

THE SECOND WORLD SOURCEBOOK

Second World Simulations



Steven Palmer Peterson

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THE SECOND WORLD SOURCEBOOK

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DEDICATIONS

Once again, this is for my father, my mother, my wife, and my friend.

I'd like to especially thank Christopher B. Jackson for his extensive feedback.

Requires the use of the Dungeons & Dragons® Player's Handbook, Third Edition, published by Wizards of the Coast®

Requires the use of the d20 Modern™ Roleplaying Game, published by Wizards of the Coast®

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Second World Simulations

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OPEN CONTENT

With the exception of "Second World Simulations" all text in this book is designated open game content. This is an experiment of sorts, sharing not just game mechanical elements but also story elements via an open license. Hopefully you or others will find some of the ideas in here compelling enough that you'll want to expand on them, either in fiction or in game material.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER ONE: CAMPAIGN	5	SHADOW WARDEN	154
THRESHOLDS	5	VECTOR WARDEN	162
First Hints	5	Teleportation Notes	163
Transition	6	CHAPTER FOUR: INFLUENCE	175
The Pause	7	INFLUENCE RULES	175
Destination	7	Influence Skills	176
SOME HISTORY	8	ORGANIZATIONS	188
SOME GEOGRAPHY	14	First World Organizations	223
SOME METAPHYSICS	18	FAVORS	230
GMING THE SECOND WORLD	20	CHAPTER FIVE: EQUIPMENT	254
First World Adventuring	24	ECONOMICS	255
ROLEPLAYING ACROSS WORLDS	26	REGULAR GEAR	261
Merging d20 Modern...	27	FIREARMS	263
Campaign Rules List	32	SECOND WORLD MAGIC ITEMS	266
World Rules List	39	CHAPTER SIX: OPPONENTS	269
Special Training	47	SECOND WORLD NPCs	269
Technology	50	SECOND WORLD MONSTERS	274
CHAPTER TWO: CHARACTERS	62	Wadkin Roa	275
BACKGROUND OPTIONS	62	APPENDIX: THE PACT SYSTEM	287
RACES	69	Overview	288
SECOND WORLD RACES	70	Mechanics	289
The Other Races	85	THE PACTS	297
SECOND WORLD CLASSES	89	The Beast Pact	297
Divine Magic in the Second World	89	The Chamber	301
SECOND WORLD FEATS	90	Cognate Architecture	305
SECOND WORLD SKILLS	94	The Fire Pact	310
SECOND WORLD SPELLS	94	The Grand Symphony	314
CHAPTER THREE: WARDENS	96	The Horde	317
Bindings	96	Legion of Black Ice	321
New Action Types	98	The Magistratum	326
New Conditions	98	The Meat Syndicate	330
Risk	99	Pact Uebinoex	334
DREAM WARDEN	100	PRESTIGE CLASSES	340
FERAL WARDEN	114	Pact Negotiator	340
FLESH WARDEN	123	Gate Warden	342
LIGHTNING WARDEN	130	PACT CONSTRUCTION	351
METAL WARDEN	138	INDEX	357
MOTION WARDEN	147		

Using This Book

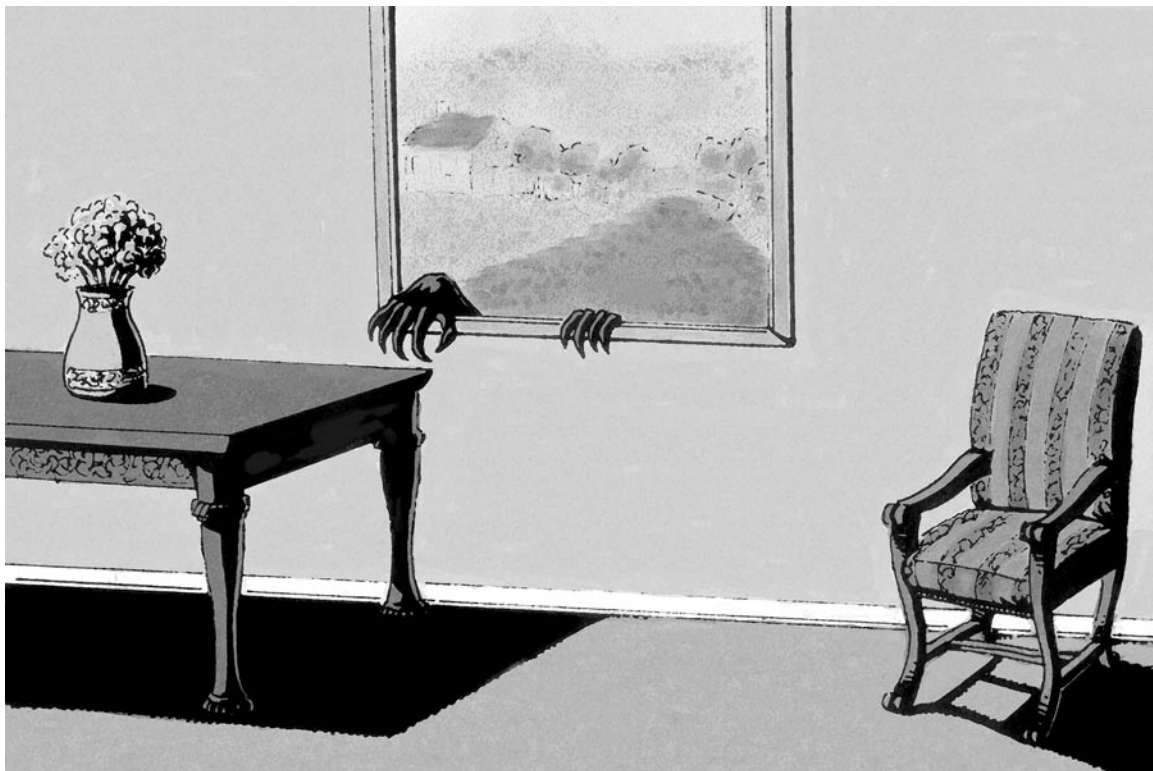
The Second World is designed to be as portable as possible. You should be able to add as much or as little of it as you like to an existing campaign. You should be able to drop the wardens and the influence system into any setting of your choosing.

Of course the races and background options could be dropped into many settings; I've tried to make them fairly generic or at least familiar enough that you could simply assign the background option to a region of your own world.

I've tried to make the Influence rules modular at several levels. You can take the full system and use it in the provided setting, or take individual organizations along with the rules and drop them into your own cities or nations, excising the First World components if you don't want to run a dual world setting. Alternately, you can apply the rules to your own organizations by assigning them favors and equipment groups or artificers. I've included over 100 favors, some of which none of the groups I present actually use, so that you can make up your own organizations. Perhaps though you don't like the idea of attaching mechanics to social systems at all. In that case I hope the organizations themselves are fairly interesting and provide a number of adventure

ideas. You can use the favors more informally, allowing players to request them and then judging yourself what impact such a request has on their relations with the organization and whether or not the organization would grant that request. Of course I like the influence rules; I think having an attribute block for something (anything really) gives me a better handle on how it works, makes it feel more complete. Then I can always ignore the stats and do what I want anyway.

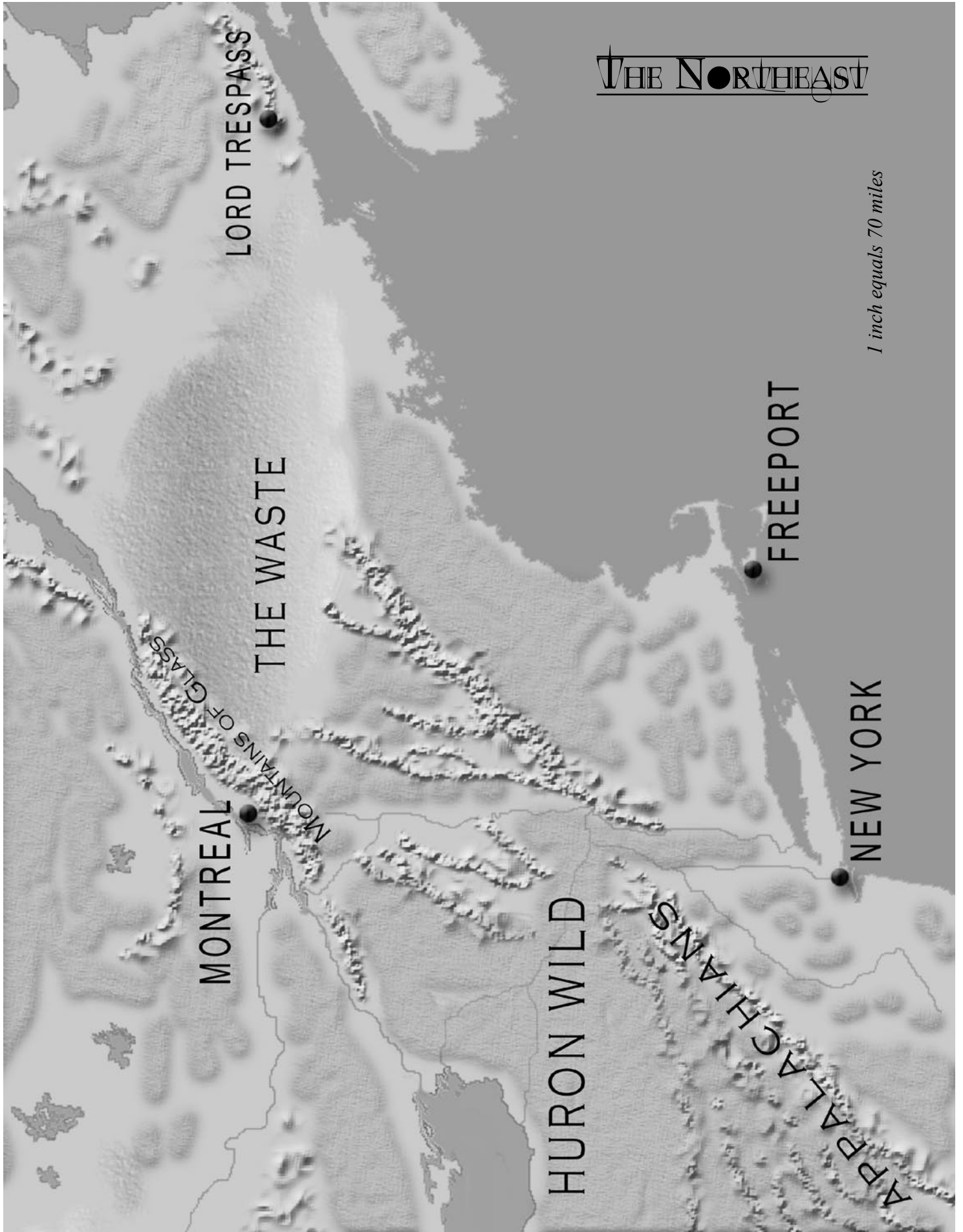
Finally, even the story elements are designed to be modular. Much of the setting actually focuses on the metaphysics of the world. The presence of two parallel worlds, the cosmology that supports it including the Forge, the interstices, the Labyrinth and Nkisi Void, you can incorporate these as you see fit into an alternative setting. I've tried to work story-line into and around particular organizations and places. If you like a particular group you can drop them somewhere into your own campaign. If you like the concept of Great Cities associated with particular powers apply them like a creature template to cities you've already developed. And, of course, if you like the two-world idea simply take two worlds and slap them together.



Shadowwalker by Dominic Hamer

THE NORTHEAST

1 inch equals 70 miles



CHAPTER ONE

CAMPAIGN

THRESHOLDS

FIRST HINTS

It begins with something odd happening. You feel the hairs on the back of your neck stand up a bit; a quiver runs through your body as a car passes by. You feel like the hand of death brushed you there for just a second. But that passes and, for a few hours or so, maybe until the morning, everything seems alright. You even tell yourself that everything is alright. Then you wake up, or look at your translucent reflection in the window and remember that everything wasn't alright. Something strange and dark and wonderful happened not so long ago. A copper-skinned woman, shining under sodium arc-lights, drove a spear through something heavy and gray and the size of a small bus, teeth the size of butcher's knives. Flashes of light, lightning flickering from the eyes of a man with his hand on the leash of the now-bleeding creature and then all of it gone again in a flash, a swirling bubble of light that popped and just as it popped you saw, for only an instant, vistas of vast emerald fields, impossibly purple-blue-black skies glittering with stars and the heady scent of air rich with the vitality of decay and rebirth that could never, ever, possibly be a part of the parking lots and faded brick buildings of this city you have lived in for most of your life.

Then you really start to worry. This can't be real; it must be a dream. This does not signal the encroach of insanity. You won't need to start taking lithium, or end up living on the street talking to stuffed dolls in the shop-

ping cart you push around, the one with the squeaky wheels and that one wheel that just never works right... You catch yourself in this moment, worry for a bit and decide it's time to take a break. Perhaps one involving alcohol. This isn't even the sort of thing you tell your closest friend; maybe later but not yet. It can't be that bad; it was just a dream; you're not going whacko. You won't end up on daytime television with a crowd of overweight people in tee-shirts yelling at you.

The problem with belief, you see, is that we like to think it's part of us like our little finger, or maybe middle finger... We can extend it if we want, pull it back, even break it if we're that desperate. But belief doesn't work that way. Pascal knew that; he knew that and it frightened him so bad that he spent every morning sewing pages of the bible into his clothing. Finger twisting eye-straining effort by candlelight and you know why he did it; right now you know why he did it better than anyone else in the world. He did it because Hell was waiting for him. Hell had its greedy, ravenous doors wide open and knew it had a comer in Pascal. And no matter how hard he tried, no matter how fervently he spoke his prayers, he couldn't get around that little bit about belief; because belief is all that really matters in the end and if you don't got it you know where you're going to go. And all the prayers, and all the beads, and all the talk, and all the sewing, and all of that still don't mean a thing when you feel the little creep of doubt pop in, "maybe I'm wrong." And there's Old Nick laughing away, "see, that's what knowin' a little gets ya."

And just like old Pascal, you can't turn this belief thing on and off. You can say it was a dream; you can say

it was from drinking too much; you can give all the reasonable explanations that should make it go away. But it doesn't feel like a dream. It doesn't feel like a flashback from that one time you took a little acid four years ago. And if you can't get rid of that feeling aren't you really just lying to yourself when you say you don't believe any of the freaky stuff happened? But it will get both worse and better, with a little more time.

BEGINNINGS

Most of those who begin on the First World and end up on the Second World start their journey by accident. They happen to be in the wrong place. They get too involved with something not from around here. And then they don't let it go (or perhaps it doesn't let them go). And then the First World gets rid of them. The First World is a haven for the sane and mundane. Special things happen here of course but they're ordinary special, like heroic fire fighters and rescue workers, or quintuplets, or really large balls of string. But not things like dragons and invokers and gaping maws opening straight into the fiery pits of hell. Those happen in books and dreams and games. And all that is very intentional. So when something like that *does* happen, even just a little, the world scabs over it and eventually the scar fades and no-one ever remembers anything. But if the wound's too deep; if the scar just won't quite go away; if that scar looks a little bit too much like a road sign saying "next stop up ahead..."; and if you just won't get it into your head that it never, ever happened, the world will simply get rid of you. This is called shunting.

TRANSITION

"I'm telling you right here and now that nothing is right. Nothing has been right since Sunday night..."

No, not just that anymore. Someone visited me today...it was a man, or at least I think so. He had the whole government agent thing going and if I wasn't so out of it he would have scared me and I would have got in the car with him. But I didn't and the truck stop had some pretty nice guys at the counter who were watching out for me...no I think they're just the kind of guys who watch out for people you know; like chivalry still matters a little, it's just hard to see sometimes behind those mudflaps with the bimbos on them.

I've bought a gun too...

Look, there's no use yelling at me now; I just walked into the store, said I wanted to do some hunting up

in Vermont and bought myself a shotgun along with some cartridges...yes it's sitting here loaded on the bed next to me. Good God no! I'm not giving this up [a clicking sound]...no that was just the blinds, I'm so uptight I look through them every five minutes...Well, they found me at a diner along the side of the road. Maybe they really are the government...if they are they're certainly not the part of the government I voted for. [there's a loud ka-klik and then a faint clatter and rolling sound]...someone's outside dammit!...Don't tell me to calm down. It's all way too late for me to start acting like the world was normal...[breathing and then whispering...] I think I'm going to shoot a person No, I can see them through the edge of the blinds. One of them is talking through an earpiece...-that's odd, I can see a forest through the bathroom door....."

>>Recording of Robin Lee. Even though we had the line fully tapped we couldn't record the other speaker's voice at all though we assume it was her friend, Shannon Lacey. We should activate Fellows' team for this.<<

SHUNTING

Also known as the Exile, this is how you step (perhaps better, are thrown) across the divide between worlds. The shunting takes many forms. For those who will heed the call it can simply be an open door to a fantastic place; peek into the closet and instead of shoes piled atop one another and the musty odor of leather and wool you smell fresh pine. A light breeze caresses your cheek and the indescribable trill of a bird echoes to you. Push aside the coats, step though and you're there; but don't look too carefully out of the corner of your eye as you step through; rabid flaming things swirl for a moment in your peripheral vision and one should leave those sorts alone. Others resist the urge to enter strange closets and other places. The world does not forget them though. They fall asleep in a cheap motel with the bed still shaking from passing semis and wake up submerged in early morning ground mist beneath an emerald green canopy of leaves. Some learn about the shunting and try to avoid it. They drink coffee and pop amphetamines, stay locked up in a room with no places to hide behind, no new things to see. If you do this you can drag it out; some people have gone close to a week before shunting. But the eyes start to flutter; you start to hallucinate; you just absolutely have to go to the bathroom and as you step around the corner, or even just turn your head a bit too quickly, you're gone.

THE PAUSE

Robin steps through the door, from off-brown nappy carpet, over slightly dented two-screws-holding-it-in-place aluminum molding, to the velvety sway of luxurious grass, grass that reaches up to her ankles. The rich, loamy smells of stuff dying and living strikes her; the fragrance of forest overwhelms. Even Vermont doesn't have this. And in that moment she feels the sudden sense of there-ness. She turns to her right to look back through the still partially open bathroom door and the door is slowly swinging shut. At the same time the outer door to the room slowly swings open. Men stand outside that door but they don't burst through it; they say something but that doesn't matter much because the outside door, the bathroom door, and Robin are all turning at the same time and this seems so richly important to Robin that she really cannot think of anything else. But there's one bit missing and then she catches it out of the corner of her eye. Here, on this side of the door, a leaf has fallen from a tree and slowly spirals down to the sodden ground, it turns in great fluttery loops keeping pace, no, tempo, with Robin and the two doors. It's like a cartoon she saw as a kid where there's this great big symphony orchestra playing some tremendous, thundering classic work and then you look down in the corner and see this little mousehole, and in that mousehole is a tiny mouse wearing a darling little tuxedo tinkling away at a little piano made of a box of kitchen matches, all perfectly in time with the tremendous symphony going on outside the hole. The leaf was that little mouse and Robin would come to learn that all there-times were like this; synchronicity had a way of bringing disparate causal chains together to forge one terrible or wonderful event. And each of these events always has the one little outside bit, a tiny piece of nonsense that's utterly disconnected from the greatness it witnesses but is drawn into it none-the-less, a part of the eternal etchings of history. The outside door fully opened, the first man stepped through, the bathroom door fully closed, Robin fully turned, and the leaf softly touched the ground, all in the same moment.

SYNCHRONICITY

Synchronicity means that shit happens, but also that shit happens for a reason. This makes coincidences occur; however those coincidences have underlying explanations that one can discover. There's a reason for why any particular confluence of events happens the way it does and involves the people it does and all such events occur at a nexus of synchronicity. In turn, the

synchronicity that brings these events together tends to rub off on the people, places, and objects central to those events. This synchronicity energy then draws more events to those people and objects; it also opens up aspects of them that might have been hidden up until now. Character levels and experience points, in part, represent this accumulation of synchronicity. Typically older characters will tend to have higher synchronicity levels but it's important to remember that synchronicity is not gained through training, expenditure of cash, or merely living; one gains synchronicity by being at the center of storms: natural and supernatural.

Alternately, your world might include destiny instead of synchronicity. Destiny and synchronicity are in many ways similar, but destiny implies that there is something you *have* to do; a certain way things *have* to be and that fate will ensure that what it intends will eventually come about. Synchronicity is like fate in that great things happen to great people; but anyone can become great through chance circumstances and, moreover, the harsh and fantastic situations one faces do not result from some pre-ordained injunction, but result from cosmic forces swirling in such a way that things just happen to go wrong (or right) around those with high synchronicity levels. Fate and destiny make powerful tropes in a novel or film where the author can dictate the outcome but they work a bit less well in a roleplaying game since the gamemaster has little control over the players and she'll have even less if they start to get the hint that fate is dictating their actions. In other words, synchronicity is like destiny with free will added.

DESTINATION

I stood there amidst all that green life seeing in a way that I'd forgotten. Shafts of sunlight wavered in fog as the wind's shoulders brushed the trees. And, as the door closed, small noises, bird calls and crickets, the rustle of wings and flutter of butterflies, the distant yowl of some cat pining for a lover and the answering howl of some wolf who couldn't quite tell cat-voices from wolf-voices, the creak and sway of the trees and the fluttering crinkle of leaves bounding across the forest floor, and then, to give a little finale to all this wonder, the bark on the tree directly in front of me split open in three places, revealing two golden eyes and a cavernous, toothy mouth, and spoke. "Welcome shoowahn, this is your world now."

SOME HISTORY

THE BONES OF ANCIENT QUEENS

—Henry Daleman, Tempest Argon, Natural Sciences Associate

Insect hives provide the oldest ruins. Thousands of miles of tunnels and tubes honeycomb the earth; vast underground caves likely served as hatching chambers, or the chambers of the queens themselves. The underground races like to use these passages and chambers and an entire ecology has grown up in what can really only be called the skeletons of the great hives. I can only assume knowledge of the truth of their home would make the orcs and kobolds and other crawlers of the deep leave far more quickly than an army with torches. The geology of this region has evolved over time; volcanic action has carved new passages, underground rivers flow in what may have been former arteries and the operations of sentient beings, mining and setting up living quarters, have certainly shaped the underground world in a massive new way. But do remember, if you find yourself in these caves that even the most innocuous troglodyte lair may have one day been the arcane memory chamber of a hive-mind that spanned a continent.

THE HIVES

The evidence provided by the massive underground network of tunnels indicates that insect hives were likely the first intelligences on the Second World. We suspect the Roa have a natural hive mentality. We also know that the Roa can generate, or perhaps even exist as, a sort of taint. Given the long periods of time involved when discussing historical epochs, likely on the order of several millennia, the Roa taint would likely infect small insect hives. Perhaps even rather frequently. At first these would have been primitive sorts of associations, with the Roa abilities merely making the insects more dangerous and survivable. But the collective nature of the insects could develop more potent abilities rather easily and so grow to larger and larger hives. As the hives grew larger, Roa based sorcerous forms of communication would have replaced the primitive, chemical forms of communication upon which most insect hives relied. This would have allowed for truly massive colonies and those colonies could have developed frighteningly complex intellects. They would have been brilliant in ways we couldn't even fathom; capable of storing vast amounts of information across their species and remarkably adaptable. How-

ever, they would have been subject to certain dangers. Any calamity that resulted in widespread death of the colony would also result in a loss of both knowledge and intellectual capability. A forest fire or flood could cripple one of these sentient masses. Still, these masses would learn to adapt to these sorts of dangers as well. Typically this would mean redundancy; any piece of information would be stored in multiple copies, spread out all over the colony so that a calamity in one region wouldn't destroy all the knowledge of the host, likewise for intellectual capabilities.

These hives would have lacked the benefits of social interaction. Their peculiar nature would make it the case that (at least in the early stages of evolution) proximity to other hives would lead to interference since individual components would end up trying to obey two masters. Moreover, the two central minds would tend to merge; if they had contradictory desires this could lead to both self-destructing. Eventually, the surviving hives would have adapted to these circumstances and communicate along different channels (very much like communicating on different frequencies). Maintaining intellectual integrity must have grown to paramount importance and so more elaborate means of protecting a hive from outside intrusion and subversion would have continually developed. One must remember that each hive constituted a single 'person' with its own goals and motivations. Moreover, each could last indefinitely as long as calamity didn't strike. As with other intelligent life, the greatest threats to these entities would have been others of its kind. Being creatures of the Wadkin Roa they must have had a voracious appetite. As such, competition amongst the hives must have been ferocious.

Infiltration from within would have been one of the most potent means of attack. An entity could sneak its own servitor insects into an enemy's territory and partially tune itself into her enemy's lines of communication. She could then access and subvert linking servitors until the enemy fell from within. Even friendly hives, those that wanted to cooperate, could not do so effectively since any overlap between hives ran the risk of circumstantial loss of servitors and loss of self-identity, which was the only true sort of death for these creatures. Each hive would have been so vulnerable to subversion that the best method of preventing it from occurring was to systematically eliminate any member of a competing hive. In turn this would lead hives to simply grow until they filled their geographic territory, usually defined by the sea.

The hives might have had their own names but it's not clear, given their enforced solitude, that they'd have any reason to name themselves. We do know that the escidi have names for the largest hives as well as some history of each:

- **Patagos:** Occupied the Patagonian sub-continent.
- **Boros and Hyperboros:** These two ruled the Americas. They were examples of the rare cooperative hives.
- **Stralis:** Australian continent, drove itself extinct (see later notes) but not before leaving one of the most elaborate sets of ruins and tunnel systems ever constructed.
- **Jevas-Thule:** A small but particularly powerful colony, Jevas and Thule were originally separate colonies but Jevas successfully subverted Thule; albeit not without a cost since Thule maintained part of its identity in the new amalgam. It's likely that Jevas-Thule successfully retreated to the Forge during the Deluge.

THE LONG STRANGE DEATH OF STRALIS

Stralis grew from a minor termite colony to complete dominance of the Australian continent. She did this despite torturous odds against her. She survived at least two extinction level events in her life, one, a meteor strike that wiped out one of her major competitors and the second a Forge eruption across the continent that unleashed a horde of Roa higher servitor species (vale daemons and the like). She managed to reconstitute herself after the meteor strike largely due to her talent for maintaining redundant systems and her ability to store information in solid and magical form (she would store knowledge in sigils then dispatch those sigils to the Forge for later retrieval). Her sorcerous skills were second to none and quite possibly greater than any sorcerous entity since, including the Thirteen. When the later eruption occurred she either killed or absorbed all the Roa running loose on the continent. While this resulted in a temporary setback it ultimately made her even more powerful as she had new, more complex life forms at her disposal.

Her downfall was herself. The Roa are a ravenous species, and Stralis acquired their unyielding appetite. Like many other hives, Stralis could not keep her appetite in

ORIGIN OF THE WORLD

Nobody cares where the world came from. It doesn't matter, at all, where the world came from. And anything I told you would be a lie anyway. But maybe the world sprung forth in some great belch from the Forge. Or maybe God reached into the tool-kit of the Forge and built a world from what He found there. Or perhaps the world came in some extra-large box with tiny little alan wrenches from a Swedish furniture manufacturer and God had a bunch of pieces left over after finishing the job so He tossed them all in a big interstice along with everything else he didn't need any longer. Maybe the first wardens, the ones who began the whole being-a-warden thing, put it all together; but I've met Laurence and anyone with that extensive a fondness for crackers, peanut butter, and Darjeeling tea simply cannot be part of a pantheon. Or maybe, and this is what really gives people in the know the shakes because it has that edgy grate of metal on bone feel of truth to it, maybe the Wadkin Roa put it all together; maybe they came out of their tower, put together this whole show, then let it fester for a while so they could come and get us when we were tasty.

check. She expanded her domain and she ate everything within that domain that could sustain her. At first the plants started to dwindle; a bit less of the land rejuvenated itself at the end of each season. For a time this was okay, but she reached a critical point and the downward spiral began. Without as many plants the animals started to die off faster than they could replenish. The land grew more arid with the lack of vegetation and the dryness sparked fires, which destroyed more vegetation. Mass death of host insects ensued. Destruction on such a wide scale led to a sort of insanity in Stralis and she ate more quickly and more ravenously than ever to prevent the downward slide. This in turn destroyed even more of the plant and animal life. Within two seasons Stralis denuded the land of its flora and fauna. Then Stralis took to self-cannibalism as her insect hosts devoured each other. The resulting insanity from this self mutilation destroyed her as a unitary intelligence; her sorcerous powers made this even worse since they could rage out of control as separate parts of her mind acted independently. Her subconscious was let loose to do as it pleased and what pleased it was destruction. Her death left the Australian continent a barren wasteland for millennia.

THE SUNDERING

The Sundering is the general term used for the event that divided the First and Second World. No one knows much about it; for that matter, no one knows if it even actually happened. Perhaps there were always two worlds. Evidence of past cataclysms that cross the worlds indicate though that they actually were one world at some time. Moreover, ancient religious texts and many Second World myths speak of a splitting, or something similar. Some even claim that the Sundering occurred quite recently, as recent as 1923. Apparently just under 5 minutes of time went missing on Sep-

tember 3, 1923 at roughly 2130 hours Zulu time. There is actually no scientific means of determining the truth of this claim; however pretty much all vector wardens of any skill and several other arcane scholars agree that the time just isn't there. Even the vector wardens don't think this means that the sundering occurred that recently; true, the gap likely indicates some significant cosmic event but the world is full of those. Typically, only the flakier religions and philosophies adopt the recent-sundering theory.

THE VANISHING

The gods they did not need to wait until the sun burned low and fat and red for the world to die. Their world already ended long ago. Their power had spread across Europe, Africa, and Asia for centuries and, in doing so, had helped to forge a civilization out of countless barbarian tribes. But with civilization came introspection. People had the time, talent, and training to question the world they were given. Many of the people developed new-found powers or tested the limits of what one could do with arcane magic. Even worse for the gods was that some people practiced divine magic without calling on them at all. Through pure force of guiding principle and higher purpose these followers of an abstract god, or even just an ideal, could do what others could only do by worship and servitude to the outsiders. Some of the old gods tried to fight this; they crushed rebellious movements, made martyrs of worshippers, threw down ramshackle temples, and hunted out the unruly tribes of heretics. Many of the new religions preached a kind of pacifism; and the old gods had trouble dealing with that. Their mortal servants' resolve weakened in the face of a purpose and ideology so strong that it survived even while being tortured. Even the gods themselves found their resolve shaken by these actions. After all, they knew the truth; they knew that all this talk of worlds sprouting from navels and people popping out of head injuries was just a lot of clever marketing. Many of the gods knew the origins of the world little better than the mortals.

After this, the gods began their retreat from Europe. Lands to the west still held opportunities for them. Scholars suspect that sometime between 1200 CE and 1600 CE the peoples of the Americas rose up in bloody revolt. We assume that approximately 35 of the old gods from Europe traveled to the Americas and every single one of them has disappeared completely.

THE CENTRAL EMPIRE



The Death of Jupiter by Jeff Doten

All records of what happened in the Americas (both north and south) between 563 CE and 1587 CE have vanished. There is little doubt that shadow wardens had a role in this, and so did the Vanishing. Regardless, by the time First World European colonists and explorers began establishing a serious presence in the Americas a thriving empire had already existed for some time in the Second World. The Central Empire's capital stands near First World Chicago. The Empire began as an enforced secular entity. The state barred all religious practices. This lasted perhaps five years, quite long considering the prominent role ideologically driven divine magic likely played in the Vanishing. The Empire changed its stance fairly quickly to one of religious tolerance and diversity. To a certain extent this was the only option available since no *one* religion or ideal had gathered enough of a following to even be considered the standard. The Empire, like other empires before it and other empires that will follow it, then began the long slow evolution to a single church state, then to a colonial power, then to a decadent pit of corruption. The Central Empire currently practices a Spinozan variation of Christianity. First World émigrés have always had and always will have a disproportionate effect on the ideology of the Second World. One reason for this is that they are almost always exiles, and exiles are powerful, and powerful people generate influence. First World religion took hold here so strongly also due to the fact that First World religion already possessed a coherent structure; it already had a doctrine and the theologians of the infant Empire had to make theirs up as they went along.

The modern day Empire has turned inward. Wounds suffered during the Mississippi Valley War and the gradual decline since the Quebec Incident have forced it to pull its forces back, to protect the heart of the Empire; however, rumors stir that perhaps the Empire needs protection not from outside, but from within.

THE QUEBEC INCIDENT

1924 saw the first collegium, a gathering of wizards, sorcerers, and wardens from the far reaches of the Empire. Chicago hosted the first one; later the site of the collegium would shift from session to session. The attendees considered the collegium a resounding success. No one's really sure why since most of the collegium involved people arguing with each other about obscure minutia such as the number of teeth unicorns had; however, some suspect the open bar policy may have been instrumental. Of greater importance than the actual seminars and discussions was

The slaying of Jupiter marked the severing of the mortal spirit from its moorings. This act of liberation set us free to plunge into a dark gulf, grasping at the phantoms of an abstract deity; but, of course, we found nothing to hold on to. In the end we find ourselves here, now, plummeting in the darkness and realize that all we have is this darkness, this empty space upon which to build our foundations. What some of us recognize is that it takes great courage to build a structure from nothingness. We will forge this new reality from steel, and fire, and shadow, on the European continent.

—Alexandra Mercier

the interaction; a number of previously isolated arcane scholars and researchers came together, met people of similar outlook, and kept in touch afterwards. Many of these people took on apprentices and some embarked on joint research projects. By the time of the Second Collegium in 1928 the practice of using the collegium to network had become entrenched. In fact, the Second Collegium succeeded to an even greater extent in this since several organizations of magical research grew out of the meetings and friendships made there (this time being held in Montreal). New York's College of the Interstice started at this meeting, though, at first, it didn't amount to much. Of greater significance, the Covenant of Stone, based in Montreal, and the Fire Concord, based in Nova Scotia, arose from this collegium. The Fire Concord chose their name as a reaction to the Covenant's. They had already argued fiercely whether or not the (then new) theory that the world had once been dominated by a handful of large insect hives had any basis.

The northeast became a Mecca for new ways of thinking. Free thinkers and experimentalists flocked to Montreal. Science, the arts, and arcane thought all flourished in the city; you could see wardens scribble arcane notes and debate arcane principles in smoky blues and jazz bars. Montreal lay far enough away from the empire to express itself and yet close enough to be safe. What Paris was to First World Europe between the wars, Montreal was to Second World America. The Empire itself had begun to suppress arcane research; not heavily, just hedge in around the corners a bit, such as placing restrictions on certain kinds of components and interstitial exploration. Arcane scholars, already vehement individualists, could hardly stand this encroachment on their liberties and flocked away from Chicago. Many wound up in Montreal, having visited it previously or having heard of the new kind of world being conjured there. Others traveled to New York (some of them forming Tempest Argon) and others, the ones performing the most dangerous experiments,

Han Xigong [286 CE to 364 CE] migrated to the Second World after putting the final touch to Lady with Parasol and Scar. He must have been shocked at the time, as his contemporaries must have been. But, with Lady, Han had begun his most unusual career. The woman pictured in Lady looked exactly like Queen Annabelle Volens, the rune warden and savior of France, who would not be born until 1645. Like all prophets and visionaries Xigong's authenticity shall always remain in doubt. However, he painted images that not only evoked a profound aesthetic but appeared to predict the future, past, or distant places.

felt they needed to go as far away as possible, and thus took up residence with the Fire Concord in Nova Scotia. The Central Empire tolerated this expansion of arcane research, so long as the research occurred on the borders.

At the Fourth Collegium in 1936 Max Kirschen, a rune warden of the Fire Concord, presented a paper on the great hives where he strongly claimed that the evidence had all come in and the existence of a great hive epoch had been settled, positively. One of his primary pieces of evidence was a painting by Han Xigong depicting what could arguably be described as the vast landscape of an insect hive, possibly even casting a spell or invoking some kind of power. The Covenant of Stone's pattern warden, Andrew Duncan, accused Kirschen of "a lack of rigor." Perhaps now would be a good time to mention something regarding academic debates. Scholars secretly know that nothing really hinges on the truth or falsity of their claims; in all likelihood they're wrong anyway and will simply be corrected sometime in the future. But scholars, even arcane ones, simply cannot believe that anyone could be so willfully stupid as to ignore the evidence that seems so abundantly clear to them. Tycho Brahe, a famous First World astronomer, got in a heated argument with another scholar over a bit of mathematics; they took their argument outside, with swords, and Tycho had his nose cut off in the ensuing "debate." The one thing you never, ever, not on your life, tell a rune warden is that they lack rigor. If you say that to a pattern warden they'll be upset, yell at you, and perhaps even throw a punch, but in the end they'll do a bit of self-examination to see if you're right because they certainly don't want to lack rigor. However, rune wardens secretly know that they lack anything even resembling rigor. Rigor isn't their shtick; however, lack of rigor equals sloppiness in many minds, including almost all scholarly minds; sciences that lack rigor include economics, psychology, and astrology. Regardless, Kirschen was right but none of that mattered. First blood had been drawn.

Later during the collegium drunk apprentices from the two camps broke into a fist fight in a Freeport tavern (the Third Collegium took place in New York and they shifted to Freeport for the fourth). The fight turned pretty brutal and one of the Covenant's apprentices

lost use of a hand, crippling his abilities to craft magic. The Covenant demanded reparations and the Concord refused, leading to an even more severe battle. Senior researchers from both groups wound up in a magical duel in the center of Freeport's Old City. The sea lord of Freeport cancelled the Collegium and drove everyone out of town (not too roughly though). Subsequent incidents followed over the next few months and on into winter. The two days of the Incident went like this:

December 18, 1936

2000 hrs. EST: A rock (a big one, from space) falls in Northeast Nova Scotia.

December 19, 1936

2330 hrs. EST: Rain of fire over Montreal.

December 20, 1936

0005 hrs. EST: Volcanic range and fissures spread across Nova Scotia.

0010 hrs. EST: A vast firestorm sweeps west from Nova Scotia across Quebec and towards Montreal. A mountain range (what are now the mountains of glass) surges up from the ground east of Montreal, shielding the city from the firestorm. Some of the fire arcs off the mountain range landing as far away as Colorado.

0010 -0042 hrs. EST: The firestorm continues and mountain shield holds.

0042 hrs. EST: Meteor swarm rains down across Nova Scotia (and nearby areas as well); one strikes the Fire Concord main institute directly, killing all inside.

Immediate Aftermath: Montreal survives the Incident but the Empire retaliates severely. The Empire issues an official proclamation outlawing most use of arcane magic and placing Andrew Duncan under arrest for crimes against humanity (along with his supporters). In preparation for this the Empire marches and sails troops towards Montreal. Duncan responds with incredulity; he claims that there will be no negotiation on these matters and that the Empire should rescind its orders.

May/37 to January/38: The Empire prosecutes its war against Montreal. The Covenant rains heavy destruction down on the Empire and its armies but not enough

to prevent the troops from making it to Montreal. The Empire relies almost solely on divine magic here since it has outlawed most arcane magic and couldn't get much support from arcane spell casters anyway.

February/38: Empire forces make it into Montreal and lay a short siege to the Covenant's tower. The survivors of the assault claim that the Earth lord was killed (regardless, pretty much everyone else there was killed and all the resources were taken over). The Empire successfully retakes Montreal and subdues all unrest there. But not without suffering grievous casualties to its army and navy, undermining its support amongst the merchant class, and offending arcane magic users; moreover, the Empire now comes across as a political entity mainly interested in sustaining its own dwindling authority as opposed to its previous status as guardian of a puritan ideology.

THE MISSISSIPPI VALLEY WAR

The Mississippi Valley War has shaped the psychic, political, and military landscape of North America more than any other event in recent history. Even Lord Trespass' Ved Qayat soldiers advancing in the northeast pale compared to the Mississippi Valley War. In 1986 the Empire learned that a cult of vampires and other undead had infested New Orleans. The Empire quickly summoned up the legion and sent a large force down the river to burn the vermin out. However, the Empire had declined over the century. The new restrictions on magic kept sorcerers, wizards, and wardens on the borders and in New York. As the legion entered the city, at

Marina Vespoes claims to have seen a copy of a letter from the Empire to the Fire Concord. Apparently, the Concord had previously inquired regarding whether or not the Empire would intervene in the (a?) dispute between their Concord and the Covenant of Stone. The Empire said that it would let them deal with the problem between themselves. Obviously, the actual article used (underlined above) matters a great deal for interpreting this. The Concord either requested mediation or permission. Regardless, if Vespoes is not mistaken, the Empire seriously failed in its responsibilities.

—Liandra Tesonnel

dawn, a black cloud swelled up to cover the sky. Those who tried to retreat up the river discovered that Castle Legraise, overlooking the Mississippi, had joined the enemy and now closed off their primary route of retreat. The Mississippi Valley War rivaled the American Civil War in its length, loss of life, and scope. During the first two years of the war the undead spread as far east as Alabama, west halfway across Texas (going west typically wound up granting sporadic control over places separated by large distances) and as far north as the area around First World Saint Louis. They advanced under the banner of night while the Empire recalled her troops from around the continent. Refugees streamed north and east, tearing up some of the farmland in the process. But, eventually, the forces of the Empire managed to halt the advance, not in one great battle but by fighting the undead everywhere along their lines; exerting constant and continuous pressure by force of arms, belief, and fire. The vampires and their allies, while powerful, could not maintain the logistics needed for a war like this; their shroud of darkness fell to groups



Fire over Quebec by Jeff Doten

of commandos used to fighting undead in crypts, then the ground forces moved in and burned them out of their homes. This process continued until the creatures retreated once more behind the walls of New Orleans. Contraction of the front lines made them all the more resilient. The ritual that provided their cover could not be disrupted here and Louisiana had been severely corrupted by the years under undead control. A brutal, door to door war ensued. The soldiers fighting in the bayous dreaded the night and could barely trust their squad-mates. Any of them could have fallen to a vampiric charm, become a vampire, or simply be a creature in supernatural disguise. Likewise, any civilian met along the way immediately fell under suspicion; after all, how could they have survived this long and not been corrupted or an accessory to the corruption. The sorts of things one had to do to survive in this environment left many of the soldiers forever shaken; most won't speak of their experiences.

Despite the incredible difficulties of such an operation the Legion did its job, performed its duty, and secured the port and the Mississippi River's access to the gulf in the Summer of 1991. A large force remains in New Orleans to constantly watch for any signs of a resurgence. The heroes of the war returned to Chicago; and, since wars make kings of generals, many of the heroes took positions of power. No one ever discovered who really led the vampires and other undead. The fighters revealed some prominent names, many of whom burned at a crusader's torch. But the fighters never really managed to come across a central circle of vampires, or a single more powerful leader that unified them all; it was as if the vermin just rose up in a well organized but independent mob. While not at all impossible for creatures such as vampires, the lack of an official capitulation left a bitter, coppery taste in the mouth of many veterans.

SOME GEOGRAPHY

BORDERS OF THE EMPIRE

The Empire stretches from a contested boundary crossing Maine and Quebec, down roughly 2,300 miles to the heart of Texas, and across to the Rocky Mountains. The Mississippi valley and the central plains states fall under the direct control of the Empire. One can raise a family with some degree of security here; the Empire defends the heartland, and provides reasonable justice. The central plains, as in the First World, feed not just

the Empire and North America, but also the world. Grain travels by caravan to Chicago, then moves on by ship or caravan the 810 odd miles to New York, and from there across the Atlantic to feed the hungry armies of Europe. Given the security in the center of the continent few adventurers stay there. The Rockies and west provide one frontier (albeit an inordinately dangerous one) and New York, the Northeast, and the South provide another. This book focuses on New York and the Northeast.

NOVA SCOTIA

Lord Trespass emerged from the ruins of the Fire Concord and quickly seized control of Nova Scotia. His Ved Qayati armies find the harsh landscape of post-Incident Canada a welcome break from Trespass's home in the Forge. They have spread south and west, but a great deal of harsh land and eruptions of strange creatures slows their progress. New York funnels supplies to barons and minor nobles living in the northeast; some of these men and women merely take the money and hide it away while they're still safe, wholly prepared to leave when the Qayat make their advance. Others take their duty as gatekeeper seriously and prepare for a lasting battle against the Qayat. An observer of what happened in the Mississippi Valley War should be able to recognize that whoever successfully fends off Trespass and his Qayati armies will likely emerge as the political power in the northeast; and, given that the northeast's power grows as the Empire's wanes, this leader may one day found a new empire.

MONTREAL

Metropolis (48,597): After the Quebec Incident the Empire subjected Montreal to martial law for some 50 years. The Empire created a special ministry called the *Mystérieux Observateurs*. This secret police grew quite influential within the city and possessed draconian powers. However, more than anything this simply generated fervent counter-culture movements within the populace. One does not impose one's will on Montreal successfully. The hidden movements thrived and may have actually been more successful in their researches and scope than they would have been had they possessed full liberty. Regardless, the movements survived the long years and even expanded within the city. When the Empire finally had to pull its forces out of Montreal to support the Mississippi Valley War the hidden movements exploded into the open. Montreal, now more than ever, thrums with the energy of new-found youth. Anything you want to buy, rent, or sell,

you can find in Montreal. Anything you want to do, you can do in Montreal. Montreal is a place without limits, forgotten by its former protector, and living within the shadow of the Mountains of Glass.

THE MOUNTAINS OF GLASS AND THE WASTES

During the Incident a great, jagged range of mountains burst up from the ground. The firestorm incinerated pretty much everything between the mountains and the North Atlantic. In addition, the firestorm fused the south-eastern slope of the mountains to glass. The wastes extend in one great barren sea. Lakes of ash still collect in some of the low spots but mostly the place is just hard-scorched earth rising in broken ridge after broken ridge. The mountains look like a giant wave cresting over Montreal, the steep western face covered with thick, but young, forests of fir, and the eastern face silent and smooth and shiny, like some mammoth jewel tossed behind by a titan. Caves riddle the western face of the Mountains of Glass; when the mountains were torn up from the earth they brought all their buried treasure with them. The massive forces unleashed across this landscape have left the reality here unstable. Random disturbances can open a gate to the Forge, another Interstice, or even the First World. Outsiders, elementals and other oddities find their way to the wastes frequently. At least one efreeti pasha has established an outpost in the wastes. Elsewhere demons occasionally emerge and rove south or west to find targets. When the Qayat encounter these they forcibly recruit the creatures into their army. Trespass despises the lazy, chaotic slackers and will beat discipline into them if the opportunity arises; they either shape up or die horribly.

THE ROCKIES

The jagged peaks of the Rocky Mountains serve as the western limit of the Central Empire's influence. The Empire's influence ends here not just because of the severity of the mountains, but because the Rockies likely house more dragons than any other place on Earth. The white great wyrm, Colorado, rules these peaks, part through personal power and part through political will. Colorado has forged an alliance of blue and white dragons along the range of mountains; from New Mexico all the way north into Canada, all dragons belong to the Teton Council. Above all else the council agrees on one thing, any red dragon falling within their realm shall be descended upon and torn to

pieces. Beyond that the Teton Council ensures that each dragon holds an area commensurate with its size and station. Occasionally they need to also decide policy regarding non-dragon incursions. The dragons of the Rockies generally tolerate the presence of goblinoids within the mountains. So long as the goblins typically stay below the tree line and leave plenty of livestock around as tribute, the dragons leave the goblins (and their ogre and troll allies) alone. Many of the dragons will even provide cover for the goblins. This means that the goblins leave the security of the mountains to raid neighboring areas and then, when the goblins return to the mountains, any pursuers may be attacked by a dragon defending its home. In turn the goblins share their booty with the dragon. This is all informal though; a dragon would almost never deign to actually cut a deal with a goblin, no matter how high ranking. The upshot is that human settlements need to move quickly when retaliating against goblin raids. Human settlements may also hire small bands of mercenaries (a.k.a. adventurers) to punish or destroy goblin encampments since dragons ignore small groups so long as the groups don't bother the dragons themselves.

The dragons of the Second World love their mountains. For a dragon, the mountain you control is your home, your castle, your throne, your status symbol, your legacy. Would you want something that is all this to you to be a lumpy hill, or something as severe and majestic as K-2? You can assume that if a mountain is famous on the First World, dragon's vie for it on the Second. This means they have to fight each other for the best mountains, and they may also have to fight non-dragons; for example, Kilimanjaro has sufficient local significance that humans and other creatures desire to possess it as well. While size definitely matters to a dragon other factors count as well. K-2 has increased in popularity since First World mountain climbers (and movies about mountain climbing) have began listing it as more difficult than Everest. The European Alps appeal due to their centrality, history, and the diverse range of peoples around; moreover, there's lots of food available. The Andes have a particularly unique aesthetic and the proximity of jungles draws a number of green dragons to those peaks. New Zealand's mountains appeal because they combine both rugged austerity and solitude for dragons who prefer their privacy. While few individual peaks within the Rockies stand out, the range as a whole stretches some 3,000 miles from central New Mexico up to northwest Alaska; dominance of that large a mountain range and one that divides a continent carries a large amount of

prestige. It also requires a coalition. Colorado managed to forge this coalition quite some time ago. Being a white dragon others frequently let their guard down against him; but that certainly cannot explain his success. Colorado has demonstrated unusual powers for a white in the past and actually defeated a red dragon to originally take control of his peak (Mt. Elbert, the highest peak along the range). The Teton Council admits no red dragons into the range, but allows all other dragons. The austerity of the Rockies tends to appeal mainly to white and blue dragons. Black and green dragons occasionally find homes in the forests near the feet of the range.

TEXAS

The Empire abandoned its settlements in Texas during the Mississippi Valley War. It also withdrew its forces from the border forts along the Rio Grande. During the long war that followed, the undead eventually had to retreat from Texas as well. This left a vacuum. In fact, little has happened to change that. Texas remains an abandoned land. However, at about the same time the Mississippi Valley War raged some barons from Mexico cracked down on gnoll raiders operating near Monterey. These bandits retreated north across the Rio Grande and took up residence in some of the abandoned forts and villages. Here they discovered that the Central Empire made better pickings than the Mexican kingdoms, especially given the recent war. A number of gnoll bandit gangs roam the area; some (exceedingly stupid ones) raid west toward raptor pueblos and camps. Others tussle with goblinoids from the Rockies. Most raid north or east though, typically swinging wide around any soldiers or fortifications. The disparate bands of gnoll brigands usually operate according to their whim. But when they came north a single leader called El Reír directed them. El Reír has led them in the past as well, occasionally maneuvering them to massive raids that brought tremendous booty. His personal gang rides horses, which took quite some time since gnolls frighten horses, gnolls eat horses, and gnolls are actually a bit scared of getting on a horse but don't ever tell one that if you like your teeth where they are. El Reír strikes an intimidating figure; his shaggy head lies hidden beneath a large sombrero, no one really knows how many blades lurk beneath his poncho, and he always has a ragged cheroot dangling from his mouth. Most gnolls try to emulate him.

In the pre-history there was a great war between the darkness and the light. The Morningstar and 13 angels rebelled against God and were defeated. They were cast out of Heaven and into hell, which is now the Second World. Where each of their corpses fell one of the great cities grew. This is called the Sundering.

At the First Coming the Savior traveled in the Second World and cast the souls of the fallen angels out, banishing them to the deepest interstice where they became the Wadkin Roa. In doing this he offered the Second World forgiveness so that it became a better place where the humanity that could not live in the First World could still survive and be happy. This is called the Redemption.

The corpses of the fallen angels remained, and great cities grew there, each devoted to one of the major powers. Everyone who possesses one of the major powers draws their strength from one of the great cities.

In His wisdom, the Lord has seen to it that the First World will progress according to its own ways and so those with the power are exiled to the Second World. In His kindness the Lord has made the Second World a place where those with the power can spin out their mortal lives.

—*Tales from the Tank*, the visions of Gorbert Dunn while using an isolation tank.

THE SOUTH

Moving south from New York one passes through much of the farmland that feeds the large cities along the eastern seaboard. These areas remain safe from any kind of large-scale invasion. The underground poses the greatest concern to the people of these lands. The vast network of caves left behind by the dying of the hives provides an entire habitat for wandering groups of underworld monsters like orcs, kobolds, and so on. Occasionally bands of these creatures will find a network of caves near the surface, dig their way past any barricades placed by the locals, then begin some lucrative raiding. The townspeople then either put together a posse, hire wandering soldiers of fortune, or lodge a request with the city authorities and wait several months or longer for a resolution. As one moves further south the First World influence drops away. The southeast represents an entirely different time, an antebellum era of chivalry. Aristocracy hunt their private forests on great estates while sharecroppers work fields for little pay. A handful of major roads connects towns and cities separated by long distances and savage wilderness. Deep forests hide forgotten towers; holes in the ground open to complex underworld temples; ancient crypts sink slowly into the bayous. These lost places can be found almost everywhere in North America but they seem most common in the south, leading many to believe that an empire may have been based here during the lost times. Charleston stands

as the one counterpoint to the antiquity of the South. It's wide promenades and busy port are as modern as New York, but a bit more polite. One important note, the Second World South might look and act quite a bit like the First World south of the early 1800's however about 40% of the aristocracy are of Cherokee descent and roughly 15% are Creole. As usual with the Second World though, many of the families experienced substantial racial inter-mixing, thus it can be difficult to tell ethnicities apart.

THE FORGE

You cannot really describe the Forge; what you do instead is list off some of its contents, discuss some of its properties, and know that you've missed a lot of the important stuff. The Forge forms the border between the First and Second worlds. To transition from one world to the other you must, however briefly, move through the Forge. Most of the gates and portals do this by quickly punching a hole through the Forge then on to the other world. Outsiders, extra-planar beings, and elementals all come either from the Forge or from one of the smaller interstices connected to the Forge. Neo-Platonists claim that the Forms come from the Forge; if one travels there long enough one can see the perfect, idealized Form of Lion, Red, Turnip, and so on. While wacky, the theory has some basis since one can find powerful, almost archetypal, versions of many natural kinds within the Forge. The Forge has no one dominant environment or ecology. In some portions you'll find inky black spaces through which float rocky moons each with their own gravity. In other places you'll see great rift canyons, some volcanic; the Ruby Rift is one such canyon and to survive there you'll need to cling precariously to the sheer cliffs. It's not even certain how you should move from one region to another. Sometimes a narrow trail along steep cliffs leads to a purple sea; at another time the trail leads to a cave that leads to a vast complex of organic caverns. This chaos infects transitions to and from the Forge. Shifting to the Forge twice from the same location in the Second World may take you to very different locations in the Forge. However, if you move quickly enough from the Second World to the Forge, then on to the First World, you'll end up in the First World equivalent of your Second World start point.

MEXICO

"I looked out westward in the deepening twilight, purple black sky above filled with that array of stars you only get in the wildlands or the Second World, and

watched the lights of the villages and tiny kingdoms spread out below me. Small pools and packets of people made warm by fire and candle-light caught here between the arcane magic of the city of runes, the alien power of the city of gates, and the fantastic landscapes surrounding the city of dreams. Somewhere beyond the horizon lay the great Pacific, so inappropriately named by someone who, like me, stood on a mountain and saw it first from a vast distance. We had come through those small kingdoms and fiefdoms, collectives and small-town democracies. We had drunk beer at their inns and ate the corn tortillas, rice and beans, and meat seasoned and marinated perhaps all day long. We saw the way this place is in the now between the troubles that had come before, the scraping recovery that followed, and the future conglomeration of states into which Mexico and Central America would likely grow. Mexico has only the memory and foreshadowing of empire you see. But that memory waits all too concretely up here in the mountains. We had traveled the long journey from New York to explore the City of Closed Doors, Tenochtitlan, and one purpose those warrior kings in their castles served was to guard against what lay behind me. But these dangers didn't trouble the villagers we met; gnoll bandits concerned them more and somehow that seemed the way things ought to be."

-Tayla Voorhees

Mexico cannot truly be called a nation, yet. But travelers can see that it lies on the verge of becoming a nation; it has paused in that magical moment First World Germany experienced prior to the Kaisers and Bismarck. The spaces between kingdoms can be dangerous; gnolls and other marauders like to take their tolls. But the kingdoms keep local areas safe and many have managed to extend their influence such that most marauders have left for less civilized lands. Yet, the old ruins of the Halcón Empire lie in wait in the hills and mountains. Adventurers can find great treasures there but some doors might be best left unopened.

NEW YORK, CITY OF RUNES

I present the vast majority of information regarding Second World New York in conjunction with the organization descriptions in the Influence section. Here I simply provide a brief overview of the city.

Close to 500,000 people live in New York and the surrounding region. Being an agricultural society, many of the people live on family owned farms in New Jersey, Pennsylvania, upstate New York, Connecticut,

and Massachusetts. Manhattan island houses close to 125,000 of those people; this is half the population First World New York had in 1820. Most Second World locales have a population roughly one twentieth their First World counterparts; the ratio will likely decrease in the future as the First World Population increases dramatically while the Second World population increases fairly slowly (and suffers constant attrition due to war).

One bridge connects Manhattan to New Jersey (the Hudson Bridge) and another connects Manhattan to Brooklyn (the Brooklyn Bridge). Both bridges are constructed from solid stone and numerous shops and businesses line them. The center of the bridge provides a throughway for foot, horse, and carriage traffic as well as having rails for horse-drawn trolleys. The old aristocracy own townhouses in the city and country houses in the surrounding area. They once had tenant farmers but since farming became a profitable industry most of the tenants have bought their own land (or moved further away to settle new land). The aristocracy retain their country estates primarily for relaxation and prestige. The new economics drives New York more than anything else. Powerful mercantile organizations like Blue-Con straddle both the First and Second World and control much of the trade in the region. No one is quite sure what kind of political structure will evolve from the old Imperial system but everyone wants to make sure they can secure a piece of the action.

Frequent traffic with the First World makes New York one of the places where your players will most feel the difference between a Second World campaign and a more standard fantasy setting. Wizards wear Yankees tee shirts and young debutantes pride themselves on how well they fit into their designer jeans. Grizzled warriors who have faced down the undead in their tombs sidle up to the bar for a cold Bud, or even a First World soft drink; carbonated soda and cheap American beer are drinks of the elite in the Second World. First World exiles come here, grow powerful and wealthy, then attempt to shape the city to the place they left; their foremost desires typically involve the creature comforts, i.e. showers, air conditioning, and refrigeration. As such, a great deal of arcane power gets expended on these rather frivolous pursuits.

SOME METAPHYSICS

As you read through the sections of this book you will discover several references to the special metaphysical

space of the two worlds. What I mention here will be a brief overview. Most people accept the following account. The three main spaces of the universe are: the First World, the Second World, and the Forge. The Second World is a kind of magical copy of the First World. The Second World landscape follows its First World counterpart and Second World history evolved along similar lines as First World history. The Forge separates the two worlds; it serves as a sort of interface and shield. According to some accounts all things have their basis in the Forge and the two worlds came out of it in separate pieces. This seems unlikely though since so many mythologies and histories indicate that a special event occurred called the Sundering, where the one world was split into two. Regardless, the Forge is an interstice, a space between worlds. As far as we know, an infinite number of interstices separate the two worlds, the Forge being foremost amongst them and certainly the largest. Innumerable smaller interstices, like tiny pocket dimensions, planes, or worlds, hover around the edges of the Forge and powerful wardens or daemons may access them. Most of the gods that once walked the Second World and protected its cities came from these fragment interstices or the Forge. Some yet live; some have retreated back to their homes now that their followers have faded; and some have taken on new roles as protectors of one of the new faiths. But few worship these beings any longer. When you travel from the First to Second World you almost always travel through the Forge, if only for a moment. This makes such travel slightly risky. There are other ways across the gap though and other sorts of places one can travel; briefly they are: the dream state, the catwalks, the labyrinth, and the Nkisi Void. All of these are described at various places in the descriptions of the wardens (since the wardens provide access to these spaces).

ETHEREAL SPACE

Ghosts have to be made of something; they have to exist somewhere. We call this ethereal space. Ethereal space operates much as described in the core rulebooks and serves the same purpose. Spells, magic items, and creatures that access ethereal space do so normally. Ethereal space overlaps the First and Second Worlds, however, each world has it's own ethereal space. Ethereal space may also cover some of the interstices; it does cover portions of the Forge but not all of it. Regardless, different interstices all have different ethereal spaces, if they have ethereal space at all. However, like material space, access points, doorways and hidden

THE CORDEMOY ACCOUNT OF ETHEREAL SPACE

The ethereal realm allows immaterial transit through objects in any direction. One's motion seems limited only by one's mind. This is also the realm of the spirits of those who have passed. For some reason they remain behind, perhaps to carry out some final task. Descartes has proved that mind and body are distinct substances and I believe that ethereal space serves as the container space for minds. The spiritual essence is not destroyed when the body is destroyed and the ethereal essence likewise; this provides good circumstantial evidence for my thesis. Thus, ethereal space likely just is mental space. Or, more precisely, the space of spiritual material. Upon death most of us pause here for a moment then move on to our final reward or punishment, but some linger behind. These are the ghosts and spirits that haunt our tombs and dark places.

passages may allow one to simply walk from ethereal space to an interstice. Likewise these kinds of passages link First and Second World ethereal space.

The Cordemoy account and variations of it remain popular to this day; however critics of a more empirical and less philosophical bent find problems with it. First and foremost what happens to people who travel in places without ethereal space? Do their spirits simply cease to exist? Cartesian dualism has come under strong attack from other quarters but even those who accept the dualist principle frequently prefer alternative accounts. Dream space seems a more likely candidate for mental space; one strong reason for this is that one can travel in dream space while one's body remains in material space whereas ethereal powers take your body with you. Also, Descartes' mental essence was supposed to exist in a spaceless realm; ethereal space clearly has spatial dimensions and people have definite locations within that space. Some have countered by claiming that ethereal space is a projection of our spirit or psyche and does not actually exist as a space but instead is merely perceived as a space.

Regardless, the competing accounts of ethereal space don't fare much better. The most popular one (advanced primarily by vector wardens) holds that ethereal space is a shadowy border between the now and the Nkisi Void. Things in ethereal space exist neither wholly here nor wholly there; the moving now produces this kind of faint and shadowy trail, like a cartoon character that runs too fast. Ethereal space is an after-image. This explains why ethereal space extends into the Nkisi Void and fails to cover timeless realms but has its own problems too. Primarily, it seems that ghosts and other ethereal creatures should appear in both the Nkisi Void and the now at the same place and this isn't true.

ASTRAL SPACE

The Second World lacks anything directly like astral space. No outer planes exist for astral space to connect; the mind already has its own realm in the dream state; and the Labyrinth sustains the vast arcane architecture of the universe. Not too many powers, spells,

and abilities rely on astral space in the core rulebooks so this shouldn't be much of a problem. When you do need to implement a specifically astral power convert it through either the Dream State, the Labyrinth, or ethereal space. Most mental explorations of the astral world should be dream explorations. For powers that draw astral 'material' into the world and manipulate it draw that material from ethereal space instead (ghosts already draw their material from it). If you're using astral space to access some underlying structure of the universe, or as an extremely alien realm to explore, use the Labyrinth or deep Forge.

THE MANY KINDS OF GHOSTS

Traditional ghosts occupy ethereal space, allowing them to exist half-way in our world and halfway in the shadowy world of spirit or lost moments. Perhaps our passions leave permanent psychic impressions upon the malleable etheric fluid; perhaps our passions create tiny hurricanes that last after we have moved on and continue to spiral, occasionally drawing new energy to sustain them from passions they inspire in their victims. Regardless, not all ghosts are the ethereal kind. A character may die under the right circumstances such that they continue to live on in the dream state. In this case their dream self may visit those who yet live in their dreams, in waking hallucinations, or in the rare places where the border between dream and reality has melted a bit allowing both to seep into each other. A character may simply screw up somehow and wind up falling back a step in time, to the Nkisi Void. Some people get lost here permanently but they can occasionally skip forward to the regular world long enough for some interaction. Some people fall so far out of time that they come completely disconnected from it. They then skip around randomly through time (sometimes across all of it or perhaps just across a portion). These people may appear randomly and their appearances explain a variety of ghost-like phenomena. Ghosts may also simply be native inhabitants of the Labyrinth. The Labyrinth underlies all spatial structures and some creatures call it home; these creatures travel along vectors that we cannot even imagine and they can appear to partially

skip through our narrow window on the Labyrinth. For instance, Razor Wolves occasionally cross our geodesics. Sometimes this means that a pack of them pass briefly through our world and what you might see when witnessing this is a flicker of ghostly fire as the edges of their bodies cut through the elements of the atmosphere before they spin on to some other axis.

GAMEMASTERING THE SECOND WORLD

A modern world influence generates a very different atmosphere for a high fantasy game. Players may use First World slang and references, they'll go out of their way to put goofy tee-shirts they saw at gaming conventions on their characters. They might put bumper stickers on their horses (or maybe not...) and feel less pressure to act in character or non-anachronistically. While this can disrupt a game if it gets out of hand you should also keep in mind that part of the pleasure of a dual world setting is the jarring confrontation between growing up watching television and now struggling for your life in a bleak tomb. If you like the touches that would ordinarily be out of place or inappropriate in another setting you can feel free to go all out with them here.

One feature of the setting is that you can easily adjust the degree of First World influence and you can do so in a variety of ways. You can simply base the campaign somewhere far away from a major city. Mexico, New Orleans, and the South look and feel a lot more like a traditional fantasy setting; the First World is there on the other side of the Forge, but you only feel its influence in those far away decadent places like New York and Los Angeles. Alternately, you can dial down the accessibility of the First World; increase the level or cost of powers that access the First World (though they're high enough that they shouldn't be too much of a problem). More importantly, eliminate or alter the way more permanent portals between the First and Second World work; by restricting this you restrict inter-world trade and thus drastically reduce the quantity of First World paraphernalia available. As paraphernalia decreases so does the cultural influence.

You can easily apply the Second World concept to your own game setting. One tricky part about a dual world setting is projecting what effects the interaction has on your world. In this book I've attempted to take that

into account in the Influence chapter (chapter 4). One result is an effective increase in the wages of ordinary folk. This impacts players by making them, relative to the rest of the population, less wealthy than they are in a more traditional fantasy setting. Of greater concern is how you want to map the First World onto your campaign setting. If you want to make your setting heavily influenced by the First World simply do a bit of retro-engineering, point out to your players the changes you made, and then connect your favorite cities on your world to your favorite cities on Earth. This creates a bit of a discontinuity in your campaign but as long as its handled well and adds fun, your players should feel okay about it.

If you'd like the change to be more subtle (or even invisible) you can re-imagine your setting as if it were always a dual-world setting. What you do here is place your "great cities" at distant locations, or make them cities that the players haven't visited yet. Upon finally reaching one of these focal cities, the players could discover that another world existed on the other side of a gate and that powerful merchants in the city trafficked frequently with the strange people in the other world. You could bring replacement characters for those who died from the First World. This method can work best because it should come as a real surprise to the players. If you do this and already have a map of your own setting, but one not fully detailed, a convenient trick is to simply drop Second World New York somewhere on your map and decide what other details you wish to keep from this sourcebook. There's no particular reason the geography or landscape of the Second World needs to match that of the First World; the two universes don't even need to have the same spatial structure. All that you need is a way to map locations in the Second World onto locations in the First World and vice versa. Perhaps transitioning from the forest south and west of your version of Second World New York deposits the players in the middle of the Pacific. If they're powerful enough to pop back and forth between the worlds they'll figure a way out and be a bit more careful in the future.

You don't need to retain the same relative distances and directions across worlds. Perhaps your core city maps to First World London and a city three hundred miles south of it maps to First World Los Angeles. The tricky part about something like this is that you need to know what happens to people who transition from points between your two cities. One method you could use is to make the mapping between the two worlds discontinuous. Draw some circles on the map of your campaign

world and simply state that locations within that circle map to locations within a similarly drawn circle on a map of the earth. Areas between these regions can either be filled in with their own mapping functions or left as dead spaces, meaning that one cannot transit (at least directly) from the Second to the First World there. Alternately you can attempt to go the far more complex route and assume that there's a continuous function that maps First World Locations onto Second World locations and vice versa. One such function is the direct correspondence method used in the Second World setting. More complex functions would allow for the London/Los Angeles pairing described previously. To help picture this imagine that you have a map of your campaign world made on a perfectly elastic sheet of rubber. You then take your map and pin various locations on it to the locations you want to connect it to on a map of the Earth. Since you can stretch it any way you want you can connect up places however you see fit, but this means that some parts of your map get really warped. Of course, nothing will appear warped to anyone on either the First or Second Worlds, but you might end up in vastly different locations if you make a shift from one room in an inn, or from the room across the corridor.

THE SYNERGY OF THE GREAT CITIES

What marks a great city off from a merely good city is that the great cities embody one of the Warden powers. There are twelve known warden powers and there are twelve known great cities. Lesser warden powers may also exist and some or all of these might also have associated cities. The power investing a great city shapes the world around it; that power even shapes the basic dynamic principles upon which the world operates. The great cities and the Warden powers that invest them make the Second World alien; they make it the kind of place it is.

In the center of Los Angeles everything is black, white, or a shade of gray. As you move away from downtown, colors bleed into the environment, at first muted but later more vibrant than anything we see in our world. A great ring of intense color surrounds central Los Angeles, the kinds of colors one might see in a hallucination, or movie. New York is the city of runes; an arcane language grows and evolves on its walls and in the tunnels beneath the city. Tenochtitlan lies dead now, a city of closed doors. But the power of the Gate Warden still invests the lands of Central America. These three cities combine to make North America what it is, a land steeped in intense arcane magic and

shaped by the fantastic and surreal.

The wild power of the Feral Warden comes out of the heart of the Amazon near First World Manaus, Brazil. This keeps South America more primitive than one might expect. Unlike the other great powers, Feral Warden does not center in a city; instead it comes from the wilderness. All of South America has a hard block on Agriculture and Animal Domestication (see the Technology section, page 50); this creates a land incapable of sustaining large communities yet able to support significant technological advances. This means that players will likely have to travel on foot unless they have animal companions. The Escidi, Yuan-ti, and other races that like to perform arcane experiments favor this area since civilization poses less of a threat. Combined with the power of the Gate Warden coming from Tenochtitlan this has let feral outsiders populate the northern reaches of South America and much of Central America. Given that the Escidi name for the Roa is feral demon, one can expect to find a few of them in the region as well.

Tokyo is the city of Lightning and that power creates an odd combination of complex electronics but no gunpowder or chemistry. In Tokyo, daring adventurers might leap from a flying mag-lev car wielding a sword and a smile; this is a place of swords and science-fantasy. Berlin, the city of steel, powers the early industrial technology of the European continent. Steam locomotives cross the continent and primitive combustion engines allow turn of the century era motorcars and even the occasional biplane. However the influence of Shadow from London makes it a sinister place, suited to spies and doppelgangers and creatures that prefer the shadows. Between Tokyo and Berlin lies a vast, radioactive desert, a testament to the destructive power of unchecked technology. Armored fighting vehicles powered by elemental and arcane energies fly across the devastated landscape.

Hong Kong spreads the power of Motion through southeast Asia. It combines with the power of Flesh coming out of Calcutta to fill the jungles of Laos, Cambodia, Vietnam, Thailand, and Burma with the most dangerous predators of the Second World. Taiwan combines the power of Motion from Hong Kong with the power of Lightning from Tokyo to create an island kingdom of elemental sorcerers steeped in martial traditions.

The power of the Vector Warden combines with the Roa incursion in Hadoun Vogot to make the African continent a land of contrasts, shaped by the primitive

demonic and the ultra-modern.

The music of the Forge rings across Antarctica. Tone provides the shaping energy of the universe. It comes into the world through Vetr Fugue, an ice-crystal city with arctic winds howling through it, making a sound like wind-chimes. All words that have ever been spoken still resonate within the crystal walls of this place. Few creatures can survive the combination of harsh weather and raw magical power from Vetr Fugue. Tone wardens and some creatures with extremely sensitive hearing can pick out the sound of Vetr Fugue from anywhere on the planet.

The Australian continent remains strangely absent of great cities. Some arcane scholars attribute this to the unusual circumstances surrounding the death of Stralis (see page 9). Stralis' death left a vast network of underground passages and tunnels and seems to have also left a resonance in psychic space. This resonance blurs the lines between the Second World, the Forge, the Dream State, and Ethereal space. This gives strange creatures plenty of opportunity to enter the world and may help explain the unusual path evolution has taken there.

From the First World we can see the influence of Pattern on the surface of Mars. Pattern Warden, like the Feral Warden takes a different form; the power of Pattern is spread across the entirety of Mars and probably provides the magical support needed to keep Second World Mars alive. Mars obeys an orderly structure of magic; most Martian wizards see magic as a sort of science or technology. Even the wilderness follows ordered structures. Forests have well-defined edges. Mountain ranges align themselves in recognizable shapes. The wizards of Mars have developed advanced arcane technology for crafting constructs; the similarity between these steel, stone, and crystal artifices and the local races fuels a great deal of speculation.

GREAT CITES AND THEIR POWERS

What follows is the "official" list of the major Warden powers and their associated great cities. I also include the First World nation where you can find the city; in the Second World national borders don't count for much.

Dream Warden, Los Angeles, USA
Feral Warden, Amazon basin, Brazil
Flesh Warden, Calcutta, India
Gate Warden, Tenochtitlan, Mexico
Lightning Warden, Tokyo, Japan
Metal Warden, Berlin, Germany
Motion Warden, Hong Kong, China

Pattern Warden, Mars
Rune Warden, New York, USA
Shadow Warden, London, England
Tone Warden, Vetr Fugue, Antarctica
Vector Warden, Mbanza, Democratic Republic of Congo

CHANGING THE MIX

One technique for inspiring new ideas is to take a small collection of themes, such as the Warden powers, then mix and match in different ways. Each combination creates a different feel and can help spark wild new visions. In the Second World you can do this quite easily by simply re-arranging the cites (or placing the Warden powers in different cities). What would a realm caught between Dream and Metal look like? Move Lightning to Santiago, Chile and you have a place that supports futuristic technology but not civilization. Other, even stranger combinations are possible; what would a mixture of Pattern, Flesh, and Vector look like? When you think about these things you might find yourself stumped at first; that might be because the combination doesn't fall into a readily recognizable stereotype. If you find it difficult to picture what the combination would create you might be trying to fit the mixture to a pre-conceived notion. Instead take a break or put that part of the creative process on hold for a bit. Try to empty your mind of pre-conceived notions of what a fantasy world should look like and just think about the core principles themselves. What follows from the mixture? What would a creature look like if the three forces shaped it? What kind of architecture would the region support? What impact would it have on nature and magic? Perhaps most important for shaping a culture, what technologies would it allow? This can take a little while but, when it works, you might have something very unique. Remember that all those images you see on television are simply arrangements of red, green, and blue dots.

When working with the Warden powers also remember that they have multiple aspects. Shadow encompasses not just darkness but also reflection and representation. If you want to change the tone of a realm play off one of the secondary aspects. For example, if you'd rather suppress some of the multi-genre features in the Second World have Tokyo center more around the storm and weather aspects of the Lightning Warden power. Berlin can embody pure elemental fire and metal as opposed to the industrial picture presented here.

None of this is limited to the Second World setting and the Warden powers either. Using a few core principles

for any setting gives you a toolkit for creating fantastic realms. I recommend going with between five and twenty core principles. Fewer than that doesn't give you enough permutations and more than that can make the thought experiments you need to do unwieldy. I also recommend associating secondary aspects with your core principles, especially if you have a small number of principles. For instance, using the four elements of air, earth, fire, and water is pretty common but by themselves the elements don't provide much inspiration. Attach some additional features to the elements; perhaps fire embodies passion and chaos, earth stability and loyalty. You can twist things around a bit too; normally we associate nature with perhaps earth or water but think of the necessary role fire plays in rejuvenating forests. Using elements similar to the four traditional elements but with a slight twist can also spur the imagination. The Warden powers I discuss in this book came about from a desire to have an elemental basis for the world but not have one that felt too familiar. Still, you can see the seeds of the Warden powers in conventional myth and literature.

THE GEOMETRY OF FLESH

It's not really fair to toss out a sample problem like "what happens when you combine Flesh, Pattern, and Vector?" then not give an answer so here are some ideas I came up with. This took a bit under one day and I came up with most of this while doing other things (such as waiting to fall asleep). In this land wizards and scientists craft living technology; the power of Pattern when imposed on Flesh allows one to manipulate it in regular ways. Architects grow cities from vast fields of bone and cover the skeletons of buildings with living tissue. Scientists sculpt flesh into arcane patterns, allowing them to shape the very structure of space and time. Bonemancers craft living magical artifacts and perform arcane rituals by shaping bodies. The realm supports a new skill, Craft (fleshsmithing); characters use this to construct living technology. They can even make spatial portals or teleport devices (with a wet, organic look) from tissue. Spellcasters can learn the Sculpt Flesh feat. This allows them to craft magical items based in organics; this might include special magical parasites or symbiotes. Pattern acting on and through flesh to occasionally shape space and time inspired these ideas.

Another idea came from reversing the process and picturing flesh as a geometric structure that shapes pattern. Using this approach most wild animals in the realm would be flocking animals; birds move as a group, fish swim in schools, and land beasts travel in herds. Crea-

tures flock because spatial distance in flesh is measured by genetic difference. Picture the properties of flesh as located along a series of spatial axes (like a multi-dimensional graph). Each creature would occupy one point in this multi-dimensional space, picked out by its particular properties. In theory one could measure the spatial difference along these fleshy axes. This idea is a bit too strange to get a strong grasp of, but might inspire something cool later on so I toss it in. Continuing now, creatures of a single species bear a close enough "spatial" relationship that all their separate bodies form a greater structure. When this structure moves in certain ways and forms certain patterns it can work magical and spatial change on the world. Thus, a herd of gazelle might create mountains as they migrated, or part a forest by having its members move in a certain pattern. A flock of birds traveling over sea might circle in the air in just the right way and summon an island from the depths of the ocean. Animals and other creatures "learn" to do this instinctively through the process of natural selection. The land shaped by these forces would be ever-changing, incredibly dynamic. Humans would also use this, thus ritual dances. I'd likely combine both of the above pictures since the first primarily covers city adventuring and the second gives ideas for wilderness adventuring. Admittedly, they're both pretty freaky, so I probably wouldn't make it the core location for a campaign.

INFLUENCE

Influence largely takes the place of gold in the Second World setting. I do this to anticipate how the First World works. In the First World some people have an awful lot of money, but not much power; and some people have fairly modest levels of wealth but awesome amounts of power. Any setting with a significant social or political structure will likely break the (direct) connection between influence and wealth. Many science fiction settings should discard regular wealth almost entirely. In a modern setting much of what players actually want to do is better represented by their connections and authority. After all, an assault rifle is pretty cheap, however you need special permission to use one and that's the tricky part.

Using influence provides an additional benefit. By attaching influence costs to abilities such as warden bindings you can leave open what exactly that means. Influence costs become a place-holder for whatever costs feel most appropriate to the gamemaster. Perhaps you use influence to acquire rare and costly material components. Perhaps you need influence to cajole the

high priests of a temple to let you use the pool of divine ascension. Perhaps you spend influence to simply convince a monastery that you're worthy of learning their secrets. As a gamemaster you can detail this or leave it abstract as you see fit. If the influence expenditure represents costly material components (as I generally assume in this book) then bindings operate pretty much as written. If the influence cost represents access to special training then you might not be able to recover that cost when you release a binding. However, you might violate the principles of the temple and spread teaching of the discipline for free; of course, that will cost *you* influence points since the temple and friends of it will no longer assist you. Specifics help bring your world to life; details enrich the place. But leaving some parts abstract so that you can fill them in later can work well. Leave it abstract until you have an idea that really appeals to you, then you'll be more satisfied with the shape your world takes.

WARDENS

The wardens and their powers form fundamental parts of the Second World. Since they're prestige classes, they can also fit into pretty much any campaign setting. From the players' perspective they should accomplish two goals. They allow you to get by without relying directly on magic items; and they allow a player to feel more like it's their character's talents that allow them to succeed, not their pocketbook (though that's not really true). Also, in a deliberate break from the intention of the core rules, the wardens do not provide a way to narrow the focus of a character. Instead I designed them to allow for even greater flexibility in character development. Each of the classes has at least 25 bindings available to it; a player can take about 10 of these. This combination of flexibility and restriction makes the choice of which warden class and the choices made at each level, important ones, hopefully ones over which the players will agonize. Agonizing over choices makes the game part of role-playing games fun.

FIRST WORLD ADVENTURING

The First World is crowded, polluted, and a just a little boring. However, the First World has plentiful access to hot showers, refrigerated drinks, and mass media. Most exiles point to those as the features they miss most about the First World. In many ways the First World looks just like our Earth. Don't drive in big cities unless you have infinite patience or sedatives; don't trust politicians; don't trust the media; don't ask too many questions about what fast food franchises put in their

hamburgers. But the First World does have something extra; it has the influence of the Second World. Blue-Con exerts significant political, economic, and even military influence in the First World. A conspiracy of mind flayers abduct and experiment on First World citizens; they might even have the consent of local governments to do so. Just a smattering of magic power grants one incredible influence in the First World. Think of how potent invisibility would be and that's merely a second level spell. However, the First World protects itself to an extent from these sorts of intrusions and manipulations.

THE EXILE

The First World suppresses and ejects the unusual. Physical records and traces of magical events, including memories, fade away or become indistinct after a time. The people who experienced those events quickly call their own memories into question, then, after a while, they forget anything happened at all; or at least think the event happened only in a dream. Those who fail to let the event go or were so involved in the event that it changed them become exiles. Fairly soon (typically within 1d6 days) they shunt to the Second World, sometimes into a dangerous situation. Likewise, people from the Second World who travel to the First World (via a gate or some other method) shunt back after a short period of time; this occurs somewhat more quickly, usually after about 4d12 hours. Some powers, spells and items extend the length of time you can stay in the First World. Initially, you'll be offered chances to voluntarily shunt; you'll encounter openings or passages back to the Second World. If you resist, the openings start to occur closer to you and occur more frequently. You might walk down a tunnel and the tunnel turns into a passage to the Second World. You can avoid this by not moving or only moving in locations where you can always see your destination. The character's subjective viewpoint is of primary importance here; he should not be able to see the actual boundaries of the passage, just the near and far ends. Likewise, others should not be able to directly see the character disappear from this world and appear elsewhere. If you avoid movement then the shunt can occur when you close your eyes, or turn your head rapidly, or blink just a bit too long, or begin to hallucinate (due to lack of sleep). You can resist the shunt but, in the end, the First World always wins.

TRAVELING TO THE FIRST WORLD

Getting from the First World to the Second is quite easy for an exile; they just wait until you shunt. However, getting from the Second to the First requires some work. Probably the most common method in modern times involves use of a shift gate. Large corporations and powerful organizations own magical gates that transpose a spherical volume of space between the two worlds. They use this for both regular transport and moving cargo. If you work for one of these organizations you'll likely make First World journeys along with a regular cargo load. After completing your mission you typically just wait around to shunt back or, if time is pressing, use the First World side of the shift gate to return early. Most corporations don't like to waste cargo space for the return trip since First to Second world cargo tends to be high volume.

Private individuals and smaller organizations often use a *plane shift* spell or similar ability to make the switch. Plane shifting provides perhaps the most convenient method for private parties to cross over. The arcane, divine, and psionic version of *plane shift* all work equally well. Due to the close correspondence between the First and Second Worlds, when you plane shift you end up in the exact analog of your Second World location; thus you need not roll to determine how far off target you arrive. Technically, when you plane shift you first transit through the Forge for a brief moment then move on to the First World. When plane shifting to the Forge or most other interstices roll for random destination normally since the mapping functions between the Second World and those places vary over time. You could also travel easily to the First World by using a *gate* spell; this offers little advantage over plane shifting though since *plane shift* already provides accuracy. However, with a *gate* you could manage to rush larger objects through the opening or get a few more people through. For more flexibility you could combine *plane shift* with a *gate* by plane shifting to the Forge then gating to a location of your choice in the First World (or Second World for that matter). When traveling magically to the First World you must punch through the First World's spell resistance as usual. If using a *gate*, spell failure just means you don't make it through. When plane shifting, failure leaves you stranded in the Forge so it's best to have multiple *plane shift* spells prepared and leave one as a failsafe to return you to the Second World if you're having a bad dice day. If you do become caught in the Forge during a plane shift you have 3d6 rounds to complete the shift or make a return shift to the Second World.

If you wait any longer than that, when you finish the shift you'll go to a random location as for regular use of the *plane shift* spell. Also, if you end up caught in the Forge the gamemaster just might roll for a random encounter.

You can simply find a secret passage between the First and Second Worlds. Some natural passages exist; if they've been discovered you can be certain that powerful people want to control them. More commonly though, natural passages form for a brief time then vanish again. This happens more frequently at sea than on land. Something about the raw elemental force of wind, storm, and ocean combine to break down the barriers between worlds. Some ship's captains have grown quite skilled at predicting where this might occur and make fat profits sailing between the worlds. More than a few First World pilots have also discovered these passages by accident when flying near Bermuda; some of them managed to survive the sudden cut-out of their engines and went on to become powerful wardens or adventurers in the Second World.

You could go ethereal then search for a route to the First World in ethereal space. This offers only a small advantage over more conventional means though. There are more passages between the worlds in ethereal space but not that many more.

The Catwalks (see page 154) provide another route between the worlds. Their labyrinthine nature makes using them confusing and dangerous though; the unschooled (and very few people count as schooled here) could easily end up emerging through a painting hanging in some demon lord's study.

Neither the Labyrinth (page 165) nor the Nkisi Void (page 170) work well for transit between worlds. As far as anyone knows both realms have separate spaces for the First and Second World. However, the more mathematically inclined think that if you go deep enough into the Labyrinth you'll reach a geometry that encompasses the two worlds, perhaps even a geometry that encompasses all worlds. Gate wardens usually disagree, saying that only their power allows transit across worlds.

ROLEPLAYING ACROSS WORLDS

In this section I talk about the First World. Other than hints and intimations I don't offer an elaborate picture of the First World in this book. You will find out a bit about the metaphysics of the two worlds and you can find write-ups on three First World organizations in the Organizations section of the Influence Chapter (page 188). Other than that though the First World remains something of an open question. I assume that most people in the First World couldn't distinguish it from the actual modern day Earth. Secret organizations, including public Second World organizations, exert a shadowy influence in the First World. And sometimes the people who vanish come back.

Wielding terrible power.

You can match the Second World up with any modern or near-modern setting. Super spies, gritty technothriller ops, dark futures with technology peeling away the layers of humanity, Byzantine conspiracies, occult undergrounds, and others can serve as your theme for the First World. In most cases adding the Second World to a modern setting will mean that people in the First World gain access to at least some magic. As you'll see in this section, the First World ain't terribly friendly to magic; you can adjust that up or down as you see fit to tailor the First World more to the kind of game you'd like to run. I mention this elsewhere but it bears repeating, how you decide to base your campaign, either primarily Second World or primarily First World should have a strong impact on how you envision the two worlds. In the version I give, I assume the Second World is the primary base of adventure and thus include laws of physics that prevent people in the Second World from spending too much time in the First World. Moreover, in a slight reversal on the conspiracy angle, your players will be the group in the know; organizations of the Second World manipulate the First World, not the other way around. When your players visit the First World they should feel at once powerful and vulnerable. They have access to magic and abilities that most First Worlders don't even believe exist. At the same time the First World remains a dangerous place; too many people have too easy access to heavy weapons, explosives, virulent diseases, and toxins; the world itself conspires to favor the lucky over the skilled.

In the remainder of the chapter I present some rules for handling cross-world adventuring and merging a d20 Modern and d20 Fantasy campaign. I tried to design these rules so you could use them in other ways too; for instance, you might use the World Rules to customize an outer plane or a Campaign Rule to modify your setting.

CAMPAIGN RULES

Campaign rules are rules that apply everywhere within your game. These can apply at a fundamental level and change the way players make characters. Characters made using one set of campaign rules might not be compatible with a game that uses an alternative set of Campaign rules. Many house rules count as campaign rules. Here's my definition of a Campaign rule:

Campaign Rule: A rule is a campaign rule if, were you to change it, you would need to change what's written on a character sheet, magic item, or monster write-up.

Things in real life don't fall into binary categories so any rule may be more or less a Campaign rule, but the character sheet change serves as a pretty good guideline. Perhaps even better, if the rule requires you to re-make a character (for instance, to maintain balance or just to get the stuff on the sheet right) then you have a Campaign rule. The Defense bonus in d20 Modern would count as a Campaign rule. In order to use your d20 Modern character in a fantasy campaign, or vice versa, you need to either drop the defense bonus off the modern character or add defense bonuses to the fantasy character classes and peel back some of the magic items they own. You can get by with simply dropping defense bonuses off of class tables but some characters suffer more from that than others; thus, it's best to rebalance the classes in light of losing the Defense bonus.

WORLD RULES

World rules change some feature of the way the world works but you can derive the effects of the change from the same character sheet used in other worlds. For a World rule you do not need any editing of the character sheet (or monster). You might edit the sheet just to speed things up a bit, but failing to do the edit should not slow down the game significantly. An example of a World rule, again from d20 Modern, is the massive damage threshold rule.

For a definition of a World rule simply saying "if the rule isn't a Campaign rule then it's a World rule" should be sufficient.

World rules have a significant advantage over Campaign rules. If your house rules only involve World rules then you don't need to do much at all to use a published scenario or supplement in your game. You can also include multiple sets of World rules in your game. In the Second World setting I suggest having one set of World rules for the Second World (the more traditional fantasy setting) and another set of World rules for the First World (the modern setting). By using World rules to make this distinction the players can use the same character sheets no matter where they go and the gamemaster can use monsters or scenarios from either world in their game with a minimum of effort. You can even implement different sets of World rules for different planes; perhaps the Forge obeys a slightly different set of laws than either the First or Second World. You could do likewise for Asgard, Olympus, or Hell.

When cooking up your own house rules I recommend trying to stick to World rules. This will make your future job of running the game significantly more easy. The downside of World rules is that it's more difficult to implement significant changes using them; that can make it difficult to model the kinds of action you want to promote in your game. However, you can frequently get quite close to the feel you want just with World rules. While the massive damage threshold might not perfectly capture the sort of dangers you want characters to face in a gritty game it gets fairly close and the ease of using the massive damage threshold rule probably makes up for its failure to get things exactly right.

WORLD RULES MENUS

At the end of the chapter I devote a few pages to World rules menus. One of the pages works as a blank template you can photocopy and fill in to detail the specific World rules you use in your campaign, a plane, the First or Second World, or whatever. The options on this page come from this chapter. The other page is the template as filled out by me. I suppose you could call these the "official" World rules for the First and Second Worlds. They are the rules I assume when writing material for the Second World setting though in most cases I'll try to make sure that you can use the stuff I write even if you have a different vision of the setting.

MERGING d20 MODERN AND THE CORE RULES

In many ways the d20 Modern rules set is simply the core rules with some additions. This means integrating the two games just requires deciding what you want to

drag over from d20 Modern. In this section I discuss the classes and what adjustments you might need to make depending on whether you want your world to look more like d20 Modern or more like the core d20 system.

CHARACTER CLASS TYPES

With the addition of d20 Modern to the core rules we have five different types of character classes: core classes, prestige classes, NPC classes, basic classes, and advanced classes. For the most part they follow a pretty similar model but they have enough differences to make it worthwhile to discuss them a bit more. On a side note, d20 Modern now capitalizes the names of character classes; this helps clarify when you're talking about a game mechanic and not just making a comment about a type of person or profession. In this book I capitalize the names of character classes as well.

Core Class: Core classes are the classes you see in the PHB; they typically have 20 levels and you suffer experience point penalties if you multi-class to more than one core class and have more than a one level gap between the core classes. Racial favored classes can eliminate this penalty. The Fighter, Rogue, and Wizard are examples of core classes.

Prestige Class: You also find prestige classes in the core rules, this time the DMG. The Warden classes in this book are examples of prestige classes. Prestige classes typically have entrance requirements that your character must satisfy prior to taking a level of the prestige class. Many prestige classes have 10 levels. You can multi-class to prestige classes at no penalty; you just need to satisfy the pre-requisites for the class.

Basic Class: Basic classes come from the d20 Modern rules. These classes have no entrance requirements and you can freely multi-class to them without suffering experience penalties. They typically have just 10 levels and you're expected to multi-class out of your starting basic class at some time. In practice most player characters actually do this with the core classes as well.

Like all the d20 Modern classes these include a defense bonus, reputation score, and action points. Other than these features you should be able to easily integrate the d20 Modern classes into an existing d20 Fantasy campaign. Unfortunately, you do need to make some small adjustments to account for the defense bonus. I discuss this in its own section called Defense Bonuses (page 32).

Class Ability Progression Table												
Level	Attack Bonus			Saving Throw Bonus			Defense Bonus			Reputation Bonus		
	P	A	G	P	A	G	P	A	G	P	A	G
1	+0	+0	+1	+0	+1	+2	+0	+1	+1	+0	+0	+1
2	+1	+1	+2	+0	+2	+3	+1	+1	+2	+0	+0	+1
3	+1	+2	+3	+1	+2	+3	+1	+2	+2	+0	+1	+1
4	+2	+3	+4	+1	+2	+4	+1	+2	+3	+0	+1	+2
5	+2	+3	+5	+1	+3	+4	+2	+3	+4	+1	+1	+2
6	+3	+4	+6	+2	+3	+5	+2	+3	+4	+1	+2	+2
7	+3	+5	+7	+2	+4	+5	+2	+4	+5	+1	+2	+3
8	+4	+6	+8	+2	+4	+6	+3	+4	+6	+1	+2	+3
9	+4	+6	+9	+3	+4	+6	+3	+5	+6	+2	+3	+3
10	+5	+7	+10	+3	+5	+7	+3	+5	+7	+2	+3	+4
11	+5	+8	+11	+3	+5	+7	+3	+6	+8	+2	+3	+4
12	+6	+9	+12	+4	+6	+8	+4	+6	+9	+2	+4	+5
13	+6	+9	+13	+4	+6	+8	+4	+7	+9	+3	+4	+5
14	+7	+10	+14	+4	+6	+9	+4	+7	+10	+3	+4	+5
15	+7	+11	+15	+5	+7	+9	+5	+8	+11	+3	+5	+6
16	+8	+12	+16	+5	+7	+10	+5	+8	+11	+3	+5	+6
17	+8	+12	+17	+5	+8	+10	+5	+9	+12	+4	+5	+6
18	+9	+13	+18	+6	+8	+11	+6	+9	+13	+4	+6	+7
19	+9	+14	+19	+6	+8	+11	+6	+10	+13	+4	+6	+7
20	+10	+15	+20	+6	+9	+12	+6	+10	+14	+4	+6	+8

Advanced Class: Advanced classes also come from the d20 Modern rules. They're pretty much the same as prestige classes. They have entrance pre-requisites and do not cause experience penalties if you multi-class to them. They have a slightly better action point gain per level than the basic classes.

NPC Class: These behave just like Core classes but they're not as good. You should use NPC classes for less important characters or characters with poor combat training.

CLASS ABILITY PROGRESSION TABLE

I use the above table fairly often in the following sections; this lists the various progression rates for different classes in different core abilities. P stands for Poor, A for Average, and G for Good. Simply cross-reference your class level with the appropriate column to determine your bonus.

CLASSES WITHOUT DEFENSE BONUSES

For all basic classes eliminate the defense bonus progression. Your gamemaster might also eliminate the Reputation score progression but keeping or dropping Reputation has no further impact on the character. A character may freely multi-class into or out of a basic class with no penalty. Basic classes have no prerequisites for entry. I note any other changes in the following list.

Remember that all the modern classes have the skill point racial modifier for playing a human built into them; simply lower their skill points per level by 1 if using the class with a non-human character.

STRONG HERO

No other changes.

FAST HERO

The Fast hero already has some pretty good abilities so you need only make some minor alterations. Give the Fast hero the following special abilities:

Defensive Maneuvering [3rd Level and 8th level]: The Fast hero emphasizes getting missed; you gain a +1 dodge bonus to armor class. Characters may possess more than one instance of Defensive Maneuvering and the dodge bonus from this ability is cumulative. Thus, an 8th level Fast hero gains a +2 dodge bonus to armor class from possessing this feature twice.

TOUGH HERO

No other changes.

SMART HERO

Modern characters, even scholars, fight better than magic users. Give the Smart hero to a Good attack bonus progression.

DEDICATED HERO

No other changes.

CHARISMATIC HERO

Charisma represents presence and, to a certain extent, force of will in the d20 system. Moreover, Charismatic heroes in movies always tend to be lucky. Give the Charismatic hero a Reflex save progression of Good and a Will save progression of Average.

ADVANCED CLASSES WITHOUT DEFENSE

BONUSES

For all advanced classes eliminate the defense bonus progression. Your gamemaster might also eliminate the Reputation score progression but keeping or dropping Reputation has no further impact on the character. A character may freely multi-class into or out of a advanced class with no penalty. Advanced classes typically have prerequisites for entry; look in the d20 Modern core rules for specific details. I note any other changes in the following list.

SOLDIER

No other changes.

MARTIAL ARTIST

Like the Fast hero, the Martial Artist needs to avoid getting hit. Give him the following special ability.

Defensive Maneuvering [3rd Level and 8th level]: The Martial Artist emphasizes getting missed; you gain a +1 dodge bonus to armor class. Characters may possess more than one instance of Defensive Maneuvering and the dodge bonus from this ability is cumulative. Thus, an 8th level Fast hero/8th level Martial Artist gains a +4 dodge bonus to armor class from possessing this feature four times.

GUNSLINGER

No other changes.

INFILTRATOR

Infiltrators who fail their Move Silently checks need to duck bullets while they run away from the crime scene.

Defensive Maneuvering [3rd Level and 8th level]: Infiltrators emphasize getting missed too; you gain a +1 dodge bonus to armor class. Characters may possess more than one instance of Defensive Maneuvering and the dodge bonus from this ability is cumulative. Thus, an 8th level Fast hero/8th level Infiltrator gains a +4 dodge bonus to armor class from possessing this feature four times.

DAREDEVIL

Daredevils get in a few more scraps than most modern characters; increase their Base Attack progression by one category to Average.

BODYGUARD

No other changes. The Bodyguard has good progression benefits but a number of his abilities emphasize helping others; we should reward altruism.

FIELD SCIENTIST

Increase the Field Scientist's Will save progression from Poor to Average and raise his skill points gained to 8 per level (+ Intelligence modifier as usual).

TECHIE

No other changes. Note that the Techie has some nice abilities but they won't do much in a world where neither electricity nor steam power work.

FIELD MEDIC

No other changes. Medical technology in a fantasy setting tends to be primitive or non-existent, and the Second World doesn't support many of the chemicals or drugs used in modern medicine. Nevertheless, allow the Field Medic to use his class features normally due to his specialized training. Reduce the healing benefit of a medical kit to 1d2 hit points for treatment (adjusted by class features as usual) since some of the modern technology won't work in the Second World.

INVESTIGATOR

Increase the Investigator's skill points per level to 6 + Intelligence modifier.

PERSONALITY

Many of the Personality's class features and benefits don't translate well when shifting to the Second World (or any fantasy world). Such is the price of stardom. Leave the character the same other than dropping the defense bonus. If you don't use the Wealth system (see page 39) give the character a one time bonus of 2,000 gp × his Personality class level each time he gains the Royalty special feature.

NEGOTIATOR

No other changes. This character class actually works pretty well in a fantasy setting; you might want to use it for diplomats. I don't penalize the Negotiator for losing a Poor Defense Bonus; negotiation skills are nice but don't help much against a gray ooze.

CORE CLASSES WITH DEFENSE BONUSES

Core classes gain a defense bonus progression and possibly some other benefits as well. If your game includes Action Points or Reputation scores use the methods of determining them in the following list; since both these changes equal out across classes the gamemaster should feel comfortable either ignoring them or including them as she sees fit. Some core classes include other adjustments to account for the potential change in relative ability from gaining a defense bonus.

A character may multi-class into or out of a core class but risks suffering an experience point penalty; see the Multiclass Characters section of Chapter 3 in the PHB. Core classes have no prerequisites for entry. I note any other changes in the following list.

BARBARIAN

Defense Bonus Progression: Average

Action Points gained per Level: 6 + 1/2 your character level (round down)

Reputation Progression: Poor

BARD

Defense Bonus Progression: Good

Action Points gained per Level: 6 + 1/2 your character level (round down)

Reputation Progression: Good

CLERIC

Defense Bonus Progression: Average

Action Points gained per Level: 6 + 1/2 your character level (round down)

Reputation Progression: Good

DRUID

Defense Bonus Progression: Good

Action Points gained per Level: 6 + 1/2 your character level (round down)

Reputation Progression: Average

FIGHTER

Defense Bonus Progression: Average

Action Points gained per Level: 6 + 1/2 your character level (round down)

Reputation Progression: Average

MONK, FAST

Defense Bonus Progression: Good

Action Points gained per Level: 6 + 1/2 your character level (round down)

Reputation Progression: Poor

Lower the Monk's hit die to a d6. This assumes an ordinary Monk's hit points come mostly from ducking attacks. The monk still receives her special Wisdom bonus to armor class when unarmored.

MONK, TOUGH

Defense Bonus Progression: Average

Action Points gained per Level: 6 + 1/2 your character level (round down)

Reputation Progression: Poor

No other changes.

PALADIN

Defense Bonus Progression: Average

Action Points gained per Level: 6 + 1/2 your character level (round down)

Reputation Progression: Good

PSION

Defense Bonus Progression: Average

Action Points gained per Level: 6 + 1/2 your character level (round down)

Reputation Progression: Average

PSYCHIC WARRIOR

Defense Bonus Progression: Good

Action Points gained per Level: 6 + 1/2 your character level (round down)

Reputation Progression: Average

RANGER

Defense Bonus Progression: Good

Action Points gained per Level: 6 + 1/2 your character level (round down)

Reputation Progression: Poor

ROGUE

Defense Bonus Progression: Average

Action Points gained per Level: 6 + 1/2 your character level (round down)

Reputation Progression: Average

SORCERER

Defense Bonus Progression: Average

Action Points gained per Level: 6 + 1/2 your character level (round down)

Reputation Progression: Good

How can you not grow famous when you have dragon's blood running in your veins?

SOULKNIFE

Defense Bonus Progression: Good

Action Points gained per Level: 6 + 1/2 your character level (round down)

Reputation Progression: Poor

WILDER

Defense Bonus Progression: Average

Action Points gained per Level: 6 + 1/2 your character level (round down)

Reputation Progression: Average

WIZARD

Defense Bonus Progression: Average

Action Points gained per Level: 6 + 1/2 your character level (round down)

Reputation Progression: Average

PRESTIGE CLASSES WITH DEFENSE BONUSES

Prestige classes gain a defense bonus progression and possibly some other benefits as well. If your game includes Action Points or Reputation scores use the methods of determining them in the following list; since both these changes equal out across classes the gamemaster should feel comfortable either ignoring them or including them as she sees fit. Some prestige classes include other adjustments to account for the potential change in relative ability from gaining a defense bonus.

A character may freely multi-class into or out of a prestige class with no penalty. Prestige classes typically have prerequisites for entry; look in the appropriate rule book for specific details. I note any other changes in the following list.

ARCANE ARCHER**Defense Bonus Progression:** Good**Action Points gained per Level:** 6 + 1/2 your character level (round down)**Reputation Progression:** AverageARCANE TRICKSTER**Defense Bonus Progression:** Good**Action Points gained per Level:** 6 + 1/2 your character level (round down)**Reputation Progression:** AverageARCHMAGE**Defense Bonus Progression:** Average**Action Points gained per Level:** 6 + 1/2 your character level (round down)**Reputation Progression:** GoodASSASSIN**Defense Bonus Progression:** Average**Action Points gained per Level:** 6 + 1/2 your character level (round down)**Reputation Progression:** GoodBLACKGUARD**Defense Bonus Progression:** Average**Action Points gained per Level:** 6 + 1/2 your character level (round down)**Reputation Progression:** GoodCEREBREMANCER**Defense Bonus Progression:** Average**Action Points gained per Level:** 6 + 1/2 your character level (round down)**Reputation Progression:** AverageDRAGON DISCIPLE**Defense Bonus Progression:** Average**Action Points gained per Level:** 6 + 1/2 your character level (round down)**Reputation Progression:** GoodDUELIST**Defense Bonus Progression:** Good**Action Points gained per Level:** 6 + 1/2 your character level (round down)**Reputation Progression:** Poor

Lower the Duelist's hit die to a d8.

DWARVEN DEFENDER**Defense Bonus Progression:** Average**Action Points gained per Level:** 6 + 1/2 your character level (round down)**Reputation Progression:** GoodELDRITCH KNIGHT**Defense Bonus Progression:** Average**Action Points gained per Level:** 6 + 1/2 your character level (round down)**Reputation Progression:** AverageELOCATOR**Defense Bonus Progression:** Good**Action Points gained per Level:** 6 + 1/2 your character level (round down)**Reputation Progression:** Average

Lower the Elocator's hit die to a d4.

HIEROPHANT**Defense Bonus Progression:** Average**Action Points gained per Level:** 6 + 1/2 your character level (round down)**Reputation Progression:** GoodHORIZON WALKER**Defense Bonus Progression:** Good**Action Points gained per Level:** 6 + 1/2 your character level (round down)**Reputation Progression:** AverageLOREMASTER**Defense Bonus Progression:** Poor**Action Points gained per Level:** 6 + 1/2 your character level (round down)**Reputation Progression:** Average

Increase skill points gained per level to 8 + Intelligence modifier and give the Loremaster an Average Fortitude saving throw progression.

METAMIND**Defense Bonus Progression:** Poor**Action Points gained per Level:** 6 + 1/2 your character level (round down)**Reputation Progression:** Average

Increase the Metamind's hit die to a d6.

MYSTIC THEURGE**Defense Bonus Progression:** Average**Action Points gained per Level:** 6 + 1/2 your character level (round down)**Reputation Progression:** AveragePSION UNCARNATE**Defense Bonus Progression:** Average**Action Points gained per Level:** 6 + 1/2 your character level (round down)**Reputation Progression:** PoorPSIONIC FIST**Defense Bonus Progression:** Good**Action Points gained per Level:** 6 + 1/2 your character level (round down)**Reputation Progression:** AveragePYROKINETICIST**Defense Bonus Progression:** Average**Action Points gained per Level:** 6 + 1/2 your character level (round down)**Reputation Progression:** Average

SHADOWDANCER

Defense Bonus Progression: Average

Action Points gained per Level: 6 + 1/2 your character level (round down)

Reputation Progression: Poor

SLAYER

Defense Bonus Progression: Average

Action Points gained per Level: 6 + 1/2 your character level (round down)

Reputation Progression: Average

SOULKNIFE

Defense Bonus Progression: Good

Action Points gained per Level: 6 + 1/2 your character level (round down)

Reputation Progression: Average

THAUMATURGIST

Defense Bonus Progression: Average

Action Points gained per Level: 6 + 1/2 your character level (round down)

Reputation Progression: Average

THRALLHERD

Defense Bonus Progression: Poor

Action Points gained per Level: 6 + 1/2 your character level (round down)

Reputation Progression: Good

Increase skill points per level to 4 + Int modifier.

WAR MIND

Defense Bonus Progression: Average

Action Points gained per Level: 6 + 1/2 your character level (round down)

Reputation Progression: Average

NPC CLASSES WITH DEFENSE BONUSES

NPC classes gain a defense bonus progression and possibly some other benefits as well. If your game includes Reputation scores determine them according to the following list; since this change equals out across classes the gamemaster should feel comfortable either ignoring it or including it as she sees fit. If you use Ac-

tion Points I recommend that you don't give them to NPC classes; Action Points belong to the major heroes and villains of a story. If you have a special NPC, giving him 5 action points + 1/2 his character level per level he gains works to distinguish him.

A character may multi-class into or out of an NPC class but risks suffering an experience point penalty; see the Multiclass Characters section of Chapter 3 in the PHB. NPC classes have no prerequisites for entry. I note any other changes in the following list.

ADEPT

Defense Bonus Progression: Poor

Reputation Progression: Average

ARISTOCRAT

Defense Bonus Progression: Poor

Reputation Progression: Good

COMMONER

Defense Bonus Progression: Poor

Reputation Progression: Poor

EXPERT

Defense Bonus Progression: Poor

Reputation Progression: Average

WARRIOR

Defense Bonus Progression: Average

Reputation Progression: Poor

CAMPAIGN RULES LIST

Most of the Campaign rules focus around making it easier to use d20 Modern classes and standard d20 classes together in the same game; specifically, I want to make it feasible to have a character start out life as a Barbarian and, after walking through a portal, end up a Bodyguard who perhaps makes occasional forays back into the Second World. Vice versa as well; you should be able to run your early campaign as a special forces operation against a strange cult operating in the

CLASS BALANCE

I assume that each class level represents acquiring a certain amount of knowledge, skill, and training. Everyone, when they gain a level, gains the same quantity of training; different classes just apply that training to different areas and thereby gain different benefits. This is one reason why designers should balance classes against each other; unbalanced classes imply that some people learn more from going up a level than other people. You can still allow some difference in power. For example, if you take special training in service to a god, the god might grant you additional benefits in exchange for your devotion. Alternately, some fields of study might simply be more rewarding; a character specializing in astrology in the real world simply won't gain as much as a character specializing in wizardry in a standard fantasy world because astrology doesn't work in the real world and wizardry does work in the fantasy world (I assume anyway...). However, the vast majority of character classes don't fall into one of those categories so they should grant pretty similar benefits.

Since d20 Modern classes remain pretty well balanced against the core classes when you remove the defense bonus, including the defense bonus means that they "learn" more when going up a level than the core classes. Assuming that the physics of learning work the same in different worlds (within the same campaign that is) this creates an issue that I'd like to resolve in order to maintain internal consistency. Importantly, I think we can resolve this issue without too much difficulty and the resolution can even make the game a bit more interesting.

bayous of Louisiana then transfer your Soldier, Field Medic, Field Scientist, and Daredevil to the Second world where they begin to learn arcane or divine magic, or pick up a Warden class, or hone their wilderness survival skills as a Ranger.

DEFENSE BONUSES

The defense bonus is the most significant difference between d20 Modern and the core rules. Everything else you can just tack on to your regular game or leave out of your d20 Modern game with little effort. Fortunately even this change, as significant as it is, can be ignored in a large number of cases. One might desire, for a sense of completeness, monsters and NPC write-ups in published modules to list what defense bonus they'd have were you to use them in a d20 Modern game. However, you know your players are just going to whack those guys the first chance they get and all you really need to handle *that* sort of interaction is the victim's total armor class. Moreover, the armor classes of monsters and most NPCs, whether designed for d20 Modern or the traditional game, fall in a similar range for their power level, challenge rating, or character level.

ANALOGS OF THE CORE RULES

In this alternative I assume you want to keep the game close to the core fantasy rules. You want to be able to run your players through the wealth of modules out there for fantasy settings (perhaps with some updating to reflect a change in era) and you recognize that the acquisition of magical treasure makes up a significant part of the fun for your players. I also assume that you want heroic modern characters, ones that don't get hit by everything once they gain a few levels. Accomplishing the latter part needs a little maneuvering.

In this system use the alternate versions of the d20 Modern character classes, the ones that lack a defense bonus (page 28). Some classes may gain a benefit elsewhere or lose something. You can leave the standard d20 system core classes and prestige classes alone; they don't need adjusting. Doing only this puts all the classes available in fairly close balance. The d20 Modern classes match up pretty evenly with the core classes once you drop the defense bonus. You can even leave it at this and let typical modern characters cut each other to pieces when they lack magic item support (see the next section).

MINIMAL CHANGES, DEAD FAST HEROES

In this option you simply drop the defense bonus altogether and don't put in a surrogate.

There's some motivation for using this method. The real world is a pretty dangerous place and highly trained combatants can be quite lethal to each other. Unless they have magic. Magic items give you the protective measures needed to do silly things like stand in the middle of a room and blast away with a gun, or charge a giant with your sword. Without magic items you better spend a bit more time sneaking around and attacking from ambush.

Other problems arise when you drop the class defense bonus though. I'll go through a small list here:

- **Cover is Good:** This is the game designer's last resort when pushing his lethal game. Real people use cover so your players better get used to using it too. While this is all true it doesn't actually provide a solution. After all, players will use cover in your fantasy setting too if they happen to get into a ranged battle; they'll have cover *plus* rings of protection, magical armor, and amulets of natural armor. Your modern characters will just have cover. Moreover, cover works poorly against a sword.
- **Melee Lethality:** Following on the above point, you'll discover that melee attacks work pretty well in a modern game, probably even better than ranged attacks. With all the characters taking cover they'll actually have something resembling an armor class against bullets; melee characters will just move around it. Moreover, since you'll likely see a lot of armor classes around 12 you'll also see an awful lot of large Power Attacks. An eighth level martial artist for instance might feel inclined to drop a +8 on damage on top of all the other damage bonuses he gains.
- **Don't These People Care About Their Life:** Perhaps fighters in a fantasy world don't worry much about defense because they have magic items to cover that (however, given my players' almost single-minded focus on increasing AC that doesn't ring true either). Surely modern characters would put a bit more effort into finding some method of keeping the number of hits down. Hit points represent this to a degree but it would be nice to have something more like a defense bonus surrogate. I discuss an option like this in the next sub-section, Special Training.

Impact: High level modern characters will acquire large attack bonuses and no armor class bonuses. If you run a pulp era game or any genre where the characters seldom wear armor you can anticipate nearly automatic hits by seventh or eighth level; even the second attack in a full attack sequence will likely hit about 70% of the time. A Fast hero-4/Soldier-4 with Weapon Focus (Beretta 92F), Weapon Specialization (Beretta 92F), Point Blank Shot, and a 14 Dexterity, shooting his favorite gun at an AC 12 (Dex) target within 30 feet

will cause an average of 16.5 points of damage per round barring critical hits. Eighth level d20 Modern characters usually have about 48 hit points, thus he'd probably kill himself in an average of three rounds. You may also see characters actually move more towards melee than you'd expect; melee attacks don't suffer from cover bonuses and power attack increases in value when you face low armor class opponents. For example, a similar Strong hero-4/Soldier-4 armed with a mere longsword, using Weapon Focus (Longsword), Weapon Specialization (Longsword), and Power Attack with a 14 Strength attacking an AC 12 target will cause an average of 15.7 points of damage per full attack sequence when judiciously using Power Attack. Keep those action points handy.

SPECIAL TRAINING

As mentioned in the last section we can expect people living in a world without magic items to do all they can to find ways of avoiding the working end of bullets and swords. You can do this and retain the balance between d20 Modern classes and the core classes by rebalancing the modern classes; reducing some of their other benefits in order to "pay" for the additional effort and training they devote to defense. Unfortunately, that requires pretty drastic changes to the d20 Modern classes and would likely make it difficult for you to use adventures and sourcebooks designed for d20 Modern.

In this treatment I peel the defense bonus out of the character class, then give it back through an alternate method. Use the d20 Modern class variants without defense bonuses for this method. Characters gain access to Special Training. I gave Special Training its own section because it got so big (and could get even larger but this is the Second World Sourcebook, not First World Sourcebook). See page 47 for full details regarding Special Training.

Impact: While Special Training partially makes up for the loss of magic items and defense bonuses you'll still see a substantial drop-off in defense. Magic items are good; I'd certainly like a few and I imagine our SWAT teams would like them too. You can feel fairly comfortable giving out Influence points specially tasked for purchasing special training courses. Most of the benefits don't stack well with magic items and if players eventually do gain magic items they'll likely use any special training courses you give them to shore up areas of lesser interest or to serve as back-ups in case they lose their magic or have to work without it for a time. Flexibility and resilience are marks of heroes but they don't make a character overly powerful.

DEFENSE BONUSES MAKE SENSE

Unlike the other alternatives I offer, this one works in the opposite direction; instead of taking defense bonuses away you give them to all characters, including the core classes.

Use the core, prestige, and NPC classes with defense bonuses options (starting on page 30). In most cases I tried to keep the classes as close to their original conception as possible. For the monk I offer two variants, the fast monk and the tough monk; I imagine that some people will want speedy, hard to hit monks but they've got to pay something for that so I lighten up their hit dice. I assume the standard monk's hit points represent a bit of getting out of the way anyhow. The tough monk has a standard defense bonus progression; both versions still get the special armor class bonus for being a monk and this remains subject to the same limitations (i.e. you can't wear armor and get it).

I titled this section "Defense Bonuses Make Sense" because they do make sense. The other core fighting abilities of a character progress automatically as he gains levels. Everyone gets increases to saving throws, skill points, feats, attack bonus, and hit points as they gain experience, but no bonus to armor class. Moreover, ask any player and they'll certainly point out exactly how key armor class is to character survival. When I first saw defense bonuses in a book I didn't care much for them but after thinking about it some more, and for the reasons I just gave, I can certainly understand why one might want to include them. In fact, using defense bonuses might just make for a better game overall.

That said, adding class based defense bonuses to the core rules brings along two fairly significant pieces of baggage. First, all those hundreds of prestige classes you have spread out over dozens of d20 books will need adjusting. Each adjustment takes little time but that can still feel pretty daunting; especially since so few books actually go the defense bonus route (and many of the ones that do use different systems). Second, making armor class rely on magic items gives more control to the gamemaster. The GM can keep the danger level up in her game by limiting the number of magic items that provide armor class boosts. This can keep goblins, orcs, and ogres dangerous for a longer time and doing that helps your game maintain consistency. By putting armor class in the character classes you lose the ability to subtly influence the danger level of the game.

If you want to make the full-scale conversion to a Defense Bonus system here's how to go about it.

VARIANT CLASSES

Use the variants of the standard classes presented starting on page 30. These include a defense bonus and possibly some small variations in other areas.

ADJUSTING NEW CLASSES

For classes that lack a defense bonus and aren't already listed in this book assign them a defense bonus as follows. First pick how good the defense bonus will be; in the table on page 28 I list the progressions for Poor, Average, and Good defense bonuses. If the class has an average progression you're done already.

If you give the class a Good progression take two penalty picks from the following list.

PENALTY PICKS

2 picks: Decrease Base Attack progression by one category.

2 picks: Decrease hit dice by one die type.

1 pick: Decrease skill points per level by 2.

1 pick: Decrease one type of saving throw progression by one category.

Decreasing the base attack progression counts as two picks so that's all you need to do to bring the character in line. The table on page 28 details the various attack bonus, defense bonus, and saving throw bonus progressions; P stands for Poor, A for Average, and G for Good.

Players loathe giving up armor class so it's okay to give them a bit of a boost when taking a poor defense bonus progression. Give the class two picks from the following list:

BONUS PICKS

2 picks: Increase Base Attack progression by one category.

2 picks: Increase hit dice by one die type.

1 pick: Increase skill points per level by 2.

1 pick: Increase one type of saving throw progression by one category.

Normally you shouldn't allow progression to improve beyond Good or below Poor; hit dice should stay between a d4 and a d12. Finally, skill points should range between 2 and 8. It's also best to use the same adjustment for all people who take a particular class or prestige class; if you want to have variations within the campaign I recommend re-naming the class or making it fairly explicit that you're dealing with a variant.

MAGIC ITEM BONUSES

The previous adjustments take care of everything at the character creation level. You still need to deal with that

pesky problem of magic item stacking though. What I'm going to do here is eliminate two types of armor class bonuses. This will leave another +1 to +5 to armor class that doesn't get balanced out by a similar magical bonus to attacks. After describing how to do each of these I include an **impact** section to help you anticipate the effect this might have on your game.

SHIELDS PROVIDE DEFLECTION BONUSES

Shields provide a deflection bonus to armor class in this system. The enhancement bonus continues to make the shield more durable, but neither it nor the base shield bonus stacks with the bonus to armor class a *ring of protection* grants.

Impact: Naturally, this only affects those characters that use shields. Another rule will make monks and wizards suffer. This rule makes using two weapons or a two-handed weapon more appealing since characters will either get a bonus from a ring of protection or from a shield, but not both. Still, shields grant a couple extra points of armor class and their magical benefits cost half as much as the bonus from a ring of protection; using a shield also effectively frees up a ring slot for the character as well as allowing the character to gain some special benefits from the shield itself.

NERFING NATURAL ARMOR

If you use this option natural armor bonuses count as armor bonuses. This means that a natural armor bonus to armor class won't stack with an armor or force armor bonus to armor class.

As with the shield bonus to deflection bonus alteration this has some precedent. Normally you don't gain an additional bonus from wearing two sets of leather armor but you do gain a bonus from wearing leather armor over your already leather-like skin. Likewise, an iron golem gets pretty tough when you put some plate armor on it. Note though that the ability to stack armor and natural armor serves a fairly specific purpose in many places; our picture of an ogre is of a creature with a fairly tough hide but who also wears some crude armor over his skin. Likewise for many other monstrous humanoids. It only gets odd when you start thinking about golems, elementals, and dragons. To capture this function of natural armor you can go with one of the two following options.

Armor Synergy: Just as skills gain synergy bonuses from other skills armor can gain synergy bonuses from other worn armor. If using this rule grant a +2 synergy bonus to armor class for every 5 full points of armor bonus received from a secondary source. For example,

THE HEART OF THE DIFFERENCE

In the standard d20 system characters gain attack bonus via levels but no defense bonus. Magic items pick up the slack on that front. Most characters will get magical armor class boosts from six sources.

- **Armor Enhancement Bonuses (wash):** Other than monks and arcane casters everyone gets these. However, those pesky fighters also get enhancement bonuses to their weapons. I assume these two bonuses balance out and thus can be ignored in a non-magical world.
- **Shield Enhancement Bonuses:** One of the great features of a shield is that you get another set of stackable enhancement bonuses; these serve a core role in helping to offset the lack of a defense bonus.
- **Deflection Bonuses:** The vast majority of players will have a *ring of protection* providing this.
- **Natural Armor Bonuses:** This one's a bit tricky since monsters get this to help set their challenge rating; for players natural armor provides another form of armor class boost that doesn't have a magical offensive bonus to offset it.
- **Dexterity Boosters (wash):** Many characters will pick up an enhancement bonus to their Dexterity somewhere along the line; while this increases your armor class your opponents will likely have similar benefits from a Strength enhancement. Thus, in a non-magical world this will be a wash.
- **Force Armor (wash):** Wizards, sorcerers, and monks typically acquire the *mage armor* spell or *bracers of armor* fairly quickly. I wouldn't count these as armor boosters though; these sources of armor primarily serve to prevent the arcane casters from lagging too far behind the other classes in armor class. In a non-magical world they likely won't exist; in a low-magic world they'll probably have spells that perform a similar role.

Some other sources of armor class exist but they typically have either a short duration or occur rarely. Of the above six types of bonuses, three of them get off-set by a similar bonus available to the attacker (I marked these with "wash"). This leaves three bonus types; each of these bonus types ranges between +1 and +5, thus a character will likely have a total armor class bonus from these sources ranging between +0 and +15 over the course of his career. If you look at the d20 Modern classes you'll notice that they get defense bonuses that range over the same values. In fact, the defense bonus from a character class at a certain level matches fairly closely to the expected bonus to armor class a fantasy character gains from deflection, natural armor, and shield. Naturally some characters focus more on defense than others. In d20 Modern you use your class to focus; in standard d20 you focus through your choice of magic items.

In many d20 Modern games you'll also gain a small, perhaps +1 to +6, net bonus to defense from a few magic items. All this works to keep armor class close to attack bonus as you go up in level. The various options I offer in this section work off the assumption that class defense bonus serves as a surrogate for deflection, natural armor, and shield enhancement bonuses (though not completely since a d20 Modern character also gets a bit of defense from other sources).

a troll has a natural armor bonus of +7; if he also wears chainmail (normally granting a +5 armor bonus) he'd receive a total of a +9 armor bonus to armor class. An ogre has a +5 natural armor bonus; were he to wear banded mail (+6 armor) he'd have a total armor bonus to armor class of +8.

The downside to using this rule is that ogres won't have an incentive to wear hide armor, which they're listed as wearing in the MM. Certain classes of monstrous creatures fall into the armor-wearing category; that's how we picture them. They also tend to be sentient monsters, the kind that frequently advance according to character class. If you want to bypass the concern about armor bonuses stacking when using pre-made monsters assume that the creature gains a defense bonus and that the defense bonus makes up for any shortfall in armor class.

Natural Armor is Rare: Alternately, you can think of natural armor as something more like inherent toughness; perhaps high values represent an anatomy completely made of metal, or multiple organs, or thick bones. Using this option, natural armor still exists for monsters and works the way it normally does but simply rule by fiat that neither spells nor magic items provide natural armor bonuses. More specifically, make a natural armor bonus to armor class as rare as a luck bonus to armor class. In the core rules you seldom see luck bonuses to armor class and, when you do, they're usually of pretty short duration. Frankly, this is probably the easiest solution.

Impact: Eliminating natural armor from players hits everyone pretty much equally. They get back an amulet slot though.

FORCE ARMOR DESTRUCTIVE SYNERGY

In this option force armor, such as that gained from the spell *mage armor* or from *bracers of armor*, does not stack with any deflection bonus to armor class. This is an extension of the special case rule in *mage armor* that says you can't use it with a shield. Since shields provide defense bonuses in this variant system I simply extend the rule to cover all deflection bonuses. Force armor still grants an armor bonus to armor class and thus also doesn't stack with regular armor or natural armor (unless using Armor Synergy). Perhaps something about the energy field interferes with deflection.

Even better, you can picture force armor as acting like a combined armor and deflection bonus. You could even go as far as to say that half the bonus counts as an armor bonus and the other half as a deflection bonus.

If you like getting highly detailed about these sorts of things (or your players want to squeeze out every ounce of armor class) you can allow certain forms of limited stacking. For example, a character wears *bracers of armor* +5; this works out to a +3 armor bonus and +2 deflection bonus (have force armor provide armor bonuses first). He also wears a +4 *ring of protection*; his total bonuses then add up to +7 (+3 armor, +4 deflection). This makes things a bit more complicated but some people live for complex games and the opportunity they grant to exploit strange synergies. Regardless, simply saying deflection and force armor bonuses don't stack works well enough, so no gamemaster should feel pressured to use the more detailed system.

Impact: In all likelihood wizards and sorcerers will have just two sources of armor; mage armor spells and their class based defense bonus. One advantage of this is that you can comfortably give arcane casters an average defense bonus progression. This means that you can create prestige classes or core class variants that have poor defense bonus progressions in order to pay for other special abilities (such as a better attack bonus, more skills, some class specials, or so on). One problem with the standard arcane classes is that you have very little “play-room” when creating variants since all their core abilities use the lowest progression method. Going with defense bonuses actually gives you some more breathing space and flexibility.

OVERALL IMPACT

If you implement defense bonuses in your regular game you will see armor classes improve even if you eliminate some sources of bonuses. A tenth level fighter using a shield can hit AC 31 by having a 12 Dex, *Plate Armor* +3, *Large Shield* +2, and class bonus +5. In the standard game he'd probably have AC 27 from 12 Dex, *Plate Armor* +2, *Large Shield* +2, *ring of protection* +1, and *amulet of armor* +1. You'll see the improvement decrease in the 11th to 20th level ranges since characters rely more heavily on deflection and natural armor bonuses at the higher levels. This means lower level characters get tougher but high level characters won't change much.

You'll also see more variation in the kinds of magic items characters use. Normally a front-line character needs to expend a large portion of his wealth and magic item slots to maintain a survivable armor class. Going to the defense bonus system frees up a ring and an amulet slot. Few other magical bonuses are as dominant or necessary as those boosting armor class so players will feel more comfortable experimenting.

DEFENSE AND ARMOR DAMAGE REDUCTION

If you decide to go the defense bonus route I suggest also using the Armor Damage Reduction option (page 46) and the Just Like Armor Class sub-option (page 47). This will help offset the relative benefit armor wearing characters gain. While a fighter with plate armor and shield can gain a net increase of 4 points of armor class, he'll likely face monsters capable of doing damage sufficient to punch through that armor or combatants who use Power Attack to partially offset the damage reduction.

DEFENSE BONUS AS WORLD RULE

If using this option also use the Classes without Defense Bonuses and campaign rule (pages 28 and 32). Characters in a normal fantasy world (or whatever) gain their armor class in the usual way. They wear armor and hopefully have a number of magic items to help boost their armor class. However, some worlds work differently. These worlds protect legendary heroes; the air feels more clear; it's easier to visualize the battlefield; and fortune protects the stars of stories.

All characters gain a flat defense bonus to armor class equal to half their character level, rounded down. These worlds frequently suppress the power of magic as well; the Power Suppression world rule set at level 2 or higher works well in conjunction with this (see page 46).

MODERN STUFF PULLED OVER

You might want to include a number of features from d20 Modern in your fantasy campaign. I've collected those features here and discuss a bit how to translate or use them.

ACTION POINTS

All characters in the d20 Modern system receive a special resource called action points. You begin with 5 action points at first level then gain (5 + half your level) each time you advance a level. Advanced classes gain (6 + half your level) action points at each level. You can spend these to increase the result of various die rolls. For more details see the d20 Modern rulebook.

If you choose to include these in your standard game give core classes and prestige classes (6 + half your level) action points for each level gained. Core classes have slightly more restrictions than basic classes.

Impact: Player characters get a finite amount of these per level. Going by the core rules that means they get replenished after about 10 to 20 encounters. As they

increase in level they'll be able to use them more often and they'll receive larger benefits when they do so. At all levels they'll likely use action points to boost saving throws; especially if you use the massive damage threshold rule. At higher levels they can use an action point to transform a poor skill into a half decent skill or accomplish something truly amazing with one of their better skills. They'll also be capable of pulling out the stops on your major bad guy and go for large Power Attacks or trick shots.

All this adds up to the players being able to handle tougher scenes than normal. As a rough guess you'll be able to put them through a module one level higher than their actual level at a similar degree of challenge. In turn, this means they'll acquire magic items and experience a bit more quickly. If you want to slow this progression, pull out a couple magic items or target the players with a few more effects intended to destroy magic items. For experience you can multiply experience gained by 80% and keep at fairly close to a normal progression. Of course, you can always just leave the situation as-is and recognize that your players will do a bit better than usual. You could also suggest to your players that they try out some more unusual or flavorful classes and combinations since they'll be more capable of saving themselves with judicious use of action points.

Impact Note: In most first edition and second edition games as well as in the new d20 System, I've used something akin to action points. Saving throws and instant death effects used to be a real nightmare and it was hard to keep a game going; especially since I seldom allowed *raise dead* or *resurrection*. Action points, or something similar, can add quite a bit to a game. They help the player make key checks when they want them. They help reduce one's vulnerability to poor die rolls when making saving throws. If you include them you can feel more comfortable about dropping *raise dead* and similar spells from your game; in fact, if you want to remove resurrection effects I definitely recommend having something like action points. They also provide another decision point for players; action points give the player another resource and this translates into both tactical and strategic options. A large part of the fun of the game portion of roleplaying comes from decision making, so making more decisions available to the players can help keep the game a bit more exciting. Finally, you can have potent spells or special abilities require an expenditure of action points. Since characters have a limited supply of these they won't use those abilities lightly; and that makes it okay to let

your players have a few abilities with which they can really cut loose.

OCCUPATIONS

The d20 Modern system introduces the idea of including Occupations for characters. Occupations represent what your character did prior to taking up the life of an adventurer. He used to have a somewhat ordinary job and now he steps through gates into a world with orcs and ogres and dragons. Occupations give the character a few extra skills that always count as class skills and some other benefits.

You can drop these altogether but they're such a good idea that I recommend including them in every game you run. In this book I call them Background Options since that, more generic, term captures what they do a bit better once you throw in the possibility of a character growing up with the wolves. Background Options represent the effect your culture has had on your character; race and attributes represent genetics. You'll find a list of background options available to both First and Second World characters in Chapter 2 (page 62). Characters with First World origins may also choose any of the Occupations from the d20 Modern core rulebook as a background option.

Impact: Background Options and Occupations give characters some free extras. They can choose a few additional skills that always count as class skills and may get a boost to their wealth, reputation, or an additional feat. This makes it easier for the character to achieve the requirements for a prestige class or advanced class. This gives Fighters something better to do with their skill points than dump them in skills that get trashed by the heavy armor they seem to favor. Anything free can't be good. But the advantages of including Background Options far outweigh the disadvantage of making characters a bit tougher. Background Options start the character out with a story. Background Options can give a player a better feel for the region of the country from which he comes. The added class skills help the player tailor the way his character develops. Later in the character's career the player will always have this one permanent feature that indicates a bit of what the character is like. Someone who started out as a lawyer and ended up as a powerful barbarian will feel a lot different than someone who started out in the Huron Wild and ended up the same. Having a Background Option is like giving your character a childhood.

Background Options cost a Feat: If you can't stand letting the players get something for free you

can charge them a feat to take a background option. See page 63 for details.

REPUTATION

The d20 Modern system gives characters a Reputation score based on their classes and level. Reputation represents how well known the character is. It can provide a benefit when people like what they hear about you and a penalty when they dislike what they hear about you. Its benefits will probably help you most often when dealing with shopkeepers, normal folk, and respectable aristocrats or scholars. A high reputation hurts you as well; every orc and goblin scrounging the forests and caverns, every thief and cultist lurking in the great cities, every archdevil and demon lord from the pits of hell to the deeps of the abyss will know your name. They'll also know a bit about who you are and what you can do. Frankly, having a reputation might be more of a hindrance than an advantage but, all in all, high or low reputation should work out to a wash as far as game balance goes. This means you can comfortably drop it from your game or add it in. In the class lists I include an optional entry for Reputation; simply decide whether or not you want to use it.

WEALTH SYSTEM

The d20 Modern rules use an alternate system for keeping track of a character's wealth. Instead of tracking individual expenditures, players make Wealth checks to see if they can afford an item and the results of these checks combined with the types of items sought after may reduce the character's Wealth bonus. In-game actions and going up in level can increase the character's Wealth bonus. All this combines to achieve an effect largely similar to that of keeping track of individual expenditures.

Gold Total	Wealth Bonus
0 – 10 gp	+0
11 – 20 gp	+1
21 – 35 gp	+2
36 – 50 gp	+3
51 – 65 gp	+4
66 – 90 gp	+5
91 – 120 gp	+6
121 – 150 gp	+7
151 – 200 gp	+8
201 – 275 gp	+9
276 – 350 gp	+10
351 – 500 gp	+11
501 – 650 gp	+12
651 – 900 gp	+13
901 – 1,200 gp	+14
1,201 – 1,500 gp	+15
1,501 – 2,000 gp	+16
2,001 – 2,750 gp	+17
2,751 – 3,500 gp	+18
3,501 – 5,000 gp	+19
5,001 – 6,500 gp	+20
6,501 – 9,000 gp	+21
9,001 – 12,000 gp	+22
12,001 – 15,000 gp	+23
15,001 – 20,000 gp	+24
20,001 – 27,500 gp	+25
27,501 – 35,000 gp	+26
35,001 – 50,000 gp	+27
50,001 – 65,000 gp	+28
65,001 – 90,000 gp	+29
90,001 – 120,000 gp	+30
120,001 – 150,000 gp	+31
150,001 – 200,000 gp	+32
200,001 – 275,000 gp	+33
275,001 – 350,000 gp	+34
350,001 – 500,000 gp	+35
500,001 – 650,000 gp	+36
650,001 – 900,000 gp	+37
900,001 – 1,200,000 gp	+38
1,200,001 – 1,500,000 gp	+39
1,500,001 – 2,000,000 gp	+40
2,000,001 – 2,750,000 gp	+41
2,750,001 – 3,500,000 gp	+42
3,500,001 – 5,000,000 gp	+43
5,000,001 – 6,500,000 gp	+44
6,500,001 – 9,000,000 gp	+45
9,000,001 – 12,000,000 gp	+46

Characters in a Second World campaign can craft magic items. Also, wealth in the core d20 system actually acts like another form of experience points (you could practically call a character's gold piece allotment their power points). Due to these issues I assume most game-masters will stick with the standard system for tracking gold. However, keeping track of one's mundane wealth can drag a game down a bit. Once you get past third level or so most players only care about the large expenditures of gold. You can blend the two systems together by using the Influence rules in this book.

WEALTH AND INFLUENCE

For this system what you do is keep track of mundane finances using the Wealth rules in the d20 Modern core rulebook.

For Second World characters you'll need to translate your character's gold allotment into a Wealth score; first remove whatever gold you want to translate to Influence points by spending 1,000 gp for each Influence point you wish to purchase. After pulling out gold for Influence convert the remaining gold to a Wealth bonus using the table here.

You can also use the table to convert a Wealth bonus to a gold allotment; simply take the Wealth bonus and use the maximum gold for that Wealth bonus (e.g. a +7 Wealth bonus translates into 150 gp, close to the average starting gold for a fighter in the core rules). Remember, one standard gold piece equals ten dollars in the Second World but a standard gold piece actually looks like a silver/gold hybrid (see

the coinage notes on page 255). This can be handy if you're moving characters from the First World to the Second World.

In this system you use wealth mostly for incidentals like lodging, transportation, small bribes, and so on.

Essentially, your Wealth bonus determines your life-style. The hard stuff, the stuff that gets you cool powers, eldritch artifacts, cutting edge military hardware, and access to special training is Influence.

People with the d20 Modern book should notice that beginning characters in d20 Modern tend to have a bit more money than standard d20 characters while high level characters in d20 Modern have substantially less money than standard d20 characters. And we thought that modern Americans had upward mobility... Most d20 Modern characters will have a large portion of their wealth tied up in assets so their Wealth scores might not be a good indicator of how much they really have.

WORLD RULES LIST

As you can see, I've tried to make as many of the rules as possible into World rules. World rules just make my life easier when running a game, especially a cross-genre game like the Second World. Moreover, you can actually achieve a remarkably diverse array of effects using only World rules. Technology counts as a World Rule as well but it's significant enough that I devote a section to it (see page 50).

KEEPING THE PLAYERS NERVOUS

Gamemasters seem awfully fond of running games where characters have a good chance of dying. Are they cruel? Have they no compassion for the time and effort you spent crafting and twinking that character to the maximum possible effectiveness? Do they not understand how much of your soul went into perfecting his Second World Appalachian accent? Probably yes. However, gamemasters also like to keep the game dangerous because this way they can make an encounter with a crowd of thuggish orcs a bit tense. Not *really* tense; you'll still mop them up in all likelihood; but you can't blow them off completely because you could get a couple bad rolls. This fascination with killing player characters often translates into nasty rules, especially in settings that include guns. I'll discuss a couple methods here (some of which should be familiar).

Note that even in ultra-realistic technothrillers the heroes are heroic. You won't see DeNiro fall too easily to a mere thug; yet these books and movies frequently come across as gritty and realistic. You can still generate the impression of gritty realism while using a fairly heroic game system like standard d20 or d20 Modern. In a dual world campaign making the modern world more gritty serves an additional function. It makes the place feel more dangerous; characters will be particu-

larly careful while visiting the First World. This also helps to accentuate the differences between the two worlds so that it feels, just a bit, like they adventure in someplace alien.

MASSIVE DAMAGE THRESHOLD (MDT)

This modification gives characters something called a Massive Damage Threshold. The d20 Modern system uses this. Essentially, if you take more damage in a single attack than your Constitution score you must make a Fortitude save (DC 15) or immediately drop to 0 hit points. Constructs, elementals, oozes, plants, and undead do not have massive damage thresholds; you need to chip away all their hit points. Vermin are resistant to the effects of massive damage and gain a +5 species bonus on their Fortitude saves. Some special abilities or feats may increase your massive damage threshold (for instance the Improve Massive Damage Threshold feat from the d20 Modern core book does this).

The massive damage rule elegantly adds some extra random risk to your game. It does tend to make big weapons even better than they already are. Also, your players will have to make a lot of saving throws when they reach higher levels and start facing giants and more area effect attacks. But this is one of the most simple World Rules to use. I'll suggest a couple options here as well.

Impact: This rule will weaken characters in the mid levels (4-12 or so) more than those at the low or high end. This happens because at those levels characters and monsters do pretty good damage, enough to provoke a saving throw, but the characters still have fairly low saving throw bonuses.

SIZE MATTERS

The core d20 Modern rules don't adjust your MDT for size. However, larger creatures should probably be able to take more damage than smaller creatures. Multiplying stinks so what you can do is adjust the MDT according to the following table:

Size	MDT
Medium-size or smaller	Con
Large	Con + 5
Huge	Con + 15
Gargantuan	Con + 30
Colossal	Con + 50

BIG GUNS ARE MANLY

The core d20 Modern rules don't adjust the Fortitude save DC for the amount of damage done. Some

gamemasters will find this horribly unjust. Increasing the difficulty class makes a saving throw significantly more dangerous, especially a saving throw that results in bleeding to death and one that's made so often. If you'd like to just wave your hand at this sort of realism you can increase the save DC by 1 for every 10 points over the victim's MDT. For a more gritty game make it +1 DC per 5 points of damage over the victim's MDT. I don't recommend going much lower than this unless you want your players to carry a stack of 10 pre-made characters to each game session. Also note that the more you rely on the massive damage rule to keep your game edgy the more you devalue hit points (since they'll likely get bypassed by a single large attack). On the menus I include a blank space next to this option so you can fill in the number of additional damage points needed to increase the save DC by 1.

WOUNDS

The Wounds system should be familiar to many readers; this is a modification of a system that has appeared in several d20 games. I offer this variation to make it more portable (i.e. more of a World rule than a Campaign rule).

Normally in a split hit point system you have two damage tracks. Your wounds equal your Constitution score and your regular hit points are collected via hit dice and Constitution bonuses as usual. You then take damage to your wounds if you've run out of hit points or when you take a critical hit. Once you run out of Wounds you are dying (as the condition); this applies even if you still have vitality points remaining.

Typically when a game includes a split hit point system characters effectively get an additional number of "hit points" equal to their Constitution score. This actually makes them tougher! Mean gamemasters can't let that happen. Thus the Wounds alternative.

Wounds: For this method characters receive hit points as usual for their class levels or hit dice. When you run out of these you start dying, as usual. However, characters and creatures also keep track of another kind of damage, Wounds. Whenever you suffer a critical hit, take the hit point damage as usual. Also mark the amount of damage taken as Wounds. If your Wounds total ever exceeds twice your Constitution score (plus possible Size bonus) then you immediately drop to 0 hit points. I use $2 \times$ Constitution in this system since most WP/VP systems drop the damage multiple for critical hits; this method accomplishes a similar goal but also allows you to retain the distinction between

swords and axes.

Creatures larger than Medium-size can take more Wounds before they lose all remaining hit points. The following chart gives the bonus:

Size	Wounds
Medium-size or smaller	Con $\times$ 2
Large	Con $\times$ 2 + 5
Huge	Con $\times$ 2 + 15
Gargantuan	Con $\times$ 2 + 30
Colossal	Con $\times$ 2 + 50

Using this system you need not keep special track of wounds. In many combats characters and monsters simply won't take them. If a character or creature does suffer a critical hit simply mark down the damage taken in a convenient location (perhaps near the Constitution score) and, if that ever exceeds the victim's (Constitution $\times$ 2) + Size bonus drop the creature to 0 hit points. You may also have certain forms of damage cause Wounds as well as regular hit point damage. Falling damage could work this way.

When the character receives healing one Wound is healed for each hit point healed. This means that Wounds heal fairly quickly and characters probably won't need to worry extensively about Wounds carrying over to another fight unless they've fought a pretty tough sequence of battles.

Impact: The Wounds system (and a regular VP/WP system) favors those with good critical threat ranges. You still need to cause decent damage to fully exploit a victim's Wounds so those with high critical damages and large threat ranges will do best; but you're already in trouble if you're fighting someone like that. This will weaken high level characters the most since they have and will face creatures with good critical threat ranges and a high likelihood of turning a critical threat into a critical hit. They also do pretty good damage and, at best, pick up relatively small bonuses to their Constitution score. In other words, while their hit points increase, the amount of Wounds they can take remains pretty stable. Low level characters likely won't even notice this rule.

Perhaps the most significant difference between the Wounds or WP/VP system and the Massive Damage Threshold System is that the Wounds method increases the importance of luck. Even a lowly orc with a great axe can drop a hero with a critical hit. That can happen in the MDT system but the victim gets a relatively friendly Fortitude save so it's less likely. Essentially, the Wounds system makes high level characters a lot

more vulnerable to bad luck.

USE BASE CRITICAL THREAT

If using a Wounds or WP/VP system high level fights can end up pretty short. This happens because high level characters typically have several critical threat range multipliers; of course, everyone has more hit points so that all equals out in the normal rules but, when using Wounds, the critical hits can become dominating.

To address this have attacks only cause Wound damage when triggered by the base critical threat, not the modified critical threat. Thus, while a character with Improved Critical wielding a keen saber threatens on a natural 12 or higher, they only threaten a Wounding strike on a natural 18 or higher. This makes Wounding strikes more a matter of pure bad luck and you can get unlucky when fighting a kobold as easily as when fighting an elite blademaker.

Adjustments: If you look at the above rule and like it but think it's far too friendly to player characters then you just might be a Mean GM. If so, you can assign a multiplier to Wound threats; $\times 2$ works quite well. What this means is that all attacks threaten Wounding damage at double their critical threat range. For less skilled combatants this means they might cause Wound damage without scoring a critical hit. This makes causing Wounds more common but still just as common for low level characters as for high level characters. The attacker still needs to confirm the Wound threat, just like he would need to confirm a critical threat.

AMBUSHES SUCK

Wounds and using base critical threats brings a random factor into the game, one that largely bypasses the level and hit point system. This will help keep your players nervous when fighting weak opponents. But you still might want snipers to pose more of a threat. This rule is pretty simple:

If the target has lost their Dexterity bonus to armor class then the attack causes Wound damage as well as regular damage.

Impact: This rule works naturally with attacks from ambush but you might also want to extend it to certain special cases. For example, a villain steps out from ambush, leveling a gun at one of the players; he wants the player to surrender. Normally the villain could have simply attacked from ambush but by doing this he gives the player the option to surrender rather than die. In this situation deny the character pinned by the villain his Dexterity bonus to armor class. If the player wants

to jump for it allow a contested initiative check, giving the villain a +5 circumstance bonus for favorable conditions. If the villain wins he can attack the player as if the player were flat-footed. If the player wins the villain still gets a free half-round surprise attack but the player retains his Dexterity bonus to armor class. Clever use of Bluff or some other skill might eliminate the bonus or even eliminate the surprise altogether.

SURPRISE STRIKE ALREADY DOES WOUNDS

The last component we need to worry about when using a Wounds system is that glorious Surprise Strike ability. Rogues cause some pretty nasty damage when they flank an opponent or get the drop on them. This additional damage is meant to represent exactly the kind of thing that the Wound system already does; stacking both effects on top of each other will make the game pretty dangerous.

When using this variant, bonus damage from a Surprise Strike does not cause additional Wounds. Instead add +1 Wound damage for every die of Surprise Strike (or similar ability) on the attack. The Surprise Strike still causes normal bonus damage. It's best to roll the six-sided dice for Surprise Strikes a little separate from the other dice when using this variant.

ONE INCH TO THE LEFT AND IT WOULD HAVE SEVERED AN ARTERY

You can spend Action points to turn an otherwise mortal injury into a merely dangerous one. This option allows a character to spend 5 Action points to ignore all Wound damage from an attack. You may spend these points after you've taken damage (and thereby noticed that the attack left you a bleeding wreck).

Impact: This will give players roughly one free pass against a killing critical per level; higher level characters can squeeze out a second pass but they'll also likely face more situations where they need to use this option. You won't need this option as much if you also use Base Critical Threats for Wounds. Since this uses Action points it doesn't protect monsters or minor NPCs. That's what you get for being an extra.

A QUANTUM WORLD

Real munchkins know that you protect yourself from the hazards of life with high armor class and high saving throw bonuses. You halve the number of times you get hit by kicking the die roll required from 19 to 20. By making the game a bit more random you can reduce the impact of high armor classes.

LUCKY HITS

Normally an attack automatically hits if you roll a natural 20 on the attack check. With this option you lower the number needed to score an automatic hit. Allowing automatic hits on an 18 or higher will keep armor class pretty valuable but still leave plenty of room for lucky shots by monsters and bad guys, even weak ones. Retain the attack's normal critical threat range; someone using a battle-axe might score an automatic hit but not a critical threat using this system. Combat is a crazy, chaotic mess and any number of factors can lead to a lucky shot getting past someone's defenses. You can also vary the auto hit number up or down; going up to 19 trims down the impact a bit while dropping down to 16 means that everyone needs to fear bad luck.

UNLUCKY BREAKS

In d20 Modern you automatically fail a Saving throw if you roll a natural 1 on your save check. By increasing this value to 2 you likely double the chance that high powered characters will fail their saves while not totally neutralizing the benefit of having good saving throw bonuses. In chapter three (pg. 99) I discuss something called Risk; this method just increases the Risk for saving throws. You could also lower the Risk for saving throws to 0; if you do this, a good saving throw bonus almost acts like a power, granting you immunity to low level effects. You don't necessarily need to tie this to Lucky Hits; a really gritty and perhaps even realistic world might have Lucky Hits set at 18+ but Unlucky Breaks set at 0.

Impact: Both of the above systems reduce the effect of skill and talent (and equipment). If you rack up a high armor class you still face the problem that about one out of every 6 attacks will hit you anyway. This also makes throwing out a bunch of fairly inaccurate attacks more effective (though a 15% chance to hit isn't something to be proud of). This will, like most of the rules here, favor the weaker character in a conflict.

HITTING THEM HARD

You can make players nervous pretty easily by upping the offense. Give everyone an automatic +2 to attack and damage. This means the players get hit more often and suffer more when they do get hit. While the players become more dangerous as well, increasing offense favors bad guys since you've got so many of them. I suggest using this in conjunction with **Lucky Hits** if you decide to include it.

Impact: This threatens low level characters more than high level characters. However, everyone suffers more.

By increasing the values even more (+4 attack and +6 damage for example) you'll make third and fourth level characters feel almost as vulnerable as first level characters. Note, that this favors small attacks after a sense; the flaming arc of doom cast by your 20th level sorcerer does 20d6+2 damage and the half-spear stab by the Strength 6 kobold who found his way to the First World to finally get some well-deserved respect does 1d6 damage.

DAZING BLOWS

If you take your Massive Damage Threshold or more in damage from a single attack you are **dazed** for one round. See the rules on Massive Damage Threshold to determine this value. You can mix and match this option with any of the other options.

A **dazed** character can take no actions but typically recovers in one round. For those of you with a wargaming mentality you can treat a dazed condition as something that a character can remove by using a full round recovery action. This means that they remain dazed until their next round, then eliminate all dazed conditions by spending a full round action.

Impact: This option makes offense and going first more valuable. If you can get a sequence going where you regularly daze the target then he won't be able to retaliate.

PERMANENT SCARS

This optional rule inflicts lasting effects on characters who suffer severe injuries. If you take enough damage from an attack (and satisfy certain other conditions) your character acquires "scar" points. Scar points are more cosmetic than serious, but they help remind a character of the battles he has fought.

Massive Damage Method: When using the massive damage threshold system every time a character has to make a Fortitude save due to massive damage they take a permanent scar. This represents some sort of lasting injury; you can let the player choose the visual effect. For each permanent scar you suffer you acquire 1d4 Scar points.

You can avoid taking any Scar points by scoring a greater success on the Fortitude save. This requires that you make the save by at least 10 points. For example, a standard massive damage save is DC 15; if you score a 25 or higher on your Fortitude save you not only make the save but also don't suffer any Scar damage.

Note that you can also use the MDT method for permanent scars even if you don't use the MDT option. Thus,

you could use massive damage threshold to determine if a character suffers a permanent scar but wed this system to regular hit points. This way you generate a sense that the character took a severe injury without taking him out of the fight due to a bad die roll. This technique does a nice job making the game feel like one of those movies where the hero gets beaten bloody but keeps on struggling.

Wound Method: If using the Wounds system you gain a permanent scar whenever you take more Wounds than your Wound total (i.e. drop to 0 hp due to Wounds). You do not receive a saving throw to avoid this. For each permanent scar you suffer you acquire 1d4 Scar points.

Regular Hit Point Method: When using regular hit points invoke Scar checks whenever a character is reduced to -1 or fewer hit points from an attack that does at least 10 points of damage. The character then has to make a Fortitude save (DC 25) or suffer 1d4 Scar points.

Effects: Add your Scar point total to your age to determine your effective age for attribute alterations and so on. Suffering grievous injuries during your life shortens it in more ways than one.

Healing Scar Points: A *regenerate* spell heals one Scar point per 2 caster levels of the caster. However, permanent Scars are more than mere damage; they become part of the character's identity. They represent his struggle to keep living no matter what dangers he faces. The character being healed must spend 50 experience points per Scar point per character level (of himself) regenerated; if he lacks the experience, or refuses to spend it, the repair is merely cosmetic. Example: a 10th level character has spent way too much time fighting lucky ogres who wield axes. He has 8 Scar points and goes to get them regenerated; the cleric casts *regenerate* and heals 6 Scar points. This costs the character 6 (Sp) × 10 (level) × 50 xp for a grand total of 3,000 xp cost. The experience cost is based on when you heal the injury, not when you take the scars.

Impact: This option works well to make players feel like they suffer some sort of permanent effect from a tough fight without actually penalizing them significantly. Even better, they can show off their scars at taverns.

SUPERNATURAL POWER

In many games and worlds you want to limit magic or some other power without completely eliminating

it. Perhaps the world suppresses magic in some way. It might reduce the power of magic or prevent weak magic from working. The actual mechanic you use means something; it favors some magic over others. Thus, I offer a couple options here.

The core rules include three different kinds of magic, arcane, divine, and psionic. Normally they all count as magic but you might want to have different World rules apply to each kind. For instance, in the "official" version of the First World, psionics suffer less of a penalty than arcane and divine magic. Perhaps you have an outer plane particularly distant from the gods, or a parallel world where the gods have died; in that case you might apply one of these World rules just to divine magic. In the following sections I'll just use the term "magic" instead of specifying the sub-type; remember that you can always vary for specific sub-type.

WORLD RESISTANCE

The very fabric of space itself prevents the casting of spells and use of magic. This only stops the generation of new magic; existing magic or magical effects perform normally.

In this system you assign the World a Spell Resistance; SR 15 works well for a low powered effect. Any time someone casts a spell or uses a spell-like ability (either personal or from a device) they must first overcome the spell resistance of the World, even for powers that do not normally allow spell resistance. They must also overcome the spell resistance of their target, if it has any, and this requires a separate die roll. Picture this as the world resisting the bringing into being of the spell. If the spell works, it goes about its business normally. Supernatural abilities squeak by in this system since spell resistance does not apply to them. I include a new class of ability called Inherent Magical abilities (see pg. 98); these act like supernatural abilities in many ways (vulnerable to anti-magic, doesn't provoke an attack of opportunity) but they are subject to spell resistance. Thus they'd be subject to World Resistance as well.

If you're using a rather high World Resistance difficulty class, such as 25, you might want to allow spellcasters to **Take 10** on these particular checks. That way once a character reaches a certain level of ability they've mastered the secret of the world and can use magic normally.

Impact: This method actually has a fairly nice impact on the setting. Low powered magic users will find many or even most of their effects failing; if you set the DC high enough (DC 25 perhaps) they might not be able

to use magic at all. High powered characters will blow right through the spell resistance. Within the setting what you'd see are very few low level spell casters. People might attempt to practice magic but it will never or seldom work. The people of the world probably wouldn't believe in magic unless they had a number of high-powered spellcasters around. Moreover, you'd see fewer high level spellcasters. First, they might not survive for long since they spent a large portion of their life devoting all their time and energy to a skill that did nothing. Second, repeated failure gives a powerful incentive to pursue another trade; only fanatics and loonies would bother to waste so much time on something that is obviously a mere superstition. You'll also notice that all your spellcasting players take the Spell Penetration feat; I'd just live with it and use Spell Penetration as a method of distinguishing between NPC mages in the know and those out of the loop.

If you don't use the Take 10 rule, magic will always act fritzzy, except for the case of very high level characters. By using the Take 10 rule you can feel a bit more comfortable assigning a high DC to the World Resistance. The Take 10 rule also results in a place where spellcasters either have a good chance of failing (always 50% or more) or have no chance of failing. Making that all important break-point where you can start taking 10 can represent the passage between initiate and master; you've joined the occult elite.

HIGH LEVEL SPELL BLOCKS

For this option increase the World Resistance against a spell by the Spell Block factor times the level of the spell. Thus, casting a third level spell in a world with WR 15 and Spell Block factor $\times 2$ requires overcoming a Spell Resistance of 21. This models a world where the resistance ramps up as you use more potent magic, somewhat like a feedback effect or the way a generator's resistance ramps up as you feed more momentum into it.

WORLD RESISTANCE AND MAGIC ITEM CONSTRUCTION

While World Resistance does not apply to the use of many magic items (such as magical swords) it will apply to the crafting of those items since you need to cast spells to finish the process. When crafting an item the spellcaster must overcome the World Resistance once for each item crafting feat required in the construction of the item and once for each spell needed in the construction of the item. If any of these checks fail, the construction fails. The spellcaster loses half the gold and experience value invested in the item and must spend the same amount of time making a new

attempt. Most spellcasters won't bother attempting to craft magic items until they've grown powerful enough to Take 10 on their checks.

CASTER LEVEL REDUCTION

The nature of the world suppresses the magical abilities of those within it. It makes their magic weaker and may reduce their access to higher level spells. To implement this simply lower the caster level of all spellcasters, those with spell-like abilities, and magic items that generate effects with a caster level by a fixed value. I suggest lowering effective caster levels by 2 or 3.

If your caster level is reduced to below twice the spell level than you cannot cast that spell; this does not apply to spell-like abilities. Also note that, while characters normally can cast first level spells at first level, even one level of caster reduction will mean that you need to be third level before you can cast first level spells. The reduction in caster level also affects all other parts of the spell (such as duration, range, damage dice, and so on).

You can also go the reverse route and increase effective caster levels. In this case don't grant access to additional spells; simply have the magic operate at a higher level. You can do something similar by applying Metamagic Feats to all spells cast within the world.

Impact: This simply shuts off the power of low level spell-casters. In order to cast even a level 1 spell you need a caster level of 3 or higher (depending on the value chosen). High level spell casters lose access to their best magic but most magic users should be able to cast 9th level spells by the time they reach 20th level. Overall, this is a pretty bland World rule but it can easily make a world feel like it has weak magic.

MAGIC ITEM SUPPRESSION

Typically you'll use this option in conjunction with one of the other magic suppression or blocking options. What this does is neutralize the power of some magic items.

NO CHEESE

Set a minimum gold piece value; all magic items with a market value below this number simply fail to work. 4,000 gp works pretty well for this since it clears out a bunch of the cheesy items but leaves stuff that's moderately powerful. If you want to kick it up one more notch go to 9,000 gp; that way you'll typically only see items roughly equivalent to a +3 or better bonus.

This World rule kills scrolls and potions so you might want to allow multiple spells on a single scroll, or multiple doses in a single potion to jack up the gold value; alternately, you can make scrolls and potions exempt from this; or finally, scrolls and potions can be a bit cheesy anyway so you might just let them die.

Impact: This won't reduce the power level of your players significantly; they will lose a bit of efficiency since they can't load up on cheap, stackable bonuses but they'll still have access to some pretty potent weapons. A very nice side effect of this World rule is that it will make the world feel a bit more like the fantasy worlds you see in fiction. Most stories that have magic items have the heroes carry just a few potent ones, not a pack full of weaker items.

ALL YOU NEED IS CHEESE

This uses the same mechanic as the No Cheese world rule but no magic items with the given value *or higher* function. This can help model a weak magic world. It would also make sense if the powerful ruler of a plane implemented this rule within his realm in order to protect him from potential attackers. Artifacts would still work (they're like an Ace, either high or low, whichever works best for them). A value of 4,000 gp keeps magic extremely minor and promotes diversification of abilities; that allows some minor attribute boosting and simple items. Higher values (for instance 20,000 gp) only come into play at levels above 10 and they'll primarily work to keep characters from getting the really good stuff. Diversification is already pretty cost effective in the d20 system so if you allow that high a number you'll probably have characters pretty similar in power to a regular game.

Impact: The players won't feel the impact of this rule until later in their career. When it does start to affect decisions you'll see a more diverse array of items stacking on characters and likely see them carry more back-up items. You should allow suppressed magic items to still defeat damage reduction and provide alternative weapons that count as having a higher bonus for purposes of defeating damage reduction; for a simple rule of thumb just double the weapon's enhancement bonus for purposes of defeating damage reduction. The game can get a bit dry if this rule applies to the entire campaign; stacking up on cheesy magic is pretty boring. However applying this to some worlds, planes, and places within your game can make your players truly and deeply hate those locations.

POWER SUPPRESSION

Worlds with Power Suppression lower the effective enhancement bonus of all magic items within them. All magic items that provide some sort of enhancement bonus, such as armor, weapons, rings of protection, amulets of natural armor, belts of giant strength, boots of Elvenkind, and cloaks of resistance, have their bonus reduced by a fixed value, typically between 1 and 3. Items that provide skill enhancements (such as boots of Elvenkind) have their benefit reduced by 2 points per point of suppression; I do this because skill bonuses typically max out at +10. All other benefits of the items work normally. Weapons count as having their full enhancement bonus for the purpose of defeating damage reduction but see the DR is Tough option below. More precisely, the Power Suppression level has the following effects on the following types of bonuses:

Circumstance: Lower bonus by 2× Power Suppression Level

Competence: Lower bonus by 2× Power Suppression Level

Deflection: Lower bonus by 1× Power Suppression Level

Enhancement: Lower bonus by 1× Power Suppression Level

Resistance: Lower bonus by 1× Power Suppression Level

When using this system treat an amulet of natural armor as providing an enhancement bonus to natural armor; not granting a natural armor bonus directly.

Impact: Power Suppression will lower armor classes across the board so you might want to include some version of Defense Bonuses. On the other hand, if you simply want to make an interstice or plane extremely dangerous this is one way to go. You'll see players focus more on items that provide spell-like or supernatural powers instead of pure numbers boosting items. You'll also see players use more weapons and armor with special abilities. For example, with a Power Suppression level of 3 a character wielding a +3 *ghost touch, flaming burst longsword* will only gain the benefits of the ghost touch and flaming burst. If you enjoy low magic campaigns this can help capture that feel. Note that *mage armor* and *bracers of armor* still work fine. You can picture this world rule as saying that only magic with overtly tangible effects has an impact on the game; ghost touch allows a weapon to go ethereal, flaming is flaming, fortification represents armor specially designed to protect the vitals, etc.

DR IS TOUGH

You can make the world even more gritty by saying that weapons use their effective enhancement bonus to defeat a creature's supernatural damage reduction. If you do this even powerful characters might need to use silvered weapons to affect a werewolf. For example, in a world with Enhancement Suppression 3 you'd need a +4 weapon to affect a lycanthrope; you'll probably want your +3 sword made of silver or whatever metal affects the monsters common to your area.

Impact: Ghost touch and special qualities that allow a weapon to affect creatures with damage reduction will become very popular.

MISCELLANEOUS WORLD RULES

Whatever world rules didn't fit into a simple category elsewhere I just tossed in here.

ARMOR DAMAGE REDUCTION

Many gamemasters and players like the idea of armor reducing the damage of an attack instead of making it harder for an attacker to score an effective hit. This seems particularly popular for those playing in modern or future settings. Having armor reduce damage feels right for many gamers; moreover one can easily visualize how armor works, or what happens when you strike a target.

If you want to have armor provide damage reduction simply convert all armor bonuses to armor damage reduction. Convert force armor (such as the spell, *mage armor*) and natural armor to damage reduction as well. These forms of protection no longer provide bonuses to armor class. This system fits quite nicely with the Defense Bonuses Make Sense option (page 34). If you use both of these options shields end up making you harder to hit since they grant a deflection bonus.

Once you do this you'll have to deal with characters who want to target unarmored portions of their target. Prepare for it now since it will arise pretty frequently in combat. Creatures will have significantly lower armor classes making them much easier to hit, but high damage reductions. For instance, an iron golem ends up with an armor class of 8 but 22 points of damage reduction that magic weapons do not bypass. Almost no player character can punch through that even though they'll hit the golem all the time. I offer two alternatives for bypassing armor.

ARMOR COVERAGE VALUES

Intuitively, armor covers a certain portion of the character's body. Natural armor often has openings or weak points (perhaps around the eyes or joints) one can exploit. In this option you assign each type of armor or creature a coverage value that determines the penalty on attack checks to hit an unarmored location. Assess a -4 penalty against light armor, -7 penalty against medium armor, and a -10 penalty against heavy armor. Increase the targeting penalty by the enhancement bonus of the armor itself.

Unfortunately, you need to make judgment calls for every monster using this system; that makes it more work to implement in a game. Also, this treatment can feel counterintuitive in some cases; for instance, chain mail covers as much of the body as banded mail yet generates a smaller targeting penalty.

JUST LIKE ARMOR CLASS

In order to bypass the armor's damage reduction using this option you take a penalty on your attack check equal to the damage reduction granted by the armor. Alternately, you can simply add the target's damage reduction from armor to their armor class.

A suit of leather armor that provides the same coverage as plate armor is easier to bypass because it has more "soft" spots or the attacker can just punch through it with a powerful attack more easily and in more locations. In many ways this option gives everyone a free sort of Power Attack feat just for bypassing armor damage reduction. Dragons and iron golems have monstrously high damage reductions; that means targeting a weak spot or hitting well enough to punch through the armor requires a large penalty on the attack check.

Impact: At first this might seem no different from the standard way of handling armor. Players likely won't see any difference. This method does have an impact though. Creatures and characters with large attacks have the option of attempting to bypass the target's armor (and taking the appropriate attack penalty) or simply attacking **through** the target's armor and eating the damage reduction. This makes giants very dangerous. In fact, the overall effect of this option is to reduce the value of armor since opponents now have multiple ways of defeating it.

SPECIAL TRAINING

As mentioned in the section on defense bonuses you can use special training to make up for the lack of

magic items in a modern setting. Special Training represents not just experience, but intense training programs in particular fields. In a modern setting, US Special Forces, US Navy Seals, British Special Air Services, and many other highly trained military units go through this kind of training. When the brass takes a soldier or spy away and puts him through six weeks of hell to develop a special package of elite skills they've given the soldier some Special Training. This costs money, lots of it. It takes a battery of highly skilled professionals working at 110% to drill the lessons into the students. Special training also uses elaborate training facilities and equipment; these cost money to purchase and maintain. Finally, special training takes time and it costs the student experience.

Enough backstory, to pick up a special training course you need to gain access to the course, spend time learning the skills the course has to offer, and spend experience to finally acquire the benefits of the course.

These rules assume that you gain access to a course by spending influence points to "purchase" the course. This represents talking to your bosses and convincing them you're worth spending the highly valuable time of a few dozen elite cadre and the highly valuable military or espionage resources of one of the best training facilities on the planet.

If you want to include special training as an option in your game I suggest making it available in both the First and Second Worlds. There's no particular reason fantasy character couldn't learn the same things modern characters do. However, they frequently won't have the same incentive. You might want to restrict access to some forms of special training. These courses require significant resources and a large number of highly skilled trainers, something that typically only giant nations (like modern Earth nations) can muster.

ACCESS

You gain access to special training using the same methods you find in the Influence section (page 175). You first need to be part of an organization or have external access to an organization that offers access to the special training. You then need to spend Influence points according to the training cost listed in the special training. Finally you make a request check (see page 180) against the difficulty class of the training course. Use the skill noted in the request skill or the influence skill appropriate to the organization you make the request through. If this succeeds you can go on to the next few steps. If it fails you lose the influence you spent. You may take 10 on this check so most players

should wait until they have a large enough bonus to the Influence check to do so.

ACCESS WITHOUT INFLUENCE

If you'd rather not use the full Influence rules you can use one of these options.

No Organizations Needed: You can let anyone make an Influence check to acquire special training by making a standard Influence check; this essentially gives all characters free access to the special training course. Otherwise handle acquisition of the special training course normally. You might want to go this route in a modern setting if your organizations for the setting don't have stat blocks like the ones included in the Influence chapter in this book.

No Influence Checks Needed: You can let people acquire a special training course automatically by spending the required Influence points. If you just want to simplify the overall process and make it a bit more like picking up magic treasure this method works well.

Gold instead of Influence: You can let people acquire special training by spending gold instead of influence. The cost of the special training course is 1,000 gp per influence point. This can work well for a more traditional fantasy themed world, especially one with mercenary training institutions.

TIME SPENT

You should take your special training in large batches; the military typically sends its soldiers to longish training sessions and trains them in a variety of particular courses. Taking a special training course requires 1 week to prepare yourself for the training, then 1 week of additional training per 600 xp (or fraction thereof) spent over the period of the training session. For example, learning Armor Optimization at +2 and Toughening at +2 requires six weeks of training.

EXPERIENCE

Once you've made the Influence check and devoted the time you spend the experience point cost to finally gain the benefits of the special training course. After that point you've pretty much got the special training forever, barring severe brain damage or something similar.

COURSES OF TRAINING

What follows is an abbreviated list of special training courses. These should cover the basics and keep First World armor classes in a survivable range. Note that you can always upgrade a special training taken at a lower bonus to a higher bonus by spending the appro-

appropriate time and paying the difference in influence and experience costs. Note also that the benefits provided here are Extraordinary abilities and, as such, not subject to anti-magic.

When your players look at the costs of special training in terms of influence and experience they might go into shock; this stuff doesn't come cheap. However, the benefits of special training don't use up a magic item slot, you cannot lose them, work with multiple items, and they work in places where magic doesn't. If you want something like that you have to pay.

ABILITY TRAINING COURSE (TYPE) [Ex]

Governments train their agents using a variety of physically and mentally demanding programs. This special training course represents six separate training courses, one for each ability. These grant a +2 or +4 enhancement bonus to the appropriate ability. If you like names here's some: Muscle Bulk Training for Strength, Muscle Tone Training for Dexterity, Endurance Training for Constitution, Analytic Training for Intelligence, Scout Training for Wisdom, or Interaction Training for Charisma.

Request Skill: Profession (Soldier); *Training Cost:* DC 13, 16 ip and 1,600 xp (+2); DC 18, 36 ip and 3,600 xp (+4).

ARMOR OPTIMIZATION COURSE [Ex]

This special training course teaches you to make the best use of your armor. By turning at the last moment and presenting your best-armored locations to your attacker you gain a non-magical enhancement bonus to any armor worn of +1, +2, or +3. You lose this bonus when you lose your Dexterity bonus to armor class.

Request Skill: Profession (Soldier); *Training Cost:* DC 10, 4 ip and 400 xp (+1); DC 15, 9 ip and 900 xp (+2); DC 20, 16 ip and 1,600 xp (+3).

EXPLOIT COVER COURSE [Ex]

In order to survive on the modern battlefield you need to make the best possible use of available cover. If you take this training you know how to make constant, practically unconscious, use of incidental cover. This grants you a +2 or +4 cover bonus to armor class against ranged attacks and a +1 or +2 cover bonus to Reflex saves against attacks that affect an area. This doesn't stack with cover bonuses gained from other sources (such as actually hiding behind cover). I'm a pretty friendly gamemaster when it comes to these sorts of special abilities but you might want to reduce or eliminate this bonus if the character moves through a

barren space. As long as the character has some reasonable cover nearby, like a typical house interior, dungeon room or corridor, or underbrush give him the full benefit; I assume a character that trains this intensively in using cover automatically picks the right locations to stand or stays low to the ground.

Request Skill: Profession (Soldier); *Training Cost:* DC 15, 9 ip and 900 xp (+2/+1); DC 20, 25 ip and 2,500 xp (+4/+2).

INTENSIVE FIREARMS TRAINING COURSE [Ex]

The military sends you out to shoot thousands of bullets. This provides a +1, +2, or +3 enhancement bonus to any firearm or crossbow you wield. This bonus adds both to attack and damage. This bonus counts as non-magical; thus it's not subject to anti-magic but also does not bypass supernatural damage reduction.

Request Skill: Profession (Soldier); *Training Cost:* DC 10, 8 ip and 800 xp (+1); DC 15, 18 ip and 1,800 xp (+2); DC 20, 32 ip and 3,200 xp (+3).

INTENSIVE MELEE TRAINING COURSE [Ex]

The military knows how to teach you to hurt people; they train you to get the most impact out of the weapons you wield. This provides a +1, +2, or +3 enhancement bonus to any melee weapon you wield. This bonus adds both to attack and damage. This bonus counts as non-magical; thus it's not subject to anti-magic but also does not bypass supernatural damage reduction.

Request Skill: Profession (Soldier); *Training Cost:* DC 10, 8 ip and 800 xp (+1); DC 15, 18 ip and 1,800 xp (+2); DC 20, 32 ip and 3,200 xp (+3).

RESISTANCE TRAINING COURSE (TYPE) [Ex]

Special agents find themselves subject to all kinds of bad effects: poisons, drugs, explosions, traps, and torture; this training program helps develop resistance to those effects. This grants a resistance bonus of +1, +2, or +3 to one type of saving throw, specify which when you take the training. You can take this more than once to cover all the different kinds of saving throws. The military industrial complex comes up with special names for these as well, Chemical Tolerance Training for Fortitude saving throws, Jump for Cover Training for Reflex saving throws, and Torture Resistance for Will saving throws.

Request Skill: Profession (Soldier); *Training Cost:* DC 10, 1 ip and 100 xp (+1); DC 15, 4 ip and 400 xp (+2); DC 20, 9 ip and 900 xp (+3).

SKILL TRAINING COURSE (TYPE) [Ex]

The government and large corporations fund numerous intensive training programs for particular skills they find valuable. Special training grants nowhere near as potent a bonus as magic does but when you can't use magic you make do with what you have. This grants a +2, +4, or +6 competence bonus to one skill (choose which skill when you develop this training). Double the influence and experience costs for exclusive skills.

Request Skill: Profession (Soldier); *Training Cost:* DC 10, 1 ip and 100 xp (+2); DC 15, 4 ip and 400 xp (+4); DC 20, 9 ip and 900 xp (+6).

TOUGHENING COURSE [Ex]

Boxers and soldiers get beat up regularly to prepare them for getting beat up for real. This grants a +1, +2, or +3 enhancement bonus to natural armor.

Request Skill: Profession (Soldier); *Training Cost:* DC 10, 8 ip and 800 xp (+1); DC 15, 18 ip and 1,800 xp (+2); DC 20, 32 ip and 3,200 xp (+3).

WEAPON PARRY AND SHIELD USE COURSE [Ex]

In melee you need to make the most of your blade and shield defensively when you can't rely on magic to do the work for you. This grants you a +1, +2, or +3 deflection bonus to armor class against melee attacks. This provides no benefit against ranged attacks. You gain this bonus so long as you wield a weapon (i.e. count as armed) or shield.

Request Skill: Profession (Soldier); *Training Cost:* DC 10, 4 ip and 400 xp (+1); DC 15, 9 ip and 900 xp (+2); DC 20, 16 ip and 1,600 xp (+3).

TECHNOLOGY

You're bound to want to include realms with different levels of technology if you run a multi-world game such as the Second World. Because technology has such a significant effect on a setting I put this World Rule in its own section. One fairly simple and standard method of handling different technology levels is to take the levels part seriously and assign worlds numerical values for the sort of technology they support. You then break technology into various categories, or group all technology into one large category, and use the rating to determine what sorts of equipment you can find there. I'll avoid that technique though; while convenient, it fails to capture some of unusual features of a place like the Second World. For example, the Americas lack modern technologies such as combustion engines and electricity but they do benefit from a

variety of other technologies imported from the First World.

Why would guns work on some worlds and not others? What makes computers and televisions possible? One way to answer these questions is to simply say that the people of the world haven't yet developed the technology in question. Perhaps they don't even have a desire to develop the technology since magic suffices or the gods slap around scientists who get too uppity. This answer won't satisfy in certain campaigns though. Again, in the Second World setting people and ideas transfer back and forth between the two worlds. Anything the modern world discovered would quickly move to the Second World.

Fortunately, we have a more interesting way to answer technology questions. What makes guns tick? A gun works because chemical propellants react, turning into a rapidly expanding gas. The expanding gas accelerates the bullet along the length of the barrel. In order for a gun to work you need some physical laws to support the technology. You need rules of physics that say that certain compounds react in the appropriate ways. In our world stuff is made up from atoms and these atoms are distinguished by their sub-atomic structures. We didn't always believe this. At times we've thought that the world was made of just a few primal elements; for a quite a long time we thought that the world was made of an undifferentiated material basis, a kind of goopy *stuff*, in which universal properties inhered. The universal properties did most of the work in these proto-scientific theories and the job of a scientist was to categorize these properties and determine how they interacted with each other.

What if the old scientists were right? What if someplace (perhaps the Second World) worked exactly the way Aristotle thought the world worked? Chemistry wouldn't look anything like what you studied in school. Even other, more familiar features, would be vastly different. Inertia didn't exist in Aristotelian physics. I suspect we couldn't even imagine a coherent physics that lacked inertia but it would certainly be an interesting work of experimental fiction.

HOW TO DO IT

In this section I suggest handling technology through use of something called theory advances and a Theory Advance Tree. This method should be familiar if you've played computer or board strategy games. I represent the march of science with a web of interconnected scientific discoveries. Isaac Newton said "If I see further, it is because I stand on the shoulders of giants." The

technology web represents this feature of science. Each theory advance requires that other discoveries come prior to it. Typically a theory advance will have one or more prerequisites that must be satisfied in order for a culture (or even individual) to have made the theory advance in a given world. Developing a theory advance can, in turn, open up new paths of research. Your players might even contribute to this research.

Ultimately what you do when designing a world is simply mark off the theory advances that the people of the world have discovered. I find this a bit easier to conceptualize. By using the tree method you get a visual representation of the path science has followed. It's easier to understand where a culture is at in its development this way. Also, the tree itself can be inverted and when you do so it represents peeling back the layers of reality until one gets closer and closer to the true physical laws governing the world. The earliest theory advances tend to be compatible with a wide variety of scientific theories but as we discover more we narrow in on the correct set of physical laws.

USING THE THEORY ADVANCE TREE

Most advances have some arrows going into them and some arrows going out of them. In many cases arrows from more than one advance merge prior to arriving at another advance.

Normally, in order for a world to have access to a theory advance at least one of the arrows leading to the advance must be satisfied. For a merged arrow all the theory advances that lead into that merged arrow must be satisfied. For example, both the Agriculture and Simple Machinery advances must be satisfied in order for the Advanced Agriculture advance to be possible. If more than one arrow leads into an advance and each arrow has a distinct connection point then as long as one of the arrows is satisfied then the advance is possible. For example, if either Electricity or Harness Elemental Lightning is satisfied then the Radio advance is possible. Some advances can require combinations of the two methods.

A world can have its technology limited in one of two ways, hard limits or soft limits.

HARD LIMITS

Mark a theory advance as hard limited by drawing an X over the box in the Theory Advance Tree. This means that not only has no one discovered the theory in the world, but the theory simply does not apply to the world. The physics of the world preclude that technology from working. Naturally this has a huge impact on all the downstream theory advances. Some

of them may be achievable via other means but the limits of the world have placed a road-block in the path of scientific progress.

Example: The Second World has a hard limit placed on the Expert Chemistry theory advance. Elements form the underlying basis for matter and energy in the Second World, not protons, electrons, and neutrons. This explains why complex chemical processes and substances don't exist in the Second World; it simply doesn't support gunpowder, plastics, or highly refined fuels.

SOFT LIMITS

Mark a theory advance as soft limited by drawing a single diagonal slash across it. When you do this you indicate that the advance has not been discovered yet. However, it is possible to discover that advance in the world so long as its prerequisites can be satisfied.

Alternative: When dealing with soft limits you're typically more interested in what a culture has discovered, not what it hasn't discovered. Put a check in the advances it has discovered and assume that everything else is soft-limited. This gives you a better visual indication of what the society knows. Unfortunately, it requires making a lot of check-marks. You might want to begin with drawing in the soft limits then fill in the checkmarks afterwards, perhaps doing a bit of special customization in the process.

Suggestion: You can photocopy the Advance Tree, mark off all the Hard Limits, then make several photocopies of the page filled in with the Hard Limits. You can then use these templates to fill in different sets of Soft Limits for different places, cultures, and organizations.

SATISFYING AN ADVANCE

If an advance comes before any soft limits or you've put a check mark in an advance (using the alternative marking system) then the culture/world in question satisfies the advance and may progress to an advance further along the path. I don't have space here to provide a satisfying set of rules for technological development of a culture; perhaps a future book...

CUSTOMIZING THE TREE

You should have enough blank space floating around that you can slip in a few additional advances if you like. You might do this because you want a new kind of technology. For instance the denizens of your world might have developed a technology that incorporates Psychology and Codified Magic. Alternately, you can drop in a bypassing advance; what I mean by this is an

advance that provides access to blocked off portions of the advance tree. For example, Harness Elemental Lighting has no prerequisites and opens up advances such as Radio and Computers. In this case scientific research in elemental theories can grant access to technology similar to the kind we have now. Moreover, these work even if chemistry, electricity, and internal combustion engines don't.

MAKING THE CHOICES

Ultimately you can draw X's wherever you want on the tree but your world will feel more coherent if you have an explanation. For example, if you want heat to actually be a caloric fluid in your world allow Thermodynamics but draw an X across Chemistry. Similarly, I picture the Second World as a place where raw forces of nature take the place of sub-atomic particles and electromagnetic energy. This blocks off access to Chemistry (one of the most central advances in the tree).

THEORY ADVANCES

I provide here a far from complete list of sample theory advances that you might want to include in a world and a small map showing how these advances interconnect. For each advance you'll want to decide whether or not it works in your world and, if not, whether you wish to make it a Hard Limit or a Soft Limit. I've made the advances in this list pretty broad, mainly due to space limitations. These should still provide enough structure to capture a wide variety of possible worlds. I include and categorize advances that I feel make the largest impact on a game setting. Thus, I leave out some advances that are pretty significant in the real world, such as written language and genetic theory. Genetic theory means a LOT to us since it makes available a range of better pharmaceuticals and medical treatments. However, in the game we tend not to focus on the specifics of medical treatment. Genetic theory will make a significant game difference when you have scientists engineering humans and animals and players either fighting them or playing them. However, since there's not much support material out there for near-future adventuring yet, I figure space is better devoted to advances you can apply using either the core rules or the modern rules.

For many advances I also briefly discuss what happens if you don't have the advance in a world. Mostly I restrict this to advances already assumed in the core setting (i.e. advances that would be present in a high fantasy medieval technology world). In these cases what's lacking might be made up for by advances

elsewhere.

ADVANCED AGRICULTURE

Improved plows, irrigation, farming techniques, and an economic structure to support them led to the first "green revolution" in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Farmers could go from a subsistence income to being wealthy members of their community.

Prerequisites: Agriculture and Simple Machinery.

Benefits: If you add this advance to an otherwise typically medieval fantasy world you'll see a fairly substantial change in the background conditions of the world. There should be fewer farms but each of them covering more ground and perhaps run by a wealthy farming family. Farmers aren't peasants any more. Laborer wages in general should increase; this leads to the formation of a stronger middle class. Cities grow larger since fewer people need to work in food production. This means that players will have access to a wider range of services and goods. You might also want to tie this to political change since the increased power of the middle class allows the citizenry to clamor for increased say in the running of the government (though in many cases democratization came even earlier).

AERODYNAMICS

This advance represents more than simply knowing how to properly make a wing; it represents the underlying principles that allow wings to work. If you include this advance I assume that your world includes Bernoulli's Laws. These cover the motions of fluids, in particular the principle that a faster moving fluid exerts less pressure than a slower moving fluid (and that this pressure differential is enough to generate significant force). By blocking this principle you prevent flight as we know it. Note though that this does not necessarily mean that birds use magical means of flight. It could instead be the case that something in the primal nature of being of bird makes them a flying creature and that having this nature counts as an extraordinary ability. This advance also includes the laws that allow for lighter than air craft.

Prerequisites: None.

Benefits: The physical laws support hot air balloons if you allow this advance. This advance will also support winged aircraft but artificers will need some form of propulsion.

AGRICULTURE

The move to cultivating land and growing seasonal crops allowed the founding of stable communities; this eventually led to the formation of towns and kingdoms.

Prerequisites: None.

Benefits: Without this advance cultures have to depend on either hunting and gathering to acquire their food or be nomadic and follow animal herds. With this advance some people within the community can specialize, giving rise to trades such as smithing and allowing the community to support professional soldiers (who typically take over). Including or excluding this advance in your campaign primarily affects your picture of society. It can be difficult to justify a hard limit on this advance but perhaps nature spirits actively thwart the cultivation of crops or the crops themselves have a wild spirit preventing their domestication.

ALCHEMY

More than one science began in mysticism. Early alchemists attempted to perform magic through manipulating compounds. Even misunderstood chemistry can get some things right so this advance grants access to some technologies.

Prerequisites: None.

Benefits: Alchemy serves mostly as a way-point on the path to more useful advances however it does grant access to the Alchemy skill (without this advance Alchemy checks take a -20 penalty if they're allowed at all). This also allows the crafting of Acid, Alchemist's Fire, and Antitoxins (see the Equipment section of the PHB).

ANIMAL DOMESTICATION

Domestication of animals was one of the first steps on the road to cities and stable communities. You could put a hard limit on this advance to represent a world naturally bestial and untamed.

Prerequisites: None

Benefits: This advance allows characters to learn and use the Handle Animal and Ride skills. You may not learn either of these skills without this advance. If you have learned one of these skills elsewhere but are currently in a world with a hard limit on this advance use of those skills suffers a -20 penalty (if they're allowed at all). Animal Empathy will work without this advance since that skill represents a communion with animal nature.

ATOMIC POWER

This advance encompasses pretty much all of our modern conceptions of the sub-atomic world. In a way this is the terminal point in the study of chemistry. If you place a hard limit on this advance I assume that the sub-atomic world just doesn't look the same (if it exists at all) in your setting.

Prerequisites: (Precision Machinery, Expert Chemistry, and Electricity) or (Harness Elemental Fire and Harness Elemental Lightning).

Benefits: This allows the construction of nuclear weapons and nuclear power plants; on a more local level you need this to support radiation treatments and diagnostic tools such PET scans.

BASIC CHEMISTRY

Basic chemistry reveals that certain compounds combine and react in predictable ways. This theory advance paves the way for a variety of other advances as well as giving access to the use of renaissance era firearms and cannon.

Prerequisites: Alchemy.

Benefits: This allows you to craft and use renaissance era weapons and grenadelike weapons. Look in the DMG for details regarding this equipment or use your favorite rules for black powder weapons from another supplement.

This advance allows characters to learn and use the Craft (chemical) skill. You may not learn this skill without this advance. If you have learned this skill elsewhere but are currently in a world with a hard limit on this advance use of that skill suffers a -20 penalty (if it's allowed at all). You will not be able to make everything available to the Craft (chemical) skill, 19th century explosives requires Precision Machining and modern explosives requires Expert Chemistry.

BRONZE WORKING

The invention of alloys allowed for the construction of durable tools and weapons. If you place a hard limit on this advance you imply that something about the physical nature of metal prevents it from being forged in the ways we do in our world.

Prerequisites: None.

Benefits: This allows the construction of metal tools, weapons, and armor (including studded leather). Bronze doesn't work as well as other materials so penalize weapons with a -1 attack and -1 damage; armor loses one point of armor bonus; and skills that require the use of metal tools suffer a -1 equipment penalty.

CODIFIED MAGIC

Arcane casters have long manipulated the primal energies of magic; this advance allows them to codify the use of those energies and employ them in a wider variety of ways.

Prerequisites: Presence of arcane magic in the world.

Benefits: This allows creatures in the world to take levels in the Wizard class. Without this advance restrict

characters to the Sorcerer class or other unstructured magic using class.

COMBUSTION ENGINE

The ozone layer could probably testify to how significant this advance has been in shaping the modern world. This advance encompasses a variety of other advances, the ability to refine oil into high grade fuel, the ability to make materials capable of enduring the temperatures in a combustion engine, and the ability to make all the tiny bits that keep such engines going and allow them to transform fuel into work.

Prerequisites: Thermodynamics and Precision Machinery.

Benefits: This opens the way for cars, trucks, motorcycles, submarines, and modern ships. Without the Electricity or a similar advance the power of these engines is limited to that of early twentieth century engines.

COMPUTERS AND ELECTRONICS

Modern computers require not just the understanding of how to construct a computational machine, but also the ability to craft micro-circuitry so those machines don't take up entire warehouses.

Prerequisites: (Electricity and Modern Plastics) or Harness Elemental Lightning.

Benefits: This allows the construction of computers and circuit boards as well as the internet. We often use specially tasked computers to support other technologies, such as cellular phones and navigating systems; this advance grants access to those technologies as well though many of them also require the Radio advance.

This advance allows characters to learn and use the Computer Use and Craft (electronics) skills. You may not learn these skills without this advance. If you have learned these skills elsewhere but are currently in a world with a hard limit on this advance use of those skills suffers a -20 penalty (if allowed at all).

CONSTRUCTION

This covers the construction of large structures such as bridges and fortresses. I also toss the technology for siege weapons in here, such as catapults. If you place a hard limit on this advance you probably want to say that the arch just doesn't support weight the way it does in our world.

Prerequisites: None.

Benefits: This allows the construction of large fortifications and structures such as major walls, keeps, cathedrals, and castles. This also allows the construction of siege weapons.

This advance allows characters to learn and use the Craft (structural) skill. You may not learn this skill without this advance. If you have learned this skill elsewhere but are currently in a world with a hard limit on this advance use of that skill suffers a -20 penalty (if it's allowed at all).

DIRECT FAITH

Early in the history of the Second World people worshipped powerful outsiders and received the ability to use divine magic by doing so. Eventually some practitioners discovered that you didn't need the presence of a god at all; pure faith in a higher ideal or more abstract deity could provide access to divine power.

Prerequisites: None.

Benefits: This advance allows clerics, paladins, and similar classes to gain access to divine power without worshipping a particular god. See the section on Second World Classes (page 89) for more details. Only good and neutral users of divine magic benefit from this advance; evil still needs to gain its power through dark pacts.

ELECTRICITY

Capturing lightning and putting it in a bottle had long been a dream of the ancients; to wield the power of Jupiter would put humanity on a level with the gods. This theory advance includes the understanding of electromagnetism, electrical power generation, and storage of electrical power in clunky batteries.

Prerequisites: Basic Chemistry.

Benefits: This allows a culture to construct and use Victorian to turn of the century electrical devices including manual-powered electric generators and electric lights. If you also have the Thermodynamics theory advance you may use steam engines to generate electricity. You may construct and use batteries for portable electricity storage in devices such as flashlights; Expert Chemistry reduces the size of these batteries.

EXPERT CHEMISTRY

As chemical science marches on so does the effectiveness of conventional explosives. From high grade versions of gunpowder to more modern plastic explosives, we certainly enjoy blowing things up. This theory advance also includes non-standard chemical grenades (such as white phosphorous grenades) and the fairly straight forward idea of wrapping explosives with fragmenting casings.

Prerequisites: Basic Chemistry.

Benefits: This allows the culture to craft and use modern era explosives and grenadelike weapons. This also allows the culture to galvanize rubber, refine oil, and

make simple plastics.

HARNESS ELEMENTAL FIRE

In some worlds or realms one can harness and channel the raw elemental energy of fire. This can make possible certain technologies that would otherwise be restricted. In the Second World, the great city of Berlin exerts an influence similar to this. It's close connection with the Metal Warden power allows for an industrial era level of technology in much of Europe.

Prerequisites: None.

Benefits: While this advance provides few direct benefits it does grant an end around to a variety of specific technologies. I sometimes call this an analogous technology since it provides benefits similar to those granted by chemistry.

HARNESS ELEMENTAL LIGHTNING

This advance represents the ability to use elemental lightning in a regular way. In many cases this works like electricity. One nice feature of including this sort of an advance is that you can have a realm that's both futuristic in some ways and primitive in others. For example, Second World Tokyo is the city of the Lightning Warden and the Harness Elemental Lightning advance operates within the region. This means that cellular phones, computers, television, electric lights, and even futuristic flying machines work there (the flying machines work in part due to the air aspect of the Lightning Warden). However, guns don't. Thus you'll still see soldiers rely on swords and bows.

Prerequisites: None.

Benefits: This advance serves as a down-stream entry point for certain forms of high technology. Essentially, it provides many of the benefits of electricity without the prerequisites and with some slight modifications. This also allows the construction of special high-capacity batteries (somewhat like super-conducting batteries) that do not work on chemical principles; they store raw elemental electricity.

IRON WORKING

Iron works even better than bronze for killing things, building things, and keeping yourself from getting killed.

Prerequisites: Bronze Working.

Benefits: This lets you make the stuff you normally see in a fantasy game. Without this advance your players will likely be stuck with bronze equipment. If you place a hard limit on this advance you're doing more than saying there isn't any iron in the world; you're also saying that iron just doesn't work there. If so, iron should fall apart rapidly (within a day or so) and suffer a -4 on all related checks (i.e. attacks, damage, skill

checks, and armor bonus). Magical Equipment suffers the penalty but does not deteriorate.

MAGICAL ALCHEMY

Once you combine Alchemy with real magic, in particular magic that has been quantified, then you can make more fantastic concoctions and potions.

Prerequisites: Alchemy and Codified Magic.

Benefits: This allows alchemists to craft Smokesticks, Sunrods, Tanglefoot Bags, Thunderstones, and Tindertwigs. This also allows characters to take the Brew Potion feat.

MEDICINE

The realization that tiny bacteria, viruses, and microbes surround us at all times transformed medicine from an occult art to a modern science.

Prerequisites: Optics and Basic Chemistry.

Benefits: Merely understanding that micro-organisms exist and contribute to such diverse processes as the decay of food, growth of mold, and infection of injuries allows one to more efficiently accomplish a number of tasks. This grants a +2 technology bonus to Alchemy and Heal checks and allows the perfection of food storage techniques that triple the length of time before food goes bad. Proper cleansing techniques increase the technology bonus to Heal checks when treating diseases to +4.

If the Expert Chemistry advance is also present characters may take the Craft (pharmaceutical) skill. If the world has a hard limit on Expert Chemistry then pharmaceuticals simply will not work in the world.

MODERN GUNS

Isn't this what modern games are all about? This advance covers all sorts of modern weapons; primarily it marks the point when manufacturers can make semi-automatic and automatic firearms. Later iterations of this technology can allow special bullets and ammunition.

Prerequisites: Expert Chemistry and Precision Machining.

Benefits: This advance makes all the firearms in the d20 Modern core rules available. Note that this doesn't give you modern armor; you need Modern Plastics for that.

MODERN PLASTICS

Plastic enters every part of modern life, from credit cards to automobile tires, to Kevlar body armor, to the packaging of snack cakes (and perhaps the contents as well).

Prerequisites: Expert Chemistry

TRAINED PSYCHOLOGIST [GENERAL]

You have completed advanced training in psychology and learned some of the fundamental principles underlying human motivation.

Prerequisites: 5 or more ranks in Diplomacy and Sense Motive.

Benefits: This grants you a +2 technology bonus on Bluff, Diplomacy, Intimidate, and Sense Motive checks.

Benefits: This allows the construction of modern era body armor and advanced composite armors such as the kind used on newer tanks. This also allows new forms of clever packaging such as cellophane and bubble-wrap.

If you place a hard limit on this advance Modern Plastics will fall apart in the world. This occurs rapidly (within a day or so) and equipment that relies on Modern Plastics suffer a -4 on all related checks (i.e. attacks, damage, skill checks, and armor bonus). Magical Equipment suffers the penalty but does not deteriorate.

MONETARY SYSTEMS

There's nothing like the feeling of coming away from a well-played night of poker with a sack full of sheep and chickens. Barter can get the job done but certainly has its limitations. Currency and monetary systems greatly eased trade.

Prerequisites: None.

Benefits: This advance simply provides a fairly standardized system of transaction. Without this advance the community must rely on barter. There are probably few worlds where you can reasonably justify placing a hard limit on this advance; one possible method would be to limit the way people can think in such worlds.

NAVIGATION

Long sea voyages that pass out of sight of land require advanced navigation techniques. This is more of a result advance than core advance; thus, if you want to hard limit it I recommend placing a hard limit on one of the prerequisites.

Prerequisites: Ship Building, Optics, and Simple Machinery.

Benefits: This advance allows characters to learn and use the Navigate skill at sea. This advance will mostly affect the campaign structure of your world since it will allow cross-ocean exploration and the possibility of far-flung colonies.

OPTICS

Theories of the way light work and how lenses interact with light provided artificers with the ability to craft

telescopes and, eventually, microscopes. At first the images seen through these devices were quite blurry; in fact, the mere use of them was a real skill, what we might call nowadays "blobology." Regardless, the devices made available by these theories allowed for significant advances in astronomy and navigation.

Prerequisites: None.

Benefits: This allows the crafting of quality spyglasses that triple your ranges for visual observations (but not in conditions of darkness). The culture can also make and use magnifying glasses that provide a +5 technology bonus to Search checks but slow the search considerably (taking 1 minute per regular check of a 5 ft. by 5 ft. area).

POWERED AIRCRAFT

This advance covers all the fun aircraft from the great ages of air combat, namely prop driven vehicles.

Prerequisites: Aerodynamics and Combustion Engine

Benefits: This advance allows the construction of modern prop driven aircraft and could allow helicopters if you assume sufficient advances elsewhere. On the chart I make the Combustion Engine a prerequisite for this but some other form of propulsion could work as well.

PRECISION MACHINING

Advances in metal crafting, machining, and chemistry allowed the invention of firearms that carried their powder in a casing along with the bullet. This made firearms far more effective as one could now fire several shots in rapid succession before reloading and the reloading process itself became significantly more simple.

Prerequisites: Iron Working, Simple Machinery, and Basic Chemistry.

Benefits: This allows the crafting and use of cartridge weapons, such as the weapons used in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. This advance allows revolvers, lever action rifles, bolt action rifles, and rotating barrel gatling guns.

PSYCHOLOGY

Freud is typically considered the founder of modern psychology. He envisioned a science of the mind centered around a collection of unconscious forces that drove the behavior of individuals. While some of his ideas reveal a bit more about his psychology than the psychology of humans in general, the principles he advanced provided an entirely new and enlightening way of looking at human consciousness.

Prerequisites: None.

Benefits: This advance grants access to the Trained Psychologist feat. This also allows psychologists to treat insanity and mental damage using their Treat Injury (or Heal) skill. Placing a hard limit on this advance neutralizes the benefits provided by the feat and can imply that the mind is something that simply cannot be quantified. You *could* place a hard limit on this advance in the modern world...

RADIO

This advance covers all forms of using radio waves as technology. This advance implies that there is such a thing as the electro-magnetic spectrum and that light, as well as other forms of electro-magnetic waves, falls within that spectrum.

Prerequisites: Electricity or Harness Elemental Lightning.

Benefits: This allows the construction of radios, radar sets, televisions, and microwave ovens.

ROCKETS/JETS

Someone eventually figured out that dumping vaporized raw fuel into the atmosphere to burn at extremely high temperatures and speeds was even more fun than old-fashioned conventional combustion. This advance grants access to a lot of the technology we normally associate with the modern world.

Prerequisites: Powered Aircraft and Expert Chemistry.

Benefits: This advance allows the construction of rockets, jet aircraft, missiles, and smaller devices such as man-portable anti-tank missiles or anti-tank rockets.

SHIP BUILDING

The construction of large, sea-going vessels provided a valuable tool for trade and exploration. This advance allows the construction of ships. You still need the Navigation advance to make trips beyond the sight of land.

Prerequisites: Construction.

Benefits: This allows the construction of ships over 40 feet long. This covers most ships other than small rowboats. You also need this advance to make use of a sail of any size or sort. Without this advance sails simply do not provide enough force to move a boat.

SIMPLE MACHINERY

This advance covers spring driven devices; getting the tolerances right on these devices took significant skill. In some worlds metal simply might not behave consistently enough at the small scales this covers to support this advance.

Prerequisites: Bronze Working and Construction.

USING THE THEORY ADVANCE TREE

I put a blank advance tree and one filled out for the default Second World setting on the next couple pages. Theory advances have a lot of interconnectivity which makes mapping them out a bit complex. I've grouped collections of advances together in little clusters (the light gray background). Many advances appear in more than one cluster. To help clarify how all this works I code advances with their background color and border.

Solid Border: All prerequisites for the advance occur within the cluster.

Dashed Border: The advance has prerequisites that are detailed in another cluster.

White Background: All derivative advances are within the same cluster.

Gray Background: Some derivative advances are in another cluster (this means you should look at the other clusters to see what this theory advance opens up).

Bolded Lettering: Advances whose names are in **bold** lettering have no prerequisites.

For example, Expert Chemistry in the Information Age cluster has a gray background and a dashed border. The dashed border indicates that you need to look elsewhere for the prerequisites (i.e. in the Chemistry cluster). The gray background indicates that Expert Chemistry also contributes to theory advances in other clusters, such as the Aircraft cluster.

Don't read too much into the cluster labels. The clusters just serve to group the advances into more digestible units and I assigned labels that felt right.

Benefits: This allows the construction of simple mechanical devices such as crossbows, clocks, and the clockwork devices you see in some supplements.

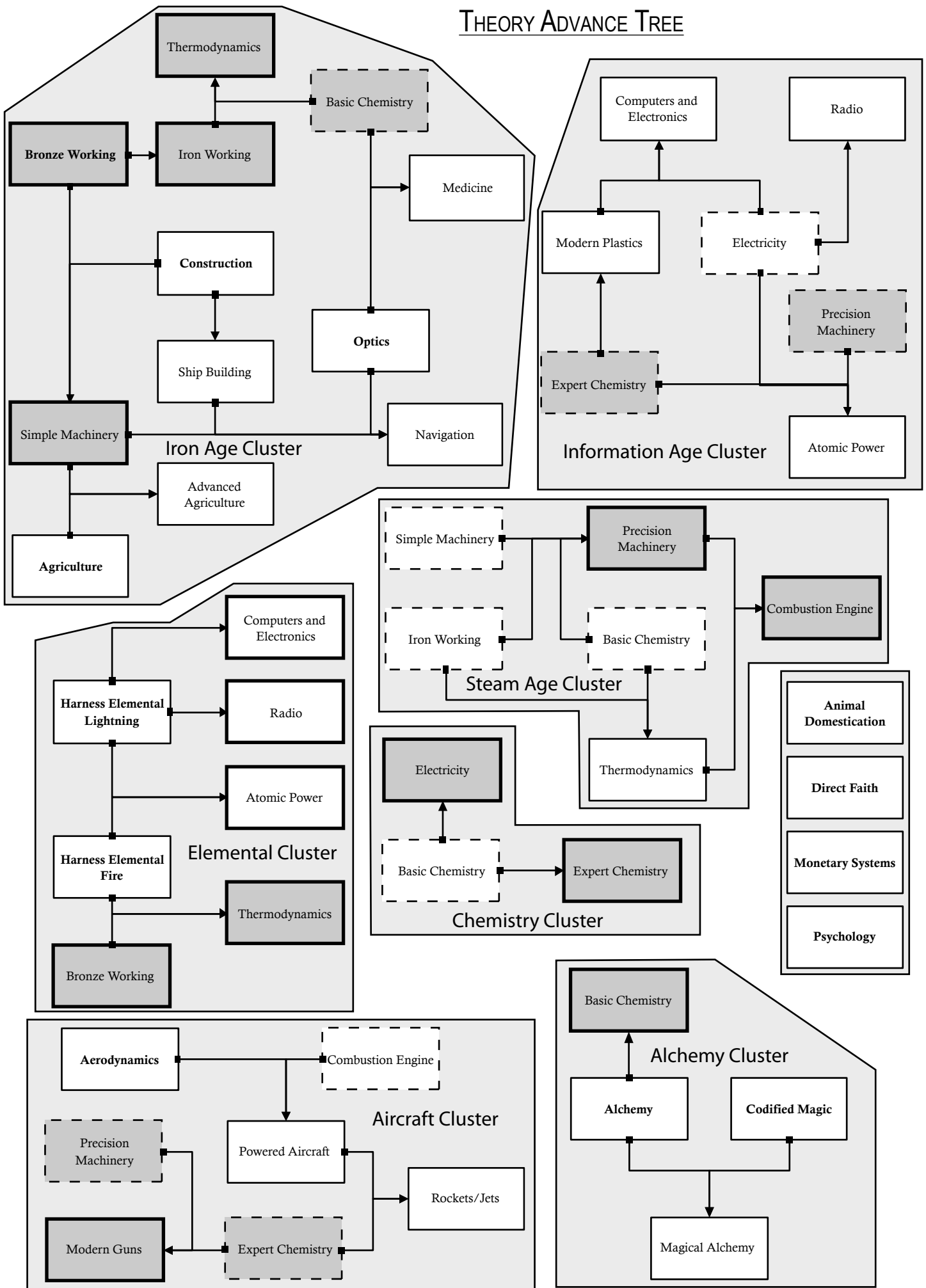
THERMODYNAMICS

Thermodynamic theory explains what heat is, how it works, and how it transfers between objects. This enables technological advances that utilize the transfer of heat between substances to transform energy of one sort (for instance, heat), into energy of another sort (for instance, motion). This advance led to the invention of the steam engine and marked the beginning of the industrial revolution.

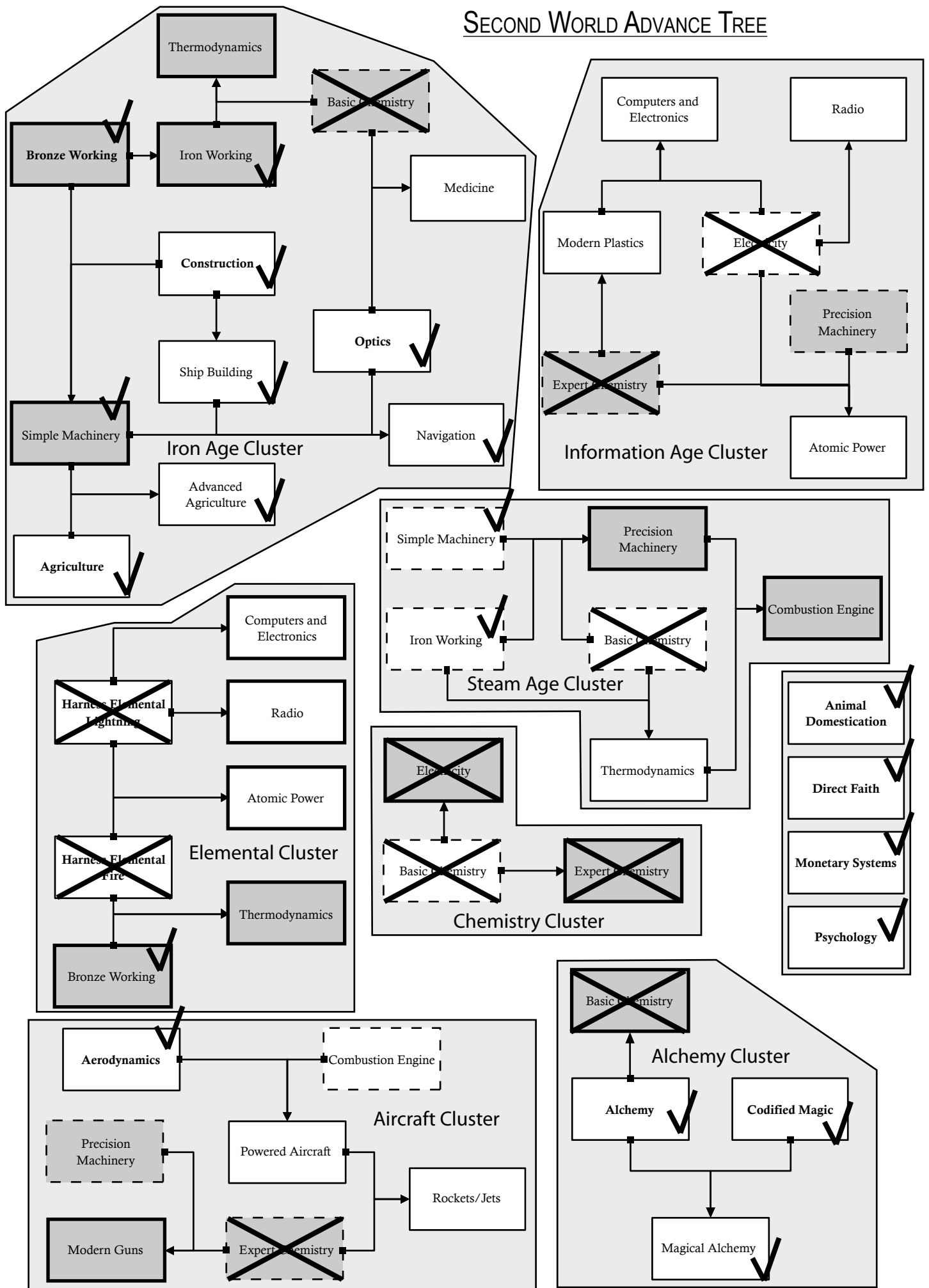
Prerequisites: (Basic Chemistry and Iron Working) or (Harness Elemental Fire and Bronze Working).

Benefits: This advance allows the construction of steam locomotives, steam powered ships, and even steam powered carriages (though these tend to be fairly inefficient).

THEORY ADVANCE TREE



SECOND WORLD ADVANCE TREE



CAMPAIGN AND WORLD RULES MENU

CAMPAIGN RULES

Defense Bonuses

- Minimal Changes, Dead Fast Heroes ☐
- Special Training is Available ☐
 - No Organizations Needed ☐
 - No Influence Checks Needed ☐
 - Gold Instead of Influence ☐
- Defense Bonuses Make Sense ☐
 - Shields Provide Deflection Bonuses ☐
 - Nerfing Natural Armor ☐
 - Force Armor Destructive Synergy ☐
- Defense Bonus as World Rule ☐

Modern Stuff Pulled Over

- Action Points ☐
- Occupations/Background Options ☐
 - Background Options cost a Feat ☐
- Reputation ☐
- Wealth System ☐
 - Split Wealth and Influence ☐

World Rules:

Keeping the Players Nervous

- Massive Damage Threshold ☐
 - Size Matters ☐
 - Big Guns are Manly ☐ +1 Save DC per ____ damage over MDT
- Wounds ☐
 - Use Base Critical Threat ☐ × ____
 - Ambushes Suck ☐
 - Sirprise Strike... ☐
 - One inch to the left... ☐
- A Quantum World ☐
 - Lucky Hits ☐ auto hit on natural ____
 - Unlucky Breaks ☐ auto fail on natural ____
- Hitting them Hard ☐ + ____ attack/+ ____ damage
- Dazing Blows ☐
- Permanent Scars ☐

Supernatural Power

- World Resistance ☐
 - Arcane ☐ SR ____ /Take 10? ☐
 - Divine ☐ SR ____ /Take 10? ☐
 - Psionic ☐ SR ____ /Take 10? ☐
 - High Level Spell Blocks ☐ × ____
- Caster Level Reduction ☐
 - Arcane ☐ CL - ____
 - Divine ☐ CL - ____
 - Psionic ☐ CL - ____
- Magic Item Suppression ☐
 - No Cheese ☐ greater than ____ gp
 - All You Need is Cheese ☐ less than ____ gp
 - Power Suppression ☐ factor ____
 - DR is Tough ☐

Miscellaneous World Rules

- Armor Damage Reduction ☐
- Armor Coverage Values ☐
- Just Like Armor Class ☐

World Rules:

Keeping the Players Nervous

- Massive Damage Threshold ☐
 - Size Matters ☐
 - Big Guns are Manly ☐ +1 Save DC per ____ damage over MDT
- Wounds ☐
 - Use Base Critical Threat ☐ × ____
 - Ambushes Suck ☐
 - Sirprise Strike... ☐
 - One inch to the left... ☐
- A Quantum World ☐
 - Lucky Hits ☐ auto hit on natural ____
 - Unlucky Breaks ☐ auto fail on natural ____
- Hitting them Hard ☐ + ____ attack/+ ____ damage
- Dazing Blows ☐
- Permanent Scars ☐

Supernatural Power

- World Resistance ☐
 - Arcane ☐ SR ____ /Take 10? ☐
 - Divine ☐ SR ____ /Take 10? ☐
 - Psionic ☐ SR ____ /Take 10? ☐
 - High Level Spell Blocks ☐ × ____
- Caster Level Reduction ☐
 - Arcane ☐ CL - ____
 - Divine ☐ CL - ____
 - Psionic ☐ CL - ____
- Magic Item Suppression ☐
 - No Cheese ☐ greater than ____ gp
 - All You Need is Cheese ☐ less than ____ gp
 - Power Suppression ☐ factor ____
 - DR is Tough ☐

Miscellaneous World Rules

- Armor Damage Reduction ☐
- Armor Coverage Values ☐
- Just Like Armor Class ☐

Notes:

CAMPAIGN AND WORLD RULES MENU

CAMPAIGN RULES

Defense Bonuses

Minimal Changes, Dead Fast Heroes	X
Special Training is Available	X
No Organizations Needed	☐
No Influence Checks Needed	☐
Gold Instead of Influence	☐
Defense Bonuses Make Sense	☐
Shields Provide Deflection Bonuses	☐
Nerfing Natural Armor	☐
Force Armor Destructive Synergy	☐
Defense Bonus as World Rule	☐

Modern Stuff Pulled Over

Action Points	X
Occupations/Background Options	X
Background Options cost a Feat	☐
Reputation	☐
Wealth System	☐
Split Wealth and Influence	☐

World Rules: First World

Keeping the Players Nervous

Massive Damage Threshold	X
Size Matters	X
Big Guns are Manly	+1 Save DC per 10 damage over MDT
Wounds	☐
Use Base Critical Threat	× _____
Ambushes Suck	☐
Sirprise Strike...	☐
One inch to the left...	☐
A Quantum World	
Lucky Hits	auto hit on natural 18
Unlucky Breaks	auto fail on natural 2
Hitting them Hard	+ ____ attack/+ ____ damage
Dazing Blows	X
Permanent Scars	X

Supernatural Power

World Resistance	
Arcane	SR 20 /Take 10? X
Divine	SR 20 /Take 10? X
Psionic	SR 15 /Take 10? X
High Level Spell Blocks	× ____
Caster Level Reduction	
Arcane	CL - ____
Divine	CL - ____
Psionic	CL - ____
Magic Item Suppression	
No Cheese	greater than ____ gp
All You Need is Cheese	less than ____ gp
Power Suppression	factor ____
DR is Tough	☐

Miscellaneous World Rules

Armor Damage Reduction	X
Armor Coverage Values	☐
Just Like Armor Class	X

World Rules: Second World

Keeping the Players Nervous

Massive Damage Threshold	☐
Size Matters	☐
Big Guns are Manly	+1 Save DC per ____ damage over MDT
Wounds	☐
Use Base Critical Threat	× _____
Ambushes Suck	☐
Sirprise Strike...	☐
One inch to the left...	☐
A Quantum World	
Lucky Hits	auto hit on natural ____
Unlucky Breaks	auto fail on natural ____
Hitting them Hard	+ ____ attack/+ ____ damage
Dazing Blows	☐
Permanent Scars	Yes

Supernatural Power

World Resistance	
Arcane	SR ____ /Take 10? ☐
Divine	SR ____ /Take 10? ☐
Psionic	SR ____ /Take 10? ☐
High Level Spell Blocks	× ____
Caster Level Reduction	
Arcane	CL - ____
Divine	CL - ____
Psionic	CL - ____
Magic Item Suppression	
No Cheese	greater than ____ gp
All You Need is Cheese	less than ____ gp
Power Suppression	factor ____
DR is Tough	☐

Miscellaneous World Rules

Armor Damage Reduction	☐
Armor Coverage Values	☐
Just Like Armor Class	☐

Notes:

World resistance for the First World does not apply to Warden Powers.

The Second World uses the standard core rules but with permanent scars using the hit point version.

CHAPTER TWO

CHARACTERS

BACKGROUND OPTIONS

You may choose to begin your character with a special background option. To do this simply create your character using the standard rules from the PHB then apply a background option to the character. If you choose to do this use the languages and possibly wealth granted by your background option instead of what you would normally receive. Background options allow you to customize your character just a bit more, to give your character a sense of history.

There are two basic types of background options, those from the First World and those from the Second World. First World background options point to the fact that you're from the First World and have learned some skills there. A First World background option describes the career you followed in the First World prior to shifting to the Second World. A Second World background option centers around the culture in which you were raised. Each region of the country has distinct habits and needs, causing its children to develop in similar ways. If you were born on the First World but arrived in the Second World at an early age you should choose a Second World background option because your experiences in the Second World would have been more shaping. When using background options ignore racial language sections; your selection of automatic and bonus languages come solely from your background (and possibly class). When using First World background options ignore the standard method of determining starting wealth; your starting wealth and goods depend solely on your background option. For Second Worlders you receive normal starting wealth for your class.

Background Options follow the same format as Occupations from the d20 Modern core rulebook. Some options have one or more pre-requisites. Each Background Option provides a set of permanent class skills from which you can choose. You can typically take three of these skills. If you already have the skill as a class skill, or acquire it during the game, you gain a permanent one-time bonus of +1 to the skill. I make one small change to the way Occupations work. Every occupation includes a short list of bonus feats; unlike the core d20 Modern rules you do not gain these feats for free. Instead you have to "spend" two of your skill picks to acquire one of these bonus feats (and only from this list). For example, an Athlete might choose to take Balance as a background skill (i.e. a permanent class skill) and the Jock feat, thus using up his allotment of three skill picks.

Background Options may grant another kind of bonus such as extra wealth or a Reputation bonus (if you use the Reputation rules). You may also use any of the Occupations from the d20 Modern core rules as Background Options if your gamemaster allows. Note that I made the First World Background Options more specific than the Occupations in the d20 Modern core rules; the core rules already give you enough generic material to make a character, these options allow you to specify the flavor a bit more. If you'd rather not use the Wealth system convert your starting Wealth bonus to gold pieces using the chart on page 39; use 10× your gold pieces if converting to dollars. I also include a language entry in the Background Options. Languages list the bonus languages a character may choose with that background option; these supersede the bonus languages available to a particular race.

BACKGROUND OPTIONS COST A FEAT

Background options and Occupations give your character something for free. You pick up either three permanent class skills or an extra feat. While I feel that background options add quite a bit to a character, enough to justify the small power and flexibility boost, you might not want to run such a profligate game.

If so, require that your players spend one of their initial character feats to purchase a Background Option. They can effectively get the feat back plus an additional permanent class skill via the background option. The limitations of the background option plus the hooks and roleplaying benefits it generates should make up for the small amount of additional power it provides.

You could also allow characters to purchase more than one Background Option if it seems reasonable. Background Options are good but not *that good* and help add flavor to the game.

The format of a background option entry is as follows:

NAME

This is just the name of the background option. Following the name is a brief blurb describing the option.

Prerequisite: This describes any conditions you must satisfy to pick the background option. Second World Background Options typically have minimal prerequisites since people can reasonably start adventuring at an earlier age in the Second World.

Skills: This section tells you how many skills you may choose as permanent class skills (almost always three) and gives you a list of skills from which to choose. For First World characters a number of knowledge, craft, and profession skills particular to the First World are included. These are not generally available in the Second World. Those skills will have limited value in a purely Second World campaign but you can refer to the d20 Modern core rules for details on how to employ them. Note that I also include both the d20 Modern version and core rules versions of various skills if they have different names in the two rules; for example, if a background option includes Treat Injury I also include the Heal skill. Players should just choose one of the two versions. For the Second World background options I've marked skills from the d20 Modern core rules with an asterisk (*).

Bonus Feat: This is a short list of feats from which

you may choose. You may pick one of these feats by spending two of your background skills on it. I've marked feats that can only be found in the d20 Modern core rules with an asterisk (*). The remaining feats can either be found in this chapter or in the PHB.

Languages: Both automatic and bonus languages will be listed here.

Starting Wealth: This only applies to First Worlders since their starting wealth is based on what miscellaneous loot they bring across with them. This will not necessarily match up with the Wealth bonus they have since people seldom get a chance to plan ahead for a trip to the Second World.

FIRST WORLD BACKGROUND OPTIONS

First World background options pay no attention to your country of origin, ethnic heritage, or religious background. All First World characters have one automatic language (that of their native country) and one free additional language. Due to the breadth of education available on the First World, your character can choose as bonus languages any language spoken on Earth; note also that most Second World languages are also First World languages. The background options themselves are simply the careers your characters gave up on shifting to the Second World. Starting equipment for a First World character is typically just some clothes and miscellaneous junk he can hock for some cash. Since First World trinkets like jewelry, watches, blue jeans, and running shoes sell for a good price in the Second World you can usually get a fairly reasonable pool of starting money as a First Worlder. Some fairly rare occupations are, perhaps, over-represented here. But what's the point in using this setting if you can't play an exiled Yankee shortstop?

ATHLETE

You were a professional athlete. You were likely too young to be really famous and might have been in one of those sports that doesn't pay well, or, unfortunately, female and not a tennis player.

Prerequisite: Strength 13 or Dexterity 13

Skills: Choose three of the following skills as permanent class skills. If a skill you select is already a class skill, you receive a +1 competence bonus on checks using that skill.
Balance, Climb, Drive, Jump, Ride, Swim, Tumble.

Bonus Feats: Spend two skill picks to select either Simple Weapons Proficiency, Brawl*, First

World Celebrity, or Jock.

Languages: Automatic: any two First World languages; Bonus: any other First World languages.

Starting Wealth: You can sell your clothes, watch, jewelry, and some other sundries you brought with you in the transition for $2d4 \times \$100$. If you take the Celebrity feat, quadruple your initial funds instead doubling them.

CORPORATE

You worked in the business world; perhaps a high powered exec, marketing guru, or horrendously nervous Wall Street broker. This can also represent any typical job in business.

Prerequisite: Age 18+

Skills: Choose three of the following skills as permanent class skills. If a skill you select is already a class skill, you receive a +1 competence bonus on checks using that skill. Bluff, Diplomacy, Intimidate, Knowledge (business, current events, or technology).

Bonus Feats: Spend two skill picks to select either Stress is my Middle Name or People Smart.

Languages: Automatic: any two First World languages; Bonus: any other First World languages.

Starting Wealth: You can sell your fancy clothes, Rolex watch, jewelry, and some other sundries you brought with you in the transition for $5d4 \times \$100$. Your cell phone melts shortly after making it across.

DOCTOR

You were probably a specialist in some incredibly narrow field. Real medicine doesn't work in the Second World but your general knowledge of how the body works will help you.

Prerequisite: Age 25+.

Skills: Choose three of the following skills as permanent class skills. If a skill you select is already a class skill, you receive a +1 competence bonus on checks using that skill.

Craft (pharmaceutical), Computer Use, Heal/Treat Injury, Knowledge (behavioral sciences, earth and life sciences, or technology), Search.

Bonus Feats: Spend two skill picks to select either Field Medic, Medical

Doctor, or Trained Psychologist (page 56).

Languages: Automatic: any two First World languages; Bonus: any other First World languages.

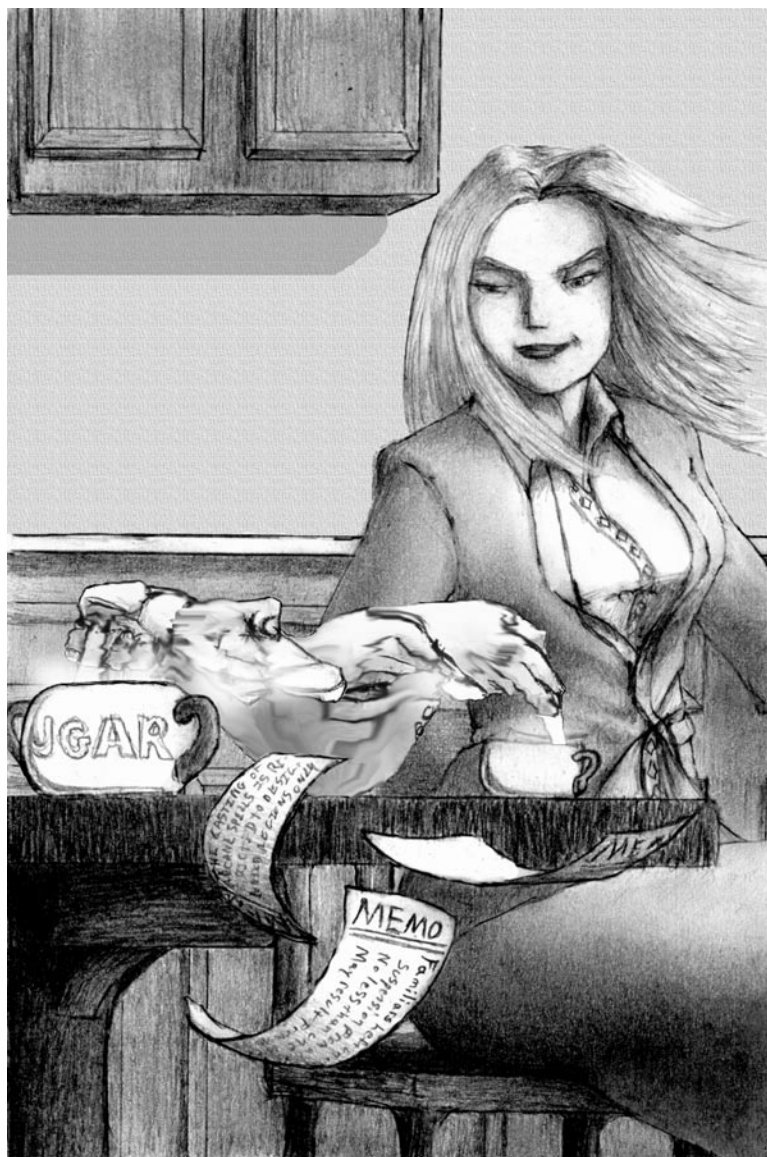
Starting Wealth: You can sell your clothes, watch, jewelry, and some other sundries you brought with you in the transition for $5d4 \times \$100$. Your beeper stops beeping.

ENTERTAINER

You worked in film, television, theater, or music. You might even have been pretty good, but that doesn't mean you were famous. You need to take the First World Celebrity feat for that; and note that talent is not a prerequisite for the First World Celebrity feat.

Prerequisite: Age 15+.

Skills: Choose three of the following skills as permanent class skills. If the skill you select is already a class skill, you receive a +1 competence bonus on checks using that skill.



Jill Rush Reloading by Fil Kearney

Bluff, Craft (visual art or writing), Diplomacy, Disguise, Perform (act, dance, keyboards, percussion instruments, sing, stand-up, stringed instruments, or wind instruments), Profession (Waiter).

Bonus Feats: Spend two skill picks to select either First World Celebrity or Presence.

Reputation Bonus Increase: +1.

Languages: Automatic: any two First World languages; Bonus: any other First World languages.

Starting Wealth: You can sell your clothes, watch, jewelry, and some other sundries you brought with you in the transition for $2d4 \times \$100$. If you take the Celebrity feat quadruple your initial funds instead doubling them.

FIREFIGHTER

This applies to firefighters, paramedics, and those in the search and rescue business. You save people's lives and property for a living. Every kid wants to grow up to be you.

Prerequisite: Age 18+.

Skills: Choose three of the following skills as permanent class skills. If a skill you select is already a class skill, you receive a +1 competence bonus on checks using that skill.
Balance, Climb, Drive, Heal/Treat Injury, Jump, Search.

Bonus Feats: Spend two skill picks to select either Stress is my Middle Name or Field Medic.

Languages: Automatic: any two First World languages; Bonus: any other First World languages.

Starting Wealth: You can sell your clothes, watch, jewelry, and some other sundries you brought with you in the transition for $3d4 \times \$100$. If you're a firefighter you can also get \$500 for your helmet (most people keep them though).

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGIES

You worked in the computer industry. Perhaps in software, network maintenance, hardware, or so on. Your skills won't be too useful in the Second World but the logical principles underlying programming carry well into some versions of magic.

Prerequisite: Age 23+.

Skills: Choose three of the following skills as permanent class skills. If a skill you select is already a class skill, you receive a +1 competence bonus on checks using that skill.
Computer Use, Craft (electronic), Decipher Script, Knowledge (business, technology), Repair, Research, Search.

Bonus Feats: Spend two skill picks to select either

Logical Thinker or The Devil is in the Details.

Languages: Automatic: any two First World languages; Bonus: any other First World languages.

Starting Wealth: You can sell your clothes, watch, jewelry, and some other sundries you brought with you in the transition for $3d4 \times \$100$.

JOURNALIST

You worked in television news or on a newspaper; perhaps a tabloid. One of your investigations might have brought you in contact with enough synchronicity to drive you over.

Prerequisite: Age 23+.

Skills: Choose three of the following skills as permanent class skills. If a skill you select is already a class skill, you receive a +1 competence bonus on checks using that skill.

Computer Use, Craft (visual art or writing), Gather Information, Investigate, Knowledge (current events, popular culture, or streetwise), Research, Search, Sense Motive.

Bonus Feats: Spend two skill picks to select either First World Celebrity, Investigative Fervor, or Presence.

Languages: Automatic: any two First World languages; Bonus: any other First World languages.

Starting Wealth: You can sell your clothes, watch, jewelry, and some other sundries you brought with you in the transition for $3d4 \times \$100$.

LAWYER

You were simultaneously one of the most reviled people on Earth and yet perhaps tied with doctors as far as popular obsession with your career goes. The Second World is a welcome break for you from sixty hour weeks.

Prerequisite: Age 23+.

Skills: Choose three of the following skills as permanent class skills. If a skill you select is already a class skill, you receive a +1 competence bonus on checks using that skill.

Computer Use, Diplomacy, Intimidate, Knowledge (business, civics, current events, history), Research.

Bonus Feats: Spend two skill picks to select either Logical Thinker or Racking up the Hours.

Languages: Automatic: any two First World languages; Bonus: any other First World languages.

Starting Wealth: You can sell your clothes, watch, jewelry, briefcase, and some other sundries you brought with you in the transition for $5d4 \times \$100$.

POLICE

You were a police officer, FBI agent, DEA agent or something similar. Plenty of opportunities arise in these fields to come face to face with something dark and nasty, something that would propel you out of the First World and into the Second World.

Prerequisite: Age 20+.

Skills: Choose three of the following skills as permanent class skills. If a skill you select is already a class skill, you receive a +1 competence bonus on checks using that skill.

Diplomacy, Drive, Intimidate, Knowledge (civics, streetwise, or tactics), Listen, Sense Motive.

Bonus Feats: Spend two skill picks to select either Combat Martial Arts*, Light Armor Proficiency, Personal Firearms Proficiency*, or Street Toughened.

Languages: Automatic: any two First World languages; Bonus: any other First World languages.

Starting Wealth: You can sell your clothes, watch, jewelry, and some other sundries you brought with you in the transition for $3d4 \times \$100$.

PROFESSOR

You were a teacher of some sort (college or high school). This background is intended for those with humanities training like literature, art history, history, political science, and philosophy. Professors who were scientists should take the Scientist background instead.

Prerequisite: Age 23+.

Skills: Choose three of the following skills as permanent class skills. If a skill you select is already a class skill, you receive a +1 competence bonus on checks using that skill.

Computer Use, Craft (writing), Decipher Script, Gather Information, Knowledge (art, behavioral sciences, business, civics, current events, earth and life sciences, history, physical sciences, popular culture, tactics, technology, or theology and philosophy), Research, Speak Language.

Bonus Feats: Spend two skill picks to select either Abstract Thinker or Logical Thinker.

Languages: Automatic: any two First World languages; Bonus: any other First World languages.

Starting Wealth: You can sell your clothes, watch, jewelry, and some other sundries you brought with you in the transition for $3d4 \times \$100$.

SCIENTIST

You were a research scientist; perhaps you worked at a research university or for a large pharmaceutical company. Your experiments could have brought on

the Exile.

Prerequisite: Age 23+.

Skills: Choose three of the following skills as permanent class skills. If a skill you select is already a class skill, you receive a +1 competence bonus on checks using that skill.

Computer Use, Craft (chemical, electronic, mechanical, or structural), Knowledge (earth and life sciences, physical sciences, or technology), Repair, Research.

Bonus Feats: Spend two skill picks to select either Logical Thinker or Experimental.

Languages: Automatic: any two First World languages; Bonus: any other First World languages.

Starting Wealth: You can sell your clothes, watch, jewelry, and some other sundries you brought with you in the transition for $3d4 \times \$100$.

SOCCER MOM

You've been raising a family for way too long. Facing dragons will be easy. On a more serious note, you have lost your family, the center of your life, probably forever. And due to the nature of exile they will almost certainly forget you.

Prerequisite: Age 18+.

Skills: Choose three of the following skills as permanent class skills. If a skill you select is already a class skill, you receive a +1 competence bonus on checks using that skill.

Concentration, Diplomacy, Drive, Heal/Treat Injury, Intimidate, Search, Sense Motive.

Bonus Feats: Spend two skill picks to select either Level Headed or Stress is my Middle Name.

Languages: Automatic: any two First World languages; Bonus: any other First World languages.

Starting Wealth: You can sell your clothes, watch, jewelry, and some other sundries you brought with you in the transition for $4d4 \times \$100$.

SPECIAL FORCES

You were a member of a special operations branch, an elite soldier trained to operate in small units behind enemy lines.

Prerequisite: Age 18+.

Skills: Choose three of the following skills as permanent class skills. If a skill you select is already a class skill, you receive a +1 competence bonus on checks using that skill.

Climb, Demolitions, Drive, Heal/Treat Injury, Hide, Knowledge (tactics), Move Silently, Navigate, Swim, Survival.

Bonus Feat: Spend two skill picks to select one of the following: Brawl*, Combat Load, Combat

Martial Arts*, Level Headed, Light Armor Proficiency, or Personal Firearms Proficiency*.

Languages: Automatic: any two First World languages; Bonus: any other First World languages.

Starting Wealth: There's a chance you have some nice weapons and armor with you when you transit; however, none of it works anymore. Regardless, the equipment has value to collectors and you can get fairly good prices for it. You can sell it for $2d10 \times \$100$.

SECOND WORLD BACKGROUND OPTIONS

Second World background options should be a bit more familiar. These simply represent where you lived, who you hung out with, and what kind of trouble you got yourself into. Each of these background options typically belongs to a region and while this may correlate them with a particular race it definitely does not restrict them to that race. The language lists are a bit short since the Second World, like the First World, has seen a great deal of compression in the number of languages. One may also choose dialects, such as the Appalachian English dialect used by the Appalachian dwarves (it has some Scots/Irish influence) and some monster languages should also be available, such as orc and goblin.

APPALACHIANS

You grew up in the Appalachian range; not everyone living there is a dwarf. If so, you'll likely know how to make some moonshine and feel pretty comfortable fending for yourself in the wilderness. However, the people of the Appalachians have a strong sense of community and family so you'll also have access to that line of support.

Prerequisite: Age 13+.

Skills: Choose three of the following skills as permanent class skills. If a skill you select is already a class skill, you receive a +1 competence bonus on checks using that skill.

Climb, Craft (smithing – see new subskills, structure*, trapmaking), Handle Animal, Hide, Move Silently, Perform (dance, sing, stringed instruments, wind instruments), Profession (brewer), Survival.

Bonus Feats: Spend two skill picks to select either Strong Drinker or The Old Craft.

Languages: Automatic: Appalachian English, English; Bonus: Creole, Iroquois, French, Gnoll, Spanish, Troll.

CENTRAL EMPIRE

Many adventurers hail from the Central Empire, especially since the Mississippi Valley War. The war took its toll, forcing people off land, leaving the soldiers who fought it with recurring nightmares, and corrupting the once clear purpose of the empire. By moving away you gain a newfound freedom and ability to grow in ways not possible in the fairly rigid class structure of the old kingdom.

Prerequisite: Age 16+.

Skills: Choose three of the following skills as permanent class skills. If a skill you select is already a class skill, you receive a +1 competence bonus on checks using that skill.

Appraise, Bluff, Diplomacy, Gather Information, Knowledge (business, civics, current events), Profession (all skills, taken individually), Ride

Bonus Feats: Spend two skill picks to select either Big City Education or Veteran of the Hard Wars.

Languages: Automatic: English; Bonus: Creole, Iroquois, French, Salanas (the south-western Raptor tongue), Spanish.

ESCAPEE OF TRESPASS'S ARMY

You were raised in the Forge, trained all your life to fight in battles for the overlord. However, you've somehow managed to escape his forces and move off on your own. One downside to this is that you might very well have some people, or creatures, hunting you.

Prerequisite: Age 18+.

Skills: Choose three of the following skills as permanent class skills. If a skill you select is already a class skill, you receive a +1 competence bonus on checks using that skill.

Climb, Heal, Hide, Intimidate, Knowledge (tactics), Listen, Move Silently, Spot, Survival.

Bonus Feats: Spend two skill picks to select either Forged in Fire or Planar Adaptation.

Languages: Automatic: Ved Qayat; Bonus: Abyssal, English, French, Icelandic, Ignan, Kuo-Toa, Spanish.

FORMER STREET IRCHIN

You are a former member of the Street Irchin Syndicate. This gives you a pleasant, rascally background and some lasting connections with the kids. The camaraderie of former street irchins is somewhat legendary, akin to the camaraderie of former marines in the First World.

Prerequisite: Age 13+.

Skills: Choose three of the following skills as permanent class skills. If a skill you select is already a class skill, you receive a +1 competence

bonus on checks using that skill.

Climb, Disable Device, Disguise, Hide, Knowledge (streetwise), Move Silently, Sleight of Hand.

Bonus Feats: Spend two skill picks to select either Brawl*, Check Pockets Feat, or City Smart.

Languages: Automatic: English; Bonus: Iroquois, French, Spanish.

Special: Former street urchins begin with –5 external access to the Street Urchin Syndicate.

MEXICO

If you hail from Mexico you'll feel a lot more like a traditional fantasy character. You likely grew up in a kingdom ruled by nobility; monsters and bandits hid in the hills and forests and gullies making travel outside the kingdom particularly dangerous. But Mexico has old bones, some buried deep, and some far too close to the surface.

Prerequisite: Age 17+.

Skills: Choose three of the following skills as permanent class skills. If a skill you select is already a class skill, you receive a +1 competence bonus on checks using that skill.

Climb, Craft (structural), Handle Animal, Profession (all skills, taken individually), Ride.

Bonus Feats: Spend two skill picks to select either Chivalry or Dangerous Curiosity.

Languages: Automatic: Spanish, English; Bonus: Creole, Gnoll, Halcón, Mind Flayer.

MONTREAL

You grew up in Montreal. Montreal has an illustrious and tempestuous history; many of its people have radical ways of looking at the world and their place in it. Montreal has constantly been at the forefront of innovative thought, particularly regarding magic.

Prerequisite: Age 17+.

Skills: Choose three of the following skills as permanent class skills. If a skill you select is already a class skill, you receive a +1 competence bonus on checks using that skill.

Bluff, Craft (visual art, writing), Diplomacy, Knowledge (arcana, architecture and engineering, geography, history, religion), Perform (act, dance, percussion instruments, sing, stringed instruments, wind instruments).

Bonus Feat: Spend two skill picks to select either Big City Education or Abstract Thinker.

Languages: Automatic: French, English; Bonus: Creole, Iroquois, Spanish.

NEW YORK

You were bred, born, and raised in the big city, the one place that really matters (at least if you're a New Yorker). This is a more standard New Yorker, the working stiff who has to make a living and get by in a tough city.

Prerequisite: Age 17+.

Skills: Choose three of the following skills as permanent class skills. If a skill you select is already a class skill, you receive a +1 competence bonus on checks using that skill.

Bluff, Intimidate, Knowledge (business, civics, current events, popular culture, streetwise), Sense Motive.

Bonus Feats: Spend two skill picks to select either Big City Education or People Smart.

Languages: Automatic: English; Bonus: Creole, Icelandic, Iroquois, French, Spanish.

PIRATES

You grew up amongst one of the many pirate communities, large or small, dotting the Atlantic seaboard. You may have come from as far away as the Caribbean, or as close as Freeport (or some of the islands nearby). This wild and wooly life has its appeals and makes you feel at home on the sea.

Prerequisite: Age 15+.

Skills: Choose three of the following skills as permanent class skills. If a skill you select is already a class skill, you receive a +1 competence bonus on checks using that skill.

Balance, Climb, Intimidate, Jump, Knowledge (geography), Profession (sailor), Swim, Use Rope.

Bonus Feats: Spend two skill picks to select either Sea Legs or Strong Swimmer.

Languages: Automatic: English; Bonus: Creole, French, Icelandic, Kuo-Toa, Merfolk, Sahuagin, Spanish, Triton.

SEVEN TRIBES

You grew up amongst the Seven Tribes and decided to head out on your own. For naming ideas look mainly at the Iroquois and associated tribes. You'll feel a bit more at home in nature than in an urban environment but quite possibly the reason you left is a need to experience the big city.

Prerequisite: Age 17+.

Skills: Choose three of the following skills as permanent class skills. If a skill you select is already a class skill, you receive a +1 competence bonus on checks using that skill.

Climb, Diplomacy, Handle Animal, Hide,

Knowledge (nature), Move Silently, Perform (dance, sing, stringed instruments, wind instruments), Survival.

Bonus Feats: Spend two skill picks to select either Communitarian Ideology or Peace with Nature.

Languages: Automatic: Iroquois, English; Bonus: Creole, French, Spanish, Centaur, Sylvan.

SOUTHWESTERN RAPTORS

You grew up in the southwest amongst the raptors and eventually migrated to the east. You've lived a harsh, but not unpleasant life in the desert.

Prerequisite: Age 15+.

Skills: Choose three of the following skills as permanent class skills. If a skill you select is already a class skill, you receive a +1 competence bonus on checks using that skill.
Climb, Hide, Knowledge (religion), Spot, Survival.

Bonus Feats: Spend two skill picks to select either Desert Survival or Long Distance Running.

Languages: Automatic: Salanas, English; Bonus: Cajun, Creole, French, Gnoll, Orc, Spanish.

SUB ARCTIC HERITAGE

You grew up in the tundra and frozen north. The winterlands take a harsh toll from those who choose to challenge them but they breed a hardy folk. The raw energy of the place can touch those who grow up here, leaving them forever marked and coloring their use of magic. Naturally, many winter gnomes have this background but other races may take it as well.

Prerequisite: Age 17+.

Skills: Choose three of the following skills as permanent class skills. If a skill you select is already a class skill, you receive a +1 competence bonus on checks using that skill.
Knowledge (arcana, religion), Listen, Move Silently, Survival.

Bonus Feats: Spend two skill picks to select either Sense of Snow or Touched by Frost.

Languages: Automatic: English; Bonus: French, Gnome, Icelandic, Inuit, Iroquois, Winter Wolf

THE NORTHEASTERN FRONTIER

The borderlands breed a tough soul. The wilds of the Northeast house many creatures and tribes of orcs, goblins, and gnolls have boiled up from the underground in the vacuum between the forces of Lord Trespass and the border posts of the empire. The people of this region are a hardy lot and not easily shaken.

Prerequisite: Age 16+.

Skills: Choose three of the following skills as

permanent class skills. If a skill you select is already a class skill, you receive a +1 competence bonus on checks using that skill.

Hide, Knowledge (planar/interstitial lore, tactics), Listen, Move Silently, Ride, Spot.

Bonus Feats: Spend two skill picks to select either Goblin Fighter or Level Headed.

Languages: Automatic: English; Bonus: Icelandic, Iroquois, French, Orc, Spanish.

THE SOUTH

The feudal South produces a natural urge to explore the world and make a name for oneself. If you hail from the South you'll likely adhere to some old-fashioned notions about chivalry. More than a few Paladins come from here.

Prerequisite: Age 16+.

Skills: Choose three of the following skills as permanent class skills. If a skill you select is already a class skill, you receive a +1 competence bonus on checks using that skill.

Craft (structural), Diplomacy, Handle Animal, Profession (all skills, taken individually), Ride.

Bonus Feats: Spend two skill picks to select either Chivalry or Veteran of the Hard Wars.

Languages: Automatic: English; Bonus: Cajun, Creole, Iroquois, French, Spanish.

RACES

FRAGMENTS ON ESCIDIAN NUMEROLOGY

...of central importance in the world is the number 13. The colorless lands [translator's note: the Escidi (snakemen) appear to call the First World the colorless lands] reduce its importance to mere superstition. This is certainly incorrect, although one can comprehend their misinterpretation. Unlike other significant numbers which retain their significance despite empirical testing, 13 is significant precisely because of its recurrence in experiment.

This is particularly noticeable in physiology. All sentient creatures we have dissected so far have precisely 13 areas situated around the central core of the brain. Each of these areas provides a distinct function. This is even true when the seat of consciousness is not a purely physical manifestation. For example, the Color Daemon has a white core and expresses itself via a combination of 13 distinct colors. Other colors are represented as well but neutralizing any of these additional colors leaves the mental performance of

the Daemon unhindered (other than the trauma such amputations cause).

Also, sorcerous deconstruction of any object, physical or ethereal, decomposes the object into at least 13 components. Some objects possess additional components but removal of one of these additional components does not damage the identity of the object. However, removal of a primary component causes the object to immediately disintegrate. When this does occur no physical or magical traces are left of the object in question. Even the component originally removed vanishes. If this were not such an arduous process it would make an excellent weapon. Even when there are additional, non-significant components that could take up the slack, they do not do so. Counter-intuitively, fire is not a significant component whereas one's ability to cast shadows or reflections is.¹

The 13 components seem to have no hierarchy or value. In almost all cases they are arranged in a circular or spherical pattern.² This points to another issue. If the components are always arrayed in this way then the point they are equidistant from seems to hold some importance. Could this be a 14th component?

Our studies have shown there to be 12 major powers active in the world. We are quite certain that there is one other power that is, as yet, unknown. If the central locus theorists are correct, there might also be a 14th power. One can also extrapolate these findings to other studies. Our proximity to the Dreaming City has allowed us to study it for some time. We are quite certain that it is some sort of manifestation of the Dream Warden major power. We are also quite certain that Tokyo is a manifestation of the Lightning Warden major power. We expect that there are 13 great cities of this sort, each manifesting a distinct major power. One should also expect that there are 13 major species of sentient creatures. Escidi, Humans, Hsüan and Raptors are all obviously of this type. The question would then be what

other races might fall under this category.

Footnote 1: This is not universally the case. Some experiments have removed reflections and shadows without causing disintegration. Sshar Tsirintz claims that this is not a counter-example since there are still other versions of reflections remaining that have not yet been removed (see his volume).

Footnote 2: A number of sorcerers claim that the property of equidistance is central to these components. In cases where equidistance seems not to apply (such as 2 dimensional situations) they claim that either alternate versions of the appropriate geometry can account for the phenomenon or that the properties are equidistant in some higher dimensional geometry.

SECOND WORLD RACES

Clearly the world houses many more living races and even many more sentient races than thirteen. Many simply deny the Escidi claim mentioned before; with good reason as well. As far as anyone knows no race faces inherent restrictions on its abilities or faculties; certainly some may be larger, stronger, more intelligent and so on, but all races, elves and dwarves, humans and orcs, raptors and halflings, seem capable of producing powerful wardens, lethal warriors, and crazed wizards. The main difference between the races is how their talents are distributed, not whether or not they have them. Still, few dispute the genius of the Escidi, or the ruthless efficiency of their medical and arcane experiments. In addition to the core races of elf, half-elf, half-orc, halfling, dwarf, gnome, and human, the Second World includes raptors, halcón, hsüan, escidi, the Ved Qayat, the orca, and many others (there's plenty of room for including your favorite races from other sources). One unique feature of the First World is that characters who begin there as humans may end up in the Second World as something else. The First World suppresses the fantastic elements of a person's nature; however some kernel of their true race remains hidden within them throughout their lives. Upon transition or exposure to the Second World this kernel activates, and they metamorphize into their truer form. This transformation takes about a week usually, though the character will still change in small ways for perhaps months (for example, Elven ears grow sharper). Drastic racial differences take longer; a true born raptor might take a month to transform once in the Second World. This means of course that you might be an elf and yet have two human parents (somewhere on the First World). Note that your parents need not

APPENDIX TO THE FRAGMENTS

It would be remiss to leave out an important exception to the previously mentioned regularities. Feral Daemons [the escidi term for the Wadkin Roa] seem to violate these rules consistently. In the rare cases where we have captured a Feral Daemon, when we removed their components they immediately disintegrated (even though the component removed would ordinarily be unnecessary). We also observed cases where they did not disintegrate ever, even if we removed all of their components. When their corpse lasted long enough for a biopsy we noted no standard internal structure.

Random Starting Ages

Race	Adulthood	Barbarian, Rogue, Sorcerer	Bard, Fighter, Paladin, Ranger	Cleric, Druid, Monk, Wizard
Raptor	15 years	+1d4	+1d6	+2d6
Orca	30 years	+2d4	+3d6	+4d6
Halcón	20 years	+1d6	+2d6	+3d6
Hsüan	as base race			
Escidi	18 years	+1d4	+1d6	+2d6
Ved Qayat	15 years	+1d4	+1d6	+2d6

Aging Effects

Race	Middle Age	Old	Venerable	Maximum Age
Raptor	35 years	53 years	70 years	+2d20 years
Orca	55 years	83 years	110 years	+4d20 years
Halcón	60 years	90 years	120 years	+3d20 years
Hsüan	as base race × 1.5			
Escidi	40 years	60 years	80 years	+2d20 years (see text)
Ved Qayat	30 years	45 years	60 years	+2d10 years

Random Height and Weight

Race	Base Height	Height Modifier	Base Weight	Weight Modifier
Raptor	5' 11"	+2d10	230 lb.	× (2d6) lb.
Orca	6' 8"	+3d10	350 lb.	× (2d8) lb.
Halcón, man	4' 10"	+2d12	120 lb.	× (2d4) lb.
Halcón, woman	4' 5"	+2d12	85 lb.	× (2d4) lb.
Hsüan	as base race			
Escidi	4' 5"	+2d6	75 lb.	× (2d4) lb.
Ved Qayat, man	4' 10"	+2d10	140 lb.	× (2d6) lb.
Ved Qayat, woman	4' 5"	+2d10	90 lb.	× (2d6) lb.

have carried the seeds of elf-hood in them; were they to translate over they could both be dwarves (unlikely though); what seems to matter most for the transition is your personality. Before the transition you'll likely resemble your race in some way. Halflings and gnomes tend to be small and lithe before the change; dwarves stocky; elves slender and graceful; half-orcs strong and passionate; raptors tall, lean, and a bit distant. One need merely look around at their co-workers, class-mates, and friends to see the races of the Second World hidden here amongst us.

YOUNG VERSIONS OF TOUGH RACES

Some of the races of the Second World are more powerful than typical player character races. Under ordinary circumstances this restricts the gamemaster to either prohibiting you from playing those races,

or forces the GM to start you out one or more levels higher than first in order to keep things fair. As an alternative, you can start with first level versions of these races based on the assumption that you are a particularly young version of the species. This section provides rules for doing this by treating powerful races as a combination of traditional racial abilities and a special prestige class immediately available exclusively to members of that race. When you take one of these races you choose the race normally but you may also take levels in the special racial prestige class; you may even take your first level in that class (though it's typically not recommended). The racial prestige class is always considered a Favored Class and thus does not count for purposes of multi-classing. Moreover, racial levels do not count against the normal 20 level maximum.

Note that for normally Large creatures this can mean that they change size during the game. While it's somewhat unrealistic that this happens all at once, when using rough categories like Medium and Large there has to be some transition point where the character goes from being a particularly large, Medium-size creature to a somewhat small, Large sized creature. Young versions of races frequently have a Wisdom penalty that gets eliminated as they take racial levels; this represents the character growing up and losing their naïveté. Also note that I give races armor bonuses where conventionally races receive natural armor bonuses. Races only receive a natural armor bonus in this system in the rare case where wearing normal armor would actually benefit them.

To begin play with a fully grown version of the race simply start out with a few extra levels, all devoted to the racial prestige class. You should also attempt to take racial class levels at a pace appropriate to in-game passage of time.

RAPTORS

Description: People typically fear raptors. First, raptors can stand close to seven feet tall and weigh over three hundred pounds. But the raptor's jagged coldness and the inability to read their expressions frightens people more. Still, raptors like to point out that they are no more reptilian than a human and that the apparent coldness is simply due to the amount of space they need

and the lack of plasticity in their features.

Personality: Raptors need their space; tails, claws, large heads and feet, these all get in the way. They also need their space as a society since so many of the tribes continue to follow a nomadic hunting tradition. This can make them feel distant. But they can also be quite warm. They enjoy outdoor gatherings with moderate sized groups where they can share stories, eat, dance, and get plastered on whiskey purchased from the Central Empire. Raptors favor light armor and steel weapons but must trade for ore or iron ingots.

Physical Description: Raptors look like small bipedal dinosaurs, something like a small version of a tyrannosaurus rex. Their arms are more well developed though and their heads a bit more narrow; meaning that they lack the biting power of most dinosaurs. Raptors have a tail (about 5 feet long) that mainly serves as balance; southern raptors also use it to aid in swimming through the swamps and bayous. Being on the large side of Medium-size, raptors are tall and heavily built. They stand about 7 feet tall and weigh in at roughly 300 lbs. The raptors of the west and southwest have a sandy brown coloring, making them blend in well with their surroundings. Raptors from most of the rest of the continent (particularly the south) are typically a dull ochre in coloring. All raptors have a degree of mottling in their coloration; this depends on how

ochre or sandy brown their parents were. Raptors have lifespans and growing cycles almost identical to humans; they reach puberty at the same age and women even reach menopause at the same age. This axis of similarity helps bridge some of the differences between the two species.

Relations: Raptors love halflings (and not to eat). There's something about the plucky resoluteness of the small folk that appeals to the raptor outlook. It could also be the halfling tendency towards earthy celebration. In general raptors look on most other races benignly; few have had hard encounters (perhaps because few societies make a living off exploiting seven foot tall warriors) with outsiders. Raptors usually ignore those with whom they don't get along. For instance, raptors avoid the central empire except for trade because the humans there are either too concerned with making money or, on those occasions where they do throw a party, etiquette kills all the enjoyment. The southwestern raptors have had a long-standing war with the goblins of the Rockies and a number of skirmishes with roving bands of gnolls from Texas and Oklahoma. The gnoll battles haven't been too frequent since the gnolls must also struggle against the Central Empire. However, the goblins and their kin hide under cover of the dragons in the Rockies and make furtive raids to ambush small groups of raptors. The raptors of the southwest hate goblins with a passion.

Excerpt from **The Anasazi Scriptures** [a prominent religious text of the southwestern raptors; in some cases words have not been translated literally]

There are no beginnings. There are only continuances. We are continuous with our past and an expression of all that has come before us. Likewise, we are continuous with our future. Any person, at any point in time is a reflection of all time. But that reflection has many hidden parts and thus both past and future remain a secret. We know as much about what lies ahead as we do about what lies behind...

...the primordial expressions of continuity are the Wardens, which exist across all time. The Wardens ground the basic material of the world. The Great Wardens are such because all objects in the world, both material and immaterial, are composed of them. Every object is located in space or time, thus the Vector. Every object has a name or will have a name and this name will be both spoken and written, thus the Rune and Tone. Every object has a mental representation, an idea, thus the Dream. Every object lies in one of the worlds or across several worlds, thus the Gate. Every object casts reflections, thus the Shadow. Every object has a solidity, something which makes it the same object as it was before and it will be in the future, thus the Metal. Every object has power, thus the Lightning. Every object is distinct from every other object, thus the Pattern. Every object plays a role in the Conflict as either weapon or shield, thus the Feral.

The other Wardens like Flame and Teeth have their roles too, but they are not universal. Some objects partake in those Wardens and some do not. Thus they are lesser.

There are places where the Wardens are strong. These are their homes. The Wardens choose Kassar (this word means something like defender, champion, or guard in the Raptor language). The Kassar come and go. The highest Kassar of each Warden possesses the power of a god and is called the Kassar-Tor. The Kassar-Tor direct the conflict and defend the world against the outsiders, the shadows with teeth. Occasionally the Kassar-Tor pass on, but always a new Kassar rises to the vacant position. The Exiled are the proving grounds for the Kassar. Exiles must face the most dangerous conflicts because only conflict strengthens one.

Raptor Level	Base Attack	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special	Defense Bonus
1	+1	+1	+0	+0	+2 Wisdom (removes penalty), fast movement	+0
2	+1	+2	+0	+0	+2 Strength	+1

Names: Southwestern raptors tend to have Hopi, Pueblo, or Navajo names, though typically altered a bit since the connection between the Second and First Worlds is tenuous.

Alignment: Raptors favor neutrality or good. Many attempt to live in a kind of balance with the natural systems around them, and, while this compels them to not take too much from the world, they also feel little compunction against taking what they want. Most raptors hunt to live and would like to keep it that way. This attitude leads many Exiled raptors to become feral wardens.

Raptor Lands: In the past raptors lived almost everywhere in the Americas. Now though, their retreat from civilization has taken them into the desert sands of the southwest and the humid bayous of Mississippi, Louisiana, Alabama, Georgia, and Florida. The bayou raptors tend to live in semi-permanent camps and fish the surrounding swamps. The desert raptors live nomadically, or have a base camp where the non-hunting part of the tribe waits while the hunters take weeks long hunting trips.

Religion: Perhaps it's best to let one of the raptor texts describe this itself, see the nearby boxed text regarding the Anasazi Scriptures. Of course, the raptors are like any other race; their religion has more in common with their non-raptor regional neighbors than it does with raptors living on the other side of the continent.

Language: Like most races of the Second World, language tends to break more across regional lines than racial ones. German raptors speak German; Chinese raptors speak Mandarin or Cantonese. Since communities still frequently group according to race, dialect differences can arise and occasionally a racial group isolates itself within a larger community, but at worst this means they might speak an additional language. Regardless, the raptors of North America fall into two main groups and these do have language differences. The southwestern raptors speak Salanas, a language that's an amalgam of Hopi, Navajo, and Pueblo. Salanas is a rich language of deep tones and slow voices; to someone unfamiliar with it Salanas can sound like a mantra. The raptors of the bayous speak Cajun flavored English, as do their non-raptor neighbors. This dialect feels a heavy influence of French Creole and can be sonorous when spoken. Listening to one of the bayou raptors speak can feel like listening to a jazz musician play.

Bayou raptors tend to have Creole names though some have carried forward Cherokee names from the past century.

Adventurers: Raptors seek adventure for many reasons. Their natural restlessness, coupled with their ability to travel great distances, leads many to explore the Americas, at least once, before settling down to a more stable tribal life. Religious raptors of the Anasazi tradition seek out conflict to test themselves. This might be the generation that is called upon to fight the shadows with teeth (generally assumed to mean the Wadkin Roa). Raptors also have a natural affinity for becoming wardens, but in order to do so they must face and overcome challenges. Many raptors travel and adventure in order to find out if they have this kernel inside them.

RAPTOR RACIAL TRAITS

- +2 Strength, -2 Wisdom
- Medium Size: but just barely. Raptors receive no special bonuses or penalties from size.
- Young raptors have an initial base speed of 30 feet; this goes up when they get a bit bigger.
- +2 Armor bonus due to their leathery skin (note that this is an Armor bonus, not Natural Armor bonus, thus it does not stack with worn armor).
- Their tail gives them a +4 racial bonus to Swim, Jump, and Balance checks.
- Raptors have rather large jaws and can bite for 1d6 lethal damage; this counts as an unarmed attack and provokes attacks of opportunity normally.
- Automatic Languages: Common and Raptor. Bonus Languages: Dwarven, Goblin, and Gnoll.
- Favored Class: Barbarian. Most Raptor tribes are nomadic in nature and live in close connection with the wilderness.

RACIAL ADVANCEMENT

Raptors are more powerful than standard characters. As such you must take racial advancement levels to gain the benefits of being a fully grown raptor.

Skill Points: 2 + Int modifier.

Hit Die: d8

RACIAL SKILLS

You may apply skill points gained from racial advancement to either the following skill set or the skill set from another class in which you already have at least one level; you cannot mix and match between the skill sets in a given level though.

Climb (Str), Craft (Int), Handle Animal (Cha), Intimidate (Cha), Jump (Str), Listen (Wis), Ride (Dex), Swim (Str), and Survival (Wis).

RACIAL FEATURES

Fast Movement: Raptors have a miles eating gait; their base speed is 40 feet.

ORCA

Description: The orca are the gentle giants of the sea. Peaceful and caring, compassionate and inquisitive, few hold a grudge against them. Their trade caravans, sea-tugs harnessed to whales or dolphins, criss-cross the oceans. All the major ports have orca traders in them at any time. Orca love to drink beer and ale and love to talk with those who have traveled the land. But the orca can be dangerous; one risks a great deal when they awaken an orca to anger.

Personality: The orca have no natural predators and few significant enemies. They make their home and craft their cities in the safety of the deeps and they are large enough that few wish to test their strength in war. The orca feel strong family ties; they live in cozy underwater houses with their immediate family (parents and children plus grandparents occasionally). Orca seldom divorce or separate; loyalty holds a central place in their lives and, while they are cautious about entering a friendship, once they do so they feel a strong, almost unbreakable bond of affection, the kind of affection it might take a human years of close friendship to develop. Due to this, married orca and orca with families actually enjoy an even greater liberty to roam. Their partners have little reason to fear that they have been forgotten and both parties frequently enjoy the expansion of their lives this kind of apartness brings. The warmth of orca love is matched by the heat of their hatred though. Wrong someone they love and

they will hunt you to the ends of the earth; oftentimes with such a red purity of purpose that they'll destroy everything you care about or value in the process. This makes orca feuds some of the most bloody and violent in the Second World. Religious and moral teachings try to subdue the vengeful natures of the orca.

Physical Description: The orca stand eight feet tall at their gently sloping, incredibly broad shoulders and weigh around 500 pounds. They look like a bipedal killer whale with thick, elephantine legs, powerful arms, and their head bent forward to show their huge mouth with its long row of sharp teeth. Their large eyes are set back along the side of their head making vision through them difficult, but their eyesight is weak anyway; they rely primarily on hearing and a kind of sonar for perception. The orca have traditional killer whale coloring, a large swath of white swirled with a swath of black, like a living Zen symbol. The orca avoid armor when submerged since light armor does them little good. On land they occasionally wear mail and heavier armor. Their blubber keeps them warm so they'll go almost naked at sea but on land they like to wear loose, flowing robes to keep the wind from drying their skin too heavily. Most orca also favor the Auroran Lance (really a sort of harpoon) while on land since it incorporates a sonic torch and thus enhances the range of their sonar. Orca typically live to about 150 years of age and come to maturity at the age of thirty.

Relations: Most orca in the initial campaign will either be former First World humans or Second World natives from Aurora, the orcan underwater city off Newfoundland. The orca here have dealt extensively with the inhabitants of Greenland and Iceland; some travel southwest to trade with the pirates and merchants of Freeport and some travel further to New York. They occasionally go all the way east to Scandinavia or London as well. The distances and water make conflict rare up here. The coldness keeps the more unsavory sea races from bothering them, though orca elsewhere have frequent battles with the sahuagin. The peace has grown tenuous though. Lord Trespass makes probes towards Greenland and Iceland and kills any orca he finds in Nova Scotia. Much worse, he has been enticing evil undersea races to come north and establish colonies in his coastal waters. Groups of kuo-toa perform raids south along the coast of Maine, kidnapping people from small towns and villages for vile rituals.

Alignment: The orca favor close communities, mutual support, and loyalty. They also prefer it if people mind their own business unless a pressing need requires

Orca Level	Base Attack	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special	Defense Bonus
1	+1	+1	+0	+0	+2 Intelligence	+0
2	+1	+2	+0	+0	+2 Strength	+1
3	+2	+2	+1	+1	Large Size; -2 Dexterity; Thicker Blubber	+1
4	+2	+3	+1	+1	+2 Constitution, +2 Wisdom	+2
5	+3	+3	+1	+1	+2 Strength	+2

otherwise. These tendencies make them good, usually. However, an orca that has suffered, or in whom hatred burns deeply may become evil in the pursuit of vengeance.

Orca Lands: The orca live in large undersea communities, usually built from rock. The orca favor cold water so coral doesn't play as large a role in their homes as it does for many other undersea races. They fish and farm the surrounding waters and enjoy traveling on land to hunt exotic animals (to them) such as deer and elk. Orca cities are built of heavier rock so they tend to be more spread out than other underwater cities (for instance, merfolk cities tend to build upwards). Generations of land-exploring orca have developed a taste for beer and alcohol, but drinking underwater presents a problem. Some time ago the orca began constructing special, air-tight public houses to serve as bars and pubs. This is where they gather to drink and has become one of the main centers of orca social life.

Religion: In the past the orca had a kind of pantheistic religion; they felt that the gods held court at the edges of the sea and spoke to them. This wasn't mere metaphor though; the orca took the distant and faint sounds that echoed to them from the far corners of the sea as these voices and spent a great deal of time attempting to decipher them. The presence of multiple voices and apparent conflict in them led the orca to believe that many gods existed; and that they spent a lot of time arguing. Later discoveries slowly whittled away at this theory; especially information from First World orca regarding the nature of sound propagation under water. The orca have found themselves somewhat without a religion since then. No human religion speaks to them. As such, those orca with a spiritual bent tend towards the mystical, reading translations of Spinoza and Theosophical texts. Many others take a detached view, believing in something but not at all certain what.

Language: The orca language consists of high pitched squeaks and whoops and clicking sounds. For long range warnings they rely on low pitched sounds (since these carry further underwater). For objects unique to

the orca language they invent new words or use descriptive names when translating. The Atlantic orca have extensive dealings with Iceland (they even have a permanent embassy in Reyk-

javik) so many of their translations or adopted terms have an Icelandic sound to them.

Names: None of their words can even be remotely pronounced by most land based creatures so they usually translate their names by using the literal meanings of them or simply take a new name. Since many took names while visiting Reykjavik the samples have that flavor. Other took names while in Freeport, New York, Charleston and so on; thus they'll have a different regional flavor.

Male Names: Adalbjorn, Aki, Bjolan, Bjorn, Kristlaugur, Lorens, Osvald, Otkell, Otti, Tor, Vekell, Vestar, Willum, Yngvar, Zrostur

Female Names: Albína, Ágústa, Bára, Birgitta, Drífa, Elfa, Elín, Hanna, Inga, Lára, Ragna, Ragnheiður, Silja, Sjöfn

Adventurers: The sea, while abundant, lacks variety. Everything tastes of salt; colors and textures are muted. This leads to a fervent desire amongst many orca to travel; and amongst others to purchase above-sea goods. Orca caravans travel the seas to trade and orca adventurers take jobs as caravan guards, escorts, and messengers to see a bit of the world. Once at a port the orca may decide to simply sample some of the local culture (at a tavern typically; culture equals beer in many orca minds) or may decide to take a longer journey across the land. Their poor vision hinders above-sea travel; but their size and strength more than make up for any lost agility and they can perceive well enough to get along without much difficulty, especially if they have allies. Moreover, their talents work well in a dungeon so adventurers are frequently willing to take on an orca ally. Wealthy orca can acquire magic items to make up for their poor vision; talented orca can take on a warden power as well.

ORCA RACIAL TRAITS

- +4 Strength, -2 Dexterity, -2 Wisdom, -2 Intelligence

- Young orca are Medium Size, but not by much. Young orca receive no special bonuses or penalties from size.
- Orca are slow and ponderous on land and have an initial base speed of 20 feet. Underwater, they have a base speed of 30 feet when swimming. Orca, unlike whales, can breathe underwater.
- +3 Armor bonus due to their blubber. +1 Natural armor bonus from blubber. Their blubber also provides protection from cold and lightning; subtract 5 points of damage per round from either of these sources.
- Orca have big jaws with lots of teeth and can bite for 1d6 lethal damage; this counts as an unarmed attack. When they grow to large size the bite damage increases to 1d8.
- Blindsight: Orca can “see” by listening carefully to the dispersion of sound around them; this allows them to locate objects and creatures within 120 feet underwater or 60 feet above sea (double these distances when they have the assistance of a sonic torch). A silence spell negates this ability and forces the orca to rely on its weak vision, which has a maximum range of 20 feet.
- Automatic Languages: Common and Orcan. Bonus Languages: Aquatic, Locathah, Merfolk, and Triton.
- Favored Class: Ranger; the orca have a natural desire to wander and hunt.

RACIAL ADVANCEMENT

Orca are significantly more powerful than standard characters. As such you must take racial advancement levels to gain the benefits of being a fully grown orca; since orca are long-lived and they are racially quite powerful you should feel free to take your time in acquiring racial advancement levels. It's not unreasonable for you to play a fairly young orca for an entire campaign.

Skill Points: 2 + Int modifier.

Hit Die: d8

RACIAL SKILLS

You may apply skill points gained from racial advancement to either the following skill set or the skill set from another class in which you already have at least one level; you cannot mix and match between the skill sets in a given level though.

Climb (Str), Concentration (Con), Craft (Int), Handle Animal (Cha), Heal (Wis), Hide (Dex), Jump (Str), Knowledge (nature) (Int), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Profession (Wis), Ride (Dex), Search (Int), Spot (Wis), Swim (Str), Use Rope (Dex), and Survival (Wis).

RACIAL FEATURES

Large Size: Your size increases to Large. As a Large creature you take a –1 Size penalty to Armor Class, a –1 Size penalty on attack rolls, and a –4 size penalty on Hide checks. However, you can use larger weapons and your lifting and carrying limits are 50% greater than those of Medium-Size characters; your reach also increases to 10 feet.

Thicker Blubber: Your blubber gets thicker, increasing the Armor bonus to a total of +4 and your Natural armor bonus to a total of +2.

ORCA EQUIPMENT

The Orca wield two pieces of fairly unique equipment.

SONIC TORCH

The first is the sonic torch. It weighs about 5 pounds and costs \$150. The torch is a short rod at the end of which a small metal or ceramic cage is affixed; the cage itself is networked with wires and sheets of metal. Below the point where the cage attaches there's a small chamber. What the orca do is place a pellet in the chamber and set the pellet on fire; the pellet burns with a strong and steady white flame, like that of an underwater torch. They don't use the intense light though, instead, as the pellet burns the gasses and smoke rushing out create a high-pitched whistling tone. This tone is inaudible to normal humans but doubles the range of the orca's Blindsight. The pellets are quite light, one fifth of a pound each but they cost \$20 and only burn for 2 hours.

Exotic Weapons	Cost	Weight	Dmg (S)	Dmg (M)	Dmg (L)	Critical	Range	Damage Type
Two-handed Auroran Lance*	\$1,500	15 lbs.	1d8	1d10	1d12	x3	-	Piercing

AURORAN LANCE

The orca favor their Auroran Lances; largely because the lance incorporates a sonic torch into it's base. However the Lance is an effective weapon by itself as well.

- * The lance has a reach of ten feet. The lance is well balanced to shortening up the grip, and so can be used at five foot range as well.

HALCÓN

Description: Pronounced hal-cohn. Halcóni ruins dominate Mesoamerica. You can find them in the deepest reaches of the rain forest and the on tallest peaks of the Andes. The remnants of a great city lie in the basin where First World Mexico City thrives. Adventurers and explorers, including some well-funded teams of field archaeologists from Tempest Argon, have mounted numerous expeditions to these places. In addition to bringing back some marvelous piles of loot (when they came back at all) they performed some valuable research. Explorers noted that in almost all the ruins, from the Chilean Andes to Mexico City (Tenochtitlan) itself, all doors are closed and locked. Every last one, including cabinets and outhouses, anything with a latch is shut up tight. Even more odd, doors that had clearly been opened recently (within the last century) were also closed, even when it was clear that the door had been spiked open. However, none of the explorers ever actually saw a door shut by itself. Regardless, prepared adventurers make sure to secure a variety of means of escape. On exploring the explorers found other things they expected to find. Battlefields, graveyards and tombs and cairns, secret laboratories, and horrid prisons. They found few weapons in the armories they investigated and several magic weapons just lying on the ground amongst a few piles of bone. Most think this clearly indicates that the Halcóni Empire fell during the Vanishing and that perhaps some powerful gate warden, or the city itself, played a role. That the power of a gate warden might still infest the ruins makes many adventurers think twice about testing their skills there. Tayla Voorhees took some illicit chemicals and experienced a vision in the Tenochtitlan ruins. This is her experience:

"I found myself amongst the stone halls of this ancient seat of empire. They had stacked bags of corn against the walls higher than my head and people were sleeping on the floor. A little girl appeared to notice me; sometimes that happens in these things. So I smiled at her and tried to say that everything would be okay

but children know when you're lying. She smiled back anyway because I think they also know when you mean well. I walked through the halls for a time and as I progressed the halls occasionally shook with great echoing thumps and little bits of sand and mortar came trickling down through the seams between the stones. I think I flashed forward a bit, perhaps some years or even longer. Somewhen during the flash I caught a fragment from an impassioned voice saying 'they'll serve us; I know the law...' and then I came again to the same place and this impossibly blue, sparkling, even glowing, water had filled it so high that I was submerged to my hips. I felt such peace at that moment. I awoke moments later and couldn't imagine how a place this steeped in violence and blood could ever produce that feeling."

Personality: Anyone who has lived with a cat already knows this. Anyone who hasn't already has some preconceptions that it's best not to go into here. Despite the fact that every myth and stereotype has some truth to it one should keep in mind that the particular ethnic offshoot of the halcón in the Americas derives from the jaguar. The halcón has all the edginess and curiosity that you would expect. But at the same time a halcón can appear almost completely relaxed; as if it were the only thing that mattered in the world. Do not let this fool you; the halcón is a predator and while it may appear to rest it remains constantly ready for motion.

Physical Description: A sinuous grace marks the halcón; a kind of feral shadow obscures their features. Halcón tend to have lithe bodies and dark complexions. They typically have streaks of white or gray running through their mostly dark and lustrous hair. They have brown eyes but these turn either gold or silver during a partial transformation. As the children of an ancient and noble empire they favor elegant clothing and jewelry, gold and jade being particular favorites (though the Halcón further south prefer silver).

Relations: Halcón cannot reproduce with each other; they must always take a mate of another race. The halcón presented here results from the mating of a halcón with a human. Attributes will slightly differ for other pairings. Halcón don't usually have much difficulty finding partners since they're so damnably attractive but the legacy of empire and their otherness makes many wary of them. A human might be willing to dally with a halcón but rarely takes one as a permanent partner. For most halcón this is exactly the way they like it. Domestic life does not appeal and they get anxious if confined too long. Given this they

have tense relations with other races; humans find them both fascinating and a bit too alien for comfort. Few openly discriminate against a halcón but the halcón must always live at the periphery of common society. Halcón in the upper classes fare much better; they fit in well amongst the elves and hsüan.

Alignment: Like any race the alignment of an individual halcón belongs to that individual. Their temperament inclines them away from law, and their predatory nature can make them a bit prone to neutrality. However, ultimately they're just halcón, perhaps a bit self-centered and aloof but also passionate. They can champion a cause, at least for a while, with incredible fervor.

Halcón Lands: Since the Vanishing the halcón have lived on the edges of society. They do not group together since they don't even find each other terribly attractive. Humans and elves fascinate them the most. Typically they'll either live near the lands of other races, or purchase a private apartment within the aristocratic neighborhoods of a city. This lends them a sort of tragic sadness; their one home, the empire they once ruled, forever lost and now they're forced to live in the interstices of other kingdoms.

Religion: Since most halcón hail from Central and South America they are typically raised Catholic. Their practice of the religion falls away fairly often once they reach adulthood since many parishes don't accept them; but you can never really take the Catholic out of someone, so even those who do stray or doubt occasionally cross themselves or call on Mother Mary.

Language: Most halcón speak Spanish though this varies according to place of birth. Modern halcón cannot understand the writings of the lost empire; it used a language most similar to Olmec.

Names: Latino names work well for most halcón. Their parents tend to react in one of two ways when choosing a name; they either accentuate the uniqueness of their child and choose an unusual name, or try to suppress the oddity and choose a particularly ordinary or common name.

Adventurers: Halcón almost have to adventure. They can never stay in any one place too long and possess a strong drive to materially succeed in the world since only the wealthy are jaded enough to accept them easily. Halcón make good sorcerers and bards, of course, but they also have the temperament for a fighter or rogue.

HALCÓN RACIAL TRAITS

- +2 Charisma, -2 Wisdom
- Medium Size: Halcón receive no special bonuses or penalties from size.
- Halcón base speed is 30 feet.
- Low-light Vision: Halcón can see twice as far as a human in starlight, moonlight, torchlight, and similar conditions of poor illumination. They retain the ability to distinguish color and detail under these conditions.
- Halcón have preternaturally sharp senses; they receive a +2 racial bonus on Listen, Spot, and Search checks. Like an elf they are entitled to a Search check by merely passing within 5 feet of a secret or concealed door; they notice it as if they were actively looking for the door
- Transformation feats available. A halcón can transform using these feats a number of times per day equal to their Charisma bonus +2. They only get one set of uses that must be spread over both sets of feats.
- Automatic Languages: Common (local). Bonus Languages: Dwarven, Elven, Halfling, Gnome, and Gnoll.
- Favored Class: Bard, the halcón must learn to master a variety of skills and abilities to get by in the world and this jack-of-all-trades class serves them best.

HALCÓN PARTIAL TRANSFORMATION [GENERAL, RACIAL]

A Mesoamerican halcón can partially transform to a jaguar form. Typically, a strong emotional response provokes the first use of this feat, fear, depression, or love could be such a response.

Prerequisite: race is Halcón.

Benefit: During a partial transformation halcón grow fur over their body, their head hair grows shorter (about half normal length), they grow small claws, and their eyes become even more feral. While in this form their low-light vision improves so that they can see three times as far as a normal human in starlight. Their fur provides a +1 armor bonus (again, not natural armor) and their claws do 1d4 damage. They also gain a +2 racial bonus to Hide and Move Silent checks and a +4 racial bonus to Balance checks. However, they lose the ability to vocalize well; their voices become ragged and harsh. They cannot speak and cannot cast spells that require a Verbal component; this latter limitation can be overcome with the Voice of the Transformed feat.

Halcón in partial transformation may wield weapons and use tools.

HALCÓN FULL TRANSFORMATION [GENERAL, RACIAL]

A Mesoamerican halcón can fully transform into a jaguar. Typically, a very strong emotional response or physical trauma provokes the learning of this feat. Falling close to death (i.e. below 0 hit points), or true and deep passion could provide the catalyst for developing this feat. Given that these experiences seldom occur when a player is actually applying experience to their character you can wait for the provoking event to occur in game, then allow the character to use an upcoming feat to develop the power, or simply assume that it all happens off-screen. If happening off screen you might ask for a small story (perhaps a page or so) describing how the character developed the ability; you could then use this as an adventure hook later on.

Prerequisite: Halcón Partial Transformation, race is Halcón.

Benefits: While in jaguar form they receive the following additional benefits:

- +2 Dexterity
- Jaguar form base speed is 40 feet or 20 feet climbing.
- Natural Equipment: Halcón receive a +1 armor bonus from their fur, can bite for 1d6 damage, and have claws that do 1d3 damage.
- In jaguar form halcón receive a +4 racial bonus to Hide and Move Silently checks and a +8 racial bonus to Balance checks. In areas of tall grass or undergrowth the Hide bonus improves to +8.
- Pounce (Ex): If a transformed halcón leaps upon a foe during the first round of combat, it can make a full attack even if it has already taken a move action.
- Improved Grab (Ex): To use this ability, the halcón must hit with its bite attack. If it gets a hold, it can rake.
- Rake (Ex): A halcón that gets a hold can make two rake attacks (+6 melee) with its hind legs for 1d3+1 damage each. If the halcón pounces on an opponent, it can also rake.
- Limited Manipulation: In jaguar form a halcón can neither speak (normally) nor manipulate objects using their paws. Thus they cannot cast spells with Verbal, Somatic, or even Material components. They also cannot wield weapons or tools. Unlike a partial transformation you cannot overcome the vocalization limitation with the

Voice of the Transformed feat.

HSÜAN

Pronounced shoo-wahn. Some people have a fey-like quality to them. Their eyes twinkle a bit; their features tend towards the lean and elfin; they see things that others simply don't see, patterns and connections emerging out of the mundane. Every sentient race has a few specimens like this; these are the hsüan. The hsüan aren't really a race in the common sense of the term. They're more like a special talent that many different species can possess. However, the escidi claim that the hsüan are one of great races. Moreover, there's a definite physical difference between the hsüan and other members of their base species.

One chooses to play a hsüan differently from other races. You choose an ordinary race and one of your initial feats must be the Hsüan Spirit feat. If you have that then you may take the Hsüan racial advancement level at any time you desire (even as your initial level).

Personality: Hsüan tend to be curious, playful, and, at the same time, calm. Their vision of the world encompasses so much (some would say their vision reads so much into the world) that the place remains constantly fascinating. Their connection with the arcane lends them a fey quality, as if they were constantly distracted by a distant sound. Most hsüan favor vibrant colors and sparkling jewelry, though not so much that the material overwhelms the senses.

Physical Description: Hsüan appear as slender, almost alien versions of their base race. Their features tend to be narrow and more lithe, and their eyes can take on the most exotic hues (metallic, bright floral colors, swirls, and so on). For species with hair hsüan tend to have exotic hair coloring as well. For species like raptors and escidi who can have multi-colored skin, their hsüan can have skin like an elaborate mosaic. Naturally, hsüan stand out and find themselves lusted after. Hsüan live 50% longer than average members of their base race; multiply their ages for each age category by 1.5.

Relations: The exotic beauty of the hsüan makes them both appealing and foreign at the same time. They'll usually generate an extreme reaction one way or the other when they first encounter someone. For this reason hsüan carefully observe etiquette when dealing with others for the first time. Otherwise hsüan have many of the same prejudices and habits as their base race. They tend to be more understanding though due

to their empathy and perception.

Alignment: Hsüan feel things deeply; if someone else feels pain the hsüan can sense that hurt himself. This makes it unusual for a hsüan to be too inconsiderate or callous; they have to deliberately desire that someone suffer in order to act in ways that many people might find morally permissible. This means that hsüan tend to be good of one sort or another; they also tend to be forgiving, even in matters of justice.

Hsüan Lands: The hsüan have no racial homeland, per se, since they're in many ways just special members of another race. However, quite a few hsüan eventually migrate to the dream state. Centuries ago some of the hsüan founded a city, sculpted from the sheer and jagged rocks of high mountains. This is Shamballa.

Religion: Hsüan frequently follow the religion of their upbringing for a time but what they see in the world tests their faith in many ways. For some their faith passes the test and becomes stronger; however, many see the strengths and faults of their belief and other beliefs too well. This may lead to either agnosticism, deism, or a spiritual quest that takes them across the globe.

Language: Naturally, hsüan have no language of their own. However, their appreciation of subtle movements and motions mean that most of them are masters of innuendo. This leads to frustration though because frequently only other hsüan get their jokes.

Names: Most hsüan keep their given names but some take new names when fully awakened (awakening typically occurs when they take their hsüan racial advancement level). Hsüan favor new-agey names like Moonshadow, or Violet Skye. Wiccan names and names derived from sixties rock bands are also common.

Adventurers: Hsüan have the sight and those with the sight want to see things in person. Pictures, paintings and photographs don't reveal the truth, not to those who know what it's like to *really* look at something. Thus, hsüan leave their homes and families to see the world and know more about it. On their travels they frequently provide what assistance they can to those in need since hsüan can feel that need themselves. Hsüan also travel on spiritual journeys, to find enlightenment

or truth or God. As such, hsüan tend to be creatures of deep principle.

PLAYING A HSÜAN

You do not choose to play a hsüan the way you do other races. Choose your base race normally and take as one of your initial feats the Hsüan Spirit feat. You may then choose to take the hsüan racial advancement level when you see fit. Hsüan do not have core racial traits, these are subsumed under the Hsüan Spirit feat. The remainder of their abilities come from the racial advancement level.

RACIAL ADVANCEMENT

Hsüan may choose to specifically develop their racial abilities by taking a racial advancement level. They call taking their racial advancement level awakening because of the substantial change it brings over them.

Skill Points: 4 + Int modifier.

Hit Die: d4

RACIAL SKILLS

You may apply skill points gained from racial advancement to either the following skill set or the skill set from another class in which you already have at least one level; you cannot mix and match between the skill sets in a given level though.

Balance (Dex), Bluff (Cha), Concentration (Con), Craft (Int), Decipher Script (Int, exclusive skill), Diplomacy (Cha), Gather Information (Cha), Knowledge (all skills, taken individually) (Int), Listen (Wis), Perform (Cha), Profession (Wis), Scry (Int, exclusive skill), Search (Int), Sense Motive (Wis), Speak Language (Int), Spellcraft (Int), and Spot (Wis)

RACIAL FEATURES

Affinity for Power: Hsüan have a natural facility with arcane magic. You receive a +2 to any and all arcane caster levels for purposes of determining spell effects (such as damage, range, penetration, and other level dependent effects).

Observe Synchronicity (Sp): Hsüan can see synchronicity. This does not come across as a sort of glow, but instead a noticing of patterns that others ordinarily ignore. This ability allows you to see magic as if using the spell, *Detect Magic*, at will. While this

Hsüan Level	Base Attack	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special	Defense Bonus
1	+0	+0	+0	+1	+2 Charisma, Affinity for power, Observe Synchronicity	+1

ability is active you cannot see very well normally; this lowers your Spot and Search checks by 4 and attack rolls by 2. This also provides clues to possible ambush or danger, meaning that you are never caught flat-footed, even when your *detect magic* ability is not active.

ESCIDI (SERPENT FOLK)

Description: Pronounced ess-skid-ee. The Escidi do not care if you fear them, hate them, or loathe them. They have been on these two worlds since the beginning and expect to see the other races die away or fall into slavery before the end.

Personality: Civilized escidi scheme; they wallow in scheming and take tremendous joy in watching arcane, complex, and intricate plans fall into place and finally work. Even failures do not bother them that much because with schemes as complex and potentially lucrative as theirs one must expect catastrophe. Risk is the price of ambition.

Physical Description: Escidi are bipedal snakes with arms. When robed they appear to be something over five feet in height, but if they stretch out their neck and tail they're quite long. Their scaly skin feels cool to the touch and is mottled with a variety of colors; the more primitive, degenerate, escidi tend to be mostly black while civilized escidi can have a variety of colorings. Escidi have no allotted time on the world; they do age however and feel the effects of aging such that they would normally live for about one hundred years without arcane assistance. However, they *do* have arcane assistance, and this allows them to extend their lives almost indefinitely. As such, almost all escidi die as a result of violence or accident. The typical escidi dies within five hundred years.

Relations: For the most part, escidi see other races as food, sacrifices, tools, or research material. In turn, other races loathe the escidi. When the escidi empires still straddled the world they engineered a race of servitors from other reptiles; that servitor race survives to this day as the lizard folk. Since the destruction of the escidi empire the lizard folk have established their own communities and even some primitive civilizations. However, the escidi constructed the lizard folk with a primitive, instinctual urge to obey them. This atavistic urge remains. The mere voice of an escidi can act as a *charm* spell against lizard folk. The escidi also have a complex relationship with the Roa. Escidi have discovered (through research on their own race, typically the degenerates) that traces of the Roa

can be found running in their system. Lost documents attribute this to a variety of causes; regardless, this helps explain some of their arcane power.

Alignment: The escidi don't care about others. A psychologist would classify the typical escidi as an almost complete sociopath; they have no fellow feelings for anything other than other escidi. They could torture a halfling child to death and calmly take notes regarding the volume and tone of the child's screams. They feel an odd sort of allegiance for each other while they care little to nothing for the degenerate escidi. They do have an almost primitive urge to advance the interests of escidi in general. One escidi once described it as similar to the desire a nicotine addict has for a cigarette; it's almost habitual. In alignment terms the escidi would come across as lawful or neutral evil. Even the rare escidi who convert to other ways (typically for religious reasons) must work to feel sympathy for others and overcome their urges to advance the interests of their race.

Escidi Lands: Advanced escidi, like rats, pigeons, and cockroaches, usually live within the confines of larger societies. Less frequently, advanced escidi live in small enclaves isolated from the rest of the world; most races kill escidi on sight. Gnolls for instance have such a phobia of the serpent folk that they'll either run on sight or respond with overwhelming force and brutality. This means the escidi must hide. The degenerates live at the bottoms of swamps, the hidden recesses of forests, or in the sewers of large cities. The civilized escidi take the form of the dominant race and set up secret enclaves within cities or kingdoms.

Religion: The escidi have no values to speak of, thus they must serve gods or interstitial entities in order to access divine power. Most escidi worship the Unspeakable One, a vast, mad, alien beast of terrible power. The Unspeakable One and some other creatures like it apparently live around or near distant stars in the Second World. Outer space in the Second World is nothing like outer space in the First World so there's little way to know exactly what it's like near the Unspeakable One's court but Mehdi Nadar (author of *Voices of the Outer Void*, written in 728 CE) claims to have walked along the shore of a dark lake where the Unspeakable One waits. Mehdi argued that space in the void is shaped differently than space near Earth; Mehdi said that it was "thicker," whatever that means. After the cataclysm a number of escidi changed their ways, figuring that worshipping the creature that destroyed their civilization wasn't such a good idea.

These escidi typically changed to worshipping Yig, an interstitial serpent god. The cult of the Unspeakable One has ruthlessly hunted down and exterminated these “splitters” ever since.

Language: The serpent folk have their own language passed down through history simply called Escidi. The language is rich with hissing sibilants, the perfect kind of voice to use when scheming or gloating over a captured enemy. The Escidi language has some similarities to Draconic but not enough for them to understand each other.

Names: The escidi are few enough in number that they dispense with anything resembling a family name. Advanced escidi typically choose several names over the course of their long lives; these have lots of “S” sounds and long vowels; the escidi tend to speak somewhat slowly as if it were a way to drag out the torture just a bit longer. When coming up with a true Escidi name try to avoid sounds that require use of the lips (like ‘P’) or that involve the tongue at the front of the mouth (like ‘D’ and ‘T’). Sounds from the back of the throat are easier for an escidi. Many escidi forget or never use their Escidi names since they spend so long under cover. In these cases they typically go by their cover name which will be whatever is appropriate to the region. True Escidi names are much the same for both males and females; gender doesn’t play an important role in Escidi society.

Male or Female Names: Hass’shala, Kiki’ssi, Ah’chiss, Go’cheche, Chege, Okoth, Rakanja, Selassie, Shika, Kohana

Adventurers: Escidi don’t normally adventure; adventuring takes away time from their scheming. However, escidi might contract out an adventuring party and even accompany them to some tomb to recover an artifact; afterwards they might choose to trap the adventurers in the tomb or sacrifice them to their horrid gods but in the meantime they’ll be adventuring (typically in disguise). An escidi run as a player character might adventure as a release for their ambitious urges. They might also hope that through exploration and contact with many different experiences they can overcome their nature. Perhaps becoming a warden (rare amongst the escidi) would help calm them; past escidi who have taken on warden classes mellowed dramatically, some even claim to know what sympathy feels like after a few years as a warden.

NPC RACES

Some of the races I include here are intended primarily as non-player races. Both the Escidi and the Orca can be problematic for player characters. There’s nothing intrinsically wrong with either but social and physical circumstances can make them inconvenient for a player. Both races do count as major races though and you may encounter them fairly often as gamemaster run characters. Regardless, I provide their racial attributes so that, if you desire to play the race, you may do so relatively easily.

ESCIDI RACIAL TRAITS

- +2 Charisma, -2 Constitution
- Medium Size: As Medium-size creatures escidi have no special bonuses or penalties due to their size.
- Escidi base speed is 30 feet on land and 15 feet in water (swimming). Their body shape makes them naturally suited for moving in the water.
- +1 Armor bonus due to their supple, but leathery skin (note that this is an Armor bonus, not Natural Armor bonus, thus it does not stack with worn armor).
- Darkvision: Escidi can see in the dark up to 60 feet. Darkvision is black and white only, but it is otherwise like normal sight, and escidi can function just fine with no light at all.
- Their serpentine form gives them a +2 racial bonus to Escape Artist and Hide checks.
- Civilized escidi have nasty fangs but their poison sacs have atrophied long ago. They can bite for 1d4 damage but loathe doing so since that’s what the degenerates do; this counts as an unarmed attack.
- Automatic Languages: Common and Escidi. Bonus Languages: Draconic, Ancient Arabic, Ancient Chinese, Ancient Greek, Ancient Latin, Olmec.
- Favored Class: Sorcerer. Something in the blood of the escidi gives them a natural affinity for raw, uncontrolled, arcane power.

RACIAL ADVANCEMENT

As escidi age they develop some potent natural arcane abilities. You may take racial advancement levels to gain the benefits of being a fully developed escidi but there’s less of a restriction on how and when you do this since these abilities are not purely age related.

Escidi Level	Base Attack	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special	Defense Bonus
1	+0	+0	+0	+1	+2 Int; Assume Form	+0

Skill Points: 2 + Int modifier.

Hit Die: d4

RACIAL SKILLS

You may apply skill points gained from racial advancement to either the following skill set or the skill set from another class in which you already have at least one level; you cannot mix and match between the skill sets in a given level though.

Concentration (Con), Craft (Int), Knowledge (arcana) (Int), Profession (Wis), and Spellcraft (Int)

RACIAL FEATURES

Assume Form (Sp): Escidi have access to a special power called Assume Form. This power allows the escidi to polymorph, as the *polymorph self* spell but with a permanent duration, to the form of a creature the escidi has fully consumed in the past. An escidi can fully consume a creature of Medium-size or less. To do this the escidi actually swallows the entire creature, whole, then lies around digesting it for about a week. After that, the escidi can polymorph to the form, or any other previously consumed form, as a Spell-like action three times per day (with an effective caster level of 8). The form must be Small or Medium-size. Most escidi have a small library of forms they can assume.

VED QAYAT

Description: Pronounced ved KYE-yat. The Ved Qayat pose the greatest threat to security in the Northeast. Under the command of Lord Trespass they have advanced out of Nova Scotia into regions of Maine and the Waste. While still a long way from New York, the major organizations of the city make certain to fund and support those who guard the borders.

Personality: Centuries in the Forge have hardened the Qayati heart. The Qayat practice a ruthless asceticism. Pleasure leads to loss; ambition makes one great. These principles make their society a viciously class-conscious one. A child born into the Ved Qayat has no limitations other than those she places on herself. However, she will find no sympathy for the losses or tragedies in her life. She has arrived at her station as a result of her own choices, talents, and efforts and if that station is low that simply indicates that she was found wanting. The Qayat is a matriarchal society yet they serve Lord Trespass as a result of a deal made in the

Drat Retribution (described in the nearby diary). Men still have significant roles in many social activities; however, the leadership of the society as a whole falls to women. The Qayat are monstrosly pragmatic in almost everything they do; this can make them useful allies for short periods of time because they are at least predictable and will make a deal when it's in their own best interest, usually. The exception comes when you have stoked their temper too long with too much. When that happens even Lord Trespass can't rein the Qayati in. Keep in mind that the Qayati discipline exists to temper the Qayati passion.

Physical Description: The Ved Qayat have human, somewhat Hispanic, features and span human heights and weights. The Qayati skin has a metallic, coppery sheen acquired from centuries in the Forge. Particular Qayat may have a slightly more or less brassy coloration to their skin. Qayat men can have thick facial hair though many like to stay clean shaven. Qayati women frequently wear their luxurious hair long; the weight and sharpness of it mean that it can actually be used as a weapon by the well-trained. Qayati hair, like their skin, has a metallic sheen though the coloration covers a much wider range. Dark black hair is common but so are metallic colors such as silver, brass, and gold (or mixtures thereof) or oxidized-appearing colors such as a bluish-green copper. Qayati eyes also have metallic coloring, silver and gray being most common. Qayat live somewhat short lives; the atmosphere of the Forge takes its toll on their health, corrupting the very essence of their species. Few Qayat live past the age of 70. They come to maturity at the same age as humans though.

Relations: The Qayat see other races as inferior, but, other than that, have nothing in particular against any of the other races. Humans are variable enough that it's best to handle them on a case by case basis. Elves are pretty close to useless. Orcs are a mess. Gnolls make good allies. The orca are too potentially dangerous to let live. And so on. When the Qayat deal with other races remember that they are not snobs, but they are impatient; if they don't respect someone or have grown bored with the conversation they'll simply move on and ignore the person. A kind of casual inconsiderateness marks Qayati dealings with others.

Alignment: You do not spend centuries serving Lord Trespass without some of him rubbing off on you. The

Qayat practice discipline and believe that justice must matter above all else; but their moral coda and system of justice has been corrupted over the centuries to value ambition and the acquisition of power through proscribed means. Most Qayati will be lawful evil, certainly most in any position of power. Rebels, though, often rebel against the entire system, becoming chaotic good; some of these rebels have even developed a special quasi-monasticism that embraces change.

Ved Qayat Lands: The Ved Qayat currently occupy Nova Scotia. The landscape here remains withered and blasted from the Quebec Incident. But the Qayat have little problem with harsh landscapes. Ever the pragmatists, the Qayat simply live in occupied houses or camp out. Most Qayat have permanently left the Forge now but they still occupy and run the Dalos Fortress. Qayat cities demonstrate the Qayat pragmatism; many are laid out in convenient geometrical patterns and can seem somewhat sterile. However, the Qayat have a love for gardening (rock gardening as well) and their gardens can be exquisite pieces of minimalist art.

Religion: Trespass provides the channel for most Qayati clerical power; this helps him retain his position, as does the promise of wealthy lands in North America. Some Qayati matriarchs have formed a small cult serving Mistress Evyskaia, the wolverine, of the Lightning Wall; Trespass has devoted considerable effort to rooting this potential rebellion out but the effort he expends on that detracts from his ability to advance out from Nova Scotia.

Language: The Qayat language sounds like a cross between Hebrew and Arabic. The script though lacks the flowing quality of Arabic lettering, instead

consisting of sharp, jagged letters, an alphabet made for carving in stone.

Names: The Qayat choose simple but symbolic names for their children, hope, peace, justice, intelligent one, and so on. Simple words describing the aspirations the parents have for their children. To produce a full name present the given name first, then ved (for a daughter), then the mother's given name. For example, Chaya's daughter, Ilana could have the full name Ilana ved'Chaya. The space between 'ved' and the mother's given name can just be a space, or one may put a dash or apostrophe there. For sons use the connector, 'dal', and the mother's given name.

Male Names: Amir, Chanan, Dov, Eitan, Gilad, Idan, Nir, Oren, Shai, Tamir, Akil, Asad, Dharr, Fath, Ghazi, Husam, Jabbar, Khaldun, Mazin, Numair, Qays, Saqr

Female Names: Aviv, Chaya, Eliana, Hadar, Ilana, Levana, Nava, Shalva, Tamar, Akilah, Bahira, Dalal, Farah, Ghaniyah, Intisar, Karida, Malika, Nasira, Qubilah, Rashida, Sahar, Tahirah

Adventurers: The Ved Qayat present one of the greatest threats to peace and liberty on the North American continent. That means players are bound to want to play one. Plenty of reasons can be given for why a Qayat might exile herself from the community; Lord Trespass' draconian rule (and the fact that Trespass is a male beneath all that fire and brimstone) grates on many of the Qayat. Other Qayat may question the values given to them by their society and seek to explore other possibilities. Even faithful Qayat may simply desire a new method of increasing their skills,

FRAGMENTS OF QADIRA D'RAL'S WAR DIARY (CIRCA 1556 CE)

...To say I hated the man would do an injustice to the word. My blood burned at the sound of his name and my sisters smoldered in silence as we marched toward the Paq Olqinus Gate. What he had done to us could not be undone, could not be apologized for, could not be atoned, not without pain that is. And we, the Ved of the Qayat basin would extract that pain in droves. Hell would not shield him from us.

The fight for the gate went better than expected. Thayd's forces had lost courage over the past months of our campaign and abandoned him. The lessons we have learned in this war: harden yourself against pain and pity; ruthlessness wins battles; ruthlessness brings fear; fear wins wars. All one needs is the will to see what one starts through to the bloody end. Nasira, my blood sister since the Eitan Dune Sea, broke her back during last night's fighting. I saw her lying on the red rock of the crater floor, her face twisted slightly but her eyes turned to the purpling sky of dawn. She would not be able to go with us into the gate. Thayd had retreated to hell, or at least some part of the Forge that looked like it. She asked me to kill her and I did so. All one needs is the will, and the fear of course.

I sit now on the basalt shards overlooking the black iron fortress of Dalos. Thayd and the remnants of his army have taken shelter inside under the guardianship of Lady Dalos the Stolen herself. I hear he has promised her Mars, all of it, should they survive us. To get here to the shards I had to deal too, with Trespass. We'll end this tonight.

advancing their interests, and thus achieving the Qayat definition of success.

VED QAYAT RACIAL TRAITS

- +2 Dexterity, -2 Constitution, -2 Intelligence, +2 Wisdom; the Qayat embrace a mixture of discipline and passion, inclining them towards the more creative and spiritual, rather than analytic, endeavors.
- Medium Size: Ved Qayat receive no special bonuses or penalties due to size.
- Ved Qayat base speed is 30 feet.
- +2 Armor bonus and +1 natural armor bonus due to their slightly metallic skin. They may also take the Second Forging and Third Forging feats.
- Automatic Languages: Common and Qayati. Bonus Languages: Dwarven, Elven, Gnoll, Infernal, and Orc.
- Favored Class: Monk. The Ved Qayat have a natural inclination to discipline and asceticism. Their talent also allows them to take other class levels after advancing as a monk and then return to choosing monk levels later.

SECOND FORGING [GENERAL, RACIAL]

The Ved Qayat call their birth the First Forging; this brings them into the world and the violence of childbirth hardens them for the conflicts they will face in the future. Many Ved Qayat undergo special rituals later in life called the Second and Third Forging. These require skill, life energy, and material components. The ritual for the Second Forging requires that molten copper be poured across the skin of the Qayat; after this their natural toughness is significantly enhanced.

Prerequisite: race is Ved Qayat.

Benefit: Acquiring this feat requires a ritual that costs 9 influence points (9,000 gp) and 720 experience points. After the ritual your racial armor bonus increases to +4 and your natural armor bonus increases to +2. You may enhance this ability to granting a +6 armor bonus and +3 natural armor bonus by spending an additional 15 influence points (15,000 gp) and 1,200 experience points. You may do this at any time.

THIRD FORGING [GENERAL, RACIAL]

Qayat that have undergone the Third Forging are called “thrice forged.” These are the Qayat of legend. The Third Forging ritual is much like the Second Forging ritual but the Qayat pours iron over her skin instead

of copper.

Prerequisite: Second Forging (enhanced); race is Ved Qayat.

Benefit: Acquiring this feat requires a ritual that costs 21 influence points (21,000 gp) and 1,680 experience points. After the ritual your armor bonus increases to +8 and your natural armor bonus increases to +4. You may enhance this power with a ritual costing an additional 27 influence points (27,000 gp) and 2,160 experience points. This raises your armor bonus to +10 and your natural armor bonus to +5.

MORE NAMES

Hopi and Navajo Male Names: Ahiliya, Ahote, Alo-saka, Bidziil, Cha'tima, Cheveyo, Gaagii, Harkahome, Hania, Honani, Kele, Kwatoko, Machakw, Naalnish, Niichaad, Niyol, Omawnakw, Pachu'a, Qaletaq, Qochata, Sani, Shilah, Sowi'ngwa, T'iis, Tse, Wikvaya, Yiska

Hopi and Navajo Female Names: Ankti, Catori, Cha'kwaina, Chu'mana, Hehewuti, Kachina, Kaya, Lenmana, Mansi, Muna, Nascha, Nova, Nukpana, Ooljee, Pakwa, Pavati, Powaq, Sahkyo, Shadi, Sihu, Soyala, Tablita, Takala, Tiva, Una, Waki, Yamka, Yazhi, Zihna

Cajun and Creole Surnames: Allain, Arceneaux, Aucoin, Babin, Babineaux, Benoit, Bernard, Blanchard, Boudreaux, Bourg, Boutin, Brasseaux, Broussard, Brun, Bujeau, Castille, Chiasson, Cormier, Cyr, Daigle, Derouen, Doucet, Dugas, Dupuis, Gaudet, Gautreaux, Godin, Granger, Gravois, Guidry, Guilbeau, Jeansonne, Landry, Langlinais, LeBlanc, Leger, LeJeune, Guidry, Martin, Melancon, Mire, Mouton, Naquin, Orillon, Part, Pellerin, Picard, Pitre, Poirier, Richard, Rivet, Rodrigue, Roger, Roy, Saunier, Thibodeaux, Vincent.

THE OTHER RACES

In addition to the races described in this chapter, the Second World can include any of the races from the core rules you desire. Try to remember when including a race in the Second World that the world has seen a great deal of change over the centuries. Ships have traveled the seas and carried both travelers and cultures with them. Exiles from the First World exert a continuous influence on the history of the Second World. Moreover, when someone becomes an exile they may become an elf, dwarf, or raptor, but their religious and political ideals remain the same. This means that culture has a larger impact on a character

than race. I don't have all the possible cultural effects listed here but there should be enough to go on. Remember also that, a) regardless of race, one may still choose a background option, and b) ethnicity has little to do with race; the Second World includes Latino elves and black dwarves.

DWARVES

Most Second World dwarves in the northeast hail from the Appalachian mountains and the dwarf clans there. You can find more details on the dwarves of the Appalachians in the organizations section of the influence rules. Dwarves from Europe tend to be more industrious, goal oriented and place a higher value on progress. This has led them to integrate into human society, almost completely in fact. While European dwarves lack the numbers to count as anything more than a large minority, their long life spans frequently lead them to positions of power and influence. You can find dwarves heading corporations, leading armies, spending centuries holding the same seat in the senate...

Treat Appalachian dwarves like regular dwarves from the core books. First World and European dwarves lack traditional dwarven training so use the following in place of their normal racial traits:

EXILED AND EUROPEAN DWARVEN RACIAL TRAITS

- +2 Constitution, -2 Charisma.
- Medium size.
- Dwarven base speed is 20 feet.
- Darkvision 60 feet.
- Stonecunning: as described in core rulebook I; dwarven stonecunning grants them their bonuses to appraise and craft thus these bonuses are independent of cultural background.
- +2 racial bonus on saving throws against poison.
- +2 racial bonus on saving throws against spells and spell-like effects.
- 4 extra skill points at 1st level and 1 extra skill point at each additional level.
- +2 racial bonus on Appraise checks that are related to stone or metal items.
- +2 racial bonus on Craft checks that are related to stone or metal.
- Automatic Languages: According to background.
- Bonus Languages: According to background.
- Favored Class: Fighter.

ELVES

Many player character elves will hail from the Seven Tribes, a loose federation living in the Huron Wild. You can find a more detailed description of the Seven Tribes in the organizations section of the Influence chapter (page 214). Seven Tribes elves vary slightly from the standard presented in core rulebook I so I include a description of their abilities here. Elves exiled from the First World lack the cultural training of Second World elves so they're slightly different as well and I include a suggestion for how to handle them. While the specifics of the rest of the world have to wait until future products, if you or a player would like to include a more standard elf in your game having him come from Africa, Southeast Asia, Scandinavia or Ireland would work well.

ELVEN RACIAL TRAITS

- +2 Dexterity, -2 Constitution.
- Medium size.
- Elven base speed is 30 feet.
- Immunity to magic sleep spells and effects.
- +2 racial saving throw bonus against Enchantment spells or effects.
- Low-light Vision: Elves can see twice as far as a human in starlight, moonlight, torchlight, and similar conditions of poor illumination. They retain the ability to distinguish color and detail under these conditions.
- Proficient with Elvish Lightblade (see below); proficient with shortbow, longbow, composite longbow, and composite Shortbow. [Seven Tribes only]
- While latent First World elves lack the work ethic of latent First World dwarves, they frequently develop their natural agility or take up some other hobby. Choose one feat from the following list: Jock (see the Feats section of this chapter for details), Run, or Skill Focus. [First World only]
- +2 racial bonus on Listen, Search, and Spot checks. An elf who merely passes within 5 feet of a secret or concealed door is entitled to a Search check to notice it as if she were actively looking for the door.
- Automatic Languages: According to background.
- Bonus Languages: According to background.
- Favored Class: Wizard.

ELVISH LIGHTBLADE

The elven smiths of the Seven Tribes perfected this weapon long ago. It consists of a long slender blade, sharpened along one edge and tapering to a heavy triangular tip. As the name implies the sword is quite light but the weight is shifted forward along the blade. With special training one can learn to exploit the unique balance of this weapon, but without that training the blade is unwieldy and awkward.

The Elvish Lightblade is an exotic, one-handed weapon and may be used with the Weapon Finesse feat. In addition the lightblade may be used in two ways. You may slash with the blade causing damage like a longsword or thrust with the weapon causing damage like a rapier. Declare which style you will use when you make an attack. It takes no time to switch modes of attack and can even be done in the midst of a sequence of attacks. Naturally, players will forget to specify so by default assume a player is using the slashing method unless otherwise noted. This weapon weighs 4 pounds and costs \$800 (80 gp if you're using regular gold costs).

Slashing: 1d8 (Critical 19-20/×2), Slashing
Thrusting: 1d6 (Critical 18-20/×2), Piercing

GNOMES

Gnomes of the Second World live in the frigid regions of the world. They've spread across the arctic and sub-arctic portions of Canada, and live in Alaska, Greenland, Iceland, and Scandinavia. They live in small enclaves because the land cannot support many people. To survive in such climates they've adapted to the cold. The harsh life of the sub-arctic has also brought out a more elemental nature in them. As such the Winter gnomes have developed a resistance to cold and their magic has evolved from that of illusion to the primal power of sorcery. Their innate powers have also changed slightly, emphasizing their connection with the cold. They still dress warmly, even their natural resistance cannot protect completely from the elements. They continue to have the warmth and playfulness of more typical gnomes, albeit tempered somewhat by the harshness of their lives. For names, Icelandic and Scandinavian names work well; the Orca write-up has a list of Icelandic names you can use. Inuit names would also work nicely.

If you wish to include more standard gnomes in your campaign you can simply place small villages of them where you see fit, or include both the Winter gnomes with the standard kind. Also, First World gnomes can be either the Winter variety or the standard variety.

GNOME RACIAL TRAITS

- +2 Constitution, -2 Strength.
- Small size.
- Gnome base speed is 20 feet.
- Low-light Vision: Gnomes can see twice as far as a human in starlight, moonlight, torchlight, and similar conditions of poor illumination. They retain the ability to distinguish color and detail under these conditions.
- +2 racial bonus on saving throws against illusions. [Standard and First World only]
- +1 racial bonus to attack rolls against kobolds and goblinoids (goblins, hobgoblins, and bugbears): Gnomes battle these creatures frequently and practice special techniques for fighting them. [Standard only]
- +4 dodge bonus against giants. [Standard only]
- 4 extra skill points at 1st level and 1 extra skill point at each additional level. [First World only]
- Cold Resistance: Gnomes of Winter do not feel the cold the way other creatures do. Subtract 5 points of damage per round from cold attacks. This effect "stacks" with other cold resistance spells and powers. [Winter gnomes only]
- +2 racial bonus on Listen checks.
- +2 racial bonus on Alchemy checks.
- Automatic Languages: According to background.
- Bonus Languages: According to background.
- Once per day a gnome can use "Speak with Animals" [per the spell] as a spell-like ability to speak with a burrowing mammal (a badger, fox, rabbit, etc.). This ability is innate to gnomes. It has a duration of 1 minute (the gnome is considered a 1st-level caster when he uses this ability, regardless of his actual level). [Standard and First World only]
- Gnomes with Intelligence scores of 10 or higher may cast the 0-level spells (*cantrips*) *dancing lights*, *ghost sound*, and *prestidigitation*, each once per day. These are arcane spells. Treat the gnome as a 1st-level caster for all spell effects dependent on level (range for all three spells and duration for ghost sound). [Standard and First World only]
- Gnomes of Winter with Intelligence scores

of 10 or higher may cast the 0-level spell (cantrip) *ray of frost*, twice per day. This is an arcane spell. Treat the gnome as a 1st-level caster for all spell effects dependent on level. [Winter gnomes only]

- Favored Class: Illusionist for standard and First World gnomes; Sorcerer for gnomes of Winter. Winter gnomes also have a natural feel for the Lightning Warden prestige class due to their connection with the wind and elements. They automatically satisfy the special requirement of the class (i.e. they do not need to be struck by a powerful bolt of lightning).

HALF-ELVES

Half-elves operate in the Second World much as they do in most settings. The fact that many cultures have grown multi-racial throughout the twentieth century makes half-elves both more common, and more commonly accepted. Treat Second World half-elves much as you would treat a half-elf in any setting.

HALFLINGS

All Second World halflings appear to have one thing in common; they all descend, sometimes distantly, from British blood. Many halflings still live in Britain, particularly London (City of the Shadow Warden). The power of the city has somehow seeped into their entire genetic lineage. This makes them slightly darker in complexion. This ancient connection with the city on the Thames makes them feel at home in urban environments. Of course, many make their home in the shadows of the cities but plenty choose to make a more honest living by opening up a small shop or inn. Halfling restaurants are popular amongst most city-dwellers, perhaps because the owners typically serve massive portions. Many halflings take up jobs with private security and investigation firms. Enigma Securities boasts a number of halfling agents (in fact their chief is a halfling). Given the breadth of the British empire in the last few centuries halflings have spread across the globe, but no matter where they live they usually retain at least a fragment of their British style and sensibilities. Given their natural talents and the excellent training British intelligence agencies provide, halflings make pre-eminent spies and security specialists.

HALFLING RACIAL TRAITS

- +2 Dexterity, -2 Strength.
- Small size.
- Halfling base speed is 20 feet.
- +2 racial bonus on Climb, Jump, and Move

Silently checks.

- +1 racial bonus on all saving throws. [Standard only]
- Darkvision 60 feet; this “stacks” to a certain extent with other powers that grant dark vision. If a Second or First World halfling acquires darkvision from another source (class, magic item, or spell) add the ranges together. [Second and First World halflings only]
- +2 morale bonus on saving throws against fear.
- +1 racial attack bonus with a thrown weapon. [Standard only]
- +2 cultural bonus on Diplomacy checks. [Second and First World halflings only]
- +2 racial bonus on Listen checks.
- Automatic Languages: According to background.
- Bonus Languages: According to background.
- Favored Class: Rogue. Halflings also have a natural facility with the Shadow Warden prestige class due to their connection with the great city of London. They automatically satisfy the special requirement of the class (i.e. they do not need to have suffered from a draining attack).

HALF-ORCS

Like half-elves, half-orcs in the Second World are little different from their counterparts in the core rules. They face similar intolerance as well, especially away from the Great Cities and places that traffic frequently with the First World. New Yorkers frown on showing open intolerance to half-orcs. New Yorkers feel the influence of the First World; many prominent citizens come from there, and along with that influence comes a distaste for anything smacking of racism. Still, the majority of citizens get this information second hand so, while you won't see too many “Half-orcs not allowed” signs hanging over the door of a restaurant, a half-orc will frequently feel eyes watching him.

SECOND WORLD CLASSES

The Second World Sourcebook doesn't offer any new basic classes. However, the prestige classes (the wardens) should make up for that. I discuss here some concerns regarding divine magic in the Second World.

DIVINE MAGIC IN THE SECOND WORLD

Most Clerics and Paladins in the Second World practice religions already familiar to you. A few thousand years ago the old gods walked the earth and protected those who would serve them. Many also punished those who would not serve them. Eventually the servants began to realize that they did not need Jupiter and Odin to provide them with divine power. Faith in a god they never saw, faith in an ideal, faith in the enduring spirit of humanity, or a simple compassion for others provided a channel for divine energy. The old gods' tyranny could not last long under these circumstances. It didn't. One cannot trust the records; every sect and nation has their own rendition of the battles of liberation; these have been mentioned elsewhere. Some gods chose to stay on in the aftermath of this revolution; becoming champions of the new religion; perhaps they saw some truth in the teachings of the prophets or at least a truth that resonated with them. These beings became the archons and now they both protect and guide some of the more powerful religions of the Second World; however, like the laborer in the field, the archons too serve a higher master and show their humility in the temple.

You do not worship a deity with a specific list of domains and a favored weapon in the Second World. Instead you follow an ideal or practice a faith. As in the First World you must wrestle with your own doubts; those who follow other faiths may perform more fantastic miracles than you can even hope. You may fail and see evil triumph. You may see the innocent suffer and evil prosper. In the face of the ravages of the Wadkin Roa, in the face of demons and devils all too flesh and blood while the angels remain mere abstractions, in the face of human servitors of ancient evil whose gods speak directly to them, maintaining faith in the face of all this is what true spirituality requires.

Second World clerics should adhere to a set of principles consistent with a reasonable interpretation of their chosen religion. This can be conveniently modeled by requiring the cleric to simply adhere to the strictures of an alignment. You might prefer to leave alignments out of your setting though. First, even if you do leave out alignments normally, using alignments as representative of the strictures of a religion works well in a number of cases. A religious doctrine that stresses duty tends toward lawfulness. A religion that emphasizes compassion (as almost all do) tends toward goodness. A religion that stresses freely choosing one's path toward the divine might be a bit more chaotic; few organized religions will truly be chaotic and since it takes organization for a religion to spread very effectively, few major religions will tend towards chaotic good. A religion that stresses detachment from the world might be neutral, or at least certain interpretations of it might be neutral. While I've seen people of every faith capable of honestly falling into almost any of these categories I'll provide some suggestions here. Most of the big organized religions, such as Hinduism, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam stress both duty and compassion in their scriptures (albeit, different practitioners of these faiths stress different aspects). Modern Christianity has divided into so many sects, from the still large and powerful Roman Catholic church to the odd Unitarian church hiding out in some small and very liberal town, that it's quite open to a wider variety of alignments. To determine the credo for your character's interpretation of a religion you can think of a few sample cases of difficult moral decisions. For instance, if one had to forego justice in order to promote a better life for innocent bystanders (for example, in punishing a mass-murderer, who will soon die anyway, one might need to expend resources that could be used to promote the welfare of a community) one is faced with a choice between compassion and justice. Favoring justice indicates a greater tendency to law

PLAYING A SECOND WORLD CLERIC

To play a Second World cleric you select two domains to represent your spiritual inclinations and abilities (but the restriction on alignment domains still applies). If one of your domains is the war domain then you may take martial proficiency with any one weapon, or weapon focus with any one weapon, your choice. This only applies to good and neutral clerics though. Evil clerics must serve some creature or being; they lack the higher purpose necessary to drive their powers. Clerics of First World faiths who fall into evil habits or who promote a twisted interpretation of their scriptures typically go through a period of trial, during which time their powers fail them. During this time they face the most severe test of their faith; somewhere deep inside they might recognize that perhaps they're interpreting the scriptures wrong, perhaps their arrogance has led to this fall. In these times of darkness a demon may appear in radiant form and tell the fallen cleric that they were right all along and that this was simply a test of their faith; they must simply accept that this messenger is the true voice of divinity and listen to the messenger for their instructions. From then on the demon or the demon's master provides the fallen cleric with power.

and, if justice always outweighs compassion, probably lawful neutral. Favoring compassion in all cases would indicate a neutral good inclination. Fortunately justice and compassion frequently coincide. Variations on Buddhism can be true neutral, though usually the lack of a strong sense of ego leads serious practitioners to be highly compassionate.

Remember that a cleric does not need to restrict himself to a traditional religion. Socialism, existentialism, and some versions of libertarianism can also provide the rigorous ideology for divine power. Key to all divine ideologies is the principle that you must serve a higher purpose; that sometimes the needs of the faith outweigh your own needs.

SECOND WORLD FEATS

Many of the following feats are used simply to provide texture for a character's background; a few perform vital roles in the Second World (e.g. the Tensile Mercury usage feats).

ABSTRACT THINKER [GENERAL]

You're particularly good at thinking abstractly and making intuitive leaps.

Benefit: You get a +2 bonus to Perform checks and a +2 bonus to spell penetration checks.

BIG CITY EDUCATION [GENERAL]

One nice thing about growing up in the big city is that you can get almost any kind of education.

Benefit: You may choose any two non-exclusive skills or one exclusive skill and make those class skills.

CHECK POCKETS FEAT [GENERAL]

Growing up with the urchins you learn a thing or two, like how to pick someone's pockets and put the stuff back the way you found it.

Benefit: With a single Pick Pocket check you can both remove the contents of someone's pockets and then later replace the contents. If you fail the check there's a 50% chance it happened when you were putting the items back.

Normal: You would usually have to make two checks, one for taking the items and one for replacing them.

CHIVALRY [GENERAL]

You hold yourself to a code of honor and chivalry many thought lost in the world, and others can sense it in you.

Benefit: You get a +2 bonus on saves against fear and mind-affecting attacks and a +2 bonus on Diplomacy checks.

CITY SMART [GENERAL]

You know all the back alleys and hideaways of New York, both above and below ground.

Benefit: You get a +2 competence bonus to Gather Information, Hide, Intuit Direction, Spot, And Wilderness Lore checks within a large city (12,001 or more people).

COMBAT LOAD [GENERAL]

They train you to carry stuff when you're a soldier.

Benefit: Treat your Strength as 2 points higher when determining your carrying capacity. This means a character with a 12 Strength and this feat can carry up to 58 lbs. as a light load. This also reduces any armor check penalty you suffer due to armor or encumbrance by one point (to a minimum of -0); this reduction applies to the total penalty, not the penalty per item.

COMMUNITARIAN IDEOLOGY [GENERAL]

You feel comfortable around people and know how to bring them to consensus.

Benefit: You get a +2 bonus to Diplomacy and Sense Motive checks.

CUTTING REMARK [GENERAL]

You have an uncanny knack for making just the right sort of comment to remove someone from the social circle.

Benefit: By succeeding at a contested Innuendo check against a target who is part of your conversational group you can lower the group's effective attitude level to them by one for the next 24 hours. This will also give them a -5 penalty to the use of social skills against members of the group (including you) during that time. Bluff, Diplomacy, Gather Information, Innuendo, Intimidate, Perform, and Sense Motive all count as social skills for this purpose. If you fail this check the target may immediately make a counter-check against you as if they possessed this feat; if their check fails you do not gain a counter-check against them. You may use this feat a number of times per day equal to your Charisma modifier.

DANGEROUS CURIOSITY [GENERAL]

Your curiosity impels you to seek out and discover the new; it has also gotten you into more than your fair share of trouble.

Benefit: Like an elf, if you merely pass within 5 feet of a secret or concealed door you are entitled to a Search check as if you were actively looking for the door. You practically have a sixth sense for getting yourself in trouble.

DESERT SURVIVAL [GENERAL]

You grew up in the desert where food and water were hard to acquire.

Benefit: You get a +1 bonus to Fortitude saves and can go twice as long as usual before needing food or water.

EXPERIMENTAL [GENERAL]

You love to work out new ways of doing things. No telephone was safe in your parent's house.

Benefit: Use Magic Device counts as a class skill for you and you get a +2 on checks with the skill.

FIELD MEDIC [GENERAL]

You're comfortable with practicing medicine in dire circumstances or when the need is pressing.

Benefit: You get a +2 bonus to Heal checks and may take 10 on a First Aid check or a Treat Poison check under any conditions.

FIRST WORLD CELEBRITY [GENERAL, INITIAL]

You were a celebrity in the First World prior to exile.

Benefit: The primary benefit of this feat is player self-satisfaction; this way you get to play a famous movie star, musician, athlete, or politician. Your character also gets a benefit of a +1 to Willpower saving throws (all that ego...), +3 to Reputation (if you use it), and starts with double normal starting funds.

FORGED IN FIRE [GENERAL]

You suffered so long in the heat of the Forge that you've developed a mild resistance against fire.

Prerequisite: Escapee of Trespass's Army background option.

Benefit: You get 5 points of resistance against attacks that cause fire damage. This resistance stacks with other sources of resistance to fire damage (such as a *ring of elemental resistance*).

GOBLIN FIGHTER [GENERAL]

You've been living near the edge of civilization and fighting goblinkind so long that you've developed a special talent for it.

Benefit: Against goblinoids you get a +1 bonus to Bluff, Listen, Sense Motive, Spot, and Survival checks and a +1 bonus to damage.

HARDENED AGAINST SOUND [GENERAL]

You have been subjected to so much abuse from sonic attacks that you've developed a mild resistance against it.

Benefit: You get a +2 on all saves against sonic attacks and 5 points of resistance to attacks that cause sonic damage, however you take a -2 on all Listen checks.

HSÜAN SPIRIT [INITIAL]

You have a kernel of the hsüan spirit inside you, granting you improved insight and the ability to take the hsüan racial advancement level.

Benefit: You pick out patterns and connections better than normal; hsüan consider this direct perception of synchronicity. This grants you a +2 racial bonus on Spot and Search checks. You may also treat Innuendo as a class skill and you treat sorcerer as a favored class in addition to any other favored classes you may have. However, the delicacy of hsüan bodies and bones has its cost; you take a -2 to Constitution.

Special: A player may discover later in his character's career that he'd like to play a hsüan. While this should be worked out with the gamemaster in many cases it should be permissible; perhaps the character's talents were simply hidden all these years.

HYPERACTIVE [BACKGROUND]

Growing up in the high speed, sound-bite era of the media age, playing video games and watching music videos have made you one of those tense, can't sit still kind of kids.

Benefit: You gain a +1 bonus on Reflex saves and a +2 bonus to Initiative.

INVESTIGATIVE FERVOR [GENERAL]

You have a knack for rooting out the truth and other juicy bits of gossip.

Benefit: You get a +2 bonus to Gather Information and Search checks.

JOCK [GENERAL]

You have always had a flair for athletics.

Benefit: You get a +1 bonus to Balance, Climb, Jump, Move Silently, and Swim checks.

LEVEL-HEADED [GENERAL]

You don't fluster easily in a fight. While others are trying to do too much too soon you always make certain to go when you're ready.

Benefit: When rolling initiative, a die roll of less than 10 is automatically raised to 10. Modifiers are then added to the new "roll" of 10.

LOGICAL THINKER [GENERAL]

You have a natural tendency to think analytically and love to solve puzzles.

Benefit: You get a +2 bonus on Spellcraft and Disable Device checks.

LONG DISTANCE RUNNING [GENERAL]

You are used to running for long periods of time.

Benefit: You may run at a Hustle rate for 4 hours without a problem; after that you start taking damage as normal. You may also move at a Run rate for up to your Constitution in minutes (then you must rest for an equal period of time).

Normal: A character can hustle for 1 hour without a problem. Hustling for a second hour in between sleep cycles causes the character 1 point of subdual damage, and each additional hour causes twice the damage taken during the previous hour.

MEDICAL DOCTOR [GENERAL]

You are a fully licensed medical doctor with a wide range of knowledge regarding medicine.

Benefit: Once per day per person you may make a “Doctoring” check. This allows you to make a Heal check (DC 15) and, if successful, cure (1d6 + half the victim’s character level, round down) points of damage; you may increase this value by +2 for each +5 you take to the difficulty class of the check. This takes five minutes.

PEACE WITH NATURE [GENERAL]

You have a natural communion with nature; wilderness feels like home to you and animals can sense this.

Benefit: You get a +2 bonus to Handle Animal and Survival checks.

PEOPLE SMART [GENERAL]

You’ve gotten to know your way around people a bit and have become better at figuring them out and extracting information from them.

Benefit: You get a +2 bonus on Sense Motive and Gather Information checks.

PLANAR ADAPTATION [GENERAL]

You have traveled the Planes widely, and are familiar with a number of alien environments. In the Second World this can apply to traveling between the two worlds or traveling to the various interstices and the Forge. Note that a race called the Dakeen may also take this feat without satisfying either of the other prerequisites; you can find the source for this race in the legal appendix (page 288).

Prerequisite: Escapee of Trespass’s Army, or 6+ ranks of Knowledge (The Planes)

Benefit: You may use the Survival skill without penalty after gaining at least some familiarity with the plane you’re on (24 hours spent on a plane does this). If you have the Track feat, you may also track while on a familiar plane. You may also make a Survival check (DC 20) to determine one World Rule of the plane. You may make one such check per day. The gamemaster decides the order in which to reveal World Rules but should consider the sorts experiences the character had during the day and which rules might be more noticeable.

Normal: The Survival skill suffers a –4 penalty in alien planes. Note that the First and Second Worlds are so similar that if you can use Survival in one you can also use it in the other.

PRESENCE [GENERAL]

You have a commanding personality and presence.

Benefit: You get a +1 bonus to Bluff, Diplomacy, Gather Information, Intimidate, and Perform checks.

RACKING UP THE HOURS [GENERAL]

You get paid by the hour; you get paid a **lot** by the hour. Do the math.

Benefit: You are especially good at putting in massive amounts of work hours. This allows you to reduce the amount of time you need to sleep each evening by 2 hours (but not to below four hours of sleep). You must still rest 8 hours to recover spells if you’re a spell caster. This also adds 1 to the amount of commitment you can support.

Normal: You can normally support up to 3 commitment points of positions. See the Influence chapter for more details.

SEA LEGS [GENERAL]

You feel at home on the shifting sea and the decks of a ship.

Benefit: You get a +2 bonus to Balance and Climb checks.

SENSE OF SNOW [GENERAL]

You have an innate feeling for snow. You can distinguish its types and flavors, smells, and the way it lies; you can tell a type of snow just by watching it fall and the way it collects on the ground.

Benefit: You receive a +2 circumstance bonus to Listen, Search, Spot, and Survival checks in snowy areas. You may also use your Search skill bonus to make Knowledge (snow) skill checks.

STREET TOUGHENED [GENERAL]

Making your living on the street hardens you.

Benefit: You get a +1 bonus to Will saves and a +2 bonus to Intimidate checks.

STRESS IS MY MIDDLE NAME [GENERAL]

Your high pressure, ASAP, I-need-it-by-yesterday, job might send you to an early grave, but in the meantime you're particularly adept at dealing with stress.

Benefit: You get a +1 bonus to Fortitude saves and a +2 bonus to Initiative.

STRONG DRINKER [GENERAL]

You've had to drink some pretty hard liquor where you come from; this has allowed you to build up a tolerance for the stuff.

Benefit: You get a +4 bonus on saves against poison, drugs, and alcohol, and can drink all night without being fazed.

STRONG SWIMMER [GENERAL]

You grew up swimming and diving deep underwater.

Benefit: You get a +2 bonus to Swim checks and can hold your breath three times as long as normal.

TENSILE MERCURY EXPERTISE [GENERAL]

You have special training with the use of tensile mercury equipment.

Benefit: This feat allows you to control and modify tensile mercury equipment you wield. You can alter your equipment as a move equivalent action and this does not provoke an attack of opportunity. For exotic weapons you must make a Craft (smithing) check against DC 20 to do this.

Normal: You cannot use or modify Tensile Mercury equipment without this feat.

TENSILE MERCURY MASTERY [GENERAL]

You are a true master in the use of tensile mercury.

Prerequisite: Tensile Mercury Expertise

Benefit: Your mastery of tensile mercury equipment allows you to control or modify tensile mercury weapons or armor as a free action (this does not provoke an attack of opportunity).

THE DEVIL IS IN THE DETAILS [GENERAL]

You know that the hard work of any project is the tiny little details; mess those up and the whole thing comes crashing down.

Benefit: You get a +2 bonus to Search and Forgery checks.

THE OLD CRAFT [GENERAL]

You've learned something of the old craft of metal forging, allowing you to work unusual metals.

Benefit: You get a +2 bonus to Craft checks involving metalwork and count as having a caster level 3 higher than normal when crafting arms and armor (thus allowing you to craft +1 weapons and armor with no magical training at all). You still need the Craft Magic Arms and Armor item creation feat but this feat satisfies the prerequisites for Craft Magic Arms and Armor.

TOUCHED BY FROST [GENERAL]

The barriers between worlds dissolve in the wildlands. Living in the arctic wastes has left you touched by the raw elemental forces of snow, enhancing your abilities in some ways and limiting them in others.

Benefit: You receive a +1 to your effective caster level and +1 to the saving throw difficulty class when using spells and powers that have the [Snow] or [Air] descriptor. However, your connection with the winterlands precludes other abilities. You may not use spells or powers with the [Fire] descriptor.

VETERAN OF THE HARD WARS [GENERAL]

You've fought in the dire battles of the Mississippi Valley War and come out alive.

Benefit: You get a +3 bonus on saves against draining effects (such as energy drains and ability drains) and a +2 bonus on Listen checks.

VOICE OF THE TRANSFORMED [GENERAL]

You have practiced special techniques for invoking arcane sounds while transformed.

Benefit: Halcón may use spells with a Verbal (V) component while partially transformed into jaguar form.

Normal: A halcón in partial jaguar form may not effectively speak using their altered vocal chords; this means they cannot use spells with a Verbal component.

Notes: Your gamemaster may allow you to use this feat with other sorts of transformations; such a call should be on a case by case basis. Also, while this allows you to cast spells with verbal components you still speak with a halting, rasping speech; it's just that a lot of magic works quite nicely when invoked (correctly) with halting, rasping speech. Also, Wizards may take this feat using one of their bonus feats.

WARDEN FEATS [GENERAL]

You can acquire most of the warden powers through feats as well as by taking one of the prestige classes. Look in the Wardens chapter for specific details regard-

ing the Warden feats.

Benefit: These allow you to take warden bindings or gain warden abilities.

SECOND WORLD SKILLS

The d20 Modern rules introduce a few new skills that you'd expect to need such as Computer Use, Drive, and Pilot. In other cases old skills get a spruced-up, more modern sounding name. For instance, Heal becomes Treat Injury, Wilderness Lore becomes Survival, and Pick Pocket goes legit with a name-change to Sleight of Hand. Finally, the broad category skills such as Craft, Knowledge, Perform, and Profession got cleaned up and codified a bit more. Craft skills in particular have been tightened up; instead of a long list of specific crafts, you choose from a shorter list of crafts, each of which have a broader application and some specific rules for how to use them. Likewise, Knowledge has had some of the areas besides arcana, religion, and nature synthesized into broader categories. Perform enjoyed a re-categorization; instead of needing a separate skill for each particular instrument you can now gain skill in a category of instruments or performance types (such as stand-up comedy or stringed instruments). Profession became a more generic skill meant primarily to control your Wealth bonus increases. I favor narrowing the number of skills and broadening their application. You won't see too many craftsmen in stories who specialize in the right rear fender of 70's era Fords. Likewise, a blacksmith in fiction can make weapons and armor as well as horseshoes; doing that, especially given its typically secondary role, shouldn't require three times as many skill points as Knowledge (arcana).

NEW CRAFT SUBSKILLS

CRAFT (SMITHING) (INT)

This combines armorsmithing, blacksmithing, and weaponsmithing. Extend it to cover the crafting of non-metallic armors as well since the smith will often have to make those. Use the standard Craft rules from the PHB when making items using this skill.

SECOND WORLD SPELLS

As with feats, this book does not offer many new spells. However, many of the warden bindings can be easily translated into spells.

ARMOR SHACKLES

Transmutation, Metal Warden

Level: Sor/Wiz 2

Components: V, S

Casting Time: Standard Action

Range: Long (400 ft. + 40 ft./level)

Target: One creature/3 full levels within a 30 ft. radius

Duration: 2 rounds/level

Saving Throw: Will negates

Spell Resistance: Yes

This spell transforms a target's armor into constricting chains and bonds. The target must be wearing metal armor, since that is the actual target of the spell. The armor itself, if magical, receives a standard Will save (negates) against this spell; item saving throw bonuses are equal to 2 + one-half its caster level (round down). Since the armor is typically worn the wearer can use their own Will bonus or their armor's, whichever is higher.

If the saving throw is failed the wearer is *entangled* within his armor. An entangled creature suffers a -2 penalty to attack rolls and a -4 penalty to effective Dexterity. Since the bonds are not anchored the target can move at half speed, but can't run or charge. An entangled character who attempts to cast a spell must make a Concentration check (DC 15 + spell level) or lose the spell.

The victim may attempt to squirm free by making an Escape Artist check against DC 20. The victim may attempt to break free by making a Strength check against DC 15 + the armor's armor bonus. Either of these require a full round action. While entangled the victim still receives the normal armor bonus but if they squirm or break free they'll be unarmored. After the duration of the spell ends the armor returns to normal unless the victim damaged it during the spell (by breaking free). Breaking free typically just damages some buckles and rearranges the material slightly so a Craft (smithing) check against DC 15, taking one day, will repair the damage.

VORTEX

Abjuration, Lightning Warden [Air]

Level: Sor/Wiz 9

Components: V, S, XP

Casting Time: 5 minutes

Range: Long (400 ft. + 40 ft./level)

Area: 30 ft wide at base, 300 feet tall and 300 feet wide at top

Duration: 5d6 (5-30) minutes

Saving Throw: (see text)

Spell Resistance: Yes

This invocation creates a magical tornado. The vortex has incredibly high speed winds, biting cold, and is wreathed with lightning. The tornado affects an area at its base of 30 feet in diameter and goes up over 300 feet until at the top it has a diameter of 300 feet across. It acts like a normal tornado in most respects. This means that within the area all ranged attacks are impossible, as is hearing anything other than the storm itself. Large and smaller creatures must make a Fortitude save against DC 20 or be sucked into the vortex for 1d10 rounds before they get tossed out by the spinning winds; while in the vortex they take 3d6 damage per round then another 6d6 falling damage when tossed from the storm. Huge creatures must make a Fortitude save or be knocked down and Gargantuan creatures must save or be **checked**. Regardless, while in the vortex, no matter what your size, you suffer 3d6 damage per round. The vortex will tear apart most structures including castles.

The vortex lasts for approximately 5-30 minutes and can be directed to move (30 feet per round) in a general direction when first invoked but cannot be controlled beyond that. Lastly, the vortex eats power. It consumes all magical power in its area, decomposing spells and the magic powering enchanted items. All spells are automatically dispelled. Magic items must make successful Will saves or be turned into normal items. An item in a creature's possession uses its own Will save bonus or its possessor's Will save bonus, whichever is higher. The vortex also has a 1% chance per caster level of destroying an antimagic field. If the antimagic field survives the vortex, then items within the field are protected. Even artifacts are subject to the power of the vortex, though there is only a 1% chance per two full caster levels of actually affecting such powerful items. Additionally, if an artifact is destroyed, the vortex grows much larger (double size) and lasts 5d6 days, wandering in a random fashion.

The vortex lasts an additional minute for each 2,000 gp worth of magic items consumed. The vortex consumes what it destroys. Anything killed or torn apart by it is siphoned off to a nether interstice.

XP Cost: 1,000 xp

SUSTAIN TRAVEL

Transmutation, Gate Warden

Level: Brd 4, Clr 6, Drd 5, Sor/Wiz 5

Components: V, S, M

Casting Time: 1 Action

Range: Touch

Target: You and one other touched creature/3 levels

Duration: 1 week

Saving Throw: Will negates (harmless)

Spell Resistance: Yes (harmless)

With this spell you suppress the synchronic signature of yourself and other touched creatures so that you may remain in the First World for a longer time. Normally, after traveling to the First World you shunt after 4d12 hours. By casting this spell you pause the countdown for one week. Multiple castings within a single trip do not work and, after shunting to the Second World you should remain there for close to the time you spent in the First World. If you spend too much time in the First World, i.e. keep popping back in as often as possible, the First World will start resorting to more extreme measures to expunge you. For instance, brakes might fail on busses as you're walking across a street; it might shunt you to someplace other than the Second World; synchronicity might place you in the middle of a revolution; all the doors you open might lead to alien places, and so on. Generally, you're safe if you spend less than one week out of every four in the First World; you may also spend two weeks in the First World close to each other so long as you then spend about 8 weeks back in the Second World. If you try to stretch it though you give the gamemaster a license to do really freaky stuff to your characters.

Material Components: a small, intricate brass clock costing no less than \$5,000 (or 500 gp) that disappears when you finally shunt. Many scholars suspect that the clock simply shunts to someplace else.

CHAPTER THREE

WARDENS

The wardens are like prestige classes. You must first meet prerequisites and then switch to them later in your career. The wardens connect to primal forces in the Second World, energies or principles that guide the development and structure of the world as a whole. This grants them substantial personal power but developing that power can carry a heavy cost in training and ritual components. In order to use the warden classes you'll need to know some basic terms first.

BINDINGS

Wardens use a special sort of ability called a Binding. Bindings fall in a gray area between class special abilities and magic items. Typically, you must have access to a Binding slot (usually gained from taking levels in a Warden class) and spend both experience points and influence or gold in order to acquire a Binding. After doing this you acquire the special abilities associated with the binding; these abilities can be Extraordinary, Inherent, Supernatural, or Spell-like, and behave in many ways like a magic item (except they're innate and have pre-requisites). It typically takes just a few days to bind a power to you (one day per 5 influence points). These are called Bound powers. Different classes have access to different lists of Bindings. For example, after gaining a level in Motion Warden you gain a binding slot for powers from the Motion Warden list.

BINDING FORMAT

The following describes the standard format for a binding. Some features of a binding are just like the features of a standard spell and not included here. The PHB has a description of how these work.

BINDING NAME (TYPE)

This is just the name and type, Extraordinary, Supernatural, Spell-like, or Inherent (Inherent is a new type of ability described on page 98).

Requires: Lists the pre-requisites for the binding (typically other bindings).

Categories: If the binding belongs to any special categories (such as Mind-affecting) this will be included.

Power Level: The power level of a binding is roughly equivalent to what its spell level would be were it a spell. The power level is also used to determine the saving throw difficulty class for saves against the binding and two times the power level is the effective caster level of the binding.

Action: This is just the action type required to activate the binding. Some bindings are constantly in effect and will lack this. Other bindings may use one of the new action types such as Spontaneous or Action Modifier; these are described a little later.

Uses: This describes how often the binding may be used per time period. You may triple the number of uses by spending double the binding cost; you may multiply the number of uses by 10 by spending a total of 5 times the binding cost. You may always "upgrade" from a lower number of uses to a higher number by spending the difference in binding costs; this does not require an additional binding slot and may be done at any time (though the ritual takes the standard amount of time to perform).

Binding Cost: This is the cost in influence points and experience points to acquire the binding. You must also have an available binding slot.

If you prefer not to use influence points in your game simply multiply the influence cost by 1,000 to determine the gold cost.

BINDING ENHANCEMENTS

Some bindings have enhancements available. An enhancement must be developed through a ritual that costs material components and experience. To purchase an enhancement you simply spend the material component and experience costs then add it to the base Binding. This does not require the use of an additional binding slot (the base binding covers that cost). Some enhancements may have requirements in addition to the base binding.

RELEASING BINDINGS

You may release a Binding, thereby opening up the slot for use with another power. In many cases you may also recover some of the power devoted to that Binding; for example, all warden bindings release a portion of their power. You may immediately invest half the experience and material component value of the binding in another binding, or use that power in the construction of a magic item. You may not, however, save these points up for an extended period of time. Releasing a binding invests your body with power, but this power “cooks off” over time; thus, one should only release a binding when one is ready to use that energy for another purpose.

VEDAS, BINDINGS, AND MAGIC ITEMS

The living body flows with energy, some of it channeled from the spirit, some of it innate, and some channeled through connection with the motive principles of

the universe. This energy collects in wells, called Vedas in the Second World; these are distributed across the body. Wardens focus their bindings on these wells of energy, using them to sustain the power of the binding. Likewise, artificers design their magic items for the Vedas and, in fact, must do so, that’s why you don’t see Elbow-pads of Armor. In all likelihood the term Veda crossed from the First to Second World back while the Vedas were being written in India. Most suspect that the actual term that was meant to come across was chakra, but that everything got screwed up in the translation. Regardless, it’s the term, Veda, that has stuck and since Kundalini yoga only recognizes seven chakras while there are thirteen Vedas (not including the spirit Veda) scholars see little reason to correct what may or may not have been a mistake. The Veda locations are described in the accompanying table.

Naturally, the presence of thirteen Vedas and thirteen major warden powers has sparked a great deal of debate; most people leave College of the Interstice gatherings when the researchers eventually and inexorably get around to the topic of which Veda is associated with which major warden power.

RE-BINDING A VEDA

You may desire to release a binding from one Veda and connect it to another one (for instance, to make room for a magic item). As usual you lose some of the energy from a binding when doing this but less so than usual; to re-bind in this fashion you must spend one fourth of the original binding cost.

Location	Associations	Magic Item Slot
Crown	Thought, universal identity, self-knowledge	1 headband, hat, or helmet
Brow (Third Eye)	Light, archetypal identity, self-reflection	1 pair of eye lenses or goggles
Top of spine	Reptile brain, atavistic urges, instinct	1 cloak, cape, or mantle
Throat	Sound, creative identity, self-expression	1 amulet, brooch, medallion, periapt, or scarab
Base of Spine	Earth, physical identity, self-preservation	1 suit of armor
Skin	Sensuality, hunger	1 robe
Heart	Air, social identity, self-acceptance	1 vest, vestment, or shirt
Shoulders	Strength, physical force, courage	1 pair of bracers or bracelets
Solar Plexus	Fire, ego, self-definition	1 pair of gloves or gauntlets
Left Hand	Rationality, analytic thinking	1 ring
Right Hand	Creativity, intuitive thinking	1 ring
Abdomen	Water, emotional identity, self-gratification	1 belt
Feet	Grounded-ness, solidity, stability	1 pair of boots

SPIRIT VEDA

Some powers are bound to the spirit Veda. You do this normally but you effectively have an infinite number of Spirit Vedas. Thus binding a power to the Spirit Veda does not use up one of your Veda slots. Wielded magic items (like staves and weapons) and magic items that don't take up a slot operate off the Spirit Veda. You may bind any power to the Spirit Veda by doubling its normal cost.

ALTERNATE KINDS OF BINDINGS

The Bindings of wardens represent a channeling and development of elemental power. Wardens possess this power within them just as if their body were enchanted with arcane energies; like other kinds of enchantments these powers are subject to dispelling (as if they were a magic item though), anti-magic, and so on.

However, not all bindings need be warden bindings. In some settings a binding might be a secret martial technique practiced by ancient masters. To purchase one of these bindings you would spend experience (for the special training), a binding slot (because you need to be far enough along the path to master a technique), and influence (because the ancient masters divulge their secrets only to a select few). Alternately, you might have a different sort of abstract currency, such as honor, which one uses to purchase these techniques.

NEW ACTION TYPES

In place of casting time, warden powers tell you what sort of action is needed to perform them. Warden powers use a few new types of actions (in addition to the free, move-equivalent, standard, and full-round action types of the core rules).

SPONTANEOUS

A power with an action type of Spontaneous can be performed at any time, even when it is not your turn. Spontaneous actions can also be activated in reaction to a die roll that is about to be made (such as a declaration of an attack). Spontaneous powers can be reacted to with other Spontaneous powers. In this case start forming a list of powers as they are being used. Effects are then resolved in order from bottom to top (that is, the last thing put on the list is resolved first). Typically, when a Spontaneous power is invoked in reaction to an action then the action and all associated die rolls (for example, an attack action consists of a to hit roll and possibly a damage roll) go at the top of the list.

NEW SPECIAL ABILITY TYPE

In addition to the standard Extraordinary, Supernatural, and Spell-like ability types of the core rules warden powers occasionally have the Inherent Magic type.

INHERENT MAGIC (In)

Inherent magic abilities behave like a cross between supernatural abilities and spell-like abilities. They frequently take a standard action to perform (though not always), count as magical and thus do not work in an anti-magic field and can be dispelled, and are subject to spell resistance if appropriate. However, like a supernatural ability, use of innate magic does not provoke an attack of opportunity nor does it require a concentration check.

ACTION MODIFIER

Action modifier actions are applied to other actions, typically attacks. The base attack can be part of a Full attack action (one of the attacks) or another special maneuver that counts as a Standard or Full attack. Only one action modifier can apply to any particular action.

NEW CONDITIONS

Using the standardized conditions list from core rulebook II greatly simplifies and clarifies the gamemaster's job. Where possible I've tried to use conditions already present in the conditions list. Some of the conditions I add here are derived from core spells and effects. Given the likelihood that these will come into play from various sources (poisons, diseases, spells, monsters) it's worthwhile to collect and standardize them as much as possible.

SEVERE PAIN

The character suffering from Severe Pain has their Dexterity score reduced by 2 and suffers a -4 penalty on attack rolls, skill checks, and ability checks. This condition is the one imposed by spells such as a *symbol of pain*.

SHOCKED

A **shocked** character loses her Dexterity bonus to AC and can only take a recover action. A recover action is a full round action that does not provoke an attack of opportunity; taking a recover action removes all **shocked** conditions. Foes gain a +2 bonus to hit **shocked** characters.

RISK

In some cases these rules (both for the wardens and elsewhere) refer to something called “risk”. Risk is like critical threat but in a bad way. Certain actions carry some inherent uncertainty and danger. No matter how good you are there’s always the chance you’ll fail. What’s worse, you can even fail particularly badly at those actions. For these actions a Risk rating is assigned. If your action check die roll is less than or equal to the Risk of the action then the action automatically fails. Moreover, you then need to make a second check and if this check also fails (either due to Risk or simply because you failed to match the difficulty class) then you have failed particularly badly. Call it a critical failure, fumble, botch, SNAFU, ricochet, or catastrophe it all adds up to things not working out the way you wanted. I prefer the term, botch, so that’s what I’ll typically use here. In this book I’ll usually give you some specific consequences of a botch though circumstances may make some other result feel right. Generally, a critical failure gives the gamemaster license to do something fun.

Example: The Dream Warden binding, Alter Memories, allows a Will saving throw when altering particular memories. However the saving throw is usually Risk 2. This means that the victim of the power fails their saving throw whenever they roll a 2 or less on the die roll, no matter how high their Will save bonus. Moreover, if they fail due to Risk then they must immediately make a second Will save against the same difficulty class. If this save is also failed they suffer a botch (or, in the case of this power, something called a ricochet which is usually bad for both the Dream Warden and the victim). It’s still good to have a high Will save bonus since that reduces your chance of botching but there are some situations where you just have to rely on chance.

THE WARDENS

The warden classes themselves follow in the next few sections. You’ll notice that each class has an extensive list of bindings, two to three times as many

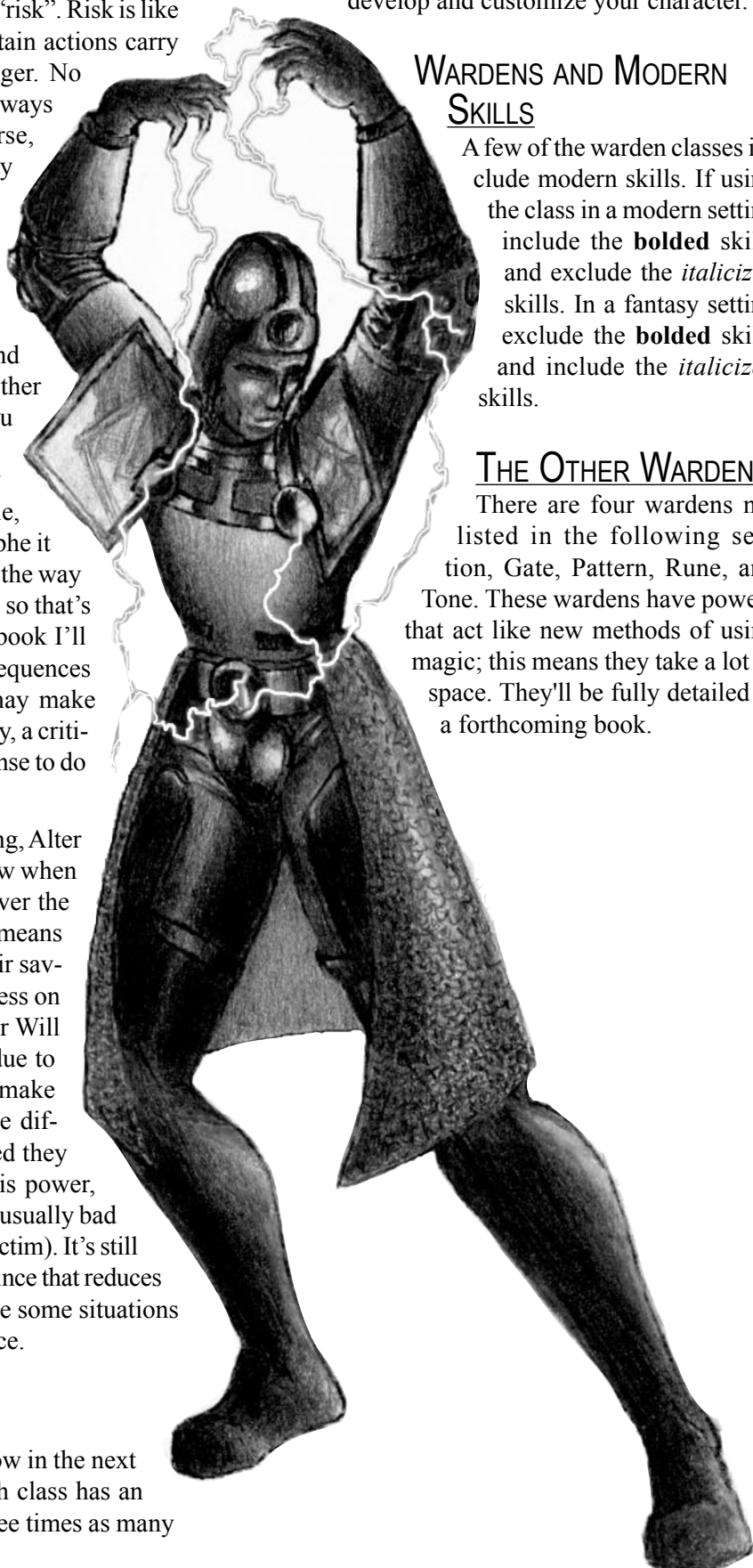
bindings as you could possibly take. When you take warden levels you’ll have to choose how you want to develop and customize your character.

WARDENS AND MODERN SKILLS

A few of the warden classes include modern skills. If using the class in a modern setting include the **bolded** skills and exclude the *italicized* skills. In a fantasy setting exclude the **bolded** skills and include the *italicized* skills.

THE OTHER WARDENS

There are four wardens not listed in the following section, Gate, Pattern, Rune, and Tone. These wardens have powers that act like new methods of using magic; this means they take a lot of space. They’ll be fully detailed in a forthcoming book.



Lightning Warden by Fil Kearney

DREAM WARDEN

Description: At the border of the physical and the spiritual lies the mental. The mental translates will into action and action into experience. The turmoil at this vital junction gives rise to fragmentary dreams and nightmares; even awake this interface constantly seethes. Countless beings charge the world with this turmoil, giving rise to a wilderness of fancy and dark landscape of nightmare called the Dream State, Dreaming, Dream Realm, Dream Lands, Dream Time, etc. Dream Wardens tap into this collective unconscious and use it as a back-road into the minds of others. Dream Wardens may also explore the landscape of dreams itself.

The Dream Warden power is one of the most subtle and least spectacular. However, it directly attacks the second most vital portion of ourselves. You might not fear the Dream Warden in front of you, but you definitely should fear the Dream Warden you don't see.

The first Dream Warden, Lawrence, blessed Los Angeles with her power. Her touch drained all color from the central part of the city. It is a monochrome place, black and white like watching an old film. But, what she took she also gives, as you walk outwards from the center of the city (and the best way to do this is to go west while the sun is setting) color slowly seeps in, growing more intense and bright by the moment until finally, just a ways south of the Hollywood Hills, the city lies before you lit up in colors so rich and vivid that you can feel the intensity of the purple in the twilight, the bright burning orange of the flaming ball of the sun as it sinks into the cool deep blue-green of the Pacific. Every moment in Los Angeles lies drenched in that Technicolor intensity and this, along with the presence of dream, makes the place surreal.

Hit Die: d8.

Action Points: 6 + 1/2 your character level (round down).

DREAM WARDEN [GENERAL]

This feat grants you access to Dream Warden bindings. Dream Wardens are part telepath, part psychic, and part spiritual traveler.

Prerequisites: as for Dream Warden class

Benefit: You acquire two binding slots for use with Dream Warden bindings. You must obey all the normal rules for binding powers to a slot, including paying the appropriate experience point and material component cost for the slot. You may also take this feat if you already have Dream Warden class levels; if you do so add 2 slots to your total available slots for Dream Warden bindings. You may take this feat more than once gaining two additional slots for each feat taken. You may only use this feat for Dream Warden bindings.

REQUIREMENTS

To qualify to become a Dream Warden, you must fulfill all of the following criteria.

- **Concentration:** 7 ranks
- **Sense Motive:** 8 ranks
- **Special:** Also, in order to become a Dream Warden you must have consciously journeyed in the dream state (having a lucid dream counts for this and the gamemaster can simply say that you've done it once).

CLASS SKILLS

The Dream Warden's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Bluff (Cha), Concentration (Con), Craft (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Gather Information (Cha), Handle Animal (Cha), Intimidate (Cha), Knowledge (All, taken individually) (Int), Profession (Wis), **Research (Int)**, Sense Motive (Wis), Speak Language (None), and Spellcraft (Int).

Skill Points at Each Level: 6 + Int modifier.

Class Level	Base Attack	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special	Defense Bonus	Reputation Bonus
1	+0	+0	+0	+2	+1 Binding Slot	+1	+1
2	+1	+0	+0	+3	+1 Binding Slot	+1	+1
3	+2	+1	+1	+3	+1 Binding Slot	+2	+1
4	+3	+1	+1	+4	+1 Binding Slot	+2	+2
5	+3	+1	+1	+4	+1 Binding Slot	+3	+2
6	+4	+2	+2	+5	+1 Binding Slot	+3	+2
7	+5	+2	+2	+5	+1 Binding Slot	+4	+3
8	+6	+2	+2	+6	+1 Binding Slot	+4	+3
9	+6	+3	+3	+6	+1 Binding Slot	+5	+3
10	+7	+3	+3	+7	+1 Binding Slot	+5	+4

CLASS FEATURES

All of the following are class features of the Dream Warden.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: The Dream Warden is proficient in the use of all simple weapons.

Saving Throws: The saving throw DC for most Dream Warden powers (when applicable) is equal to 10 + the power's level + the Dream Warden's Charisma modifier.

THE DREAM STATE

The dream state is the collective set of fragmented mental realms created by sentient beings when they dream (and, to a lesser degree, even while they're awake). Traveling across this landscape is like traveling across a crazy patchwork quilt; one moment daffodils and butterflies surround you and the next a gray fog flecked with feral eyes engulfs you. The landscape itself remains moderately stable. Explore a kingdom tonight, return in a week and it will still be there. However, the dreamscape is malleable, and great changes can wash across it. In times of great or wide-spread trouble on the First or Second World the lands themselves may plunge into darkness.

The waking world exerts an indirect influence on the landscape of the dream state. The thoughts and psychic energies of local creatures construct the dreamspace of an area and the waking experiences of those creatures shape the dreams they have. Thus, a map of the dream state matches, to a degree, a map of the world. However, the dual nature of the First and Second Worlds unifies in the dream state. If you enter the dream state in Second World New York you'll see a landscape shaped by the collective thoughts of the people and creatures from both Second World New York and First World New York. The dream state thus appears as a surreal

amalgam of the two worlds and the imaginings of the people and creatures of the two worlds. As you travel through the dream state the land changes to reflect the way people and creatures see it. All this means that you can enter the dream state and interact with people and creatures from either world there. Few individuals remember anything more than fragmentary bits upon waking though.

Usually, damage and effects suffered in the dream state are real within the dream state. You can die there. However, this does not kill your physical body. When you awaken you will feel different, your inspiration and creativity will suffer (-4 to Perform and Craft checks), but you will continue on through life and even continue to experience pseudo-dreams. The dreams you have will be faint and wispy, the normal thrashings of a consciousness; but you will never again be able to access the rich lands of dream. Some people, powers, and places, can make the connection between your physical self and dream self much more solid.

RICOCHETS

You cannot bounce around in a person's mind without causing some disturbances; these are called ricochets. Ricochets typically occur when you act too forcefully within the target's consciousness. The psyche requires a delicate balance; our world-view consists of a network of inter-locking beliefs and memories and when inconsistencies develop in this network our subconscious automatically attempts to correct the errors. Normally this works just fine, but our subconscious didn't evolve to deal with Dream Wardens. Thus, sometimes Dream Wardens can create a cascading effect within a target, damaging the very information they're after and generating long-term side effects.

Ricochets typically have one effect associated with the particular power being used and a standard effect. Any time a creature suffers from a ricochet, in addition to the particular effect due to the power, it must also make another Will save against the DC of the power that caused the ricochet. If this save is failed then the creature will suffer from a mild mental disorder somehow associated with the mind work that caused the ricochet. Typically, the disorder takes the form of either an obsession or phobia with something peripherally (not directly) related to the memory, belief, or thought. For example, if you suffer a ricochet as a result of someone probing around the memory of an encounter in a forest you might develop an obsession or phobia with snakes since they lurk in forests and one startled you in a forest when you were very young. The disorder is not usually significant enough to generate game mechanic effects but it will be apparent in behavior.

BINDINGS

ALTER MEMORIES (Sp)

Requires: Lesser Perception Altering or Mind Probe

Categories: Mind-Affecting

Power Level: 5

Action: Standard Action (see text)

Range: 50 ft.

Target: 1 creature

Duration: Permanent

Uses: 1/day

Binding Cost: 6 ip, 500 xp, Spirit Veda

Saving Throw: Will negates

Spell Resistance: Yes

This binding allows you to reach into the subject's mind and modify her memory. You may make up to three "edit" actions. Each edit allows you to modify up to 5 minutes of memory in one of the following ways:

- Eliminate all memory of an event the subject actually experienced. This power cannot negate charm, suggestion, geas, quest, or similar spells.
- Allow the subject to recall with perfect clarity an event she actually experienced. For instance, she could recall every word from a 5-minute conversation or every detail from a passage in a book.
- Change the details of an event the subject actually experienced.
- Implant a memory of an event the subject never experienced.

Invoking the power takes 1 action. If the subject fails

to save, you proceed with the power by making your first edit, spending up to 5 minutes (a period of time equal to the amount of memory time you want to modify) visualizing the memory you wish to modify in the subject. If your concentration is disturbed before the visualization is complete, or if the subject is ever beyond your range during this time, the use is lost. The subject then receives an additional Risk 2 Will save against this effect (but no spell resistance); any failure due to risk generates a ricochet. You may continue to attempt edits against the same memory or a new one (using your edit actions) but each subsequent edit against the same memory increases the Risk by 2.

A modified memory does not necessarily affect the subject's actions, particularly if it contradicts her natural inclinations. An illogical modified memory, such as the subject recalling how much she enjoyed drinking poison, is dismissed by the subject as a bad dream or a memory muddled by too much cheap First World beer. More useful applications of modify memory include implanting memories of friendly encounters with you (inclining the subject to act favorably toward you), changing the details of orders given to the subject by a superior, or causing the subject to forget that she ever saw you or your party. The gamemaster reserves the right to decide whether a modified memory is too nonsensical to significantly affect the subject.

Ricochets: A ricochet during a memory alteration will eliminate the targeted memory; however the replacement memory will be absurd in some way; for example you planned to simply remove the target's memory of seeing you kill the CEO of a powerful corporation involved in demon trafficking but a ricochet occurred. Now the target thinks a team of cigar-smoking polar bears wearing Special Air Service uniforms busted in and blew his boss away. The memory **is** damaged indefinitely though. But it's now also identifiable as damaged and can be repaired with a *greater restoration* spell or similar healing effect.

ATAVISTIC URGE (Sp)

Requires: Ignore Pain or Enhance Pain

Categories: Mind-Affecting

Power Level: 4

Uses: 2/day

Binding Cost: 10 ip, 800 xp

You summon up primal terrors from within your victims using this ability. You may use the following spells as spell-like abilities for the indicated cost in uses. Your effective caster level with these abilities is 8. In addition to the spell-like powers, you gain a

supernatural aura of dread that may be activated at will. This aura causes those within 10 feet of you to take a -2 morale penalty on attack rolls against you. This penalty does not apply to fearless or mindless creatures nor to creatures with a challenge rating 2 or more higher than your character level (or challenge rating if you happen to be a monster).

Scare, 1 use

Fear, 2 use

CHAIN ATTACKS (Su)

Requires: Gestalt

Power Level: 6

Action: Attack Modifier

Range: as base power

Targets: 5 creatures, no two of which can be more than 30 ft. apart

Duration: as base power

Uses: 1/day

Binding Cost: 13 ip, 1000 xp, Spirit Veda

Saving Throw: as base power

Spell Resistance: as base power

This allows you to attack more than one opponent at a time with a single Dream Warden power. This converts any Dream Warden binding that affects one or more targets at range with a power level of 5 or less to an area effect power with the above attributes.

CHARMING (Sp)

Requires: Psychic Dodging

Categories: Mind-Affecting

Power Level: 4

Uses: 1/day

Binding Cost: 6 ip, 500 xp

This binding grants you a presence that entrances and enthralls others. This gives you a constant +2 enhancement bonus to Charisma and you may use the following spells as spell-like abilities for the indicated cost in uses. Your effective caster level with these abilities is 8.

Enthrall, 1 use

Charm Monster, 1 use

COMMANDING (Sp)

Requires: Charming or Empathic Projection

Categories: Mind-Affecting

Power Level: 5

Uses: 2/day

Binding Cost: 15 ip, 1200 xp, Spirit Veda

This binding enables you to exert your will upon

another individual, shaping their thoughts and desires. You may use the following spells as spell-like abilities for the indicated cost in uses. Your effective caster level with these abilities is 10.

Dominate Animal, 2 uses

Dominate Person, 2 uses

Greater Command, 2 uses

Suggestion, 1 use

Lesser Geas, 1 use

DREAM QUEST (Sp)

Requires: Minor Dream Sculpting

Power Level: 6

Action: see below

Uses: 1/week

Binding Cost: 8 ip, 600 xp, Spirit Veda

This allows you to embark on a quest through the collective unconscious. You contemplate a topic prior to sleeping and then, in your dreams, search the dreamscape for images and recollections that might help you. A topic can be a person, place, object, or event. During the quest you find yourself (and any companions you bring along) in a fragment dream space conjured through the use of this power. Initially it appears similar to the place where you fell asleep. As you walk away from your starting location you begin to visit locations and scenes connected to the topic. Each stopping point along this trip is called a single Impression because what you see on your trip are the images and tales the topic has engraved on the psychic landscape. Usually the impressions will be recreations of historical events connected with the topic. Thus, if your topic involved an enchanted axe you might walk away from your campsite in the woods to come across a bloody battlefield; the warriors will likely still be there. The phantoms conjured by this power are as real as any other dream-stuff, and thus can be dangerous. But they're also abstractions, the impressions left by the originals on the psychic reality of the object you investigate. They tend not to notice you (-5 on any Spot or Listen checks for dream creatures) since they continue to play out the scenes from long ago. However, part of that scene might involve a horde of orcs slaying everything in their path and you might be in their path.

Player Implementation: When invoking this power you can try to specify a subject area. Do this by choosing the topic and then choosing a keyword or phrase, much as if you were typing it into an online search engine. The gamemaster then leads you to an

Impression which will play out before you (or perhaps even at you, this can be a dangerous power to use). If you choose to continue you must remain on the same topic but may choose new “key words.” Typically, what you discover in one Impression gives you clues to other impressions. You may follow up a number of times equal to your Charisma bonus; thus, one Dream Quest can lead you to at most 1 + your Charisma bonus Impressions.

You need to make a Spellcraft check to successfully use this ability. If the person or object is at hand or if you are in the place in question, you dream about it with a successful Spellcraft check (DC 10). If only detailed information on the person, place, or object is known, the DC is 15 and you lose one follow-up Impression (minimum of one Impression though). If only rumors are known, the DC is 20, and you lose two follow-up Impressions (minimum of one Impression though).

You can bring along others by having them fall asleep with you after either drinking special tea, or while burning incense, or through a variety of other procedures (many of which are illegal on the First World...). The material component cost of this is \$500 per additional person and you can bring along at most 12 other people. While in the dream state you have psychic copies of your equipment (unless you have lost the dream version of it sometime in the past).

Gamemaster Implementation:

The most difficult part of adjudicating use of this power is determining what Im-

pression the player or players will see. First, an object leaves many kinds of Impressions over the course of history. There’s the battlefield trauma described above or potent magical events associated with it in the past. However, the object might also leave powerful impressions on others. Perhaps a magical pond cured a man of disease and he feels everlasting thanks to nature (and it) as a result. Or Lloyd Fisk has sought the rare Jade Gazelle stamp issued by Benin in 1808 for close to 70 years, carving his obsession for the stamp indelibly into the psychic history of the world.

You will also need to have some idea of the relative ranking of Impression significance. Some Impressions regarding a topic are more significant than others and, generally, the more significant Impressions are what the players will encounter. If the Dream Warden fails to specify a particular subject then the first scene should be the most significant event in the topic’s history. Leaving powerful psychic traces makes an event significant. This can occur due to powerful emotions felt by large numbers of people (such as a battle) or potent magical forces at play. More recent events are favored over older events (thus destruction will be shown before birth). Finally, whatever seems significant to you (the gamemaster) is significant.

When given key words simply take the strongest Impression from the set of total Impressions that satisfy the key words. For example, if the player chooses to investigate an axe and wants to focus on the late



The Stuff Nightmares are Made Of, by Jeremy Dale

1800's then take the strongest Impression from roughly 1850 to 1899. There's no need to use computerese in describing the subject or key words, though that can be a convenient model; simply use your judgment. The players may choose a key word or combination that cannot be satisfied. If something very close to it *can* be satisfied use that instead. If that isn't possible have the players return to their starting point; the fact that nothing was found is information too (and does count as use of an Impression).

Impressions are not simply filmed recordings of past occurrences; better to think of them as filmed recordings made by Picasso or Dali. These will be abstract, sometimes mistaken, but almost always very intense. In fact their intensity and inclusion of metaphor can be even more informative than a mere recording would be. They can also be dangerous, particularly for quests involving items with powerful histories. If making up the specifics of the Impressions on the fly it's worthwhile to restrict yourself to using only pre-generated opponents (like creatures from a published source) for possible fighting encounters. For famous or named opponents the Impression version should not be the same as the actual one; instead the Impression version should be symbolic of the actual one. This is best accomplished by giving him some generic attributes and one or two signature abilities that might have stood out in a potential observer's recollection.

Finally, this power is designed to allow a group of players to go on the quest together. It's best to avoid making use of this power a required part of a scenario but it's worthwhile to give some thought to what sort of Impressions you might associate with a given topic. A good technique is to request that they tell you ahead of time what topic they'll study and what keywords they'll use so that you can prepare a scenario for the following week. Since the players need to rest for the evening to go on a dream quest, when they decide they *do* want to use one they should be able to hold off until the end of the gaming session.

DREAM SCULPTING (Sp)

Requires: Minor Dream Sculpting

Power Level: 6

Uses: 2/day

Binding Cost: 10 ip, 800 xp, Spirit Veda

Saving Throw: Will negates

Spell Resistance: Yes

This allows you to exert substantial control over the dream environment. You may use any of the following spells as spell-like abilities at a cost of one use;

however, you may only use these within the Dream State or a dream. If you are in someone else's dream they receive a Willpower saving throw to negate the effect, even if the effect does not go directly against them. They also receive any saving throw normally associated with the power used. Your effective caster level with these abilities is 12.

Acid Fog, Blade Barrier, Control Weather, Control Winds, Evar's Black Tentacles, Fabricate, Insect Plague, Leo's Secure Shelter, Major Creation, Minor Creation, Move Earth, Passwall, Solid Fog, Spike Stones, Summon Monster VI, Transmute Mud to Rock, Transmute Rock to Mud, Wall of Fire, Wall of Ice, Wall of Iron, Wall of Stone, Wall of Thorns

EMPATHIC PROJECTION (Sp)

Requires: Empathy

Categories: Mind-Affecting

Power Level: 4

Uses: 1/day

Binding Cost: 6 ip, 500 xp

This binding allows you to project feelings onto others or leach them away. This grants you a constant +2 enhancement bonus to Wisdom and you may use the following spells as spell-like abilities for the indicated cost in uses. Your effective caster level with these abilities is 8.

Calm Emotions, 1 use

Emotion, 1 use

EMPATHY (Su)

Power Level: 3

Uses: at will

Binding Cost: 3 ip, 240 xp

This allows you to read the surface emotions of creatures you see. You'll detect strong feelings such as hate, anger, love, fear, anxiety, hunger, pain, depression, glee and so on but subtle or weakly felt emotions blend together. In addition, your sensitivity to emotions grants you a +10 circumstance bonus to Sense Motive checks.

ENHANCE PAIN (In)

Categories: Mind-Affecting

Power Level: 3

Action: Attack Modifier

Uses: 1/day

Binding Cost: 2 ip, 160 xp

You use this ability to make an injury seem more damaging than it actually is. Add +2d6 subdual damage to a melee attack or ranged attack (so long as the target

is within 30 feet).

ENTER DREAM STATE (Sp)

Categories: Mind-Affecting

Power Level: 5

Action: 10 minutes

Range: 25 ft.

Target: 1 sleeping creature

Duration: While sleeping (D)

Uses: 1/day

Binding Cost: 6 ip, 500 xp, Spirit Veda

Saving Throw: Will negates

Spell Resistance: Yes

This allows you to enter the dream-state of a sentient creature. The target receives a Will save to resist this effect and even targets that would normally be friendly, or whom you are trying to help, will usually make a saving throw since they're unlikely to realize what you're actually doing. As with a Dream Quest you can bring along others by having them fall asleep with you. The material component cost of this is \$500 per additional person and you can bring along at most 12 other people. Likewise, while in the dream state you have psychic copies of your equipment (unless you have lost the dream version of it sometime in the past). The amount of time spent in the dream state is equivalent to the amount of time spent sleeping. The target must be nearby or you must be able to telepathically contact the target. While in the dream state you can interact with the target. You may use this to treat a catatonic patient (assuming the patient isn't completely brain dead).

Occasionally locations resonate with psychic energy as well. You can enter the dream state to investigate them. Likewise, one might only be able to communicate with certain unusual sentient creatures via the dream state. You enter the dream state of a particular individual however you may access the global dream state from a particular dream. For particularly traumatized individuals, finding the passage to the collective unconscious may be difficult or even dangerous. If you just want to explore the global dream state by yourself or with some allies you may use this power on yourself. This takes you and your allies into your own dream; from here you have easy access to the local dream landscape.

GESTALT (Sp)

Requires: Psychic Link

Categories: Mind-Affecting

Power Level: 4

Action: Standard Action

Range: 100 feet

Target: One volunteer

Duration: 10 minutes

Uses: 1/day

Binding Cost: 3 ip, 240 xp, Spirit Veda

Saving Throw: Will negates

Spell Resistance: Yes

You can generate a deep mental link with some other sentient creature in the immediate area or to anyone with whom you already have an established mental link. The depth of the connection requires that the other person in the Gestalt grant permission to the linking; in fact, the linking occurs at the level of the spirit or will. Gestalt's are typically used to quickly and completely transfer information. For example, you could share everything you know about a person through a gestalt. If used in conjunction with a Vector Warden's shifting powers the Vector Warden could use their gestalt's familiarity with the target location while this was in effect.

The two of you can also better coordinate your actions and benefit from each other's skills. In fact, you can simply use each other's skill ranks as you see fit (you use your own attributes though). Using your partner's skill does not mean they can't use it as well; it simply becomes group property. However, you do not gain your partner's powers, feats, base attack bonus, saving throws, or class special abilities (including spells known). When working together on a task or project you both get an additional +2 circumstance bonus to any checks that might be required. When fighting you both get a +2 circumstance bonus to armor class and a +4 circumstance bonus to any Spot, Listen, or Search checks that might be required. These bonuses only apply when you are in the same room or immediate area.

Gestalts can enrich a relationship, turning allies into the deepest of friends, but it can also reveal truths uncomfortable to both. The short time frame of the gestalt usually prevents any kind of deep exploration, otherwise it would be ideal for therapeutic purposes; still, even this short time frame can reveal clues to help solve a problem.

GREATER DREAM SCULPTING (Sp)

Requires: Dream Sculpting

Power Level: 9

Uses: 1/day

Binding Cost: 50 ip, 4000 xp, Spirit Veda

Saving Throw: Will negates

Spell Resistance: Yes

This allows you to exert almost complete control over the dream environment. You may use any of the following spells as spell-like abilities at a cost of one use; however, you may only use these within the Dream State or a dream. If you are in someone else's dream they receive a Willpower saving throw to negate the effect, even if the effect does not go directly against them. They also receive any saving throw normally associated with the power used. Your effective caster level with these abilities is 18.

Earthquake, Polymorph Any Object, Reverse Gravity, Shapechange, Storm of Vengeance, Summon Monster IX, Transmute Metal to Wood, Whirlwind

HOLDING (Sp)

Requires: Phantom Wounds

Categories: Mind-Affecting

Power Level: 4

Uses: 1/day

Binding Cost: 6 ip, 500 xp

This binding allows you to lock down the target's control of their own body. You may use *hold monster* or *slow* as a spell-like ability for one use. Your effective caster level with this ability is 8. The same power that grants you control over the nervous systems of others also grants you greater control over your own nervous system; you gain a constant +2 enhancement bonus to Dexterity.

IGNORE PAIN (Su)

Power Level: 2

Binding Cost: 3 ip, 240 xp

This allows you to shut off your pain centers. You suffer fewer penalties from wounds and can withstand any amount of torture. You cannot be Dazed, Shocked, or Stunned and are immune to Severe Pain (see the New Conditions section). This means that torture will provide no bonuses to interrogation checks against you. You do not fall unconscious when you drop below 0 hit points though you still suffer the other effects (in particular, being Disabled).

KNOW ATTACK (Su)

Categories: Mind-Affecting

Power Level: 1

Action: Spontaneous

Range: Personal

Target: You

Duration: one attack

Uses: 2/day

Binding Cost: 1 ip, 80 xp

This allows you to know what your opponent is thinking during combat, giving you a +2 insight bonus to armor class against that opponent. This also makes you immune to Feints, surprise, and flanking or other attacks that rely on misdirection and deception. You may use this against an attack of which you would otherwise be unaware.

KNOW DEFENSE (Su)

Categories: Mind-Affecting

Power Level: 1

Action: Attack Modification

Duration: one attack

Uses: 2/day

Binding Cost: 1 ip, 80 xp

This is like *Know Attack*, however this grants a +2 insight bonus to hit against one opponent. You use this ability in conjunction with an attack. Your insight into the victim's intentions also neutralizes any bonus they receive from fighting defensively or using the Expertise feat.

LESSER PERCEPTION ALTERING (Sp)

Categories: Mind-Affecting, Phantasm

Power Level: 3

Action: Standard Action

Range: 150 feet

Target: 1 creature

Duration: 10 minutes (D)

Uses: 1/day

Binding Cost: 5 ip, 400 xp, Spirit Veda

Saving Throw: Will negates

Spell Resistance: Yes

This binding allows you to alter a target's perceptions so he sees what you want him to see. The victim receives a Will saving throw (negates) to resist the effect. If the saving throw fails you may choose to inflict any one of the following effects on your victim:

- You can make yourself—including clothing, armor, weapons, and equipment—look different to the victim. You can appear to be any roughly humanoid creature of the same size class. The extent of the apparent change is up to you; you could add or obscure a minor feature, such as a mole or a beard, or look like an entirely different person. This effect does not provide the abilities or mannerisms of the chosen form. This does not alter the perceived tactile (touch) or audible (sound) properties of you or your equipment. A battleaxe made to look like a dagger still functions as a battleaxe.

If you use this effect to create a disguise, you get a +10 bonus on the Disguise check.

- You can make yourself invisible to the victim. The victim will not be able to perceive you using any of his senses; it will be as if he were purposely ignoring you. However, spells and powers specifically designed to see or detect invisible creatures will allow the victim to notice you. The effect ends if you attack the victim. For purposes of this power, an “attack” includes any spell targeting the victim or whose area of effect includes the victim. Actions directed at unattended objects or others do not break the effect. Causing harm indirectly is not an attack. Thus, you can open doors, talk, eat, climb stairs, summon monsters and have them attack, cut the ropes holding a rope bridge while enemies are on the bridge, remotely trigger traps, open a portcullis to release attack dogs, and so forth. If you attack the victim directly, however, you immediately become visible along with all your gear.
- You can create the visual illusion of an object, creature, or force, as visualized by yourself. The illusion includes sound, smell, and thermal properties but not texture. While concentrating, you can move the image. The image disappears if struck by the target. The image you create can appear to fill up to 10 ten foot cubes (shapeable).

LORD OF ILLUSIONS (Sp)

Requires: Dream Sculpting

Power Level: 7

Action: Standard Action

Range: 0

Area: 100 ft. radius emanation

Duration: 10 minutes

Uses: 1/day

Binding Cost: 20 ip, 1600 xp

Saving Throw: None

Spell Resistance: No

When you use this ability you draw the dream state into the real world; causing a sort of overlap between the two spaces. The area affected takes on a dream-like quality, the specifics of which are based on your psychology (happy wardens draw happy dream states; dark wardens draw unpleasant ones). Within the affected area you can manipulate the world using the various Dream Sculpting powers. Moreover, you get a +2 circumstance bonus on all actions (including

attacks, skill checks, and saving throws). Note that these bonuses only apply in this special version of the dream state; they do not apply to general combat within the dream state. Other Dream Wardens can also exercise control over this region, but they do not gain the circumstance bonus to actions unless they take command of the area. They can take command of the area by invoking this power themselves and defeating you in a contested Dream Warden class level + Charisma bonus check. When the duration of this invocation ends the world returns pretty much to normal; any alterations or damage to objects disappears. However, any alterations or damage to living creatures (specifically, things that dream) does remain.

MENTAL DISRUPTION (Sp)

Requires: Enhance Pain or Holding

Categories: Mind-Affecting

Power Level: 5

Uses: 1/day

Binding Cost: 6 ip, 500 xp, Spirit Veda

This binding allows you to direct a lance of psychic energy at a target mind; disrupting their normal functions. You may use the following spells as spell-like abilities for the indicated cost in uses. Your effective caster level with these abilities is 10.

Confusion, 1 use

Feeblemind, 1 use

MENTAL DOMINATION (Sp)

Requires: Commanding

Categories: Mind-Affecting

Power Level: 9

Uses: 1/day

Binding Cost: 40 ip, 3200 xp

This binding enables you to exert your will upon any other individual, granting you complete control over them. You may use the following spells as spell-like abilities for the indicated cost in uses. Your effective caster level with these abilities is 18.

Demand, 1 use

Dominate monster, 1 use

MENTAL RECONSTRUCTION (Su)

Requires: Mental Domination

Categories: Mind-Affecting

Power Level: 9

Binding Cost: 40 ip, 3200 xp

This allows you to sustain a dominate power (e.g. dominate monster, dominate person, dominate animal)

with this Veda. If you possess this binding you may “attach” it to a dominate power you have in effect. This binding will then sustain that domination indefinitely. You may always release this binding and attach it to a different dominated creature or person. Creatures that break free from control (due to being forced to do something against their nature) only break free temporarily if this binding is in effect. Every 24 hours they must make another saving throw or fall back under your control.

MIND PROBE (Sp)

Requires: Know Defense or Know Attack

Categories: Mind-Affecting

Power Level: 5

Action: 1 Minute

Range: 50 ft.

Target: 1 creature

Duration: Concentration

Uses: 1/day

Binding Cost: 6 ip, 500 xp, Spirit Veda

Saving Throw: Will negates

Spell Resistance: Yes

This power allows you to invade a person’s mind and gather information. When you activate this ability the target makes an initial Will saving throw to deny you access; if this save is failed you then receive 5 probing actions. Each probing action may be used to scan for and retrieve one particular memory or belief the target may have. However, the target also receives a Will saving throw against each particular probe (no spell resistance though). If the target makes his saving throw that probe is denied. These saving throws have a base Risk of 2 and any failure due to risk generates a ricochet. You may continue to attempt probes against the same belief or memory (using your probe actions) but each subsequent probe increases the risk by 2 since you’re effectively going into the target’s mind with a jackhammer.

Memories are stored (for game purposes) in five minute long units and are usually fairly accurate (though not complete and not wholly accurate since we often fill in the gaps in our memories with made-up stuff). When specifying a memory use the key-word technique as outlined in the Dream Quest power. Beliefs are stored as short phrases; for example, “the king is a fink” is one such belief; “I killed the ambassador” would be another such belief. Unless you have a pretty clear idea of what you’re seeking use your initial probe actions to figure out good key words and methods of narrowing your search; try to leave at least two probes for the end

in case the information is guarded.

Unlike dream quests, the more significant the belief the better guarded it is within a person’s mind. People have certain thoughts they particularly guard against revealing. If a memory or belief is something that the target would be on guard against letting slip (for instance he watches himself around this subject when out drinking) then it is considered guarded. Guarded information cannot be revealed with the first probe; instead, when a guarded thought is picked out by a probe you first sense resistance, a psychic wall. This indicates to you that the thought is guarded; you may then attempt to penetrate the wall by taking another probe action (which increases the risk as usual). If this probe succeeds without causing a ricochet you get the information for which you were looking.

Typically, thoughts fall into just the guarded or unguarded category. Rarely, information is intensely guarded. Witnessing the bishop getting possessed by a demon and being sworn to secrecy on threat of eternal damnation might fall into this category. Also, some severe traumas are intensely guarded. Note though that a great deal of very useful information will be unguarded.

Ricochets: A ricochet in a probe distorts or garbles the memories you’re examining; the victim won’t actually forget their memory but it will be confused and not terribly useful. Beliefs can also be garbled this way but there is usually enough error-correcting material around (i.e. other beliefs that supported the garbled one) that these rapidly correct themselves. A ricochet that affects a memory corrects itself naturally after about one week and the victim goes back to the way they were. You can thus choose to probe again after some time has passed.

ENHANCEMENTS

QUIET PROBE (Su)

Requires: Mind Probe

Power Level: 7

Binding Cost: 10 ip, 800 xp

This enhancement allows your Mind Probes to work without alerting the target and increases the range of the power to 200 feet. The victim still makes saving throws as usual but the subtle nature of a quiet probe reduces the initial risk to 1 (it still increases by 2 per subsequent probe against the same topic though).

MINOR DREAM SCULPTING (Sp)

Requires: Enter Dream State

Power Level: 3

Uses: 2/day

Binding Cost: 5 ip, 400 xp, Spirit Veda

Saving Throw: Will negates

Spell Resistance: Yes

This allows you to exert some control over the dream environment. You may use any of the following spells as spell-like abilities at a cost of one use; however, you may only use these within the Dream State or a dream. If you are in someone else's dream they receive a Willpower saving throw to negate the effect, even if the effect does not go directly against them. They also receive any saving throw normally associated with the power used. Your effective caster level with these abilities is 6.

Arcane Lock, Create Food and Water, Create Water, Darkness, Daylight, Deeper Darkness, Diminish Plants, Entangle, Fog Cloud, Gust of Wind, Hold Portal, Knock, Leo's Tiny Hut, Light, Make Whole, Mending, Mount, Obscuring Mist, Open/Close, Plant Growth, Sculpt Sound, Snare, Soften Earth and Stone, Spike Growth, Stone Shape, Summon Monster III, Summon Swarm, Warp Wood, Wind Wall, Wood Shape

PERCEPTION ALTERING (Sp)

Requires: Lesser Perception Altering

Categories: Mind-Affecting, Phantasm

Power Level: 5

Action: Standard Action

Range: 150 feet

Target: 1 creature

Duration: 10 minutes (D)

Uses: 1/day

Binding Cost: 10 ip, 800 xp, Spirit Veda

Saving Throw: Will negates

Spell Resistance: Yes

This binding allows you to drastically alter a target's perceptions so he sees what you want him to see. The victim receives a Will saving throw (negates) to resist the effect. If the saving throw fails you may choose to inflict any one of the following effects on your victim:

- You may make the subject think he was struck with a magical damaging effect, such as a fireball, lightning bolt, or so on. Regardless of the specific appearance the target will suffer 8d6 subdual damage, half if a successful Reflex saving throw is made (note that the target will suffer no damage if the initial Will save is made). If you use this effect then the duration should be considered instantaneous.

- You may make the target think that you have summoned a creature of some sort. Treat the effect as a summon monster IV spell (actually it appears as a summon monster V spell but some of the other creatures have to wander off to fight other things). The creature appears to have full hit points.
- You may become invisible to the target as for lesser perception altering however you do not become visible when you attack him (like *improved invisibility*).
- You can alter the appearance of the terrain over an area of ten 20 foot cubes. The terrain will look, sound, feel, and smell like some other terrain of your desire. You can alter the appearance of structures (or add them where none are present). You cannot disguise, conceal, or add creatures.

PERMANENT GESTALT (Su)

Requires: Gestalt

Categories: Mind-Affecting

Power Level: 8

Binding Cost: 20 ip, 1600 xp

This binding establishes a permanent gestalt with a single individual. The target must be willing but once the power has been established it cannot be rescinded by either party. About the only way to remove the gestalt is through the death of the other participant. Some high level powers (such as a *wish*, *miracle*, or a power that drastically reconstructed one's mind) could eliminate the effect as well. Otherwise this acts just like a regular Gestalt.

PHANTOM STALKERS (Sp)

Requires: Atavistic Urge

Categories: Mind-Affecting

Power Level: 5

Uses: 1/day

Binding Cost: 6 ip, 500 xp, Spirit Veda

This binding allows you to direct a nightmare creature into the unconscious of the target. You may use the following spells as spell-like abilities for the indicated cost in uses. Your effective caster level with these abilities is 10.

Phantasmal Killer, 1 use

Nightmare, 1 use

PHANTOM WOUNDS (Sp)

Categories: Mind-Affecting

Power Level: 4**Action:** Standard Action**Range:** Personal or Touch**Target:** 1 creature**Duration:** 10 minutes (D)**Uses:** 1/day**Binding Cost:** 2 ip, 160 xp, Spirit Veda**Saving Throw:** Special**Spell Resistance:** Special

This binding allows you to fade the substance of your weapons and all attacks into dream-stuff. While this power is active none of your attacks cause actual damage or permanent effects. This includes such effects as poison, damage from spells, and energy drains. At sunset or sunrise the effects will simply disappear from the victim. Dream Wardens use this to capture people. You may also touch someone so that it works on them, but they must voluntarily accept the effect.

PSYCHIC DODGING (Su)**Power Level: 2****Binding Cost:** 1 ip, 80 xp

This allows you to automatically defend against unwanted psychic intrusion. Any psychic or mental attack launched against you will alert you and give you a general idea from what direction the attack is coming. You get a +4 dodge bonus to your saving throw against any Mind-Affecting attack.

PSYCHIC LINK (Su)**Power Level: 3****Binding Cost:** 8 ip, 600 xp**Per Extra Link:** 4 ip, 300 xp

You develop this ability to set aside a mental “channel” for communication with one other person. For each link in the binding you can have one channel. Once you have an available channel it then takes five minutes to establish a link. This must be used with a friendly, and willing, nearby target or one with which you can mentally communicate. Once activated you have a telepathic link with the target for as long as you wish to maintain it. These psychic links do not have an action penalty associated with them. Psychic links can also be toned down when members desire (for instance, when they want some privacy). Psychic links have no range limitation but do not cross dimensional barriers (i.e. do not extend from the First to the Second World) and can be blocked by certain powers. A psychic link can be dropped by either party whenever they desire. Psychic links allow sub-vocalized mental communication. This means that you do not share sense information but instead “talk” to each other, as if you had a kind of

mental radio. You can have one link per Dream Warden level bound to a single slot; if you desire more links you may use up another slot to do so.

PSYCHIC RENDING (Sp)**Requires:** Mental Disruption**Categories:** Mind-Affecting**Power Level: 5****Action:** Standard Action**Range:** 150 ft.**Target:** 1 creature**Duration:** Instantaneous**Uses:** 1/day**Binding Cost:** 6 ip, 500 xp, Spirit Veda**Saving Throw:** Will half**Spell Resistance:** Yes

This power allows you to rip through a target’s body and soul with pure psychic force. This turns the victim’s brain to jelly and rends their internal organs. This causes 10d8 damage (half if a Will save is made). While this power causes physical damage it must be channeled through the victim’s psyche, thus this will not affect a mindless creature.

TELEPATHY (In)**Requires:** Thought Sending**Power Level: 9****Binding Cost:** 13 ip, 1000 xp

You may use *detect thoughts*, as the spell, at will. Furthermore, you can send a telepathic message to anyone whose surface thoughts you are reading (allowing two-way communication).

THOUGHT SENDING (Sp)**Requires:** Know Attack or Know Defense**Categories:** Mind-Affecting**Power Level: 5****Uses:** 1/day**Binding Cost:** 6 ip, 500 xp

You can communicate over vast distances using this binding. This binding also generates a resonance between your mind and the dream state which grants you a +2 enhancement bonus to Intelligence. You may use the following spells as spell-like abilities for the indicated cost in uses. Your effective caster level with these abilities is 10.

Sending, 1 charge*Dream*, 1 chargeTRANSFER MIND (In)**Requires:** Permanent Gestalt & Telepathy

Categories: Mind-Affecting

Power Level: 9

Action: Spontaneous

Range: 100 ft.

Target: 1 creature

Duration: Instantaneous

Uses: 1

Binding Cost: 75 ip, 6000 xp

Saving Throw: Will negates

Spell Resistance: Yes

Binding this ability to a Veda gives you one use of it. When you use the ability both the bound power, and the Veda to which it is bound are sacrificed forever. You can use this normally or upon dying as an instant action. If used upon dying you can liberate your mind and either have it float free for a short period of time or attach it to another character (typically a friendly one) for a longer period. You can only float free for about ten minutes, but you can ride with another character as long as you like and they are willing. You may ride along with any willing character in range, any character with which you have a psychic link (and who is on the same interstice) or any character with whom you have a gestalt (no matter where they are).

While disembodied like this you can only communicate with your host (as if you had a psychic link with them) or launch an attack to dominate. Domination allows you to transfer your mind to another creature. The victim receives a normal Will saving throw; if they fail you now live on in that creature's body. If they succeed, you can try again against some other target but that victim is forever resistant to you. Alternately, you can detach yourself completely from the world and go to live on in the Dream State. This will probably take you out of the game unless the gamemaster chooses to move the campaign there. In the Dream State you'll be just as you were when you died (but you won't have any equipment unless someone brings it to you in the Dream State).

You acquire the physical and natural abilities of the creature you have dominated while retaining your own mind. Physical abilities include natural size and Strength, Dexterity, and Constitution scores. Natural abilities include armor, attack routines (claw, claw, and bite; swoop and rake; and constriction; but not petrification, breath weapons, energy drain, energy effects, etc.), and similar gross physical qualities (presence or absence of wings, number of extremities, etc.). Natural abilities also include mundane movement capabilities, such as walking, swimming, and flight with wings, but not magical flight and other magical

forms of travel, such as blink, dimension door, phase door, plane shift, teleport, and teleport without error. Extremely high speeds for certain creatures are the result of magical ability, so they are not granted by this spell. Other non-magical abilities (such as an owl's low-light vision) are considered natural abilities and are retained.

You retain your Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma scores, level and class, hit points (despite any change in your Constitution score), alignment, base attack bonus, and base saves. New Strength, Dexterity, and Constitution scores may affect final attack and save bonuses. You retain your own type (for example, "humanoid"), extraordinary abilities, spells, and spell-like abilities, warden powers and bindings, but not your supernatural (non-warden) abilities. You can cast spells for which you have components. You need a humanlike voice for verbal components and humanlike hands for somatic components. You do not gain the spell-like abilities of your new body. You do not gain the supernatural abilities (such as breath weapons and gaze attacks) or the extraordinary abilities of the creature.

Your new body can be disorienting. Any time you are in a stressful or demanding situation (such as combat), you must succeed at a Will save (DC 19) or suffer a -2 penalty on all attack rolls, saves, skill checks, and ability checks until the situation passes. Dream Wardens deal better with this sort of change than most and so you grow accustomed to your new form in about one month, after which you no longer suffer from this disorientation.

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FERAL WARDEN

Description: The Feral Warden is the only warden power based on a property. All other warden powers are associated with objects (sometimes abstract objects but individual items at any rate). This difference reflects a core theme in the Feral Warden's world view. The Feral Warden is aligned with a state of mind, an operator, and not any particular object, form, or environment. Feral Wardens are at home in the wild, whether that be the rain forest, swamp, desert, tundra, or inner city. They do not love the wilderness; they are not guardians of the wilderness; they *are* wilderness. They are part of the circle of death and rebirth. They are the hard part of the hydraulic process of natural selection; they are the part that culls the weak from the herd. It might seem that the encroachment of civilization has weakened their presence in the world; this is far from correct. The cities are more vicious than the forests, plains, and jungles ever were. Some wardens have taken it upon themselves to enter the cities and practice their harsh justice amongst the concrete and steel.

While you can find vegetarians and others with a fondness for nature amongst the Feral Warden ranks they are not common. Part of the reason for being vegetarian is because we, as creatures capable of moral reasoning, can overcome our urges when we recognize that great harm arises from them. Wolves and tigers cannot do that and Feral Wardens have more in

common with them than with us. Feral Wardens align themselves with common themes in the wilderness. You have predators, herbivores, omnivores, scavengers, parasites, stagnancy, change, old growth, new growth, and so on. Feral Wardens develop techniques to align themselves with these types of nature, thus gaining their special abilities. There's not enough room in this book to detail all of the possibilities but I will provide a small selection of options here.

Hit Die: d8. Give the Feral Warden a d10 for hit points if using Defense Bonuses.

Action Points: 6 + 1/2 your character level (round down).

FERAL WARDEN

This feat grants you access to Feral Warden bindings. Feral Wardens draw on the elemental power of the hunter and predator. While they might seem like forest people they typically lack the calm and peace of nature; instead they possess its ferocity.

Prerequisites: as for Feral Warden class

Benefit: You acquire two binding slots for use with Feral Warden bindings. You must obey all the normal rules for binding powers to a slot, including paying the appropriate experience point and material component cost for the slot. You may also take this feat if you al-

Class Level	Base Attack	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special	Defense Bonus	Reputation Bonus
1	+1	+2	+0	+0	+1 Binding Slot	+0	+0
2	+2	+3	+0	+0	+1 Binding Slot	+1	+0
3	+3	+3	+1	+1	+1 Binding Slot	+1	+1
4	+4	+4	+1	+1	+1 Binding Slot	+1	+1
5	+5	+4	+1	+1	+1 Binding Slot	+2	+1
6	+6	+5	+2	+2	+1 Binding Slot	+2	+2
7	+7	+5	+2	+2	+1 Binding Slot	+2	+2
8	+8	+6	+2	+2	+1 Binding Slot	+3	+2
9	+9	+6	+3	+3	+1 Binding Slot	+3	+3
10	+10	+7	+3	+3	+1 Binding Slot	+3	+3

ready have Feral Warden class levels; if you do so add 2 slots to your total available slots for Feral Warden bindings. You may take this feat more than once gaining two additional slots for each feat taken. You may only use this feat for Feral Warden bindings.

REQUIREMENTS

To qualify to become a Feral Warden, a character must fulfill all of the following criteria.

Base Attack Bonus: +5

Survival: 8 ranks

Feats: Endurance, Track

Special: You must also spend one month living in the wild with no tools (at all, including clothing). During this month you must kill an animal for food at least once per week.

CLASS SKILLS

The Feral Warden's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Climb (Str), Craft (Int), Handle Animal (Cha), Hide (Dex), Jump (Str), Knowledge (nature) (Int), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), **Navigate (Int)**, Ride (Dex), Search (Int), Spellcraft (Int), Spot (Wis), Survival (Wis), and Swim (Str).

Skill Points at Each Level: 4 + Int modifier.

CLASS FEATURES

All of the following are class features of the Feral Warden.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: The Feral Warden is proficient in the use of all simple and martial weapons and with light and medium armor. Feral Wardens are not proficient with shields.

Saving Throws: The saving throw DC for most Feral Warden powers (when applicable) is equal to 10 + the power's level + the Feral Warden's Constitution modifier.

BINDINGS

BLENDING (Su)

Power Level: 3

Action: Move-equivalent Action

Range: Personal

Target: Self

Duration: 1 round

Uses: at will

Binding Cost: 3 ip, 240 xp

Chapter Three: Wardens

Driven

4 ip, 320 xp

Stamina
1 ip, 80 xp

Endurance of the Bear
variable

Natural Reserves
6 ip, 500 xp

This special ability allows you to blend into the background, which lets you make a Hide check even while being observed. Make a regular Hide skill check; compare this to all opponent's Spot skill bonuses +10; everyone you beat has lost track of you. You may then take a normal action while effectively hidden. You can quickly move around a corner, or move to flank a target for a surprise attack. Technically, you are not invisible and if you attack a target you do not get the invisible attacker bonus (though you will typically get a flanking bonus).

DRIVEN (Su)

Requires: Stamina

Power Level: 2

Binding Cost: 4 ip, 320 xp

You can perform fatiguing activity for long periods of time without tiring by summoning some power from nature itself. Count overland movement rates as one category lower (i.e. Hustle tires you out as if walking and Running tires you out as if hustling; you run at twice your hustle pace typically). This ability also allows you to swim for long periods of time at a fairly rapid rate. With this binding you swim at a pace of about 2 miles per hour and only need to make a Swim check (still DC 20) every four hours instead of each hour.

ENDURANCE OF THE BEAR (Su)

Requires: Stamina

Power Level: 4

Binding Cost: variable

You can call on the enduring aspect of the bear. This gives you an enhancement bonus to Constitution. The binding cost depends on the enhancement bonus you choose. You may always choose to upgrade a smaller bonus to a larger one by paying the difference in their costs.

Bonus	Cost
+2	2 ip, 160 xp
+4	8 ip, 600 xp
+6	18 ip, 1400 xp

FERAL INSTINCTS (Su)

Power Level: 3

Binding Cost: 2 ip, 160 xp

You are constantly on guard and thus never surprised by traps or ambushes. This means that you are never flat-footed; you also get a +2 insight bonus on Reflex saving throws against traps and a +2 insight bonus to AC against attacks made by traps.

FRENZY (Su)

Requires: Speed of the Serpent

Power Level: 7

Action: Full Round Action

Range: Personal

Target: Self

Uses: 1/day

Binding Cost: 15 ip, 1200 xp,
Spirit Veda

With this binding you can flash into a berzerker frenzy, laying waste to all around you. When you use this power you get a full attack against all creatures in a ten foot radius surrounding you; this radius includes the corners (thus it's as if you stepped immediately north, south, east and west and attacked all adjacent creatures). You attack everyone, friend and foe alike and at the end you even make one attack against yourself at your full bonus with your best weapon. Afterwards you must spend one round surveying the carnage. You can do nothing during this round but you defend normally (and may make opportunity attacks if there's anything stupid enough to still be near you).

HEART OF THE LION (Su)

Requires: Speed of the Serpent

Power Level: 5

Action: Free

Range: Personal

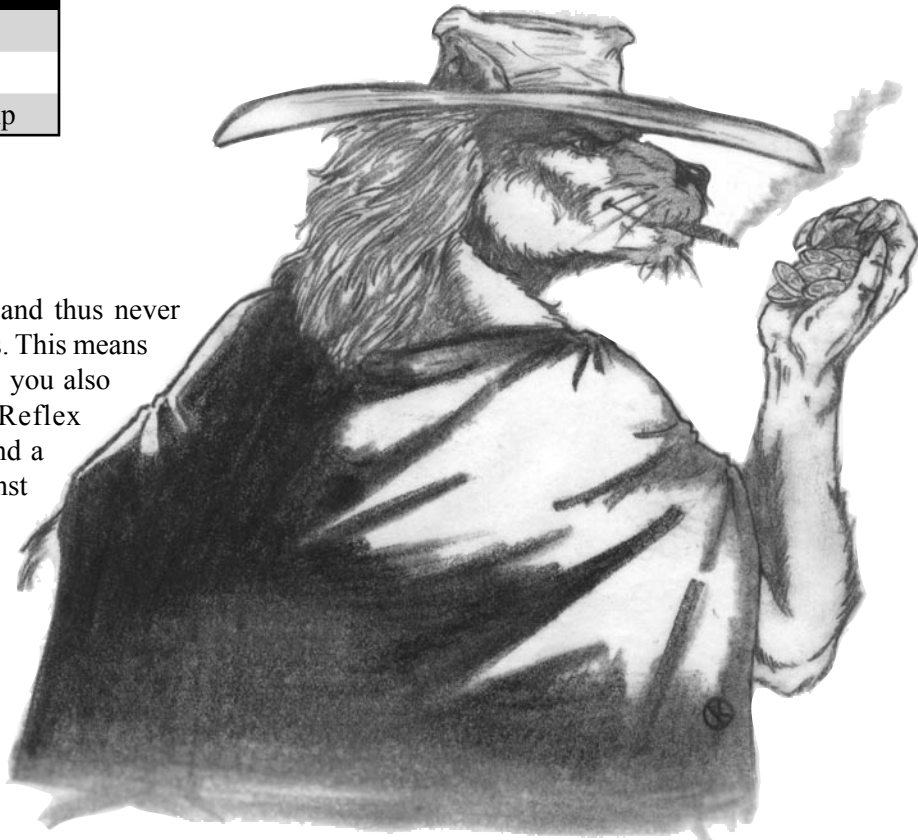
Target: Self

Duration: 1 round

Uses: 1/day

Binding Cost: 8 ip, 600 xp, Spirit Veda

You take on a bit of the ferocity and majesty of the lion. When used this allows you to ignore up to 100



points of damage scored against you until the end of the round. Note that since this requires a Free action to use you must do so in **anticipation** of taking horrendous amounts of damage in a round.

INSTINCTUAL TRACKING (Sp)

Requires: Feral Instincts

Power Level: 6

Casting Time: One hour

Range: see text

Target: One creature

Duration: 24 hours

Uses: 1/week

Binding Cost: 10 ip, 800 xp, Spirit Veda

Saving Throw: None

Spell Resistance: Yes

Keen Senses
1 ip, 80 xp

Natural Communion
8 ip, 600 xp

Scent of the Wolf
6 ip, 500 xp

Read Prey
5 ip, 400 xp

Feral Wardens can develop a supernatural tracking sense. This sense works through no known medium; Feral Wardens themselves describe it as “simply knowing he was there” as if it were a form of raw intuition. Using this ability you can determine whether or not someone has been in a location, how long ago they were there (most recently), and where they went. This does not operate against the target; instead it detects the ephemeral trail the target leaves.

To pick up the trail you must designate a target (person or creature typically but some items can count), spend one hour searching a one mile radius, and make a Survival skill check. The difficulty of this skill check is based on how long it has been since the target was in the region, what sort of connection you have to the target, how well you know the target, and the target’s Hide skill bonus. If this check succeeds you discover how long ago the target passed through the region and can proceed to follow their trail for 24 hours.

In order to attempt to use this ability you must have either an item of the target or personal knowledge of the target (having met him for instance). Thus, you cannot start “tracking” from a footprint using this ability. On the other hand, you don’t need any physical evidence either; for instance, if you had met the target at a party in New York you could then attempt Instinctual Tracking in Los Angeles even if you had no evidence that the target had been to Los Angeles (i.e. you’re just gambling).

The base difficulty for this check is equal to the target’s current Hide skill bonus + 10, note that the difficulty has absolutely nothing to do with the target actually being stealthy or trying to hide their movements. Mere talent with the skill generates changes within the target making them more resistant to this power. This base difficulty is then modified by the target’s magical aura (this would be the strength of their aura were you to use *detect magic* on them) and type of connection according to the nearby charts.

Magical Aura Strength	DC Modifier
Dim	+4
Faint	+2
Moderate	+0
Strong	-4
Overwhelming	-8

Connection	DC Modifier
Personal Connection	-5
Physical Connection	+0
Haven’t met the target	+5
Met the target at least once	+0
Met the target many times (a friend)	-5
Blood relative of target	-10

Any possession that was close to the target (either physically or emotionally) counts as a physical connection. Something integral to the target (blood being a good example) counts as a personal connection. Note though that dead material such as hair and nail clippings do not count as a personal connection.

Normally, there are no bonuses or penalties for the passage of time but the target must have been within the area searched within the past 24 hours. Magical storms and similar phenomena can impose further penalties. Note that you can even track a target over water or through the air with this ability.

KEEN SENSES (Su)

Power Level: 1

Binding Cost: 1 ip, 80 xp

You enhance your normal senses with this transformation. This grants a +5 circumstance bonus to all Listen, Spot, and Search checks.

LEAP OF THE CAT (Su)

Power Level: 1

Binding Cost: 1 ip, 80 xp

This binding allows you to leap about as if a *jump* spell had been cast on you, adding a +30 bonus to all your Jump checks and eliminating your usual maximum distances.

LURE (Sp)

Power Level: 2

Uses: 2/day

Binding Cost: 2 ip, 160 xp

Your predatory nature grants you special abilities to help you to set ambushes. This binding gives you the following spell-like abilities:

Ventriloquism, 1 use

Ghost Sound, 1 use

Misdirection, 2 uses

NATURAL COMMUNION (Sp)

Requires: Keen Senses

Power Level: 5

Action: Standard Action

Range: Personal

Target: Self

Duration: 10 minutes

Uses: 1/day

Binding Cost: 8 ip, 600 xp, Spirit Veda

You link your mind with that of the natural world. The hunger of wolves, paranoia of deer, calm of the forest, rush of the wind, rhythm of the sea, all of these fill you and you feel your place within this giant cycle. While in this state you experience a supreme sense of calm. This allows you to take 10 on any check, even under the most extreme circumstances (including combat and attack checks). You also receive a +2 sacred bonus to Will saving throws. However, the sense of calm you feel reduces your aggressiveness and survival instincts; you suffer a -2 penalty to attacks and armor class.

While in communion you see through many eyes and hear through many ears; but there are so many eyes and ears that it is nearly impossible to sort through them all. You can sense great upheavals in the natural world while in communion but they won't bother you much. Also, even though you are connected to the entire natural world you sense better what happens near you. For example you would notice a forest fire if it were near (within perhaps 100 miles) but only notice extreme catastrophes on the opposite side of the world.

NATURAL RESERVES (Su)

Requires: Stamina

Power Level: 4

Action: Free Action

Range: Personal

Target: Self

Duration: Instantaneous

Uses: 1/day

Binding Cost: 6 ip, 500 xp, Spirit Veda

This allows you to quickly replenish hit points. You can heal 2d8+4 hit points as a free action with each use.

NO COMEBACKS (Su)

Requires: Feral Instincts

Power Level: 6

Binding Cost: 10 ip, 800 xp

You develop an uncanny ability to pick out the weak points in a target and cause severe injuries. If you hit with a critical threat you may make two attack checks (and take the better roll) to see if you actually score a critical hit. Moreover, anyone you kill must make a Will save; if they fail they cannot be raised or ressurected.

READ PREY (Su)

Requires: Keen Senses

Power Level: 5

Action: Standard Action

Range: 120 ft.

Target: One creature

Duration: Instantaneous

Uses: 3/day

Binding Cost: 5 ip, 400 xp

This binding allows you to gain knowledge of a target by simply observing the creature. You learn: the creature's size and type (including any bracketed information such as Fire or Evil if present); a general indication of hit dice, weak is 3 or less, moderate is 4 to 7, strong for 8 to 15, and overwhelming for 16 or more; climate/terrain; injuries, full health if at full hit points, injured if between half hit points and full, severely injured if at less than half hit points; and whether or not they are diseased, poisoned, cursed, or drained (but not type or degree).

ENHANCEMENTS

GREATER READ PREY (Su)

Requires: Read Prey

Power Level: 7

Binding Cost: 10 ip, 800 xp

When you use read prey you also gain the following additional information: special attacks; special qualities (which would include caster level or warden level); general difficulty to hit, weak is AC

Feral Instincts
2 ip, 160 xp

No Comebacks
10 ip, 800 xp

Leap of the Cat
1 ip, 80 xp

Instinctual Tracking
10 ip, 800 xp

Seclusion
10 ip, 800 xp

Lure
2 ip, 160 xp

Blending
3 ip, 240 xp

Stealth of the Hunter
1 ip, 80 xp

Survival
1 ip, 80 xp

Trackless Step
1 ip, 80 xp

Vision of the Owl
2 ip, 160 xp

13 or less, moderate is AC 14 to 17, strong is AC 18 to 25, and overwhelming is AC 26 or higher; general attack accuracy, weak is best attack bonus +3 or less, moderate for best attack bonus +4 to +7, strong for best attack bonus +8 to +15, overwhelming for best attack bonus +16 or greater; and best attack maximum damage (without a critical hit), weak for 4 or less, moderate for 5 to 12, strong for 13 to 24, and overwhelming for 25 or higher. You need only purchase this once even if you take additional uses of Read Prey.

READ TERRAIN (Sp)

Requires: See Terrain

Power Level: 6

Action: 10 minute invocation

Range: Personal

Target: You

Duration: Instantaneous

Uses: 1/day

Binding Cost: 13 ip, 1000 xp, Spirit Veda

This binding allows you to *commune with nature*, as the spell, with an effective caster level of 12. However, read terrain also works within urban areas (but not within artificial structures).

SCENT OF THE WOLF (Su)

Requires: Keen Senses

Power Level: 3

Binding Cost: 6 ip, 500 xp

You get the Scent ability, but as a supernatural, not extraordinary ability. This lets you detect approaching enemies, sniff out hidden foes, and track by sense of smell. You can detect opponents by sense of smell, generally within 30 feet. If the opponent is upwind, the range is 60 feet. If it is downwind, the range is 15 feet. Strong scents, such as smoke or rotting garbage, can be detected at twice the ranges noted above. Overpowering scents, such as skunk musk or troglodyte stench, can be detected at three times these ranges. You detect another creature's presence but not its specific location. Noting the direction of the scent is a standard action. If you move within 5 feet of the scent's source, then you can pinpoint that source. With

the scent ability you can also identify familiar odors just as normal humans do familiar sights.

You can follow tracks by smell, making a Wisdom check to find or follow a track. The typical DC for a fresh trail is 10. The DC increases or decreases depending on how strong the quarry's odor is, the number of creatures, and the age of the trail. For each hour that the trail is cold, the DC increases by 2. The ability otherwise follows the rules for the Track feat. When you track by scent ignore the effects of surface conditions and poor visibility. This ability also provides a +4 circumstance bonus to regular Tracking checks if the target leaves an odor.

Water, particularly running water, ruins a trail. False, powerful odors can easily mask other scents. The presence of such an odor completely spoils the ability to properly detect or identify creatures, and the base Wilderness Lore DC to track becomes 20 rather than 10.

SECLUSION (Sp)

Requires: Instinctual Tracking

Power Level: 7

Action: 1 minute invocation

Range: one half mile

Target: 1 creature

Duration: special

Uses: 1/week

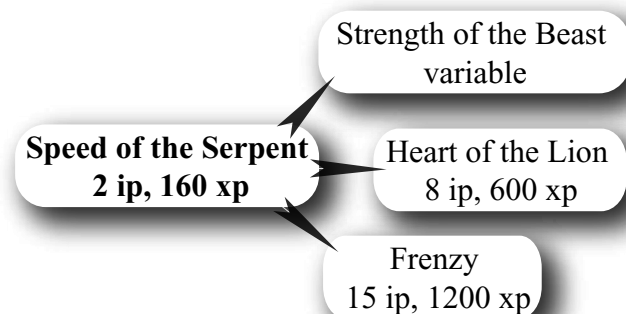
Binding Cost: 10 ip, 800 xp, Spirit Veda

Saving Throw: Will negates

Spell Resistance: Yes

With this ability you can remove yourself and a target to a special pocket interstice modeled after the terrain the target occupies. In this pocket interstice you and your target duel a final battle. In order to invoke this power you must first track the target using *instinctual tracking* to where the trail is less than 1 hour old or you are within one half a mile of the target. At this point the target makes a single Will save but the potency of this power imposes a -2 penalty on the saving throw and gives it a Risk of 2. If the save fails, both you and the target are shifted to a pocket interstice where the terrain is physically identical to the original location. This pocket interstice has boundaries at a 3 mile radius centered on the target. There are no other animals with an Intelligence higher than 2 in the area (there can be fantastic animals if there were fantastic animals in the original area).

Neither you nor the target may leave the area normally until one or the other is dead (but if one participant has



left somehow then the other is automatically returned to the regular world when he leaves the boundaries of the seclusion zone).

You may release the seclusion zone via a 1 minute invocation; the target may resist though, in which case you make a contested Will save with the target. This means you both make Will saving throws and if the target ties or beats you the seclusion zone holds until one of you dies. One can attempt to gate or plane shift out of the area with a spell or other effect but this requires overcoming a spell resistance of 20 + your Feral Warden level + your Wisdom bonus.

Effects in the Seclusion zone have no effect on the real world (other than the death of one of the participants). Time passes in the Seclusion zone and the real world normally. Note that you do not actually have to see the target to initiate a Seclusion zone.

SEE TERRAIN (Sp)

Power Level: 2

Action: Standard Action

Range: Personal

Target: You

Duration: Instantaneous

Uses: at will

Binding Cost: 3 ip, 240 xp

Saving Throw: None

Spell Resistance: Yes

This allows you to understand special features of the area you occupy. When you use this ability you learn: whether you're in the First World, Second World, the Forge, or some other interstice (if you have previous familiarity with the interstice or realm you know precisely which one); terrain type (aquatic, desert, forest, mountains, plains, swamp, underground, urban); climate (cold, temperate, warm); presence of strong or weak magic (this is less likely in the Second World); warden influence (e.g. near New York Rune is dominant, on the Russian steppes there's a mixture of Metal and Lightning); and whether or not there is any kind of gate or magical portal in the immediately viewed area. This binding also grants the benefits of the Planar Adaptation feat.

SPEED OF THE SERPENT (Su)

Power Level: 2

Action: Spontaneous

Range: Personal

Target: Self

Duration: 1 round

Uses: 1/day

Binding Cost: 2 ip, 160 xp

You attack with a sudden, blinding burst of speed, like a cobra striking. This grants you a +20 to initiative for one round, declare at any time during the round (including prior to your regular initiative) but if someone else has had their initiative come up you cannot interrupt their action with this ability. All attacks you make during the round gain a +2 haste bonus to hit. At the end of the round your initiative returns to normal.

STAMINA (Su)

Power Level: 1

Binding Cost: 1 ip, 80 xp

In addition to incredible feats of endurance in physical activity Feral Wardens can go for long periods without sleep and can survive longer than normal people without food or water. You need only sleep 2 hours per day to gain the benefit of 8 hours of sleep and can go 48 hours without sleep before feeling any ill effects; you still need to rest normally to prepare spells though. You can go for up to a week before needing water and then only need to make checks every day after that. You can go for a month without needing food and only need to make checks once per week afterwards.

STEALTH OF THE HUNTER (Su)

Power Level: 1

Binding Cost: 1 ip, 80 xp

This binding cloaks you with the stealth of predatory beasts. This grants a +5 competence bonus on Hide and Move Silently checks.

STRENGTH OF THE BEAST (Su)

Requires: Speed of the Serpent

Power Level: 4

Binding Cost: variable

With this binding you gain the ability to draw on the strength of predatory animals. This gives you an enhancement bonus to Strength. The binding cost depends on the enhancement bonus you choose. You may always choose to upgrade a smaller bonus to a larger one by paying the difference in their costs.

Bonus	Cost
+2	2 ip, 160 xp
+4	8 ip, 600 xp
+6	18 ip, 1400 xp

SURVIVAL (Su)

Power Level: 1

Binding Cost: 1 ip, 80 xp

You Bet	Pays Off	Rough Percent	DC	Description or Examples
10	5	70%	5	You're confident the request is true anyway, better than even chance that it's true.
10	10	50%	10	Chances are probably about even. A known drawbridge is down; there's an inn within the next five miles of road; house door being open or closed; forest covered in a low-lying fog
10	20	30%	15	Fairly common, enough that you wouldn't be shocked to see it occur.
10	100	10%	20	Pretty rare but stuff you've encountered; chance you were born in the same month as the person next to you, etc.
10	1000	1%	25	Bad Movie coincidences: a hay cart passes below the window you jump from; the next river has a drawbridge over it; you get exactly the card you need on the next draw from a deck
10	10,000,000	Around 1 in a million	30	The chances must be better than the lottery, but not by much. Amazing coincidences; the stuff they print up in tabloids.
Not on your life		Close enough to impossible	35	The odds are so low that you think you're just throwing money away by betting on this; likely the odds are lower than winning the lottery then.

You have an innate connection with nature. This grants you a natural sense of direction and of the layout of terrain as well as making you capable of surviving in almost any natural setting. This grants a +5 circumstance bonus on any Survival checks the character makes (including those made for tracking). You can always find your way back along the path you traveled and know your location relative to previous locations you have visited (assuming you traveled normally).

THE HUNTING GROUNDS (Su)

Requires: Read Terrain

Power Level: 7

Action: Free Action

Duration: Immediate

Uses: 3/week

Binding Cost: 20 ip, 1600 xp, Spirit

Saving Throw: None

Spell Resistance: No

Enviorns through which you move naturally favor you. This can be construed as a kind of control though it actually is not. This is part synchronicity (random events occurring in such a way that they favor you) and part your tendency to subconsciously put yourself in situations that favor you (i.e. when you chose to go left at the last turn you had an instinctual urge to choose the path that would best help you escape; and that path

would be the one that happens to have a drawbridge at the end of it).

The strange nature of this power requires special rules for implementation. What follows should not be taken as a literal description of how the power works or how the warden implements it.

To use this ability you choose a state of affairs consistent with the evidence you currently possess. The gamemaster then assigns this state of affairs a rough probability of being true, given your evidence, and the evidence available to the other player characters in the game. The probability should be seen as a relative frequency. For instance, if roughly one in fifty bridges across rivers are drawbridges then there's a one in fifty chance that the next bridge will be a drawbridge. The gamemaster then assigns a difficulty class to the use of this ability based on the relative frequency of the state of affairs desired. You then make a Charisma check against this difficulty class; if the check succeeds the state of affairs you requested is in fact the case. If the check fails nothing happens but you still burn a use. You can get a +10 on the check by spending an additional use (e.g. by using a total of three uses you get a +20 on the Charisma check). You may receive no more than a +20 bonus this way. Since you'll only be using this power when you want something fairly rare to be the case most of the likelihoods will be rather low.

See Terrain
3 ip, 240 xp

Read Terrain
13 ip, 1000 xp

The Hunting Grounds
20 ip, 1600 xp

Some Methods for Determining

Likelihood: One convenient method of determining likelihood is to simply look up the chance in one of the various tables when possible; for instance if there's a 10% chance of rain given the weather charts you use for a region then treat that as the likelihood for rain and set the DC at 20 (thus, this power can be used as a sort of weather control). If the Feral Warden is running along a dungeon corridor look at some random dungeon charts to determine the likelihood of the desired state.

Frequently you won't have charts for uses of this power though. In those cases take the information you have fixed about the world and imagine betting scenarios; if you were in the character's situation (or knew a fair bit about the world) would you take a two to one bet in your favor that the state of affairs was true. For example, the character wants the next town to have an apothecary, would you be willing to risk \$10 if, on there being an apothecary in the town, you would win \$20. If yes then you probably think the odds of there being an apothecary in the town are better than one in three. We're somewhat better at estimating our betting behavior than we are at estimating our subjective probabilities directly; that's why this method can be convenient. To determine subjective probability look at the chart on the previous page, start from the top, and read down it until you reach the point at which you'd be willing to take the bet. Then look in the column to the right to determine the percent, DC and so on.

Gamemaster notes: The Feral Warden's expected likelihood for a state of affairs may very well be different from the actual expected likelihood; for instance, if one of the other players had previously been down this road and there wasn't an inn there then there won't be an inn this time either (unless one has been recently built which has a much lower likelihood than there just being an inn present). Probabilities can multiply. For instance the chance for two doors both being open if the chance for any particular door being open is one in two, is one in four; however, the chance for all doors in a particular house being open might be higher than one in two raised to the power of the number of doors in the place (since the chance the occupant is a leave-the-door-open kind of person is significantly higher than the chance many random doors would be open). There are no saving throws for this power even though it might appear to directly affect people at times. For example, the player might request that there be an old beggar around the next corner with some knowledge of the area; this is a valid request. It's not that the warden teleports the beggar to the location, or charms him in some way, but instead

the entire life history of the warden has led him to just the right place for this to be true. Some non-player characters or circumstances may be resistant to this ability. There may be some cases where you want to restrict the use of this power; one good rule of thumb is consider anything already specifically written down by you (or thought out) to be part of the fixed evidence (i.e. as if a player character already knew it to be the case). However, even for these situations you should allow some flexibility if making a change in accordance with the request can be done without having to alter too much of what you have written (or your picture of the world).

This does not control random chances; it makes it the case that something that could have been the case actually is the case. Thus, this cannot be used to influence the outcome of a purely random process such as the roll of a die, spin of a roulette wheel, and so on. The draw of a card can be a special case (since technically the card is already determined) but should count as a purely random process unless there is some reason to think that past choices of the warden or synchronicity could have influenced the outcome the warden experiences. For instance, this power shouldn't be used for something as mundane as regular gambling but might be okay for drawing the right card to save a life or other scenario significant event (however, even in those cases the minimum roll required should be 10, no matter the difficulty class and bonuses). You must actually observe the requested state of affairs within 24 hours otherwise the power fails (this is to prevent Feral Wardens from making distant changes willy-nilly).

TRACKLESS STEP (Su)

Power Level: 1

Binding Cost: 1 ip, 80 xp

With this binding you leave no trace of your passage, as if under the effect of a *pass without trace* spell.

VISION OF THE OWL (Su)

Power Level: 2

Binding Cost: 2 ip, 160 xp

You have an owl-like ability to see in the dark. This gives you the Low-light vision racial ability.

FLESH WARDEN

Description: From the power of flesh comes the power of life. Skin and bone and blood provide the vehicle for the spirit; skin and bone and blood provide sustenance for the beast. The Flesh Warden is at once artist and doctor, sculptor and dancer, ascetic and hedonist. A strong bond connects Flesh and Feral Wardens since they operate on similar principles. They both tend to be hunters and warriors (though Flesh Wardens have other aspects). They both emphasize transformation bindings, that is, bindings that transform the self in some way and provide a constant effect.

The Flesh Warden primarily controls himself. This power gives him control over his form and his features. At its most basic level this power focuses on the ability to mold and control the outer musculature and flesh of the warden. With certain advanced options the warden can alter his skeletal or even genetic structure. To the Flesh Warden his body is a tool, with a finite amount of resources to be used for his purposes. Some Flesh Wardens are very fond of their body and treat it almost like a tabernacle; others see it in a detached way, thinking of it as just some meat they're using for the moment.

Hit Die: d10. Give the Flesh Warden a d12 for hit points if using Defense Bonuses.

Action Points: 6 + 1/2 your character level (round down).

FLESH WARDEN

This feat grants you access to Flesh Warden bindings. Flesh Wardens possess a primal link to the power of meat; they command skin and bone and blood and nerve. This grants them tremendous flexibility in the use of their abilities.

Prerequisites: as for Flesh Warden class

Benefit: You increase your Flesh Warden rank by two. The total number of shift points you may purchase depends on your Flesh Warden rank and you must pur-

chase those shift points using experience and material component costs according to the rules described in the Flesh Warden class. You must then allocate the shift points you purchase to individual aspects of the flesh and may only switch shift points within an aspect. In this book I provide five aspects, skin, bone, blood, nerve, and muscle. You may take this feat more than once increasing your Flesh Warden rank by 2 for each time you take the feat.

REQUIREMENTS

To qualify to become a Flesh Warden, you must fulfill all of the following criteria.

Base Attack Bonus: +5

Total Hit Points: 40 or more

Feats: Endurance, Toughness

Special: You must have had to make a saving throw against a shapechanging curse, disease, or power such as the *curse of lycanthropy* or a *polymorph* spell. Certain other effects will also work such as the *corporeal instability* power of a chaos beast but petrification does not count.

CLASS SKILLS

The Flesh Warden's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Balance (Dex), Climb (Str), Control Shape (Wis), Craft (Int), Disguise (Cha), Escape Artist (Dex), Jump (Str), Listen (Wis), Ride (Dex), Spot (Wis), and Swim (Str).

Skill Points at Each Level: 2 + Int modifier.

CONTROL SHAPE (WIS)

The Control Shape skill can be used for more than just controlling lycanthropic change. Flesh Wardens use the skill to know the secrets of flesh and use the more delicate aspects of their power.

Class Level	Base Attack	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Defense Bonus	Reputation Bonus
1	+1	+2	+0	+0	+0	+0
2	+2	+3	+0	+0	+1	+0
3	+3	+3	+1	+1	+1	+1
4	+4	+4	+1	+1	+1	+1
5	+5	+4	+1	+1	+2	+1
6	+6	+5	+2	+2	+2	+2
7	+7	+5	+2	+2	+2	+2
8	+8	+6	+2	+2	+3	+2
9	+9	+6	+3	+3	+3	+3
10	+10	+7	+3	+3	+3	+3

Check: Most uses of Control Shape covered here involve one of the various powers described later. Specific actions such as disguising oneself use skills such as Disguise. Knowing how to mold flesh and perform special tricks with the molding of flesh use the Control Shape skill.

Retry: Yes (depending on circumstances).

CLASS FEATURES

All of the following are class features of the Flesh Warden.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: The Flesh Warden is proficient in the use of all simple and martial weapons and with light armor. Flesh Wardens are not proficient with shields.

Saving Throws: The saving throw DC for most Flesh Warden powers (when applicable) is equal to 10 + the power's level + the Flesh Warden's Constitution modifier.

SHIFT POINTS

To mold and control the flesh of their body a Flesh Warden must bond shift points to their Vedas. Each shift point is aligned with a constituent of the body: bone, nerve, skin, blood, and muscle. These are called Aspects of the Flesh, or just Aspects. The shift points

you have devoted to an Aspect may then be distributed amongst the powers available to that Aspect; moreover, you may later change the powers to which those shift points are allocated. For example, a third level Flesh Warden has nine shift points, all in bone. A simple and fairly standard allocation would be one point for claws then another 4 points for a +2 enhancement bonus to the claws. This leaves some points left over to burn on a use of *spurs*.

You receive shift points according to your Flesh Warden rank; this is simply equal to you Flesh Warden class level plus any additional ranks from the Flesh Warden feat. These shift points must be bonded to a Veda (much like regular bindings). In the process of doing this you also specify the Aspect of the shift point, i.e. bone, nerve, skin, blood, muscle. Each Veda thus allows one Aspect to be bonded to it. The ritual cost of this binding is 2 ip and 160 xp per shift point.

You may allocate shift points as you see fit within each Aspect but you may not use shift points from one Aspect with powers from another. Each power or ability has a listed cost in shift points. Usually, dropping

an ability or power counts as a free action and immediately frees up those shift points. It takes a move-equivalent action to re-distribute or allocate a number of shift points equal to your Flesh Warden level. Some specific alterations may take even longer. No altera-

Flesh Warden Rank	Shift Points
1	2
2	5
3	9
4	16
5	25
6	36
7	49
8	64
9	81
10	100
11	121
12	144
13	169
14	196
15	225
16	256
17	289
18	324
19	361
20	400

Natural Weapon Type	Small	Medium	Large	Specials
Fangs	1d3	1d4	1d6	-2 attack, may deliver poison
Claws/Talons	1d4	1d6	1d8	
Gore/Horns	1d6	1d8	2d6	-2 attack
Bite	1d6	1d8	2d6	-2 attack
Hooves	1d3	1d4	1d6	

tion works with less than the full required amount of shift points though the gamemaster may decide the alteration has some tiny effect (for instance, points partially put into wings may put little flapping things on your back, but they won't be capable of giving you flight).

The Aspects presented here are the core ones and the abilities presented here are the only ones available to those aspects. However, some other aspects exist that have different abilities and disciplines have been created that significantly alter what one can do with an aspect.

BURNING SHIFT POINTS

Some powers either burn or have a chance of burning one or more shift points. In order to use these powers you must have the necessary shift points available to be used. You then use the ability normally but once the ability is used these shift points are no longer available; you have exhausted them. The burned shift points will be available again after a full period of rest (eight hours of sleep).

BONE ASPECT

SPURS (Su)

Power Level: 4

Action: Attack Modifier

Shift Point Burn: 2

You can shift your natural or laced weapons slightly as they enter a victim, causing barbs and hooks to appear on them. Your attack will then cause +2d6 damage from the additional ripping and tearing.

NATURAL WEAPONRY (Su)

Power Level: 1

Shift Point Cost: 1

You can invoke natural weaponry such as claws, tails and teeth by reformatting your skeletal structure. Damage for these weapons is based on your size and the weapon type; some natural weapons will also have other modifiers. Natural weapons have a critical threat of $20/\times 2$. For other attributes see the table on the previous page.

TOOTH AND FANG EMPOWERING (Su)

Power Level: 3

Shift Point Cost: var.

This transformation allows you to empower your natural weapons with raw arcane energy, making them

Carapace

Armor Bonus	Max Dexterity Bonus	Armor Check Penalty	Arcane Spell Failure	Speed 30 feet	Speed 20 feet
+6	+3	-3	25%	20 ft.	15 ft.

effectively enchanted. The chart below gives the cost for a particular bonus level. This applies to all your natural weapons, including fists and feet. This is good for two weapon use and monks.

Bonus Points	Shift Point Cost
1	1
2	4
3	9
4	16

CARAPACE (Su)

Power Level: 2

Shift Point Cost: 2

You grow a hard, chitinous exoskeleton over your body that provides additional armor. This grants an armor bonus of +6 but is also somewhat inflexible. Carapace counts as wearing medium armor and requires medium armor proficiency. The carapace can be given an enhancement bonus of +1 for an additional 1 shift point, or an enhancement bonus of +2 for an additional 4 shift points.

REVERSAL (Su)

Power Level: 2

Action: Attack Modifier

Duration: Instantaneous

Shift Point Burn: 2

You can make your entire body flow, for just a moment, like water. This can be used to instantly break free from a grapple or to get a +5 on a grappling attack roll (and any resulting Strength roll).

GRAB WEAPON (Su)

Power Level: 2

Action: Spontaneous

Shift Point Burn: 2

You may grab a weapon that causes at least 5 points of damage to you with your body by absorbing the weapon into your flesh and twisting it from your opponent's grasp. After being struck you may make an immediate Disarm check against the attacker. This does not provoke an attack of opportunity and failure does not grant the attacker a chance to make a Disarm attempt against you.

WEAPON LACING (Su)

Power Level: 5

Shift Point Cost: 5

This invocation allows you to internalize a weapon (or other small item) as part of your bone structure. After the weapon is laced it can be used as if it were a natural weapon, thus allowing you to use special abilities (or spells) that only work on natural weapons to work on the laced weapon. You may release a laced weapon at any time. If the weapon is small or very small it can be made retractable for free. If it is medium sized you can make it retractable at a cost of one additional shift point. Natural weapons can be drawn (extruded) more easily so that it is as if you had the Quick Draw feat with the weapon. Flesh Wardens are also innately comfortable with laced weapons; this grants a +1 bonus on attack and damage rolls with the weapon (this can also apply to your natural weapons if you lace them). This grants a +5 circumstance bonus to resist disarming attempts but does not make you immune to disarms. A successful disarm attempt against you burns the points you devoted to this shift.

BLOOD ASPECT

RESISTANCE (Su)

Power Level: 4

Shift Point Cost: 8

You have so much control over your own internal workings that you become immune to almost all poisons and diseases. Some very special and rare poisons and diseases still affect you (these are specifically noted and typically they have been cultivated or designed with the express purpose of slaying Flesh Wardens).

EFFICIENT DIGESTION (Su)

Power Level: 1

Shift Point Cost: 1

This power allows you to more effectively digest food and use water. This means that you can survive on one fourth the amount of food and water that an ordinary person would require.

ESCOTIC VENOM (Su)

Power Level: 5

Action: Attack Modifier

Shift Point Burn: 5

During the Hyacinth Revolution in Second World China (circa 500 BCE) the Escos monastic order of Flesh Wardens began using this venom against their enemies, in particular other Flesh Wardens. Later historians suspect that the Escotic monks learned this

technique from interaction with representatives of the Kyalin Hive; the alien nature of the venom seems to support this theory.

You secrete a potent venom along your natural or grafted weapons. If a melee attack with one of these weapons causes damage then the poison is assumed to enter the target's system. The poison's save DC is 15 + the Warden's Constitution modifier and has an initial and secondary damage of 1d6 Con. This venom is highly caustic and prevents Regeneration or Fast Healing. Other Flesh Wardens cannot use their healing abilities on wounds caused by attacks with this effect; these wounds cannot be healed through magical means unless a *neutralize poison* is cast on the victim first. The wounds heal at one half normal rate otherwise. Escotic Venom is one of the few poisons to which a Flesh Warden is not resistant.

BACKUP ORGANS (Su)

Power Level: 4

Action: Spontaneous

Shift Point Cost: 5

You can set up a system of backup organs so that if you suffer a severe injury they take the place of the damaged body part. What this does is allow the backup organs to effectively absorb up to 20 points of damage from any one injury. The shift points dedicated to this are not available until the backup organs heal themselves. After they heal you can reallocate the shift points as usual or use them to absorb another injury. This alteration must be made in advance and held in reserve until used. Backup Organs can be activated against any injury of your choosing as a Spontaneous action. You may have multiple sets of backup organs.

QUICK HEALING (Su)

Power Level: 2

Action: Free Action

Range: Personal

Target: You

Duration: Instantaneous

Shift Point Burn: 2

Each use of this ability allows you heal regular hit point damage. You can heal 1d8+2 hit points of damage as a free action (only once per round though).

REGENERATION (Su)

Power Level: 8

Shift Point Cost: 50

This grants you Regeneration 3 as the monster special quality. This means that most attacks do subdual damage to you and you heal 3 hit points of damage per

round and treat. If you lose a limb, an organ, or any other body part while this transformation is active, you regenerate it like the spell. You only regenerate damage taken while this transformation is active and your regeneration does not work against fire or acid damage.

WATER BREATHING (Su)

Power Level: 4

Shift Point Cost: 6

This gives you a set of gills so that you can breathe in oxygenated water. You retain your normal lungs and can shift between water and air breathing at will.

MUSCLE ASPECT

MOBILITY ENHANCEMENT (Su)

Power Level: 2

Shift Point Cost: 3

You strengthen your legs, enhancing your ability to run and leap. This enables you to move at double your normal speed, grants a +10 competence bonus to Jump checks, and removes the height limitation imposed on jumping distance.

ARMS TO LEGS (Su)

Power Level: 3

Shift Point Cost: 3

This allows you to transform your arms into legs. You shift muscle and bone mass into your forebody and move onto all fours. While you lose use of your hands you do gain the benefits of being four-legged. This increases your ground movement rate and carrying capacity by 50%. You also no longer suffer an attack penalty with bite, fang, or horn natural weapons.

ARMOR LACING (Su)

Power Level: 3

Shift Point Cost: 5

This transformation is much like the *weapon lacing* power except it works with armor. Laced armor moves more easily with your body, thus reduce the armor check penalty by one, arcane spell failure chance by 5%, increase the maximum dexterity bonus by 1, and count the armor as one category lighter for movement purposes (only). Laced armor is usually not obviously visible. You *can* have both natural and laced armor and you can usually wear normal armor over your laced armor; however, since the armor bonuses are of the same type this is typically not useful. You can lace any armor into your body but heavy armor is pretty obvious and prevents you from wearing any other armor.

SHIFT FEATURES (Su)

Power Level: 4

Shift Point Cost: 3

This allows you to alter your features, mostly for cosmetic purposes. Altering just a certain portion of your features is typically easier. The actual alterations take the usual amount of time, but fine-tuning them to look right takes much longer. Typically it will take at least half an hour to do a decent job of just looking like someone other than yourself. Trying to look like someone specific can take several hours. However, making a simple change such as changing hair color, eye color, or growing a beard can be done with just a regular action.

You can disguise yourself as a particular individual with a regular Disguise skill check. You receive a +10 equipment bonus on your Disguise check when using this ability. You can also disguise yourself by using *Taste of Flesh* on a person, making a successful Control Shape skill check against DC 15 and then using that information to make the shift; this allows you to effectively take 20 on the Disguise check but without having to roll or take additional time. It takes a DC 30 Control Shape check to duplicate extremely complex features such as fingerprints and retina prints. You must use *Taste of Flesh* and make a Control Shape check (DC 40) to duplicate a genetic pattern; this would mainly be useful in high technology settings where genetic patterns were used for security measures.

STRENGTH ENHANCEMENT (Su)

Power Level: 4

Shift Point Cost: var.

You can boost your Strength by making your muscles more bulky and dense. This grants a +2 enhancement bonus to Strength for 2 shift points, +4 for 8 shift points, or +6 for 18 shift points.

COMBAT SHIFT (Su)

Power Level: 1

Action: Attack Modification

Duration: 1 attack

Shift Point Burn: 1

By making quick minor changes to your physique during a melee attack you can give yourself a +2 to hit.

MAJOR COMBAT SHIFT (Su)

Power Level: 4

Action: Spontaneous or Attack Modification

Duration: 1 attack

Shift Point Burn: 4

You drastically alter your body in the midst of an attack or defense, rearranging your bone structure and musculature to grant you additional reach or flexibility. You may use this to grant you a +5 circumstance bonus to hit or a +5 dodge bonus to armor class (but only against that one attack).

SKIN ASPECT

WINGED FLIGHT (SU)

Power Level: 3

Shift Point Cost: 5

You can grow wings with a twenty foot wingspan that allow you to fly at up to 90 feet per round with average mobility. For each additional three shift points devoted to this ability you can increase your flight speed by 30 feet per round.

TOUGHENING (SU)

Power Level: 4

Shift Point Cost: var.

You thicken and harden your sub-dermal areas, protecting vital organs and joints, so that you possess natural armor.

FIREPROOFING (SU)

Power Level: 4

Shift Point Cost: 12

You can make yourself fireproof; this involves a complex arrangement of cooling systems, some insulation, and making your skin non-combustible. Subtract 30 points of damage per round from any fire damage taken. This level of protection should be enough to walk through fire as intense as a house or forest fire without suffering too much (it will feel like a very hot day).

INSULATION (SU)

Power Level: 4

Shift Point Cost: 10

You can insulate yourself with a layer of non-conductive sub-dermal material. This provides heightened resistance to lightning and cold; subtract 15 points of damage per round from any cold or electrical damage taken. You could survive the extreme cold of an arctic winter with this active.

FUR (SU)

Power Level: 1

Shift Point Cost: 1

You grow fur all over your body. This is mostly cosmetic but with enhancements you can gain special benefits such as water-proofing, some armor, protection from cold, and protection from fire. The basic level of fur grants an armor bonus of +2 but you count as being unarmored while this is active (fur has no penalties associated with it).

WATER PROOF FUR

Power Level: 2

Shift Point Cost: 2

This makes your fur water proof, like that of an otter or seal. This provides some protection against cold (subtract 5 points of damage per round from any cold damage taken) and makes you more buoyant. The buoyancy provides a +5 equipment bonus on swimming checks and makes it much easier to tread water.

HEAVY FUR

Power Level: 2

Shift Point Cost: 2

This gives you much heavier fur. This increases the armor bonus to +4 and subtracts 5 points of damage per round from any cold damage taken. Animals (and you) can “open” up their fur by having it stand more on end, thus preventing this from making you too warm when it’s hot outside. Heavy fur counts as wearing light armor and requires light armor proficiency.

FIREPROOF FUR

Power Level: 2

Shift Point Cost: 2

By secreting a chemical along your fur you can make it fire resistant. This provides some protection against fire (subtract 5 points of damage per round from any fire damage taken) and your fur does not catch fire.

CAMOUFLAGE (SU)

Power Level: 2

Shift Point Cost: 1

This allows you to alter your skin coloration so that you blend with the environment. This grants a +10 circumstance bonus to Hide checks.

DECREASE SIZE (SU)

Power Level: 2

Shift Point Cost: 10

Toughening	
Natural Armor	Shift Point Cost
1	1
2	4
3	9
4	16
5	25

Heavy Fur					
Armor Bonus	Max Dexterity Bonus	Armor Check Penalty	Arcane Spell Failure	Speed 30 feet	Speed 20 feet
+4	+4	-2	20%	30 ft.	20 ft.

Each use of this decreases your size by one level (to a minimum size class of Small, but a 10th level Flesh Warden can decrease to Tiny size). In addition to the normal benefits and penalties of being a smaller size class you take -2 to Strength and gain +4 to Dexterity; these are considered enlargement bonuses. Shunting mass is much faster than acquiring it and typically takes one minute per size class shunted. When you want to reacquire your regular size you must consume food as if you were using the *increase size* ability.

INCREASE SIZE (Su)

Power Level: 2

Shift Point Cost: 20

Each use of this increases your size by one level (to a maximum size of Large). In addition to the normal benefits and penalties of being a larger size class, you gain +4 to Strength, -2 to Dexterity, and +5 hit points (which are lost if this alteration is dropped); these are all enlargement bonuses. This alteration takes longer since you must consume enough material to acquire the added mass. Typically, it will take about 30 minutes of heavy eating to do this. The material should be organic and digestible. Note that this does not change the size of your equipment.

SWIMMING (Su)

Power Level: 2

Shift Point Cost: 1

You grow flippers or fins, granting a +10 equipment bonus on swimming checks.

NERVE ASPECT

ENHANCE SENSES (Su)

Power Level: 2

Shift Point Cost: 5

This allows you to enhance all your sensory apparatus. This provides a general +5 circumstance bonus to all perception skill checks (Listen, Spot, and Search) and gives you low light vision. Also, if you keep this up, you receive a +2 insight bonus to initiative due to the extra information you receive. You must have this active at the beginning of a combat to get the initiative bonus and you must leave it up throughout the combat or lose the bonus.

REFLEX ENHANCEMENT (Su)

Action: Free

Duration: 1 round

Power Level: 4

Shift Point Burn: 3

You pump energy into your nervous system granting you a sudden burst of speed. This allows you to act as if *hasted* until the following round (at your initiative).

DARK VISION (Su)

Power Level: 2

Shift Point Cost: 4

This transformation grants you Darkvision (60 feet) as the racial power.

ECHOLOCATION (Su)

Power Level: 4

Shift Point Cost: 13

This alteration gives you sonar. This allows perception under almost any conditions and even works well underwater but does not work if there is no medium for the sound to pass through nor if the object to be perceived is gaseous or intangible. The ability operates as Blindsight to a range of 60 feet. If you are somehow deafened then you lose use of this ability. You cannot read text or perceive other fine details using this ability.

DEXTERITY ENHANCEMENT (Su)

Power Level: 4

Shift Point Cost: var.

You can boost your reflexes by sheathing your nerves in a special compound and shortening the length of the nerves themselves. This grants a +2 enhancement bonus to Dexterity for 2 shift points, +4 for 8 shift points, or +6 for 18 shift points.

TASTE OF FLESH (Su)

Power Level: 1

Action: Standard

Duration: Instantaneous

Shift Point Burn: 1

When you taste a creature's flesh (this can be skin or blood) you gain some insight into the creature's makeup. Make a Control Shape skill check against DC 15 (this may be adjusted based on the creature). This will reveal the creature's size and type as well as any sub-types. You'll also learn what the creature had to eat recently (or typically eats) and whether or not it was poisoned or diseased. This works best on fresh flesh. If the creature has been dead for over an hour then increase the DC by 5. You cannot use this ability on creatures without flesh (such as long dead corpses).

LIGHTNING WARDEN

Description: The most primal form of energy; the raw, crackling, blue-white power pulsing through hurricane and high tension power line alike. Lightning is energy in its most pure state; strip away the surface properties of fire, nuclear conflagration, and chemical reactions and what you have left is the weapon of the old gods; the thunderbolts of Zeus and Odin. The Lightning Warden taps into this power, a power made manifest in storms. In the Second World lightning actually drives storms; it fuels the maelstrom. This gives Lightning Wardens extensive control over weather effects. More technically minded Lightning Wardens refine their skills with the power to give them control over electronic equipment.

Lightning Wardens are in particular demand across Europe and Asia. The Russian and Mongolian steppes as well as almost all of China and Southeast Asia exist between the two poles of the city of Lightning, Tokyo, and the city of Metal, Berlin. While much of the Second World exists at a fairly low technology level Eurasia suffers from an amalgam of industrial and post-industrial technology. With no threat of global annihilation from nuclear weapons to deter the powers in the region, no democratic regimes, no global trade to stabilize the area, and the security that both Berlin and Tokyo are unlikely to be attacked, the area between these two powers has become a wasteland where strange machines powered by Lightning and Metal Wardens constantly battle.

Hit Die: d10.

Action Points: 6 + 1/2 your character level (round down).

LIGHTNING WARDEN

This feat grants you access to Lightning Warden bindings. The raw power of the storm infuses the Lightning Warden. This grants them control over weather, air, and, of course, lightning. Due to the intimate connection between Lightning and First World electricity Lightning Wardens may also power, disrupt, or control electronic equipment and technology.

Prerequisites: as for Lightning Warden class

Benefit: You acquire two binding slots for use with Lightning Warden bindings and increase your Lightning Warden rank by two. You must obey all the normal rules for binding powers to a slot, including paying the appropriate experience point and material component cost for the slot. Lightning Wardens need a commodity called Charge to power the use of some of their abilities. The total amount of charge you can store depends on your Lightning Warden rank and Constitution. You must also spend experience and material component costs to “activate” your internal battery; I describe this in the class description for the Lightning Warden. You may also take this feat if you already have Lightning Warden class levels; if you do so add 2 slots to your total available slots for Lightning Warden bindings and increase your effective Lightning Warden rank by 2 for each time you take this feat. You may only use this feat for Lightning Warden bindings.

REQUIREMENTS

To qualify to become a Lightning Warden, you must fulfill all of the following criteria.

Concentration: 8 ranks

Feats: Great Fortitude, Lightning Reflexes

Special: Also, in order to become a Lightning Warden you must have been struck by lightning for at least 25 points of damage; it must have occurred all at once and this value is what must have gotten through after any defenses (such as elemental resistance and saving throws). The source of this damage can be natural, supernatural, or technological. Cassandra Gaard of Tempest Argon will typically supply this service for free to those in the New York area, which is a good deal as long as you can put up with her giggling the entire time.

CLASS SKILLS

The Lightning Warden’s class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Balance (Dex), **Computer Use (Int)**, Concentration (Con), Craft (Int), Intimidate (Cha), Knowledge (nature) (Int), Profession (Wis), Spellcraft (Int), and Spot (Wis).

Class Level	Base Attack	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special	Defense Bonus	Reputation Bonus
1	+1	+0	+0	+2	+1 Binding Slot	+1	+0
2	+2	+0	+0	+3	+1 Binding Slot	+1	+0
3	+3	+1	+1	+3	+1 Binding Slot	+2	+1
4	+4	+1	+1	+4	+1 Binding Slot	+2	+1
5	+5	+1	+1	+4	+1 Binding Slot	+3	+1
6	+6	+2	+2	+5	+1 Binding Slot	+3	+2
7	+7	+2	+2	+5	+1 Binding Slot	+4	+2
8	+8	+2	+2	+6	+1 Binding Slot	+4	+2
9	+9	+3	+3	+6	+1 Binding Slot	+5	+3
10	+10	+3	+3	+7	+1 Binding Slot	+5	+3

Skill Points at Each Level: 2 + Int modifier.

CLASS FEATURES

All of the following are class features of the Lightning Warden.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: The Lightning Warden is proficient in the use of all simple weapons and with light and medium armor and shields.

Saving Throws: The saving throw DC for most Lightning Warden powers (when applicable) is equal to 10 + the power's level + the Lightning Warden's Constitution modifier.

CHARGE

Lightning Wardens power many of their abilities through the use of *charge*. Charge is just electrical energy built up and stored within the Lightning Warden's body. They then release this energy to activate powers.

MAXIMUM CHARGE

A Lightning Warden's maximum amount of storable charge depends on his Lightning Warden rank; the character's Lightning Warden rank equals his Lightning Warden class level plus any bonuses from feats. The charge table lists available charge by rank. A Lightning Warden then adds his Constitution bonus times his Lightning Warden rank to this total.

This number describes just charge potential though; in order to activate that potential you must spend material

component costs and experience costs. This takes the form of a ritual and costs 1 ip plus 80 xp per point of charge. Most Lightning Wardens simply keep themselves at the maximum possible charge for their level and attributes. If your Constitution should drop for some reason you lose temporary use of those charge points but you may recover them later.

RELEASING CHARGE

Charge is released voluntarily to activate certain powers. Some abilities do not require the expenditure of charge but do require that your charge level be at or above a certain value. There are other instances where charge can be released. Whenever a Lightning Warden is **stunned** they lose one point of charge due to the shock.

BUILDING CHARGE

By resting for eight hours a Lightning Warden can build back up to full charge; essentially turning himself into a human dynamo. At the end of this time he recovers his full charge level.

OVERCHARGING

A Lightning Warden can also overcharge. Overcharging allows you to rapidly replenish expended charge or even take you above the maximum amount of charge you can usually maintain.

In order to overcharge you take 1 full round action building up energy. This gives you 5 points of charge. You also take 1d10 points of **strain** when doing this. You may do this as often as you like, or at least as until the **strain** takes

Lightning Warden Rank	Charge
1	5
2	10
3	15
4	25
5	35
6	45
7	55
8	70
9	85
10	100
11	121
12	144
13	169
14	196
15	225
16	256
17	289
18	324
19	361
20	400

Power Level	Charge Cost
0	.5
1	1
2	2
3	4
4	6
5	9
6	12
7	18
8	24
9	36

you out. You may not overcharge to more than double your normal maximum and overcharge leaks out over time. When you are overcharged you lose all your overcharge points while sleeping (or if unconscious for some reason). If you are overcharged and immersed in water you lose one point of charge per round (partial immersion can cost one point of charge per minute).

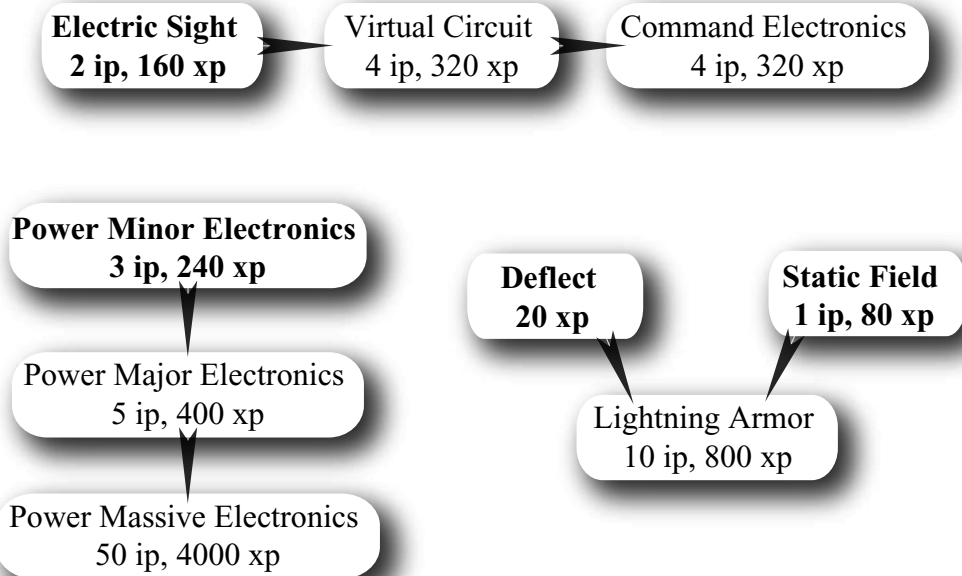
STRAIN

Strain acts a lot like physical damage, only worse. Strain represents exertion so terrible and deep that it has disrupted the very life force of the character. This is more than mere physical exhaustion. This is exhaustion of the soul.

Reduce your total available hit points by the amount of strain you have taken. Strain is not subdual damage so this makes you more vulnerable to dying. Even worse, only rest heals strain. You recover 1 point of Strain per character level (or hit die for creatures without levels) by resting for eight hours. This rest period also counts for other purposes. Thus an eighth level lightning warden who had taken 15 strain during the day and expended most of his charge would recover all charge and 8 points of strain. By resting for a full day you recover 2 points per character level. While resting you may still perform light activity such as reading. No known magic repairs strain though a *miracle* or *wish* might.

OVERLOADING

Most Lightning Warden abilities have a standard power level and cost in charge. However, you may choose to invoke powers at higher power levels. To do this refer to the nearby chart describing charge cost by power



level. When you do this the effective power level becomes the level at which you invoked the power. This raises the difficulty class of saving throws against the power and you may treat the effective caster level as equal to twice the power level at which you invoked. Some other effects of the particular power may also be based on the invocation power level.

SUSTAINED POWERS

Some bindings are sustained. This means that you must devote charge points equal to the sustain cost to maintain the power. It then lasts while you leave those charge points devoted to the binding. Later you may drop the power and use half (round down) those charge points for some other ability.

BINDINGS

CALL LIGHTNING (Sp)

Requires: Lightning Bolt

Power Level: 3

Action: as for spell

Use Cost: 4 Charge

Binding Cost: 1 ip, 80 xp, Spirit Veda

This ability allows you to *call lightning*, as the spell.

CHARGE WEAPON (Su)

Requires: Lightning Stroke

Power Level: 3

Action: Attack Modifier

Use Cost: 2 Charge

Binding Cost: 1 ip, 80 xp

This allows you to discharge electricity along the blade

of a metal weapon or object. This adds +2d6 electricity damage to the attack. If the attack fails to hit due to armor (i.e. would have hit if it were a touch attack) then the electrical damage still applies.

COMMAND ELECTRONICS (Sp)

Requires: Virtual Circuit

Power Level: 4

Action: Full round action

Range: 60 feet

Target: 1 system

Area: 30 foot radius burst

Duration: Concentration

Sustain Cost: 6 charge

Binding Cost: 4 ip, 320 xp

Saving Throw: Shielding negates

Spell Resistance: Yes

You can control electronic devices and systems at a distance using this power. This allows you to perform simple operations as if you were working any of the controls of the equipment. Any operation that can be activated via a switch, key, button, dial, keyboard, mouse, or other input device can be performed with this power; the switch must be fairly small, typically one you could activate with a single finger. You still need special skills for elaborate procedures though. For instance, while you could program a computer with this ability as if typing commands into the keyboard you would still need to know how to program a computer. What you're doing is manipulating and overriding an input device already present in the system. Your range is measured to the input device itself (though you don't need to directly perceive it so long as you can perceive some part of the system). A system counts as any device or network of devices whose controls are interconnected and interact electrically; specifically, if you can trace a continuous electrical current from one component to another then those components are part of the same system. This is potent because you could pass from a wall outlet, into the electrical wiring of a house, then on into a computer and access the computer that way; however, all components must be within the range of the power. Simple operations such as throwing a switch don't require actually seeing the switch (some knowledge of the way technology works covers that). You can use your *electric sight* ability to perceive the systems on which you work; this will allow you to work even complex controls (such as a keyboard) from a distance.

DEFLECT (Su)

Power Level: 2

SAVING THROWS FOR MACHINES

Systems that have security measures receive a pseudo Will saving throw with a bonus based on the degree of security. For simplicity, treat a system that has significant security measures as having a Will save bonus of +4; a very high security system might have a Will save bonus of +8. This is called the machine's Shielding bonus and applies to powers that allow a Shielding saving throw.

In these abbreviated rules assume this applies both to powers meant to control the machine and powers such as short circuit, meant to damage it.

Military equipment typically has at least a +4 bonus since it was made to survive thunderstorms, electronic countermeasures, and sometimes even the electromagnetic pulse from a nuclear explosion.

Action: Spontaneous

Duration: 1 Attack

Use Cost: 1 charge

Binding Cost: 20 xp

By controlling electric and magnetic fields you can deflect incoming attacks. This gives you a +3 deflection bonus to AC against a metallic weapon for one attack. You must declare use of this prior to the attack roll being made.

ELECTRIC SIGHT (Su)

Power Level: 3

Sustain Cost: 10 charge

Binding Cost: 2 ip, 160 xp

With this binding you can observe the magnetic and electric fields surrounding you. You connect yourself completely to the electro-magnetic field and disregard conventional visual information. This enables you to "see" in complete darkness so long as the objects around you have electric or magnetic fields, or at least disrupt such fields. While conventional things we notice about objects (such as color) aren't detectable through this sense some other features are and can be just as distinctive. You can see using this sense out to 60 feet, just like Blindsight.

This binding also allows you to sense the structure of an electric system. You can feel where the power lines run, how they flow, and what interruptions there might be in the system (such as switches and dials). Electrical power flows are intense enough that you can see them through normal walls; stronger power flows can be seen through heavier walls. Note that substantial electrical wiring obscures in a way similar to mist or fog. This grants a +2 equipment bonus to the use of

technical skills.

FLIGHT (Su)

Requires: Minor Weather Control

Power Level: 3

Sustain Cost: 6 charge

Binding Cost: 3 ip, 240 xp

You lift yourself with winds granting you flight with Good maneuverability. You can fly at 45 feet per standard move action (90 feet for a full move). You may double this speed if flying more than 100 feet above the ground outdoors since you can call on stronger winds to support you. If this power is dispelled or disrupted for some reason the winds continue to support you briefly, allowing you to glide to the ground as if under the effects of a *feather fall* spell.

GREATER WEATHER CONTROL (Sp)

Requires: Weather Control

Power Level: 9

Binding Cost: 20 ip, 1600 xp, Spirit Veda

This binding allows you to use the following spells as spell-like abilities for the given charge cost. Your effective caster level with these abilities is 18. You must pay any xp or material component costs associated with these spells. A star (*) indicates the spell is new and included in the spells section of this book.

Whirlwind, 24 charge

*Vortex**, 36 charge

LIGHTNING ARC (Sp)

Requires: Lightning Bolt

Power Level: 4

Action: Standard Action

Range: 40 feet

Area: Cone

Duration: Spontaneous

Use Cost: 6 charge

Binding Cost: 2 ip, 160 xp, Spirit Veda

Saving Throw: Reflex half

Spell Resistance: Yes

You hold both hands out in front of you, generating a circuit between them, then direct the growing charge outwards in a large arc so that it fills a thirty foot long cone with a swarm of electricity. The arc does 8d6 damage to all in the area and has an effective caster level of 8. You can increase the effective caster level normally; each additional caster level increases the range by 5 feet and the damage by 1d6, up to 15 dice maximum.

LIGHTNING ARMOR (Sp)

Requires: Deflect or Static Field

Power Level: 4

Action: Standard Action

Range: Personal

Target: Self

Sustain Cost: 20 charge

Binding Cost: 10 ip, 800 xp

Saving Throw: None

You wreath yourself in a field of lightning. Any creature striking you with its body or handheld weapons deals normal damage, but at the same time the attacker takes 1d6+10 points of damage. This damage is electrical damage. If a creature has spell resistance, it applies to this damage. Note that weapons with exceptional reach, such as two-handed spears, do not endanger their users in this way. When using this ability, lightning flickers across your body. This generates light equal to half the illumination of a normal torch (10 feet).

LIGHTNING BOLT (Sp)

Power Level: 3

Action: Standard Action

Use Cost: 4 charge

Binding Cost: 1 ip, 80 xp, Spirit Veda

You can release electrical charge in a long, jagged strike of lightning. This acts as a *lightning bolt* spell. You can increase the effective caster level normally.

LIGHTNING IMMUNITY (Su)

Requires: Strength of the Storm

Power Level: 5

Binding Cost: 18 ip, 1400 xp

You become immune to lightning. Like a superconductor, electricity will just flow through you, leaving no harmful effects. This does not protect your equipment though; just yourself. This ability does not require charge.

LIGHTNING STORM (Sp)

Requires: Call Lightning or Lightning Arc

Power Level: 7

Action: Standard Action

Range: Medium (100 ft. + 10 ft./caster level)

Area: Two 10-ft. cubes/caster level (S)

Duration: Instantaneous

Use Cost: 18 charge

Binding Cost: 14 ip, 1150 xp, Spirit Veda

Saving Throw: Reflex half

Spell Resistance: Yes

You summon a series of lightning bolts simultaneously to rain down within the designated area. Those within

Power Minor Electronics**Charge Sample Devices**

1	flashlight, portable radio
4	television, personal computer with peripherals, home stereo system

Power Major Electronics**Charge Sample Devices**

12	motorcycle, power boat, family car, family home, World War II era jeep
20	large truck, van, prop plane, armored personnel carrier

Power Massive Electronics**Charge Sample Devices**

30	Main battle tank, World War II diesel electric submarine, small factory
60	large electric train (10 cars), sports stadium, city block

the area take 1d6 damage per caster level (maximum of 20d6). Your base effective caster level for this power is 14 but you can increase it using the normal rules. If you use this outdoors and while under a thunderstorm halve the charge cost.

LIGHTNING STROKE (Su)**Power Level:** 4**Action:** Free Action**Use Cost:** 6 charge**Binding Cost:** 2 ip, 160 xp

You can strike so quickly with a weapon that the attack is practically invisible. This allows you to make a normal melee or ranged attack as a free action (at your normal bonus). The attack is also stronger due to the speed backing it, granting a +1 velocity bonus to damage. You can make as many of these as you want (or can afford) during a round however each successive use in the same round costs twice as much charge. Moreover, bystanders won't even realize that you have made an attack unless they can make a Spot skill check against DC 20.

LORD OF THE SKY (Su)**Requires:** Weather Prediction**Power Level:** 5**Action:** Spontaneous**Duration:** 1 round**Use Cost:** 9 charge**Binding Cost:** 3 ip, 240 xp, Spirit Veda

This allows you to deny the air to the enemy. For the

duration, all attacks launched through the air (but not including spells) miss their target. This applies to all attacks in a large area around you, even those not aimed at you. The area is somewhat indeterminate. It should be at least a 1000 foot radius but could be much larger if there's a storm in the region.

MINOR WEATHER CONTROL (Sp)**Requires:** Weather Prediction**Power Level:** 3**Binding Cost:** 2 ip, 160 xp, Spirit Veda

This binding allows you to use the following spells as spell-like abilities for the given charge cost. Your effective caster

level with these abilities is 6.

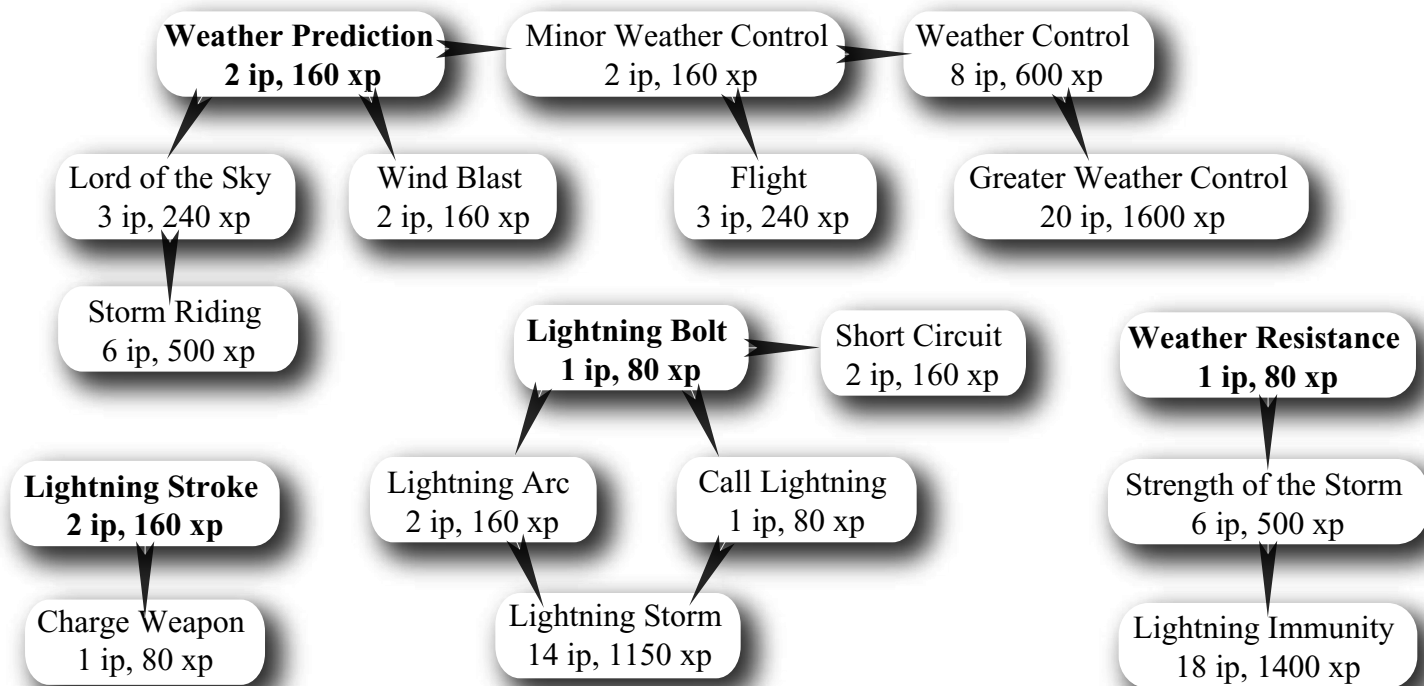
Fog cloud, 2 charge*Gust of wind*, 4 charge**POWER MAJOR ELECTRONICS (Sp)****Requires:** Power Minor Electronics**Power Level:** 6**Action:** Standard Action**Range:** 0**Target:** 1 object**Area:** 45 ft. radius**Sustain Cost:** see table**Binding Cost:** 5 ip, 400 xp, Spirit Veda

This is an enhanced version of *power minor electronics*. This binding generates enough power to keep a house or moderate sized building running along with all its normal appliances. This is also enough juice to power major equipment, like regular vehicles or even an armored fighting vehicle, so long as it runs solely on electricity (which is rare for large vehicles). Electric cars and vehicles specially fitted with all electric motors are popular in the Second World due to the presence of this ability.

POWER MASSIVE ELECTRONICS (Sp)**Requires:** Power Major Electronics**Power Level:** 8**Action:** Standard Action**Range:** 0**Target:** 1 object**Area:** 120 ft. radius**Sustain Cost:** see table**Binding Cost:** 50 ip, 4000 xp, Spirit Veda

This is an enhanced version of *power minor electronics*. This generates enough power to run a city block, sports stadium, electric train or diesel electric submarine running on batteries.

Lightning Warden



POWER MINOR ELECTRONICS (Sp)

Power Level: 3

Action: Standard Action

Range: Touch

Target: 1 object

Area: 5 ft. radius

Sustain Cost: see table

Binding Cost: 3 ip, 240 xp

You create electricity within a device thus allowing it to operate in the Second World (or when it's regular power source is unavailable). Use the electric power table to determine the charge required for various power outputs.

In using this power you simultaneously generate a constant power supply to a device or network of devices and construct a field of space wherein electrical current flows and operates; you need both these since without the field the power is just lightning and without the lightning there is no power. While sustained this power provides electricity to the target object and any objects within the area of effect connected by a standard electrical circuit.

SHORT CIRCUIT (Sp)

Requires: Lightning Bolt

Power Level: 3

Action: Standard Action

Range: 150 ft.

Area: 30 foot radius burst

Duration: Instantaneous

Use Cost: 4 charge

Binding Cost: 2 ip, 160 xp, Spirit Veda

Saving Throw: Shielding negates

Spell Resistance: Yes

You use this invocation to flood an area with magnetic and electric fields to wipe out electronics. Electronic equipment in the area receives a saving throw against this effect only if it possesses a shielding bonus (and then saves using the shielding bonus). Equipment only partially within the area of effect can receive a bonus to the saving throw. While the effect is instantaneous most equipment de-gausses naturally after some time; after an hour there's a 25% chance for each circuit that it naturally recovers. If this fails the equipment needs to be repaired; doing so takes 15 minutes per 10 foot cube of electronics and requires a Craft (electronic) check with a DC of 10 plus your effective caster level with this power.

STATIC FIELD (Su)

Power Level: 2

Action: Free action

Range: Personal

Sustain Cost: 4 charge

Binding Cost: 1 ip, 80 xp

This allows you to reinforce metal armor that you wear with a static magnetic field. Using this power grants a +2 enhancement bonus to worn metal armor.

STORM RIDING (Sp)

Requires: Lord of the Sky

Power Level: 6

Action: Standard Action

Campaign

Characters

Wardens

Influence

Equipment

Opponents

Range: Personal**Target:** Self or group**Area:** 60 foot radius**Sustain Cost:** 12 charge**Binding Cost:** 6 ip, 500 xp, Spirit Veda

This allows you to walk or ride on clouds. Typically you summon a fog to allow the initial climb, then climb up the fog bank until you finally stand on the clouds themselves. If you start out on a mountain this process is sped up considerably. This movement can be very fast, about triple normal ground speed when on a moving cloudbank plus you avoid any terrain penalties. You can extend this effect to up to 40 other people. It takes one hour to climb or descend to cloud height unless you have a special route to it.

STRENGTH OF THE STORM (Su)**Requires:** Weather Resistance**Power Level:** 5**Binding Cost:** 6 ip, 500 xp

This binding allows you to draw power from a storm whenever you are within a storm. The tempest must be an electrical storm. You get a +2 elemental bonus (this is like a sacred or profane bonus but derives from the power of nature or the elements) on all saves, gain 2 free points of charge each round (this cannot be used to replenish charge though), and have Fast Healing 3 while in a storm.

VIRTUAL CIRCUIT (Sp)**Requires:** Electric Sight**Power Level:** 4**Action:** Standard Action**Range:** 150 ft.**Area:** 30 foot long circuit**Sustain Cost:** 4 charge**Binding Cost:** 4 ip, 320 xp, Spirit Veda

You can create electrical circuits that actually run through the air. This can be used as a simple extension cord or as a means of connecting virtual cables to electronics. These circuits are usually invisible, but if enough power flows through them (such as the power in a high tension power line) the electrical flow will glow; essentially, the electricity is strong enough to make the air fluoresce. Virtual circuits can go through solid objects as well, unless the object is electrically shielded. The distance these circuits can cross is 30 feet + 30 feet per power level over 4.

WEATHER CONTROL (Sp)**Requires:** Minor Weather Control**Power Level:** 6**Binding Cost:** 8 ip, 600 xp, Spirit Veda

This binding allows you to use the following spells as spell-like abilities for the given charge cost. Your effective caster level with these abilities is 12.

Control weather, 12 charge*Control winds*, 9 chargeWEATHER PREDICTION (Su)**Power Level:** 2**Binding Cost:** 2 ip, 160 xp, Spirit Veda

This allows you to constantly know, with absolute accuracy, what the weather will be like in the nearby area over the next three days.

WEATHER RESISTANCE (Su)**Power Level:** 2**Binding Cost:** 1 ip, 80 xp, Spirit Veda

With this ability you can be one with the storm. This will make it easier for you to walk in it and predict its actions. You will not be buffeted by winds or tormented by sudden downpours unless you desire so. This acts like a *free action* spell that only neutralizes penalties associated with weather effects. You can even exert a mild amount of control in normal situations to move the breezes the way you want. This can be used to keep dust from blowing in your eyes or to create a “hair blowing in the wind” effect.

WIND BLAST (Sp)**Requires:** Weather Prediction**Power Level:** 3**Action:** Standard Action**Range:** Medium (150 ft.)**Duration:** Instantaneous**Use Cost:** 2 charge**Binding Cost:** 2 ip, 160 xp, Spirit Veda**Saving Throw:** None**Spell Resistance:** Yes

Your attunement with the elements allows you to direct winds; with enough power and skill you can focus the wind into a narrow and intense beam capable of knocking people over or causing severe damage. The wind attack does 2d6+5 damage and requires a regular ranged attack to succeed; you may choose to have the attack cause subdual damage instead of normal damage as you desire. If the attack hits, the target must make a Strength check against DC 15 or be knocked prone (add +4 to the check for every Size level over Medium—size and another +4 if the target has four legs).

METAL WARDEN

Description: Fire and steel, tempering and the forge; these are the domains of the Metal Warden. Heavy elements and the forces that make them constitute the primary building blocks of worlds, the places where life begins and civilization evolves. The Metal Warden taps into these forces and structures; shaping them via an innate connection with the primary material. The Metal Warden does not just shape steel, but makes steel and flame part of himself. The heat of the forge and the chill efficiency of steel come out in his demeanor; he can react with a ruthless and pragmatic efficiency while seething with a passion for justice or baser emotions. The Metal Warden is the lone lawman, facing his enemies at high noon; he is the last line of defense holding the breach against unnumbered hordes; he may bend but he will not break.

The power of the Metal Warden rages across Europe where massive steel beasts of war wait in the Fulda Gap, where industry produces material in the Ruhr Valley, where the low countries suffer from the endless march of invading armies. Berlin is the city of the Metal Warden and its influence spreads across all of Europe and North Africa then moves east to combine with the power of lightning to create a very special region where strange machines battle across the Siberian tundra, the Mongolian steppes, the rich farmland east of the Urals, and the desolate waste of the Gobi.

Hit Die: d10.

Action Points: 6 + 1/2 your character level (round down).

METAL WARDEN

This feat grants you access to Metal Warden bindings. Metal Wardens tap into the power of steel; they can summon it from nowhere (well, actually, an interstice) and empower what they summon. Steel needs fire and that connection grants the Metal Warden some power over fire as well.

Prerequisites: as for Metal Warden class

Benefit: You acquire two binding slots for use with Metal Warden bindings. You must obey all the normal rules for binding powers to a slot, including paying the appropriate experience point and material component cost for the slot. You may also take this feat if you already have Metal Warden class levels; if you do so add 2 slots to your total available slots for Metal Warden bindings. You may take this feat more than once gaining two additional slots for each feat taken. You may only use this feat for Metal Warden bindings.

REQUIREMENTS

To qualify to become a Metal Warden, you must fulfill all of the following criteria.

Disable Device: 4 ranks

Open Locks: 4 ranks

Craft (smithing): 4 ranks

Also, two of the above skills must be at least rank 8

Feats: Iron Will, Tensile Mercury Expertise. Must be proficient with all simple and martial weapons and all forms of armor.

Special: Also, in order to become a Metal Warden you must undergo a test of will called the Forging. In this test you stick one of your hands into a fire (bonfire or forge) and must hold it there for 13 seconds without pulling it out or falling unconscious. After thirteen seconds you withdraw your hand and immerse it in a bucket of ice cold water; again you must not pass out. The gamemaster can either roleplay this out with a Will save (DC 15) or simply assume that you are heroic enough to succeed at this (possessing the Iron Will feat should explain your ability to do this). Any damage suffered from doing this recovers in about one week.

Class Level	Base Attack	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special	Defense Bonus	Reputation Bonus
1	+1	+2	+0	+0	+1 Binding Slot	+1	+0
2	+2	+3	+0	+0	+1 Binding Slot	+1	+0
3	+3	+3	+1	+1	+1 Binding Slot	+2	+1
4	+4	+4	+1	+1	+1 Binding Slot	+2	+1
5	+5	+4	+1	+1	+1 Binding Slot	+3	+1
6	+6	+5	+2	+2	+1 Binding Slot	+3	+2
7	+7	+5	+2	+2	+1 Binding Slot	+4	+2
8	+8	+6	+2	+2	+1 Binding Slot	+4	+2
9	+9	+6	+3	+3	+1 Binding Slot	+5	+3
10	+10	+7	+3	+3	+1 Binding Slot	+5	+3

CLASS SKILLS

The Metal Warden's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are *Appraise* (Int), *Climb* (Str), *Craft* (Int), *Disable Device* (Int), *Jump* (Str), *Knowledge* (metallurgy) (Int), *Open Lock* (Dex), *Profession* (Wis), **Repair** (Int), *Ride* (Dex), *Spellcraft* (Int), and *Spot* (Wis).

Skill Points at Each Level: 2 + Int modifier.

CLASS FEATURES

All of the following are class features of the Metal Warden.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: The Metal Warden is proficient in the use of all simple and martial weapons and with all armor and shields. Also, at fourth level the Metal Warden develops such an affinity with steel that he is proficient with all metal weapons and armor, even if exotic.

Saving Throws: The saving throw DC for most Metal Warden powers (when applicable) is equal to 10 + the power's level + the Metal Warden's Charisma modifier.

BINDINGS

A number of these bindings call into being a large quantity of metal. The metal so created is sustained by the power of the warden and when he withdraws that power the metal slowly melts away back to the interstice from which the warden drew it. This 'melting' process is, in some ways, more of an evaporating process. The metal objects become more pitted, disappearing a bit at a time. Enchanted metal objects lose their enchantment within moments after being invoked unless the warden continues to focus on them (the magical energy quickly

evaporates back to its source interstice). For almost all invoked metal the warden must be in physical contact with the material to sustain it.

ARMOR FLOW (Su)

Power Level: 1

Action: Spontaneous

Duration: 1 attack

Uses: 2/day

Binding Cost: 1 ip, 80 xp, Spirit Veda

You can shift your armor positioning as someone attacks you. This allows you to reinforce the point of attack and enhances the ability of the armor to deflect blows. This increases the armor bonus of worn armor by 2 against one attack.

ARMORING (Sp)

Power Level: 2

Action: see text

Range: Personal

Target: Self

Binding Cost: 2 ip, 160 xp

This invocation allows you to sheathe yourself in steel armor. The armor can count as any metal armor, specifically including (but not limited to): chain shirt, scale mail, chain mail, breast plate, splint mail, banded mail, half plate, and full plate. Invoked armor is tougher than normal armor (add +5 to its hardness and hit points; this does not include the effect of Steel Aura) and counts as masterwork.

Normally, armoring would require a Full round action to invoke and draws an attack of opportunity; however, since all Metal Wardens must have the Tensile Mercury Expertise feat it only takes a move equivalent action to invoke armor and doing so does not provoke an attack of opportunity. With the Tensile Mercury Mastery feat you need only perform a free action to invoke armor.

ENHANCEMENTS

ARMOR ENHANCEMENT

Power Level: 3

Binding Cost: see chart

This allows you to provide an enhancement bonus to the armor you invoke. Since you can take this power at a variety of levels I provide a table to describe the various costs. Two columns are provided for costs, one for the incremental cost (how much it would cost to go from the previous bonus level to the target bonus level), and one for the total cost. Your purchased bonus level can be used for standard enhancement bonuses; with additional bindings or enhancements you may also be able to purchase special bonuses (such as Shadow armor) which still require the normal set of bonus points. Note that enhancement bonuses higher than +2 require that the armor be made of a special metal or material such as Martian Steel or Black Iron.

BLACK IRON (Su)

Requires: Martian Steel

Power Level: 6

Binding Cost: 8 ip, 600 xp, Spirit Veda

You can invoke Black Iron weapons and armor. This is meant for use with the armoring and blading bindings. Black Iron can support up to 10 points of bonuses with a maximum +5 enhancement bonus; black iron also has 8 points of hardening. The enhancements themselves must still be purchased normally.

BLADING (Su)

Power Level: 3

Binding Cost: 2 ip, 160 xp, Spirit Veda

Weapon Enhancement	Total Cost		Incremental Cost	
	Bonus Points	IP	XP	IP
1	1	1	100	40
2	5	5	400	300
3	11	11	900	500
4	20	20	1600	700
5	31	31	2500	900
6	45	45	3600	1100
7	61	61	4900	1300
8	80	80	6400	1500
9	101	101	8100	1700
10	125	125	10000	1900

Armor Enhancement	Total Cost		Incremental Cost	
	Bonus Points	IP	XP	IP
1	1	1	40	40
2	2	2	160	120
3	5	5	360	200
4	8	8	640	280
5	13	13	1000	360
6	18	18	1440	440
7	25	25	1960	520
8	32	32	2560	600
9	41	41	3240	680
10	50	50	4000	760

You can form any metal melee weapon. These weapons are more durable than normal weapons (add +5 to hardness) and count as masterwork. You can invoke more than one weapon if you normally use two weapons; moreover, each weapon you invoke can have its own full set of enhancements so long as you've acquired the appropriate bindings. This makes Metal Wardens efficient two weapon users.

Normally, blading requires a Full round action to invoke and draws an attack of opportunity; however, since all Metal Wardens must have the Tensile Mercury Expertise feat it only takes a move equivalent action to invoke a weapon and doing so does not provoke an attack of opportunity. With the Tensile Mercury Mastery feat you need only perform a free action to invoke a weapon.

ENHANCEMENTS

WEAPON ENHANCEMENT

Power Level: 3

Binding Cost: see chart

This allows you to provide an enhancement bonus to the weapons you invoke. Since you can take this power at a variety of levels I provide a table to describe the various costs. Two columns are provided for costs, one for the incremental cost (how much it would cost to go from the previous bonus level to the target bonus level), and one for the total cost. Your purchased bonus level can be used for standard enhancement bonuses; with additional bindings you may also be able to purchase special bonuses (such as Flaming) which still require the normal bonus points. Note that enhancement bonuses higher than +2 require that the weapon be made of a special metal or

material such as Martian Steel or Black Iron.

BULLET WARD (Su)

Requires: Metal Ward

Power Level: 4

Binding Cost: 8 ip, 600 xp

You develop a natural affinity for warding out metal. This aura is only powerful enough to deflect metal objects, not actually prevent their intrusion entirely. However, this is sufficient to grant you a +5 deflection bonus to armor class against metal missiles and cause them to have a 50% miss chance against you. You also receive a +5 deflection bonus to saves and take half damage from explosives that rely on shrapnel and fragmentation. Finally, this also grants a +1 deflection bonus to AC against melee attacks with metal weapons.

BURST OF POWER (Su)

Power Level: 2

Binding Cost: 2 ip, 160 xp

Motorized vehicles that you drive have their top speed increased by 50% and gain a +2 enhancement bonus to their Maneuver rating. The vehicle can exceed its normal characteristics when this ability is used.

CHAIN BLAST (Sp)

Requires: Chaining

Power Level: 3

Action: Standard Action

Range: 90 ft.

Area: 20 foot radius burst

Duration: Instantaneous

Uses: 1/day

Binding Cost: 4 ip, 320 xp, Spirit Veda

Saving Throw: Reflex half

Spell Resistance: Yes

You can invoke a swarm of chains affixed to blades and hooks to impact an area 20 feet in radius. This causes 6d6 physical damage to anyone in the area (half damage if a Reflex save is made). The chains are normally non-magical, so creatures with damage reduction get it against this attack. If you have access to special material the chains may be made from that material and gain any appropriate bonuses. Any enhancement for regular chaining may be applied to this attack. However, you don't make an attack check so bonuses to hit don't really matter and the damage bonus only applies to the total. More importantly, the enhancement bonus may overcome a target's damage reduction and special enhancements (such as Ghost Touch or

Flaming when available) may provide other benefits.

CHAINING (Sp)

Requires: Blading

Power Level: 1

Action: Standard Action

Range: 90 ft.

Target: Creature

Duration: Instantaneous

Uses: at will

Binding Cost: 3 ip, 240 xp

Saving Throw: None

Spell Resistance: Yes

Chaining allows you to project blades and other metal items as a ranged attack. This is treated as a standard ranged attack (i.e. requires a normal attack roll) that does 2d6 damage with critical 20/x3. Being made of metal your chaining can be forged of any metal to which you have invocation access. However, being a standard action and a spell-like ability you cannot perform full attacks with chaining. You may use your blading enhancements with chaining.

CONTROL HEAVY MACHINERY (Sp)

Requires: Control Machinery

Power Level: 7

Action: Full round action

Range: 200 ft.

Target: 1 piece of machinery

Duration: Concentration

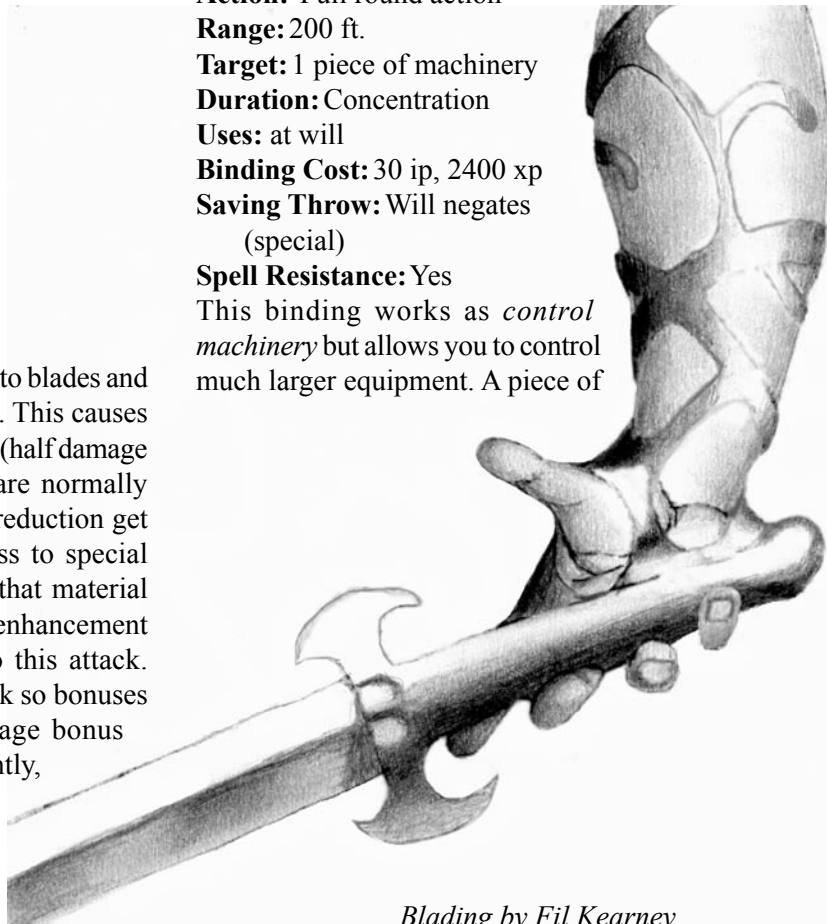
Uses: at will

Binding Cost: 30 ip, 2400 xp

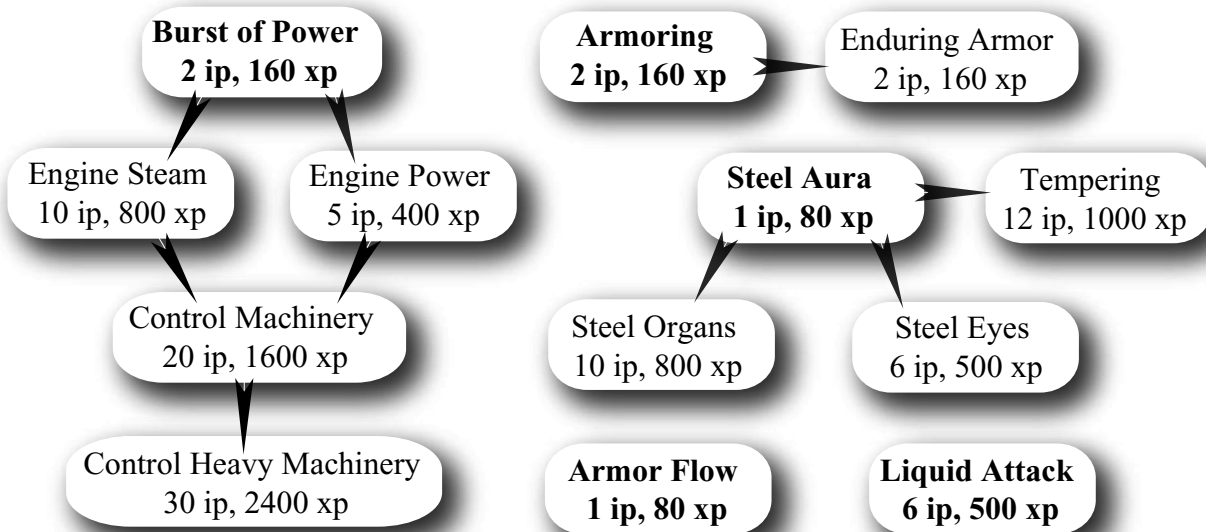
Saving Throw: Will negates (special)

Spell Resistance: Yes

This binding works as *control machinery* but allows you to control much larger equipment. A piece of



Blading by Fil Kearney



equipment that falls wholly within a 40 foot radius may be controlled. For purposes of saving throws use the highest Will bonus of any operator and assume a +2 circumstance bonus due to assistance from other operators. A controlled heavy machine can be used as an animated object of up to Gargantuan size. A factory or assembly line counts as a single machine for the purposes of this power.

CONTROL MACHINERY (Sp)

Requires: Engine Steam or Engine Power

Power Level: 4

Action: Full round action

Range: 100 ft.

Target: 1 piece of machinery

Duration: Concentration

Uses: at will

Binding Cost: 20 ip, 1600 xp

Saving Throw: Will negates (special)

Spell Resistance: Yes

This allows you to make machinery operate as you choose. The equipment operates as normal but you may control switchable, scalable, and movable functions. Any operation you could perform via a lever, switch, dial, or mechanical interface could be performed at range using this ability. Thus you could turn a process off, change the direction of a process, or speed or slow a process. With a long enough period of control you could damage or destroy a piece of machinery, either by simply altering it to work in ways it wasn't meant to or by speeding up the process for so long and to such an extent that the machinery seizes up; doing this typically takes ten minutes of uninterrupted control. This works on machinery such as smaller vehicles and production

equipment so long as the machinery falls within a 10 foot radius. If the machine is controlled by an operator they get a Will saving throw against the effect; if this save is made the operator establishes control over the device for one hour; if the save fails you have control over the device for one hour or until your concentration is broken, whichever comes first. Your effective caster level with this power is 8.

You may use control machinery to open many simple locks, such as sliding bars and operate a portcullis. You may also use this to open locks or disable devices from a distance; your enhanced control grants you a +5 circumstance bonus with Open Locks and Disable Device checks on metallic objects.

Finally, a controlled machine can also be used as an animated object of up to Large size.

ENDURING ARMOR (Su)

Requires: Armoring

Power Level: 3

Binding Cost: 2 ip, 160 xp, Spirit Veda

This binding allows you to enhance invoked armor with the Hardening, Fortification, and Invulnerability special abilities. You must still pay for the special ability with purchased enhancement bonuses.

ENGINE POWER (Su)

Requires: Burst of Power & Lightning Warden:
Power Minor Electronics

Power Level: 4

Binding Cost: 5 ip, 400 xp

With this binding you can power the internal combustion engine of a vehicle that you're driving.

You can power any engine up to 500 horsepower (this will cover most common production vehicles). Between this binding and the Lightning Warden power you can simply take a First World car and run it in the Second World. Moreover it will run just like in the First World (complete with power steering, air-conditioning, and stereo so long as you get the right car). The vehicle does not require fuel when you use this power (pure fire supplies the combustion).

Fire and Steel
1 ip, 80 xp

Minor Steel Shaping
5 ip, 400 xp

Metal Ward
6 ip, 500 xp

Steel Shaping
8 ip, 600 xp

Bullet Ward
8 ip, 600 xp

Greater Steel Shaping
12 ip, 1000 xp

Harden Body
10 ip, 800 xp

ENGINE STEAM (SU)

Requires: Burst of Power

Power Level: 5

Binding Cost: 10 ip, 800 xp

Steam lacks the motive power to drive engines in the Second World; it compresses too easily and the iron housings lack the strength to contain it at high enough pressures to work. Not for a Metal Warden though. With this binding you can empower a steam engine, one large enough to run a locomotive or steamship such as the kind that used to run up and down the Mississippi river. This is not powerful enough to move an Ironclad or other heavily armored ship. Otherwise this is equivalent to creating a local area where the Thermodynamics theory advance works. You use this power naturally when you concentrate on driving or piloting such a vehicle. The vehicle still requires fuel normally (i.e. coal or wood).

Wealthy nations and organizations can occasionally find Metal Wardens willing to work on salary. These wardens live luxuriously and are typically assigned to flagships when working with a navy. The company frequently sponsors the warden's binding of this ability so long as the warden agrees to contract for a period of time (usually two years).

FIRE AND STEEL (SU)

Power Level: 2

Binding Cost: 1 ip, 80 xp, Spirit Veda

Firearms do not normally work in the Second World. Metal does not meet the proper tolerances and the expanding gas which propels the bullet does not produce the necessary force. Metal Wardens can fix this. Through subtle alterations of the metallic structure and by enhancing the potency of the ignition (in the hands of a Metal Warden, the flame does the propelling of the bullet instead of the gas) a Metal Warden can get a firearm to operate. This requires concentration

on the weapon in question, but that concentration is inherent when a Metal Warden fires a pistol. A Metal Warden could also concentrate on a firearm held by someone else, but this would spend the Metal Warden's action.

This binding allows you to use a Renaissance era firearm (as if you personally had the Chemistry theory advance) in the Second World. You still need ammunition and powder as usual, but you empower the weapon to work with your own abilities. If used on the First World (or in another area where these firearms normally work) you receive a +1 enhancement bonus to damage with the firearm.

ENHANCEMENTS

PRECISION GUNS (SU)

Requires: Fire and Steel

Power Level: 3

Binding Cost: 3 ip, 240 xp

This allows you to use revolvers, and bolt or lever action firearms in the Second World as if you personally had the Precision Guns advance. If used on the First World (or in another area where these firearms normally work) you receive a +2 enhancement bonus to damage with the firearm.

MODERN GUNS (SU)

Requires: Precision Guns

Power Level: 5

Binding Cost: 6 ip, 640 xp

This allows you to use modern firearms in the Second World as if the Modern Guns theory advance worked just for you. If used on the First World (or in another area where these firearms normally work) you receive a +3 enhancement bonus to damage with the firearm.

GREATER STEEL SHAPING (SP)

Requires: Steel Shaping

Power Level: 5

Uses: 1/day

Binding Cost: 12 ip, 1000 xp, Spirit Veda

This allows you to construct or repair objects made of large quantities of steel. You may use the following spells as spell-like abilities but you may only use them on metal objects or for the purpose of constructing metal objects. Your effective caster level with these abilities is 10.

Fabricate, 1 use

Major Creation, 1 use

Wall of Iron, 1 use

After creating a wall of iron you may then transform it into a *blade barrier*, as the spell. This costs one additional use from the Veda. Given that a pre-summoned wall of iron must be used as the focus for the blade barrier you cannot realistically use the blade barrier as an attack (that is, you cannot summon it on top of some targets).

This power also allows you to construct an Iron Golem, Steel Horse, or Steel Wolf using the standard costs.

HARDEN BODY (Su)

Power Level: 5

Action: Free

Duration: 2 rounds

Uses: 1/day

Binding Cost: 10 ip, 800 xp, Spirit Veda

With this power you channel the power of steel directly into your body, granting it a grayish sheen and making you much more resilient. This grants you damage reduction 25/+4 for the duration.

INDIRECT ATTACK (Su)

Requires: Chaining

Power Level: 4

Binding Cost: 10 ip, 800 xp

This allows you to use your chaining ability from an unusual angle. The attack can emanate from any location within 150 feet. This can help avoid cover bonuses (though you'll still have to deal with any concealment the target may have) but will not count as a flanking attack unless the target is particularly unaware (for instance, surprised). If you have a means of perceiving behind a wall or enclosure you can set the source point of your chaining from that location. Note that this effectively increases the range of your chaining attack since the new range is measured from the source point. You may use this ability at will.

LIQUID ATTACK (Su)

Power Level: 4

Action: Standard Action

Duration: 1 attack

Uses: 1/day

Binding Cost: 6 ip, 500 xp, Spirit Veda

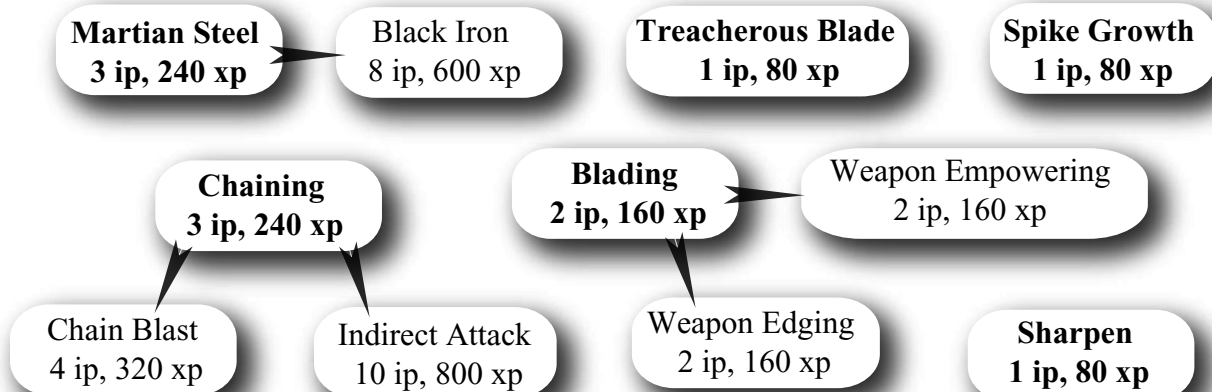
You make your weaponry completely fluid so that it spreads out and bypasses any defensive measures taken by the target; it then flows through the cracks in the victim's armor and resolidifies in his flesh. Treat this as a melee touch attack made with your weapon that ignores any bonuses the target may get for fighting defensively, using expertise, or using a defending weapon.

MARTIAN STEEL (Su)

Power Level: 3

Binding Cost: 3 ip, 240 xp, Spirit Veda

You can invoke Martian Steel weapons and armor. This is meant for use with the armoring, blading, and chaining bindings. Martian steel can support up to 6 points of bonuses with a maximum +4 enhancement bonus. The enhancements themselves must still be purchased normally. Martian steel also provides 4



points of hardening for items forged from it.

METAL WARD (Su)

Power Level: 4

Action: Spontaneous

Target: Self

Duration: 1 attack

Uses: 1/day

Binding Cost: 6 ip, 500 xp

This allows you to briefly make yourself immune to damage caused by a metal item, magical or non-magical. This power must be declared prior to the attack roll.

MINOR STEEL SHAPING (Sp)

Power Level: 2

Binding Cost: 5 ip, 400 xp

This binding allows you to mildly form and reshape metal items. You may use the following spells as spell-like abilities at will but you may only use them on metal objects. Your effective caster level with these abilities is 4.

Make Whole

Mending

Open/Close

You may use the Open/Close ability in conjunction with an Open Locks skill check to open locks; you act as if you had masterwork tools (+2 circumstance bonus on the check) and can perform the operation from a distance. This likewise works for Disable Device checks so long as the device is metallic; however, you cannot use Disable Device at range using this power.

SHARPEN (Su)

Power Level: 1

Action: Attack Modification

Duration: 1 attack

Uses: 1/day

Binding Cost: 1 ip, 80 xp, Spirit Veda

This hones the edge of a bladed weapon briefly, granting it 3 points of Penetration.

SPIKE GROWTH (Su)

Power Level: 2

Action: Spontaneous

Uses: 1/day

Binding Cost: 1 ip, 80 xp, Spirit Veda

You can cause a sudden growth of sharp, metal spikes from your armor. This allows you to instantly cause 2d6 damage to all opponents who have grabbed you or that you have grabbed. After this power is used you

can either retain the blades and use them as if you had armor spikes or let them merge back into your armor.

STEEL AURA (Su)

Power Level: 2

Binding Cost: 1 ip, 80 xp

Metal equipment tends not to break down around you. For simplicity's sake assume that most mechanical items simply stay in top condition. Even swords and knives stay sharp. Extremely abusive conditions can still cause failure, but less so than normal. This will also increase the hardness of any metal items you use by 5 and their hit points by 10.

STEEL EYES (Ex)

Requires: Steel Aura

Power Level: 4

Binding Cost: 6 ip, 500 xp

You replace your eyes with steel ones. This provides heightened visual acuity and resistance to attacks meant to damage the eyes. Steel Eyes give you Low-light vision, a +5 circumstance bonus to Spot and Search checks, immunity to attacks and powers that conventionally damage the eyes (such as the *flare* spell and any blinding effects), and a +2 circumstance bonus to saving throws against gaze attacks. The eyes themselves have damage reduction 15/- if for some reason they are attacked directly.

STEEL ORGANS (Ex)

Requires: Steel Aura

Power Level: 4

Binding Cost: 10 ip, 800 xp

This ability allows you to replace your internal organs with steel ones. The replacement is permanent and provides you with 75% (moderate) fortification against critical hits and sneak attacks (as for magical armor).

STEEL SHAPING (Sp)

Requires: Minor Steel Shaping

Power Level: 4

Uses: 2/day

Binding Cost/Use: 8 ip, 600 xp, Spirit Veda

This allows you to modify and damage objects made of moderate quantities of steel. You may use the following spells as spell-like abilities but you may only use them on metal objects or for the purpose of constructing metal objects. Your effective caster level with these abilities is 8. A star (*) indicates the spell is new and included in the spells section of this book. You may also construct a Steel Wolf using the standard rules for

making constructs.

Keen Edge, 2 uses

Rusting Grasp, 2 uses

*Armor Shackles**, 1 use

TEMPERING (Ex)

Requires: Steel Aura

Power Level: 4

Binding Cost: 12 ip, 1000 xp

You temper your own body with heat and flame; calling upon the fire aspect of metal to protect you. This transformation gives you resistance to fire. You ignore the first 30 points of fire damage each round.

TREACHEROUS BLADE (Su)

Power Level: 1

Action: Spontaneous

Duration: 1 attack

Uses: 1/day

Binding Cost: 1 ip, 80 xp, Spirit Veda

Your mother always told you not to play with sharp objects. Declare the use of this power prior to an attack against you; any miss, for whatever reason, is considered a critical failure threat and requires a second attack check to see if it actually is a critical failure. If the second check also fails then the opponent must immediately direct that attack against an ally; if no ally is available then he must attack himself. This can only be used against opponents with metal weapons but will also work against missile weapons.

WEAPON EDGING (Su)

Requires: Blading

Power Level: 3

Binding Cost: 2 ip, 160 xp, Spirit Veda

This binding allows you to enhance an invoked weapon with the Keen, Mighty Cleaving, Wounding, or Penetration special abilities. You must still pay for the special ability with purchased enhancement bonuses.

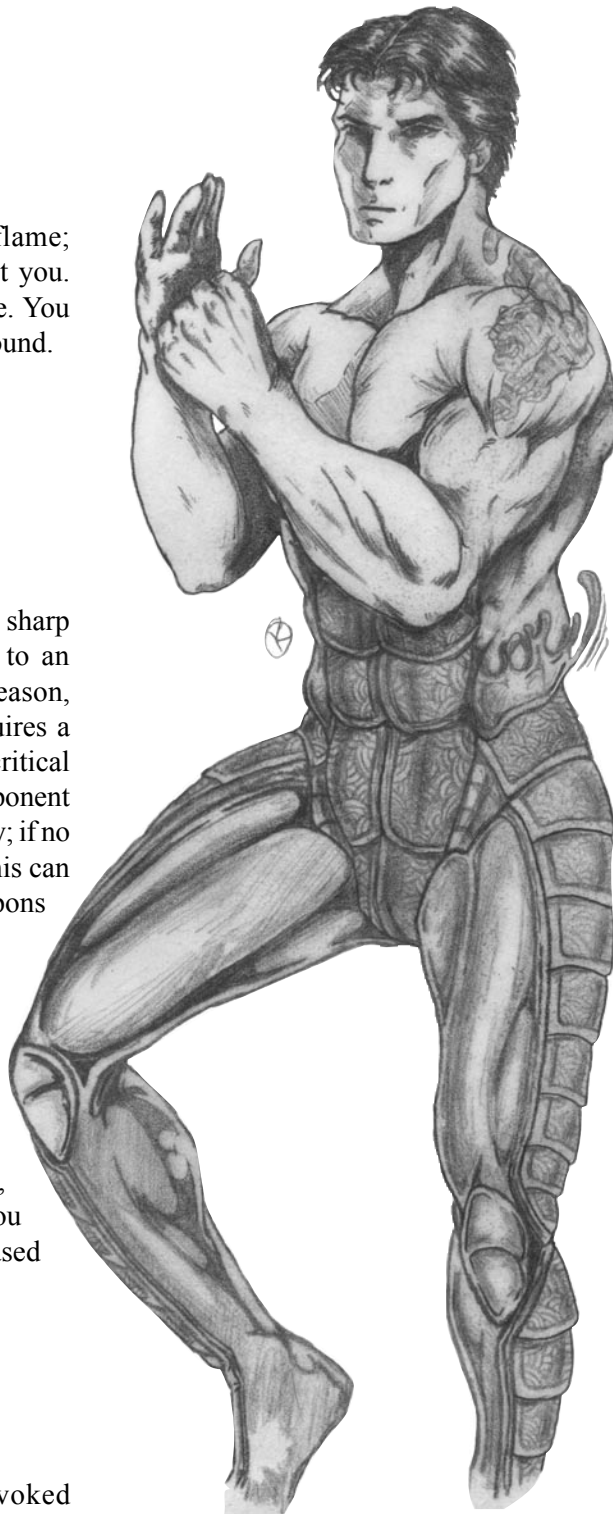
WEAPON EMPOWERING (Su)

Requires: Blading

Power Level: 3

Binding Cost: 2 ip, 160 xp, Spirit Veda

This binding allows you to enhance an invoked weapon with the Flaming, Flaming Burst, Frost, Icy Burst, Shock, or Shocking Burst special abilities. You must still pay for the special ability with purchased enhancement bonuses.



Harrison Shu by Owen Kuhn

MOTION WARDEN

Description: Motion is the evolution of the world. It is the most basic currency. All actions, all things desired are simply the rearrangement of parts of the world. Given enough time you could move any object to any location in the universe with any finite quantity of energy, no matter how small. The fact that we want to do such things quickly is why they cost so much; thus, motion is ultimately what we always desire. Motion's fundamental place in the makeup of all universal laws (including those for even the most alien interstices), the fact that without it even time might not exist, makes it, along with Pattern and Vector, one of the core dynamical principles of the world.

Motion Wardens tap into the fundamentals of motion. They store and manipulate it directly within their body in the form of momentum. They then channel this momentum into various powers and effects. Some Motion Wardens call their discipline the art of action. Motion Wardens move with a fluid grace, making the most mundane of activities look like an elaborately planned and practiced dance. Sitting still for a Motion Warden is difficult though. They store so much energy in their body at all times that they appear jittery and anxious. Members of Goal Oriented Energetics commonly say that their infamous Motion Warden, Jill Rush, "makes coffee nervous." And in more ways than one since she not only thrums with so much momentum that cats leave the room when she enters, but she also downs close to twenty five cups of the stuff a day (breaking it up by chain-smoking First World cigarettes). Needless to say, Jill, like most Motion Wardens, doesn't worry about gaining weight.

This constant energy, this constant sense of needing to act disrupts one's equilibrium. As such many Motion Wardens take up meditative practices to deal with their anxiety. Zen practice is one of the most common.

Most Motion Wardens first train as fighters, rogues, or monks, with a few beginning as barbarians. They tend

to have a high Dexterity and short life span. Low Dexterity Motion Wardens get kicked out of china shops.

Hit Die: d10. If using Defense Bonuses reduce the Motion Warden's hit die to a d8.

Action Points: $6 + 1/2$ your character level (round down).

MOTION WARDEN

This feat grants you access to Motion Warden bindings. Motion is the most fundamental commodity in the universe; everything you want to do, everything you wish to accomplish, ultimately depends upon motion. Its central role in the dynamics of the world makes it resistant to neutralization; thus many Motion Warden powers count as Extraordinary abilities instead of Supernatural ones.

Prerequisites: as for Motion Warden class

Benefit: You acquire two binding slots for use with Motion Warden bindings and increase your Motion Warden rank by two. You must obey all the normal rules for binding powers to a slot, including paying the appropriate experience point and material component cost for the slot. Motion Wardens use a commodity called Momentum to power the use of some of their abilities. The total amount of Momentum you can store equals your Motion Warden rank plus your Dexterity bonus. You may also take this feat if you already have Motion Warden class levels; if you do so add 2 slots to your total available slots for Motion Warden bindings and increase your effective Motion Warden rank by 2 for each time you take this feat. You may only use this feat for Motion Warden bindings.

REQUIREMENTS

To qualify to become a Motion Warden, a character must fulfill all of the following criteria.

Balance: 8 ranks.

Jump: 8 ranks.

Tumble: 5 ranks.

Feats: Run, Lightning Reflexes

Special: You must have completely avoided an other-wise dangerous area effect attack by ducking out of the way. In game terms this just means that you need to have successfully used the Evasion ability at some time in the past.

CLASS SKILLS

The Motion Warden's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Balance (Dex), Climb (Str), Concentration (Con), Craft (Int), Escape Artist (Dex), Jump (Str), Move Silently (Dex), **Navigate (Int)**, Ride (Dex), Spellcraft (Int), Swim (Str), and Tumble (Dex).

Skill Points at Each Level: 2 + Int modifier.

CLASS FEATURES

All of the following are class features of the Motion Warden.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: The Motion Warden is proficient in the use of all simple and martial weapons and with light armor. A Motion Warden can wear any armor but the maximum number of momentum points she can maintain is reduced by her armor check penalty. Motion Wardens are not proficient with shields.

Saving Throw: The saving throw DC for most Motion Warden powers (when applicable) is equal to 10 + the power's level + the Motion Warden's Charisma modifier.

MOMENTUM

Motion Wardens keep a store of energy inside them. This energy is called momentum. It represents the

amount of stored motion the warden has available at a given time. Motion Wardens use Momentum in the exercise of their power, and replenish it through movement and action.

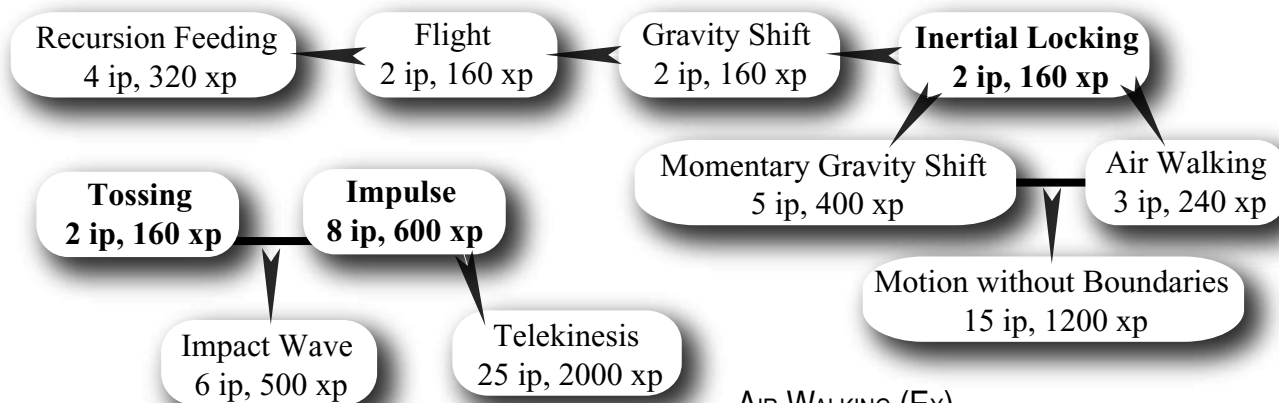
Each power the warden uses bleeds off her store of momentum in accordance with the power. The warden can get back momentum via a variety of means. When a warden moves she gets 1 point of momentum for moving 20 feet or 2 momentum points for moving 50 or more feet. When she takes 5 or more points of damage from a physical attack she gets 1 point of momentum (the kinetic energy of the attack gives her some power). Drinking a cup of coffee (not decaf) generates a point of momentum, and so on. Note, the warden does not regain momentum from an action where she used momentum. Thus, if she uses momentum to enhance an attack or to move, she does not gain any momentum for making that attack or moving. She still gains momentum whenever she takes damage regardless of whether or not she spent any momentum trying to avoid the damage.

During a battle momentum fluctuates. After a battle the warden can quickly replenish her momentum to its full value. Walking around at full momentum becomes natural to a Motion Warden but makes her tense and she can appear agitated or on edge. The musculature and bone structure of a Motion Warden becomes stronger under this constant stress. This actually makes Motion Wardens highly resistant to heart attacks and they are almost never overweight.

MOMENTUM POOL

You have a momentum pool equal to your Motion Warden rank plus your Dexterity bonus. You can replenish this pool by taking the actions described earlier but, under normal circumstances, you cannot have more momentum points at any one time than your pool

Class Level	Base Attack	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Motion Warden Rank	Special	Defense Bonus	Reputation Bonus
1	+1	+0	+2	+0	1	+1 Binding Slot	+1	+0
2	+2	+0	+3	+0	2	+1 Binding Slot	+2	+0
3	+3	+1	+3	+1	3	+1 Binding Slot	+2	+1
4	+4	+1	+4	+1	4	+1 Binding Slot	+3	+1
5	+5	+1	+4	+1	5	+1 Binding Slot	+4	+1
6	+6	+2	+5	+2	6	+1 Binding Slot	+4	+2
7	+7	+2	+5	+2	7	+1 Binding Slot	+4	+2
8	+8	+2	+6	+2	8	+1 Binding Slot	+6	+2
9	+9	+3	+6	+3	9	+1 Binding Slot	+6	+3
10	+10	+3	+7	+3	10	+1 Binding Slot	+7	+3



level. Motion Wardens spend momentum to activate many of their powers. Momentum costs are given in momentum points (MP).

An unusual feature of the Motion Warden is that many of her bindings are extraordinary abilities and thus not subject to dispelling or anti-magic.

BINDINGS

ABSORPTION (Su)

Requires: Stand Fast

Power Level: 7

Action: Spontaneous

Use Cost: none

Binding Cost: 10 ip, 800 xp

You can use this ability to absorb the kinetic energy of a physical attack (but not energy attacks such as fireballs). When used you suffer no damage from the attack and, moreover, gain 1 momentum point for every 2 points of damage the attack causes. This energy can be used to supercharge you, i.e. sustain you at a higher momentum level than normally allowed. This state is tenuous though; the extra momentum naturally bleeds off at one point per minute, so use it quickly.

This power costs no momentum but instills a sort of instability in your body that needs to be bled off over time. Once this power is used it cannot be used again without risk of grave consequences. Roll a d8 when the power is used then trace back a number of days equal to the die roll. If this power has been used in that time period then it does not work against this attack and you must make a DC 20 Fortitude save or drop to -5 hit points due to a heart attack; even if you survive the check you still take 4d6 damage (from internal rupturing and bleeding) for each time you have used the power successfully during those days.

AIR WALKING (Ex)

Requires: Inertial Locking

Power Level: 4

Action: Standard Action

Duration: Permanent (D)

Use Cost: 2 MP

Binding Cost: 3 ip, 240 xp

With this binding you can fix yourself at a given altitude and walk around at that altitude as if walking on the ground. Operating the ability takes a standard action, costing 2 momentum points; you may then move while inertial locked at no further cost. You must stay at a fixed altitude when using this power but the altitude is measured above sea level; thus you could run off a cliff and remain at the same height indefinitely. With a little power you can also use air walking to effectively “walk” upwards through the air. “Walking” up air is more difficult; it costs 1 momentum point per round and allows you to move upwards as if climbing up a 45 degree slope; you move at half normal rate when doing this. You can recover momentum normally while inertial locked.

FLIGHT (Su)

Requires: Gravity Shift

Power Level: 3

Use Cost: 1 MP per round

Binding Cost: 2 ip, 160 xp

You can direct the motion in your own body to generate a sort of flight. You must spend 1 momentum point per round to maintain this flight and this gives you a movement speed of 90 feet. If you wish to carry others with you increase the momentum cost by one for each extra person (if you want to be more specific, base the extra mass allowed on the warden’s own weight). While flying you cannot recover momentum from any other source except by taking damage.

Note that this flight violates First World physics. You do not use any thrust to propel yourself, and there is no “equal and opposite” reaction. As such this can be used

quite nicely to move even in locations such as space, or in free fall if you wish to reorient yourself.

FREEDOM OF MOTION (Ex)

Power Level: 4

Requires: Lightning Move

Binding Cost: 15 ip, 1200 xp

This binding protects you from powers and effects that hinder your movement. You are constantly protected by a *freedom of movement* spell.

GRAVITY SHIFT (Ex)

Requires: Inertial Locking

Power Level: 4

Action: Standard Action

Duration: Permanent (D)

Use Cost: 2 MP

Binding Cost: 2 ip, 160 xp

This more complex version of *inertial locking* allows you to shift your plane of gravity. Each such shift costs 3 MP. This allows you to act as if gravity were affecting you from an alternate direction. You could use this ability to walk on a wall or ceiling, or even to fall upwards or sideways.

GREAT MOVE (Ex)

Power Level: 1

Action: Free

Use Cost: 1 MP

Binding Cost: 2 ip, 160 xp

This power doubles your movement speed for the round, adds a +10 competence bonus to Jump checks, and eliminates the height limit on jumping.

IMPACT WAVE (Su)

Requires: Tossing & Impulse

Power Level: 4

Action: Standard Attack

Range: 30 feet

Area: Cone

Use Cost: 4 MP

Binding Cost: 6 ip, 500 xp

You can release a wave of raw momentum at an area. You send a wave of force out in a cone shaped area 30 feet long. All those in the area of effect take 4d6 impact damage (Reflex save for half). Every 2 additional points of momentum pumped into this effect grants +1d6 damage. Any target which takes ten or more points of damage gets knocked back 5 feet for every ten points of damage suffered and is knocked down unless a Tumbling or Balance skill check is made against DC 10 + distance moved in feet. Subtract 5 feet

of knockback if the creature is Large size; Huge and larger creatures do not suffer knockback.

IMPULSE (Sp)

Power Level: 2

Action: Standard Action

Range: Medium (150 ft.)

Target: one object

Use Cost: 1 MP

Binding Cost: 8 ip, 600 xp

You can extend your momentum out to a distant object and give it a velocity. Typically, this is used to cause the object to start moving in one direction, somewhat as if you threw the object. You act as if you exerted a Strength equal to your Charisma on the targeted object. This is good for moving objects around but works too slowly to be immediately useful in combat. The gamemaster may allow inventive uses of this ability to have a combat effect.

You can also control extremely detailed motion. This will allow you to manipulate an object at range (such as using a key to unlock a door, or using lockpicks). This also costs 1 momentum point per round and cannot be used with anything particularly heavy (the object must be less than 1 kilogram). Moreover, there is little force behind this motion so it could not be used effectively to manipulate a weapon at range for combat purposes.

INERTIAL LOCKING (Ex)

Power Level: 3

Action: Standard Action

Duration: Permanent (D)

Use Cost: 1 MP

Binding Cost: 2 ip, 160 xp

You can use this power to “lock” yourself in a certain inertial state or at a potential energy value. There are several ways of using this effect. You can fix yourself rigidly to a location (making it very difficult to move you). This allows you to add your warden level to any Strength checks for resisting attempts to move you (such as Bull Rush).

Another way to use this ability is to lock yourself at a certain height off the ground. When done you will remain there as if you were standing on the ground. By using this effect to a limited extent you can slow down your velocity. This will allow you to act as if under the effects of a *feather fall* spell wherever you wish. Even better, this version of *feather fall* works for lateral motion as well; thus, if you’re tossed off a speeding train you can slow down your impact velocity from that source as well. When used to slow falling

the momentum cost is negligible since any momentum you spend can be replenished from the momentum you gain by falling.

LEAPING ATTACK (Ex)

Requires: Great Move

Power Level: 5

Action: Standard Attack

Use Cost: 3 MP

Binding Cost: 10 ip, 800 xp

This power allows you to make a full attack even if you have already taken a move action during the round. This acts much like the Pounce special attack that some animals and monsters have but costs momentum and is not restricted to being used in only the first round of combat.

LIGHTNING ATTACK (Ex)

Requires: Freedom of Motion and Great Move

Power Level: 7

Action: Spontaneous

Use Cost: 6 MP

Binding Cost: 10 ip, 800 xp

This binding allows you to make a standard melee attack as a Spontaneous action. Being a Spontaneous action you can even use this during someone else's action. Needless to say, this can be extremely useful when fighting a spellcaster.

LIGHTNING MOVE (Ex)

Power Level: 3

Action: Free

Use Cost: 2 MP

Binding Cost: 2 ip, 160 xp

This is a quick flash of movement, allowing you to hop 20 feet very quickly as a free action. This provokes attacks of opportunity normally if moving through threatened areas. Double the momentum cost for each subsequent use in the same round.

MOMENTARY GRAVITY SHIFT (Ex)

Requires: Inertial Locking

Power Level: 5

Action: Free action

Duration: 1 round

Use Cost: 1 MP

Binding Cost: 5 ip, 400 xp

This binding allows you to rapidly alter your plane of gravity for a single round. During this time you may shift the direction of gravity for yourself freely until the end of the

round. This will allow you to run on walls, then on the ceiling, then drop to the floor, or whatever. Skilled use of acrobatics and tumbling with this ability can generate impressive stunts. You may also activate this power as a spontaneous action to ignore the effects of a *reverse gravity* spell.

Motion Sense

1 ip, 80 xp

Stillness of Space

4 ip, 320 xp

MOTION SENSE (Ex)

Power Level: 3

Binding Cost: 1 ip, 80 xp

You have an innate sense for how you are moving and the forces which are acting upon you. This means that you can always tell if you are moving (relative to the Earth or some other massive object), what direction you're moving, and whether you're accelerating or decelerating. This information can either be given in absolute terms, or in relative terms (for instance, relative to a train you are on, or perhaps the planet). This grants a +5 competence bonus to Drive and Pilot checks. Generally this bonus applies to any piloting skill check for a vehicle moving at forty miles per hour or faster.

MOTION WITHOUT BOUNDARIES (Ex)

Power Level: 3

Requires: Momentary Gravity Shift and Air Walking

Binding Cost: 15 ip, 1200 xp

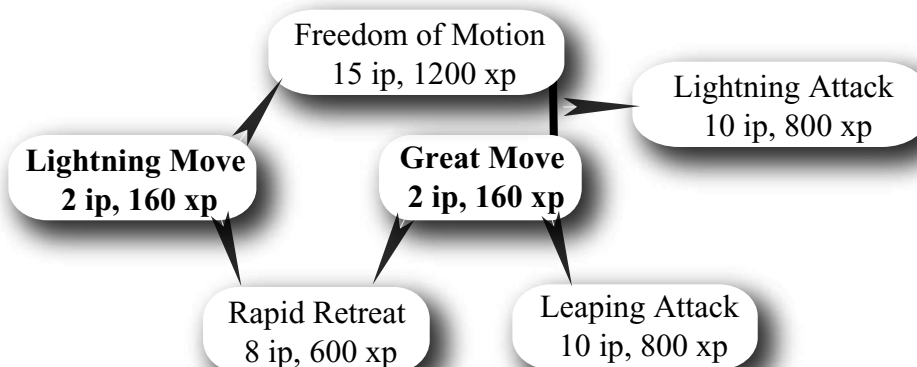
This binding allows you to move constantly as if under the effect of a momentary gravity shift, inertial lock, and/or air walk at will. You can run up and down walls freely, on the ceiling, through the air, and so on.

PERSPECTIVES OF TRAJECTORIES (Ex)

Power Level: 3

Requires: Proficiency in Bow or Crossbow

Binding Cost: 3 ip, 240 xp



You have an inherent understanding of how motion works and how things move. The primary effect of this ability is to give you a competence bonus of +2 to hit and +1 to damage with ranged attacks; the damage bonus only applies if the target is within 30 feet. You also receive a +2 synergy bonus with the use of artillery and other activities associated with the understanding of trajectories (perhaps for launching satellites or so forth). Finally, you receive a +5 synergy bonus when playing pool if you've had a chance to observe the table for a bit. Naturally, this can be good or bad depending on the size and temperament of your competition.

Stand Fast
1 ip, 80 xp

Absorption
10 ip, 800 xp

Perspectives of Trajectories
3 ip, 240 xp

Stabilization
6 ip, 500 xp

Touch of Peace
8 ip, 600 xp

Touch of Silence
10 ip, 800 xp

also, any projectile weapon you use gets a +50% to its range increment (this stacks with the feat, Far Shot).

STAND FAST (Ex)

Power Level: 1

Action: Spontaneous

Use Cost: 1 MP

Binding Cost: 1 ip, 80 xp

You use this maneuver to resist being knocked down or knocked back. If shoved or pushed (for instance, by a Bull Rush or Trip attack) you get a +10 circumstance bonus on any Strength check to resist (in addition to any bonus from Inertial Locking). If knocked down by some form of attack you can ignore that effect by using this maneuver.

RAPID RETREAT (Ex)

Requires: Lightning Move or Great Leap

Power Level: 3

Action: Spontaneous

Use Cost: 5 MP

Binding Cost: 8 ip, 600 xp

You absorb the momentum from an attack then use the energy to generate a rapid backwards motion. This halves the damage from one attack and moves you 10 feet directly away from the attacker (effectively breaking melee without provoking an attack of opportunity). You can only activate this maneuver in response to an attack that hits you and causes damage.

RECURSION FEEDING (Su)

Requires: Flight

Power Level: 5

Use Cost: none

Binding Cost: 4 ip, 320 xp

You can feed the motion from flying back into your momentum, thus eliminating the momentum cost. You may still carry others at a cost of one additional momentum point per round per person.

STABILIZATION (Ex)

Power Level: 2

Binding Cost: 6 ip, 500 xp

You can intrinsically stabilize the flight motion of projectiles you fire. This sustains their velocity for a longer time and makes them less prone to deviation in flight. The game effect of this is that you may take 10 on a ranged attack at a cost of 1 momentum point;

STILLNESS OF SPACE (Ex)

Requires: Motion Sense

Power Level: 3

Action: Free Action

Duration: 1 round

Use Cost: 2 MP

Binding Cost: 4 ip, 320 xp

Your sense of the motion of objects and creatures around you is so detailed that everything else seems to stand almost completely still; it's like walking through a garden of statues. While this is active you can move freely through threatened areas without provoking an attack of opportunity.

SWEEP ATTACK (Ex)

Requires: Velocity Strike

Power Level: 5

Action: Attack Modifier

Use Cost: 3 MP

Binding Cost: 5 ip, 400 xp

You can attack two opponents with a single attack. Make separate attack and damage rolls against both targets. Moreover, any special abilities used apply to both attacks (for instance, using Smite Evil grants its bonuses to both attacks).

TELEKINESIS (Sp)

Requires: Impulse

Power Level: 5

Action: Standard Action

Range: Long (800 ft.)

Use Cost: 1 MP per round

Binding Cost: 25 ip, 2000 xp

This allows you to use *telekinesis*, as the spell, at a cost of 1 momentum point per round. Your effective caster level for this is 10.

TOSSING (Su)

Power Level: 2

Action: Attack

Cost: 1 MP

Range: see text

Use Cost: 1 MP

Binding Cost: 2 ip, 160 xp

You can transfer your momentum to an object and use the object as a high velocity projectile. The object should be relatively small (up to a dagger or arrow in size), but not so small or fragile that it will be harmless (steel ball bearings are good). This is treated as a simple ranged attack that causes 1d10 damage, has a Critical threat range of 18-20/x3, and range increment of 30 feet for completely non-aerodynamic objects, 60 feet for partially aerodynamic objects (ball bearings) and 100 feet for fully aerodynamic objects (such as arrows). The damage can be increased by +2 for every additional momentum point used in the attack. The gamemaster may assign penalties if the object is poorly designed for throwing (such as tossing a small rodent) or if the object is too large. If the projectile itself is magical any enhancement bonus counts normally but use the damage attributes for this power. You may use ranged attack feats with this power and since this counts as an attack action you may use it as part of a Full attack sequence.

TOUCH OF PEACE (Su)

Power Level: 3

Action: Action Modifier

Duration: 6 rounds

Use Cost: 3 MP

Binding Cost: 8 ip, 600 xp

Saving Throw: Will
negates

Spell Resistance: Yes

Either an inaptly named binding or one named by a true cynic; this binding allows you to focus the stillness of your touch to such an extent that it also slows the person touched; as the *slow* spell. You may use this through a wielded melee weapon as well. You

Velocity Strike
2 ip, 160 xp

Sweep Attack
5 ip, 400 xp

Whirling Strike
10 ip, 800 xp

can use this as part of an attack thus the attack still causes damage normally. The victim receives no save or spell resistance against *haste* neutralization if that is the effect.

TOUCH OF SILENCE (Su)

Power Level: 3

Action: Free action to activate

Use Cost: free

Binding Cost: 10 ip, 800 xp

Another misnamed binding, Touch of Silence allows you to still the air around you; the effect is somewhat limited, only reaching out to a five foot radius but enough to keep yourself quiet; the limited radius can actually make stealth a bit easier since people tend to notice when large portions of their local area go dead silent. While silence effects are usually wizard killers the limited radius of this power prevents that; if a wizard is standing within five feet of a Motion Warden (which, given the Motion Warden's abilities might happen fairly often) the wizard has far more important things to worry about. This would ordinarily cost momentum but you gain back what you spend through absorbing momentum from the vibrations of the air; thus you may use this power at will.

VELOCITY STRIKE (Su)

Power Level: 2

Use Cost: 1 MP

Binding Cost: 2 ip, 160 xp

With this binding you speed up the velocity of a melee attack. Add a velocity bonus of +1 to hit and +1 to damage; this can be used multiple times in a round if you desire (on different attacks).

WHIRLING STRIKE (Su)

Requires: Sweep Attack

Power Level: 6

Action: Full Attack

Use Cost: 10 MP

Binding Cost: 10 ip, 800 xp

You duck into a quick spin while holding your weapon close to your body. You then feed momentum into your angular motion and stretch out to attack at the last second, resulting in a wicked hit. This takes a full attack action, grants a +10 velocity bonus to Penetration, and causes +5d6 damage. This maneuver is so fine tuned that you will spin in accordance with whatever Coriolis forces are present, in order to squeeze out just a bit more velocity.

SHADOW WARDEN

Description: Shadow encompasses three major domains in the Second World. Shadows are the empty spaces in light; shadows are the representation of an object; shadows are you blasted out over the ground or a wall by the sun. Shadows in the Second World are part of a person; one has their shadow and one best take good care of it. Moreover, your shadow leaves traces of itself in the world. A little bit of it is captured in every painting and photograph. This range of shadow phenomena gives the Shadow Warden power over some very unique areas. One of the most significant of these is the looking glass world; a network of tunnels lies behind all paintings and mirrors. Many wardens call this network the catwalks of the gods.

Caleb Stone claims that the angel Antaeliath was slain by the Rook and his sister after being chased up the Thames. Antaeliath had no true body, just shadows and fog, and thus could leave no true corpse. Instead his essence flowed into the world, shrouded London in everlasting twilight, and gave power to the night. The darkness of London lurks above Europe and certainly contributes to the continuing war on the continent. But the night also brings peace, introspection, and calm; moody artists, decadent new rich, and the underworld all flock to London. London is at once a wild border post between Europe and the Americas, a haven for refugees fleeing the wars of the continent, and an ancient city teeming with its own mysteries. Typically, visitors either love it and never want to leave or hate it and attempt to escape one direction or the other as quickly as possible.

Hit Die: d8. If using Defense Bonuses reduce the Shadow Warden's hit die to a d6.

Action Points: 6 + 1/2 your character level (round down).

SHADOW WARDEN

This feat grants you access to Shadow Warden bindings. Representations have power; this fundamental principle drives much of the magic and ritual of the world. Shadow Wardens tap directly into this principle since the most immediate representation of a thing is the shadow that trails behind it. However, Shadow Wardens also tap into the power of other reflections, such as those in mirrors or photographs.

Prerequisites: as for Shadow Warden class

Benefit: You acquire two binding slots for use with Shadow Warden bindings. You must obey all the normal rules for binding powers to a slot, including paying the appropriate experience point and material component cost for the slot. You may also take this feat if you already have Shadow Warden class levels; if you do so add 2 slots to your total available slots for Shadow Warden bindings. You may take this feat more than once gaining two additional slots for each feat taken. You may only use this feat for Shadow Warden bindings.

REQUIREMENTS

To qualify to become a Shadow Warden, you must fulfill all of the following criteria.

Hide: 8 ranks

Move Silent: 8 ranks

Listen: 8 ranks

Feats: Blind-Fight

Special: Also, in order to become a Shadow Warden you must have suffered from an attribute drain or energy drain of some sort resulting from either shadow or negative energy, for example, the touch of a shadow, spectre, wraith, or wight.

CLASS SKILLS

The Shadow Warden's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Bluff (Cha), Craft (Int),

Class Level	Base Attack	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special	Defense Bonus	Reputation Bonus
1	+0	+0	+0	+2	+1 Binding Slot	+1	+0
2	+1	+0	+0	+3	+1 Binding Slot	+2	+0
3	+2	+1	+1	+3	+1 Binding Slot	+2	+0
4	+3	+1	+1	+4	+1 Binding Slot	+3	+0
5	+3	+1	+1	+4	+1 Binding Slot	+4	+1
6	+4	+2	+2	+5	+1 Binding Slot	+4	+1
7	+5	+2	+2	+5	+1 Binding Slot	+4	+1
8	+6	+2	+2	+6	+1 Binding Slot	+6	+1
9	+6	+3	+3	+6	+1 Binding Slot	+6	+2
10	+7	+3	+3	+7	+1 Binding Slot	+7	+2

Diplomacy (Cha), Disguise (Cha), Forgery (Int), Gather Information (Cha), Hide (Dex), Intimidate (Cha), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Perform (Cha), Search (Int), Sense Motive (Wis), Spellcraft (Int), and Spot (Wis).

Skill Points at Each Level: 8 + Int modifier.

CLASS FEATURES

All of the following are class features of the Shadow Warden.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: The Shadow Warden is proficient in the use of all simple weapons and with light armor.

Saving Throw: The saving throw DC for most Shadow Warden powers (when applicable) is equal to 10 + the power's level + the Shadow Warden's Charisma modifier.

BINDINGS

ANIMATE REFLECTION (Sp)

Requires: Control of Reflections

Power Level: 6

Action: Standard Action

Range: 50 feet

Target: 1 reflection or image

Duration: 10 minutes

Uses: 1/week

Binding Cost: 10 ip, 800 xp, Spirit

Saving Throw: Will negates (harmless)

Spell Resistance: Yes (harmless)

This invocation allows you to bring a reflection to life. You possess no special ability to control the reflection and the reflection can choose to resist being drawn forth by making a Will save. The reflection has all

the properties of the pictured creature at the time that the picture was made so long as the creature's highest saving throw bonus is lower than your Will save bonus. If the object is completely fictional or has a saving throw bonus equal to or greater than your Will save bonus then it looks like the pictured creature but has the combat attributes of an Astral Construct VI, adjusted for the new creature's size. This can be useful for testing a target's abilities and also for interrogating a subject (the subject knows everything that it did at the time the reflection was created).

BECOME SHADOW (Sp)

Requires: Control Shadows

Power Level: 5

Action: Standard Action

Range: Personal

Target: You

Duration: 10 minutes (D)

Uses: 1/day

Binding Cost: 10 ip, 800 xp

This binding allows you to actually become a shadow for a short period of time. While in this form you are, for all intents and purposes, **incorporeal**. However, anyone with the Shadow Fighting ability can still attack you. You are vulnerable to purely light based attacks though you do not take damage from light itself (i.e. shining a flashlight on you doesn't cause damage). Fire based attacks will affect you to a degree but halve the damage. Many Shadow Wardens with this binding wield ghost touch weapons. By purchasing this binding at 10× its normal cost you may use it at will.

BIND SHADOW (Sp)

Requires: Shadow Blade & Soul of Darkness

Power Level: 8

Action: Standard Action

Range: 50 ft.

Target: 1 Creature**Duration:** Instantaneous**Uses:** 1/day**Binding Cost:** 25 ip, 2000 xp**Saving Throw:** Will negates**Spell Resistance:** Yes

This binding allows you to slay an individual and in the process bind that individual's shadow to your own. You invoke this ability by simply declaring a target; this uses up the ability for the day and requires a free action. If you then kill the target he must make a Will save. If that saving throw fails you may bind the victim's shadow to yourself.

You may use one of your bound shadows' abilities. Activating a shadow takes a standard action (as a Supernatural ability). This allows you to use up to two abilities of the bound creature. Ability scores, skill ranks, feats, and saving throw bonuses each count as a single ability. You may use the new abilities for up to ten minutes; after that time the effect goes away and the shadow fades. While bound to you, the creature cannot be raised. You can have up to 6 shadows bound to you at any one time (giving you a total of 7 shadows). Activating a shadow costs a use of this power.

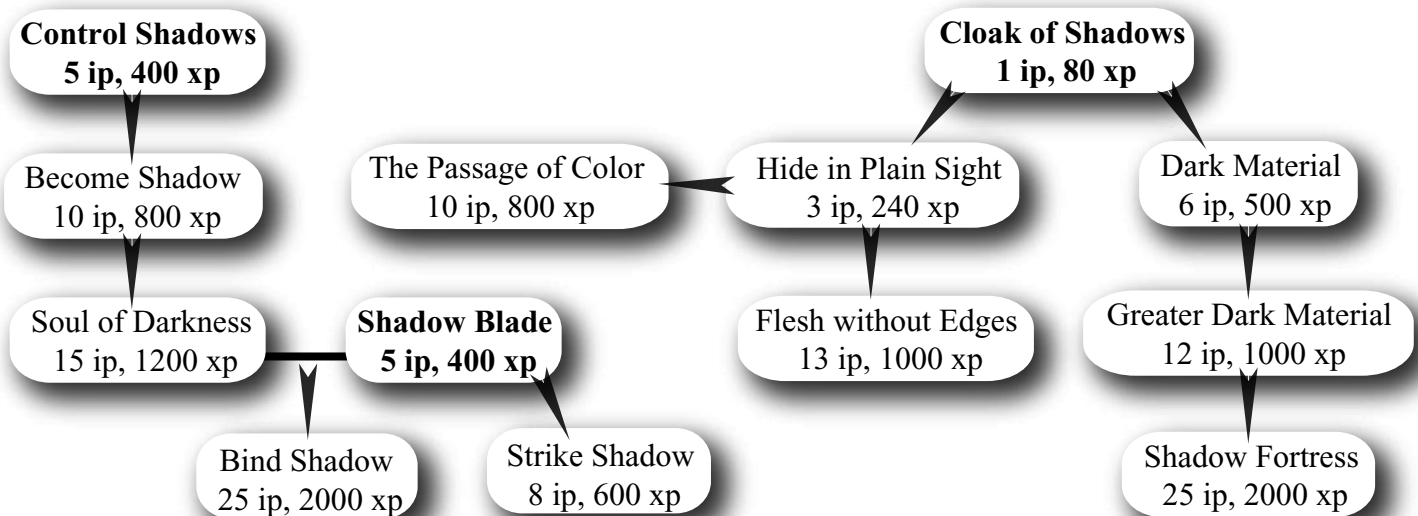
If one of the shadows has hit dice equal to or greater than your own you may use it to replace a shadow you've lost (for example, due to Shadow Simulacrum).

CLOAK OF SHADOWS (Su)**Power Level:** 1**Binding Cost:** 1 ip, 80 xp

You can wrap yourself in shadows at will. This grants a +10 circumstance bonus on Hide checks and the shadows do not count as your own thus you can use them for the **hide in plain sight** special ability.

CONTROL OF REFLECTIONS (Sp)**Requires:** Unnoticed**Power Level:** 4**Action:** Standard Action**Range:** 180 feet**Target:** Reflections or images**Duration:** Instantaneous or Concentration**Uses:** 1/day**Binding Cost:** 5 ip, 400 xp, Spirit Veda**Saving Throw:** Will negates (see text)**Spell Resistance:** Yes (see text)

You have some control over your reflection. You can remove it completely; thus casting no reflection. You can also delete other kinds of reflections, like your shadow, a photographic image or painting of you, or even your name (either written or spoken). You must be able to concentrate on a specific image in order to delete that specific image, so you cannot delete a photographic image of yourself unless you have access to the photograph. However, you can delete all photographic images of yourself within the range of this power. Later you can have new pictures taken. If the reflection is currently in someone's possession and being concentrated on (i.e. examined) then the person concentrating gets a Will save to negate the effect. Each of these removals requires a standard action. For continuing things, like your shadow, or a reflection in a mirror, or your image as it's being recorded by television or cameras you can concentrate and during the period of concentration some or all of these images (your choice) can be suppressed. So long as the cameras are within range this will work (the televisions themselves do not need to be within range too).



ENHANCEMENTS

GREATER CONTROL OF REFLECTIONS (Sp)**Power Level:** 5**Action:** Standard Action**Range:** 180 ft.**Target:** Reflections or images**Duration:** Instantaneous or Concentration**Uses:** from Control of Reflections**Cost:** 6 ip, 500 xp**Saving Throw:** Will negates (see text)**Spell Resistance:** Yes (see text)

You can now do more than just remove your reflection, you can also alter or replace it with any other reflection. When doing this it's best to have a sample reflection available; for example, a photograph with the image you wish to trade for your reflection. If you lack a sample you can spontaneously create one with a DC 20 Perform skill check; if this fails the replacement image looks pretty shoddy. The gamemaster should raise the difficulty class if you attempt something particularly complex with the image replacement.

You can also use this ability to alter someone else's reflection. The other person must be present (within the range of the power) and receives a Will saving throw if he wants to resist the power.

CONTROL SHADOWS (Su)**Power Level:** 4**Action:** Standard Action**Range:** 130 feet**Target:** Self**Area:** 20 foot radius burst**Duration:** Concentration**Uses:** at will**Binding Cost:** 5 ip, 400 xp

This simple binding allows you to control the shape and activity of shadows in a twenty foot radius. You may also use this like the spell, *suggestion* or *charm monster*, against shadow creatures such as shadows and shadow mastiffs. When used in this fashion it works as an area effect (burst) power, may be used at will, and counts as a Spelllike ability.

DARK MATERIAL (Sp)**Requires:** Cloak of Shadows**Power Level:** 5**Uses:** 1/day**Binding Cost/Use:** 6 ip, 500 xp, Spirit Veda

This binding allows you to create solid objects from darkness. You may use the following spells as spell-like abilities for the indicated cost in uses. Your effective

caster level with these abilities is 10.

Evar's black tentacles, 1 use

Shadow conjuration, 1 use

DARKENING (Sp)**Power Level:** 3**Action:** Free action**Range:** 500 ft.**Target:** Self**Area:** up to a 100 foot radius burst**Duration:** Instantaneous**Uses:** 1/day**Binding Cost:** 5 ip, 400 xp, Spirit Veda**Saving Throw:** None**Spell Resistance:** Yes

This binding allows you to extinguish all light sources within the area of effect as if they were turned off. Lamps and torches may be relit and electric lights may be switched off and back on but *light* spells are cancelled indefinitely. A permanent magical source of light will be suppressed for one day (until the next sunrise).

Alternately you may use *deeper darkness* as a spell-like ability at a cost of one use; this requires a Standard action. Your effective caster level with these abilities is 6.

EIDETIC MEMORY (Su)**Requires:** Shadow Fighting**Power Level:** 3**Binding Cost:** 3 ip, 240 xp

This allows the you to create a perfect reflection of a sense experience in your memory. You must concentrate to use this ability; while you are concentrating you create a perfect record of your sense experiences that you can remember at any time you like in the future.

FLESH WITHOUT EDGES (Su)**Requires:** Hide in Plain Sight**Power Level:** 2**Binding Cost:** 13 ip, 1000 xp

You blur the borders of your image, breaking down the barriers between your image and the image of the world around you. This makes you appear smoky, as if you were under the effect of a *blur* spell. This gives opponents a 20% miss chance. You may invoke or cancel this effect at will as a free action.

GREATER DARK MATERIAL (Sp)**Requires:** Dark Material**Power Level:** 6

Uses: 1/day

Binding Cost/Use: 12 ip, 1000 xp, Spirit Veda

This binding allows you to create solid objects and effects from darkness. You may use the following spells as spell-like abilities for the indicated cost in uses. Your effective caster level with these abilities is 12.

Greater shadow evocation, 1 use

Shades, 1 use

HIDE IN PLAIN SIGHT (Su)

Requires: Cloak of Shadows

Power Level: 2

Binding Cost: 3 ip, 240 xp

Shadow Wardens can use the Hide skill even while being observed in the same way that shadowdancers can. As long as you are within 10 feet of some sort of shadow, you can hide yourself from view in the open without having anything to actually hide behind. You cannot, however, hide in your own shadow.

When first used, you must move so that the shadow falls across some part of your body. The shadow does not need to cover your entire body, just some part. Once hidden in this fashion you can then move under cover of shadow. When stopped some part of your body must be covered by an external shadow; while moving you count as moving under concealment so long as you remain touched by shadow or cross a gap of no more than ten feet.

INVERSION (Su)

Requires: Shadow Fighting

Power Level: 3

Action: Move-equivalent Action

Range: Personal

Target: Self

Duration: Instantaneous

Uses: at will

Binding Cost: 3 ip, 240 xp, Spirit Veda

You use this ability to mirror yourself. This simply means that what was on your left side is now on your right and vice versa. This also changes your handedness which might give you a slight advantage in a fight if your opponent is specially prepared for you. Finally, using this ability immediately breaks any connection between you and any simulacrum; this will prevent them from having use of any of your abilities and cause simulacrum such as those created by a mirror of opposition to simply wink out of existence.

NAMELESS (Su)

Requires: Control of Reflections

Power Level: 6

Binding Cost: 20 ip, 1600 xp

Shadow Wardens take this binding quite seriously. With this you remove all records of your image and name. You cannot be photographed; any documents with your name written on them have the writing disappear; you do not appear in mirrors or on television. You also act as if under the effects of a permanent *nondetection* spell (DC 25 for divinations). While this binding is potent, it does have its downsides.

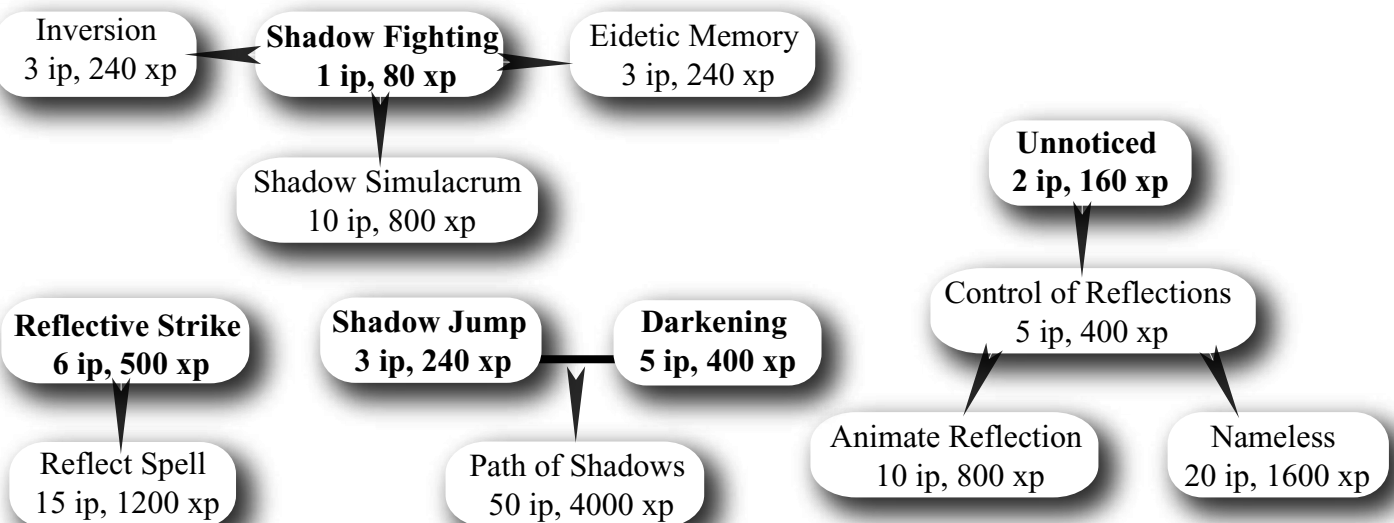
PATH OF SHADOWS (Sp)

Requires: Shadow Jump & Darkening

Power Level: 7

Binding Cost: 50 ip, 4000 xp

This binding immerses you fully in the realm of shadow; with it you can *shadow walk*, as the spell, as



a standard action at will. You may also *shadow jump* as the binding described later at will. Your effective caster level with these abilities is 14. In the Second World it's not completely clear where one actually travels when shadow walking; in many ways the space looks like the Nkisi Void, but it also has some of the qualities of ethereal space. Some conjecture that the plane of shadow is simply the Nkisi Void version of either the catwalks or the labyrinth.

REFLECT SPELL (Su)

Requires: Reflective Strike

Power Level: 7

Action: Spontaneous

Uses: 1/day

Binding Cost: 15 ip, 1200 xp

This allows you to reflect one spell or spell-like ability back on the person making the attack as if you were under the effect of a *spell turning* spell. Note though that the level of the spell reflected does not matter.

REFLECTIVE STRIKE (Su)

Power Level: 4

Action: Spontaneous

Range: 40 feet

Duration: Instantaneous

Uses: 1/day

Binding Cost: 6 ip, 500 xp

With this maneuver you capture a reflection of an attack made against you in the Veda to which you bind this power. You can then release that attack which uses the attack bonus, damage, and any special qualities of the original attack. The original attack must have hit you (and you take damage normally from it) and must have been a melee attack (specifically, it cannot be a spell or spell-like ability); however, you can choose after you've been hit whether or not you want to "capture" the attack. Capturing an attack costs one use and you may then release the attack at any time as a standard action. You can "store", at most, one attack at a time; when you release an attack you then need to replace the stored attack with a new one.

SHADOW BLADE (Sp)

Power Level: 3

Action: Standard action

Range: Touch

Target: Weapon

Duration: 10 rounds

Uses: 1/day

Binding Cost: 5 ip, 400 xp

Saving Throw: Fort partial

Spell Resistance: Yes

You can briefly cloak your weapon in shadow so that it's touch will deliver draining cold. For the duration of the power, if the weapon hits it causes 1d6 temporary Strength damage (or 1 point if a Fortitude save is made) in addition to any normal damage. A creature reduced to 0 Strength by this attack dies.

SHADOW FIGHTING (Su)

Power Level: 1

Binding Cost: 1 ip, 80 xp

This allows you to fight opponents without penalty even if you can only see your opponent's reflection or shadow. The latter ability can be quite handy when facing creatures with gaze attacks. If you avert your eyes and there's an available reflection or shadow your opponent gets no concealment against you; moreover, since you have a special talent for looking directly at shadows and reflections you do not need to make a check to see if you accidentally look at the creature. However, if the creature with the gaze attack spends an action specifically targeting you then you still need to make an avert gaze check and saving throw normally. Also, when fighting against the Nikdaw Oar (reflected versions of the Roa) you suffer none of the penalties normally associated with them.

SHADOW FORTRESS (Sp)

Requires: Greater Dark Material

Power Level: 8

Action: 5 minutes

Range: 100 ft.

Target: 1 Building that falls within a 30 ft. radius

Duration: until the dawn (D)

Uses: 1/day

Binding Cost: 25 ip, 2000 xp, Spirit

You use this binding to create a shadow fortress or turn an existing building into a shadow fortress. When you invoke the power, darkness seeps out in serpentine coils from your body, either constructing a building or converting the existing building. Shadow fortresses are dark within, though light sources shed dim illumination. Magic is sapped within the confines of the building; all entities must overcome a spell resistance of 10 + your Shadow Warden level to cast spells or use spell-like abilities while inside. The walls of the shadow fortress have a spell resistance of 15 + your Shadow Warden level. These walls are immune to most conventional attacks (they have a hardness of 20 and 100 hit points). Lastly, Shadow Wardens heal within the fortress at twice the normal rate.

SHADOW JUMP (Su)**Power Level:** 4**Action:** Move-equivalent action**Range:** 600 ft.**Target:** You plus up to 500 lbs.**Duration:** Instantaneous**Uses:** 1/day**Binding Cost:** 3 ip, 240 xp

You use this binding to slip from one shadow to another that is currently visible to you much as if you used the spell, *dimension door*. Both the start point and the end point must be in shadow.

SHADOW SIGHT (Su)**Power Level:** 2**Binding Cost:** 4 ip, 320 xp

This allows you to see perfectly in conditions of darkness. This grants you *darkvision* to a range of 90 feet.

SHADOW SIMULACRUM (Su)**Requires:** Shadow Fighting**Power Level:** 5**Action:** Spontaneous**Target:** 1 attack**Duration:** Instantaneous**Uses:** 1/day**Binding Cost:** 10 ip, 800 xp

This allows you to shunt the damage of an attack off onto your shadow. If the injury would ordinarily be fatal then your shadow actually dies, and you lose it permanently. Otherwise, your shadow shows the effect of the injury and heals it as you would. This maneuver even allows you to survive what would ordinarily be an instant death attack (such as a thermonuclear explosion).

SOUL OF DARKNESS (Su)**Requires:** Become Shadow**Power Level:** 4**Binding Cost:** 15 ip, 1200 xp

With this binding you shroud your soul in darkness, protecting it from negative energy attacks. This makes you immune to negative energy effects such as level drains and some ability drains. This is not like the spell negative energy protection though; positive energy does not provide the shielding and thus there are no checks for backlash.

The Silver Window
8 ip, 600 xp

The Looking Glass World
10 ip, 800 xp

Shadow Sight
4 ip, 320 xp

STRIKE SHADOW (Su)**Requires:** Shadow Blade**Power Level:** 5**Action:** Attack Modifier**Duration:** 1 attack**Uses:** 2/day**Binding Cost:** 8 ip, 600 xp**Saving Throw:** None**Spell Resistance:** No

You can attack someone's shadow and damage the actual person. You cause half normal damage (round up) due to the disconnection but the attack is very difficult to defend against. Count the attack as a flanking touch attack. In addition, the attack automatically bypasses any damage reduction the target might have.

This does not work against anyone with the Shadow Fighting ability. It does work on any shadow though so clever wardens may use this to attack someone from around a corner (if their target's shadow goes around the corner) or from quite a distance if, for example, their target is illuminated horizontally.

THE LOOKING GLASS WORLD (Sp)**Requires:** The Silver Window**Power Level:** 6**Action:** Full round action**Range:** Personal**Target:** You plus up to 600 lbs. of touched equipment**Duration:** Instantaneous**Uses:** 1/day**Binding Cost:** 10 ip, 800 xp

You can enter reflections or images (including motion pictures) and hide there; you can then access the looking glass world from within the image and use this network for transit. You can look out from the image as if you were looking out through a window, but you can also be observed (unless you hide around a corner or edge). Entering or leaving an image takes a full round action and it requires a separate invocation of this power to do either. Each additional use spent in invoking this power allows you to bring along 2 other people. If you get dragged into the looking glass world and do not have this power you'll need to find some other way out.

Typically, stepping into an image places you within a small pocket space that appears to contain whatever is in the image. This space is static and you can walk around within the space, even hide behind objects within the image. For example, if you

enter a mirror that reflected a bedroom you could hide in the closet of the bedroom or under the bed itself within the mirror image. You can see out through the image you entered; this is just like looking out through a window into the real world and those outside can see you looking out at them. The pocket space of the image itself tends to have boundaries though these are not the same for all images; typically the pocket space won't be much larger than 100 feet across.

Somewhere within every such pocket space lies a door or passage to a network of dark tunnels that connects all reflections and images; you can travel through those tunnels (sometimes called the catwalks of the gods). Finding the door or passage usually requires a DC 20 Search check though the difficulty might be higher or lower for some images. You could enter a mirror in Los Angeles, travel through the tunnels, and emerge from a mirror in Paris. You could even enter or emerge through a reflection in a pool of water, or through a painting, photograph, movie, or image on television. The tunnels themselves tend to be narrow; almost like the access tunnels for a subway. Frequently the floors are wet and the only sources of light are what seeps through the doors and passages to the pocket spaces of the mirrors and images. Given how many images and reflections there are, the tunnels tend to be endless rows of doors. No one has quite figured out how the catwalks actually work, and they change all the time since images and reflections change all the time. However there are at least two tiers of organization; similar images tend to be close together (or have connecting passages that aren't too terribly long) and images spatially close to one another tend to be close to each other (thus the paintings in a museum are closely connected in the catwalks). The tunnels themselves go on for thousands of miles, and that's just for a single world; you can also travel from the First to Second world using the tunnels. By and large they tend to be safe simply because they're so huge. No particular painting or image will likely have a monster but creatures do prowl the catwalks so one should be careful.

THE PASSAGE OF COLOR (Sp)

Requires: Hide in Plain Sight

Power Level: 5

Action: Standard Action

Range: Personal

Target: You

Duration: 30 minutes (D)

Uses: 1/day

Binding Cost: 10 ip, 800 xp

This power allows you to let color and image flow through you, making you effectively invisible. This creates a small amount of distortion which can be detected by skilled perceivers. Also, your shadow is not concealed through this power. Your shadow is too strongly linked to your powers and abilities to be removed in this fashion. You can, however, keep to dark areas or other locations where your shadow will not be noticed. An advantage of this power is that it is not, technically, invisibility. As such you cannot be detected via *detect invisible* spells nor seen via *see invisible* spells or abilities. This is not an illusion either and thus *true seeing* will not reveal you. Moreover, this form of invisibility is not dispelled when you attack. Your opponents may make a Spot check against DC 20 if in melee, or DC 25 at range, in order to spot you; this takes a standard action. Once spotted you count as having three quarters concealment (miss chance 30%). If not spotted you count as being normally invisible.

THE SILVER WINDOW (Sp)

Power Level: 4

Uses: 1/day

Binding Cost/Use: 8 ip, 600 xp

This binding allows you to use reflective surfaces as scrying devices. You may scry, as the *scrying* spell, through a reflective surface such as a pond or mirror. Your effective caster level with this is 8 and you do not need a specially prepared focus.

UNNOTICED (Su)

Power Level: 1

Binding Cost: 2 ip, 160 xp

This allows you to conceal small items and light armor even if you hold or wear them in plain sight. The items are not actually invisible so much as just not noticed. You may conceal up to 5 items total using this. True seeing or a similar ability to see through illusions will reveal the hidden equipment.

ENHANCEMENTS

MEDIUM SIZED

Power Level: 2

Binding Cost: 2 ip, 160 xp

Your concealment extends to medium sized weapons or objects and medium armor.

LARGE CONCEALMENT

Power Level: 3

Binding Cost: 3 ip, 240 xp

Your concealment extends to large sized weapons or objects and heavy armor.

VECTOR WARDEN

Description: For most of human history we believed that the geometric structure of space presented itself to us just as it was; Euclidean geometry struck many as obviously true once one really thought about it. Kant thought that geometry was a special science, one that could tell us about the world without actually ever having to see the world or test its hypotheses. The nineteenth century fractured the foundations of this view and the twentieth century brought it crashing to the ground. These discoveries, that space itself has a sort of structure, hint at a deeper principle of the two worlds; the mathematical structure of space determines in many ways the dynamics of the world. However, that mathematical structure could have been otherwise. Vector Wardens tap into this. They feel the radial structure of space, the slight curvature of geodesics, and the compression of fields near the surface of the earth. This web, or fabric, or hydraulic field pressing against their skin reacts to their touch, enabling a Vector Warden to shift through space and time, warp the structure of it, or remove themselves (or something else) completely from the flow of it.

The city of the Vector Warden, Mbanza, is one of the most striking and unusual in the Second World, part simply because it appears so post-modern with its wide highways and sloping ramps. Part because this modernity is set within the verdant jungles of the Congo and so close to the death pits and dark magic of Hadoun Vogot. The Nkisi void knights of Mbanza are pretty much all that stand against that place and the Wadkin Roa within. The long and brutal war they have fought against the Roa has forged the Nkisi into quite probably the most dangerous warriors on the planet; fighting the Roa does that to a person. Mbanza protects western and southern Africa, north and east are left for the armored columns of Europe and the Mediterranean to deal with.

Hit Die: d8.

Action Points: $6 + 1/2$ your character level (round down).

VECTOR WARDEN

This feat grants you access to Vector Warden bindings. One of the most important discoveries of the twentieth century was that space has a structure and that it is an empirical question as to which kind of structure it has. That something has a structure implies that it's a thing, and things can be manipulated; that's what Vector Wardens do. Since space has a close connection with time, Vector Wardens also gain some power over time itself.

Prerequisites: as for Vector Warden class

Benefit: You acquire two binding slots for use with Vector Warden bindings. You must obey all the normal rules for binding powers to a slot, including paying the appropriate experience point and material component cost for the slot. You may also take this feat if you already have Vector Warden class levels; if you do so add 2 slots to your total available slots for Vector Warden bindings. You may take this feat more than once gaining two additional slots for each feat taken. You may only use this feat for Vector Warden bindings.

REQUIREMENTS

To qualify to become a Vector Warden, a character must fulfill all of the following criteria.

Knowledge (geometry): 5 ranks

Knowledge (mathematics): 5 ranks

Feats: Blind-Fight

Special: At least one of the above skills must be rank 8. The character must also have slipped through the Nkisi Void at least once in their life; perhaps just for a moment or perhaps as part of a longer journey. In theory, you could even have visited the void during a dream.

CLASS SKILLS

The Vector Warden's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Balance (Dex), Concentration (Con), Craft (Int), Jump (Str), Knowledge (geometry and mathematics) (Int), **Navigate (Int)**, Search (Int), Spellcraft (Int), and Spot (Wis).

Skill Points at Each Level: 4 + Int modifier.

CLASS FEATURES

All of the following are class features of the Vector Warden.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: The Vector Warden is proficient in the use of all simple and martial weapons and with all armor and shields.

Saving Throw: The Difficulty Class for saving throws against Vector Warden abilities is 10 + the ability's power level + the Vector Warden's Intelligence modifier.

TELEPORTATION NOTES

Shifting is what Vector Wardens are best known for, and what makes them extremely valuable allies, or dangerous opponents. Shifting encompasses both teleportation and remote viewing (scrying). Given the importance of these powers to the Vector Warden some expanded rules for handling such abilities are offered here. In particular, specifying a destination for these powers is described in greater detail. Also, the Vector Warden rides along the rapid-moving surface of a place called the Labyrinth; this quasi interstice is described here as well.

SPECIFYING THE DESTINATION

A destination is the target point of a teleport or remote view. A destination can be a place, thing, or even person. Simply designating the destination can be a tricky process, especially if it is well out of viewing range. There are various ways of specifying a destination; typically you must trade off usefulness for accuracy. The most accurate methods can typically only take you a short distance. The ones that can take you across the world are notoriously risky.

IMMEDIATE METHODS

All the immediate methods allow you to operate at the local level for designating a destination. These are highly accurate, albeit less potent.

DIRECT PERCEPTION

You have direct perception of a destination when:

- 1) You can perceive the destination
- 2) The sense organs you use to perceive the destination must point at the destination for proper use (and thus give you the bearing intrinsically)
- 3) Using the senses that generate a bearing you could also distinguish the destination from an object within 5 feet of the destination

The technical definition above should only be necessary in real tight cases. For the most part direct perception just means perception with your unassisted eyes. However, with the right kind of hearing ears could work; and hands could almost certainly work if they were just long enough. Not all assistance is bad though; looking through binoculars is okay (since you still get instinctive bearing information). Looking through a television is not okay since you'd need to calculate bearing information.

Class Level	Base Attack	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special	Defense Bonus	Reputation Bonus
1	+1	+0	+2	+0	+1 Binding Slot	+1	+0
2	+2	+0	+3	+0	+1 Binding Slot	+1	+0
3	+3	+1	+3	+1	+1 Binding Slot	+2	+1
4	+4	+1	+4	+1	+1 Binding Slot	+2	+1
5	+5	+1	+4	+1	+1 Binding Slot	+3	+1
6	+6	+2	+5	+2	+1 Binding Slot	+3	+2
7	+7	+2	+5	+2	+1 Binding Slot	+4	+2
8	+8	+2	+6	+2	+1 Binding Slot	+4	+2
9	+9	+3	+6	+3	+1 Binding Slot	+5	+3
10	+10	+3	+7	+3	+1 Binding Slot	+5	+3

Accuracy: Direct perception is almost always completely accurate unless you are drunk, hallucinating, or the terrain is illusory.

DISTANCE AND BEARING

You can designate a destination by simply choosing a bearing and a distance along that bearing. Use some convenient method for designating which direction the character is going then simply give the distance in whatever scale is most useful.

Accuracy: Distance and bearing will take you exactly to the location you designate. However, the destination might not be what you expected.

INDIRECT

You can specify a destination indirectly by first picking out something that you have direct perception of, then designating a distance and bearing from that object. For instance, you could indirectly pick out a location by saying “5 feet behind that door I see” in which case the bearing will be along a line running from you to the door.

Accuracy: As for distance and bearing, this will take you to exactly the location you designate. In fact, this method is actually just a more convenient method for designating a distance and bearing.

MEDIATED METHODS

After the above it gets tricky since, at best, you will have some vague idea of where the location is relative to you.

What you need to do now is pick the destination out from the weave of the labyrinth, this is easier if it is close by (within 10 miles)

ROUTING

The most common form of specifying a destination for long range remote viewing and teleportation is the routing method. This is the method the standard, fifth-level *teleport* spell uses as well as the *screying* spell and crystal balls. When you route to designate a destination what you do is pass your information regarding the destination to the Labyrinth itself as you pass into it (either physically or just your senses). The Labyrinth then passes you up through the network until it makes a solid enough connection to drop you at your supposed destination. If the information you pass is weak and too many matches occur the Labyrinth draws additional details from your mind, typically these details are your prejudices and illusions about the destination. As the

Labyrinth draws this less solid information from you, fewer and fewer destinations match your desired one; frequently, in fact, the subconscious information you pass ends up being inconsistent. This is what gets you dumped into the Labyrinth itself.

To model this process you make a Spellcraft check against a difficulty class based on your familiarity with the destination. These Spellcraft checks may also have a Risk factor (see page 99). Your familiarity with the target determines the Risk and a connection may increase or decrease the Risk.

The different degrees of familiarity are listed below. A special connection is also valuable because the Labyrinth can extract information directly from the connection to help distinguish the destination; connections grant a bonus on your check. Also, closeness does matter slightly. If you are within 10 miles of the destination (or one of your locked events is within 10 miles of the destination) then you receive a +5 on your check and lower the Risk by 1.

Familiarity	DC (Risk)
Very Familiar	5 (1)
Studied Carefully	10 (1)
Seen Casually	15 (1)
Viewed Once	20 (2)
Description	25 (3)
Connection Only	30 (4)
False Destination	*

FAMILIARITY

Very familiar: This is a destination with which you have intimate experience; a best friend, long term lover, or your own house would count. This would be a place or object that you could know by the smell of it; a place or object that you could find your way around even if blind-folded.

Connection	Bonus (Risk)
Likeness or picture	+5 (+0)
Possession or garment	+8 (-1)
Component	+10 (-1)

Studied carefully: This is a destination you know well, either because you have experienced it often or you have used other means (such as scrying) to study the destination. You

should have studied the destination carefully over a period of days, enough so that you could pick it from a lineup of five similar looking destinations.

Seen casually: This is a destination that you have seen more than once but with which you are not very familiar. Work acquaintances and the restaurant you occasionally eat at would fall into this category.

Viewed once: This is a destination that you have seen once, possibly using magic.

Description: This is a destination whose description you know through someone else; perhaps even from a precise map.

Connection Only: This is a destination of which you have no real knowledge, just some kind of connecting item like a lock of hair or portion of a sculpture.

False destination: This is a destination that doesn't exist. For false destinations all failures dump you in the Labyrinth.

CONNECTION

The bonuses connections grant to Spellcraft checks are connection bonuses; as usual with bonuses these do not stack, apply only the highest bonus.

Likeness or Picture: The images of events hold nuances that the Labyrinth can detect and exploit.

Possession or Garment: Living creatures leave a bit of their spirit on objects important to them. A knife used once at an inn won't count but a sword carried through a few battles will.

Component: A component of a destination is something that was actually part of its construction at some time. For living creatures this would be blood, flesh, hair, nail clippings and so on. For buildings this would be a brick or bit of mortar; perhaps a flagstone or the fragment from a gargoyle.

MAKING THE CHECK

After determining the difficulty and any bonuses you go ahead and make the Spellcraft check. If this succeeds you arrive at your destination (either physically or just your senses). If the check fails you usually end up in the Labyrinth; the results of this depend on what you're specifically trying to do. For sense shifts your sensory node ends up in the Labyrinth and you can simply drop it whenever you desire. For location shifts you and whatever you brought with you end up in the Labyrinth. This is described a bit later. If you botch a check then you wind up in an area that's similar to your intended destination; specifically the geometry of the solid material in the region should be similar, though similarity amongst events can also be important. Generally, you appear in the closest similar place, but since these powers have no range limit, you could conceivably wind up somewhere else across the globe or even more distant.

RELATIVE LOCATION

The relative location method of specifying a destination involves routing to one or more well known desti-

nations then using an off-set from them. For instance, you might remember a pair of statues you passed some time ago because they stood out. You could designate your destination by saying something like "between those two statues." You then make a Spellcraft check according to your familiarity with the two statues and if this succeeds you arrive at the desired destination; as with the bearing method you might not be pleased with the actual contents of the destination.

THE LABYRINTH

A failure to find the destination or a place sufficiently similar takes you "upstream" to the Labyrinth. The Labyrinth goes in all directions, wraps back upon itself and does things that simply don't feel right. As one moves deeper into the Labyrinth the place gets even more complicated, and, almost oddly (because with so many more options one would expect even greater freedom of movement) one's liberty to move and act grows restricted; the added complexity brings in added symmetries, so more and more of one's options end up being effectively the same. Regardless, few get that deep into the labyrinth and it has many exits as well as dead ends, so the primary trick is finding one of them. Finding your way out depends on your Intelligence score (or the highest Intelligence score in the group) as for the *maze* spell.

Unlike the *maze* spell though, if you don't attempt to escape you can stay in the Labyrinth indefinitely. That is, until you starve or something eats you. The Labyrinth, as far as anyone can tell, is devoid of regular life. The passages are tubes fashioned of some kind of dull material, typically gray but other colors too. A tunnel occasionally opens up into a wider space and lost Vector Wardens have reported encountering wandering creatures, many of them wildly alien and violent; however this is uncommon. It's suspected that *maze* spells **just are** fragments of the Labyrinth broken off, or perhaps use the Labyrinth as the model for their construction. You can move within the Labyrinth just as

if you were moving within any world or interstice but it's apparently not actually an interstice since one cannot gate into or out of it.

On leaving the labyrinth, you reappear in the spot you were when you attempted to shift. If this spot is now filled with a solid object, you appear nearby. Minotaurs can be trapped in the Labyrinth but they always find

Labyrinth Trap	
Intelligence Score	Time Trapped
Under 3	4d6 hours
3	2d6 hours
4-5	1d6 hours
6-8	5d6 minutes
9-12	4d6 minutes
13-15	3d6 minutes
16-17	2d6 minutes
18+	1d6 minutes

their way out in about one minute.

Encounters in the Labyrinth: The Labyrinth constitutes an entirely different axis of reality; it has an ecology, albeit sparse and alien. Typically you won't run into anything while in the Labyrinth, especially if you immediately begin searching for the closest exit. But the place can be dangerous; use encounters suitable for the Astral or Ethereal plane. If the players spend more than 2 hours in the Labyrinth then the gamemaster should feel free to roll on the chart. Some random encounters in the Labyrinth can be very, very bad so few people spend extended periods of time there.

BINDINGS

ATTACKING (SP)

Requires: Lesser Location Shifting & Narrowing

Power Level: 5

Action: Standard Action

Range: 800 ft.

Target: 1 creature

Duration: Instantaneous

Uses: 1/day

Binding Cost: 6 ip, 500 xp, Spirit Veda

Saving Throw: see text

Spell Resistance: Yes

You may use your power as an attack. There are three general techniques.

One method involves *shifting* a character through space or time against his will. This requires that you be close enough to the target that he's encompassed in the area of your shift, and that the victim fail a Will save. Naturally, both you and your victim suffer the same consequences of this action. This form of attack should use one of the other bindings and cannot be performed using this power.

The second method is by teleporting an object into the target. This is not very efficient since you first need to hit the target with a ranged touch attack, then the victim receives a Will saving throw to completely negate the effect. If all this is successful the results are typically gruesome. The victim takes 10d6 damage from the object merging into their body and suffers from the added encumbrance of having the object in their body. You can plant up to about 50 pounds of material this way (but you need to have the stuff on hand). A Medium-size victim is **staggered** if the weight of the object is 25 pounds or more; 10 pounds will stagger a Small creature and it takes 100 pounds to stagger a Large creature.

The third and most common method is by warping the target in space and time, typically called *rending*. This causes 10d8 damage to a single target with a Will save allowed for half damage. Victims of this attack who do not age halve the damage taken.

DISTANT STRIKE (SU)

Requires: Extensions

Power Level: 3

Action: Attack Modifier

Range: 500 ft.

Duration: 1 Attack

Uses: 1/day

Binding Cost: 3 ip, 240 xp, Spirit Veda

This allows you to make a melee attack at any distance out to the range of this ability. The attack also counts as flanking if the target is engaged by someone else in melee since it can come in from any angle. Other benefits of using this ability can be adjudicated on a case by case basis.

EVENT LOCKING (SU)

Power Level: 2

Binding Cost/slot: 1 ip, 150 xp

Event locking allows you to store a location in memory for later use with *shifting* powers. An event is an occurrence in a particular region of space time. Typically you lock perdurant events, these are particularly stable events that endure in a fairly regular shape over an extended period of time. In non-vector-speak perdurant events are ordinary lasting objects. However, while it might seem unusual to describe a thunderstorm as a lasting object, a thunderstorm **is** a perdurant event so long as it retains cohesion. The great red spot on Jupiter is possibly one such storm.

What you do when you lock an event is code it into your spatial repertoire. From that point on you know your location and position relative to that event like you know your hand's position relative to your body. While used most often with shifting powers just having an event locked helps you figure out quite a bit. You will know distance and direction to the locked event precisely. For example, if you event locked a hamburger stand in First World Los Angeles, were knocked out and kidnapped by a Mind Flayer abduction team, then flown to Perth Australia and kept in a small but nicely decorated cell, you'd know that the hamburger stand was around seven thousand miles away at a moderate angle off of directly down. Vector Wardens with really good math skills (or nice portable computers) can get pretty exact locations this way. It's also important

to recognize that you are not restricted to locking stationary events. Your baseball card collection could be event locked just as easily as your house.

Everyone (even non-Vector Wardens) starts with one event locked location, themselves. You need to add extra ones by binding this power. You have the equivalent of direct perception of all event locked destinations. You can also specify a destination indirectly by picking out a distance and bearing from an event locked destination; this is considered an immediate method. For purposes of routing if one of your locked events is within ten miles of your destination then you receive the +5 closeness bonus to your Spellcraft check. A single Veda can have up to your Vector Warden class level slots; if you wish to purchase more slots you need to use another Veda or wait until your level increases. You may swap out event-locked locations as you desire; you simply drop the old event-lock and attach a new one. This takes a Standard action.

EXTENSIONS (Su)

Power Level: 2

Action: Free Action

Range: 150 ft.

Duration: Concentration

Uses: 5/day

Binding Cost: 5 ip, 400 xp

Saving Throw: Will negates

Spell Resistance: Yes

This allows you to move across large distances with a single motion. This is much like teleporting or using a *dimension door* but it requires that you move. What actually occurs is that you create a narrow tunnel of shrunk space, like a wormhole, then move through that tunnel to exit at the far end. The tunnel remains open for as long as you wish and others can use it as well. Technically you can have this passage extend through solid material, but unless you can move through solid material yourself, you will be unable to use the passage. However, the passage can cross over areas that you could not normally cross (such as water or a canyon). The tunnel can connect two locations that are up to 90 feet apart and you can place either end point within your range. Traversing the tunnel counts as a 20 foot move no matter how long the tunnel is.

You can extend the passage to an unseen location but if the passage winds up extending through a solid object then it will be unusable (note that characters attempting to pass through the passage will not suffer any damage from the attempt since they are merely blocked by the

object). You can move through this passage on the same round that you open it. Note also that the passage goes both ways though typically Vector Wardens only concentrate long enough to use the tunnel themselves. If the tunnel passes through a living creature they get a Will save to negate the use of the power and, if the save is failed suffer no ill effects (though they are assumed to be in the tunnel). You may curve the length of the tunnel, like a bow; thus you can typically avoid having it pass through anyone.

FUGUE (Sp)

Requires: Sideslip

Power Level: 4

Action: Standard Action

Range: Personal.

Target: You

Duration: 10 rounds

Uses: 1/day

Binding Cost: 7 ip, 500 xp, Spirit Veda

With this binding you skip back and forth a few moments in time, then skip to several locations simultaneously, effectively creating multiple copies of yourself.

You run your multiple selves just as you run your own character. All selves operate from a common pool of hit points and expendable resources. Thus if one of your selves uses a location shift charge then all of your selves do. Each of your selves is in complete mental communication with your other selves (they think with the same mind after all). The fugue distracts you terribly though, so each self only receives a partial action each round (typically all on the same initiative). When you fugue you create a total of two copies of yourself; thus you will have three selves wandering around capable of taking partial actions. Powers that affect a single copy affect all of you; thus if one copy is held or poisoned all copies are held or poisoned. Likewise, if one copy is hasted all copies are hasted (for *haste*, each self gains a normal full round action; Vector Wardens get a little extra out of the spell). Note though, if multiple copies of you are struck by an area effect attack you only take one set of damage; however, you do need to make separate saving throws for each copy hit by the attack and if any copy fails the save then all fail the save.

LESSER LOCATION SHIFTING (Sp)

Requires: Extensions

Power Level: 4

Action: Standard Action

Range: 1000 ft.

Target: You

Duration: Instantaneous

Uses: 1 per hour

Binding Cost: 8 ip, 600 xp

This binding grants you physical access to the Labyrinth. This enables you to move shortly upstream and emerge at a nearby location. This is also called direct teleportation since you don't go very deep into the labyrinth; in theory you could go deep but you'd get lost so quickly that there would be little value. You can move yourself and up to 400 pounds using this ability. Long years of development have led Vector Wardens to bind this ability to a Veda in a very special way; the Veda contains a small amount of power but replenishes fairly quickly.

You can specify a destination through any of the immediate methods.

LESSER PERCEPTION SHIFTING (Sp)

Requires: Extensions

Power Level: 3

Action: Standard Action

Range: 1000 ft.

Target: You

Duration: Concentration

Uses: 1/day

Binding Cost: 4 ip, 320 xp, Spirit Veda

This binding allows you to place a sensory node at a destination. You can perceive through this node as if you were in that location; in fact all of your senses other

than touch work and any enhancements to those senses or magical senses that you have active also work. The node acts as an invisible sensor, similar to that created by a scrying spell; it can be dispelled and detected as for normal scrying abilities.

You can specify a destination through any of the immediate methods.

LOCATION SHIFTING (Sp)

Requires: Lesser Location Shifting

Power Level: 5

Action: Standard Action

Range: Personal

Target: You plus 500 pounds

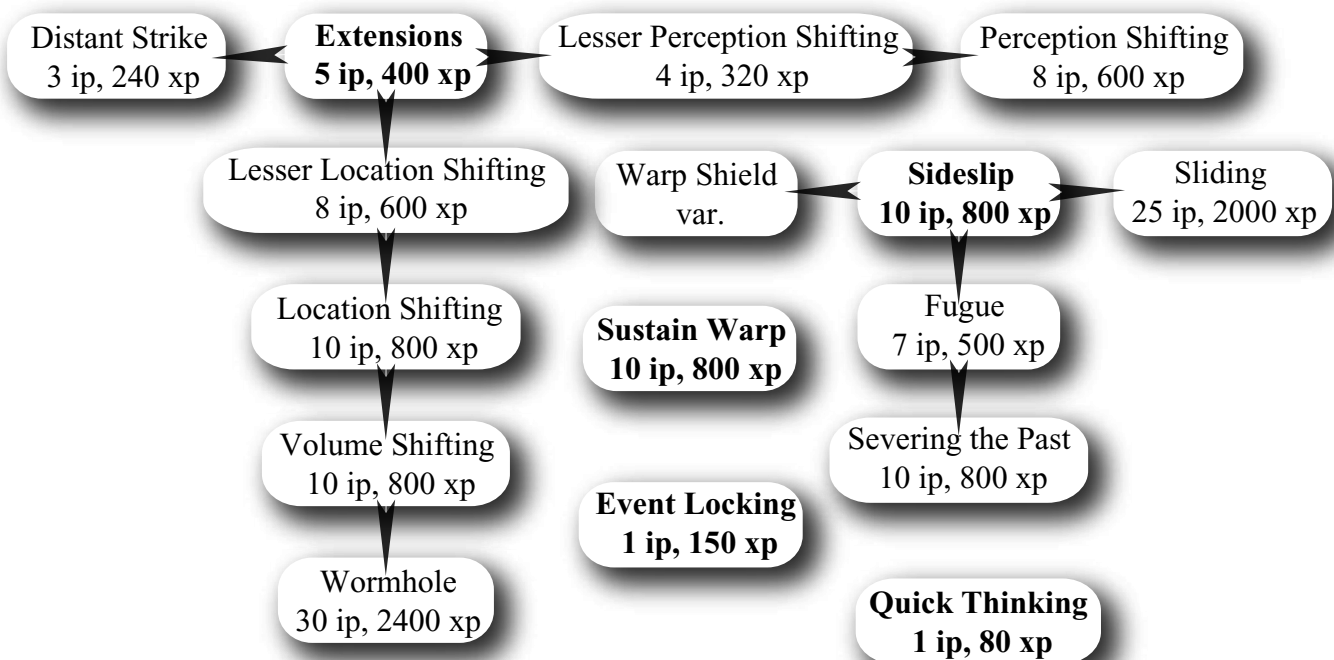
Duration: Instantaneous

Uses: 1/day

Binding Cost: 10 ip, 800 xp

Shift Location is, in many ways, just like the *teleport* spell. However, the specifics of the way shifting operates in the Second World create some subtle differences. This binding grants you physical access to the deep Labyrinth. This enables you to move to practically anywhere within your interstice. You can move yourself and up to 500 pounds using this ability.

You can specify a destination through any of the methods mentioned earlier. Note that shifting is almost instantaneous travel along alien pathways, perhaps interstitial; regardless, anything that blocks astral travel also blocks teleportation.



NARROWING (Sp)**Power Level:** 3**Action:** Standard Action**Range:** 150 ft.**Target:** You**Area:** area within 15 ft. diameter sphere**Duration:** Concentration**Uses:** 5/day**Binding Cost:** 8 ip, 600 xp**Saving Throw:** Will negates**Spell Resistance:** Yes

This allows you to fold and manipulate space over a small area. This can be used to expand an opening or contract it. Typically a thin opening (about the size of the crack around a door or even a keyhole) can be expanded to allow a man-sized creature to move through it. This power can also be used to contract a man-sized space down to the size of a crack or seam (for example, closing off a corridor). You can move through this passage on the same turn that you open it. Note that the passage goes both ways. This can make a passageway small enough for a single person to hold it easily, or expand it so that a large group can advance simultaneously. This can be used on a living thing (if it fails its save) but causes no actual harm or pain to the victim (just an odd feeling of disorientation, resulting in a -2 on attack rolls and skill checks made by the victim for the duration).

PERCEPTION SHIFTING (Sp)**Requires:** Lesser Perception Shifting**Power Level:** 4**Action:** Full round**Duration:** 15 minutes**Uses:** 1/day**Binding Cost:** 8 ip, 600 xp, Spirit Veda

This binding allows you to place a sensory node at a destination as for lesser perception shift. However, your range is unlimited since you can utilize the higher order levels of the Labyrinth. You may specify a destination using any of the methods described earlier. In addition, if you successfully establish a sensory node you can then look around, listen, smell, and even move around to change your point of view in the distant location as if you were there. While you do this your body will still be in the start location and will move around the start location the way you move around the target location. This can be dangerous if you're standing near a cliff. The limitations of both your base location (where you shift from) and target location (where you shift to) apply. Thus, if you shift from inside a bathroom to a large warehouse you'll be limited to exploring

a bathroom sized area of the warehouse (though you could open the bathroom door and so on). Likewise, if you shift from a warehouse to a bathroom you can only explore the bathroom and, since you cannot physically interact with objects at the target site (that is, they limit the movement of your node but your node cannot move them), you will not be able to open the door to explore the rest of the house.

PREDICT ACTION (Su)**Power Level:** 2**Action:** Spontaneous**Range:** Personal**Target:** You**Duration:** 1 attack**Uses:** 1/day**Binding Cost:** 2 ip, 160 xp

This allows you to predict the method of an attack. You receive a +2 insight bonus to AC and/or any required saving throws and you will not be tricked by feints, bluffs, or other deceptions that the opponent uses.

PRIVATE TIME MANIPULATION (Sp)**Requires:** Narrowing**Power Level:** 3**Uses:** 1/day**Binding Cost:** 5 ip, 400 xp

This binding allows you to modify individual time flows. You may use the following spells as spell-like abilities for the indicated cost in uses. Your effective caster level with these abilities is 6.

Haste, 1 use*Slow*, 1 use**QUICK THINKING (Su)****Power Level:** 2**Binding Cost:** 1 ip, 80 xp

Your mind operates on such a different time flow that you can take almost an infinite amount of time to make a decision, even in the most split-second of circumstances. This means that the gamemaster can never count down on you or force you to rush a decision because of in-game time constraints (out of game time constraints, such as other players getting angry, should be taken into consideration though).

SECOND CHANCE (Su)**Power Level:** 4**Action:** Spontaneous**Range:** Personal**Target:** You

Duration: Instantaneous

Uses: 1/day

Binding Cost: 6 ip, 500 xp

This allows you to slip back in time an instant after an action has been resolved (either by you or against you). The entire action is set back to the declaration phase and the initiator can choose to change their action, modify parts of the action (e.g. alter the degree of a power attack), apply different modifiers or spontaneous actions, and finally re-roll the dice for execution of the action. Any modifiers or special abilities spent earlier are returned to them. You must actually survive the action and be conscious in order to use this ability but except in rare circumstances the gamemaster should assume that you remain conscious just long enough to use this ability (even if your head has been lopped off by a sword). You are the only one who actually ‘remembers’ the time reversal. There are a variety of inventive ways you could use this power; for example, you could use it to open a door to find out if its trapped, then decide not to after the second chance. The action you replay must be able to be resolved as, at the longest, a full round action, though it should typically be a standard, partial, or attack action.

SEVERING THE PAST (Su)

Requires: Fugue

Power Level: 7

Binding Cost: 10 ip, 800 xp

Powerful (and somewhat twisted) Vector Wardens can travel back in time and kill their past self. This severs your life path and connection with history, breaking you loose from the constraints of cause and effect. One advantage this has is to make you a continuing thing without a past. This prevents someone else from traveling into your past and killing you there (not really much of a worry but this is what originally motivated Sambalah Kututain to develop the technique). This has the more beneficial side effect of removing Exile; you will no longer be shunted from the First World though mundane traces of you still fade there. Many Vector Wardens see this is an advantage since they can remain indefinitely in the First World and yet do pretty much whatever they please since most people will forget about them in a few days. Even good Vector Wardens take advantage of this since it helps them avoid the legal complications of battling evil sorcerers in the First World.

Less ruthless Vector Wardens have discovered that you need not kill your past self to achieve this effect; simply interfering in your past life in a drastic enough

way (such as convincing your younger self to raise a family instead of embarking on a monster-killing career) can achieve the same result.

SIDESLIP (Sp)

Power Level: 4

Action: Standard Action

Range: Personal

Target: You

Duration: see text

Uses: 1/day

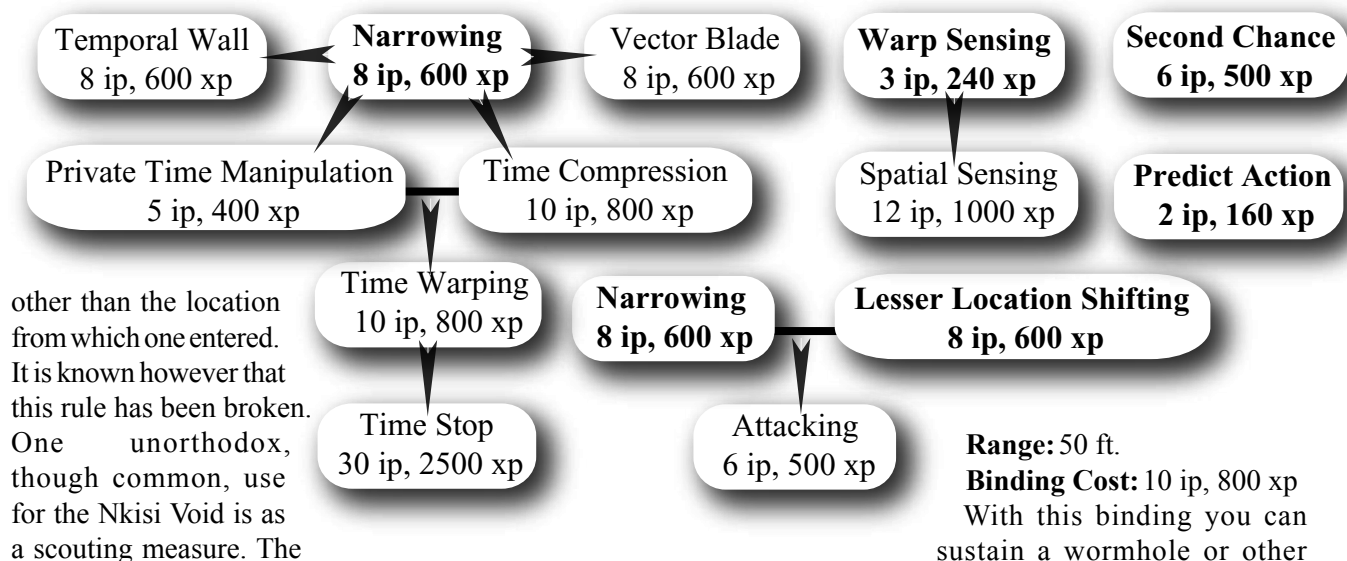
Binding Cost: 10 ip, 800 xp

You are capable of entering a timeless state sometimes called the Nkisi Void or the Lost Moment. Vector Wardens suspect that this is where passing moments go to die. The Nkisi Void is pretty much just like the normal world except it is completely uninhabited by any form of sentient life (including insects) and tends to be a little haunting; it feels vacant. Colors are washed out; foods tastes bland; and smells and sounds are muted. While here nothing happens in the real world and you can think or plan as you see fit (even heal yourself or prepare equipment). When you emerge you must emerge at the same location you left and you cannot carry anything you picked up in the Nkisi Void out with you (there may be exceptions in special circumstances). In fact, even food you pick up and eat there vacates you as does air (Vector Wardens usually prepare for leaving the Nkisi Void by first exhaling fully, otherwise they’re in for a rude shock when they get back). None of this applies to stuff you carried in with you.

Even though no time passes while you’re gone you don’t actually come back to the same location in time. Each round after you sideslip, on your initiative, there’s a 20% chance that you re-appear in your original location. From your perspective, you have one hour in the Nkisi Void. You may always choose to leave early (though the same amount of time passes in the real world no matter what you do).

If, just as you emerge you discover that you absolutely don’t want to then you can try to delay. This requires a Risk 1 Will save (DC 15). If this saving throw fails then you vanish permanently; perhaps you’re lost in the Nkisi Void or perhaps something worse has happened (the gamemaster can choose). If you reappear inside an object or other person then one or the other is typically shunted off to the side a short distance. You both take 3d6 damage with no save allowed.

Normally, one is not allowed to emerge at a location



SLIDING (SU)

Requires: Sideslip

Power Level: 4

Binding Cost: 25 ip, 2000 xp

As a move-equivalent action you can partially slide into higher order geometric states. Physical attacks against you have a 30% miss chance; this *also* works against area effect attacks and spells but not against individually targeted spells. You exert much less force on the ground, as if your weight were one tenth normal (you feel the full effects of your weight though; it's just that it's spread across a variety of surfaces). This is not an illusion so *true seeing* and similar effects won't neutralize the miss chance.

SPATIAL SENSING (SU)

Requires: Warp Sensing

Power Level: 5

Binding Cost: 12 ip, 1000 xp

You have an intrinsic understanding of the layout of space around you. This negates all visibility problems and serves as a sort of Blindsight. Once you have this ability you can 'see' in conditions of complete darkness, perceive invisible creatures (but not intangible or ethereal ones), and cannot be flanked.

SUSTAIN WARP (SP)

Power Level: 4

Action: Standard Action

Range: 50 ft.
Binding Cost: 10 ip, 800 xp
With this binding you can sustain a wormhole or other alteration (called generically a warp). You invoke the base power as usual but you then attach the warp to the Veda bound with this power. The Veda then supplies the necessary gravity to maintain the effect indefinitely without requiring your concentration, consciousness, presence, or even life. If you wish to recover the Veda for use in sustaining another warp you can cancel the effect at any time. In 1d6 days the warp will drop; and in another 1d6 days you recover use of the Veda. This time lag is reduced to hours if you can actually see the warp, and increased to weeks if you drop the effect from a different interstice (i.e. the Forge or First World when the effect is on the Second World). As mentioned, this power will sustain a warp even after your death; in which case the warp lasts permanently or until someone finds of way of neutralizing it. The powers that can be sustained are: *wormhole*, *temporal wall*, *narrowing*, *extension*, and *time warping*. You may only use this on a time warp when slowing the time flow within the field. Generally, powers that affect areas and have durations can be sustained; powers that affect individuals cannot be sustained (the location needs to remain relatively fixed). You may purchase and bind more than one of these if you like to have a lot going at once.

TEMPORAL WALL (SP)

Requires: Narrowing

Power Level: 5

Action: Standard Action

Range: Medium (100 ft. + 10 ft./level)

Effect: Wall whose area is up to ten 5-ft. squares

Duration: 10 minutes

Uses: 1/day

Binding Cost: 8 ip, 600 xp, Spirit Veda

This invocation allows you to create a flat wall of

expanded time. Time passage within this wall is terribly slow. This makes the wall effectively impenetrable to anything that must physically pass through it; the wall itself isn't made of anything and thus cannot be attacked in any conventional sense. However, it also doesn't cause damage by being ran into (since the victim is just being slowed down).

TIME COMPRESSION (Su)

Requires: Narrowing

Power Level: 6

Action: Spontaneous

Range: Personal

Target: You

Duration: Partial Action

Uses: 1/day

Binding Cost: 10 ip, 800 xp

You can compress the time required for an action to almost nothing. This grants you immediate use of a partial action. Since this is a Spontaneous action you could use this power to move away just before someone strikes you, or just as an area effect attack was launched at you. If you use these close together you risk severe injury: if you've used this power within the last 3

rounds roll a d4; if the roll is greater than the number of rounds since you last used the power you suffer what's known as a slide. During a slide your current moment spreads out over a short period of time. This causes you to lose all actions for the next 2d6 rounds. This wreaks some havoc on your internal organs as well; you suffer 1d6 points of temporary Constitution damage during a slide.

TIME STOP (Sp)

Requires: Time Warping

Power Level: 9

Uses: 1/day

Binding Cost: 30 ip, 2500 xp

A Vector Warden can step out of the flow of time completely. You can use the spell, *time stop*, as a spell-like ability once per day. Your effective caster level is 20.

TIME WARPING (Sp)

Requires: Time Compression & Private Time Manipulation

Power Level: 6

Action: Standard Action



Escape Tunnel by Owen Kuhn

Range: 0**Area:** 125 ft. radius**Duration:** 20 rounds (interior)**Uses:** 1/day**Binding Cost:** 10 ip, 800 xp, Spirit Veda**Saving Throw:** None**Spell Resistance:** No

Time warping allows you to increase or decrease the effective rate of time flow within a region of space. The way this is handled is that you choose to either increase the rate in the region or decrease it. If you increase the rate then those inside the region effectively act more quickly than those outside. To model this, those outside the region get one round of action for every ten rounds that pass inside the region. If you decrease the rate then simply reverse the system; thus for every round that passes within the region one minute passes outside the region. There is nothing limiting people from entering or leaving the area and the time flow along the border gradually changes over a space of 15 feet.

Speeding up time is good for when you want to delay reinforcements from arriving; slowing down time is good when you want your reinforcements to arrive more quickly (relatively speaking). Essentially, *Time Warping* is simply the temporal version of *Narrowing* and *Extension* (which one could call space warping).

VECTOR BLADE (Su)

Requires: Narrowing**Power Level:** 5**Action:** Attack Modifier**Duration:** 1 attack**Uses:** 1/day**Binding Cost:** 8 ip, 600 xp

You narrow the edge of your weapon quickly as you make an attack then let it expand as you pass the blade through your target. This transforms a regular melee attack into a touch attack with the “keen” advantage (increase the critical range). Both effects work on blunt weapons such as maces as well as swords and axes; this even works with improvised weapons like chairs or sticks.

VOLUME SHIFTING (Sp)

Requires: Location Shifting**Power Level:** 7**Action:** Action Modifier**Target:** other power**Uses:** 1/day**Binding Cost/use:** 10 ip, 800 xp**Saving Throw:** Will negates**Spell Resistance:** Yes

With this binding you can shift an entire volume of space. What you actually do is simply transpose the volume of space you occupy (out to a 5 foot radius) with the space at the destination. You designate the destination normally as for location shifting or lesser location shifting. You use the base power normally (i.e. spend uses for location or lesser location shifting) then also spend a use from this power to apply it to the location shift, thereby making it affect a volume. You can increase the radius of effect by 5 ft. for each additional use spent when activating this power.

Those who fall within the area (at either end) and don't want to be shifted can make a Will saving throw to cancel the effect. This means that if anyone at either end wants to resist and succeeds at a saving throw the entire effect fails. It's best to choose your target location carefully. Living creatures (those invested with a spirit) always either shift or stay in one complete piece.

Players can and will use teleporting powers like this one for all kinds of tricky effects. For example, a Vector Warden leading the charge against a castle could shift himself directly into the wall of the fortress. While this will place him in the midst of the enemy troops it will also transport a ten foot diameter section of the wall to the warden's original location, creating a convenient breach.

WARP SENSING (Su)

Power Level: 2**Binding Cost:** 3 ip, 240 xp

You have an intrinsic feel for spatial and temporal disturbances (such as gates or teleport zones) in the immediate area (up to a 60 ft. radius). You automatically detect such disturbances. You may also resist the use of those warps once per day as a Spontaneous action (as long as they are used within 60 feet of you). This allows you to make a Will save to negate the use of the warp. This applies to gates, teleport, dimension door, summoning spells, the similar warps described here, and any power with the Teleportation or Calling descriptor.

WARP SHIELD (Su)

Requires: Sideslip**Power Level:** 4**Binding Cost:** var.

This binding allows you to warp space around you, providing a constant deflection bonus to your armor class. Activating or deactivating the field is a free action. Use the nearby table to determine the binding

cost of the field; you may upgrade this without any penalties by paying the difference between the cost of your current bonus and the cost of your targeted bonus.

WORMHOLE

Requires: Volume Shifting

Power Level: 8

Action: Full Round

Range: Personal

Target: You

Effect: creates 10 ft. diameter tunnel

Duration: Concentration

Uses: 1/day

Binding Cost: 30 ip, 2400 xp

Saving Throw: None

Spell Resistance: No

This creates a small tunnel in space that runs from the source location to the target destination. From the outside it looks like a swirling whirlpool of warping space with the funnel running away from the opening; there is no backside to the wormhole thus, at each end, you can only enter through the open side. You can both look through and move through (as can both living and un-living matter and energy) a wormhole, though the tunnel is fairly long (90 feet) and twisty meaning you typically cannot see out the far end. The diameter of the tunnel is 10 feet. When you invoke a wormhole you must specify a destination for it as usual and make all the normal checks for such a task; it's wholly possible that you open a wormhole to a deep portion of the Labyrinth.

There's no practical limit on the number of people or objects you can move through a wormhole. This is mainly because the wormhole can handle a large volume of mass moving through it. However, as mass moves through the wormhole it creates disturbances in the spatial fabric; these disturbances, if strong enough, can cause the tunnel to collapse. This can happen when a lot of material moves through over a short time or when the material moves through at extremely high speeds. Both of these occur when you open a wormhole to the bottom of the ocean, to deep space, or to the heart of the sun. In these cases pressure differentials force large quantities of atmosphere (whether it be air, water, or fusing fire) through the wormhole. Most wormholes break down within less than a second of this occurring, though special wormholes designed as weapons can last longer. Given that Vector Wardens will want to do this here are some rules for handling

Warp Shield		
Bonus	IP Cost	XP Cost
+1	1	80
+2	4	320
+3	9	720
+4	16	1300
+5	25	2000

those cases:

OPEN FROM FIRST WORLD EARTH TO DEEP SPACE

This typically evacuates the air from a region. Air doesn't have much mass, but the speed and volume of transit make the wormhole unstable enough to break down fairly quickly. If done in an enclosed and sealed room it will

become a vacuum almost immediately and then, once the pressure has stabilized, the wormhole will remain open for its regular duration. In a larger room or non-sealed area the wormhole will close fairly shortly (there's a 25% chance each round that it closes spontaneously). Everyone within 20 feet of the wormhole must make a DC 10 Strength check (+4 to check for every size category over Medium-size, -4 to check for every size category below Medium-size) in order to grab on to something (like the ground) and avoid being pulled out into space. Potential victims also receive a standard Reflex save against the power; if they succeed at this they get a +5 on their Strength check. Once in space use the suffocation rules and add 1d6 cold damage per round to handle the effects of the vacuum.

Second World Note: Space in the Second World isn't very dangerous. The atmosphere is thin, much like the atmosphere at the top of a high mountain (and similar effects apply) but there isn't enough pressure differential to cause the explosive decompression of the First World. As such, opening a wormhole into space on the Second World is little different from opening a wormhole to the top of a tall mountain.

OPEN FROM EARTH TO DEEP OCEAN

This lasts a brief time, somewhat less than a second. Even so it's enough to flood four 10 ft. cubes. Those in the area must make a DC 15 Strength check to remain standing (size doesn't matter because it helps as much as it hurts).

OPEN FROM EARTH TO CENTER OF SUN

This lasts in the millisecond range for time. It effectively operates like a potent fireball. Treat this as a 16d6 fireball in a 30 foot radius centered on the wormhole (Reflex save for half damage).

INFLUENCE

INFLUENCE RULES

The Second World setting makes extensive use of a resource called Influence. Influence is an abstract measure of a character's ability to control and gain favor with both organizations and individuals. You can use Influence to gain access to magic items or to positions of authority. In some games you may use it to gain access to certain feats, spells, and prestige classes. In keeping with this model Influence is tracked as an expendable resource, just like gold. You can also earn Influence for accomplishing deeds.

The power and effects of influence are pretty vast in the Second World setting, but having that influence requires giving up part of one's personal freedom. Many players don't like the feeling of working for someone in the way one frequently must if they're an insider. One goal of these rules is to make the world feel right. If you don't want to be an insider with all the duties that requires then don't become part of an organization; however, you need to recognize the Hobbesian point that *real* power is gained from collective action; ten untalented people can frequently do much more than one talented person (though the reverse is true for certain goals). Being part of an organization (or two) will typically provide one with vast advantages over those who choose to go it alone. If you do prefer to go it alone you can spend the increased cost to purchase outsider influence and be the figure in the shadows pulling the strings. Alternately, you can forego the benefits of membership in an organization altogether but you should recognize the kind of sacrifice you are making.

What these rules do is codify to a certain extent the advantages of working within a social order. This way a player with a character who possesses lots of influence can look at their character sheet and see what they have, as opposed to having it represented purely abstractly (though, just like everything else the codification doesn't tell the whole story). Mao said power grows

out of the barrel of a gun. He was wrong; power grows out of the barrels of *lots* of guns.

INFLUENCE

The influence system is used to model the social abilities of characters. The rules for influence are remarkably simple but the implementation of these rules can get rather involved. Most of the work for the influence rules is performed in the organizations themselves. The organizations tell you what you can do with a given expenditure of influence within that organization. This makes the influence rules one of the places where you can most significantly customize your campaign to suit your tastes. The organizations you (the gamemaster) create define the social realities of your world and the social realities of your world generate a great deal of the interactions available to your players.

Influence points (ip) themselves are treated as an expendable resource, just like money. In order to get something done, acquire a position, or gain access to equipment you spend Influence points. These points are lost (spent forever) but you will gain more influence as you accomplish tasks (such as cleaning out an abandoned fortress for the Imperial Legion). You might also be able to "invest" Influence. Like investing money this allows your Influence to work on its own and grow over time.

GAINING INFLUENCE

During the game there are several methods of improving one's influence levels. Given the sorts of activities player characters get involved in, the most common method for them to improve their influence is through in-game actions such as adventuring.

The gamemaster may choose to limit how influence is spent; this isn't wholly necessary though. It's assumed that influence rewards come as a result of accomplishing goals and performing actions that generate some degree of notoriety or reputation. This

reputation and evidence of past accomplishments makes the character a valuable commodity to organizations; the character's skills and talents are desirable and their value as a commodity can be parleyed into position and power. While giving players this kind of freedom can potentially lead to issues, more often than not it allows players to exercise their creativity and exert greater control over the way their character develops. Still, there will likely be times when a particular type of influence reward is appropriate; simply give the characters specific influence points for use with that organization under those circumstances. Note though that there are all sorts of reasons for giving general influence rewards. For instance, the players might accomplish a significant mission for the Seven Tribes and the gamemaster then gives them an influence reward for doing this. One of the players would prefer to parley that influence elsewhere however and asks the Seven Tribes to put in a good word for him with the Chanask. It's as simple as that and makes sense, just like we use letters of recommendation and letters of introduction to convert influence we have with one person into influence with someone else.

INFLUENCE SKILLS

The influence system uses already existing skills for Influence checks. The way this works is that each request uses a particular skill. For organizations all requests regarding that organization use the influence skill appropriate to the organization. Individual favors and requests for equipment outside of an organization use skills particular to the request.

I list some of the main skills used for influence and some sample organizations to which they apply here. In some cases I choose skills to improve them. In other cases I choose skills because appropriate classes have the skill.

Knowledge (Tactics): For military organizations I choose Knowledge (Tactics) as the influence skill. This skill comes from the modern rules but I recommend making it a class skill for Barbarians, Fighters, Paladins, and Rangers as well as any other typically martial class. Even a primitive warrior has an intuitive grasp of how to move on a battlefield; you don't survive long without it.

Appraise or Knowledge (business): This is used for corporate and mercantile organizations such as the Blue Conglomerate or ACI. Note that Appraise can be used not just to evaluate an item, but also an offer or business venture.

Bluff: This is used for political requests such as with the mayor's office.

Diplomacy: This applies to requests within the circles of high society, such as Baroness Lynda Michaels or the Hellfire Club. While this used to be important on the First World it's significance has declined; essentially Perform has taken its position.

Gather Information: This applies to underworld and criminal groups such as the Red Society and the Clims Gang.

Knowledge (arcana): This is used for requests involving arcane organizations such as the College of the Interstice or Tempest Argon.

Knowledge (religion): This is used with religious groups such as the Catholic Church.

Knowledge (tactics): This is used for requests involving military and mercenary organizations such as the Sword Guild or the Imperial Army.

Perform: This is used with media organizations and doesn't really help in the Second World but is quite powerful on the First World.

Sense Motive or Investigate: This is used with police and security forces such as the City Guard and Enigma Securities. This is another influence skill far more applicable on the First World.

Survival: This is used with nature oriented groups

GP EQUIVALENCE

In these rules one influence point is treated as roughly equivalent to 1,000 gp or 10,000 Imperial dollars (the coin of the Second World). This rough equivalence is used for purposes of determining the ip costs of favors, magic items, and positions and also for purposes of determining appropriate awards for overcoming challenging encounters. This is intended to fit easily into the standard system of determining awards for scenarios and adventures and also to gauge how much power (in terms of wealth and influence) a character should have at a given level. It's assumed here that about half of the award parties receive for adventures come in the form of ip; this means that characters in the Second World will only have half as much gold as characters in a standard game but that lack will be made up for via influence. Naturally you could scale the ratio differently. For instance, you could translate almost all rewards into influence rewards and keep the cash flow to a minimum; one advantage of working this way is that you can more easily model the common genre convention of poor but powerful heroes.

such as the Seven Tribes. Any request made using Survival can also be made using Knowledge (nature) at no penalty.

INFLUENCE CHECKS

You make Influence checks to secure requests. A request can be asking for access to some equipment, asking an organization to perform a favor for you, asking to be offered a position or membership in an organization, and so on. To make a request you spend the required time (typically an hour), pay the cost, and make an Influence check (just like a skill check) against the difficulty class of the request. This check uses the skill appropriate to the request. The request may have an access modifier. If this check fails then you lose the influence points or stress you spent. You may take 10 on an Influence check as usual; since the circumstances surrounding an Influence check are seldom rushed or stressful only under extreme circumstances will you be prevented from taking 10 on an Influence check. You may also take 20 on an Influence check but this multiplies the cost by 20 as well as taking 20 times as long as normal.

The time required to exercise influence is typically pretty short. All that's usually required is that you contact the right people and talk to them a bit; they'll then contact their people and the process will begin. Under normal circumstances an hour is sufficient to make an Influence check. What mainly matters for time is how long it takes you to get in contact with the organization.

Implementation of a successful request can take quite a bit longer. This depends largely on what is asked for. Typically, requests for equipment or favors can be finished in a day, or even less if the equipment is readily available. The time for implementation depends on the specific request and is listed along with the favor or equipment. Gaining a position can take even longer since all organizations suffer a certain amount of bureaucratic inefficiency. Frequently someone needs to be transferred out of a position in order to make that position available. In some organizations it is not even possible to gain a position unless that position is vacated (sometimes via peaceful retirement or promotion, and sometimes via less savory methods). Also note that even though the Influence check for a favor might be successful that doesn't necessarily mean the favor itself will be successful. If the favor fails typically it will only cost half as much influence or stress (round down) but some organizations operate

BASIC REQUESTS

In the later sections I mark some favors and some equipment with an asterisk. This indicates that the request counts as a Basic Request. You do not need special access to make one of these requests; in fact, you're assumed to have an Access bonus of +0 for all Basic requests.

differently.

INFLUENCE COSTS

Influence actions cost one of three resources, influence points, social stress, or money. The cost is noted in the request itself. Influence points have already been discussed and money is just standard monetary cost. Social Stress represents damage to one's ability to call on favors.

SOCIAL STRESS

Social Stress costs operate a bit like damage. When you spend a cost in social stress you take social stress damage equal to the cost. When this damage equals or exceeds your Stress Limit (10 + your Charisma modifier) you suffer a -10 to all Influence checks. When your stress equals or exceeds twice your Stress Limit you can no longer make any influence requests. Social stress starts at 0. Stress "heals" naturally over time; you recover 1d8 + your Charisma modifier stress points (typically just called stress or noted with an "s") per two weeks. You can also heal 1d8 + your Charisma modifier stress points by dedicating one week to networking.

REDUCING STRESS COSTS

For requests that cost social stress points (and only requests that cost stress) you halve the cost (rounding up) if you score a greater success on the Influence check. To score a greater success you must beat the DC of the check by at least 10. If you score a perfect success (DC +20) divide the cost by four (rounding up). Note that this gives characters an incentive to roll instead of simply taking 10 on a check. For example, if the character has a bonus of +18 and the DC is 20 they'll automatically succeed if they take 10. However, by rolling they have a 45% chance of halving the stress cost and only a 5% chance of failing outright.

REDUCING INFLUENCE POINT COSTS

For requests that cost influence points (and only those that cost influence points) you may reduce the cost by 10% if you score a greater success (DC +10); a perfect success (DC +20) reduces the cost by 20%. In this way characters with high influence levels can get equipment

RICH AND POWERFUL?

When I'm running a game it doesn't bother me too much if a wealthy industrialist or financier has access to a bunch of cool toys or covert power. After all, those are the guys I want my players either working for or working against. However, it *would* bother me if all the cool toys got scarfed up by incompetent CEO's that turned a successful corporation into a bankrupt one then bailed in their golden parachute, or overpaid utility infielders with batting averages around .225 and slugging not much higher. We should see a correlation between wealth and power in the First World, but not a universal correlation. To create more of a split between wealth and power you can use the following system.

Reward your players primarily with influence points. The players should use these to purchase magic items, pay material component costs, craft magic items, and make influence requests. You can also provide more standard monetary awards but these primarily affect a character's lifestyle (such as the kind of inn they frequent and meals they eat).

Characters (gamemaster controlled characters too) can spend cash to purchase magic items, material components, influence options, and so forth. However, the cost of individual items goes up drastically when using regular money. Convert the influence cost for an individual item to a dollar cost using the nearby table. Divide the dollar cost by 10 to determine the gold cost. This chart uses a geometric progression. That means it's cost effective to break purchases down into their smallest components. In most cases you should convert the influence cost for a single magic item or request to a dollar cost. For example if you purchase a +3 sword (18 ip) and a cloak of Elvenkind (2 ip) using cash it will cost you \$3,280,000.

If using this method with magic item construction first convert the influence cost for the item to a dollar cost then charge the artificer half the dollar cost for the material components.

Impact: If you use this system you transfer power in the game from the wealthy to those with the right connections (or in the right offices). Political power grows in significance as the population increases and social technologies develop to exploit cooperative ventures (in other words, we develop economic technology). Money matters of course, but it only grants personal power via the influence one can generate with it. Using this system you can keep the characters poor while allowing them to attain the kind of personal power you see in a high fantasy game. Note that they can probably translate their influence into large sums of cash by making the right choices; however, why bother? Who needs money when you pull the strings on the president?

at near cost. Note though that if you can take 10 on a check it's more cost effective to do so than gamble for a 10 or 20 percent discount.

INFLUENCE FUMBLES

If you botch an Influence check (i.e. roll a Risk threat and then a failure) you suffer 3 points of social stress. You recover this stress normally. Note that most standard requests do not have a Risk factor; this rule is just a suggestion for gamemasters who like to use fumble rules.

INCIDENTAL STRESS AND RECOVERY

The gamemaster should feel free to either impose incidental stress or reduce stress based on in-game activities. A horrible *faux pas* at one of Baroness

Influence Cost	Dollar Cost
1	\$10,000
2	\$40,000
3	\$90,000
4	\$160,000
5	\$250,000
6	\$360,000
7	\$490,000
8	\$640,000
9	\$810,000
10	\$1,000,000
11	\$1,210,000
12	\$1,440,000
13	\$1,690,000
14	\$1,960,000
15	\$2,250,000
16	\$2,560,000
17	\$2,890,000
18	\$3,240,000
19	\$3,610,000
20	\$4,000,000
21	\$4,410,000
22	\$4,840,000
23	\$5,290,000
24	\$5,760,000
25	\$6,250,000
26	\$6,760,000
27	\$7,290,000
28	\$7,840,000
29	\$8,410,000
30	\$9,000,000
31	\$9,610,000
32	\$10,240,000
33	\$10,890,000
34	\$11,560,000
35	\$12,250,000
36	\$12,960,000
37	\$13,690,000
38	\$14,440,000
39	\$15,210,000
40	\$16,000,000
41	\$16,810,000
42	\$17,640,000
43	\$18,490,000
44	\$19,360,000
45	\$20,250,000
50	\$25,000,000
60	\$36,000,000
70	\$49,000,000
80	\$64,000,000
90	\$81,000,000
100	\$100,000,000
150	\$225,000,000
200	\$400,000,000

Lynda Michaels' parties will cause stress to all that player's dealings. Rescuing some mongrels from the pound might remove some stress as the SIS puts out the good word. This can also be a convenient minor reward for player actions when the gamemaster doesn't want to provide full influence points. If the players have no stress you may also give them some spare stress points; these would operate as a sort of reserve the player could call on in times of need.

ACCESS

Some requests are considered basic. This means that anyone can make an Influence check for the request. Basic requests are identified as such in the favors and items sections. Everyone is assumed to have a +0 access bonus with these requests. You can purchase an access bonus to basic requests by paying the access cost for the request. This gives you a +5 access bonus with that particular request. Some positions may also provide access bonuses for basic requests.

Advanced requests cannot be made unless the character has access to the request. Access may typically be gained in one of two ways. The first way is to take a position that grants access to the request. You do this by joining an organization. The second way of gaining access is to purchase it by paying the request's access cost in influence points. By spending more on the access you can gain a higher level of access which can eliminate penalties when making the request or even grant a bonus.

DIRECT ACCESS

You gain direct access to a request by purchasing an access level. To do this you simply pay the access cost in influence points for the request (these are listed along with the request) multiplied by the cost factor of the access level you choose (round up). The access level determines the bonus to your Influence checks when later making requests for the favor or equipment group. The following chart lists the cost factors for different

access levels. Note that you do not need to make an Influence check to purchase direct access.

Direct Access Level	Cost Factor	Access Bonus
No access	Na	na
Partial Access	1	-5
Standard Access	2	+0
Full Access	5	+5

Note that access bonuses do not stack; instead use the highest access level available to determine your access bonus.

Organizations also purchase access levels in this way; however, they typically have to pay more based on the size of the organization. The organization then distributes those access levels to their members.

When upgrading from a lower level of access to a higher level you get credit for the levels you've purchased. Thus, when going from partial to standard access you pay only 1× the access cost (the difference between the two access costs).

POSITIONAL ACCESS

When you take a position in an organization you typically gain access to a variety of requests. The access levels are listed in the organization description (either in a master chart or individually with each position).

EXTERNAL ACCESS

You can also acquire external access to an organization. External access is both expensive and typically less effective but allows one to call on the equipment and favors of an organization without being beholden to them. This means that, as an outsider, you do not need to perform missions or duties. You may frequently want to though, after all, you've invested heavily in this organization already and it helps you if the organization gets more powerful. Doing so will typically bring ip rewards as well as the more standard rewards; moreover, it's good adventurer fare. External access comes in the same levels as direct access; however, the bonuses are different.

To purchase external access you choose a position to which you want external access and choose a level of access. Multiply the access level cost factor by the external access cost of the position then make an Influence check at -5 against the DC of the position just like making a regular request. If successful you gain external access at the given level to the position. Use the nearby chart for external access level costs.

GETTING SOME PULL

In this section I list a bunch of different ways you might gain access to the favors, resources, and other special bits in the later sections. Players shouldn't worry too much about these variants. The easiest way to get pull is to simply acquire a position in an organization and make use of the requests available through that. Alternately, acquire some kind of connection with someone in an organization (i.e. external access) and use that to make requests.

Once you have an external access level you can then make any requests available to that position but you suffer your external access penalty (if any) to those Influence checks. External access penalties “stack” and may be chained. For example: you purchase standard external access to a Blue Conglomerate Executive. This allows you to make Blue Conglomerate Executive requests at -5. Blue Conglomerate Executives have partial external access to the Mayor’s Office (-10). You thus have external access to the Mayor’s Office at a net penalty of -15. Influence “chains” can extend indefinitely through connections like this. This makes some positions valuable just because of the external access they provide.

External Access Level	Cost Factor	External Access Penalty
No access	Na	Na
Partial Access	1	-10
Standard Access	3	-5
Full Access	10	+0

EXTERNAL ACCESS NOTES

External access can represent several things, control of an individual via blackmail or bribery, secret mastery of the organization’s inner workings, or simply an alliance between yourself and another organization. You gain external access by setting up some sort of relationship with members of the target organization. How many members you control and their rank in the organization determine the quality of your access.

External Access normally does not give you the perks or standard equipment of the position you acquire. You may be able to get these depending on your particular relationship with the group though. For example, if you’re a trusted ally the group might set aside a little office space for you or make you an honorary member. If your control represents complete domination of a target’s will he’ll give you *his* stuff.

These rules for outsider access should work fine with organizations of Small or larger size (more than 10 people). However, tiny organizations are so heavily dependent on the actions of one or two individuals you should specifically ask the gamemaster about external access to those groups. If you’re on friendly terms with the target organization and are purchasing the access to represent a solidification of your alliance then these rules should work fine. But if you’re attempting a hostile takeover merely throwing influence points

at a person who hates you isn’t going to change his mind.

EXAMPLE OF PURCHASING ACCESS

Typically influence levels are purchased over a long period of time, the course of an entire campaign in fact. However I’ll assume here that Cale Darrow has just got a bunch of ip from a recent bit of messy business and has also been saving up for some time. Cale decides to finally spend some of this influence and develop some pull in the local underworld. Cale sees himself as one of the elite, he’s an exile after all and recently reached sixth level (he’ll wait a bit before taking a warden level), so he’s not going to bother with common riff-raff like the Clims Gang. Moreover, besides being a fine place for a man of his talents, the Red Society is more powerful. He has 6 influence points (he’s still a fairly young hoodlum). He considers moving into the assassins right away, perhaps picking up some training, but that strikes him as rather expensive, he would get 2 points back in the form of an equipment pool though. He could just become a guild member for 1 influence point and his Gather Information bonus (at +7) is high enough to take 10 on the check. The requirement for a check clinches his decision and he becomes a guild member for 1 influence point. Now he can use some of that Red Society pull to get a magic item or two. Eventually the Society will be really good for him; he can access arms and armor that require caster levels of 12! However, he lacks both the savvy and wealth for those kinds of requests. Instead he decides to look at some items from the intrusion group; those are exactly his speed. Not much in the way of weapons there, he frowns, but some mild enhancement items are always nice. He’s got cash socked away as well, about \$30,000 so he could kick that in for some purchases if needed. Gloves of swimming and climbing are quite useful, but a tad steep and would require an actual Influence roll. He decides to stick with the simple stuff and picks up a ring of jumping for 2 ip and no roll required. He’ll store the remainder for later use, perhaps a warden binding down the line or an upgrade to Red Society assassin. Cale has become an official member of the New York underworld.

REQUESTS

Influence actions take the form of requests. Requests can be pretty much anything but I focus on three common types of requests in this section. One can make a request for equipment; this involves trying to get some special resources or goods and works much like purchasing goods with regular money (but the

currency used is influence). A favor is a request for some action, typically the use of someone else's skills or fixed equipment. Finally, in order to increase your influence or get access to the nicer equipment one might request assignment to a position.

FAVORS

Favors are specific activities or actions that the organization can undertake for the character. By making a request for a favor the character can gain whatever benefits are associated with that favor. For instance, a member of Tempest Argon can have arcane research done for them.

EQUIPMENT

Characters can exercise their influence to gain access to specific equipment. As for favors some equipment is considered basic and anyone can make an Influence check to purchase it. Other equipment is broken down into categories and you must purchase or somehow gain access to that category in order to request equipment from the category. As usual, you need to spend the ip cost of the equipment and make a check against the DC of the equipment in order to purchase it. If the check succeeds you're the brand new owner of the equipment; if it fails you either need to try again (spending more ip in the process) or just give up.

CERTIFICATES

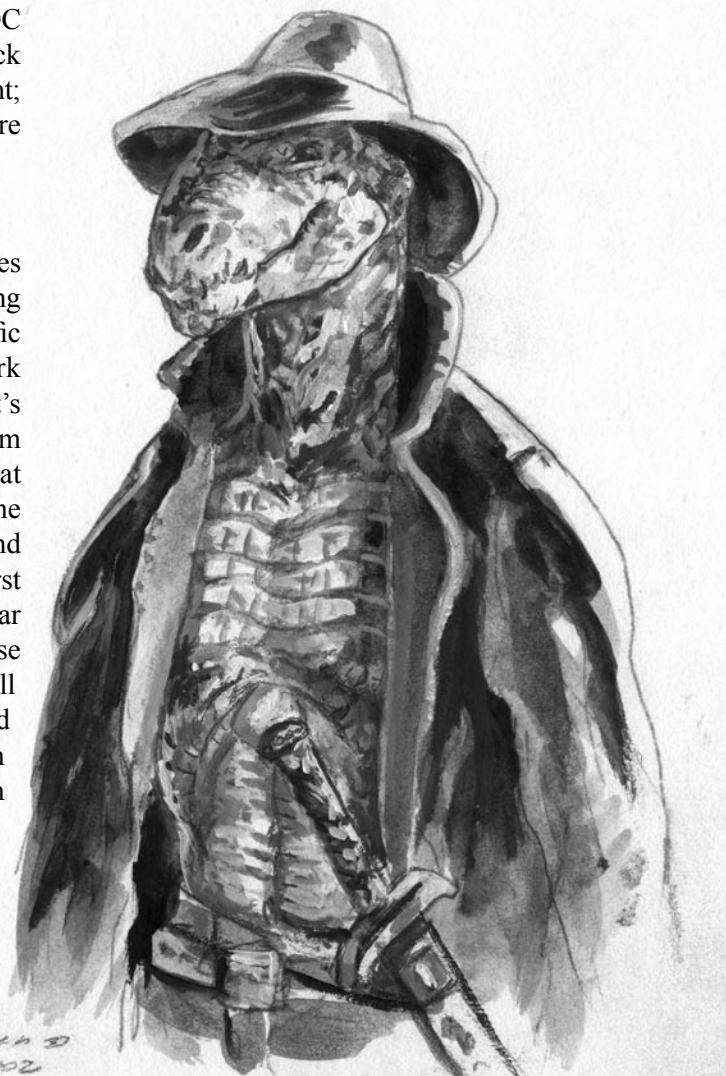
Certificates are a special kind of influence. Certificates are the sort of thing that you either have or lack. Having a certificate typically gives you some kind of specific benefit. For instance, in Second World New York citizenship is not a right; it's not even a privilege; it's something you either buy and pay for or coerce from your contacts. NY Citizenship is a certificate that costs 1 ip (or \$10,000); if you have it you have the right to vote in city elections, call on the police and exercise other benefits we take for granted in the First World. Other sorts of certificates should be familiar from ordinary experience, a medical license or license to practice law, a driver's license, and so on are all certificates. As noted in the example, influence and certificates can sometimes be purchased. More often than not, acquiring a certificate is based primarily on meeting the prerequisites and can be gained fairly easily if you satisfy those requirements.

POSITIONS

Membership in an organization is the cheapest way to gain access bonuses. However, while membership has its privileges, it also has its costs. You must maintain your membership

by performing the duties assigned to your position. For the organizations and positions presented here that shouldn't be too difficult so long as you choose an organization in line with your playing style. I have focused on both organizations, and positions within those organizations, that favor the sorts of activities players enjoy.

While characters use their skills as the base value for Influence checks, their position within a particular organization substantially affects their chances of success with any particular request. Organizations distribute access to favors and equipment according to how they value the positions within the organization. Typically, more and better access is given to higher ranking positions. When you first start out in a group you'll likely have access to just a few favors and may have penalties or no bonus with those favors. As you take better positions within the organization you'll get access to new requests as well as improving your access to requests you already have.



Eclipse by Jeff Doten

The way this works is that each organization has one or more positions available. By taking a position within an organization you get access to the favors and equipment available to that position. These will be listed along with the position or in a chart associated with the organization. Each request will also have a modifier listed with it. This is the bonus or penalty to your Influence checks when making that request. You can then look up the base difficulty class and ip cost of the request in the appropriate sections. Note that even having a -5 penalty to a request costs the organization something since many of the requests it supplies are not normally available.

Some positions offer far more leeway and independent action than others; moreover, it's assumed that the player characters will gravitate towards those kinds of positions (if they're going to be part of an organization at all). This is also recommended; it's good if the characters can take pro-active roles in the game. Instead of just following orders or accomplishing missions they become part of the decision making process; they decide what goals should be pursued and by doing so become more heavily invested in the success or failure of their organization, which can be quite a bit of fun. However, you may find yourself with a group of players who would rather not think about the big picture in that way; who would rather be presented with particular puzzles or problems and trouble-shoot them as they come along. If so, go with it and simply present them with a mission of the week. This can be an effective way to start a campaign if the players are involved in the same organization. Sooner or later they might want to change their role in the organization and, if this happens, you can transfer or promote them to positions with more freedom.

APPLYING TO A POSITION

Applying to a position is a request just like any other and follows the standard rules for such requests (including ip costs, Influence checks, and so on). One difference is that you can only apply for positions once per month. If your application fails you need to wait a while before re-applying or applying to something else. If it succeeds you're stuck with the position for a little while. Applying to a position does not require access nor does the Influence check gain an access bonus.

Note that applying to a position in one organization does not prevent you from applying to a position in another organization. Of course, other reasons might make doing so difficult (working two jobs can be hard; working two jobs for mortal enemies can be really hard...).

ROLEPLAYING ACCESS

For each position I provide a small section called "Roleplaying Access" intended to give a description of how one might roleplay out gaining access to the position. These are primarily intended as seeds for crafting a scenario or series of encounters around gaining access to a position. Perhaps the players handle diplomacy well and can talk their way into a job or perhaps they just perform some duties well and the organization wants to hire them. It's assumed that the players can either say the process happens off-screen, make a few die rolls and spend some influence points to acquire the position, or use the somewhat more elaborate method of roleplaying the process out. Likewise, as the game-master you can choose whether or not you wish to allow both kinds of access to positions or go with just one of the two methods. I also assume that successfully meeting the roleplaying requirements eliminates

COMMITMENT AND DUTY

Note that the primary duty of holding a position is simply the commitment point requirement. Positions are not meant to be things that keep players tied to offices, or checking in with their bosses everyday, or anything like that. The positions in this book are the kinds of jobs people in action movies have. The archaeologist can simply up and leave for months at a time so long as old stuff is involved. The cop can spend all the time he wants chasing down a particular criminal and basically pick and choose his assignments.

Generally, so long as the players can advance the goals of their organizations, however loosely, then the organization should give them a free hand. Even simply advancing their own goals helps the organization since that makes the player a better agent for the organization. The organizations will only get truly upset when they have a specific mission they need accomplished and the players fail or ignore that mission (and ignoring is generally far worse than failing).

The organizations and positions available to player characters should be seen as a resource for both the player and the gamemaster. The player gets to utilize some of the social structure of the organization. The gamemaster gets to use the organization as a hook for scenarios and as cement to hold the campaign together and shape its direction.

DOWN AND DIRTY OFF-SCREEN ACTION

Given that you have this rating in place to determine how much time you have available for behind the scenes activity you might want to use it for other purposes. If so, this section provides some guidelines for using Commitment to cover off-screen action.

Standard players receive 3 Commitment points plus 1 additional “free-floating” Commitment point. You can allow a character to turn 1 point of Commitment into 1 day of work per week. This won’t seem like much but I also don’t distinguish between adventuring time and non-adventuring time in this system so this rate assumes that the characters spend part of their time adventuring and get to collect off-screen days during that time. Assume here that one “day” equals an eight-hour work period. The character can then use these “days” to craft magic items, perform magical research, practice fighting skills, or whatever. This works particularly well for magic item construction since those rules are well detailed in the DMG. For other uses you might need to do a bit of translation or make up something new. Assume that 5 Commitment-days equate to one week if the time period for a task is measured in weeks; 4 weeks equal one month if the time period is measured in months.

If you use the down and dirty system I suggest ignoring or glossing over the issue that some of these activities require the time spent to be consecutive. You can justify this glossing over by looking at it from a larger perspective. Commitment can also represent the time you spend per month, season, or year pursuing an activity. Thus, when a character builds up 3 weeks military training over a series of adventures that can represent the character having found those three consecutive weeks at some time during what must have been a pretty long adventure (and the time between adventures). If you’d prefer to keep closer track of character activities you can allow no collection of off-screen days during an adventure (unless the players specifically take some time off) and give characters 2 “days” of work per Commitment point during non-adventuring weeks.

Finally, if you want to use the down and dirty rules I also suggest giving those occupying certain positions or possessing certain pacts some construction/training time as well. One thing you don’t want is wizards avoiding joining a magical college because it doesn’t leave them enough time to craft magic items. To address this, give members of a magical college half the commitment (round fractions down) they’ve dedicated to the organization back for purposes of doing things associated with their position; this means they have a bit less time than a pure freelancer but, since much of their work in the college involves research anyway, they still manage to get some personal work done in the pursuit of their normal activities (that’s one of the reasons people become university professors). Likewise, fighters should get half their Commitment (round fractions down) back for fighter training or relevant activities.

the need for an Influence check and can either reduce or eliminate the influence point cost for the position. One convenient rule of thumb is to reduce the cost by a fixed amount, perhaps 1 or 2 ip for a somewhat average accomplishment of the roleplaying requirements and up to 5 or more for an impressive accomplishment of the role-playing requirements.

For more ideas along this line see Informal Influence (page 187).

UPGRADING A POSITION

If you already have a position within an organization and want to upgrade to a better position, or simply change to a different branch you can deduct the ip cost of your current position from the ip cost of the target position when making the request. The base cost may not be reduced below 1 ip in this fashion (any such request causes a bit of a hassle, even requests to move to a lower rank).

COMMITMENT REQUIREMENTS

Becoming a member of an organization requires that

one commit a certain amount of time and effort to that organization. Spread yourself too thin and you’ll be kicked out; if you’re already spending too much time supporting other organizations you won’t even be accepted into a new organization. This is modeled in the game by associating commitment costs with positions. Every character can support up to 3 points of commitment. This represents the time you have available for fulfilling the everyday duties of your position. Positions, in turn, cost commitment points; for example, being an executive in an organization typically costs 2 commitment points while simply being a member costs only one point. The typical character can only have 3 or less total points of commitment. Certain feats and abilities can increase the amount of commitment points a character can sustain. External access to an organization does not cost commitment points; you have the power and the pull to call on the organization whenever you want and it has little pull on you.

BENEFITS OF POSITION

Positions are powerful. In communist countries they're the only true measure of power. In capitalist countries they're the way a millionaire becomes a billionaire. In addition to providing access bonuses, and possibly making new requests available, positions frequently come with some standard equipment, possibly an equipment pool, and some duties.

STANDARD EQUIPMENT

Upon achieving certain ranks, levels of influence, or positions in an organization, a character may gain access to some standard equipment. This standard equipment is issued to the character and is theirs to keep for as long as they are a member of the organization. Sometimes they'll be able to retain the equipment upon leaving the organization; typically this occurs when the character has performed good service for the organization and the parting is amicable. It can also occur simply because the equipment is not the kind that the organization wants returned (you may keep your standard issue underwear, recruit). Standard equipment is like one of the character's possessions. If it is lost or damaged it will even be replaced free of charge in many cases; assume that if the equipment was lost or damaged as a result of a mission or in the line of duty the organization treats that as a standard expense and replaces it. If the character loses the item through negligence they'll probably catch some hell, but at least the first time or so they'll get it replaced for free. Eventually, these sorts of replacements might start to cost ip.

The variety of equipment is staggering: weapons and armor, a lamp for guard duty, regular supplies of cigarettes, a uniform, a horse or coach, an office, a secretary, guards, the boss's cat (for which you also have a responsibility), and the list goes on. If offered, a salary counts as part of standard equipment.

EQUIPMENT POOLS

You may have access to an equipment pool. This is a pool of special ip that can be spent on particular equipment and you can keep that equipment for as long as you like. However, if you keep the equipment you have fewer points left in the pool for other goods. You can free up points by returning equipment to the organization. This gives you great flexibility in preparing for different kinds of missions. Equipment pools typically also have a level. The level is used to determine the highest DC of equipment you can choose. No check is required for 'purchasing' the equipment though.

Thus, a character with an equipment pool of 10 ip and equipment level of 20 can pick up any item at its base cost that has an Influence request DC of 20 or lower. The equipment must be taken from that available to the character's position and use the effective DC of the item according to the character's position. Thus if a position grants a +5 bonus with Arms and Armor up to Wizard caster level six then you can request Arms and Armor with a request DC of 25 or less. Items that need to be custom built typically take 3 days per one influence point of value to acquire; see the specific rules regarding equipment for more information. Characters can also enjoy temporary increases in their equipment pool when they're on particular missions for the organization (or when they convince the organization that their current activity is important to the organization).

TEMPORARY EQUIPMENT

Characters can purchase access to temporary equipment from an organization. The character purchases the equipment as usual using ip but they can later return the equipment and get those ip back. So long as the equipment is close to its original condition they recover 75% of the ip they spent (there's a small restocking fee).

DUTIES

These are the downsides to holding a position. For the most part the positions I list along with the organizations here are the ones that give their office holders a great deal of latitude; so long as the character is promoting the interests of the organization (in a fairly broad sense) they'll typically be living up to their duties. If a character fails to satisfy the duties of his position then assign him some social stress. This may go away shortly, or take a long time; it may even require some special actions to remove. More severe violations of one's duties or continued small failures may result in the character losing his position. This might just mean being downgraded to a lower level position but can be as bad as kicking the character out. How to handle individual cases is left to the discretion of the gamemaster.

LOOT

Roleplaying has a long and illustrious history of looting and that won't stop with this campaign setting. However, it's important to note that while fulfilling the duties of one's office the items one comes across should probably go to the organization, and not the agent. Some organizations will simply examine the item for a bit and then give it back but many will

prefer to put it in a more secure location (particularly if it's powerful). Likewise, ownership of the artifacts a character is using when she dies typically reverts to the organization. One should remember that powerful artifacts attract powerful attention. Most of the potent artifacts out there have been gathered up by power groups, either by killing their current owners, co-opting them, buying them off, or simply by requesting that the owner donate it to a worthy cause when they're finished using it. These groups now allocate those artifacts to their members, for temporary use (though temporary might mean "for the life of the member"). Organizations also request that their members donate any personal artifacts to the group when they're done using them; this way the artifact is less likely to end up in the hands of their enemies.

Many organizations simply let their members keep any normal loot recovered on a mission; special items, the target of a mission for instance, go to the organization but the players get an influence reward commensurate with the power of the item recovered as recognition for a job well-done. Some organizations may split the loot recovered from a mission with the players; however, in doing so the players typically get influence commensurate with the amount of loot they recover for the organization, the end result being that it's just as if the players sold the loot to the organization. Since players can usually sell loot for half its market value simply grant them 60% of the market value of the loot in influence points when they turn it over to the organization. They receive a slight bonus for working within the social framework (and making your job as a gamemaster a bit easier). If you'd like to promote working within organizations even more, give players a higher percentage of the influence value of the loot transferred; this will make them love their organization. Up to 75% is reasonable, but anything more than that can lead to situations where players could purchase items then immediately resell them and realize a profit. Also note that this translation scheme does not apply to everything; a powerful artifact antithetical to the ideals of the organization will be taken and either destroyed or secured in some way. The members do not receive influence points equal to the value the artifact might have on the market; instead they'll likely get some kind of bonus for successful completion of a dangerous and difficult task.

SECRETS

Secrets represent the special knowledge available to characters within an organization. There are actually two types of secrets and they have significantly

SPECIAL TRAINING COURSES

Many organizations have access to the special training courses presented in chapter one. I've included the Special Training Courses with the Equipment Groups (see page 254). Members of organizations can gain access to special training via the equipment groups listed in their organization's equipment section.

different effects. The first type of secret is the kind one normally thinks about. It's information that is not widely known but can be shared with the inner circle of a power group. This can be as mundane as a special handshake, to highly classified information regarding the sex life of the mayor. If you include secrets attach them to a position; note though that I haven't included secrets for the organizations and positions presented in this chapter. Many organizations know a lot of secrets and they don't go through a process of listing all of them off to everyone who achieves a given position. Still, if the person asks, the information will be provided quickly.

Of course, knowledge is a difficult thing to contain. Ultimately all the secrets held by organization will end up being widely known or lost in the annals of time. Organizations know this, and do their best to prevent the dissemination of their secrets while refining new techniques to replace those lost to the general public or lost due to their holders being a bit too overzealous in keeping them hidden (and thus dying with their secrets still locked away).

SPECIAL TRAINING

Access to special training is a form of secret. Like other secrets it's not the sort of thing that one typically gains via Influence checks; instead one gains access to special training by occupying a position. The techniques learned via special or secret training comprise some of the most potent abilities in the Second World. Secret formulae for spells and powers, amazing feats, and forbidden prestige classes are all forms of secret training. But access to these secrets requires a commitment to the organization or at least the organization's ideals. The current masters of secret lore do not divulge their knowledge lightly; their reasons for doing so involve either furthering their own agenda, or ensuring that such powerful knowledge does not fall into the wrong hands.

In this sourcebook I don't include many special training options with the organizations since I have so few available. The warden prestige classes are freely avail-

able but more typical prestige classes, either from the core rules, from other sourcebooks, or of your own design, can also make excellent special training options. By attaching such classes to a position you have a more quantified way of controlling access to the class and help incorporate it into your world.

SECRET INFORMATION

There's something of a catch-22 involved in providing secret information in association with an organization. If I list it here every player will see it (even players who try to avoid doing so) and even if I list it in a gamemaster's guide many players also run their own games. There's no easy solution; one method I'll use is to provide secrets along with scenarios and another method will be to provide secrets with city sourcebooks (in the gamemaster's section). Of course, one of the best methods is to simply tailor the secrets to your own campaign; after all, you'll likely run the setting differently anyway. The final method I use is to not provide the truth, but instead provide the evidence from which one can derive the truth. I also provide several interpretations of the evidence, typically interpretations actually believed by people in the Second World. You can then choose which interpretation is most accurate, though it's doubtful that any interpretation gets it all correct.

DOMAIN

Powerful organizations can impose their will on other organizations. The FBI, for example, can step in and take over investigations run by local law enforcement agencies. This is represented in the game by giving some organizations domains. An organization's domain lists the other organizations that are subject to its control. Domain ends up working exactly like external access and uses those rules; I just use the name "domain" since it better captures the feel of the process. In many cases I'll list domains as simply applying to an organization. I do this when the description of the organization only includes one position; you should simply treat it as if that one position is what the domain applies to.

To a certain extent this also works in reverse; a lower level organization can call upon the powers of the higher level organization in whose domain it lies. The access levels for these uses of influence are given in the lower level organization's description. One problem with doing this is that all too often what ends up happening is that the higher level organization provides assistance by taking complete control of the situation.



COMMENDATIONS

As a result of special services performed, characters may gain commendations. Typically, the commendations themselves have little in the way of actual game effects. Instead, the commendation will include an influence gain or perhaps another reward and those will be the mechanical effect of the commendation. Thus, commendations are a kind of 'frill', but they're a kind of frill that people (and players) frequently enjoy. Commendations are a tangible recognition of services rendered and they do a great deal to enhance the flavor and immersiveness of a game. An organization feels like something you want to work for if you get to wear a medal because of it. Commendations themselves can take a variety of forms, medals, plaques, statues, official letters in a file, and so on. They could also just represent recognition from an officer in the organization but that kind of intangible recognition doesn't carry the same weight as recognition attached to an object. I'll try to include sample commendations for individual organizations but given space constraints the lists will be incomplete. Feel free to add some commendations of your own. Also, if a character has a commendation this can provide some roleplaying effects; for instance,

in the real world, soldiers who have earned the U.S. Medal of Honor are saluted by even the highest ranking officers.

INFORMAL INFLUENCE

Now that the formal rules for handling influence are covered I can discuss some informal rules. An organization can offer high level access pretty freely. For example, a tiny organization consisting of just the player characters might allow someone to ally with them. In doing this they offer the ally full use of their own access levels and, in return, gain full use of their ally's access levels. Naturally, if the players can do this, other organizations can do so as well. In fact, another organization might simply offer a player an inner circle position if doing so gave their inner circle access to the player's favors. This can work because the player brings something to the organization. The primary thing to keep in mind when using the informal method is organization size; both the players and other organizations need to control the number of people with access to an favor; grant too many people high level access to an favor and you'll over-tax your available equipment. For example, you are the CEO of an organization consisting of 100 people and you decide to grant full access to your one executive bathroom; you will quickly discover that the line for the toilet has gotten awfully long.

ROLEPLAYING REWARDS

While Influence rewards are modeled after the gold rewards in the core rules there will be times when the players pick up informal influence through some actions of theirs. For example, they might successfully dominate a high ranking officer in the Imperial Legion through the use of magic. This then gives them full external access to the Imperial Officer position (or perhaps somewhat less since it's only one officer). Normally this would cost quite a few influence points but, through in-game actions, they managed to get it for free. That's a good thing. First, it wasn't free. They had to make a plan and execute it; they faced risks and will continue to face risks in the future (since the Imperial Legion might find out about it). Second, they could have just gone into a dungeon or on some other mission that night, making money or influence the old-fashioned way. By allowing this mission you let the players make up their own adventures; they become pro-active and by being so grow more involved with your world.

Roleplaying rewards can also be freebies handed out

by the gamemaster during an adventure. Perhaps a party of first level adventurers does something nice for the Seven Tribes and the Tribes then give the party full access to Guarded Passage through the Forest. By doing this the party picks up an asset but you control precisely what asset they get. In this way you can provide a fairly expensive reward without worrying about giving out too much or making the party too powerful for their level.

CREATING AN ORGANIZATION, INFORMAL

You now have everything you need to create a Tiny organization. This is because a group of player characters just is a Tiny organization. Assuming they're friendly and fulfill requests for each other they do exactly what an organization does, but at a small scale.

Larger organizations are more complex but essentially they do the same thing as smaller organizations, provide a means of sharing influence and equipment. A fuller set of rules for building your own organization deserves its own book.

REPURCHASING ACCESS

These rules ignore issues such as having to replace assets or develop new connections as one's old connections retire, die off, or transfer jobs. Within the time frame of most campaigns replacement shouldn't be an issue but, strictly speaking, one should account for it. Also, large organizations that have been around for a long time would have unreasonable levels of access if they didn't need to go through this replacement process. Assume that an organization or individual needs to repurchase access every 5 years or so. This shouldn't normally apply to inside members and their positions (since they maintain it through everyday labor). It shouldn't be necessary to track repurchasing at all but recognizing that repurchasing is necessary explains why organizations simply don't keep adding more and more favors over time (or at least only does so insofar as the organization grows in power).

ORGANIZATIONS

Organizations provide the vehicle for the use of influence. They link people together, forming a whole greater than the sum of its parts. In this section I list some of the organizations of Second World New York. Most of the powerful ones are included here but not all of these organizations are terribly influential. Instead I've tried to include organizations from a range of levels. I've marked the organizations particularly appropriate for player character membership with asterisks. For these organizations I've tried to include a variety of positions so that players can enjoy some movement within the organization or change roles if desired. The other organizations have fewer positions (sometimes only one) as it's assumed that players will mainly use those organizations for external access to their favors. Despite this, the rules are consistent across both sorts of organizations.

INFLUENCE INVESTMENT

You can invest your influence points in an organization. When you do this you typically receive a return of 10% of your investment per year. To model this in a convenient fashion allow characters to purchase "bonds" in an organization. Each bond costs 10 ip and returns 1 ip of interest per year. These bonds do not compound interest; that means the character effectively gets all interest paid off in dividends. The character can choose to re-invest this interest by saving up the earnings and purchasing another bond. If you want more complex methods of handling just use the economic theory of your choice. The investment itself strengthens the organization but this is already taken into account in the interest. Of greater concern will be in-game actions. If the organization suffers a substantial loss or great boon the interest for a year can be adjusted upward or downward. A simple plus or minus of 1 ip per 5 bonds is convenient though you can use different ratios for more significant events. Naturally, by investing in an organization the player gains a vested interest in seeing

that organization succeed. Again, this promotes role-playing opportunities, and, unlike the First World, there are no rules against insider trading.

ANARCHO-SYNDICALIST MOVEMENT

Skill: Knowledge (civics)

Description: The anarcho-syndicalist movement started with a few wanderers from the Seven Tribes then expanded to capture the heart of the Second World Manhattan counter-culture. The core ideal of the movement is to replace centralized state and corporate authority with a grass roots federation of manual and intellectual laborers. These small individual units would then decide what to do through consensus building. The Movement achieves its goals largely through labor organization, boycotts, and strikes. In the past the movement has been subjected to violent crackdowns, but, since the fall of communism in the First World, state and corporate enforcement agencies tend to let the Movement do what it wishes. However, they still monitor it closely. The success of the Seven Tribes makes some in Manhattan think that the A-S Movement has a real chance at corrupting their posh life-style, but the Movement still hasn't caught on much with those it should best represent, the working class. Whether or not the Movement ever does succeed and regardless of whether or not it even *should* succeed the Movement does provide a valuable service for the city; it provides a check on the overweening power and influence of the large commercial organizations like ACI and BlueCom. In the future the Movement may also exert a liberalizing influence on whatever government eventually takes over the city.

PERSONS OF NOTE

Daniel Nassar (Rog/Wiz)

Onatah Yellow Leaves (Dru)

Positions

Syndicalist Activist

DC:	15
IP Cost:	2
Commitment:	2
External Access Cost:	4 ip

It doesn't take much to make it into the ranks of the Movement beyond a willingness to do the hard work of organizing and keeping a watch on the powers that be in the city. Activists fill a wide variety of roles; few players are likely to enjoy the job of standing on a corner passing out fliers or going to industries to organize; but the Movement frequently stages rallies and they appreciate people who can provide protection without breaking heads. They also appreciate those who keep an eye on the actions and schemes of the large corporate, government, and military interests in the city. The Movement itself receives enough funding from the Seven Tribes to maintain its course.

Roleplaying Access: An official letter from the Seven Tribes grants membership in the New York activist community; alternately, protecting protestors or union members from violence would grant at least a bonus to the Influence check.

Domains

Mayor's Office (-10)
Seven Tribes (-5)

Favors

Muscle Level I (-5)
Public Demonstration (+0)
Propaganda (+0)

Equipment

Negotiation group (+0)
Security group (+0)
Potions and Scrolls, Clr5 (+0)

Appalachian Dwarves

Skill: Perform

Description: Some call the dwarves of the Appalachian Mountains moonshine swilling hillbillies. Others have less kind names for them. As a folk the dwarves keep to themselves, expressing their culture through small local gatherings and avoiding the trappings of polite society. They're ornery dogs, taken to cussing and spitting and shooting squirrels for dinner. They don't take well to patronizing folk and don't see much use for education. This is the veneer outsiders see at any rate.

The dwarves educate, just not in the expert classes; they teach their young about the ways of the woods and the hills. They avoid polite society and civilization because they've been there before. Living in the bustle of the get-ahead world made many of them miserable; these are the ones who left the shores of Europe some 300 years ago to come to America. Here they settled the hills of the Appalachian range (you can't take a dwarf too far from the rock) and picked up a rural lifestyle. This time they chose one with small farms; where you could hunt for your daily meat and grow enough grain for some hearty bread and more than a little alcohol. With food, a decent shack, and hoe-downs as often as possible the dwarves found life far more pleasant here than in the old world and see no reason to return to the old ways. There's no official organization, but elders of the small communities speak with one another if something needs to be done. In times of trouble (gnoll raids being a common version of trouble) the folk gather into a ragtag, disorganized, citizen army and drive the intruders out. Younger dwarves frequently leave for the good times and high wealth of the city. This culture will die out some day, or at least pull back to a small corner of the mountains. But for now there are enough who remember the old times to sustain the community.

Persons of Note

Waylon Graylock (Ftr/Rgr/FerW), Elder

Positions

Good Ol' Boy

DC:	20
IP Cost:	5
Commitment:	1
External Access Cost:	10 ip

What can you call a position in a community that has no structure? The lack of structure part is false though; all groups have a sort of structure, a natural pecking order that develops. For the Appalachian Dwarves this tends to break down into insiders and outsiders. You can gain a sort of quasi-insider status by being labeled a good ol' boy. This just means you're okay folk, not like the rest of the outsiders. Moreover, acquiring the official label places you in the upper half of the Appalachian community itself (since there are a number of not-so-nice insiders). One requirement for becoming a Good Ol' Boy is that you have to down a flask of White Lightning; this is supplied for you as part of your initiation.

Roleplaying Access: Being born into the dwarves of the Appalachians (even if not a dwarf) is enough for a

+5 bonus to the check but not enough for free access. The dwarves respect good hootch; so if you can bring in a sizable load and throw a good party you'll be on their good side. Killing five trolls up in the hills will not only get you in but also put you a good distance towards the troll-slayer commendation; alternately taking out a band of gnolls could get you recognition. No matter what though, you cannot patronize them; you cannot look down your nose or be anything less than genuine.

FAVORS

Hole Up (+5)

Call on Family (+0)

EQUIPMENT

White Lightning (+5)

Arms and Armor*, Wiz12 & Clr10 (+0)

Artifacts

Hammer of Thunderbolts (175 ip, DC 30)

- * Arms and armor crafted by the Appalachian dwarves may be forged from black iron at the standard increase in price; this does not affect the DC of the request.

COMMENDATIONS

TROLL SLAYER

Gangs of trolls prowl the Appalachian range; they like to steal dwarven goods (sheep in particular) and in the process have no problem killing a few dwarves. This has generated a longstanding blood feud between the dwarves and troll kind. The dwarves reward those who have killed 20 or more of the monsters with a troll-slayer axe. This is either a dwarven war-axe or regular battle-axe forged from black iron culled from the hills. The axe is then engraved with ancient runes, proclaiming the name of the hero and his deeds. The axe itself has a +2 enhancement bonus and the runes grant an additional bonus point (of the character's choosing). The axe is custom made for the heroes and just wielding one will improve dwarven reactions to you (granting a +2 circumstance bonus to Diplomacy checks).

ATLANTIC CONSTRUCTION INCORPORATED (ACI)*

Skill: Appraise or Knowledge (business)

Description: ACI is a corporation formed from several

construction companies; the primary drive for this union occurred after Sheila Kincaid began using her first Lyre of Building for construction on the island. While this worked quite effectively her construction company still needed to provide finishing work and materials transport, both of which took a great deal of labor power. Fortunately, Second World New York has no anti-trust laws and so she joined with some other construction companies that had more resources in these areas. Since then they've gone from being a gang of hardy contractors to one of the most powerful businesses on the eastern seaboard. The controlling board has a passion for building; they have a vision of what the city should look like and constantly work to make that happen. ACI also engages in a fair bit of construction outside the city. Given their resources and ability, ACI can build up the area around a mine, or a valuable agricultural region, quite quickly. Much of the expansion in the northeast is heavily controlled by the ACI board choosing which contracts to take.

PERSONS OF NOTE

Sheila Kincaid (Brd), Chief Engineer

Samantha Tennyson (Wiz/PatW), Chief Architect

Jimmy Nguyen (Rgr/Shaw)

Jane Nguyen, (Ftr/MetW)

POSITIONS

FIELD ENGINEER

DC:	20
IP Cost:	3
Commitment:	2
External Access Cost:	4 ip

Description: ACI builds mainly on the island, but also takes some external contracts. Many of these contracts are for outposts, guard towers, and border keeps. The empire or an independent business contracts these buildings when a region opens up or starts becoming more heavily populated (or a resource is discovered). As people begin to move in to the area, or in expectation of civilians moving in to a region, the business constructs a keep or fortress. ACI sends field engineers to build these border structures but these are dangerous areas so both the engineers and the teams typically have some combat experience. This gives them an escort capable of providing protection and able to help scout and clear the area surrounding the construction. After they establish this initial foothold one of the military organizations takes control of the keep to provide continuing security. This is an excellent excuse for an adventure. Field Engineers can be architects, scouts,

or warriors since all are needed in a field construction. The engineers may also be left behind during initial surveying (that is, scouting a territory for potential use). Surveying takes the form of just poking around a region for possible resources and development opportunities. Engineers aren't needed for this but some basic notion of engineering principles helps, so the fighters and scouts who go on these missions frequently have a couple ranks in an appropriate craft or profession skill. Finally, ACI hides its military arm within the ranks of the field engineers. If ACI needs some strongarm enforcement it calls on the field engineers to supply people with the right kinds of skills.

Roleplaying Access: ACI might offer this position as part of the reward for securing the building up and clearing of a region. This could be a mini-campaign centered around some monster lair you have developed. Alternately, ACI could grant a bonus of some sort to players that brought them a territory ripe for expansion.

DOMAINS

Teamster's Guild (-10)

FAVORS

Arranging a Loan (+0)
 Arrange Cargo Transport (+0)
 Shady Construction (+0)
 Bardic Engineer Crew (+0)
 City Planning Archives (+0)
 The Black Ball (+0)

EQUIPMENT

Fortifications Group (+0)
 Housing Group (+5)
 Arms and Armor, Wiz6 (+0)
 R/S/W, Wiz9 (+0)
 Wondrous Items, Wiz8 (+0)
 Lyre of Building (+5)

Artifacts

Portable Hole, 12 ip (DC 27)

BARONESS LYNDIA MICHAELS*

Skill: Diplomacy

Description: The Baroness throws the best parties in the city and getting an invitation to one of these means you've "made-it" here. Lynda Michaels has commanded New York fashion for the last one hundred years. She works with the theater and opera to determine what shows will play in New York. She

has arranged countless marriages, most of which were not only practical but even pleasant to both parties. The Baroness herself retains her beauty; a half-elf, she has entered her middle years, growing from a willowy young woman of taste to an elegant woman of substance. Her husband, the Baron Damian Michaels earned his title carving the southern road through New Mexico to Los Angeles in 1902. He couldn't stand the lack of seasons so moved as far away from the West as possible, ending up here in New York. The Baron was only human though and passed away in 1965, leaving the Baroness a widow while still in her youth. She seems reticent to enter into any relationships of her own since his passing but has occasionally been seen with various escorts in the last decade or so.

PERSONS OF NOTE

Baroness Lynda Michaels (Nob)

POSITIONS

FRIEND

DC: 20
IP Cost: 1
Commitment: 2
External Access Cost: 3 ip

Naturally, there are no official positions within this faction. Being a friend just means you're on the standard invitation list to the Baroness' parties and can easily meet her for lunch and so on. This isn't quite good friend level though; that requires some extra roleplaying. She will carve time out of her busy schedule to listen to your problems or offer some advice. The high commitment cost represents the amount of time one needs to spend networking, going to parties, having lunch, and so on, when one wants to be part of the social elite. One thing to note regarding this position is that while it might lack fancy favors and equipment the domains are quite powerful.

Roleplaying Access: There's not much in the way of heroics that will get you in the good graces of the Baroness; she's seen it all anyway. However, she has a soft spot for love stories so if you either manage to pursue love against great odds, or aid someone else in the pursuit of their love she'll show her favor. Alternately, if you manage to get her to have a Helpful attitude you may take this position for free.

DOMAINS

Blue Conglomerate: Executive (-10)
 Red Society: Assassin (-10)
 Mayor's Office (-5)

FAVORS

Party Invitation (+5)
 Matchmaking (+0)
 Arranging a Meeting (+0)
 Seal of Favor (+0)

EQUIPMENT

Housing group (+5)
 Wondrous items, Wiz7 (+0)

BLUE CONGLOMERATE (BLUECON)*

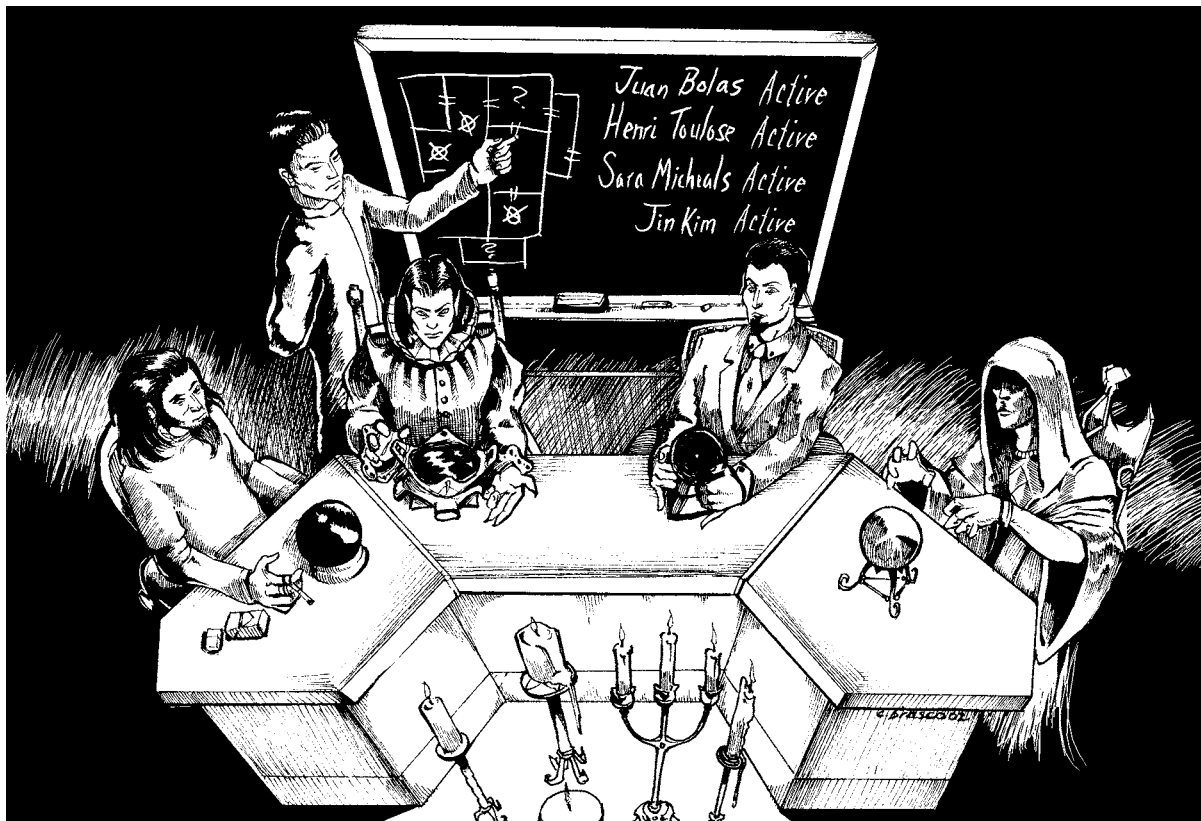
Skill: Appraise or Knowledge (business)

Description: The Blue Conglomerate is the strongest corporation in New York. Initially formed over two hundred years ago, the Blue Conglomerate started as a guild of shipping magnates, thus the name. The Conglomerate grew steadily but slowly in power over the intervening years, until it began expanding into other businesses around 1920. During this century the Conglomerate has rapidly grown in economic and political power. The Conglomerate controls most of the shipping, caravan trade, and banking in the city. Fully one fourth of the ships that leave and enter port sail under the flag of the Blue Conglomerate. It also controls much of the government. This model of business and power fits in with the Conglomerate's philosophy: enhance economic and temporal power;

expand the boundaries of the area controlled by New York; maintain status quo largely within the city; specifically do not become a government of its own (the Conglomerate would much rather have someone else be the government and then just buy them).

The Blue Conglomerate avoids open warfare, preferring instead to acquire power through economic and covert means. The Blue Conglomerate uses para-military forces to break strikes and occasionally support war against intractable foes (but this is not typically necessary). For example, if the Seven Tribes got out of hand with their opposition to commercial expansion the Blue Conglomerate might push the city to declare open war on the Tribes.

The Blue Conglomerate built its headquarters in central Manhattan, near First World Times Square. The Conglomerate owns a large First World skyscraper and their shift gate takes one directly from their main Second World HQ to their main First World HQ; note though that in the First World they go by the name BlueCon to sound a bit more friendly; they're even trying to get people to start using that name in the Second World but with less success. Their Second World headquarters has a large shopping bazaar on the ground floor; one can find items imported from all over the First and Second Worlds here and the Conglomerate allows independent vendors to set up



Blue Room Op by Craig R. Brasco

stalls and tables for their wares for a nominal fee. The vendors love this since they sell much more at the bazaar than elsewhere and BlueCon supplies the security.

The Conglomerate has substantial connections to the Red Society and various criminal groups. They are also one of the Sword Guild's best customers since they hire guards for their ships through them. When the bazaar needs reinforcements they go to the Sword Guild.

The Conglomerate's First World holdings consist mainly of rail and airlines. They have contacts amongst a number of the criminal organizations there and informers in the police department and mayor's office. Most First World merchandise that is available in the Second World is brought over by the Blue Conglomerate.

PEOPLE

Alice Crandall (Rog/VecW), CEO
Marvin Raillton (Ftr/FleW), Field Op
Peter Johnson (Clr), Exec
Edward Krebs (Brd/DreW), Field Op

POSITIONS

AGENT

DC: 15
IP Cost: 1
Commitment: 1
External Access Cost: 2 ip

This is the basic level of membership in the Blue Conglomerate. This simply indicates some kind of association with the organization and assumes that the character occasionally performs small jobs for the Conglomerate. Other than the access bonuses this provides no special advantages to the agent.

Roleplaying Access: There's really no backdoor way into being an agent for the Blue Conglomerate. They have a standardized test they use for entrance, actually designed by a First World testing firm and they don't like providing a free pass. The influence check actually represents taking the test.

EXECUTIVE

DC: 25
IP Cost: 8

Blue Conglomerate Access Chart

Requests	Agent	Field Operative	Executive
Domains			
Red Society: Assassin			-10
Sword Guild	-10	-5	-5
Mayor's Office			-10
Favors			
First World Transit	-5	+0	+5
First World Shift Gate		-5	+0
Arranging a Loan		-5	+5
Arrange Cargo Transport		+0	+0
Secret Passage		+0	-5
Hippogriff Stables	-5	+5	+0
The Blue Room		+0	-5
Contacts (Commercial)	-5	+0	+5
Fighter Retraining		+0	-5
Equipment			
Close Combat Group	-5	+0	-5
Housing Group	+0	+0	+5
Sea Transport Group	-5	-5	+5
Wondrous Items, Wiz6	-5	+0	+0
Arms and Armor, Wiz6	-5	+5	+0
Potions, Clr8 & Wiz8	-5	+0	+0
Artifacts			
	Difficulty Class		
Ring of Water Elemental Command (175 ip)		30	30
Instant Fortress (48 ip)	32	22	27
Ring of Regeneration (75 ip)	35	30	30

Commitment: 2
External Access Cost: 20 ip

Executives make important decisions within the corporation and are trusted with a great deal of latitude in how they implement their tasks. Executives tend to be busy with duties but player character executives will likely take missions (frequently on their own initiative) more in line with their adventuring tastes. You may also take a special position called an Op-Exec; this has a total Commitment cost of 3 and you can use the most favorable access bonuses from either the Field

Operative or the Executive. You must gain access to both positions normally.

Roleplaying Access: It's not good enough to simply be talented in a fight for access to the executive bathroom; you also need to be able to brown-nose. But if you can't do that either, perhaps showing overwhelming competence will work. You need to demonstrate leadership and the ability to be proactive; the best way to do this is to come up with a scenario idea of your own, a plan to advance the interests of the Blue Conglomerate that you then pass on to your gamemaster so that the GM can build a scenario around it. The quality of the plan and its execution determines what kind of break BlueCom will cut you on the entrance requirements.

STANDARD EQUIPMENT

As an executive you have an office and a secretary. More powerful executives get nicer offices and more secretaries. You may also receive, if you desire, company housing in one of the Conglomerate owned security complexes (essentially, gated communities) scattered around the city. These accommodations are quite comfortable.

FIELD OPERATIVE

DC:	20
IP Cost:	6
Commitment:	2
External Access Cost:	10 ip

Field operatives go on the dangerous and nasty missions to which the Conglomerate must occasionally resort. For these missions, a field team is put together and run by an executive (actually, someone who is both an executive and a field op, sometimes called a field executive or op-exec). Once in the field, they have incredible latitude about how they go about accomplishing their task. Typical assignments involve rescuing hostages, escorting negotiators to potential trade partners, clearing out dungeons for later exploitation, and so on. For vital missions the operation may be directed from the Blue Room (the operatives can also request Blue Room coordination for an official mission or a pro-active mission).

Roleplaying Access: Unlike the execs, fighting ability will get you into the field ops. A sample run is pretty typical; this is where BlueCom simply sends you on a mission and sees how well you succeed. Depending on your gamemaster's interpretation of the Blue Conglomerate this run may or may not involve some pretty shady activity. A shadowy version of the Blue

Conglomerate would require missions of a more ambiguous morality in order to make sure prospective field ops have the right moral "character".

STANDARD EQUIPMENT POOL

Because field teams are combined arms units, typically consisting of fighting, intrusion, and magical power each field operative has a pool of equipment to choose from as standard equipment. Operatives get an initial resource pool of 4 ip with a resource level of 20.

COMMENDATIONS

The Blue Conglomerate normally eschews the frivolous award of medals and commendations. Instead, successful agents get letters that go in their file. Still, field operatives are a different sort of animal and face different sorts of risks. For this reason the Blue Conglomerate awards the Mariner's Wave.

MARINER'S WAVE

The Mariner's Wave is a small, oval pin with a blue background and a white wave embossed upon it. This commendation is worth a one time award of 2 ip and is given upon completion of an operative's first successful field mission. Later successful missions do not change the status of this medal but exemplary performance on a mission may earn a sort of upgrade. There are three upgrades to the Mariner's Wave: bronze, silver, and gold. These are awarded for missions where the agents overcame Encounter Levels of 6, 12, and 18 respectively (as long as they overcome one encounter of the given EL on the mission they get the reward). The commendations are worth one time awards of 1 ip, 3 ip, and 12 ip respectively. The improved awards are denoted by a metal border around the medal. The medals are non-magical.

CATHOLIC CHURCH*

Skill: Knowledge (religion)

Description: On September 3rd, 148 CE Thorus Dravon led a small group of rebels against Kira Sa'Veriden, better known as Jupiter, tyrant of the Middle Sea. The ensuing struggle spanned two worlds, one interstice, and shattered the Ruby Rift but, in the end, Sa'Veriden fell. The rebels proceeded to slay 3 more archons before being ambushed and destroyed by loyalist forces. This marked the end; Thorus made the evolution from rebel to martyr and eventually to ideal. He had shown the world that the old gods were not needed; belief alone was sufficient and, in fact, more important than patronage. The Catholic Church occupied the void left by the passing of the archons to the west and grew

to one of the most powerful religious organizations in the world. As the church evolved it incorporated First World Christian doctrines into its structure. As with First World Christianity the first few centuries saw heated debate over interpretation of scripture and the eventual structure of the organized church. In the coming centuries the Catholic Church's initial militant policies would be tempered by First World interpretations of Christian gospels. While it took a while for the Second World branch of the Catholic Church to embrace the ideal of turning the other cheek, especially in dealing with interstitial entities, it *did* recognize that the gospels stressed peace. They shifted their attention from indiscriminate persecution of outsiders to less savory interstitial entities, especially the Roa and those who dealt with them. During the Reformation and counter-reformation the more militant members frequently shifted allegiance to Norse variations of Protestantism (championed by the interstitial convert, Tyr).

The Catholic Diocese in New York monitors the presence of demons and spreads the teachings of the gospels; using the teachings as a form of preventative medicine while the Monitors treat outbreaks.

PERSONS OF NOTE

Rafael Dominguez (Pal/Clr), Arch-Diocese

POSITIONS

MONITOR

DC:	20
IP Cost:	5
Commitment:	2
External Access Cost:	15 ip

Monitors combat demonic and undead forces on earth and within the interstices themselves; as a side duty they support the regular church in secular activities where needed in the Second World. Monitors specialize in fighting undead, the demonic, and the Roa. Many of them are converted adventurers who began by facing down the undead in musty tombs. Recently, veterans of the Mississippi Valley War have joined the Monitors to continue the fight begun there. The Monitors have suspicions regarding the Central Empire nobility but cannot move on mere rumor. Thus they hone their skills recognizing that a more dire fight may await them in the future.

The Monitors maintain constant vigilance for signs of demonic influence. They also serve as the scouting arm of the church; many of them explore the wilderness, like knights errant, seeking out and finding demonic

influence. The Monitors reporting to the New York Diocese keep constant watch on the movements of Lord Trespass and his forces. They established Fort Brigid near Boston for this purpose and run regular patrols up into Maine and Nova Scotia. Farming settlements have moved into the region south and west of Fort Brigid despite the looming danger.

Roleplaying Access: In addition to being a member in good standing of the church you should also have significant experience fighting undead or demons. Being part of an active exorcism (i.e. an exorcism that required some up close work with weapons) that involved the church is one good method of being granted Monitor status. Perhaps this comes about by accident or you could even be recruited from a parish to assist in defeating some evil. Within New York this might take the form of clearing a haunted house. The scenario involved should be made for at least fifth level characters.

DOMAINS

Teamsters (-5)

FAVORS

Translations (+5)
Ritual Cleansing (+0)
Divine Lockdown (+0)
Vatican Library Access (+0)

EQUIPMENT

Potions, Clr8 (+0)
Arms and armor, Clr6 (+0)
Religious buildings group (-5)
Exorcism group (+5)
Undead hunter group (+5)

CHANASK*

Skill: Gather Information

Description: Since the Red Society declared open season on them, the Chanask have moved underground and act almost completely in secret. They operate mainly out of the tunnels though its members can be contacted in downtown. Eclipse and Aeric began their adventuring career in the Southwest; surviving the deserts of New Mexico, Nevada, and Arizona. They spent some time exploring the ruins of the Grand Canyon and were captured by Talos, a demon lord and part of the Ruby Rift Canyon Pact. Their internment took them on a long trip through the Forge which they only escaped by emerging into First World New York while pursued by a small horde of Basalt Icon Wielders

commanded by a fifth rank Scopic Weaver. Naturally, they shunted to the Second World shortly thereafter and met up with a very young Kitara, recently graduated from the SIS.

PERSONS OF NOTE

Eclipse (Rog/Shaw)

Aeric (Wiz/PatW)

Kitara (Ftr/VecW)

POSITIONS

ALLY

DC:	25
IP Cost:	5
Commitment:	1
External Access Cost:	20 ip

While rumors hold that the Chanask has people everywhere those not subject to superstitious awe know that it consists of just a few members; it's practically an adventuring party. They can offer little in the way of equipment; typically they need to haggle with someone to get an item made. However, they've managed to secure access to a supply of potions and have a few favors available. The main thing you get by joining the Chanask is an opportunity to get in on the ground floor of an organization that might be going somewhere.

Roleplaying Access: Getting in to the Chanask is pretty informal; you mainly just need to be on "helpful" terms with them. You can get this way by helping them avoid the Red Society or get back at the Red Society; though even this will only cut you a half cost break and +5 to your influence check. Long term cooperation works best and can get you in via the back door. The Chanask favors reliability, commitment, and is one of those "honor amongst thieves" sorts of organizations.

DOMAINS

House Usher (-10)

Tempest Argon (-10)

Street Irchin Syndicate (-10)

FAVORS

Sweep (-5)

Sewer Transit (+5)

Extraction Team (+0)

Secret Guildhouse (+5)

EQUIPMENT

Potion, Clr8 (+0)

CHEN FAMILY*

Skill: Diplomacy

Description: Randolph Chen is the patriarch of this extended family. Randolph tends to be a ruthless expansionist when dealing with outsiders but is extremely fair and even generous with his family and friends. However, he demands respect and a proper show of etiquette from children and employees. He might expect little from a less than competent nephew or son but will push those who show potential to be their best. Success when working for him reaps sizable rewards.

Randolph instills in his family a desire to propagate the family name, therefore he has a number of children. His current number two son, William Chen, demonstrates intelligence and talent and will inherit the leadership of the family when Randolph retires. The Chen family keeps control of its businesses within the family. However, they allow some outsiders to marry a daughter and then change their last name to Chen. If someone takes this opportunity then they are treated as a full member of the family and can achieve a very high rank (it's even feasible that they could be the family leader if something happens to William or he eventually retires). An outsider who marries into the family and keeps his own surname will still be a part of the family, but will lack direct influence over family decisions.

The Chens straddle the line between underworld organization and legitimate business. They began with pretty much standard smuggling, gambling, and protection rackets run out of Chinatown. This proved lucrative and they slowly built up a number of smaller, more legitimate businesses (particularly import and export). Lately they've divested themselves of the smuggling enterprises and reduced the number of casinos they own; this brings them into conflict with the Red Society and the Clims Gang much less. However, the Chens retain their protection business within Chinatown; in part simply because without the Chens the immigrants and small businesses within Chinatown would have no security. Since the Chens generally deal fairly, the residents of Chinatown treat them with respect. However, the age of underworld fiefdoms may be coming to a close, especially if the City Guard ever reforms.

PERSONS OF NOTE

Randolph Chen (Wiz/RunW), patriarch

Harrison Jing-shu (Ftr/MetW)

William Chen (Ftr/Rog)
Jennifer Chen (Clr/GatW)

POSITIONS

SILK TIGER

DC: 20
IP Cost: 5
Commitment: 2
External Access Cost: 10 ip

Silk Tigers perform the random dangerous work of the Chen family. They are expected to be both subtle, like silk, and dangerous, like a tiger. The Silk Tigers get their orders from Harrison Jing-shu, William, or Jennifer; only under the most extreme circumstances will they accept a surrogate's word. Any kind of miscellaneous work that you might expect a highly trained agent of questionable morals to perform falls into their venue; this makes them a good player character position. Silk Tigers can move to positions within the family itself; for instance, Harrison Jing-shu began as a Silk Tiger.

Roleplaying Access: Performing a single mission isn't enough to enter the Silk Tigers. You would need to perform one mission as an outsider to demonstrate your ability then undergo some training. During the training period you'll be tested for humility and loyalty. You're not expected to be blindly obedient but you are expected to show respect and demonstrate your trustworthiness. After the training period you'll likely be assigned a significant task, one in which the Chens actually have a vested interest. If this succeeds you'll be admitted.

STANDARD EQUIPMENT

The Silk Tigers operate on their own; in fact they can spend most of their time doing their own thing or pursuing other missions. Few would even know that a Silk Tiger worked for the Chens. All Silk Tigers receive a *Silk Tiger Tattoo* (see page 267) courtesy of Randolph Chen. They get to keep this even if they leave the service (given the difficulty of removing it).

HONORARY CHEN

DC: 25
IP Cost: 10
Commitment: 3
External Access Cost: 30 ip

Being accepted within the family circle is both a great honor and great burden. Once inside you are forever inside and you are expected to adhere to the family's

Chen Family Access Chart

Requests	Silk Tiger	Honorary Chen
Favors		
Search Ship	-5	+0
Deep Search of Ship		-5
Search Building (Chinatown)	+0	+5
Muscle II	+0	+0
Shady Construction	-5	+0
Watch the Ports	-5	+0
Equipment		
Scrolls, Wiz10	+0	+5
R/S/W, Wiz12	+0	+5
Wands, Wiz7	+0	+5
Artifacts		
Difficulty Class		
Ring of Fire Elemental Command (175 ip)	30	25
+3 keen spiked chain of brilliant energy (110 ip)	26	26

wishes. However, being inside the circle means that you can take on the Chen name if you want and this means that your authority within the family is only limited by your own ability.

Roleplaying Access: First, this requires time; the Chens need to become so comfortable with you that they practically consider you family. One way to get this status is to marry one of their children, with Randolph's consent. Eloping won't work (though, later on Randolph might grant his blessings if you prove yourself).

STANDARD EQUIPMENT

Family members receive a room within the mansion and use of any of the Chen estates scattered around the New York area (there's a vacation house on Long Island and one in Upstate New York). Family members also receive a resource pool of 5 ip at level 25.

CITY GUARD*

Skill: Sense Motive

Description: The City Guard doesn't do much besides harass non-citizens in Second World New York. The previous political structure has a lot to do with this; for any significant matters the Imperial Legion would step into the city and handle the situation. This relegated

the city guard to such exciting and important activities as handling petty thieves and break-ins then ignoring the crimes of the wealthy. Since the withdrawal of the Legion and Imperial influence the guard's power has increased and, potentially, they can do quite a bit. However, they still need the okay of the Mayor's office for major activity and, more importantly, the tacit approval of powerful civilian organizations such as the Blue Conglomerate. Lacking these they may discover that Division Alpha has taken over their job.

The funding for the guard comes largely from the citizen's dues and this plays out in the way the guard provides security. However, that does not mean that no-one in the guard takes their duties seriously. Especially now, in post-Imperial New York, constables and detectives test the limits of their position and attempt to reform the guard from within. With good reformers in the guard's lower ranks and some advancement of those people to positions with more authority the guard could become a respectable institution.

PERSONS OF NOTE

Leonard Pats (Ftr/Rog), Precinct Captain

POSITIONS

DETECTIVE

DC: 15

City Guard Access Chart		
Requests	Detective	Precinct Captain
Domains		
Red Society: Assassin		-10
Clims Gang		-10
Favors		
Suppress Investigation	-5	+5
Stop Investigation	-5	+5
Search Building	+5	+0
Detain Individual	+5	+0
Official Interrogation	+5	+0
Equipment		
Close Combat Group	-5	-5
Interrogation group	+0	+0
Inspection group	-5	-5
Potions, Clr6	+0	+0
Arms and armor, Wiz6	+0	+0

IP Cost: 1
 Commitment: 2
 External Access Cost: 5 ip

Detectives investigate the more significant crimes committed within their districts. Or at least they would in an ideal world. In the Second World they investigate crimes against the wealthy and their property. Despite their official duties some detectives take on a fair bit of unofficial work. However, to do this they need some protection against their own superiors. Given the lack of a news media someone else needs to take on that duty and some detectives have found that cultivating a relationship with Baroness Lynda Michaels or the Catholic church provides that security; this means they need to spend some of their influence points on other organizations just to do their job. Regardless, they still need to be particularly cautious.

Roleplaying Access: The city guard is always on the lookout for good detectives; the main problem you'll face is the corruption rampant in the force. Still, if you manage to help the guard solve a crime and also manage to make it look as if they did the solving you'll be in good shape. The guard values characters with police experience from the First World and your exploits there will get you at least a +5 bonus on the Influence check (more if you actually solved a major crime).

STANDARD EQUIPMENT

Detectives receive a resource pool of \$2,500 (primarily meant for mundane equipment) and a small desk in a large precinct room.

PRECINCT CAPTAIN

DC: 25
 IP Cost: 5
 Commitment: 2
 External Access Cost: 10 ip

Precinct Captains have a reputation as some of the most corrupt people in Second World New York. This is entirely deserved. Precinct Captains spend much of their time brown-nosing those in authority and making sure that no constables or detectives get out of hand and arrest the wrong people. If anyone with real authority gets offended at what's been happening in their area the Captain will scream at his detectives until something happens to cool down the heat. Precinct Captains frequently have good relations with either the Red Society or the Clims Gang. Trying to reform the guard from a captaincy will likely get you dead; much like the detectives you'd best have some powerful outside backing.

Roleplaying Access: In the future precinct captains might have to come up through the ranks. For now, political pull can get pretty much anyone the job. If you can get on the mayor's good side, and guarantee to support him, he'll put you in charge of a precinct. You don't even need to work through him necessarily since Marie Nonce controls so much of the office. Alternately, doing some good, old-fashioned detective work can get you the promotion; the community might clamor for it to such an extent that the mayor's office has to cave in. Solving three significant cases should be enough for this kind of promotion. This can take the form of solving three scenarios during your career as a detective (that get recognition).

COMMENDATIONS

While the City Guard offers a wide variety of commendations (at last count there were 53 distinct commendations) they're awarded for such arbitrary and self-serving reasons that no one gives them any credit.

CLIMS GANG*

Skill: Gather Information

Description: The Clims Gang is essentially a down and dirty version of the Red Society. Clims has no pretensions to status. He runs a criminal organization pure and true. He'll get his hands bloody, run some numbers and other rackets, shake down a person or two, and generally do what bad people do to get ahead in the world. Clims has a pure and feral hatred for the Red Society; he's gone through much of his life with an inferiority complex and this comes out in a sort of foul spew whenever he has to deal with the snobbish Red Society elite. Clims isn't powerful enough to be too uppity but he's cunning and ruthless enough to survive and he's ambitious enough to pose a serious threat.

PERSONS OF NOTE

Jack 'Fatman' Clims (Ftr/Rog), boss
'Mayo' (Bar/Ftr), bodyguard

POSITIONS

THUG

DC: 15
IP Cost: 1
Commitment: 1
External Access Cost: 2 ip

You have the rare privilege of getting yelled at and made to do low-down dirty things by Jake Clims. There's absolutely no glory in this position, but the

duties couldn't get much easier. Moreover, since Jake lacks much in the way of competent help you can advance quite rapidly in his organization.

Roleplaying Access: You can practically just talk your way into this position. If you've had some run-ins with the Red Society you're already on Jake's good side. Just don't patronize him; he hates people looking down their noses at him.

MADE MAN

DC: 20
IP Cost: 3
Commitment: 2
External Access Cost: 6 ip

Once you get "made" you're pretty well ranked in the gang. This primarily means that if you're ever hit the Clims Gang promises to score some payback for you. This is better than it sounds since it means that you're officially protected from within. There's quite a bit of internal violence in the gang and you're shielded from that once you're made. It also gives you something of a license to kill since only the boss will call your actions into question.

Roleplaying Access: It takes a lotta hard work, sweat, and spitting nails to make it in this gang. Ya gotta be either tough or sharp and if yer sharp you can't smart-mouth off to Jake; he don't take well to that. But if yer sharp and you know your place and you keep Jake out of a bind or two, well, he can use a guy with a head on his shoulders in the gang. But don't you ever call him 'fatman'. One more bit, while Jake's an unrepentant sexist pig and this would normally make it almost

Clims Gang Access Chart

Requests	Thug	Made Man
Favors		
Criminal Business		+0
Hit		-5
Look the Other Way	-5	+0
Muscle Level 1	+0	+5
Watch the Docks	-5	+0
Equipment		
Arms and armor*, Wiz9		+0
Potions, Clr7	-5	+0
Artifacts		
Difficulty Class		
+3 Keen Rapier of icy burst ² (70 ip)		20

impossible for a woman to get made in the gang his desire to find someone to use the sissy weapon has made him amenable to female recruits.

EQUIPMENT NOTES

- * Arms and armor crafted via Clims Gang contacts may be forged from Martian steel at the standard increase in price; this does not affect the DC of the request.
- ² Clims can't stand this "sissy" weapon, but he also can't stand to let it go to waste. He won't use it himself and won't let his bodyguard use it but might let someone else use it. A "loyal broad who was tough in a scrap, knew her way around a kitchen, and weren't too damn uppity" would be the ideal candidate.

COMMENDATIONS

Typically the only kind of commendation you can expect from Clims is a "good job boys" and a pat on the back, or perhaps a free dinner. To a certain extent being "made" is a commendation.

COLLEGE OF THE INTERSTICE*

Skill: Knowledge (arcana)

Description: Wardens and other individuals with academic and exploratory interests make up the College of the Interstice. They offer some classes to the public, and provide information to interested individuals, but they are largely reclusive and focus on their research. One of their primary goals is the exploration of interstitial spaces. This means they need people capable of providing access to those spaces, and people capable of handling themselves in the dangerous and uncertain environments found within the interstices. This leads them to risky research, since the doors they open go both ways. Also, high level sorcerous research like this has been watched carefully by the Empire since the Quebec incident. The Empire allows them to exist since the College is too useful to shut down completely, and it's better to keep them in the open than drive them underground.

DOMAIN

The College has little to no temporal influence. The researchers just aren't concerned with local affairs. However, like most magical organizations the College is surrounded by an air of mystery and cachet of threat; thus most people will at least be deferential to an Interstitial Colleague.

Given the heavy presence of Rune, Pattern, and particularly Gate Wardens the College exerts some

influence over interstitial organizations (i.e. monstrous alien hordes). This makes being a member of the college particularly good for Gate Wardens.

PEOPLE

Barbara Walsh (Wiz/PatW)
Hector Velasquez (Wiz/RunW)
Caleb (Ghaele, Celestial)

POSITIONS

The College has librarians, guards, and a few administrators. But mainly the college is comprised of researchers. These are the ones who do the core work and face the primary dangers.

ASSOCIATE

DC: 15
IP Cost: 1
Commitment: 1
External Access Cost: 3 ip

Associates have an official connection with the college but are not part of its regular activities. This gives them improved access to the college's research facilities and personnel. Associates may also be called upon to provide their own insight into particular puzzles. Most associates are members of some other organization. There's some competition between the College and Tempest Argon so there isn't much interaction between the two (other than name calling).

Roleplaying Access: Demonstrated competence in arcane magic is pretty much all that's needed to get a position as an associate. This takes the form of a standardized test so there's usually no way around the Influence check for entrance. However, when a particularly young wizard demonstrates competence (such as a member of the SIS) the College frequently grants a special scholarship to the prodigy.

STANDARD EQUIPMENT

Associates get a small corner of a lab devoted to them but their main reward is partial access to the library.

RESEARCHER

DC: 20
IP Cost: 3
Commitment: 2
External Access Cost: 15 ip

Researchers are the main reason the college exists. Researchers come in various grades but they all have a say in how the College operates; there are occasional staff meetings where the researchers choose whether someone gets promoted or accepted into the college.

To a large extent, influence with the college is just influence over the College's researchers.

Within limits the researcher is expected to share their knowledge with the college as a whole. Since many researchers tend to be secretive this rule is particularly lax but the researcher is expected to donate their spell books and all research notes to the library upon death. Researchers may also be called upon to cast spells on behalf of the college. In particular, preparation spells for exploration missions to an interstice. Younger researchers take on the duty of preparing all the *cat's grace* and similar buffing spells for explorers prior to them taking a shorter interstitial journey.

Roleplaying Access: Researchers do research of course; so what gets you into the field is typically long arduous months of studying some incredibly narrow topic and writing a book that no one will ever read. However, come up with a significant new spell (and donate it to the library) and you might get elevated to researcher early as a rising young star. More active research works as well, such as interstitial explorations where you discover important new data.

STANDARD EQUIPMENT

Researchers get assigned an office, lab space, and free access to the full library.

EXPLORER

DC:	20
IP Cost:	7
Commitment:	2
External Access Cost:	15 ip

While some researchers look at the explorers as rough edged barbarians and thrill-seekers (and these criticisms have some merit) most researchers recognize that the college could hardly even exist without the explorers. Since it's the explorers who bring back the goods and information, talented ones are shown some of the highest respect. Many explorers are also researchers,

<i>College of the Interstice Access Chart</i>			
Requests	Associate	Explorer	Researcher
Domains			
Red Society: Assassin			-10
Sword Guild	-10	-5	-5
Mayor's Office			-10
Favors			
Basic Analyze Item	-5	+0	+5
Advanced Analyze Item		-5	+0
Interstitial Gate		+0	+0
Deep Exploration Vehicle		+0	-5
Interstitial Base Camp		+5	-5
Magical Library II	+0		
Magical Library III		+0	+5
Equipment			
Ring, Wiz12	-5		+0
Alchemy Group	+0	+0	+5
Exploration Group		+5	+0
Inspection Group		+0	+5
Undead Hunter Group		-5	
R/S/W, Wiz7	+0	+0	+0
Wondrous Item, Wiz9	-5	+0	+0
Artifacts		Difficulty Class	
Sword of the planes* (45 ip)		25	30
Cubic Gate (140 ip)		33	33
Staff of the Magi (225 ip)			35
Ring of Wizardry III (65 ip)		32	27

which means they get a say in the proceedings of the college. You may take both a Researcher and Explorer position at a total commitment cost of 3.

Explorers get access to some of the best equipment available. They need it. Items recovered on a mission technically belong to the College (with standard Influence point compensation) but successful explorers are usually given first dibs on stuff they bring back and they receive free analysis of the stuff they recover.

Roleplaying Access: One of the best methods for roleplaying your way into this position is via a field promotion. An associate finds himself dragged into an interstitial adventure unexpectedly, makes a good showing in some fairly dire circumstances, and then

returns to find they've been promoted. A strong knowledge of interstitial lore can also get you assigned to a team, especially if you have information relevant to a mission.

STANDARD EQUIPMENT

Explorers have a resource pool of 5 ip at level 20. They can freely trade back and forth items from within this pool. They may also acquire special equipment for particular missions.

EQUIPMENT NOTES

- * The college actually has a few of these swords. Assume there are enough for two players to request them if they desire.

COMMENDATIONS

THE WHITE MEDAL

This commendation is awarded after 5 interstitial excursions. Typically, the length of the excursion doesn't matter (it's not really worthwhile for the Colleagues to fight about that). The medal itself is a simple white disc. Every 5 excursions after that a diagonal black line is added across the lower right corner. Explorers are particularly proud of this medal and the number of slashes they have. The explorers then typically get into arguments about which places are worse and so on. The medal is worth a one time bonus of 1 influence point.

FOREIGN AWARDS

Occasionally explorers or researchers receive commendations from interstitial governments or organizations they assist. Many of the explorers are particularly proud of these and the College itself likes to show off those who have received these awards.

DIVISION ALPHA*

Skill: Knowledge (tactics)

Description: Division Alpha cut its teeth fighting the Ved Qayat. Lord Trespass has spent the last five decades crafting the Qayat into an effective fighting force. One method he used was to direct their hostilities towards an external target, the first being the Culvet Basin lying between New York and Montreal. The Culvet Road, linking New York and Montreal, passes directly through the basin and serves as a major artery for trade moving between the two cities when the river connecting Montreal to the North Atlantic is ice-locked. Long caravans of grain, grown on the plains of Alberta, move through Montreal, down along the Culvet Road to New York, and then on by ship to the hungry armies

of Europe. In turn, Europe sends clippers filled with manufactured goods and production materials to pay for the food. When Lord Trespass moved his Arxhan Corps into the basin he cut off this lucrative trade route and threatened to establish not just a base in the region but also a permanent settlement. The Blue Conglomerate, Hudson Bay Shipping, and others paid Division Alpha handsomely to fix this problem, which the Division accomplished by looting the ranks of other mercenary organizations (including the Imperial Legion) and going on the march. The campaign was ultimately a success though it cost quite a few lives. The Qayat fought fiercely and developed their organizational skills as the campaign progressed. Eventually Trespass pulled his forces out of the region; while losing the battle he managed to provide an external target around which to rally his factions and cement his hold over Nova Scotia. Division Alpha returned from the Culvet Basin Campaign with a well-disciplined veteran army. They then used this army to help New York expand its influence and control; the region of safe haven, where a farm or town could be expected to survive, expanded considerably during their tenure. However, these communities end up corporate towns, safe only due to the economic intervention of New York's major corporations.

Division Alpha organizes itself in a military structure. Seniority and capability determine who runs the Division. Due to its mercenary nature the Division has little ability to call on outside allies in times of need. Still, few would risk attacking it because of its strong position and utter ruthlessness in battle. Far better to simply hire it. When Alpha enters into a contract it fixes its price based on the situation. While Alpha claims that it does not open itself to bidding in these events, it has accepted payment to remain neutral in the past. This has made them few friends in the Northeast.

PERSONS OF NOTE

Madison Tor (Ftr/Precision Sword Master)

POSITIONS

JUNIOR OFFICER

DC:	20
IP Cost:	2
Commitment:	3
External Access Cost:	4 ip

Junior officers run the day to day business of the division's units. They determine daily training, regimen, and maintain logistics. This gives them a fair degree of leeway in how they run their unit but

keeps them running their unit almost all the time. Player character junior officers should use the Field Exercise favor to move their unit into areas where they wish to adventure. This allows them to perform their duties while adventuring and gives them the added bonus of a well-defended base camp.

Roleplaying Access: Many junior officers hail from the Imperial Legion; frequently they were former non-commissioned officers whose talent went unrecognized there. Other junior officers arise from battlefield promotions; perform well and demonstrate some leadership qualities while facing down gnolls or the Black Fist orcs and you can get a promotion on the spot. It needs to be a tough fight though and it needs to demonstrate more than just the ability to kill things. You need to lead a troop through an extended period of time and coordinate their actions.

STANDARD EQUIPMENT

Junior officers receive chain mail, a large steel shield, a battle-axe or longsword, a light or heavy crossbow, and a light warhorse as personal equipment. They also have use of a personal office and billet when at the base, or standard tent while in the field.

SENIOR OFFICER

DC:	25
IP Cost:	5
Commitment:	2
External Access Cost:	25 ip

Senior officers plan staff meetings and major movements of troops in the field. When the Division receives a significant operation it hands implementation of that mission to a senior officer who then commands up to a battalion (plus auxiliary units) in the execution of that mission. Between missions the senior officer arranges major training exercises and may be placed in charge of construction tasks (such as building or repairing a border tower). Fairly typical major missions involve clearing or securing an area for a future settlement or potential industry.

Roleplaying Access: Many of the senior officers rose up through the ranks by leading troops against Lord Trespass. You can work your way up to Senior Officer by leading troops successfully in the field. Promotions should depend largely on conquering more territory. You conquer some land; New York mercantile interests move in to exploit the land; then they recommend you for promotion. Leading a company sized unit in an important defense against incursions by Lord Trespass would also earn at least a discount on this

Division Alpha Access Chart

Requests	Junior Officer	Senior Officer
Domains		
City Guard: Captain		-5
Imperial Legion: Officer		-10
Favors		
Field Exercise	+5	+5
Fortified Tower	-5	+0
Fighter Retraining	+0	+0
Equipment		
Arms and armor*, Wiz6	+0	+5
Potions, Clr7	+0	+5
Rings, Wiz12 & Clr12	-5	+0
Close Combat Group	+5	+5
Fire Combat Group	+0	+5
Fortifications group	+0	+5
Siege engines group	+0	+5

promotion.

STANDARD EQUIPMENT

Senior officers receive chain mail, a large steel shield, a battle-axe or longsword, and a light or heavy crossbow, all of masterwork quality. For transportation they get a light warhorse as well as a carriage and driver. An assistant constantly accompanies a senior officer and takes care of most mundane requirements. Finally, senior officers receive comfortable housing allocations.

EQUIPMENT NOTES

- * Arms and armor crafted via Division Alpha contacts may be forged from Martian steel at the standard increase in price; this does not affect the DC of the request.

COMMENDATIONS

SPARTAN CROSS

Soldiers may earn the Spartan Cross for exceptional bravery. Charging a dozen orcs, holding a breach, and advancing under withering arrow fire can earn this medal even when the benefits are not too significant. The medal is a simple silver cross, like a Maltese Cross, outlined in brass. It's worth 1 ip when awarded.

ENIGMA SECURITIES*

Skill: Sense Motive

Description: During World War II a number of First Worlders found themselves in the Second World. Their experiences in combat, both mundane (but stressful) and supernatural pushed them across the Forge and made them exiles. Many of these individuals were members of special forces or covert operations groups; and some of those on the Allied side returned to North America. The founders put their intelligence skills to profitable use in New York; while few powerful groups in the area would accept the city guard having anything in the way of investigative authority, most groups could make good use of an independent investigative organization that worked for hire. Enigma Securities (named after the German code cracked by the allies in World War II) provided this service. Enigma specializes in security measures, counter-intelligence, and investigation. They also engage in detective work and espionage. The firm keeps track of all the major players in New York and likely possesses one of the best databases on New York organizations (rivalled perhaps by the Red Society).

PERSONS OF NOTE

George Lazlo (Rog)

Henri Derbon (Wiz/RunW)

POSITIONS

RETRIEVAL

DC: 20
IP Cost: 2
Commitment: 2
External Access Cost: 4 ip

Retrieval means “thief” in Enigma-speak. Retrieval agents are tasked with missions to infiltrate buildings and retrieve important information or items. Occasionally they’ll also be tasked with a kidnapping or assassination. Retrieval agents double as security advisors; when an organization requests security advice from Enigma they’ll send along one of their retrieval agents to determine the best way to protect the location from intrusion. This involves setting guard duties and guard allocations as well as installing locks and alarms.

Roleplaying Access: Enigma typically requires a probationary period where you perform a variety of small operations, from minor retrieval and scouting missions to setting up security for a small business (then perhaps testing your measures with another agent). At least one of these should be played out if

Enigma Securities Access Chart

Requests	Retrieval	Intel
Domains		
City Guard: Captain		-5
Favors		
Basic Analyze Item	+0	
Magical Surveillance	-5	+0
Surveillance	-5	+0
Sweep	+0	
Equipment		
Inspection group	+0	+5
Interrogation group	+0	+5
Intrusion group	+5	+0
Scouting group	+5	+0
Security group	+0	+5
Stealth group	+5	+0
Surveillance group	+0	+5

you want to use the roleplaying method of gaining access, preferably two.

INTEL

DC: 20
IP Cost: 2
Commitment: 2
External Access Cost: 4 ip

Intel agents do plain detective work but their usual job is counter-espionage. This means they check backgrounds on employees and perform surveillance of possible leaks. Intel agents are also brought in for inspection purposes and have some pull with the City Guard to gain access to buildings.

Roleplaying Access: As with retrieval you can’t get into Intel with a single mission. However, if you work as an outside assistant on three cases and provide useful support, they’ll let you work a case by yourself. Pass this test they’ll bring you inside. They do make exceptions for truly brilliant insights. Occasionally a character just pegs the solution right (frequently breaking the scenario in the process). For this kind of insight Enigma brings them onboard as Intel right away.

GOAL ORIENTED ENERGETICS*

Skill: Knowledge (religion)

Description: GOE places agents offering free personality and potential tests on the streets of several of the great centers of power and influence in both the Second and First World. These are passed off as a combination Intelligence quotient, magical quotient, exile potential, and personality profile depending on the world. In fact much of this is true; however the main function of these tests is to find likely recruits for Goal Oriented Energetics. Likely recruits have some raw talent or power, but have either fallen into a dark phase of their lives or have serious personality disorders that GOE can use to manipulate them. GOE does not merely brainwash and use these agents though; it empowers these agents. GOE takes the downtrodden, those with miserable self-images, breaks them with harsh training and brutal psychological inspection, then re-forges them into new, more powerful individuals. Those who make it through this process emerge with a new sense of purpose, a drive to excel and take care of themselves, ruthlessly if necessary. GOE is about the triumph of the ego, the will. The initiated of GOE believe in the infinite power of the self; unfortunately, consideration for others only matters insofar as others can be used to advance one's own position or hinder that advance. The power of the will forms the core ideology of the GOE metaphysic. As one advances within the hierarchy, GOE initiates the member into the deeper secrets of the metaphysic and their ultimate purposes. Stefan Kharkov (of Tempest Argon) once described GOE's philosophy and technique as "a bastard fusion of Nietzsche and Zen koan; I wish I had thought of it."

GOE also provides training seminars. These are terribly expensive but remarkably successful at teaching assertiveness and positive thinking. These students have met with some success in business and politics, expanding GOE's influence even more.

PERSONS OF NOTE

Cordelia Sykes (goddess?), Leader
Jill Rush (Ftr/MotW)
Donald Friend (Sor)
Caleb Stone (Wiz/RunW)
Tara Grey (Bar/FleW)

POSITIONS

DYNAMIC AGENT

DC: 20
IP Cost: 8
Commitment: 3
External Access Cost: 16 ip

Dynamic agents have worked their way through GOE, demonstrating loyalty and an ability to operate proactively to advance the interests of the organization. Once accepted as a Dynamic Agent the member gains access to more details regarding the purposes and functioning of the organization. Dynamic Agents can start their own cell or continue to work within one of the larger cells (such as the New York cell). A new technique that GOE is exploring involves establishing a cell in a rural, unsecured, area then providing security against monsters and other threats. So far while this has paid relatively well in terms of monetary investment it hasn't done so well at winning converts, so the practice may be discontinued.

Roleplaying Access: There are two things GOE looks for in a Dynamic Agent, loyalty and the power of positive thinking. Overcoming adversity in the execution of a task, or even persevering in the attempt to accomplish the impossible can earn one their way into the Dynamic Agents.

STANDARD EQUIPMENT

Dynamic Agents use mostly their own equipment. They're expected to lead and influence others though, so GOE provides them with a *cloak of charisma* +4.

DOMAINS

City Guard (-5)
Mayor's Office (-10)
ACI (-10)

FAVORS

First World Transit (+0)
Repatriation (+0)

EQUIPMENT

Arms and armor, Wiz9 (-5)
R/S/W, Wiz14 (+0)
Wondrous items, Wiz9 (-5)
Interrogation group (+0)
Negotiation group (+0)

HELLFIRE CLUB

Skill: Diplomacy

Description: The Hellfire Club began as a secret society where the elite could go to broker the back-room deals that made financial empires. Later, as the power of the aristocracy waned, the Club served as a haven for the wealthy; a place where they could hide from their wives and the rabble and indulge in pleasures forbidden in polite society. This hedonism led to ever

more experimentation with arcane forces. Scrying allowed a sort of perfect voyeurism. Conjurations allowed blasphemous union with interstitial demons. Some of these creatures offered not just pleasures of the flesh, but new routes to power. This has re-invigorated the club for a while at least; making it once again a powerful faction in New York. However, the corruption and jaded hedonism has pushed the Hellfire Club to the very brink; soon something might break loose and either bring the Club crashing down or propel it to new heights. Lord Jones Hamilton exercises substantial control over the organization, and is supposedly one of its founding members (rumor has it that he aided in the drawing up of the charter in the early 1700s).

PERSONS OF NOTE

Lord Jones Hamilton

POSITIONS

JADE KEY

DC:	20
IP Cost:	5
Commitment:	1
External Access Cost:	10 ip

The Hellfire Club rewards its most trusted or influential members with a jade key. This key grants access to the inner sanctum, where one can indulge in the more illicit features of the Club. Members with this level of access are simply called Holders of the Jade Key, or Jade Keys for short. The sitting rooms of the inner sanctum swim in a decadent luxury; the red leather chairs softly embrace the sitter, the alcohol behind the polished oak bar comes in cut-crystal containers and has been meticulously chosen by those members with the best knowledge of such goods. The Keys trade whispered stories of fantastic bordellos and foreign drugs; they also trade knowledge of what good investments they know, though this has declined over the years. The duties of a Jade Key are pretty minimal, simply support the Club when needed. Most Keys have little ambition left but will not stand in the way of someone else pursuing dangerous goals.

Roleplaying Access: Simply being filthy rich is enough to get you into the Hellfire club. If you ever have a bank account of two million or more dollars (and it's not purely temporary) the Hellfire Club will grant you entrance. Other than that you need to go the dice rolling route.

DOMAINS

Tollwyn Family (-10)
Tempest Argon (-10)

FAVORS

Arrange Meeting (+0)
Quick Inspection (+0)
Magical Library I (+0)
The Hellfire Club Mirror (+0)

EQUIPMENT

Scrolls and Potions, Wiz8 (+0)
Rings, Wiz12 (+0)

HOUSE USHER*

Skill: Perform

Description: Usher began as a small clique of exiles living in central New York. As exiles, they had familiarity with First World practices, plus a high concentration of wardens. The founders took risks, explored dangerous places, performed shady jobs, and generally got into enough trouble to get rich, but not enough to get dead. They parleyed their infamy, influence, and wealth into a strange kind of organization; a technology maintainer in a place where technology doesn't work. Still, they had the power and resources to make it work, albeit at great cost. The result of all this is that the New York elite could have fancy, First World toys if they were willing to pay. As an efficient business practice these toys have questionable value but they certainly shine as status symbols. The founders chose a name (House Usher) and took over a building. The ground floor of their headquarters is a large nightclub (also called House Usher) with a heavy techno-urban First World influence. They check nothing at the door so the place can occasionally turn dangerous but at least you can show off your shiny magical cloak to prospective dates. The second floor is where they handle most of their retail business, and the upper floors are what pass for offices.

PERSONS OF NOTE

Morgan "Poe" Vance (Sor5/TonW8)

POSITIONS

THE HIGH TABLE

DC:	20
IP Cost:	2
Commitment:	1
External Access Cost:	4 ip

House Usher, the nightclub, opens its doors at sunset then closes them again at sunrise. The club has a ground level with one large dance floor, a scroungy basement with a small dance floor and a tiny, beer soaked stage,

and an upper dance floor which is fully visible from the ground floor (a wall of silence separates it from the rest of the club though). A balcony to the side overlooks the mass of writhing flesh and in this balcony sits the High Table. The only significant sign of membership in the House is having a permanent seat at the High Table. Some time ago the table was replaced with an archaic round one about fifteen feet across. Of course, it came with claims regarding thousand year old English origins; sometimes people point to the "AP+G 4ever" caption inside a heart carved into the surface of the table to support those claims to authenticity (oddly enough, the carving itself appears quite old). Regardless, the sitters at the High Table have taken the whole thing to heart and occasionally dispense odd quests or call for tournaments within the club itself.

Just sitting here is enough to draw the attention of every eye in the nightclub and immediately marks you as an insider with one of the most dangerous factions in the city. While House Usher seldom moves against anyone pretty much everyone knows that if they did they would pose a serious threat. The house spends time maintaining the network cross-link (this requires some work in the Forge), scouting out performing talent for

the club, keeping in contact with the taggers, and having a good time, not necessarily in that order. The only real duty one has as a member of the High Table is to promote the interests of House Usher (which can be accomplished in a wide variety of ways; finding a good brand of Scotch is one).

Roleplaying Access: Naturally, accepting a quest and succeeding at it serves as the main roleplaying route to the High Table. These quests sound in many ways like the sorts of quest Arthur might have passed down, but they possess a distinctive modern urban overtone. A knight might be asked to rescue a pop singer from her cruel agent; you might be asked to recover an item from Ticon's hoard. On the more pragmatic side blazing a new network trail through the Forge provides a sufficient boon for access to the table. Regardless, you still need to demonstrate some strength of character and inner nobility (though it can be of the street variety).

STANDARD EQUIPMENT

A permanent seat at the High Table and free drinks from the bar. Usher will also give you an apartment in the building if you request it.



The High Table by Craig R. Brasco

DOMAIN

Taggers (-5)

FAVORS

Cell Phone and Cross-World Call (Basic, +5)

Street Listening (+0)

The Beast (Basic, +5)

Construct Fashion (+0)

EQUIPMENT

R/S/W, Wiz12 (+0)

Potions, Wiz8 (+5)

Wondrous items, Wiz9 (+0)

IMPERIAL LEGION

Skill: Knowledge (tactics)

Description: The Central Empire is waning, but waning empires are frequently the most dangerous. From the early 18th century to the mid-20th century the Central Empire dominated North America from the Rio Grande to Canada and from the Rockies to the Eastern seaboard. The empire declined in power during the first half of the 20th century and suffered severe losses during the Quebec Incident (particularly to resources and units stationed in the north). Since then an outbreak of undead in Louisiana led to the Mississippi Valley War which lasted almost six years before finally being put to an end at the Battle of New Orleans. During that time Lord Trespass and the Ved Qayat established a firm presence in Maine. What's worse, the empire itself seems spent from the Valley War; it's like a sort of lethargy has crept over the central states and in its wake left not only a malaise, but an ever increasing decadence. The lessons of First World history are not lost on the empire's citizens (and even rulers) and many can't help but notice the similarities between the decline of the Central Empire and the decline of the Roman Empire. However, neither vehemence in the senate nor vitriol in what free press exists seem capable of stemming the tide.

Regardless, the empire is still a far ways off from dead and exerts an almost complete dominance over the central states. The more far flung regions of the empire show the cracks though. Texas has become a wild frontier and is all but run by El Reir, a gnoll bandit lord. New York and the northeast have always enjoyed far more freedom than the rest of the nation, in part due to New York's status as a Great City. Great Cities are unduly influenced by the First World and in the past two hundred years that means that they just don't operate in the same way. Also, Great Cities have

always drawn power to them; this is likely the result of synchronicity. What this means is that Great Cities tend to have more powerful inhabitants, and powerful people don't like to follow orders. It's far easier to just ignore them a bit and focus on the rest of your empire than try to keep the hornet's nest in line. What this has meant and continues to mean is that the empire stations a legion in or nearby the city; it maintains both a military and diplomatic presence, frequently attempting to recruit when it can. While the threat of Legion invasion is constantly present and serves to restrain some of the more radical elements, the shadow the empire casts over the city is faint, even forgettable. More than anything the power brokers in New York see the empire as yet another piece on the political chessboard, useful for out-maneuvering an adversary and ensuring enough stability to prevent wholesale revolution (and thus secure the status quo).

Imperial Legion Access Chart

Requests	Commissioned Officer	Imperial Scout
Domains		
Mayor's Office	-10	
City Guard: Captain	-10	
Favors		
Field Exercise	+0	-5
Fighter Retraining	+0	-5
Fortified Tower	-5	+0
Imperial Scouting Maps	-5	+5
Untiring Steed	-5	+0
Equipment		
Close Combat Group	+5	+0
Fire Combat Group	+0	+5
Exotic Cavalry Group	+0	+0
Scouting Group		+0
Fortifications Group	+0	
Siege Engines Group	+0	
Exploration Group		+0
Arms and Armor, Clr6	+0	+0
Potions and Scrolls, Clr6	+0	+0
Artifacts		
Difficulty Class		
Steel Horse (100 ip)	30	25

PEOPLE

Jadan Wilks (Ftr), Commander
Adam Swensen (Ftr/Rog/MotW)

POSITIONS

COMMISSIONED OFFICER

DC:	20
IP Cost:	2
Commitment:	2
External Access Cost:	4 ip

As a commissioned officer you either have led, or do lead, troops in the field. The officer imagined here inspects the troops occasionally but mostly slacks off and lets the NCOs do all the real labor.

Roleplaying Access: Many of the officers hail from the Waukeen military academy north of Chicago and only the children of the nobility get into there. Other officers out east rose up through the ranks the hard way, by leading troops in the Mississippi Valley War. However, they weren't the right kind for home duty so they got shunted off to where they'd be mostly harmless. You can work your way up to Senior Officer by the typical politicking and getting yourself assigned to important aide positions, or you can lead troops successfully in the field. You can do this by adding to territory, suppressing a rebellion, or protecting the Northeast against intrusions by Lord Trespass.

STANDARD EQUIPMENT

Officers in the Legion are issued \$15,000 in personal gear; they can contribute their own funds to make this equipment masterwork or purchase higher ticket value items. This gear is expected to get beat up a bit so is generally pretty easy to replace when lost or damaged.

LEGION SCOUT

DC:	15
IP Cost:	2
Commitment:	1
External Access Cost:	4 ip

The Scouts of the Imperial Legion are famous; these are the most rugged and talented of the legionnaires. They also work better as a player position since they have much more authority to come and go as they please. The scouts can be called upon to explore dangerous areas, even dangerous urban areas. Typically this occurs in response to news that a region is having some troubles (such as an incursion by Lord Trespass).

Roleplaying Access: The Legion frequently recruits for its scouts. It needs local guides while on campaign and

so hires people to pathfind for it. These guides scout the land ahead and keep the Legion both on track and out of too much trouble. Perform this mission particularly well and the Legion will bring you on full time as a Scout. This kind of advanced patrolling mission can work out to make an interesting adventure; the scouts have the security of knowing there's a large army to back them up but they also have the responsibility to make sure that no large forces set an ambush. They also face considerable risk since they'll be ahead of the main force operating mainly on their own in what may very well be enemy held territory.

STANDARD EQUIPMENT

The scouts take pride in their individuality, thus, no two will look alike or take something as mundane as a standard equipment package. They do tend to gravitate towards particular types of items though (bows, magic for travel and concealment, etc.) This lack of uniform earns them a certain degree of disdain from the legionnaires.

The one exception to this is that all Legion Scouts receive a *Ring of Sustenance*.

COMMENDATIONS

One thing the Empire does better than any other organization in the Americas is give out commendations. It's not just that it gives out lots of commendations (though it does do that, especially to its officer corps) but that its commendations look so impressive. Moreover the commendations have the



Shattered Sun by Dominic Hamer

backing of one of the strongest nations to stride the Second World in the past millennium; this means that the commendations are not only beautiful, but they bear the weight of history. If you achieve the highest award in the Imperial military (which also happens to be the highest award in the Empire) you share something with the heroes of legend. Just being part of this historical tradition is enough to motivate a good number of soldiers.

SHATTERED SUN

The history of this medal lies sometime during the vanished years; that it's a connection to those times makes this medal even more valuable. The medal itself appears as a simple red disk either rising above a horizon or setting below it. The sun itself is fragmented into four shards by a jagged line. The empire awards this to those who perform deeds not only dangerous, but that bring great benefit to the people of the empire (save thousands of lives for instance). Those honored with this live forever in the history of the Empire. Even the Emperor salutes the wearer of this medal (in the past it was noted that doing so was a good idea if the emperor wanted to avoid potential coup). Bearing this medal grants a +2 circumstance bonus to most uses of Charisma skills, Influence checks, and reaction checks in North America and grants a one time bonus of 20 influence points.

LORD JONES HAMILTON

Skill: Knowledge (arcana)

Description: Lord Jones Hamilton remains one of the lasting enigmas of Second World New York. He has floated in and out of the scene for as long as anyone can remember. Carol Yin, when she was still a member of the SIS, remembers using a riddle she made up about Jones Hamilton on Ticon and Ticon musing that he thought Hamilton would have died during Dravon's rebellion. Hamilton doesn't seem to actually do much of anything, other than read. But he does possess a ravenous curiosity for history and minutia. "Where did that person go to school? What color clothes did his mother prefer? Did he ever have a girlfriend? Did she die violently?" Stuff like that. He possesses an unsettling ability to know all about you, even from the first time you meet. Finally, he has made some frighteningly accurate predictions; usually of incredibly minor details but almost always painful ones. No one has actually seen him fight.

Hamilton has historically exerted influence through the Hellfire Club; this is changing though. Already he

appears to be abandoning the project in favor of other organizations. For instance, he's been seen with high-ranking GOE members fairly often. More than a few people suspect Hamilton is an archon; perhaps one of the really tough archons. Alternately, people accuse him of being one of the Roa, perhaps a Roa overlord of some sort. Stories have it that one of the members of the Hellfire Club, Gregor Stanley, some years back got really annoyed at Hamilton; apparently Jones Hamilton would frequently chuckle or laugh out loud upon seeing Stanley. After one particularly long and raucous outburst of laughter Gregor accused Hamilton of being a Roa. They stood facing each other for no more than a minute, then Gregor fell to the floor dead. Subsequent (and clandestine) investigation failed to reveal any trace of magic, poison, or disease; the investigators even transported the body to the First World for medical analysis, but this was before modern methods. Regardless, the First World examiner ruled it natural causes and suspected a stroke or something similar; perhaps tension, stress, and terror combined to take Gregor down. Or perhaps Hamilton possesses the power to strike someone dead with nothing more than a glance; perhaps he somehow commands a person's fate.

POSITIONS

FLUNKY

DC:	25
IP Cost:	5
Commitment:	3
External Access Cost:	25 ip

The flunky has gotten close enough to Hamilton to regularly do business for him. This means that the flunky gets to regularly speak with Hamilton and that's enough to put the fear on anyone in the Hellfire Club. As a flunky you will spend a great deal of time scrounging up old books, tracking down the gossip surrounding both important people and apparently insignificant people. This keeps you busy and it's likely that Hamilton will barely tolerate your presence. But just look at the stuff you get...

Roleplaying Access: Er, you just need to sign this little contract; here's a needle... Regardless, Jones seems all too willing to accept powerful flunkies but you do have to impress him with your personal power; savvy helps but really isn't all that important. He's also willing to accept those with the willingness and capability to search out the most obscure data for him.

DOMAIN

Hellfire Club (+0)

FAVORS

Those via the Hellfire Club

EQUIPMENT

Any item at Wiz12 or Clr7 (+5)

Rings, Wiz18 (+0)

Artifacts

Deck of Many Things (10 ip per draw, DC 25, DC 30 for non-lackeys; Jones loves sharing this toy)

MAYOR'S OFFICE

Skill: Bluff

Description: The mayor's office of Second World New York is something of a paper tiger. The mayor's office didn't even exist in any substantial form up until twelve years ago because New York was under the control of the North Eastern regional governor for the Central Empire until then. Changes in the internal structure of the Empire caused them to draw inwards and pull back the resources they thought too expensive to maintain. More importantly, internal struggles made the presence of a strong imperial force outside of Chicago dangerous to those in power there; no one wanted the old governor throwing his weight behind one of the factions fighting for power in Chicago. The solution was to simply pull the governor out and distribute more authority to the independent groups in New York. This also saved resources since the legion could be drastically reduced and New York asked to provide its own defense. In pulling out the Empire bequeathed much of its power on the mayor's office; but, under pressure from the organizations in New York, a number of controls were placed on his office. Moreover, since the mayor's office had been emasculated for so long it remained mostly ineffectual. Still, it at least has the authority to institute some pretty severe measures for a temporary period and its control of the city records and other services make it a valuable commodity.

Michael Antoni serves as the current mayor. Antoni is frequently torn between delusions of true power and simply maintaining his current level of comfort. The latter typically wins, especially when threatened. Assistants in his office see the potential of the city government and many of them plot to one day take control and turn the office into a major power.

PERSONS OF NOTE

Michael Antoni (Nob), Mayor

Marie Nonce (Nob), scheming staff member

POSITIONSMAYOR'S STAFF

DC: 20

IP Cost: 5

Commitment: 2

External Access Cost: 10 ip

The mayor's staff has managed to keep itself from growing too bloated over the years. Marie can claim much of the credit for that (and frequently does). However, this has much less to do with keeping staff costs down and more to do with excising those not in her camp. Antoni stays oblivious to this since Marie seems to help him advance the interests and temporal power of his office. Staff members can keep busy running errands but they also have enough authority to palm much of that work off on their assistants. If moving with the Marie faction you can advance rapidly by working to expand the authority of the mayor's office. This is best done through political maneuvering and networking though undermining rival powers works well too.

Roleplaying Access: Get on the good side of either the mayor or Marie and you can get on the staff. To get on the good side of the mayor you simply need to charm him with your social graces (or other social bits). That still won't get you much pull because Marie's faction will tolerate you just enough to let you hang around. Getting on Marie's side means you're going places. You can do this by building up the power of the mayor's office; someday she thinks the office will be worth something but it will take serious effort. If you can help move some political action through the city to get the office a new form of authority (typically also resulting in a new favor) then you're on the inside with her.

STANDARD EQUIPMENT

Staff members receive an office and a small staff of assistants (typically 2 to 4).

DOMAIN

City Guard (-5)

Imperial Legion (-10)

FAVORS

Martial Law (+0)

Suppress Investigation (-5)

Stop Investigation (-5)
 Search Ship (-5)
 Records Sweep (+5)
 City Planning Archives (+5)
 Orb of Storms (+0)

EQUIPMENT

Fortifications Group (-5)
 Housing Group (+5)
 Potions, Wiz6 & Clr6 (-5)

COMMENDATIONS

KEYS TO THE CITY

Any citizen who provides some great service for the city may be given the Keys to the City. This ceremony involves lots of back-patting and smiling for the public plus a rather goofy official symbol (such as a giant brass key). Still the services that earn this reward legitimately deserve accolades. Previous recipients have rescued a dozen children from a burning building, captured a notorious pirate plaguing the city's trade lanes, delivered a large supply of food in times of famine, and so forth. The reward grants the recipient permanent citizenship free of charge. The recipient will also gain 2 ip for their recognition.

NIGHT WATCH*

Skill: Knowledge (tactics)

Description: This group offers highly skilled mercenaries for small businesses and operations. The Night Watch operates out of Hell's Kitchen. Technically this puts in Clims Gang territory but they have a working agreement where they leave each other alone. Hank Wolfe forged the group from recon specialists that fought in the Mississippi Valley War. They took their name from the dangerous duty they performed, night patrol and forward guard. Wolfe and his team managed to bring down the roamancer Legraise in a particularly bloody battle at his castle on some cliffs overlooking the Mississippi river. After this they further distinguished themselves in the Battle of New Orleans. Since then their trust in the Empire has waned.

The group is closely knit and members feel obligated to support each other in times of need or to offer their services for free to support the group as a whole. The camaraderie and Esprit de Corps they feel expresses itself in patches or tattoos identifying themselves with the group. Under proper circumstances this group could

become influential. Note that Night Watch members tend to be principled and may balk at orders they find offensive. In most cases the Night Watch will back up its members in these situations (though it will refund any money paid).

PERSONS OF NOTE

Hank Wolfe, (Ftr/Rgr/FerW)

POSITIONS

WRAITH TEAM MEMBER

DC: 20
IP Cost: 5
Commitment: 2
External Access Cost: 10 ip

The Wraith teams perform lucrative and hazardous extraction missions. Hank Wolf draws these members from a variety of fields, trying to have arcane, intrusion, and fighting ability strongly represented in each team. A typical player character group fits the model of a Wraith team quite well. Wraith teams rescue hostages, liberate political prisoners, scour a site for intelligence, and even perform artifact retrieval from a dungeon.

Roleplaying Access: Assisting a Wraith Team in their mission generates both good will and an appreciation of your talents. You should demonstrate about 8th level of ability, plus honor and loyalty to your adventuring party. You shouldn't leave too much of a mess; the Wraiths are quick-in and quick-out kind of people.

STANDARD EQUIPMENT

All Wraith team members receive a bunk and selection of uniform. They also receive a 5 ip resource pool at level 20.

FAVORS

Bodyguards (+0)
 Extraction Team (+0)
 Fighter Retraining (+5)
 Site Recon (+0)
 Watch the Ports (-5)

EQUIPMENT

Arms and armor*, Wiz9 (+0)
 Close Combat Group (+5)
 Intrusion group (+0)
 Scouting group (+0)
 Stealth group (+0)

* Arms and armor crafted through the Night Watch's contacts may be forged from tensile mercury at the standard increase in price; this does not affect the DC of the request.

PROTESTANT CHURCHES OF NEW YORK***Skill:** Knowledge (religion)

Description: The unique nature of Second World belief works against organized religion, or at least against centrally organized religion. Everyone with true faith, in the spirit, in a cause, or in an ideal, can channel that faith into divine power. Everyone capable of channeling that faith speaks with a special kind of authority; their clarity of vision and ability to explain that vision creates a constantly evolving community of belief. All this fits in well with Protestant doctrine but prevents the sort of centralization of authority present in the Catholic Church. Despite this, an informal organization exists amongst Protestant churches. The Protestant community listens to those well versed in scripture, those who battle the undead, and those with a clear insight into the faith. This is the source of authority and influence within the Protestant community.

Given the informal nature of the Protestant organization it lacks a clear and consistent goal or purpose. Each small church and individual has his own purpose, some good and some not. This provides a great deal of latitude for an individual, but also reduces one's ability to call on social resources.

PERSONS OF NOTE

Sarah Koln (Clr), Religious leader

POSITIONSMINISTER

DC:	15
IP Cost:	2
Commitment:	3
External Access Cost:	4 ip

A minister has acquired a significant enough following to have a voice in the community. Ministers also speak with other ministers to help guide the overall policy of Protestant churches in the Northeast. Ministers have a large number of duties, many of them to the people within their ministries. This keeps them pretty busy. However, this position possesses enough influence to have helpers for dealing with everyday duties, leaving some time left over for other activities.

Roleplaying Access: Just being a cleric gets you some of this but you're more than a healer, you're a community leader; and, what's more, the leader part is far more important than the being a cleric part. So long as you have a congregation of at least 40 people who truly believe in you and think that you have a

special talent for knowing right from wrong you can occupy this position.

STANDARD EQUIPMENT

Ministers don't get much. The ministry keeps up the church and supplies the minister with a residence and stipend.

DOMAINS

Mayor (-10)
City Guard (-5)
Teamsters (-5)

FAVORS

Boycott (+0)
Public Demonstration (+0)
Congregation (+0)

EQUIPMENT

Religious buildings group (+0)
Healing group (+0)
Potions and Scrolls, Clr6 (+0)
R/S/W, Clr6 (+0)

RED SOCIETY***Skill:** Gather Information

Description: The Red Society is currently the most powerful criminal organization in Second World New York. They have their hands in drug running, loan-sharking, protection, trafficking in unsavory material components, and pretty much everything of a criminal nature. They run two of the largest casinos in the city and provide a variety of other services that few organizations have the "will" to become involved in. Moreover, the Red Society leans hard on anyone who tries to provide those services independently. One method the Red Society uses to solidify its control is to keep tight rein on the cities fences. If you need to sell something you've stolen you typically need to do it through a Red Society controlled pawn broker; this process involves a default tax of 40% that the broker takes out of any transaction and passes on to the Society. In this way the Society keeps control over even minor criminal activity; it allows a discount on the brokerage tax if the seller has official status with the Society (down to 20%). This provides a significant incentive for freelancers to come into the fold.

The Society has grown in economic and political strength; in turn this has enhanced its legitimacy within the city. Given the way past criminal organizations have worked the Society may be in the transition phase

between a gang and a legitimate business. Already Viktor Quine has purchased a permanent seat at the opera and supports any charities the Baroness sends his way. He has also reorganized the Society to eliminate former traces of racism, though old habits die hard.

PERSONS OF NOTE

Viktor Quine (Rog/Ass), Boss

Carol Yin (Rog/FleW)

Michael Dominguez (Sor)

POSITIONS

ASSASSIN

DC: 20
IP Cost: 5
Commitment: 2
External Access Cost: 10 ip

The Red Society employs some assassins, though they're mostly just hit men and glorified enforcers. Still, it's a prestigious position within the Society and allows for a fair amount of freedom. Assassins gain free access to training for the assassin prestige class (naturally).

Roleplaying Access: Like the assassin prestige class you must perform a job as a "freebie" for the Society. This typically will be someone of moderate importance; not high but also not a small-time shopkeeper, unless it's one of those trouble-making shopkeepers that complain all the time about the good old-fashioned protection money they're paying.

STANDARD EQUIPMENT

There's no standard issue for Red Society Assassins but they are allocated a 2 ip equipment pool at level 20 for personal supplies. An assassin typically receives about \$10,000 for a hit (of course, the nature of the target affects this heavily).

GUILD MEMBER

DC: 15
IP Cost: 1
Commitment: 1
External Access Cost: 2 ip

This allows you to become an official guild member of the Red Society. This means that you face fewer hassles in going about whatever illegal business you undertake. You have minimal duties as a guild member; mainly you just need to keep out of the Society's way and makes sure not to engage in restricted activities (such as opening a criminal business) without permission. If you're a guild member the fencing tax drops to 20%.

Red Society Access Chart

Requests	Guild Member	Assassin
Domains		
City Guard: Captain		-10
Teamsters	-10	-10
Favors		
Digging up the Dirt	-5	+0
Passing the Word	+0	+5
Hit	-5	+0
Muscle level 2	+0	+0
Surveillance	-5	+0
Look the other Way	+0	+0
Criminal Business	-5	+0
Equipment		
Intrusion group	+0	+0
Assassination group		+5
Arms and armor*, Wiz12	-5	+0
Potions, Wiz8	-5	+0
Scrolls, Wiz6	-5	+0
Artifacts		Difficulty Class
Cloak of Etherealness (45 ip)		25
Ring Gates (35 ip)		32 27

Roleplaying Access: There's no real way to roleplay into the guild; you need to demonstrate some skill and pay the entrance fee.

- Arms and armor crafted via Red Society contacts may be forged from Martian steel or tensile mercury at the standard increase in price. Using Martian steel does not affect the DC of the request but using tensile mercury increases the difficulty by 5.

SEVEN TRIBES*

Skill: Survival

Description: Legend has it that the current peoples of the seven tribes descend from the fey and humans. This mixture created the modern elven race; these elves, in turn, make up the majority of the Seven Tribes. They've managed to retain control over the Huron Wild through a combination of politics and strong defense of the forest paths. Around 1940 the Tribes

officially adopted an Anarcho-Syndicalist form of government. What this means is that the tribes form a loose federation of individual organizations; the individual organizations are just small, local communities of elves. These communities are small enough to have a very old fashioned kind of democracy; they gather in village meetings to decide community policy and, for the most part, can do so with unanimous decisions. Each community provides a council member to meet with the council members from the other tribes; for national policies the council members discuss options and bring those options back to their tribes for further decision making. This rather slow process prevents the tribes from reacting quickly to anything, but given the life span of elves this presents less of a problem than it would be for other races. The resulting society looks suspiciously communist (and was largely influenced by the anarcho-syndicalist movement in revolutionary Spain which also looked a bit too communist for it's own health) but lacks the kind of formal legal system to enforce its dictates that most governments possess. In fact, the Tribes have little to no authority to do anything without unanimous consent. While this might sound idyllic and in fact leads to pretty appealing conditions, there are some downsides. As mentioned before the Tribes are slow to react; however, since elves have little reason to rush and don't face many grave dangers (and, when they do, unanimity is much easier to gain) this isn't as severe a problem as one might think. More problematic is the small-town social pressures this form of government engenders. While there are no formal means for enforcing the will of the majority the informal means can be almost as bad. Rejecting the norms of the community place one outside the community, and since unanimity is required strong pressures rise to generate unanimity through ostracism and so forth. Being rebellious is less tolerated since rebelliousness is more damaging. While this social system forms strong bonds between the members of a community, just as in small towns and close knit families, those bonds can sometimes be strangling.

The Seven Tribes is mainly interested in maintaining stability. They want the forest to remain a constant size, their population to stay steady, and the ecosystem to maintain a kind of balance. Their lack of an expansionist policy has enabled them to keep friendly relations with the Empire (who saw them as an excellent buffer). This worked because the empire had little desire to expand significantly into or near Seven Tribes territory. This may change in the future though as New York organizations expand their control over the Northeast.

For now, the peace holds.

PERSONS OF NOTE

Fire on Water (Wiz/PatW), Elder
Kin Viejo (Rgr/FerW), Partisan

POSITIONS

SEVEN TRIBES PARTISAN

DC:	20
IP Cost:	4
Commitment:	2
External Access Cost:	8 ip

The partisans of the Seven Tribes secure the pathways and glades of the forest from intrusion. While this hasn't been a problem in quite a while the Tribes remember well the War of 1812 and the threat they faced. Nowadays the Partisans travel abroad frequently. Some like to explore; both the frigid north of Canada and humid south of Central America provide fascinating places to see. Others take their political ideology seriously and join revolutionary movements around the continent.

Roleplaying Access: Being born into the Seven Tribes (or raised there from an early age) grants a +5 bonus on a request for the position. For roleplaying, protect the forest from some deep harm, like a forest fire or the expansion of a logging community. Note that the Tribes prefer to deal peacefully if possible. They'd be far more impressed by a person capable of negotiating with the logging community to get them to maintain their local forest at a given level than by a person who simply scared the logging community away.

STANDARD EQUIPMENT

Partisans receive a *cloak of elvenkind* upon admittance.

FAVORS

Seven Tribes Scouting Lore (+5)
Guarded Passage through the Forest (+5)
Fey Glade (+0)
Elder Tree Circle (-5)

EQUIPMENT

Nature Group (+0)
Arms and Armor, Wiz6 (+0)
R/S/W, Dru12 (+0)
Potions and Scrolls, Dru6 (+0)

Artifacts

Oathbow* (25 ip, DC 30)

RUNNING AN SIS CAMPAIGN.

One or more of your players might want to play a street urchin and given how many stories in the dual world genre involve children you might find such a campaign interesting. It would be most convenient to simply have everyone play street urchins, but that might not be possible to arrange; also, the genre is rife with powerful kids adventuring alongside cynical adults. The first concern is how to handle child adventurers. This is actually quite simple; since they're player characters they don't take any penalties to feats, skills, or classes (they are obviously precocious children). They do however take a -2 penalty to Strength and start out one size category smaller than normal for their race, unless they are already a small race, in which case the Strength penalty is -3. The only benefit they receive for this is a +2 youth bonus on Fortitude saving throws and the satisfaction of knowing that they might have one of the youngest archmages or swordmasters ever. Eventually they'll grow up; assume at the age of 16 they eliminate any size or Strength penalty as well as the Fortitude saving throw bonus (the vitality of youth fades all too quickly). It is convenient in a street urchin campaign to block out long periods of time where nothing happens so that the characters can grow out of their childhood. If you'd like to run such a campaign I include some sample background options for child adventurers.

FIRST WORLD CHILD BACKGROUNDS

BOARDING SCHOOL KID

Your rich parents liked the *idea* of having a child a bit more than the reality of it. Upper class society has provided a nice solution for this. This background could also apply to a poor but talented student admitted on

scholarship.

Prerequisites: Age 15 or less

Skills: Choose three of the following skills as permanent class skills. If the skill you select is already a class skill, you receive a +1 competence bonus on checks using that skill.

Bluff, Computer Use, Diplomacy, Knowledge (Popular Culture)

Bonus Feats: Spend two skill picks to select either Big City Education or Cutting Remark.

Languages: Automatic: any two First World languages; Bonus: any other First World languages.

Starting Wealth: You can sell some of your nice clothes and trinkets for 1d10 x \$50.

RAISED ON THE STREETS

You grew up on the streets, perhaps you couldn't stand your parents or perhaps you were just a delinquent. Regardless, you learned how to survive on your own from an early age.

Prerequisites: Age 15 or less

Skills: Choose three of the following skills as permanent class skills. If the skill you select is already a class skill, you receive a +1 competence bonus on checks using that skill.

Bluff, Climb, Gather Information, Hide, Intimidate, Knowledge (Popular Culture)

Bonus Feats: Spend two skill picks to select either City Smart or Street Toughened.

Languages: Automatic: any one First World language; Bonus: any other First World languages.

Starting Wealth: You don't got much, but those running shoes are pretty nice, worth maybe \$60 in trade.

- * The elves of the Seven Tribes have several oath-bows so they may grant more than one.

COMMENDATIONS

GREEN MAN

The forest rewards those who perform a great service for it. The Seven Tribes serve as the adjudicator for this but the benefit is actually granted by the Huron Wild itself. The Green Men gain the benefit of a permanent *Pass without Trace* within the Wild. Druids instead gain the benefit of a permanent *Speak with Plants* within the woods. A great service would be something that saves many lives, a species, or large tracts of the forest from destruction.

STREET URCHIN SYNDICATE

Aka: Power Rascals , X-Punks, Pokebrats, Stinking Potters (current trend)

Skill: Diplomacy

Description: These kids are generally between the ages of 8 and 12 (up to adolescence). Members leave voluntarily after that age (typically the age about when they start having serious interest in romance). Many of these kids have somehow managed to find their way here from the First World. They are the kids who come from families that it's really not much of a loss to never see again. There's a high incidence of future wardens amongst them; in turn these future wardens, while no longer part of the SIS, harbor a special fondness for the kids. This provides the Irchins with a certain degree of security. Irchins tend to be anti-authority, pro-portable

RURAL KID

You grew up in the countryside, learning how to live off the land. You likely did some hunting and fishing to help your family put food on the table.

Prerequisites: Age 15 or less

Skills: Choose three of the following skills as permanent class skills. If the skill you select is already a class skill, you receive a +1 competence bonus on checks using that skill.

Climb, Handle Animal, Hide, Move Silently, Swim, Survival

Bonus Feats: Spend two skill picks to select either Long Distance Running or Peace with Nature.

Languages: Automatic: any one First World language; Bonus: any other First World languages.

Starting Wealth: You've really got nothing but some cheap clothes and \$20 in cash or equivalent valuables.

RAISED IN THE SUBURBAN WASTELAND

You've probably wasted way too much of your life watching television, hanging out in malls, playing video games, skateboarding, and lying to your parents.

Prerequisites: Age 15 or less

Skills: Choose three of the following skills as permanent class skills. If the skill you select is already a class skill, you receive a +1 competence bonus on checks using that skill.

Balance, Bluff, Climb, Computer Use, Knowledge (Popular Culture), Swim

Bonus Feats: Spend two skill picks to select either Hyperactive or Jock.

Languages: Automatic: any one First World language; Bonus: any other First World languages.

Starting Wealth: What you own isn't worth much at all but you carry about \$150 in goods; skateboards are common.

SECOND WORLD CHILD BACKGROUNDS

Child adventurers in the Second World start with 1d6 x \$100 in goods. Some standard backgrounds are also good for Second World children. In addition to the background option listed here the following backgrounds should be acceptable: Rural Kid or Boarding School Kid (from above); Appalachians; Former Street Irchin (change to current though); Pirates; Seven Tribes; Southwestern Raptors.

SCHOOL OF WIZARDRY

A school of wizardry noticed your talents at an early age and brought you on board for both training and indoctrination.

Prerequisites: Age 15 or less

Skills: Choose three of the following skills as permanent class skills. If the skill you select is already a class skill, you receive a +1 competence bonus on checks using that skill.

Concentration, Decipher Script, Gather Information, Knowledge (arcana), Spellcraft

Bonus Feats: Spend two skill picks to select either Dangerous Curiosity or Experimental.

Languages: Automatic: English plus one of the arcane languages; Bonus: any other First World languages including ancient Latin, ancient Greek, ancient Chinese, ancient Sanskrit, ancient Arabic, or ancient Hebrew.

property (that is, only things you carry with you count as property; this philosophy causes some issues with shopkeepers), and pro-fun. As an interesting note, while they are unrepentant thieves by most standards, their portable property credo means that they do not take goods carried by a person. However, they enjoy picking pockets. This led them to develop a very special technique and thus the Check Pockets favor. Current First World fads exert a heavy influence over the SIS, thus the SIS has recently seen a drastic increase in youthful practitioners of magic.

If you're wondering about the spelling of "irchins" the little rats **do** know how to spell; it's just that SUS is a sucky acronym.

POSITIONS**SEWER RAT**

DC:	15
IP Cost:	1
Commitment:	1
External Access Cost:	2 ip

There's not much to being a member besides abiding by the rules of the game (namely the restrictions on portable property). The Sewer Rats have taken the oaths, swore on their mother's grave, and spit in their hand to shake on the rules. After this ritual they're in. Many of the rats go on to great things in the city; this affords them a fair degree of protection since powerful exiles still owe the group some loyalty. You must be pre-adolescent to take this position.

Roleplaying Access: If you're actually running an SIS campaign that might be enough all by itself to grant

access to the SIS. However, a small initiation ritual should capture the feel of the SIS. Some fairly standard ones include running through a Check Pockets scheme, stealing some food from a shop owner or inn, conning an adult, and so on. Perhaps some more inventive initiation rituals could be gleaned from all those dares you traded with your friends back in grade school (or that kids always seem to do in movies). For example: staying the night in a haunted house; exploring the steam tunnels; wandering through the sewers for a couple blocks; or going up and talking to the scary geezer in the house at the end of the street.

DOMAINS

Red Society: Guild Member (-10)
College of the Interstice: Researcher (-10)
The Chanask (-5)

FAVORS

Street Listening (+0)
Passing the Word (+0)
Surveillance (+5)
Check Pockets (+0)

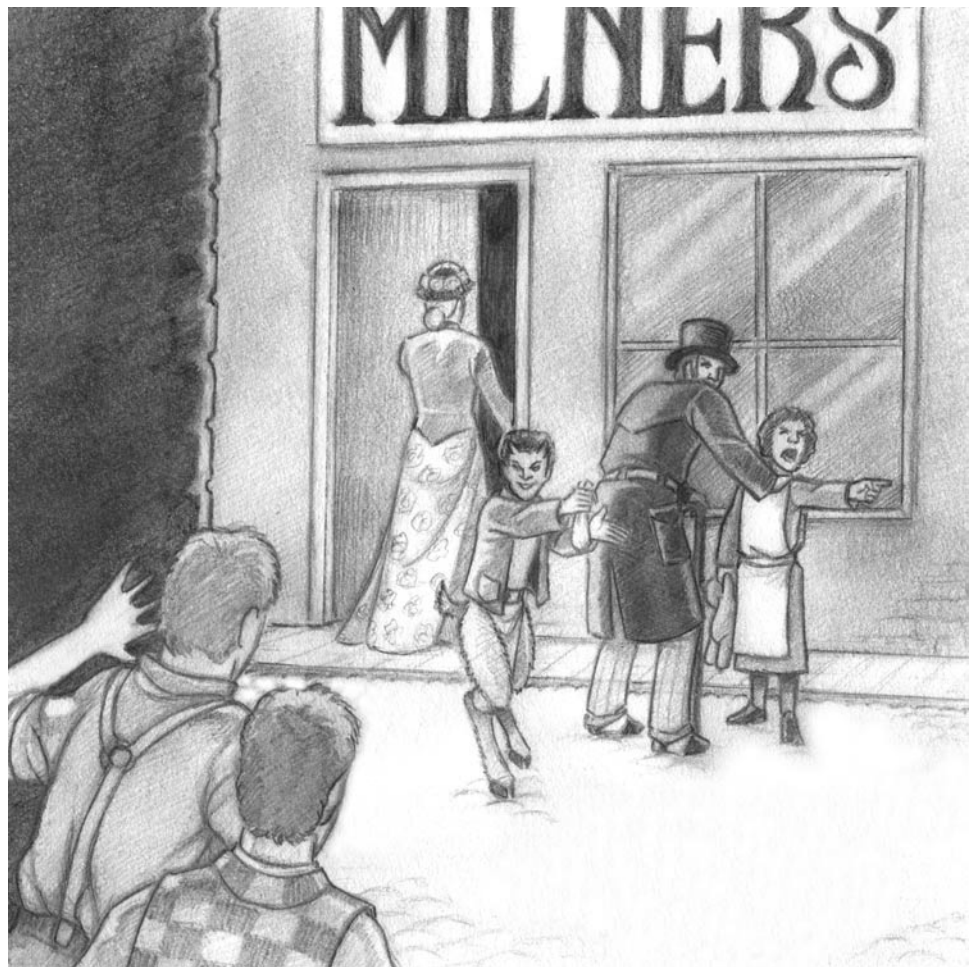
EQUIPMENT

R/S/W, Wiz6 (+0)

SWORD GUILD*

Skill: Knowledge (tactics)

Description: The Sword Guild hires anyone. The hiring process typically involves a new name (which the sergeants of the Sword Guild are happy to supply). Gary Trask established this organization some 15 years ago when the Red Society declared war on the Valots. The snowbound city experienced one of the most vicious gang wars in its history that winter. Shop-owners and private citizens, afraid for their lives, turned to mercenaries for assistance. The major groups (like Division Alpha) supplied the major organizations leaving little left over for those without power. Gary Trask filled in that void. By spring the Valots lay at the



bottom of the East River but Trask had built up enough of an organization to carry him into the 21st century. Since 1986 Trask has supplied low cost mercenaries to anyone with the money.

The Sword Guild commands little loyalty and people hired through it are occasionally unreliable (though it blacklists those who are too unreliable). The Sword Guild will do anything at anytime and thus is useful for no questions asked sorts of employment.

PERSONS OF NOTE

Gary Trask (Ftr), General
Raymond Bleys (Rgr/Sor)
Rachel Smith (Clr/GatW)

POSITIONS

SOLID MERC

DC:	20
IP Cost:	1
Commitment:	1
External Access Cost:	2 ip

The Swords take pretty much anyone, but even Trask has a few standards. Mercs who've performed well on

Checking Pockets by Dominic Hamer

past missions and demonstrated some small semblance of responsibility get advanced to Solid Merc status. This just means Trask moves them to a special list for more important missions and might even be willing to talk to them now and then. If you're the kind of merc who doesn't give up, even if it means massive, wholesale, and wanton destruction, then you're the kind of merc Trask wants on the inside.

Roleplaying Access: If you got a Bottle of Jack some time on a minor op (freelance work, so to speak) then Trask will take you on as a Solid Merc; one of his go-to troops.

FAVORS

Bodyguards (-5)
Fighter Retraining (-5)
Muscle I (+5)
Muscle II (-5)
Secret Passage (-5)

EQUIPMENT

Close Combat Group (+0)
Fire Combat Group (-5)
Potions, Clr7 (+0)
Arms and Armor*, Wiz6 (+0)

- * Arms and armor crafted via Sword Guild contacts may be forged from Martian steel at the standard increase in price; this does not affect the DC of the request.

COMMENDATIONS

BOTTLE OF JACK

Do a job particularly well, kill a lot of people without getting your clients killed, cause massive property destruction and have it be justified, and you'll get Gary Trask's special thanks, a bottle of fine Kentucky bourbon imported from the First World. You get this and you also get some recognition from your peers. This translates to an ip award of one point.

TAGGERS

Skill: Perform

Description: Many citizens think this group is simply a bunch of punks and would probably classify them in the criminal category. However, New York is the city of Runes, founded by the Rune Warden, Sebastian. Some graffiti artists know this; most at least have subconscious inklings of it, calling out to them in their dreams and being expressed in the bold, if sometimes

inexpert, images they paint on the walls. The Taggers themselves are not really a group as such. They have no formal power structure, no organization, no meetings, no "leader" either chosen or enforced upon them and are unlikely to rise up in arms against authority. But they speak constantly to the chaotic submerged turmoil raging through the collective psyche of the city. They might not be part of the revolution directly. But they would certainly be instrumental in it. The Taggers will tell you that sometimes they feel the city operating through them, as if it were their muse. Many also hold that the city produces some graffiti itself; spontaneously generating the images that mold the psyche of its citizens.

PERSONS OF NOTE

Basque (Wiz/RunW)

POSITIONS

STREET ARTIST

DC: 20
IP Cost: 2
Commitment: 1
External Access Cost: 4 ip

The primary requirement for becoming a member of the Taggers is a capacity for art and the willingness to display it on the street. The creation of this art and promulgation of an important theme are your primary duties. All of this gets you little beyond the respect of the tagger community.

Roleplaying Access: Produce either a virtuoso piece, emblazoned for all to see, or produce a constant stream of quality work that expresses your emotions and the emotions of the city. A virtuoso piece would be difficulty class 35. It's assumed that most artists instead of working pain-stakingly on one piece over and over (thus taking 20 the normal way) produce a wide variety of different pieces with the average result being that one in 20 of those pieces of art scored a natural 20 on the die roll. For long term work in constructing a theme require perhaps 20 or more pieces at DC 20 or higher. The player, when using either of the above methods should describe the theme of her artwork. What is she trying to portray? Is it autobiographical? Emotional? Political? Or perhaps just craziness sprayed out all over the city's walls.

DOMAINS

House Usher (-5)

FAVORS

Passing the Word (+0)
 Street Listening (+0)
 Urban Art Theme (+0)
 Tagger Code (+0)

EQUIPMENT

Marvelous Pigments (+5)

TEAMSTERS' GUILD

Skill: Appraise or Knowledge (business)

Description: Just as in the First World, the people who move the goods provide the life blood of commerce. The fact that individually they are replaceable puts them in a precarious position. Unified they exert a great deal of power. Also, as in the First World, the exercise of this power can lead to serious consequences; Division Alpha has taken to the streets more than once to break the back of the Teamster's Guild but the Teamsters are hardy individuals and have their own connections; thus they don't scare that easily. When striking, the teamsters have hired their own mercenaries (the Sword Guild typically) to help protect them. The city itself lacks the authority to do much and the Imperial Legion typically sits these disputes out. What has evolved from this is an uneasy truce between those who transport the goods and the companies that supply them. The Teamsters have a fervent hatred for Division Alpha given their past run-ins but are on good terms with the Sword Guild. The Red Society has helped the Teamsters in the past and so there is a connection with them as well.

PERSONS OF NOTE

Maury Silva (Ftr/Rog), Union Head

POSITIONSUNION BOSS

DC:	15
IP Cost:	1
Commitment:	2
External Access Cost:	2 ip

The Union bosses run the Teamsters' Guild, but only with the consent of their constituents. How they go about generating that consent is as Machiavellian as any First World politics. The bosses survived the mean streets of the city and several bloody encounters with strike busters. This makes many of them tough as nails. Like all flesh, many soften with age; a family, a comfortable home, and a comfortable life in the city contribute to a desire for stability. Union bosses

need to network with potential contacts, check up on the working conditions of their people, and manage pensions as well as the other financial aspects of the business. Sometimes they also need to bust a few heads though typically they have that done for them (the Sword Guild or the Red Society provides this service).

Roleplaying Access: To become a union boss you need to get backing amongst the union members. They need to trust you and look to you for advice in how to run their affairs. This means a lot of hand-shaking. But it also means that you need to protect them in times of trouble and organize them to get better benefits. As should be apparent, advancing in the Anarcho-Syndicalist movement and becoming a union boss can go hand in hand.

DOMAIN

Sword Guild (-5)
 Red Society: Guild Member (-10)

FAVORS

Secret Passage (-5)
 Street Listening (+0)
 Watch the Ports (-5)
 Free Transport (+5)

EQUIPMENT

Potions, Clr5 (+0)
 Wondrous Items, Wiz6 & Clr5 (+0)

TEMPEST ARGON*

Skill: Knowledge (arcana)

Description: Where the College of the Interstice concerns itself with abstract principles and understanding the universe, Tempest Argon focuses on power. A collection of arcane practioners, banded together for mutual support and the development of their abilities, started Tempest Argon. Most Tempest Argon members are sorcerers and wizards or Pattern, Tone, Gate, and Rune Wardens. However, all wardens and spellcasters are accepted into the organization. Argon recognizes its power and does not fear to exercise that power in the pursuit of temporal goals. This means Argon exerts considerable control over the city's politics. Tempest Argon also backs more mundane excursions; they might provide the resources and information leading to the exploration of some long-lost tomb or crypt. That makes this one of the better organizations to get involved with if you want to do more traditional dungeon crawling. The agents prefer to think of themselves

as “dynamic archaeologists.”

Tempest Argon is a large organization with a number of branches and field sites spread about the eastern United States. This makes it an organization with a fair degree of internal politics. Its size and power have drawn the attention of the Empire; moreover, in order to advance its own interests Tempest Argon has made certain to cultivate its relations with the Empire. As such, major Tempest Argon strongholds typically have an Empire representative on site.

PERSONS OF NOTE

Stefan Kharkov (Wiz/PatW)

Celine Rikswald (Wiz/GatW)

Cassandra Gaard (Rgr/LigW)

POSITIONS

FIELD ARCHAEOLOGIST

DC: 15

IP Cost: 2

Commitment: 2

External Access Cost: 4 ip

Tempest Argon Field Archaeologists do the dirty work of digging rare artifacts out of dangerous places. Typically they refer to themselves as FA's now. The typical FA swears like a sailor, cleans her fingernails with a dagger, and can stare down a gang of drunken orcs while chained to a chair. FA's don't go into a dungeon without a game plan. They approach the dungeon as a puzzle to solve, ideally in advance, and come with the equipment and strategy to do so; to ensure this they require minimally a 72 hour research period before entering any dungeon. The research involves checking history, checking local word of mouth, comparing to similar dungeons explored in the past and surveying the terrain. This enables them to not only enhance their survival chances, but also to make sure that every last scrap of treasure is dredged from the site. They consider the typical, go in and bounce around technique of most adventurers to be horribly unprofessional and the sort of thing that kills off far too many talented people.

Roleplaying Access: Simply demonstrating competence on one or more previous expeditions should suffice, so long as they were freelance work

Tempest Argon Access Chart

Requests	Field Archaeologist	Pact Negotiator
Domains		
Imperial Legion: Officer	-10	
Favors		
Advanced Analyze Item	+0	-5
Basic Analyze Item	+0	+0
Interstitial Gate		+0
Magical Library III	+0	+5
Scrying Device (Telepathy)	+0	+0
Special Imprisonment	+0	-5
Zetas Interrogation	-5	+0
Equipment		
Alchemy Group	+0	+0
Exploration Group	+0	
Interrogation Group		+0
Negotiation Group		+0
Arms and Armor, Wiz6	+0	
Scrolls and Potions, Wiz8	+0	+0
R/S/W, Wiz6	+0	+0
Artifacts		
Difficulty Class		
Staff of Passage (160 ip)	25	25
Iron Flask (150 ip)	35	30
Ring of Regeneration (75 ip)	25	30
Crystallized Steel Sphere (75 ip)	30	30

for Argon. However, it takes more than just getting in and getting back out alive; you need to bring back a pretty good haul, or at least demonstrate that you got all that could be looted. Needless to say, some searching skills are advised.

STANDARD EQUIPMENT

The FA's provide their own equipment for the most part. Tempest Argon supplies them with a storage location for the goods they bring back and want to keep. Argon also supplies a sparsely furnished room for FA's at any of their branch locations.

PACT NEGOTIATOR

DC: 20

IP Cost: 4

Commitment: 3

External Access Cost: 8 ip

The wardens of Tempest Argon cultivate their interstitial allies as strongly as their worldly ones. The Pact Negotiator performs this important duty. Maintaining existing allegiances and developing new ones is a complex process. Some interstitial organizations obey ever-changing intricate codas, others weave themselves into their own complex webs of relations meaning that you have to sacrifice some allegiances to maintain others. The negotiator needs to talk to these groups and perform frequent research to keep track of who is doing what. This can lead him and his team on interstitial expeditions or various missions in the Second World at the bequest of Argon's allies. The negotiator position is fairly arduous so it tends to rotate through the members; however, it's a good way to improve one's position within Argon so ambitious members seek it out.

Roleplaying Access: Forging a new pact with some interstitial entities is always a good start. You should demonstrate not only a knowledge of the interstices, but an ability to relate to the strange creatures native to those realms.

STANDARD EQUIPMENT

Basement offices in Tempest Argon are a valuable commodity; everyone seems to want their privacy (and arcane experimenters seem to prefer dingy holes in the ground for some reason). Since the negotiators provide such a vital service they get first choice of office space. Their offices tend to be cluttered with notes, maps, flowcharts, and the ubiquitous dusty tomes (mostly borrowed from the library).

TOLLWYN FAMILY

Skill: Diplomacy

Description: The Tollwyn's are aristocracy in decline. Generations of hedonists brought this about in part but the decline of the New York aristocracy also occurred due to the decline of the ideal of the noble family. Mercantile houses and organizations have supplanted inherited wealth and status. Holland Tollwyn heads the family currently. He spent his youth playing in bands and barely survived a short military and adventuring career. Since then he's wised up a bit and now runs the family businesses moderately well; he'll likely be able to sustain their fortunes for another generation but after he passes there's a good chance the family will cease to hold any significant influence. Some family members hate to see their once great name waste away like this and seek out new ways to re-establish themselves. This

can lead them to risky actions and alliances.

PERSONS OF NOTE

Holland Tollwyn (Brd)

POSITIONSADVISOR

DC: 15
IP Cost: 2
Commitment: 1
External Access Cost: 4 ip

The Tollwyn family employs a small gang of advisors. These men and women perform a wide variety of tasks, from secretarial work, to personal assistant, to wet-work with the city's underworld. The advisors make most of the important decisions or make sure that most of the important decisions are made according to their wishes. Several advisors have later moved on to more important jobs with other organizations (for example, a former advisor is now an executive with the Blue Conglomerate).

Roleplaying Access: Simply getting on Holland's good side will grant you this position. One way of doing this is to play in his band and have some talent at it. If you can get him to trust you enough to play with him at House Usher you're probably already there.

DOMAINS

House Usher (-10)

FAVORS

Arranging a Meeting (-5)
 Party Invitation (+0)

EQUIPMENT

Exotic cavalry group (-5)
 Wondrous items, Brd10 (-5)

WHITE SQUALL SHIPPING

Skill: Profession (sailor) or Navigate

Description: White Squall shipping started out as a group of treasure hunters. Horace Mendoza and Daniel Laird started the company with one ship and a suit of magical armor. Both of them had an interest in naval history as well as a general interest in the sea itself; this led them to search for and explore rumors of ships lost at sea. After one and a half years they recovered their first ship; this gave them the capital to expand their operation and buy more ships. They proceeded to diversify into general shipping, becoming a moderately wealthy trading company. But their first love remained exploring old wrecks and their wealth

of both magical and mundane treasure. As they grew older their children were also drawn into the business. White Squall makes most of its money now from its trading enterprises but, more than anything, this just leaves the owners free to search for sunken treasure. White Squall is on good terms with the Orca and they provide mutual support. White Squall also has two pirate hunting ships as part of its fleet, giving it more naval combat power than usual for an organization of its size.

PERSONS OF NOTE

Horace Mendoza (Wiz), Partner

Daniel Laird (Rog), Partner

Eliza Smits (Rog/MotW), Pirate Hunter Captain

Andrew Cobb (Ftr/Sor), Pirate Hunter Captain

POSITIONS

PIRATE HUNTER

DC: 20
IP Cost: 2
Commitment: 2
External Access Cost: 4 ip

As a pirate hunter you take a job on board ship with either Captain Eliza Smits of the Vapor Range or Captain Andrew Cobb of the Queens Bourbon (named after the borough, not a monarch). Pirate hunting mainly involves roaming the sea lanes. The hunters almost always check out any sail they see and if the ship starts to move away from them they chase it down mercilessly.

Roleplaying Access: The best way to get into the pirate hunters is as part of some other mission where they're helping you out and you wind up running into a pirate while going about your activity. Prove yourself in the cutlass to cutlass fighting, demonstrate that you're comfortable around a boat, and the captain may recommend you for a more permanent position.

SENIOR OFFICER

DC: 25
IP Cost: 3
Commitment: 2
External Access Cost: 10 ip

The senior officers of White Squall perform a variety of duties. There's one on every pirate hunting ship as well as one or more on any treasure recovery mission. They also work organizing trade routes and handle the exploration of new trade opportunities. External access to a senior officer can allow one access to White Squall's favors and equipment. A senior officer ally can

White Squall Shipping Access Chart

Requests	Pirate Hunter	Senior Officer
Domains		
Orca	-10	-10
Favors		
Arrange Cargo Transport	+0	+5
Cost Reduction (Shipping)	-5	+0
Deep Sea Diving Gear	-5	+0
Pirate Hunters	+5	+0
Secret Passage	+0	+0
Watch the Ports	-5	+0
Equipment		
Ring, Wiz12	-5	-5
Wondrous Item, Wiz6	+0	+0
Underwater Exploration Group	-5	+5

also be a good means of finding employment for missions involving some risk. Exploring a potential trade route (or trade destination) can make for an exciting adventure; this is a good method of getting the players on a boat for a naval scenario you have in storage or a simple explore-a-new-area scenario.

Roleplaying Access: Since treasure hunting is such an important aspect of White Squall coming up with a map to a sunken ship and providing solid assistance in recovering the lost treasures can get you an assignment to this position. Alternately, opening up a new trade route at sea or discovering an island with resources to develop can provide a more permanent assignment.

COMMENDATIONS

DIVING MEDAL

After completing your first successful recovery mission that brings in \$500,000 or more in value White Squall bequeaths this medal. The diving medal is a small brass replica of a deep sea diving helmet. Only one of these is ever awarded, no matter how often you retrieve a large treasure. Being awarded the medal grants a one time bonus of 2 ip.

FIRST WORLD ORGANIZATIONS

In the final section of this chapter I include writeups of three sample First World organizations that one might encounter or use in a Second World campaign.

Note that all major organizations often have both First World and Second World branches or activities so there's not that significant a difference between the two types of organizations. When I list persons of note for these organizations I give them modern classes if appropriate.

SOLSTICE INTERNATIONAL

Skill: Appraise or Knowledge (business)

Solstice International is the largest privately held corporation in the First World. If it were a nation it would be the 48th wealthiest country in the world. Like all mega-corporations many people view it with not a little suspicion. It's multi-national status places it outside the laws of any particular country for many purposes and it pursues its own agenda with such fervor that many suspect it's up to something. What's worse, it's agenda isn't the easily understandable one of simply making more money. Solstice can be oddly philanthropic at times and a ruthless corporate empire at others.

At no time in the past 16 years has it not been in a legal battle of some sort; most of the cases against it have been anti-trust cases or unfair business practices cases. Solstice heavily backs research at all kinds of institutions. Practically every university in the United States, Europe, and Pacific Rim receives substantial grants from Solstice. Some of these research programs have generated yet more controversy for the company since it heavily backs genetic research, much of which occurs off-shore to avoid legal issues. For the more "delicate" areas of research Solstice simply provides no-strings-attached backing to the organization. This helps it avoid some legal problems at home. All that money, all that influence, the arcane agenda, and mysterious owner have generated yet another industry around Solstice. Scores of books and a few dozen amateur magazines explore the secrets of Solstice International. Perhaps every third issue of all the major tabloids have one article discussing what Solstice is up to or showing grainy photographs of someone the tabloid claims to be Patrick McCann meeting with weird aliens that look suspiciously like midgets in rubber suits. Patrick McCann disappeared from public life some 12 years ago at the age of 36. He had already turned his father's small financial empire into the mega-empire it has become. Since then papers have reported that he died no less than 8 times; three of the times the major networks carried the story.

In the Second World Solstice has major offices in each of the known great cities; it's not the only First World

corporation to demonstrate knowledge of the Second World but it is certainly one of the largest. Naturally, most First World employees of Solstice don't even know the Second World exists. It's holdings in the Second World focus on the standard cross-world trade, taking magic and exotic goods from the Second to the First and shipping manufactured goods from the First to the Second. It also makes some money transferring goods from the Second World to the First, then flying them to another great city, and moving the goods back across the Forge. Solstice will, absolutely, get the package there overnight but you need to pay pretty heavily for that. More worrying to many is that Solstice heavily employs arcane spellcasters and wardens. It particularly seems to favor Vector and Gate wardens and spellcasters that focus on temporal or interstitial magic. Some theorize that McCann wants to travel through time, perhaps to change some event in his past but no one knows enough about his past to know what that might be. The most plausible explanation would be a past lover he wants to save; Vector Wardens shudder when this suggestion comes up. Other theories: he may be attempting to find something hidden in the Forge or one of the interstices; given that the most significant "missing" thing in the interstices is the Tower (legendary home of the Wadkin Roa) this makes people pretty nervous. Some even suggest that he might be trying to undo the Sundering.

PERSONS OF NOTE (NEW YORK)

Elizabeth Warner (Charismatic/Negotiator) Chief Executive NY Branch

POSITIONS

WINTER AGENTS

DC:	20
IP Cost:	4
Commitment:	2
External Access Cost:	8 ip

Patrick McCann came up with the name for these agents himself. There's an obvious tie-in with solstice but no-one's really clear about why he chose Winter or whether or not it represents something special. Regardless, Winter Agents do pretty much anything and everything. They explore the occasional crypt but more often explore interstices, bringing back information and unusual items (many of which aren't particularly powerful). Winter Agents also perform some more traditional protection duties around the New York area, ensuring the security of Solstice's interests. They're like a tamer version of the BlueCon Field Operative. Higher ranking agents go on the more critical missions,

particularly missions involving whatever secret agenda Solstice pushes.

Roleplaying Access: Being a Vector Warden grants you a +5 bonus to the request check for this position. If you'd like to provide a roleplaying opportunity for acquiring this position send the characters to investigate a haunted house in the First World. Have Solstice provide some Sustain Travel spells then hook them up with a variety of scientific equipment (or even scientists) to help them in their investigation. Ultimately, Solstice expects the characters to do both arcane and physical investigation of the place; part of their job involves protecting the science team but they should also try to figure out some of the properties of the haunted house. For instance, do its powers come from the Second World and do they avoid suppression? Players can actually check this by "volunteering" to be the victim of it's magical effects and seeing if the house overcomes suppression. When on a mission like this Solstice does **not** want the players to "fix" the haunted house unless it poses a clear and present danger. After all, they might need to investigate the place further.

FAVORS

First World Transit (+5)
 Interstitial Transport (+5)
 Interstitial Maps (+0)
 Portal to London (+0)
 Repatriation (+5)
 Second World Shipping (+0)

EQUIPMENT

Exploration Gear Group (+0)
 Housing Group (+0)
 Potions, Clr6 (+5)
 Wondrous Items, Wiz7 (+0)
 Rings, Wiz12 (-5)

COMMENDATIONS

PARTIAL REPATRIATION

Solstice doesn't offer standard commendations, mostly just letters of recommendation and word of mouth. However, more powerful agents who have demonstrated continued reliability may receive a *ring of quiet* (see the new magic items in the Equipment chapter). This ring allows them to remain in the First World for much longer periods of time and Solstice has little problem handing them out for free to those agents who perform their duties well and take on a variety of First World missions. These are quite potent items so Solstice expects its agent to take care of them.

MIND FLAYERS IN THE SECOND WORLD

"He looked just like Mark, all except that odd bit on his arm where the skin folded over in a kind of wrinkle. Then it smiled, or something, and a swarm of ropy tentacles with sharp little rings of teeth at the end slithered out. That was enough for me so I cut the thing open and its insides spilled out all over the floor, writhing there like a pile of partially digested snakes. Oddly though, they lacked any odor. It's as if they took this pile of tentacles and poured it inside a Mark suit and it somehow gained sentience that way."

A pile of tentacles in Mark suit. Some variation on that theme best describes the mind flayers of the Second World. We have only rumors of how they might live in their natural form, perhaps some massive pool of slime covered ropes slithering over each other in a dark cave, perhaps small mounds all jumbled together or oozing along ancient tunnels. But what we see is the flayers in Mark suits or Betty suits or hobgoblin suits or orc suits. They always take humanoid sized and shaped suits, suits they peel from the original owners. Some suspect the previous "wearer" gets sent somewhere for other purposes. Mind flayers exhibit psionic powers and they typically know most of what their suit's previous owner knew, but not everything so you can trip them up with a successful Bluff check against their Sense Motive skill (they receive a +2 circumstance bonus to their check due to their telepathic powers). Despite their apparent lack of internal anatomy they appear to suffer damage just as the previous occupant of the skin did. The flayers spend almost all their time abducting people, mostly from the First World, and performing experiments. They favor underground caverns and places far from Second World power centers but close to First World sources of victims. They can defend themselves fairly well but prefer to use psionically reconstructed creatures to defend themselves. Through their experiments they have also constructed (sometimes through something akin to genetic engineering) a variety of abomination servitors. You'll find a number of gibbering mothers in their research institutes as well as odd cross-breeds (such as one of their personal favorites, the black pudding cross bred with a purple worm). Technically, few of these creatures are actual cross-breeds, instead they're something more like a construction.

MODE GAMMA

Skill: Psicraft

"I hate small towns. I hate their quaint little streets and the way people look at you funny because they just know you're not from around here. In New York,

either side, no one knows you. You can slip in and slip out, disappear in the crowd and get about your business the way one ought. But here, in the middle of America, you can't walk into a store without facing a barrage of questions about where you're from and why in the hell would you be coming through here. But that's only a little part of why I hate small towns. You see, every one of these places creates its own little social ecosystem, complete with food chain. And somewhere along the line some smart people figured that a quick and easy way to power involved nothing more than planting someone at the top of these chains. A fair number of them were either Mode Gamma or Flayer controlled now. If this were the former I'd probably just be watched; the latter and I might get dissected."

Psionics work much better in the First World than magic; psionic powers are still far from certain but they operate well enough that novice practitioners can manage to actually use some of their powers. Moreover, those with psionic powers can avoid the exile if they're careful. They need to avoid too much association with wardens and the Roa of course, they need to lie low so they don't acquire too much synchronicity; but, if careful, they can stay in the First World until they die of old age or violence. Prior to the 19th century most psionics simply stayed within their small communities, using their powers to ensure a comfortable and wealthy life, all too frequently one marked by a casual lack of consideration for the interests of others.

Communication and nascent globalization in the 1800's led to friction between these people. After all, why be in charge of a small town when you could command a territory or state. Shadow wars erupted amongst the psis. Even worse, not only did you face the risk of getting dead but, even if you won, you'd frequently shunt to the Second World where your powers became a lot less special. To address this, psis banded together and manipulated others to strike against their enemies. This war of consolidation lasted into the 1920's.

Mode Gamma (named after the psionic sub-frequency they employ to minimize the First World's suppression effect) is the group that came out on top. During the middle of the 20th century they made some power grabs against large corporations and potent government offices. This in turn led to occasional wars with Second World power groups. Prior to the 20th century the First World didn't matter much to those in the Second. They appreciated the First World. After all, it had given birth to most of the great prophets. Thus many Second Worlders saw it as a kind of holy land, a



place to visit at least once in your life. But First World resources paled in comparison to what one could find in the Second World. This started to change in the 19th century when the technology developed in the First World began to outstrip what could be done at home (but much of which translated fairly easily, for instance, the cotton gin).

In the 20th century industrialization, communication, and transportation technologies of the First World grew so advanced, plus the First World had so very many people, that Second World power groups realized they had to take a stronger hand in First World activities. However, Second World groups have limited reach in the First World. They lack a sufficient number of people with the right abilities to exert extensive control over what happens. So, Second World groups focus on the top rungs of power, large corporations, senates and parliaments, presidencies and kings. When Mode Gamma tried to move against those sectors of society they found powerful individuals and organizations opposing them. However, Mode Gamma had one advantage in this ongoing struggle. Second World groups lack sufficient people in the First World thus they have to centralize. Mode Gamma has enough less-powerful

Flayer in a Mark Suit by Jeremy Dale

psis at its disposal that it could place them in some of the key small towns and less significant groups around the nation. This grass-roots organization serves as a check against Second World influence, albeit those subject to their control wouldn't notice the difference between one organization and the other.

Mode Gamma maintains an office in Second World New York. Like all significant First World organizations it also owns the office space on the First World side. Gamma doesn't do much in the Second World; their office is practically an embassy and they focus on cultivating relationships with Second World organizations in order to help protect themselves against **other** Second World organizations. BlueCon bristles at their presence and is certain that Mode Gamma intends to acquire complete control of things in both worlds.

PERSONS OF NOTE (NEW YORK)

Matthew Hertz (Psi)

POSITIONS

FLAYER COUNTERMEASURES EXPERT (FCE)

DC:	25
IP Cost:	16
Commitment:	2
External Access Cost:	25 ip

The FCEs have one simple, driving purpose, root out and destroy flayer enclaves. FCEs operate in both the First and Second Worlds and can gain quick and easy access to transit systems to take them from one to the other. Unfortunately, this kind of battle brings with it quite a bit of synchronicity, meaning that almost all FCEs become exiles shortly into their career. As such, you'll find most of them in the Second World searching for hints of flayer activity. Once they discover some clues they either make their own way to the First World or find a local Mode Gamma base and use methods there to make the journey. FCEs spend much of their time in the field, so they can have difficulty in calling on Gamma resources but Gamma makes sure to keep them extremely well supplied. These are some very dangerous people. Gamma tests all prospective candidates with a simple method. A psi hits the target with a brain lock manifestation then tells him to move. The Will saving throw difficulty class for this is a d20+5, or 15 if you don't roll for psionic save difficulty classes. If the character fails to move (and, assuming they want in, they'll try to move) then they've failed one of the tests. The tester gives the character twelve such tests over the space of a week and the character must succeed against 7 or more of those tests; moreover they

must do so while naked. If they fail the test sequence they cannot re-take the test until at least six months have passed. Mode Gamma lets no one into the FCEs who might pose too great a liability.

Roleplaying Access: Since flayers love their underground experiments you can use Mode Gamma to spark a delve into the tunnel network after a flayer compound. The goal of such a mission can be as simple as destroying the compound and everything in it or something slightly more complex such as retrieving an important figure abducted from the First World. If the latter, the target of the retrieval mission may very well be damaged, brain-washed, or torn into his component pieces. Still, pieces are better than nothing in the Second World. Even more fun would be to involve the players in a complete cross-world scenario where Gamma sends them to investigate a Flayer subdued town in the First World followed by penetrating a flayer complex on that side, shifting to the Second World, and then taking out the Second World complex as well. This can sometimes be the only feasible means of entrance to a Second World flayer complex since flayers like to collapse all normal passages leading to their lair and use the First World for moving supplies in and out.

STANDARD EQUIPMENT

Gamma takes the FCEs quite seriously and funds them better than probably any other position available in any other organization. Since Gamma brings such a wide variety of people into the FCE, and so many of them have different powers and abilities or different needs based on the mission, Mode Gamma provides its agents with nothing less than a 12 ip resource pool at level 25 (as usual, determine the effective level of the pool based on the resource list).

FAVORS

Communiqué (+5)
Cross-World Communiqué (+0)
First World Transit (+5)
Psychic Analysis (+0)

EQUIPMENT

Encode Stone, Psi10 (+5)
Psionic Arms and Armor, Psi6 (+0)
Psionic Tattoo, Psi12 (+0)
Universal Items, Psi12 (+0)

HABREC-7 (SEVEN)

Skill: Investigate (modern skill)

In the First World this group is the blackest of the black; so hidden that they have gone entire presiden-

HabRec-7 Access Chart

Requests	Liaison	Agent
Domains		
ACI		-10
Blue Conglomerate: Executive		-10
City Guard: Captain	-10	-5
Mayor's Office		-5
Favors		
Cross-World Call		+5
First World Files	+0	+5
First World Transit	+0	+5
Psychic Analysis	+0	+5
We'll Pass it Off as Toilet Seats	-5	+5
Equipment		
Fire Combat Training	+0	+5
Interrogation group	-5	-5
Inspection group	-5	-5
Universal Items, Psi6	-5	+0
Rings, Wiz12	-5	-5

cies without ever reporting to an elected authority. In the Second World HabRec-7 is somewhat more widely known (though still not well-known by any means). It numbers a few score people and has offices in Los Angeles, New York, Chicago, Seattle, and Washington D.C. In all but Washington D.C. it also has an office on the Second World side. HabRec-7, or just Seven, draws its name from its source of funding. In order to hide the group and its budget the office draws funds from the Habitat Recovery branch of the Environmental Protection Agency. There are actually six such branches divided regionally throughout the United States. Since Seven draws down money from each of these branches the agents started referring to themselves as the seventh branch of HabRec and this evolved into simply calling themselves Seven. The president in office when Seven was created wanted to present himself as being strong on the environment so he figured funneling funds to Seven via an environmental agency would look good on his record while, at the same time, promoting national security interests. Technically Seven reports to the NSA. However, since Seven suffers from something akin to exile most civilians tend to forget it exists at all. This can create problems for maintaining the budget but previous heads managed to get much of their funding hardwired into other programs.

Due to Seven's special nature its operatives enjoy a great deal of latitude in going about their business. They choose who to watch and who to fund. They choose who to cultivate for an alliance. They basically just get up in the morning and pursue an agenda they think beneficial to national security. Due to this latitude one of the key criteria for an agent is their loyalty and trustworthiness. The head knows each agent personally and new agents are typically recruited by current agents who've already worked with them for a time. You cannot be a full agent if you suffer from exile. This makes the top positions unavailable to most player characters. However, Seven does work with Liaisons and these people can exert substantial pull in the organization.

Seven agents spend most of their time gathering intelligence. They watch the actions of potentially subversive groups; in the past they focused on the Anarcho-Syndicalist Movement in New York and some even actively undermined A-S goals. However, concerns about the spread of global communism have dwindled to nearly nothing so HabRec-7 focuses on other organizations now. The field office in Chicago tracks the movement of the Central Empire Aristocracy. The office in New York keeps tabs on Solstice and magical groups like Tempest Argon and the College of the Interstice. For the most part these are nothing more than intelligence gathering operations. HabRec-7 lacks the status to make more serious moves. Yet, with the withdrawal of Imperial forces from the Northeast, Seven has realized that it's important to keep the region stable. As such, HabRec-7's New York office works towards a solution to stabilize the city; in doing so the agents there have approached powerful organizations like BlueCon, ACI, and Solstice to solicit assistance in reforming the power structure of the city.

HabRec-7 operates out of a small office in Second World New York; it's large enough to contain a shift gate and they also own the office space on the First World side. Their Second World office has no markings and no listings. You need to know about them ahead of time to even find them. If you run the sample scenario provided on the website (Small Worlds and Exiles) you might want to recruit Agent Sharon Stiles for Seven and transfer her to the Second World New York office.

PERSONS OF NOTE (NEW YORK)

Derek Mansfield (Fast/Smart)

Agent Sharon Stiles (possibly)

Positions

Liaison

DC:	20
IP Cost:	4
Commitment:	1
External Access Cost:	10 ip

Like all Seven members, liaison's are chosen for their talent and their loyalty. Liaisons are essentially trusted freelancers. Seven frequently needs certain things done, things that require divine, arcane, warden, or fighting talents, and turns to its liaisons to get the job done. HabRec-7 uses liaisons for a variety of purposes. They might send you into a building to recover information; they might need Ved Qayat territory scouted; they might need a dungeon explored or a bad guy beat up; they also might need some magical hitting power for a First World mission. This last comes up most often when some magical creatures or beings have established a foothold or operation in the First World and Seven wants it removed. It turns to liaisons in these cases because they're typically powerful, and familiar with fighting against magical opposition. As a liaison you receive nothing in particular, not even an office. Seven does allow its liaison's to board at the office for a short time if needed.

Roleplaying Access: You must be able to convince Mansfield or Stiles that you can be trusted and that you have democratic interests at heart. If you can get either of them to a helpful attitude then you've likely succeeded at that part. You must also perform at least one mission not just satisfactorily, but well. You've performed a mission particularly well when no-one even knows you did anything.

Agent

DC:	25
IP Cost:	10
Commitment:	2
External Access Cost:	50 ip

In order to become an agent you must believe, more than anything, in promoting the good of your country. You must be honest; screwing up a little is okay so long as you tell your fellow agents about it. And, of course, you must be smart, charming, inventive, courageous, and an all around perfect sort of person. If you include alignment in your game Seven detects for Good in the character; they'll only accept those who test positive for this and the person must be nearly naked when they take the test. If you don't care much for alignment subject potential agents to a rigorous personality test (counts as Sense Motive +15). The test can only

detect certain personality disorders and a tendency to be looking for something out of the position. Both of these tests represent just a final double-check though; the personal recommendation of another agent counts for much more since Seven thinks that only continued association with an individual can reveal important truths about their character.

As mentioned before, agents can do just about anything and answer to practically no one. They've reached a point in their career where the head office assumes that the agent's agenda matches well enough with the agenda of the organization that they can give agents a free hand. However, agents are expected to communicate with other agents, particularly those in the same office. This ensures that the information they possess doesn't get lost if something unfortunate should happen. Given all this the agent position is a pretty good one to give player characters so long as the characters possess the right kind of ideology. Since you may want to allow exiled characters access to this position you can simply relax the normal restriction on exiles or provide a scenario where the characters gain the ability to not suffer from exile. If you do this you'll likely see a lot more First World adventures in the future. Given the growing supply of modern d20 settings and adventures this should provide a simple justification for transferring back and forth between modern scenarios and high fantasy scenarios.

Roleplaying Access: Roleplaying access is practically required for this position. You need to remove exile, test for Good, and establish a close relationship with an existing agent. Almost all Second World agents will have risen from the ranks of the liaisons.

Standard Equipment

HabRec-7 agents in Second World New York receive an office, board, and lodging. They also receive a small resource pool of 6 ip at level 20. HabRec-7 is still working on building up a body of magical equipment for use by its agents. One of the agency's core goals is to develop a stronger network of arcane contacts to help address this weakness. All agents also receive a Cell Phone, paid for by HabRec and maintained by House Usher.

FAVORS

Favors are built up from three components: resources, personnel, and standard operating procedures. You need some resources (in the Second World these are typically magic items) to be able to do anything. You need personnel with the right skills to operate the resources. And you need a plan or procedure for how to use those skills and resources. While it's always possible to use resources in innovative ways it's convenient for game purposes to standardize a frequent sort of use into a favor. This is the way organizations increase the variety of favors to which they have access. The writeups for NPCS mentioned in the favors can be found in chapter six. The format for favors is as follows:

NAME

This is just the given name of the favor.

Skill: This tells you what skill you use to make a request for the favor. This is not a hard rule since many organizations possess a wide network of contacts.

DC: This is the difficulty class of Influence checks made for the favor. Some favors require contested influence checks; in these cases typically you must make your influence check against one of the target's influence bonuses +10. For these favors a base difficulty class will also be given in the stablock; use either the base DC or the contested DC, whichever is higher. Also, some favors will refer to the core influence skills; these are just the following skills: Appraise, Bluff, Diplomacy, Gather Information, Knowledge (arcana), Knowledge (religion), Knowledge (tactics), Perform, Sense Motive, and Survival.

Use Cost: This is noted in ip (influence points), stress, or both. This is the cost of making the request and must be paid when making the roll, regardless of success or failure.

An (S) after the use cost indicates that the favor is sustained. This means that the base stress cost of the favor cannot be 'healed' until the duration has ended

or you are no longer using the favor. For example, the Fortified Tower Favor has a base cost of 5 stress and duration of one month. You cannot recover any of that 5 stress so long as you're making use of the tower. Use the base cost for this, not the effective cost you paid (perhaps because you had to make 2 or more checks to get the request).

Request Time: The request time of a favor is how much time the character needs to spend pounding the street and hunting down his contacts to get the favor going.

Implementation Time: The implementation time is how long the contacts take to get their act in gear or perform the task. The character can go about other business during this time.

Duration: Several favors have effects that remain in place for a period of time; this is the duration. If no duration is listed the favor likely has an instantaneous effect.

Access Cost: This is the cost to gain access to the ability to make the request. Players should seldom, if ever, be concerned with this since they should gain access through organizations but it's offered anyway.

Description text follows the above detail. The favor is both described and its implementation is explained here.

THE FAVORS

ADVANCED ITEM ANALYSIS

Skill: Knowledge (arcana)

DC: 20

Use Cost: 1 ip + 5 stress

Request Time: 1 hour

Implementation Time: 1d6 hours

Access Cost: 8 ip

This gives the character a thorough analysis of the item

Favor	DC	Use Cost
Advanced Item Analysis	20	1 ip + 5 stress
Arcane Quarantine	20	2 ip + 20 stress (S)
Arrange Cargo Transport	10	1 stress
Arranging a Loan	15	10 stress
Arranging a Meeting	20	5 stress
Bardic Engineer Crew	15	4 ip/hour
Basic Analyze Item	10	3 stress
Bodyguards	20	10 stress (S)
Boycott	varies	2 ip
Call on Family	20	varies
Careful Inspection	20	3 stress
Cell Phone	15	2 ip
Check Pockets	15	2 stress
City Planning Archives	15	1 stress
Communiqué	20	5 stress
Congregation	15	3 stress
Construct Fashion	25	2 ip
Contacts	varies	varies
Criminal Business	15	varies
Cross World Call	20	3 stress
Cross-World Communiqué	25	7 stress
Deep Exploration Vehicle	20	5 stress
Deep Inspection	20	10 stress
Deep Sea Diving Gear	20	10 stress
Deep Search of Building	20	8 stress
Deep Search of Ship	20	6 stress
Detain Individual	20	3 stress
Divine Lockdown	25	10 stress
Elder Tree Circle	25	20 stress
Extraction Team	20	7 ip
Fey Glade	20	3 ip
Field Exercise	15	5 stress (S)
Fighter Retraining	15	1 ip
First World Files	20	5 stress
First World Shift Gate	20	5 ip
First World Transit	15	5 s + 1/person
Fortified Tower	15	3 stress (S)
Free Transport	15	none

Favor	DC	Use Cost
Guarded Passage through the Forest	15	2 stress
Hippogriff Stables	20	6 stress
Hit	20	2 ip
Hole Up	15	2 stress (S)
Home Delivery	15	2 stress
Imperial Scouting Maps	15	2 stress
Interstitial Base Camp	20	5 stress
Interstitial Maps	20	5 stress
Interstitial Transport	20	1 ip
Lockdown	25	2 ip + 20 stress (S)
Look the Other Way	15	\$100 + 1 stress
Magical Library I	15	1 ip
Magical Library II	20	2 ip
Magical Library III	25	4 ip
Magical Surveillance	20	5 stress
Martial Law	25	10 ip + 20 stress (S)
Matchmaking	20	10 stress
Muscle Level I	15	2 stress
Muscle Level II	20	5 stress
Official Interrogation	20	5 stress
Orb of Storms	25	10 stress
Party Invitation	20	2 stress
Passing the Word	20	5 stress
Pirate Hunters	25	2 ip + 10 stress (S)
Poison Lab	20	1 ip
Portal	20	5 stress
Propaganda	20	15 stress
Psychic Analysis	10	3 stress
Public Demonstration	15	5 stress
Quick Inspection	15	3 stress
Records Sweep	20	5 stress
Red Society Dirt	20	4 stress
Repatriation	20	10 stress
Ritual Cleansing	20	1 ip + 5 stress
Scrying Circle	25	15 stress
Scrying Devices	20+	2 stress+
Seal of Favor	20	1 ip + 5 stress
Search Building	15	3 stress

Favor	DC	Use Cost
Search Ship	15	2 stress
Second World Shipping	20	10 stress
Secret Guildhouse	20	5 stress (S)
Secret Passage	20	5 stress
Seven Tribes Scouting Lore	15	1 stress
Sewer Transit	20	3 stress
Shady Construction	15	3 ip
Site Recon	20	2 ip
Special Imprisonment	25	5 ip
Stop Investigation	25	15 stress
Street Listening	20	7 stress
Suppress Investigation	20	5 stress
Surveillance	15	3 stress
Sweep	20	5 stress
Tagger Code	20	2 stress
The Beast	20	10 stress
The Black Ball	30	3 ip
The Blue Room	25	25 stress
The Great Library	25	6 ip
The Hellfire Club Mirror	25	10 stress
Translations	10	1 stress
True Inspection	25	5 stress
Untiring Steed	15	5 stress
Urban Art Theme	25	15 stress
Vatican Library Access	30	8 ip
Watch the Ports	20	5 stress
We'll Pass it Off as Toilet Seats	25	15 stress
Zetas Interrogation	25	15 stress

in question. The researchers of the college cast *detect magic*, *identify*, *analyze dweomer*, and *legend lore* on the item; these are cast at 12th level of effect.

ARCANE QUARANTINE

Skill: Bluff

DC: 20

Use Cost: 2 ip + 20 stress (S)

Request Time: 1d6 hours

Implementation Time: 24 hours

Duration: 1d6 weeks

Access Cost: 50 ip

The Second World doesn't suffer much from disease but threats such as demonic possession and Roa infestation more than make up for that. You can quarantine a block

sized sector of a city (up to roughly 300 people) on the grounds that there may be a supernatural hazard in the area. Demons, Roa, undead, pretty much any creatures from an interstice, and simple magical disturbances all provide good grounds for quarantine. The local militia enforce it (in Second World New York the Imperial Legion enforces most quarantines). No unauthorized people may enter or leave the area.

ARRANGE CARGO TRANSPORT

Skill: Appraise

DC: 10

Use Cost: 1 stress

Request Time: 1 hour

Implementation Time: 24 hours or more

Access Cost: 2 ip

Occasionally you need to transport some large object or collection of objects. By using this favor you can get several carts with loaders and drivers to move up to 5 tons of stuff up to twenty miles by land per 1 stress point. Loading and unloading will be handled for you. If the transport occurs by sea double both the allowed weight and distance.

ARRANGING A LOAN

Skill: Appraise

DC: 15

Use Cost: 10 stress

Request Time: 1 hour

Implementation Time: 2d6 days

Access Cost: 10 ip

Your commercial contacts can help arrange a reasonable interest loan of up to \$100,000, giving you the capital to accomplish your goals. The interest rate is 10% per year; this is low by Second World standards given that business ventures are subject to so much greater risk. Typical interest rates are at 20 to 25 percent and require some pretty strong credentials to get at all. You may take out more than one loan at a time but for each existing loan you have increase the DC of the request by 5.

ARRANGING A MEETING

Skill: Diplomacy

DC: 20

Use Cost: 5 stress

Request Time: 1 hour

Implementation Time: 4d12 hours

Access Cost: 3 ip

You can get a private meeting arranged via this favor. This assumes the meeting will be with someone important, so it works on almost anyone. If the target

has a negative attitude towards you arranging the meeting is more difficult (but typically not impossible). Double the cost and increase the DC by 5 in these circumstances.

BARDIC ENGINEER CREW

Skill: Appraise

DC: 15

Use Cost: 4 ip/hour

Request Time: 1 hour

Implementation Time: see text

Duration: 10 hours

Access Cost: 5 ip

Eventually someone had to figure out that a *lyre of building*, even played by an incompetent musician, was an excellent investment. At \$100 per laborer per day you get \$30,000 of work for 30 minutes of play on a Lyre; given that even someone with no skill can play the Lyre for 2 hours per week that translates out to \$120,000 worth of work per Lyre, a single Lyre thus pays itself off in raw labor value alone in about 10 weeks. Moreover, they produce 1200 man-days of work per week with just one of these devices at even the minimal rate. ACI tapped into this strategy first and quickly cornered the construction market in the city. ACI is responsible for much of the elaborate architecture one sees in Second World New York, the kind of architecture that just wouldn't be possible if you actually had to have people putting the buildings up. Technically, most of the architects are not Bards, they're experts with high perform skills (minimally +10 though ACI pays highly for those even better since the value returned is excellent). The founder of ACI is a Half-Elven bard named Sheila Kincaid and has a Perform bonus of +18 (with magical items) meaning that when she's on the job they typically get about 11 hours per week per Lyre (but only if she's really pushing it since it all has to be in one go). The Musician Engineers are also trained in craft skills appropriate to architecture. The buildings ACI produces are bare of adornments, so more mundane crews need to come in to finish off the job; still, the buildings can have pretty unusual architecture due to the lack of limitations on construction time. ACI has managed to acquire three such Lyres through various means and has about 15 Musician Engineers in training and on staff. ACI also provides finishing work and materials transport, thus employing large numbers of more ordinary laborers as well. The upshot of all this is that Second World New York looks somewhat like First World New York in terms of number of buildings and elaborateness of structure. Also, businesses and the government are far

more willing to replace or refurbish older structures given the ease with which new structures can be produced.

BASIC ANALYZE ITEM

Skill: Knowledge (arcana)

DC: 10

Use Cost: 3 stress

Request Time: 1 hour

Implementation Time: 1d4 hours

Access Cost: 1 ip

This gives the character a basic analysis of the item in question. This includes use of *detect magic* and *identify*; these are cast at 3rd level of effect.

BODYGUARDS

Skill: Sense Motive

DC: 20

Use Cost: 10 stress (S)

Request Time: 1 hour

Implementation Time: 1d6 hours

Duration: 1 week

Access Cost: 5 ip

In a place as dangerous as the Second World those with wealth need to protect it with strength. While many of the rich have their own personal bodyguards, or house guards, when traveling or attending some kind of special meeting it pays to have some extra help, in particular, help that has a bit more experience dealing with a crisis. This favor gives you three bodyguards and the cost is per week. One bodyguard remains near you at all times while the other two scout ahead and behind; they open doors for you and so on. If they end up on an adventure they expect standard shares of any treasure found.

BODYGUARD TEAM

Bodyguard Chief

2 Bodyguard Agents

BOYCOTT

Skill: Diplomacy

DC: see text

Use Cost: 2 ip

Request Time: 1d6 days

Implementation Time: instant

Duration: 2d6 months

Access Cost: 25 ip

With this favor you isolate a target from his community. You must be a member of the same community as the target and then you must succeed at an appropriate Influence check, DC 25 or the target's Diplomacy

bonus +15, whichever is higher. If you succeed at this check the target suffers a -5 circumstance penalty on all Influence checks within the region. If they do business they will also suffer a 30% downturn in gross sales.

CALL ON FAMILY

Skill: Perform

DC: 20

Use Cost: see text (S)

Request Time: 1 hour

Implementation Time: 2d6 hours

Duration: 1 week

Access Cost: 5 ip

The dwarves of the Appalachians have extended families and they stay pretty tight. Every year they have a large gathering and feast to renew their bonds. The tightness of this community gives them a wide group of people to call on in times of need.

With this favor you can gather some brothers, sisters, and cousins to help you out with a mission. You choose how many and which people you want; there's a startup fee of 2 stress points then each person you call on costs a few more stress points. These stress points can be spent on the following people and they'll work with you for a week.

Dwarven Scout (2 stress)

Dwarven Gnollbasher (2 stress)

Dwarven Snakehandler (4 stress)

CAREFUL INSPECTION

Skill: Sense Motive

DC: 20

Use Cost: 3 stress

Request Time: 1 hour

Implementation Time: 1 hour

Access Cost: 2 ip

You can have an expert brought out to inspect an object. The expert has Search, Spot, and Listen bonuses at +10. More importantly the investigator comes with special equipment, a *ring of x-ray vision* and a *lens of detection* (generating a total search bonus of +20) and uses these in his inspection. This makes finding secret compartments quite easy; they're particularly good at inspecting an object you don't want to break open).

CELL PHONE

Skill: Appraise

DC: 15

Use Cost: 2 ip

Request Time: 1 hour

Implementation Time: 1 day

Duration: 1 year

Access Cost: Basic (5 ip)

House Usher supplies cell phones for the city elite. Their price is exorbitant as are the maintenance fees but if you have more money than you need these are the ultimate status symbols. Usher keeps these working via magic constructed by Lightning Wardens. There are no roaming charges, because you can't roam; they only work within 12 miles of House Usher itself (which covers most of the island). There's also no limit on the number of minutes you get (at the prices they charge customers want to be able to use the phone as often as possible). Making the check gets you a cell phone for a period of one year.

CHECK POCKETS

Skill: Gather Information

DC: 15

Use Cost: 2 stress

Request Time: 1 hour

Implementation Time: 2d6 × 10 minutes

Access Cost: 2 ip

The Street Irchin Syndicate has perfected a special pick-pocketing technique. The SIS tends to be good at picking pockets anyway, but what they do in this favor is lift the target's purse, quickly inspect its contents, then replace it the way they found it on the target. When successful the target never even knows that something has happened. The SIS typically checks the contents of all major pouches this way and can even check the contents of a backpack or saddlebags given enough time (they just wait until the target is having dinner). Treat this as a standard pick pocket attempt with a total +16 bonus (this includes the kid's +8 skill bonus, +2 synergy bonus for Bluff 5, favorable circumstances bonus of +2 for timing and another +2 for equipment, and helper bonus of +2 for other urchins assisting). Their special process allows this entire action to succeed with just one successful check.

CITY PLANNING ARCHIVES

Skill: Bluff

DC: 15

Use Cost: 1 stress

Request Time: 1 hour

Implementation Time: 1 hour

Access Cost: 1 ip

This gives you access to the archives of the city planning office. In the Second World the city doesn't involve itself much in private affairs but it does keep track of property transactions and major building projects. It also has records of public building projects such as the

sewage system and roads system. Note that things such as blueprints will not be available (when people buy land they can do whatever they want on it).

COMMUNIQUE

Skill: Knowledge (arcana or psionics)

DC: 20

Use Cost: 5 stress

Request Time: 1 hour

Implementation Time: 1d6 × 10 minutes

Access Cost: 5 ip

With this favor you contact some people you know and they use magic or psionics to send a message to someone in a distant location. The target must willingly accept the communication (most do) but by tapping into the power network you can get a message of up to 50 words sent and receive an answer of up to fifty words in length. Typically, you contact someone who passes the message and they may need to contact someone else to relay that message; most communication of this sort relies on individuals with the *sending* spell or manifestation (and they usually make two available for the message) but other means of communicating work as well. For instance, this can even get a message to someone in a magic restricted area though the execution time may be longer since the contact team needs to send a messenger of some sort to the target.

CONGREGATION

Skill: Knowledge (religion)

DC: 15

Use Cost: 3 stress

Request Time: 1 hour

Implementation Time: 1d6 hours

Duration: 2 hours

Access Cost: 5 ip

This favor allows you to call up a congregation of 5d10 faithful adherents to your religion. They come (willingly) and support your actions with their faith. These are simply normal lay practitioners and mostly low level NPC classes. They may even fight for you but they'll likely get slaughtered. The congregation's best use is in support of spells or rituals that require followers.

CONSTRUCT FASHION

Skill: Diplomacy

DC: 25

Use Cost: 2 ip

Request Time: 1d6 days

Implementation Time: 1d6 weeks

Access Cost: 10 ip

The social elite construct fashion through everything they do. By *being* cool the very concept of cool tracks your movement and tastes. The cost of this favor represents the investment in clothing, parties, and time to fashion a new look. While there are few direct benefits of constructing a fashion some indirect benefits arise. For instance, constructing a new fashion in clothing creates demand for a particular style of clothing. This will benefit certain businesses and brand names. By constructing a new fashion in recreational drugs (alcohol being one of them) you can lead people to trying out a dangerous substance. Finally, by constructing a new fashion you can ensure that only you and the quick adopters get the bonuses of appearing in that fashion. This can provide a +2 situational bonus to the use of social skills for a time.

CONTACTS [TYPE]

Skill: Variable

DC: Variable

Use Cost: Variable

Request Time: 1 hour

Implementation Time: 1d6 hours

Access Cost: 1 ip per skill

Most organizations offer a wealth of human resources. This takes the form of allowing a character to use their influence to get someone else to make a skill check for them. The cost and difficulty of the request depends on the skill level requested; by succeeding at the request the character gets to make one skill check using the contact's bonus; the character can make multiple checks by simply making multiple requests. If the character knows in advance they'll want multiple checks they can multiply the base cost by the number of checks they want and make a single request; this can save time.

I divide contacts into a few groups, with each group offering a certain range of skills. The cost and difficulty of a check depends primarily on the skill level but is increased for limited skills.

Contacts		
Skill Bonus	DC	Use cost
+5	15	1 stress
+10	20	3 stress
+15	35	1 ip
+20	45	3 ip
Special Skill	+5	*2

The above costs assume that the contact is not exposing

himself to serious risk. Field work may be involved (such as for a Gather Information check) but it should not be field work that requires on-site presence under hazardous conditions (such as searching an unsecured building; though searching a secured building would likely be okay). Special skills are those skills restricted to a particular class.

CONTACT GROUPS:

Commercial: Appraise, Craft (structural), Knowledge (business, civics, current events, history, pop culture)

Natural: Handle Animal, Knowledge (nature), Survival

Religious: Knowledge (religion), Languages

Sorcerous: Alchemy, Knowledge (arcana), Knowledge (Interstitial Lore), Spellcraft

Underworld: Forgery, Gather Information, Search, Disable Device, Open Lock

CRIMINAL BUSINESS [TYPE]

Skill: Gather Information

DC: 15

Use Cost: by business

Request Time: 1 day

Implementation Time: 1 month

Access Cost: 20 ip

You need permission to set up a criminal business in most cities; you typically gain this from the local underworld boss. Successful use of this favor allows you to set up a modest casino, brothel, or racket and gain protection from the local underworld. A cut from your earnings goes to the gang, and it's assumed that you also have some managers who handle enough of the business to give you time to adventure a bit. Any special problems you have to deal with yourself. These are all equivalent to influence investments of various sorts; they pay off much better though since the risk involved is higher and you need to spend more time protecting your investment (giving the gamemaster more opportunities to hook you into a scenario).

CASINO (10 ip)

Casino's can be quite profitable and even generate some influence on the side (since people build up debts). They're also one of the first targets in gang warfare so you need to be prepared for such an eventuality. This generates \$10,000 and 1 ip per year.

BROTHEL (10 ip)

Brothels are fairly safe businesses to run because, while there can be frequent small problems (unruly customers), there aren't too many large problems

since even criminals don't see much point in hurting these employees. This generates an income of 2 ip per year.

RACKET (10 ip)

A racket in this game means a collection of businesses that pay you protection money. This can be quite profitable and even not too immoral if you actually do protect them. This generates \$20,000 per year in income.

CROSS-WORLD CALL

Skill: Appraise

Requires: Cell Phone

DC: 20

Use Cost: 3 stress

Request Time: 1 minute

Implementation Time: 1 minute

Access Cost: 2 ip

If you have a cell-phone supplied by House Usher, for an additional fee you can arrange a cross-world call via the House Usher operator (Lily, who chain-smokes like a fiend). These last for up to one hour and cost a small fortune but they allow you to make a call to any regular phone number in the First World. If you get disconnected on the other end, or can't get through (busy signal for example) you still have an hour to call other numbers or try again later. Essentially, House Usher patches you through to the First World telephone network and you can treat your phone as connected to that for the duration.

CROSS WORLD COMMUNIQUE

Skill: Knowledge (arcana or psionics)

DC: 25

Use Cost: 7 stress

Request Time: 1 hour

Implementation Time: 2d6 × 10 minutes

Access Cost: 10 ip

As with a standard communiqué this allows you to send and receive a message of up to 50 words in length. This also works cross-world, with no failure chance unless something special interposes itself. Essentially, the communication network builds in redundancies and has people located in the appropriate world to ensure the delivery of the message.

DEEP EXPLORATION VEHICLE

Skill: Knowledge (arcana)

DC: 20

Use Cost: 5 stress

Request Time: 1 hour

Implementation Time: 1d6 days

Access Cost: 5 ip

When you need to explore the deep sea or certain unforgiving interstices one of the best devices for doing so is an *apparatus of kwal*. You can get access to one of these with a successful check. It typically takes 1d6 days to set up an appointment; on top of that you need to get the device delivered to wherever you're going to use it. By making the Influence check at -5 you can get the device up and running in 1d6 hours. The organization also supplies a pilot for the vehicle. In fact, unless they have reason to trust your skills they insist on supplying a pilot. The organization supplies a *bottle of air* along with the Apparatus for extended operation (this allows for almost indefinite operation though other factors may reduce exploration time).

DEEP INSPECTION

Skill: Sense Motive

DC: 20

Use Cost: 10 stress

Request Time: 1 hour

Implementation Time: 1d6 hours

Access Cost: 5 ip

This favor calls in a team of spellcasters of various sorts to investigate a location. The team casts these arcane spells: *detect poison*, *detect magic*, *detect secret doors*, *see invisibility*. It also casts all four detect alignment spells (law, chaos, good, and evil) to see if there are any lingering traces. They cast these divine spells: *zone of truth*, *speak with dead* (with any available corpses), *speak with plants*. If animals are present there's a 30% chance a druid can be brought in to cast *speak with animals*. Finally, all the evidence is taken back to headquarters where it is analyzed and subjected to a *legend lore*. The search check can be assumed to have a +15 bonus (and taking 20) and the spells are cast at level 5 or the minimum caster level required.

DEEP SEA DIVING GEAR

Skill: Appraise

DC: 20

Use Cost: 10 stress

Request Time: 1 hour

Implementation Time: 1d6 hours

Duration: 1 week

Access Cost: 6 ip

White Squall shipping engages in some underwater recovery missions, otherwise known as treasure diving, in order to supplement their income. In fact, White Squall started as ocean going treasure hunters and while the older generation can no longer take the

physical strain of underwater activity their children are quite fond of it (parents stay topside guiding the missions nowadays). They have the following gear to assist in deep sea operations: 2 *pearls of the sirines*, 2 *plate armor of the deep*, 3 *gloves of swimming and climbing*, and 2 *helms of underwater action*.

DEEP SEARCH OF BUILDING

Skill: Sense Motive

DC: 20

Use Cost: 8 stress

Request Time: 1d6 hours

Implementation Time: 1 hour

Access Cost: 8 ip

This allows you to not only search a residence or business building but also break open stuff in the process. Add 15 to the victim's best core influence bonus to determine the difficulty of this favor, or use the base DC, whichever is higher. You have 72 hours of authority for this search.

DEEP SEARCH OF SHIP

Skill: Sense Motive

DC: 20

Use Cost: 6 stress

Request Time: 1d6 hours

Implementation Time: 1 hour

Access Cost: 6 ip

This is just like a deep search of a building but applies to a ship.

DETAIN INDIVIDUAL

Skill: Sense Motive

DC: 20

Use Cost: 3 stress

Request Time: 1 hour

Implementation Time: 1d4 hours

Access Cost: 2 ip

In cities and kingdoms there's typically an organization with the authority to detain people. In the Second World the restrictions on detaining a person are pretty relaxed, so long as the person has no influence. The DC of this favor is equal to the highest Influence bonus of the target plus 10, or the base difficulty class, whichever is higher. A detained target may make one check to get out after an hour, then one check each subsequent day. The difficulty class for these Influence checks is 20 if using Sense Motive or 25 if using one of the other core influence skills.

DIVINE LOCKDOWN

Skill: Knowledge (religion)

DC: 25

Use Cost: 10 stress

Request Time: 1 hour

Implementation Time: 1d6 hours

Duration: 2 hours

Access Cost: 8 ip

This favor allows you to call in a team of clerics to secure a building or other site. This group surrounds the target location and brings enough holy water to create a complete barrier around the area. They then stand side by side so as to completely surround the building; each has a *magic circle of protection against evil* active and each is fully prepared to turn undead. Monitors call these teams in when they've singled out a creature lair and want to make sure that nothing escapes. A sufficient number of clerics of 5th level from the surrounding region come in to provide the services.

ELDER TREE CIRCLE

Skill: Survival

DC: 25

Use Cost: 20 stress

Request Time: 1d6 hours

Implementation Time: 1d6 days

Access Cost: 10 ip

Hidden deep within most great forests stands a circle of ancient trees, guardians of nature that can trace their roots back to before the Sundering. Through this favor you may contact individuals who guide you to one of these circles and make a request, either for information or assistance. The elder tree circle is slow to answer though, and even slower to come to a decision. Assume 1d6 days for the answer to a significant question and 1d6 weeks for them to act on the information. The results of this interview are left to GM discretion. I'll discuss some sample requests here. You should restrict petitioners to one request per visit. For requests favorable to the forest or nature in general the cost can be reduced or even eliminated.

Forest Knowledge: The tree circle knows or can know of, all events that transpire within the forest so long as they are not specially hidden in some way. Given this, they can give detailed descriptions of what has happened or is happening.

Historical Knowledge: Members of the tree circle have been around for a very long time, some are eons old. Others possess the oral history passed down from member to member. While they have only heard rumors of the outside world these rumors are frequently far better than recorded histories. They can give fairly accurate broad information regarding events on their

continent within the last 2,000 years. The information gets sketchy beyond that but even then it's more direct than most information (perhaps passed along one generation).

Divine Spells: Members of the circle can grant knowledge of lost or forgotten druidical spells. Assume they'll grant up to 16 levels of lost spells to a petitioner. Other sourcebooks make good sources for such spells.

Retribution: When the need arises the elder tree circle can be terrible in its wrath. Against interlopers they can direct a grove of 10 treants while simultaneously closing off means of escape. Against a settlement or building they can direct the ground to simply swallow the place up; burying it beneath the earth (up to the size of a fortress).

EXTRACTION TEAM

Skill: Sense Motive

DC: 20

Use Cost: 7 ip

Request Time: 1 hour

Implementation Time: 1d6 days

Access Cost: 10 ip

Kidnappings are unfortunately common in the Second World. Moreover, to deal with them you need more than just the city guard; you need more than an army. What you need are highly trained intrusion agents who can get in without alerting the targets to the fact that they're going to lose both their meal-ticket, and last line of defense. The Night Patrol, given its small size but high talent, has taken to specializing in this sort of favor. They don't guarantee success, but they don't charge for failure either; moreover, they have a rather high success rate (over 75%). Their costs can be exorbitant, depending on the specifics of the mission. The Wolf Pack can also provide Extraction consultation and equipment for groups that want to run their own mission; these costs are typically fairly low. Jake will nix any assistance if he thinks someone's in over their head. Jake's typical extraction team consists of four 8th level characters. A sample extraction team is listed in the NPC section.

FEY GLADE

Skill: Survival

DC: 20

Use Cost: 3 ip

Request Time: 1 hour

Implementation Time: 1d6 nights

Access Cost: 15 ip

Fey glades appear intermittently in virgin wild lands. They are always circles, though slightly off in some way, as if the universe couldn't quite get a circle right. They can form in the midst of a forest as the trees slowly bend away from the center, or on a desolate moor as a depression in the thickened vegetation, or even in a dune sea where the wind has somehow blown a circular pattern in the sand. These are called Fey Glades because that is the name the elves (and the Irish) chose for them. However, you will find no Fey there. The glades appear during the evening, forming as the moon rises, then disappear by morning with the setting of the moon. An intelligent creature that waits in the glade and can clear their mind completely, for even a moment, experiences an epiphany. How this happens and the nature of the epiphany vary from individual to individual. There's some kind of significant inner journey but no one ever remembers anything about the journey beyond vague images, whispered words, and glimmers of emotion. They collapse upon experiencing the moment and recover in the morning.

With this favor you can arrange for escort to a Fey Glade. The location varies but typically you can get to a glade within 1d6 nights (Fey Glades only appear at night). In order to experience an epiphany you must wait in the center of the glade under moonlight and successfully lose all sense of your self. To do this you must succeed at a Wisdom check (DC 15). You get to make one check per hour and the moonlight lasts for 2d6 hours. You can know in advance how long the moonlight will last if you make a Survival check (DC 15) or bother to look in an almanac. If your Wisdom check succeeds you experience the moment and pass out. You can then choose to "re-arrange" your character. What this means is you can swap around your feats, skills, advancement stat bonuses, and levels as you see fit. A sorcerer could re-allocate their known spells. You could fully change what classes you have acquired. Your equipment remains the same, and any abilities not applicable under their new configuration are lost (for example, a wizard that loses all wizard levels also loses any spells he learned, even those he spent money to learn). You cannot switch your attributes, but you may do so for attribute bonuses acquired during level advancement. Warden characters get access to a pool of power equal to the influence and xp they spent on Bindings. This pool can be re-allocated but if not used is lost. Only one character per evening may use the circle; this is the first character to succeed at the check; if multiple characters succeed in the same hour the one who rolls highest succeeds. If two or more characters

are still tied have Wisdom roll-offs until you determine a winner.

You tend to have some slightly different memories after this experience. You also gain a circular scar or tattoo with a faint pattern in the middle. Repeated uses of a Fey Glade darkens the pattern within the circle and make it more complex. Both the modifications to the character, and the location and form of the tattoo or scar are up to the player running the character; it's worthwhile to note that the player is operating in author mode here to an extent. The character has only a vague idea of what will happen to him (but there is some link between the desires of the character and the change experienced). Minor modifications to the character's memory are under the control of the gamemaster. How the glade works and what it actually does is the subject of endless speculation; I imagine some gamemasters already have evil thoughts. Some possibilities are: A) a spiritual journey allows the character to drastically re-evaluate their life, provoking such change that they take off in an entirely new direction. B) the character relives their entire life, making the choices they always wondered about; they emerge as the person they would have been. C) The character's mind is replaced with the mind of his "brother" existing in a slightly different parallel world. D) the character is possessed by a demon, Roa, interstitial entity, or such. As a player you should recognize that using a glade gives your gamemaster a license to mess with you depending on her interpretation of how glades work.

FIELD EXERCISE

Skill: Knowledge (tactics)

DC: 15

Use Cost: 5 stress (S)

Request Time: 1 hour

Implementation Time: 1d6 days

Duration: 2 weeks

Access Cost: 4 ip

You can get a military organization to re-locate one of its field exercises. While they won't fight for you their presence can be quite effective at stabilizing a region (since they move aggressively to defend themselves). Typically a company sized unit (about 160 troops) goes on a field exercise.

FIGHTER RETRAINING

Skill: Knowledge (tactics)

DC: 15

Use Cost: 1 ip

Request Time: 1 hour

Implementation Time: 1 week per feat

Access Cost: 10 ip

Soldiers often need to go back to training in order to match themselves better to a new job or position. With this favor you can retrain your fighter feats. What this means is that you effectively trade in any fighter feats you've currently taken for alternate fighter feats. For each feat "traded" you must spend one week retraining. You must still satisfy the pre-requisites of any feats you possess in order to gain the benefit of those feats. For example, if you have the Power Attack and Cleave feats and trade Power Attack for Dodge you may no longer use the Cleave feat. Thus, when retraining, make sure not to dangle your feats.

FIRST WORLD FILES

Skill: Sense Motive

DC: 20

Use Cost: 5 stress

Request Time: 1 hour

Implementation Time: 1d6 days

Access Cost: 10 ip

You can get access to the official FBI and local law enforcement files regarding a particular person or organization. Treat each such request as a separate request. In the Second World this takes longer since you need to connect to people who can talk to the other side, then they need to photocopy all the materials in a Second World friendly format (for instance, regular

photographs deteriorate in the Second World) then they need to ship it across to you. In many situations there simply won't be much in the way of available information; if the subject has been exiled then many of his records have wound up lost, destroyed, or faded somehow. But they can usually scrape up some stuff. Naturally, no such problems face research on non-exiled subjects.

FIRST WORLD SHIFT GATE

Skill: Appraise

DC: 20

Use Cost: 5 ip

Request Time: 1 hour

Implementation Time: 30 minutes

Access Cost: 10 ip

Organizations that import to and export from the First World have shift gates. These are ideal for transporting large quantities of goods. All these organizations own the property on the far side, typically a well-secured warehouse. This favor grants full use of a shift gate for one transit (this is useful when moving cargo).

FIRST WORLD TRANSIT

Skill: Appraise or Knowledge (arcana)

DC: 15

Use Cost: 5 stress +1 stress per extra person

Request Time: 1 hour

Implementation Time: 15 minutes



Access Cost: 4 ip

Major organizations have fairly regular contact with the First World. In order to facilitate this they have both permanent gates and plane shifting individuals for easy transit between the First and Second Worlds. With this favor you can arrange transport of some kind to the First World. This may take the form of moving as part of a cargo load via shift gate or having an individual with the right powers take you (and perhaps some others) across personally. Most of these organizations own the property on the far side of the gate through a holding company or other subsidiary organization.

FORTIFIED TOWER**Skill:** Knowledge (tactics)**DC:** 15**Use Cost:** 3 stress (S)**Request Time:** 1 hour**Implementation Time:** 1d6 hours**Duration:** 1 month**Access Cost:** 4 ip

The military has watch towers scattered about the territory, particularly in the more dangerous regions. With this favor you can set up a base in a fortified tower for one month. Many of these towers are mere watch posts staffed by just a few soldiers. The soldiers perform their normal duties (such as maintenance and guard) plus provide food while the players are stationed there.

FREE TRANSPORT**Skill:** Appraise**DC:** 15**Use Cost:** 0**Request Time:** 1d6 minutes**Implementation Time:** according to trip**Access Cost:** 2 ip

By exerting pull on the Teamsters you can get free transport on any of the city's taxis. Just flag one down and they'll take you where you need to go. You shouldn't over-abuse this but, generally, you get as many free trips as you want.

GUARDED PASSAGE THROUGH THE FOREST**Skill:** Survival**DC:** 15**Use Cost:** 2 stress**Request Time:** 1d6 hours**Implementation Time:** according to trip**Access Cost:** 2 ip

The Seven Tribes are protective of their wild lands. By knowing the right people you can get an escort through

the forest. This allows up to 12 people to travel through Seven Tribes lands without incident; they even supply guides (forcibly if necessary) to make sure you don't get lost or into trouble.

HIPPOGRIFF STABLES**Skill:** Appraise**DC:** 20**Use Cost:** 6 stress**Request Time:** 1 hour**Implementation Time:** 2 hours**Duration:** 3 days**Access Cost:** 5 ip

Of the flying steeds Hippogriffs are the most tractable; they aren't too smart (like a Pegasus, just try ordering them around) and they don't eat their trainers as readily as Griffons. Given these advantages the Blue Conglomerate chose them for their special stables. There are several hippogriffs in the stables for use by messengers and high ranking officials (at least those who aren't afraid of heights). The hippogriffs are trained by Trevor Ryle, a gruff Ranger of questionable morals but impeccable animal handling skills.

HIT**Skill:** Gather Information**DC:** 20**Use Cost:** 2 ip**Request Time:** 1 hour**Implementation Time:** 2d12 hours**Access Cost:** 5 ip

When you really don't like someone... This favor puts an assassin in motion. In Second World New York these are usually supplied by either the Red Society or the Clims Gang. Neither group takes this lightly since it can generate some bad blood and has other repercussions, but if you're sufficiently influential with the group you can get it done. For special characters it's best to game out the assassination in some way using the attributes of the assassin (see the NPC section for details). For less important targets make a simple check (with no bonus) against DC 6 to see if the hit succeeded; alter the DC as you see fit (one simple solution is to set the DC equal to 2× the victim's challenge rating). This can also be used to scare someone, or to just mess them up a bit. The success difficulty class for that sort of action is significantly lower, perhaps as low as 2 for a sufficiently unimportant target. The Clims gang goes about this a bit differently; they send a group of toughs to kick in the door and cause some damage.

HOLE UP

Skill: Bluff

DC: 15

Use Cost: 2 stress (S)

Request Time: 1 hour

Implementation Time: 1d6 hours

Duration: 3 months

Access Cost: 5 ip

There are few places better to hide than up in the hills of the Appalachians. The dwarves themselves are closed-mouthed folk and caves honeycomb the hills. With this favor you call on your dwarf allies and they find you a place to hide out until things blow over. This can last for up to three months and your allies will even make sure you get regular supplies of food. It'll be wilderness living though, not much more than a dirt floor and a stream nearby. You get the added advantage that no one can come after you in a large force since doing so would make the dwarf clans rise up to repel the invaders.

HOME DELIVERY

Skill: Gather Information

DC: 15

Use Cost: 2 stress (S)

Request Time: 1 hour

Implementation Time: 1d6 hours

Duration: 1 week

Access Cost: 4 ip

Occasionally it's not such a good idea to be seen in public. With this favor you can arrange to have someone do your shopping for you and return the items to a location of your choosing (within the city). This can be to almost any location, not just a regular residence. It's expected that you'll be laying low in a pretty seedy area when this favor is used.

IMPERIAL SCOUTING MAPS

Skill: Knowledge (tactics)

DC: 15

Use Cost: 2 stress

Request Time: 1 hour

Implementation Time: 1d6 days

Access Cost: 4 ip

The empire has thoroughly mapped most of the North American continent. Many of these maps are horribly out of date, and some were produced by poor mappers (but perhaps good fighters) so they'll be of limited cartographical value but they frequently have useful first hand information (such as dangerous creatures in the area). Imperial maps tend to come in a fairly standard scale, 40 miles by 40 miles.

INTERSTITIAL BASE CAMP

Skill: Knowledge (arcana)

DC: 20

Use Cost: 5 stress

Request Time: see text

Implementation Time: see text

Access Cost: 4 ip

The College of the Interstice has set up several base camps in various interstices for use by their explorer teams. Most of these camps are in the Forge but there are some in other locations as well. You can make this request by giving advance notice. When doing this you work out with the College what region you'll be exploring and they indicate to you locations of base camps along that route. You may then schedule a stop at one of those base camps. Another way to use this favor is to simply call on it in a time of need; if you're exploring the Forge or another interstice you make the request check as usual and spend influence stress as usual; the check and the expenditure of stress represent past communication you had with people of the college regarding interstitial base camps, perhaps you pressured them too hard or something and this later (i.e. now) comes back to haunt you. The gamemaster then makes a check to see if there are any base camps within a reasonable distance. Roll percentile dice: on a 1-25 there's a nearby camp, within 1d12 hours travel time; on a 26-75 the camp is further away, 1d6 days of travel; on a 76 or higher there are no camps nearby at all. Add 20 to 50 to the percentile roll for unusual interstices or deep areas of the Forge.

These camps store provisions plus basic equipment, enough to restock a typical adventuring party of up to 10 people; pretty much anything from the common goods or containers and carriers equipment lists will be there; smaller collections of class tools and skill kits are also available. The camps themselves also have a small alchemical laboratory, one scroll with the divine spell, *sending*, one with the divine spell, *plane shift*, one with the arcane version of *plane shift*, and one with the arcane spell, *dream*. If used, the explorers are expected to replace them (though the College might replace them for free if the mission was official).

INTERSTITIAL MAPS

Skill: Knowledge (arcana)

DC: 20

Use Cost: 5 stress

Request Time: 1 hour

Implementation Time: 1d6 days

Access Cost: 4 ip

Many sorcerous enclaves have mapped out regions of the interstices, in particular the Forge. They like to hoard this information so it can be hard to access and, given the vastness of the place, there's a lot more unexplored than explored. Still, for any particular area assign it a basic chance (25% for many regions of the Forge, 15% or lower for interstices and more obscure places in the Forge) and make a simple check to determine if some kind of map is available. These maps can look pretty weird due to the geometry of the locations.

INTERSTITIAL TRANSPORT

Skill: Knowledge (arcana)

DC: 20

Use Cost: 1 ip

Request Time: 1 hour

Implementation Time: 1d6 hours

Access Cost: 10 ip

The College has several transit methods on standby, ready for use in research or other purposes. As a member of the college you can make use of one of these transit methods. The listed ip cost applies to one transit to either the Forge or the First World.

For an alternate interstice double the ip cost (or more if it's extraordinarily difficult to access).

LOCKDOWN

Skill: Sense Motive

DC: 25

Use Cost: 2 ip + 20 stress (S)

Request Time: 1d6 hours

Implementation Time: 24 hours

Duration: 1d6 weeks

Access Cost: 50 ip

When crime gets out of hand the city guard will call for a lockdown on a particular district. During a lockdown the guard blockades off a portion of the city and controls all access to the region. During this time they will move methodically through the area checking papers and trying to clean up any criminal establishments they see. Gambling dens, rackets, drug hideouts, and brothels (depending on the laws of the city) will be shutdown, typically only to pop up somewhere else. All criminal businesses within the lockdown area are destroyed.

LOOK THE OTHER WAY

Skill: Gather Information

DC: 15

Request Cost: \$100 + 1 stress

Request Time: short

Implementation Time: short

Access Cost: 2 ip

When caught red-handed (or suspiciously close to red-handed) you can pull on your underworld influence to get a member of the city guard to look the other way and let you get on about your business. Pulling the request is quick and easy but you should first make a Sense Motive Check (DC 15) to make sure the target is on the take. There's typically a 75% chance that any member of the guard actually is on the take so you can gamble if you choose though the gamemaster may adjust for different parts of town. If the request succeeds and the guard is on the take he'll let you go, but not provide any help.

MAGICAL LIBRARY I

Skill: Knowledge (arcana)

DC: 15

Use Cost: 1 ip

Request Time: 1d6 hours

Implementation Time: 1d6 days

Duration: 10 years

Access Cost: 5 ip

This library has a fairly complete collection of spells. Any given spell from the PHB of up to third level has a 75% chance of being present. Spells from other supplements (that are also allowed in your campaign) have a 5% chance of being present. The library provides the basic material for magical and mundane research as well.

MAGICAL LIBRARY II

Skill: Knowledge (arcana)

DC: 20

Use Cost: 2 ip

Request Time: 1d6 hours

Implementation Time: 1d6 days

Duration: 10 years

Access Cost: 10 ip

All spells from the PHB of up to third level are present and there's a 10% chance that spells from other supplements are present. Spells from 4th through 6th level have a 60% chance of being present if they're from the PHB and 5% chance otherwise. The library provides a +2 equipment bonus on Research checks.

MAGICAL LIBRARY III

Skill: Knowledge (arcana)

DC: 25

Use Cost: 4 ip

Request Time: 1d6 hours

Implementation Time: 1d6 days

Duration: 10 years

Access Cost: 20 ip

All spells from the PHB of up to 6th level are present and there's a 10% chance that spells from other supplements are present. Spells from 7th through 9th level have a 40% chance of being present if they're from the PHB and 5% chance otherwise. The library provides a +4 equipment bonus on Research checks.

MAGICAL SURVEILLANCE

Skill: Knowledge (arcana) or Sense Motive

DC: 20

Use Cost: 5 stress

Request Time: 1 hour

Implementation Time: 1 hour

Duration: 1 day

Access Cost: 5 ip

Mundane surveillance can be upgraded to include magical measures. When this occurs the surveillance team makes frequent use of *detect magic* as well as some scrying methods (clairvoyance and so forth) to enhance their abilities. Large magical disturbances as well as magical activity will be noted in the surveillance. This is the cost per day of surveillance. The scrying checks have a +12 bonus. Assume the team keeps the target you designate under constant scrying.

MARTIAL LAW

Skill: Bluff

DC: 25

Use Cost: 10 ip + 20 stress (S)

Request Time: 2d6 hours

Implementation Time: 3d12 hours

Duration: 1d6 weeks

Access Cost: 100 ip

An entire city can be placed under martial law through this favor. While under martial law private citizens may not carry weapons or wear armor unless they have special permission. Also, the militia occupies the streets and performs random spot checks on citizens, asking for papers and so forth. Since most people actually lack these in the Second World what ends up happening is that those with foreign sounding accents or looks typically end up being taken somewhere for questioning regarding their business in the city. Local governments also take this opportunity to deport undesirables such as beggars and the sick. Deportation involves putting the people in some carts and carrying them off somewhere in the countryside then letting them fend for themselves or putting them on ships bound for elsewhere.

MATCHMAKING

Skill: Diplomacy

DC: 20

Use Cost: 10 stress

Request Time: 1d6 hours

Implementation Time: 1d100 days

Access Cost: 10 ip

The social elite love doing this, but only for those they respect. This favor allows you to request that the machinery go into operation and find you or someone else an appropriate partner. The people involved in this favor know what they're doing so frequently they make better choices than the individuals would themselves.

MUSCLE LEVEL 1

Skill: Gather Information

DC: 15

Use Cost: 2 stress

Request Time: 1 hour

Implementation Time: short

Duration: 1 day

Access Cost: 2 ip

With a little bit of pull you can pick up a crowd of thugs in pretty much any seedy dive or on any street corner. This gets you 5 cheap thugs (see NPC section) for one day's work. It's okay to lose these guys; that's part of the risk they take. Future costs may increase if you lose too many.

MUSCLE LEVEL 2

Skill: Gather Information

DC: 20

Use Cost: 5 stress

Request Time: 1 hour

Implementation Time: short

Duration: 1 day

Access Cost: 5 ip

One nice feature about being part of a gang is that sometimes you get to call on the help for your own purposes. This gets you 4 tough thugs (see NPC section) for one day's work. Every thug you lose while using this costs you 5 extra stress. The organization cares about these people to some degree.

OFFICIAL INTERROGATION

Skill: Sense Motive

DC: 20

Use Cost: 5 stress

Request Time: 1 hour

Implementation Time: 1d6 hours

Access Cost: 5 ip

If an individual is already detained you can get them interrogated as well. With this favor you can actually be present (perhaps behind a screen of some sort) to direct the interrogation if you wish or you may simply give the interrogator a list of questions to ask. The interrogator is fairly good (a +10 bonus).

ORB OF STORMS

Skill: Bluff

DC: 25

Use Cost: 10 stress

Request Time: 1 hour

Implementation Time: 2d6 hours

Duration: 3 days

Access Cost: 10 ip

The climate of the northeast is generally favorable to agriculture and business but there's always the possibility of extreme weather conditions wreaking havoc. A simple solution (that doesn't rely on unruly spell casters) is to secure an Orb of Storms; moreover this provides some defense against invading armies and an even better defense against invading navies. While in the city it's quite difficult to make use of the Orb since the city government doesn't want people messing around with Manhattan's weather. However, the Orb is mobile and the master of the Orb can be talked into using it elsewhere (in fact, he typically moves around fairly frequently to help farmers in outlying areas).

PARTY INVITATION

Skill: Diplomacy

DC: 20

Use Cost: 2 stress

Request Time: 1 hour

Implementation Time: short

Access Cost: 2 ip

Getting invited to the fancy parties gives you access to the ear of important people. It's also a status symbol getting into these parties. Use of this favor gets you an official invitation to pretty much any of the parties in town.

PASSING THE WORD

Skill: Gather Information

DC: 20

Use Cost: 5 stress

Request Time: 1 hour

Implementation Time: 1d6 hours

Access Cost: 4 ip

This favor allows the character to use his underworld contacts to assist in a Gather Information check. There are two ways this can be implemented. The character

can either have their criminal contacts do the work or use their contacts to assist their own Gather Information check. In the second case they get a +4 circumstance bonus to one check and a +2 circumstance bonus to four checks.

To determine the success of the criminal contacts treat it as 1 gather Information check with a +15 bonus, 2 Gather Information checks with a +10 bonus, and 4 Gather Information checks with a +5 bonus.

PIRATE HUNTERS

Skill: Appraise

DC: 25

Use Cost: 2 ip + 10 stress (S)

Request Time: 2d6 hours

Implementation Time: 1d6 days

Duration: 1 month

Access Cost: 10 ip

The larger trade guilds of the city either hire their own, or fervently support, official pirate hunters. Pirate Hunters themselves are a motley lot, many no better than the people they hunt but some in it for the combination of adventure and apparent good they can do. Pirate Hunters are typically quite hardy and captain fast, well-armed, and well-trained ships. They often have a couple ships under their command at a time. With this favor you can get one of these hunters tasked to you for about one month. They're quite happy to take a commission to go after a particular pirate, smuggler, or den of thieves holed up on an island.

POISON LAB

Skill: Gather Information

DC: 20

Use Cost: 1 ip

Request Time: 1 hour

Implementation Time: 1d6 days

Access Cost: 5 ip

This lab gives you access to a wide variety of poisons, plus some staff on hand to analyze a potential poison or, with the right funds, concoct a custom poison. For poison creation it's best to provide a large sample of some animal poison then let them work on turning it into a usable poison. The lab will provide 1d6 doses of the poison; this is what it can extract from a typical animal corpse. Lower the amount generated if the corpse is particularly damaged.

PORTAL

Skill: Knowledge (arcana)

DC: 20

Use Cost: 5 stress

Request Time: 1 hour

Implementation Time: quick

Access Cost: 5 ip

With this favor you gain use of a wormhole to allow quick and simple movement to another location on the Second World. This allows up to ten people a two way trip through a wormhole; the return trip can be arranged at the character's convenience. Each wormhole connects just two locations so organizations with this favor should specify where the wormhole leads (in parentheses works well).

PROPAGANDA

Skill: Knowledge (religion)

DC: 20

Use Cost: 15 stress

Request Time: 1 hour

Implementation Time: 1d6 days

Duration: 1 month

Access Cost: 15 ip

This favor gets the local presses rolling and putting out a message of your choosing. For most groups this works best when demonizing some hapless victim (deserved or not). This directs a large amount of attention towards the victim of the propaganda, which may fan the flames of hatred or breed sympathy based on the claims made and their legitimacy. Many groups are not above making unsubstantiated accusations that are quite harmful (such as child molestation) but wary of doing so too often in case their reputation for accuracy dwindles too greatly. In game terms this will raise or lower reaction levels to the target by one degree for the duration.

PSYCHIC ANALYSIS

Skill: Knowledge (psionics)

DC: 10

Use Cost: 3 stress

Request Time: 1 hour

Implementation Time: 1d4 hours

Access Cost: 1 ip

This gives the character a basic analysis of the item in question. This includes use of the psionic manifestations *identify* and *object reading*; these are manifested at 3rd level of effect.

PUBLIC DEMONSTRATION

Skill: Knowledge (religion)

DC: 15

Use Cost: 5 stress

Request Time: 1 hour

Implementation Time: 1d6 hours

Duration: 1d6 hours

Access Cost: 5 ip

The organization can call up its members for a public demonstration or spectacle of some kind. This will always be in the open, typically in daylight. The advantage of an operation like this is that it puts a lot of people in the street (over a hundred). These crowds can get quite rowdy as well. The disturbance can provide excellent cover for an operation or put a lot of witnesses in a particular spot if you need them. The demonstration covers about one block and lasts for 1d6 hours.

QUICK INSPECTION

Skill: Sense Motive

DC: 15

Use Cost: 3 stress

Request Time: 1d6 × 10 minutes

Implementation Time: 2 hours

Access Cost: 3 ip

This calls in a team of lesser field agents to work a site. The team casts these arcane spells: *detect poison*, *detect magic*, *detect secret doors*, *see invisibility*. It also casts all four detect alignment spells (law, chaos, good, and evil) to see if there are any lingering traces. The team collects all evidence they can find (search +10, take 20), then analyzes the evidence using the magic at their disposal as well as alchemical methods.

RECORDS SWEEP

Skill: Bluff

DC: 20

Use Cost: 5 stress

Request Time: 1d6 hours

Implementation Time: 24 hours

Access Cost: 8 ip

Through an inside contact with an organization you can get standard records regarding yourself "lost" somehow. This favor is particular to the organization in question and does not apply to knowledge particular individuals might have.

RED SOCIETY DIRT

Skill: Gather Information

DC: 20

Use Cost: 4 stress

Request Time: 1 hour

Implementation Time: 1d8 hours

Access Cost: 4 ip

This allows the character to get access to special files the Red Society has regarding a particular person or organization. These files have information regarding all actions the individual took using Red Society resources

(i.e. past dealings with the Red Society) and may include some additional information as well. The stress cost is for a moderately important individual; minor players would halve the cost (for instance, a street thug would have a small file but also only cost 1 stress). Higher powered individuals or people somehow important to the organization have higher costs and higher difficulty classes for the request (or will have locked portions of their files that require a greater expenditure).

REPATRIATION

Skill: Knowledge (arcana)

DC: 20

Use Cost: 10 stress

Request Time: 1 hour

Implementation Time: 1d6 hours

Duration: 1 week

Access Cost: 20 ip

Some groups have access to special rituals that remove the effects of exile. This favor allows you to remain in the First World for an extended period of time and, while there, your powers will not be suppressed. This means that, for the duration of this effect, your spells and similar abilities will not be subjected to the First World's background spell resistance. This also has the advantage that it allows you to remain in the First World longer; start counting down the time before you need to leave only after the duration of this effect has expired.

RITUAL CLEANSING

Skill: Knowledge (religion)

DC: 20

Use Cost: 1 ip + 5 stress

Request Time: 1 hour

Implementation Time: 1d6 days

Access Cost: 10 ip

This favor calls in a team of clerics to go over a location in detail and eliminate all trace of demonic, necromantic and evil influence. This involves first systematically dispelling every part of the place, then thoroughly dousing the area in holy water, then the casting of a *consecrate* spell over every bit of the location, followed up by a *hallow* spell; no additional spell effects are added to the *hallow* spell.

SCRYING CIRCLE

Skill: Sense Motive

DC: 25

Use Cost: 15 stress

Request Time: 1 hour

Scrying Devices

Bonus Effect	DC	Use Cost	Access Cost
See Invisible	20	3 stress	10 ip
Detect Thoughts	20	3 stress	10 ip
Telepathy	25	5 stress	15 ip
True Seeing	30	7 stress	20 ip

Implementation Time: 1 hour

Duration: 1 day

Access Cost: 10 ip

This is one of the most potent surveillance favors. A circle of wizards, sorcerers, and/or druids will keep an area under constant watch via scrying methods (crystal balls, scrying spells, etc.) They record both visual and auditory information in the target area. Alternately, they can target an individual and track their movements and actions constantly. Assume they have a Scrying check of +12 and allow one check by the target per day to detect the scrying. Naturally, some people may be able to circumvent this favor. Extending the surveillance costs less, add 5 stress for each additional day of surveillance.

SCRYING DEVICES

Skill: Knowledge (arcana)

DC: 20

Use Cost: 2 stress

Request Time: 1 hour

Implementation Time: short

Duration: 2 hours

Access Cost: 8 ip

Many arcane and intelligence organizations pool their resources to purchase or construct one or more *crystal balls* for scrying purposes. Like many other devices, people have found that pooling their resources for an object like this is quite effective since they are used relatively infrequently but quite handy to have available. The particular organization will have details regarding exactly what type of *crystal ball* they own. One expenditure of stress grants one access to the crystal ball for 2 hours of use. There's some small chance that a *crystal ball* is being used at any given time (1 in 10) but it will typically be available in 1d6 hours.

SEAL OF FAVOR

Skill: Diplomacy

DC: 20

Use Cost: 1 ip + 5 stress

Request Time: 1d6 hours

Implementation Time: 1 hour

Duration: 3 months

Access Cost: 5 ip

Baroness Lynda Michaels can provide a group with a special seal indicating that the person has her favor. This will help them to find lodging (of the best sort of course) on a long trip and give them an opportunity to meet people they otherwise could not. The group will gain a one degree attitude shift in their favor when dealing with government and high society characters. A seal lasts for about three months.

SEARCH BUILDING

Skill: Sense Motive

DC: 15

Use Cost: 3 stress

Request Time: 1 hour

Implementation Time: 1 hour

Access Cost: 4 ip

With the right kind of pull you can get legitimate authority to search a building. This allows you to walk through the building and perform a normal Search check (up to 2 hours worth of searching). In order to perform this you must make a contested Influence check against the target of the search. Assume a mundane target (a civilian) has an Influence bonus of +2. If you fail to find incriminating evidence in one of these searches the use cost is tripled.

SEARCH SHIP

Skill: Sense Motive

DC: 15

Use Cost: 2 stress

Request Time: 1 hour

Implementation Time: 1 hour

Access Cost: 4 ip

This is just like search building but applies to ships. This is considered a separate favor because different laws and regulations apply to commercial shipping.

SECOND WORLD SHIPPING

Skill: Appraise

DC: 20

Use Cost: 10 stress

Request Time: 1 hour

Implementation Time: 24 hours

Access Cost: 20 ip

This favor allows you to get a package delivered practically anywhere overnight. The process involves you taking the package to your contacts, they then transit the package to the First World, fly it to the destination, then transit the package back to the Second World and deliver to the target. This works best for shipping between great cities or any city where the organization

that provides the service has an office. To other locations raise the request DC by 5 or more, depending on how far out of the way the location lies. The package may weigh up to 50 pounds and yes, you're allowed to ship a halfling this way (customs considerations aren't a worry).

SECRET GUILDHOUSE

Skill: Gather Information

DC: 20

Use Cost: 5 stress (S)

Request Time: 1 hour

Implementation Time: 1 hour

Duration: 1 week

Access Cost: 6 ip

Thieves' Guilds maintain secret safe houses in all large cities and quite a few of the smaller ones. With this favor you can take temporary residence in one of these safe houses. The safe houses are regularly secured against standard surveillance (typically by placing them in hard to spot places) and are moved often enough that knowledge of a particular safe house goes out of date quickly. Safe houses have some small, standard weapons (short swords, light crossbows) and thieving equipment (picks) as well as food and more mundane items. They also have at least 3 secret entrances, one typically to a back alley, one to the roofs, and one to the sewers (in cities with those).

SECRET PASSAGE

Skill: Appraise

DC: 20

Use Cost: 5 stress

Request Time: 1 hour

Implementation Time: 1d12 hours

Access Cost: 5 ip

With this favor you can arrange secret passage. The best method is secret passage on a ship; you'll travel either in the cargo hold or (for true smuggler ships) a secret compartment. Secret passage can also be arranged over land; in these cases you'll likely travel in a secret compartment in a wagon. The cost is for a trip of up to 500 miles by land or 1000 miles by boat. The implementation time represents the time before you commence the trip; completing the trip takes the normal time for a trip of its length.

SEVEN TRIBES SCOUTING LORE

Skill: Survival

DC: 15

Use Cost: 1 stress

Request Time: 1 hour

Implementation Time: 1d6 hours

Access Cost: 2 ip

Many Seven Tribes elves go on extensive Spirit Quests. These quests can take them to the furthest reaches of the continent and beyond, frequently to locales too dangerous for even the Imperial Scouts. While these explorers seldom make maps and what they do make are sketches at best, the lore is still passed from generation to generation. One need simply ask the lore keepers to get some traveler's information regarding a region. Sylvan and arcane features of the area will be mentioned in particular.

SEWER TRANSIT

Skill: Gather Information

DC: 20

Use Cost: 3 stress

Request Time: 1 hour

Implementation Time: travel time

Access Cost: 3 ip

Some organizations have particularly good knowledge of the arcane network of tunnels beneath the city. With this favor you can get a guide to take you through the tunnels to a location of your choosing, including into or out of the city. This can also grant access to some locations (i.e. basements of buildings) within the city. However, most buildings of any importance are secured from this route. Nonetheless, the sewers go under pretty much everything and while you might not have immediate access to a building you can get within 20 feet (albeit, twenty feet of stone) of any building in the city. Use of this favor also eliminates any chance of encountering Ticon during the trip unless you're specifically going to one of his lairs or caches.

SHADY CONSTRUCTION

Skill: Appraise

DC: 15

Use Cost: 3 ip

Request Time: 1 hour

Implementation Time: according to construction

Access Cost: 25 ip

Smugglers, underworld bosses, sorcerers, and the eccentric rich all like to have their homes and vehicles thoroughly packed with a variety of hiding places and secret passages. With this favor you can get the people who make these places make one for you. This means you can have a ship made with secret smuggling compartments or a home made with secret doors, passages, and even some traps. Add the cost of this request to the cost of the construction. You may also do this for an existing building; increase the cost

to 4 ip.

SITE RECON

Skill: Knowledge (tactics)

DC: 20

Use Cost: 2 ip

Request Time: 1 hour

Implementation Time: 1 week

Access Cost: 10 ip

The Night Watch can supply detailed site recon of a location via this request. The Watch begins with magical surveillance (*scrying* and *wizard eyes* in particular) to generate an overall layout of the area, and then translates this intel into a Semi-permanent Image. The image is purely visual but can be rotated and expanded or shrunk. The Watch then sends recon specialists to the site. The recon group operates cautiously and avoids encounters if at all possible. Finally, sculptors and model builders construct a scale model of the site and cartographers translate all this into maps. This information is then turned over to the requesting party (the Watch typically retains a map for its own archives though). Assume that any hidden features have one chance to be detected as if Searched for with a +10 bonus.

SPECIAL IMPRISONMENT

Skill: Knowledge (arcana)

DC: 25

Use Cost: 5 ip

Request Time: 1 hour

Implementation Time: 1d6 hours

Duration: 1 year

Access Cost: 25 ip

Security forces and researchers occasionally need to imprison or capture some pretty unusual beings in the Second World. The main problems are typically teleportation and dimension shifting powers, thus the group constructs special cells. The cells are quite sturdy but the primary work is done by a set of Dimensional Shackles along with automaton or undead guards (thus not subject to mind influencing abilities).

STOP INVESTIGATION

Skill: Sense Motive

DC: 25

Use Cost: 15 stress

Request Time: 1 hour

Implementation Time: 1d6 hours

Access Cost: 15 ip

This favor can completely stop an investigation. It's assumed that the investigation is pretty significant (like

a murder investigation) thus the high cost. In stopping the investigation the security agency will come up with either a false pretext or simply say that the investigation cannot be solved.

STREET LISTENING

Skill: Gather Information

DC: 20

Use Cost: 7 stress

Request Time: 1 hour

Implementation Time: 1d6 hours

Duration: 1 week

Access Cost: 10 ip

You can spread the word that you're interested in hearing if anyone is asking around town regarding a particular topic. When people make Gather Information checks regarding that topic word will get back to you regarding the snoops. For any Gather Information check made regarding the topic you have a 50% chance of finding out that the check was made, a description of who made it, and what other sorts of questions were asked. People can ask questions quietly but they must do so intentionally and take a -5 on Gather Information checks when they do. If the Gather Information check is made quietly then there's only a 5% chance that word will get out (per check).

SUPPRESS INVESTIGATION

Skill: Sense Motive

DC: 20

Use Cost: 5 stress

Request Time: 1 hour

Implementation Time: 1d6 hours

Duration: 1 week

Access Cost: 5 ip

Investigations are typically instigated by private interests. Nonetheless, these interests need to operate through some mechanism, such as the city guard (typically a poor mechanism) or a private security firm (the best kind of mechanism). This favor won't put a stop to the investigation but it will slow it down substantially, long enough for someone to clear their name or frame someone else. This effectively postpones an investigation by one week.

SURVEILLANCE

Skill: Sense Motive or Gather Information

DC: 15

Use Cost: 3 stress

Request Time: 1 hour

Implementation Time: 1 hour

Duration: 1 day

Access Cost: 3 ip

This favor calls in a team to perform surveillance on a location. The site will be constantly watched by a group of people. They record the comings and goings of individuals and objects at the site as well as report any unusual activity. These people generate a Spot and Listen score of +10 at the location. The team remains in position for 24 hours. If the target looks for the surveillance team the team must make a single Hide check at a +8 bonus. The difficulty class of this check is equal to the target's Spot bonus +10; for really paranoid targets, the kind that take 20 on everything (and thus use up about two-thirds of their working hours looking over their shoulder) the DC is their Spot bonus +15.

SWEEP

Skill: Sense Motive

DC: 20

Use Cost: 5 stress

Request Time: 1 hour

Implementation Time: 2d6 × 10 minutes

Access Cost: 5 ip

With this favor you call in a team to sweep a residence or area. The team cleans up the site, removing all trace evidence and casting dispels and so forth to clean up residual magical traces. Pretty much no evidence (other than the fact that it's been cleaned) remains after this.

TAGGER CODE

Skill: Gather Information

DC: 20

Use Cost: 2 stress

Request Time: 1 hour

Implementation Time: 2d6 hours

Access Cost: 2 ip

You can get a message passed quickly through the tagger community, or a region marked off in some way, by having taggers leave coded messages within their art. This can operate as a sort of silent Gather Information check or it can quietly put a bounty on someone's head. The coded message will be repeated throughout the community. This code can be read by those who know the Tagger language (treated like a regular language but there's only a written form).

THE BEAST

Skill: Gather Information

DC: 20

Use Cost: 10 stress

Request Time: 1 hour

Implementation Time: short

Duration: 1 day

Access Cost: 5 ip

When you want to arrive in style pull up in this Cadillac Limo, specially modified and maintained to operate in the Second World. It comes complete with tinted windows, wet bar, operational television (but only plays VCR tapes, DVDs, and state of the art video games) and air conditioning. It was purchased off an ambassador from a country prone to assassinations so it's also heavily armored and heavily engined. This favor gets you use of the Beast for a single night.

THE BLACK BALL

Skill: Knowledge (arcana)

DC: 30

Use Cost: 3 ip

Request Time: 1 hour

Implementation Time: 1d6 hours

Duration: 3 days

Access Cost: 20 ip

This grants you use of a Sphere of Annihilation with a Talisman of the Sphere for a period of three days. During this time you will be accompanied by a Bodyguard Team (more for the Sphere than for you). ACI has the only one that people know of in the New York area; they primarily use it for destruction, disposal, and tunneling purposes. People get out of the way when they're moving it to a work site.

THE BLUE ROOM

Skill: Appraise

DC: 25

Use Cost: 25 stress

Request Time: 1d6 hours

Implementation Time: 1 hour

Access Cost: 100 ip

A network of wizards and psychics may be tasked to provide communications support for a team doing field work in the Second World. Up to eight people can be kept in constant telepathic contact via this; moreover, the team maintains a link with the Communications Circle back at base (which can be anywhere). The Circle is housed in the same room as a Surveillance Circle, thus they can feed information and directions to the intrusion team from the home base.

The actual setup consists of 8 Crystal Balls with Telepathy, 2 Crystal Balls with True Seeing, and one Crystal Ball with Detect Thoughts, all being operated by wizards, clerics, sorcerers and adepts with Scrying bonuses of +10 (typically 5th level). Naturally the cost for the items alone is staggering, that just increases

once you add in the cost of keeping those people on staff.

THE GREAT LIBRARY

Skill: Knowledge (arcana)

DC: 25

Use Cost: 6 ip

Request Time: 1d6 hours

Implementation Time: 1d6 days

Duration: 10 years

Access Cost: 30 ip

The Great Library of Chicago (capital of the Central Empire) has one of the largest collections of research material available. Due to the sheer enormity of the place the Research bonus here is only +2 (there's just too much material to sift through) however, pretty much everything is covered. The magical library is one of the best in the world given that other places (such as Europe and Asia) de-emphasize magic in favor of technical information. All spells from the PHB are present in the library and there's a 15% chance of an acceptable (to the GM) spell from a supplement being present.

THE HELLFIRE CLUB MIRROR

Skill: Diplomacy

DC: 25

Use Cost: 10 stress

Request Time: 1d6 hours

Implementation Time: 1d6 hours

Duration: 2 hours

Access Cost: 50 ip

While the Hellfire Club is somewhat lacking in raw talent, it makes up for that in wealth, resources, and pull. Rich people like to be able to play with the nice toys, but they need toys that do all the work for them. Thus something that provides scrying, answers questions, and provides transport is a natural fit. A *mirror of mental prowess* does exactly this and some time ago they funded a number of missions to retrieve such a mirror. Many of these missions ended in failure but finally they got what they wanted and the Hellfire Mirror occupies a place of prominence in the club (albeit, the access is heavily restricted). This favor allows one to use the mirror for a period of two hours, more extended periods of use can be arranged (particularly for travel purposes) by taking 5 additional stress for each additional 4 hours of use. At a cost of 2 ip one can also make use of the question asking feature of the mirror, though there's a 30% chance that the mirror has already been tasked for that for the week. A number of members of the club have developed some talent in Scrying for

use with the mirror; mostly these are the high ranking members who get to use it more often.

TRANSLATIONS

Skill: Knowledge (arcana)

DC: 10

Use Cost: 1 stress

Request Time: 1 hour

Implementation Time: One week

Access Cost: 2 ip

This calls a translator to either work for up to one week as a personal translator or translate a book of up to 400 pages in length. Most common languages are freely available but rare, obscure, or special languages will only be available 25% of the time (or less).

TRUE INSPECTION

Skill: Sense Motive

DC: 25

Use Cost: 5 stress

Request Time: 1 hour

Implementation Time: 1d6 hours

Access Cost: 3 ip

As for Careful Inspection, an expert is dispatched to check an item or location; however this one uses a *gem of seeing* during the inspection. Very little sneaks its way into the Imperial halls.

UNTIRING STEED

Skill: Knowledge (tactics)

DC: 15

Use Cost: 5 stress

Request Time: 1 hour

Implementation Time: quick

Duration: 1 week

Access Cost: 4 ip

The Imperial messenger service needs many different means of transport and communication. In addition to other magical formats they have a pair of *stone horses (destriers)* for use in long journeys. One of the horses wears *horseshoes of speed* and the other wears *horseshoes of a zephyr* (the horses were first temporarily made flesh, and then the shoes were attached). In fact, *stone horses* are fairly cost effective since they don't need to eat and typically need not be replaced.

URBAN ART THEME

Skill: Gather Information

DC: 25

Use Cost: 15 stress

Request Time: 1 hour

Implementation Time: 2d6 days

Duration: 2d6 weeks

Access Cost: 15 ip

The taggers paint anywhere and everywhere. Mostly they paint what they feel; they voice their anger, happiness, violence, despair, or hope. Occasionally they'll hit on a theme and this passes from tagger to tagger via their main medium, the walls. When this takes hold, many taggers focus on promulgating this theme, expressing it in their own, individual style. The constant presence of images with this theme then permeates the city and the psyches of its inhabitants. One possible use of this is to change the city's attitude by one level up or down towards a particular subject. Other uses can be to simply put a subject in the public consciousness. Note that the subject is usually an ideology, but can sometimes be a person or organization.

VATICAN LIBRARY ACCESS

Skill: Knowledge (religion)

DC: 30

Use Cost: 8 ip

Request Time: 1d6 hours

Implementation Time: 1d6 days

Duration: 10 years

Access Cost: 40 ip

The Vatican Library has a copy of pretty much every written thing ever made; since the 17th century they've made a point of collecting originals or copies of texts from Asia and the Americas. This means that you can find any spell you want in the library; if it's in a sourcebook and you're including it in your campaign it has a 25% chance of being here unless the spell is specifically restricted to a small group. You can also find pretty much any research information you want in the library but there's so much of it that the cataloguing has completely broken down and thus you take a -2 penalty to your research skill checks.

WATCH THE PORTS

Skill: Gather Information

DC: 20

Use Cost: 5 stress

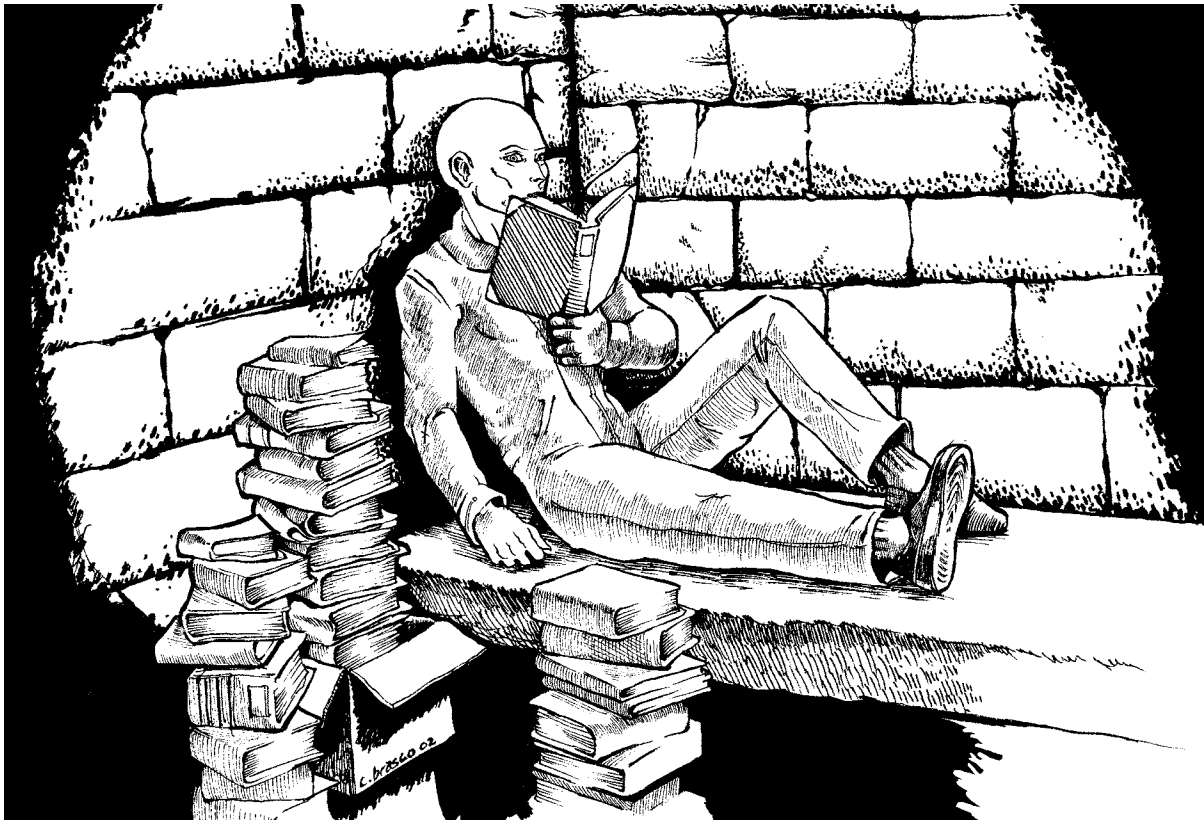
Request Time: 1 hour

Implementation Time: 1d6 hours

Duration: 1 week

Access Cost: 5 ip

You can set some people to watch the ports and city gates. They'll keep an eye out for those entering and leaving via these common methods. You need to specify what you're looking for (ideally a description



of the person). The people watching the ports have a Spot Bonus of +10, thus slipping past this kind of security is typically a DC 20 Hide action. They'll stay in place for one week.

WE'LL PASS IT OFF AS TOILET SEATS

Skill: Knowledge (business or civics)

DC: 25

Use Cost: 10 stress

Access Cost: 50 ip

When you work for the government you can find all kinds of ways to hide expenses. This allows you to defray the cost of another request by hiding the expense in amongst a number of other bills. Reduce the ip cost of a favor (but not resource request) by 1 when you use this favor. You may use this multiple times on the same favor request, possibly eliminating the influence cost of a favor request. However, you suffer standard penalties for accumulated stress when doing so. It's up to you whether or not you wish to check and pay the stress costs for We'll Pass it Off before or after you make the check for the primary activity. If the primary activity only has an ip cost it's typically more efficient to make that check then begin the funny bookkeeping.

ZETAS INTERROGATION

Skill: Knowledge (arcana)

DC: 25

Use Cost: 15 stress

Request Time: 1 hour

Implementation Time: 1d6 hours

Access Cost: 15 ip

Tempest Argon imprisoned a major demon lord some time in the past; rumors have it that they were helped by opposing demonic factions. Zetas is the name of this demon lord and he is imprisoned in a special cage in the basement of Tempest Argon headquarters in New York. Zetas himself doesn't seem terribly perturbed by this experience. Perhaps being immortal has something to do with it, but most suspect that he seethes beneath his apparently calm exterior. With this favor you can secure an interview with Zetas. He'll impose his own conditions on the interview and make his own requests, typically rather odd ones (from something as minor but humiliating as interviewing him naked, both men and women, to arduous but irrational requests like snow from the peaks of the Rocky mountains). He's the best source of demonic information in the world since he personally knows much about the interstices and other demon lords.

CHAPTER FIVE

EQUIPMENT

Equipment in the Second World campaign setting has a few associated values. Most equipment has a monetary cost or an influence cost, and an influence difficulty class. For those items with a difficulty class you must make a request using the influence rules to acquire the item. For some items you may choose to spend either influence points or regular currency to make the request. Items without a difficulty class are considered standard items. These items can be purchased simply by paying their cost (typically in currency). You may choose to hunt for a bargain (i.e. haggle) by paying the cost and making an influence request against DC 15 (use your Appraise skill for this); obviously, this is only worthwhile if you also score a greater success on the check to get a discount. The relatively high difficulty class is due to the fact that common goods have pretty standardized prices, shopkeepers are skilled hagglers, and you shouldn't bother your gamemaster with haggling over the price of a gourd unless it's *very* important.

Most items with an influence check difficulty class are considered restricted. You may not make a request for these items unless you have an access level with the equipment. Characters typically gain access to equipment by joining organizations; however, you can purchase access to individual equipment groups in the same way you purchase access to favors. Another common method for handling magical equipment is to purchase access to artificers.

EQUIPMENT GROUPS

Most equipment is collected into smaller groups. The purpose of these groups is to provide a convenient method of indicating the equipment to which an organization or individual might have special access. When an equipment group shows up on an organization's equipment list members of that organization may make requests for that equipment using the influence skill appropriate to the organization

and that request gains any associated access bonus. These equipment requests can typically be fulfilled within 4d12 hours unless it's fairly clear that the equipment must be constructed or something similar (i.e. a request for a castle). Each equipment group has an associated access cost and standard required skill. A player may purchase access to the group individually and uses the indicated influence skill for request checks made within that group. By tripling the access cost you may use an alternate influence skill for the check (this is what a number of organizations do).

When making your own organizations use equipment groups for two purposes. First, by including an equipment group you allow members to use their influence skill for that organization with that equipment. For example, a commercial organization might have a standing navy to defend its trade interests and thus have access to the Naval Power equipment group. Second, many organizations have special access to equipment, making them easier to acquire and less expensive. This is represented by giving the members access bonuses with an equipment group.

ARTIFICERS

Few organizations have a standing stock of magic items ready to be used; instead what they have is a network of contacts and allies willing to craft magic items for them when the need arises. These are the artificers. Organizations and individuals gain access to individual crafting feats at particular caster levels of a particular type. I.e. one artificer resource might be Potions, Wiz7 which means that you can have a level 7 wizard brew any potion he's capable of for you. Assume that he already knows any spells required for the construction of the item (the cost of learning the spell has likely been paid long ago, or gets spread out across all the different people who will request that item).

It takes 1d6 hours to make the request then another 2

Artificer Access Cost Chart

Caster Level	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
Access Cost	1	2	4	6	8	10	13	16	20	25	30	36	42	49	56	64	72	81	90	100

days per 1 influence point of item value to fulfill the request. The artificer groups follow the item creation feats fairly closely with one exception, craft rod, craft wand, and craft staff are unified under a single artificer group. Thus there are 6 magical artificer categories: potions, scrolls, arms and armor, rods/staffs/wands (abbreviated R/S/W), rings, and wondrous items. For each of these categories you also need to specify the class and level of the artificer (e.g. Wiz7, Dru6, Clr11). In actuality, your access might represent connections with a number of artificers, especially if they are lower level and/or the bonus is high.

Look up the artificer caster level minus one half the artificer market for that class in the community (rounded down) on the nearby table to determine the access cost for an artificer category.

For example, the access cost for Potions, Wiz7 in New York would be 8 ip (level 7 minus one half of four equals 5 which translates to 8 ip on the above chart). Using the access rules you could get +0 (standard access) for 16 ip, partial access at -5 for 8 ip, and full or enhanced access at +5 bonus for 40 ip. These costs add up quickly; that's why people act collectively via organizations.

ARTIFICER MARKETS

Large cities tend to have many more artificers and people willing to do work for hire. To model this allow automatic access to all artificer categories at a +0 bonus up to a level according to the community. For example, Second World New York is a grand city and you can request any item with a caster level up to four at a +0 bonus using any core influence skill; this applies to items made by either wizards or clerics. Smaller communities have lower levels and some communities might have differing levels for different classes (for example, the Seven Tribes has higher druid levels and lower cleric levels). The format for recording this in a city description is:

New York Artificer Markets: Wiz4, Clr4, Dru3

The above listing (for New York) tells you that anyone can make a request for items that a 4th level or lower wizard could make who had all the item creation feats possible for a fourth level or lower wizard, likewise for the cleric, and somewhat less for the druid.

For some cities you can be more specific. For example,

a dwarven city might have higher levels available for just Arms and Armor.

THE EQUIPMENT GROUP LISTS

The equipment group lists include more information than standard equipment lists. Item cost in Second World currency, influence cost, and difficulty class for requests are included in these lists. I categorize the equipment according to equipment groups. Naturally, some items appear in more than one equipment group so you will see repetitions. For ease of use some standard data from the core rulebooks is reprinted on these tables; for descriptions and more information regarding those items you should refer to their entry in the core rulebooks. Items that have their influence DC marked with a star (*) require an Influence check to obtain but are not restricted. You do not need to purchase access to request those items and are assumed to have a +0 access bonus for them; however, you still need to make a check.

DETERMINING COSTS AND DIFFICULTY CLASSES

For magic items not in the equipment tables set the Dollar cost at 10 times the gold piece cost determined according to the core rulebooks. The influence point cost is 1/1,000 the gold piece cost (or 1/10,000 the dollar cost); round up. The standard difficulty class for a magic item request is equal to 15 + the caster level of the person making the item. Note that a number of items (especially magic rings) have a minimum artificer level significantly higher than the listed minimum caster level. For example, all rings would have a minimum request DC of 27. I've already adjusted the difficulty classes for this in the equipment groups. You're making a request of a pretty powerful spell-caster after all and it's their level that determines the difficulty.

ECONOMICS

SECOND WORLD CURRENCY

The Central Empire mints four standard coins, commonly referred to as the Bear, Eagle, Coyote, and Owl for the animals stamped on their faces. The backs of the coins have varied over the years, as have the coins' relative values and compositions, but the faces

have remained the same for close to five centuries. The Bear represents strength, is made of copper, and is the lowest valued coin (currently about a dime in U.S. currency). The Eagle represents courage, is made of silver, and is (currently) worth one U.S. dollar. The Coyote represents sharpness of wit and intelligence; it's worth ten dollars U.S. and made mostly of silver with a small central core of gold. The Owl represents wisdom, is made wholly of gold, and is worth one hundred dollars U.S. In all cases the metal value of a coin is kept closely in line with its actual trade value (for instance, at the First World price of \$300 per ounce a gold coin weighing one fiftieth of a pound is worth approximately \$100). This helps merchants use the coins to trade in distant places. People throughout North America prefer to trade in Central Empire coins when they use currency so you'll find them from New York to Los Angeles.

The Central Empire began minting coins well before European settlers first set foot on American soil in the First World. Over the centuries increased trade with the First World and the fact that many people of importance in the empire came from the First World led the empire to align its currency with First World currency once a common American currency was established. Trade with the First World grew dramatically in the 20th century leading the Empire to peg its currency against the U.S. dollar. Most people in the Second World will not accept First World currency; paper money is far too easy to counterfeit with magic and even more mundane versions of counterfeit money would be hard to detect. Large organizations and those who do significant business with the First World may accept First World currency though they'll typically charge an exchange fee of about five to twenty percent (depending on your trustworthiness and how much they like you).

1 Owl = \$100 = 10 Coyotes
 1 Coyote = \$10 = 10 Eagles
 1 Eagle = \$1 = 10 Bears
 1 Bear = \$0.10

North Americans of the Second World primarily use Coyotes and Eagles; when looting a body one finds these coins most often. However, I list prices in this book using dollars as the base value; one reason for this is that the currency symbol is convenient, but also, by putting prices in dollar terms it's easier for a gamemaster to judge what kind of reward would be large or small, and what kind of cost would be appropriate for a service or good. Treasure piles feature the gold Owls more frequently than you would see

platinum in a regular game; at one hundred dollars per coin your players should have a proper appreciation for the value of a purse full of these.

For conversion purposes with other d20 products and the core rulebooks one gold piece is equivalent to one Coyote or \$10. This keeps relative prices between magic items and most weapons and armor consistent. However, the prices for some common items and, more importantly, the wages of typical workers are, relatively, much higher. This has the nice side effect of keeping player characters at wealth levels not too outrageously high (i.e. when the players recover a +1 sword they don't recover \$200,000 worth of property, but instead \$20,000) and makes the rewards offered by communities more believable. The downside of this is that minor magic items become more affordable to the "common" man; that is, they're affordable in the way a new car is affordable. Unfortunately, it's very difficult to restrict magic items to player characters without simultaneously making them multi-millionaires; that's just the harsh truth of economics. Despite this, magic items, even minor ones, will be far from common. Given that it would cost someone earning \$10 an hour a full year's gross wages to purchase a +1 sword few would find the expense worth the benefit.

AGRICULTURE AND PRODUCTION

Medieval farmers could produce about 6 net bushels of grain per acre per year (after accounting for grain needed to replant); this would be further reduced by tithes to the church and taxes to the manor lord. A family of four would need roughly 35 bushels of that to survive. Modern technology produces a stunningly large amount per acre per year, wheat grosses 70 bushels per acre per year, soybeans roughly 40 bushels, and corn roughly 140 bushels. In part the modern "green revolution" is due to better equipment such as tractors to till the soil, better fertilizers to put nitrogen back into the soil, engineered crops that are more resistant to insects and weeds, and that grow larger to produce a greater yield, and pesticides and weed killers to prevent crop damage. Many of these technologies are unavailable in the Second World since the chemical and mechanical principles upon which they rely do not apply. However, the more mundane technologies such as improved harnessing methods for labor animals, plow designs, non-steam or combustion powered machinery, crop rotation, and use of special off-season crops have been disseminated amongst Second World farmers. For this reason Second World farms resemble the private family farms of the middle

1800's more than they do the peasant run farms of the middle ages. One resource cites 1865 farm production at 15 bushels of wheat per acre. I'll assume that's roughly standard for the Second World and make it the net production (i.e. taking into account reseeding costs) on the basis that Second World soil is better and Second World pests (at least the tiny kinds) aren't as bad; moreover, given the relative efficiency of tools a Second World farmer can cultivate significantly larger areas of land than a medieval farmer. This means that Second World farmers do not live at a subsistence level. In fact, good farmers can be quite wealthy since they own land, can produce plenty of food for themselves, and sell the remainder for profit, much like the farming families of the American mid-west during the latter half of the nineteenth century.

SHIFT GATES

Shift gates are an important enough factor in the Second World economy that I'll describe them a bit here. Shift Gates transpose a volume of First World space with a volume of Second World space. Shift gates typically transpose a 10 foot radius volume of space. Each such shift costs \$50,000 in material components. Shift gates serve as the primary vehicle of trade between the First and Second worlds though some other methods also exist. The organizations that use shift gates for trade have specialists trained in making the most use of the space available. Since shift gates transpose a radius of space organizations make certain to use both the space above floor level and below it. One common method of doing this is to create a spherical chamber and lace it with a metal framework and catwalk. This generates roughly 1300 cubic feet of available volume. However, the volume is transposed, thus there's actually twice that space available per shift since both the Second World side can be filled with goods to be shipped to the First World and vice versa for the First World side. This volume then costs roughly \$25 per cubic foot. Typically, owners of shift gates try to make a gross profit of at least \$100 per cubic foot. For example, jeans require about 1 cubic foot per ten pairs; if the owners can sell First World jeans for \$10 per pair over the First World cost (i.e. \$60-\$70) then trade in First World jeans will be justified and this commodity will be available. Accordingly, the primary factor in First-Second World trade is the price to volume ratio. The cost charts in this section and elsewhere in this book take the presence of First/Second World trade into account; for instance, spyglasses and magnifying lenses are much cheaper than in the core rulebooks since they can be produced

more efficiently in the First World then shipped across the interstitial gulf.

THE FIRST WORLD MARKET FOR MAGIC ITEMS

One factor driving the price of everything in the Second World is the First World demand for magic. Consider this, a *remove disease* potion sells for about \$7,500 in the Second World. HIV multi-drug treatment runs roughly \$12,000 U.S. per year. Bone marrow transplants for cancer can cost \$200,000 U.S. and stem cell treatment \$80,000. Few, if any, of these treatments offer the same level of effectiveness as a spell commonly available in the Second World. Now consider what a wealthy person might be willing to pay for such a cure and it should be clear that Second World magic would enjoy an incredible demand in the First World, despite the high costs. Of course, the price of transport needs to be added but even assuming as little as 10 potions per use of a shift gate (costing \$5,000 per potion) only increases the cost by a moderate fraction. Of greater concern is the First World's resistance to magic; even potions must overcome the innate spell resistance of the environment which means that multiple potions need to be sent across, enough so that a client will feel comfortable with the risk. Regardless, magical treatment remains a viable solution and one that generates a great deal of wealth for Second World organizations such as the Blue Conglomerate. Other forms of magic also provide unmatched utility in the First World. Divination magic such as scrying or *legend lore* can be incredibly effective means of solving criminal cases or spying on foreign powers (government or corporate). What enjoys little demand are the spells most appealing to player characters. There's little to no need for fireballs, lightning bolts, and personal enhancement spells in the First World since technology and an abundance of well-trained personnel can replace those effects. Intrusion activities would be benefited by support spells such as *invisibility* but in those cases it's typically best if Second World agents perform the mission themselves due to their familiarity with the techniques. Frequently though, First World support personnel are provided to deal with technological obstacles (or simply to provide guidance regarding what needs to be recovered).

The relatively high costs of even minor Second World magic plus the fact that you need some kind of connection to the secret, in-the-know, loop puts magic beyond the reach of all but the very wealthy. However, there's plenty of the very wealthy around.

THE MATERIAL COMPONENT MARKET

One last thing to mention regarding Second World economics is the material component market. The construction of potent artifacts and minor potions requires material components, from \$250 for a *potion of cure light wounds* to \$1,000,000 for a *ring of elemental command*. These material components can take many forms, rare herbs or minerals, exotic animal parts, aged ginseng roots, and so on. One thing common to all components is that someone needs to supply them and that creates a market. If a single journeyman artificer consumes \$150,000 per year in material components that can employ three people. The artificer then sells the product to a corporation like the Blue Conglomerate who ships it to the First World and sells it at a comfortable markup, thus employing even more people. As one can see, this means even a single alchemist can bring a substantial income to a small community.

EQUIPMENT GROUP LISTING

I list each of the equipment groups in a sort of stat-block format. For costs I typically use influence points unless the cost is low enough that people typically pay cash for the good. To translate to a gold cost multiply the ip cost by 1,000; to translate to a dollar cost multiply the gold cost by 10.

Items with a star next to their difficulty class count as basic requests; everyone receives a +0 access bonus when making a request for one of these. If using the “Rich and Powerful?” option (page 178) to increase the cost of potent magic items, do not use the cost increase for basic requests or requests for non-magical goods.

I also include Special Training courses available through the equipment group if you choose to allow Special Training in your game. Special Training courses are described in chapter one (page 47). Skills marked with an asterisk are from the modern rules.

AIR MAGIC GROUP

Knowledge (arcana), Access Cost 20 ip

Items: *Air elemental command ring* (200 ip, DC 30); *Censer of controlling air elementals* (100 ip, DC 32); *Sword, frost brand* (50 ip, DC 29); *Staff of frost* (70 ip, DC 25)

ALCHEMY GROUP

Knowledge (arcana), Access Cost 10 ip

Items: Acid (flask) (\$100, DC 15*); Alchemist’s fire (flask) (\$100, DC 15*); Alchemist’s lab (3 ip, DC 20); Antitoxin (vial) (\$300, DC 15*); Mag-

nifying glass (\$250, DC 15*)

Special Training: Ability Training: Dexterity, Intelligence; Skill Training: Alchemy, Decipher Script.

ASSASSINATION GROUP

Gather Information, Access Cost 15 ip

Items: *Assassin’s dagger* (11 ip, DC 24); *Dagger of venom* (10 ip, DC 20); *Shadow armor +1* (4 ip, DC 20); *Shadow armor +2* (9 ip, DC 21); *Sword of subtlety* (16 ip, DC 22)

Special Training: Ability Training: Dexterity; Resistance Training: Will; Skill Training: Hide, Stealth.

CLOSE COMBAT GROUP

Knowledge (tactics), Access Cost 25 ip

Items: Potions, Clr4; Arms and Armor, Wiz6

Special Training: Ability Training: Strength, Constitution; Armor Optimization; Intensive Melee Training; Resistance Training: Reflex, Will; Toughening; Weapon Parry and Shield Use.

EARTH MAGIC GROUP

Knowledge (arcana), Access Cost 20 ip

Items: *Earth elemental command ring* (200 ip, DC 30); *Staff of earth and stone* (85 ip, DC 27); *Stone of controlling earth elementals* (100 ip, DC 28); *Stone salve* (4 ip, DC 28)

EXORCISM GROUP

Knowledge (religion), Access Cost 20 ip

Items: *Blessed book* (10 ip, DC 22); *Candle of invocation* (8 ip, DC 32); *Ghost touch weapon +2* (18 ip, DC 24); *Incense of meditation* (5 ip, DC 22); *Phylactery of faithfulness* (1 ip, DC 18)

Special Training: Ability Training: Wisdom, Charisma; Resistance Training: Will; Skill Training: Concentration, Knowledge (interstitial lore, the planes, religion).

EXOTIC CAVALRY GROUP

Knowledge (tactics), Access Cost 20 ip

Items: Elephant (2 ip, DC 15); Griffin (9 ip, DC 20); Hippogriff (4 ip, DC 20); Horseshoes of speed (2 ip, DC 20); Saddle, exotic military (\$600, DC 15*)

Special Training: Ability Training: Dexterity, Charisma; Armor Optimization; Intensive Melee Training; Resistance Training: Reflex, Will; Toughening; Skill Training: Handle Animal, Knowledge (tactics)*, Ride; Weapon Parry and Shield Use.

EXPLORATION GROUP

Knowledge (tactics), Access Cost 25 ip

Items: Climber's kit (\$800); *Boots of the winterlands* (3 ip, DC 20); *Decanter of endless water* (9 ip, DC 24); *Major elemental resistance ring* (24 ip, DC 27); *Minor elemental resistance ring* (16 ip, DC 27); *Sustenance ring* (3 ip, DC 27); *Warmth ring* (2 ip, DC 27)

Special Training: Ability Training: Constitution; Resistance Training: Reflex; Skill Training: Balance, Climb, Heal, Jump, Knowledge (nature), Listen, Navigate*, Search, Spot, Swim, Survival.

FIRE COMBAT GROUP

Knowledge (tactics), Access Cost 25 ip

Items: Potions, Clr4; Arms and Armor, Wiz6

Special Training: Ability Training: Dexterity, Constitution; Armor Optimization; Exploit Cover; Intensive Firearms Training; Resistance Training: Reflex, Will; Skill Training: Knowledge (tactics)*; Toughening.

FIRE MAGIC GROUP

Knowledge (arcana), Access Cost 20 ip

Items: *Brazier of commanding fire elementals* (100 ip, DC 28); *Fire breath potion* (1 ip, DC 21); *Fireball (6th-level caster) wand* (14 ip, DC 21); *Flame tongue* (19 ip, DC 26); *Protection from elements (fire) potion* (1 ip, DC 20); *Staff of fire* (29 ip, DC 27); *Wall of fire wand* (21 ip, DC 22)

FORTIFICATIONS GROUP

Knowledge (tactics), Access Cost 15 ip

Items: Castle (500 ip, DC 20); Huge castle (1500 ip, DC 20); Keep (150 ip, DC 20); Moat with bridge (50 ip, DC 20); Tower (50 ip, DC 15)

Special Training: Ability Training: Intelligence; Skill Training: Craft (structural)*, Demolitions*, Knowledge (physical sciences)*, Search.

HEALING GROUP

Knowledge (religion), Access Cost 15 ip

Items: *Cure moderate wounds wand* (5 ip, DC 20); *Keo's ointment* (4 ip, DC 20); *Neutralize poison potion* (1 ip, DC 20); *Remove blindness/deafness potion* (1 ip, DC 20); *Remove disease potion* (1 ip, DC 20); *Remove paralysis potion* (1 ip, DC 20)

Special Training: Skill Training: Heal.

HOUSING GROUP

Diplomacy, Access Cost 10 ip

Items: Grand house (50 ip, DC 15*); Mansion (150 ip, DC 20*); Simple house (10 ip)

Special Training: Ability Training: Charisma; Skill Training: Bluff, Craft (structural)*, Diplomacy, Sense Motive.

INSPECTION GROUP

Sense Motive, Access Cost 25 ip

Items: *Dust of appearance* (2 ip, DC 20); *Gem of seeing* (75 ip, DC 25); *Goggles of minute seeing* (1 ip, DC 18); *Lantern of revealing* (30 ip, DC 20); *Lens of detection* (4 ip, DC 20); *Metal and mineral detection rod* (11 ip, DC 24); *X-ray vision ring* (25 ip, DC 27)

Special Training: Ability Training: Intelligence, Wisdom; Resistance Training: Reflex; Skill Training: Disable Device, Investigate*, Listen, Open Lock, Search, Spot.

INTERROGATION GROUP

Sense Motive, Access Cost 15 ip

Items: *Candle of truth* (3 ip, DC 20); *Dimensional shackles* (26 ip, DC 26); *Iron bands of bilar* (26 ip, DC 25); *Love potion* (\$1,500, DC 17); *Truth potion* (1 ip, DC 19)

Special Training: Ability Training: Charisma; Resistance Training: Will; Skill Training: Bluff, Diplomacy, Intimidation, Sense Motive.

INTRUSION GROUP

Gather Information, Access Cost 25 ip

Items: Disguise kit (\$500); Thieves' tools (\$300); Thieves' tools, masterwork (\$1,000, DC 15*); *Chime of opening* (3 ip, DC 26); *Climbing ring* (2 ip, DC 27); *Darkvision potion* (1 ip, DC 18); *Gaseous form potion* (1 ip, DC 20); *Gloves of swimming and climbing* (6 ip, DC 20); *Immovable rod* (8 ip, DC 25); *Invisibility potion* (1 ip, DC 18); *Jump potion* (\$500, DC 16); *Jumping ring* (2 ip, DC 27); *Rope of climbing* (3 ip, DC 18); *Slippers of spider climbing* (2 ip, DC 19); *Spider climb potion* (\$500, DC 16)

Special Training: Ability Training: Dexterity; Resistance Training: Reflex; Skill Training: Balance, Climb, Disable Device, Hide, Listen, Move Silently, Open Lock, Search, Spot.

NATURE GROUP

Survival, Access Cost 20 ip

Items: *Animal friendship ring* (10 ip, DC 27); *Boots of elvenkind* (2 ip, DC 20); *Cloak of elvenkind* (2 ip, DC 18); *Staff of woodlands* (90 ip, DC 27); *Sylvan scimitar* (56 ip, DC 26)

Special Training: Ability Training: Constitution; Resistance Training: Reflex; Skill Training: Balance, Climb, Heal, Jump, Knowledge (nature),

Listen, Navigate*, Search, Spot, Swim, Survival.

NAVAL POWER GROUP

Knowledge (tactics), Access Cost 10 ip

Items: Frigate (150 ip, DC 20); Sloop (60 ip, DC 15)

Special Training: Resistance Training: Reflex; Skill Training: Balance, Climb, Jump, Navigate*, Spot, Swim.

NEGOTIATION GROUP

Diplomacy, Access Cost 20 ip

Items: *Bracelet of friends* (5 ip, DC 30); *Charisma potion* (1 ip, DC 18); *Circlet of persuasion* (5 ip, DC 20); *Cloak of charisma +2* (4 ip, DC 23); *Cloak of charisma +4* (16 ip, DC 23); *Glibness potion* (1 ip, DC 19); *Mind shielding ring* (8 ip, DC 27); *Tongues potion* (1 ip, DC 20)

Special Training: Ability Training: Charisma; Resistance Training: Will; Skill Training: Bluff, Diplomacy, Intimidation, Sense Motive.

RELIGIOUS BUILDINGS GROUP

Knowledge (religion), Access Cost 10 ip

Items: Cemetery (5 ip, DC 15); Grand church (75 ip, DC 15); Simple church (15 ip); Small cathedral (250 ip, DC 20)

Special Training: Ability Training: Intelligence, Wisdom; Skill Training: Craft (structural)*, Knowledge (physical sciences*, religion), Search.

SCOUTING GROUP

Knowledge (tactics), Access Cost 20 ip

Items: *Boots of striding and springing* (6 ip, DC 18); *Boots, winged* (12 ip, DC 24); *Eyes of the eagle* (1 ip, DC 18); *Fly potion* (1 ip, DC 20); *Goggles of night* (8 ip, DC 18); *Wings of flying* (6 ip, DC 20)

Special Training: Ability Training: Constitution; Resistance Training: Reflex; Skill Training: Balance, Climb, Heal, Jump, Knowledge (nature), Listen, Navigate*, Search, Spot, Swim, Survival.

SEA TRANSPORT GROUP

Appraise, Access Cost 15 ip

Items: Clipper ship (125 ip, DC 20*); Galleon (150 ip, DC 20*); Merchant ship (60 tons cargo) (75 ip, DC 15*); Rowboat (\$500); Sailboat (1 to 8 people) (10 ip)

Special Training: Resistance Training: Reflex; Skill Training: Balance, Climb, Jump, Navigate*, Spot, Swim.

SECURITY GROUP

Sense Motive, Access Cost 15 ip

Items: *Figurine of wondrous power (onyx dog)* (16 ip, DC 26); *Figurine of wondrous power (serpentine owl)* (9 ip, DC 26); *Stone of alarm* (1 ip, DC 18)

Special Training: Ability Training: Intelligence; Resistance Training: Will; Skill Training: Balance, Climb, Craft (mechanical*, structural*), Disable Device, Hide, Listen, Move Silently, Repair*, Search, Spot.

SIEGE ENGINES GROUP

Knowledge (tactics), Access Cost 20 ip

Items: Ballista (2 ip, DC 15); Catapult, heavy (5 ip, DC 15); Catapult, light (3 ip, DC 15); Ram (2 ip, DC 15); Siege tower (4 ip, DC 15)

Special Training: Ability Training: Intelligence; Exploit Cover; Intensive Firearms Training; Skill Training: Craft (structural)*, Demolitions*, Knowledge (physical sciences)*, Search, Spot.

STEALTH GROUP

Gather Information, Access Cost 20 ip

Items: *Amulet of proof against detection and location* (35 ip, DC 23); *Chameleon power ring* (12 ip, DC 27); *Dust of tracelessness* (\$2,500, DC 18); *Invisibility ring* (20 ip, DC 27); *Nondetection potion* (1 ip, DC 20)

Special Training: Ability Training: Dexterity; Resistance Training: Reflex; Skill Training: Balance, Climb, Hide, Listen, Move Silently, Search, Spot.

SURVEILLANCE GROUP

Sense Motive, Access Cost 25 ip

Items: *Crystal ball* (42 ip, DC 25); *Crystal ball with detect invisibility* (50 ip, DC 25); *Crystal ball with detect thoughts* (51 ip, DC 25); *Crystal ball with telepathy* (70 ip, DC 25); *Crystal ball with true seeing* (80 ip, DC 26)

Special Training: Ability Training: Intelligence, Wisdom; Resistance Training: Will; Skill Training: Craft (mechanical*, structural*), Hide, Listen, Move Silently, Repair*, Scry, Search, Spot.

UNDEAD HUNTER GROUP

Knowledge (religion), Access Cost 25 ip

Items: *Amulet of undead turning* (11 ip, DC 25); *Daylight wand* (5 ip, DC 20); *Freedom of movement ring* (40 ip, DC 27); *Holy avenger* (120 ip, DC 33); *Mace of smiting* (76 ip, DC 28); *Order's wrath (8th-level caster) wand* (24 ip, DC 23); *Restoration wand* (22 ip, DC 22); *Searing light (6th-level caster) wand* (14 ip, DC 21); *Sun blade* (51 ip, DC 25)

Special Training: Ability Training: Strength, Constitution, Wisdom; Armor Optimization; Intensive Melee Training; Resistance Training: Fortitude, Will; Skill Training: Knowledge (religion), Listen, Search, Spot; Toughening; Weapon Parry and Shield Use.

UNDERWATER EXPLORATION GROUP

Knowledge (arcana), Access Cost 20 ip

Items: *Apparatus of kwal* (130 ip, DC 34); *Bottle of air* (15 ip, DC 22); *Helm of underwater action* (24 ip, DC 22); *Plate armor of the deep* (17 ip, DC 26); *Swimming potion* (\$1,500, DC 17); *Swimming ring* (3 ip, DC 27); *Trident of fish command* (4 ip, DC 22); *Water breathing potion* (1 ip, DC 20)

Special Training: Ability Training: Strength, Dexterity, Constitution; Resistance Training: Reflex; Skill Training: Climb, Intuit Direction, Swim.

WATER MAGIC GROUP

Knowledge (arcana), Access Cost 20 ip

Items: *Bowl of commanding water elementals* (100 ip, DC 28); *Cloak of the manta ray* (20 ip, DC 24); *Flame extinguishing rod* (15 ip, DC 27)

WEATHER MAGIC GROUP

Survival, Access Cost 15 ip

Items: *Javelin of lightning* (1 ip, DC 20); *Orb of storms* (38 ip, DC 33); *Protection from elements (electricity) potion* (1 ip, DC 20); *Shooting stars ring* (50 ip, DC 27); *Thunder and lightning rod* (23 ip, DC 24)

Special Training: Resistance Training: Fortitude; Skill Training: Knowledge (earth and life sciences).

REGULAR GEAR

This section has a short list of First World items that you'll find in the Second World. Many of the prices listed for items in the Second World can be derived by multiplying the gold cost in the core rules by ten and making the currency unit dollars. Note though that labor intensive products, and those products on the low end of the scale, tend to cost more in the Second World.

OTHER EQUIPMENT

For other equipment, either from the core rules or from other products simply multiply the gold cost by 10 to get the cost in dollars. Also, for many goods and services you can simply charge the same costs as the

ones you know. A local beer or room for the night costs pretty much the same on the Second World as it does on the First World.

For First World gear imported to the Second World take the price you might see in a local store then double it. Double or triple the price again for each applicable shipping factor.

Low price but high volume item: Volume is all that usually matters for transport so companies prefer to get as much value per unit space as possible; however, people are willing to pay a lot for nice sleeping bags and First World clothing.

Low Demand Item: Bringing items across that sell slowly or infrequently means that you've made a costly outlay for an investment that may take a long time to pay off.

Perishable Item: Goods that have an expiration date are particularly risky for cross-world trade since you might spend all that money transporting the item only to have it rot on your shelves. Vary the multiplier for goods with longer or shorter shelf lives.

CLASS TOOLS AND SKILL KITS

2nd World Surgery Room: This is a large room outfitted with mechanical tools brought over from the First World. Frankly, the gear looks like that scary, shiny, surgical steel stuff you see psychotic doctors use in horror films. However, that's pretty much all that works over here and it works better than anything else so you have to put up with it. This grants a +4 circumstance bonus to Healing checks and a +2 circumstance bonus to cooperation checks for Healing (see the skills section of the PHB for cooperation rules) for up to two helpers. If you have the Medical Doctor feat you also heal one additional point of damage using that feat and heal 3 points of damage per +5 you take on the DC of the check (instead of the normal rate of 2 per +5 to DC).

Binoculars: These are lightweight but durable 12× binoculars, typically finished in matte black. When using these allow a character to make a Spot check at –2 out to 3 times their normal range, or at –4 out to 12 times their normal range. These do not work with darkvision, nor do they work to increase your range of vision during conditions of darkness.

First Aid Kit: The Second World version of a healer's kit; it's only slightly better because what makes our first aid kits so nice doesn't work in the Second World; still it's light, convenient, and cheap. This grants a standard +2 circumstance bonus to Healing checks and

Class Tools and Skill Kits	Weight	Cost	DC
2nd world surgery room		\$50,000	
Binoculars	2 lbs.	\$750	
First aid kit	1 lb.	\$25	
Mechanic's shop		\$100,000	
Mechanic's tool kit	20 lbs.	\$750	
Small surgical kit	5 lbs.	\$1,000	
Clothing	Weight	Cost	DC
Designer clothing, first world	5 lbs.	\$5,000	
Jeans, first world	3 lbs.	\$100	
Common Goods	Weight	Cost	DC
Sleeping bag, first world	6 lbs.	\$2,500	
Trench lighter, metal	-	\$25	
Field shaving kit (includes small mirror)	1 lbs.	\$15	
Fishing gear	15 lbs.	\$20	
Military web gear	2 lbs.	\$600	
Notebook with pens and pencils	1 lbs.	\$25	
Pioneer tools (shovel, pick, sledgehammer)	15 lbs.	\$60	
Thermos (2 liters)	7 lbs.	\$500	
Water skin (about 4 liter capacity)	10 lbs.	\$5	
Wind-up alarm clock	1 lbs.	\$150	
Wind-up watch	-	\$300	
Food, Lodging, and Entertainment	Weight	Cost	DC
1st world bottle of Scotch	2 lbs.	\$200	
1st world bottle of soda	1 lbs.	\$5	
1st world candy bar (or other junk food)	-	\$5	
2nd world cigars, pack of 10	1 lbs.	\$5	
Dinner at a restaurant		\$15	
Good pipe	1 lbs.	\$50	
Good pipe tobacco (pouch with about 20 fills)	-	\$5	
Havana cigars, per cigar	-	\$25	
Home cooking, for 1 month		\$300	
Lunch or breakfast at a restaurant		\$6	
Pack of cigarettes (imported from first world)	-	\$20	
Whiskey (bottle)	2 lbs.	\$15	

a successful first aid check heals 1 point of damage. Only one point per day can be healed this way. If you have the Medical Doctor feat a modern First Aid kit allows to to also heal 1 additional point of damage.

Mechanic's Shop: This is every motorhead's dream. The garage is filled with all sorts of nice tools and grants a +2 circumstance bonus on Craft checks involving armor, weapons, and machines.

Mechanic's Tool Kit: You need one of these to make Craft checks with machinery; the tools can also be used for armor and weapons.

Small Surgical Kit: A surgical kit enables you to provide long-term care with a Healing check for a patient in the field. Normally you need supplies and materials only found in civilized locations to provide long term care.

CLOTHING

Designer Clothing, First World: First World clothing by itself is high fashion in the Second World; make it elite First World clothing and you have something that will get you noticed at even one of the Baroness's parties. This grants a +3 circumstance bonus on social checks where you're trying to impress people.

Jeans, First World: They're useful in the Second World too and they have pockets, a technology lacking in most settings that include orcs.

COMMON GOODS

Sleeping Bag, First World: The second most desired adventurer import in the Second World. This is a goose down sleeping bag since synthetic fillers deteriorate in the Second World. However, it's got a nice water-proofing treatment, can keep you warm in practically arctic conditions, and it's incredibly light.

Trench lighter, metal: The most desired adventurer import in the Second World. These artifacts from World War I involve a simple brass container of oil with a wick stuck into it and flint and steel (like a modern cigarette lighter) to light the wick. You can use these to light your cigarettes, lantern, cooking fire, or find your way in the dark to one of the above (light radius 5 feet). Modern cigarette lighters based on vaporizing gas don't work, however capillary action seems to operate fine (or something similar to it) so the trench lighter is not only durable but the only real option.

Field Shaving Kit: Just as it says. The mirror can also be used in a pinch when you're fighting Medusas and the sort.

Fishing Gear: This is a quality set of rod and reel fishing gear made of bamboo. This will grant a +3 circumstance bonus to Survival checks for getting food.

Military Web Gear: This is that harness with all the small holes and clasps on it you see soldiers and SWAT team members wear. It grants you an incredible number of places to hook things and makes you look very serious.

Thermos: This is a stainless steel (inside and out) thermal container capable of holding one half gallon of water or other liquid. It'll keep the liquid hot or cold for quite a while and includes a cup.

Wind-up alarm clock: This small analog alarm clock operates off a spring mechanism. Metal doesn't hold tension the same way in the second world unless made from special material (Martian Steel works well) so you need to reset the clock fairly often and it will simply stop working after about one year. You can get one of these custom crafted from Martian Steel at a cost of \$2,500, in which case it will work almost indefinitely.

Wind-up watch: just like the wind-up clock this needs to be set fairly frequently and stops working entirely after a year. A Martian Steel version runs about \$3,000 (the craftwork is more complex but you don't need as much metal).

FOOD, LODGING, AND ENTERTAINMENT

First World luxuries are very popular in the Second World. We take for granted the availability of food like chocolate, oranges, bananas and so on. However, we only have these because of the ease of shipping; that's far less common in the Second World. Also, the vices of the First World spread rapidly, fine Scotch, Kentucky Bourbon, even a brand name soda or candy bar fetch a good price in the Second World. Also, the Second World has no laws restricting smoking...

FIREARMS

While firearms do not normally work in the Second World you will occasionally run into them. They're dangerous, they can kill you, and they make ordinary thugs a far greater threat, but they're not completely dominating. More than likely you'll fear guns because you're on the First World, and subject to it's lethal laws when you face them. This section discusses how to bring firearms from the modern core rules into a fantasy setting.

PERSONAL FIREARMS PROFICIENCY

You are proficient with all types of personal firearms.

Benefit: You can fire any personal firearm (a firearm designed to be carried and used by a single person) without penalty.

Normal: Characters without this feat take a -4 penalty on attack rolls made with personal firearms.

ADVANCED FIREARMS PROFICIENCY

You can use firearms set on autofire.

Prerequisite: Personal Firearms Proficiency.

Benefit: You can fire any personal firearm on autofire without penalty (provided, of course, that it has an autofire setting).

Normal: Characters without this feat take a -4 penalty on attack rolls made with personal firearms set on autofire. See the description of Autofire in the modern core rules.

THEORY ADVANCES

Weapons are grouped according to theory advance (see page 50). The standard set of theory advances in the core rules is assumed to be those for the Second World minus the Advanced Agriculture advance; the baseline for these weapons is the light and heavy crossbow. Renaissance weapons require the Basic Chemistry advance. Later 19th century and early 20th century firearms arrive with the Precision Machinery advance. Truly modern firearms (i.e. later 20th century guns) come in with the Modern Guns advance. For these rules each theory advance acts similar to a +2 magical weapon bonus; thus a Modern weapon (an automatic rifle) is like a heavy crossbow with roughly +6 in magical enhancement bonuses. These bonuses increase the damage and penetration, make the weapon more compact, and improve the reload characteristics. Note that melee weapons haven't improved much because none of the theory advances add much to a melee weapon. All weapons here come straight from the modern rules. I provide an abbreviated list of firearms in this book; if you want something more extensive see the modern rules core book.

FIREARMS PROFICIENCY

In order to use a firearm without suffering a non-proficiency penalty you need firearms proficiency feats from the modern core rules. This feat chain starts with Personal Firearms Proficiency and expands to include proficiencies for more complex weapons and proficiencies that make you even more lethal. I reprint two of the most important feats here (see the sidebar) in case you don't have the book.

REALISM OPTIONS

Firearms were a significant advance in weapons technology, one that changed the way soldiers fought wars. Armor became a thing of the past, worn mostly for ceremonial purposes. Armies stopped fighting in close order formation (eventually). I designed these rules options with two purposes in mind. One, to model the benefits increases in technology offer. I assume that increased technology offers bonuses similar to the bonuses enchanted weapons offer. Two, to explain why armies started fighting so differently (in particular, stopped wearing armor). The penetration rating system serves the second function since these firearms rules make armor fairly useless (at least until hardened armor in the form of composites arrives on the scene near the end of the twentieth century). Otherwise I attempt to keep the system simple and continuous with the core d20 System material.

PENETRATION RATING (PEN)

A major feature of firearms is their PEN attribute. This value is subtracted from the target's armor rating; the armor rating of the target is equal to the total of the target's Armor bonus and Natural Armor bonus to Armor Class. What this means is that firearms with a high PEN rating will tend to blow through lighter armors and thus neutralize the bonus from them. 2 points of Penetration counts as a +1 weapon special ability.

Example: If firing a hunting rifle at an orc (as described in the MM) the DC of hitting the orc will be 10 (+4 for Scale Mail, -6 for PEN of 6, but this can do no more than neutralize the armor bonus).

ARMOR HARDENING

Each point of armor hardening neutralizes one point of PEN; modern armors typically have 4 to 8 points of hardening. 4 points of hardening counts as a +1 magical bonus. Note that if you have both natural and normal armor, penetration applies to normal armor first, then to natural armor; thus a creature with a natural armor bonus of +4 and 4 points of hardening for their natural armor, wearing scale mail (granting an armor bonus of +4) shot by a hunting rifle (PEN 6) would have an effective armor class of 14 (the scale mail's armor bonus of +4 is neutralized by the PEN, 2 points of PEN get through to the creature's natural armor but his hardening of 4 eliminates that, leaving just the +4 natural armor bonus).

Some monsters have a hardening rating for their armor specifically listed. For other monsters, give their armor a hardening rating equal to four times the weapon enhancement bonus required to bypass their damage reduction. For example, a young adult white dragon has damage reduction 5/+1 which means that their armor has a hardening of 4. Note also that it will take significantly higher technology levels before old dragons seriously need to worry about guns. Moreover, they still get their normal damage reduction unless ones uses magical bullets.

GENERIC WEAPONS

The firearms listed in these rules are rather generic; here are descriptions including some of the models upon which they're based. The costs in the table are First World prices; there's really no market for firearms in the Second World Americas. I use the standard designations from the core modern rules for these weapons.

For restricted weapons an influence point cost is given along with a request difficulty check (typically use your Gather Information skill for this check).

BASIC CHEMISTRY

Flintlock pistol: This is a standard muzzle loading flintlock pistol, the kind you see in musketeer movies.

Musket: This is a standard muzzle loaded, unrifled longarm, the kind used during the U.S. revolutionary war.

PRECISION MACHINERY

Medium Revolver: This is the standard .38 sometimes used by the police. Bad guys tend to sneer at this pistol, then pull out their SMGs. You can also use this for western revolvers.

Heavy Revolver: The ultimate Freudian symbol of masculinity. You could shoot through the engine block of a car with this thing.

Shotgun: This is a short barreled, pump fed shotgun, like the witness protection gun or a hand-made sawed off shotgun. These are illegal in the U.S. but most players and villains won't worry much about that.

Hunting Rifle: This is a fairly heavy hunting rifle; it's not really modeled on any specific rifle but fires a high caliber round and uses a bolt action.

Dynamite: Just a stick of TNT to blow things up real good.

Weapon	Dmg	PEN	Crit.	Dmg Type	Range Inc.	Rate of Fire	Mag.	Size	Wgt	Cost
Basic Chemistry										
Flintlock Pistol	1d10	2	20	B	20 ft.	Single	1 int.	Med	4 lb.	\$200
Flintlock Musket	1d12	4	20	B	50 ft.	Single	1 int.	Large	12 lb.	\$400
Precision Machinery										
Medium Revolver	2d6	3	20	B	30 ft.	S	6 cyl.	Small	2 lb.	\$350
Heavy Revolver	2d8	4	20	B	30 ft.	S	6 cyl.	Med	3 lb.	\$500
Shotgun	2d8	2	20	B	30 ft.	Single	5 int.	Large	9 lb.	\$400
Hunting Rifle	2d8	6	20	B	80 ft.	Single	5 int.	Large	8 lb.	\$600
Modern Guns										
Automatic Pistol	2d6	3	20	B	40 ft.	S	15 box	Small	3 lb.	\$700
Heavy Automatic Pistol	2d8	4	20	B	40 ft.	S	9 box	Med	4 lb.	\$900
Submachine Gun	2d6	3	20	B	50 ft.	S, A	30 box	Large	7 lb.	2 ip (DC 20)
Assault Rifle	2d8	6	20	B	80 ft.	S, A	30 box	Large	8 lb.	5 ip (DC 25)
.50 Rifle	2d12	8	20	B	120 ft.	S	11 box	Huge	35 lb.	5 ip (DC 25)

Weapon	Dmg.	Crit.	Dmg Type	Burst Radius	Ref DC	Range Inc.	Size	Wgt	Cost
Dynamite	2d6	—	Concussion	5 ft.	15	10 ft.	Tiny	1 lb.	12
Fragmentation grenade	4d6	—	Slashing	20 ft.	15	10 ft.	Tiny	1 lb.	15

MODERN GUNS

Automatic pistol: This is a pretty standard modern semi-automatic pistol with a staggered magazine. Archetypes for this would be the Browning Hi-power (popular with law enforcement), Beretta 92F, and the infamous Glock.

Heavy automatic pistol: Large rounds with high loads don't feed through the automatic mechanism that well but high-powered bullets or the rare magnum automatics can represent this gun.

Submachine gun: This is a pretty standard light submachine gun such as an HK MP5. While you could squeeze a couple extra bullets into the gun by leaving one in the chamber and maxing out the clip few soldiers do so since they have to answer to sergeants who don't like privates walking around with a round under the firing pin and clips can actually misfeed a bit more frequently if overloaded.

Assault Rifle: This is a standard automatic rifle firing 5.56 mm rounds, i.e. an M-16.

.50 Rifle: This is the gun you see snipers use in modern sniper movies. It can also represent an elephant gun though you should change the ammunition rating to 2 internal (representing having to break it open to reload).

Fragmentation Grenade: This is a defensive hand grenade, the kind used by modern First World armies. It uses better explosive than older (i.e. World War II) era grenades. It does the listed damage to all within the area of the attack; a Reflex save halves the damage. Older era hand grenades would typically do 3d6 damage. You must make a normal attack check against AC 10 (as modified by range, cover, and so on) to bounce the grenade in the right location; if you miss determine where the grenade lands using the standard rules for grenade-like weapons.

MODERN ARMOR

I include yet another abbreviated list of modern equipment here. This armor is made of composites and plastics; when you take it to the Second World the cohesion of the material in the armor breaks down and becomes brittle. Not only does it lose all hardening but the armor bonus drops by two; then after being hit once or twice the stuff starts breaking off your body in horrid sheets. However, this armor works quite nicely in the First World. I list the Hardening rating and Maximum Dexterity Bonus for each armor type. Note that the core modern rules don't have Max Dex Bonuses for armor but I include them here to help you fit them into your game if you want to keep Max Dex Bonuses.

Armor	Type	Armor Bonus	Hard.	Max Dex	Armor Penalty	Spell Failure	Speed		Wgt.	Cost
							(30 ft.)	(20 ft.)		
Light Armor										
Leather jacket	Impromptu	+1	0	+8	−0	5%	30	20	4 lb.	\$100
Light undercover shirt	Concealable	+2	4	+7	−0	5%	30	20	2 lb.	\$250
Pull-up pouch vest	Concealable	+2	4	+6	−1	10%	30	20	2 lb.	\$250
Undercover vest	Concealable	+3	4	+6	−2	10%	30	20	3 lb.	\$300
Medium Armor										
Concealable vest	Concealable	+4	4	+4	−3	20%	25	15	4 lb.	\$400
Light-duty vest	Tactical	+5	4	+3	−4	25%	25	15	8 lb.	\$600
Tactical vest	Tactical	+6	8	+2	−5	30%	25	15	10 lb.	\$800
Heavy Armor										
Special response vest	Tactical	+7	8	+1	−6	35%	20	15	15 lb.	\$1000
Forced entry unit	Tactical	+9	8	+0	−8	45%	20	15	20 lb.	\$1500

All the armor listed on the table, except the leather jacket, requires the Modern Plastics theory advance.

SECOND WORLD MAGIC ITEMS

One can find the standard array of magic items from the DMG in the Second World. Note that many powerful individuals are wardens and they focus on developing their personal abilities. However, even wardens make liberal use of more conventional magic.

POTIONS

WHITE LIGHTNING

Skill: Perform

DC: 15

IP Cost: 1

One thing the Appalachian dwarves do better than anyone else in the world is make strong liquor. White Lightning is a clear grain alcohol cut with some special ingredients. It burns with a blue flame and if set afire causes 2d6 burn damage to a target hit with a ranged touch attack (as a grenade like object). Splash damage is negligible since the stuff burns so quickly and a target hit by a flask can make a Reflex save (DC 13) for half damage. White Lightning ain't made for burning though. It's made for drinking. If you can manage to get a small bottle of the stuff down (counts as 1d6/1d6 Int poison with a Fort save DC of 14) you'll be feeling no

pain for the next four hours. This makes you immune to all pain effects (for example, spells that cause penalties via pain) and can remain conscious at negative hit points. While at 0 or fewer hit points you'll only move at half rate (due to physical damage, not pain). White Lightning counts as partially magical. The creator does not need to be able to cast spells but the pain resistance effects of the alcohol go away in an anti-magic field (they cannot be dispelled though).

Caster Level: Alchemy check DC 20; *Prerequisites:* Brew Potion; *Market Price:* 750 gp; *Weight:* -. Making White Lightning requires 400 gp worth of components and an Alchemy check at DC 20 to brew (no experience cost though). A failed check ruins half the components.

WONDROUS ITEMS

CRYSTALLIZED STEEL SPHERE

Skill: Knowledge (Arcane)

DC: 30

IP Cost: 90

Description: The sphere can be found in either its active or inactive state. If active it appears to be a perfectly uniform metal sphere about the size of a human fist with small engraved patterns on its surface. It can be de-activated by pushing on portions of the sphere's engraved surface and twisting it; the sphere itself is a puzzle that must be manipulated in just the right way to be opened or closed. When closed it is in sphere form and fixes itself in space so that it cannot be moved. When open it's like an odd conglomeration

of small bars, rods and curved surfaces that can be pushed and pulled in various ways.

Tempest Argon uses one of these spheres in their dungeon. They have four cells surrounding a central chamber where the sphere is kept.

Powers: While the sphere is active all space in a roughly 55 foot radius of the sphere is considered stabilized. Stabilized space cannot be entered or left via teleportation powers (those with the teleportation descriptor), nor can gates or gate-like powers be used in the region. The effect is as if the spell, *dimensional anchor*, affected everyone and everything within the region of crystallized space. Also, certain forms of scrying might not work depending on how they operate. This is left to the DM's judgment.

If the sphere is found in its active state then it can be de-activated with a successful Disable Device or Spellcraft check against DC 35. If found inactive it is much easier to figure out and only requires a DC 30 check. In both these cases retries are allowed. These spheres are sturdy but not invulnerable. They are made of black iron, have a Hardness of 20, 40 hit points, and Spell Resistance of 25. When inactive the sphere can easily be carried in a pocket. When activated it anchors itself in space relative to the earth and can no longer be moved (though it can be manipulated).

Once a user has figured out how to open or close a sphere he no longer needs to roll for that task and gets a +5 on the opposite task (e.g. if found already open one could figure out how to close it with a DC 30 check and then receive a +5 on the skill check to figure out how to open it.) It takes 5 rounds (full actions each round and these actions provoke attacks of opportunity) to open or close a sphere.

Caster Level: 15th; *Prerequisites:* Craft Wondrous Item, *Dimensional Anchor*, 10 ranks of Disable Device; *Market Price:* 90,000 gp; *Weight:* 1 lb.

RING OF QUIET

The Ring of Quiet doesn't suppress the sound you make; instead it suppresses whatever qualities you project that cause an exile to shunt. No one really knows what properties of a person make them shunt, or fully comprehends how to suppress those properties. One thing does seem clear, the ability to use magic or warden bindings causes one to shunt; and the more of that you have the quicker you go. Quite likely, even the potential for those abilities causes you to shunt. Regardless, arcane spellcasters have studied this since the Sundering and have developed a few tricks to help

extend one's stay in the First World for a longer period. The Ring of Quiet represents one of the more successful inventions in this area. If you wear this ring you can remain in the First World for three weeks prior to rolling the dice for when you shunt. After that time you need to return to the Second World and remain there for one week; if you don't do this and return to the First World right away you'll shunt normally. With the Ring of Quiet you essentially get the ability to spend three fourths of your time safely in the First World.

While this item is one of the most effective means of staying in the First World it cannot suppress the signature of truly powerful wardens and characters. For simplicity you can handle this by simply saying the ring does not work on anything with a challenge rating or effective character level greater than 9. It may work for characters of higher level, but only if they lack a capacity for magic or wardenhood and aren't too wrapped in synchronicity. Merely lacking magic wielding classes doesn't mean much here though; it's the potential that matters and, for now at least, is best handled by a judgment call from the gamemaster.

Caster Level: 9th; *Prerequisites:* Forge Ring, *sustain travel*; *Market Price:* 20,000 gp; *Weight:* -.

SILK TIGER TATTOO

Skill: Diplomacy

DC: 20

IP Cost: 4

Description: The silk tiger tattoo is simply a full color tattoo of a tiger. The colors are rich and vibrant, with a sheen like silk; it even feels silky to the touch and shines faintly beneath moonlight (like a cat's eyes). Randolph Chen claims to have learned of the tattoo during his tour of duty as a United States recon marine in Vietnam. He performed long range patrols that took him into some pretty awful areas. One of these patrols led him to the Second World and a few years later he made it back to New York, this time on the Second World side. He has built up an empire since then.

Powers: The silk tiger tattoo grants you the sinuous motions of a tiger. This gives you a +5 competence bonus to Escape Artist, Move Silent, and Tumble checks.

Caster Level: 5th; *Prerequisites:* Craft Wondrous Item, *cat's grace*; *Market Price:* 4,000 gp; *Weight:* -.

SPECIAL MATERIALS

TENSILE MERCURY (REQUEST DC +5)

Tensile mercury is a silvery, psycho-active metal. Artificers find the material gathered in small pools buried underground. Occasionally geologic forces push tensile mercury up through seams into underground rivers and small droplets of it get carried to the surface to collect in ponds or streambeds. Despite tensile mercury's lack of raw magical power, adventurers and the rich of the Second World value it quite highly. This is because a tensile mercury wielder can command it to reshape itself.

All tensile mercury equipment can expand or contract. A given quantity of tensile mercury can contract to one tenth its maximum mass and size. Reshaping tensile mercury weapons or armor requires training; you must take the Tensile Mercury Expertise feat to use it. It then takes a move equivalent action to modify your equipment. Tensile mercury users typically store their equipment as bracers (or matched sets of arm and leg bracers for armor), elaborate jewelry, and so on. While in storage mode the user does not suffer any of the penalties normally associated with the equipment (other than the reduced weight). You still need proficiency with the weapon or armor type as usual. Shaping an Exotic Weapon requires a Craft (Weaponsmithing) check against DC 20 and takes the normal time for shaping a tensile mercury weapon; you make take 10 on this check, even during a fight.

Tensile Mercury has a hardness of 15 and 30 hit points per inch of thickness. While fluid, enchanted weapons can damage it (much the way ghosts can be damaged by enchanted weapons). Give it damage reduction of 15/+2 due to its fluid nature; this only applies to attacks directed against the item itself.

WEAPONS

One can shape Tensile Mercury weapons into any weapon made in large part of metal, such as the following: Axes; Swords; Chain weapons; Daggers; Dart; Gauntlets; Glaive; Guisarme; Halberd; Hammers; Kama; Kukri; Maces; Morningstar; Picks; Ranseur; Scythe; Shuriken; Sickle; or Trident.

A tensile mercury weapon has a base cost of \$100,000. Tensile mercury can support up to 7 points of bonuses with a maximum +4 enhancement bonus.

ARMOR

Like weapons, one can shape tensile mercury armor into any mostly metallic armor such as: chain shirt,

scale mail, chain mail, breast plate, splint mail, banded mail, half plate, or full plate.

Tensile mercury armor has a base cost of \$60,000. Tensile mercury can support up to 7 points of bonuses with a maximum +4 enhancement bonus.

MARTIAN STEEL (REQUEST DC +2)

Martian steel gets its name from its red-tinted, brassy coloring but many artificers suspect that it may actually be found in large quantities on Mars itself. Regardless, miners can find substantial deposits of it at various locations on Second World Earth. Martian Steel is light, sturdy, and fairly flexible; it holds an edge and all these qualities make it a favored material for mail armor and swords (though it's used for all kinds of weapons and armor).

Weapons, armor, and tools made from Martian Steel have 4 points of Hardening, hardness 15 and 50% more hit points than normal (30 hp/inch). Martian steel can support up to 6 points of bonuses with a maximum +4 enhancement bonus.

Weapons made of Martian Steel cost \$15,000 more than usual. Armor made of Martian Steel costs \$30,000 more than usual. For most tools the cost increase will be about \$10,000.

BLACK IRON (REQUEST DC +5)

Black Iron forms in the depths of volcanoes and other infernal places where the heat is so intense that it breaks through the barriers between interstices, allowing the raw power of steel and fire to seep into the ore. Black Iron's connection with such primal forces makes it the favored metal of demons and other interstitial creatures. The metal itself is flat black, heavy, and has a texture like enamel, though it's quite hard.

Weapons, armor, and tools made from Black Iron have 8 points of Hardening, hardness 20 and 100% more hit points than normal (40 hp/inch). Black Iron can support up to 10 points of bonuses with a maximum +5 enhancement bonus.

Weapons made of Black Iron cost \$30,000 more than usual. Armor made of Black Iron costs \$75,000 more than usual. For most tools the cost increase will be about \$20,000.

CHAPTER SIX

OPPONENTS

SECOND WORLD NPCs

I describe a few non-players characters in the following sections. These are mainly just the people you'll need for various favors from the Influence section. I highlight feats that you should remember in **bold** print. I do this mainly because they're feats that are frequently relevant to a fight but easily overlooked. Feats that are already figured into the NPC's attributes are not highlighted. I use a description format for NPCs more like that of a monster. In my experience I've found that stat-blocks work well within a module but get a bit difficult to use when presented together in a large section of NPCs; monster descriptions have always been something that I, as a gamemaster, could go and use directly from the book since they've got space for writing notes and their large headers stand out easily. Since opposition NPCs work in many ways like monsters, especially in the Second World, I decided to sacrifice some density here for usability.

MINOR NPCs

These non-player characters are generic people found within the Second World. You will encounter most of them as a result of various influence requests.

BODYGUARD CHIEF

Human Rogue 3, Fighter 2

Medium-size Humanoid

Hit Dice: 3d6+2d10 (24 hp)

Initiative: +5 (+1 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative)

Speed: 30 ft.

AC: 16 (+4 chain shirt, +1 Dex, +1 buckler)

Attacks: Longsword +7 (1d8+1; 19+/×2) or Sap +5 (1d6+1 S)

Special Abilities: Sneak Attack +2d6, Evasion, Uncanny Dodge (Dex bonus to AC)

Saves: Fort +4, Ref +3, Will +2

Abilities: Str 12, Dex 12, Con 10, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 8

Skills: Climb +3 (+4), Gather Information +5, Hide +6 (+7), Intimidate +5, Jump +3 (+4), Listen +9, Move

Silently +6 (+7), Profession (Bodyguard) +7, Sense Motive +7, Search +6, Spot +11

Feats: Alertness, Improved Initiative, Skill Focus (Spot), Weapon Focus (Longsword)

Languages: English, Spanish

Challenge Rating: 4

Alignment: typically lawful

Description: The bodyguard chief runs a team of bodyguards when out on a mission; he is both educator and coordinator plus the last line of defense for his assignment. He'll direct the other team members so as to keep them in proper location at all times.

Possessions: masterwork Longsword, masterwork Chain Shirt, Buckler, Sap, \$80

BODYGUARD AGENT

Human Rogue 2, Fighter 1

Medium-size Humanoid

Hit Dice: 2d6+1d10 (14 hp)

Initiative: +5 (+1 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative)

Speed: 30 ft.

AC: 16 (+4 chain shirt, +1 Dex, +1 buckler)

Attacks: Longsword +2 (1d8; 19+/×2) or Sap +2 (1d6 S)

Special Abilities: Sneak Attack +1d6, Evasion

Saves: Fort +2, Ref +3, Will +1

Abilities: Str 11, Dex 12, Con 10, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 8

Skills: Climb +1 (+3), Gather Information +4, Hide +4 (+6), Intimidate +4, Listen +8, Move Silently +4 (+6), Profession (Bodyguard) +6, Sense Motive +6, Search +5, Spot +10

Feats: Alertness, Improved Initiative, Skill Focus (Spot)

Languages: English, Spanish

Challenge Rating: 3

Alignment: typically lawful

Description: The bodyguard agent keeps a constant watch for unusual activity; he also keeps a constant watch out to make sure the boss doesn't slap him around for being caught off guard (which the bosses love to do). This tends to make bodyguard agents pretty anxious.

Possessions: Longsword, Chain Shirt, Buckler, Sap, \$40

CHEAP THUG

Human Fighter 1

Medium-size Humanoid

Hit Dice: 1d10+4 (10 hp)

Initiative: +0

Speed: 30 ft.

AC: 11 (+1 padded)

Attacks: Club +2 (1d6+1) or Punch +2 (1d3+1 S)

Saves: Fort +3, Ref +0, Will +0

Abilities: Str 13, Dex 10, Con 12, Int 8, Wis 10, Cha 10

Skills: Climb +3, Intimidate +1, Jump +3, Swim +3

Feats: Improved Unarmed Strike, Toughness

Languages: English

Challenge Rating: 1

Alignment: typically evil

Description: The cheap thug probably ain't worth the time you need to spend re-sharpening your sword.

Possessions: Club, Padded armor, \$5

TOUGH THUG

Human Fighter 3

Medium-size Humanoid

Hit Dice: 3d10+6 (24 hp)

Initiative: +0

Speed: 30 ft.

AC: 16 (+4 chain shirt, +2 shield)

Attacks: Longsword +5 (1d8+1; 19+/×2) or Punch +4 (1d3+1 S)

Saves: Fort +5, Ref +1, Will +1

Abilities: Str 13, Dex 10, Con 12, Int 8, Wis 10, Cha 10

Skills: Climb -1 (+3), Intimidate +3, Jump +1 (+5), Swim +3

Feats: Improved Unarmed Strike, Power Attack

Toughness, Weapon Focus (Longsword)

Languages: English

Challenge Rating: 3

Alignment: typically evil

Description: The tough thug takes a while to put down and can be flat out dangerous with a longsword. His signature skill is pushing around cheap thugs.

Possessions: Longsword, Chain Shirt, Large wooden shield, \$25

RED SOCIETY ASSASSIN

Human Rogue 5, Assassin 3

Medium-size Humanoid

Hit Dice: 8d6+8 (42 hp)

Initiative: +3 (+3 Dex)

Speed: 30 ft.

AC: 16 (+3 leather, +3 Dex)

Attacks: Rapier +10 (1d6+2, 18+/×2); Light crossbow +8 (1d8, 19-20/x2)

Special Abilities: Evasion, Sneak Attack +5d6, Uncanny Dodge (retain Dex bonus to AC even when flat-footed or struck by invisible attacker, cannot be flanked), death attack (DC 14), poison use, +1 save vs. poisons

Saves: Fort +3, Ref +10, Will +2

Abilities: Str 12, Dex 16, Con 12, Int 12, Wis 10, Cha 10

Skills: Disable Device +7, Disguise +11, Gather Information +11, Hide +24, Intuit Direction +5, Listen +11, Move Silently +24, Open Lock +14, Search +10, Spot +9, Use Rope +6



Thug-Mart® by Fil Kearney

Feats: Weapon Finesse (Rapier), Weapon Focus (Rapier), **Dodge**, Improved Initiative

Languages: English, Spanish
Challenge Rating: 7

Alignment: typically evil

Description: Red Society assassins want to be tough, cool hit men that light cigarettes with one hundred dollar bills but a lot of them are nothing more than elite thugs, with all the manners to match. This guy falls somewhere in that pretentious range; he's certainly dangerous enough but lacks the finesse and quality of the truly cool.

Possessions: *leather armor +1, rapier +1, cloak and boots of elvenkind*, light crossbow, Sap, Position (Assassin of the Red Society), carries no money while on a mission.

DWARVEN SCOUT

Dwarf Ranger 2, Fighter 1

Medium-size Humanoid

Hit Dice: 2d8+1d10+3 (21 hp)

Initiative: +1 (+1 Dex)

Speed: 20 ft.

AC: 15 (+4 chain shirt, +1 Dex)

Attacks: Battleaxe +1 (1d8; 20/×3) and Handaxe +1 (1d6; 20/×3) combo; Composite Shortbow +4 (1d6; 20/×3)

Special Abilities: Stonecunning, save +2 vs. poison, save +2 vs spells, +4 dodge vs giants, +1 to hit orcs/goblinoids, +2 on Appraise of stone/metal items, +2 on stone/metal Craft check, Favored Enemy (Gnoll +1); Darkvision (60')

Saves: Fort +6, Ref +1, Will +1

Abilities: Str 10, Dex 13, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 8

Skills: Climb +1 (+3), Hide +2 (+4), Listen +6, Move Silently +3 (+5), Search +6, Spot +8, Survival +6

Feats: Alertness, Endurance, **Point Blank Shot**, Track, Wild Empathy

Languages: Appalachian English

Challenge Rating: 3

Alignment: usually good

Description: The dwarven scout lives in the wild and you can tell what he's eaten for the last couple days just by looking in his beard. They like to swing into battle with both axes hacking away but will probably hold off and provide support with their bow if others are around.



Possessions: Chain Shirt, Composite Shortbow, Battleaxe, Hand Axe

DWARVEN GNOLLBASHER

Dwarf Fighter 3

Medium-size Humanoid

Hit Dice: 3d10+3 (21 hp)

Initiative: +0

Speed: 15 ft.

AC: 17 (+5 chainmail, +2 shield)

Attacks: Dwarven Waraxe +1 (1d8+1; 20/×3); Throwing Axe +3 (1d6+1)

Special Abilities: Stonecunning, save +2 vs. poison, save +2 vs spells, +4 dodge vs giants, +1 to hit orcs/goblinoids, +2 on Appraise of stone/metal items, +2 on stone/metal Craft check, Favored Enemy (Gnoll +1); Darkvision (60')

Saves: Fort +5, Ref +3, Will +3

Abilities: Str 12, Dex 10, Con, 14, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 7

Skills: Climb -1 (+6), -1 (Jump +6), Spot +1

Feats: Exotic Weapon Proficiency (Dwarven Waraxe), Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Weapon Focus (Dwarven Waraxe)

Languages: Appalachian English

Challenge Rating: 3

Alignment: usually good

Description: The dwarven gnollbasher enjoys fighting up front. They'll usually swig a bit of hooch before a fight to steady their nerves.

Possessions: Chainmail; Large wooden shield; Dwarven Waraxe; Throwing Axe x3; waterskin filled with hooch

DWARVEN SNAKEHANDLER

Dwarf Druid 4

Medium-size Humanoid

Hit Dice: 4d8+4 (27 hp)

Initiative: +0

Speed: 20 ft.

AC: 14 (+2 leather, +2 shield)

Attacks: Scimitar +3 (1d6; 18+/×2)

Special Abilities: Stonecunning, save +2 vs. poison, save +2 vs spells, +4 dodge vs giants, +1 to hit orcs/goblinoids, +2 on Appraise of stone/metal items, +2 on stone/metal Craft check, Nature Sense, Animal Companion (2 small vipers), Wild Empathy, Woodland Stride, Trackless Step, Resist Nature's Lure; Darkvision (60')

Saves: Fort +5, Ref +1, Will +6

Abilities: Str 10, Dex 10, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 14, Cha 8
Skills: Concentration +8, Handle Animal +6, Heal +5, Knowledge (Nature) +1, Survival +9
Feats: Brew Potion, Track
Languages: Appalachian English, Druidic
Challenge Rating: 4

Alignment: Neutral Good

Description: The dwarven snakehandler makes for some fun at parties; he always keeps a couple vipers hidden about his body and leads some odd, quasi-spiritual gatherings where dwarves get together and play with the venomous little things.

Possessions: Leather armor, Scimitar, Large wooden shield, 2 *potions of cure light wounds* (1d8+1)

Druid Spellbook (castable)

Level 0 (5): *Cure Minor Wounds* (x2); *Detect Magic* (x1); *Know Direction* (x1); *Light* (x1)

Level 1 (4): *Animal Friendship* (x1); *Cure Light Wounds* (x1); *Entangle* (x1); *Obscuring Mist* (x1)

Level 2 (3): *Charm Person or Animal* (x1); *Flame Blade* (x1); *Resist Elements* (x1)

2 Small vipers: CR 1/2; small animal; HD 1d8; hp 4; Init +3; Spd 20 ft (climb 20ft., swim 20 ft.); AC 17 (+1 size, +3 Dex, +3 natural); Melee bite +4 (1d2-2 and poison); SA poison; SQ scent; AL N; SV Fort +2, Ref +5, Will +1; Str 6, Dex 17, Con 11, Int 1, Wis 12, Cha 2.

Skills and Feats: Balance +11, Climb +12, Hide +15, Listen +9, Spot +9; Weapon Finesse (Bite)

SA—Poison (Ex): Bite, Fortitude save (DC 11); initial and secondary damage 1d6 temporary Constitution

NIGHT WATCH EXTRACTION TEAM

An extraction team consists of four members averaging 8th level. The team as a group is encounter level 12; note that this is a ‘hard’ EL 12 in that you should expect a group of four eighth level characters to have roughly a 50% chance of losing to the Extraction team. The primary reason for this is that the team is built just like a bunch of player characters; however, their magic items are largely hidden within their bindings. Thus the reward for looting them is commensurate with what you’d find off a standard NPC but the total magic item value they possess is actually much higher. The Extraction team should also serve as an example of how you can make tough NPCs without worrying about throwing the magic item component of your game out of whack. Extraction teams are designed for intrusion and extraction; as such, they emphasize stealth abilities and frequently de-emphasize healing and preparation magic. Any healing can be performed after the mission and preparation magic can be cast before entering the target zone. Members have some

spells cast upon them before entering a mission area if they know ahead of time what to expect; usually this involves a variety of first and second level spells. The Blue Conglomerate uses similar teams so you can use this team to model the Conglomerate coming after a group of players who don’t know their place in the social hierarchy. If the situation warrants, the Conglomerate team will be backed by the Blue Room, which makes them extremely dangerous.

EXTRACTION TEAM POINT

Half-orc Ranger 3, Barbarian 2, Feral Warden 3
Medium-size Humanoid

Hit Dice: 3d8+2d12+3d8+16 (63 hp)

Initiative: +3 (+3 Dex)

Speed: 40 ft.

AC: 22 (+6 armor, +3 shield, +3 Dex)

Attacks: Longsword +14/+9 (1d8+6, crit 19+/-2)

Special Abilities: Rage 1/day, Favored Enemy (Aberrations +1); Darkvision (60 ft.)

Saves: Fort +12, Ref +6, Will +5

Abilities: Str 16 (20), Dex 16, Con, 14, Int 8, Wis 10, Cha 8

Skills: Climb +8, Handle Animal +6, Listen +15, Spot +15, Search +11, Survival +11

Feats: Alertness, Endurance, Iron Will, **Track**

Bindings: Keen Senses, Strength of the Beast (+4), **Speed of the Serpent** (3/day)

Languages: English

Challenge Rating: 8

Alignment: according to group

Description: The extraction team point takes the lead position during the mission; his keen senses and dark-vision make it quite difficult to catch him off-guard. This job is, of course, quite dangerous and quite important; he’s extremely proud of that.

Possessions: +1 longsword, +2 chain shirt, +1 large steel shield, +1 cloak of resistance

EXTRACTION TEAM ANCHOR

Human Rogue 2, Fighter 3, Metal Warden 3
Medium-size Humanoid

Hit Dice: 2d6+3d10+3d8+16 (59 hp)

Initiative: +3 (+3 Dex)

Speed: 30 ft.

AC: 22 (+8 chain shirt, +3 Dex, +1 deflection, H4)

Attacks: Longsword +10/+5 (1d8+5, crit 19+/-2) and shortsword +10 (1d6+4, crit 19+/-2) combo

Special Abilities: Sneak Attack +1d6, Evasion

Saves: Fort +9, Ref +9, Will +5

Abilities: Str 14, Dex 16, Con, 14, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 11

Skills: Bluff +4, Craft (Weaponsmith) +11, Craft (Armorsmith) +11, Decipher Script +5, Disable Device +5, Escape Artist +6, Listen +5, Open Lock +11, Search +4, Spot +8, Use Magic Device +5

Feats: Ambidexterity, Iron Will, **Dodge**, Tensile Mercury Expertise, Tensile Mercury Mastery, Two Weapon



Fighting

Bindings: Armoring at +4 (as Chain shirt usually), Blading at +3 (typically longsword/shortsword combo), Martian Steel

Languages: English

Challenge Rating: 8

Alignment: according to group

Description: The extraction team anchor doesn't quite fit the normal model of an anchor since he's fast, has surprise strike, and not heavily armored. However, he can switch to Full plate almost at will raising his armor class to 24 if necessary. He lacks the mobility of a true rogue so mostly relies on the others to set up flanking shots; when combined with two weapon use this makes him pretty dangerous.

Possessions: +1 cloak of resistance, +1 ring of protection

EXTRACTION TEAM STEALTH OPERATIVE

Elf Rogue 5, Shadow Warden 3

Medium-size Humanoid

Hit Dice: 8d6 (34 hp)

Initiative: +4 (+4 Dex)

Speed: 30 ft.

AC: 19 (+5 chain shirt, +4 Dex)

Attacks: Rapier +10 (1d6+2, crit 18+×2), Composite longbow +10 (1d8+1, crit 20+×3)

Special Abilities: Surprise Strike +3d6, Evasion, Un-

canny Dodge

Saves: Fort +3, Ref +10, Will +5

Abilities: Str 12, Dex 18, Con, 10, Int 14, Wis 11, Cha 10

Skills: Balance +13 (+14), Climb +8 (+9), Gather Information +11, Hide +24 (+25), Intimidate +8, Jump +2 (+3), Listen +15, Move Silently +14 (+15), Open Lock +12, Pick Pocket +12, Search +15, Spot +15, Tumble +11 (+12), Use Magic Device +2

Feats: Alertness, Weapon Finesse (Rapier), **Blind Fight**

Bindings: Shadow Sight (darkvision 90 ft.), Cloak of Shadows, Shadow Jump (3/day)

Languages: Iroquois, English, French, Goblin

Challenge Rating: 8

Alignment: according to group

Description: The extraction team stealth op typically follows the group for a bit or scouts ahead when the group comes to a halt; the SO also checks side passages for a short distance. In a fight the SO shadow jumps behind the enemy group to set up flanking attacks.

Possessions: +1 rapier, +1 chain shirt, +1 cloak of resistance, masterwork mighty composite longbow (+1)

EXTRACTION TEAM ARCANE

Human Wizard 8

Medium-size Humanoid

Hit Dice: 8d4+16 (41 hp)

Initiative: +2 (+2 Dex)

Speed: 30 ft.

AC: 20 (+4 mage armor, +3 Dex, +2 deflection, +1 Dodge)

Attacks: Fist +4 (1d3 S)

Special Abilities: Spellcasting

Saves: Fort +6, Ref +6, Will +8

Abilities: Str 10, Dex 14 [17], Con, 14, Int 16, Wis 10, Cha 11

Skills: Alchemy +14, Concentration +13, Knowledge (Arcana) +14, Scribe +14, Spellcraft +14

Feats: Simple Weapon Proficiency, Scribe Scroll, **Combat Casting**, **Dodge**, **Spell Penetration**, **Spell Focus (Evocation)**, Craft Wand

Languages: English, French, Draconic

Challenge Rating: 8

Alignment: according to group

Description: Extraction team wizards can learn pretty much any spell they please, since if it's needed for the mission the spell will be provided for them. Extraction team wizards sometimes go out of their way to take unusual assignments in order to expand their spellbook. Bolded spells have already been cast (either on himself or an ally). Typically, one or more characters will have the invisibility spell cast on them.

Possessions: ring of protection +2, cloak of resistance +2, wand of fireballs (level 8, 20 charges)

Prepared Spells

High Priced Help by Jeremy Dale

Level 0 (4): *Detect Magic, Flare, Detect Magic, Light*
 Level 1 (5): **Mage Armor**, *Sleep, Charm Person, Magic Missile*×2
 Level 2 (4): **Invisibility**×2, *Cat's Grace, Darkness*
 Level 3 (4): *Lightning Bolt, Fireball, Dispel Magic*
 Level 4 (2): *Dimension Door, Stoneskin*

CLIMS GANG HIT TEAM [EL 7]

Instead of high powered assassins Clims has these guys; they're pretty tough though and very good at busting kneecaps if that's your shtick.

CLIMS SENIOR MUSCLE

Human Fighter 6

Medium-size Humanoid

Hit Dice: 6d10+12 (48 hp)

Initiative: +5 (+1 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative)

Speed: 20 ft.

AC: 20 (+6 armor, +3 shield, +1 Dex)

Attacks: Bastard sword +10/+5 (1d10+5, 19+/-2);
 Throwing axe +8 (1d6+2)

Special Abilities: none

Saves: Fort +7, Ref +3, Will +4

Abilities: Str 15, Dex 12, Con, 14, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 10

Skills: Climb +3 (+7), Handle Animal +5, Jump +1 (+5),
 Ride +8, Swim (+7)

Feats: Exotic Weapon Proficiency (Bastard Sword),
 Weapon Focus (Bastard Sword), Weapon Special-
 ization (Bastard Sword), **Improved Unarmed**
Strike, Improved Initiative, **Power Attack**, Iron Will

Languages: English

Challenge Rating: 5

Alignment: neutral or evil

Description: Clims gang senior muscle know how to beat stuff up; they also enjoy getting in and slapping around those people who get on Jake's bad side. Many of them have a nasty tobacco chewing habit.

Possessions: +1 *bastard sword*; 2 masterwork throwing axes; +1 *large steel shield*; +1 *breastplate*; some chaw

CLIMS BURGLAR (1)

Human Rogue 4

Medium-size Humanoid

Hit Dice: 4d6 (16 hp)

Initiative: +5 (+1 Dex)

Speed: 30 ft.

AC: 13 (+2 armor, +1 Dex)

Attacks: Sap +2 (1d6-1 S); Light crossbow +4 (1d8, crit 19+/-2)

Special Abilities: Surprise Strike +2d6, Evasion, Uncanny Dodge

Saves: Fort +1, Ref +5, Will +1

Abilities: Str 9, Dex 12, Con, 10, Int 12, Wis 10, Cha 10

Skills: Climb +6, Disable Device +8, Hide +8, Gather

Information +7, Listen +9, Move Silently +8, Open Lock +8, Pick Pocket +8, Search +8, Spot +9

Feats: Alertness, **Point Blank Shot**, **Run**

Languages: English, Iroquois

Challenge Rating: 3

Alignment: neutral or evil

Description: The main purpose of the Clims burglar is to open doors so the muscle can get inside and beat people up; they'll also scope the place out in case the punk is holding something back. They avoid fighting but they might pop in for a surprise strike or two (they'd much rather just waste people with their crossbow).

Possessions: Leather armor; Masterwork light crossbow; *potion of cat's grace*; *potion of invisibility*

CLIMS VETERAN TOUGH (2)

Human Fighter 4

Medium-size Humanoid

Hit Dice: 4d10+4 (28 hp)

Initiative: +0

Speed: 30 ft.

AC: 17 (Armor +5, shield +2)

Attacks: Bastard sword +8 (1d10+4, crit 19+/-2)

Special Abilities: none

Saves: Fort +6, Ref +1, Will +3

Abilities: Str 14, Dex 10, Con, 12, Int 8, Wis 10, Cha 10

Skills: Climb +4 (+9), Intimidate +2, Jump +3 (+8),
 Swim (+3)

Feats: Exotic Weapon Proficiency (Bastard Sword), Iron Will, **Improved Unarmed Strike**, Weapon Focus (Bastard Sword), Weapon Specialization (Bastard Sword)

Languages: English

Challenge Rating: 3

Alignment: neutral or evil

Description: The veteran toughs are simply senior muscle in training. They like to chew as well, making Clims hangouts places where you should wear shoes.

Possessions: Masterwork Breastplate; Large steel shield; Masterwork Bastard sword; *potion of bull's strength* (3 hours); some chaw

SECOND WORLD MONSTERS

What follows is a small selection of creatures for the Second World setting. One note: I avoid giving creatures high natural armor bonuses; instead they receive a large regular armor bonus. In ordinary play this won't mean much since armor and natural armor work the same against touch attacks. This mainly serves to eliminate any incentive for the owner of a Steel Horse to put chainmail barding on it (since armor bonuses don't stack).

WADKIN ROA

“The Roa are the very worse kind of thing, poor and powerful.”

—*Unnamed but experienced adventurer overheard at one of Baroness Lynda Michaels' parties.*

Some say the Wadkin Roa constructed the world so they'd have things to torture later. That's doubtful; nothing so destructive could bring itself to build something so complex and diverse. However they likely have been around as long as the world. Legend has it that their home lies somewhere deep within the Forge, or perhaps through an interlocking sequence of interstices coming off from the Forge. Perhaps this fragment, called simply the Tower (even though no-one actually knows if it exists), was once an entire world or even pair of worlds itself. Some claim that worlds emerge from the Forge and grow, then, in the final days, the Wadkin Roa come and tear them to pieces; the scraps of the worlds float back into the Forge and stay there, serving as templates for the contents of future worlds.

The Roa act in many ways like an insect colony. They appear to combine features of hive minds and caste systems. A definite hierarchy exists within the Roa. Different Roa appear to be capable of differing degrees of independent action. While people worship the Roa there is no reason to do so; the Roa do not grant divine powers; they do not favor one with Wisdom; and that you worship them does not matter to them. Some worshippers are just pathetic souls who've read a bit too much Nietzsche and didn't quite get it. Others have succumbed to the wiles of a cult and false promises made by, typically, a roamancer.

“The Roa, while almost wholly alien, do appear to follow a sort of code. However, no one other than the Roa actually know the code. Some people devote their life (or unlfe) to the study of this code, and the manipulation and prediction of Roa behavior. We are called roamancers. Modern roamancy holds that two principles govern Roa behavior, a set of codes called (by us) the Tower Coda, and an overarching general plan called the Tower Directive. The Tower Coda is probably like an elaborate set of laws, the kind of legal system that would arise after millennia of court decisions, precedents, amendments, and new laws being passed without there ever being a simplification or overhaul of the system. Through manipulation of the Coda we can coerce Roa to do some pretty nice tricks; just don't make a mistake. We understand the Tower Directive at once both better and worse than the

Coda. At it's most basic the Directive seems to be a generalized principle for which the Wadkin Roa strive. At best guess, the Directive resembles something akin to a commandment to do evil, where evil means cause destruction or bring about misery. But this does not seem to apply in all cases and, even if it did apply, is such a vague directive and subject to so much interpretation that it possesses no explanatory value. We are pretty much in agreement that Roa behavior arises from these two sources but we typically restrain ourselves to just the Coda, since it's so much more testable.”

“The combination of Coda and Directive also explains the apparently hive-like or caste directed behavior of the Roa. For quite some time roamancers thought that the Wadkin Roa communicated at some primitive level. We still believe that many do, perhaps through somewhat conventional means. However, given the restrictions placed by the Coda, and goals placed by the Directive, a Roa with a complete internal understanding of the two could likely predict with high accuracy the behavior of any other Roa in various circumstances. They could then use this prediction of the other Roa's behavior to coordinate their movements with other Roa; this would give the appearance of wide-scale coordinated motion based on communication, when in fact the coordination could be explained by a prior common cause. There appear to be some complexities in this theory regarding recursive predictive functions, complexities which might indicate that such prediction is inconsistent or *a priori* unstable.”

Legraise at the Thirteenth Collegium

COMBAT

Lower ranking Roa typically fight with a kind of ruthless abandon. You do not matter to them; they do not matter to them. All that matters is the Coda and the Directive. Higher ranking Roa such as the Worm-kings fight with more cunning. They'll sacrifice maws and intruders quite easily to achieve their ends.

WADKIN ROA QUALITIES

Roa do not have a universal ability to summon other Roa. They do not have a universal ability to move into or out of an interstice. They do have a universal tendency to have black and gray markings on their body; for some these are the only markings they have and for others the markings show up in subtle ways (like a small tattoo or birthmark, or perhaps just the hair).

Immunities (Ex): Wadkin Roa are immune to negative

energy effects such as energy level drains and attribute drains from undead.

Alien Mind (Ex): Wadkin Roa think in a way incomprehensible to pretty much everything else; it's as if the way they coded their thought simply worked differently. This makes spells such as detect thoughts and telepathic powers useless against them. This also makes them immune to spells or powers that force creatures to tell the truth.

Alien Body (Ex): Whatever material makes up the Wadkin Roa doesn't last long without their life force to sustain it. Wadkin Roa evaporate cleanly within an hour or two of death. They leave behind no trace and even relatively powerful invocations cannot keep their corpses here. An odd side effect of this ability is that not only do all of them have some degree of damage reduction, but their natural weapons count as +5 for purposes of defeating damage reduction.

ROA MAW

Medium-Size Outsider (Evil)

Hit Dice: 8d8+16 (52 hp)

Initiative: +4 (Dex)

Speed: Fly 60 ft. (perfect)

AC: 24 (+4 Dex, +8 armor, +2 natural armor)

Attacks: Bite +11/+6 (3 PEN) or Slam +11/+6

Damage: Bite 2d6+3, Slam 1d8+3

Face/Reach: 5 ft. by 5 ft./5 ft.

Special Attacks: Razor sharp teeth

Special Qualities: Antimagic field, Blindsight, Devour, Damage reduction 10/+1 or black iron

Saves: Fort +8, Ref +10, Will +7

Abilities: Str 16, Dex 18, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 10

Skills: Concentration +10, Hide +12, Listen +9, Move Silently +12, Spot +9, Search +8, Sense Motive +9, Survival +9

Feats: Power Attack, Improved Bull Rush, Dodge

Climate/Terrain: Any land and underground

Organization: Solitary or feast (2-7)

Challenge Rating: 10

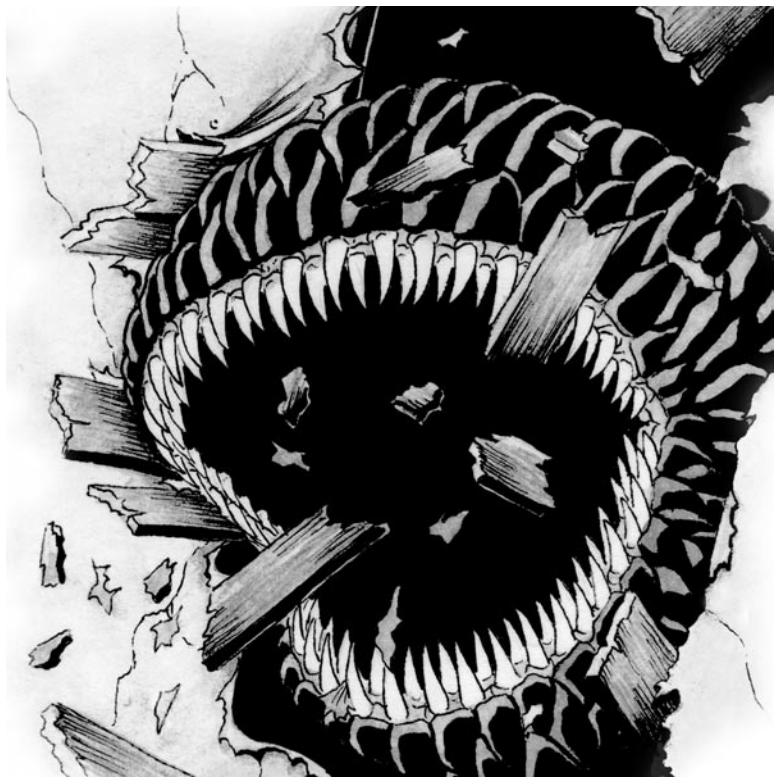
Treasure: none

Alignment: Always neutral evil

Advancement: 9-12 HD (Medium), 13-24 HD (Large)

Description:

"A thump, thump, thump alerted me to its presence; it bounced against the outside wall hungry for the con-



tents. I suppose I counted as contents. Then I heard an awful rip and the thing came chewing its way through the wall, ravenous. The blind round black sphere, marbled in gray had no eyes, just one large cavernous mouth filled with row upon row of teeth, like a shark that was all jaw."

Roa Maws are just what their name implies, all bite. They consume material, up to one ton of it, at which point they appear to be satiated since they'll leave. The maw floats as if levitating but it's more of a sliding through space; something akin to either Motion Warden or Vector Warden flight. Their flight is not magical and cannot be dispelled; in fact, if they rest they simply stay exactly where they are (relative to nearby objects). Maws have perfect maneuverability while flying.

COMBAT

Roa maws simply eat anything in their way. After killing any opponents they proceed to eat the corpses and all equipment, including magic items. Thus, maws don't leave much treasure behind.

Razor Sharp Teeth (Ex): The same teeth that chew through stone and steel can chew quite easily through armor. The maw's bite attack has 3 points of penetration. This allows it to ignore 3 points of a target's armor or natural armor bonus.

Antimagic Field (Su): A Roa maw emanates an antimagic field in a 30-foot radius from its body. This

functions just like an antimagic field cast by a 12th-level sorcerer. All magical and supernatural powers and effects within the radius are suppressed. The maw can suppress this power, but doing so requires concentration and can be disrupted like a normal concentrate action. Note that a magic weapon, while losing its normal bonuses within the antimagic field still counts as having its non-neutralized enhancement bonus for purposes of bypassing damage reduction.

Blindsight (Ex): Roa maws can feel the structure of space around them, much like a Vector Warden. They can use this ability to ascertain all foes within 120 feet as a sighted creature would. This version of blindsight also works through solid objects (but not in a volume of space affected by a Crystalline Steel Sphere, see the magic items section).

Devour (Ex): Roa maws can eat through practically anything given time. When chewing through an inanimate object halve the object's hardness due to the maw's sharp teeth and apply 20 points of damage per full round action. This only works on stationary targets. Magic items do receive a saving throw against the maw (DC 18) but unless they automatically save eventually the maw will win (effectively the maw keeps trying so it's as if the magic item were forced to Take 1 on the check).

ROA INTRUDER

Large Outsider (Evil)



Hit Dice: 8d8+24 (52 hp)

Initiative: +1 (Dex)

Speed: 40 ft.

AC: 20 (-1 Size, +1 Dex, +8 armor, +2 natural armor)

Attacks: Bite +12/+7 melee or Slam +12/+7 melee

Damage: Bite 1d12+4, Slam 1d8+4

Face/Reach: 5 ft. by 5 ft./5 ft.

Special Attacks: Improved Grab (with bite)

Special Qualities: Damage reduction 10/+1 or black iron, Ringing teeth, Fast Healing 3, SR 18

Saves: Fort +9, Ref +7, Will +6

Abilities: Str 18, Dex 12, Con 16, Int 6, Wis 10, Cha 12

Skills: Hide +9, Listen +8, Move Silently +3, Spot +9, Search +8, Sense Motive +9

Feats: Power Attack, Improved Bull Rush, Sunder

Climate/Terrain: Any land and underground

Organization: Solitary or pack (2-7)

Challenge Rating: 7

Treasure: none

Alignment: Always neutral evil

Advancement: 9-12 HD (Medium), 13-24 HD (Large)

Description:

"We stood there with Hausmann flopped over the case, blood pooling on the table then on the floor for maybe 15 seconds. Later it would occur to me that perhaps that's how long it took Hausmann to really die. After all, I think the trap he placed on the stones was set to go off when he kicked it. But he had a head wound, a nasty splattering one; I would have thought death would be immediate. Doesn't matter much. 15 seconds, with one of the guys holding a gun on me too. I was just extra help, a fill-in that they couldn't get rid of and couldn't trust. I thought this might be it. Then 15 seconds, and the stones burned a hole right through the case and the space around the table seemed to melt through, like watching film burn up in a movie theater. All these shiny little squiggles came pouring through the hole and painted everything. And leaping through after them this large pitch-black pit bull like thing with a head the size of a refrigerator and wide smacking jaws that clattered open and shut; big, thick, grinding teeth ringing like, of all goddamn things, wind chimes."

Roa Intruders are nothing but great big thick slabs of muscle and bone, meant to do the grunt work of chewing things up for the hierarchy. Despite their canine features they have an herbivore's massive square teeth for chewing. They have difficulty

sneaking around since they cannot resist smacking their teeth and their teeth make a sound like ringing wind-chimes.

COMBAT

Intruders simply bounce into the fray and start taking things down. Like a pit bull, when they bite something they lock their jaws on it then begin shaking and grinding, not letting go until either they or their victim lie dead.

Improved Grab (Ex): To use this ability, the intruder must hit with a bite attack. A successful bite attack against a Medium-size or smaller creature allows the Intruder to immediately make a grab attempt that does not provoke an attack of opportunity. If this succeeds the Intruder locks its jaws on the victim and can automatically hit the grabbed victim with subsequent bite attacks.

Ringed Teeth (Ex): The intruder constantly smacks its large teeth together creating a ringing sound. This gives them a penalty of -8 on all Move Silent checks (already figured in). One can only imagine that their masters attempted to cure them of this habit but they've done it for as long as anyone has known about them. The ringing does have one beneficial side effect; it paralyzes rodents (rats, squirrels, possums, and wererats too) within 60 feet. Rodents who hear the ringing must make a Will save (DC 13) or be paralyzed for 1d10 rounds; if one makes a Will save then they do not need to make another until 24 hours have passed. One theorist suggested that perhaps the Intruder's primary purpose is pest control...

ROA MOTH SWARM

Medium (Fine) Outsider (Evil)

Hit Dice: 4d8+12 (30 hp)

Initiative: +4

Speed: Fly 30 ft. (perfect)

AC: 20 (+4 Size, +4 Dex, +2 armor)

Attacks: Engulf

Damage: Special

Face/Reach: 5 ft. by 5 ft./0 ft.

Special Attacks: Engulf, Roa gray moth disease

Special Qualities: Flying swarm, Damage reduction 10/+1 or black iron, SR 18

Saves: Fort +7, Ref +8, (Will +8)

Abilities: Str 2, Dex 18, Con 16, Int -, Wis 10, Cha 1

Climate/Terrain: Any land and underground

Organization: Swarm (thousands)

Challenge Rating: 6

Treasure: none

Alignment: always neutral

Advancement: 5 to 6 HD (Medium-size), 7 to 12 HD (Large)

Description:

"A great horde of fluttering things, black moths with gray swirls and spirals upon their wings, billowed up in a smoky cloud."

Some thousand or so individual moths make up a roa swarm. They flutter and bounce against living things, covering the eyes, ears, mouth, nose, and other orifices attempting to find their way inside. A moth will crawl up a potential victim's nose. Once inside they head for the lungs, stomach, brain, and other soft tissue where they dissolve into a chalky black-gray powder to be absorbed into the flesh. This same powder coats any creature or item caught within a swarm but isn't very dangerous outside the body.

COMBAT

The roa swarm is simply a cloud of moths, roughly five feet in diameter and up to ten feet high. They may only attack creatures within the area of the swarm itself.

Flying Swarm (Ex): Flying swarms consist of a collection of hundreds or even thousands of tiny vermin. Flying swarms cannot run but can fly. A flying swarm can move about and do the things that a relatively thick fluid could conceivably do, such as crawl under the crack of a door. Swarms cannot pass through solid matter or enter water or other heavy fluids. Flying Swarms are affected by winds or other forms of moving air to the extent that the wind pushes them in the direction the wind is moving.

Flying swarms, are considered a single creature with special defensive abilities. They take normal damage from most spells and similar effects. Physical attacks including force-based magical spells (such as *magic missile*) have an 80% miss chance and cause minimum damage even if they hit. Torches and flaming damage (i.e. from a flaming sword) do not suffer the miss chance. Flying swarms receive a size bonus to their armor class equal to half the bonus for the size of their component creatures (if positive). Area effect attacks work normally. A *gust of wind* or similar effect forces the swarm to make a Fortitude Saving throw against the standard difficulty class for a spell of the appropriate level. If the swarm fails this save then it is stunned for 1d6 rounds. Flying swarms do not provoke attacks of opportunity when they move; they do not take critical hits or suffer extra damage from critical hit-like effects (such as sneak attack). Since flying swarms



are composed of so many minds they receive a +4 bonus on Will saves (but this doesn't matter for the Roa Moth Swarm since they are mindless).

Engulf (Ex): The roa moth swarm merely has to move over its targets, affecting as many as it can cover (typically just those in the five foot square it occupies); there is no save against having the swarm move into your location. The swarm then attempts to enter the victim's body through various orifices. The victim receives a Reflex saving throw (DC 16) to avoid this effect; if the victim desires they can spend a standard action covering up which grants them a +4 circumstance bonus to their saving throw and gives the swarm the equivalent of a 50% miss chance against the target (i.e. the target first rolls the miss chance and only if that fails do they need to make a Reflex saving throw). If the saving throw fails some of the creatures have entered the victim's body and begin moving towards the victim's vital organs. This attack acts like a poison (DC 20) with an initial damage of 1d12 hit points and a secondary damage of 1d6 temporary Constitution. If you lose any Constitution points to this effect you gain darkvision (60 ft.) until all the

Constitution damage is healed.

ROA WORM-KING

Medium-Size Outsider (Evil)

Hit Dice: 12d8+48 (102 hp)

Initiative: +1 (Dex)

Speed: 20 ft.

AC: 22 (+1 Dex, +6 armor, +2 natural armor, +3 deflection)

Attacks: Slam +7/+2

Damage: Slam 1d6+1

Face/Reach: 5 ft. by 5 ft./5 ft.

Special Attacks: Spells, items, Gray worms

Special Qualities: Arcane sight, Amorphous form, Damage reduction 10/+1 or black iron, Oily robe, Regeneration 3, SR 23

Saves: Fort +8, Ref +10, Will +7

Abilities: Str 12, Dex 12, Con 18, Int 20, Wis 18, Cha 20

Skills: Concentration +16, Hide +13, Knowledge (Alchemy) +17, Knowledge (Arcana) +17, Knowledge (The Forge) +17, Knowledge (Roa) +17, Listen +16, Move Silently +13, Spellcraft +17, Spot +16, Search +17, Sense Motive +16

Feats: Brew Potion, Craft Wand, Combat Casting, Maximize Spell

Climate/Terrain: Any land and underground

Organization: Solitary or with 1d6 Intruders

Challenge Rating: 13

Treasure: items carried plus standard coins

Alignment: Always neutral evil

Advancement: As sorcerer

Description:

"I don't know why but this thing always liked to meet in a bait shop; perhaps it had a sense of humor. The creature stood near a large tray filled with dirt. It wore an oily black robe that completely engulfed it, covering its hands and face. As I approached it turned to me as if it stood on a rotating disk. There was a wetness, a sloppy phlegmatic gurgle to its voice that reminded me of my grandmother right before she died. Nothing ever dropped loose from the robe or stuck to the floor as it slid across but the way it talked and the way it moved and the way its flesh roiled under the robe and the way it looked so intently at the nightcrawlers burrowing in the dirt I couldn't help but think about what lay under that oily fabric."

Worm-kings sometimes break into the Second World (usually as a result of someone trying to cut a deal with the Roa) and then co-ordinate operations and activities within a region. They mostly stay behind the scenes,

pulling strings and planning complex and elaborate schemes.

COMBAT

Worm-kings practice an alien kind of magic most similar to sorcery. They rely on this, their servants, and their plans in a fight.

Gray worms, disease (Su): If a worm-king grabs an opponent he can shove his hand or face in the victim's face and let part of his body ooze into the victim's mouth, nose, ears, and the spaces around their eyes. This infects the victim with a sort of disease called gray worms (Supernatural, DC 18, 1 day, 1d6 Con). A victim that dies from gray worms evaporates just like a roa. Worm-kings occasionally use this on captured opponents but seldom in an actual fight.

Arcane-sight (Su): Roa worm-kings have an innate sense of the arcane energies flowing around them. They may use this ability to ascertain all foes within 60 feet as a sighted creature would. In addition this power allows them to *detect magic*, *identify*, and *analyze dweomer*, as the spells, at will, as supernatural abilities. An antimagic field suppresses all these abilities and effectively blinds the worm-king. For this reason worm-kings seldom work with Roa maws.

Amorphous Form (Ex): The worm-king has an amorphous form; perhaps it has vital organs but no one knows for certain; at least they don't seem to have vital organs. This makes them immune to critical hits and abilities such as sneak attack.

Alien Magic (Sp): Roa worm-kings cast spells like a 12th level sorcerer; however they may choose two clerical domains and spells from those domains count as known spells. They also receive the standard benefits associated with the domain. Because their magic is so alien it gains a +4 circumstance bonus to standard spell penetration; however, it takes a -4 penalty (in place of the bonus) to spell penetration against the First World suppression effect. What follows is a fairly typical worm-king spell list. This one chose the Healing and Death domains.

- 0 (6): *Arcane mark, flare, ghost sound, light, mending, open/close, detect magic, ray of frost, read magic*
- 1 (8): *Cause fear, cure light wounds, charm person, unseen servant, magic missile, shield, sleep*
- 2 (7): *Death knell, cure moderate wounds, acid arrow, knock, cat's grace, darkness, resist elements*
- 3 (7): *Animate dead, cure serious wounds, haste, fireball, tongues, nondetection*

- 4 (7): *Death ward, cure critical wounds, polymorph other, charm monster, dimension door*
- 5 (6): *Slay living, healing circle, cloudkill, prying eyes*
- 6 (3): *Create undead, heal, chain lightning*

Death Domain Ability: The worm-king may use a death touch once per day. The death touch is a spell-like ability that is a death effect. He must succeed at a melee touch attack against a living creature (using the rules for touch spells). When he touches, roll 12d6. If the total at least equals the creature's current hit points, it dies.

Healing Domain Ability: The worm-king casts healing spells at +1 caster level.

Regeneration: Fire and acid deal normal damage to a Roa Worm King. Body parts lost regrow without needing to be re-attached.

Oily Robe: The oily robe a worm-king wears provides a +6 armor bonus, +3 deflection bonus to armor class, and +3 resistance bonus to saving throws. The robe also sustains the worm-king without food, water, sleep, or air. The robe is cursed so that it corrupts the wearer, turning them slowly but inexorably into a roa (perhaps even a worm-king).

Magic Items: Worm-kings typically have one or more standard magic items (that can be looted) worth up to 20,000 gp. This sample one owns a *wand of lightning bolts* (caster level 8 with 20 charges)

TICON

Gargantuan Dragon (Earth, Lightning)

Hit Dice: 39d12+273 (526 hp)

Initiative: +7 (+3 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative)

Speed: 60 ft., burrow 30 ft.

AC: 47 (-4 size, +3 Dex, +36 armor, +2 natural)

Attacks: melee: 1 bite +47, 2 claws +42, 2 wings +42, 1 tail-slap +42

Damage: Bite 4d6+12, claw 2d8+6, wing 2d6+6, tail-slap 2d8+9

Face/Reach: 10 ft. by 80 ft./15 ft.

Special Attacks: Breath weapon, spell-like abilities, spells, fear (DC 36), crush (DC 37, 4d6+9 damage), tail-sweep (DC 37, 2d6+9 damage)

Special Qualities: Electricity immunity, damage reduction 20/magic, SR 31

Saves: Fort +28, Ref +24, Will +25

Abilities: Str 35, Dex 16, Con 25, Int 24, Wis 19, Cha 24

Skills: Concentration +46, Escape Artist +42,

Knowledge (Music) +46, Knowledge (Poetry) +46, Knowledge (Riddles) +46, Knowledge (Underground) +46, Listen +43, Perform +46, Spot +43, Search +46, Spellcraft +46, Survival +43

Feats: Cleave, Craft Wondrous Item, Extend Spell, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Initiative, Power Attack, Quicken Spell-like Ability, Run, Snatch, Track

Climate/Terrain: New York sewers and underground

Organization: Solitary

Challenge Rating: 24

Treasure: Double standard spread through several caches

Alignment: Chaotic evil

Advancement: 40+ HD (Gargantuan)

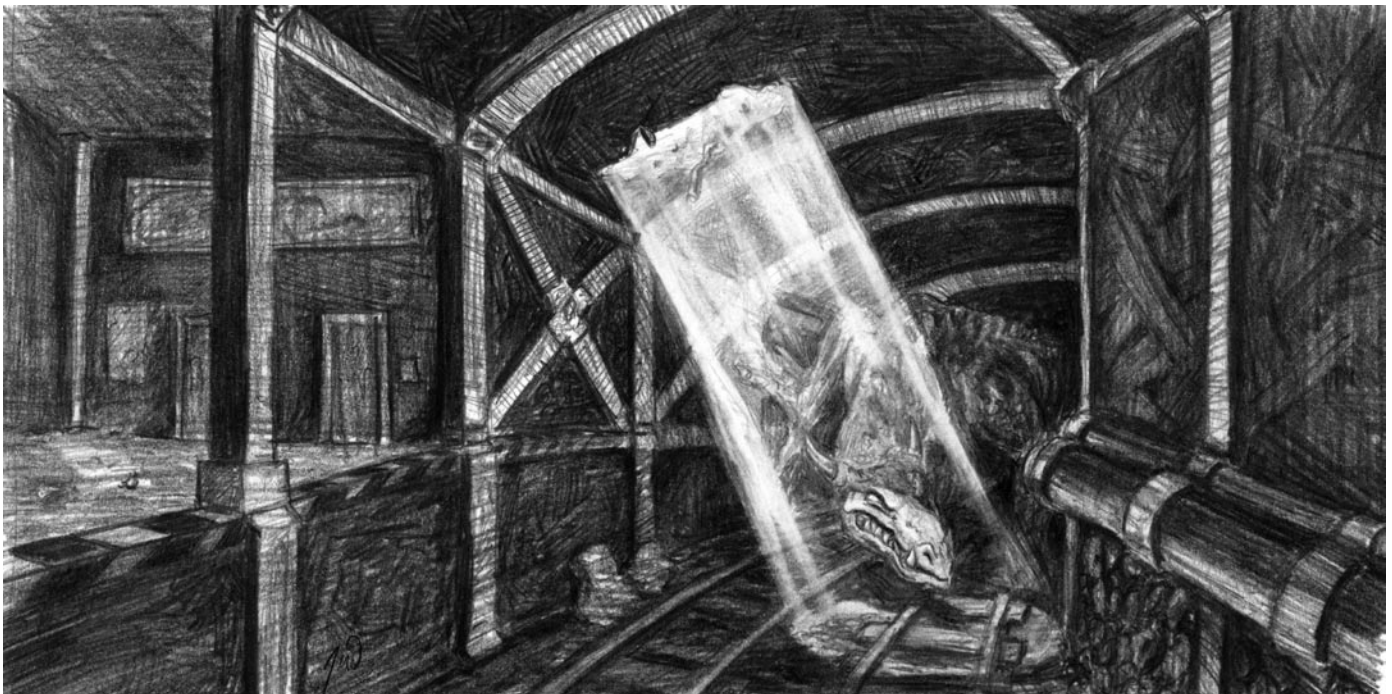
Description:

“On my first trip to Second World New York I walked the streets and marked the similarities and differences between this place and the place of my birth, First World Manhattan. The buildings here don’t reach quite so high; the roads are of cobblestone; the place smells quite a bit different; the sky rings with a blue so intense it almost feels cold; the people and shops have even more variety, more tastes to try, more songs to hear, more ideas to understand. Then, as I walked along, a jaded First World Manhattanite rubber-necking here like a yokel, I felt the soft beginning of a rumble beneath my feet build to a crescendo and die away. A few people down the street crossed themselves and I

paused for just a moment then remembered, *they don’t have subways in the Second World.*”

Tunnels and sewers and things that look an awful lot like subway passages riddle the Manhattan underworld. These passages lead on to the greater underground cavern network and would provide an all too dangerous pathway for invading orcs and other creatures but for one thing. The tunnels of Manhattan belong to Ticon. He’ll let others use them, perhaps pass through now and then; others can find secret ways in and around. They might know Ticon’s movements and habits well enough to systematically avoid him. But no large group could possibly make it through without encountering the great, insane beast himself. Ticon’s serpentine body stretches out 80 feet long; he lacks wings and appears more like a Chinese than European dragon. His cat-like eyes and slightly off kilter smile filled with razor sharp teeth complete the picture of a creature barely holding on to its sanity. Ticon has so much electricity running around in him that it constantly seeps out and flickers along his scales. As he runs through the tunnels, sparks fly off him, filling the underworld with an unholy blue-white light; walkers on the streets above can sometimes see the glow of Ticon’s passing in the sewer openings.

Ticon, like most dragons of the Second World, is pathologically insane. Take any of the innumerable serial killers depicted in fiction, film, and television, transplant their brain into a massive engine of destruction, and you have a dragon. As dragons get



The Underground by Jeremy Dale

older their obsessions, phobias, paranoia, and so on grow increasingly worse and their long range behavior becomes erratic. This catastrophic drop off in mental stability leads older dragons to spend more and more time resting, primarily due to periodic bouts of crushing depression. There appears to even be a link between Second World dragons and First World psychopaths; perhaps the presence of Second World dragons in a city causes more serial killers in its First World counterpart, or perhaps a dragon is born in the Second World every time a serial killer is born in the First World.

Ticon lacks all feelings of sympathy and empathy. He will look at you with an odd sort of curiosity, perhaps even tilt his head slightly and reach out and bat you up against a wall as if testing to see how you bounce. He will play with you the way a cat plays with food. If you entertain him though he will pause for a bit, see if he likes what you're doing, then move along. Entertaining Ticon can be represented by a risk 1 Perform check, the difficulty of which depends on the format. Ticon enjoys music (DC 20), some poetry (DC 25), and riddles (DC 15). He does not get jokes, whether human or dragon, and lacks the patience for theater. He eats mimes on sight so don't wander around the tunnels looking like one and it's not even safe being on the surface looking like one. If you manage to entertain him he'll usually pass on; if you fail to entertain him he might find ways of making you entertain him (for instance, the previously mentioned bat-you-around game) or eat you, or eat part of you, or bounce you to the surface near someplace where you can learn how to be entertaining; typically he will combine some of those actions. When playing Ticon and dealing with the player characters imagine either how a cat interacts with a bug, or how you interact with a character in a computer game (ideally a character in one of those computer games where you run around and shoot everything).

COMBAT

Ticon's combat strategies are pretty simple; he lays down lightning in the cramped and confined space of the tunnel; then eats the charred remains. He's specially adapted for life in the tunnels and can build up a furious running speed; he's capable of running at up to forty-eight miles per hour along these passages. If the fight doesn't go his way quickly (i.e. everything isn't laying on the ground in a charred heap or running away within about two or three rounds) he'll back out of the fight and retreat. He then repairs damage as much as possible (using one of his secret treasure caches if necessary), loads up with equipment and preparation spells, and returns to the fight. He can use his tremor sense to track

within the tunnels and will frequently try to come in through a wall. In the re-match he'll likely rely less on his lightning breath since most people who come to fight him take measures to resist lightning. The spells Ticon casts during his temporary retreat are bolded on his spell list; most of these spells last a long time so he can cast them in safety then seek out his targets.

The cumulative effects of his spells typically result in a +2 to hit and +1 damage for melee attacks (+2 for the bite); +1 initiative; +3 to AC (+1 Dex enhancement and +2 Deflection bonus against lawful or good creatures); +1 on Reflex saves and an additional +2 on all saves against lawful or good creatures; and Damage Reduction 10/+5 for up to 170 hit points.

Breath Weapon (Su): Ticon breathes a 120 foot long line of lightning that causes 24d8 damage, Reflex save for half (DC 37). After being used this cannot be used again for 1d4 rounds.

Frightful Presence (Ex): Ticon unsettles foes with his mere presence. The ability takes effect automatically whenever Ticon attacks, charges, or rumbles through a nearby tunnel. Creatures within a radius of 360 feet (only 60 feet though if the rumble is being heard through stone) are subject to the effect if they have less than 39 HD. A potentially affected creature that succeeds at a Will save (DC 36) remains immune to Ticon's frightful presence for one day. On a failure, creatures with 4 or fewer HD become panicked for 4d6 rounds and those with 5 or more HD become shaken for 4d6 rounds. Dragons ignore the frightful presence of Ticon.

Create/Destroy Water (Sp): This ability is a hold-over from Ticon's blue dragon heritage; he's probably forgotten that he can even use it. Ticon can use this ability three times per day. It works like the *create water* spell, except that Ticon can decide to destroy water instead of creating it, which automatically spoils unattended liquids containing water. Magic items (such as potions) and items in a creature's possession must succeed at a Will save (DC 36) or be ruined.

Engine Speed (Ex): Ticon can build up tremendous running speeds through the underground; if he took a full movement action the previous round and does so again this round his speed is doubled.

Spell-Like Abilities: 1/day-passwall and *phase door* (DC equals 17 + spell level).

Immunities (Ex): Ticon is immune to lightning, sleep, and paralysis effects.

Blindsight (Ex): Ticon can ascertain creatures by nonvisual means (mostly hearing and scent, but also by noticing vibration and other environmental clues) with a range of 360 feet.

Tremorsense (Ex): Ticon can automatically sense the location of anything within 360 feet that is in contact with the ground.

Keen Senses (Ex): Ticon sees four times as well a human in low-light conditions and twice as well in normal light. He also has darkvision with a range of 1200 feet.

Spells: Ticon knows and may cast the following spells as a 17th level sorcerer.

0 (6): *Arcane Mark, Detect Poison, Flare, Ghost Sound, Light, Mending, Open/Close, Detect Magic, Read Magic*

1 (8): *Magic Stone, Protection from Good, Protection from Law, Unseen Servant, Identify, True Strike, Magic Missile, Reduce*

2 (8): *Soften Earth and Stone, Desecrate, Shatter, Arcane Lock, Knock, **Cat's Grace, Bull's Strength, Darkness***

3 (8): *Stone Shape, **Magic Circle against Good, Magic Circle against Law, Haste, Displacement, Tongues (permanent), Nondetection***

4 (7): *Spike Stones, Unholy Blight, Chaos Hammer, Polymorph Other, Polymorph Self, Charm Monster, Arcane Eye*

5 (7): *Wall of Stone, Dispel Good, Dispel Law, Cloudkill, **Prying Eyes, Permanency, Telepathic Bond***

6 (7): ***Stoneskin**, Create Undead, Animate Objects, Antimagic Field, Chain Lightning, Analyze Dweomer*

7 (6): *Earthquake, Blasphemy, Word of Chaos, Greater Scrying, Vision, Ethereal Jaunt*

8 (3): *Iron body, Unholy Aura, Cloak of Chaos, Maze, Discern Location*



STEEL HORSE

Large Construct

Hit Dice: 16d10 (88 hp)

Initiative: +2 (Dex)

Speed: 60 ft.

AC: 31 (-1 size, +2 Dex, +20 Armor)

Attacks: 2 hooves +17 melee (3 PEN), 1 bite +12 melee

Damage: Hoof 2d6+7, bite 1d10+7

Face/Reach: 5 ft. by 10 ft./5 ft.

Special Attacks: Steam breath, Razor sharp hooves

Special Qualities: Construct, damage resistance, rust vulnerability, damage reduction 20/+2 or adamantite

Saves: Fort +5, Ref +7, Will +5

Abilities: Str 25, Dex 14, Con -, Int -, Wis 11, Cha 1

Climate/Terrain: Any land

Organization: Solitary or with rider

Challenge Rating: 13

Treasure: None

Alignment: Always neutral

Advancement: 17-22 HD (Large), 23-44 HD (Huge)

Steel Horse by Jeff Doten

Description:

A steel horse stands as tall as a heavy warhorse; its metal eyes glow red with the internal heat needed to keep it running. Like all things of the metal warden, the steel horse combines the strength of iron with the internal power of fire. The horse can release this heat in a scalding jet of steam. The artificers of steel horses sharpen their hooves to a razor's edge; thus, when they gallop, their hooves strike up sparks from the cobblestones.

A steel horse behaves much like a normal horse but does not tire. Thus, its rider can push it at an extreme pace. While the horse itself could move at a full run indefinitely, few riders are capable of staying mounted on a galloping horse moving at such a pace for extended periods. Usually the rider of a steel horse moves at a constant 'hustle' pace instead of running pace, which works out to 12 miles per hour. If the rider can take the punishment or the horse is traveling without a rider, a pace of 24 miles per hour can be sustained; occasionally owners use their steel horses to dispatch messages or deliver heavy cargo. A steel horse can carry up to one ton of load (typically this is more than can be fit on its back). It can draw up to four tons behind it in a wheeled cart. A steel horse naturally makes an excellent warhorse. It never spooks and can fight in combat. It will not fight if no one is riding it.

COMBAT

Steel horses obey their rider in battle; the rider may direct the horse the same way he directs a regular horse. The Gray Uhlan, the four most elite metal wardens in the Imperial Legion, ride their steeds into the center of enemy formations then unleash the construct's steam breath.

Razor Sharp Hooves (Ex): The steel horse's hooves hold a razor sharp edge, granting them 3 points of penetration. This allows them to ignore 3 points of a target's armor or natural armor bonus.

Steam Breath (Su): The internal factory powering a steel horse produces a great deal of steam and heat; every so often the horse can release this in a blast of scalding steam. Once every 1d4 rounds a steel horse can breath forth a cloud of scalding steam in a cone 30 feet long. Those caught in the cloud take 6d6 fire damage from the steam (DC 15 Reflex save for half damage).

Construct: Immune to mind influencing effects, poison, disease, and similar effects. Not subject to critical hits, subdual damage, ability damage, energy

drain, or death from massive damage.

Magic Immunity (Ex): A steel horse is immune to all spells, spell-like abilities, and supernatural effects, except as follows. An electricity effect slows it (as the *slow* spell) for 3 rounds, with no saving throw. A fire effect breaks any slow effect on the horse and cures 1 point of damage for each 3 points of damage it would otherwise deal. For example, a steel horse hit by a fireball cast by a 5th-level wizard gains back 6 hit points if the damage total is 18. The steel horse rolls no saving throw against fire effects.

Damage Resistance (Ex): A steel horse is resistant to a variety of forms of damage. It takes half damage from fire, cold, and acid and no damage from lightning.

Rust Vulnerability (Ex): A steel horse is vulnerable to rust causing effects, such as that from a rust monster or a *rusting grasp* spell.

CONSTRUCTION

It takes 4,000 pounds of pure iron, 80,000 gold pieces worth of material components, and 1600 xp to construct a steel wolf. You must also make a DC 20 Craft (smithing) check, be 16th level and either be able to cast the arcane spells, *geas/quest*, *limited wish*, *polymorph any object*, and *incendiary cloud*, or have the Metal Warden binding, *greater steel shaping*.

STEEL WOLF

Medium Construct

Hit Dice: 8d10 (44 hp)

Initiative: +4 (Dex)

Speed: 60 ft.

AC: 24 (+4 Dex, +8 armor, +2 natural)

Attacks: Bite +10/+5 melee

Damage: Bite 1d10+4

Face/Reach: 5 ft. by 5 ft./5 ft.

Special Attacks: Trip

Special Qualities: Construct, Construct encoding (wolf), damage resistance, rust vulnerability, damage reduction 15/+1 or adamantine, Darkvision 90 ft.

Saves: Fort +5, Ref +7, Will +5

Abilities: Str 18, Dex 18, Con -, Int -, Wis 14, Cha 1

Climate/Terrain: Any land

Organization: Solitary or in pack (3-6)

Challenge Rating: 8

Treasure: None

Alignment: Always neutral

Advancement: 9-12 HD (Medium), 13-24 HD

(Large)

Description: Baron Firenzo Milan (Rgr7/MetW7) occupies the Milano Fortress in northern New Hampshire. This wild land faces dangers not only from the surrounding wilderness, but also provides one of the first lines of defense against Trespass' Ved Qayat. Baron Milan comes from the old school of noble conduct; he hunts his forest, protects his landholders, and expects proper respect. Firenzo has constructed three steel wolves (Ovid, Dante, and Petrarch) and uses them during his hunts, and during raids against encroaching armies.

Steel wolves stand about the same height as normal wolves. Naturally though, they're made of steel. Being much smaller than a steel horse they do not generate nearly the same heat; but the artificer funnels the waste heat they generate into the wolf's eyes to grant it darkvision. Steel wolves are completely tireless and loyal to their master. They can run at up to 24 mph overland indefinitely. They have glowing eyes (which provides their Darkvision) of a variety of colors depending on the choice of their creator.

COMBAT

Steel wolves fight much like regular wolves, they sweep around a target biting at its legs and flanks in order to trip it and knock it to the ground.

Trip (Ex): A steel wolf that hits with a bite attack can attempt to **trip** the opponent as a free action without making a touch attack or provoking an attack of opportunity. If the attempt fails the opponent cannot react to trip the steel wolf.

Construct: Immune to mind influencing effects, poison, disease, and similar effects. Not subject to critical hits, subdual damage, ability damage, energy drain, or death from massive damage.

Magic Immunity (Ex): A steel wolf is immune to all spells, spell-like abilities, and supernatural effects, except as follows. An electricity effect slows it (as the slow spell) for 3 rounds, with no saving throw. A fire effect breaks any slow effect on the wolf and cures 1 point of damage for each 3 points of damage it would otherwise deal. For example, a steel wolf hit by a fireball cast by a 5th-level wizard gains back 6 hit points if the damage total is 18. The steel wolf rolls no saving throw against fire effects.

Construct Encoding (wolf): When an artificer constructs a steel wolf she

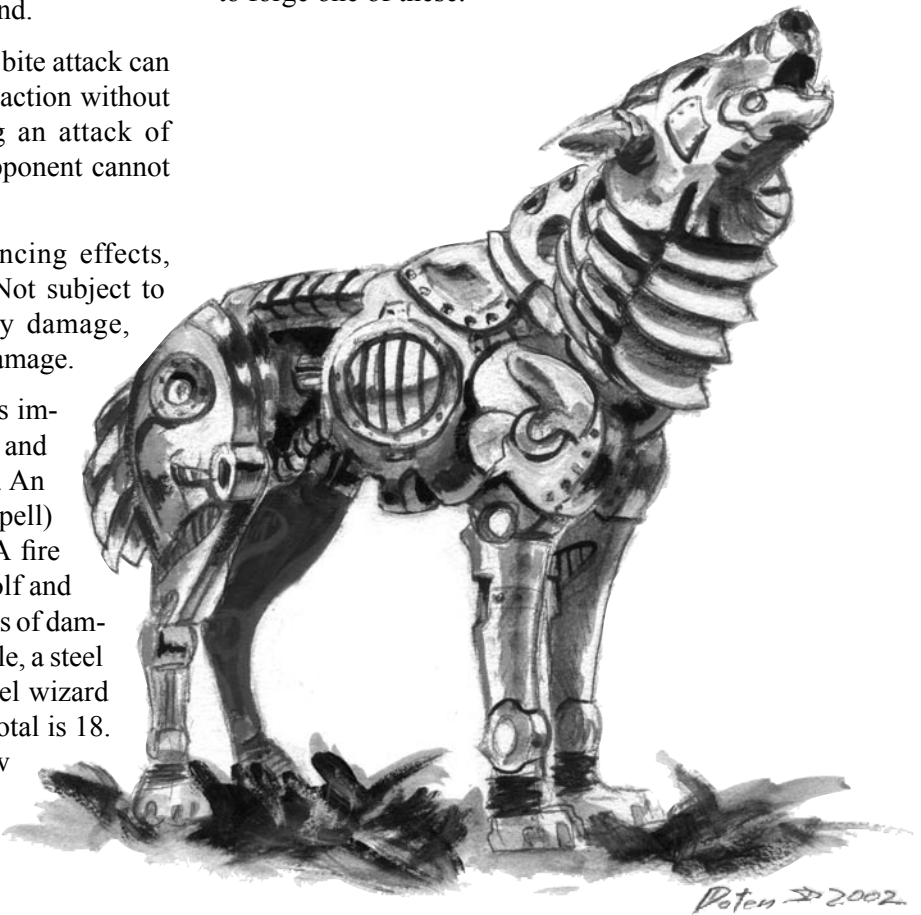
embeds in the metal of the thing a bit of the formal essence of Wolf. This embedding of essence allows constructs to possess some skills and feats; you can picture this as analogous to programming a construct but you must use pre-defined programs based on formal essences (which exist in the Forge). Wolf encoding grants the construct the Track feat and these skills: Listen +6, Spot +6, Wilderness Lore +6. Encoded skills and feats do not use the construct's mental attributes to determine their bonus.

Damage Resistance (Ex): A steel wolf is resistant to a variety of forms of damage. It takes half damage from fire, cold, and acid and no damage from lightning.

Rust Vulnerability (Ex): A steel wolf is vulnerable to rust causing effects, such as that from a rust monster or a *rusting grasp* spell.

CONSTRUCTION

It takes 600 pounds of pure iron, 30,000 gold pieces worth of material components, and 600 XP to construct a steel wolf. You must also make a DC 17 Craft (smithing) check, have a caster level of 14 and be able to cast the arcane spells: *geas/quest*, *limited wish*, *polymorph other*, and *legend lore*. Alternately, possessing the Metal Warden binding, Steel Shaping allows you to forge one of these.



Even Steel Howls by Jeff Doten

APPENDIX THE PACT SYSTEM

"You got Kosher beef here?" An abortive nod— "Don't lie to me. Right then, I'll go with the wild venison instead."

"Don't forget the salt..." I added.

"Oh right! No salt either. Use one of those salt substitutes."

The Weasel handed his menu to the waiter. The waiter snapped it shut with a click. And I shouldn't call Krayce "the Weasel". He looked more like a porcupine really, something to do with the hair implants.

"You're working the Uebinoex then?"

"Yep, no more blaspheming for me." Krayce gave me one of his ferret smiles.

"They've got nice juice but there's no way I could handle the oath. I've grown too fond of junk food."

"I thought you were in deep."

"Sure, but I'm just working the angles. The more psycho the group, the more angles its got and the Followers went way past deep crazy long ago. They still sending out literature?"

"Yep, runes on some kind of flesh in a bone cylinder. Could you drop me a hint Thomas? They're anti-cigarette..."

"I know." I took one out. Lit it. Blew smoke at the window. New Jersey had its benefits.

"Go to a premium shop and get the filterless kind with no additives. Or roll your own."

"No, I mean the whole 'turn east when you sneeze' bullshit is driving me nuts." The Weasel's right hand couldn't stop playing with the silverware. "Tell me how to play 'em from the outside."

"Going back on the oath will bring some heat. You'd be better off dropping the meat-crazies and working another org. Anyway, it's all about research. You need to read all those loathsome little pamphlets they churn out. The ones stamped with the red seal are all official dogma. Every High Seneschal for the past three thousand years felt the need to update the faithful on how they should live on a weekly basis. Almost all of them wrote the dogma while under the influence and kept writing the dogma long after they went

senile. Between senility, insanity, and 3,000 years of scriptural updates by different seneschals the whole Uebinoex doctrine is riddled with system crashing inconsistencies. You ever take logic, sport?"

"Nah, I shunted when I was 16."

"Whatever. You know there are colleges on the other side too? Anyway, you can derive anything from an inconsistency. The trick is to show them the derivation you want to see. That's called working the org. And you want to be the one working them, not the other way around."

Think of the last time you went to the Department of Motor Vehicles. Think of the Byzantine intricacies of something even as young as the United States legal system. Now imagine those bureaucracies after another 200 years, another 500 years, another million years. This concept forms the core principle of the pact system in this book. In fact, the entire pact system is just a what-if question. What if alien beings lived in parallel dimensions and planes and have lived there for eons? What would their politics look like? These creatures live and breath magic so what would their technology look like? What great structures would they have constructed? And how would those who wield magical power tap into that structure for their own benefit?

This system gives you the ability to tap into the intricate structure of social and political relations binding creatures from the outer planes. You tap into these structures by becoming part of them or learning how to manipulate them. These are called pacts.

These rules represent pacts by using a form of influence, the same influence rules used in the Second World Sourcebook. If you are part of a pact what you do is open a partial gate to the right interstice and call on the entity you need. The entity or organization on the other side of the gate then helps out by completing the gate, perhaps to advance its own interests or perhaps because you know the proper way to pull their strings.

OVERVIEW

The pact system allows characters to exploit the politics of the outer planes to accomplish a variety of powerful and flexible effects. A wide range of character types may make use of the system. Sorcerers and wizards can learn pact gate spells and use them to access the special requests available via pacts. Other characters might take on a few levels of the Gate Warden prestige class, or take a few Gate Warden feats, to gain access to various levels of pact gates. You don't even need a pact gate to make use of the pacts themselves. Regular *gate* spells, summoning circles, and fixed connection points to other worlds can all provide the needed transit route for use of a request. Ultimately you need a few elements to make use of the pact system. You must have entered into a pact in order to make the requests. You need skills, influence, and perhaps some other abilities to make full use of the pact. Sometimes this requires a commitment on your part to perform certain actions. Finally, you must have some means of contacting the extra-planar entities and organizations so that you can make requests and you may need to provide the germ of a transit route so they can get from where they're at to where you made the request.

MECHANICS

This section begins with a brief overview of what you typically need to do to make use of the pact system. Since you can use the pact system in a variety of ways, this section includes some alternative methods of using the system.

Step One: Learn the Pact Gate spells

You should first dedicate a spell slot to a pact gate spell. For a wizard this doesn't count as much of a commitment, simply learn a pact gate spell then prepare it once you want to make use of the spell. For a sorcerer you need to dedicate one of your known spell slots to a pact gate. Since sorcerer spells-known slots come so infrequently you'd best make sure that you're willing to devote the additional resources to developing pacts before dedicating a spells-known slot. Generally, it's best to learn a pact gate spell first because most spellcasters use the pact gate to develop the pacts themselves. You use the pact gate somewhat like the initial telephone interview for a job. Note that you can develop a pact without a pact gate spell. You could do this through other spells or by finding some way to meet up with those in charge of the pact and negotiate the pact in person.

Step Two: Develop the Pacts

Developing the pacts is one of the most variable parts of the process. This simplified overview assumes that you develop the pact by simply learning of its existence, then using a pact gate spell to make contact. Naturally, you must first know

that a pact exists in order to enter it. The pacts included in this book represent fairly common knowledge. In a standard campaign your gamemaster might make all these pacts freely available. This way you can start making use of the pact system right away. However, given the large number of outer planes and an outer planar structure with a truly ancient history, you can assume that many pacts have been forgotten or are just not known by current scholars. This gives the gamemaster plenty of opportunities to customize her world or campaign. As a gamemaster you might want to hand out information about forgotten pacts like a sort of treasure; you can even use a search for forgotten pacts as an adventure or campaign-arc seed. You can also use this to restrict access to more powerful or flexible pacts if you want to adjust the availability or pre-requisites to better balance the pact.

Pacts themselves operate in a variety of fashions. Many use the influence system developed in the Second World Sourcebook (and described here as well). They can also use other alternatives; perhaps the pact utilizes an arcane system of automatic rules and your mastery of the pact derives from your ability to exploit those formal rules (almost like programming, or even playing a game like chess). Once you've developed the pact you can then make requests from the pact by using pact gate spells.

Step Three: Make the Request

Once you have entered into a pact you may make requests of that pact. The process for this typically requires that you first cast an appropriate pact gate spell; complex or powerful requests require you to use a pact gate capable of reaching deeper into your world's planar structure. Once you make contact via the pact gate you then make a request check to secure the benefit. This works like an Influence check or a skill check. If the check succeeds you then gain the benefit and pay any associated cost for making the request. Each pact has a list of possible requests and the requests themselves detail what degree of pact gate you need to use, what you need to make the request check, and the cost of the request.

PACT GATES

To use the powers granted by a pact you need some way of getting the thing that provides the benefit from where it lives to where you are. To do this, wizards, sorcerers, and Gate Wardens use pact gates. Pact gates provide a specialized connection with other planes and dimensions. By themselves pact gates have little power. Unlike a true *gate* spell or even a summoning spell a pact gate does not pull a creature from another world into yours; it does not even open a door into another world. You should instead see the

HIDDEN STRUCTURE

The pact rules grant added flexibility to spellcasters. For a wizard, they allow her to prepare a spell that she can use in a variety of ways, making her somewhat like a sorcerer. For a sorcerer, they allow him to go beyond the confined list of spells known. For both classes this added flexibility incurs costs. One cost is the need to dedicate slots to Pact Gate spells. For wizards this cost is somewhat minor. Sorcerers effectively “pay” more for the slot since they have so few to begin with, but they also gain more since added flexibility means so much to them. The most significant cost for both classes is that of joining a pact and developing the skills and abilities to use the pact. This cost takes a variety of forms. For some pacts you need a high skill; others require special commitments; others require sacrifices in the form of oaths and taboos; almost all require an expenditure of some kind of resource (influence or gold).

Finally, making requests via a pact also costs Stress and you have a limited amount of that available at any time. Many pacts grant you a “Stress buffer”, a pool of points (typically $10 + \text{a stat modifier}$) that you receive for free each week to spend on requests. This works out to giving you that buffer once per scenario since most groups complete a scenario in less than a week and they’ll likely have a couple weeks off before their next scenario. To see what’s happening under the hood look at the costs and the typical Stress buffer. A perfectly average character has a Stress buffer of 10; this means they can use a Stress 2 request five times a week, Stress 3 three times, Stress 5 twice, and Stress 10 once. You can then fiddle with the numbers a bit for particular requests to make it slightly more or less expensive. Once a character has used her Stress buffer she essentially loses the use of the Pact Gate spell; not so bad for a wizard since they can just prepare different spells, somewhat worse for a sorcerer since they might not have much left over from which to choose.

That’s not the whole story though. Characters also have a pool of Common Stress equal to $10 + \text{Charisma bonus}$. Most ordinary uses of influence tap into this. This pool of Common Stress represents the good will they have “on credit”. Buffers replenish automatically each week but Common Stress requires work. Common Stress represents you telling someone “I’d like you to do this now but I’ll make it up for you when I get some spare time.” Of course, you’ve only got so much spare time to promise. These rules assume there’s enough interaction between the

various groups and organizations that they’d have an idea of when you’re overextending yourself. You can spend Common Stress on anything; this helps when you need a lot of support that only the Horde pact can provide. However, you need to spend some time later to pay back your dues. There is an out-of-game method for this; you talk with your gamemaster and simply say that you’re spending some of the downtime between adventures paying off the favors and the gamemaster rolls dice or decides how much Common Stress you pay off.

When handled in downtime you mainly perform minor favors, perhaps running errands or doing research or some light guard duty. The gamemaster could instead hang a scenario around it and have your “creditor” request that you perform some service. In a way that’s sort of free since you likely would have gone on the adventure anyway but it provides a nice hook for getting players into an adventure.

Downtime favor pay-offs can generate an even more compelling hook for a scenario. Often gamemasters like to run an adventure as a mundane activity gone bad. Someone described the Navy as “six months of utter boredom followed by 5 minutes of hell.” But we have a hard time modeling this in a game. After all, as soon the gamemaster tells you that a caravan master sits down at the table and says this will be a routine guard job you know that it will be anything **but** a routine guard job. The gamemaster can use downtime activity like the sort described here to start you in the middle of a scenario. For instance, after you complete an adventure you tell the GM that you’ll spend some time paying off all the favors you requested over the adventure. You also mention the sorts of things that you’d be willing and unwilling to do (be reasonable otherwise the GM might not let you recover any Stress). Perhaps you’d particularly like to perform healing for the local church. The gamemaster can then hook you into a scenario by having a sudden influx of injured refugees flood the church, or perhaps someone with a terrible magical disease. Perhaps your rogue character does some minor retrieval ops for the local syndicate and one of the items retrieved has a dark secret. Or perhaps the politico you agreed to escort around the city gets attacked and you start the adventure in the middle of a fight.

Most characters that use pacts have Stress buffers of roughly 12 to 16 (they’ll likely focus on pacts that use one of their better attributes and they’ll also emphasize development of the appropriate attributes).

pact gate as creating a closed door to another place. Creatures on the other side of the door then provide the power and means to open it. Thus, you can access fairly power-

ful creatures or realms with a pact gate but only because someone else supplies part of the energy. Of course, just placing random doorways around wouldn’t do much good

by itself so you cut deals with interstitial and extra-planar organizations and entities. These then tell you the secret codes you need to use to get some actual use of the gate. In some cases the secret is just linking the pact gate opening to the right extra-dimensional space. In other cases you might need to embed a code in the pact gate so that those on the other side know whether or not you have the authority to summon them. Regardless, the pact gate itself provides a vehicle for the powers listed here; you still need to gain access to the power itself.

Sorcerers and wizards can learn and use pact gates just like regular spells. They're listed together with all the other new spells in the spells section of the book (pg. 4). This book includes four degrees of pact gates; wizards and sorcerers can use a first-degree pact gate as a second level spell, second-degree pact gate as a fourth level spell, third-degree pact gate as a sixth level spell, and fourth-degree pact gate as an eighth level spell. Other classes might be able to gain access to pact gates as well, at a slightly higher or lower level. Gate Wardens (see page 47) can gain direct access to the ability to use pact gates. The pact gate spells operate much like a regular spell. Since they do not target an opponent directly, potential victims do not receive a saving throw or spell resistance against the pact gate; however, victims may very well receive both a save and spell resistance against the effect.

PACT GATE, FIRST DEGREE

Conjuration (Creation, Calling), Gate Warden

Level: Clr 3, Sor/Wiz 2

Components: V, S

Casting Time: Standard Action

Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)

Target: One pact gate

Duration: Varies

Saving Throw: None

Spell Resistance: None

Description: This spell allows you to create a first degree pact gate. It lasts just long enough to make and resolve a pact request. Opening the gate requires a Standard action and making the request takes a Move action; thus you should have a full round of actions available when casting this spell. The specifics of the effect depend on the request being made. See the Pacts section to see the different ways you can use this spell.

PACT GATE, SECOND DEGREE

Conjuration (Creation, Calling), Gate Warden

Level: Clr 5, Sor/Wiz 4

Description: As for *pact gate, first degree*, except this allows you to open a second degree pact gate.

GOLD MAKES THE MULTIVERSE GO ROUND

Every pact listens to money, or some kind of surrogate for money. You can purchase pact levels with gold according to the costs in the following chart. This works with any of the pacts listed here. The costs are higher than they normally would be since it's assumed that you have to filter the gold through agents, special materials, or some other kind of translating method to cement your connections with the pact.

Pact Level	Cost
First	5,000 gp
Second	20,000 gp
Third	45,000 gp
Fourth	80,000 gp

PACT GATE, THIRD DEGREE

Conjuration (Creation, Calling), Gate Warden

Level: Clr 7, Sor/Wiz 6

Description: As for *pact gate, first degree*, except this allows you to open a third degree pact gate.

PACT GATE, FOURTH DEGREE

Conjuration (Creation, Calling), Gate Warden

Level: Clr 9, Sor/Wiz 8

Description: As for *pact gate, first degree*, except this allows you to open a fourth degree pact gate.

ENTERING A PACT

In order to make use of a pact you must join it. Think of pacts as organizations or clubs. Like organizations and clubs, pacts can have a wide variety of entrance conditions and membership requirements. In order to enter a pact you first need to know that it exists. Many pacts become common knowledge amongst arcane practitioners in the same way that the spells from the core rules are commonly available. That may be the way your gamemaster will handle the pacts presented in this book but, of course, you should always check to make sure. Once you know that a pact exists you can try to make contact in order to enter the pact. In many cases you do this by simply casting a pact gate spell (typically first degree). Your gamemaster may choose to roleplay this out or have it occur off-screen. You then pay the costs for the pact and make any required checks (if any). After that you can make requests via the pact using the standard system.

PACT LEVELS

Most pacts include four levels of entrance, one for each degree. Your pact level must be equal to or greater than the degree of the request in order to make that request. Thus you need a pact level of 2 or higher to make a second degree request; this is in addition to needing a pact gate of

the appropriate degree.

THE COSTS OF A PACT

It's probably not true that nothing in life is free, but games are another story. If you want to play with the cool toys you need to pay. Because pacts can represent such a diverse array of relations the costs for entering into a pact take a wide variety of forms. A few of the more common forms of cost are presented here but the pact description itself always gives the final answer.

COMMITMENT

Commitment represents a time investment in the pact; the basic concept carries over from the regular influence rules. When people join a mundane organization they usually have to devote some time to maintaining their position and connections within the organization. They might spend their time just meeting up with contacts, or doing more extensive work like taking out the garbage, attending committee meetings, doing research, and so on. To represent various degrees of time requirements these rules use something called commitment. All characters have 3 Commitment points that they may allocate to organizations, positions, and pacts. A fairly standard position (perhaps something like being a member of a magical college) that player characters might occupy would cost 2 commitment points. A character could take that position then have 1 commitment point left over for other uses. The character could join another organization, one that requires a bit less time, or perhaps spend the commitment point on a pact that asks for some day-to-day activity. The character could also spend that extra time on research, training, or crafting items though this book doesn't include extensive rules for how to do things outside of game time.

The specifics of Commitment are purposely abstract. The gamemaster and player can fill in the details when needed and you can use those details to inspire a bit of roleplaying or even an adventure. Moreover, while we normally think of a job as something you show up at every day Commitment doesn't work like that. You might disappear for weeks or even months at a time and still live up to your requirements, just so long as you continue to allocate the Commitment points. You can picture the player as perhaps performing the mission in such a way that it advances the goals of his organization, or doing little side jobs during the adventure (off-screen probably) that fulfills his requirements, or simply devoting a bit more effort after the adventure has ended (or before it has started) to make up for the missing time.

The standard character receives 3 Commitment points. This assumes they also have an adventuring career and they can spend up to that many Commitment points without worry-

MEANS AND ENDS [GENERAL]

Fable is rich with stories about those who had the hubris to think they could deal with the devil to accomplish a greater good and wound up corrupted in the end. These were morality tales and were meant to teach the listener a lesson. The concept makes sense though. How could a mere human ever hope to outsmart the prince of lies? How could you deal with a demon without somehow empowering it? After all, any negotiated transaction works because both parties believe they advance their own interests by agreeing to the deal. If one of those parties is evil you must be advancing evil interests as well as your own.

Some stories tell tales about sharp con artists and willful sages manipulating those of the lower planes in order to achieve not just a greater good locally, but a greater good overall. And players may very well want to play that sort of character. All pacts with the lower planes should act this way to an extent if you want players of good characters to have access to pacts with evil creatures. This feat just gives that concept more juice.

Prerequisite: 5 ranks in Bluff

Benefit: This feat allows a character to enter a pact with evil creatures, or join an evil organization, and not worry about their alignment. As long as their ends are good, the fact that they use evil creatures as a means does not jeopardize their moral status. This feat represents the character being clever enough to use the evil organization in a way that violates no-one's rights, and achieve a greater good. Characters are still responsible for promoting evil ends, and can suffer alignment shifts accordingly.

This feat also allows you to use the Bluff skill in place of the normal pact influence skill. You can do this for up to two pacts or organizations. You can take this more than once; for each additional feat spent, you gain a cumulative +1 bonus to your Bluff skill checks and may use Bluff as the influence skill for 2 more pacts or organizations.

ing about losing their status with an organization or a pact. Some feats increase the amount of Commitment available to a player. All player characters have one point of "free" Commitment. This represents the odd bits of time they can scrape up between doing other things. They cannot use this on positions or pacts but they may use it to train, craft magic items, or learn new spells. This is like hobby work. Picture 1 point of Commitment as representing approximately 8 hours of work time per week. If you've been gamemastering for any time you'll likely have noticed that, while your players might be lazy slugs, their characters spend every waking moment working. Admittedly, player characters are more driven than most people but by formalizing the rules

you can distinguish between characters that are more and less driven.

FEATS

A natural cost for a pact might be some kind of feat. The feat might offer no benefit other than access to the pact. Some feats might also offer side benefits. In any case, if a pact requires a feat you'll find the feat description in the pact itself (or in nearby boxed text).

INFLUENCE

The Second World Sourcebook introduced a type of reward called Influence points. These represent the abstract currency of good favor and reputation that a person might gain. If you've done a lot to help the king you could have a large pool of influence to spend on special favors from the king. If you've made a number of significant requests of the king his patience might wear thin. In this book, some of the pacts or requests have Influence costs. If you choose to not use influence in your game treat the influence cost as a ritual gold cost of 1,000 gp per Influence point.

OATHS

Some pacts require you to take a particular oath. You might need to forego eating meat, or eating vegetables. Perhaps you have to donate a certain portion of all wealth gained to charity. You might need to pray each morning or make a pilgrimage (perhaps even a regular pilgrimage). Most of the examples given so far don't count as a significant cost for the pact. The player can simply say he performs the right rituals or adhere to the strictures and doing so has little impact on how he plays the game. These are really just bits of flavor text to make the pact seem more rich and detailed. The gamemaster should feel comfortable changing them around to better suit her campaign without worrying about play balance. However, some oaths represent significant costs. For instance, the tithe mentioned earlier amounts to a large amount of gold over the course of a character's career; a 10% tithe between levels 10 and 20 comes out to over a 70,000 gp sacrifice. Likewise, other oaths can incur significant costs. Perhaps the character cannot wear cold iron so must forge all his armor from adamantite or mithral. Perhaps the character must ritually scar himself every morning, costing 5 hit points a day. The pact might require that the character sacrifice one eye and this penalizes an attribute or his Spot and Search skills.

RITUAL GOLD

While outsiders have little interest in the trinkets and mundane commerce of the regular world they do seem to enjoy sacrifices. It's not entirely clear what an outsider gains from having a goat (or whatever) sacrificed in his honor but many

DEMONS AND DEVILS

You can give these pacts to demons and devils. Assign the creature one or more pact levels. The creature can then use one of its summonings as a pact gate of any degree less than or equal to one fourth its hit dice or caster level (whichever is higher). It must still make a request check as usual and pay any associated costs. To a certain extent demons and devils use something akin to a pact when they use their summoning ability to bring an allied demon or devil.

seem to like them anyway. In earth cultures the actual value of the sacrifice mattered quite a bit. People felt proud if they could afford to sacrifice something as valuable as a goat or cow during their worship practices and would burn other valuables such as grain. In a fantasy setting you might assume that outsiders gain the astral form of whatever a worshipper sacrifices in this manner. For instance, the astral stuff associated with the body of a hellhound could be released in a ritual that consumes the heart of the hellhound. The ritual then directs the astral stuff, empowered with the elemental magic of the hellhound, to the outsider targeted by the ritual. In this way the outsider acquires some magical power that it can use for its own purposes. In exchange for the sacrifice the outsider grants the petitioner access to a pact that the outsider oversees. A great law of barter economics is that if enough agents are willing to trade enough items you can extract a fairly stable valuation schema for those items. The boundless extents of the outer planes contain a lot of agents and they like to bargain. All this just means that you can comfortably assign valuations to various sorts of sacrifices and simply use the valuation itself to determine what sort of sacrifice entering a pact requires. Naturally, a gold cost works particularly well here. Thus, instead of listing out all the obscure animal bits, weird plants, and rare gems that one must sacrifice to gain access to a pact simply assign a gold cost and fill in the details later.

The ritual gold might even represent a more direct transfer; the entity in charge of the pact might simply want a pay-off. One nice feature of the universe is its consistency.

SKILLS

Some pacts might require that you possess a certain number of ranks in a skill in order to gain access to the pact. Typically the pact requires ranks in an obscure and otherwise useless skill, for instance, Knowledge (Interstitial Geometry). If you actually manage to get some in-game use from the skill feel free to drop by the Second World Simulations website and mention it on the message board. It can add a bit of flavor to a character having him spout off his obscure knowledge. Regardless, spending 5 skill ranks is roughly

PURCHASE EXAMPLE

Thomas is an 8th level sorcerer and has chosen to focus on developing his extra-planar connections. While he'll likely advance fully through pact negotiator at some point, for now let's assume he just has sorcerer levels. Naturally, one of his second level spells is *first degree pact gate* and he takes *second degree pact gate* as his only fourth level spell.

Thomas is a sorcerer and their talent at the Bluff skill makes them natural pact users. His stat block is included at the end of the section so you can see how he chose to develop. Note, that he's a Second World character who began in the First World.

After magic items and other consideration Thomas has 13,000 gold pieces to spend on pacts.

Thomas signs on for the Chamber pact; he has a total of 21 ranks in Knowledge skills granting 4 publication credits, two of them are at 10 for an extra +2 credits, and +2 more credits for Intelligence, granting a total of 8 publication credits. Enough for pact level 2 and close to pact level 3. Other than the skills and having to write endless drivel this one was free. He'll use Intimidate on this pact and has a stress buffer of 12.

He signs on for the Horde pact; his Bluff bonus grants him 1 pact level and he'll spend 4,000 gp on Blood and Souls for the lords of Chaos, taking him to pact level 2. He can use his excellent Intimidate skill here and has a stress buffer of 15.

As you might have expected given the opening story, Thomas is lined up with Pact Uebinoex. Knowing the code grants one pact level and he'll toss in a point of constitution for the time being. He can use his adequate Dogma skill and has a stress buffer of 11.

The Grand symphony appeals partially because Thomas likes the idea of having a crystal hand. He takes the pact, becomes a patron of the arts to the tune of 4,000 gp, and grabs a crystal hand; pact level 2. He devotes one of the Means and Ends swap outs to Grand Symphony and can thus use that massive Bluff skill; he has a stress buffer of 15.

The high Intimidate skill and natural appeal of fire leads Thomas to take the Fire pact. He'll spend 4,000 gp on Burnt Offerings. He could sacrifice his anger but Thomas is an angry young man so he'll just stick with the pact level 1; again, he gets his big Intimidate skill here and a stress buffer of 15.

Finally, Thomas signs on with the Meat Syndicate. He has 9 pact levels from other sources granting him one pact level here due to clients. He'll hold onto his soul and wait until later to build this up. This gives him a pact level 1; he devotes the second Means and Ends swap to this so he can use his Bluff bonus and ends up with a stress buffer of 12.

Thomas has some loose change left over. He has such a massive quantity of stress buffer available each week (80 points!) that he'll likely run out of pact gate spells long before he burns through his available stress. He should try to spread the stress

costs around though. Naturally, Thomas will want to pick up some Pact Negotiator levels down the line. He might also want to work towards acquiring a Gate Warden feat so that he can increase the number of pact gates he can open each day.

Thomas, Male Human Sor8: Medium; HD 8d4+8 (hp 33); Init + 0; Spd 30; AC 12 (Flatfooted: 12 Touch: 12); Atk melee or ranged dagger +5 (1d4+1, 19–20/×2), ray +4; AL N; SV Fort + 3, Ref + 2, Will + 6; STR 10, DEX 10, CON 10 (12), INT 14, WIS 10, CHA 18 (20).

Skills: Bluff +18, Diplomacy +16, Intimidate +20, Knowledge (arcana) +13, Knowledge (Uebinoex dogma) +13, Sense Motive +7, Spellcraft +3.

Background Option (Police): Diplomacy, Intimidate, Sense Motive

Feats: Big City Education: Knowledge (the Planes), Knowledge (nobility and royalty); Means and Ends (Grand Symphony, Meat syndicate); Negotiator; Persuasive.

Spells Known (Sor 6/8/7/6/4): 0—*arcane mark, detect magic, flare, light, mage hand, prestidigitation, ray of frost, read magic*; 1st—*identify, mage armor, magic missile, message, sleep*; 2nd—*acid arrow, first degree pact gate, invisibility*; 3rd—*fireball, suggestion*; 4th—*second degree pact gate*.

Possessions: +1 dagger; ring of protection +2; amulet of health (+2); cloak of charisma (+2).

Pacts: Chamber +20, PL 2, SB 12; Horde +20, PL 2, SB 15 (4,000 gp); Uebinoex +13, PL 2, SB 11 (1 point of Con), Grand Symphony +18, PL 2, SB 15 (4,000 gp, crystal hand); Fire Pact +20, PL 1, SB 15 (4,000 gp); Meat Syndicate +18, PL 1, SB 12.

USE EXAMPLE

Thomas wants to use some of these connections now.

He starts with an information request using the Chamber's second degree Minor Research Request. This is out of combat so we won't worry about actions required. He casts a *second degree pact gate* spell, using one of his 4th level slots. The DC of the request is 20; Thomas takes 10 on the check, scoring a 30, and can thus halve the stress cost. This reduces the cost to 2 stress. He then needs to check in the next day by opening a *first degree pact gate* and making a Pneumatic Tubes request; this has DC 15, so he takes 10 and reduces the stress cost to 2. He can check his mail and find the results of the three Knowledge checks.

Later on Thomas is fighting against some undead. During the combat he spends a standard action to cast a *second degree pact gate* spell then makes a Divine Light request from the Grand Symphony pact; the request costs a move action but both can be performed in the same round. The DC of the request is 20 so it's a worthwhile gamble to roll the dice. He rolls a straight 10—succeeds but doesn't manage to reduce the stress cost; thus the request costs 4 stress. Archons light the darkness and the undead grow uncomfortable.

equivalent to spending one feat; so you should consider this a substantial cost. If the pact also uses the skill for requests, reduce the effective cost (since the skill gains some value) but the fact that one needs to use an obscure skill to gain the benefits of the pact should count as a cost too.

USING A PACT

The standard way to use a pact is to invoke a pact gate via a spell or spell-like ability then make a pact request. This counts as two actions, a standard action to invoke the pact gate then a move-equivalent action to make the request. Invoking the pact gate operates like the casting of a regular spell and provokes attacks of opportunity as usual. Making the request does not provoke attacks of opportunity; the request usually requires an Influence check. Once you've invoked the pact gate you may make any request available through a pact gate of that degree.

You have access to a variety of requests through the various pacts you've joined. Figure out which request you'd like to make then cast a pact gate spell of the required degree or higher. Assuming the spell succeeds you now have a channel open to the agency that grants the request. To complete the process make an Influence check against the difficulty class of the request and pay any associated cost. If the Influence check succeeds and you can afford the cost, the agency grants the request.

INFLUENCE CHECK

You make Influence checks to secure requests. To make a request spend the required time, pay the cost, and make an Influence check (just like a skill check) against the difficulty class of the request. This check uses the skill appropriate to the request. The request may have an access modifier. If this check fails then you lose the influence points or stress you spent. You may take 10 on an Influence check. You may also take 20 on an Influence check but this multiplies the cost by 20 as well as taking 20 times as long as normal.

For those familiar with the Influence rules from the Second World Sourcebook these rules are the same as the ones there. Some new features have been added; most important are Stress Buffers, the way you gain access to pact requests, and the skills you use to make Influence checks. The latter two differences are because ancient and alien beings can have some weird politics.

REQUEST COSTS

Pact requests can cost a variety of resources: influence points, social stress, gold, or something else entirely. The cost is noted in the request itself. Influence points have al-

ready been discussed and money is just standard monetary cost. Social Stress represents damage to one's ability to call on favors.

SOCIAL STRESS

Social Stress costs operate like damage. When you spend a cost in social stress you take social stress damage equal to the cost.

OVER-STRESS

When your Stress damage equals or exceeds your Stress Limit (10 + your Charisma modifier) you suffer a -10 to all Influence checks. When your stress equals or exceeds twice your Stress Limit you can no longer make any influence or pact requests. Social stress starts at 0.

RECOVERING STRESS

Stress "heals" naturally over time; you recover 1d8 + your Charisma modifier stress points (typically just called stress or noted with an "s") per two weeks. You can also heal 1d8 + your Charisma modifier stress points by dedicating one week to networking.

REDUCING STRESS COSTS

For requests that cost social stress points (and only requests that cost stress) halve the cost (rounding up) if you score a greater success on the Influence check. To score a greater success you must beat the DC of the check by at least 10. If you score a perfect success (DC +20) divide the cost by four (rounding up). Note that this gives characters an incentive to roll instead of simply taking 10 on a check in certain circumstances. For example, if the character has a bonus of +18 and the DC is 20 they automatically succeed if they take 10. However, by rolling they have a 45% chance of halving the stress cost and only a 5% chance of failing outright.

STRESS BUFFERS

Many pacts give you something called a Stress Buffer. A Stress Buffer is a pool of free Social Stress points you may draw from prior to suffering regular social stress. These buffers replenish completely and automatically once per week.

For example, the Beast Pact grants a Stress Buffer of 10 + Charisma modifier points that recovers once per week. A character with a Charisma of 10 could make requests from that pact by first drawing Stress points from the buffer. Let's say that over the course of the week he makes four requests with a final Stress cost total of 12 points. The first 10 points comes from his Buffer and he takes the remaining 2 points as normal social stress. At the end of the week his Stress buffer with that pact fully replenishes but he still suffers from the 2 points of regular social stress until he recovers them, using the normal rules for Stress recovery.

REDUCING GOLD OR INFLUENCE POINT COSTS

For requests that cost gold or influence points you may reduce the cost by 10% if you score a greater success (DC +10); a perfect success (DC +20) reduces the cost by 20%. Note that if you can take 10 on a check it's more cost effective to do so than gamble for a 10 or 20 percent discount.

REDUCING OTHER SORTS OF COSTS

For more unusual request costs whether or not they can be reduced, and how to do so, is described in the request.

REQUEST FUMBLES

If you botch a Request check, you suffer an additional 3 points of stress. You recover this stress normally. Note that this system does not have fumble rules; this is just a suggestion for gamemasters who like to use fumble rules.

MORE WAYS TO USE THE PACTS

In addition to providing a new way to cast and prepare spells, the pacts are also organizations. As organizations the gamemaster can use them just like she would a more mundane organization in her world. The pacts can lead to an adventure, provide roleplaying opportunities, give the players someone to question, or help launch an outer planes scenario. The pacts can form opposition groups; you can create an organization of mad scientists in your world where most of them are wizards and sorcerers that have pact levels with the Chamber.

ROLEPLAYING ACCESS

The game mechanical implementations are included for those gamemasters who prefer a more structured implementation of political power. The sacrifices one must make to gain access to a pact and the costs associated with requests are the game part of using a pact. They force players to make choices regarding how they spend their resources.

You should not feel constrained by the game mechanical aspects of pacts. If it makes sense in the context of a story to give out a free pact level or two, do so. Likewise, it might

KEEN INSTINCTS [GENERAL]

Some people choose to sacrifice the rational processes of civilization and instead rely on their more primal urges.

Benefit: Each time you take this feat you take a -2 on all Intelligence based skill checks. By making this sacrifice you gain a +1 bonus on all Wisdom based skill checks. These bonuses and penalties only apply to skills, not to other sorts of checks.

Special: You may take this feat more than once; the benefits and penalties stack.

NATURAL VS. ARTIFICIAL

In the real world there probably is no well-defined distinction between the natural and the artificial. Everything on this planet, including cellophane wrapped cream-filled golden spongecake, arose through a natural process. Any real distinction we can make, such as manufactured by humans, would have little role in scientific theory.

In a fantasy world we can do a lot more. In a fantasy world the natural and unnatural can derive from primal categories in the minds of the gods or in the metaphysical structure of the outer planes. In a fantasy world some spells and magics might only affect the natural, or might only affect the unnatural. When thinking about the metaphysics you wish to use in your campaign keep in mind what practical effect that will have on what happens in the world. One can draw a hard line or demarcation between the natural and unnatural by fiat. For example, if it derives its reality from one of the Platonic Forms it's natural, otherwise it's unnatural. This gives you a system for answering tricky questions. You can polymorph to a bird and fly because there's a Form of Bird and it has the ability to fly. You cannot polymorph to a chimera and fly because there is no Form of Chimera; the creatures we see in the world are magical amalgams of the Forms of dragon, lion, and ram. Fantasy worlds have a categorization advantage because when you design one you can isolate the sources of power and objects in the world. Some power comes from elemental planes, some from various gods, and so on. Having a general picture of the metaphysics helps you answer a variety of questions, quite often in interesting ways. Moreover, players in such a game can discover the mysteries underlying the way the world works; a great deal of enjoyment in books, movies, and roleplaying games comes from the slow discovery of secrets.

be in the best interests of an organization to provide a free request. Alternately, an organization might let a member call on a request not on the lists; they can do more than just the limited range of options listed here after all.

Importantly, do not see roleplaying rewards as "freebies". While it's true that roleplaying rewards don't fall into the standardized gold reward structure of the core rules, most games already include them in other ways. During the course of a campaign your characters make friends, allies, and enemies. They form connections with others. These connections provide tangible, albeit unquantified, benefits. In effect, we already give our players Influence points above and beyond the gold and magic they receive for defeating monsters. A safe way to go is to give out 1 extra influence point for every 2,000 gp players gain through the conventional methods. Influence points and the Influence system

are simply ways of quantifying what already happens.

PRESTIGE CLASSES

Many prestige classes are tied to organizations. While the pacts included here don't focus on prestige classes you can easily add a listing of prestige classes you use in your game to the pacts. With the advent of the open gaming license there are literally hundreds of prestige classes available; if you want to structure access to those classes attach them to different organizations and require membership at various levels in order to take those prestige classes.

You might prefer to run a more open game. Players like having many options and requiring membership in an organization for all prestige classes might be frustrating for them. Moreover, most players can come up with a variety of interesting story justifications for why or how their character gained access to a prestige class. If you want to leave access to prestige classes largely open, yet tie them to an organization, you can give players an incentive to join the organization to gain the prestige class.

A particularly mercenary way of doing this is to give them a bonus of 100 experience points times their current character level when they take their first level in a prestige class through an organization with that prestige class in its list. This experience reward can represent the special training provided by the organization. The experience reward is large enough that players will seriously consider it but small enough that it shouldn't throw development too far out of whack. You can also allow continuing rewards for those who stay with the organization while developing the prestige class. When doing this the continuing reward should be 50 xp times current character level.

If you prefer sticks to carrots you can charge a flat 1,000 experience points for access to a prestige class if the player isn't part of an organization that grants access to that class. Increase the cost to 2,000 xp if the minimum level one needs to be to enter the class is 10 or higher; increase the cost to 3,000 xp if the minimum level required is 15 or higher. You can then designate some prestige classes as **Open**; these prestige classes do not require special access. **Open** prestige classes can represent training that has dispersed itself through the population, or a prestige class that represents a character simply focusing their skills in a new way but something anyone should be able to figure out for himself. For example, in the real world, martial arts used to be something taught to a select few, and one needed to satisfy the secret masters in order to receive the training. Nowadays one can find martial arts training, even for esoteric styles, at the local strip mall.

EQUIPMENT

Alien organizations have access to magic items, artifacts, and other rare materials. Members of a pact could request some of those items through the pact gate. The items in question may have problems working in the regular world, or the pact gate might not be the safest way to transport such an item permanently. You can use the full influence system from the Second World Sourcebook to provide access to equipment via the pacts.

TEMPLATES

Many templates represent empowering a creature or person, often with abilities from other planes. You can give players access to these templates via the pacts. For example, the Fire Pact might grant access to templates centered on elemental fire. Again, other books in your collection serve as an excellent source for templates appropriate to a pact. When granting a template try to have a character acquire it when she gains a level; the character must be prepared for such a drastic change after all. Also note that often the challenge rating adjustment for a template doesn't match up well with its value to a player character. You can use a combination of influence, gold, and level or feat costs to pay for a template. *Bodies and Souls: 20 Templates* has several templates designed and balanced for addition to player characters and gives some examples of how to assign costs to a template.

PACT REQUEST FORMAT

Each pact request follows a standard format similar to the format of a spell.

REQUEST NAME

This is just the name of the request.

DC: This is the difficulty class of the Influence check for the request. Use the pact's standard Influence skill for the pact.

Request Cost: Most pact requests have a cost of 4 stress; some requests may have a slightly higher or lower stress cost and some may require Influence points or some other sacrifice.

Range: Measure range from the pact gate opening. For many requests what you do is open the pact gate, let the creature through, and it then moves toward the target. The distance it can move thus becomes the range. This also means that you can extend the range of a request by opening the gate as far away from you as possible then measuring range to the target from there.

Area: As for a spell.

Target: As for a spell.

Duration: As for a spell; since most pact requests involve summoning a creature to perform a task for you, the duration is how long the creature hangs around.

Saving Throw: While the target doesn't get a saving throw to resist you opening the pact gate it may get a saving throw against the effects of you opening the pact gate. Also, when a saving throw against an effect is allowed, the difficulty class of the saving throw is usually a fixed value; this is because the DC of the save is set by the creature delivering the effect.

Spell Resistance: As for a spell; pact requests are seldom blocked by spell resistance since their effects are typically delivered via a creature.

Description: This tells you what the request looks like and what it does.

DEALING WITH SUMMONED CREATURES

When using pact gates the creatures you summon serve you either of their own free will, or because their organization directs them to do so.

A summoned creature will freely use its daily or at will powers and abilities. However, to get a summoned creature to use a weekly ability you must make another Influence check against the same DC that you used to call the creature; you must also pay the request cost again (and can reduce the cost normally). In order to get a creature to use a monthly ability you must pay double the normal request cost and make a check against the standard DC +5.

THE PACTS

THE BEAST PACT

Pact Skill: Knowledge (nature) or Wilderness Lore

Stress Buffer: 10 + your Charisma modifier

Did you think that the animals we see around us came about through some random array of mutations and extinction events? Do you think that such a haphazard process could ever forge the majesty of the Lion or the regal honor of the Hawk? Life force exists in this world and it strives towards a purpose. Creatures evolve, but they evolve towards an ordained end-state. The great beasts of the outer planes represent the purest form of animal nature. The mangy lion we see in the king's zoo is just a pale reflection of the purity of the king of beasts. These kings and queens, presidents and ministers, make up the underlying core of nature. They supply the drive to promulgate and survive; they give instinct its goal to achieve a higher form of being.

The paradigm beasts are the most visible of the natural creatures but they live in paradigm forests and deserts. Terrain has its lords as well. Trees and flowers have their lords, perfect examples of what it is to be an oak (strong and wise) or rose (beautiful and dangerous). The paradigm Forest houses many of the great creatures in its cool glades and dappled pathways. The paradigm Desert tests the survivability of the most hardy creatures.

With this pact you tap into the instinctual drive to live and reproduce that is core to the great beasts. In the Second World setting these creatures and environments live in the Forge. They serve as templates for the contents of worlds. Most worlds contain a small selection from the variety of great beasts and habitats represented in the Forge; this means that there are great alien beasts and plants in the outer planes and interstices as well. Skilled negotiators can call on them occasionally.

CHICKENS AND EGGS

The picture given here makes it sound as if the Forms (the great beasts that serve as paradigmatic examples of the actual creatures we see in the world) exist prior to anything in the world. This ties into a rich philosophical tradition, one that lends itself well to a fantasy setting. Here's a simple, and rough, argument for why the Forms of the great beasts must have always existed:

- 1) Forms are perfect examples of the creature.
- 2) It is more perfect to exist than to not exist.
- 3) It is more perfect to exist necessarily than to exist contingently.
- 4) Therefore, the Beast Forms must exist necessarily.

Sentences 2 and 3 are probably false but they certainly sound cool for a fantasy setting. If this theory is true, then all creatures that we see in the world derive their features and structure from the Great Beasts living in the outer worlds. How you reconcile this with the aberrations and magical beasts crafted by mad wizards can create some interesting game effects. For instance, you might go the consistent but dry route of saying that there's a perfect exemplar of the ettercap somewhere in the outer planes, likewise for all the other odd, slapped together bits of flesh you see populating underground laboratories. Alternately you can break creatures into different categories. Beasts are natural and have a form that gives them a drive to live. This means that beasts can reproduce and evolve. Aberrations are unnatural and have no associated Great Beast. This means that aberrations do not naturally reproduce nor do they evolve. They have no perfect ideal to evolve towards. Aberrations might

reproduce in some mockery of nature, perhaps by crafting more of themselves from the living bodies of other creatures. Magical beasts could fall in the middle. They partake in the form of the non-magical base and this gives them the will to survive and reproduce. However, their magical nature is unnatural and does not pass on to their off-spring.

Perhaps the Forms depend on what there is in the world. According to this account there is a Great Beast for every type of beast in the world. The fact that such creatures exist in the world brings into being a Great Beast to serve as the overlord. This means there's a Great Beast for that rat/tuna fish crossbreed your wizard has finally constructed. The Great Beast itself is a **type**, each of the particular animals we see in the world is a **token** of that type. Unlike the previous account, the type cannot exist without the tokens. This lends itself well to a fantasy setting too. Since the Great Beast relies on the existence of particular tokens you can connect the power of the Great Beast to the power and breadth of its tokens. In a more primitive or rural world the majestic Great Beasts dominate; lions and tigers, wolves and buffalo, deer and antelope all dominate their environment and thus their Great Beasts wield great power. As civilization advances these animals die out and lose their domain over the land. Increased urbanization moves the Great Rat to a position of prominence and the Great Lion grows weak and sick. There's even an internal logic to the structure of the Great Beasts according to this account. As you have more and more tokens of the animal, the Great Beast can draw from a wider pool to determine what counts as perfection. If there is just one token perhaps its Great Beast is exactly the same as it.

The first account, where the Great Beasts are eternal, is similar to a Platonic account of the Forms. The second account, where the Great Beasts depend on their tokens, is similar to an Aristotelean account of the "Forms". If you want to do some more research, the second approach is often referred to as an Immanent Universals account.

GAINING PACT LEVELS

Much of your influence with this pact derives from your connection with natural forces. Druids fit well of course but the Beast Pact isn't an alignment with nature; it's an alignment with the animalistic. Plants and forests are good because they're good for beasts; they don't have any inherent value.

FERAL OATH

The Feral Oath requires you to live as the beasts do. You hunt what you eat, live without manufactured goods, and live close to wilderness. In order to maintain this rugged lifestyle in the face of the luxuries civilization has to offer,

you must possess the Endurance feat. You may stay for short periods of time in civilization but no longer than a week. If imprisoned in civilization for more than a week you become **fatigued**, and cannot recover from that fatigue until you return to the wilderness. You may eat prepared food, such as the kind you get at an inn but should not make a habit of it. The cost of this oath is part roleplaying and part game mechanical so you have some leeway with the roleplaying portion. By taking the Feral Oath you gain 1 pact level with the Beast Pact.

INSTINCTS

By honing your natural instincts and letting them guide your life instead of your reason you align yourself more closely with the bestial spirit. To develop your instinct you take the Keen Instincts feat. Each Keen Instincts feat you take is worth one pact level.

NATURE PRESERVES

By setting aside and maintaining a certain amount of land as a natural preserve you can increase your pact level with the Great Beasts. You can figure this either according to the cost of the land in gold or by acreage. Acreage comes relatively cheap; this is because taking care of land requires more effort and provides plenty of plot hooks for a game-master. Regardless, going by modern world prices, these costs of land are quite high; attribute that in part to the fact that land makes up a larger part of one's capital in most lower technology settings. Forest is worth slightly more than desert or tundra; assume that the following values are for forest and double the acreage for less hospitable terrain. Note that very little terrain is "worthless" to the beast lords. All environments generate their own ecology.

Pact Level	Gold Cost	Acres
First	2,000 gp	20
Second	8,000 gp	160
Third	18,000 gp	360
Fourth	32,000 gp	640

SUMMONINGS

You may summon the following creatures via a pact gate of the appropriate degree as requests (using the standard request format); your pact level must be at least as high as the gate degree required. These creatures will fight for you, even risking their life, acting in all ways like a creature summoned via a *summon monster* spell.

Summonings				
Creature Type	Gate Degree	Request DC	Request Cost	Duration
Wolf	1	15	4 stress	8 rounds
Wolverine	1	15	4 stress	4 rounds
Lion	2	20	4 stress	12 rounds
Tiger	2	20	4 stress	8 rounds
Brown Bear	2	20	4 stress	8 rounds
Orca Whale	3	25	4 stress	12 rounds
Baleen Whale	3	25	4 stress	12 rounds
Elephant	4	30	4 stress	16 rounds

FIRST DEGREE

BEAR SPIRIT

DC: 15

Request Cost: 4 stress

Range: 30 ft.

Target: One creature

Duration: 4 minutes

Saving Throw: Will negates (DC 13, harmless)

Spell Resistance: Yes

You summon the spirit of the bear through the pact gate to bond with the target. The bear spirit strengthens and fortifies its host; the target gains a +2 enhancement bonus to Strength and Constitution and may operate while at negative hit points. If below 0 hit points the target still takes one point of damage each round unless a Fortitude save (DC 20) is made.

FLOCK OF BIRDS

DC: 15

Request Cost: 4 stress

Effect: Flock of birds filling a 10 ft. cube

Duration: 6 rounds

You summon a flock of 88 small birds through the pact gate. The birds are all of one type and you may designate the type. Good choices are starlings, sparrows, crows, robins, and even bats (the Beast Lords categorize things differently than modern humans). The flock moves as a group, covering a cube 10 feet on each side. The flock moves at your spoken command. You can direct the flock to lift up to 25 pounds of material, either as a group lifting one item or as individuals lifting myriad small items. The flock can fly 60 feet as a Move action. The flock provides three-quarters concealment (granting a 30% miss chance) within its area. The flock can also attack targets within its area as a Full-round action. This causes 1d4 damage to all in the area; victims may make a Reflex save (DC 13) to negate the damage.

RABBIT SPIRIT

DC: 15

Request Cost: 4 stress

Range: 30 ft.

Target: One creature

Duration: 4 minutes

Saving Throw: Will negates (DC 13)

Spell Resistance: Yes

This request draws a portion of the spirit of the rabbit through the gate. The rabbit is fast and wary, making this an odd request since it provides both a benefit and a hindrance. The rabbit spirit invests a single target who may choose to resist. The creature afflicted with the rabbit spirit is **frightened**, however the creature also gains an additional Move action each round.

A creature that is frightened flees as well as it can. If unable to flee, the creature may fight. It suffers a -2 morale penalty on attack rolls, checks, and saving throws. A frightened creature can use special abilities, including spells, to flee; the creature must use such means if they are the only way to escape.

WOLVEN HUNTING TEAM

DC: 15

Request Cost: 4 stress

Duration: 1d8 hours

This request draws a pack of wolves (1d6+10) through the pact gate to hunt down some food for you. The wolves rush off and scour the local terrain for game animals. After 1d8 hours they return to you so long as you are within 24 miles of where you summoned them. They bring enough game animals to feed 2d4 people for one day. In a desert or tundra the wolves bring back only enough food for 1d4 people.

SECOND DEGREE

MOUNTS

DC: 20

Request Cost: 4 stress

Duration: 48 hours

This request allows you to draw 4 mounts through the pact gate. These are normal animals. You may draw additional mounts through the pact gate at a cost of 1 stress per additional mount. You may choose the type of mount from the following list: camel, riding dog, donkey, heavy horse, light horse, warhorse, giant lizard, mule, or pony. The creatures need not be of the same type. You may instead summon 2 elephants through the pact gate; this increases the request DC by 5; the stress cost increases to 6 and it costs 3 stress for each additional elephant. None of the mounts fight.

PACIFY

DC: 20

Request Cost: 4 stress

Range: 100 ft.

Area: 100 ft. radius burst centered on the pact gate

Duration: 24 hours

Saving Throw: None

Spell Resistance: Yes

For this request all you do is open the pact gate to demonstrate your ability and connection with the Great Beasts. All natural animals within the area of effect recognize your connection with their overlords and cease attacking you and your allies. Guard animals neither attack you nor alert their masters. This only works on animals as defined in the MM. The animals within the area also pass on their knowledge to other animals they meet. Thus, when you use this request within a forest the news spreads rapidly enough that you need not worry about being attacked for the duration of the effect. If you attack an animal during the duration you lose these benefits and suffer an additional 4 points of stress.

WOLVEN TRACKING TEAM

DC: 20

Request Cost: 4 stress

Duration: 24 hours

This summons a wolf pack (1d6+10 wolves) specially trained to track. You give the wolf team an object to smell or direct them to a location where they can pick up the trail. They then fan out to follow the trail. While they wait for you to keep up, pack members constantly check side trails and possible double-back paths. The large team of wolves plus their special training allows them to make Track checks (as the feat) with a +12 bonus; moreover, they may roll twice and take the better result for each Track check.

THIRD DEGREE

LYCANTHROPIC SPIRIT

DC: 25

Request Cost: 4 stress

Range: 30 ft.

Target: One creature

Duration: 30 minutes

Saving Throw: Will negates (DC 19, harmless)

Spell Resistance: Yes (harmless)

With this request you draw a major beast spirit through the pact gate and bond it with a nearby target. This allows you to add a Lycanthrope template to a creature for the duration of the effect. This obeys all the normal rules of the Lycanthrope template (see the MM), but the target has complete control over transformations and gains a +15 competence bonus with the Control Shape skill. This allows you to give a character the Wereboar, Wererat, or Werewolf template.

MAW OF THE LEVIATHAN

DC: 25

Request Cost: 4 stress

Target: Up to eight Medium-size creatures

Duration: 2d4 hours

This request summons a great whale to swallow you and your party; up to 8 Medium-size creatures total. Large creatures count double. The whale then swims into the deeps, returning to the rich, blue-green seas of its home realm. It swims through these seas then re-appears in your world or any other world connected to its home realm. There it delivers you to a destination of your choosing. You must be near a large body of water to make this request; large lakes work, such as one of North America's Great Lakes. This likewise applies to the destination. The journey takes 2d4 hours. You remain safe within the mouth of the whale during the journey and can even start a fire or set up camp.

WATCHFUL EYES

DC: 25

Request Cost: 4 stress

Area: 5 mile radius centered on you

Duration: Until sunset or sunrise

For this request you open a pact gate and a small bird of your choosing flies out. It must be no larger than an owl. You tell the bird how you want its allies to help you. The bird then flies back through the pact gate and, moments later, thousands of its kind swarm out and spread over the surrounding countryside. They cover a 5 mile radius centered on you. Within this area they keep watch for you, warning you of any ambushes or if something is sneaking up on you. They also look for whatever you requested in the initial interview and keep you updated on the target's movements. This can be a creature, object, or terrain feature. The birds work off your description so the better that is the better they operate. The birds as a collective have a +15 Spot bonus; one can hide from them by making Hide checks (DC 25). During the duration of the request you can ask the birds to look for something else but it takes 2 hours for the change in mission to promulgate through the flock.

You may choose either day birds or night birds for this request (bats are allowed and they count as night birds). Day birds remain until sunset; night birds remain until dawn. No matter what, the birds don't stay longer than twelve hours (i.e. you don't get a few months worth of *watchful eyes* at the North pole).

FOURTH DEGREE

BISON STAMPEDE

DC: 30

Request Cost: 4 stress

Range: 180 ft.

Area: Cone

Duration: 3 rounds

Saving Throw: Reflex half (DC 16)

Spell Resistance: No

This request connects the pact gate up to an area through which a herd of bison stampedes. The bison rush through the pact gate and spread out, covering a cone shaped, but flat, area. While the range is quite large the herd only moves 60 feet per round, so it takes them 3 rounds to cover the entire area. After 3 rounds the beasts return to their home plane. All those in the area of effect that are Large size or smaller take 4d12 damage and must make a Strength check (DC 23) or be knocked down; victims may add +4 to their Strength check for each size category they are above Medium-size or subtract 4 for each size category below Medium-size. If a target has three or more legs he receives a +4 stability bonus to his Strength check. This occurs each round. Victims receive a Reflex save (DC 16) to halve the damage and avoid the knockdown chance. Victims that have been knocked down suffer a -4 penalty on any subsequent Reflex saves. In the first round the bison cover a 60 ft. long cone; in the second round they cover a 120 ft. cone; in the third round they cover the entire 180 ft. cone.

GREATER LYCANTHROPIC SPIRIT

DC: 30

Request Cost: 4 stress

Range: 30 ft.

Target: One creature

Duration: 30 minutes

Saving Throw: Will negates (DC 22, harmless)

Spell Resistance: Yes

This request works as does *lycanthropic spirit* but allows you to give a creature the Werebear or Weretiger template.

SPEAK WITH BEAST LORD

DC: 30

Request Cost: 4 stress

Target: 1 Beast Lord

Duration: 30 minutes

This request allows you to open a pact gate to one of the Beast Lords and speak with him or her personally for a time. Overcoming the DC of the request and spending the Stress represents the social cost of imposing on a Great Beast and the risk of not gaining an audience. The Great Beasts can give you knowledge of happenings within their realm and gossip about the other Great Beasts. Much of this information is left up to the gamemaster but there are some standard types of things a Beast Lord will know. The Beast Lords of earthly creatures know of the Beast Lords of all other earthly creatures (that is, creatures native to your game world). They also know whether the other Beast Lords are waxing or waning and roughly how powerful they are

compared to the other Beast Lords; these are arrogant and competitive beings.

The Beast Lords also know everything that one of their **tokens** (tokens are the particular creatures in the world modeled after the Great Beast) is feeling. This allows you to use them as a kind of surveillance device since they can see through the eyes of any of their creatures. They also know everything that their tokens have experienced within the past 24 hours. Animal memories dim quickly. Pact members gain a 30 minute interview; they can use this request to ask questions such as “have any of your children seen this man” then hold up a picture.

THE CHAMBER

Pact Skill: Knowledge (behavioral sciences or earth and life sciences), Heal/Treat Injury, or Intimidate

Stress Buffer: 10 + Intelligence modifier

Any crime you can imagine has its own religion in the abyss. Millions of demons refine such trivial evils as vandalism and rudeness to avant-garde performance art. Just imagine then what demonkind would do with something truly horrific.

The Chamber is a collection of torturers, jailers, and mad scientists. Their prisons and laboratories infest the lower planes. A system of pneumatic tubes connects many of these chambers; small cylinders shoot along the network of tubes. Every time a serial killer dies in the material worlds the last black breath they exhale channels into the network of tubes, providing the motive force for the cylinders. The tubes are fashioned from iron, adamantite, and chitin exuded from the organic walls of the Abyss. The Chamber uses these tubes and cylinders to communicate, sharing secret arts of torture and science. One can become immortal through these tubes; sharing your knowledge with others builds respect for your intellect and can create a legacy that lasts eons after your demise. Seven ebon-skinned paladins invaded the Abyss 38 centuries ago, cut Zhishan the marilith dame into 666 pieces, and buried the pieces beneath 666 hallowed cornerstones but her 13 treatises on the flaying of living nerves remains one of the most influential written works in the Abyss.

The Chamber is the library, sage, and jailer of the lower planes. Other demons seek them for information and bring them prisoners for interrogation. Demon lords fund their research projects. The scientists use these resources to craft new kinds of fiends, often grafted together composites. The scientists also use these resources to construct fiendish technologies, battering rams crafted from arcane energy and the skulls of still-born elephants or engines driven by screams. The Chamber does not run the Abyss but the Abyss could barely function without it.

GAINING PACT LEVELS

As with all the lower plane pacts, many who join the Chamber sacrifice their soul for the privilege. Other options are available for those who don't wish to pay such a high price.

PUBLISH OR PERISH

The Chamber values you for what you know and how much you share. You gain influence by proving your genius to others. To do this you must spend a nominal amount of time transcribing your knowledge. For game purposes the time spent transcribing can be assumed to occur in the background but you should assume about two days per rank of Knowledge skills per year to keep up your publishing schedule. That's if you write by hand. Those from high technology worlds (i.e. with computers) halve the time needed. Most advanced members of the Chamber have permanent unseen servants, familiars that can write, or other magical forms of assistance that do the writing for them while they talk or perform others sorts of research. If you have one of those helpers then time spent doing something else (such as crafting a magic item) also counts towards fulfilling the publishing requirement.

After transcribing what you know and your theories you pass the transcriptions into the network of tubes running through the Abyss. Many of these texts eventually find their way back to the world, perhaps as a compilation or as notes in someone else's text. Improper citation and plagiarism can earn you a more central role in the research process...

You receive one publishing credit for every 5 ranks of Knowledge skills you possess; these ranks do not need to be in one skill, 3 ranks of one skill and two ranks of another grant you one credit. You also receive extra publishing credits for having high Knowledge skill ranks. The nearby chart lists the bonus credits; you get these for each Knowledge skill with that many total ranks. It pays to specialize. Finally, you receive an additional publishing credit for every 2 points of Intelligence bonus. Total the publishing credits you possess and compare to the following chart to determine the number of Pact levels gained via publishing:

Credits	Pact Level	High Skills	Credits (total)
2	1	10 ranks	+1
6	2	15 ranks	+2
9	3	20 ranks	+4
13	4		

Oddly enough, there's no restriction on the kinds of Knowledge skills that count. While your extensive knowledge of rast haiku has little utility, that is made up for by the fact

that you have few competitors for becoming an expert in that field.

THE RAW MATERIAL OF RESEARCH

The chamber needs extensive resources to carry on its research and experimentation. This can take a wide variety of forms, corpses of rare creatures, ancient tomes and rare texts, plants and herbs alien to the Abyss, and minerals useful in forging new kinds of tools. Assign the objects donated to research a gold value; every 3,000 gp worth of materials gives you one publishing credit.

SUMMONINGS

You may summon the following creatures via a pact gate of the appropriate degree as requests (using the standard request format); your pact level must be at least as high as the gate degree required. These creatures will fight for you, even risking their life, acting in all ways like a creature summoned via a *summon monster* spell so long as the fight is not on their home plane. On their home plane the intelligent demons play it cautious but will fight until things look overly bleak.

Summonings				
Demon Type	Gate Degree	Request DC	Request Cost	Duration
Dretch	1	15	4 stress	6 rounds
Quasit	2	20	4 stress	8 rounds
Hezrou	4	35	6 stress	16 rounds
Nalfeshnee	4	45	8 stress + 1,000 gp	16 rounds
Marilith	4	50	10 stress + 3,000 gp	16 rounds

FIRST DEGREE

LIQUID FORTITUDE

DC: 15

Request Cost: 4 stress

Target: 1 creature

Duration: 10 minutes

Saving Throw: Fortitude negates (DC 13)

Spell Resistance: No

With this request you reach through the pact gate and withdraw an archaic hypodermic crafted of curling silver wrapped around a crystal vial; a hollow needle extends out one end. The fluid in the hypodermic helps one stay conscious despite pain; unfortunately it does this by causing extreme pain. While using this you suffer a -2 to armor class, attack, and skill checks due to the pain. You gain 20 temporary hit points, a +3 circumstance bonus to Fortitude saves, and can operate while at negative hit points. Most spellcasters who request this inject it into either a friend or themselves (foregoing their saving throw), willing to suffer the agony in order to fight a bit longer. The Chamber injects

it into patients who pass out too easily.

SCREAMS OF THE TORTURED

DC: 15

Request Cost: 4 stress

Area: 20 ft. radius burst

Duration: 5 rounds

Saving Throw: Will negates (DC 13)

Spell Resistance: Yes

This request opens a gate to a torture chamber; one in use. The screams emanating from hole have enough supernatural backing to cause both magical and normal fear. Those who fail their save are **shaken**. A **shaken** character suffers a -2 morale penalty on attack rolls, checks, and saving throws. This affects all within the area, friend and foe alike.

THE PNEUMATIC TUBES

DC: 15

Request Cost: 4 stress

Duration: 10 minutes

Saving Throw: None

Spell Resistance: No

You open the pact gate to access the pneumatic tubes running through the Abyss. Any pact member has a sort of address, a routing station to which the demons in charge of the system guide cylinders. The cylinders moving along these tubes have a cavity 5 inches in diameter and 15 inches in height; for comparison, this is roughly the size of a large thermos. The cylinder arrives at its destination in 1d10 hours. Your “box” is a bank of slots where incoming cylinders fall out of the network; these slots might be iron, bone, or flesh. You can adjust a series of enruned dials on the cylinder, like the dial locks you see on modern day briefcases. The setting of these dials determines where the cylinder goes. One can also use magic to set the destination; for more special destinations you might have to use magic. After setting the dial you simply slide the cylinder into the pneumatic tube opening to send it. When you invoke this request you have ten minutes to check your “box” and send cylinders.

SECOND DEGREE

MINOR RESEARCH REQUEST

DC: 20

Request Cost: 4 stress

Effect: 3 Knowledge skill checks

Duration: 10 minutes

Saving Throw: None

Spell Resistance: No

You access the pneumatic tubes and send out a request for information regarding some topic. 3d8 hours later you’ll receive an answer to your question in your “box”; you need to invoke a *pneumatic tubes* request later on to retrieve your

answers and it’s typically best to wait the full 24 hours. Treat this as 3 separate Knowledge checks, each with a +15 bonus. Almost all fields of Knowledge are available with gamemaster approval. You can also split the Knowledge checks; for example, you could ask for one Knowledge (nature) and two Knowledge (lower planes) checks.

While making this request you can also check your mailbox and send messages normally.

SEA OF BLOOD

DC: 20

Request Cost: 4 stress

Area: 20 ft. radius spread centered on the pact gate

Duration: 10 rounds

Saving Throw: Special

Spell Resistance: No

Vast vats of blood serve the hydraulics of the Abyss. The Chamber also taps this blood for use in ritual and experiment. The lords of chaos have simply tossed all the blood from their billions of victims together in these reservoirs; this limits its utility in most magic but makes it more valuable for certain purposes. With this request you tap into one of the reservoirs and pour the blood out in a rushing stream.

All those in the area of effect must take 1d8+4 fire damage and 1d8+4 acid damage from the caustic nature of the blood; a successful Reflex save halves the damage. They must also make a Fortitude save or the wave of blood knocks them down. Victims get a +4 size bonus to this saving throw for every size category over Medium-size; victims with three or more legs also receive a +4 stability bonus to the save against the knockdown.

If the area the blood fills is contained and covers less than a 10 foot radius spread, the blood fills the container, submerging all inside. Those immersed in the blood continue to take 1 point of fire and acid damage each round during their action and may drown (using the normal rules). The blood slowly flows back into the Abyssal reservoirs, fully returning after 30 minutes.

SUMMON SWARM

DC: 20

Request Cost: 4 stress

Effect: Swarm of small creatures in a 10 ft. radius spread centered on the pact gate

Duration: 6 rounds

Saving Throw: None

Spell Resistance: No

With this request you open a pact gate near a wog of hezrou. A treaclely slime covers the hezrou, drawing flies, roaches, and other insects to surround them in a constant cloud. In

the pollywogs of their home plane the insects grow so thick as to make the air soupy with vermin. By opening a gate you draw through some of this mass to interfere with an opponent.

A swarm of little creatures fills the affected area, viciously attacking all other creatures there. The creatures all count as vermin. A creature in the swarm who takes no actions other than fighting off the swarming creatures takes 1 point of damage on its turn. A creature in the swarm who takes any other action, including leaving the swarm, takes 1d4+2 points of damage. Spellcasting or concentrating on spells within the swarm is impossible.

The creatures' attacks are magical enough to bypass damage reduction negated by silver. Greater versions of damage reduction or similar abilities make a creature immune to damage from the swarm.

The swarm cannot be fought effectively with weapons, but fire and damaging area effects can force it to disperse. The swarm disperses when it has taken a total of 15 hit points of damage from these attacks. Certain area or effect spells disperse a swarm immediately if appropriate to the swarm summoned.

The swarm is stationary once summoned.

THIRD DEGREE

ABYSSAL VIVISECTION

DC: 25

Request Cost: 4 stress

Effect: 2 Knowledge checks

Saving Throw: None

Spell Resistance: No

The marilith count some of the greatest and most skilled vivisectionists amongst their number. They have entire universities devoted to the art of vivisection. With this request you summon a marilith vivisectionist to come and rapidly dissect a corpse. The vivisectionists enjoy these on-site experiments, thus the ease of the request. The marilith come through the gate and goes to work on a body of your choosing, flaying off its flesh on one great sheet, pouring the blood and internal fluids into sealed containers, removing all the internal organs into separate containers, stripping the muscle into one large mass, and peeling out the central nervous and endocrine systems to place in another pair of jars. A marilith vivisector can complete this entire process in 5 minutes per 100 pounds of target creature. All six of her arms move in glittering, buzzsaw arcs. The vivisectionist takes the components with her and returns to the abyss. Within 24 hours she'll deposit a complete report in the summoner's box; she can also reveal some gross anomalies on the spot, if they're obvious enough. The vivisection reveals:

- Cause of death of the subject.
- What the subject recently ate.
- Age of the subject.
- What the subject recently breathed.
- Any poisons or diseases afflicting the subject.
- Any negative or positive energy effects on the target.
- The subject's stat block (like the MM write-up), including hit dice, attributes, special attacks, special qualities; anything that has a physical representation in the subject.

The vivisector gets to keep 75% of the victim; the summoner may first set aside 10% of the victim as belonging to him, then the vivisector chooses from the remaining material to fill her share.

ITEM ANALYSIS

DC: 25

Request Cost: 4 stress

Effect: Research one item

Saving Throw: None

Spell Resistance: No

Another of the requests that call on the research capabilities of the Chamber. With this request you submit an item to the Chamber; they send it around to those with the best knowledge of the subject matter. Since they actually have the item to work on they use multiple *identify* spells and a *legend lore* spell to determine the item's abilities. For any item worth less than 100,000 gp this research reveals all the abilities of the item and how to use it. You also get the benefit of whatever historical information they discover while researching the device. While it is possible that whoever researches the item will just keep it, the standards of the Chamber strictly punish this; the upshot is that even if you do lose the item in some unrecoverable way you receive its value in Influence points or fair selling value in gold if not using Influence; the fair selling value is typically half the market price. This is especially risky when sending potential artifacts for research. The more significant risk involved in using this method of research is that you alert others to the fact that you possess the item.

You contact a special terminal for item delivery. 48 hours after handing the item over you must open another third degree pact gate to recover the item and report; this does not require an additional Influence check and does not cost any stress.

URGENT RESEARCH REQUEST**DC:** 25**Request Cost:** 4 stress**Effect:** 2 Knowledge checks**Duration:** 10 minutes**Saving Throw:** None**Spell Resistance:** No

This works like a minor research request but more quickly and at a higher level. You may request two Knowledge checks regarding any topic. Both Knowledge checks occur at a +20 bonus and you receive your answer within ten minutes (before the pact gate shuts down). You should have your questions prepared ahead of time so that you can send them as soon as you open the pact gate; if you do not have them pre-written the gamemaster can assign a 10% or higher chance per minute delayed that the answers come back after the pact gate closes.

FOURTH DEGREE

ABYSSAL GRAFT**DC:** 30**Request Cost:** 4 stress**Target:** One creature**Duration:** 24 hours**Saving Throw:** None**Spell Resistance:** No

This request summons a marilith surgeon through the gate, complete with medical office and assistants. She practices her skin-grafting techniques on a willing or subdued subject. She binds the subject to a steel table, then goes to work stitching demon skin onto the patient's body. She also fuses some chitin into the skeletal structure of the patient; to do this she typically needs to break a few of the subject's bones and rearrange them. The whole process takes 20 blood-spattered and scream-curdled minutes. The patient can make a Fortitude save (DC 30) to remain conscious and gets a +2 synergy bonus on the save if he has 5 or more ranks of Concentration. Alternately, the subject can make a Concentration check (DC 25) to fall unconscious as quickly as possible. It doesn't matter either way for the surgery but some adventurers make it a point of pride to stay conscious through the blinding pain of the process.

The patient takes 20 points of damage from the surgery which can be healed normally. The patient also gains: Damage Reduction 10/+2; Spell Resistance 18; cold, fire, electricity, and acid resistance 20; and a +4 natural armor bonus (magic items and spells can increase this). All these benefits last for 24 hours, at the end of which the graft melts away.

RETRIEVAL SERVICES**DC:** 30**Request Cost:** 8 stress**Effect:** Locate one creature or object**Duration:** 24 hours**Saving Throw:** None**Spell Resistance:** No

This request summons a retriever to track something down for you. The retriever has the abilities listed in the MM and uses its **find target** special quality to help you locate your target. This operates like the *discern location* spell but the retriever may use the ability repeatedly over the course of the day. It will only use this to locate a single creature or object but by being able to use it multiple times the retriever can better track the target; for example, the retriever could locate a protected target's clothes or shoes, perhaps some coins, or use some other method to track the target indirectly. The retriever refuses to fight and leaves if it takes even one point of damage or has to make a saving throw.

TEARING THE SOUL FROM ITS ABYSSAL BINDINGS**DC:** 30**Request Cost:** 4 stress**Effect:** Locate one creature or object**Duration:** Permanent**Saving Throw:** None**Spell Resistance:** No

The nalfeshnee can raise the dead, at least in theory. In fact what they do is tear a soul from its abyssal bindings and release it back into the world of living things. With this request you can get a nalfeshnee to do that for a subject. The target creature must be chaotic evil and, unlike a regular raise dead, may not choose to resist the summons; this is because the pathetic souls writhing in the walls of the Abyss have to do whatever their demon overlords wish. Even worse, when the hapless creature returns to life it is infected with dark energies; this makes it subject to turning and rebuking. Otherwise this works like a normal *raise dead* spell. Spellcasters often use this not on their allies, but on the corpses of those they wish to interrogate.

Note: This is an awfully high level request for an ability with an even more limited effect than a common fifth level spell. This is because wizards can use this. If you prefer to run a game with less access to *raise dead* and similar effects you can replace those with spells like this; by assigning a horrific cost you mark those powered by unnatural life. Those who are brought back in this way occupy a shadowy place between life and unlife.

COGNATE ARCHITECTURE

Pact Skill: Computer Use or Decipher Script

Stress Buffer: 10 + your Intelligence modifier

The Cognate Architecture fuses together millions of tiny astral creatures into an organized structure capable of significantly greater computational power than any of its components. The majority of the components are mental procedures that float through the depths of astral space; like plankton, these are the equivalent of single-celled animals. Unlike plankton these single cells are units of thought. Scholars and psionic scientists give these a variety of names, typically incorporating the name of the discoverer; more generally they are called process spirits. The process spirits appear as shining points of colored light. They naturally collect into vast star-fields in the deeps of astral space. Each process spirit runs a single procedure, a collection of unified memories, a single emotion, a single drive, or a single information processing method. Process spirits communicate with other nearby process spirits in their natural state. However, since the spirits group together randomly, this communication serves no function other than causing them to shift constantly in their relations to each other. The Cognate Architecture started as a group of individuals dedicated to bringing process spirits together in an ordered structure. By arranging process spirits in the right manner their natural means of communication could be organized for computational purposes. As the Architecture grew so did the computational power; this required new methods to facilitate communication between process spirits and the Cognate Architecture spends much of its time experimenting with new media in which to immerse the process spirits. By embedding the spirits within the right kind of astral fluid their natural communication speeds up significantly. The core functions of the Cognate Architecture are embedded in a permanent array of process spirits. Around this frozen central core the Cognate Architects arrange a variety of free-floating external process spirits that accomplish a wide range of tasks. Most people refer to the massive thinking machine as the Cognate Architecture and call those who help design, develop, and maintain that machine, the Cognate Architects.

When you join this pact you join the ranks of Cognate Architects. You become an engineer of sorts, though the architects need a wide variety of skills. You might help maintain and develop the Architecture itself. Alternately you can provide the core materials needed for the expansion of the Cognate Architecture. The Cognate Architecture itself is simply a massive computer. Unlike a computer, the Architecture includes explicitly emotional modules. This makes the Architecture capable of procedures unavailable

to normal computers. It also makes it less efficient at certain operations that computers handle well.

The Architecture does not yet exhibit a unified consciousness and some architects believe that, due to its size, it will never possess a unified consciousness. However, local regions of the Architecture exhibit consciousness and an awareness of self. These appear temporarily and are likely constructed from transient wave loci. The Architecture has grown large enough that its communication now passes in waves through its structure. Major waves pass through it on a regular basis, like the waves in a human brain. However, these waves also create secondary and tertiary waves that can echo through the structure for long periods of time. Secondary and tertiary waves often connect disjointed regions of the Architecture. Occasionally the waves achieve a stable state. When these stable states occur a consciousness can develop at a wave intersection. The consciousness typically comes into the world with a full set of memories, beliefs, and methods of thought. Communicating with these consciousnesses is often enlightening and a more efficient method of running procedures through the Cognate Architecture. The longest time such a consciousness has lasted was 7 years, 5 months, and 13 days. The shortest time is unknown; most architects assume that minor consciousnesses appear and vanish constantly, some lasting perhaps microseconds.

Many of the requests available through the Cognate Architecture draw psychic creatures through the pact gate to temporarily bond with the summoner, an ally, or an enemy. These psychic creatures impart some of their abilities to the bonded creature. The creatures are pure mentation and even less tangible than an incorporeal creature. While bonded to a target they cannot be attacked. However they can be exorcised.

GAINING PACT LEVELS

Working on the Cognate Architecture is the best way of gaining levels in this pact but few player characters have the time to do that. As an alternative, they can help power the Architecture or supply some of the basic material that makes it run.

CODING TECHNIQUES

The Cognate Architecture needs to constantly add new methods of coding processes and procedures. It accumulates memories, experiences, and feelings and all these need special techniques and methods when incorporated into the cognitive superstructure. Creating a technique with an effective check of 35 or higher grants +1 pact level. Creating a coding technique with a check of 50 or higher is worth 2 pact levels. The base time to do this is two weeks. It is assumed that most characters will take 20 on these checks,

thus 40 weeks. You may use either Computer Use or Decipher Script to craft the technique.

MEMORY SACRIFICE

By transferring your memories and knowledge to the Architecture you help build a stronger information base for the structure. This works by having the character sacrifice skill points and/or feats to the Architecture. Every 5 skill points or 1 feat sacrificed to the Architecture gives the character one pact level. These skill points and feats are simply lost.

PSYCHIC EMPOWERMENT

While tremendous waves of psychic energy already flow through the Cognate Architecture, it can always use more. By sacrificing psionic power points to the architecture you can gain pact levels. You may also sacrifice spell slots; the translation process is inefficient, thus you need to sacrifice higher level spells than you would if you were sacrificing manifestations.

Pact Level	Psionic Power Points	Spell Slots
First	3	3
Second	10	3 & 5
Third	21	3, 5, & 7
Fourth	36	3, 5, 7, & 9

SUMMONINGS

You may summon the following creatures via a pact gate of the appropriate degree as requests (using the standard request format); your pact level must be at least as high as the gate degree required. These creatures will fight for you, even risking their life, acting in all ways like a creature summoned via a *summon monster* spell.

Summonings				
Creature Type	Gate Degree	Request DC	Request Cost	Duration
Astral Construct 2	1	15	4 stress	8 rounds
Astral Construct 4	2	20	4 stress	8 rounds
Astral Construct 6	3	25	4 stress	12 rounds
Phthisic	3	25	4 stress	12 rounds
Astral Construct 8	4	30	4 stress	16 rounds

FIRST DEGREE

INFORMATION RETRIEVAL

DC: 15

Request Cost: 4 stress

Effect: 2 questions

Duration: 10 minutes

With this request you access the Cognate Architecture like a modern world character would a computer network. The Cognate Architecture is an inefficient information resource but has large stores of data. Unfortunately, most of the data in the Architecture relates to alien places and ancient times.

While connected you can make up to 2 Knowledge checks relating to any field. Unlike normal checks these have no skill bonus but you roll 2d20 and sum them to determine the effective skill check. You also get retries on these Knowledge checks since you can access different modules of the Architecture.

PSYCHIC DEFENDER

DC: 15

Request Cost: 4 stress

Range: 30 ft.

Target: One creature

Duration: 10 minutes

Saving Throw: Will negates (DC 13, harmless)

Spell Resistance: Yes

This request draws a psychic combatant through the pact gate to bond with the target. While bonded to the target the combatant cannot use any of its attack modes; maintaining the bond and lack of direct access to the outside world prevents that. However, it can activate psionic defense modes while bonded. These modes protect both itself and its host. It has access to all psionic defense modes and possesses 30 psionic power points with which to defend. The host may choose which defense modes to use. The host counts as being psionic for defending while bonded to the creature.

RECORDER

DC: 15

Request Cost: 4 stress

Range: 30 ft.

Target: One creature

Duration: 30 minutes

Saving Throw: Will negates (DC 13, harmless)

Spell Resistance: Yes

This request draws an archive spirit through the pact gate. The spirit bonds with the target then begins recording all the target's sensations, feelings, and thoughts. The archivist encodes these experiences both in itself and in a special region of the target's psyche. The target can later recall those experiences and thoughts at will, with no loss in clarity. The archivist also keeps a record of those experiences but there are so many archivists and such a long history of recorded experiences that unless someone knows exactly where to look it'd be almost impossible to pull the right recording.

SECOND DEGREE

LOGIC UPLINK

DC: 20

Request Cost: 4 stress

Range: 30 ft.

Target: One creature

Duration: 4 hours

Saving Throw: Will negates (DC 16, harmless)

Spell Resistance: Yes

This request summons a logic interface process spirit through the pact gate. The interface spirit merges with the target; this links the target's mind with the Cognate Architecture. While linked with the Cognate Architecture the target can call on its enormous computational powers to aid in mental activities. This speeds up mental processes by a factor of 20; the game effect is that the target may Take 20 on all Intelligence based skill checks (but not Influence checks based on those skills). This works even for skills that do not normally allow you to take 20. Making these checks takes the time required for a normal skill check. This takes a terrible toll on the normal mind; the character suffers 1d4 temporary Wisdom damage at the end of the duration.

MENTAL REPAIR

DC: 20

Request Cost: 4 stress

Range: 30 ft.

Target: One creature

Duration: 4 hours

Saving Throw: Will negates (DC 16, harmless)

Spell Resistance: Yes

This request draws a repair spirit through the pact gate to bond with the target. The spirit naturally re-invigorates psychic pathways and synaptic connections; it also reconstructs mental structures from regions of the brain that have deteriorated due to internal inconsistency or partial damage. This heals 1d4 points of temporary or permanent Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma damage. Note that it heals all types of damage simultaneously. The process occurs over a period of 4 hours. At the end of the period the target also receives another saving throw against any lasting mental effects, such as *domination*, *confusion*, or so on; the target uses his new, higher attributes for making the saving throw.

PROCESSING SPEED

DC: 20

Request Cost: 4 stress

Range: 30 ft.

Target: One creature

Duration: 8 rounds

Saving Throw: Will negates (DC 16, mostly harmless)

Spell Resistance: Yes

This request draws a hyper-charged psychic spirit through the pact gate. When this spirit bonds with the target it pumps energy into the target's psychic connections. This greatly enhances thinking speed. This gives the target a +4 bonus to Initiative, a +2 competence bonus to Spot and Listen checks, and allows the character to cast one spell or manifest one psion per round as a free action (as if **Quickened**). The spell

or manifestation must have a casting time of less than one round. At the end of the duration all that speed and power takes its toll; the target suffers 1d4 temporary Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma damage. Roll separately for each attribute.

THIRD DEGREE

COGNATE BOND

DC: 25

Request Cost: 4 stress

Range: 30 ft.

Target: One creature

Duration: 4 hours

Saving Throw: Will negates (DC 19)

Spell Resistance: Yes

This request draws a special interface process spirit through the pact gate to bond with a nearby construct or other mindless creature. The spirit provides a linkage between one of the transient intelligences and the target object. The target object resists with a Will save (DC 19). If the target fails its saving throw the transient intelligence takes over. The intelligence is friendly to the summoner; it has Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma scores of 16. It also 4 skills with 10 ranks each and 1 feat; the summoner may choose the skills and feat. The intelligence may only use the feat if it satisfies all prerequisites when bonded to the target. The intelligence can have any personality that the gamemaster can imagine; typically it has no useful incidental information since it draws its memories from a diverse array of subjects. This effect works against constructs, mindless undead, and astral constructs, including the ones you summon. If used against an astral construct that you summon increase the duration of the summoning to 4 hours; this special feature only works on astral constructs of type 6 and lower.

EMOTION UPLINK

DC: 25

Request Cost: 4 stress

Range: 30 ft.

Target: One creature

Duration: 10 minutes

Saving Throw: Will negates (DC 19, harmless)

Spell Resistance: Yes

This request draws an emotive interface process spirit through the pact gate to meld with the target. This links the target's emotional structure into the emotional patterns of the Cognate Architecture. This is a controlled uplink so the target can use the Architecture to control his own emotions; the target can feel any emotion he desires while this is in effect. This makes the target immune to fear and other emotional effects if he wishes. The target can also summon strong emotions regarding any topic of his choosing. By

controlling your emotions you gain a +2 morale bonus on all checks. If you can rage (as the barbarian ability) you can double its duration. You can also call a great flood of passion into your body; this grants you a +5 morale bonus on one check and allows you to roll twice, taking the better result. Calling up the flood of passion burns you out emotionally; you take 1d6 points of temporary Wisdom damage each time you do so.

STACCATO PSYCHIC OVERLOAD

DC: 25

Request Cost: 4 stress

Range: 60 ft.

Area: 20 ft. radius burst

Duration: Instantaneous

Saving Throw: Will special (DC 19)

Spell Resistance: Yes

This request draws six assault spirits through the pact gate. The spirits zip towards the target area then let loose with a series of different psychic assaults. The rapid succession of psionic attacks along different channels overloads most victims.

Victims of the attack must make 3 Will saving throws (DC 19). If a victim succeeds at all 3 saving throws he suffers no ill effects. The other effects depend on how many saving throws are failed:

1 failed save: Victim is stunned for one round.

2 failed saves: Victim suffers 2 points of temporary Intelligence and Wisdom damage and is stunned for 1d4 rounds.

3 failed saves: Victim suffers 1d6 points of temporary Dexterity, Intelligence, and Wisdom damage and falls into epileptic seizure for 2d6 rounds. Each round of the seizure the victim suffers 1d6 points of subdual damage and one point of regular damage.

FOURTH DEGREE

COMPARTMENTALIZE

DC: 30

Request Cost: 4 stress

Range: 30 ft.

Target: One creature

Duration: Permanent

Saving Throw: Will negates (DC 22)

Spell Resistance: Yes

This request summons a surgeon spirit through the pact gate. The spirit then goes to work on a target you designate, blocking off a portion of his consciousness. This works on unwilling victims but less efficiently than other effects; the victim receives two saving throws at the end of the period.

If either saving throw succeeds the process fails.

You may choose to lock out as much of the target's knowledge and as many of its memories and beliefs as you desire. You cannot plant memories, knowledge, or beliefs with this request. The process takes 4 hours so you should either have a willing target or a captured one. When locking out the information you can declare a trigger event that reveals it; passwords, images, events and so on can be used as trigger events. You may indicate up to 5 distinct trigger events. Once the trigger event occurs the target regains access to all of the locked out memories. While locked out, the target has no access to the targeted memories. This can be useful for intrusion and negotiation when you want the target to be capable of honestly saying that he doesn't know something that he otherwise would. This is also useful for removing trace memories of an event you want kept hidden. The *mental repair* request and *restoration* spells can open access to locked out memories; however they must make a caster level check against DC 26 to succeed.

FUNCTION BOND

DC: 30

Request Cost: 4 stress

Range: 30 ft.

Target: One creature

Duration: 10 minutes

Saving Throw: Will negates (DC 22, harmless)

Spell Resistance: Yes

This request draws a function spirit through the pact gate. Function spirits are pure psychic creatures that encapsulate skills or techniques; they can pass use of these to the bonded creature. The target gains 20 skill ranks that it can distribute as it sees fit, including distributing the ranks to skills the target already possesses; these ranks do not provide synergy bonuses nor can they be used to satisfy prerequisites for other abilities. The target may spend 7 skill ranks to purchase a feat. The target must satisfy any prerequisites for feats acquired in this fashion and cannot exceed his normal skill rank limit.

GRAY EFFLUENCE

DC: 30

Request Cost: 4 stress

Range: 30 ft.

Target: One creature

Duration: 30 minutes

Saving Throw: Reflex negates (DC 22, harmless)

Spell Resistance: Yes

This request draws forth astral material through the pact gate. This silvery-gray stuff shines like polished lead. When you draw the material through you can order it to coat an

object or creature. Whatever it coats gains a hardness of 5 and spell resistance of 20. Detections, teleportation, and X-ray vision do not work through the material. While coated with the effluence, a creature looks like a silvery-gray, featureless manikin of itself. The creature can see perfectly through the material.

In a modern setting reports of featureless gray aliens could be due to creatures from astral space entering the world covered in this material or a lesser version of it. If so, you could make any of your favorite humanoid monsters the truth behind the gray aliens.

THE FIRE PACT

Pact Skill: Intimidate or Perform

Stress Buffer: 10 + your Charisma modifier

In the fire realms 'mander captains guide double masted schooners of obsidian with white-hot tungsten skeletons. The leviathan rast prowls the burning deeps. Cities of brass and bronze and steel form the hubs of commerce in the vast flame sea. Raw fire lives here and all those under its influence burn.

WATER IN THE FIRE REALMS

In the fire seas plane described here water exists. The heat means that almost all water is in steam form. Much of the steam is evenly dispersed throughout the fire sea and locals use cool plates of ceramic, glass, or obsidian to condense the vapor out of the atmosphere. The steam occasionally collects into full scale clouds; this creates a cooler area and more water vapor collects in these clouds as it condenses out of the atmosphere. These clouds might rain normally; water-miners search for these storms. Some storms grow so large that they create a permanent cool area, and thus a permanent storm, like the great red spot on Jupiter. The people of the seas often build cities near the periphery of the storm. Every object in the fire seas cooler than the fire itself collects condensation. The continent sized rocks are often wreathed in fog and almost constant rains, making them more like tropical jungles than deserts.

If you prefer keeping your elements separate, the fire realms are one vast desert. Much of what we consider life would be incapable of living there. Even worse, anything with water as part of their body would likely lose that water, or have it suppressed, upon entering the fire realms. This would kill a human instantly. You can instead rule that all water is replaced with a sort of liquid flame. This liquid flame causes 2d6 fire damage per round as it burns the traveler from the inside out. To survive in this place one needs magical protection.

With this pact you form a connection with primal fire; you can call on its servants, those who use it for blood, and the powers of living flame itself. Fire is more than simple combustion. Fire is appetite. Fire fuels the passion that drives both creation and destruction.

The sea of flame is a vast open space filled with clouds of fire. Fire rises and the realm burns so intensely that anything capable of surviving it can fly at 30 feet per round (good maneuverability). Massive stone islands roll through the depths; they exert a localized form of gravity out to twice their radius above the ground. For smaller islands the gravity is just enough to hold someone near the surface of the rock. The largest of these stones can reach the size of a terrestrial continent and exert an earth-like gravity. Vegetation doesn't survive long here but some unusual plants, such as the living jade of the Kikitik Archipelagoes grow in lush jungles.

In the Second World setting, the Fire Sea is a large region of the Forge, the plane separating the Second World from the modern world. Interstitial passages lead from the Fire Sea to pocket interstices and planes of purer fire; these would be like the elemental planes of fire but there are many of them instead of just one. If your world sticks with a single elemental plane of fire you can still include some water in the plane. All darkness contains a seed of light and vice versa; like the yin and yang symbol the fire elemental planes could include a seed of water. In some sense the plane needs its opposite in order to exist.

Many of the requests of the fire pact involve summoning or dealing with various fire spirits. These allow you to interact with fire, negotiate contracts with it, and exchange favors. Fire respects strong emotions and those moved by strong emotions.

GAINING PACT LEVELS

The fire pact rewards those who give it their anger, burn material dedicated to it, or craft great works of art.

BURNT OFFERINGS

Fire consumes. By burning items or materials of great value in a ritual dedicated to the element of fire you can curry favor with flame. If burning mundane objects, divide the value by 10 since they don't have the same potency as objects invested with magical power. Houses and other buildings count as mundane objects.

Pact Level	Gold Cost
First	4,000 gp
Second	16,000 gp
Third	36,000 gp
Fourth	64,000 gp

CRAFTING GREAT ART

Art immortalizes passion. By crafting great works of art you can earn pact levels. Crafting a work of art requires a Craft skill check, either structural, visual art, or writing. Only these sorts of permanent arts count for the Fire Pact; Perform can create great art but it is too temporary. Crafting a piece of art with an effective check of 32 or higher grants +1 pact level. Crafting a piece of art with a check of 45 or higher creates a timeless masterpiece and is worth 2 pact levels. It is assumed that the character will take 20 on these checks; great art is a slow process.

SACRIFICING ANGER

Anger is a fuel. By sacrificing your anger to the Fire Pact you strengthen the pact's elemental power.

Creatures that can **rage** (such as Barbarians) may sacrifice two of their daily rages to gain one pact level in the Fire Pact. You may take this version of Sacrificing Anger multiple times.

Creatures without the ability to rage don't have as much to offer since their passions burn more weakly. A regular creature can sacrifice its anger, giving it a -2 penalty on all attack checks. This grants it one pact level. You may only take this version of Sacrificing Anger once.

SUMMONINGS

You may summon the following creatures via a pact gate of the appropriate degree as requests (using the standard request format); your pact level must be at least as high as the gate degree required. These creatures will fight for you, even risking their life, acting in all ways like a creature summoned via a *summon monster* spell.

Summonings				
Creature Type	Gate Degree	Request DC	Request Cost	Duration
Small Fire Elemental	1	15	4 stress	4 rounds
Fire Mephit	2	20	4 stress	8 rounds
Hell Hound	2	20	4 stress	8 rounds
Medium Fire Elemental	2	20	4 stress	8 rounds
Large Fire Elemental	3	25	4 stress	12 rounds
Salamander	3	25	4 stress	12 rounds
Huge Fire Elemental	4	30	4 stress	16 rounds

FIRST DEGREE

FIRE SWORD SPIRIT

DC: 15

Request Cost: 4 stress

Target: one weapon

Duration: 6 rounds

This request allows you to summon a weapon spirit from the fire realms. The spirit flies out of the gate and bonds with a weapon of your choosing. For the duration of the effect the weapon gains the *flaming* magical quality, as detailed in the DMG.

FLAME WISP

DC: 15

Request Cost: 4 stress

Effect: summons one flame wisp

Duration: 4 hours

This request summons a flame wisp through the pact gate. Flame wisps are Tiny elemental spirits that hover near their master. They shed a rich, yellow light over a thirty foot radius. The richness of the light deepens shadows, bringing the texture out, and saturates the colors of objects, making them more vibrant. This provides a +5 circumstance bonus to Spot and Search checks against everything within the illuminated area. You can command a flame wisp to float up to 60 feet away from you when you want to inspect something at a distance. Flame wisps don't fight but can be attacked; use the following stat block:

Flame Wisp: CR 1/2; Size M; HD 2d8 (Outsider); hp 9; Init +2; Spd Fly 60 ft. (Perfect); AC 14 (14 Touch); Melee: Flaming Touch +1 (1d3); SQ: fire subtype; incorporeal; AL N; SV Fort +3, Ref +5, Will +3; Str 5, Dex 15, Con 10, Int 8, Wis 10, Cha 11.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +4, Hide +10, Listen +4, Search +2; **Dodge**

HEAT SHARD

DC: 15

Request Cost: 4 stress

Target: one person

Duration: 30 minutes

This request draws a red, glowing shard of crystal through the pact gate. The crystal is the size of an American football. It hovers near the targeted person and protects him from ranged cold and fire attacks. It absorbs 10 points of fire or cold damage per round. It cannot intercept melee attacks but will protect the target from any ranged or area effect attacks. While the shard is present you may redirect it to protect another person as a Move action.

SECOND DEGREE

FLAME SPEAKER

DC: 20

Request Cost: 4 stress

Duration: 30 minutes

This request draws a flame speaker through the pact gate. Flame speakers are Small balls of multi-colored flame, like

more substantial versions of flame wisps. The flame speaker can talk using any language known by the summoner. It can also talk to fires, even the stupid fires found in the regular world. Fires start off with a Friendly attitude to the flame speaker. Flames are blind and short-lived, but they listen well and can talk about anything spoken in a conversational or louder voice within 20 feet of them since their life began. They overhear even whispered conversations if close enough; for example, candle flames often overhear whispered conversations at taverns and restaurants. You can speak with the fire via the flame speaker for the duration of the effect.

FLAME VIRUS

DC: 20

Request Cost: 4 stress

Range: 30 ft.

Target: 1 fire or creature

Duration: 10 rounds

Saving Throw: Fortitude negates (DC 16)

Spell Resistance: Yes

Fire suffers its diseases too. With this request you draw a virus through the pact gate that afflicts flames. Direct it at an open flame and it begins as a collection of small black flecks; the flecks glow blue-white around the edges. The flecks spread outward at a rate of 5 feet per round within the fire. As the flecks spread the entire fire transforms into a flickering black mass shot through with crackling blue-white bolts, almost like lightning. Two rounds after the virus has spread to a section of flame it extinguishes the fire, leaving a gray ash behind. At the end of the duration the virus ceases to spread (later generations lose potency); thus the virus can only clear up to a 50 foot radius spread of fire.

You can also direct the virus against a living target so long as it has the fire subtype. Living creatures take much longer to kill; treat the virus as a disease: Fortitude save (DC 16), incubation period 1 day; damage 1d3 temporary Constitution. The victim gets an initial Fortitude save (DC 16) to shake off contracting the disease. The virus lives on past its normal duration in a living host; this is because it rapidly mutates into a form that draws its strength from the host. The mutated virus cannot affect normal fires.

SPIRIT OF FURY

DC: 20

Request Cost: 4 stress

Area: 20 ft. radius burst centered on gate

Duration: 10 rounds

Saving Throw: Will negates (DC 16, harmless)

Spell Resistance: Yes

Flame, heat, and passion all tie together in the fire realms. Flame provides the motive energy for spirituality, love, and war. With this request you tap directly into the passion of fire and pass that energy to your targets. This provides a +2 morale bonus to attacks and saving throws either against a particular individual (hate), or against anyone who has attacked a particular individual (love). Designate a subject when you invoke the effect and choose whether the effect is war or love. The passion affects all those in the area though no one need act on it. The subject of the passion receives no save or spell resistance since the passion does not affect them directly.

THIRD DEGREE

DETENTE

DC: 25

Request Cost: 4 stress

Target: You

Duration: 1 hour

With this request you declare a temporary truce between yourself and the element of fire; you both promise not to harm one another. This gives you immunity to fire for the duration of the effect; moreover, fire elementals refuse to

SHIPS OF THE FIRE SEAS

The 'mander schooner is like the top half of two ships fused together so that it looks the same if you flip it over. A mast and scalloped, crystalline sail comes out of each deck. Usually 'manders guide the lower sail (whichever one that happens to be at the time) from the upper deck by using black, fibrous guidelines. 'Manders build their ships starting with an elaborate skeleton of tungsten; they then paint on the flesh of the hull, a pliant ceramic that can be whatever color the crafters prefer. They leave the tungsten skeleton exposed so that the salamanders can superheat it using their body. Heat naturally rises in the outlands so the heated skeleton provides the buoyancy they need when near the monstrous chunks of earth and stone that pass for land there. While under power a 'mander ship's skeleton glows white.

During a full roll the crew turns top sail left and bottom sail right until the ship rolls completely over. Roughened walk-paths lead up over the rail, down along the side, and over the bottom-deck rail. As the ship rolls the crew walks along those paths like rolling a log. Occasionally they make a half roll and stand on the side of the ship with the twin sails sticking out to either side like wings; this format can provide the best speed, albeit at great risk. Since the ship rolls fairly frequently 'manders tie everything down in their cabins; they even design their bunks so that you can sleep on the top side or bottom side.

attack you. You must hold up your side of the bargain too though; you cannot voluntarily harm fire during the truce. This means no putting out torches, summoning flame viruses, or dowsing burning things with water.

If you violate the truce you lose all benefits and immediately suffer 10 points of Influence stress. You also lose use of the Fire Pact for the next 24 hours; after that you're in the clear. Fire has a short memory.

FLAME PHALANX

DC: 25

Request Cost: 4 stress

Range: 150 ft.

Effect: Opaque sheet of flame up to 100 ft. long and 20 ft. high

Duration: 12 rounds

Saving Throw: Reflex negates

Spell Resistance: Yes

This summons forth a moving wall of shimmering fire that takes the form of a solid phalanx of soldiers in sculpted armor that march side by side. The "soldiers" march out of the pact gate and into position when you place the wall. The wall does 2d6+12 points of fire damage to those who pass through it or those it overruns. The wall deals this damage when it appears and each round that a creature enters or remains in the area. The wall deals double damage to undead creatures.

You can move the wall up to 30 feet each round as an Attack action. You can move it 10 feet each round as a Move action. If the wall overruns a target or is summoned on top of a target, the victim may make a Reflex save (DC 19) to take no damage. Those who voluntarily spend a round in the wall, or who move through it, receive no saving throw.

If any 5-foot length of wall takes 20 points of cold damage or more in 1 round, that length goes out. (Do not divide cold damage by 4, as normal for objects.)

TAPPING THE DEEP INFERNO

DC: 25

Request Cost: 4 stress

Range: 60 ft.

Area: Cone

Duration: Instantaneous

Saving Throw: Reflex half (DC 19)

Spell Resistance: Yes

This request opens a pact gate to the deeps of the fire realms; the dense flame filling these regions rushes out in an intense geyser. This fills a cone shaped area with fire, causing 12d6 damage to all those inside. One advantage of using this request as an attack is that the cone originates at the pact gate and you can point the opening of the pact gate in any

direction you like. For example, if you stood with 30 feet of a window you could open the gate inside the window and blast the cone of fire into the room; the window would provide no cover this way.

FOURTH DEGREE

DECOMBUSTION ZONE

DC: 30

Request Cost: 4 stress

Area: 60 ft. radius spread

Duration: 1 hour

Saving Throw: Special

Spell Resistance: No

This request extracts a promise from the element of fire that it will not enter an area for the duration of the request. No fire effects operate within the region covered by the request. Even hot objects do no damage within the area. Creatures with the fire subtype feel uncomfortable in the region and avoid it; they can stay if they make a Will save (DC 22) but if they do so they suffer a -2 morale penalty on all checks. You may center this effect on a location or a creature (but not an object). If centered on a creature, the effect moves with the creature. Note that even small fires refuse to enter the region; thus torches and candles extinguish themselves and your cigarette lighter stops working. Clever casters can use this inventively; for instance, in a modern setting combustion engines wouldn't work within the area covered by the request.

FIRE MOTES

DC: 30

Request Cost: 4 stress

Area: 80 ft. radius spread centered on pact gate

Duration: 16 rounds

Saving Throw: Special

Spell Resistance: No

This request draws a swarm of fire motes through the pact gate. The motes are Diminutive points of intense and unstable fire. They fill the area of effect, like a star field. As many as a half a dozen can occupy each five foot square. As long as you don't move too rapidly you're safe within the field. However, if you move more than five feet in a round you set off the motes. Treat the motes as threatening the entire area covered by the field. Anyone that would provoke an attack of opportunity by moving within the threatened area sets off one mote for each five feet of movement; thus you set off one mote for each five feet of movement above the first five foot step in a round. You may make a Tumble check (DC 20) to move without setting off motes. Each mote you set off explodes for 4d6 fire damage in your five foot square. In theory you receive a Reflex save (DC 22) against this but since dodging out of the way would set off

more notes you should just eat the fire damage like a good soldier. The notes flicker out at the end of the duration.

PROMETHEAN SPARK

DC: 30

Request Cost: 4 stress

Range: 30 ft.

Target: 1 creature

Duration: 24 hours

Saving Throw: Will negates (DC 22, harmless)

Spell Resistance: Yes

Flame destroys but it also provides the spark and passion for creation. With this request you draw that creative spark through the pact gate and use it to inspire. You may bestow the spark on any creature with a mind within 30 feet of the pact gate opening. For the duration of the effect the target performs at peak ability; they automatically “roll” a 20 on all Craft, Perform, and Research checks. If you use a system that allows something akin to critical successes on these sorts of skill checks, this roll counts as a critical threat; the subject still needs to roll normally to confirm the critical.

During the duration the subject may choose to spend his inspiration in one, focused action. This allows the subject to use his inspiration on any single check, not just the delineated skills. The character may declare this after rolling. Creativity of this intensity can shatter a mind; if a character has been inspired by a promethean spark within the past 28 days he suffers 1d6 temporary Wisdom damage from benefiting from another inspiration.

THE GRAND SYMPHONY

Pact Skill: Perform

Stress Buffer: 10 + your Charisma modifier

There’s a reason so many churches and temples devote so much time to hymns, symphonies, and choirs. Through music the parishioners connect themselves with the divine. Celestial hosts have sung and played music since the dawn of the world. Some theorists suggest that the music of the stars drives the world and, were it to stop, so would the motion of the planets.

This pact connects you to that music in a more direct way. The music you play reflects the sounds you hear. The music you play adds to the music driving the engine of the universe. Naturally Bards are drawn to this pact and it works well with their natural talents; however, their moderate arcane skill limits their ability to make use of the pact.

The Symphony protects great artists or those who show promise; they might send the players to protect a child prodigy or older maestro. The Symphony might ask one

of its members to recover a magical instrument of great power, perhaps a mechanical singing bird or pipe organ that plays notes so deep and resonant that its music can be heard across the planes.

While a powerful force for good, the maestros of the Grand Symphony can be difficult to deal with. Being amongst the immortals humbles them to a degree but also reinforces an already prodigious ego; after all, they must be one of the immortals too. Still, the Grand Symphony encompasses many voices, from the timeless mathematical strains of Bach to the nonsensical singing of a child.

GAINING PACT LEVELS

You gain influence in this pact by contributing to music.

PATRONS OF THE ARTS

Mortal musicians add to the sound of the Grand Symphony. The rhythms of the Symphony reach them on a subconscious level and textures the melodies they play. In turn they feed their music back into the music of the world. By supporting mortal artists, opera houses, bands, and orchestras you add to the Grand Symphony and can gain pact levels. Determine the pact level gained by the value of the endowment; it’s assumed that you make the grant in such a way that it provides a lasting benefit, such as an opera house or investment that continually channels funding to support new artists.

Pact Level	Gold Cost
First	4,000 gp
Second	16,000 gp
Third	36,000 gp
Fourth	64,000 gp

CRAFTING GREAT MUSIC

The Grand Symphony constantly needs new music. By crafting great works of music you earn pact levels. Creating a work of music requires a Perform skill check. Creating a composition with an effective check of 35 or higher grants +1 pact level. Creating a composition with a check of 50 or higher creates a timeless masterpiece and is worth 2 pact levels. You must write a significant musical composition, either an album sized collection of songs (and they should be tied together by a theme) or a symphony. The base time to do this is two weeks. It is assumed that most characters will take 20 on these checks, thus a total of 40 weeks; great art is a slow process.

LIVING TONES

You can earn favor with the Symphony by replacing part of your body with celestial crystal. Your own life force powers the crystal; the crystal then resonates with the sound of the Symphony at an almost inaudible level. Each time you do

this you gain one pact level. Each replacement gives you a -1 penalty on Move Silently checks; other effects depend on what you sacrifice. You can sacrifice a hand, in which case you lose use of the hand. If you sacrifice one eye you suffer a -4 penalty to Spot and Search checks and all ranged attacks. If you sacrifice an internal organ you lose 1 point of Constitution. Extrapolate other effects from the examples.

SUMMONINGS

You may summon the following creatures via a pact gate of the appropriate degree as requests (using the standard request format); your pact level must be at least as high as the gate degree required. These creatures will fight for you, even risking their life, acting in all ways like a creature summoned via a *summon monster* spell.

Summonings				
Creature Type	Gate Degree	Request DC	Request Cost	Duration
Lantern Archon	1	15	4 stress	8 rounds
Hound Archon	2	20	4 stress	12 rounds
Lillend	3	25	4 stress	12 rounds
Celestial Destrachan	4	30	4 stress	16 rounds

FIRST DEGREE

THE CALCULUS OF SOUND

DC: 15

Request Cost: 4 stress

Area: 30 ft. radius burst centered on pact gate

Duration: 8 hours

This request opens a pact gate to a section of the Symphony playing fugues or other complex classical music. The mathematical structure underlying such music improves the thinking processes of listeners. Everyone within the area receives a +5 competence bonus to Intelligence based skill checks. The pact gate remains stationary once opened.

CELESTIAL INSTRUMENT

DC: 15

Request Cost: 4 stress

Effect: One musical instrument

Duration: 10 minutes

This request allows you to draw a man-portable instrument through the pact gate. You may choose the type of instrument. This instrument grants a +5 equipment bonus on any perform checks and doubles the range of any musical effects you generate.

CELESTIAL SHARD

DC: 15

Request Cost: 4 stress

Duration: 1 hour

Crystal chandeliers hang in the chambers of the Grand Symphony. The cut crystal shards that make up these chandeliers absorb the tones and resonances played near them. This request allows you to borrow a shard for a time. The crystal shard vibrates, shedding a soft, inaudible tone in a 30 foot radius burst. Within the area covered by the tone sounds are more clear and pure. Silence spells do not operate within the area of the shard, everyone receives a +5 circumstance bonus to Listen checks, and sonic effects cause half damage.

SECOND DEGREE

DESTRACHAN CHANT

DC: 20

Request Cost: 4 stress

Duration: 30 minutes

This request summons a celestial destrachan far-speaker. These destrachan have specially trained their voices to carry long distances. Most destrachan are evil, but a rare few overcome their darker urges and heed a higher calling; these become the celestials. They serve the Symphony with their grand voices; their range of tone, from basses so deep that they're inaudible to humans, to sopranos so high that they can cause physical harm, adds a richness of range to the orchestra.

The summoned destrachan can sing a song or speak to a crowd up to three hundred miles distant. The destrachan can also hear what's spoken at the target location, and can communicate that to the summoner. The destrachan locates the target area by listening; as long as the summoner can direct the destrachan to within one mile of the target area, the destrachan can home in on the exact location through sound.

DIVINE LIGHT

DC: 20

Request Cost: 4 stress

Range: 30 ft.

Area: 30 ft. radius spread

Duration: 20 minutes

Saving Throw: None

Spell Resistance: No

This request opens a pact gate beneath the lunar host; these are the balconies where the lantern archons and ghaele float to watch orchestral movements. The light these creatures give off shines through the pact gate; it's a liquid light and spreads out in a circle. This hurts undead and provides illumination as a *daylight* spell. Moreover, it eliminates natural darkness and magical darkness of power level 4 or lower. The holy power backing this light imposes a -2 morale penalty to attacks on undead and evil outsiders.

RHYTHM OF THE WORLD**DC:** 20**Request Cost:** 4 stress**Duration:** 10 minutes

The beat of the Grand Symphony matches the beat of the world. With this request you open a small pact gate near you that plays the rhythm of the world; the sound bonds with you, guiding your actions and making your movements more graceful and dance-like. While active, this grants you a +2 competence bonus to attacks, armor class, skill checks, and saving throws.

THIRD DEGREEDEEP NOTE**DC:** 25**Request Cost:** 4 stress**Area:** 50 ft. radius burst centered on pact gate**Duration:** Instantaneous**Saving Throw:** Fortitude special (DC 19)**Spell Resistance:** Yes

This request asks the Symphony to sound a single, deep note. The note echoes out of the gate and as it passes through the world it ripples reality; this looks like the shimmer of heat above pavement and passes out through the gate in an expanding circle. These notes disrupt reality on a fundamental level then put it back the way it was. The brief disruption causes 1d6 damage to all in the area, including large fixed structures like walls and doors (but not smaller items such as those carried by someone). The wave disrupts thought as well; everyone in the area must make a Fortitude save (DC 19) or be stunned for one round. Finally, the ripple can disrupt magical patterns; it operates like a single-target dispel against every ongoing spell effect. The dispelling effect operates at caster level 10. The dispelling feature does not affect items.

RICH AIR**DC:** 25**Request Cost:** 4 stress**Area:** 30 ft. radius spread**Duration:** 5 minutes**Saving Throw:** None**Spell Resistance:** No

In order to play the clearest tones you need the purest air. The music chambers of the Symphony use Rich Air, a form of air clear of impurities and made vital with divine power. This request draws some of that air into your world, filling a 30 foot radius spread centered on the pact gate. Within the area of the Rich Air no harmful gasses or sounds work. The air also energizes those in the region, granting a +2 circumstance bonus to all Constitution checks and Fortitude saves and **fast healing 1** to everyone inside for the duration.

Anyone with the **fatigued** or **exhausted** condition suffers no penalties from them while in an area of Rich Air; however, they still count as fatigued or exhausted and must recover normally.

VOICE OF THE DIVINE**DC:** 25**Request Cost:** 4 stress**Area:** 30 ft. radius burst centered on pact gate**Duration:** 6 rounds**Saving Throw:** Will negates (DC 19)**Spell Resistance:** No

This request opens a pact gate and lets the music of the Symphony into the world. The gate reaches the most appealing music, the movements intended to reward the souls of the blessed. Good creatures within the area of effect gain a +2 morale bonus on Saving throws. Evil creatures despair at the realization that this will be forever denied to them; they may take no actions while they hear the music.

FOURTH DEGREEDANCING SWORDS**DC:** 30**Request Cost:** 4 stress**Range:** 30 ft.**Effect:** 2 dancing swords**Duration:** 4 rounds

A pair of celestials let loose their specially enhanced dancing swords to fly through the gate and fight under your direction. The swords are +4 greatswords with attack sequences of +21/+16/+11 melee; they cause 2d6+11 damage with a critical threat range of 19-20. They can move up to 30 ft. per round as a move action but cannot move more than 30 feet from the pact gate opening. The swords may attack on the initial round but moving through the gate counts as a Move action for them. At the end of their last round in this world they speed back through the pact gate.

THE ENGINE OF THE WORLD**DC:** 30**Request Cost:** 4 stress**Area:** 5 mile radius**Duration:** 8 hours

With this request you speak through the pact gate to the part of the Grand Symphony responsible for the music that drives the great engine of the world. You may ask them to slow down or speed up the engine driving the motion of the heavens. This request either stops the sun and stars from moving, or speeds their progress. When slowed the heavens do not turn for the duration of the effect. When sped up, the heavens move as if 60 times as fast, i.e. one hour per minute; you can use this to speed to a certain time

of the day. Other than lengthening or shortening the time of daylight/nighttime this has no other effect. This affects a 5 mile radius centered on you. At the end of the duration, the turning of the heavens speeds up or slows down long enough to put the region covered back in sync with the rest of the world. This is a flashy effect that requires a great deal of power to accomplish but likely has little game mechanical benefit. It's useful for ambushing vampires though.

RIVER OF STARS

DC: 30

Request Cost: 4 stress

Range: 500 ft. long line

Area: Line

Duration: 1 hour

You draw a stream of sparkling points of white light through the pact gate. The light from each point fades to blackness, so that even if the river is summoned in daylight the points of light flow through darkness. The river of stars extends out through the pact gate in an 500 foot long, 20 foot wide line; unlike most line areas of effect the river can have up to four 45 degree turns. The river can pass through any non-magical material, water, air, or stone. As the river passes through the material it bends it out of the way without damaging it, as if bending the space of the stuff.

The river of stars provides a safe channel through any medium. You can only enter at the ends and must walk or ride the entire distance to the far end. Within the river you move as usual but the river protects you as if the edges have DR 35/- and SR 35. The edges block ethereal passage and teleportation.

THE HORDE

Pact Skill: Innuendo or Intimidate

Stress Buffer: 10 + your Charisma modifier

When you observe the motion of a locust plague, or flock of crows, or school of barracuda, you see that all creatures move in unison as if they follow a common plan. But there is no plan, no leader, no government. All you have is blind desire.

The Horde isn't a pact in the normal sense. The Horde did not arise from a formal association of creatures; no hand or secret cabal guided it to political power. The Horde is the great violent mass of demonkind raging across the lower planes. They seek blood and lust and gold and follow whatever provides that. They can and do move in unison; as with all swarms these great movements are guided by visual and local cues. A demon sees other demons moving towards a point and assumes that something is there worth having. De-

mons coordinate their movement through violence to others, keeping them on track or at least out of their own way. Most demons exert authority through barter or threat. The balor wield the greatest power; like pirate captains they control lesser demons through fear and the promise of loot.

The most powerful force in the Horde, though, is Rumor. A vrock hears about the rich soul of a fallen prophet from a glabrezu who heard the murmurings of the dretch, who had listened to and repeated the whisperings of a quasit. The Rumor passes through the mass and evolves, a lethal meme that must compete with other ideas, even its own spawn, for dominance. By controlling and manipulating Rumor, weak creatures can exert their own form of control; this is also the way many arcane spellcasters use the power of the Horde.

RUMOR

Someone once measured the rate of spread of a rumor at 5 miles per hour. Less interesting rumors spread less quickly, retain less of their core, and frequently die off. Fascinating or scandalous rumors spread rapidly, evolve quickly, but sustain an identifiable core. Occasionally a rumor bifurcates, spawning two rumors distinct enough to evolve into very alien, perhaps even competing, ideas. All rumors face competition from other ideas; if a rumor cannot capture the interest of the audience it is either forgotten or changed so much in the re-telling (in order to *make* it interesting) that nothing important remains of the original.

GAINING PACT LEVELS

As with all the lower plane pacts, many who join them sacrifice their soul for the privilege. Other options are available for those who don't wish to pay such a high price.

SELLING YOUR SOUL (2 PACT LEVELS)

Most souls aren't worth much, but most souls don't get you much either. After all, you need to be a high level wizard or sorcerer to use the most powerful effects and those souls are worth a lot. Close connection with chaos can break one's mind. As you age you do not gain bonuses to your mental attributes for increases in age category; you still suffer penalties to your physical attributes when you move to a new age category.

If you sell your soul then you cannot be raised or resurrected. Even wishes fail here. You immediately become evil; you must promote the ends of your patron; and things get much worse after you die.

DEVELOPING YOUR RUMOR

The power of rumor takes almost physical form in the killing fields of the Abyss. By developing your rumor you

gain power over these creatures. To develop your rumor you must be able to open a pact gate of at least first degree; you use this to communicate with the Horde. You open the gate repeatedly over a period of time, whispering through it to whoever might wait on the other side. Demons listen to whispers too much; secrets and scandal fascinate them and they use scandal in barter, trading secrets for other secrets or for more tangible rewards such as beating hearts or poisoned blades.

Developing your rumor takes some time and a lot of skill. Twice per month you must open a pact gate and pass your rumor to the waiting hordes on the far side. When you do this you must make a Bluff check (DC 22) to gain an effective +1 to your pact level for the next two weeks. If you make a Bluff check (DC 35) you can gain a +2 bonus to your effective pact level. You may take 10 on these checks but not take 20 since retries provide no benefit within the same two week period. If the character can sustain a Bluff bonus of +12 you can simply assume that he maintains a +1 to his effective pact level. With a Bluff bonus of +25 you can assume that he maintains a +2 to his effective pact level. Note that since the character needs to only have this high of a bonus twice per month he can use temporary boosting spells or items to assist his checks.

BLOOD AND SOULS FOR THE LORDS OF CHAOS

Demons are gluttons for blood, souls, gold, alcohol, drugs, food, flesh, and the pleasures that go with flesh. You can buy your way into the Horde by providing these goods and services. You can purchase a pact level with gold; the gold actually represents the cost of the things you need to buy to slake the demons' thirsts.

Pact Level	Gold Cost
First	4,000 gp
Second	16,000 gp
Third	36,000 gp
Fourth	64,000 gp

SUMMONINGS

You may summon the following creatures via a pact gate of the appropriate degree as requests (using the standard request format); your pact level must be at least as high as the gate degree required. These creatures will fight for you, even risking their life, acting in all ways like a creature summoned via a *summon monster* spell so long as the fight is not on their home plane. On their home plane the intelligent demons play it cautious but will fight until things look overly bleak.

Summonings				
Demon Type	Gate Degree	Request DC	Request Cost	Duration
Dretch	1	15	4 stress	4 rounds
Quasit	2	20	4 stress	8 rounds
Succubus	3	25	4 stress	12 rounds
Vrock	4	30	4 stress + 1,000 gp	16 rounds
Bebilith	4	30	4 stress	16 rounds
Glabrezu	4	40	6 stress + 2,000 gp	16 rounds
Balor	4	55	6 stress + 5,000 gp	16 rounds

FIRST DEGREE

A TASTE OF THE ABYSS

DC: 15

Request Cost: 4 stress

Target: one tankard sized volume of liquid

Duration: up to 3 rounds

Saving Throw: None

Spell Resistance: No

This request summons an invisible quasit through the pact gate. You whisper into its ear and it scuttles off to dip its claw into a drink. This is enough to poison a tankard-sized volume of liquid (or smaller). The poison allows a Fortitude save (DC 13); initial damage 1d4 temporary Dexterity; secondary damage 2d4 temporary Dexterity. Quasit poison gives off enough of a smell to warn a target ahead of time; the victim gets a Wisdom check (DC 12) to detect something wrong just prior to drinking. The poison loses its potency after 30 minutes in this world.

CLAWS OF THE DRETCH

DC: 15

Request Cost: 4 stress

Target: 1 creature or object

Duration: 1 round

Saving Throw: Reflex half

Spell Resistance: No

You open the pact gate near your target then the arms of a half dozen dretch reach through and scrape at him with their scabrous claws. The target of this effect suffers 2d4 claw attacks, each with a +3 attack bonus and causing 1d4 damage; if the victim makes a Reflex save (DC 13) he is only attacked by 1d4 claws. These claws bypass damage reduction as if they were silver.

WHISPERS THROUGH THE DARK GATE

DC: 15

Request Cost: 4 stress

Effect: 1 message up to 15 words in length

Duration: 1 minute

Saving Throw: None

Spell Resistance: No

With this request you open a pact gate a whisper a rumor through it to the waiting horde. It then passes from creature to creature until the rumor has spread through the entire horde. This allows you to pass a message into the horde. The message can be up to 15 words in length (any longer and it will deteriorate too much in the re-telling). Most casters pass the message into the horde using a sort of encryption that others can break by use of the Innuendo skill. You make an Innuendo check against a declared difficulty class. Anyone else may decrypt the message by making an Innuendo check against your declared DC +10; those with whom you have previously shared the code do not suffer the additional +10 to DC. You can pick up any encrypted messages by making this request; there's a 10% chance per hour since the rumor started of the rumor being available. Most such rumors have a sort of lead section that indicates the source, making it easier to specify which rumors interest you; you must know the shared code to recognize the leaders. This is an effective way to pass information but you run the risk that enemy creatures discover the message.

SECOND DEGREE

CARRION COMFORT

DC: 20

Request Cost: 4 stress

Area: 30 ft. radius spread

Duration: 1 hour

Saving Throw: None

Spell Resistance: No

Vrocks swarm the battlefields of the lower planes. On some layers they just sweep away the swarms of flies picking over the corpses, on others they wait until the great predatory beasts of the layer take what they want, but in all of the abyss nothing matches them in their carrion skills. They are Hell's trash disposers and they love their purpose.

With this request you bring a flock of vrock into the world to pick clean the corpses from an area. The vrock remove all traces of any dead bodies. They peel flesh from bone, crack the bones in their beaks, suck the marrow, then grind the bones to dust and eat that; they lick the walls, ground, and any objects clean of blood, even willing characters. They will also remove any objects the summoner wants removed. This leaves no evidence behind. Neither magical nor mundane means find anything, though the complete absence of evidence is a form of evidence as well. Any corpses "cleaned" by the vlocks are unrecoverable by most magic short of a wish or miracle.

CLOUD OF RAGE

DC: 20

Request Cost: 4 stress

Targets: Cloud that spreads in a 30 ft. radius, 20 ft. high

Duration: 8 rounds

Saving Throw: Will negates (DC 16)

Spell Resistance: Yes

The passions of the abyssal battlefields live on after the wars have finished. Even more potent, some battles never cease and the rage and bloodlust hover over them in a red cloud. With this request you open the pact gate over one of these battlefields and draw the rage forth from that place into this world.

All those within the cloud may rage, as the barbarian ability. If the character is already raging grant an additional +2 bonus to Strength, Dexterity, and Constitution. Characters may use one of their regular rages while under the effect of the cloud to acquire the additional bonuses.

STENCH OF THE DRETCH

DC: 20

Request Cost: 4 stress

Area: Cloud that spreads in a 30 ft. radius, 20 ft. high

Duration: 8 rounds

Saving Throw: Fortitude negates (DC 16)

Spell Resistance: No

You open the pact gate to a vat of dretch, letting the dark cloud of their stink flow into the world. This cloud creates a bank of fog that obscures all sight, including darkvision, beyond 5 feet. A creature within 5 feet has one-half concealment (attacks suffer a 20% miss chance). Creatures farther away have total concealment (50% miss chance, and the attacker can't use sight to locate the target). The fog's vapors are nauseating. Living creatures in the cloud are nauseated (Fortitude negates), making them unable to attack, cast spells, concentrate on spells, and so on. The only action a nauseated character can take is a single move (or move-equivalent action) per turn. These effects last as long as the character is in the cloud and for 1d4+1 rounds after he or she leaves the cloud. (Roll separately for each nauseated character.) Those who succeed at their saves but remain in the cloud must continue to save each round. The cloying vapors of this fog resist wind better than normal clouds; A strong wind (21+ mph) disperses the fog in 4 rounds; a severe wind (31+ mph) disperses the fog in 1 round.

THIRD DEGREE

BORROWING THE BLADE

DC: 25

Request Cost: 4 stress

Duration: 10 rounds

Saving Throw: None

Spell Resistance: No

The balor love their swords but will loan them out for a brief time. You open the pact gate and a red, muscular arm reaches out holding a *+1 vorpal greatsword* that looks like a flame or bolt of lightning; the weapon also has the ability to detect good, as cast by a 12th level sorcerer, but with a range of 30 feet. Anyone may use the weapon but takes 4d6 flame damage from shaking hands with the demon. The sword automatically returns to the owning demon at the end of the duration. If, for some reason, the sword cannot return the caster cannot make any more requests via this pact until the sword is returned. The balor will come hunting.

INVOKED DANCE OF RUIN

DC: 25

Request Cost: 4 stress

Area: 100 foot radius burst

Duration: Instantaneous

Saving Throw: Reflex half (DC 15)

Spell Resistance: No

You contact a clutch of five vlocks who begin a dance of ruin. You may use this request in two ways; first you can contact the vlocks, they start their dance while you leave the pact gate open, and three rounds later the effect occurs centered on the pact gate. Alternately, you can contact the clutch earlier; they start dancing and maintain a special form of the dance for up to four hours. At any time during the following four hours you may open a second pact gate (of the same degree) and activate the effect immediately. In either case you only make one request check and pay the stress cost once.

When you activate the effect a wave of crackling energy spreads out from the gate causing 2d20 damage to all non-demons within a 100 foot radius burst; A Reflex save (DC 15) halves the damage.

UNHOLY SEDUCTION

DC: 25

Request Cost: 4 stress

Target: One humanoid creature

Duration: 24 hours

Saving Throw: Special

Spell Resistance: No

You call a specially trained succubus through the pact gate to seduce a target. The succubus draws pictures, smells, textures, and tastes from the target's mind and uses these in the seduction to craft the perfect object of lust. The succubus emerges through the gate and you designate the target. She'll spend ten minutes to an hour observing the target and gathering information. Once she has enough information she'll make the approach. If that works she moves on to talking and flirting with the target.

Observation: The succubus uses *detect thoughts* and Sense Motive to read the target. Make separate checks for both of these; the succubus makes a detect thoughts check with a +7 bonus against a difficulty class equal to the target's Will save bonus +10 and the succubus makes a Sense Motive check (+2 bonus) against the target's Bluff bonus +10. If neither of these checks succeed the succubus receives a -5 penalty on all future checks. If the detect thoughts check succeeds the succubus gains an additional +5 bonus on subsequent checks.

Approach: The succubus first prepares her disguise by making a disguise check against the target's Spot bonus +10. The succubus has a Disguise bonus of +21 (+26 if the *detect thoughts* worked). If this succeeds the succubus has chosen a form sufficiently appealing and properly crafted; the succubus can proceed to the next stage.

Flirting: Finally the succubus engages the target in small talk and flirting; this requires a Bluff check (+11 bonus, or +16 if the detect thoughts check succeeded) against the target's Sense Motive bonus +10. If this succeeds the target has fallen to the succubus' wiles. Most victims want to fall victim to this sort of thing but player characters and victims with strong moral codes may resist by making a Will save (DC 19). This part of the process takes one hour.

Success: If the succubus succeeds at the seduction she'll occupy the target's attention for at least eight hours. The succubus can also get the target to do special things as well, many of these allow a resistance check which is just a Will save (DC 19). If the target makes the resistance check they refuse the request; if the target makes two resistance checks he breaks off the seduction. The following requests allow resistance checks: withdrawing to a particular location (like a good ambush spot); access to a particular location (like a vault); access to a particular piece of information; extending the "relationship" by another 24 hours.

The succubus will stay longer and charge less if the target is appealing. Increase the duration by one day per point of the target's Charisma bonus. Also, subtract the target's Charisma modifier from the stress cost (this means that it costs more to use this against a target with a Charisma below 10).

FOURTH DEGREE

DEMON HORDE

DC: 30

Request Cost: 4 stress

Duration: 5 rounds

Saving Throw: Reflex special

Spell Resistance: No

You open a pact gate and it vomits forth a slaving horde of demons to slaughter and pillage. The demons attack everything in sight, frequently stopping to devour fallen enemies, fight each other, and destroy anything of value or beauty. When you open the gate a swarm of demons floods out, filling a 30 foot radius spread. The radius of the spread increases by 30 feet each subsequent round until the duration expires, at which point all demons return to the Abyss. During each round everyone within the area suffers 1d6 attacks, each with a +11 attack bonus. Any attack that hits causes 5 points of damage. A Reflex save (DC 15) halves the number of attacks suffered (round up). The demons also attack fallen opponents, but they're too disorganized and their appetite is too great to pause for a proper kill; instead of coup de grace attacks they'll make normal attacks against fallen opponents (who receive no Reflex save, act as if they have a 0 Dexterity, and are prone).

Tactically, it's best to either find some cover or get out of the area but heroes aren't always known for their tactics. If you choose to fight the horde you can do so. The horde keeps coming, and killing a demon just frees up space for another to fill its spot; but you can slow them down and thin them out.

Attacking the Horde: You can attack the horde with either melee or ranged weapons. Make your attacks against an armor class of 25 (DR 15/+2). For every 10 points of damage you clear one 5 foot square of demons; if you cause at least 15 points of damage with an attack you may also make a cleave attack. At the beginning of your next action any squares you have cleared re-fill.

Spells against the Horde: The Horde has Spell Resistance 18, and cold, fire, and acid resistance 20; the demons save at Fort +9, Ref +8, and Will +8. When you cast a spell that causes damage to an area it clears the area if it causes at least 15 points of damage after any resistances and saving throws. For a spell that affects multiple targets it clears one 5 foot square for each target that suffers 15 or more points of damage. For a spell that neutralizes a target (such as charm monster) clear one 5 foot square for each target neutralized. At the beginning of your next action all the gaps close up.

Place tokens of some sort on cleared squares if using a battlemat; coins work well for this. A caster can also attempt to dispel the pact gate while it is open; make a normal caster level check against the character who opened the pact gate.

GLABREZU EYES

DC: 30

Request Cost: 4 stress

Duration: 1 hour

Saving Throw: None

Spell Resistance: No

You open the pact gate, reach through, and a glabrezu plucks out his eyes and lends them to you for a time. You then place them over your own eyes and they plop into your head with a wet, squishing sound. For the duration you gain darkvision 60 ft., a +8 racial bonus to Spot checks, and continuous *detect magic* and *true seeing* effects (as the spells cast by a 12th level sorcerer). You get what you pay for and you pay for what you get though; while using the glabrezu's eyes everything looks dark and twisted. The ugliness of things and people is exaggerated, wrinkles stand out like neon letters and deformities dwarf whatever beauty is present. You suffer a -8 circumstance penalty on Sense Motive and Diplomacy checks.

LEGION OF BLACK ICE

Pact Skill: Knowledge (tactics)

Stress Buffer: 10 + your Intelligence modifier

It is a cold day in Hell.

The gelugon hail from the icy circle of hell. In their circle the winds blow so harsh that they freeze the souls of the damned into vast black sheets. Across this tundra march the armies of the Legion of Black Ice. The Legion is one of the largest organized mercenary forces in the lower planes. And unlike most mercenary groups, the Legion has an infrastructure. The Legion has its own engineer corps, medical corps, and maintains its own supply trains. All these branches of the Legion train on the icy wastes. Dealing with the harsh realities of that terrain make them adaptable to almost any environment. Unlike most armies of the lower planes, the Legion does not participate in punishing the souls of the damned; the black ice and eternal Winter of their circle take care of that business. This makes the Legion one of the more palatable organizations with which to work, with leanings toward lawful-neutral amongst many of its members.

The Legion enforces its authority through a feudal structure. This helps it maintain a larger standing army and more easily call up additional forces.

GAINING PACT LEVELS

The Legion is a military order so it grants authority for performance in the field or for bringing a supply of troops.

FEUDAL OATH

The Legion operates according to a feudal structure. It maintains its military strength through bonds of personal loyalty. The great generals are served by colonels who are served in turn by barons who, in turn, have several knights

serving them. The simplicity of this structure allows for the easy build up of large military forces; the danger in such a system is that no one in the hierarchy serves the structure itself. Thus, it's far too easy for internal conflicts to evolve into full scale rebellions.

One can gain access to the structure by signing on with a higher ranking officer; you promise them your loyalty and they promise you their support. The more powerful you are and the more soldiers you bring to the legion, the more authority you can wield. What you bring to the Legion determines your rank and your rank serves as the starting point for your pact level. Use the Rank Table to determine your rank and pact level according to what forces you bring. Convert all your forces into challenge point totals by multiplying the number of troops by the challenge points for the appropriate challenge rating. Count yourself, your followers, henchmen, hirelings, servant creatures (including undead), and close allies (such as fellow party members who you can count on to help) as part of your forces. Add up the total points from these sources then compare to the Challenge Point Total to determine your effective encounter level and rank.

Example: You are 8th level and you have two allies willing to devote themselves fully, also at 8th level. You have a personal steed with a challenge rating of 4 and a small retinue of 5 1st level followers and one 7th level cohort (from a net Leadership score of 10). This is worth a total of 52 challenge points ($3 \times 12 = 36$, $+ 1 \times 3 = 3$, $+ 5 \times 1 = 5$, $+ 1 \times 8 = 8$). 52 challenge points is equal to an Encounter level of 12, which makes you a Baron and gives you a Pact Level of 2.

Normally you are expected to provide six weeks of service per year to your immediate boss. In times of great war the service time can be extended.

COMMENDATIONS

Military commendations bring with them honor and respect. Performing heroic (or diabolic) deeds while in the service of the Legion can earn you a commendation worth one or, rarely, two pact levels.

Legion of the Dead: This medal looks like a mithral skull set into an adamantite pentagram. The Legion of the Dead is awarded for life-threatening actions that provide some great tactical benefit. The encounter level of such an action must be at least 3 higher than both the character's level, and the highest

character level in the group performing the action. The action must also succeed and it must achieve a tactical goal that saves an allied unit worth an encounter level of at least 9. The Legion of the Dead medal is worth one pact level. The skull and medal represent your brush with death. Many with this medal refer to themselves as already living in the land of the dead.

Black Ice Shard: This medal is a simple shard of black ice; a constant feed of cold energy from the lower planes keeps it frozen to a diamond-like hardness (hardness 30). If pressed directly to the skin it causes one point of cold damage per round. The Black Ice shard is awarded for actions that generate significant strategic benefits at substantial risk. The action should involve at least two encounters at 3 or more levels above the character's level and one encounter at 6 or more levels above the character's level. The action must also save a large military action, ideally one that results in the rescue of at least 2,000 troops or capture of a like number of enemy troops.

Rank Table							
Challenge Rating	Challenge Points	Number	Sub-total	Challenge Point Total	EL	Rank	Pact Level
1/3	.3			1	1		
1/2	.5			1.5	2		
1	1			2	3		
2	1.5			3	4		
3	2			4	5		
4	3			6	6	Knight	1
5	4			8	7		
6	6			12	8		
7	8			16	9		
8	12			24	10		
9	16			32	11		
10	24			48	12	Baron	2
11	32			64	13		
12	48			96	14		
13	64			128	15		
14	96			190	16		
15	128			250	17		
16	190			375	18	Colonel	3
17	250			500	19		
18	375			750	20		
19	500			1000	21		
20	750			1500	22		
				2000	23		
Total				3000	24	General	4

BOND OF FROST

In the frozen layers the cold wields its own authority. By bonding with the black ice you gain more authority within the Legion. Bonding requires nothing more than an oath to the ice; in speaking this oath you exhale the heat from your body and it transforms into cold, adding to the ice fields of the lower planes. You may not cast spells or use personally powered abilities with the fire descriptor. You also take a -2 penalty on all saves against fire or effects with the fire descriptor. This is worth one pact level.

SUMMONINGS

You may summon the following creatures via a pact gate of the appropriate degree as requests (using the standard request format); your pact level must be at least as high as the gate degree required. These creatures will fight for you, even risking their life, acting in all ways like a creature summoned via a *summon monster* spell.

Summonings				
Devil Type	Gate Degree	Request DC	Request Cost	Duration
Lemure	1	15	4 stress	4 rounds
Imp	2	20	4 stress	8 rounds
Kyton	3	25	4 stress	12 rounds
Barbazû	3	25	4 stress	12 rounds
Gelugon	4	35	6 stress	16 rounds

FIRST DEGREE

BLACK ICE ARMOR

DC: 15

Request Cost: 4 stress

Target: You

Duration: 10 minutes (D)

You draw black ice through the gate, covering your body with plates of the stuff. The dark energy infusing the ice holds the plates a small distance away from your body so that it does not interfere with your motions. The ice gives you a +6 armor bonus to armor class but does not impose any of the normal penalties associated with armor.

ICY COORDINATION

DC: 15

Request Cost: 4 stress

Range: centered on the pact gate

Targets: up to 6 creatures all within a 20 ft. radius burst.

Duration: 6 rounds (D)

Saving Throw: Will negates (DC 13, harmless)

Spell Resistance: Yes

Devils like orders; orders give life structure; orders keep those below you in line. The calculating mind-set of the Legion has evolved into a physical presence the infuses the ice

and storms of the Legion's circle of hell. With this request you draw that psychic energy to fortify your allies.

The coordination provided by this request grants all those affected a +2 circumstance bonus to Listen, Search, and Spot checks. It also gives those affected a +1 circumstance bonus to attacks, armor class, and saving throws. Finally, no one counts as flat-footed unless everyone in the coordinated group is flat-footed.

ICY TOMB

DC: 15

Request Cost: 4 stress

Range: 10 feet

Target: 1 creature

Duration: 4 days

Saving Throw: Reflex negates (DC 1)

Spell Resistance: No

By drawing through a flow of ice from the lower planes you can freeze and preserve a dead body. The ice coats the target, encasing it in a thick layer of ice. The cold from this ice is special and directs itself inward; this means that it feels neither warm nor cold to the touch, like ceramic. Treat a creature encased in ice as if it died as long ago as the time that passed between when it died, and when it was frozen. Thus, if you encase a creature one minute after it died, when you un-freeze the creature it will be as if it had only been dead for one minute. You can use this on a living creature but there aren't many things capable of moving that couldn't get out of the way in time. Anyone can remove the ice by melting it; immersion in heated water works best.

SECOND DEGREE

COLD WINDS

DC: 20

Request Cost: 4 stress

Range: 80 feet

Area: Cone, starting at the gate opening

Duration: Instantaneous

Saving Throw: Reflex half (DC 16)

Spell Resistance: Yes

A cold, black wind blows through the pact gate; one can faintly hear the screams of the damned carried on the wind. The wind blows out all open flames of torch size or smaller within the area and has a 50% chance of extinguishing covered flames (such as a hooded lantern) or larger open flames, up to campfire size. The bone-numbing cold and negative energy infusing the wind causes 1d8+8 damage, half if a Reflex save (DC 16) is made. Half the damage counts as cold and the other half as negative energy. This wind also disrupts clouds as a *gust of wind* does.

SPIRIT OF BLACK ICE**DC:** 20**Request Cost:** 4 stress**Target:** You**Duration:** 10 rounds

You make a primal connection with the black ice of hell. Your skin turns black; lighter areas turn a shade of gray and frost forms on your skin. This connection gives you the **Cold** sub-type for the duration of the effect. This makes you immune to cold damage but you take double damage from fire, except on a successful save. The negative energy in the ice also provides protection against other negative energy effects. You gain immunity to level drain for the duration of the effect.

TOUCH OF BLACK ICE**DC:** 20**Request Cost:** 4 stress**Effect:** One weapon**Duration:** 10 rounds

You open the pact gate and extend your weapon through the opening. The black ice on the far side coats the weapon, turning it black and giving it a thin coating of frost; this gives it the *frost* quality (from the DMG) for the duration. Someone else can use the gate instead of you, but they need to hold their action to go on the same round as you.

THIRD DEGREELEGION MEDICAL CORPS**DC:** 25**Request Cost:** 4 stress**Target:** 1 creature

With this request you open a pact gate to a Legion Medical Corps field station. You then pass an injured creature through the gate to the field station. Some time later you must open another third degree pact gate to recover the person passed through.

The field station performs emergency surgery on the target. This stabilizes the target if they're currently bleeding. The greatest benefit is that the field medics can resuscitate a dead creature. The creature must be at -20 hit points or higher and must make a Fortitude saving throw (DC 15 + 1 for every full minute it has been dead). The patient may use only its natural saving throw bonuses; saving throw bonuses from magic items or spells will not work (since their magic must connect through the patient's now absent life-force). If the patient is at -10 hit points or lower, brain damage causes the patient to lose one level as for a *raise dead* effect.

While at the field station, non-devil patients heal two times their level in hit points each day. They also recover temporary ability damage at double the normal rate. Diabolic

patients heal at triple the normal rate while at the field station. The field medics count as having a Heal skill bonus of +20 for other purposes.

SIEGE ENGINES**DC:** 25**Request Cost:** 4 stress**Target:** 1 or more siege engines totaling 2,000 gp in value**Duration:** 1 day

With this request you borrow a siege engine from the Legion. You can choose any siege engine or combination of siege engines up to 2,000 gp in value. The Legion has fused lemure into the structure of these siege engines. The bodies of the lemure form a sludgy, gray musculature for the engines; this means that you do not need an additional crew to run the siege engines. The lemure lack in skill what they make up for in loyalty; they count as having a +3 bonus for any checks related to operating the siege engine. The caster or his allies may guide use of the engine, in which case use the leader's abilities to resolve any checks. The lemure-fused engines return to their circle after the duration expires.

WALL OF BLACK ICE**DC:** 25**Request Cost:** 4 stress**Range:** 30 feet**Effect:** Anchored plane of black ice, up to twelve 10-ft. squares, or hemisphere of black ice with a radius of up to 15 ft.**Duration:** 12 minutes**Saving Throw:** See text**Spell Resistance:** Yes

This request calls forth an anchored plane of black ice or a hemisphere of black ice, depending on the version selected. A wall of black ice cannot flow into an area occupied by physical objects or creatures. Its surface must be smooth and unbroken when created. Fire can melt a wall of black ice. It deals full damage to the wall (instead of the normal half damage suffered by objects). Suddenly melting the wall of black ice creates a great cloud of dark fog that lasts for 10 minutes; the fog acts like a *stinking cloud* due to the foul odors given off by the black material in the ice.

Ice Plane: A sheet of strong, hard ice appears. The wall is 12 inches thick. It covers up to twelve 10-foot-square areas. The plane can be oriented in any fashion as long as it is anchored. A vertical wall need only be anchored on the floor, while a horizontal or slanting wall must be anchored on two opposite sides.

Each 10-foot square of wall has 36 hit points. Creatures can hit the wall automatically. A section of wall whose hit points drop to 0 is breached. If a creature tries to break through the wall with a single attack, the DC for the Strength check is 27.

The ice is infused with negative energy; anyone touching the wall or striking it with a non-reach melee weapon gains 1 negative energy level. The Fortitude save to remove these negative energy levels is DC 19.

Hemisphere: The wall takes the form of a hemisphere whose maximum radius is 15 feet. It is as hard to break through as the ice plane form and inflicts negative energy levels as usual.

The character can create the hemisphere so that it traps one or more creatures; these creatures can avoid being trapped by the hemisphere by making successful Reflex saves (DC 19).

FOURTH DEGREE

ARCTIC HELL

DC: 30

Request Cost: 4 stress

Range: 160 feet

Area: Cone, starting at gate opening

Duration: 8 + 2d6 rounds

Saving Throw: Reflex half (DC 22)

Spell Resistance: Yes

You summon a full scale blizzard through the pact gate. Those in the area of effect suffer 2d6 cold damage per round and gain 1 negative level per two full rounds spent within the area of effect. The wind within the area operates at *windstorm* level, meaning that creatures must make a Fortitude save (DC 18) or suffer from an effect according to their size. Small or smaller creatures are **blown away**; Medium-size creatures are **knocked down**; and Large or Huge creatures are **checked**. See the DMG for rules covering the various conditions. Ice and snow covers everything within the area. The ice is rough enough and there's enough snow to provide traction but it still counts as having a **slipperiness** rating of 1.

A **slipperiness** rating of 1 gives those attempting a Trip check a +2 circumstance bonus. Those running or charging within the area must make a Balance check (DC 10) or fall down when they reach the end of their move. Increase the DC by 2 for each size category larger than Medium-size and decrease it by two for each size category smaller than Medium-size.

LEGION ENGINEERING CORPS

DC: 30

Request Cost: 4 stress

Target: 1 structure

Duration: 48 hours

This request summons a team of gelugon from the Legion Engineer Corps. The engineers specialize in crafting structures from ice. They have been specially trained in creating lasting walls of ice and can construct any fortification, up to 500,000 gp in value, over a period of thirty minutes; this will cover a regular castle. For ice bridges charge 500 gp per foot of length; the bridge is twenty feet wide and can support an army. The ice structures created by these engineers have the hardness and hit points of stone. The structure melts away after 48 hours.

SUMMON GLACIER

DC: 30

Request Cost: 4 stress

Area: 60 ft. wide, 30 ft. high glacier

Duration: 24 hours

This request draws a fast moving glacier of black ice through the pact gate. Fast moving for a glacier doesn't count for much; it moves at a rate of 1 mile per hour, or roughly 10 ft. per round. As the glacier emerges from the pact gate it expands to cover a 60 foot wide, 30 foot high front over the course of the following hour, gaining 1 foot in width and .5 feet in height each minute. The glacier plows a furrow 24 miles long in the ground, clearing all structures within its path. Even the largest trees fall to its unrelenting strength. Old or powerful forests may receive something akin to a Fortitude saving throw (DC 22) to resist the crush. Against a structure it deals 20 hit points of damage per minute evenly across its entire face; subtract any hardness from the damage per minute. This is more than enough to throw down most conventional buildings. Unconventional fortifications can withstand the force; they typically need a hardness of at least 20 to resist the glacier. The glacier digs through low hills but large hills or mountains turn it aside; it continues to move for the duration but follows the path set by the valley.

When first invoked the black ice of the glacier imposes negative energy levels as a wall of black ice. Within thirty minutes it will have gathered enough detritus and locally formed ice that the negative energy levels only hit those buried in the glacier. When used offensively (typically to throw down a fortress or city) you should start the glacier at least one mile away from the target. While moving the glacier can be attacked with fire magic or dispelled. The glacier has an effective caster level of 16 for dispelling. Fire magic works poorly against the glacier; the flame must affect an area of at least 20 foot in radius to cause non-negligible damage. It then counts as having fire resistance 30 against any attacks. Every 200 points of fire damage slows down

the advance of the glacier by one hour and a total of 1,000 points of fire damage destroys it entirely.

THE MAGISTRATUM

Pact Skill: Knowledge (civics) or Investigation

Stress Buffer: 10 + your Intelligence modifier

Lith Stone Hall stands beneath three suns, one gold, one silver, and one bronze. The Lith is the center of justice in the upper planes. A legion of celestials carved it out of a granite mountain, polishing the stone to a reflective shine and sculpting 12 colossal columns to frame the massive entrance. They carved it from granite to represent the strength and stability of justice. The upper reaches of the Lith are dotted with offices opening onto balconies so the officers can fly in and out easily. Birds from every world nest on the peak (if they can reach that high) or along the lower slopes. The first thing a visitor often notices is the feathers. Feathers float everywhere; they carpet the hallways and hover over the slopes of the mountains. The feathers remind those inside of what they work for; justice is one step removed from revenge and those who work at justice can too easily lose sight of why it is important. The feathers remind the Magistratum that they do their work for the innocent who have suffered and to minimize future suffering. Flames from platinum sconces light the halls. Tables of teak dominate the offices where the Magistratum holds meetings. But the hallways and offices have no carpeting or paneling other than the feathers. The Magistratum needs the constant cold reminder of polished gray stone that their task is a solemn one.

Celestials promote the Good and dispense justice. While the Good takes many forms, from art to games, self-fulfillment to life-enrichment, justice follows a more standard model. As creatures of the Good, celestials temper their justice with mercy; but they must consider the rights of the victim as well as the rights of the perpetrator. Balancing these rights requires wisdom and insight. Before a crime reaches the judges the Magistratum must first discover everything they can about the crime. The Magistratum serve as the investigative and police arm of the celestial host. They do much of their work in the outer planes, relying on both mundane and magical means for investigation. Mortals can also join the Magistratum; this helps bring justice tempered by mercy into the mortal world.

GAINING PACT LEVELS

As an investigative organization the Magistratum values those who bring it information.

CASES SOLVED

You can earn favor and rank in the Magistratum by apprehending criminals and preventing crimes. Use the challenge rating of the most powerful criminal apprehended to determine your rank. If you kill the criminal instead of apprehending him lower his effective challenge rating by 3. Note that most player characters will be able to defeat a criminal with a challenge rating significantly higher than their own level.

Pact Level	CR
First	9
Second	12
Third	16
Fourth	20

OATH TO UPHOLD THE LAW

Taking an oath to uphold the law of the Magistratum indoctrinates you into their circle. When you take the oath you receive a badge of office. This badge is a silver shield with a depiction of the Lith Stone Mountain engraved on the surface. Three suns of varying size rise over the mountain and stars line the edges. Each badge also has the name of the character engraved on a plaque beneath the mountain.

Taking the oath binds you to the laws. You receive 1 pact level for taking the oath. Every time you violate the oath you take 2 points of temporary Constitution damage; the gamemaster might adjust up or down based on severity. If you ever suffer 5 or more points of Constitution damage from this in a single week you are suspended from the Magistratum; you must then contact the Magistratum to be reinstated.

DEDICATING YOURSELF TO THE LAW

You dedicate your life and spirit to the Magistratum. You cannot be raised or resurrected; neither wishes nor miracles will bring you back because you won't want to come back from your final reward. In some rare cases, where you have business left to accomplish, you may return via any means normally allowed in your campaign. Once you accomplish your task, you disappear in a halo of gold and silver light. You must remain good or lose the benefits of this sacrifice. This is worth one pact level.

SUMMONINGS

You may summon the following creatures via a pact gate of the appropriate degree as requests (using the standard request format); your pact level must be at least as high as the gate degree required. These creatures will fight for you, even risking their life, acting in all ways like a creature summoned via a *summon monster* spell.

THE LAW

The Magistratum balances justice with mercy. It places few restrictions on how you go about gathering information. You must not torture someone and you must have probable cause to use invasive methods of information gathering (such as mind reading or looking through a suspect's private things).

Probable cause can loosely be defined as evidence sufficient to make a reasonably cautious person believe that what you're looking for will be found. That is, you must think there's a better chance than not that if you go poking around in this guy's head you'll find evidence of the crime that interests you. Simply thinking that there might be evidence there isn't enough. More specifically, you don't go poking around people's brains or bathrooms hoping to turn up a clue. Note that if you violate probable cause and find juicy evidence anyway what happens is you suffer the Constitution damage but the evidence is admitted normally.

Major Crimes: Murder, torture, rape, enslavement, and causing significant suffering to a dozen or more people count as a major crimes. Magistrates may use extreme means to prevent these crimes, or punish those who have committed them.

Minor Crimes: Crimes against property, the causing of minor injuries, and the causing of harm via negligence count as minor crimes. Magistrates must use reasonable measures in the prevention of these crimes and exercise extreme caution when punishing them.

Killing: If non-lethal measures have failed, you may kill a criminal who has committed or is in the process of committing a major crime. You may also kill a criminal if they are about to commit a major crime and you haven't the time to attempt a non-lethal solution. You may always kill in self-defense and you may kill a repeat offender of minor crimes during apprehension if they resist arrest.

While the Magistratum is an enlightened enforcer of justice it does not adhere to the complexities and double-checks common to legal systems in the modern world. The outer planes and most fantasy settings are harsh places and must hold to a rougher standard. The Magistratum's justice is the kind you'd get from an honest frontier lawman.

Summonings

Creature Type	Gate Degree	Request DC	Request Cost	Duration
Lantern Archon	1	15	4 stress	8 rounds
Celestial Giant Eagle	2	20	4 stress	8 rounds
Celestial Griffin	3	25	4 stress	12 rounds
Avoral guardinal	4	30	4 stress	16 rounds

FIRST DEGREE

ARCHON SCOUT

DC: 15

Request Cost: 4 stress

Target: One creature

Duration: 4 minutes

This request summons a lantern archon through the pact gate to scout ahead of you. The lantern archon has normal attributes but special training in scouting. This gives it a +7 bonus with Listen and Spot and a +5 bonus with Search. It travels at 60 ft. per round except when Searching. While searching it moves 5 feet per round; special training allows it to make a Search check against its own square plus all adjacent squares while doing this. The archon scout refuses to fight and flies away at the first sign of hostility.

BLUE ARCHON

DC: 15

Request Cost: 4 stress

Area: 30 ft. radius burst

Duration: 20 minutes

Some lantern archons grow in unusual interstices or close to the elemental planes. The power of these places affects the growth of the archon, often changing their color and granting variant abilities. Blue archons hail from a night world and they develop a dark light instead of a bright one. This request draws a blue archon through the pact gate. The blue light shed by the archon reveals features normally invisible to the eye. Blood traces show up particularly well, as do other sorts of fluids. The light surrounds small particles in a fluorescent nimbus. At a large scale so much information overwhelms, and all characters suffer a -5 penalty to Spot checks within the area. This highlights details so Search and Investigate checks gain a +10 circumstance bonus within the area of the light. The light also allows for the discovery of unusual and minute trace evidence. One can find minor detritus (such as flakes of skin, saliva drippings, hair, and so on) from a creature with an Investigate or Search check (DC 25). The blue archon remains for the duration and can move 30 feet per round at your command.

RED ARCHON

DC: 15

Request Cost: 4 stress

Area: 30 ft. radius burst

Duration: 30 minutes

This request summons a red archon through the pact gate. The archon remains for up to 30 minutes. Red archons have absorbed energy from the fire realms. The fire elemental energy filters through the lattice underlying the archon's positive energy structure to grant their light a special effect.

All those within the light shed by a red archon burn when they lie. The burning occurs from the inside out so those with strong wills can avoid revealing much; each lie you say while in the red light cause you to take 1d6 fire damage (no save). You must make a Will save (DC 13 + the damage suffered) or flinch; flinching looks obvious and you suffer a -10 penalty on any Bluff checks.

SECOND DEGREE

BINDING

DC: 20

Request Cost: 4 stress

Range: 60 ft.

Target: 1 Large size or smaller creature

Duration: 8 hours

Saving Throw: Reflex negates (DC 16)

Spell Resistance: Yes

This request draws a binding archon through the pact gate. Binding archons can alter their form into manacles of force. You may direct the archon to bind any creature within range of Large size or smaller. Unconscious or already captured creatures receive no saving throw. The archon binds the creatures hands or feet (your choice); this prevents their use. The victim can burst free with a Strength check (DC 30); the bindings have DR 20/-, 10 hit points, and SR 18. The bindings adjust themselves automatically if the victim squirms around; this makes Escape Artist checks to get free DC 35. With bound feet the victim cannot run and moves at half normal rate. With bound hands the victim cannot wield a weapon of size Small or larger and cannot use a shield. Other activities requiring use of the hands are difficult, add +10 to any associated DC or +35% to the spell failure chance of spells cast with somatic components.

DOOR SEAL

DC: 20

Request Cost: 4 stress

Target: 1 door

Duration: 8 hours

This request draws a sealing archon through the pact gate. The sealing archon emerges and bonds with a door chosen by the summoner. After bonding, the door glows with a pale white light. This locks the door closed, giving it DR 20/- and SR 18. To burst the door one must make a Strength check (DC 30). The regular lock on the door stops working. The summoner may ask the archon to open or close the door as a free action. If the door started out locked then it remains locked and the summoner must find some other means of opening the door.

SURVEILLANCE ARCHON

DC: 20

Request Cost: 4 stress

Duration: 4 hours

This request draws a surveillance archon through the pact gate. Surveillance archons look like regular lantern archons. You can direct the surveillance archon to any location; from there it watches and listens to all activity surrounding it. Surveillance archons have a +7 Spot and Listen bonus, low light vision, and darkvision out to 60 feet. At the end of the duration the surveillance archon returns to the summoner and reports what it has seen and heard. The surveillance archon can dim its light; this gives it a Hide bonus of +16.

THIRD DEGREE

INTRUSION ARCHON

DC: 25

Request Cost: 4 stress

Effect: Intrusion field with a 10 ft. radius

Duration: 10 rounds

The intrusion archon can create a special field that bends space around it. It brings into being a sphere of energy surrounding it at a 10 radius. When it does this it slips free from normal space; from the outside it looks as if the archon and everything inside shrink to a point. The archon can then move at a rate of 10 feet per round through any material. Those inside the sphere see the material slide apart when it hits the field, then slide back together as they pass through the object. The archon can maintain this field for up to 10 rounds; at the end of that time the archon returns to its plane. You do not need to use the archon right away; after summoning the intrusion archon it will remain for 10 minutes, or until the duration of the warp field expires, whichever happens first. While inside the field you cannot be seen or attacked conventionally, nor can you affect those outside the field. Objects outside the field look blurry; this gives you a -5 penalty on Spot checks.

LIGHT CONSTRUCT

DC: 25

Request Cost: 4 stress

Effect: Figment with a 20 ft. radius burst

Duration: 30 minutes

This request draws four lantern archons through the gate. With an Investigate check (DC 20) you can instruct the lantern archons to reconstruct a three-dimensional image from the evidence you have available. You must tell them what to put in the image but you can make adjustments, draw lines in the air, and match the three-dimensional projection to the environment and evidence. For example, footprints lead you to think that two men fought in a room so you have the archons construct an image of two men; the archons then move the images to simulate fighting. You can make small adjustments to the play out of the fighting

to get the images' footsteps to match the footprints you see on the floor. If you found a dagger stuck into a wall you can have the scene play out the throwing of the dagger, accounting for standard effects such as gravity, and see at what point the dagger must have been thrown to end up in its location. While this is mainly useful for helping the players and their characters visualize a scene it can also provide a small numerical bonus to Search and Investigate checks for items related to the scene; such checks receive a +5 equipment bonus.

TRIBUNAL

DC: 25

Request Cost: 4 stress

Duration: 24 hours

This request draws a tribunal of ghaele in globe form through the gate. Each ghaele takes on a different color, one gold, one silver, and one bronze, to represent the different aspects of the social order (rulers, warriors, and laborers). The tribunal sits in judgment. They'll listen to a case for a period of eight hours. During this time you should present all the evidence you have available regarding the case. You should also appoint an opposing counsel to present the opposite side of the case. At the end of the eight hours the tribunal retreats for one hour to determine their judgment. The greatest risk here is that the tribunal decides that not enough evidence has been presented; the gamemaster can make a simple call to determine if the evidence and arguments are poor, adequate, or strong. If poor there's a 25% chance the tribunal returns an accurate judgment; if adequate there's a 50% chance they get the judgment right; if the evidence is strong there's a 75% chance they return the correct judgment. If there is no opposing view presented, or the opposing view is presented weakly, reduce the probability of an accurate judgment by 25%. If this check fails the tribunal returns no judgment; they say that don't have enough information. Under normal circumstances the tribunal never returns a false judgment. Note also that an accurate judgment might not be the one you wanted or expected.

FOURTH DEGREE

PRISONING

DC: 30

Request Cost: 4 stress

Range: 60 ft.

Target: 1 Large size or smaller creature

Duration: 8 hours

Saving Throw: Reflex negates (DC 22)

Spell Resistance: Yes

This request draws a ghaele in globe form to capture the target. The target must be Large size or smaller. The globe expands to cover the victim then contracts to a point with the

victim inside (like the intrusion archon). While captured this way the target cannot escape through conventional means. The ghaele then follows the summoner until ordered to release the prisoner. Since the ghaele has shrunk to the size of a point it is both invisible and invulnerable; moreover it hides itself within the body of the summoner, protecting it from most area effect attacks. The summoner need only speak a few words to command the ghaele.

The prisoner cannot *teleport* or *dimension door* out. *Dispel magic* can defeat the prison but the DC for the attempt is 32 (the ghaele gets to effectively Take 20 while establishing the cage).

PUNISHING

DC: 30

Request Cost: 4 stress

Range: 60 ft.

Target: 1 creature

Duration: Permanent

Saving Throw: Will negates (DC 22)

Spell Resistance: Yes

While the Magistratum doesn't focus too much of its energy on causing suffering, some people really deserve it. In these cases members may request a punisher to inflict appropriate harm on a criminal. This request draws a justice archon through the pact gate to bond with a target. The victim receives one saving throw; if he fails this the archon binds with him and begins to torment him with his own sins. Many creatures feel guilt and the archon first uses this against the creature. However, some creatures just don't have a guilt function; for these creatures the archon uses its most potent ability, projective sympathy. The archon can make the creature feel the pain it has caused to others. In either case, upon first getting hit the creature suffers 1d6 permanent Wisdom damage from the shock of the pain; the target continues to suffer 1 point of permanent Wisdom damage each week until it changes alignment to some form of non-Evil and atones for past crimes. Each time the creature commits an evil action it suffers another point of permanent Wisdom damage (more for particularly severe crimes). Creatures that cannot feel guilt suffer one additional point of permanent Constitution damage for every two points of permanent Wisdom damage they have taken from this.

SHIELD ARCHON

DC: 30

Request Cost: 4 stress

Target: You

Duration: 10 minutes

This request draws a shield archon through the gate to protect you for the duration of the request. The archon floats

near you, intercepting one attack per round. Each time you are attacked you may choose whether or not you want the archon to block; you must make this decision prior to the attack roll. If you choose to let the archon block for you then, if you're hit, the archon gets in the way, reducing the damage you suffer by 20 points. This works against melee or ranged attacks.

THE MEAT SYNDICATE

Pact Skill: Appraise or Knowledge (business)

Stress Buffer: 10 + your Intelligence modifier

Hell is hierarchy.

Everyone enters the Syndicate at the bottom. Unlike most organizations in the lower planes you can move within the Syndicate. Skill, talent, ruthlessness, and brown-nosing get you promotions that might take centuries in the more conservative organizations.

The Syndicate controls the commodity exchanges of the lower planes. Most large transactions of commodities occur in the Pit, a large hole filled with gangs of infernal traders from all the circles of hell. They trade adamantite, black iron, dragon's blood, screams, favors, dominion, and souls of course.

The Meat Syndicate got its name by fixing a standard system of currency. Most souls become lemure in the circles so the Syndicate developed a method of packing lemure into steel flasks. These silver-gray flasks are the size of a fire extinguisher; one end screws off and you can pour lemure out, or stuff them in. A single flask can hold up to 100 lemure. It compresses them, then folds them into interstitial pockets.

The value of a single lemure changes depending on market fluctuations but generally stays around 100 gp each (one third the value of an encounter of their level). This makes a full steel flask worth 10,000 gp not including the value of the flask itself. Few transactions use physical currency anymore and the Syndicate has expanded its profitability immeasurably by also serving as the primary banking facility for the lower planes. The Syndicate keeps a vast storehouse of lemure and other commodities in a place called the Pit Vault. 666 Pit Fiends guard the vault; there are other guards as well if the pit fiends aren't convincing enough.

In addition to running the Pit, Syndicate members handle a wide variety of business related transactions for other devils. The Syndicate includes marketing advisors, contract and legal advisors, brand managers, shipping contractors, and anything else an industry as large as the business of managing sin requires.

GAINING PACT LEVELS

The Syndicate respects savvy business practices; in Syndicate-speak savvy business practice means backstabbing, lying, cheating, and increasing profits.

SELLING YOUR SOUL (2 PACT LEVELS)

Most souls aren't worth much, but most souls don't get you much either. After all, you need to be a high level wizard or sorcerer to use the most powerful effects and those souls are worth a lot.

Every month your overlords will call on you to perform some evil action. Most of the time this is something relatively risk free. There's a 10% chance per month that the required action carries some risk (such as an adventure near your level or an encounter one or two levels higher than your character level) and a 1% chance that the action is high risk (an encounter as many as four levels above your character level). The required action is up to the gamemaster; this is a license for the gamemaster to mess with you.

If you sell your soul then you cannot be raised or resurrected. Even wishes fail here. You immediately become evil; you must promote the ends of your boss; and things get much worse after you die.

CLIENTS

The Syndicate values the connections you bring to the table. Add up the total pact levels you have from other sources; if you have five or more you get a one pact level bonus with the Syndicate. If you have 15 or more you get a 2 pact level bonus with the Syndicate. Worldly connections have some importance. If you're also using the full Influence system and belong to one or more organizations, every 5 ip worth of positions you occupy count as one pact level from another source.

HOSTILE TAKEOVER

The Syndicate respects the ruthless use of influence and corruption to advance one's interests. You can purchase a pact level with Influence points according to the following table:

Pact Level	Influence Cost
First	4 ip
Second	16 ip
Third	36 ip
Fourth	64 ip

THE PAPERWORK OF HELL

Hell's bureaucracy makes mortal bureaucracies weep. Knowing how to work it not only greatly expedites business, but makes others want to be your friend. You receive 1 pact level for every ten full ranks in Knowledge (business).

SUMMONINGS

You may summon the following creatures via a pact gate of the appropriate degree as requests (using the standard request format); your pact level must be at least as high as the gate degree required. These creatures will fight for you, even risking their life, acting in all ways like a creature summoned via a *summon monster* spell.

Summonings				
Devil Type	Gate Degree	Request DC	Request Cost	Duration
Lemure	1	15	4 stress	4 rounds
Imp	2	20	4 stress	8 rounds
Erinyes	3	25	4 stress	12 rounds
Cornugon	4	30	4 stress	16 rounds

FIRST DEGREE

EVERYTHING HAS A PRICE

DC: 15

Request Cost: 4 stress

Effect: evaluate any one item

Duration: 10 minutes

This request opens a pact gate to one of the market value specialists working for the Syndicate. The specialist can evaluate the standard market price for any item that has a standard market price. They can't always price artifacts or abstract things but can often give a fairly close estimate. It takes the specialist 10 minutes to make the evaluation.

SMOKE CLAWS

DC: 15

Request Cost: 4 stress

Range: 30 ft.

Duration: 4 rounds

This request draws a smoke claw through the pact gate. Smoke claws are incorporeal, flying hands tipped with sharp talons. The requestor can command the smoke claw mentally within a 30 ft. radius. You can use the claw to make a ranged attack against anything within 30 feet of you. If you have multiple attacks you may use a full attack sequence with the claw. The claw makes incorporeal touch attacks and does 1d4 + your Charisma modifier damage. Smoke claws attack the spirit, not the body; thus they cannot score critical hits and cause no damage to inanimate objects or mindless creatures. Most armor is useless against smoke claws but armor that works against incorporeal attacks provides its normal bonuses. The claws move rapidly enough and are sufficiently insubstantial to ignore attacks.

SYNDICATE COUNSEL

DC: 15

Request Cost: 4 stress for one hour of counsel +1 stress for each additional hour

Duration: 30 minutes

As one might expect, hell has access to the best legal minds in history. With this request you gain a consultation with a Syndicate lawyer. This grants you an interview with a lawyer who has a +20 bonus with Knowledge (civics) applicable to your jurisdiction. The lawyer can also have contracts or letters written for you. Writing a letter takes one additional hour besides the consultation time. Contracts typically require an additional 4 hours of preparation, depending on the length and complexity of the contract. Elaborate contracts can take days to prepare and usually cost 1 influence point.

SECOND DEGREE

INVESTMENT SERVICES

DC: 20

Request Cost: 4 stress

Target: 1 account

Duration: 30 minutes

If you want to make lots of money, work close to where it changes hands. The Syndicate runs a thriving banking business and stores its hoards of wealth in the Pit Vault. With this request you receive 30 minutes of banking with the Syndicate. They take most types of currency though they prefer the diabolic standard, lemure. Wealth you store with the Syndicate can earn a small interest rate (2% per year) if you commit to leave it untouched for a one-year period. Otherwise you receive all the standard features of a banking account. You can withdraw wealth in either lemure form or as standard coinage. If you include hard power in your game (a form of crystallized arcane energy detailed in the adventure "Small Worlds and Exiles", downloadable for free from the Second World Simulations website) the Syndicate also handles that.

The Syndicate's banking services also accept written checks and letters of transfer. You must first authorize the Syndicate to accept these written transfers and supply them with a sample transfer. You can write a promissory note on any medium; you use your blood for the ink and sign it normally. Even these written checks have limited value since the person you deal with must trust that you actually have an account; checks are mostly used between people who already know each other or know of each other.

SYNDICATE MARKET

DC: 20

Request Cost: 4 stress

When you make this request you open a pact gate to a Syndicate Free Market vendor. The vendor buys anything with a gold value; he'll pay 40% of standard market value. The vender can also acquire items for you; you make your

requests then the vendor contacts other merchants to see what they have available. With your gamemaster's okay the Syndicate Market can supply any magic item with a required caster level to craft of 6 or lower; these items cost 25% more than normal. For purchases you give the vendor a list and half the money up front; the vendor then tracks down your requests and you open another second degree pact gate 24 or more hours later, pay the vendor, and collect your goods.

WALL OF LIQUID FLESH

DC: 20

Request Cost: 4 stress

Range: all wall sections must fall with 80 feet of the gate opening

Effect: Wall filling 16 ten foot squares

Duration: 8 minutes

This draws a viscous morass of lemure through the gate opening which you may shape into a wall. The lemure fill 16 ten foot squares and you may shape the wall any way you like; the lemure are plastic, like clay, so they fit into almost anything. Once in place you can command the lemure to solidify; they actually just become more viscous, like thick sludge. When thickened, the lemure wall has a hardness of 3; damage reduction 5/silver; spell resistance 5; immunity to fire; cold and acid resistance 20; and fast healing 3 (defeated by holy and blessed weapons). Each 5 foot section of wall has 50 hit points.

THIRD DEGREE

INFERNAL BODYGUARDS

DC: 25

Request Cost: 4 stress

Target: 1 fiendish ogre or two fiendish bugbears

Duration: 24 hours

Executives occasionally need to travel in dangerous areas to do business; bodyguards not only provide protection when bad things happen, but also send the message that others best not let bad things start to happen. This request gets you the service of infernal bodyguards for a period of 24 hours. You may choose to have one fiendish ogre or two fiendish bugbears as bodyguards. These bodyguards are not natural to the lower planes; they've been crafted, usually by the Chamber, to serve the Syndicate.

Fiendish bugbear: CR 2; Medium-size Outsider; HD 3d8+3; hp 16; Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; AC 17 (+1 Dex, +4 armor, +2 shield); Melee: Morningstar +4 (1d8+2); Ranged: Javelin +3 (1d6+2); SA Smite Good (+3 damage to good creature 1/day); SQ Darkvision 60 ft.; cold and fire resistance 5; SR 6; AL NE; SV Fort +2, Ref +0, Will +1; Str 15, Dex 12, Con 13, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 9.

STEEL FLASK

These 6 inch diameter, 30 inch long steel cylinders are used by the Syndicate to store living lemure. Simply pick up a lemure and stuff it into the flask, like stuffing a pillow into a pillow case, to fill the flask up; you will get some lemure on your hands when you do this so have a towel ready. When you want to remove lemure you pour them out. The lemure are mindless enough to not be terribly bothered by all this. They don't need to eat, either in the flask or out. They will not fight for you unless you have some other authority over them. Free-range lemure may resist, and lemure bound to a devil or some other master always resist. Steel flasks cannot hold dead lemure.

Caster Level: 12th; *Prerequisites:* Craft Wondrous Item, *plane shift*, *secret chest*; *Market Price:* 500 gp; *Weight:* 10 lb.

Skills and Feats: Hide +3, Listen +3, Move Silently +6, Spot +3; Alertness.

Fiendish ogre: CR 3; Large Outsider; HD 4d8+8; hp 26; Init -1; Spd 30 ft.; AC 16 (-1 size, -1 Dex, +5 natural, +3 hide); Melee: Huge greatclub +8 (2d6+7); Ranged: Huge longspear +1 (2d6+5); SA Smite Good (+4 damage to good creature 1/day); SQ Darkvision 60 ft.; cold and fire resistance 10; DR 5/+1; SR 8; AL NE; SV Fort +6, Ref +0, Will +1; Str 21, Dex 8, Con 15, Int 6, Wis 10, Cha 7.

Skills and Feats: Listen +2, Spot +2; Weapon Focus (greatclub).

INFERNAL CONTRACT

DC: 25

Request Cost: 4 stress

Target: up to 4 signatories

Duration: Instantaneous

The Syndicate handles many of the contracts devils make with outside parties. These contracts have special binding conditions so that they enforce themselves. The power binding the contract flows from the free will of the parties involved in the contract. For this reason all infernal contracts must be signed by agents acting of their own free will. Basic contracts may be up to 666 words in length and can have up to four signatories. All contracts also have a penalty clause that specifies a disease; devil chills is most common but almost any disease can be chosen. The DMG has a listing of sample diseases. If a signatory violates the letter of the contract, he contracts the disease specified in the contract. This disease progresses normally but cannot be cured through mundane or magical means; the character may make Fortitude saves to resist damage from the disease

as usual but that just slows the rot. The disease does not go away until the contract is fulfilled. If you allow players to succeed at saving throws on a 1 (when they have a high enough bonus) that should not apply to the disease from an infernal contract.

The signatories to the contract must be acting of their own free will; it is that will that gives the contract power. Magical compulsion or any effect that reduces one of the signatories mental attributes (Intelligence, Wisdom, or Charisma) makes the contract useless. Mundane means of coercion are more tricky; grabbing a person's hand and forcing him to sign the contract won't work but many explicit threats are part and parcel of the normal way of doing business. For example, if you threaten to kill someone if they don't agree to the contract and they sign off on it, that signing counts; it was coercion but it operated through their will. Contract law in hell doesn't obey the niceties of contract law in democratic societies.

MARKETING CAMPAIGN

DC: 25

Request Cost: 4 stress

Target: You

Duration: 1 hour

Product placement, brand management, eye-catching logos, and annoying, repetitive phrases increase your name recognition. In a market as vast as that of the damned, name recognition and an established product identity is the key to success. With this request you tie yourself into an ongoing marketing campaign by temporarily "branding" yourself in accordance with the marketing campaign. This doesn't grant you permanent benefits but allows you to expand your range of abilities for a short time. You add one to your effective pact level with any pact with which you already have at least one level, and add a +5 circumstance bonus to all request, Diplomacy, and Intimidate checks for the duration of the effect. When you increase a pact level remember that you still need to cast pact gates of the appropriate degree to access those requests.

FOURTH DEGREE

MARKET SPECIAL REQUEST

DC: 30

Request Cost: 6 stress

You can use the Syndicate Market to make a special request for an item. Special Requests allow you to purchase any magic item (with GM permission) with a required caster level to craft of 15 or lower. As usual, these items cost 25% more than normal. It takes the vendor 1d6 days to track down the item; otherwise handle the purchase the same as for a regular use of the Syndicate Market.

PIT BOSS

DC: 30

Request Cost: 4 stress

Effect: One summoned pit fiend

Duration: 4 rounds

The pit fiend guardians of the Pit and the Pit Vault like to get out occasionally and wreak some mayhem. The Syndicate has made an arrangement allowing members to summon a pit fiend more easily than normal. A pit fiend steps through the gate and attacks as much as possible in the little time it has available. The nature of the special arrangement prevents the pit fiend from using any of its spell-like abilities. Most of the bosses don't mind; they call these little trips *ravages*. By leaving their arcane power behind the pit fiends summoned this way don't suffer as much if they die outside of hell; they make the most of this chance and throw themselves into even the most foolish fights.

PROJECT ANALYSIS

DC: 30

Request Cost: 4 stress

Target: 1 effect

The Syndicate got where it is via brutal efficiency. With this request you gain an interview with a Syndicate efficiency expert. The efficiency experts do more than spout clichés; they feed your information into cyclopean analytic engines forged from the bodies of the damned. Lemure form the basic structure of the engine while imps and higher ranking devils fused into the machine perform the information analysis procedures. The engineers cull the material worlds for raw materials, living nerve being the most sought after. The engines need constant supplies of raw nerve for information transfer.

When you use this request you may pick from one of the following effects: *analyze dweomer*, *find the path*, or *legend lore*. The pact gate remains open until the request has been completed. The *find the path* function produces a map with precise written directions towards the target at the time of the request; it does not update based on target motion. The *legend lore* function requires additional energy; this is typically supplied by feeding 2 lemure into the machine (worth 200 gp) or 250 gp worth of some other material component.

PACT UEBINOEX

Pact Skill: Knowledge (Uebinoex Dogma)

Stress Buffer: 10 + your Constitution modifier

The Followers of Uebinoex have constructed a vast, organic temple across several interstices and fragment shards. Pathways of flesh link gurgling chambers; communication

works through living nerve, pheromones, and endocrine filled tubes. The Followers worship Uebinoex, lord of the flesh. Unlike many religions, the Followers practice a form of fleshy hedonism. The faithful must revel in their flesh and the pleasures of it. The faithful should be promiscuous, not celibate. But not all pleasures are allowed; pleasures related to the inorganic can get one burned at the stake.

The strange taboos and practices of the Followers are complicated even more by their religious hierarchy. A High Seneschal communicates directly with Uebinoex; he does this via the road of excess, by consuming hallucinogenic mushrooms, licking narcotic toads, and using other sorts of mind-altering but organic materials. He compounds these effects with indulging in the most intense forms of physical pleasure or pain. The concept being that one communicates with Uebinoex not by transcending the flesh, but by immersing oneself in it so deeply that he finds the primordial seed of flesh within.

While experiencing the psychotic breaks that come from these orgies the Seneschal issues edicts. Lots of edicts. These edicts are transcribed onto organic texts or memorized by recorder organisms, then distributed via the endocrine tubules. Uebinoex Dogma has over one million commandments, most of which were decided upon and issued in this way.

One early commandment ordained that you should not speak the name of Uebinoex unless you're a High Seneschal. Thus, the Followers simply call themselves *the Followers*, or, occasionally, *the Faithful*. When others deal with the Followers they do likewise since the Followers take blasphemy serious. One can get by though if he knows enough about the rest of the dogma; there's a streak of piety competition in the Followers with everyone trying to show that he's more faithful than the other.

NEW SKILL: KNOWLEDGE (UEBINOEX DOGMA) (INT)

The Followers of Uebinoex obey an extensive set of dogma; scratching yourself at the wrong time or speaking the word 'twilight' (in any language) when facing south can get you excommunicated. If the Followers discover any of their texts transcribed onto inorganic matter they burn them. The dogma focuses mainly on telling you what you cannot do, and there's an awfully long list of that (microwaving food that you eat was added in 1978, First World reckoning). Knowing the dogma also gives you knowledge of some Follower history, mostly regarding the lives of martyrs and prophets but also covering angels and demons.

THE UEBINOEX AND THE FOLLOWERS OF UEBINOEX

In one of those bits of cosmic synchronicity the name, Uebinoex, occurs more often than it should. The Followers worship a god named Uebinoex and treat unbidden use of that name as blasphemy. There's another group called, simply, the Uebinoex. Unlike the Followers the Uebinoex embrace the technological. Flesh and the pleasures it brings are signs of primitive weakness and imperfection. In response to this they deny their physical nature and replace their organs with technological artifacts. The Uebinoex have perfected an array of odd and alien devices, most of which appear to violate conventional laws of physics. Their technology can achieve amazing results, they've manufactured perpetual motion machines and devices capable of storing far more energy than they should such as the hand flamer and the air cannon.

The Followers have been at war since they first discovered each other. When they battle, neither group takes prisoners.

Many scholars believe that there is no Uebinoex. They point to the erratic nature of the Followers' divine powers as proof. If a character wants to take Uebinoex as her deity she should come up with a little story regarding her interpretation of Uebinoex and the nature of flesh. She then picks any two domains available in the game to represent her interpretation. She should also choose a weapon appropriate to her interpretation as Uebinoex's favored weapon.

No one group or race dominates the Followers; they've managed to convert outsiders from a wide variety of backgrounds.

GAINING PACT LEVELS

The best method to develop this pact is by training in the special rules and restrictions governing the behavior of the Followers and their creations. Joining with them grants a great deal of influence but, given their credos, you probably don't want to. Fortunately, their credos make them vulnerable to someone who knows their religious practices. The rules given here assume that you use their religious dogma to manipulate the Followers and their servitor species, perhaps augmenting that knowledge with an oath or via some other means.

Pact Uebinoex doesn't lend itself well to monetary sacrifices for pact level increase (the pact members don't value gold that highly). If you use Influence points in your game you can allow characters to purchase pact levels via Influence points according to the following chart.

Pact Level	Influence Cost
First	4 ip
Second	16 ip
Third	36 ip
Fourth	64 ip

IRON OATH

By taking this oath you gain one pact level with Pact Uebinoex. The oath requires that you forego the wearing and use of inorganic weapons and tools. So long as you maintain this oath you receive the bonus. It's a fairly good oath in some ways because other pacts make similar requests and the classes that use this pact often don't rely on inorganic material anyway. Using dead organic matter does not violate this oath.

When you take the oath it bonds your body to the commitment, so much so that if you wear or wield inorganic equipment you suffer 2d6 damage per hour (or fraction thereof). Doing so also marks you, all the way into your spirit. This interferes with your ability to call on the pact; you lose your Stress Buffer.

Followers of Uebinoex can recognize the effect this oath has on your body; they receive you more favorably. You receive a +2 circumstance bonus on social interactions with the Followers. If you consistently violate the oath you lose use of the pact for thirty days and suffer a -5 penalty on social interactions with the Followers during that time. Taking 50 or more points of damage from violating the oath within a seven day period counts as consistently violating. The Followers treat the fallen even worse than they treat pagans.

DEVOTION OF FLESH

By dedicating part of your flesh to the pact you gain access to deeper levels of power. For each point of Constitution you sacrifice you gain one level in the pact. When you sacrifice a point of Constitution you lose it for all purposes (somewhat like taking a point of permanent Constitution damage but you cannot recover it via *restoration* or similar effects).

PRACTICED RITES [GENERAL FEAT]

You develop a practice of constantly following all the tiny strictures and performing the inane rituals of the Followers. You develop this technique by taking a feat.

Benefit: This feat provides no benefits other than giving you one pact level with Pact Uebinoex and granting a +2 circumstance bonus to social interactions with the followers.

Special: You may take this feat more than once. Each time you take the feat you gain an additional pact level with Pact Uebinoex.

KNOWING THE CODE

You also gain one pact level for every ten full ranks you have in the Knowledge (Uebinoex Dogma) skill. As you develop more ranks in the skill you can recover some of the sacrifices made earlier in your career. For example, you might finally reach 20 ranks but already have all four levels of the pact; perhaps you sacrificed a point of Constitution earlier via Devotion of Flesh. You could recover that Constitution point upon acquiring the 20th rank in Knowledge (Uebinoex Dogma). You could also recover some Influence points by doing this; simply free up the Influence for other purposes.

SUMMONINGS

You may summon the following creatures via a pact gate of the appropriate degree as requests (using the standard request format); your pact level must be at least as high as the gate degree required. These creatures will fight for you, even risking their life, acting in all ways like a creature summoned via a *summon monster* spell.

Summonings				
Creature	Degree	Request DC	Request Cost	Duration
Homunculus	1	15	4 stress	4 rounds
Gibbering Mouther	2	20	4 stress	8 rounds
Chaos Beast	3	25	4 stress	12 rounds
Flesh Golem	4	30	4 stress	16 rounds

FIRST DEGREE

FEED MEAT

DC: 15

Request Cost: 4 stress

Duration: Instantaneous

With this pact request you draw 200 pounds of raw flesh through the gate. It flops out of the gate so you should clean up the place first. You need to carve away the fat, cartilage, and some unsavory bits, leaving you with only 100 pounds of usable meat. Total time to prepare and cook: 5 hours (but you can get help). This is enough to feed 100 people for a day but you should also supply other types of food for a nutritious and satisfying meal. Without special preparation or storage techniques the meat doesn't last much more than a day. Different kinds of meat fall through these gates at random, thus it will often taste like chicken but occasionally taste like beef, pork, mutton, pheasant, sea slug, or any other assortment of creatures.

FLANGE

DC: 15

Request Cost: 4 stress

Duration: 10 minutes

Typically you open the pact gate right next to you to facilitate drawing the flange through the gate; casting the spell and performing the move-equivalent action to make the request also counts as drawing the weapon. Flanges are organic, living longspear and use longspear attributes; i.e. they're Large, martial, reach weapons that cause 1d8 damage, a critical multiplier of $\times 3$, can be set for a charge, and do piercing damage. They are covered with a variety of barbs and hooks which move on contact with flesh. The flange has an attack penalty of -2 due to its tendency to move. However, it causes vicious damage, +1d6 normally and an additional +1d10 damage on a critical hit. Due to its alien nature a flange counts as having a +3 enhancement bonus for purposes of defeating damage reduction.

After you score a critical hit with a flange you may choose to break off the end in the victim. This kills the flange but causes the victim an additional 1d10 damage per round for the next five rounds while the flange squirms in its death throes; each round the victim may make a Fortitude save (DC 13) to ignore the damage for that round.

TOXIN SYMBIOTES

DC: 15

Request Cost: 4 stress

Range: 10 feet

Target: 1 creature

Duration: 2 days

Saving Throw: Fortitude negates (DC 14)

Spell Resistance: No

You summon a swarm of tiny parasites that flow over and infest the fleshy object (be it dead or alive) nearest the gate. The parasites proceed to devour any toxins in the creature's body. The subject of the symbiotes is cured of all physical poisons and diseases. The patient remains comatose for 2 days while the symbiotes do their work. The patient should be force-fed water and food during this time. The symbiotes are not very useful as an attack because they can be evaded quite easily, Reflex save (DC 5) negates. If the victim fails to evade, or cannot evade for some reason, she goes into the coma described above. Some creatures with unusual blood streams can be killed by these symbiotes; treat them as a disease with an incubation period of one day, a save DC 13, and causing 1d6 Strength damage per day (maximum of two days for the disease though). Your gamemaster decides which sorts of creatures suffer damage from the symbiotes. Note, if the subject has already been killed by the toxin or disease then all this does is remove the evidence from his corpse.

SECOND DEGREE

BONE CANNON

DC: 20

Request Cost: 4 stress

Duration: 10 rounds

To use this request you open the pact gate near yourself and stick your arm through the opening. Leathery flesh and carapace cover your arm, forming a large, organic projectile weapon. Medium-size creatures need both hands to stabilize the device. Muscular contractions in the cannon rapidly spit out shards of bone at high velocity; the shards have ragged edges, increasing their critical damage. Anyone can stick their arm through the opening but the cannon only works for those who are part of Pact Uebinoex.

You use the bone cannon as a Simple, Large sized missile weapon, capable of both automatic and burst fire (see the d20 Modern rules); you may use firearms feats with this weapon. It does 2d8 ballistic damage, critical 20/ $\times 3$, and has a range of 80 feet. The cannon grows its own ammunition, enough to keep it fully supplied for the duration of its stay in the world. The bone fragments count as +2 for bypassing damage reduction.

REFLECTING ORB

DC: 20

Request Cost: 4 stress

Duration: 2 hours

Saving Throw: None

Spell Resistance: No

This creature looks like a six inch diameter, floating, chrome sphere. It bobs around in the air at the user's command. Upon entry into the world it begins to absorb sensory information. This process lasts for 2 hours, at the end of which the orb dies. For a corpse, reflecting orbs are quite informative. Any arcane caster with the spell, *arcane eye*, on his list may activate the corpse as a **spell trigger** item (see the DMG). This means that one can also activate the corpse by using the Use Magic Device skill (DC 20). When activated the corpse starts replaying the sensory information it absorbed. Orbs absorb and transmit information across a wide spectrum, both visual and auditory. The impressions they receive include sensory information outside the range of normal human ability such as infrared, ultraviolet, ultrahigh pitch and low level sound. This expanded range of perceptions is played back as well, but the observer must be able to sense it in some fashion.

With a Spellcraft check (DC 20) you can use a *major image* spell to construct a three-dimensional scene from the images played out on the surface of the orb. You need to concentrate on maintaining the *major image* spell through-

out the playback.

Typically these creatures are used for scouting and surveillance. You should give the orb ample time to travel to its destination and back. They are not invisible by any means, though they can be hard to detect in cluttered environments (since they reflect the appearance of their surroundings). Unlike most summoned creatures, reflecting orbs do not return to their plane after the duration ends; in fact, the orb body is simply a side effect of the spiritual essence of the creature entering the world. At the end of the duration the essence returns to its home plane, leaving the ‘shell’ behind. However, the shell does rot and decay like a regular corpse (albeit more slowly since it’s pretty durable). Within roughly a week it will have rotted to the point where it’s unusable; however, one could freeze the corpse or use magic to prevent the rotting.

Reflecting Orb: CR 2; Tiny Outsider; HD 2d8 (Outsider); hp 9; Init +4; Spd Fly 90 (Perfect); AC 16 (+2 size, +4 Dex); Melee: +0 Slam (1d6-4); SQ: All-around vision (Ex), Blindsight (Ex), DR 5/+1, SR 13, Evasion (Ex), Immune to Gaze attacks (Ex), Resistances: Acid 10, Cold 10, Electricity 10, Fire 10; AL N; SV Fort +3, Ref +7, Will +4; Str 3, Dex 19, Con 10, Int 6, Wis 13, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Hide +14 (+18), Intuit Direction +5, Listen +3, Move Silently +6, Search +2, Spot +3, Tumble +6; **Dodge.**

+4 racial bonus to Hide checks due to reflective surface.

TRUTH SIGIL

DC: 20

Request Cost: 4 stress

Area: 30 foot radius burst

Duration: 30 minutes

Saving Throw: None

Spell Resistance: No

Truth sigils hail from the Forge. They look like a twisting and glowing piece of neon tubing twisted into a letter from an alien language; they’re about 1 foot in size and hang in the air. Everyone bathed in a truth sigil’s glow (this covers a 30 foot radius burst) must speak the truth. Individuals in the area can still withhold the truth, or lie by omission or implication, but the words they speak must be truthful. Note that this only applies to spoken words, not thoughts or mental communication. Thus it can prevent disinformation but it cannot force someone to reveal information she wants to keep hidden. Once summoned you can command a truth sigil to move up to 10 feet per round.

THIRD DEGREE

FLESH HARNESS

DC: 25

Request Cost: 4 stress

Target: 1 creature

Duration: 10 hours

Saving Throw: Fortitude negates (DC 19, harmless)

Spell Resistance: Yes (harmless)

This request draws a large, spider-like underbody through the pact gate. Eight long, multi-jointed legs come off the main body; the main body is big enough to house a Large size or smaller creature up to the waist. The entire thing is fleshy, and covered with thick, leathery skin. After emerging from the pact gate the summoner can merge with the harness. The summoner can also direct the harness to merge with someone else but whoever does the merging must belong to Pact Uebinoex.

A person linked into the harness increases his base ground movement by 20 feet, gains a circumstance bonus of +20 to Climb checks and has a climbing speed equal to his ground movement speed. While “wearing” the harness you gain a +30 bonus to Jump checks. You also count as one size category larger than normal for all purposes except for the kinds of weapons you can wield and your attack bonus (note that this adjusts armor class and Hide checks). Since you now have multiple legs you gain a +4 stability bonus when resisting trip and bull rush attacks. You may use your two front legs to attack; they have wicked barbs on the feet to aid in climbing and cause 1d8 (critical 20/x2) damage. The legs count as off-hands thus you suffer a -4 attack penalty with them if you don’t have the Ambidexterity feat. However, their increased musculature allows them to gain your full Strength bonus to damage. You may make additional attacks with them as usual according to the two-weapon fighting rules. For example if you have a normal attack sequence of +9/+4, the ambidexterity and two-weapon fighting feats, and a normal two-weapon sequence of +7/+7/+2, then you would have a multi-weapon fighting sequence of +7/+7/+7/+7/+2 when using your legs as well (adjusted for individual items as usual). If you had the improved two weapon fighting feat as well your attack sequence would be +7/+7/+7/+7/+2/+2 because improved two-weapon fighting doesn’t work with more than two limbs. The harness uses your hit points and your armor class; treat it more like equipment than an organism.

FLESH SCULPTING

DC: 25

Request Cost: 4 stress

Duration: 24 hours

Saving Throw: Reflex half

Spell Resistance: No

With this request you summon a chaos beast master sculptor through the pact gate to reshape a target's flesh. The master sculptors consider themselves artists and do not fight for you; they barely take direction from you. The chaos beast can recast a target's physical features. This works like a permanent *change self* spell but causes actual physical change. This does not alter any of the victim's abilities. The master sculptor can use this to disguise a victim; they have an effective Disguise skill bonus of +30 when doing this (partially from their own skill but with a large bonus from their power). The victim may make a Fortitude save (DC 18) to negate this. Merely changing features this way causes the victim 1 point of permanent Wisdom damage. The master sculptor can also craft the victim's features to make them painfully beautiful or hideous. For each point of permanent Wisdom damage the victim suffers they gain either a +1 or -1 competence bonus to certain social skill checks. Beauty provides a bonus to all the social skills, Bluff, Diplomacy, Gather Information, Intimidate, and Perform. Hideousness generates a penalty for all those skills except Intimidate and Gather Information, to which it grants a bonus. Since you have the victim at your mercy you can cause as much permanent Wisdom damage as you like so long as they have a Fortitude saving throw bonus of +16 or less; victims with high Fortitude saves take longer to affect this way though. The master sculptors' skills are matched only by their ego, thus all their works of art incorporate some kind of signature such as a tattoo, scar shaped like a rune, or even a particular, small, deformity. Healing the Wisdom damage via a *restoration* spell or similar effect also reverses the physical changes.

SUMMON SKIN HOUND**DC:** 25**Request Cost:** 4 stress**Range:** 10 feet**Target:** 1 creature**Duration:** 1 week**Saving Throw:** None**Spell Resistance:** No

This request summons a skin hound. See the nearby boxed text for details on the creature. The skin hound will help the summoner track a target; there are two ways this can work. First, the skin hound could simply do all the tracking itself. In this case use the skin hound's abilities to make the tracking checks. Second, you can form a symbiosis with the skin hound. In order to form a symbiosis you must extract some blood from the skin hound and inject it in the creature with whom it will form a symbiosis. This requires a Heal check (DC 20); if you have access to a syringe you receive a +5 equipment bonus on this check. Syringes cost 200 gp in a

typical medieval world, 10 gp in a renaissance era world or the Second World, and \$10 in the modern world. Once you've formed the symbiotic link it lasts for one week or until the skin hound returns to its plane, whichever comes first.

While the symbiotic link is active the host gains use of the Scent special ability and receives a +6 bonus to Wilderness Lore checks used for tracking. Four points of this bonus come from the Scent ability and the other two points come from assistance provided by the skin hound. Anyone can form a symbiotic link with a skin hound, not just the summoner; however, only one person can be linked at a time.

SKIN HOUND**Large Outsider****Hit Dice:** 4d8+16 (34 hp)**Initiative:** +0**Speed:** 40 ft.**AC:** 17 (-1 size, +8 natural)**Attacks:** +7 melee bite or +7 melee butt**Damage:** Bite 1d8+6; Butt 1d6+6**Face/Reach:** 5 ft. x 10 ft./5 ft.**Special Qualities:** Scent**Saves:** Fort +8, Ref +4, Will +8**Abilities:** Str 18, Dex 10, Con 18, Int 8, Wis 14, Cha 12**Skills:** Intuit Direction +10, Jump +6, Listen +8, Move Silently +4, Search +7, Spot +8, Wilderness Lore +12.**Feats:** Iron Will, Alertness, Track**Climate/Terrain:** Any land or underground**Organization:** Usually summoned**Challenge Rating:** 4**Treasure:** None**Alignment:** usually Neutral**Advancement:** 5-7 HD (Large); 8-12 HD (Huge)

Skin hounds are large dog-like creatures, roughly the size of a tiger. They're covered in rolls of flapping flesh and have broad faces and large noses. They have no fur, just thick, leathery skin. Skin hounds have evolved over the centuries into able trackers; recently hunters have bred into them an ability to temporarily bond by blood sharing.

COMBAT

Skin hounds seldom fight, but when they do they can bite with their flat teeth or butt with their bony head.

Skills: Skin hounds have a natural feel for their location and keen senses; they receive a +4 racial bonus to Intuit Direction, Search, and Wilderness Lore checks.

WALL OF FLESH**DC:** 25**Request Cost:** 4 stress

Effect: 100 foot long, 10 foot diameter wall

Duration: 2 hours

Saving Throw: None

Spell Resistance: No

This request draws a long, worm-like cylinder of flesh through the pact gate. The wall can slither along the ground at a speed of 20 feet per round and can Bull Rush opponents (effective bonus of +24) but moves too slowly to attack in any other fashion. It emerges from the pact gate at its regular movement rate, thus it takes 5 rounds to fully come into this world. The wall of flesh can fold back on itself or curl as the summoner desires.

A wall of flesh has: 200 hit points; AC 2 (-4 Dex, -8 size, +4 natural); DR 15/+2; fire, electricity, acid, cold, and sonic resistance of 20; and regeneration 10; fire and acid damage that surpasses the creature's resistances does not regenerate. If you can cause at least 10 points of damage per round you can dig your way through the wall in four rounds; the injury closes up behind you though. By causing at least 50 points of damage to a single section you can temporarily cut a 5 foot wide passage through the thing.

FOURTH DEGREE

DEVOURING MAW

DC: 30

Request Cost: 4 stress

Range: 80 feet

Area: 15 foot radius burst

Duration: Instantaneous

Saving Throw: Reflex half (DC 22)

Spell Resistance: No

This request draws a giant worm from the deep Forge through the gate; it lashes out, engulfs a 15 foot radius burst, swallows everything in the area, then returns through the gate to the Forge (or astral space depending on the world).

Count the range from the pact gate. The burst radius is actually the radius of the worm's mouth (this summons one of the small worms...) All those in the blast radius of size Huge or smaller size must make a Reflex save (DC 22). Those who fail the saving throw get eaten, taking 4d6+16 damage from the multitude of foot-long teeth that line the worm's gullet. Those who make the saving throw take 2d6+8 damage just from the impact. When the worm retreats through the gate it takes all those it swallowed with it.

That's not the end of the story. Now you have a bundle of heroes, bystanders, villains, or monsters stuck in the stomach of a worm floating in the deep Forge. Once past the gullet, the inside of the worm isn't so bad, except for the stench and digestive acids. Everyone inside the stom-

ach takes 1d6 acid damage per round; this can be reduced to 1d6 acid damage per ten minutes by climbing (DC 20) to a portion of the stomach not submerged in acid. Every 30 minutes the gamemaster should roll to see if the worm convulses (20% chance); when the worm convulses every muscle in its body contracts at once, causing another 2d6+8 bludgeon damage to those still inside. Creatures trapped inside the stomach of a worm can carve their way out with slashing weapons. The worm's interior has DR 15/+2 and an effective hardness of 10 due to the thickness of the flesh and its ability to close up quickly. You can cut a 5 foot wide tunnel to the outside by causing 75 points of damage to the worm. It also regenerates 15 hit points per round.

GIBBERING INTERROGATION

DC: 30

Request Cost: 4 stress

Duration: 1 week

Saving Throw: see below

Spell Resistance: No

With this request you summon a gibbering moulder, leave it near a captive audience, and let it run off at the mouths for several days. Part of the deal with this summoning is that the moulder doesn't have to do any fighting; thus it stays around longer and you get to summon a gibbering moulder specially trained in interrogation techniques. The moulder gibbers as usual; however it also varies its voice and pitch, creating a selection of obscene symphonies better suited to achieving certain effects. You may choose from the following list of techniques to use in the interrogation. All techniques affect all creatures within a 60 foot spread unless otherwise noted. You should choose one technique per day. While subjected to the gibbering, victims do not recover temporary ability damage to Intelligence, Wisdom, or Charisma, regardless of the source.

Brain-numbing ditty: By gibbering the same tuneless but catchy short phrase endlessly from hundreds of mouths you can break down a target's will. Each day a subject is exposed to this, he must make a Will save (DC 22) or take 1d4 points of temporary Intelligence damage. Even if the victim makes his save he still takes 1 point of temporary Intelligence damage. Each point of temporary Intelligence damage a victim suffers from this reduces level checks to resist Intimidation checks by the same amount. People subjected to this form of interrogation have been known to remember the phrase for decades or even centuries.

The Carcosian Candidate: The moulder interrogator conceals a brainwashing subtext beneath a variation of its confusion causing gibbering. Victims of the variant gibbering are not immune to the *confusion* effect for 24 hours after succeeding at a saving throw. This typically means that

over the course of a day the victim constantly drops into and out of confusion. Ten percent of the mouther's voices deliver the subliminal message. The entire process requires five days and only works on a single target (since the voices need to focus their message on a particular person). Each day the target must make a Will save (DC 22); keep track of the number of saves failed. You can "spend" failed saves to purchase lasting effects to the victim's psyche. One failed save allows you to modify up to 24 hours of the victim's memories or cause the victim to completely forget what happened over the last week. Two failed saves allows you to either modify a full week of the target's memories or plant a special *suggestion* (as the spell) that lasts for 4 weeks. Three failed saves allow you to place the victim under a *geas/quest* (as the spell). Four failed saves let you place the victim under a very long term *suggestion* effect; this lasts up to four years. Most people use triggered effects for this. Five failed saves allow you to inflict *insanity* (as the spell) on the victim or alter as many of the victim's memories as you could talk about in a period of 24 hours.

Will-numbing questions: The mouther continually asks questions, some of them banal and some of terrible significance. By intermixing occasional tidbits of useful information and pitching its voice just right the mouther can keep the victim from completely tuning out. Each day a subject is exposed to this the victim must make a Will save (DC 20) or take 1d4 points of temporary Wisdom damage. Even if the victim makes his save he still takes 1 point of temporary Wisdom damage. Victims of this forget all of what they heard and said during the period, making this form of interrogation useful if you plan on later releasing the victim.

POWER PARASITES

DC: 25

Request Cost: 4 stress

Range: 10 feet

Target: 1 creature

Duration: 1 week

Saving Throw: None

Spell Resistance: No

These parasites flow out of the gate and into the body of a creature within 10 feet of the gate. If the creature can move at all it can easily get out of the way of these parasites and the parasites perish without a host. Thus, it is best to use these on an already subdued victim. The parasites eat the victim's magical energies. The victim may not activate any spell, spell-like, inherent, or supernatural ability; moreover, the victim cannot use magic items other than potions.

Most creatures naturally eliminate these vermin in a week. Despite the high pact gate degree required to summon these creatures they are ravenous to show up for some free dinner,

IT'S ALL ABOUT THE MATH

The pact system is designed around a standard pact having four pact levels and 4 requests per pact level. What a pact does is allow a character to trade in one spell slot that would normally hold a specific spell, for a flexible spell slot. This system gauges trading off a spell slot for a variable spell (using the pact rules) as roughly equal to the value of gaining one additional spell slot. If it were a purely variable slot the cost should be higher; but since pacts have the added restriction that you can only do a limited amount of spell swapping during a week (based on the Stress costs) the "4 requests = 1 bonus spell slot" should be right.

Once you have that assumption in place the rest follows pretty naturally. Most wizards have a high enough Intelligence that an item that grants an enhancement bonus to Intelligence will grant them two additional spell slots per day per two points of bonus; for example, with an 18 base Intelligence a +6 item gives a character additional first, second, third, fifth, sixth, and seventh level spells. Since an extra spell slot is roughly equivalent to a flexible spell slot via a pact, a third degree pact should cost, in total, about the same as a *headband of intellect* (+6). The pact has some advantages; it doesn't use a magic item slot (normally doubling the cost) and stacks with a *headband of intellect*. However, it doesn't grant skill bonuses, you can't use it for Intelligence checks; and, perhaps most vital to the combat monster wizard, you don't pump up all your saving throw difficulty classes with a pact. These advantages and disadvantages roughly balance out and thus the cost structure for pact levels follows the cost structure for an attribute boosting item.

thus the low request DC.

PRESTIGE CLASSES

PACT NEGOTIATOR

Pact Negotiators are spellcasters who have focused on using pact gates and dealing with the alien organizations on the other side of those pact gates. The Pact Negotiator can be a diplomat or con artist, and often both. Dealing with alien intelligences exacts a terrible price, either in health or sanity. But the powers offered by pacts with outsiders are so valuable that many worldly organizations do what they can to prop up their Pact Negotiators. For instance, both Tempest Argon and the College of the Interstice make Wisdom and Constitution enhancing items available at half cost to their Pact Negotiators. Powerful organizations need

these people to serve as the interface between the organization and the outer planes. Pact Negotiators must train in a wide variety of skills, develop a range of special techniques, and bind themselves to arduous oaths to accomplish their job. For paying this cost they gain flexibility in the spells they cast.

Hit Die: d4.

Action Points: 6 + 1/2 your character level

REQUIREMENTS

To qualify to become a Pact Negotiator, you must fulfill all of the following criteria.

Bluff: 5 ranks

Diplomacy: 5 ranks

Sense Motive: 5 ranks

Feat: Negotiator

Special: You must be able to cast a *pact gate* spell.

CLASS SKILLS

The Pact Negotiator's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Bluff (Cha), Concentration (Con), Craft (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Gather Information (Cha), Innuendo (Wis), Intimidate (Cha), Knowledge (Int), Profession (Wis), Scry (Int), Sense Motive (Wis), Speak Language (None), and Spellcraft (Int).

Skill Points at Each Level: 2 + Int modifier; 4 + Int Modifier if using defense bonuses.

CLASS FEATURES

All of the following are class features of the Pact Negotiator.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: The Pact Negotiator is proficient in the use of all simple weapons.

Spellcasting: A Pact Negotiator continues training in magic as well as pact dealings. When a new Pact Negotiator level

is gained, the character gains new spells per day as if she had also gained a level in a spellcasting class she belonged to before she added the prestige class. She does not, however, gain any other benefit a character of that class would have gained (improved chance of controlling or rebuking undead, metamagic or item creation feats, and so on). This essentially means that she adds the level of Pact Negotiator to the level of some other spellcasting class the character has, then determines spells per day, spells known, and caster level accordingly.

If a character had more than one spellcasting class before she became a Pact Negotiator, she must decide to which class she adds each level of Pact Negotiator for purposes of determining spells per day when she adds the new level.

Terrible Price: Dealing with the alien takes its toll on the character. Either the strangeness of the creatures and ideas you're exposed to eat away at your sanity or the alien environments wrack your health. When you take your first level in Pact Negotiator you must sacrifice either one point of Constitution or one point of Wisdom. Each time you gain a level with this special feature you must sacrifice another point of Constitution or Wisdom; you may choose which to sacrifice.

Art of the Deal (+5 sp): In order to interact with creatures from alien worlds and dimensions you need to train in a wide range of areas. Moreover, each Pact Negotiator has her own set of particular organizations with which she is most familiar. At each level you gain 5 special skill points. You may spend these skill points normally or use them to purchase other abilities.

You may make any skill required for a pact a permanent class skill so long as you take at least one pact level in the pact; this costs 2 skill points.

You may choose a feat at a cost of 6 skill points. You may choose any feat that grants pact levels or any feat from the following list: Attentive*, Confident*, Creative*, Decep-

Class Level	Base Attack	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special	Fort Save	Defense Bonus	Reputation Bonus
1	+0	+0	+0	+2	Spellcasting, terrible price, art of the deal (+5 sp)	+1	+0	+2
2	+1	+0	+0	+3	+5 sp	+2	+1	+2
3	+1	+1	+1	+3	+5 sp	+2	+1	+2
4	+2	+1	+1	+4	Terrible price, +5 sp	+2	+1	+3
5	+2	+1	+1	+4	+5 sp	+3	+2	+3
6	+3	+2	+2	+5	+5 sp	+3	+2	+3
7	+3	+2	+2	+5	Terrible price, +5 sp	+4	+2	+4
8	+4	+2	+2	+6	+5 sp	+4	+3	+4
9	+4	+3	+3	+6	+5 sp	+4	+3	+4
10	+5	+3	+3	+7	Inscrutable, terrible price, +5 sp	+5	+3	+5

tive*, Educated*, Frightful Presence*, Great Fortitude, Iron Will, Leadership, Low Profile*, Renown*, Skill Focus, Studious*, Trustworthy*, and Windfall*. Feats marked with a * are from the d20 modern rules.

You may spend 6 of your special skill points to develop finesse with a pact; this grants you one pact level with that pact.

You may save up your special skill points from level to level in order to pay for the larger purchases.

Inscrutable: You are a master diplomat and poker player. If you want to hide your thoughts or feelings they remain hidden. While you still need to make Bluff and Diplomacy checks as usual to gain their benefits, you are immune to any ability that reveals something about your intentions without you wanting it to do so. This makes you immune to all detect spells, including alignment, lies, and even *detect magic*. Nothing can force you to tell the truth, nor can anything tell if you're lying. These effects act as if you fully and truly believed everything you say. This even applies to deep mental probes. Prior to one of these happening you should create a "cover story". This cover story is what you project to the world as your belief system; when someone reads your mind what they discover is the cover story. Your cover story can be as crazy or inconsistent as you desire. Note that by making it consistent and believable you're more likely to convince others that you actually believe what your cover story says you believe. Note also that this ability can be a drawback since those with whom you deal cannot rely on truth determining spells and effects when negotiating with you; of course, this is only a problem if they have reason to believe you have this ability.

GATE WARDEN

The Gate Warden specializes in opening portals between dimensions and manipulating those portals. This grants her powers of summoning and movement.

Gates created by Gate Wardens only allow movement across dimensions, they never allow movement within a dimension (unless linked to another power). Interstices and dimensions tend to line up alongside each other. What this means is that there is a unique function that maps the locations of one interstice onto those of another. The most pronounced example of this is the function mapping the Second World onto the First World. If you're in Second World New York and gate to the First World you end up in a perfectly analogous location in First World New York. In fact, the Second World looks just like a copy of the First World, at least spatially. This doesn't hold universally though; for instance some locations in the Second World

map onto drastically different locations in the First World. This may be because those locations have been modified by a powers user (such as a Vector Warden) or due to natural, though rare, circumstances. Many interstices have mapping functions like this. If you open a gate to the Dyson Shard (a fragment interstice known for its odd physics) from First World Philadelphia you'll always end up in the same place within the Dyson Shard. Interestingly, if you then open a gate from that same location within the Dyson Shard to the Second World you do not end up in the Second World analog of Philadelphia, but instead wind up in Wyoming (or the western marches of the Central Kingdom to use the Second World name for the area). This is one of the ways that you can use Gates to travel within a world, but you must do so by knowing the correct routes through various interstices. The Dyson Shard itself was discovered by the Gate Warden, Andres Dyson, while he was trying to do just this, explore new transit routes. Note also that the Dyson shard is a small interstice and as such not every location in the First or Second World maps to a location in the Shard. This is one of the features of a fragment interstice, or shard; it is not accessible from certain locations within the full worlds (in fact they are frequently only accessible from rather limited regions). Note though that most shards do have all of **their** locations mapped onto First and Second World locations; shards are strictly speaking smaller than full interstices (or worlds).

The mapping between the First and Second worlds is also "flat." What this means is that if you gate to the First World, then move 5 miles east and gate back to the Second World you will then be five miles east of your starting point in the Second World. Not all mapping functions work this way; again, the Dyson Shard has non-flat mappings with both the first and Second Worlds. For example, you Gate from First World Philadelphia (or Second World Wyoming) to the Dyson Shard, ending up at a landmark called Point Harmony (because of the calming, chime-like, music produced by the waves crashing against the shore). If you then proceed ten miles south along the coast you'll come to a large, jade, statue of a head (almost identical to the heads on Easter Island). Gating from there back to the First World will take you to Easter Island; from the jade heads to the Second World takes you to Cuba. Non-flat mappings appear to be discontinuous, but that might be due to our inability to finely discriminate between locations. Regardless, some locations in a non-flat mapping can be dangerous to gate from (because they're at the border between mapping to one area and mapping to another, distant area). It can be painful, and uncertain, when gating from one of these locations but seldom fatal. Finally, some mapping functions are dynamic (as opposed to static). This means that the mapping of loca-

tions of one world onto locations of the other world vary over time. Dynamic mapping functions aren't inherently dangerous; you don't suffer injuries because you gate at a time when the mapping function is in transition. However, it can be awfully hard to know where you're going to end up. The function connecting the First and Second Worlds to the Forge is a dynamic function.

It's not a dynamic function everywhere though; some regions have stable connections with each other. Also, in at least some cases, the dynamic function appears to be cyclic; for instance, every new moon you might be able to access a certain specific location in the Forge from a particular hilltop.

Given all these interstices are there an infinite number of them? And, are there an infinite number of parallel worlds like the First and Second Worlds? People keep finding new interstices but mostly they're small fragments like the Dyson Shard. Perhaps there's an infinite number of them; or perhaps people can just make new ones; or perhaps the search itself disturbs the Forge in such a way that it spawns a new shard. But so far the only interstices discovered large enough to count as worlds are the First and Second Worlds (and the Forge if you want to count that). Naturally, lots of this will be up to individual gamemasters; perhaps you want to include one of your favorite fantasy settings as an interstice or perhaps you'll discard the Second World setting in favor of your own campaign setting. The advantage of having a bunch of extra worlds is it gives you that much more space to explore; the disadvantage is that it can be distracting.

Despite this ability to travel and explore the nature of the Gate Warden's power has developed more and more into that of a conjurer or summoner. This places Gate Wardens in the category of the big four (Pattern Warden, Rune Warden, and Tone Warden being the other three) as far as powers flexibility and potential potency goes. The Gate Warden is frequently viewed with suspicion by the populace. She traffics with unknown and alien creatures from nether regions. Past superstitions regarding necromancy, witchcraft, and devil worshipping carry over onto her. This is most pronounced in the common populace but even other spellcasters may be wary. For the most part this is completely unjustified. Gate Wardens are clever negotiators more than

Class Level	Base Attack	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special	Defense Bonus	Reputation Bonus
1	+0	+2	+0	+2	+1 Binding Slot	+1	+1
2	+1	+3	+0	+3	+1 Binding Slot	+2	+1
3	+2	+3	+1	+3	+1 Binding Slot	+2	+1
4	+3	+4	+1	+4	+1 Binding Slot	+3	+2
5	+3	+4	+1	+4	+1 Binding Slot	+3	+2
6	+4	+5	+2	+5	+1 Binding Slot	+3	+2
7	+5	+5	+2	+5	+1 Binding Slot	+4	+3
8	+6	+6	+2	+6	+1 Binding Slot	+4	+3
9	+6	+6	+3	+6	+1 Binding Slot	+5	+3
10	+7	+7	+3	+7	+1 Binding Slot	+5	+4

anything else, much like the rogue with his web of contacts, the diplomat with his art of negotiation, or the merchant who drives a hard bargain. The Gate Warden just deals with creatures from another dimension. On the other hand, there have been those Gate Wardens who have dealt with the Roa, risking their life and the lives of those who surround them for a quick glimpse of power.

Gate Wardens deal with interstitial entities frequently. As such, Gate Wardens have extensively researched and explored the interstices and the Forge. They use this information to gain access to new creatures from the interstices and also to gain special abilities which derive from the interstices. To a certain extent, Rune Wardens could do much the same thing and some do; but since it takes them so long to access the interstices they usually restrict themselves to sigils and runes.

Gate Wardens have found it important to discover which entities are natural servitors (or that naturally do the sort of thing one desires, such as the Truth Sigil). However, these creatures are few and far between. Thus Gate Wardens need to find other methods to summon useful creatures. Since Gate Wardens have no means of binding summoned creatures they need an alternative. This alternative comes in the form of pacts.

Hit Die: d8.

Action Points: 6 + 1/2 your character level (round down)

GATE WARDEN FEAT

This feat grants you access to Gate Warden bindings. Gate Wardens master the opening of gates to alternate planes, dimensions, and world. Their gates do not allow transit within a world, but transit between worlds.

Prerequisites: as for the Gate Warden class

Benefits: You acquire two binding slots for use with Gate

Warden bindings. You must obey all the normal rules for

binding a power to a slot, including paying the appropriate

experience point and material component cost for the slot. This ability allows you to shift your axis as you at-

You may also take this feat if you already have Gate Warden

class levels; if you do so add 2 slots to your total available

slots for Gate Warden bindings. You may take this feat more

than once gaining two additional slots for each feat taken.

You may only use this feat for Gate Warden bindings.

REQUIREMENTS

To qualify to become a Gate Warden, you must fulfill all of the following criteria.

Knowledge (the planes): 8 ranks

Feats: (Toughness or Great Fortitude) and (Iron Will or Spell Penetration)

Special: You must have traveled to an alternate plane at some time in your career. In a Second World campaign the First and Second worlds as well as the Forge all count as distinct planes. The other special spaces also count as distinct planes (for instance, the Labyrinth); thus, if you have ever teleported then you have traveled, albeit briefly, in the Labyrinth.

CLASS SKILLS

The Gate Warden's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Bluff (Cha), Concentration (Con), Craft (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Knowledge (arcana/arcane lore, or the planes) (Int), Profession (Wis), and Spellcraft (Int).

Skill Points at Each Level: 4 + Int modifier.

CLASS FEATURES

All of the following are class features of the Gate Warden.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: The Gate Warden is proficient in the use of all simple weapons.

The saving throw DC for most Gate Warden powers (when applicable) is equal to 10 + the power's level + the Gate Warden's Intelligence bonus.

BINDINGS

AXIS SHIFT (SU)

Requires: None

Power Level: 4

Action: Free

Range: Personal

Target: Melee attack

AXIS WALK (SP)

Requires: World Stepping

Power Level: 5

Uses: 1/day

Binding Cost: 6,000 gp, 500 xp

This power allows you to use one of the following spells as spell-like abilities for the indicated cost in uses. Your effective caster level with these spells is 10.

Ethereal jaunt, 1 use

Plane shift, 1 use

CONTROL GATE (SP)

Requires: Perceive Alternate Axes

Power Level: 5

Action: Standard

Range: 100 ft.

Target: 1 gate

Duration: Varies

Uses: 1/day

Binding Cost: 4,000 gp, 320 xp

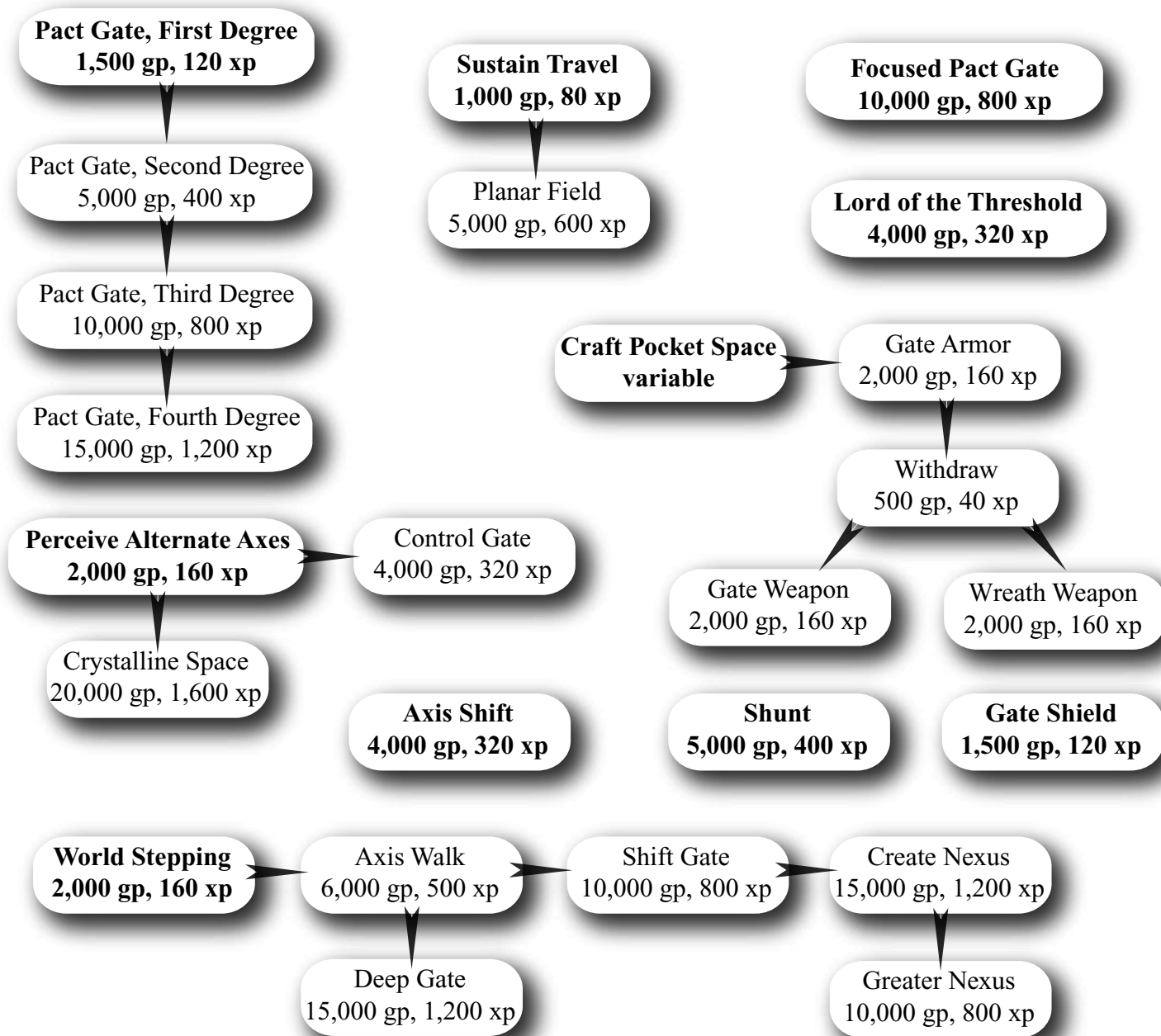
This power allows you to manipulate existing gates. You close them, move them, change their destination, or prevent them from opening. These tasks frequently require a caster level check; Use your character level as your effective caster level for these checks. The various methods are described below.

Close: You can close any gate at a cost of one use. This requires a caster level check against the spellcasting level of the person or creature who opened the gate. If the gate is permanent this closes it for a period of 24 hours.

Move: You can move an existing gate up to 30 feet per round. You must concentrate while moving the gate. Moving a gate requires a caster level check against the caster level of the gate. Permanent gates are moved permanently when you use this ability. You can spend up to 10 rounds moving a gate at a cost of one use.

Destination Shift: You can change the destination of the gate to any destination known to you; this requires a caster level check against the caster level of the gate. You know of a destination if you have ever been there or can make a Knowledge (planes or interstitial lore) check

Appendix: Pact System



(DC 20). Some planes are so familiar that everyone who can manipulate a gate knows about them; in the Second World setting the First World, Second World, and the Forge count as well known in this way. You may also use this ability to temporarily convert a gate to a *pact gate*; true gates (like most permanent gates) count as *fourth degree pact gate*. When shifting the destination of a permanent gate the shift lasts for 24 hours.

Block Opening: You can prevent a gate from opening as a spontaneous action. This costs a use and allows you to make a contested caster level check to prevent the gate from opening. By spending 2 additional uses you may change the gate to a pact gate with a degree equal to

or less than half the level of the spell being cast (round down); you may make the request check and apply its effects immediately. This works against any summoning spell as well as regular gates, including the innate gating powers of outsiders. Gates constructed by outsiders count as a pact gate of their hit dice or caster level, whichever is higher, divided by 4 (round down).

CRAFT POCKET SPACE (SP)

Requires: None

Power Level: 2+

Action: Standard

Range: 10 ft.

Effect: Craft and access pocket space

Campaign

Characters

Wardens

Influence

Equipment

Opponents

Duration: 1 hour (D)

Uses: 1/day

Binding Cost: variable; Spirit

This power creates a small pocket interstice within which you can store items. You determine the details of this pocket space but you need higher levels of power to construct more elaborate pocket spaces and to sustain greater numbers of them. Standard pockets can only be accessed by you (typically) and you need to open a small gate in order to do so. You can access these pockets from any location by expending a use of this power.

You can also create a fixed pocket. The opening of this sort of pocket is fixed to an object or locale. This can be used to construct rooms that are much larger on the inside than on the outside or special clothing with pockets that can carry more than usual.

You may purchase this ability multiple times; each purchase indicates that you are building and sustaining a particular pocket space. There are some methods of creating pocket spaces that do not require your maintenance (typically this is easier with fixed pockets and requires some source of magical power). Note: The pockets you create are empty. It is up to you to fill them. Pocket spaces have dull gray walls. The pocket space itself is a special fragment interstice or planar shard and thus doesn't have a conventional "outside".

Power Level	Gold Cost	XP Cost	Size
2	250 gp	20 xp	1 object (up to size of a large weapon) or 1 cubic foot of space
3	1,000 gp	80 xp	8 cubic feet (the size of a large backpack)
4	4,000 gp	320 xp	120 cubic feet (big steamer trunk)
6	10,000 gp	800 xp	20 ft. by 20 ft. by 10 ft. room
8	25,000 gp	2,000 xp	2,000 square foot building (10 foot high ceilings)

Halve the cost if the pocket space is fixed to an immobile object. Crafting a pocket space costs no uses; the power you expend in creating the space pays for the cost to open the gate as well. Crafting a pocket space takes time though. It takes one day per 1,000 gp invested in the pocket space.

You may access permanent fixed and mobile pocket spaces by simply opening the door, pack, or reaching

into the appropriate pocket. Moreover, anyone can reach into those pocket spaces. Only you can access a personal pocket space and this requires one charge from your uses per day. It takes a standard action to do so. The gate to the pocket space opens within ten feet of you (your choice of precise location). You can keep the pocket space open for up to 1 hour but it's typically best to close it when not transferring material.

CREATE NEXUS (SP)

Requires: Shift Gate

Power Level: 8

Action: Standard

Range: 30 ft.

Area: 30 ft. radius burst centered on you

Duration: 30 minutes

Uses: 1/day

Binding Cost: 15,000 gp, 1200 xp

Saving Throw: None

Spell Resistance: No

This merges an area of two worlds into a single location. The two areas overlap each other within the region. From the inside you see an amalgam of the two worlds. Objects from both worlds merge as much as possible. Where not feasible, use the dominance ordering below to determine which object wins out.

Dominance Ordering:

Animals/Creatures

Manufactured Structures/Objects

Plants

Terrain

The area looks normal from the outside. People can only see material from their world in the nexus. Watching from the outside looks strange since, if a fight is going on, an observer in one world sees people from her side apparently fighting nothing and suffering injuries from invisible attacks.

Leaving the area of a nexus returns you to your native world unless you specifically try to do otherwise, in which case you must make a Will save (DC 18). Gate Wardens can freely travel between the worlds merged by a nexus.

If the two worlds follow different rules (such as the World Rules detailed in the Second World Sourcebook) the Gate Warden invoking the nexus may pick and choose which rules operate within the area.

Metaphysical Nexus: Instead of merging the world you may simply import the world rules from another plane into the region. In this case no overlapping occurs and

people cannot exit the region to the other plane.

CRYSTALLINE SPACE (SP)

Requires: Perceive Alternate Axes

Power Level: 6

Action: Standard

Range: 60 ft.

Area: 60 ft. radius burst centered on you

Duration: 10 minutes

Uses: At will

Binding Cost: 20,000 gp, 1600 xp

This binding allows you to fix space in a region surrounding you. This acts like a *dimensional anchor* spell that operates against all objects and creatures in a 60 foot radius centered on you. This field also prevents the summoning of any creatures or opening of any *pact gates* within the area.

You may use this invocation as a single target effect instead. If you do this, it acts just like the *dimensional anchor* spell with a caster level of 10.

DEEP GATE (SP)

Requires: Axis Walk

Power Level: 9

Uses: 1/day

Binding Cost: 15,000 gp, 1200 xp

This power allows you to use one of the following spells as spell-like abilities for the indicated cost in uses. Your effective caster level with these spells is 18.

Gate, 1 use; You may also use the *gate* as a pact gate of fourth degree or lower.

Shadow walk, 1 use

FOCUSED PACT GATE (SP)

Requires: None

Power Level: 8

Uses: 1/day

Binding Cost: 10,000 gp, 800 xp

This allows you to open any degree pact gate; the use cost depends on the type of pact gate. These pact gates work with only one pact.

Note that you will likely want to purchase multiple uses of this power in order to gain access to the higher degree pact gates. 3 uses per day costs a total of 20,000 gp and 1,600 xp. 10 uses per day costs a total of 50,000 gp and 4,000 xp.

Degree	Use Cost
First	At will
Second	1
Third	3
Fourth	5

GATE ARMOR (SU)

Requires: Craft Pocket Space

Power Level: 4

Action: Free

Range: Personal

Target: 1 outfit

Duration: Instantaneous

Uses: 1/day

Binding Cost: 2,000 gp, 160 xp

When you use this ability you can swap out equipment you wear for a predefined outfit, or subset of that outfit, in one of your pocket spaces. Set up one or more outfits and place them in your pocket space; these outfits can include worn clothing, armor, shields, rings and amulets, or any other equipment that counts as worn.

When you use this power you can replace all or some of the outfit you currently wear with the predefined outfit. For example, you could define an outfit as a suit of full plate armor, shield, two magic rings, magic amulet, and the sports cap for your favorite First World sports team. When you use the power you could swap out all your worn equipment for that in the outfit, or just do a partial replacement, perhaps just one of the rings, the armor, and the shield if you were traveling light and found yourself in a combat where the stored ring would be more useful. Needless to say, Gate Wardens find this useful when traveling by sea.

GATE SHIELD (SU)

Requires: None

Power Level: 2

Action: Spontaneous

Range: 80 ft.

Target: 1 ranged attack

Duration: 1 attack

Uses: 1/day

Binding Cost: 1,500 gp, 120 xp

Saving Throw: Special

Spell Resistance: No

This invocation opens a circular gate in the path of an attack. This can be used to shunt off a ranged attack at a distance. It works against any form of ranged attack, firearm, projection, missile, or area effect attack. This can also be used against attacks directed at targets other than yourself. This grants the target a +7 cover bonus to armor class and a +3 cover bonus to Reflex saves against that one attack. If the attack misses due to the cover bonus assume the weapon or effect was shunted to some unknown interstice; items with the returning ability or something similar get a Will save (or their owners Will save, whichever is higher) to resist the shunting. They still miss but disrupt the shift gate; the collapse of the gate stops them at the gate's location. Since this

is a small gate it is useless for travel and cannot shunt off a person attacking in melee.

GATE WEAPON (SU)

Requires: Withdraw

Power Level: 3

Action: Spontaneous

Range: Touch

Target: 1 weapon

Duration: 1 attack

Uses: 1/day

Binding Cost: 2,000 gp, 160 xp

This tricky use of the gate power requires that you possess the Withdraw ability. When used you briefly replace the weapon that you are currently using with one inside a pocket space that you control. You attack as if you were using the alternate weapon. The sudden change in weapon disorients the defender giving you a +2 circumstance bonus to hit. You may use this defensively with an attack of opportunity; if you have a reach weapon in one of your pocket spaces you count as threatening targets out to your extended reach range when you use this power. You may either retain the original weapon or the new weapon after the attack is complete.

GREATER NEXUS (SP)

Requires: Create Nexus

Power Level: 9

Action: Standard

Range: 30 ft.

Area: 30 ft. radius burst centered on you

Duration: 30 minutes

Uses: 1/day

Binding Cost: 10,000 gp, 800 xp

This operates as Create Nexus but you may overlap more than two worlds within the region. Within the region you may pick and choose which world rules operate. You may choose from all the world rules available in planes of which you have knowledge. You may also create the nexus as a metaphysical nexus.

LORD OF THE THRESHOLD (SP)

Requires: None

Power Level: 2

Action: Varies

Range: 100 ft.

Uses: 1/day

Binding Cost: 4,000 gp, 320 xp

An unusual side effect of your abilities is that you possess command over doors and other portals. Through a simple act of will (a free action) you can open or

close doors within your vicinity. You may also open locked doors and windows. This grants you access to the following spell-like abilities; use the above range for all powers.

Open/close (quickened), at will

Arcane lock, 1 use

Knock, 1 use

You can also open and close portcullises and similarly large doors by spending 3 uses on a *knock* spell.

You do not need to see the door. If it is out of line of sight you should be familiar with it, have a good idea of what the surroundings look like, and must be within range. By spending 3 uses on either a *knock* or *arcane lock* spell you can open or shut all doors with a 100 ft. radius, whether you see them or not and whether you even know of them or not. Portals closed in this fashion act as if *arcane locked* for 24 hours; after that time they count as normally closed.

With the expenditure of 500 gp worth of hard power you can open or close doors on the First World while remaining in the Second World. You typically have to use this in conjunction with the area effect opening/closing technique described above.

PACT GATE, FIRST DEGREE (SP)

Requires: None

Power Level: 2

Uses: 1/day

Binding Cost: 1,500 gp, 120 xp

This allows you to open a *first degree pact gate*, as the spell, at a cost of one use. See the spell description on page 4 for details.

PACT GATE, SECOND DEGREE (SP)

Requires: Pact Gate, First Degree

Power Level: 4

Uses: 1/day

Binding Cost: 5,000 gp, 400 xp

This allows you to open a *second degree pact gate*, as the spell, at a cost of one use. See the spell description on page 4 for details.

PACT GATE, THIRD DEGREE (SP)

Requires: Pact Gate, Second Degree

Power Level: 6

Uses: 1/day

Binding Cost: 10,000 gp, 800 xp

This allows you to open a *third degree pact gate*, as the spell, at a cost of one use. See the spell description on page 4 for details.

PACT GATE, FOURTH DEGREE (SP)**Requires:** Pact Gate, Third Degree**Power Level:** 8**Uses:** 1/day**Binding Cost:** 15,000 gp, 1200 xp

This allows you to open a *fourth degree pact gate*, as the spell, at a cost of one use. See the spell description on page 4 for details.

PERCEIVE ALTERNATE AXES (SU)**Power Level:** 3**Binding Cost:** 2,000 gp, 160 xp

This allows you to see things and objects that operate on a different axis. This grants full sensory perception of any gates. They appear to you as glowing outlines; the color of the outline often indicates where the gate leads. You may make a Knowledge (interstitial lore or the planes) check (DC 20) to identify where the gate leads. This ability also allows you to perceive creatures or entities that use an alternate axis for concealment (for instance, creatures that are partially in this world and partially in another). Incorporeal creatures count as using an alternate axis and this allows you to observe them even when they are invisible for other reasons. This ability allows you to time and target attacks to eliminate the miss chance due to a creature being incorporeal; you must still wield a magical weapon or use a spell to affect them.

This also allows you to automatically resist a gate if you so choose. You gain spell resistance equal to 10 + your character level against effects that gate you against your will. You can extend this protection to others within a 10 foot radius by sacrificing 3 points of spell resistance. By fixing yourself to a local planar region you become opaque to planar movement through your body. This means that creatures cannot *blink* through you nor pass through your body incorporeally; specifically, you receive your full armor class against incorporeal touch attacks.

PLANAR FIELD (SU)**Requires:** Sustain Travel**Power Level:** 5**Binding Cost:** 6,000 gp, 500 xp

This binding allows you to summon a small field of space around your body at will. The atmosphere and environment of your home plane operates within this field, allowing you to safely travel in alien dimensions. This also protects you from ambient effects in your home plane; it provides air, regulates temperature, and evens out the surface pressure on your body. This allows you to survive in space or in the depths of the ocean.

This also makes you immune to the harmful, direct effects of all gasses and similar fluids (such as a cloud of insects). Thus you would ignore the nausea effect of a *stinking cloud* spell but not its concealment effect. You may maintain this ability indefinitely.

SHIFT GATE (SP)**Requires:** Axis Walk**Power Level:** 8**Action:** Standard**Range:** 10 ft.**Area:** 10 ft. radius burst centered on you**Duration:** Instantaneous**Uses:** 1/day**Binding Cost:** 10,000 gp, 800 xp**Saving Throw:** Will negates**Spell Resistance:** Yes

This invocation transposes everything within a 10 foot radius of the caster with an equal sized area in another plane or dimension. This transposes all living and non-living material within the radius, cleanly severing non-living solid objects in the process. Creatures within the area of effect, on either side, may make a Will save to resist. If any creature successfully resists, the *shift gate* fails.

SHUNT (SU)**Requires:** None**Power Level:** 4**Action:** Spontaneous**Range:** Personal**Target:** You**Duration:** 1 attack**Uses:** 1/day**Binding Cost:** 5,000 gp, 400 xp

This allows you to partially shunt an attack into another dimension at the last moment. You can declare this after an opponent has hit you. Halve the damage (rounding up) that you suffer from the attack. This works against melee, ranged, and area effect attacks. You must be aware of the attack to use this ability.

SUSTAIN TRAVEL (SP)**Requires:** None**Power Level:** 5**Action:** Standard**Range:** Touch**Target:** You and up to 3 other touched creatures**Duration:** 1 week**Uses:** 1/week**Binding Cost:** 1,000 gp, 80 xp**Saving Throw:** Will negates (harmless)

Spell Resistance: Yes (harmless)

With this invocation you suppress the synchronic signature of yourself and other touched creatures so that you may remain in the First World for a longer time. Normally, after traveling to the First World you shunt after 4d12 hours. By using this power you pause the countdown for one week. Multiple uses within a single trip do not work and, after shunting to the Second World you should remain there for close to the time you spent in the First World. If you spend too much time in the First World, i.e. keep popping back in as often as possible, the First World will start resorting to more extreme measures to expunge you. For instance, brakes might fail on busses as you're walking across a street; it might shunt you to someplace other than the Second World; synchronicity might place you in the middle of a revolution; all the doors you open might lead to alien places, and so on. Generally, you're safe if you spend less than one week out of every four in the First World; you may also spend two weeks in the First World close to each other so long as you then spend about 8 weeks back in the Second World. If you try to stretch it you give the gamemaster a license to do freaky stuff to your characters.

WITHDRAW (SU)**Requires:** Craft Pocket Space**Power Level:** 2**Action:** Free**Range:** Touch**Duration:** Instantaneous**Uses:** 1/day**Binding Cost:** 500 gp, 40 xp

This special ability allows you to instantly withdraw an object from one of your personal pocket spaces. The object appears in your hand. You may instead use this to instantly transfer an object in one of your hands to a pocket space.

WORLD STEPPING (SU)**Requires:** None**Power Level:** 3**Action:** Movement action modifier**Range:** Personal**Target:** You**Duration:** 1 movement action**Uses:** 1/day**Binding Cost:** 2,000 gp, 160 xp

This binding allows you to quickly step out of your current plane, move a short distance through an alternate plane, then reappear in your starting world. What you do is temporarily shift your axis to an alternate world, but

with a limited duration. Use this when you're moving; during the movement you bypass all objects in your world and provoke no attacks of opportunity. You may use this with either a single move or a double move, but not while running.

If you arrive in a place that is already occupied by a solid body, you become trapped in the Astral Plane. Each round that you remain trapped in the Astral Plane in this way, you may make a Will save (DC 25) to return to your start plane at a random open space on a suitable surface within 50 feet of the intended location. If there is no free space within 50 feet, make a Will save (DC 25) each minute to appear in a free space within 1,000 feet. If there's no free space within 1,000 feet, you are stuck on the Astral Plane until rescued.

WREATH WEAPON (SU)**Requires:** Withdraw**Power Level:** 3**Action:** Free**Range:** Touch**Target:** 1 weapon**Duration:** 1 attack**Uses:** 1/day**Binding Cost:** 2,000 gp, 160 xp

With this binding you briefly move the weapon you wield through an alternate plane while you attack. This wreaths the weapon in energy from that plane, adding 1d6 to the damage (or 1d6 + 1d10 on a critical hit). You may choose the type of energy when making the attack. Choose from fire, cold, lightning, positive, or negative energy. Positive energy heals normal creatures and damages undead. Negative energy repairs undead and damages living creatures. If using the power to heal a creature you can touch it lightly; in this case roll 1d8 to determine the amount of damage healed.

PACT CONSTRUCTION

Strip away the story elements and pacts are primarily collections of requests along with some requirements for how to gain access to them. When developing a pact start with the concept first. How would you describe the pact in a story? Who are the members? How do they interact? And what benefits do they provide? Once you have the story down then it's a matter of translating that picture into game mechanics. On the game mechanics side you'll spend most of your time developing two things, Requests and Pact Level Costs.

PRELIMINARY STUFF

You need to choose a Pact Skill and assign a Stress buffer. In both cases go with what feels right. Also, these are areas where you can perform some small balancing operations. Assigning a useful skill to the pact can increase its appeal. Stress buffers should typically be 10 + an attribute modifier.

REQUESTS

These are the powers and functions characters can choose from when using a pact gate. Requests provide benefits similar to spells. When balancing a request compare it to arcane spells with a level equal to twice the degree of the request. Assume that the caster level of the spell is then equal to twice its effective spell level. If the pact requires divine power or is mainly useful for divine casters for some reason, you can use divine spells as the basis instead of arcane spells but increase the level by 2 or more.

One of the primary difficulties you'll face when designing pacts is coming up with an idea that doesn't just feel like a warmed over spell. In many cases you should feel free to make a request operate largely, or even exactly, like a spell. For instance, opening the pact gate in the right way might release a torrent of fire that behaves exactly like a *fireball*. Still, you want to capture the flavor of using a pact gate instead of directly manipulating magic. One way to do that is to alter the base spell in subtle ways. For example, a *fireball* normally allows spell resistance but if you're releasing fire from the heart of an alien sun then it might not allow spell resistance. If so you should increase the effective spell level by one or two.

When designing a pact request strive for unusual effects that fall into the right spell level. For example, something like *glitterdust* makes a better first degree request than *invisibility* or *bull's strength*. This is because play-

ers likely already take "meat and potatoes" spells like *bull's strength* but may want the opportunity to cast one of the more unusual spells. Since pact requests allow players to choose from four spells they can more easily find one spell amongst the available set that's useful in their situation, and thus get a chance to try out some of the weird, but cool spells you have in all those books. A simple method for coming up with pact requests is to simply translate spells from non-core books. Again, pick the spells that are strange but interesting; you can feel more comfortable about choosing a spell that the sorcerer wouldn't ordinarily add to his list because the sorcerer can always use one of the other requests from that degree.

When hunting for inspiration you can look through the creatures related to the pact and see what sorts of services they could provide. Every pact should include a few summonings since summoning is ultimately what they're all about but the requests are what make them interesting. Extrapolate from the base creatures and figure out new ways for them to use their powers. Perhaps some of the summoned creatures have special training. Alternately, the character might be able to request aid from a creature who wouldn't come to fight but will come to provide some minor service. Look at the key powers of a creature, in particular the powers that aren't modeled by simple spell effects or are unique in some way. Then take that power and extrapolate; give it a twist or think of how some particularly clever version of the creature might put the power to a new use.

REQUEST DIFFICULTY CLASS

The difficulty class of a request follows a standard format according to the following table.

Degree	DC
1	15
2	20
3	25
4	30

You can massage the difficulty class up or down by five points to adjust for the power level of the request. It's best to usually massage down; if you want to massage up it's better to increase the degree of the request and massage the DC down. This is because if you make a low degree request more effective than comparable requests you'll see players gravitate towards using that request only once they've achieved a high bonus with their Influence skill.

REQUEST COST

The vast majority of requests have a flat Stress cost of 4 points. Since a player can reduce the stress cost by having a large skill bonus the difficulty class does much of the work of controlling how often the player can use the request. A typical character can make 3 pact requests per week of the highest degree available to them. Adjust up or down slightly if you want to make a certain request take up more of the character's weekly allotment. Note that even reducing the Stress cost to 3 increases the uses per week to four. On the other hand, reducing the cost to 3 has almost no effect on the cost for high skill bonus characters since you round up when dividing.

If you want a stronger limit on how often the request gets used, or just want to charge a permanent cost for the use of a request add in an Influence point or some other kind of cost (much as if giving a spell a high material component cost). It seldom makes sense to assign an experience cost to a request. However, gold costs or special component costs fit well into the framework. You can simply say that whichever creature performs the service wants to get paid. Generally, if the request creates a permanent benefit it should have a permanent cost of some sort. In fact, you could use this as a form of magic item creation. Simply have some creature step through the gate and give the character the magic item in exchange for the gold cost of the magic item. Of course, you'll want it to be a bit more interesting than a sword delivery service. Also note that devoting a pact request to the ability to purchase a single magic item isn't as powerful as a request that can be used repeatedly; if you do include a specific request like that don't count it towards the cost of the pact level and use it to make up for a pact level with weaker requests.

RANGE

Assigning a range for a request can feel strange. All requests via pact gate effectively have a range equal to the range of the pact gate. Since the requests typically operate by having a creature emerge from the pact gate and do something the range should be related to how far the creature can move in a round. If you want to represent a creature that moves out of a pact gate but has to complete all its movement in the same round that the request is made, simply give the request a normal range and count that range from where the pact gate opens. If the creature can hang around for a while, give it a Range of X ft./round, indicating that it can move the given distance each round until it completes its task.

SPELL RESISTANCE

In many cases it makes sense to not allow spell resistance against a request effect. If the Hell's Hammer request works by summoning the fist of one of hell's adamantine golems through the pact gate then the victims of the hammer would no more get their spell resistance against it than they would when fighting the adamantine golem in person. For damaging effects that allow a saving throw for half damage, foregoing spell resistance is nice but not terribly significant; treat the request like a spell one or two levels higher than a spell with similar effects that allows spell resistance. For direct target effects or effects with no saving throw, treat the spell as two or three levels higher. Remember that spell resistance is handy but mainly serves to prevent weak players from threatening strong monsters. When players face challenges appropriate for their character level they'll typically have a good enough spell penetration bonus to punch through spell resistance between fifty and seventy percent of the time.

CASTER LEVELS

The summoner doesn't provide the power for the effect, whatever he summons does. This means that you should assign a flat caster level for any request when caster levels are needed. The caster level should equal 4 times the degree level (i.e. CL 4 for degree 1, CL 8 for degree 2, CL 12 for degree 3, and CL 16 for degree 4). Again, this is an area where you can play with the numbers to get the balance of the request right.

Adding duration typically has a minor effect on the efficiency of a power yet can make it much more appealing to players since they won't need to worry about the effect running out too early. You can reduce duration to drastically limit the power of an effect; for example, the *true strike* spell is well-balanced because of its short duration; were the duration any longer the spell would be much more potent (even if it still only provided the bonus for one attack).

PACT LEVEL COSTS

In order to gain access to requests of a given degree a character must purchase a pact level at least equal to that degree. The actual costs a character pays for a pact vary widely and should help the player feel like he's bargaining with alien creatures. However, the basic cost structure for pact levels follows a standard pattern.

The cost for a pact level depends on how many requests it makes available to the character. Start by assigning pact levels an Influence point cost according to the following chart:

Pact Level	2 requests	3 requests	4 requests	5 requests
First	2 ip	3 ip	4 ip	5 ip
Second	8 ip	12 ip	16 ip	20 ip
Third	18 ip	27 ip	36 ip	45 ip
Fourth	32 ip	48 ip	64 ip	80 ip

Note that all the pacts in this book have four requests at each pact level. This is the assumed standard and it provides a nice balance of flexibility and focus. Moreover, it makes determining the value of sacrifices and costs more easy. If using a non-standard number of requests per pact level try to keep the number of requests per pact level the same or within one of the average.

The above just gives you a generic ranking structure for pact costs. Many pacts won't allow characters to use Influence points at all. However, the costs give you the skeleton from which to build an alternate cost structure; it tells you how much a pact is worth relative to other pacts and even other objects (such as magic items).

After you've set the cost for the various pact levels you need to figure out how characters actually pay for those levels. The most straight forward way of purchasing a pact is to simply spend Influence according to the cost. But that's nowhere near as interesting as selling your soul, taking a vow of peace, or giving over the phylacteries from three slain liches.

All these forms of gaining access are called sacrifices. You can represent a wide variety of sacrifices in the pact system. Each form of sacrifice is assigned either a Pact Level value or an Influence Point value.

Influence Point Values (ip): Total the Influence point value of all sacrifices to determine the pact level gained via this method. You should also add in the Influence point value gained via gold sacrifices, material component sacrifices, and standard Influence expenditures.

Pact Level Values: Add the degrees gained from these sorts of sacrifices to the pact level acquired through Influence point values to determine the final pact level. Degrees have the effect of multiplying your investment. Use degree adds when the sacrifice has a larger effective gold value at higher character levels. For example, a character can make up for a 2 point attribute sacrifice at low levels with a 4,000 gp magic item but at high levels they'll likely already have a +2 or +4 attribute enhancement item and thus be effectively giving up 12,000 or 20,000 gp.

SAMPLE SACRIFICES

Here are some sample sacrifices. You can also use the sacrifices from the pacts as examples when designing your own sacrifices.

AGING (1 IP PER 2 YEARS)

You age yourself, giving your lifeforce to the pact. When determining attribute alterations keep track of your effective age and your actual age. Your effective age equals your current age plus any years sacrificed via this method. Use your effective age to determine attribute penalties. Use your actual age to determine attribute bonuses (i.e. bonuses to Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma). For long lived races multiply the number of years you need to sacrifice per one Influence point gained by (Venerable Age/100).

DEDICATING YOUR SPIRIT (1 DEGREE)

This is the good version of selling your soul. You dedicate your life and spirit to the service of a good aligned outsider or pact. You cannot be raised or resurrected and wishes won't work either because it's assumed you won't want to come back from your final reward. You must remain good or lose the benefits of this sacrifice.

ELEMENTAL ENERGY SACRIFICE

Elemental pacts might request that you sacrifice part of your energy to the pact. When you do this, pick an elemental energy type appropriate to the pact or the polar opposite of the pact; for example, a Fire pact might request that you give up any of the cold in your body in order to align yourself more closely with the element of fire. You may not cast spells or use personally powered abilities with that elemental descriptor. You also take a -2 penalty on all saves against that type of elemental energy or effects with that energy descriptor. This is worth one pact level.

GOLD

Few pacts care for regular currency, but they do care for the sorts of things you can buy with currency. Rare gems and herbs, strange extracts, perhaps even exquisite art, can all bring you authority within a pact. Everyone needs magic so crafting, buying, or finding magic items and transferring them over can serve as ways to translate gold into influence. Every 1,000 gold pieces translates to 1 influence point.

HUMAN/ANIMAL SACRIFICES

Honestly, if you were a powerful demon how much would you value the average goat? These operate just

like gold sacrifices and are actually just an alternate form of material component sacrifice. Assign a gold value to a sacrifice equal to half the gold value you would normally gain for overcoming an encounter equal to the creature's challenge rating.

LIVING IN FEAR (2 DEGREES)

Some creatures feed off of fear. You live in constant fear to provide this. This is worth 2 pact levels and places you constantly under the **shaken** condition. Moreover, you suffer a -4 on any saves against fear effects.

A shaken character suffers a -2 morale penalty on attack rolls, checks, and saving throws. Shaken is a less severe fear condition than frightened or panicked.

OATHS (1 DEGREE)

Oaths either limit your behavior in some way, or require you to behave in some way. Since there are so many different kinds of oaths and they can do so many different things you'll need to do some guesswork when assigning a value to an oath.

Treat simple oaths that control behavior as something of a freebie. Use these for adding flavor to a pact, recognizing that they're a bargain. For this reason you should include no more than one oath option per pact unless the oath carries a significant game mechanical drawback. Oaths can also serve to help drive your campaign; you can use them as scenario hooks or to give the players an overarching goal, and thus help give the campaign cohesion. If the oath does this then it's worth something to you, as the gamemaster, and it's reasonable to give out a game mechanic award (i.e. a pact level) for making your job easier.

PACT USES A NON-MAGE SKILL

If the skill required for use of the pact isn't on the Wizard or Sorcerer skill list then grant one pact level if the character has five or more ranks in the skill. In some rare cases this can mean that a character gains a pact level at rank 5, 10, and 20 in the skill when it is not on one of the spellcasters lists nor useful. For example, the seldom-heard-of Ball of Infinite Twine Pact requires the Use Rope skill...

PACT USES A USELESS SKILL

If the pact uses a skill that has little value outside the pact grant one pact level for every ten full ranks the character has in the skill. As the character develops more ranks in the skill he can recover some of the sacrifices made earlier in his career. For example, a 16th level character might finally reach 20 ranks but already have

all four levels of a pact; perhaps they sacrificed a point of Constitution earlier via Devotion of Flesh from Pact Uebinoex. The character could recover that Constitution point upon acquiring the 20th rank in Knowledge (Uebinoex Dogma). You could also recover some Influence points by doing this; simply free up the Influence for the character to use for other purposes. Normally, this would not free up gold sacrifices (your pact allies have already spent it) however a gamemaster might allow some form of recovery if the player can come up with a good roleplaying justification.

PERMANENT HIT POINTS (1 IP PER 2 HIT POINTS OR 1 DEGREE PER 15 HP)

Hit points are an abstract thing but sacrificing them can serve as an alternative way to represent giving up part of your life force. This hits magic using characters the most. You can also use this to represent the character suffering from a continuous mild pain.

SACRIFICING ARCANE/PSIONIC POWER

By sacrificing spell slots or psionic power points to a pact you can gain pact levels. If you want to adjust the pact to focus on one type of power or the other increase the levels of spell slots that must be sacrificed by one or add 2 points per pact level to the amount of Psionic Power points that must be sacrificed.

Pact Level	Spell Slots	Psionic Power Points
First	2	3
Second	2 & 4	10
Third	2, 4, & 6	21
Fourth	2, 4, 6, & 8	36

SACRIFICING STATS (1 DEGREE PER -1 TO STAT, ADJUST FOR STAT TYPE)

Some pacts can take your core essence or strain you to the point that you lose attribute points. For Strength or Constitution this can represent giving up part of your physical essence or health. For Dexterity this might be a palsy that you take on from dealing with alien forces; Intelligence or Wisdom sacrifices can represent damage to your mind from too deep an understanding of the alien. Charisma sacrifices can represent a sacrifice of your spiritual essence.

SACRIFICING YOUR ABILITY TO LOVE (2 DEGREES)

Love provides one of the driving forces behind the human spirit. If you make this sacrifice you take a -2 penalty on all Diplomacy and Sense Motive checks.

You also take another, more severe penalty.

Option 1: Using the standard d20 rules you take a -2 penalty to all saving throws since you have so little connecting you to life. If you are killed and someone attempts to raise or resurrect you there is a 30% chance that you refuse to return from the afterlife.

Option 2: If you're using the d20 modern rules or using action points in another setting you can instead reduce the number of actions points the character gains each level by 4.

SACRIFICING YOUR SANITY

The easiest way to represent insanity is through Intelligence or Wisdom loss. In order to get the most roleplaying fun out of this kind of a sacrifice list off a few particular insanities and associated values for each of them. These can operate like oaths in that they place restrictions on actions.

Paranoia (1 degree): Paranoid characters feel a constant sense of dread and unease. Anxiety has an adaptive function in human psychology; it motivates us to seek out a course of action to address the anxiety. In a paranoid character the anxiety module has grown overactive to the point where it hinders his activities. This imposes a -4 penalty on all Charisma based skill checks. When everyone is out to get you paranoia can help out; you gain a +2 competence bonus on Listen, Spot, and Search checks.

Delusions (1 degree): You suffer from frequent hallucinations. We imagine things all the time; we picture what friends would say were we talking to them and construct fantasies about what could happen in our life. Delusions occur when that part of our brain grows overactive and begins projecting those images on the world. This imposes a -4 penalty on Listen, Spot, and Search checks.

Phobias (1 or 2 degrees): Phobic characters feel primordial fear when faced with the object of their phobia. The d20 system offers a variety of fear effects of increasing strength (see the conditions section in chapter 3 of the DMG for details); most phobias should impose the **frightened** condition. If the character makes a Will save with a DC equal to 15 + one half the encounter level they can reduce the effect to **shaken**. When picking a phobia it's worth two degrees if it applies to a large group, such as a monster type (i.e. aberration, vermin, undead, outsider, or so on). Use the Ranger's favored enemy list or the monster type list from the MM for ideas. If it applies to a substantial subset of a monster type, such as all spiders, then a phobia is

worth one degree.

Fragmented Personality (2 degrees): Perhaps a myth but one of the myths most discussed in the popular media. A fragmented personality occurs when a person suffers such tremendous emotional shock that they need to create another self to protect them. In game terms the player should develop one or more personalities and their roleplaying characteristics. Each personality has access to a fraction of the character's skills and feats. If you have two personalities each one has access to 60% of the character's skills and feats; with 3 or 4 personalities each one has access to 40% of the characters skills and feats. At 5 to 10 personalities each one has access to 20% of the character's skills and feats. When developing the personalities list the feats and skills to which it has access (round fractions up). The number of ranks in a skill doesn't matter as long as the skill has at least one rank.

Example: Eve has three personalities, 7 skills, and 4 feats. Personality one could have 3 skills and 2 feats; personality two could have the other 4 skills and one feat; and personality 3 could be the fighter and have one skill plus all four feats.

SACRIFICING YOUR TIME

A couple hours each day get shipped over to your pact lords. If you're using the Commitment system then dedicating one Commitment point to the pact is worth one pact level.

If you're not using the Commitment system then have the players dedicate part of their downtime to the pact. If they dedicate one fourth of their free days (which they would normally use for crafting magic items or performing some other task) give them one pact level. Don't allow more than one pact level to be gained via this method if using the informal system.

SELLING YOUR SOUL (1 DEGREE)

Frankly, most souls wouldn't be worth much to a powerful evil outsider. However, the souls of powerful wizards and warriors, i.e. the sorts of characters players have, can be worth quite a bit. If you sell your soul then you cannot be raised or resurrected. Even wishes fail here. You immediately become evil; you must promote the ends of your patron; and things will get much worse after you die. You should also attach an extra cost to this sacrifice; some small mechanical penalty or the possibility that someone will make requests of the character work well.

THE ESSENCE OF LIFE (2 DEGREES PER

LEVEL)

When you do this lower your level by one but you still advance as if your normal level. This slows your level gain drastically.

UNUSUAL MAGIC ITEMS

It's not uncommon for adventurers to recover rare artifacts that they simply cannot use for one reason or another. Perhaps the artifact is dedicated to evil and the players wouldn't even consider using it; or the item can be an ancient, alien, and incomprehensible device that entire teams of researchers will spend decades studying. In either case giving the device over to your pact allies can garner influence for what might otherwise be useless to you. For example, celestial allies would look favorably on a pact member capable of rooting out an evil artifact and turning that over to them for safekeeping.

USEFUL BITS OF A CREATURE

Many creatures have valuable components. Treat these and granting a portion of the creature's value were it to be a sacrifice. The components of a sacrificed creature have no value since everything that powered them, namely the spiritual essence, is gone. Some creatures have key components, such as a lich's phylactery. Giving over one of these has the same value as sacrificing a lich. Nothing else from the lich should have any value.

USELESS FEAT (1 DEGREE)

You can force someone to take a feat that is otherwise useless, or provides only minimal benefits, to represent a cost of a pact. Try to assign some small benefit to the feat, perhaps a bonus to certain kinds of actions that seldom happen in a game.

YEARS OF YOUR LIFE (1 IP PER 10 YEARS)

You sacrifice years off the end of your life. Divide your venerable age by 10, rounding up; that's the number of years you need to sacrifice off the end of your life to pick up 1 ip of value.

INDEX

A

Access 179
 Action Modifier 98
 Action Points 37
 Advanced Class 28
 Agriculture and Production 256
 Alternate Kinds of Bindings 98
 Amazon basin 22
 Antaeliath 154
 Antoni, Michael 211
 Appalachians 67
 Appalachian Dwarves 86, 189
 Applying to a Position 182
 Armor Damage Reduction 46
 Armor Hardening 264
 Artificers 254
 Artificer Markets 255
 Astral Space 19
 Auran Lance 77
 A bastard fusion of Nietzsche and Zen
 koan 205

B

Background Options 62
 Background Options Cost a Feat 63
 Bardic Engineer Crew 233
 Baroness Lynda Michaels 191
 Baron Firenzo Milan 285
 Basic Class 28
 Basic Requests 177
 Bayou of Dream 108
 Berlin 22, 130, 138
 Bindings 96
 Binding Enhancements 97
 Black Iron 268
 Blading 141
 Blue Conglomerate 192
 Blue Room 251
 Blue Room Op 192
 Boros and Hyperboros 9
 Bottle of Jack 219
 Burning Shift Points 125

C

Calcutta 22
 Campaign and World Rules Menu 60
 Campaign Rules 26
 Caster Level Reduction 45
 Catwalks of the gods 18, 25, 154
 Central Empire 11, 67
 Chanask 195
 Charge 131
 Checking Pockets 218
 Chen Family 196
 Child Backgrounds 216
 Clims Gang 199, 274
 College of the Interstice 200
 Colorado, Great Wyrn 15

Commendations 186
 Commitment and Duty 182
 Commitment Requirements 183
 Control Shape 123
 Cordemoy Account 19
 Core Class 27
 Covenant of Stone 12
 Creating an Organization, Informal 187
 Culvet Basin Campaign 202
 Culvet Road 202

D

Dazing Blows 43
 Death of Jupiter 10
 Defense Bonuses 32
 Determining Costs and Difficulty Classes
 255
 Direct Access 179
 Divine Magic in the Second World 89
 Diving Medal 223
 Division Alpha 202
 Domain 186
 Down and Dirty Off-Screen Action 183
 Dream State 18, 100, 101
 Dream Warden 100
 Duties 184

E

Economics 255
 Eitan Dune Sea 84
 Elder Tree Circle 238
 Elvish Lightblade 87
 El Reir 16, 116
 Enigma Securities 88, 204
 Equipment 254
 Equipment Groups 254
 Equipment Group Listing 258
 Equipment Pools 184
 Escidi 81
 Escotic Venom 126
 Ethereal Space 19
 Exile 24
 External Access 179
 Extraction Team 272

F

Favors 181, 230
 Feral Warden 114
 Fey Glade 238
 Firearms 263
 Firearms Proficiency 263
 Fire Concord 12
 Fire over Quebec 13
 First World Adventuring 24
 First World Background Options 63
 First World Market for Magic Items 257
 First World Organizations 223
 Flayer in a Mark Suit 226

Flesh Warden 123
 Forge, The 17, 18

G

Gaining Influence 175
 Ghosts 19
 Goal Oriented Energetics 204
 GP Equivalence 176
 Great Cites and their Powers 22
 Great Cities 21
 Great Library 251
 Green Man 216

H

HabRec-7 227
 Hadoun Vogot 162
 Halcón 77
 Han Xigong 12
 Harrison Jing-shu 146, 196
 Hellfire Club 205
 Hellfire Club Mirror 251
 High Table 207
 Hives 8
 Hong Kong 22
 House Usher 206
 Hsüan 79
 Huron Wild 86, 240
 Hyacinth Revolution 126

I

Imperial Legion 208
 Incidental Stress and Recovery 178
 Influence Checks 177
 Influence Fumbles 178
 Influence Rules 175
 Influence Skills 176
 Informal Influence 187
 Inherent Magic 98

J

Jade Key 206
 Jervas-Thule 9
 Jill Rush 64, 147

K

Kharkov, Stefan 221
 Kututain, Sambalah 170
 Kyalin Hive 126

L

Labyrinth 18, 20, 26, 165
 Lady Dalos the Stolen 84
 Legraise 275
 Lightning Warden 99, 130
 London 22, 88, 154
 Looking Glass World, The 160

Lord Jones Hamilton 210
 Lord Trespass 14, 83
 Lost Moment 170
 Los Angeles 22, 100
 Lucky Hits 42

M

Magic Item Suppression 45
 Map of the Northeast 4
 Mariner's Wave 194
 Mars 22
 Martian Steel 144, 268
 Massive Damage Threshold 40
 Material Component Market 258
 Mbanza 22, 162
 McCann, Patrick 224
 Metal Warden 138
 Mexico 17, 68
 Mind Flayers in the Second World 225
 Mississippi Valley War 13
 Modern Armor 265
 Mode Gamma 225
 Momentum 148
 Montreal 14, 68
 Motion Warden 147
 Mountains of Glass 15

N

New Action Types 98
 New Conditions 98
 New York 18, 22, 68
 New York Artificer Markets 255
 Night Watch 212, 272
 Nkisi Void 18, 20, 26, 170
 Nonce, Marie 211
 Nova Scotia 14
 NPC Class 28

O

Occupations 38
 Orca 74
 Origin of the World 9
 Other Wardens 99

P

Paq Olqinus Gate 84
 Patagos 9
 PEN 264
 Penetration Rating 264
 Permanent Scars 43
 Positional Access 179
 Positions 181
 Prestige Class 27

Q

Quantum World 42
 Quebec Incident 11

R

Races 69
 Randolph Chen 196
 Raptors 71
 Re-binding a Veda 98
 Realism Options 264
 Reducing Influence Point Costs 177
 Reducing Stress Costs 177
 Red Society 213
 Regular Gear 261
 Releasing Bindings 97
 Reputation 38
 Requests 180
 Rich and Powerful 178
 Ricochets 101
 Risk 99
 Rocky Mountains 15
 Roleplaying Access 182
 Rook 154
 Running an SIS campaign 216

S

Saving Throws for Machines 133
 Second World Advance Tree 59
 Second World Background Options 67
 Second World Classes 89
 Second World Currency 255
 Second World Feats 90
 Second World Races 70
 Second World Skills 94
 Second World Spells 94
 Secret Information 186
 Serial Killers 282
 Serpent Folk 81
 Seven 227
 Seven Tribes 68, 86, 188, 214
 Severe Pain 98
 Shadowwalker 3
 Shadow Warden 154
 Shattered Sun 209
 Shift Gates 257
 Shift Points 124
 Shocked 99
 Shunting 6
 SIS 216
 Social Stress 177
 Solstice International 224
 Sonic Torch 76
 Spartan Cross 203
 Special Training 33, 47, 185
 Special Training Courses 185
 Spirit Veda 98
 Spontaneous 98
 Standard Equipment 184
 Stanley, Gregor 210
 Stiles, Sharon 228
 Strain 132
 Stralis 9
 Street Irchin 67
 Street Irchin Syndicate 216
 subways 281
 Sundering 9
 Sword Guild 218
 Synchronicity 7

T

Technology 50
 Teleportation Notes 163
 Tempest Argon 220
 Temporary Equipment 184
 Tenochtitlan 22, 77
 Tensile Mercury 268
 Teton Council 15
 Texas 16
 Theory Advances 51, 263
 Theory Advance Tree 50, 58
 Therapy Breakthrough 112
 Thug-Mart® 270
 Ticon 280
 Tokyo 22, 130
 Tollwyn Family 222
 Tower, the 275
 Tower Coda 275
 Tower Directive 275
 Trained Psychologist 56
 Troll Slayer 190

U

Upgrading a Position 183

V

Valots 218
 Vanishing 10
 Vatican Library 252
 Vector Warden 162
 Vedas, Bindings, and Magic Items 97
 Ved Qayat 83
 Vetr Fugue 22

W

Wadkin Roa 275
 Wardens 24
 Wealth System 39
 White Medal 202
 White Squall Shipping 222
 Winter Gnomes 87
 World Resistance 44
 World Rules 27
 World Rules: First World 61
 World Rules: Second World 61
 Wounds 40
 Wraith Team 212

Y

Young Versions of Tough Races 71

Z

Zetas 253

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The Second World Sourcebook is a complete guide to multi-genre roleplaying in the d20 universe. Drop a team of Special Forces Ops into any fantasy world, trap your wizard, thief and cleric in a near future cyberbased metropolis run by greedy corporations. The possibilities are endless for how you can cross or jump genres adding hundreds of new and exciting options to your game.

The Sourcebook supports both the d20 Modern Rules and the standard d20 rules and provides a complete set of genre and technology rules for customizing the way reality works in the two worlds, in alternate planes, or even in your own game world. Over 200 powers spread across 8 prestige classes (with an alternate, feat-based system) are detailed. Each class gets to pick one ability per level from a list of at least 25 special powers; this provides maximum customizability in character development. It also includes a complete set of influence rules with over 30 organizations and 100 favors to request; this system provides a nifty method for adding crunch to the political aspect of a game. The Second World Sourcebook also provides a basic campaign setting designed to show off the full potential of genre jumping.

Second World Simulations has become known for it's innovative game products and this is it's most innovative to date. Here's what the critics said about Second World Simulations last product, Master of Arms: "Highly recommended, a great addition to a D&D game table." - Jeff Ibach, Gameplay News "Author Steven Palmer Peterson wields one of my favourite writing styles in the entire industry. Peterson's style is great at getting across flavour and detail clearly and succinctly." - Gamewyrd "I really have to give Masters of Arms the thumbs up." - Alan D. Kohler, EN World.

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Requires the use of the Dungeons & Dragons® Player's Handbook, Third Edition, published by Wizards of the Coast®

Requires the use of the d20 Modern™ Roleplaying Game, published by Wizards of the Coast®

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