

# The Emerald Legion



appenstance is an equal opportunity killer, and as a result, the Emerald Legion is nothing if not diverse. Unlikely and untimely deaths occur across the spectrum. Tragedy trips up the mighty and the meek, the opulent and the opprobrious, the peerless and the pitiable...especially the pitiable.

The hodgepodge nature of membership in the Legion makes Emerald Legionnaires themselves difficult to pigeonhole. So many things are swept under the Emerald Lord's aegis that Emerald Legionnaires often find themselves with nothing in common except an improbable death-tale. A 70-year-old diabetic who died when the candy striper accidentally unplugged her dialysis machine works alongside an innocent teenager riddled with bullets in a drive-by shooting. Even in cases where dozens of Legionnaires died together, the only bond these wraiths share is the lethal "Oops" that shoved them across the Shroud. Hearing several Legionnaires' stories in a row tends to generate uncomfortable laughter in listeners; tell tale after tale of unlikely and often embarrassing deaths has led many a circle into fits of absurd hilarity, with death as the punch line of a bad joke that won't end. A sizable number of Emerald Legionnaires were simply clumsy or careless in life. Smoking in bed led to painless asphyxiation for many, even as their houses burned down around their corpses. Clumsily tripping over their own feet has been the inadvertent death of a few. Some Legionnaires were considered to have bad luck all their lives, leaving a trail of disasters in their wake. Some wraiths tell of a string of near misses before a final slip killed them.

Other Emerald Legionnaires had maverick streaks in life. Athletes, especially those involved in extreme sports, are a small but highly visible segment of the population. Skaters can and do turn every place in the Shadowlands into their own gothic skate parks. BASE jumpers who misjudged the wind in life leap with relic parachutes off of Underworld landmarks. Rock climbers who lost their grip on a mountain scale the Stygian architecture for sport. Since these athletes prepared so meticulously for their dangerous games, only sheer chance sent them under the offices of the Emerald Lord.

And of course, large numbers of new recruits appear *en masse* at the site of earthquakes, hurricanes, airplane crashes, sinking ships and gas explosions.

Thus, while not an entirely happy group, the Emerald Legion largely consists of those who claim no malice or hatred against a mortal foe. On the whole, Emerald Legionnaires' Passions tend more toward "softer" emotions, such as regret and envy, rather than hate or revenge.

One unusual feature of the Emerald Legion is the fact that many of its members, even older ones, are more strongly attached to their Fetters than are the members of the other Legions. The sheer randomness of these wraiths' deaths leaves them with more unfinished business on average. Furthermore, fewer members of this Legion have tales Transcendence than other Legions, because of the inherent difficulty in making peace with Happenstance. Legion philosophy is simple: Better to make do with what's in front of you now than to take your chances on a complete unknown.

Despite its outmoded purpose, the Emerald Palace continues to host the wondering dead as they search for meaning. An "act of God" is a particularly unnerving way to cross the Shroud, and in the relentlessly mechanistic Hierarchy, one rarely even has the luxury of being permitted a god to rail

against for one's death. So Emerald Legionnaires of all stripes are encouraged to spend time in the "merry old land of Oz" (as the palace is known outside of Stygia) reflecting on their deaths.

Time spent in the palace facing the vagaries of Happenstance tends to vex more than soothe. The maddening confrontation therapy inside consists of viridian maze in which scenes and memories of a wraith's former life flicker and jump on the edges of peripheral vision, then suddenly loom directly ahead. Wraiths who enter the maze are expected to remain inside until such time as they've come to grips, even marginally, with their histories. Pardoners are stationed at strategic points in the maze to assist wraiths thrown into Catharsis by sudden reminiscence, and no less a personage than Sister Acceptance has lauded the maze as a therapeutic tool. However, not every Emerald Legionnaire journeys to Stygia to undergo such treatment; with time and reflection, many have come to accept their circumstances, even if explanations for those circumstances remain lacking.

Of course, Transcendence is no longer the goal of this therapy. These days the Legion just wants competent, settled Legionnaires. Some interpret the openness of the Emerald Palace as meaning that the Deathlord actually cares about his Legionnaires' well-being, and that this coming to terms is seen as necessary work in getting "sea legs" for the afterlife. Others just call it a Deathlord protecting his assets.

# Politics

Pragmatism is the defining political rule of the Emerald Legion. As regards the edicts of Charon, the Legion seems to prefer to ask the proverbial forgiveness rather than permission. While some would say that this is standard operating procedure for all the Hierarchy, the Emerald Legion is particularly unsubtle about its dealings with the Heretics and Renegades. Officially, the façade of following Charon's Law is maintained, but some Legionnaires gave more thought to interstate speed limits in life than they do the Dictum Mortuum in death. A good bit of this laxness is due to the Emerald Legion's own written code of behavior. Though the Lord is silent on specific interpretation of his code, it is understood to supersede Charon's when the two conflict. This code of behavior, known as the Emerald Values, is drilled into every new recruit, and there are harsh penalties for those who don't get with the program quickly enough.

The Emerald Values appeared shortly after Charon's disappearance, apparently written by the Emerald Lord himself. These Values would undermine the Empire's entire status quo if widely enacted, but even hard-core idealists see that as unlikely. However, the Values have remarkably changed the details of organizations and operations within the Legion. What the Emerald Lord hopes to accomplish by these radical notions is known to him alone, but the growing influence and higher profile of the Emerald Legion are signs of some success.

The Emerald Values, and what is commonly called the "Stygian Interpretation", are:

**Value One: Determine Risk**

Don't simply calculate your chances for success, determine them. If you don't like your odds, fix them.

**Value Two: Cogs Turn Wheels**

The reason anything works is because Legionnaires and clerks make them work. They deserve the highest respect and reward for their individual contributions.

**Value Three: Throw it Up and See if it Flies.**

Failure is acceptable. Not trying isn't. If an idea doesn't work, rework it and try it again, until you make it work.

**Value Four: Talk Emeralds, not Thorns.**

"Emeralds," in Legion vernacular, are solutions. "Thorns," by contrast, are those things, which obstruct solutions. They are also stock in trade for Shadows.

Plaques bearing the Emerald values are posted in every Citadel and domain in which the Emerald Legion has a stake. Specific interpretation of Values varies through the Empire; they are darkly twisted in some places, items of convenience in others. In some places, however, they are gospel. It is in this third group where the Emerald Legion shines (or glares) most brightly, and no better case study exists than in Stygia itself.

Stygian Emerald Legionnaires are the most shockingly positive, performance-oriented Legionnaires found in the Underworld. This is due in no small part to the Anacreon's gung-ho application of the Emerald Values to every job-related aspect within Legion purview. In Stygia, innovation and risk-taking are rewarded above success. Interesting solutions that half-work receive more enthusiasm than routine ones that do completely.

This attitude tends to have two effects on Emerald Legionnaires: 1) Champions of a particular idea emerge, intent on a better solution at any cost (sometimes to the chagrin of more conservative thinkers); and 2) Virtually every wraith takes personal pride in her job because she feels respected for her contributions and areas of specialty. These Values often seem to contradict the Hierarchy's track record, but their efficacy is undeniable.

The first Emerald Value, *Determine Risk*, deals with the most fundamental issue for every Emerald Legionnaire: chance. Chance is an ocean, rocking and tossing all on its rolling tide. Chance can be dangerous and unpredictable. Storms brew quickly, and the greatest dangers lurk unseen below the waterline. But, if one learns to read the signs and watch for patterns, predictions can be made. Because of this attitude, the Legion is hallmarked by risk-taking, not as a fanatical concept, but a practical, methodical approach to goals. The formula embodying the first Value is: Size up circumstance for likelihood of success, change factors to ensure success, and then succeed. The Legion doesn't give out consolations prizes for nice tries.

Manufacturing change is a tricky business, however. Necessary factors are specific to each situation, and there's no guarantee that changing them in a perfectly reasonable fashion will create anything resembling a desired outcome. Caveats aside, certain changes are good bets. One of the most reliable factors is information gathering. Talking to experts about projects in their areas of expertise or doing research has been shown consistently to increase likelihood of success. Another common method involves direct communications with wraiths or Shadows in a position to make a project happen. This can be anything from politely asking favors to pulling rank to rude threats. Note that bargaining with Shadows can often virtually ensure short-term success. The long-term consequences of this sort of deal, however, can be decidedly unpleasant.

To facilitate negotiations skills with unpredictability, every Legionnaire is taught the basics of Fatalism and encouraged to consult with experienced Oracles before undertaking major tasks. In fact, most Emerald Legion leaders keep skilled Oracles on staff for just such consultations. Under proper Risk Determination protocol, Legionnaires are taught to restructure circumstances to create 80/20 odds of success before proceeding. Legionnaires should never attempt any action, which generates less than a 50/50 chance for success. That would be poor Risk determination. To encourage worthwhile Risk Determination, Emerald Oracles have developed their own art, Odds Are.

The second Emerald Value, *Cogs Turn Wheels*, is an emphasis on the front-line worker. From the Legionnaire in the trenches fighting the Spectral hordes to the clerk behind a desk shuffling monthly

reports, the “little guys” make the entire Legion run smoothly. No one knows how to do a job as well as the wraith actually doing it. Therefore, the manner in which the job is done is immaterial, as long as it gets done. Ignoring or denigrating one Legionnaire’s judgment in these matters cripples the entire Legion. Let Cogs turn Wheels, and everything goes around nicely.

This Value places a premium on manpower. Very few Emerald Legionnaires get smelted into soulsteel or items of convenience. No one wants to turn a soul into an end table when that soul can be using his hands and brains somewhere else. As a result, Legion offices are spartan and functional. Emerald Legionnaires typically must make do with short supply unless they have a large pool of malcontent wraiths nearby to forge, or access to a steady supply of relics.

The third Value, *Throw it Up and See if it Flies*, is a call to action. Legionnaires are encouraged to plan and determine acceptable levels of risk. But the best-laid plans of mice and men are worthless unless someone acts on them. If the plans fail, that’s fine. As long as something was learned in the attempt, no one bats an eye at a setback. The important thing is to make it work eventually. A popular Legion adage says, “The chance of any one thing’s working is small. The chance of one of a whole bunch of things working is pretty big.”

The fourth Value, *Talk Emeralds, not Thorns*, is the means to instill innovation in Legionnaires and take toys away from Shadows. Any potential solution to a problem, no matter how improbable, is an Emerald. Any excuse for not finding a solution is a Thorn. Note that this is not the same as “If you can’t say something nice, don’t say anything.” Negative comments are fine, so long as they lead to workable solutions and don’t devolve into *ad animam* attacks.

This is widely considered to be the toughest of the four Values to implement. Many workable Emerald Legion projects have imploded because of a Shadow’s untimely whisper. While nothing completely silences a Shadow, an Emerald Legionnaire should offer it fewer opportunities by not dwelling extensively on negatives.

## A Second Look

Unfortunately, this uncharacteristic optimism is hardly the case in every domain held under Emerald sway. In joint command Necropoli, Emerald Legionnaires often have to compromise just to get along. Other Necropoli ignore the Values because of the work involved in implementing them. However much the Emerald Values support the efforts of common Legionnaires, the Values’ worth is still only as good as the interpretation of local authorities.

A prime example of local abuse of Emerald Values lies in Assessor States. As any Renegade will tell you, abuse comes naturally to Hierarchy officials. In a small number of Citadels, the Emerald Values are used to enforce a near-Orwellian state of paranoia among wraiths within their sphere of influence. These are called Assessor States because of their strict and constant assessment of a Legionnaire’s contributions to the power base of the local branch of the Emerald Legion.

Centurions known as Assessors make up the enforcement arm of the Hierarchy in Assessor States, working for the Anacreons or Regents of their particular Citadels. Assessors watch over Legionnaire as they work, maintaining close authoritarian supervision. They keep exhaustive records of a Legionnaire’s performance, checking closely to assure that the proletariats show “appropriate loyalty” and “judicious risk determination” in word and deed. Assessors appear randomly and often drag “disloyal” Legionnaires away from their jobs or Haunts with no warning and with only the vaguest hints

of due process. Such Legionnaires themselves are little more than Thralls without chains. (Some claim Thralls are better off; at least Thralls know when their time is up.)

Those wraiths that Assessors deem lacking in loyalty or judicious risk determination are sent for review before an Assessor Review Board. Boards are comprised of other Assessors, and are for all intents and purposes kangaroo courts. Reviews are held in cavernous rooms with the Assessor Board sitting behind raised desks. For evidence, they rarely take testimony, instead silently consulting stacks of papers, which supposedly contain the wraith's record of service and loyalty. To no one's surprise, these papers are never shown to the accused.

The fate of the charged lies mostly in what the Board sees as their most immediate need, and how much of a threat the accused presents to his masters' desire. For infractions as small as interrogating a Heretic instead of immediately turning her over to the Citadel's forgers, a Legionnaire has been soulforged herself to "teach a lesson about proper associations with outlaws."

Thus, the first Emerald Value is redefined to mean that Legionnaires should *Determine Risk* according to Assessors' rule.

Assessor States interpret the second Value as an imperative, not a declaration. They place value on the Wheel, rather than the Cog. Those who work slowly or unwillingly (in the flagrantly subjective view of the Assessors) are accused of not turning the Wheel, and are subject to review.

The third Value is used to goad faster work from the Assessor's charges. "Throw It Up" is, to an Assessor, to turn out goods and services faster. "See If It Flies" is to ensure quality of work. Though in reality the two mandates are often mutually exclusive, Assessors accept no excuses. They occasionally toss a wraith to the barghests to encourage others to work both quickly and meticulously.

Finally, any who speak against the Assessors or their masters are accused of violating the fourth Emerald Value by speaking Thorns against the leaders. This infraction is one of the most serious in an Assessor State, and is usually compounded with other Values violations a wraith may have committed against the Legion.

Perhaps even more disturbing than the presence of this Emerald Legion Secret Police is how consistently this organization appears over a broad geographic range. Pockets of Assessors appear in the northwest United States, Central America, Germany, Austria and Switzerland. In each of these locations, the Assessors display the same heavy-handed enforcement style, the same board method of adjudication, and even the same uniform, down to the black scale insignia on stark white masks.

Only the most unobservant do not see that this lockstep uniformity indicates an organized plan. Possibly the Assessors intend to supplant the more populist Stygian interpretation of the Emerald Values, yet Legion diplomats and Stygian officials do nothing to counter it. The powers that be occasionally make fleeting allusions to "internal disagreements" or "major issues to be discussed" as the Stygian interpretation vies for control of these blackened mirrors. But the vagueness of their references and the many concessions made to Assessor States point to a conspiracy at the highest levels.

The inherent appeal of the Stygian interpretation makes it a popular choice in the ranks, yet the Assessor interpretation seems to be gaining support in the upper echelons where policy is made. Where this support comes from and why remains a mystery. Many see it as a sign of weakness in the Emerald Lord that he has not put a stop to this grotesque mockery. Some think the Assessor States are the brainchild of the Emerald Lord's own Shadow. Others theorize that the Deathlord is playing both ends against the middle for some purpose of his own. The Emerald Lord himself makes no mention of the growing crisis, and seems oblivious to the potential repercussions of allowing the assessors to run amuck. Meanwhile, Assessors continue to smelt hapless victims into bricks and steel, justifying their atrocities in the name of the Emerald Values. Neutral observers have only one comment on the matter – something has to give. Soon.

# Other Legions

On the whole, Emerald Legionnaires view other Legions with benign condescension. The Emerald Legion takes considerable pride in its unique view, and other Legions which discourage or ignore their members' contributions are seen as unenlightened.

Emerald Legionnaires tend to regard the Pauper Legion as cohorts. Domains overlap so often that in more remote places, they regard paupers as interchangeable with their own troops. In spite of their aggressive membership-drive mentality, Reapers usually cede borderline souls to the Beggar Lord with little dispute. On the other hand, the Grim and Gaunt Legions send more souls to the forges in a year than the Emerald Legion receives in total. This is a sore spot for the Anacreons who work to build their Legion, yet still find themselves understaffed.

Finally, low-level resentment is held toward the Legion of Fate. Victims of Happenstance must accept that accidents happen and that they cannot dwell in the past. The Ladies of Fate don't seem bound by similar emotional compromises. They may have answers that plague uncounted Emerald Legionnaires, yet they don't share their knowledge. Don't they see how it could benefit everyone if they would only share information?

# Renegades

Renegades receive ambiguous treatment from the Emerald Legion. They are understood to be enemies, especially since their actions most often define them as such. But since Renegades operate under fewer rules than the Hierarchy, they make fascinating operational models for study. Breaking the mold is a Renegade specialty, and, as a result, they probably have hundreds of unorthodox methods for dealing with simple problems that never make it into Hierarchy think tanks. No one hurries to discard such an educational opportunity.

One branch of the Order of Archimedes' Bathtub observes Renegade Circles in the field and find newer, better ways to tackle old problems. If the researchers believe they have milked a particular group for all they can learn, the Order then gives their behavioral studies to the military branch of the Legion. The Renegades suffer a crushing Hierarchy attack shortly thereafter.

# Heretics

As long as Heretics remain splintered and present no serious threat to the Hierarchy, they are tolerated or studied. Interestingly, the Riders of the Wheel is a Heretic group that the Emerald Legion seems not only to tolerate, but very nearly to embrace. The Anacreon of the Trenton Necropolis is openly seen in the Hanging Gardens casino, and is said to be a nigh-infallible card counter. Some Legionnaires come to understand that nature of chance, or to test their prowess at risk determination. Others just come to gamble or watch the fights.

Though gambling one's own soul is officially forbidden, a Legionnaire occasionally turns up missing after a bad night at the casino. If he is still missing after several days, another wraith is assigned to his former post, and the foolhardy gambler is quietly filed MIA. This practice is becoming

increasingly common in areas surrounding Atlantic City, though none of the higher-ups have addressed the problem. The Trenton Anacreon may have some stake in the Hanging Garden casino's continued existence, but no one gives voice to this suspicion in the open.

## Non-Military Life

In non-military affairs, the Legion operates very much like a business. Anacreons and Regents view themselves as CEOs and vice presidents. Ministers and Inspectors loosely translate to supervisors and middle managers, while clerks work in tiny cubes on simple jobs like record-keeping and resource management.

Overall, the civilian Legion works to stockpile Shadowland resources for the "company." These resources are not merely oboli and Artifacts, though. Conventional wisdom states that the most valuable resource for a small Legion is manpower. Therefore, in accordance with the Emerald Values, the business focuses on retaining current Legionnaires and recruiting new ones from recent arrivals and the ranks of Renegades and Heretics. Turning otherwise serviceable souls into raw material is a waste. A preferable course for many Anacreons is to get their charges to follow orders of their own free will. To do so, they adopt one of the most alien, least understood concepts in the Underworld. Kindness.

In adherence to the second Value, *Cogs Turn Wheels*, Anacreons communicate regularly with their Inspectors. They even wander around the offices, talking directly with clerks. They tell clerks how much they appreciate them, encourage their ideas, and reward risk-taking that pays off. They offer regular incentives for quality work done on schedule. Perks include time off to visit Fetters, free use of Legion facilities and good old-fashioned oboli. At the same time, Anacreons firmly admonish wraiths that aren't team players, and encourage those who seem disconsolate about death to spend time at the Emerald Palace. These motivational tactics were severely criticized by other Legions when introduced, but the results show undeniable success.

The kindness shown to clerks got passed on to their customers. Artificers began to take exacting pride in their structures and repairs. Usurers became open and helpful, rarely giving customers an unfair exchange. Reapers acted like big brothers and sisters to Enfants rather than stern authority figures or fearmongers. Granted, backstabbing, and ulterior motives still exist, but Legionnaires now often ask rather than manipulate to get things, and it usually works just as well.

After initial uncertainty, the change paid off. When most wraiths have a choice between a bored, mechanical Pardoner and a friendly, non-judgmental one, the latter wins again and again. With the goal of serving the Underworld in better, more innovative ways than anyone else, Emerald Legionnaires are, if not the best at what they do, by far the most pleasant. Except when fighting the occasional Spectre rampage (or under the influence of their Shadows), Emerald Legionnaires are polite on the job, and they uniformly seem to enjoy their work.

The loss rate to Renegade and Heretic groups also slowed with this shift in Legion mission. Currently, in most places, the Emerald Legion is enjoying a membership increase. Anacreons ignore detractors who claim this is because of the rise in natural and man-made disasters in the past few years. They choose to believe instead that judicious application of the Emerald Values has paid off.

Other concrete displays of the Values include requisite monthly seminars. Specialists come in from other Necropoli on a seminar circuit, designed to introduce new ideas and stir debate on current events. They speak on practical topics such as "Try A New Arcanos," "Quality Fetter Management" or "Talking Back to Your Shadow." In addition, every Inspector and Minister is expected to spend at least

half her time walking around, talking and listening to clerks, and pitching in occasionally to better understand how a clerk's job works. Impromptu meetings are held whenever a problem comes up, and the necessary participants are summoned to confer on a problem, recommend a course of action, and then proceed with it.

In all of this, however, no member of the Legion wears a permanent smile or claims to feel happy-go-lucky. Every wraith still feels the pull of Fetters, and hears the whisper of the Shadow. And rare is the wraith that wouldn't bargain his soul for another chance at life. But in a wash of suffering and regret, the Emerald Legion can be a small island of respite where a Legionnaire can find appreciation and perhaps even a bit of encouragement.

## Military Life

Though the non-military side of the Legion operates surprisingly well under the Emerald Values, the military arm has failed miserably attempting to mix notions of autonomy and innovation on the battlefield. Gaunts, calling themselves the Old Soldiers (some of whom had been soldiers for hundreds of years), refused to believe that a more effective tactical unit existed than the simple infantry block. One hundred wraiths with swords, they reasoned, was formidable enough opposition for any foe.

This type of head-down bulldozer approach conflicted sharply with the individual, autonomy-oriented Emerald Values. After several years of stubbornly ignoring the values, the Old Soldiers were finally forced to reorganize in the late '60s by a consortium of Anacreons tired of seeing large numbers of wraiths march off to war and small blocks of wraiths come back. Under the new regime, individual Legionnaires were given basic training and told to use their "best judgment" on the battlefield. The Old Soldiers saw this as civilian bureaucrats meddling in business they knew nothing about, and swore they would prove what an utter failure it would turn out to be.

Certain evidences seem to indicate that the Old Soldiers may have arranged the 1969 Birmingham Necropolis riot for just such a purpose. To this day no one has been found responsible for the Heretic white supremacist riot following the 16<sup>th</sup> Street Baptist Church bombing. Disorganized and outgunned, nearly 300 Legionnaires were lost to Oblivion as white-hooded wraiths looted and razed part of the Birmingham Necropolis using relic pistols and rifles, along with years' worth of stock piled relic bullets. Charging through the Necropolis, they mercilessly cut down Legionnaires armed only with swords and their "best judgment." Prisoners were rapidly smelted down into new weapons for the rioters, who were only subdued by a rush of well-disciplined reinforcements from Stygia itself.

The Old Soldiers, with barely concealed pleasure, announced that this massacre was final vindication of conventional troop organization and maintenance. Believing that this loss of face would quiet the insistent champions of the so-called "Emerald Values" once and for all, the Old Soldiers began reordering their troops in a manner more befitting the time-honored tradition of command.

This palace coup might have gone unchallenged, except for the sudden, timely appearance of Marcus Lowry a few months later. Lowry had a military past and a vision for the future. His greatest asset was an intense personal magnetism. He was the kind of person you wanted to be your friend. On top of this, he was also a competent commander and tactician.

By dint of his masterful escape from the jungles of Vietnam, Lowry proved his mettle and demanded a right to be heard among the Old Soldiers. He agreed that large-scale organized military movements failed spectacularly when several hundred wraiths gang-tackled an objective using several

hundred approaches. But instead of concluding that the Emerald Values should be discarded in military affairs, Lowry chose to incorporate them.

In a detailed report to the Emerald Lord himself, Lowry outlined a new standard for military organization within the Legion, starting by eschewing the previous literal standard of commanding the 100 Legionnaires in a Century. He conceded that victory through main strength might work in a larger Legion, but the woefully understaffed Emerald Legion could fight more efficiently when not committed exclusively to huge blocks of infantry.

To everyone's surprise (except Lowry's), a trial period was approved. Lowry reorganized the army into small, tight units known as "Ranks," which contained 10 or fewer Legionnaires. He then gave field promotions to dozens of Legionnaires, making them "occasional Centurions" in charge of a Rank, and placing regular Centurions over 10 to 12 Ranks. Ranks could then be quickly assembled into Centuries, or dispersed into small units at a signal. Essentially, Lowry broke the basic Emerald military unit into even smaller units. Though this seems an elementary solution in retrospect, his timely intervention healed a Legion-wide breach before it got out of proportion.

Once the concept of Ranks had proven itself in a few minor battles, the idea was adopted Legion-wide. But Lowry wasn't done. Next he negotiated with other, larger Legions who could afford the luxury of mass ground troops. Emerald Legion Ranks were then "loaned" to other Legions for assignments of ambushes, sniping, harassment, decoys, reconnaissance, or any other potentially dangerous job another Legion wouldn't want to lose troops to. Maintaining the second Value, such Ranks were simply given mission objectives with no details and few stipulations. They were expected to work out details for themselves, as long as they met or exceeded the expectations given by their temporary commanders in other Legions.

Despite the grudging respect given to Lowry personally, "Lowry's Ranks" still meet with disdain from the Old Soldiers who prefer their own methods. In many Necropoli, particularly ones where the Values are distorted, Ranks are simply never dispersed, and the old-style infantry blocks are still the rule. The commanders in place complain that "Lowry's Ranks" would be ineffectual as military units if other Legions were not able to back up the hit-and-run guerilla fighting in which they specialize.

Until this century, military dress in the Emerald Legion was highly formal and standardized, consisting of long coats, trousers, knee-high boots and square-billed military caps. More recently, with the advent of the Emerald Values and emphasis on individuality, each Rank has adopted its own name and insignia. The names and styles vary as much as the hundreds of Ranks that exist. Military motifs still crop up most often, with straight military names (Charlie Company) or inspired by nostalgia (Flying Tigers or The Argonauts). Appearance is kept in check by the demands of service; no wraith wants to make herself a target by dressing like a rodeo clown in combat. Final decisions are usually left up to the Centurions who must command the troops.

## Special Orders

### Guardians of the Labyrinth

The wraiths sworn to guard the Veinous Stair seem like a separate entity from the rest of the Emerald Legion. Allegedly called to service by Charon himself, the Guardians watch the Stair and

defend against Tempest incursions with single-minded intensity. The experimental, freewheeling attitude of the other Emerald Legionnaires is replaced by a lookout's eye and a sniper's cool. The Guardians are effective enough that no one challenges their methods.

## Order of Archimedes' Bathtub

The story goes that Archimedes discovered the concept of buoyancy while taking a bath. When he hit upon the idea, he leaped out of the tub and ran naked down the street shouting, "Eureka!" all the while. In that tradition, the Order of Archimedes' Bathtub consists of late inventors and engineers dedicated to finding innovation in unusual places.

One current "Tubber" project is to create a portable Maelstrom shelter. To this end, several Tubber groups have set up their bas camps far from populated areas and bathyscape into the Tempest to test experimental shelters. Such teams are secretive, but occasionally can be seen constructing or launching soulsteel and plasm contraptions into the Tempest. It is said that these experimental shelters usually contain a test subject, though the subject's willingness is an issue of debate.

## Green Teams

Reaper "Green Teams" avoid the usual distorted masks and bizarre insignia of Hierarchy functionaries. Instead, they adopt smiling faces and friendly, welcoming attitudes. Since Emerald Enfants often cross in groups, due to multiple deaths at disaster scenes, Green Teams can consist of up to 20 Reapers, all trained to be non-threatening and congenial. In fact, Emerald Reapers often seem more like camp counselors than soldiers. They gather Enfants in a circle, play get-to-know-you games, and sing upbeat songs laden with positive messages about Hierarchy life.

After a quick debrief, Enfants are marched back to a "welcome center" at the closest Emerald Legion outpost. On the entire march, Green Teams teach Enfants marching songs and echoing chants. Versions of "Louie, Louie" are a popular choice – most people know the song, everyone can join in the chorus, and carrying a tune is optional.

At the welcome centers, Reapers answer questions, introduce Enfants to the Emerald Values, teach a crash course in basic statistics and tell stories of some of the Legion's legendary innovators and risk-takers. Reapers lightly sidestep complicated or charged political questions at this point. They want to create comfort and good feelings while introducing friendly Legion values and culture.

Green Teams, like so many other parts of the Emerald Legion, receive much criticism. Some is even deserved. Outsiders criticize Reapers' "Sesame Street" propaganda, calling it trite misrepresentation of Shadowland existence. Less subtle critics call the indoctrination "brainwashing," though Reapers insist the dazed expressions on the newly Reaped are a holdover from death and the Caul. Regardless, Green Teams still boast the largest member retention rate in the Hierarchy, and the Legion itself has a slowly growing population base.

Though most Guild members in the Emerald Legion do a passable job of hiding Guild connections, many Green Teams incorporate Monitor Guild symbols into their Reaper uniforms. Open eyes appear on buttons and cufflinks, and the little televisions adorn hats, coats, and shoes. Reapers

defend their stylistic choices by claiming that these symbolize protectiveness for their charges. Even sympathizers call this a rationalization, though, and incautious Monitor Guild members get reassigned quickly, usually to perfunctory jobs. No one wants to lose a solid worker, but blatant evidence of Guild connections is simply unacceptable, even in the Emerald Legion.

