

Holy Orders

The following martial orders exist in service and reverence of the three Stewards of Civilization. Each has a number of members among the various ranks of the Imperial nobility, and many a hero has found valuable patrons among his elders in the Orders.

The three historic Patron-Stewards of Empire have martial Holy Orders in their name. Each has a number of members among the various ranks of the Imperial nobility, and many a hero has found valuable patrons among his elders there. Each Order has four levels of acclaim and authority, the Seals: the first seal marks the Initiate, the second raises one to a Knight-Candidate, the third elevates its bearer to a full Knight, and the fourth and final seal names a Knight-Champion. Each comes with greater restrictions, and greater blessings — and greater curses upon those who break their sacred oaths and lose their powers. Those of the same order gain a +2 bonus to reaction rolls with one another, and a +1 bonus in interactions with the other orders.

Orders may be found and joined through play (a character would never start as a member of an Order). To initially join an Order, and to indicate the desire to advance to the next seal, a character begins to observe the strictures of the seal they seek to attain. When a sponsor among the Order takes note of this, its leaders may offer a quest or grand deed “in the name of the Stewards,” as a test of worthiness for this honor. Upon the success of such a task, the character will be bestowed with the proper honors and elevated to the next seal, with its associated boons and strictures.

The Order of the Lion, in service to Elion

- The First Seal (Sun) — Initiates of the first seal of Elion must swear to act with justice, as befits the knight they would become. They must obey just laws and lawful authorities, and comport themselves as knights. Such initiates are blessed with comportment and dignity, and gain Leadership proficiency.
- The Second Seal (Scales) — Knight-candidates of the second seal must vow to always see justice done, and never allow wrongs against them, their family, their vassals, or others under their protection to go unpunished. They must protect these individuals, and failing that demand compensation for harm inflicted from the wrongdoers. Only if that is not granted, then they may and indeed must take fitting vengeance. These candidates are aided in their discernment with the power of Sensing Evil. Those already so blessed perceive even the unseen and hidden things, gaining Second Sight.
- The Third Seal (Scepter) — Full knights of the third seal must place Law before all personal wellbeing, civilization over tyranny or wildness. As paragons of Law, they tolerate no Chaos or Corruption in themselves or their allies, and must offer fair and

impartial judgment in any case brought before them, even by their sworn foes. The unholy falter against them, for knights of Elion may Turn Undead as a Crusader of half their level; if already so able, they gain their choice of full level turning or the benefits of Righteous Turning.

- The Final Seal — Knight-champions bearing the four seals of Elion are grandmasters of their order, each a shield against Chaos. They swear to extend their protection to any honest seeker without reservation, seeing them safe against harm. As a symbol of the safety to be found about them, knight-champions of Elion are blessed with sacred light, and perpetually radiate *perpetual illumination* as the spell. This effect cannot be dispelled.
- Oathbreakers — Those who lapse in observance of their strictures may lose their boons, but those who forswear their oaths before Elion are truly cursed for their impiety. The Judge should select a number of the following penalties equal to the Seal the character had attained before betraying his vows:
 - Unworthy Leader — The character takes a -1 penalty to the loyalty of any hirelings or followers, and -1 to domain morale.
 - Distrusted — Reaction rolls with sapient creatures of Lawful or Neutral alignment can never achieve a friendly (12+) result.
 - Ignominy — The character is treated as two character levels (one degree of title) lower for purposes of perceived import.
 - Uninhibited — The character's discernment and self-control are lost. His Wisdom score is permanently reduced by 2 points.

The Order of the Falcon, in service to Therin

- The First Seal (Spear) — Initiates of the first seal of Therin must swear to act with honor, as befits the knight they would become. They must at all times remain ready for war, keeping their gear in good repair and being of sound mind, must offer enemies parole if taken captive, and must generally comport themselves as befits a knight. Such initiates are blessed with a keen insight on the battlefield, and gain one rank of Military Strategy. Alternatively, those not proficient in spears or bows may take Martial Training to become so.
- The Second Seal (Tome) — Knight-candidates of the second seal are sworn to protect and safeguard knowledge. They must never destroy records but rather defend them with their life, and must fully and truthfully record all their doings in writing, updating this journal at least six days of every seven unless physically incapable. Whenever possible, an updated copy of this book must be left with the Hall. These candidates' senses are honed to a keen edge, their Alertness perpetual to perceive the slightest change in their surroundings, and to recall it for the Chronicles.

- The Third Seal (Crown) — Knights of the third seal must swear a vow of truth, to let no false words pass their lips. They cannot lie or misrepresent the truth, even to enemies, though they need not answer. But as knights of truth, all truth is laid open to them through the meditative practices of the Probability Trance, and they perceive the hidden patterns and subtle insights spanning history and human knowledge to foresee future events.
- The Final Seal — Knight-champions bearing the four seals of Therin are grandmasters of their order, each a spear against the darkness. They must never let an ally stand alone, whether in defense of their walls or marching to war, but will ever send fitting aid, going themselves in person if reasonably possible. This conviction infuses any weapon they bear, such that any slashing or piercing weapon held by a knight-champion of Therin gains a +1 magic bonus, which stacks with any innate bonus it might possess and cannot be dispelled.
- Oathbreakers — Those who lapse in observance of their strictures may lose their boons, but those who forswear their oaths before Therin are truly cursed for their impiety. The Judge should select a number of the following penalties equal to the Seal the character had attained before betraying his vows:
 - Unfaithful Blade — The character takes a -1 penalty to hit in melee as his weapon twists in their grasp and cannot be trusted. On an attack throw of a natural 1, they must reroll the attack throw against an adjacent ally who is not sworn to Therin (if any).
 - Blind to Truth — The character takes a -4 penalty to all saves vs enchantment or illusion effects, or bewitchment effects of any sort.
 - Unfocused — The character takes -1 to initiative rolls (including strategic initiative) as he is constantly distracted.
 - Stupefied — The character's mind loses its wit and cunning. His Intelligence score is permanently reduced by 2 points.

The Order of the Bear, in service to Rora

- The First Seal (Sheaf)— Initiates of the first seal of Rora must swear to act with mercy, as befits the knight they would become. They must not slay incapacitated or surrendered foes or inflict unnecessary pain, and must generally comport themselves as befits a knight. Such initiates are blessed with skill at granting succor and Healing, as the proficiency.
- The Second Seal (Hearthfire) — Knight-candidates of the second seal must vow to never turn away a supplicant at their door. Any guest who begs hospitality must be granted food and shelter, even a sworn enemy, and the character must ensure such guests do

not come to harm while so hosted. These candidates can restore the fallen with merely a touch, gaining the ability to Lay on Hands.

- The Third Seal (Staff) — Knights of the third seal must always offer treatment to the wounded (save only supernatural beings of Chaos), be he at home or on crusade. A knight may prioritize treatment as they deem fair, but he must do what he can to preserve the lives of even his foes after they are defeated in combat. As knights, however, their own health becomes resilient and their equilibrium of body certain. They are able to endure poisons both magical and mundane, gaining Wholeness of Body.
- The Final Seal — Knight-champions bearing the four seals of Rora are grandmasters of their order, bastions of peace. They may never initiate violence against another nor attack from surprise, only striking in return once enemies first attempt to act. However, so long as they bear this mantle of peace, even their foes will struggle to break it. Any character attacking a knight-champion of the final seal of Rora for the first time in a turn must save vs Spells, unless the knight-champion has made attacks or cast offensive spells of his own. This effect cannot be dispelled.
- Oathbreakers — Those who lapse in observance of their strictures may lose their boons, but those who forswear their oaths before Rora are truly cursed for their impiety. The Judge should select a number of the following penalties equal to the Seal the character had attained before betraying his vows:
 - Thin Blood — The character takes a -4 penalty to saves vs disease and poison.
 - Weakness of Heart — Whenever the character takes a mortal wound, he must roll twice and take the worse or more ironic result (as determined by the Judge). If bedrest is required, the amount is doubled.
 - Distrusted — Reaction rolls with sapient creatures of Lawful or Neutral alignment can never achieve a friendly (12+) result.
 - Enervated — The character's soul is sapped of strength and vigor. His Constitution score is permanently reduced by 2 points.