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Whispering Fury

A Melodramatic Exalted-to-Wushu Conversion

by Shreyas Sampat

Introduction

For those of you already familiar with *Exalted*, be unalarmed. This conversion doesn't do anything strange to the setting, though it makes some tweaks and adjustments. The idea is to get the *Exalted* setting to jive with Dan's slick, exciting game engine. So, none of the style and concepts are changed, though they are reinterpreted a little, just enough to keep things flowing.

The thing that struck Benjamin "Bailywolf" Baugh and I - he wrote a different conversion for these games - when we saw *Wushu* is that it rewards players directly and immediately for describing dramatic and interesting actions. It accomplishes this by awarding players with character effectiveness - for each cool detail a player adds to an action, he gets an extra die to throw when resolving it, and more dice are always better. It's smooth and intuitive.

Simple constraints keep this embellishing from getting dull; any player can veto the die bonus from a detail if he thinks that it's not exciting enough or not appropriate to the tone of the game. That covers the etiquette. Anything that the table likes goes.

Most of the *Wushu* rules remain undescribed in this document; I describe only the alterations I have made to either game. You will need both *Wushu* and *Exalted* to play this, and it wouldn't hurt to take a look at Baily's conversion either. Mine's a little less crunchy; you may prefer his if you like more mechanically detailed characters and such.

This conversion covers Solars, Abyssals, Lunars, Alchemicals, and the Dragon-Blooded. I'll add Sidereals and Fair Folk as their hardbacks make it to print, and (heroic) mortals and ghosts if someone asks for them. Spirits require some thinking; I'll get back to those.

Verbiage

As in Baily's conversion, the vast majority of the terminology in here comes from *Exalted*, but one convention is unique to the conversions: *Wushu* uses Yang and Yin dice to indicate different types of actions; here I use Scarlet and Ebon. Scarlet dice are used for actions, while Ebon dice are used for countering action, such as attack and parry.

The Virtues

Characters have four Virtues: Compassion, Conviction, Temperance, and Valor. These are the engines that power the character; they are what divide the heroes from the ones who tell their tales. Virtues in this conversion map both to themselves and to Willpower in straight *Exalted*.

Whenever a character is performing an action where a Virtue applies, he can add the score of his relevant Virtue to his Target Number. Rolled dice equal to or below the Target Number are successes.

Compassion is the Virtue of humanity. It aids in any task where the character is trying to right injustices, protect the weak or the beloved, or understand his fellow man.

The Virtue of inhumanity is Conviction, Compassion's counterbalance. It helps characters when they must commit or endure atrocities for the sake of their principles, to hold fast to their beliefs even when the gods of the world have turned against them.

Patience, caution, obedience, foresight: all these are the province of Temperance. Temperance is the Virtue of the Middle Way of moderation, the straight and narrow path of prudence. Temperance aids characters when they wish to hold back their temptations or see their way safely through an endeavor. It counterbalances Valor.

Valor is a Virtue of extremes, of the duellist's steely silence and the berserker's bone-breaking roar. It aids men when they need to withstand great odds bravely, when their honour and grace are threatened, when it is a time for swift and decisive action.

All characters choose one Virtue to set at three, two at two, and the remaining one is set to one. In addition, all the *Exalted* patrons favored their children with a shard of their own power. For this, Solars and Abyssals can raise any Virtue by a single point; Lunars add a point to Valor, Terrestrials to Compassion. Sidereals get a bonus point of Temperance, and Alchemical Exalts get an extra point of Conviction. Whenever a character fails a roll with his highest Virtue, he acts out his Virtue Flaw; see the next section.

The Great Curse

The dying Primordials, with their last couching breaths, cursed the *Exalted* to live a life of debauchery and degeneracy; their own virtues would destroy

them. This is the Great Curse, the legacy of the gods before gods, the fallen builders of Creation.

The Great Curse manifests differently in different Types of Exalts. When Solars act out their Virtue Flaw, they become totally, destructively ruled by their dominant Virtue. A Compassionate Solar might suddenly collapse into tears or protective rage at the sight of suffering, while a Temperate one might perform severe asceticisms or loudly criticise the less virtuous in the face of excess. When acting in Flaw, a Solar can only add the Flawed Virtue to Target Numbers, or roll Attributes without a Virtue added.

The lesser Celestials completely lose the effect of the Virtue when the Flaw kicks in. A Lunar with Flawed Conviction might turn into a listless slob when faced with seemingly insurmountable challenges; a Sidereal with bad Valor might cower pathetically when challenged or mocked. When Flawed, these Exalts lose the use of the Flawed Virtue entirely.

God-Blooded and Terrestrials collapse into their Roots when their Flaw becomes active, seeking refuge in their elemental or spiritual ancestry. They lose the use of all but their lowest Virtue, and must engage in elemental behavior (sexual violence, argumentation, etc., for a Fire Aspect, drinking, sloth, theft for Water, disrupting a play or target shooting for Wood, and so forth) or contact with their spirit environment (the woods for a forest spirit, fire and flight for a phoenix) before they recover.

Abyssals have had their Curse bent and twisted to help the Malfeans better keep them in line. If the Abyssal is working directly in their service, the Curse manifests in the same way it would affect a Solar. If otherwise, then it manifests as a Black Miracle, a morbid perversion of Creation caused by the tainted Essence of the Abyssal. Depending on the severity of the Exalt's mishap, the Black Miracle varies in its intensity; a minor misstep could simply turn the Abyssal's eyes into windows to a world of screaming madness, while an epic failure could turn a city instantly to a smoking necropolis.

Essence

Essence in this game works identically to Chi in Wushu, and parallels the function of Essence and Health Levels in *Exalted*. It indicates a character's vitality, his spirit, his power and expertise in controlling the flows of natural energy that pass through the world. Characters with more Essence are brighter,

Essence By Type

Mortal	1
God-Blooded	3
Terrestrial	3
Alchemical	5
Lunar	5
Sidereal	5
Abyssal	7
Solar	7

bolder, more intense. Different types of Exalts start with different Essence scores, and some are better at raising them than others. The most potent of an Exalt's powers require a temporary reduction of Essence to activate. In addition, the number of dice that an Exalt can generate through description is limited by his Essence.

Traits

Once you've come up with your character concept, distributed his Virtues, come up with a Flaw and checked Essence, you need to work out Traits and anima abilities.

Terrestrials, Sidereals, Abyssals, and Solars have Abilities as Traits; these represent realms of expertise that the character has access to. Five of these are Caste Abilities (Aspect for Terrestrials); they gain a +1 modifier to Target Number. You can then choose five (for Dragon-Blooded, three) abilities as Favored Abilities; these also gain a +1 TN modifier. You can choose a Caste Ability as Favored for a +2, as well.

Lunars and Alchemicals have Attributes as Traits; these represent aptitudes intrinsic to the character. Three of these are Caste and three Favored.

The Solars

All Solars can spend 1 point of Essence to activate their Charm and double the dice they roll for a single action. This doubling is applied after any dice from details and special bonuses, but before the dice are rolled. A Solar under duress can lay waste very quickly to many lesser opponents. In addition, each Caste has a unique anima power. Solars regain 1 point of Essence each per day if they can rest and recover their energy. They also receive a bonus point at their Caste's time of day, a boon of the Unconquered Sun.

Dawn Caste Solars have the Abilities Archery, Brawl, Melee, and Thrown. Their animas awe and terrify; spend 1 point of Essence and foes that don't have Essence higher than your own are dazzled and cowed; they must spend a Scarlet success willing themselves to action against you. This effect lasts a scene.

Zeniths have the Abilities Endurance, Performance, Presence, Resistance, and Survival. Their animas cleans and purify; after spending 1 point of Essence, a Zenith can incinerate corpses with her gaze to protect them from possession, and can turn that same baleful glare to minions of the dead. The harm she inflicts on them is doubled, and they are affected by her anima as if she were Dawn as well.

Twilight Solars have the Abilities Craft, Investigation, Lore, Medicine, and Occult. Their animas enfold them in safety; for the cost of 1 Essence, they can double the effectiveness of their defensive actions for a scene.

Night Caste Solars have the Abilities Athletics, Awareness, Dodge, Larceny, and Stealth. Their animas burn more quietly; for no cost a Night can make an anima manifest as one level lower. For 1 point of Essence, the Exalt can muffle the world around him, concealing himself in glorious subtlety.

Ecclipse Castes have the Abilities Bureaucracy, Linguistics, Ride, Sail, and Socialize. Their animas are physical embodiments of the ancient oaths of hospitality; no spirit creature would dare break such a vow in an Eclipse's presence. Eclipses can spend 1 point of Essence to sanctify a vow into an unbreakable oath, or 3 points to use the special Charm of another type of Exalt.

The Abyssals

The Charm of Abyssals weakens those around them; for 1 point of Essence they can make every success against them count as a half for a round - an opponent would need 2 unopposed Scarlet successes to damage the Abyssal's Essence 1 point, for example. Abyssals in a shadowland or the Underworld regain 1 point of Essence each night, and one at their Caste's time of day as a mark of the Malfeans' favor. In Creation, Abyssals can only regain Essence through their life-draining magics; for one extra Scarlet success, they can change a lethal attack into a lethal, Essence-draining attack.

Musk Caste Abyssals have the Abilities and anima power of Solar Dawns. They are figures of dread and terror when their anima flares into darkness.

Midnight Caste Abyssals have the Abilities of the Zenith. For 1 point of Essence, they can touch a corpse with necromantic Essence; at the end of the scene, it rises as a faithful zombie extra.

Daybreak Caste Abyssals are the necrosurgeons and soulsteelsmiths of the Underworld; they have the Abilities and anima power of the Twilight Caste.

Night Caste Solars. Instead of muffling and distracting, though, the anima cloaks a place in silence and shadow, damaging any and all perceptions.

Moonshadows have the Abilities and anima powers of Eclipses, but not their ageless privileges; the Decievers can no longer take refuge in the oaths of civility that their purer brethren take advantage of.

The Lunars

Lunars can channel their Essence to transform their physical bodies, enhancing an Attribute by 1 point for a point of Essence. This lasts a round. If this increases the TN of a roll to 6 or more, every die on that roll is an automatic success. Lunars regain a point of Essence every night with a change to rest and relax, and another when Luna's motion marks their Caste - Full Moons at moonrise, Changing Moons at its zenith, and No Moons at moonset.

At no cost, a Lunar can change into any of his trueforms as a detail, or into a Heart's Blood form as his action for the round. If a Lunar's anima flares, he is locked into one of his trueforms for the remainder of the scene; though he can still use minor shapeshifting and moonsilver manipulation, full changes of limbs or body are beyond him.

Full Moon Lunars have the Attributes Strength, Dexterity, and Stamina. They can spend a point of Essence to double the rolled successes on any athletic, non-combative action.

Changing Moon Lunars have the Attributes Charisma, Manipulation, and Appearance. They can bend their animas into perfect, silent illusions for a point of Essence.

No Moons have the Attributes Perception, Intelligence, and Wits. When they spend Essence to reduce the difficulty of a spell, they reduce it by 3 per point, rather than 2 per point.

Casteless Lunars have no Caste Attributes and 5 Favored Attributes; they have the anima power of the current phase of the moon.

The Sidereals

The Sidereal Great Curse is hubris; they are proud and sure in their abilities, and are nearly incapable of doubting them or seeking assistance, particularly when they are gathered in groups. This Curse has no game-mechanical effect. The special Charm of Sidereals spins Fate to do their bidding; they may spend 1 point of Essence, before rolling, to double the Ebon or Scarlet successes of one action; in addition, each Sidereal Caste has a special anima power. Unlike the anima powers of the other Exalted, Sidereal animas always affect the Chosen and any of her nearby allies. Sidereals gain 1 point of Essence each day with a change to meditate and reflect, and an additional point at the moment of their Maiden's rising in the sky.

Journeys is the name of the first Maiden; her Chosen have the Abilities Endurance, Ride, Sail, Survival, and Thrown. For 1 point of Essence, the Chosen of Journeys can invoke the Lesser Sign of Mercury; within its amber light, the Chosen and her allies can run three times as fast and without fatigue for a scene.

Serenity is the province of the second House of Destiny. The Chosen of Venus have the Abilities Craft, Dodge, Linguistics, Performance, and Socialize. For 1 point of Essence, these Exalts can invoke their Lesser Sign, whose azure glow adds 1 to the TN of any action requiring compassion and grace.

Battles Caste Sidereals have the Abilities Archery, Brawl, Melee, Presence, and Resistance. The scarlet Lesser Sign of Mars, by which war is made, costs 1 point of Essence to invoke, and adds an extra Scarlet die to its beneficiaries' offensive combat actions.

Secrets is the House called the Forbidding Manse of Ivy. Chosen of its mistress Jupiter have the Abilities Investigation, Larceny, Lore, Occult, and Stealth; their special anima power illuminates the world in sparkling emerald and grants a free Ebon die to against attempts at mind-reading and compulsion, and a free Scarlet die to uncover things unknown.

Endings Caste Sidereals, the Chosen of Saturn, have the Abilities Athletics, Awareness, Bureaucracy, Martial Arts, and Medicine. Their special anima power tolls like a violet funeral bell, automatically converting 1 Scarlet attack die into a success.

The Alchemicals

Alchemicals do not suffer from any version of the Great Curse; they do not experience emotional travail when their Virtues fail them. Their special

Charm allows them to adapt versatily to many situations; they may spend 1 point of Essence to increase their TN by 1 for a single action. Alchemicals regain 1 point of Essence every day with a chance to rest and recover, and another point with a day of concentrated, assisted maintenance.

Orichalcum Alchemicals have the Attributes Strength, Intelligence, and Manipulation. They can spend 1 point of Essence to gain a bonus Scarlet success to damage for the duration of the scene.

Moonsilver Caste has the Attributes Stamina, Wits, and Charisma. They can spend 1 point of Essence to gain a bonus Ebon success for defensive actions for the duration of the scene.

Jade Caste Exalts have the Caste Attributes Dexterity, Intelligence, and Appearance. They can spend 1 point of Essence to quicken their bulky bodies, doubling the speed at which they move.

Starmetal Alchemicals have the Attributes Dexterity, Perception, and Manipulation. Starmetal Caste Alchemicals can spend 1 point of Essence to add a free die to all combative actions for the duration of a scene. Choose Scarlet or Ebon when activating this Charm; the free die must always be this color.

Soulsteel Caste presides over the Attributes Stamina, Wits, and Appearance. Soulsteel Alchemicals can channel 1 point of Essence into their animas to increase the difficulty of attacks against them; the first Scarlet success of any attack must be used to cancel this effect.

The Dragon-Blooded

Dragon-Blooded are efficient and flexible - they have to be, being the most delicate of the Exalts. For a point of Essence, a Dragon-Blooded can ignore the Scarlet-Ebon distinction for the rest of the scene. Dragon-Blooded recover 1 point of Essence a day with rest, and they can regain a bonus point for spending at least an hour immersed in the Element of their Aspect: dry saunas, gardens, soaking pools, caverns, windswept towers, and that sort of thing are built by the Dragon-Blooded for just this purpose.

Air Aspect has the Abilities Linguistics, Lore, Occult, Stealth, and Thrown. For 1 point of Essence, an Air Aspect can enfold himself in the winds, becoming light and swift. For the duration of the scene he can run twice as fast, jump three times as far, and fall like an autumn leaf - slowly, gracefully, landing with poise and effortless panache.

Earth-Aspected Exalts have the Abilities Awareness, Craft, Endurance, Martial Arts, and Resistance. They can channel a point of Essence to harden their bodies with the spirit of stone, gaining a free Ebon success to defense for the remainder of the scene.

Fire-Aspected Dragonbloods have the Abilities Athletics, Dodge, Melee, Presence, and Socialize. For a point of Essence they can set their animæ afire, gaining a free Scarlet success to offensive actions for the duration of the scene.

Water Aspects have the Abilities Brawl, Bureaucracy, Investigation, Larceny, and Sail. They can spend a point of Essence to adapt to water, breathing in it as easily as air, seeing through its darkness and enduring its pressure.

Wood Aspect Exalts have the Abilities Archery, Medicine, Performance, Ride, and Survival. For a point of Essence they can become as supple as a willow sapling, gaining a free die of either type to any physical action for the duration of the scene.

Backgrounds

Every character has 5 points to distribute among Backgrounds, which provide you with specific advantages. Some Backgrounds can be taken twice for an added benefit, and some can be taken only by certain types of characters. Some are based on Virtues; you may choose any Virtue for them that makes sense. You can link no more than two Backgrounds to a single Virtue. For Dragon-Blooded, the benefits of a variable Background are always at the two-pick level. Abyssals can gain this benefit as well, but only if they are faithful to their Deathlord liege's command, as can Sidereals, subject to Celestial approval.

Allies: You know 1 person per point of Virtue that is willing to aid you directly, or 3 if taken twice. Unavailable to Sidereals.

Artifact: You have an item of power that adds a free die (not subject to Essence limit) to any relevant actions, as well as having any special effects you and the GM like. Taken twice, the Artifact is singularly special, granting two dice and major SFX.

Backing: You have influence and resources via your placement in a regional organization, for which you have responsibilities to fulfill. Taken twice, the organization is global. Your responsibilities decrease and benefits increase with a higher linked Virtue. For Sidereals, Backing is always from a division of the Bureau of Destiny or some other celestial organization.

Breeding: You have particularly good ancestry, which grants you social prestige and increases your Essence by 1. Dragon-Blooded Background.

Command: You command a military force composed of dangerous and well-trained mortals. This works like Followers. Dragon-Blooded or Abyssal Background; Abyssal troops are ghosts and the walking dead.

Contacts: You know folks, based on your Virtue. Taken once, you know people who move in certain interlinked circles; taken twice, you know people from every walk of life. For Sidereals, this Background includes appropriate cover identities.

Cult: You are worshipped as a divine figure by a cult. The size of this cult depends on your linked Virtue. For two picks, your cult is large and growing, and you regain a point of Essence for presiding over a major cult gathering. Lunar and Abyssal Background.

Familiar: You are mystically bonded to a special creature. It is like a character with 6 points distributed among Virtues and 5 among Abilities, and Essence 2. Taken twice, the creature is uniquely advantaged, having 8 Virtue points, 7 Abilities, and an Essence of 3. Sidereals may gain as many Familiars as their highest Virtue.

Followers: You have mooks with a total threat level equal to your highest Virtue, or three times that if taken twice. They may be a small, elite group or a sizable, ragtag band. If their threat level is reduced to 0, it takes at least a session for your following to recover. Unavailable to Sidereals.

Hearth's Blood: You have already tasted the heart's blood of many shapes. You know 3 times your highest Attribute score in forms, human or animal. For two picks, you know 5 times your highest Attribute score. Lunar Background.

Senchmen: You have one or more Nemesis rank NPCs who serve you. You have a total of 15 Abilities to distribute among them; they each get normal Virtues. Dragon-Blooded Background.

Influence: You have pull in a social circle based on your linked Virtue. Taken twice, you can stretch your influence outside this circle with an effort.

Manse: You are attuned to a Manse and regain an extra point of Essence each day, or two if taken twice. A Manse can be in Creation, the Underworld, or Heaven; Heavenly Manses grant their benefit to the owner regardless of where they are, and the others only function if the owner is in the same realm. Heavenly Manse is a Sidereal Background.

Mentor: You have a relationship with a more powerful character who can teach and advise you; he reduces the Experience cost to improve by 1 point per expenditure. Taken twice, the mentor is a power in the world and reduces Experience costs by two.

Renown: You are well-known in Lunar society. Taken once, you are known and spoken of, and you are treated with good respect. Taken twice, you are famous, and your legend is told to newborn Lunars as a model of achievement. Lunar Background, or double cost for Solars.

Reputation: You are known in Dragon-Blooded society based on your linked Virtue, for things associated with that. Dragon-Blooded Background.

Resources: You have a comfortable income and a fairly sizeable pool of assets. You own some property and live well. For two picks you have untold wealth, can buy nearly anything, and have a large serving staff and holdings. For Sidereals, this property is always in Yu-Shan, the city of gods.

Sifu: You have an Exalted martial arts teacher who reduces the Experience costs to improve your kung fu (and, subject to ST approval, Essence) by two. Sidereal Background.

The Anima

The Exalted are imperfect beings, and as Essence courses through their frames, some of it spills out into the world, creating intense displays of mystical energy. Pillars of light, smoky spirit animals, paper birds, flocks of pebbles, rippling heat haze spelling words in the air, lambent icy darkness: the anima banner could be all these things and more.

When an Exalt generates as many dice as his Essence through details, his anima *flares*. An anima flare lasts until the end of the scene, and is nearly always visible for miles. The anima takes shapes iconic to the character when this occurs; a Wood-Aspect might scent the air with falling rain and create spectral images of vanishingly tall trees, while a Lunar's anima could take the shape of a thousand moonsilver antelope stampeding through the scene. Anima flares always leave some trace behind that can be identified by someone with the proper learning.

Anima manifest as less-formed bonfires of Essence at the level of one die fewer than a flare. These are still visible for miles and scene-long, but do not leave trace. With a bonfire anima, a Solar might stand in a hazy mandala of writhing golden shapes that turn

into centipedes if the anima flares later; an Abyssal turns into a black silhouette filled with wailing stars, casting pale, sickly violet light all around.

One die less severe is the obvious display. This lasts only until the descriptive phase of the next round, and is just strong enough for anyone on the scene to know that the Exalt is using Essence.

Less intense still is the telltale display. This too only lasts a round, and is only noticeable enough that a knowledgeable person paying attention would know what is going on. These occur whenever the Exalt generates dice through details.

Paperwork

Written by Shreyas Sampat with the excellent input of Benjamin Baugh and Daniel Bayn himself. *Wushu* is Daniel Bayn's property; *Exalted* is the property of White Wolf Publishing, and *Wushu for Exalted* is the property of Benjamin Baugh.

This document is meant as a reinterpretation of Benjamin's, which is intended to allow a person to run a game in the *Exalted* setting, using the rules framework of *Wushu*. To get the best possible use out of this document, you should get a copy of *Wushu*, the *Exalted* main book, and Benjamin's conversion, which sometimes explains things better than I do here, and has expanded rules for sorcery and Lunar shapeshifting, including beastman form stuff.

Clarifying: This document is not intended as a challenge to any of the three copyrights it's interacting with; it should be considered the work of an adoring fan who wishes to combine three excellent works in the best way he can imagine.

Several elements in this work come directly from Benjamin's, or are only slightly modified. These are repeated here mainly for accessibility, and not in an attempt to claim his work as my own. Specifically, these are: all the Backgrounds, excluding their application to Abyssals and Sidereals; the Essence mechanics; the Charm of Solars, Lunars, and Dragon-Bloods; the anima powers of those; the basis of the anima rules; the Scarlet-Ebon die terminology.

You can! Get a copy of *Wushu* at Daniel Bayn's website, <http://www.bayn.org/games/wushu.html>. You can also contact me at torchbearer_rpg@yahoo.co.uk; I'll be glad to forward thoughts to Benjamin as well.

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