

When a mage Awakens, his soul travels out of his body across the yawning chasm of the Abyss to the Realms Supernal. He is guided through the void by the light of a Watchtower with which his soul most closely resonates. The Watchtower and its surrounding Supernal Realm dictates a mage's *path*, and that path determines what sort of mage he becomes. Choosing one's path is often one of the earliest steps in character in **Mage: The Awakening**,



Acanthus

Enchanters on the Path of Thistle, Scions of the Watchtower of the Lunargent Thorn in the Realm of Arcadia, Kingdom of Enchantment and Abode of the Fae

A mage who walks the Path of Thistle that winds through the realm of Arcadia to the Watchtower of the Lunargent Thorn (the "moonsilver thorn"). Arcadia is known dimly to Sleepers through the legends of faeries and the nymphs and dryads of the plant kingdom. In Arcadia, everything is enchanted, wearing a magical glamour of intense beauty—or ugliness. Things tend toward extremes; there is very little compromise in the abode of the Fae. Change is common and encouraged; those who walk this Path tend to be fickle and ever eager to try new things.

Acanthus mages are especially adept at performing magic that affects destiny and the fluid progression of time. Fairy stories from around the world reflect the timelessness of the realm, as people who enter places under its influence and spend an evening often exit many years later, as time is measured in the Fallen World. Likewise, a promise or oath is binding, and none can betray it without terrible consequences.

Acanthus, also called "enchanters," are often thought of as the archetypal "divine fools," for they seem to achieve their goals by not trying or by waiting for things to come to them. But this over-reliance on luck can be to their detriment, as they spurn patience and plunge themselves into situations that are perhaps best tackled instead with some degree of foresight and strategy. They are the wild cards of the Awakened world, both loved and hated by others for it.



Mastigos

Warlocks on the Path of Scourging, Scions of the Watchtower of the Iron Gauntlet in the Realm of Pandemonium, Kingdom of Nightmares and Abode of Demons

A mage who walks the Path of Scourging through the nightmarish labyrinth of the realm of Pandemonium, at the center of which is the Watchtower of the Iron Gauntlet. Pandemonium is also called the Realm of Nightmares, for its echoes appear to Sleepers most often in their most terrible and dreaded dreams, where they fall from endless heights, never to hit the ground, or run for what seems like hours but never make any headway. Their worst fears or repressed emotions are brought forth in places touched by Pandemonium, to be examined and judged by strangers who mock and condemn them. Through such a gauntlet of humiliation and submission, a soul is scourged of its

sins and purified to re-unite, cleansed and free, with the divine.

Mastigos mages work magic that affects the mind and the space all around us. The darkest corners of the unconscious mind are readily apparent here, worn like badges, while all roads twist in upon themselves, leading the traveler to confrontations with his own failings.

While Mastigos "warlocks" are often associated with diabolists and demon-summoners—those who make deals with the Devil—they are more properly the masters of such infernal urges, those who, by dint of will, command that within them which is most unsavory. While all men sin, the Mastigos learn from the foibles of the mortal coil and use them to attain higher power.



Moros

Necromancers on the Path of Doom, Scions of the Watchtower of the Lead Coin in the Realm of Stygia, Kingdom of Crypts and Abode of Shades

A mage who walks the Path of Doom, treading the barren wastes and black rivers of the realm of Stygia to attain the Watchtower of the Lead Coin. There is a price to be paid for entering places influenced by Stygia, and there are many toll gates on the road the soul must travel through death to attain new life. This price isn't measured in mundane lucre but the treasure reaped by the soul during life. If its weight is light, like the precious metals, the soul can rise above its death, but if it is heavy, like lead, the soul must remain in the abode of shades until it can relinquish its grasping hold on life.

Mages who traverse the Abyss to Stygia perform the magic of death, affecting all forms of inert matter, for Stygia is the place of shells—whether the hollow shells of egos worn in life or the heavy shells of material greed. Whatever is most heavy falls to the influence of this realm: ghosts who are anchored to the world they have already left, material treasures that distract the soul from its true work, and even darkness, which weighs down the light.

Moros necromancers are often stereotyped as dour and quiet, and there are certainly those mages who fit that description, but this image is based more on others' misunderstanding of what mages who work so close to death must be like. If a Moros is gloomy, it is more because he is all too aware of the doom to which others will fall, while he rises above it all, alchemically transformed by his sojourn in the undiscovered country to which all must eventually travel.



Obrimos

Theurgists on the Path of the Mighty, Scions of the Watchtower of the Golden Key in the Realm of the Aether, Kingdom of the Celestial Spheres and Abode of Angels

A mage who walks the Path of the Mighty, gliding on celestial winds through the realm of the Aether and the firmament of the stars to reach the Watchtower of the Golden Key. Only the elect can enter here, guarded by the Hosts with their swords of fire. Lightning strikes any who fly with false wings, just as Icarus was downed by his hubris. He who would wield the Flame Supernal must not flinch in the face of adversity, and cleave to one of the many visions of the divine.

The Obrimos control the very forces of the heavens themselves, as well as the subtle essence whence those forces derive. The Realm of the Aether bristles with energy—sometimes too much energy, threatening to burn those not shielded with divine purpose. The raw power of the prima materia, the fire of Creation that fuels magic, is born here and meted out by Providence.

Obrimos theurgists are often feared by other mages, for their temperaments as much as their judgmental attitudes. Nonetheless, their strength is admired by all, and they are the first called upon by others when the need is dire.

Thysus



Shamans on the Path of Ecstasy, Scions of the Watchtower of the Stone Book in the Realm of the Primal Wild, Kingdom of Totems and Abode of Beasts

A mage who walks the Path of Ecstasy, forging his own trail through the realm of the Primal Wild to discover the Watchtower of the Stone Book. Most of the hallmarks of civilization are but dreams not yet dreamt in this realm, where the world into which mortals were first born thrives in all its teeming grandeur and horror. This place speaks to the primordial in all beings, causing them to lose themselves to ecstasies of the flesh or spirit, exalting in the very act of being alive. Some claim that all wine is blessed with the taste of the Primal Wild, and that those who get madly drunk dance in its humid embrace.

Mages on this path perform magic that affects both living things and spirits equally. The pounding drums of the heart and lungs, the surging blood in every vein, the tingling nerves and salty sweat—these things all spell an alphabet of desire presided over by this realm. Not just flesh, but ephemera, too—the instincts of beast and spirit alike are wrought in the jungles of the Primal Wild.

Thysus shamans celebrate the moment and the sheer thrill of existence. Surrounded by Presences, they are never alone—there is always a partner ready to take up the dance anew. While some of them are looked upon by other mages as uncivilized louts, they are no hippies—the Path of Ecstasy is also about pain, for life is there, too; only the dead feel no pain. Nonetheless, Thysus are often the first mages sought when the Realms Invisible intrude.