

MAU

"You are the Great Cat, the avenger of the gods, and the judge of words, and the president of the sovereign chiefs and the governor of the holy Circle; you are indeed the Great Cat." – inscription in the Valley of the Kings

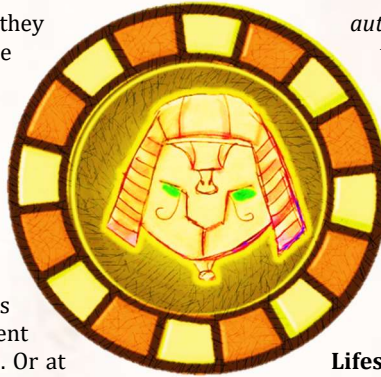
Quote: You there, mortal person. You dare surmise that Thoth had the head of a stork? He also had the head of a baboon you dolt! He must also have had the head of a great Khem cat as well! Do you know why? For I am here, and I am Thoth, and you shall pay for your indiscretion!

Once upon a time, the Cats decided that they were Gods. Everyone knows this story. The Thrice-Damned Followers of Sutekh know it. The Wolf-Headed Striders in Silence know it. The Immortal Amenti in the Empire of the Sphinx know it well. There is one family of Akuko – (or one Tribe of Cait-Sith if one asks the Celtic Cousins) that know of this God-hood more than any other. The Mau. From time immemorial the Mau set themselves up as erstwhile deities, exemplifying the attributes of the Netjer- the Heliopolitan Gods of ancient Egypt- and overseeing their self-made worlds. Or at least, that is what the Mau espouse. The truth of the matter is that Egypt, like many cities of the Dreaming Kingdoms in the Land of Ancient Stories- might not boast the same power that it once held. The Empire of the Sphinx, once a fabled metropolis of learning and magic, has been debilitated by the onward passage of time - And the Mau with it. The Truth of the Mau is the same truth of Egypt. Time changes all things.

A Mau today is a cat, a flea-plagued, refuse eating, scarred bastard of a stray. They live in Cairo alley-ways, and in the sewers of Luxor. Life is not kind to them. Life is not kind to anyone. Yet a very small number of these cats remember, remember that once, life wasn't only fair, but a great gift from the Sun. The cats who remember wrap themselves in the raiment of memory. They garb themselves in the trappings of immortality and ascend to a Godhood that they recreate from ancestral memory.

Every Mau renames himself after a particular Egyptian Deity. More than a simple priest of that Netjer, they instead become the living embodiment of that God or Goddess. Of course, some research has to be done on the part of the would-be Deity, but so much the better for those mortal retinue swayed into the service of a breathing God. The Mau wheels and deals and sets up shop as precious masters of underground temples. As new Mau wake up to their God-hood they migrate to these temples, where great clowders of Cat-Headed immortals bask in adulation. Prodigals from all walks of life come to venerate these modern incarnations. The Thrice-Damned Followers of Sutekh, the Wolf-Headed Striders in Silence, the Immortal Amenti – all see and all fear the glory. At least so far as the Mau explain it.

Appearance: In both Felid and Mortal Mien, the Mau appear as painfully thin and hungry looking strays or persons of Northern-Saharan or Semitic stock. Their Bopha Umomo (Mortal Miens) see dark fur or skin, sharp faces, and large eyes. There is an air of manic frenzy to their wide eyes, as if a great spiritual weight will come crashing down on their shoulders at any second. When they wear the trappings of their God-hood (Either Pharaoh costumes from E-bay or something more



authentic) their demeanor changes to better suit their status as God who walks.

Their Bilongo Umomo (Fae Mien) is that of a tall and lithe cat-headed God. There is danger in their gaze and promises of secret pleasure in their thin smiles. Unusually astute onlookers may still see the manic frenzy and just a hint of fear in their eyes, however. It is unwise to point this out. No God wants to be reminded of his faults.

Lifestyle: All of the above sums up the Mau's lifestyle nicely. As the preeminent Akuko in Akhet (the Empire of the Sphinx or Dreaming of Egypt) the Mau has no shortage of goings-on to keep herself busy. Traveling Fae dignitaries, not just from Africa but all over the world seek out long-lost secrets. Of course the Mau can help them for a price. Heart-broken Amenti who miss a previous incarnations pet may fawn over a particularly fluffy Khem-Cat. Even the thrice-damned blood-drinking Followers of Sutekh come bearing gifts in exchange for good blessings.

Tifl Mau are angry, entitled, and downright arrogant little bastards. But are still hungry in a way that few understand. If one might take a moment, and realize that just a little bit ago, this Goddess before you was a starving, mewling stray with no hope, no future, and no way out... then they might understand why the Ngane is an angry, entitled and downright arrogant little bastard.

Shujae Mau have settled very nicely into God-hood, thank you very much.

Kabur Mau also called *grey-whiskers* have not just settled into God-hood, but have come to embody the sheer magnitude and raw supremacy that such God-hood endures. Some few grow benevolent, understanding that nothing lasts forever, and they give away their many splendid things to trusted servants. Others grow increasingly paranoid and pour themselves into research that might stave off that forthcoming undoing of self. The worst turn towards the Followers of Sutekh, who always have a means to stave off the grave.

Glamour Ways: Mau regain Bilongo by being worshipped. The Mau have an easier time with this than you might think. In Mortal Mien, there are always lovers who will grovel at your feet, or feeble-minded commoners to kneel in wide-eyed wonder. In Feline form of course, well... The Joke has gotten stale by this point.

Unleashing: Cantrips cast by the Mau are accompanied by a blast of dry heat, far away chanting in a forgotten tongue, the aromas of spicy exotic incenses and the oppressive feeling of the weight of the ages. There is also a bit of hidden sadness underneath all of this grandeur. The particularly astute may see through this grandeur and see just how cardboard it truly is.

Affinity: Actor

Changing: For a point of Bilongo spent, a Mau can transform their decaying form into Mummra the Everliving. Just kidding, they can turn into a cat. It costs no Bilongo to change from cat to human. But for Bilongo spent, the Mau can adopt an aura of Divinity in either Feline or Mortal mien. (See *All the Old Gods* Birthright below).

Birthrights

All the Old Gods (*Klu Alalihat Alqadima*): As inheritors of priestly regimes that have long been forgotten, the Mau are privy to perks that were reserved for the Gods themselves. Upon Saining (and choosing which God best suits incarnating) the Mau receives all the blessings of God-hood. They get 5 free dots of backgrounds to spend on Either Holding, Title, or Retinue.

Their true name (Ren Hekau) changes to an amalgamation of their previous name and the name of Deity chosen., (Even the Amenti - masters of magical naming) have difficulty in explaining this shift. In Game terms, any Naming Magics meant to affect the Mau have their difficulties raised by 4, even if that

means exceeding difficulty 10. Also, for a point of Bilongo spent, a Mau can bathe himself in a sudden flash of divine energy. Cosmetically not much has changed, but the intensity of the stare, the shifting of shadows and light, the air pressure in the room- all swing wildly illuminating the Mau to be far more than she seems. Most mortals are cowed by this simple parlor trick, and even some Fae tribes of other lands give pause and wonder..."*Could this be a God?*" A willpower roll (Difficulty of 5 + Mau's appearance) to see through this and not be cowed by the eminence of the Netjer's supremacy.

Frailties

Hidden Sadness (*Alhuzn Alkhafiu*): Every now and again, for no good reason at all (and at storyteller's discretion) a Mau is met with the truth of their own mortality. The truth of themselves is that they are strays and liars, their Godhood is a lie, and the Gods disappeared a long, long time ago. No E-bay pharaoh costume can change that. During these times, usually after a good lengthy streak of worshippers and slaves groveling in supine positions of adoration, the Mau must roll willpower (difficulty varies all the time) or else fall into a mental funk. Debilitating visions of their own wasted mortality play across their mind's eye, and even their fellow Mau Gods can't shake them out of it. These periods prove more and more frequent the older the Mau grows.

During these periods (which can last anywhere from a day to years) anything that requires concentration is at a +3 difficulty. In addition, the Mau cannot regain Bilongo until her spirit is healed. Some whisper that forgoing the Godhood and traveling in Felid form for an extended period is a means to soothe the soul, but none know for sure.

Mafdet- Priestess of herself and ruler of all she sees, decrees her opinions for all her subject to hear and adopt

Ahl-il Tirub: Moroccan harlots with all the grace of a wiggling snake. If I had the time, I might make them my enemies. Perhaps I will one day.

Nasnás: We don't much care for Yemen, and so the little hopping frogs can do as they please. For now.

Sha: Ah, the little shades who couldn't. If they weren't so cloying, I might invite one here to serve as my shadow.

Shabti: A thousand-lifetimes of servitude, and no means to elevate the self. This is the mark of good retinue; others should take note.

Eshu: The Blood of a well-traveled God? inheritors of chance and luck and lust and frenzy? Hidden knowledge of this world and the next? Envy them? Why my dear, I am still talking about myself.

The Cait-Sith: Who? Oh, my darling, there is only us? And us is all you will need.

Bubasti: No relations, no relations, no relations at all.

Striders in Silence: Broken hearted lovers as fleeting as a whisper. I might decide to keep one as a pet.

Amenti: Of course, we keep many of them still around, if only to remind us of past glories. They aren't as numerous as they used to be of course. Time does that, yes?

Followers of Sutekh: Liars all, but at least you know they are liars. Keep this truth in mind and open up the dialogue. There are all sorts of tasty treats available to the both of us if we both understand our positions.

