

Gesamtnacht: A Revised Nacht Sorcery

Knacks: Awareness (Bewußtsein), Chill (Schattenschauer), Domination (Herrschaft), Pathway (Schattenbahn), Scar (Schattennarbe)

Apprentice Degree: Call of the Shadows

Adept Degree: Embrace of the Shadows

Master Degree: One with the Shadows

Fleischwulf. The Schattenman. Opa Nacht. The mysterious artifacts of Die Kreuzritter. The shadows of Eisen are a living, breathing force: sometimes malevolent, sometimes beneficial, but always powerful and mysterious. The sheer number of encounters with creatures of shadow (or who manifest some sort of darkness-related power) in Eisen suggests that there must be a common ancestor. Some dark thread that weaves through the past and present of Eisen, bringing all these shadowy powers together. And those suggestions are correct.

In ages past, a quiet but ambitious Synchron race lived in cities of black ice, built far underground. The name of this race has been lost to history, though anyone who happened to stumble upon one of their ruined cities and managed to translate the writings they found there would learn that this race was less populous than their fellows. Primarily feudal in nature, and prone to periodic struggles for supremacy that saw entire ruling factions cast down, this race kept to its place in the shadows, little acknowledged by the other races that fought for dominion (or deliverance) of Terra.

Though violent and power hungry, the race was also pragmatic and fiercely proud. By the time the Great Wars were nearing their end, it was obvious that they would not survive. They had spent so long warring with one another, they could no longer stand up to whichever side won the war, and their sophisticated technology and mastery of the forces of shadow were simply too potent for the victors to let them go unchecked. Rather than risking annihilation in a war that was already lost and seeing all they had created cast down, the survivors of this race chose to destroy themselves.

One by one, they willed themselves into the shadows, never to return. Their cities were left intact, but stripped of their most powerful defenses. Their artifacts of sorcery were shattered and the remnants scattered throughout their domain, each harnessing a tiny, residual part of the race's power...and each prepared to surrender its secrets if found.

Currently, the once-potent Sorcery of Gesamtnacht—True Night—exists only in fragments, granted to a select few by the discovery of some odd artifact or Synchron construct. Even the brightest scholars of Synchron Lore know very little about the Sorcery or the race that spawned it, beyond a few pictographs in Eisen dig sites which they have come to translate as “Penumbra.” Before the Sorcery could be reborn, some enterprising explorer (or mysterious secret society) would have to gather a variety of artifacts and invest their powers in a single individual. Conceivably, the combination of these artifacts could spontaneously reawaken the Gesamtnacht bloodline.

Of course, it could also reawaken the race that spawned the magic and call them back from the shadows...

Apprentice Degree

An Apprentice of Gesamtnacht has begun to feel at home in the shadows, and can travel through them freely (though at great cost). At the Apprentice level, a Gesamtnacht Sorcerer may enter the Dark Paths himself using his Pathway Knack. He may carry inanimate objects with him, but he cannot transport living objects. It costs one Action and one Drama Die to enter the Dark Paths, and another of each to leave them. (Woe to the Sorcerer who uses his last Drama Die to enter the Paths; even if he manages to avoid the dangers therein, he will eventually starve unless he can scrounge up another.) In addition, the Apprentice gains a limited ability to see in the dark; any

actions he attempts in conditions of Dim Lighting or Total Darkness are penalized Unkept dice rather than Kept dice.

Unlike many Sorceries, there are no set physical manifestations of Gesamtnacht; the physical changes a Sorcerer undergoes are a function of the specific Knacks he manifests, rather than the sorcery itself.

Adept Degree

At the Adept level, a Gesamtnacht Sorcerer's senses continue to sharpen. He suffers no penalties to actions taken in conditions of Dim Lighting, and any penalties for operating in Total Darkness are halved (this is cumulative with the benefits of the Night Trained Advantage, if applicable, as well as the Apprentice level benefit). By spending an Action and a Drama Die, an Adept may push inanimate objects into the Dark Paths without entering them himself, though he can not guarantee that they will go unmolested if he leaves them there too long, and he still cannot bring living objects through the shadows.

Master Degree

A Master of Gesamtnacht can operate in darkness as well as—if not better than—he can in daylight. He suffers no penalties for operating in Total Darkness, and any rolls he makes in conditions of Dim Lighting receive a bonus of two Unkept dice if they involve movement or vision in any way. As a Master, he can finally bring living creatures into the Dark Paths, though he must accompany them, and they must remain in contact with his body at all times or they will fall out of the shadows and back into the “real” world. A Master is free to bring animals into the Dark Paths, though they will invariably panic unless specifically trained to function in the alien landscape (requiring an Animal Training check with a TN of 30). Every additional living creature brought into the Dark Paths requires the expenditure of an additional Drama Die, though they can be ejected from the shadows at no cost simply by breaking physical contact with the Sorcerer. Finally, the Master does not age while he is in the Dark Paths, though he may certainly die from unnatural causes, or from starvation or thirst.

Sorcerous Knacks

Note that because Gesamtnacht is not a Bargainer's Sorcery, using any of the Knacks below requires the expenditure of an Action and a Drama die, unless specified otherwise.

Awareness (*Bewußtsein*): The unearthly cold that permeates the Gesamtnacht Sorcerer leaves him constantly on edge; the world around him seems to move a little more slowly, and he develops reflexes like a cat's. The Sorcerer always adds twice his Rank in this Knack to all Active Defenses he attempts, as well as to his Initiative total in combat. There is no Drama Die cost associated with this Knack, however, the Sorcerer finds it virtually impossible to sit still. He must subtract twice his Rank in this Knack from all Stealth and Unobtrusive rolls he attempts (he may spend a Drama Die to negate this penalty for a single roll, but only before the roll is made). Furthermore, a Sorcerer with a Rank above zero in this Knack ages two years for every one year that actually passes (though a Gesamtnacht Master still ceases to age at all in the Dark Paths).

Chill (*Schattenschauer*): By using this Knack, a Sorcerer can turn the shadows into a weapon, damaging his enemies with the unnatural chill of the darkness that infuses him. The method by which he inflicts harm, and the physical effect this Knack has upon him, varies by Mastery Level. (Note that an Adept can choose to use the Apprentice level effect, and a Master can use the Apprentice or Adept level abilities, should he so wish.) None of the attacks inflicted by using this Knack leave any marks upon the victim.

Apprentice Level: By grabbing hold of an opponent in a shadowy area, the Apprentice can attempt to drag the opponent into the shadows and inflict damage upon him. After successfully Grappling an opponent, the Apprentice may spend an Action (and a Drama die) to make a contested Brawn roll against his opponent in an attempt to pull him into the shadows. If the Apprentice wins this roll, the opponent suffers a number of Flesh Wounds equal to the difference between the rolls. If the opponent wins, or if he escapes from the Grapple, he manages to avoid being pulled into the shadows and suffers no damage. An Apprentice with a Rank above zero in this Knack has darkened fingernails, as if they are perpetually bruised.

Adept Level: An Adept can call forth the shadows within him to create a melee weapon (knife, rapier, broadsword, or whatever) by spending a Drama Die, but not an Action. This weapon is shadowy and insubstantial; it cannot be broken or disarmed, cannot be parried or used to parry, and ignores any armor (even Dracheneisen) worn by an opponent. It must be wielded by the Adept directly; if he attempts to throw the weapon or give it away, it will vanish immediately. The Adept rolls to attack with the weapon normally, using Finesse + whatever Knack is associated with the weapon he has created, and rolls a number of dice equal to his Rank in this Knack for damage, keeping dice equal to his Mastery Level in Gesamtnacht. This damage is not increased by the Adept's Brawn, though he may take Raises on his attack roll to add Unkept damage dice. For all other intents and purposes, the weapon is a perfectly normal example of its type; it cannot be created with any special modifications, but it may be used with any applicable Swordsman Knacks or other abilities. A weapon created using this Knack may be dismissed at will, without spending an Action. If exposed to direct sunlight, the weapon immediately vanishes, and the Adept suffers Flesh Wounds equal to the Damage Rating of the weapon he created (1k1 Flesh Wounds for a knife or stiletto, 2k2 for a fencing weapon, 3k2 for a heavy weapon, and so on). The Apprentice level "bruising" associated with this Knack spreads at the Adept level; the Adept's hands will be mottled with dark patches all the way up to his wrists.

Master Level: By spending an Action and a Drama Die, a Master may animate the shadows near an opponent (including the opponent's own shadow) and direct them to attack that opponent. The attack roll is made using the Master's Finesse + Chill; like the weapons of the Adept level, these attacks cannot be parried and ignore all types of armor. If an attack is successful, the shadows inflict Flesh Wounds equal to the amount by which they beat the target's Passive Defense (note that a target attempting to Parry these attacks has a Passive Defense of 5). A Master may attack only one opponent at a time, and once the shadows have been animated, they require additional Actions to attack again, but not additional Drama dice (the shadows may also be dismissed at will, requiring neither an Action, nor a Drama die). Additional Drama dice must be spent only if the Master wishes to attack another target. At the Master level, this Knack stains the hands of a Master completely dark, not unlike the bloodstained hands of a Porté user. However, the hands of a Gesamtnacht Sorcerer appear bruised rather than bloody.

The Nightblade Advantage described in the Kreuzritter sourcebook is a corrupted form of this Sorcerous Knack.

Domination (Herrschaft): Traditionally the first power manifested by a Sorcerer blooded with Gesamtnacht, the Domination Knack causes the shadows within the Sorcerer to well up in his eyes; by fixing his gaze on another person, he can force them to look away uncomfortably. The Sorcerer may add Unkept dice equal to his Rank in this Knack to any Intimidate actions he attempts (in addition to any dice added courtesy of another Knack or ability). The eyes of a

Gesamtnacht Sorcerer with a Rank above zero in this Knack lose their original color; his irises become completely black.

Pathway (*Schattenbahn*): By using the Pathway Knack, a Gesamtnacht Sorcerer can step through the shadows of the mortal world and enter the Dark Paths, as described on pages 82-84 of *Die Kreuzritter*. It takes one Action (and a Drama die) to enter the shadows, and another Action (and a Drama die) to leave them. The Sorcerer's ease at traveling within the Dark Paths, and the effect they have on him while he is there, varies with his Mastery Level. Note that it does not cost Drama Dice to move within the Dark Paths once the Sorcerer has entered them. A Sorcerer with a Rank greater than zero in the Pathway Knack no longer casts a shadow of his own, regardless of lighting conditions.

Apprentice Level: The Apprentice may enter the Dark Paths and move within them at the same rate he moves anywhere else; each mile traveled in the Dark Paths equates to a mile in the real world. An Apprentice suffers from shadowburn as described in *Die Kreuzritter*, and can only move fifty feet with a single Action; an Apprentice generally uses this power as a temporary escape from immediate harm, or to ambush an unsuspecting opponent.

Adept Level: As an Adept, a Gesamtnacht Sorcerer may cross great distances in the Dark Paths in a very short time. By spending an Action, the Adept may take a single step and move to any other point in the Paths within his line of sight (i.e., about twenty miles, given the generally level surface of the Dark Paths). While useful for making a hasty escape, navigation in the Dark Paths is a tricky affair. To arrive at a specific location, the Adept must make a Wits + Navigation or Wits + Cartography roll with a TN equal to the number of Actions (i.e., "steps") necessary to reach the location. Thus, a five-step (100 mile) journey has a TN of 5, but traveling from Freiburg to Kirk (820 miles) would have a TN of 41. If this roll is failed, it is up to the Game Master's discretion how far off course the Adept is, and where he ultimately emerges from the shadows. An Adept is no longer subject to the effects of shadowburn, though he is still in danger from any Nights or assorted critters he encounters in the Dark Paths.

Master Level: A Master of Gesamtnacht is virtually unlimited in his ability to travel within the Dark Paths. By spending a single Action, he may attempt to move to any other location within the Dark Paths. This requires a Resolve + Pathway roll against a TN using the same mechanic as the Adept level ability. As before, it is up to the GM to decide how far off course the Sorcerer is if this roll is failed, and he cannot attempt a second roll to arrive at a specific destination without first leaving the Dark Paths to check his bearings. Note that any living creatures the Master brings into the Dark Paths are subject to the effects of shadowburn, even though the Master himself is not.

The Nacht Advantage described in the *Kreuzritter* sourcebook is a corrupted form of this Sorcerous Knack.

Scar (*Schattennarbe*): The Gesamtnacht Sorcerer's Scar Knack is one of his most fearsome weapons, not only because of the horrible effects it can inflict, but because of the way it complements his other abilities. To inflict a Scar on an opponent, a Sorcerer must spend an Action and a Drama Die, and make a successful Finesse + Scar roll against the opponent's TN to be hit. An opponent may choose to Actively Defend against this attack, and unlike Chill attacks, it may be parried. If successful, the Sorcerer rends part of the opponent's shadow away. The target of the attack will appear normal, but his shadow will display jagged "wounds," as if there are portions of the target that simply aren't there, and therefore cast no shadow.

Although he appears normal, the target of this attack nevertheless radiates a disturbing aura. He automatically gains a Fear Rating equal to the Gesamtnacht Mastery Level of the Sorcerer who struck him. This Fear Rating cannot be controlled, and will affect animals, townsfolk, and even the target's family and friends (though the Sorcerer who gave the mark is immune to this Fear effect himself). Anyone in the target's presence must make the necessary Resolve roll or suffer the requisite loss of Unkept dice on all rolls made in the character's vicinity (even if they are made against another target) due to the disconcerting aura of menace the target exudes. Furthermore, while affected by the Scar Knack, the target can neither spend nor accumulate Drama Dice for any reason. (Note that a Sorcerer can use this Knack on himself, though he suffers the drawbacks as well as the benefits.)

The Scar remains in place until the next sunrise. However, by making a successful Called Shot on the Finesse + Scar roll, the Sorcerer extends the duration of the effect by one full day for every Raise necessary to make the Called Shot. So long as the Scar remains in place, the Sorcerer who inflicted it can unerringly track the target; if he wishes, he may use his powers to walk the Dark Paths to travel to the target's location without requiring any sort of roll to navigate the Paths successfully.

If a Gesamtnacht Sorcerer has a Rank greater than zero in the Scar Knack, his fingernails inevitably begin tapering into sharp points, and by the time he reaches the level of Master his fingertips will have become as hard as bone. This has no effect on game mechanics, though it looks quite scary unless the Master files his nails on a daily basis.

Game Master's Notes

Aside from the overwhelming rarity of Gesamtnacht Sorcery in general, the "Gamemaster's Discretion" aspect of the Pathway Knack is probably the most compelling restraint against Player abuse of the power. Game Masters may wish to make these checks in secret, and the following table provides some suggestions for handling failed rolls. As an option, the Game Master may choose to apply a less advantageous result; each Drama Die he spends will bump the result down one level on this table.

TN Missed By	Possible Effects
0	Sorcerer arrives at intended destination.
1 - 5	Mildly off course (right city, wrong building); minor inconvenience when emerging from Dark Paths (Sorcerer is not adequately dressed for weather at destination, or emerges in a large puddle).
6 - 10	Moderately off course (right general area, wrong city); embarrassing moment when emerging from Dark Paths (Sorcerer emerges in the middle of a formal dinner party, or a noblewoman's bath).
11 - 15	Severely off course (right nation, wrong province or shire); potential danger when emerging from Dark Paths (Sorcerer emerges in front of a runaway carriage, or near a cadre of Inquisitors).
16 - 24	Horribly off course (wrong nation); imminent danger when emerging from Dark Paths (Sorcerer emerges in a burning building, or in the middle of a pistol duel).
25 or more	Imminent danger <i>before</i> emerging from Dark Paths (Sorcerer materializes above a wide empty space or body of water, or in front of an enraged Night).



Clever players may try to avoid high TN's by making multiple short journeys within the Dark Paths rather than a single long one. This is only effective if the Sorcerer leaves the Dark Paths (spending a Drama Die to do so), gets his bearings, then reenters the Paths (spending another Drama Die) to make the next leg of his journey. If this step is not taken at every stage of the journey, allow multiple rolls to be made, but the TN's are cumulative, as are the penalties for failure.

This Sorcery does not have a direct effect on the Barrier. Rather, it allows immediate access to the Barrier itself, with potentially disastrous results. A Porté Sorcerer who opens a rift while in the Dark Paths is likely to cause an immediate, massive breach in the Barrier. On the other hand, a Glamour Mage who invokes the Legends in the Dark Paths may cause even a sizeable tear in the Barrier to heal itself instantly. On an equally disastrous level, just as a Gesamtnacht Master may bring living creatures into the Dark Paths with him, he may bring inhabitants of the Dark Paths (Strangers, Nights, or what have you) into the mundane world by staying in physical contact with them and spending an extra Drama Die (per creature) when leaving the Dark Paths. If the Sorcerer breaks contact with the creature, it will be thrust back into the shadows (similarly, a Master may drag such a creature back into the Dark Paths without spending any additional Drama Dice); otherwise, so long as it remains in contact with the Sorcerer, it is free to act however it wishes.