

## LORD OF APOCALYPSE (F 1.0)

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*[There is a choice present which affects how you approach this world]*

The world that lays before you in ruins is Horodyn. The King from which it recieved its name is long dead, and even now, the world continues to fall apart. One by one, worlds aside from Horodyn have been falling to the influence of Chaos. For this, for Horodyn's plight, we have the “Lords” to blame, these were the former masters of the world. Their history stretches back to a time when Horodyn had yet to be given a name.

In the beginning, God created an artifact called the Stone of Vermillion, which he used to form the worlds which would be inhabited by men and other races. To begin, he created seven worlds and content with his creations he set the Stone aside. For a time there was peace. But in due time, the societies strewn across the seven worlds grew hungry for power. There was only one thing which could satisfy them, and so they turned towards the Stone of Vermillion, hoping that the Stone would make them God. The ones at the top of the pile became known as the Lords.

The power they sought became known as “Arcana”. But the first Lords who attempted to wield it were unworthy and amidst their struggling, the Stone of Vermillion was shattered. The Lords knew that to attain the power they sought for, they needed to reunite all of the shards, but this left the worlds at odds with one another. Ages passed as the conflict continued.

Eventually, one Lord succeeded. This Lord became known as the Lord of Vermillion, for the Stone that he had successfully reunited. But the transgression of the original Lords had left a deep scar in the universe, a wound which had never been addressed. The aftermath of their transgression became known as the Great Collapse, it introduced “Chaos” into the world, a force which was the antithesis to the Stone of Vermillion. While the Lords had fought amongst themselves, Chaos had been corrupting worlds along the fringe. It had established a firm foothold in the universe.

The Lord of Vermillion put up a valiant fight against the Chaos, driving it away where he could, holding the line where he had to, saving those in the worlds doomed to fall. But for all of his familiars, his allies, and his own efforts, he could not stave off the Chaos forever. God had created boundaries between the worlds to keep the Chaos at bay, but the Lords had broken these boundaries – and even the reformed Stone of Vermillion was incapable of repairing them.

To prevent the Stone of Vermillion from falling into Chaos' grasp, the Lord of Vermillion willingly sacrificed himself and shattered the stone. Fragments of the Stone scattered, seeding worlds with new life. The core fragments of the stone which held the seat of the Lord's power were hidden away in a single world among millions, protected by entities referred to as “Master Guardians” far away from Chaos' reach. It was his intention to wait for a Successor who would reunite the shards in order to continue the fight. And for a time, Chaos was thrown off the trail – but eventually, Chaos did find Horodyn, and it attempted to corrupt the Guardians one by one. The barriers manifested by the Lord kept Chaos at bay, but it was clear that the Successor needed to step up.

That time is now. Here on Horodyn, the cycle begins anew as a Successor arrives on the stage.

+1000 points

## [At Crossroads]

Before you enter Horodyn, there's something you need to determine about yourself.

Are you a **Lord**, or a mere **Traveller**?

This decision is permanent, you can only choose one or the other. Take a moment and think about it carefully.

### Lord (Irregular Mode)

- \* The Lord has a different perk tree, and is a standalone background.
- \* As the Lord, you have default benefits as detailed in the [Sleeping Lord] section
- \* The Lord cannot take perks outside of the Lord section.
- \* The Lord can take the same Items/Drawbacks as the Traveller

### Traveller (Standard Mode)

- \* The Traveller is a set of standard backgrounds with standard trees.
- \* The Traveller has access to the Arcana option, regardless of background. Details are in the Companion Section.
- \* The Traveller can technically have an imported companion become the Lord. Details are in the Companion section.

Note that while this choice is exclusive, it is possible under special circumstances for someone who was once a Traveller to become a Lord, and vice versa. Details are in the section for situational modifiers.

The following are backgrounds for the Traveller, if you've made your decision.

Background	Description
Slayer	Though the Slayers would probably consider themselves as treasure hunters, as the world of Horodyn slowly fell apart, they found themselves with fewer and fewer opportunities to look for treasure, but more and more monsters to eradicate. Nowadays, they truly live up to their name, primarily residing in guilds that serve to keep the remaining human settlements safe. A master at slaying beasts, this path is best for those who enjoy combat.
Constructor	In the days after the Great Collapse but before Horodyn came into prominence, Lords fought with one another across different worlds. Their battlegrounds were specifically constructed to withstand the Lords' might by the Constructors. While the Constructors of old have all died, some of their techniques were passed down, repurposed for different ends. There's no Constructor left to compare against, but your skills should come in handy given that over half the world is in ruins.

<b>Guildmaster</b>	<p>The few societies which are left band together around the Guilds, groups of Slayers and survivors that stick together out of necessity and for lack of companionship. In an age like this, the people need a leader, and the Guildmaster is about as close to a leader as they're going to get.</p> <p>While they're generally more proficient at managing people than they are at fighting, it's not uncommon for a Guildmaster to be just as capable as a Slayer. The people here respect strength in their leaders.</p>
<b>Tainted</b>	<p>While not exactly outcasts, these folks aren't what you can consider “natives” either. In the aftermath of the Great Collapse, the boundaries between many worlds was torn asunder, and people drifting from world to world became an occurrence which was uncommon but not unheard of. Some of these people came into contact with the Chaos during their transit, and it left them intact but changed. While they were still capable of maintaining their individuality, they had recieved powers previously unheard of, powers tied to the blood that ran within them.</p> <p>The Tainted is a specialized combatant with less of a focus on martial ability and more of a focus on a Chaos influenced power.</p>

Regardless of what path you chose, you'll be arriving in Horodyn at Port Carillo, a small village in the Southern hemisphere and one of the last bastions of human civilization. Horodyn is divided into 4 continents, three in the South and one in the North. This may help you get a bit of perspective. Closest to Port Carillo is the Neumellow Forest, but even the creatures there are generally hostile to outsiders.

The Abhor Desert lies to the West of Port Carillo, a place with frequent heatwaves and fire elementals, making it impossible for explorers to stick around for now. North of the desert is the Gurow Bog, a toxic swamp inhabited largely by slimes and various demons. Far to the North lies the Celestial Temple, a set of ruins kept floating up in the sky. It serves as a legacy of the old kingdoms, now overrun by monsters such as harpies and golems. To the Northeast of Port Carillo is the Brankad Lava Cave, an active volcano which is about as hospitable as the Abhor Desert, with substantially more lava and substantially less sand. But of particular interest to Slayers is a peculiar “hole” in the center of the world. “Something” is supposed to be there in the middle of the ocean. But until the Lord's seals are broken and the True Arcana is reassembled, whatever is there remains hidden away.

It's probably for the best however, as there is a terrible force coming from that region of space. In all likelihood, something corrupted by the Chaos is waiting there, and the Lord's seals are the only thing holding it back

(There's a map in the notes)

## **[THE SLEEPING LORD]**

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*If you've come to accept that you are the Lord, or at least, the one who will take up the mantle, there are some things that you need to come to accept. No Lord is without responsibilities, but to fulfill those responsibilities, every Lord is given an adequate amount of power.*

*A general piece of advice – don't overestimate your powers. Every Lord has their limits, and you who have yet to take up the mantle fully should not be taking unnecessary risks.*

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### **NOBLESSE OBLIGE**

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The Lord of Vermillion has one duty – safeguard creation from the encroaching Chaos. To do this, you need to understand two things.

**Firstly**, the complete Stone of Vermillion, or the “True Arcana” as it is also known, must be reassembled before a proper fight can be had. Fighting Chaos is possible without it, but a complete victory is impossible – the True Arcana is required to purge Chaos' influence and depending on how far Chaos has been allowed to spread, purging it may take an inordinate amount of time, more than what you have.

**Secondly**, Chaos is currently unaware of the True Arcana's exact whereabouts, as it is still incomplete. With the Arcana shards protected by the former Lord's seals, Chaos will instead look to engulf as many worlds as it can, while keeping a presence near Horodyn in case the seals fall. There's word that a Lord which fell to Chaos “resides” on Horodyn – his existence will likely prove to be a major risk after the seals are broken.

Your first priority is to assemble the True Arcana and regain your lost strength.

Next, you should aim to eliminate the Fallen Lord, he who goes by the name of Vermillion.

After that, whether you depart from Horodyn to fight the Chaos is up to you. Such is your right as the Lord of Vermillion.

**Keep in mind that you have a decade.**

**Should you fail to assemble the True Arcana within this time frame, the mantle will be lost to you, and the privileges which come with it will be taken away.**

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### **PROOF OF THE LORD**

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Just as the Lord is expected to face greater challenges than your average Slayer, the powers afforded to him go beyond that of what your average Slayer is capable of. To understand these powers, it is necessary to explain some details regarding the Lord and the Vermillion lineage.

**[Lord of Vermillion – Candidacy]** – As the Lord Successor, parts of your memory have been removed. Thankfully, these are stored safely within the Arcana. But until you successfully reclaim the Arcana and reform the Stone of Vermillion, those memory fragments will be sealed away.

**[Shell of Reawakening]** – The Lord's physical body isn't their true body, and while most Lords retain the body that they had when they were still a Successor, this body isn't necessarily human. As “shell” would imply, the physical body only serves as a vessel to act in and protect the Lord's true body, which houses the incomplete True Arcana while they have yet to become the Lord of Vermillion. Should you prefer to use an alternate form as your physical shell, that's your choice to make – though you may want to keep in mind that most of the neutral and friendly parties in Horodyn are human.

**[Spectral Body]** – Hidden within the Lord's physical layer is a spiritual body that serves as the “container” for the True Arcana. The form of this body can vary but generally this spiritual body resembles a human – the one trait that is consistent regardless of the spiritual body's form are the crimson eyes that distinguish the Lord. These eyes are capable of scrutinizing the flow of magic and life within their environment – indirectly allowing the Lord to detect corruption such as influence by Chaos.

**[The Lord's Right]** – Forming the spiritual core of their body, the True Arcana allows the Lord to circulate energy at a frighteningly effective speed. Wounds sustained on the physical body mend quickly, the Lord's stamina and magic essentially replenishes after brief moments of rest, and if necessary, the Lord can pull on the energy in their environment to sustain themselves. Naturally, while the Arcana is incomplete this is less effective.

**[Paragon Aspect]** – While there are a general set of traits which all Lords share, in terms of combat proficiencies, they fall into one of three generalities, the Attacker, Magician and Defender. By choosing one of these three, you effectively amplify one field of expertise, but the other two are rendered slightly less effective. Attackers specialize in physical combat, Magicians specialize in the use of offensive magic, and Defenders specialize in support tactics and endurance tactics.

**[Chaos Purge]** – The primary means of combating Chaos at the Lord's disposal is to purify it, purging the Chaos out of a target. This process leaves the target intact, but anything which was created via the corruption disintegrates. But as the antithesis to Chaos, the Lord's attacks are particularly effective against corrupted entities.

**[Dimensional Grasp]** – Though the True Arcana's power deals with “Life”, the Lord is capable of manipulating “space” to a degree, something which manifests itself even when the Arcana is incomplete. Wherever more than one dimension exists, be it in the form of isolated pockets or parallel planes, the Lord is capable of opening and closing passages into these spaces.

**[The Nine Arcana]** – Nine Arcana Shards reside within the Shrine in Port Carillo, each protected by a Guardian. The Shards serve to protect Port Carillo, manifesting a boundary that keeps the Chaos at bay, but breaking this barrier is unavoidable for the sake of resurrecting the Lord of Vermillion.

With each Guardian subdued by the Lord Successor, a memory fragment is returned to them, and the Arcana Stone residing within their spiritual body moves closer towards completion. But the Guardians aren't any laughing matter – they were intended to weed out Successors that were unworthy and the influence of Chaos means they won't be holding back.

It has been so long since the Guardians walked the land that the only records remaining of the previous Lord's Guardians come from the Vettel, who possess a memory span of many human lifetimes combined. If we assume that the Guardians have not changed, then you should expect to fight the following Guardians.

**Agni** – A God of Fire referred to as the “Magma Monster”, Agni is effectively a fire giant made of living rock, coated in flames. This can make fighting him a pain as he has a tendency to curl up into a ball and simply roll around the battlefield like a self propelled flaming boulder. Relying on brute force and fire magic, it's important to keep a safe distance from Agni if you don't want to be burned.

**Takemikazuchi** – The Thunder God, an ogre like creature who has a strange array of drums and channelling trinkets – which he uses to direct lightning at his targets. Be wary that while the trinkets may not look like much, Takemikazuchi can sustain lightning from them to create thunder blades. And while normally this wouldn't be much of a problem, Takemikazuchi strongly favors shrinking his opponents down until he towers over them, and suddenly those blades of his become extremely difficult to avoid.

**Bahamut** – The Dragon Lord is a very methodical Guardian, and his approach to a fight involves taking some time to gauge his opponent, relying on physical attacks to assess their strength. But once he considers himself prepared, he'll suddenly switch gears and rely on his ability to fly at high speeds while spewing energy blasts all over the battlefield. Though it is ideal to defeat him as quickly as possible before he tries to overwhelm you, this can prove difficult, since as a dragon and a Guardian his resilience is quite high.

**Cthulhu** – The Apostle of the Abyss, the largest among the Guardians, composed of an armoured upper body connected to a massive octopus. Between the armoured body's massive sword, the seemingly endless amount of tentacles and pesky ice magic to freeze opponents, avoiding Cthulhu's attacks can be an overwhelming task. This is made worse by the fact that the armoured upper body happens to be a mage capable of creating a barrier that deflects physical attacks entirely. While sufficient damage against the barrier will break it, this often leaves the Lord Successor open to tentacle attacks.

**Azdaja** – The Lady of Twin Serpents, the twin serpents being two snakes that are joined to the core female human upper body. Given the size and strength of those heads, it isn't often that the main body has to fight with her twin swords, and with her ability to effortlessly burrow through the earth, her hit and run tactic using the twin serpents can be extremely effective. Because both serpent heads can regenerate after being cut off, it is paramount to concentrate on taking down the human body.

**Grendel** – The Dragon Knight Guardian, capable of flight like Bahamut, but preferring a more direct approach with the oversized bastard sword it wields. If you are incapable of flight,

Grendel's habit of leaping into the air to throw the sword at you may become annoying, especially as he can recall his sword back to him, or use it to channel laser beams that rain down from the sky.

**Xerxes** – The Arbiter Guardian, a construct that technically does not belong to any of the core five races. Xerxes has a core robotic body with three shield plate extensions, each one armed with a circular saw. When missiles and lasers don't suffice against its foe, Xerxes opts to adopt a spinning strategy, rotating the spinning saw extensions around its body. Attacking the underside core is key to subjugating Xerxes, but that generally requires you to be within the range of the circular saws.

**Hecatoncheir** – Oddly referred to as the “Blind Rage Heavy Warrior”, Hecatoncheir is a quadrapedal Undead beast that resembles a centaur – except rather than having the upper body of a man, he possesses the upper body of a giant. Boasting a phenomenal level of endurance even without the armour scattered across his body, he primarily relies on his massive cleaver and throwing his weight around in battle, but he also happens to have mortars that can fire randomly. A rather difficult opponent for combatants who prefer to fight at a slower pace or rely on maintaining distance, as his mobility is deceptively high for his size.

**Siegfried** – The Knight of the Abyss, and the most straightforward of the Guardians in that he fights in the same fashion as a human knight. But despite fighting in full plate, with an oversized sword and shield, Siegfried has no issues with mobility and will generally hold himself back as a fight begins only to demonstrate explosive growth in speed and strength throughout a battle. Be wary that his shield is specifically enchanted to repel attacks – it's best to avoid fighting him head on altogether.

But as the Lord Successor, you know the Guardians better than the Vettel – or at least, you should. You can decide who your Guardians will be, whether some of the “Old” Guardians are replaced with Companions more familiar to you. The **Lord Successor has 9 free choices** for Guardians (refer to Companion options) – they can opt to replace the original Guardians outright, or mix and match the arrangement.

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## THE LORD OF VERMILLION

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Rebinding the Arcana to the stone within you has two major consequences. Firstly, the power of the Stone of Vermillion is regained, giving you a better foundation to take the fight to Chaos.

Secondly, the seals protecting Port Carillo are broken, revealing the Vermillion Tower that anchors Chaos to Horodyn, lying in the center of the sea. This Tower is the proverbial forward operations base for Chaos.

A shadow of the former Lord exists there, “Vermillion”, an entity corrupted by Chaos. With the barriers dropped, nothing's stopping him from attacking Port Carillo in order to get to you. In some regards, he is a test – unless you can surpass the previous Lord, you won't be worthy of taking the Lord of Vermillion title. Be wary that the influence of Chaos allows the Lord to manifest copies of himself – in order to subjugate him, you need to ensure that not a single

copy manages to escape. Otherwise he'll recuperate within the safety of Chaos before returning to finish the job.

Purging Vermillion drives the Chaos away from Horodyn, allowing you to reclaim the world in its entirety. However, what you fought was merely the tip of the iceberg, with your ascension,

Chaos now has a clear target to focus its attention to. You should expect to fight more corrupted Lords, Guardians, and monsters as Chaos attempts to claim the completed Stone of Vermillion for itself.

**[Lord of Vermillion – Ascension]** – The completed True Arcana possesses the power to seed life across worlds. “God” made the Stone to supplement his own powers of creation, so used by the Lord of Vermillion, it doesn't have quite the same effect. You're not going to be creating planets with a snap of your fingers, or repairing the wall between worlds and eradicating Chaos. In all likelihood, not even God would be able to tackle the last one.

The Stone of Vermillion has several definite capabilities. The **first** of these is the ability to seed life into a world. Regardless of whether the world is habitable, the Stone is capable of transforming it such that it can host life, though “life” in this case does not necessarily mean humans. Once utilized, the spark of life will slowly spread outwards, but the process can be accelerated by seeding a world multiple times. This will drain both the Stone and you, so a period of rest is advised in between.

With it being related to the first ability, **shattering** the stone is always an option – though this breaks the stone, the scattered shards will all be able to plant a spark of life on whatever world they land on. This won't kill you, but in order to reform the Stone afterwards, you'll have to repeat the Successor process again – and this ties in to the Stone's second ability.

The Stone's **second** ability is to fragment your memories and store them within “Key” Arcana, which you can bestow to key individuals. Simply bearing the Key Arcana is enough to empower an individual into a Guardian – by merit of possessing a memory of yours. The process is strenuous on the individual who receives the Key Arcana, so it's best to choose strong candidates.

The Stone can **cycle** life energy within its surroundings, which can lead to individuals regularly exposed to the stone having increased lifespans. This also ties in to the Stone's third ability.

The Stone of Vermillion's **third** ability allows it to establish a reincarnation cycle for individuals tied to the Stone. The previous Lord utilized this to ensure that a Successor would step up to claim the mantle, but anyone who has been affected by the Stone in some way is a valid target, and the Stone can reincarnate them with their memories intact. You're an exception to this since reincarnation implies that you need to die.

The Stone of Vermillion's **last** ability could be considered the most important. For any world, the Stone can create “anchors” - Arcanas made using the life force of locals which serve as anchors to stabilize the world in the event of major disturbances, such as extreme imbalances of natural energies or the intrusion of external forces. The more of these Anchor Arcana there are, the more effective they are – but naturally, this requires more life force to be offered up.



## **[PERKS/PERSONAL MODIFICATIONS]**

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*Within the backgrounds, the initial modification is free and all others are discounted.*

### **THE SLAYER**

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#### **Weapon Proficiency 100**

The Slayer is the first and last line of defence for every human settlement, but with how severely outnumbered they are, there are very few people with the free time to train the next generation. As such, Slayers are expected to hone their skills on their own. If you're starting from nothing, this will help you find your footing by developing a proficiency in either a field of magic or a weapon. As you gain proficiency in a given field, you'll find that all of the skills related to that field also increase in terms of strength.

Should you have no proficiencies at all, you can obtain one for either the standard weapons or magic here in Horodyn. Sword weapons are split up between the twinblade, the light sword and the greatsword. There are staves, battleaxes from the selection of polearms. Finally spear rifles and tomahawks exist as ranged options. The seven core elements for magic include Fire, Wind, Lightning, Ice, Holy, Darkness and Earth.

#### **Rapid Consumption 200**

In the heat of a fight, you can't expect to be given the time to find a potion. In those moments when the enemy won't let up on the pressure and you're driven into a corner, you can depend on this to provide you with the consumable you need to continue the fight. While you still need to make the appropriate arrangements to have the consumable available, you don't need to worry about rummaging around for it, the consumable will be applied whenever an appropriate situation arises. Just remember how much was in your supply.

#### **Core Shattering 400**

In the past, there was an entire branch of crafting that revolved around utilizing the soul material that lingers after a living being is killed. But as human society slowly fell apart, the amount of people who could harvest soul material steadily decreased. You're one of the last people capable this feat, both the art of extracting soul material from fallen foes and using this material to craft and modify items.

In practice, it is uncommon for a foe to leave behind pristine soul material in the form of a core. Foes that die with severe wounds, particularly mental wounds, often leave “imperfect” soul material – but on the other hand, by inflicting severe wounds such as severing body parts, you'll end up collecting what is essentially soul fragments. Fragments can be pieced together to form a complete core, and with enough practice, you'll be able to discern the easiest parts of an enemy to break apart with a mere glance.

## **Aura of Siegfried 600**

With how few Slayers there are and how often emergencies arise, many of the veterans find themselves with little choice but to conduct operations solo. Monster hordes threatening the Port have become a fact of life, and Slayers go into these emergencies with the understanding that not only will they be outnumbered, but injuries will be inevitable. The missions are seen as deathtraps, but someone has to drive the threat away.

Adapting to the demanding environment of the Slayer profession has left you with a superhuman level of resilience and vitality. Resting doesn't simply help your stamina recover; shallow wounds close rapidly and mental fatigue vanishes when you have the time to take a break. There's a significant drop in effectiveness when you enter combat however, as your body responds to battle by amplifying your physical capabilities instead.

The intensity of this amplification steadily increases whenever you sustain injuries. Your body simply overlooks injuries that would normally hamper people, and the more injuries you sustain the more power your body draws out in response. Slayers who prefer physical combat, particularly with close range weapons, will notice a substantial difference. Swinging their weapon goes from being effortless to “shattering the earth with a single blow”. But even those without a martial focus will still see benefits from this amplification as their fortitude increases, greatly increasing how long they can remain in combat.

However, you should keep an eye on your injuries before they become life threatening. When you can't feel your injuries, it's easy to lose track of how much damage your body has taken.

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## THE CONSTRUCTOR

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### **Structural Reinforcement 100**

If society is going to rebuild across Horodyn, the people need sturdy residences to take shelter in. The Lord's barriers may be protecting Port Carillo from the innumerable predators, but that barrier won't last forever, and Slayers can only do so much as the first and last line of defence.

With all the focus placed on driving the monsters back, the thought of construction and maintenance was put off to the side – Slayers can try to assemble a house or a wall, but their real expertise lies in fighting monsters and destroying things. This makes expanding the Port a major challenge. Thankfully, you have the expertise to step up to the task.

At your level of expertise, the fortifications you build will have no problem resisting waves of monsters. They could go up against a corrupted Guardian and still hold – at least for a while.

The problem comes with reinforcing what you build. The ancient techniques allow you to reinforce and even enhance buildings with magic so that they operate more efficiently, but the process takes a significant amount of magic and a fair bit of time, which may be difficult to

come by if monsters are constantly knocking. If you strictly rely on this ability to reinforce the Port, you'll probably find yourself drained for most of your time here.

### **Vermillion Gate 200**

Across Horodyn you'll find plenty of ruins, relics from a time when civilization could afford to build monuments and palaces. Some of the architecture still standing stems from an older time still – and one of the techniques that the ancient civilizations used involved manipulating space by “sectioning” it off. Unlike the dimensional walls which the Lord of Vermillion could manifest, these were typically pocket dimensions simply displaced from their original location.

The ancient civilizations used this technique to create things such as prisons, one way gates, and walls. A similar technique was used to seal the Guardians, who knew that their physical bodies would eventually fall under the influence of Chaos. These spaces would be locked in a manner that required a threshold level of magic to break – by applying a lock in this fashion it was guaranteed that only a competent individual could intrude, most likely the Lord Successor.

You can utilize the same technique to manipulate space around you, taking sections and isolating it from the rest of the world. Locking the space works in a similar fashion to the locks on the Guardian's domain, but there's an added benefit in that once a lock is applied, the gate between the “normal” world and the pocket space can be moved around. This will prevent people or monsters from accidentally wandering in, and if you're using it to contain dangerous creatures, having the gate move about can deter the curious.

### **Static Warfare 400**

In the days of old, societies existed which were sophisticated enough to make structures mimicking the Lord's ability. Though the Constructors of that Age weren't Lords themselves, their work was just as crucial, for the Lords back then lacked the power of the True Arcana and for all of their powers, they still relied on others to construct structures and tools.

The world may have changed, but the underlying theories and applications of arcane construction haven't. With enough magic and time, you can materialize structures into the world around you. In the past, there were three applications of this magic that saw extensive use, creating structures capable of serving as magic sentry towers, structures capable of converting ambient energy into mana, and structures capable of manipulating Familiars in the same fashion as the Lords of the day did.

The key to this ability lies in simplicity. Because there's nothing inherently complicated about the Guard Tower, Mana Tower or even the Minion Ark, conjuring them does not require any special catalyst or ritual. The Guard Tower consumes mana to fire magic bolts, the Minion Ark consumes mana to create a stream of Familiars (By default, odd little wisp creatures stream out of the Ark, but you can change this to suit your preferences if you have your own minions), and both of these structures can be sustained with enough Mana Towers serving as batteries.

Unfortunately, the reason why these three applications became commonplace was because the Lords went to war amongst themselves. In an attempt to organize the fighting so as to prevent unnecessary deaths, specific locales were set up and maintained as battlefields by the Constructors – the Lords would fight each other here until they were satisfied. Or at least, that was the plan – ultimately it meant the only survivor was the Lord of Vermillion.

Now that the idea of a Lord has become all but a legend, you can put this ability to better use...like defending the few remaining pockets of civilization from Chaos and monsters.

### **The World's Heart 600**

There was a period of time during the war between Lords when the intensity of the conflict shifted – rather than individual Lords fighting against one another, it became more of an organized contest. During this time, the Lords agreed that the idea of putting the Arcana at risk over the whole affair was unthinkable, and it was during this period of time that the Constructors came up with their greatest creation. The Lords needed something to fight over, so the Constructors responded by making an artificial Arcana.

This crystal, forged from magic, blood, and time, would mimic the Arcana to the best of its ability, but since it was artificial, destroying it would not have the same consequences as destroying a Lord's Arcana. These “Fake Arcanas” were extremely effective, capable of resurrecting both Lords and Familiars; while they were incapable of defending themselves, they could manifest an entity to fight on their behalf. Whether they knew it or not, the Constructors had effectively created the prototypical Guardian by binding a Familiar to the Arcana and giving it the mandate to defend the Arcana.

For a time, the system worked well. But as history tells us, that time wouldn't last – the Lords were destined to kill one another off. The organized contest had merely been an interlude, a brief moment of respite before the real war resumed.

Manifesting the Artificial Arcana differs from manifesting the towers in several ways. Firstly, it requires life force to manifest in addition to a massive quantity of magic and time. The more life force fed to the Artificial Arcana, the stronger it becomes, which makes it the more effective at resurrecting the dead.

When someone who binds themselves to the Arcana suffers a fatal injury, the Arcana activates, channelling enough life energy from its reserve to reverse that individual's injury. Once the pool of life energy within the Arcana runs out, it will shatter and need to be remade. In comparison to “regular beings” such as a Slayer or a Lord, creatures such familiars, summons, and minions don't tax the Arcana by any appreciable degree. As such, the Arcana is capable of resurrecting a stream of minions, but it might only be able to revive your party once or twice before it breaks. This distinction is of particular importance, because the entity which the Arcana can manifest to protect itself also happens to be a Familiar – its strength is dependent on how much life force the Arcana contains, but the Arcana can resurrect it effortlessly.

## THE GUILDMASTER

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### **Personnel Scouting 100**

Everyone in Port Carillo is aware that given how few survivors there are, the importance of finding new blood and convincing them to stick around cannot be overstated. The local community has banded around Guilds, established not just to protect the Port, but also to create a sense of camaraderie. The main issue now is Horodyn's dwindling population.

Thankfully you have a distinct talent for finding potential allies, even in a wasteland where friendly faces are few and far between. Even without any intention of actively recruiting anyone, people just tend to show up and they're generally quite receptive towards your advances, whatever your intentions may be. Now, not everyone you meet will have the same capabilities, but given time you'll be able to determine the fields in which these strangers excel at by looking them over, so figuring out how they can fit in shouldn't pose a challenge.

### **Mercenary Management 200**

Mercenaries make up the majority of Port Carillo's population aside from the Slayers, and while only a few ever choose to stick around, the Guild values every able body that answers the call.

As a Guildmaster, managing temporary allies is critical if you want to optimize your group's effectiveness. And while most mercenaries tend to be a cut below Slayers, you don't have to worry about that very much, since you have an innate talent for cultivating the potential of others – even if your time with them is limited.

So long as you and your “employee” have fields of expertise that overlap, those skills will improve at a substantially high rate than normal, even if they were stuck at an impasse before working under you. This doesn't have much of an effect on skills that you have no expertise in – because frankly, there's not much you can do for them without a foundation. With enough time spent under your supervision, these people will come to realize that they can surmount previously established limits on their abilities – and this might encourage them to stick around.

### **Foundational Skills 400**

In a settlement like Port Carillo, there's an unspoken expectation that everyone should be able to apply themselves in multiple fields. So the alchemist responsible for managing the Port's inventory also has experience in scouting and fighting, while the attendants in charge of the Slayers have experience in managing the shops. Unfortunately, most newcomers tend to arrive with only one applicable skill set or none at all. It falls to the Guildmaster to ensure that newcomers are brought up to speed and don't end up becoming dead weight, typically this involves teaching some basic skills so the newcomer can be helpful around the Port. But there's

no denying that even with just a few newcomers, teaching fundamentals can be time consuming. This is doubly true if the newcomer happens to be a poor pupil.

You can alleviate this problem by fast tracking the training process. Instead of training the newcomers one by one, you can take several basic skills and drill those into the students in one session. From their perspective, it'll be as though they knew the skills all along.

There's a catch to this – while this works well for fundamental skills without substantial prerequisites such as basic crafting, bartering, or basic alchemy, the more complex a skill is, the more likely that the student will end up learning something flawed or even learn nothing at all. The risk of this increases if you attempt to teach them something that you have no knowledge base in, or if you're attempting to force too many basic skills into the trainee all at once. While this is meant to reduce the time needed for training, you should keep in mind that people generally have a limit to how much information they can take in at once.

### **Together As One 600**

When a large group of people gather together, inevitably there will be people who don't get along with one another. But in a time of need, they need someone to rally around, someone that makes them forget their differences – and as the guildmaster, that person might as well be you. You'll find that while people may disagree, as long as you're around their disagreements won't undermine the group's overall cohesion.

But maintaining that cohesion requires you to prove that you are a leader worth following. So long as you keep their belief in you strong, their faith in you will have an impact on your performance – those around you with this level of faith will lend their strength to you in a very literal fashion. A fraction of their skills and proficiencies add on to you, empowering you as the group's representative. Should any of the contributing members fall, their support will be cut off, but as the leader, you can ensure that they'll get back up again. As long as you get to them fast enough, you can inject a portion of your own life force to bring a fallen member back to life. Granted, this does mean sustaining injuries as you have to sacrifice life force proportional to their wounds in order to bring them back – but taking an injury to bring someone back from death isn't exactly a bad trade, especially when they're your comrades.

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## THE TAINTED

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### **Lineage Ward 100**

The effects of being touched by Chaos still lingers within your blood, but having overcome the corruption to some degree, you'll find that you've developed antibodies to external influence like Chaos' corruption. It isn't just mental corruption, but also viruses, parasites, curses and even physical corruption to some extent – your body will “recieve” the intrusion, which will likely lead to a bit of discomfort, but the intended effects will be greatly dampened.

But you do need to be wary, with your blood tainted as it is, it can pose a hazard to others – especially if they attempt to take your blood without warning. You can control this to a certain extent, but it's probably in the best interests of others if you don't go about donating your blood to banks.

### **Blood Weapon 200**

The accursed nature of your blood serves as both shield and sword – with enough time and practice you can make that very literal by transforming your blood into a weapon. The weapon is technically an independent extension of your body, though depending on its form it'll function differently, and the weapon's form is something you'll have to decide on your own. As long as you have enough blood, you can manifest, repair, and even enhance the weapon. You should keep in mind, that an average person only has so much blood to spare, and using other people's blood isn't anywhere near as effective as using your own. As such, be wary that some weapons may be more dangerous, say a crossbow that constantly requires blood to make bolts with, in contrast to a shield which doesn't require much blood to make and maintain.

For optimal results, it is best to stick to a single form. Constantly changing the form of your weapon will make it difficult for you to adapt to it, and this in turn makes it harder for the weapon to grow. By sticking to a single type and growing accustomed to it, you'll find that its strength will grow steadily – even more so if you find some means to strengthen your blood.

### **Chaos Resonance 400**

The corruption that Chaos spreads is part of its fundamental nature – an instinctive drive to infiltrate and take control. While you have no problem suppressing this, the same cannot be said for anyone who happens to take in your blood, and while your average human would likely suffer greatly as their body attempts to reject the foreign presence, with this they can go out in a much less painful fashion.

By introducing your blood into others, you can slowly corrupt them – but since the blood is yours and in your control, rather than the individual succumbing to Chaos, they'll instead be your thrall. Naturally, as a blood weapon is formed with your blood, wounds inflicted with the blood weapon will accelerate the corruption effect.

If the victim can't purge your blood properly and it circulates within them for too long, eventually they'll develop an aura that shrouds them, clouding their mind. At this point, while they'll retain their consciousness, their natural inclination will be to follow your commands. For troublesome individuals, once they hit this point where they can be controlled, you can choose to transform them into a monster instead of relying on mental suggestions. They can't reverse the transformation on their own, and odds are good that someone else will dispatch them seeing them as a monster.

But there's one thing to wary of: Just as you resisted Chaos' influence, those with sufficient strength of will can fight off the effects of your blood, especially if given the time they need to collect themselves.

### **Blood Transformation 600**

If the situation ever gets so desperate that you're forced to expend every option at your disposal, you may have to turn to the latent power within your blood, and give it a certain measure of freedom. Tapping into the power contained within your blood can be dangerous, especially if you're already weakened or you don't have much blood left, but as a last ditch effort, letting it take control can potentially turn the tables by surprising the enemy and giving you an opportunity to rest.

Unlike manifesting a weapon or infecting an individual, this grants your blood a level of autonomy which could be seen as independence. A substantial portion of your blood is used to form a combat shell, which shields your real body until it is completely destroyed. While it is shielding you, the “living blood” greatly amplifies a single combat proficiency in your repertoire, utilizing this to eliminate surrounding threats. As the blood's approach to combat is very straightforward, it most likely will choose to amplify the combat style you use most often, be it a branch of magic or martial arts.

The consequences of this transformation can be observed in certain Chaos corrupted creatures as they exhibit very similar behaviour. One example is the entity known as Vermillion, whose physical appearance is actually a similar combat skin but manifested out of Chaos corruption instead of blood. In both cases the outcome is the same, the external shell is capable of fighting autonomously while the true body is kept safe. While within the shell, you can influence it to some degree, so if there's an enemy who happens to be overwhelmingly strong, you can direct the blood to flee while you recover.

MISC.

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### **Cinematic Engagement 100**

There will be times when a fight with an enemy reaches a critical point, when you're on the verge of landing a critical blow or you're on the receiving end of a fatal blow. These are effectively moments when the fight will be decided depending on how events play out. Your senses have honed to the point where you can anticipate these moments and your body responds by entering a state of hyperfocus, where your enemies and your surroundings slow to a crawl, giving you the time to execute the deciding blow. You'll have enough time to make it as flashy as you want.

### **Inducing Flight 100**

There's a very odd phenomenon which occurs when it is clear that you have the upper hand, where monsters which normally act in a mindlessly belligerent fashion will turn tail and flee.



Enemies may claim that retreat won't be tolerated or they'll fight to the bitter end, but the moment they realize that they're at a disadvantage, the idea of running away is planted inside them. At the onset, most enemies can disregard the notion, especially if they manage to regain the advantage. However, should the situation turn against them again or worsens, that original seed of doubt is reinforced, over and over again until it becomes the only thing in their mind. In this state, your enemies are incapable of doing anything other than fleeing with every means at their disposal.

### **Record of the Ages 200**

In an age when there aren't enough people to pass down correct history, it's important that someone is able to remember what actually happened – if only so that future generations can have an understanding of how the world turned out this way. Maybe some things are best left forgotten, but you get to decide what it is that you remember and what you forget. While this extends your ability to retain memories significantly, just remember that the wisdom needed to handle the knowledge properly needs to come from within you.

### **Stake of Corruption 200**

While many creatures succumb to the influence of Chaos almost immediately, entities such as the Guardians are capable of resisting Chaos for an extensive period of time. Though the Lord's absence gives Chaos all the time it needs to wait for the Guardians to succumb, in that time it has also developed its own approach to accelerating the corruption process.

As an ability that targets Guardians, this is also extremely effective against summoned or supernatural entities, and beings that are bound by contracts. When an entity comes in contact with a source of corruption, you can sustain this to create a vulnerability which corrupts the entity from within. While attempting this against normal individuals simply causes mental damage to accumulate, in summoned and contracted entities, sustaining the effect eats away at the binding between “master” and “servant”. Sustain it for long enough, and the entity will be completely immobilized, and when the binding is completely destroyed, you're free to influence the entity as a “neutral” third party, even against their former masters if need be.

## **[COMPANION MODIFICATIONS]**

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*Companions cannot purchase companions.*

### **Unexpected Visitors 50/300**

This world is about as desolate as a world can get without being considered dead, so if you have some friends, you might as well bring them along to keep you company. Import a companion for 50 CP; they gain 600 CP to spend on options other than companions. You may import in a batch of 8 for 300 CP, with the same benefits. If you have made the choice to take up the mantle of the Lord, note that none of your companions can take up the position. Otherwise, see [**The Lord Candidate**] below.

### **Locals?...What Locals? 50/100**

There aren't actually all that many people left, and while the few folks that scrape together a living are nearly all battle hardened veterans, there's not much to look forward to, at least not from their perspective. If you need help from somebody local, well, if you can convince them to join you, you only need to pay the discounted price above to have them become a companion.

### **Power Shift 100 -> 50**

This option serves to allow you to transfer your resources over to a companion at the rate shown. It cannot be used by companions.

### **The Arcana's Guardian 200 [Restricted – Cannot be chosen by the Lord]**

The Guardians lie in wait for the Lord to awaken from their slumber and reclaim what is rightfully theirs. Their wait has stretched from decades to centuries, to the point that none of them remember just how long ago it was since the Lord shattered the True Arcana. All they know is that so long as there is a Lord, there will be nine Arcana lying dormant in wait.

Should you abstain from the path of Succession, the option of becoming a Guardian is open to you. Similarly, your companions can choose to fulfill this role, regardless of whether you are the Lord or not. The known Arcana Guardians belonging to the previous Lord are detailed in the section directly addressing the Lord. Whether you or your companions are the ones fulfilling the role, you may elect to “become” one of the nine previous Guardians, assuming their role and powers – or you may choose to become a Guardian as you are right now.

Should you choose to not assume the identity of an existing Guardian, take note of the following details, which apply to all “new” Guardian.

**[Guardian Form]** – Guardians come in all shapes and sizes, with no real consistency in terms of appearance unlike humans. As such, if you have a preferred form to use as your core body, that

can serve as the Guardian Form instead of the “normal” human body. All Guardians are capable of regenerating damaged or destroyed body parts, but there's a limit to their regeneration speed.

**[Elemental Exclusivity]** – Each of the Guardians specialize in a single element. While this doesn't render them useless at utilizing other elements, other elements tend to fall by the wayside as they hyperfocus into their chosen specialty. You may select one element (that you're capable of utilizing) – within this element your magical strength, natural resistance, and growth rate increases substantially. Should you have no elemental affinity, you may instead choose an elemental affinity native to Horodyn. (Fire, wind, lightning, ice, light, darkness, and earth)

**[Ultimate Spell]** – The proverbial trump card, each Guardian has a technique reserved for worst case scenario. This augments a single ability/spell/skill within your wheelhouse to serve this role. The strength of the chosen ability is amplified several times over, but it renders the ability impossible to use in rapid succession, as the amount of energy it expends is greatly increased. As this amplifies the strength of the ability, the actual effect is dependent on what the chosen ability was designed to do.

**[Corruption Resistance]** – Protected by the Lord and the Arcana stone they guard, the individual Guardians are highly resistant to all forms of mental corruption and degradation, able to resist the influence of Chaos for ages if the need arises. Should their Lord be present, the Guardians are completely immune to external influence, but without their Lord, they may eventually succumb if enough time is allowed to pass while the corrupting influence grows unchecked, and they weaken.

**[Memory Shard – Contractual Bind]** – While the above traits reflect the Guardian's inherent properties, it is their responsibility towards the Lord which is integral to their identity, for they serve to guard the Lord's memories and ensure that Succession is possible. This memory serves a connection between Lord and Guardian, allowing the former to summon the latter to their side, and amplifying the Guardian's strength. This connection also allows the Lord to “purify” the Guardian at any given time, this will remove any traces of corruption to be found within the Guardian. Should the Guardian fall in combat, the Lord only needs to expend a portion of energy to raise them, pulling them back from the brink.

A Guardian with no connection to a Lord is no different from a Familiar – they are still able to grow, but their strength and conviction pales in comparison.

### **The Lord Candidate [Restricted – Companion Only]**

So long as you aren't the Lord and the mantle has yet to be taken up, it is plausible for one of your companions to take up the role. This could even be a companion that you did not import (keep in mind that they won't have any points to utilize at all). The details in the Lord section still applies to a companion who chooses to become the Lord, but the following change needs to be taken into consideration.

**[Regarding Arcana Guardians]** – While Companion Lord Successor cannot have companions of their own, it is up to you to determine whether the Arcana Guardians which they subdue during their path to becoming Lord serve as summons, followers, or temporary allies. Should your Companion take up the role of the Lord, you can serve as their Guardian. (When it comes to rules of conditional immortality however, your death still holds its normal consequences provided you have no other countermeasures.)

## **[ITEMS]**

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*Where reasonable, items can be taken more than once. Items purchased by companions are bound to those companions.*

### **Racial Totem 50**

When it became clear that the slayers would need something to give them a fighting chance against the predators out in the wilderness, the alchemists in Port Carillo came up with a solution, expendable trinkets used to protect Slayers and give them an edge against specific races. Five races make up the majority of the threats Slayers face, including Beasts, Gods, Daemons, Sea Monsters and the Undead.

These trinkets have been modified so that they won't be consumed, remaining active as long as the user keeps it on their body. Choose a race for the trinket to target and while it is active, the user will be able to hit members of these races much harder, while attacks from enemies of these races are less effective. Once chosen, the target race that the trinket applies to cannot be changed.

### **Talisman of Sacrifice 50**

A contingency measure that no Slayer would ever want to rely on, but keeps on hand in anticipation of the worst that could happen. The magic spun into this nondescript doll is strong enough to reverse the consequences of an otherwise fatal event, rewinding the body back to a healthy state. Once the magic activates however, the doll disintegrates, leaving no trace that it ever existed in the first place.

### **Weapon Reinforcement 50**

Weapons are the most crucial tool for anyone looking to stay alive in Horodyn. It is strictly forbidden for citizens to leave Port Carillo without a weapon for their own safety, and even Slayers need to constantly keep their weapon battle worthy. But as expeditions are sent into deeper regions and the monsters present greater challenges, eventually the only means to stay competitive is to find avenues for overhauling weapons and adapting them to new threats.

The local artisans have developed a method towards reinforcing weapons that are based on using monster core materials. Luckily for you, there's enough material here for you to reinforce a weapon at your disposal – just that the material on hand is limited, so the areas that you can reinforce for the weapon are similarly limited. But this is still better than what most Slayers have to put up with, as Monster Cores are rare, and often they have to stick to using a grindstone to sharpen their weapon.

The parameters that can be strengthened via this method include the seven elemental affinities (fire, wind, lightning, ice, light, darkness, and earth), its effective strength when used against

any one of the five key races, and basic properties such as physical strength, swing speed, and defensive prowess – should you bear a weapon that can be used like a shield. **Note that this option can also be used to purchase a weapon in the event that you have none.** Weapons available include the **Twinblade/Lightsword/Staff/Greatsword/Battleaxe/Spear Rifle/Tomahawk.**

### **Magic -> Card / Skill -> Orb Transformation 100**

As part of the initiative to make the entry curve for Slayers smoother, the alchemy branch worked tirelessly to develop an ability for converting magic spells and personal skills into an easily transferrable form. This worked spectacularly and while magic isn't quite as advanced on Horodyn as it may be on other worlds, being able to teach anyone basic magic has raised survival rates by an appreciable margin.

This can be applied to any spell or skill at your disposal, converting them into a form which when possessed by someone else, can be utilized by them with minimal practice.

### **Deck of Familiars 100**

An ancient artifact used in the age when Lords fought against one another in order to determine who would become the Lord of Vermillion. The Lords of that age had yet to rely on Guardians, but rather utilized Familiars, conjuring forth members from the five races to serve as their soldiers in the war for the mantle.

In the same fashion as those Lords of old, this artifact allows you to establish a working contract with Familiars of your own. It isn't without its limitations, and to explain these it is best to see this artifact like a deck of cards. The deck by default contains enough magic to store up to 15 cards, and can channel enough magic to manifest up to 4 cards at time from the deck of 15. In this analogy, the Familiar manifested is dependent on the card, but in reality, you'll determine what is manifested.

When you subjugate a creature, you can expend a blank card to “copy” it and create a Familiar. Because the Familiar is a magic construct, while they share the creature's form and capabilities, their personality and behaviour are independent from the original. This is most noticeable if you attempt to copy “unique” individuals rather than common beasts. Your Familiars will accumulate experience with consistent use and steadily improve in terms of ability. Each card can only contain the Familiar for one entity, so if you find that you don't have enough blank cards available, additional cards can be purchased at a rate of 100 points / 5 cards.

Should you have no opportunity available to you to create a Familiar, you can either “borrow” local monsters or delve into the old records to look at the Familiars used by the ancient Lords for your first 4 cards. (Basically look at notes)

### **Vettel Tree Sapling 100**

Because so much knowledge was lost when the former Lord's civilization collapsed, there is a great deal about Horodyn that people only have passing knowledge of, and the existence of

the Vettel is one of these things. What is known is that the Vettel's existence are tied to trees – the tree which this sapling will eventually grow into. The Vettels themselves are sapient daemons capable of human speech and flight. As far as the humans know, the Vettel have extremely extensive memories, most of the knowledge regarding the Arcana and the Lord were imparted by the Vettels, the two Vettels of note which reside in Port Carillo. These two had knowledge of the former Lord, which would suggest the Vettel's memories go far beyond mere centuries.

It is reasonable to assume that once mature, the tree will eventually “spawn” Vettels, though the exact process is unclear. With their prodigious memories they're quite effective at being archivists, and they seem to adapt well to any environment, quickly gathering information to the point where they can serve as guides.

### **Grendel's Sword 200**

A simulacrum of the weapon used by one of the former Lord's Guardians, the Dragon Knight Grendel. The blade is large to the point of being unwieldy in the hands of an average human, but this isn't as much of an issue as one would expect, since the sword is designed to be thrown at the enemy either in the fashion of a spear, or a boomerang. And just like a boomerang, the sword magically returns to the side of the user after a short span of time.

While you may not possess the sheer strength of the Dragon Guardian, and you might not be able to fly like Grendel can, the sheer size of the sword allows it to be used as a shield, and though it may be a simulacrum, it is sturdy enough to withstand multiple blows. The maiden figure engraved into the sword will glow should enough damage be sustained, and the sword can release a burst of light magic that sends nearby foes flying. Naturally, Grendel has even more abilities at his disposal with his “true” sword, so don't be surprised if he uses his sword in ways that you can't with this simulacrum.

### **Shield of the Abyss Knight 200**

The shield counterpart to Grendel's sword, a simulacrum of the distinctive shield used by the Knight Guardian Siegfried. As one would expect of a tower shield, its massive size makes for good protection, though you'll have to be strong enough to wield it in the first place. Due to its weight and size, it is entirely possible to use this as a blunt weapon, easily stunning even foes wearing full armour.

The true strength of the shield, as Siegfried will surely demonstrate if you ever have to face him, comes from the barrier which when activated, nullifies magic and reflects a portion of all physical attacks which strike it. As long as you're hiding behind the shield, you could probably endure a dragon breathing fire at you. Just don't try it against Siegfried himself, the Knight Guardian swings that blade with enough strength to rend the earth asunder. Even reflecting a portion of the blow is likely not going to be enough to protect you.

### **Vermillion Armament 200**

A simulacrum of the bizarre armour piece used by the Chaos entity residing somewhere within Horodyn. A back plate connected to a tail piece with two claw arm extensions, all of which hover around the user when inactive. When active, the back plate actively allows the wielder to float about the battlefield while protecting against attacks from the rear. The tail connected to this piece is capable of attacking autonomously, though its range is limited. The two claws however, are capable of phasing out of normal space, materializing near enemies and engage them on their own accord. Though it is feasible to give these claws weapons to make them even more dangerous, they're plenty dangerous without.

These are considered armaments as even if they happen to be destroyed, they don't seem to affect the wielder's performance, and it only takes a short span of time before they rematerialize around their wielder. Be particularly wary of this should you ever find yourself attacked by the Chaos entity, as you can destroy the entire armament, and it won't leave a scratch on the entity itself. Lords in particular, should anticipate this encounter, as there is evidence to suggest the Chaos entity arrived with the intention of killing the Successor

### **Arcana Simulacrum 300**

A relic of a bygone age, one of the Arcana which was scattered when the Lord sacrificed himself – this one is one of the redundancies that the former Lord had arranged for before he sacrificed himself. As such, this has no Guardian assigned to it. And because the Lord Successor only needs the key Arcana shards protected by the Guardians in order to reassemble the True Arcana, this emergency fallback should never be necessary, provided that the Successor can unseal all of the Arcana hidden in the Horodyn Shrine in a timely manner.

Originating from the Stone of Vermillion, the Arcana is a wellspring of life, and just having it present revitalizes the surrounding world, driving away corruption and allowing new life to flourish – from nothing if there is no foundation to work off of. Beings unaffected by corruption grow quicker while under the Arcana's influence, and the Arcana will passively gather energy as living beings go through the cycle of life around it.

As it is not a mimicry or influenced by Chaos, this Arcana has the ability to call forth new life, though it'll need direction from you to determine what kind of life it brings into the world. If you're opting for sentient or even sapient life, just note that the more complex the creature, the longer it takes for the Arcana to successfully establish a population. Also note that the Arcana works with breeds rather than individuals. By choosing a creature for the Arcana to “reproduce” however, you can also designate it as a Guardian, and as the Arcana establishes a cycle of life, the energy that cycles between the Arcana and the world around it will steadily strengthen the Guardian.

You should keep in mind that while the Arcana may stimulate growth and bolster life, but it's not some sort of rapid planetary terraforming and repopulation artifact.



## **[SITUATIONAL MODIFIERS]**

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*There's no cap on modifiers, just note that stacking too many of these can lead to bizarre situations that may be impossible depending on your strength.*

*Re:Cycle however, is a special modifier that can only be taken once. If Re:Cycle was used “before”, it cannot be taken “again”.*

### **Re:Cycle [Special]**

Horodyn is one world among many. Chaos is the antithesis to the Lord, the Stone of Vermillion, and all of creation. The fight between them is eternal – with the wall between worlds broken, Chaos can be driven back, but eventually, somewhere, sometime in the future, it will return.

The previous Lord clashed with Chaos countless times over what felt like an eternity. He drove it back and reclaimed worlds, but at the end of it all, he realized that his mantle had become a prison. The Stone had created the world, but Chaos was not its creation, and so the Lord could only drive it outside the world, back into its own domain. He had all the time in the world to suppress it, to contain it, to banish it, but maintaining the status quo was the best he could do.

The Lord accepted that this fight had no end, but by the time he did there was no one left beside him. Life existed, societies existed, but he was alone in his fight against the Chaos. Now weary of the fight, his responsibility having become his greatest burden, the Lord chose to abdicate by shattering the Stone. The cycle was reset as the Stone became the Arcana, nested away on Horodyn to await the Lord's Successor. Chaos returned, but with no sign of the Stone, its progress slowed – it was unaware that the Stone had been scattered into shards, creating the myriad of worlds.

Whether you determined that you were the Successor or just another wanderer, this gives you the opportunity to go through a second cycle, with a caveat. During the second cycle you're effectively locked into the path which was not chosen. “Progress” attained in terms of perks, companions, and items during the first cycle are retained – the second cycle is effectively a “new” Horodyn.

Whether things will play out differently is in your hands.

### **Chaos Influence +100**

The taint of Chaos has a very peculiar effect on living beings. The initial effects of the corruption aren't readily visible, but as the corruption increases, the creature's behaviour will become more aggressive and less methodical. However, because the corruption greatly increases the strength of the creature from the onset, this can make corrupted creatures dangerous to fight against – the unexpected level of strength can easily overpower the Slayer

who was anticipating something weaker. But worse still, when the creature feels threatened, it is liable to transform, becoming cloaked in darkness, marking a full conversion to the Chaos. In this state, their capabilities increase even further, and the Chaos' influence allows them to ignore their injuries, at least until they are completely subjugated.

You should be wary of all this, because the number of Chaos corrupted creatures wandering the wilderness will increase greatly. Should you go on a hunt, it is inevitable that you will run into these beasts.

### **The Covetous and The Coveted +100**

The Arcana have attracted the attention of many, though the vast majority of people are unfit to wield its strength and fail to stand their ground against the guardian. But there are those who know more than rumors regarding the Arcana and their power, some know the link between the Arcana and the Stone of Vermillion – and they're aware that the existence of the Arcana means that the Lord has yet to return. Which means they have a chance to usurp the mantle for themselves.

**Every time this is taken, you net yourself a stalker.** They're convinced that you're an obstacle in their quest to become the Lord, regardless of whether you've elected to become the successor. Competent enough to give you a challenge, they seem to constantly have a bead on you, and if the opportunity presents itself, they'll make an attempt on your life. Otherwise, they'll be working to try and turn others against you, to undermine your efforts wherever you decide to wander. If there are more than one, they're very likely to cooperate with one another until you are removed from the equation.

### **Shattered Realm +100**

When the presence of Chaos in a world becomes overwhelming, it seeps into the very fabric of the world. Color is drained from the world, living beings become mere shadows of their former selves, and the world moves closer to stagnancy with each day that passes. The environmental isn't just depressing, it is mentally oppressive to the point where even day to day life becomes a constant struggle to maintain course and retain motivation.

Horodyn happens to be in such a state. Until the True Arcana is assembled, the Chaos' influence will return even if you have means to drive it away. The silver lining is that Chaos doesn't have the presence of mind to search for the True Arcana on a world already under its influence. But Horodyn is deep within Chaos territory, for a newly ascended Lord, while this will give them easy access to the enemy, the moment that Chaos becomes aware of the situation, they'll have to be ready for intense retaliation.

### **Chaos Legion +200**

For quite some time now, the Arcana's Guardians have been holding off the Chaos, and with parts of Horodyn sealed away to contain the threats, the “safe” region of Port Carillo has been

able to sustain a small society of humans. If you want the peace to continue, you better be ready to defend the Port, because Chaos will be sending waves of corrupted entities after you and other survivors, led by malignant variations of the original Lord's guardians. Each one of these “generals” is about as strong as the corrupted guardians, placing them below a guardian actively bound to a Lord, but still easily capable of destroying Port Carillo if given free reign. And since the Arcana are kept just outside Port Carillo, and need to remain in the shrine there for the reassembly to proceed...well, the Lord Successor has their work cut out for them.

### **Vettel Curse +200**

The notion of being cursed isn't unheard of, there are Slayers who attest to being cursed with immortality, others who claim they have been cursed with unavoidable misfortune. Your curse just happens to be...quite evident from a mere glance. No one can deny that your form definitely isn't that of a human, but rather a Vettel.

The Vettel, a rather diminutive creature that looks like a small demon covered in leaves – well they're not really made for combat. And in a world where nearly everyone has to be able to fight to some degree this can prove to be a problem. The problem isn't so much that your abilities are sealed, but rather they don't work very well with your cursed body. Holding onto weapons can be a challenge when most weapons are several times your size. Some forms of magic can have substantial backlash onto the Vettel's small frame. The Vettel can fly, but it isn't particularly fast, and as expected from the Vettel's frame, a blow can easily send it flying. Uncontrolled flight that is.

If you happen to be the Successor. Pray. Pray intensely.

### **War of Hegemony +300**

It so happens that there isn't just one Lord Successor. It's unclear whether these new Lord Successors were created by Chaos, or if they arrived from other worlds, but for every Arcana Guardian, one Lord Successor has come to claim them and begin on their road towards becoming the true Lord of Vermillion.

This is naturally a problem if you or one of your companions happens to be the Lord Successor. This becomes a bigger problem when you take in account the peculiar fact that none of the Successors are capable of communicating with one another, they're compelled to fight one another automatically upon encountering their counterparts, and whoever loses the fight disperses into a shower of light, presumably to return to wherever they came from – or simply die off. Any Arcana in the defeated Successor's possession is bestowed upon the winner.

And during this war of succession, Chaos will continue to grow in strength. If the conflict draws out for too long, Horodyn will fall to Chaos, and the likelihood that any of the Lord Successors surviving will be slim to nil.

## Notes

### What is what?

Lord of Apocalypse is the remade version of Lord of Arcana. Lord of Vermillion is the technical prequel to Lord of Apocalypse. Lord of Vermillion would later go on to spawn Lord of Vermillion Arena (after some sequels), which is technically somewhere concurrent/parallel to Lord of Vermillion and Crimson King. Crimson King is the anime sidestory to Vermillion and is technically concurrent to either Vermillion, Arena, or Apocalypse.

Lord of Arcana's original story did not involve Lords, rather you were just someone random with the potential to be a Lord Candidate. The backstory however, is technically the same as Vermillion, just years afterwards. Lord of Apocalypse changed the story somewhere, to which you were a Lord all along (hence the choice of a Lord specific pathway), and confirmed the existence of many more worlds other than the original 7 as per lore.

Lord of Vermillion is set before this, technically during the time when Lords fought each other to become the eponymous Lord of Vermillion. Arena was the “peak” of this, when large numbers of Lords fought against one another and alongside one another. Crimson King is set in “modern day Tokyo”, and is assumed to be “just one world among many”. Lord of Vermillion IV was set in the same “domain” as Crimson King, with the same characters.

For all intents and purposes this is set in the world of Lord of Apocalypse.

True Arcana/Stone of Vermillion is used interchangeably.

### About Re:Cycle

Because the Lord path is technically so restrictive, the option to take the jump twice was introduced – once for the Lord path, once for what would be an otherwise “normal” run. Two birds with one stone.

### About Vettels

Most of the bosses (Arcana Guardians can be found in youtube videos, though realistically only Xerxes, Azdaja, Takemikazuchi, Cthulhu, and Hecatoncheirs have unique designs. Grendel and Bahamut are somewhat similar, and Siegfried is literally a knight.). The Vettel are difficult to pin down, so here's an image.



### About the Deck of Familiars

This basically runs off of the core premise of Lord of Vermillions Arena (the ~~half-assed~~ setting where Lords from multiple kingdoms all became summoners and decided to try and slaughter each other to become the Lord of Vermillion). In light of “first jump viability”, **the four cards** that are used as a “default” summoning template can be filled out “**for free**”. (Normally you'd need to beat the target into submission in order to create a Familiar). The catch is this:

For these four, you can choose from either the list of local monsters (Yes, including Guardians – the Familiar to some extent an arcane mimic) or the actual list of cards as it applies to LoVA. Because the series is basically dead, I'd generally advise to go by names that you'd recognize, but the following resources might help.

>[https://lordofarcana.fandom.com/wiki/Mobile:Monster\\_Encyclopedia](https://lordofarcana.fandom.com/wiki/Mobile:Monster_Encyclopedia) Despite the name this has information on Lord of Apocalypse creatures as well.

><https://lova.fandom.com/wiki/Servants> English resources for LoVA are absolutely terrible, and will only give you a list of names but not pictures. <https://wiki.4gamer.net/lova/%E4%BD%BF%E3%81%84%E9%AD%94> This site is a lot better despite it being in complete Japanese. Use the five icons marked [人獣][神族][魔種][海種][不死] (tl: Beast, God, Daemon, Sea Monster, Undead) to navigate, clicking on those icons will yield pictures, clicking on the pictures gives names and a general ability. Names are in Japanese but Google translate mostly works if you can't read. Yes there are collab creatures – no making them familiars doesn't mean you get the person, the rules of the Familiar being a mimic with its own personality applies, even if you choose to make a mimic of someone like Suigintou or Zero (they're both Undead race fyi)

**My advice** is if you can't be bothered but you still want familiars for whatever reason, just grab whatever monsters from the LoA list that sounds cool. Or look at the second list, find a picture you like and go for that. The English LoVA list is NOT comprehensive. I highly suggest using the Japanese site and going by pictures while translating the names (always at the top of the card and top of the page when the picture is clicked).

### The Odd World of Horodyn



(Credits to the folks on the English wiki for ripping the map)

1: Port Carillo. 2: Neumellow Woods 3: Ahbor Desert 4: Brankad Lava Cave 5: Kamma Wind Cave 6: Gurow Bog 7: Celestial Temple 8: Urtbarn Hill 9: Cursed District 10: Scarlet Tower 11: Yormbea Labyrinthe 12: Temple Cavern (part of Port Carillo) 13: Rivenhelt Ruins

## Perk Notes

<b>Slayer (Lord of Arcana)</b>	
<b>Weapon Proficiency</b>	<p>*Establishes proficiency with a specific weapon type. This includes magic.</p> <p>*As the weapon type is used more, skills that are tied to that give weapon type increase in strength.</p> <p>*If you have no weapon expertise or spell expertise (blank entry), this allows you to obtain one for native weapons and spells.</p> <p>*This includes the Twinblade/Lightsword/Staff/Greatsword/Battleaxe/Spear Rifle/Tomahawk for weapons. Magic falls under Fire/Wind/Lightning/Ice/Holy/Darkness/Earth</p>
<b>Rapid Consumption</b>	<p>*As long as you have the necessary consumables in inventory or storage close by, you will automatically use it in pinch situations. Removes the need to manually consume items.</p> <p>*You can choose what items this applies to and when it activates.</p>
<b>Core Shattering</b>	<p>*Enemies defeated have a chance to leave behind their spiritual essence/soul in the form of a “Core”.</p> <p>*Cores can be used to enhance equipment, or used to increase personal strength.</p> <p>*Breaking off parts of an enemy has a chance to leave behind fragments of a core. Enough fragments can be combined together to form an intact core and doesn't affect the shattered individual.</p> <p>*It becomes easier to determine which parts of an enemy can be broken.</p>
<b>Aura of Siegfried</b>	<p>*After being wounded to a certain threshold, your physical abilities will increase dramatically (2x init.). Your speed, strength, and ability to ignore physical force will surge, and continue to increase should you receive further wounds.</p> <p>*In this state, your body ignores the normal physical limitations of combat (i.e. swinging a weapon too fast hurts the body), and physical attacks emit a wave of force upon impact (AoE effect). The strength of the wave is proportional to the severity of wounds taken.</p> <p>*Outside of combat, the rate at which your wounds heal is greatly accelerated, but you have to be out of combat for a minimum period of time.</p>
<b>Constructor (Lord of Vermillion Arena)</b>	
<b>Structural Reinforcement</b>	<p>*The inherent stability of structures you create, and their ability to resist damage, are increased.</p> <p>*Allows you to reinforce structures using any form of magical energy, structures reinforced this way effectively have a magic shield that lasts until the damage they sustain is greater than the shield's capacity. While reinforced, structures have greater operational efficiency.</p>
<b>Vermillion Gate</b>	<p>*With enough materials, energy, and time, space can be “split” open – creating a pocket dimension. This takes a section of your surroundings and duplicates it into said pocket dimension. Each dimension made this way requires a small flow of energy to sustain, and is of a fixed size.</p> <p>*Creatures that wander into the affected space can be sucked into the</p>



	<p>pocket dimension.</p> <p>*The pocket dimension can be locked with a gate, which requires a steady flow of magic in order to unlock (you can bypass this). The Gate itself can be set up to move about and evade those who would attempt to access it without permission.</p>
<b>Static Warfare</b>	<p>*Used to create Towers, expends energy and time, but not resources. Towers are generally used defensively, but have other applications as well, and come in three different varieties.</p> <p>*Guard Towers are the quickest to make, and attack hostile entities automatically, with a fixed detection and attack range using its magic laser.</p> <p>*Mana Towers take longer to erect, but will massively channel mana to you or nearby allies, and can be used to sustain the operation of other Towers, as both Guard Towers and Minion Arks require mana.</p> <p>*Minion Arks take the longest to erect, but have a wider detection range than the Guard Tower and will alert you to enemy movement. Should you happen to have minions that you can control, the Ark allows you to deploy them automatically from the Ark and empowers them so long as the minions stay within the Ark's effective radius.</p>
<b>The World's Heart</b>	<p>*Forms a makeshift Arcana, in this case drawing more heavily on the soulstone aspect of the Arcana. Because it isn't a "real" Arcana, this doesn't interact with the Lord. Only a single Arcana can be manifested at any given time, and it is a time intensive process. The more energy you dedicate to the process, the more durable and effective the Arcana becomes.</p> <p>*The Arcana serves as a "relay" point for you and allies. Should you fall, the Arcana will shatter but you'll survive an otherwise fatal injury. The Arcana will manifest a Gatekeeper to defend itself (By default this is a creature resembling a Final Fantasy Bahamut). This creature stays around the Arcana at all times to defend it and will not stray away.</p> <p>*Should you happen to have minions you can control, the Arcana can sustain the resurrection of minions when they fall, but they'll resurrect next to the Arcana (which can be problematic if you happen to be far away). This doesn't break the Arcana.</p>
<b>Guildmaster (Lord of Apocalypse)</b>	
<b>Personnel Scouting</b>	<p>*Makes it easier for you to find people willing to help you.</p> <p>*Allows you to see some of the skills that the people you encounter have high proficiency in.</p> <p>*General boost to persuasive ability.</p>
<b>Mercenary Management</b>	<p>*Improvements to leadership and personnel management ability. Personnel which you manage will perform better at their assigned tasks.</p> <p>*When you oversee/command individuals (such as mercenaries or minions) and they utilize skills/proficiencies which you share, their growth in that field will be substantially higher than normal.</p> <p>*Individuals who have worked under or alongside you for a long time can exceed their normal limitations when it comes to performance. This phenomenon is slow, but permanent and accumulates with time.</p>

<b>Foundational Skills</b>	<p>*Your general ability at teaching new skills and proficiencies to those which you've taken under your wing improves. Most effective for teaching basic skill sets, such as basic spells, basic alchemy.</p> <p>*For basic skills this allows you to teach the skills to groups nearly instantly. Success rate falls dramatically for complex skills, or if you're attempting to teach a large number of skills at once.</p> <p>*You must have a solid foundation in these skills before they can be taught to others in this fashion, skills taught this way do not exceed your level of expertise, and if the skills require a catalyst, they can still be utilized, but their effectiveness falls.</p>
<b>Together as One</b>	<p>*You passively borrow a portion of strength from each individual contracted, obligated, or in a cooperative relationship with you so long as they are in the vicinity. This applies to general ventures, combat, magic and so forth, but is dependent on the skills of the individuals. The greater their individual skill, the more pronounced the effect becomes. Borrowing in this manner doesn't weaken the “donors” by any appreciable amount.</p> <p>*When working in a group, if an ally happens to fall, you can expend a portion of life force in order to bring the ally back into action, reversing the consequences of injuries entirely. The more severe the wounds, the more energy this requires, but the requirement decreases the more allies there are in the vicinity.</p> <p>*People under your command are more open to working with each other even if they have personal differences or open animosity.</p>
<b>Tainted (Lord of Vermillion/LoVA/Crimson King)</b>	
<b>Lineage Ward</b>	<p>*Your blood (and body) becomes resistant to curses, afflictions, and corruption.</p> <p>*By default this makes your blood a hazard to others, those who ingest your blood will slowly become corrupted and suffer from mental debilitation. You can suppress this.</p> <p>*Your resistance towards unwanted mutation from various sources increases steadily with time.</p>
<b>Blood Weapon</b>	<p>*Allows you to materialize a weapon using a portion of your blood. This weapon shares the same properties as your blood, and as long as you have blood at your disposal, you can materialize it as many times as necessary.</p> <p>*By using more blood, the weapon can be reinforced and made stronger. Repeated use of the weapon makes it stronger as well. While there are no limitations on what you can materialize (be it a sword, shurikens, bow and arrow, shield, etc.), if you do not decide upon one set materialized form and switch between many different ones, the weapon can't grow in strength.</p>
<b>Chaos Resonance</b>	<p>*Allows you to slowly infect others with your blood. This does not interfere with any potential mental debilitation effects, but the more blood that you feed/inject into them, the quicker the infection spreads. Wounding them with your blood weapon also accelerates this effect.</p> <p>*When the enemy is sufficiently infected, you can manipulate them to</p>



	<p>transform into a monster. They retain their consciousness, but are otherwise subjected to your control until either you release the control or they break free on their own accord.</p> <p>*A fully controlled individual will emanate a dark aura around them, this aura is strong enough to protect them by a small degree, but it can be purged or purified if the opportunity presents itself.</p>
<b>Blood Transformation</b>	<p>*Allows for a complete transformation into a “corrupted” state.</p> <p>*This state is similar to the Vermillion boss, which is a complete corruption of a former Lord. The form serves as an “exoskeleton” of sorts, but it needs to be broken before your actual body can be harmed.</p> <p>*The form's actual appearance can be your choice, or you can use the Vermillion boss as a template.</p> <p>*This state amplifies one aspect of your abilities, but only one. If you choose to amplify your magical capabilities, it will have no effect on your physical capabilities, and vice versa.</p>
<b>Misc</b>	
<b>Cinematic Engagement</b>	<p>*When you bring a particularly difficult enemy down to their last legs, you'll always engage in an overly dramatic fight sequence (effectively you and the target get thrown into a movie cutscene) with them. You can still act freely during this, but your enemy will slow down noticeably (for dramatic effect) and give you time to react.</p> <p>*This will occasionally kick into effect when you're at a severe disadvantage, and gives you an opportunity to throw the enemy off balance.</p> <p>*If multiple enemies are close by, this can drag them into it as well.</p>
<b>Inducing Flight</b>	<p>*In combat, enemies are driven to flee from you the moment it becomes clear that you have an advantage.</p> <p>*The weaker they are, the more likely they are to flee.</p> <p>*When an enemy is forced to flee due to this, they'll panic completely and give up on any thought of fighting back.</p>
<b>Record of the Ages</b>	<p>*Memory extension modification (based off of Vettels). Extremely straightforward.</p>
<b>Stake of Corruption</b>	<p>*A curse that is particularly effective against summoned entities or supernatural entities. Used against summoned entities this immobilizes them for as long as you sustain it, and slowly corrupts them until eventually you can turn them against their masters.</p> <p>*Used against normal individuals, the immobilization effect can be resisted, but the curse will steadily damage the individual unless they dispel the magic. Manifests as stakes driven through the target.</p>