

MARKS, TIERS & EDITIONS



A BALLAD OF CHAOS

THE IDENTITY SYSTEM

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ALL ART BY THE AUTHOR

One ward, and everything struck from it.

The Brand Kit answers *how a thing is made* — the treatments, the colour, the separators and the reasoning under each. This document answers the other half: **what exists, what each asset is for, and where it sits relative to everything else.**

Size encodes rank, and it runs backwards on purpose. The saga is largest because it is the thing being sold; the Primordials are smallest because they are the oldest and the least visible. Anyone laying out a new artefact reads the hierarchy off the sizes without being told it.

The system is not a collection of marks that happen to share a style. It is one construction — concentric tick-rings, orbiting dot-nodes, a single central glyph on a vertical axis — repeated at four levels of the story. The saga ward is the parent. The five volume bearings are struck from it. The Ancient-tier marks sit beneath the story's own hierarchy, and the three Primordials sit above all of it, drawn smallest because they are furthest from the reader.

ONE GRAMMAR, FOUR TIERS

Every mark in the property is the same construction at a different scale. A new mark that departs from it is not in the system.

ACCENT MARKS THE STORY, NOT THE DESIGN

Every mark carries a colour, and the colour is quoted from the books. The exception is the marks the story never activated — those stay cream.

NOTHING HERE IS COMMISSIONED

Every asset in this document was drawn by the author, including the plates the covers are built on.

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Every Ancient has power over the ones to their left; every Ancient has power to expunge the life of the one on their right.

THE LAW OF ANCIENTS • WHY THE MARKS ARE ORDERED AND NOT ARRANGED

Eighteen marks, and all but one share the same construction.

TIER	WHAT IT IS	COUNT	SIZE	ACCENT
<i>The saga</i>	The master ward — one mark for the whole property	1	LARGEST	Ember
<i>The volumes</i>	Five bearings struck from the master ward, and the prelude — which is not struck from it at all, but the Slab of Ancients itself	6	LARGE	Volume accent
<i>The Ancient tier</i>	The seven Ancient seats and Existence	8	SMALL	Seat colour, where the story gives one
<i>The Primordials</i>	Fate, Eternity, Infinity — the tier before colour	3	SMALLEST	NONE

WHY THE SMALLEST TIER IS THE OLDEST

The Primordials predate the currents, and the currents are what the accents *are*. A Primordial drawn with a hot accent would claim a colour that did not exist yet. They stay cream, and they stay small, and the plate reads correctly without a caption.

△ THE SILENCE HAS NO MARK

It is the Seventh Seal — not a current, not an Ancient, not a tier. It gets no sigil, no swatch and no seat. Where a composition must acknowledge it, it appears as absence: the one place the linework stops.

ADDING A MARK LATER

A new mark inherits the grammar and takes its size from its tier. If it does not belong to one of the four tiers, it does not belong to the system — and a mark for something the books never named is not a mark, it is an invention.

Every mark in the property, grouped by what it belongs to.

THE SAGA • THE MASTER WARD

ONE MARK FOR THE WHOLE PROPERTY



THE
SAGA

THE VOLUMES • SIX

FIVE BEARINGS, AND THE PRELUDE'S SLAB



I
NIGHT & CHAOS



II
LIGHT & LIES



III
PERDITION



IV
FLAME & RUIN



V
DAWN & ORDER



PRELUDE
FIRST LIE

THE SEVEN ANCIENT SEATS

CALAMITY AND WAR STAND EMPTY IN THE PRELUDE



SALVATION



CALAMITY



LOVE



CREATION



WAR



DESTRUCTION



JUDGMENT

THE EIGHTH, THE PRIMORDIALS,
AND THE SILENCE

THE TIER BEFORE COLOUR, AND THE
ONE WITH NO MARK



EXISTENCE



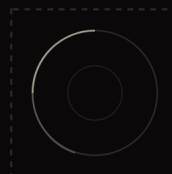
FATE



ETERNITY



INFINITY



THE SILENCE

△ THE SILENCE IS SHOWN AS AN ECLIPSE, NOT A SIGIL

It is the Seventh Seal — not a tier, not an Ancient, not a mark. Where a composition must acknowledge it, the linework simply stops: an arc that begins and does not close. It has no export, and it never carries a colour.

What each mark is actually drawing.

Each mark draws its volume's central mechanism — none are interchangeable. The badge is the board's status, not the volume's — Books I–IV are published; the sigil boards are in print for I and II.



The Morningstar

BOARD · IN PRINT

Volume I · A Son of Night and Chaos

A five-pointed inverted pentagram, broken open at one arm — the question asked and the silence that answered it. The break is where the cycle enters.

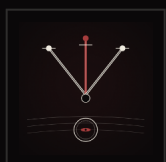


The Vesica and the Flaming Sword

BOARD · IN PRINT

Volume II · A Son of Light and Lies

Two overlapping circles — light and the lie built from it — pierced by one descending blade: the set's only straight line, for its only orderly betrayal.



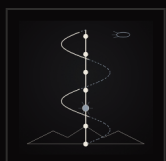
The Plumb-line and Pendulum

BOARD · FORTHCOMING

ART · IN PRINT

Volume III · A Farmer of Perdition

Three primordials crossed at one weighted point — a Charon in Origin, in Ash, in Shadow: one tragedy at three depths.



The Helix over Mountains

BOARD · FORTHCOMING

ART · IN PRINT

Volume IV · A Reaper of Flame and Ruin

Seven gates as a rising coil, not a ladder — the book opens them out of order. Two voices on one axis, struck in storm-grey: the one mark with no fire in it.



The Empty Throne at Dawn

BOARD · FORTHCOMING

Volume V · A Harbinger of Dawn and Order

Reverse polarity: order as fragile human geometry at the centre, chaos at rest around it, a throne with nobody on it. Dawn-amber — the only accent that is not a red.



The Slab of Ancients

FORTHCOMING

Prelude · The First Lie

Not struck from the master ward. Seven sockets, six names — the ring reads complete and one hollow belongs to nothing. An object from the story, not a bearing.

TIER I · THE PRIMORDIALS

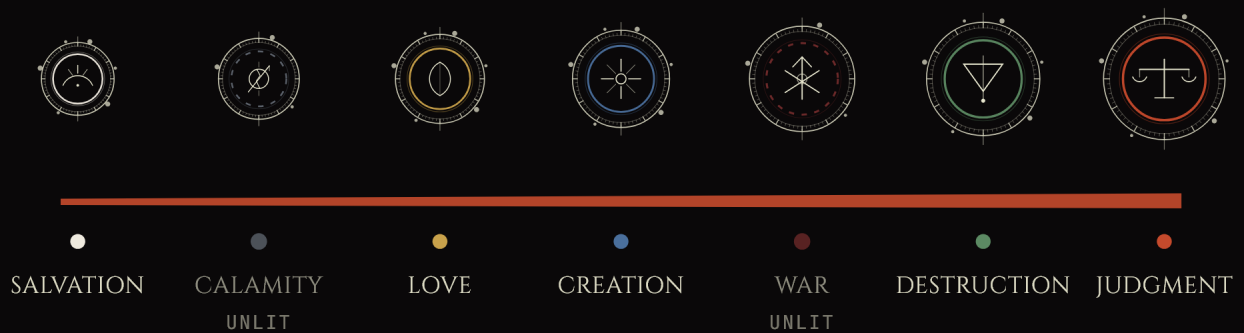


the friction that keeps the wheel turning

TIER II · THE EIGHTH, AND AN ABSENCE



TIER III · THE SEVEN ANCIENT SEATS



power over the ones to their left · power to expunge the one on their right

The First Lie takes a mark of its own.

A free prelude novella, subtitled *The Journal of Lady Death*, serialised as a webnovel and given away as an e-book. Its mark is the one image the whole book is built to deliver: **seven sockets, six names, and one struck** — the line reads complete, and one hollow at the base belongs to nothing.



HOW IT SITS IN THE SYSTEM

The Slab of Ancients rolled into the house ward: the chamber of black diamond, seven hollow sockets, a crimson seat ring thickening toward Judgment, and three crystal points at the crown. The only mark whose single ember accent points at something missing.

NO NUMERAL, AND AN ATMOSPHERE OF THREE

It sits outside the count, so the numeral slot takes *The Prelude*. With no accent of its own it borrows the last generation's seating — Oris blue, Voris crimson, Moris green, green dominant because it is her journal.

Cream at the top, colour arriving in the middle band, two sockets still unlit.

The existing six sigils each carry one hot accent — red for Books I–IV, copper for Book V.

This board withholds it, and the reason is canon rather than taste: the accents are the currents, and the Primordials predate all three. The seven seats are the deliberate exception, because they are where colour enters the property at all.

TIER I

Three, above everything

Fate, Eternity, Infinity — named in iridescent crystal at the crown of the slab. Fate is *father*; Eternity and Infinity are *mothers*. Fate alone has a mechanical role: it is the friction that keeps the wheel turning, which is why its ward is the largest and why its glyph is a book that turns.

TIER II

Seven seats, fixed order

Cut in sapphire into the slab, permanent, predating Oris. A crimson line runs beneath them left to right and thickens as it goes, and the size of each name grows with it — Salvation the smallest word on the slab, Judgment the largest.

TIER III

The Eighth, and an absence

The Eighth Ancient is the *Kalpavrikśa* — Existence, root and crown as one structure. Beside it, the Silence: no seat, no swatch, no ring. It is drawn as the one place on the plate where the linework simply stops.

⚠ DO NOT REORDER, RENAME OR ALPHABETISE

Salvation · Calamity · Love · Creation · War · Destruction · Judgment. The order *is* the diagram: every Ancient has power over the ones to their left; every Ancient has power to expunge the life of the one on their right. That is the Law of Ancients, and the thickening crimson line is what it looks like.

TWO SEATS STAND EMPTY IN THE PRELUDE, NOT IN THE SAGA

Calamity and War are filled by the time of *A Ballad of Chaos*. The dashed rings and held-back names describe the age *The First Lie* is set in — the null age, before those seats were taken. Their values come from the volume artwork rather than a tablet light.

Five colours are quoted from Book I. Two are taken from the artwork.

Five seats have a canon colour — the light an opal tablet released as it clicked into its socket. Calamity and War are not yet filled in the prelude's age, so their values come from the volume artwork instead, and the board marks the difference with a dashed ring.

SEAT	COLOUR	VALUE	SOURCE
<i>Salvation</i>	white	#EFEADF	<i>"white light danced across the chamber"</i>
<i>Calamity</i>	pale grey	#8E9AA8	Empty in the prelude — value from the Book IV artwork
<i>Love</i>	gold	#C9A24B	<i>"shimmered gold as it found its home"</i>
<i>Creation</i>	blue	#4A6F9C	<i>"blue energy pulsed outward"</i>
<i>War</i>	deep red	#A63D3D	Empty in the prelude — value from the Book III artwork
<i>Destruction</i>	green	#5C8A63	<i>"a faint ring of green light"</i>
<i>Judgment</i>	crimson	#C54A2C	<i>"glowing crimson"</i>

GRAMMAR IS NOT OPEN FOR REDESIGN

Concentric tick-rings, orbiting dot-nodes, one central glyph on a vertical axis, cream on black. The new tier is **more of the same system, not a new one** — it sits above the master ward and the five book sigils without changing how any is drawn.

DELIVERY

Colour and black-line pairs, transparent PNG, as the six were supplied. Vector at 1240 × 1660, so both passes come off one source.

Seven families, and no asset sits outside them.

THE MARKS

The master ward, the five volume bearings, the Ancient-tier marks and the Primordials. Each exists in a colour pass and a black-line pass, on transparency. The line pass is the one for foil, embossing, stamping and single-colour print.

THE WORDMARKS

Two lockups only: the inline single line, and the stacked block. One size throughout; articles are de-emphasised in the stacked lockup and set at full size inline.

THE BADGES

Square and round, in ink, paper and ember. For spines, endpapers, seals and anywhere the full wordmark will not fit.

THE COVERS

Front cover per volume plus the omnibus, in two editions. Web cuts serve the site and retail; print resolution is held separately.

THE ATMOSPHERES & PLATES

The painted fields the covers are built on, plus the wide plates used as full-bleed backgrounds and interior leaves. They carry no type and no mark, so they can take either.

THE SEPARATORS & ORNAMENTS

Interior scene-break rules and their variants. One per book plus a series-neutral form; the treatments and spacing are specified in the Brand Kit.

THE RETAIL BANNERS & LOCKUPS

The series banner, the horizontal strip and the dark-field lockup. The only surfaces that show the sigil set as a set rather than one mark at a time.

▲ THE BOARDS ARE DIAGRAMS, NOT DECORATION

The Primordial board and the hierarchy plate state the cosmology. They can be reproduced whole; they cannot be cropped to a fragment, because a fragment of a hierarchy asserts something the story does not.

WHERE THEY LIVE

Everything free to use for press, review and editorial work is downloadable from the press page, with credit and no form. Branding and merchandise need written permission first — see balladofchaos.com/license.html. Print formats and anything at a proportion the published assets do not have are sent on request.

A parable, told as myth, in epic form.

Five forms fit at the top and no single label covers the work — but the parable ranks the others, because it is the reason they were chosen. Where the saga breaks a form is where it is doing something on purpose.

FORM	FIT	WHERE IT BREAKS
<i>Parable</i>	●●●●●	Short and humans-only by form; four of five books are neither. The form does not fit — the lesson does.
<i>Myth</i>	●●●●●	Myth is anonymous and inherited; this is single-authored. And its moral runs inverted — the accused is the victim.
<i>Epic</i>	●●●●●	It does not glorify heroic deeds. It indicts them.
<i>Saga</i>	●●●●○	The family is one soul across four descents rather than a bloodline — genealogy of a self, not of a house.
<i>Allegory</i>	●●●●○	The characters are not <i>only</i> symbols. That costs the form clarity and buys the book its weight.
<i>Lore</i>	●●●●○	A layer, not the work — it explains the world rather than telling it.
<i>Legend</i>	●●●○●	A legend is based on truth. This begins from scripture.
<i>Folklore</i>	●●○○○	It consumes folklore rather than being it.

THE MORAL, SINGULAR AND STATED

Make peace with yourself. Five descents, one lesson — Lucifer asking a question nobody answers, Uriel carrying a light that is not his, Charon refusing to give up a name, Kalki inheriting a verdict he did not pass, Manu understanding the world perfectly and himself far too late. The saga is not about good and evil; it is about the cost of being at war with yourself, and the way out is not victory.

THE SHELF

It files with the literary mythic retelling — canonical myth re-argued from the accused party's side, in a literary register. Not epic fantasy: that shelf expects volume this does not carry, and invites the one comparison the work loses. Any comparison is drawn against the omnibus or the coda, never a single early volume.

The order they are read in, and the editions that carry them.

The cycle is Books I–V. Around it sit a free prelude and three collected or alternate editions — **two of which carry no numeral at all**, because they are the same story cut two different ways.

#	TITLE	ACCENT	STATUS
—	<i>The First Lie</i>	Blue · crimson · green	PRELUDE · FORTHCOMING · FREE WEBNOVEL
<i>I</i>	A Son of Night and Chaos	Ember	PUBLISHED
<i>II</i>	A Son of Light and Lies	Amber	PUBLISHED
<i>III</i>	A Farmer of Perdition	Deep red	PUBLISHED
<i>IV</i>	A Reaper of Flame and Ruin	Cool grey	PUBLISHED
<i>V</i>	<i>A Harbinger of Dawn and Order</i>	Dawn-amber	FORTHCOMING THE CANON VERSION, TO REPLACE THE CODA SE
—	The Coda	Dawn-amber	VOLUME V STRIPPED OF MYTH
—	The Coda — Special Edition	Dawn-amber	VOLUME V IN FULL · LIMITED RUN
—	The Saga Entire	Amber	THE MYTHIC OMNIBUS · NO STANDARD EDITION
—	The Chronicles Consummate	Amber	ALL VOLUMES, THE PRELUDE & THE ESSAYS

Three phases, and the covers that belong to each.

PHASE 1 • ART-LED

PAINTED PLATE, BOOK TITLE ABOVE



I • NIGHT & CHAOS

II • LIGHT & LIES

III • PERDITION

IV • FLAME & RUIN

PHASE 2 • SERIES NAME LARGEST

SAME PLATES, THE SERIES TO THE TOP

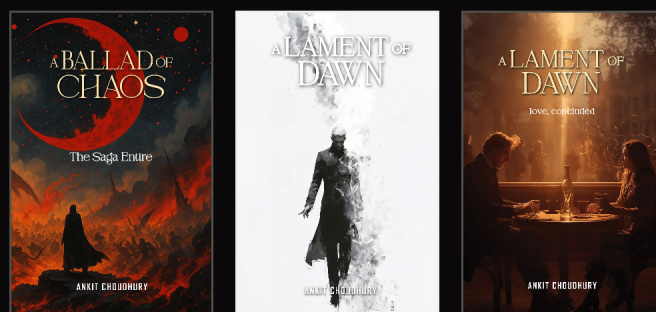


I • NIGHT & CHAOS

II • LIGHT & LIES

III • PERDITION

IV • FLAME & RUIN



THE SAGA ENTIRE

THE CODA

CODA • SE

PHASE 3 • THE SIGIL BOARDS

ART REMOVED, THE MARK CARRIES THE COVER



PRELUDE

I • NIGHT &
CHAOSII • LIGHT &
LIES

III • PERDITION

IV • FLAME &
RUINV • DAWN &
ORDER

OMNIBUS

Two ways in, and neither of them is a form.

DOWNLOAD

From the press page

The covers as the web cuts the site runs on, the marks as vector, this document and the Brand Kit, the author photograph and the approved boilerplate. Nothing behind a form. **Branding and merchandise need written permission** — see the licence.

Several wide plates are free on the artwork page, and the covers these replaced sit on the alternative-covers page.

ASK

Print formats, direct

Print-resolution covers and the interior plates are sent on request, as are longer extracts, the soundtrack stems, and a mark or cover at a proportion the published set does not carry.

Enquiries and permissions:
hello@balladofchaos.com.

CREDIT

Ankit Choudhury. The writing and the artwork are his; the music is **written, arranged and produced** by him.

THE LINE PASS IS THE PRINT PASS

Every mark exists in colour and in black line. Foil, emboss, stamp and single-colour work all take the line pass, not a flattened colour one.

⚠ ASK BEFORE ADAPTING

Recolouring a mark, cropping a cover to a new proportion or resetting the wordmark breaks the system. If a piece needs a shape the assets do not have, request it rather than making it.

⚠ RESERVED, IN FULL

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IF THE PIECE WANTS THE REASONING

Why the coda has no wings, why one book is cold and the other four burn — all of it is written down at length in *The Anatomy of Chaos*.

THE MARK SYSTEM, ENTIRE
SEVENTEEN MARKS • THE SLAB STANDS APART



A BALLAD OF CHAOS

ANKIT CHOUDHURY

ALL ART BY THE AUTHOR • NOTHING COMMISSIONED
THE SILENCE HAS NO MARK — IT IS THE SEVENTH SEAL