events in the past.

Weak against: Fish Control, Scrying

Strong against: Temporal Magic.

SORCERER'S SYMPOSIUM

Dowsing

Dowsing is the very simple magic of locating an object.

Weak against: Alchemy.

Strong against: Scrying, Teleportation.

Empathy

Empathy spells allows you to either read the current emotion of a person, or plant a particular emotion in an individual.

Weak against: Self Control.

Strong against: Healing, Mindreading.

Mindreading

This only works on people- animals are not smart enough to read. Demons and animated corpses have no mind in the usual sense, and can't be read either.

Weak against: Empathy, Illusion.

Strong against: Long-Speaking, Prophecy.

Scrying

Scrying is the art of seeing what is happening now, but some distance away.

Weak against: Dowsing, Prophecy.

Strong against: Divination. Illusion.

Prophecy

Prophecy is only concerned with finding out about the future. However, it only gives the current 'likeliest outcome', which may change immediately after the spell has been cast in light of the new knowledge gained.

Weak against: Mindreading, Temporal Magic.

Strong against: Scrying.



Long Disciplines

These three oddball schools all involve moving something to somewhere, well, distant.

Teleportation

To teleport to a place, the mage must be able to see the destination, or be passably familiar with it.

Weak against: Dowsing, Long-Speaking.

Strong against: Kinetic Forces.

FUN FACT!

Teleportation magic prevents solid matter from overlapping in any way. Should a spell try to place its cargo somewhere where there is already a solid object, the spell will put the payload as close to the target point as it can, like in snooker.

SORCERER'S SYMPOSIUM

Long-Speaking

Sending messages, of any form, over long distances.

Weak against: Mindreading.

Strong against: Teleportation.

Temporal Magic

Manipulation of time does not currently include the ability to visit the past or future, just alter the speed at which it precesses.

Weak against: Divination.

Strong against: Prophecy.

Forces

Also known as the 'schools left over'.

Kinetic Force

The manipulation of pure kinetic force can throw objects or break open doors.

Weak against: Magnetism, Teleportation.

Strong against: Self Control.

Magnetism

Control of magnetic force does not extends to manipulating metal objects finely, it only deals with attracting them to a certain point.

Weak against: Puppetry

Strong against: Kinetic Force, Steel Magic.

5b) Abilities: Other

There are also many abilities mages can have which are not magical schools, although many of them are related to them and may even offer a boost to the wizard's effective spell-casting ability. Many of these skills can have more details associated with them.

Apprentice (cost: 1)

An apprentice is a junior wizard being taught by the character. Apprentices are sometimes included in the invitations to the Symposium. An apprentice has three points to spend on magical schools, but cannot be the equal or better of his teacher. Apprentices are often used as manual labour by wizards, and can be sent on errands during the symposium. They are not always reliable or loyal. The apprentice should be given a name and some magical schools.

FUN FACT!

Some wizards treat the Symposium as a kind of swap meet, exchanging their minor artefacts for ones of another school. Caveat Emptor has never been truer than when the merchandise might try to eat your face.

Minor Artefact - own discipline (cost: 1)

A mage can create an artefact that can call forth arcane power on command. This artefact can only do a single particular task, such as shoot a gout of flame or fly through the air. The power of the artefact is equal to the maker's skill in the relevant school minus 1. Anyone can use the artefact, as long as they can work out how to trigger it. Popular triggers are command words and buttons.

SORCERER'S SYMPOSIUM

Minor Artefact - not own discipline (cost: 1-3)

A mage can also obtain an artefact made by another wizard. It may be on loan, or be the possession of the wielding character. The power of such an artefact is equal to its cost plus 1. The maximum power a minor artefact can have is 4.

Major Artefact (cost: 1)

A major artefact represents a significant expenditure of resources by a wizard. Unlike a minor artefact, a major artefact can only be used by someone with at least one point in the relevant magical school. It still has only one basic use, like a minor artefact, but the user gets a 1 point bonus to their magic when using it.

Exemplar (cost: 2)

An exemplar embodies one particular form of magic. You may only have points in one school of magic if you wish to be an exemplar. You lose any weaknesses of your school of magic, and develop an obvious physical deformity closely related to your school. Exemplars of necromancy, for example, resemble corpses. Exemplars also gain a 1 point bonus whenever they cast spells (note that this stacks with a major artefact bonus, but doesn't allow the character's apprentices or minor artefacts to be any more powerful). The Exemplar should have a description as to how their appearance is changed by the ability.

Familiar (cost: 1-3)

A familiar is an animal or magical beast bound to you by magic. It will do your bidding without question, and is completely trustworthy. A basic familiar costs 1 point. For an extra point, the familiar can communicate with speech (or something equivalent to speech). For an extra point the familiar has 2 points in a school of magic the wizard knows. Familiars also have a General Competence ability of 1. Each familiar should be given a name, and what type of animal it is described. Mythical beasts are, of course, allowed.

General Competence (cost: 1-3)

Unlike many of your brethren, you have learned skills other than magic. This covers anything not related to magic, such as fighting or sneaking about. This can be qualified with a description of any particularly noteworthy areas of competence. These make no difference to the character's ability, but help flesh them out more.

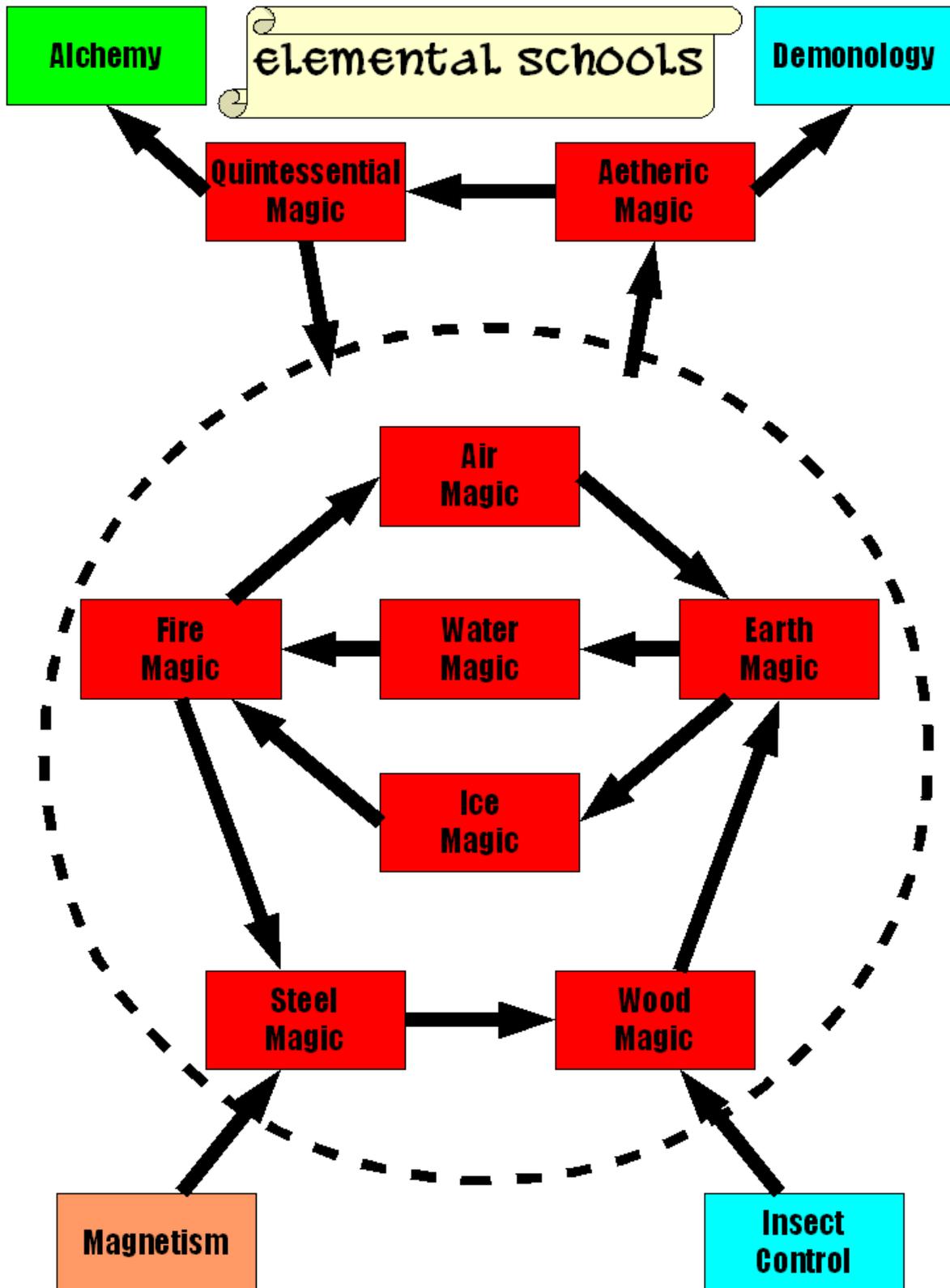
Grimoire (cost: 2)

There exist books of magic of such awesome power that wars have been fought over them. They are, however, dangerously sentient. When a character reads such a tome while casting a spell, they gain a 1 point bonus to their ability. However, a wizard using a Grimoire has a greater than usual chance of having their spell escape their control. Grimoires should be given a suitably sinister name.

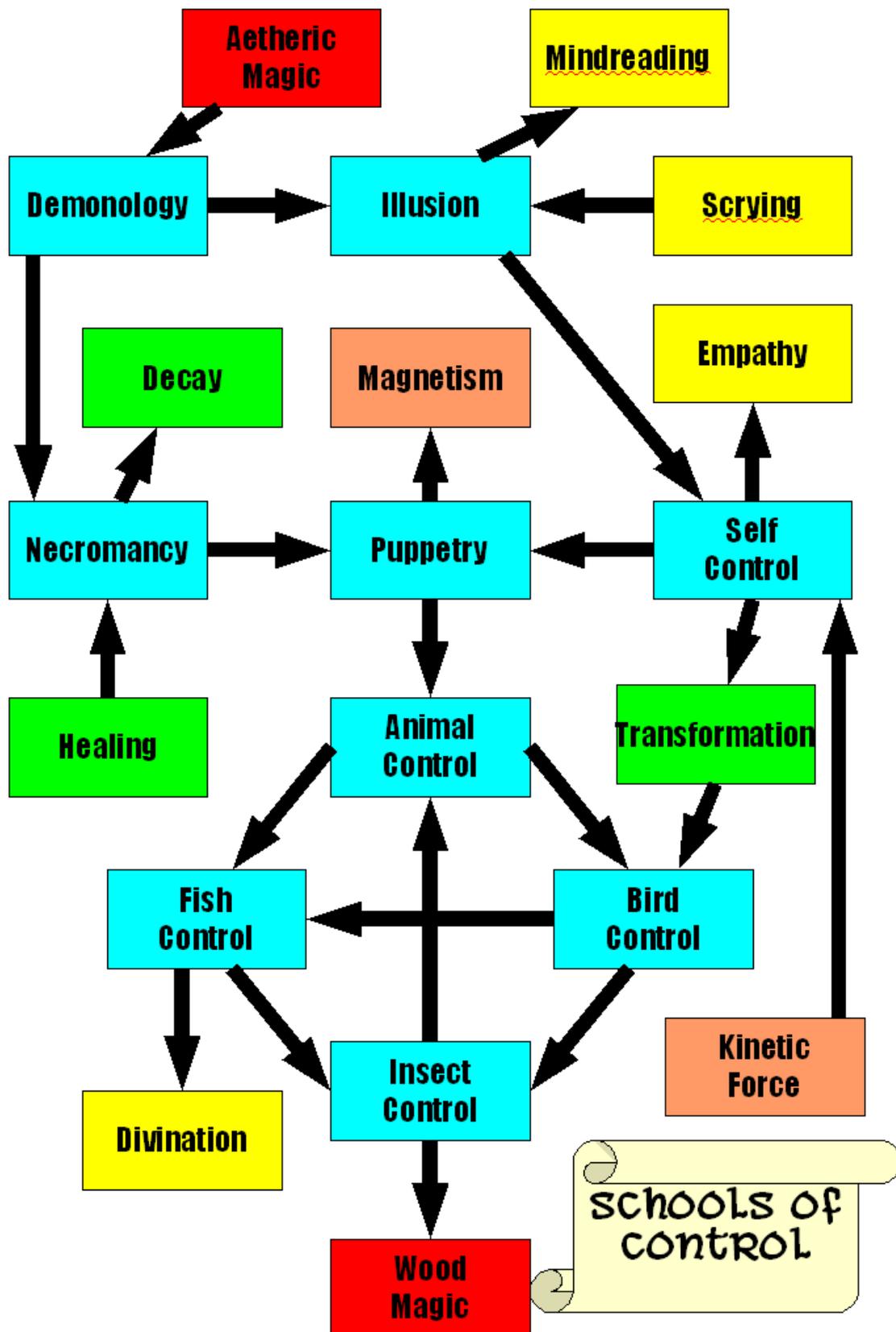
Polymath (cost: 5)

A polymath is someone learned in many different schools. When you take this ability, pick 10 schools you currently have no points in and gain one point of knowledge in each. Points gained this way do not stack with any points you spend on magical schools normally. You cannot be both an Exemplar and a Polymath.

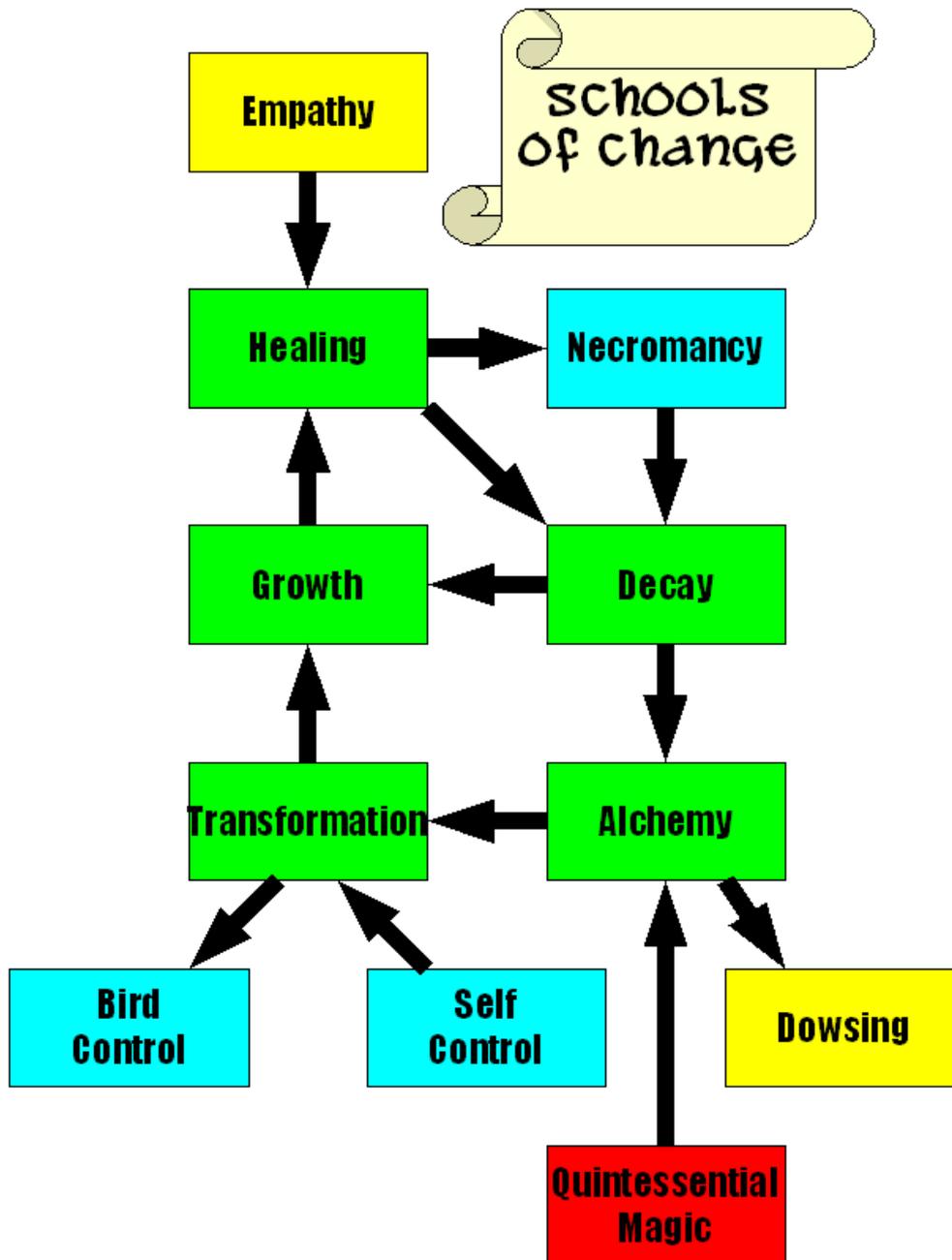
SORCERER'S SYMPOSIUM



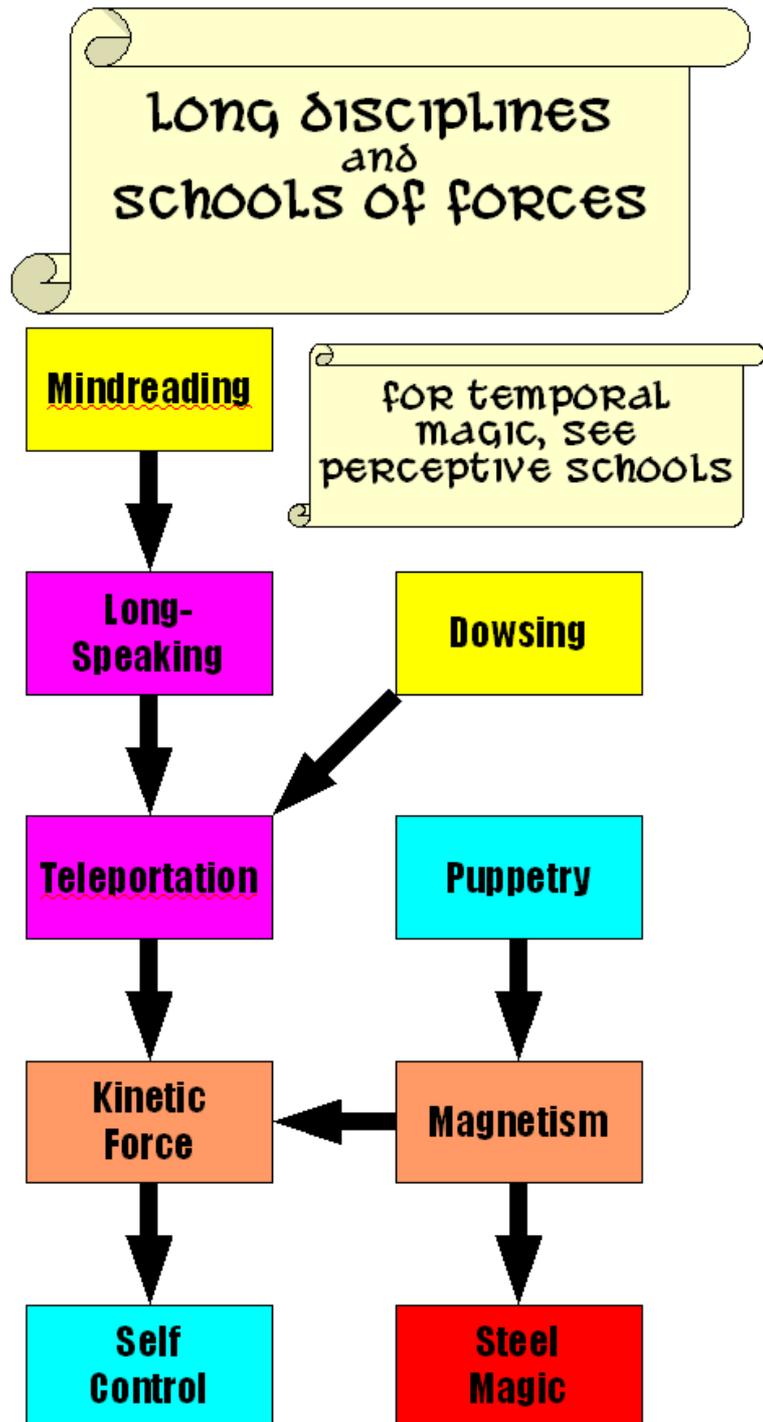
SORCERER'S SYMPOSIUM



SORCERER'S SYMPOSIUM



SORCERER'S SYMPOSIUM



More on Magic

The Scope of a School

If a character wants to cast a spell to achieve a particular goal, it can be attempted if it seems plausible that the school can be applied. As a rule of thumb, if no other school can make a better claim to a particular magical working, it should be allowed. There are a large number of magical schools. For most magical schools, a spell can only be cast to have an effect somewhere the wizard can see. The most obvious exception is the school of Scrying. Teleportation magic is partially subject to this limit- being restricted to locations the sorcerer can see or locations they can place very precisely from memory or description. The GM has final say on what spells need line of sight, but the rule of thumb is that magic needs to be done up close and personal most of the time. This is not just to limit it arbitrarily; it also prevents magical feuds from becoming boring because the participants are in very different places and don't get to shout at one another.

The Power of Spells

The next section deals with how to adjudicate the effect of spells after rolling the dice, but it is also useful to have a guide for the general power level that mages have. The baseline is that 1 point spent in a school of magic allows the character to create or affect something half the size of a person. This size can be made bigger if the wizard is prepared to sacrifice some intensity. The magic can be made more fierce if the wizard makes the spell smaller. A ball of fire this size behaves more-or-less exactly as you would expect a ball of ordinary fire to do. If the wizard wants to do complicated things with the magic, such as shaping its effect in a clever way, then this makes the magic smaller or less intense.

For each point beyond the first a character spends, this starting size for a magical effect doubles. So, a character with the maximum 5 points in Fire Magic can create a ball of fire the size of 8 men. Alternatively, they could create 16 much smaller balls each of which would chase after one person (the size being enough for 32, but the complexity halving that number).

All of these adjustments are just intended to guide the players, and the GM should make greater allowance for particularly entertaining spells and be much stricter for rather boring spells.

How to Cast a Spell

The casting of a spell can be a very personal thing for a wizard. Depending on the tradition, there may be a number of facets to casting a spell, wild gestures, fanciful and rare ingredients, and Words of Power. These all function as a kind of spellcasting assistance, making it easier for the mage to cast the spell and leaving them less fatigued afterwards. However, none of these elements are strictly necessary. Even if you gag a mage and deprive them of their staff and spell components, they can still encase you in a block of ice if they really need to.

SORCERER'S SYMPOSIUM

From the perspective of the game, this avoids the tedium of tracking bits and bobs of ingredients and eliminates cheap tactics to deprive wizards of their mojo. It also means that characters can describe complicated spellcasting rituals and other entertaining bits of detail without putting their character at a disadvantage.

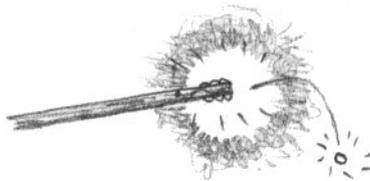
There are much more powerful spells that can be cast, but these require months of careful preparation and the various rituals and ingredients are essential in this case. These are typically the culmination of years of work for the wizard casting them. A wizard may intend to cast one during the Symposium, but most sorcerers would consider the Palace too risky a venue to attempt something that important.

Other Useful Information

There is no school of magic that directly interferes with another person's mind. This is because depriving the players of any control over their characters is frustrating. You can achieve very similar effects, however, by using Illusion or Puppetry. In both of these cases, however, the target still retains some control of themselves.

Weaknesses and strengths have been touched on earlier.

The last important bit of information is that magic can get wildly out of control, become 'wild magic' that is a mortal danger to anyone in the vicinity. The exact effects of this are discussed later.



How the Rules Work

Most of what goes on in the game is narration by the GM or one of the other players. Where there is uncertainty, because a character is attempting a risky action or duelling with another character, then dice are used to arbitrate the outcome. Some interpretation of what actually happens is still required, and generally falls to the GM unless another player has a really good idea. The dice used in this game are ordinary, six-sided dice.

Making a Roll

When a character want to perform an action using one of the abilities, be it a school of magic or otherwise, a roll may not even be required. Rolls should only be made when doubt about the outcome of the task makes the situation tense or interesting. Where a character is pitting magical skill against another character, or attempting a particularly difficult task, then a roll should be made.

Before the dice are rolled, the character should say what they are trying to accomplish- this should be some specific resolution to the scene, or some part of the scene. If the player wants this action to have some specific effect (such as injuring another character, or allowing them to escape), this should be mentioned as part of the description.

To make a roll, the character rolls a number of six-sided dice equal to the ability they are bringing into play. Magical abilities can be used not just to cast spells, but to demonstrate knowledge of the field, recognise a magical effect or identify the wizard who cast a particular spell. Some abilities may add extra dice to the usual total- such as Major Artefact and Exemplar.

The character rolls the dice for their ability, then removes duplicates such that there is at most one die left for each number. These remaining dice are then added up to give the character's Roll Total.

Grand Magus Crumhorn is casting a spell with elemental fire so he can see his way to the lavatory. He had 4 points in Fire Magic, and so rolls 4 dice. He rolls 2, 3, 3 and 5. One of the 3s is discarded, and his Roll Total is 10.

Rolling With No Skill

If a character has no appropriate skill- such as a wizard with no General Competence attempting a physical task, a special rule is followed. The character rolls 2 dice but discards the higher one. The remaining die is the character's Roll Total.

Grand Magus Crumhorn is now fleeing down the corridor from a torrent of water. He is too flustered to try casting a spell, and attempts to stay afloat when it crashes around him. He has no General Competence skill. He rolls 2 dice and gets a 3 and a 5. He therefore keeps the 3.

SORCERER'S SYMPOSIUM

Magical Strengths and Weaknesses

If a character is casting a spell against something or someone that their magic is strong against, as per the strengths and weakness of magical schools, then the character rolls an extra die on top of what they would normally roll. Remember that a weakness can be bought off for a specific character.

Grand Magus Crumhorn has found the wizard responsible for the tsunami of water, and wants to teach the culprit a fiery lesson. His target also goes on the offensive, using Air Magic. Fire Magic is strong against Air Magic, and the Air Mage has not bought off this weakness, so Crumhorn rolls 5 dice.

Counterspells

Sometimes, all a wizard wants to do is stop an enemy from casting their spell. This can only be done using a school of magic that is strong against the school the enemy is using. The counterspelling mage rolls two extra dice instead of one, and if they win the roll the enemy's spell is stopped from being cast. The countering character, naturally, does nothing else with their spell. Like other spells, counterspells can accidentally trigger wild magic. Also note that if a weakness against a certain school has been bought off by a sorcerer, then counterspelling using that school will be ineffective. Thus, Exemplars cannot have their spells counterspelled.

Grand Magus Crumhorn's enemy is now casting a spell trying to blow Crumhorn through an open window. The Grand Magus does not want this, so attempts a counterspell using his Fire Magic. He rolls 6 dice.

Assisting

One mage can assist another in casting a spell, if they also have the right school of magic for the spell and they are at most two points weaker in that school than the primary caster. The primary spell-caster then gets an extra die to roll.

Grand Magus Crumhorn's apprentice has been woken by the noise, and assists her tutor in immolating the Air Mage. Crumhorn rolls 4 dice for his magical knowledge, an extra 1 for Air Magic being weak against Fire, and 1 more for his apprentice for a total of 6.

FUN FACT!

If a character is an Exemplar of their school with five points spent in it, uses a Grimoire and a Major Artefact, has an assistant and is facing an enemy against which their magic is strong, they can roll a princely 10 dice. Even in this case, there is a small chance they get a Roll Total of 1.

Character Against Character

Where two characters are competing against one another, the first step is to establish what each character is trying to achieve. These aims must be in opposition to each other in some way. Otherwise, turn the roll into two separate 'Character Against the World' tests, one for each character.

SORCERER'S SYMPOSIUM

When a character against character test is appropriate, the characters roll their dice and the higher Roll Total wins. That character achieves the aim they stated.

Grand Magus Crumhorn and his apprentice roll their dice and get 1, 1, 2, 2, 5 and 6. They keep 1, 2, 5 and 6 for a Roll Total of 14. The Air Mage has 4 points in Air Magic, but is using a Major Artefact and thus rolls 5 dice. 3, 3, 3, 5 and 5. This gives him a Roll Total of 8.

Lasting Spells

Sometimes a wizard's spell will last a long time. If a character attempts to counter this spell after it is cast, then the spell acts as a proxy for the wizard, rolling the same dice the wizard would have done when the spell was first cast. Casting a spell with a lasting effect is done like any other Character Against the World roll- the GM decides if the duration of the spell bumps the difficulty up a category. (both of these are described in the next section).

Grand Magus Crumhorn's sworn enemy, Madame Pipette, is stalking the corridors when an uncontrolled wall of water rushes towards her. This is the lasting effect of a spell the Air Mage cast earlier, rolling 2 dice. She gathers her Earth Magic skill and attempts to cast a spell to divert the water down a side passage. She rolls 5 dice for her ability, and the wall of water rolls 3 (as Water Magic is strong against Earth Magic).

Character Against the World

If a character is attempting a particularly difficult task, and there is no suitable opponent, then the character rolls to get a Roll Total above a fixed target number. There are four possible difficulty categories:

Moderate - 5

The task is difficult enough to merit a roll, but is not that challenging. The task is within reach even for the unskilled, and skilled characters will very seldom fail. Examples: climbing over a six foot high brick wall, casting a spell to carry you over some pointy mountains.

Difficult - 10

A task like this daunts even the competent. Highly skilled characters using non-magical resources will only succeed about one time in three, although mages can draw on more powerful resources. Examples: leaping over a very wide chasm, casting a spell to shatter a castle gatehouse.

Very Difficult - 15

Although it's not impossible to complete such a task using mundane means, it is the stuff of legends. Even powerful wizards will struggle to enact a spell this difficult, unless they have done a lot of preparation for it. Examples: casting a spell to bring someone back from the dead, casting a spell to consume an army in fire.

SORCERER'S SYMPOSIUM

Nigh Impossible - 20

Yeah. Good luck with this one. You need 6 dice all showing different numbers. Examples: casting a spell that affects the Palace in some significant way, casting a spell to relocate a continent.

Note that there is no 'easy' task- if it can be considered easy then you shouldn't bother rolling for it.

Grand Magus Crumhorn is chasing the Air Mage in the cellars. The Air Mage has already cast a spell to extinguish all the lamps and torches. Crumhorn decides to cast a spell to relight them. The GM decides this is a moderately difficult task. The Grand Magus rolls 4 dice, getting 1, 2, 4 and 6 and thus a Roll Total of 13. This easily beats the difficulty of 5, so the torches are relit.

Pushing Your Luck

If a character is currently losing, with a Roll Total lower than their opponent's or less than the difficulty, then they can push their luck. To do so, they roll an extra die. If the die comes up a number different to any they have already rolled, then they add it to their Roll Total. If it comes up the same as one of their dice then they immediately suffer a 'horrible failure'.

Characters that are currently winning can also push their luck, to try to get a bigger margin of victory, but only after the current loser has had an opportunity to push their luck.

Luck can be pushed any number of times, but only by whoever is currently losing. Lasting spells cannot push their luck. If the Roll Totals are currently tied, then either character can

choose to push their luck. Choosing not to do so does not prevent them from pushing their luck in the same roll later on. However, if the totals are tied when casting a spell, then a casting character is forced to push their luck even if they don't want to.

Pushing your luck is a central part of the dice rolling mechanic- it allows a character to take a risk in order to try to turn a failure into a success.

FUN FACT!

Every time you think about pushing your luck, you know exactly how likely you are suffer a horrible failure. The important question is- are you a chicken, punk?

Grand Magus Crumhorn has cornered the Air Mage. They cast spells against one another. Crumhorn gets 2, 3, 4, 4 and 6, for a Roll Total of 15. The Air Mage gets 2, 3, 6 and 6, for a Roll Total of 11. The Air Mage does not want to lose, so pushes his luck. He rolls a 4, bringing his Roll Total up to 15.

Grand Magus Crumhorn is now tied with the Air Mage. As they are casting spells, they are compelled to roll more dice. Crumhorn rolls a 2, triggering a Horrible Failure. The Air Mage rolls a 3, also triggering a Horrible Failure.

SORCERER'S SYMPOSIUM

GRIMOIRES

If a character is casting a spell using a Grimoire then they must always push their luck if they would normally be able to. This is what makes using them dangerous.

Grand Magus Crumhorn's apprentice bumps into a soggy and furious Madame Pipette. Although the apprentice is much weaker, she happens to be carrying Crumhorn's personal Grimoire and flips through its pages searching for an edge. Pipette wants to injure the apprentice. The apprentice wants to create a wall of fire so she can escape. The apprentice gets 2, 3 and 6 for a Roll Total of 11. Madame Pipette gets 1, 3, 4 and 5 for a Roll Total of 13. Because the apprentice used a Grimoire, she must push her luck. She rolls a 4, bringing her Roll Total to 15. Madame Pipette has no wish to risk a Horrible Failure, so gracefully admits defeat and lets the apprentice escape.

The Outcome

When both characters choose not to push their luck, or one character triggers a horrible failure, the contest is ended and the GM narrates the result. A character will endure one of the following outcomes:

Success

The character achieves their goal.

Tie

If the Roll Totals are tied in a character against character roll, neither character gets what they wanted, exactly. If the Roll Total equals the difficulty of a task, then the attempt fails but it was close enough that the character can immediately try again if they wish. Note that ties can never occur if at least one character is casting a spell.

Failure

The character didn't achieve their goal. If the check was against a fixed difficulty, they may not try again.

Horrible Failure

The character messed up. Badly. Not only do they fail to achieve their aim, but something painful and/or humiliating happens to them. If a character casting a spell suffers a horrible failure, then the magic runs wildly out of control. This will have hilarious consequences.

Grand Magus Crumhorn's apprentice scored a success against Madame Pipette when trying to create wall of fire to cover her retreat. The wall of fire therefore stops the Madame from following her down a side corridor. Pipette, on the other hand, scored a failure, so fails at her goal of injuring the apprentice.

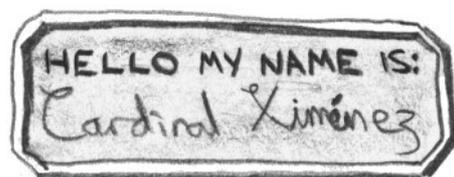
Grand Magus Crumhorn and the Air Mage both scored horrible failures, creating two bursts of elemental wild magic. It seems unlikely that anyone bunked in that part of the Palace will get much sleep that night.

SORCERER'S SYMPOSIUM

Complicated Situations

Sometimes, when there is more than one character involved, events can become complicated. Making a roll should only ever involve two characters at most. If more complicated things are happening, break it down into a series of simpler conflicts. Resolve them one at a time. Each character gets a chance to instigate a conflict until everyone has had that chance. If the scene is still not fully resolved, then begin again. Determine who gets to start the first conflict in whatever way seems more sensible- sometimes a character has a natural advantage by virtue of the situation. Another rule to follow is that characters who have already decided what they want to do get to act before characters who are vacillating.

A single wizard under attack by many foes can roll their full ability against each attack directed at them. For this reason, attempting to overwhelm a foe with large numbers is not very effective.



Death and Beyond

Risking Injury

Sometimes, characters will try to hurt one another, or will hurt themselves trying to do something they shouldn't.

Injuring another character can be made a goal of a roll. The other character may reciprocate, or simply wish to escape. After one roll, there may immediately be another if the fight continues. A character who is trapped and likely to be killed can always grovel for their life at the feet of their tormentor- nothing swells the wizardly ego like proper grovelling.

If a character is attempting a task with some element of risk, such as dodging large chunks of falling masonry, then it's obvious that injury should be a possibility.

Taking Injuries

Each character has 3 boxes for injuries. When they suffer an injury, they write the value of the injury in the box- a higher number means a more serious injury. This number is the difference in the Roll Totals (treat a horrible failure as a 0 in this calculation). The severity of the injury only affects how difficult it is to treat, for other purposes all injuries are equal.

A character can cheat injury if their spell casting suffers a horrible failure- the wild magic prevents them from taking injury, but will itself present a very real danger to life and limb for everyone in the area. This means that when a wizard has their back against the wall, they will often push their luck until they overcome their enemy or trigger a burst of wild magic.

Grand Magus Crumhorn is fleeing an angry octopus of fire created from his mis-cast spell. He rolls 1, 2, 2 and 4 for a Roll Total is 7. The Wild Magic gets 2, 4, 5 and 6 for a Roll Total of 17. Crumhorn lost by 10, so puts that number in one of his injury boxes.

Recovery

The most obvious way to recover is to use healing magic of some description. The Healing magic school can treat any injury, but many others can be used to treat specific wounds- for example Water Magic can be used to treat burns. General Competence can be used to treat wounds, but only if they are relatively mundane. It can be used to treat bites, but not arcane pestilence.

The character doing the healing must get a Roll Total higher than the severity of the wound. If the roll is successful, the injury is removed from the character. In the event of a horrible failure, the character doing the treating (not the character being treated) suffers the brunt of the consequences. For this reason, few mages will attempt to heal someone without being given something in return.

SORCERER'S SYMPOSIUM

The Sanatorium at the Palace has a wide variety of tinctures and potions that can treat injury. These roll 4 dice to treat any injury, but may not push their luck.

Grand Magus Crumhorn's apprentice is tending to him in the sanatorium. She finds a stoppered bottle in the cupboard and dribbles the contents between the Grand Magus' lips. She gets a Roll Total of 10, tying the severity of the injury. This is a tie, so the Magus is not healed, but she can try again with another bottle and hope for better luck.

Death

If a character ever has all 3 injury boxes with values in, they can immediately attempt to remove the least serious wound using their highest magic school ability or General Competence- even if it would not normally be appropriate to treat the wound in this way. If they succeed, the injury is removed as normal. This does not reflect actual healing so much as the character managing to carry on with wounds in extremis. If they fail the roll, the character dies. They may not push their luck with this roll.

Apprentices are not very durable, and will perish if they suffer any injury. Familiars have three injury boxes like wizards, and can be healed in the same way.

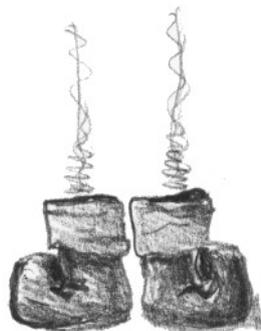
The Air Mage has been battered near to death by a runaway whirlwind. He already has injuries with severities of 8 and 17 (!) and suffers a third with a severity of 9. He rolls his best ability (Air Magic, as it happens) and gets a Roll Total of 13. This is higher than 8, so the first injury is removed and he can carry on trying to escape.

Certain Death

There are some circumstances that no-one can be expected to survive. For example, someone who falls off the Palace entirely will not survive the fall unless they have some magic that can help them. In these situations, by-pass the rules for injury completely.

Beyond Death

Just because a character dies, it does not mean the player is out of the game. The GM should let them play the Enemy of one of the surviving characters, creating them as they would a new character if necessary.



Magic Gone Wild

Where magic 'gets away from' the casting wizard, it is a hazard to anyone in the area.

Think big. Think hostile. Think indiscriminate.

It becomes a lasting effect intent on causing harm to anyone and anything nearby. The exact nature of the wild magic depends on the school used in its creation. Elemental wild magic often takes the form of amorphous balls of elemental energy, control magic often brings into being nightmarish creatures with mouths full of fangs, perception magic brings vivid hallucinations to life and so on. The GM is free to come up with whatever they think is appropriate.

Getting rid of wild magic is no easy task. It must be bested somehow, usually using magic. It rolls dice for any task equal to the strength of the magical storm- this is equal to the value of the single die that triggered the wild magic (causing the horrible failure) plus 2. Only a single successful roll is needed to disperse the wild magic, but engaging it almost always risks injury. Strengths and weaknesses for the school take effect as normal. Attempts to get rid of wild magic that suffer Horrible Failures create new wild magic problems. While two bursts of wild magic may fight until one is destroyed, the survivor will not be significantly weakened.

One silver lining is that the indiscriminate nature of wild magic makes it relatively easy to escape from if things go badly. It may be busy attacking someone else.

Grand Magus Crumhorn created wild magic with a roll of 2. This means that the wild magic will roll 4 dice. By the same token, the whirlwind the Air Mage set loose rolls 5 dice, which may explain why he had such a rough time dealing with it.

FUN FACT!

If wild magic causes a sorcerer some distress, they will not be above tracking down the wizard who caused it and applying a little corrective pain.

The Role of the Game Master

The GM does not exist solely to throw rakes under the feet of the players. That's a big part of their job, but there's more to it than that. The set-backs should not create a 'GM versus the rest' mentality. They should instead encourage the players blame other characters in the game for their misfortune. Their enemies, random other conference goers or even each other. By the same token, the GM should not make the players feel like they have no control over their own destiny- they should be able to survive even the most dangerous situation if they are resourceful and just a little bit lucky.

The first scenes each fulfil a purpose to help get the game going. The invitation helps set the mood. The arrival scenes give the characters an opportunity to introduce themselves and demonstrate any mannerism or personality traits they have. The dormitory scene lets the characters encounter one another and gives a coherent reason for them to spend time together in a large crowd. The opening ceremony then introduces their enemies to the story.

The conference sessions serve a similar purpose- allotting time to each character for them to be in the limelight on an equal basis. The Conference Dinner serves as a grand finale, the last chance the characters have to get done everything they want or need to and with ample opportunity to have a final showdown with their respective nemeses. The time-table is not just an in-character device; the GM can fill in each session with an event- be it a session a player is supposed to intend or a pre-planned event designed to cause trouble.

That said, this structure is not a straight-jacket for the GM or the players. If you struggle to come up with entertaining events for all the conference slots, just skip a few until the next interesting thing happens. You should never be in a situation where you are just marking time.

The most important job of the GM, over-riding all other considerations, is making sure everyone at the table has fun.

More about the Palace

Naturally, the characters may have to find a lot of these facts out themselves in the course of play.

General Layout

Although Kazzam's Wonderful Flying Palace is often described as being as large as a city, in fact from side to side it is considerably smaller. It more than makes up for it, however, in height. It is nearly five times higher than it is wide. Almost all of the upper part of it is seldom used, being constructed of decorative turrets, elevated walkways and empty, echoing rooms. The lowest part of the the Palace is solid rock, a foundation on which the rest of the complex stands. There are still very many busy floors between the two, and in terms of square feet of traversable area the Palace far exceeds any city in the world.

Actually giving numbers to floors is not a trivial task, as there are several rooms with doorways on more than one floor, and no floor extends at the same level all across the Palace. The best way to think of it is as if there were once several buildings, each with floors at a different height, that have been extended until they merge into one building. Imagine that short staircases were added piecemeal as the buildings joined up.

The architecture of the Palace tends to the needlessly grand. It is not uncommon to have a ceremonial door several floors high. Most traffic makes do with the more normal-sized doors, where they are available. Very high ceilings are commonplace, with accompanying balconies or galleries in most instances. Different parts of the Palace seems to have been influenced by different schools of architecture from around the world, so most conference delegates express location to one another in terms of architectural style and notable landmarks.

The general plan of the Palace is an irregular polygon around the Quad, with a thicker bulge where the largest and most important rooms are. Most rooms have windows facing either onto the Quad or out into the sky. The 'bulge', on the other hand, has relatively few windows. There are many staircases, but almost all of them have a central void so that wizards who can teleport or fly are not inconvenienced. For the same reason, many important rooms have wide balconies outside the windows.

Underneath the main rooms and the Quad is a labyrinthine network of corridors and tunnels. This is used mostly by the porters to keep the Palace running as expected, housing as it does the kitchens and the laundry.

Further details as to the layout are not of much use because they vary from year to year. It even seems that the largest and most prominent rooms can change location, although the inconstancy of the corridors and lesser buildings you have to use to judge this makes it difficult to be certain.

Although it is very easy to get lost in the Palace, the one saving grace is that its geometry is strictly Euclidean. Most years, anyway.

SORCERER'S SYMPOSIUM

Porters

The porters are possibly the most enigmatic part of the Palace. They act as servants and administrators. They speak seldom, and never display any emotion. They all wear unremarkable dark blue robes. In fact, they are all identical. There are hundreds of them in the Palace, most fully occupied keeping the Palace clean and looking after conference guests. The face they all share appears to be modelled on Al-Kazzam himself, if the portraits in the Palace are to be trusted. The silent and implacable way they go about their business can be most unsettling to the first-time visitor.

Any attempt to harm a porter or interfere with his business is met with a terrifyingly powerful burst of magical fire. This does not extend to protecting them from any wild magic- presumably this mechanism is meant to act as a deterrent to mischief rather than to actually keep the porter safe.

Porters will assist guests if doing so does not interfere with their business. The most common form of assistance rendered is directing lost attendees to the room they are trying to find.

Arrival Halls

The three halls that newcomers arrive in are the only part of the Palace safe to enter without the Seal of the Palace.

The landing balcony is a large open floor near the bottom of the Palace. On the first day of the conference it is very busy with flying carpets, magical carriages and flying wizards landing at cross-purposes. There are porters with magical glowing sticks that attempt to direct traffic, but wizards are not known for taking directions well. Actual collisions are mercifully rare.

The teleportation room is an ornate, tall room with several alcoves around the edge. Attempts to teleport to another part of the Palace without an active Seal are redirected to this room. This annoys wizards with teleportation magic because redirection of that kind is supposed to be impossible. At times of heavy traffic, a wizard can appear in an alcove before the previous one has vacated it properly.

The gondola room has two hatches in the floor. The magical gondolas drop through one, pick up passengers, then rise through the other. The journey takes several minutes at a modest speed, and the more friendly wizards take the opportunity to get to know their fellow passengers.

All three rooms have porters greeting the guests and providing them with their conference materials. Non-guests are permitted in these halls. Rich or powerful wizards often arrive with a retinue, to demonstrate how important they are. Anyone without the Seal of the Palace who tries to pass through the doorway into the Palace proper will be incinerated with the minimum of fuss.

Attics

The empty rooms in the ornamental turrets are little used, although they do make an ideal meeting place away from the rest of the conference. Wizards who can fly or teleport can

SORCERER'S SYMPOSIUM

make good use of them to get away from the crowds. Most of the walkways and external staircases in the attics have no safety rails.

Cellars

The cellar areas are mostly the domain of the porters. Guests are not discouraged or removed by the porters, but few mages spend much time in them. They are darker than the rest of the Palace, with fewer lamps and lanterns to light the way, and there are even fewer location cues to prevent getting lost. Particularly paranoid wizards visit the kitchens to make sure there are no attempts at poisoning.

Dining Hall

The Dining Hall is situated right on top of the kitchens. Most of the conference meals take place here, although the opening and closing meals are in one of the grander halls. There are a number of dumb waiters that rise up through the floor to bring food into the hall. The hall itself has a ceiling painted to look like the night sky, with the stars picked out in very large precious jewels.

FUN FACT!

Attempting to poison food at conference meals presents a challenge. The food is served on magical platters that destroy any poisonous or noxious substance the food is laced with. However, a resourceful would-be poisoner can simply add a plate of his own to the table and hope his target takes a bite. Veteran conference-goers know to check the plate to avoid this.

Dormitories

The dormitory rooms are spread out all across the Palace. Particularly unlucky guests may be assigned a room a significant distance from the rest of the conference. The decoration of rooms tends to reflect the architectural theme of the area of the Palace they are found in. The beds will be heavy wood four-posters with curtains in some, and opulent piles of silk cushions in others. The precise facilities vary considerably. Some wizards say that they have stayed in dormitories with private swimming pools or steam baths, but this is probably exaggeration.

The Long Gallery

The Long Gallery extends over half the circumference of the Palace. It looks out over the ground below, both from windows in the wall and crystal prisms set into the floor. Sometimes, it is the easiest way from one side of the Palace to the other.

The Short Gallery

The Short Gallery houses a collection of paintings, all produced by Al-Kazzam. However good a wizard he was, he was a truly terrible painter.

SORCERER'S SYMPOSIUM

Great Hall

The Great Hall is the venue for the opening ceremony of the Symposium. The third largest room in the Palace, it boasts a large number of trestle tables and thick velvet curtains around the perimeter. These curtains conceal walk-ways around the room, and doors into it from other parts of the Palace. The walls are covered in murals depicting famous events from Al-Kazzam's personal history.

Greater Hall

The Greater Hall is one of the grandest rooms. The walls are an ever-changing pattern of vivid stripes, which slowly move or merge in a hypnotic fashion. They are dozens of heavy oak tables and accompanying chairs, which are normally only used for the Conference Dinner. There is a minstrel gallery at one end, and balconies on the two adjacent walls. This makes it possible to have a commanding view of the room just by climbing a simple set of stairs.

FUN FACT!

Once, an irate wizard threw paint over the portrait of Al-Kazzam in the Greatest Hall. He disappeared the very same night, although his dormitory mates reported hearing someone shouting for help from beneath the floorboards until the day they left.

Greatest Hall

This is the largest room in the entire Palace, by a significant margin. It is so large that it is completely impractical for any purpose. The doors are very high and too heavy to open properly, the fireplace is the size of a barn and the ceiling can't be seen with the naked eye. The hall also catches the wind something chronic, despite the bonfire in the fireplace, but often it is the only way from A to B. There are pillars in a classical style, tall and fluted, but there are so many of them that it is

difficult to see all the way across to the other side of the hall. The most notable feature is the forty-foot portrait of Al-Kazzam himself above the fireplace.

Laboratories

The labs in the Palace are all incredibly well stocked with powders, herbs and all kinds of other ingredients for spell-casting. The problem is, no lab ever seems to be properly equipped for the workshops or demonstrations booked for it. There is also no guarantee that the labels on the jars will be at all accurate. In the circumstances, it is a wonder that any of the practical sessions avoid ending in disaster.

Lecture Theatres

The lecture theatres are dusty and poorly-lit. Most have tiered seating. They vary considerably in size, from ones that can happily seat 150 people to ones that can barely fit 15. Some have blackboards and chalk. Some have just one or the other. Many wizards will use magic to create patterns in the air to illustrate a point. Naturally, this can get out of hand just as easily as any other spell.

SORCERER'S SYMPOSIUM

Library

The Library of the Palace attracts many to the Symposium, mentioned as it is front and square on the invitation. The books of a wizard as powerful as Al-Kazzam would surely be a fantastic find for any sorcerer. Unfortunately, no-one has ever actually found the library. Or, if they have, they are keeping it a closely guarded secret.

Orrery

Rather than depicting the motions of planets and moons, the Orrery of the Palace has a glowing orb for each school of magic. Each orb is actually a shape appropriate to its school- elemental orbs are simple spheres of that element, Temporal Magic is represented by an hourglass, and Animal Control by a sheep. Thick lines hang in the air, connecting similar schools and showing the pattern of strengths and weaknesses. Other, more obscure indications also hang in the air, and experts often debate their meaning.

The room is dark apart from the orbs. In its very centre, each school has a raised flagstone marked with its symbol. By stepping on one of these flagstones, the Orrery will re-arrange itself with that school hanging in the centre of the room.

Quads

The middle of the Palace is occupied chiefly by a large, grassy area. This is used for recreation, and occasionally for demonstrations that require more room than any of the laboratories can afford. There is a small grove of orange trees near the Greater Hall. Some of the more outdoorsy attendees will prefer to spend their time in the quad if they can.

Sanatorium

The Palace's small hospital wing has around a dozen beds, and a large stock of healing potions. Porters will politely prevent anyone from taking them out of the room, but will happily allow anyone to drink them while inside. As the only place in the Palace with no-string-attached healing available, the Sanatorium is often frequented by the losers of magical battles. Because of this, it is also often frequented by the winners, looking for the losers, hoping to finish them off once and for all.

Other Attractions

Because the Palace changes from year to year, it is entirely possible that a new room of note will appear. Perhaps the Mid-Conference Entertainment needs a specific facility, so one has been provided, or some new landmark has been created. Such novelties may well become a permanent part of the Palace.

What can Go Wrong?

The heart of the game are the magical accidents and intrigue that happen during the course of the Symposium. The lectures and other activities are just reasons for the characters not to spend the entire week in the dormitory with pillows over their heads. The GM should already have some ideas for the carnage that will go on during the week, which will naturally be extended to include whatever out of control magic the players create. Particularly ambitious players may seize the opportunity to strike out at their enemies.

It bears mentioning that the players have three main options- they can either stick together and try to weather the problems as a group, they can look out only for themselves or they can actively try to cause trouble for each other. Groups that co-operate (at least in part) should find it easier to get through the week intact- but the GM should be prepared to shelve any pre-planned problems if the players are creating enough interest by themselves.

Spell Gone Bad

The most obvious source of mayhem is when magic gets out of hand. Wizardly duels are commonplace between magical academies with bitter rivalries, and naturally this can cause the occasional burst of wild magic. There are also the workshops and demonstrations, where an inexperienced or nervous magician can wreak terrible havoc. Naturally, in the true spirit of 'not my problem', the players need not deal with it unless they have to- they can simply run away. However, wild magic events also have a habit of disappearing into the unoccupied parts of the Palace only to reappear at inopportune moments. There are also times when the players can't simply ignore it- for example if the incident is near their dormitory.

Open Hostility

Each character has an Enemy, with at least one agent in the Palace. Sometimes, these enemies will try to take direct action up to and including assassination. Naturally, the fact that there's a time-table that gives times and places for the target to be makes this job a lot easier. Often, in order to enjoy their foes' discomfit, these aggressive wizards may make no secret of their intention to kill. There may even be elaborate bluffs of the 'next time...' variety. A lot of wizards are just plain nasty people.

Skulduggery

If the Enemy of a character is not given to the blunt approach, there are still many things they can do to make life difficult. Lectures can be sabotaged, property stolen, lies told and spell ingredients replaced with Folgers Crystals. If an agent of the Enemy is at work rather than the enemy themselves, it will be very difficult to work out who is causing trouble and how to stop them.

Just Plain Strange

The Palace itself is not entirely stable. As a vast, magically powered mechanism it is prone to the occasional burst of erratic behaviour. The Palace might rearrange its layout overnight, make all the doors slightly too small for comfort or cover every square inch of corridor with magically-enhanced mouse traps. Less dramatic aberrations are actually quite commonplace, and a source of small-talk for delegates, but any weird event the GM can come up with is a possibility.

FUN FACT!

One memorable year, the floors were waxed so thoroughly that they became frictionless. The first arrivals were a party of wizards from the Incendiary College who attempted to stop their flying carriage on the landing balcony. The vehicle skidded straight over the edge, got stuck in neutral, and was lost with all hands.

Bad Luck

The organisation of any large event leads to compromises being made, and some delegates get the short straw. This is why some unlucky mages have a dormitory in one of the attics, a lecture scheduled in a toilet stall, or are called to chair a panel discussion where the panel and the audience all have reason to want them dead.

a Patsy is You

Given the quantity of shenanigans going on, it is not unlikely for a wizard to be dragged into someone else's dangerous situation. Cases of mistaken identity have claimed the lives of more than one attendee. Other times a wizard up to no good may simply find anyone they can to pass the blame on to. Name badge abuse assists in this process.

Maelstrom

The most feared of all magical mishaps is the maelstrom. This is a once in a lifetime catastrophe, essentially wild magic writ large. It can only occur when sufficient magical forces are thrown around in a small area without proper control over them. It typically takes the exertions of a least a dozen wizards to cause one. However, the threat of a maelstrom means that any large assembly of wizards will normally scatter in the face of sudden danger, and try to deal with it in small groups. Should there be a panic at one of the Symposium dinners, however, there may be sufficient uncontrolled magic to cause a maelstrom. Should such a calamity happen, the Palace would have to be evacuated. The effects of the maelstrom are without limit, and wise wizards will not stop to look behind them as they run, fly or teleport away.

Maelstroms must be left to burn themselves out, as any further magic near it will only make matters worse.

FUN FACT!

The last recorded maelstrom destroyed a continent, changed the colour of the moon and created an entire race of nymphomaniac cat-girls who eat their partner after mating.

Repeat Customers

Should players want to bring their character to the Symposium next year, here are some things to bear in mind.

Physical objects can be lost or stolen. If a character gains or loses items that cost points when creating a character, the changes stand. Apprentices and familiars can be killed, and there is no compensation when that happens.

If the organisation the mage belongs to gave them equipment for the Symposium, they may not give them the same equipment the next year. In practical terms, this means that a character can 'sell' them back and spend the points on something else. If these points are spent on magical schools or abilities not tied to objects, this represents some serious study over the intervening months.

Apprentices can only attend when included in the invitation, and there is no guarantee that they in following years. In game terms, a player can sell an apprentice and spend the points on something else, under the same premise as for equipment.

Over and above any of these considerations, the character also gets 1 bonus point to spend as they choose. This cannot be saved from year to year, but it can be combined with points reclaimed from equipment or apprentices given away.



SORCERER'S SYMPOSIUM

Name: Apprentice Miranda Lesson _____

Gender: Female _____

Appearance: Short, sensible hard-wearing
clothes, large spectacles and frizzy hair _____

Tradition: Academic _____

Why Attend? She has to _____

Enemy: Grand Magus Crumhorn, a _____
danger to himself and others. _____

Magical Schools

Fire Magic 2

Srying 3

Other Abilities

General Competence 3
Long suffering side-kick.

Grimoire (2)
The Necrowombicon.

Injuries:

SORCERER'S SYMPOSIUM

Name: Runs With White Horses _____

Gender: Female _____

Appearance: Willowy, with diaphanous _____
pale yellow robes. She wears a tiara made
from leaves. _____

Tradition: Shamanic _____

Why Attend? To settle score with enemy. _____

Enemy: Priest Militant Gehron, Imperial _____
Sorcerer and multiple murderer. _____

Magical Schools

Animal Control 5

Bird Control 1

Insect Control 1

Other Abilities

Familiar (3)

Razorhoof, a stallion

Animal Control 2

Injuries:

SORCERER'S SYMPOSIUM

Name: Wu Ra _____

Gender: Male _____

Appearance: Simple white gi. _____

Tradition: Philosophical _____

Why Attend? To pursue excellence _____

Enemy: The Nei-Wa Imperial Magician's
Guild _____

Magical Schools

Self-Control 5

Other Abilities

Apprentice (1)
Tan (Self-Control 3)

Exemplar (2)
Wreathed in white light.

General Competence 2
He knows Kung Fu.

Injuries:

SORCERER'S SYMPOSIUM

End~Matter

This simple role-playing game was written by Ben Wright in less than a month. Five short pieces of prose, each a taster for a different game, were offered. By the start of March, Sorcerer's Symposium was the option with the most votes, so that was the one that would get written by the end of March. Granted, there were only 6 votes in total, but it's the thought that counts.

This game is released under the Creative Commons Attribution-Non-Commercial-Share Alike 2.0 license; <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/2.0/uk/>

Marvel at the author's miserable blog: <http://queex.livejournal.com>

SORCERER'S SYMPOSIUM

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	Arrival						Conference Dinner
9							
10							Departure
11		Session 1	Session 3	Session 5	Session 6	Session 8	
12		Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	
1		Session 2	Session 4		Session 7	Session 9	
2							
3							
4				Entertainment			
5							
6	Opening Ceremony						
7		Dinner	Dinner		Dinner	Keynote Speech and Conference Dinner	
8				Supper			
9							
10							
11							

Evening Afternoon Morning

SORCERER'S SYMPOSIUM

Name: _____

Gender: _____

Appearance: _____

Tradition: _____

Why Attend? _____

Enemy: _____

Magical Schools

Other Abilities

Injuries:

I took to the podium rather nervously. Researching a paper entitled 'Esoteric Incendiary Rites of the Poolum Archipelago' had seemed like an excellent idea when it had appeared that all I would have to do was spend two months on a beach surrounded by impressionable native women. Now I had to present it at the Symposium, inside the Kazzam's Wonderful Flying Palace, I felt sure I was about to make a laughing stock of myself for poor scholarship.

The audience did not seem much interested. It seemed to be mostly apprentices looking for a dull lecture in which to get some sleep. There was a warlock trying to pretend he wasn't talking into the palantir on the desk in front him. And I knew that the minute I started speaking, the ice wizards on the back row would start throwing snowballs.

I cleared my throat.

Then entire back of the auditorium vanished. Where it had been all I could see was a set of teeth the size of coffins. The teeth moved down, and I found myself staring into the eyes of a gigantic serpent, which then wasted no time in taking another bite of the room. The warlock, running for his life, turned an ankle on the palantir as it rolled along the floor. As I was right at the front of the room, it was easy for me to duck into the corridor and start running.

I was relieved my presentation had been cancelled. Plus, given that my dormitory was right on the other side of the palace, the giant man-eating serpent was about to stop being my problem.