

## Cult of the Desert Dragon

The Cult of the Desert Dragon is strictly limited to a very few skilled (and lucky) women in the Rethiminan society.

Women who are in the Cult have been ritually tattooed around the eyes with a dragon. The dragon entwines the eyes in a figure eight pattern with the head of dragon resulting on a cheek and the tail over an eyebrow. If the head of the dragon is on the right cheek the woman has successfully completed the ritual. If the head of the dragon is on the left cheek the woman has failed in the ritual. Typically, women who are marked with the dragon on the left are never seen in public as it is a disgrace to be dragon-marked on the left. However these women are useful to society in that they teach others who are performing the ritual.

*Editor's Note: There seems to be some dissent into the dragon-marking on the left hand side. It is meant to indicate failure to become an advisor, but does not lessen the position within the monastery for teaching purposes.*

To enter the Cult of the Desert Dragon one must have apprenticed with a member of the cult as her personal healer until the time that she thinks the aspirant is ready for further training at the Desert Dragon Monastery. The Monastery is located high upon Monastery hill in the Deep Desert near the Royal Palace. At the Monastery aspirants may learn any subject that they deem desirable. Almost any subject can be taught at the Monastery because all knowledge brought into Rethimina eventually makes it way to the Monastery.

When an aspirant desires to leave the Monastery the ritual is performed. If the aspirant fails the aspirant is dragon-marked on the left. If the aspirant succeeds she is dragon-marked on the right. If an aspirant succeeds she is guaranteed employment as an advisor to the rulers in Rethiminan society. She is waited on hand and foot and is looked upon in such high esteem that only the rulers are regarded better. She is under obligation not to speak with anyone besides the rulers and her personal healer.