

## *Tempus: the Bargainer's Art of Greed*

Knacks: Old Wounds, Personal Time, Steal Moment, Time Slip, Timeline

Apprentice Degree: Echo

Adept Degree: Anchor

Master Degree: Tether

It is hardly surprising that details surrounding the Bargain which brought Sorcery to Théah are sketchy. Even the most inspirational tale might have degenerated over centuries of telling and retelling—certainly this dark and sinister coalition would have guarded their secrets and sewn disinformation about the source of their powers—and about who had participated in the ritual. For all of these reasons, the lost Art of Tempus has disappeared from the pool of common knowledge regarding Sorcery; anyone wishing to investigate the Art will need to consult (and find) ancient texts, dating back to the earliest days of the Bargain.

A Tempus Sorcerer—called a Chronomancer—steals bits of time. Mostly, he steals boring, unneeded time from his own future, saving tiny split-seconds he can use to make his life easier in the present. As his powers grow, the Chronomancer can learn to manipulate bigger slices of time, giving him more opportunities to shape his actions or even alter the timeline of others, enemies and allies alike. Most of the Chronomancer's abilities are subtle to outside observers, appearing as good fortune or uncanny speed rather than control over time. But it's clear to anyone who has seen a Chronomancer dash past a charging horse, run along a crumbling ledge, or dodge a guard's musket ball that the Sorcerer has some kind of power.

Many Chronomancers end up with lives focused on larceny and stealth. The ability to slow, alter, and even reverse time is a powerful incentive to take risks, and flaunting the law is a risk that drives many Chronomancers. This does not need to be a malicious act—many Chronomancers see their powers as a way to place checks on the power of tyrants, offer unseen aid to the downtrodden, and rebalance the scales in favor of the unfortunate. Although some use their abilities to brazenly take the things they desire simply because of the sheer thrill of being able to do so, even the most self-centered Chronomancer is unlikely to cause direct harm to downtrodden individuals (though they often have no problem merely ignoring the plights of the unfortunate).

A Chronomancer deals in moments: tiny split-seconds of time that he steals from his own timeline. These moments are inconsequential slivers of continuance that he will not even notice going missing from his activities in the future. However, he can use these moments to affect his present, allowing him to re-try actions or slow down time around him so he can act more carefully and alertly in fast-moving situations.

Unlike most Bargainer's Arts, Tempus does not change a Sorcerer's physical appearance. However, the Sorcery manifests in a number of behavioral changes. A Chronomancer finds it very difficult to sit still under any circumstances—they pace habitually, their hands fidget, and they occasionally break into a pronounced stutter.

### **Apprentice Degree**

An Apprentice Chronomancer receives a pool of one Moment Die for every Tempus Knack in which he has at least one Rank. Thus, a Full-Blooded Chronomancer with Ranks in all five Tempus Knacks would have a pool of five Moment Dice. In addition to powering his Knacks, the Chronomancer may use these Moment Dice to replace any die rolled as part of an Attack Roll, Active Defense, or Skill Check that occurs entirely within the scope of a single action. Immediately after the roll is made, the Chronomancer may take away as many rolled dice as he likes (all at once, or one at a time) and roll Moment Dice in their place. Essentially, he is rewinding time by

small amounts to erase any minor mistakes he made due to distraction, lack of balance, insufficient skill, or some other factor.

For example, a Chronomancer rolls 6 dice (keeping 3) against a TN of 20. He rolls a 1, 2, 2, 4, 6, and 8, for a total of 18. The Chronomancer may take away the die that rolled a 1 and roll a Moment Die in its place. Assume it rolls a 7—that makes the Chronomancer's roll a 21—success!

A Chronomancer may not spend Moment Dice to alter any roll related to the use of one of his Tempus Knacks—the Dice may be used to activate a power or to affect an outcome, but not both. A Chronomancer may still use Drama Dice to improve the use of his Knacks; he may also use Drama Dice to activate his Knacks if he is out of Moment Dice.

The Apprentice's pool of Moment Dice refreshes at midnight on the first day of every month.

### Adept Degree

An Adept Chronomancer has a larger pool of Moment Dice, equal to two Dice for every Tempus Knack in which he has at least one Rank. Thus, a Full-Blooded Adept with Ranks in all five Tempus Knacks would have a pool of ten Moment Dice. In addition to using these Dice as described above, the Adept may spend a Moment Die in conjunction with an Action Die to take an action (including an Active Defense) at any time in a Round, regardless of the Phase showing on the Action Die or the Sorcerer's Initiative Total.

The Adept's pool of Moment Dice refreshes at midnight on the first day of every week.

### Master Degree

A Master Chronomancer has three Moment Dice in his pool for every Tempus Knack in which he has at least one Rank; since a Master must have a Rank of 5 in all five Knacks, that gives the Master a pool of fifteen Moment Dice. As a Master, the Chronomancer may spend two Moment Dice to take an action (including an Active Defense), even if he is Surprised or out of Actions for the Round. (He still cannot attempt an Active Defense after performing a Lunge, against a Beat or Feint, or any other time an Active Defense would not be permitted.) In addition, he may spend a Moment Die to use his Adept ability on behalf of any ally within his line of sight. That ally must have at least one Action Die for the Round; but once this power is invoked, he or she can take an Action immediately, regardless of the Phase showing on the Action Die or his or her Initiative Total.

The Master's pool of Moment Dice refreshes every day at midnight.

### Sorcerous Knacks

**Old Wounds:** By spending a Moment Die, the Chronomancer can channel time into his wounds, causing them to heal quickly, as if many days had passed. A Resolve + Old Wounds roll allows the Chronomancer to instantly heal that many Flesh Wounds. He may also attempt to heal Dramatic Wounds; it requires a single Action and a Resolve + Old Wounds roll against a TN of 20 to heal one Dramatic Wound. Each additional Dramatic Wound to be healed requires one additional consecutive Action and two Raises on the roll.

A Chronomancer can only affect his own wounds using this Knack.

**Personal Time:** By spending a Moment Die, the Chronomancer can accelerate his movements to a speed that allows him to easily see and react to melee attacks, bolts and arrows—even firearms. This Knack may be used as an Active Defense Knack against any sort of physical attack—even cannon fire. It cannot be used to avoid a magical effect, such as a skjæren's lightning bolt. This Knack can also be used to avoid traps (e.g.: instead of Leaping to avoid falling into a pit or Tumbling to duck beneath a volley of poisoned darts).

**Steal Moment:** By spending a Moment Die, the Chronomancer can attempt to steal a moment of success from another person. After the target has succeeded on an Attack, Active Defense, or Skill Check, the Chronomancer may attempt to rewind time just long enough to force a reroll. The Chronomancer rolls Resolve + Steal Moment against a TN equal to the result of the roll he wishes to undo (e.g., if the target made an Active Defense with a roll of 33, that would be the TN for the Chronomancer's Steal Moment roll). If the Chronomancer fails when using this ability, the results of the target's first roll stand. If the Chronomancer succeeds, the target's roll is discarded, and he must attempt the roll again. Any Raises called or Drama Dice applied to the initial roll apply to the reroll, as well. If the target succeeds a second time, the Chronomancer may use this ability again to attempt to force a third reroll (or a fourth, a fifth, and so on), so long as he has Moment Dice to spend and does not fail at any attempts to force a reroll).

**Time Slip:** By spending a Moment Die, the Chronomancer flings himself briefly into the future to observe the results of a proposed action or decision in the present. This ability can only see a few minutes into the future, so the result may not take into account the long-term consequences of a contemplated action. This ability is essentially a Lore Check using Wits + Time Slip against a TN determined by the GM. If successful, the Chronomancer will obtain one of the following results:

- Positive (if the action will probably have good consequences)
- Negative (if the action will probably have bad consequences)
- Mixed (if the action is likely to have both good and bad consequences)
- Nothing (for actions that don't have especially good or bad results)

If the Chronomancer's roll fails to meet the TN set by the GM, he will get the "Nothing" result, but he will not be able to tell if this is the consequence of an action with no particular results or a failed use of this ability.

Consequences that result within one minute of the proposed action are equivalent to an "Unusual" piece of knowledge, with a TN of 20. Each additional minute that is likely to elapse between the action and its result increases the difficulty by one level (and the TN by 5).

**Timeline:** A Chronomancer's Timeline Knack represents a set of boons and abilities related to mastery over his personal timeline. For every Rank in this Knack, the Chronomancer's maximum age is increased by ten years, as are the age categories where the Chronomancer begins to suffer penalties to Martial Skill rolls (he still receives a bonus to Civil Skill rolls, however).

In addition, the Chronomancer may spend a Moment Die to slow his own breathing and heartbeat, appearing for all intents and purposes to be dead. The Chronomancer rolls Resolve + Timeline to establish the TN to detect the ruse, typically using Wits + Diagnosis, Examiner, or some similar Knack. The Chronomancer is not fully aware of his surroundings while in this state, though he is alert enough to recognize when he is in danger and end the effect, which takes a single Action during combat (or a mere moment or two otherwise).

### Game Master's Notes

Tempus is one of the lost Bargainer's Arts. It is currently extinct in Théah; however, given the nature of this Sorcery, it is entirely possible that it remains frozen in time in some Ssyneth ruin, waiting to be rediscovered.

Like all Bargainer's Arts, Tempus contributes to the inexorable collapse of the Barrier: in this case, through the subtle theft of moments from the future. While most of a Chronomancer's moments are drawn from his own timeline, a few of them bleed into his pool from the wider world. Moment by moment, each use of this sorcery shortens the time before the Barrier collapses. If Tempus was an active Sorcery—or worse, if it was as prevalent as Porté or Sorte—the Barrier may

well have fallen already.

A Chronomancer's stutter may be activated (or countered) as if it were a **Hubris** or **Flaw**, and it will last until the end of the **Scene** in which it is activated. While stuttering, a Chronomancer suffers a penalty of one **Unkept Die** per **Mastery Level** to all rolls involving social interaction, including **Repartee Actions**.

