

THE ECLIPSE

Entry in the 2006 Nexus Organizations Contest.

“Let the Towers hunt down Sorcerers, for we shall then go unnoticed, and from the shadows, rule them all”

---Ansel Rhea, First Adept and Lord of the Eclipse

The Eclipse is a secretive and malevolent organization, which seeks to rule entire countries through guile, assassination, manipulation and outright coercion. From their secret enclaves, these individuals practice the arts of Shadow casting as taught to them by the Shadow Sorcerer herself.

JOINING THE ECLIPSE

The Eclipse recruits individuals who have an affinity for primal sorcery, usually at a young age so that they can be indoctrinated to the philosophies and trained in the unique form of arcane mastery that is Shadowcasting. Older individuals who have actively sought out the group are usually Sorcerers who have been drawn to the sphere of Illusion and the usage of negative energy.

Entry Requirements

Skills: Spellcraft 5 ranks

Shadowcasting/Spellcasting: Ability to use fundamentals of shadow or cast spells of the shadow subtype such as *lesser shadow conjuration*.

Would-be novices (usually Sorcerers, Bards or Assassins) who actively seek out The Eclipse are few and far between, but for those brave (or foolish) that do, the simple rule is that The Eclipse finds you. Anyone who begins to show an aptitude for shadow magic will usually be contacted as soon as they have reached some sort of proficiency (approximately 3rd to 4th level) in that sub sphere of magic.

BENEFITS OF THE ECLIPSE

As a full-fledged academy, members have access to advanced training and equipment not normally available to *Wizards of High Sorcery* or *Academy Sorcerers* (such as the Shadowcaster base class and Shadow magic Prc's). Members can borrow magic items based on Shadow magic or Illusion equal to the Members

level x 700 Stl, for instance a 3rd level member can borrow a magic item or magic items whose total values in steel pieces is equal to 2100 Stl or less. If the item is lost or destroyed however, the member must replace the item(s).

Members also can recruit minions and apprentices from within the group, to assist the member with any personal missions that do not interfere with the Organization as a whole, as if the member had the leadership feat.

Playing an Adept of the Eclipse

As an Adept of The Eclipse, each member is expected to put the goals of the organization above their own personal goals. Although using the resources of the organization for personal gain is not prohibited, if the endeavor in anyway interferes with an ongoing mission, retribution is swift, brutal and permanent.

Combat

As an organization consisting of primarily spellcasters of one kind or another, magic is the primary weapon of choice. However, as many Assassins are trained and employed by the organization, the art of the knife and garrote is just as often employed as the Spell and staff. A general maxim of The Eclipse is that “Why use a direct attack, when a knife in the back is so much safer.”

Advancement and Organization

Novices are the apprentices of the organization. An individual can remain a Novice indefinitely, or until the Novice has performed some deed that furthers the goals of the organization in some way. Typical deeds include but are not limited to, the removal of some minor obstacle either by guile, assassination or blackmail or the recovery of some item of importance to a senior member of the organization. After advancing from Novice to Journeyman the member is entrusted with minor missions for one of the many organizations many projects. After a period of time if the Journeyman has managed to survive the infighting and various missions they have been assigned, they are then promoted to the rank of Master. Masters may continue to function as instructors of Novices and overseers of Journeyman but the true path to power is to function as an independent agent. After a career of forwarding the goals of the organization, the Master may be promoted to Adept, and given a voice on the ruling conclave helping to



determine policy and guiding the organization to its rightful place. The Rank of First Adept, and Lord of the Eclipse, is not one that will be open to many in the near future, as the current bearer of that title has managed to achieve Lichdom and plans on ruling the organization for eternity.

Missions

The organization is always seeking to expand; the acquiring of new disciples and novices to assist the furthering of the organizations goals is paramount. Many of the missions involve acquiring magical items or the elimination of the various obstacles that crop up during a project. Many Journeymen, find themselves searching for information to be used as blackmail for government officials or assisting in the assassination of overly curious nobles. Projects, such as the type handled by Masters and Adepts, usually involve subverting or outright manipulating local governments or the elimination of prominent Wizards and other users of Magic.

HISTORY OF THE ECLIPSE

The Eclipse was founded by three of the Shadow Sorcerer's most promising students, in the hopes of creating a new order of primal sorcerers loyal to the Shadow Sorcerer alone. As the War of Souls raged and primal sorcery began to fail, only the specially trained Shadowcasters remained in full control of their powers, as they had learned to use primal sorcery to tap into the plane of shadow to fuel their spells, rather than remain dependant on what items they could leech power from. When Takhisis was revealed as The One God, and was eventually thrown down, the few remaining Shadowcasters fled to the ancestral home of Ansel Rhea, the self-appointed First Adept of the Shadow Sorcerer. From their new base in Nightlund, Ansel consolidated the few remaining Shadowcasters and shadow adepts, and with the plundered tomes of magic and other items of power, began to build a secret academy dedicated to the arts of Shadowcasting and with the intention of supplanting the Wizards of High Sorcery as the pinnacle of arcane mastery.

THE ECLIPSE IN THE WORLD

"Look at you louts, jumping at shadows, as if the darkness itself could possibly assault me"

--- Lord Bran Uth Mason,
Former Kingfisher General (Deceased), just prior to dismissing his bodyguards for the night on the evening of his demise.

This organization allows for the addition of shadow magic as an offshoot of primal sorcery in an ongoing campaign. Its members are a shadow organization that actively seeks to subvert all levels of the both the political world and the magical. Most members of The Eclipse encountered will be as antagonists, but they may also be enterprising Journeyman or Masters who hire the PC's to retrieve items from areas that might prove to dangerous for the Member alone. It also allows for those PC's of a darker bent access to an organization that would assist them with training and resources outside of the rigid controls of the Knights of the Thorn or the Wizards of High Sorcery.



NPC reactions: Enemies and Allies

As members of this organization are indubitably renegades and any information on the organization or its activities would be of great value to the

Towers, as well as the secret of their unique form of spell casting be to the Knights of the Thorn. Other groups such as assassin's guilds would actively seek to affiliate themselves with the organization, while some thieves' guilds would have heard the stories of those who sought to double cross its members only to be found ripped to shreds within a locked and bared windowless room the next day.

GAMING INFORMATION

Although the Shadowcaster is the primary base class found within this organization, Wizards and Sorcerers dedicated to the school of illusion are welcome. Also the organization allows for Assassins and other Prestige classes, which combine magic and rogue like abilities. All of the prestige classes presented in the Tome Of Magic under the Shadow Magic heading are permissible within this organization with many members adopting the Master of Shadow class for pure Shadowcasters or the Noctumancer for those multiclassed Sorcerer/Shadowcasters or Wizard/Shadowcasters. Many of the members who are not pure casters, usually adopt the

Shadowblade or Shadowsmith classes during their affiliation with the organization.