

BLACK LANTERN REPORT: ADEPT ORDERS AND CITADELS

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GRAND MASTER SHIRO JUN

"All wars are fought on the battlefield, but some wars are waged far from the eyes and ears of those in power. This is the war of the mind, of powers that many find too terrible or dangerous. They fear what they do not understand, and they persecute that which they fear. I am Grand Master Shiro Jun, where I come from matters not, as for those who read this -- I compiled this document in order to further the understanding of our Orders and instruct future Grand Masters who come to this rank with a desire to establish their own Orders, to build upon the traditions sacred, and important to us all.

These are not guidelines, or rules carved in stone of how our Orders are or should be. There are those Orders which will always differ from that of the Amethyst Mind. Know this, there are similarities in the way that all the other Orders operate. I hope this information is useful to you and May the Way always enlighten and Guide you all." ~ **Shiro Jun, Grandmaster of the Order of the Amethyst Mind.**

Our Brother within the order managed to access the attached treatise written by Grandmaster Shiro of the Amethyst Mind. He communicated to me in his report that getting the document seemed almost too easy. Almost as if the Grandmaster allowed it. He also stated that everything he's been able to verify agrees with what is set down in these pages. In fact, it may have been written for just us so we may be informed and know how to proceed in the future.

~ **Brother Peregrine, Senior Brother of the Second Spoke**

ADEPT ORDERS & CITADELS

"Ours is an ancient order, but it is important that you, at least, know the history behind the Adepts in general, and the role they have often played in shaping Shaintar's history. It is also true, no matter what the robed scholars tell you, that the Dregordians are the first of the Adepts -- they are the ones who mastered The Way before we did, and our forefathers learned from them the secrets of controlling their mind and bodies, to become weapons, tools, and protectors." ~ **Shiro Jun from the Scroll of 'The First Element of the Mind'.**

OF DREGORDIANS AND THE WAY

It is not for our Order to talk of history as a be-all and end-all source of all things. The past has lessons that we take into the future, this is the core of our teachings and should be first and foremost in your minds when you begin to speak to new students in the Way. We must acknowledge the part that the Dregordians played in the role of developing our Adept schools; they are the wellspring from where all the waters of our knowledge flow.

THE FOUNDATION OF THE WAY

It's understood by me and many peers, including, Grandmaster White Storm, and Grandmaster Nightingale that in 3300 B.C. the Dregordian Voltiss vo Ssartis came down from the Hellstorm Mountains to begin the first teachings of the Way. He did so as a way for his people to control the inner beast.

In 3290 B.C. the first Adept School was built in Ssatis, and became the foundation upon what later we shall come to call: Citadels.

Over time these Adept Schools flourished and grew, more and more dregordians flocked to learn how to control their rage. Then sometime in 3024 A.C. A man named Hawk Nollan, an Adept and Silver Unicorn member founded the Order of the Jade Flame. This may be the first recorded instance of a non-Dregordian Adept School being set up outside of Dregordia though his order doesn't exactly follow The Way.

History is sketchy at best, but I have able to discern that between the first school, and the Jade Flame, many non-Dregordian Adepts came to Ssatis in search of enlightenment, and a way to control their bodies, and minds. They were welcomed with open arms and inducted into the various mysteries of the newly formed.

It's highly probable that by 3015 B.C. there were numerous schools throughout Dregordia, all focused on the Way and aspects of what became our modern Orders. My master was a Dregordian who traced his line back to Voltiss'.

Over a rapid period of time as our Order grew, the methods changed, but the fundamental principles of control and understanding did not. You must make certain that the students know this, it is vital that they

remember the path we have taken to get where we are now, and the hard road many of us have trod to become as respected as we are.

Of course we might be respected thanks to the efforts of our Orders who promote the good name of Adepts, protect fledgling practitioners, oppose the creating chapters of our Order in the Kal-A-Nar Empire, or Malakar Dominion, and of course provide a safe haven for our allies.

We are not fully trusted, and who can blame the unenlightened, depending on our abilities, we could rip the thoughts from minds or read their souls like open books. Those are all things to be wary of and to impress on our future students -- we do not wish them to fall through pride or greed as some of our brothers and sisters who have subverted the Way for their own desires have done.

Later on in this scroll I have made certain to illuminate some of the supposed Adept Guilds and Schools who have hired their services as mercenaries, to the highest bidder.

LEARNING 'THE WAY'

Our teaching is balance, understanding, harmony, empathy, and attunement with our minds, bodies, and spirits. We train hard every day, with little in the way of comfort or possessions, for those are the elements of life which distract. Ours is the comfort of a stone floor, a forest as our mattress, and the stars as our blanket.

We learn to harden our bodies, along with our minds, and control the physical reactions to extreme heat, intense cold, and other environmental changes. With our power, focused through our foci, made of Crysarium, we can achieve incredible feats which to others might seem magical.

To this end we must strive to impart the knowledge the Dregordians gave us on The Way, for their teachings have been successful through the ages. Their results are excellent, and what we desire most of all as teachers of this art, is to allow the student to become the master -- to give them the confidence to fight the beast within, and stand within the Light.

Below is a typical day within the training regimen in the life of an Order. I understand that many of you will seek to change the regimen, and impart your

own ideas onto the grand tapestry which has been in play since the beginning. I admire this, but caution you on changing too much, for the willow does not break, it simply bends.

A DAY WITHIN IN THE ORDER

We should push our students as we ourselves were pushed. We cannot afford to allow the weak link to shatter the chain. It's a hard truth, but my Master and yours obviously instilled that same ethos into you. This regimen does not coddle our hopefuls, it is designed to build them into men and women who will be proud to serve the Amethyst Mind and all of Shaintar against powerful enemies in the future.

AN HOUR BEFORE SUN UP

The night has come and gone and one hour before the dawn comes students must go meditate in coldest waterfall they can find. The Order has a specially created room just for this purpose. When outdoors, a stream or river will do. This will allow them to embrace their bodies as they are, and allow the student to begin to control their body rather than be controlled.

Once an hour has been spent in meditation, the student should dry off and use the power of their mind and a cup of soothing herbal tea made of Azure-tipped Cinnis berries to counter the intense chills. As the student grows in ability we they will be able to use their own mind to ward off the cold and meditate without distraction.

Males and females should not be segregated, part of the control of their bodies is to learn that bodies are temples, clean and pure and none have the right to objectify others. In the beginning, those who cannot avoid staring at their fellow students will be given extra duties -- harder work and more chores will render them too tired.

Liner Notes: Azure-tipped Cinnis

Found in the highest peaks of mountains across Shaintar, Azure-tipped Cinnis are a delicate blossom well adapted to cold and snowy climes. These ivory flowers are tipped in a blue reminiscent of bluish aura given off by use of the The Way. For centuries, Adepts have cultivated and harvested these flowers for their meditative properties. When properly prepared and steeped, a rather lengthy and delicate process, the berries of these mountain beauties are said to stave off chill, providing a +1 bonus to Vigor rolls vs Cold.

SUN UP

As the day dawns and light floods our buildings, the students should take their first meal of the day. Students that are well fed and fortified learn better. This order has a communal eating area, there should be no segregation between student and teacher. Leading by example demonstrates to the students that their teachers are worthy of respect because we have the same meals and meditations they do. The Masters must remember that to be given respect, we must show it. Food should be prepared as to be both healthy and hearty, and become a good foundation for the rest of the day.

FIRST TWO HOURS OF THE MORNING

Once the morning meal has been eaten, we will embark on a two hour training regimen. The students first learn control, our minds are weapons as much as our bodies, and a focused mind is more dangerous than any sword. The Garden of Serenity is perfect for this purpose, the garden will let us focus our energies and the surrounding Crysarium will allow energy to flow better. Later on we can take away the garden and teach them control and focus in other areas, including under extreme duress, or and great distraction.

SECOND TWO HOURS OF THE MORNING

Ours is a life that contains hardship and sometimes we are without tools to help us in the most menial of tasks. Our students will use the next few hours in service of the Order. We should find them tasks that will test their skill, their tenacity, strength, and of course we should also teach them to work together on a task. Exceptions to this rule are students who have been punished for a variety of offenses, including the one outlined about in the "Before Sun Up" section of our regimen.

MEDITATION HOUR

The middle hour of the day should be an hour for meditation. This will help teach our students that they control their bodies - including whether they feel hunger or not. Students must be able to focus in any situation and not be thinking of such needs. They should be prepared to go without; in fact, I am told the Dregordian Adepts advocate this method. The garden is nearly the perfect place for beginning mediation, later the meditation will occur at the falls, and other areas that might provide distractions to set aside.

FOOD

An hour will be set aside to eat once again within the communal gathering area.

PHYSICAL EXERCISE

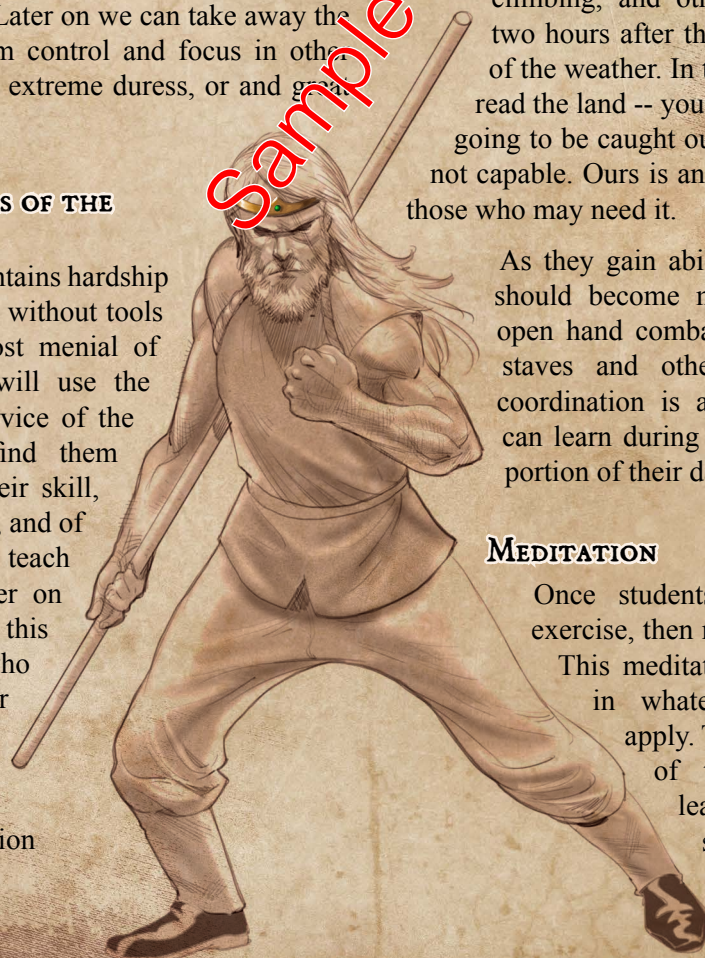
We must ensure that the students are fit, physically, spiritually, and mentally. To this end they must take regular exercise. This includes running, jumping, climbing, and other outdoor activities for two hours after the second meal, regardless of the weather. In the process they'll learn to read the land -- you never know when you are going to be caught outside with others who are not capable. Ours is an Order devoted to helping those who may need it.

As they gain ability, the physical exercise should become more demanding such as open hand combat and then working with staves and other weaponry. Hand eye coordination is another skill the students can learn during the physical conditioning portion of their day.

MEDITATION

Once students have completed their exercise, then meditation is their reward.

This meditation should occur outside in whatever weather conditions apply. The point is contemplation of the natural world, and learning the energy that surrounds everything. As they observe, they'll



begin to pick up the energies around them. These are the energies that surround us, bring us together, and allow us to understand the world at large.

SCROLLS BEFORE DARK

Our minds must be honed too, and we have a range of scrolls that the students must study. Our Order is based on the written word of all the Grand Masters back to the beginnings. These classes are based on ability. Those few who need it will be taught to read first. Those who can read will help the others learn, as we are all brothers and sisters in the Order. Once the students can read, they're taught to master the skills of communication as well – writing, and speaking to others in a calm and reassuring manner. A panicked Adept is no leader when it comes to facing down dangerous situations or enemies.

I recommend the third and fourth scrolls of meditative control, along with the first scroll of the Amethyst Mind Technique as early beginner reading materials.

SUN DOWN

A short meal at this time is preferred. Long rambling meals will distract our students and just bad habits. After the meal they should continue with more lessons in control. In the first hour after the third meal, the students should learn and practice the art of the attack, and the second hour, the art of defense. The ability to use the mind as both weapon and shield is a vital part of our training. We also hone their ability to use focus crystals at this point. Some of our more capable members should be on hand to demonstrate, as well as ourselves as Masters and Grand Masters. These lessons should take up the first hour, second hour, and third hour after Sun Down.

FINAL MEAL

The students are allowed a final meal; this is akin to the supper taken in other lands. It should be enough to hold them over, because after the final meal, they are going to endure another hour's meditation in extreme conditions.

FINAL MEDITATION

For one hour after the final meal the students are once again subjected to a meditation under the falls, they are expected once more to remain focused on

their inner mind and ignore everything except for the focus we give to them. We should notice an improvement in our students beyond the first day we attempt this teaching method, and those who improve quickest should be tasked in helping those with slower improvement results.

SLEEP

Once the final meditation is over for the day the students should sleep. Their bodies need adequate rest, and at least six hours is preferable. There are, of course, many of us who can go without any sleep for days, but these are new minds and bodies, we can't expect miracles as we begin. If we notice they have improved in their control over their bodies, we may curtail their sleep and change their schedule by inventing teaching scenarios designed to simulate the wide variety of conditions that they may find in the outside world.

For now we let them rest; tomorrow will be just as hard as the day before.

THE STRUCTURE OF THE ORDER

GRAND MASTER

Our Grandmasters shall be exemplars of our Order; they will lead from the front, and by example. They will seek to enlighten, to instruct, and never to chastise even if the student is unruly or disruptive. They will counter violence with understanding, and treat willingness to learn and improve as sacrosanct. They will seek to impart new understanding and reach even greater levels of control over The Way day by day.

SENIOR MASTER

The Senior Masters of the Order are akin to our Grand Masters. They are exemplars of the Way; they have reached enough levels of understanding to be considered as potential candidates to open a new Order if one is required. We look to them to teach our students when the Grand Master cannot, to impart a greater understanding of the guiding principles of our Order, to protect our students and accompany them as they grow into their true power. There should only ever be three Senior Masters in the Order.

MASTER

We should look to our Masters as we do the Senior Masters. They should be of a similar understanding, but their authority is not as far reaching as those above them. The Masters are our cornerstone when we require lessons taught, chaperones for our students in the wild. Masters are numerous and the Order should seek to support at least six to eight of these talented individuals.

STUDENT OF THE FIRST MIND

Students of the First Mind have reached the pinnacle of what we can teach them, their next step on the path of the Way will take them into the halls of Mastery. They will learn to become Masters, understanding the deeper mysteries of the Order and taking greater steps in their personal journey. They are people upon whom we can rely and assign greater tasks. They should be encouraged to help all those below and even those of us above them, as none of us are too old to learn.

STUDENT OF THE SECOND MIND

The Students of the Second Mind are one step away from their next ascension, they have begun to master the techniques that will take them to First Mind, and they have started to grasp the truth that we hold to be evident about our world and the power within themselves. They are capable individuals that we can assign numerous duties, and look to help others in the Order. We can give them major tasks to undertake, and trust them to do them responsibly.

STUDENT OF THE THIRD MIND

The Students of the Third Mind have just taken their first steps into a wider world. They will learn our deeper mysteries, achieve greater control over mind and body, and learn to adapt to a variety of situations. They are given new focus, and new insight. Many of them should be encouraged to help their fellow students achieve their goals; we should reward those who go beyond the call of duty with increased workloads and greater responsibility. We can look to these students to help us with minor tasks, and see how they handle the increased responsibility.

STUDENT (OF THE MIND)

These are our first proper students; these are the ones who make it through the first year as a Hopeful. They are the ones who have mastered the basic skills they need as an Adept, and those who have demonstrated a further understanding of the world beyond the one they think they know. We will watch them closely and hone those who achieve great things, whilst encouraging them to lift those below them into the wind and let them fly.

HOPEFUL

Our Hopefuls are on the first steps of the path of The Way, they are the important foundation from which we can build our school. We know we cannot take all of them with us, but we will watch for the ones with true potential and guide them as best as we can. Know that it will be a hard choice to pick those who we see with a future in the Order. We should not let just raw ability take precedence either, we should watch for those who might not be as trained as their peers and seek to help them achieve their goals.

GOALS OF THE ORDERS

Our Orders are based on a need to enlighten those Adepts who seek to learn more, to instruct new Adepts in their power, and to provide a safe space for our recruits to prosper far from the eyes and sharp tongues of those who do not trust us. To this end I have compiled a list of our goals as I see them. Grand Masters can see fit to amend or add to these goals as time goes on, especially for their own Orders.

- Instruct our students in the proper methods to control their power. The Way is a dangerous ability, and a very powerful tool. There is a saying, a fire is a good servant, but a poor master. A raging power can quickly burn all without compunction.
- Provide a safe haven for our students. We walk a hard path, so we give them shelter and teach them to provide shelter for others.
- Grow our own understanding as Grand Masters, Masters, and senior members of the Order. We should train just as hard as, if not harder than, those we seek to instruct. We cannot hope to instill the correct teaching if we ourselves are barely capable.