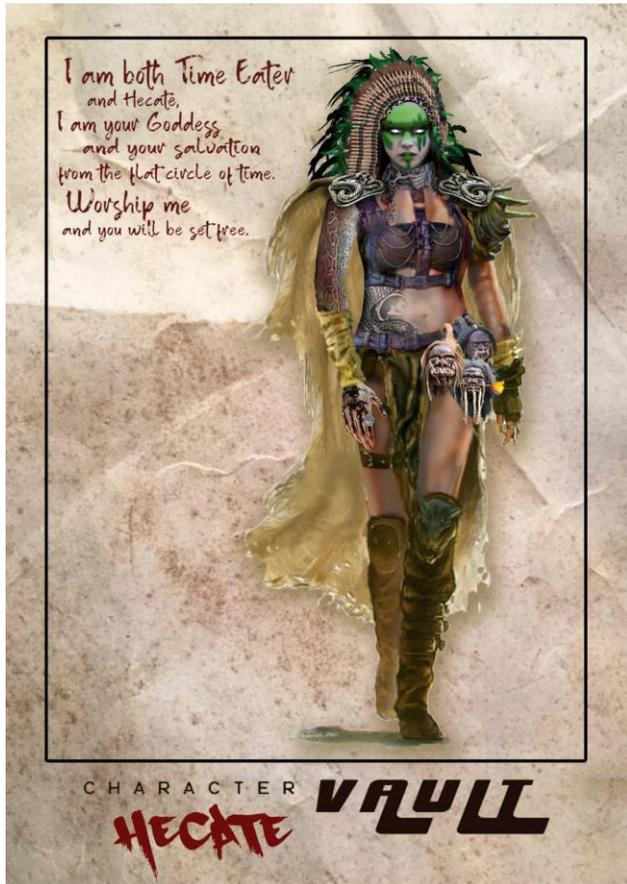


Section 7: Hecate and her Ouroboros

Soundtrack Atmosphere: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Fm98Tpa0AVA>



History

The young girl Kyros was born amongst the Cyclers Tribe of eastern Arizona. Before the war, they were a cultish commune that believed in karmic cycles. After the war, their beliefs changed: time was a flat circle, man was doomed to repeat the same mistakes and pass onto one another our suffering, where one has been another will be again, and the Great War will come about again.

Conceived through considerable ritual, Kyros was born with a destiny: she along with the tribe's chieftain, Marrow, would conceive the Time Eater. One who would end the cycle of humanity and break us free of time's flat circle.

At age 13 married to Marrow of 23, they repeatedly attempted to conceive but to no effect. Marrow repeatedly abused Kyros, until at age 16 she stole a blade and stabbed him 43 times in the chest,

and gouged out his eye sockets. For this murder and for dooming humanity, she was sentenced to death but escaped into the Wasteland. Starving and alone, she eventually came to the Nursery and Diana.

When she left she did so flush with technology, knowledge, purpose and ideas. She was Kyros the wife-slave no longer, she was Hecate, the Time-Eater. She had learnt much in the way of herbalism and illusions at the Nursery.

She came across the Sidewinder tribe in the Rocky Mountains - descendants of the US Army that venerated weapons and armor. At war with several other tribes, they were losing due to starvation - the tribes had cut off their resources. At first, they approached Hecate as a potential concubine - but she had a "spell" ready, expelling a blast of colored powder in a fanciful dust cloud from her sleeve,

causing the nearest Sidewinder to choke - his throat sealing. She warned the others she had many such magics - but she was here in peace.

She became the tribe's shaman, healing their wounded. She led them to victory by casting "curses" poisoning enemy sources of food and hunting ground. Join her or the curses would continue - and so they did so. Using the chemical processes she had learned, she turned their enemies' heads into shrunken tokens worn around the hip by her and her followers. She seduced and offered herself to the Sidewinder's chief, and together they had a child she called Sampson. She blessed the tribe with chemical concoctions that instilled fertility.

By the time the Sidewinders and her confederation of followers left the Rockies, she had gone from Shaman, to Sorceress, to Goddess. She was leading them back to The Cyclers.

She declared her return, as the Cyclers tribesmen gathered to the gates of their commune "I am both Time Eater and Hecate. I am your Goddess and your salvation from the flat circle of time. Worship me and you will be set free."

Hecate and her followers walked in unimpeded, the few that resisted were slain and reduced to shrunken heads. What were once Temple Followers were now Sons and Daughters of Hecate, and the Cycle was shaped into an Ouroboros.

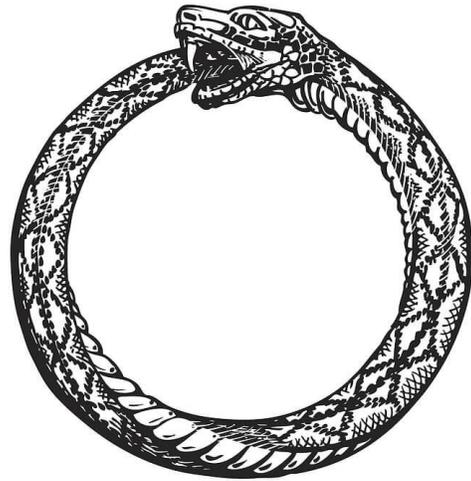
Beliefs and Practices



The Ouroboros believe that under the Goddess Hecate they can escape the flat circle of time. The power of her sorcery means all those born under ritual of her worship are free from the chains of time and the cycle of suffering, and instead of rebirthing into the body of another upon death, they will reach the Elysian Fields. This can occur for living followers of Hecate, but only through ardent worship and tribute - they believe this will ultimately prevent a repeat of the

ultimate suffering of man - The Great War - they believe they are saving the world.

The standard recruiting process for a tribe under Hecate's grasp is such - a Daughter arrives with Sons and preaches the word of Hecate, scouting the situation. If they believe the tribe is ripe, they summon more daughters. They organize a great campfire which they cast their sorcery over - creating strangely colored flames, and through usage of rings specially designed to imbue chemicals, they dose the tribals with psychedelics and ask them to look into the fire, as they fervently preach the teachings of Hecate. Feeding them further with aphrodisiac - they initiate orgy.



In the days afterwards, the deal becomes more practical. Deal tribute to Hecate through your firstborn children and resources, or incur her curse (poisoning of hunting grounds and the seeding of farmland with chemical components that cause miscarriage). Most take the deal. Those that don't are slaughtered by her Sons after a prolonged period of cursing. If they don't submit before then.

Sacrifices are regularly performed of wildlife and livestock upon a great ceremonial altar in the center of Ouroboros - their blood drank by the Daughters of Hecate in ritual ceremonies. In recent times, this has moved to human sacrifice also - captive Legionaries of Caesar. They believe that Mars and his Son are enforcers of the cycle - that the patriarchal wrath of man was what forged the cycle and brought the Great War, and Caesar will bring it again through the same misguided masculinity. Only matriarchy and the guidance of the female can guide them out of the Ouroboros of time.

Children taken in tithe in by Hecate are raised in two segregated camps as Sons and Daughters, as tribals of Ouroboros. Daughters are raised as cultists, and the Sons raised as servile warriors or "pleasurites" depending on their attractiveness in adulthood.

The Sons of Hecate imbue their blades with the poison of Giant Pit Vipers - a species drawn to near extinction by Hecate's doing. All

servants of Hecate wear a tri-spiked crown adorned on their helmet or as a tiara.

Ouroboros



It has been well over 25 years since and Hecate has expanded her parasitic influence to 14 tribes beside her own in Northern and Eastern Arizona. They have built and achieved little with this growth - a generation of worship.

Ouroboros is heavily fortified. An outside "tributary" is located outside the large junk walls where Brahmin bazaars are located - a wooden statue of Hecate at its center (a symbol of power via rare resource ala a gold statue) where each visitor must leave a trinket of value at its feet. The bazaar is overlooked by watchtowers on the walls - Sidewinders with sniper rifles. The outer bazaars are constantly flowing with incoming tribal tributary missions - bands from the Stone Trees, The Montezumas, The Red Titans, or even just groups of Sons led by Daughters bringing their collected tithe. Most traders, however, have switched to trading with the Legion instead (Because of consistent pricing, dealing and lack of "tribute"), Hecate met this "betrayal" with vicious attacks - ensuring her alienation from the Arizona merchant economy. Ouroboros itself used to be surrounded by crop and Brahmin farms, but these have ceased and disappeared since the bulk of tithe began - Ouroboros is entirely reliant on the outside world.

The outer tributary was once home to a variety of places for travelers that since the outbreak of war with Caesar have been closed down, such as "The Wanderer's Rest" which was a hotel and tavern, and now only cares for outsiders when they are in the service of Hecate. Such places were ran by the elderly of Ouroboros - Sons too old to fight or Daughters too old to travel and seduce.

Inside Ouroboros, life is segregated by gender. The Sons and the Daughters live in separate "wings" of the fortress-town, Daughters to the East and Sons to the West. The children brought as tribute are raised amongst the Ouroboros in collective dormitories determined by their gender. The Sidewinders have a dormitory of their own "The Snake's Pit" where they preserve their original tribal culture.

The inside of Ouroboros proper can be divided into four distinct areas

Temple of Hecate: A pyramid constructed of junk with an inner temple where the Daughters commune with their Goddess - an Ouroboros styled fire pit (the smoke filters through ventilation holes throughout the pyramid) surrounded by hand-sown carpets and rugs where the Daughters sit cross-legged. Before the fire, a throne made of junk metal, adorned with the shrunken heads of former Cyclers. Here Hecate sits and theatrically proclaims to her Daughters and Sons who enter her temple, only those part of a top-level cadre of Ouroboros. Those who have achieved great respect in the eyes of Hecate, or those that simply gain her interest. The surrounding area of the lower temple beyond this center are full of mattresses where the "Pleasurites" and the Daughters participate in Chem-Fueled orgies. An ascending spiral staircase leads to Hecate's sanctum above, a small triangular room where she stays most of the day, with a balcony overlooking the rest of Ouroboros.

Realm of the Daughters: Where the women are raised. Fine adobe houses adorned in symbols and icons, the young girls educated in Ouroboros mythology and in the ways of herbalism and sorcery, which they perfect in the "Sorcery Palace", a circular adobe amphitheater. Here is also where the healing of the sick or wounded takes place. The older Daughters take on the roles of "potion makers" and alchemists as well as teachers, whilst the younger Daughters are prepared for their duties.



Realm of the Sons: Where the males are raised. Composed of spartan scrap-metal houses, primarily focused around combat training with a small mock battle arena, dummies and a fully staffed armory. Sexual contact is limited to roles as Pleasurites or in reproductive rituals (Which do occur fairly often). Sidewinders act as combat trainers and teachers for the Sons, and also handle the making of weapons. Though they receive plenty of armor and spears in tribute.

Ouroboros Square: An engraved Ouroboros symbol on the ground surrounding a ceremonial alter table- the center of the city. Surrounded by banners of each tribe under her grasp and naked worshippers with Ouroboros tattoos on the back endlessly in prayer and praise facing the temple. Sampson, her son wearing barely functional Sidewinder T-45 and wielding a flamer, can be found here as a lone sentry. By night, ceremonies of fire-dancing, sword-swallowing and

maddened song-like prayers occupy the Square as the Sons and the Daughters gather for rituals.

Important Characters of Ouroboros

- **Hecate:** At this point you can't tell if she buys her own act. Entirely manic and constantly "in-act" as the sorceress tyrant - imitating the Shakespearean flair of Diana but letting her vanity and Wasteland attitude bleed through - somewhere between a witch and a raider-queen bitch. She participates in the numerous vices of the Pleasure Palace and watches from her upper sanctum - but never leaves her temple. She requests the head of Caesar from all who serve her.
- **Sampson:** Hecate's only son. Chief of the Sidewinders. An ego bigger than his inherited power armor, he believes he's destined for greatness and the best warrior of Ouroboros. His stiff, malfunctioning armor may slow that somewhat. He's more a stationary flamer turret. He will manage most of the quests given to the player in this area.
- **Gaia:** Head of the Daughters and a Prisoner 13 - a stubborn, venom tongued, sarcastic zealot in the vein of the women of the Westboro Baptist Church. Participates in many Pleasure Palace hedonisms
- **Martin:** A Follower of the Apocalypse from the same expedition as Frank and Xian. He was caged by Hecate after a verbal dispute, and is on the chopping block for human sacrifice, labelled a heretic.



Quests of Ouroboros:

- **A Bull Amongst Snakes:** As the players arrive a dying, bloodied Daughter of Hecate will stumble through the bazaar, dying at the gates, her final words a hysterical screaming about a spy of Caesar among them. Find the spy. The spy themselves is conspiring to assassinate Hecate, and can help agents of Caesar in doing so.
- **A Single Drop:** The Sons of Hecate need more venom, go to the southern pits and commit one of the last surviving Giant Pit Vipers to death to retrieve its venom sacks.
- **Taming of the Bulls:** A Legion scout camp has been spotted. Wipe them out and bring back their uniforms. Utilize the Legion uniforms to disguise yourselves at a Legion camp sieging the Gecko-Skinner tribe and put Hecate's sorcery to work - poisoning food supplies, leaving wooden charms and generally instilling fear, ultimately, their Centurion must be killed.
- **Heal Thyself:** Martin will beg the players for help in getting him out of his cage and escaping Ouroboros - find a way to help.

- **Chain-Breakers:** Raid slave caravans headed for Magnum Chasma and put a stop to them
- **The Choked Snake:** Someone has been poisoned at the Pleasure Palace - no simple overdose. Untangle the web of soap opera tribe drama and uncover the killer