

GODS OF THE FALL

BY BRUCE R. CORDELL

GODS BEYOND:
CONVERTING GODS OF THE FALL
FOR NUMENERA AND THE STRANGE



NUMENERA

CYPHER
SYSTEM

THE
STRANGE

INTRODUCTION



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Gods of the Fall uses the same Cypher System that underlies The Strange and Numenera. Although all three settings have mechanical differences, they share an identical core resolution mechanic: all game difficulties are rated from 1 to 10; characters use Effort, skills, and assets to reduce that difficulty; and a d20 is rolled to determine success or failure. In addition, characters are described by a single sentence composed of descriptor, type and focus: I am an adjective noun who verbs (though *Gods of the Fall* adds one additional divine component). Even individual elements of the games are similar; several descriptors and foci can be found in two or all three settings. But even where types, creatures, cyphers, descriptors and foci differ, the general form in which they are presented, and the way they fit into the game as a whole, remain the same.

This means it's only the settings themselves that are truly different. But if you're reading this, you likely already know that, and it's probably because you're interested in using *Gods of the Fall* with either Numenera or The Strange, or both. You are familiar with Numenera and The Strange, right?

WHAT IS NUMENERA?

Numenera is a science-fantasy game set a billion years in the future, where technology is so advanced that it seems like magic. Eight great civilizations have come and gone, leaving their bizarre relics scattered about the planet. Now, somehow, humans have returned. They're making a new world for themselves amid the ruins of what's come before; they're creating the Ninth World.

Throughout this supplement, you'll see page references to various items accompanied by one of four symbols.

These are page references to the:



Cypher System Rulebook



Numenera corebook



The Strange corebook



Gods of the Fall

In each, you can find additional details about the item, place, creature, or concept. It isn't necessary to look up the referenced items in those, but doing so will provide useful information.



WHAT IS THE STRANGE?

The Strange is a science fiction game that postulates that there are otherworldly realms where many Earth fictions—novels, comics, movies, myths, and even RPGs—become real. So you can travel to Sherlock Holmes’s London, then to a place where rebels try to save the galaxy from an evil empire, or to a place where Lovecraftian horrors lurk at your doorstep. As your characters adapt to each new world each time, their equipment and abilities change to keep up with their new world, which keeps things interesting!

LOOT-ONLY OPTION

Rather than incorporating *Gods of the Fall* into Numenera or The Strange in its entirety, you could just loot the good parts.

In this case, *Gods of the Fall* does not “coexist” with Numenera and/or The Strange in some larger cosmology. This makes *Gods of the Fall*’s foci, descriptors, special abilities, cyphers, and artifacts available as a supplement for Numenera or The Strange, and vice versa. You can rifle through *Gods of*

the Fall for creatures for your other Cypher System games without fear of creating some kind of time paradox.

For instance, if you want to grab the *Gods of the Fall* descriptor Beneficent for your Numenera game, go ahead; your Beneficent jack who Leads is sure to be a big hit. Likewise, if you want the *Gods of the Fall* focus Finds the Flaw in All Things for a character in The Strange, congratulations—your Intelligent paradox who Finds the Flaw in All Things in your game of The Strange is sure to find a way to come out ahead.

However, there are ways you can combine *Gods of the Fall* narratively with Numenera and The Strange, as described in the following two major sections.

How is the Afterworld (the world of *Gods of the Fall*) connected with The Strange or Numenera’s Ninth World? There is no official answer. Or rather, the official answer is: each is its own distinct setting. But that shouldn’t stop you from doing whatever you want. Several suggestions follow on how to convert *Gods of the Fall* to both Numenera and The Strange.



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Jack, page 40



Leads, page 66

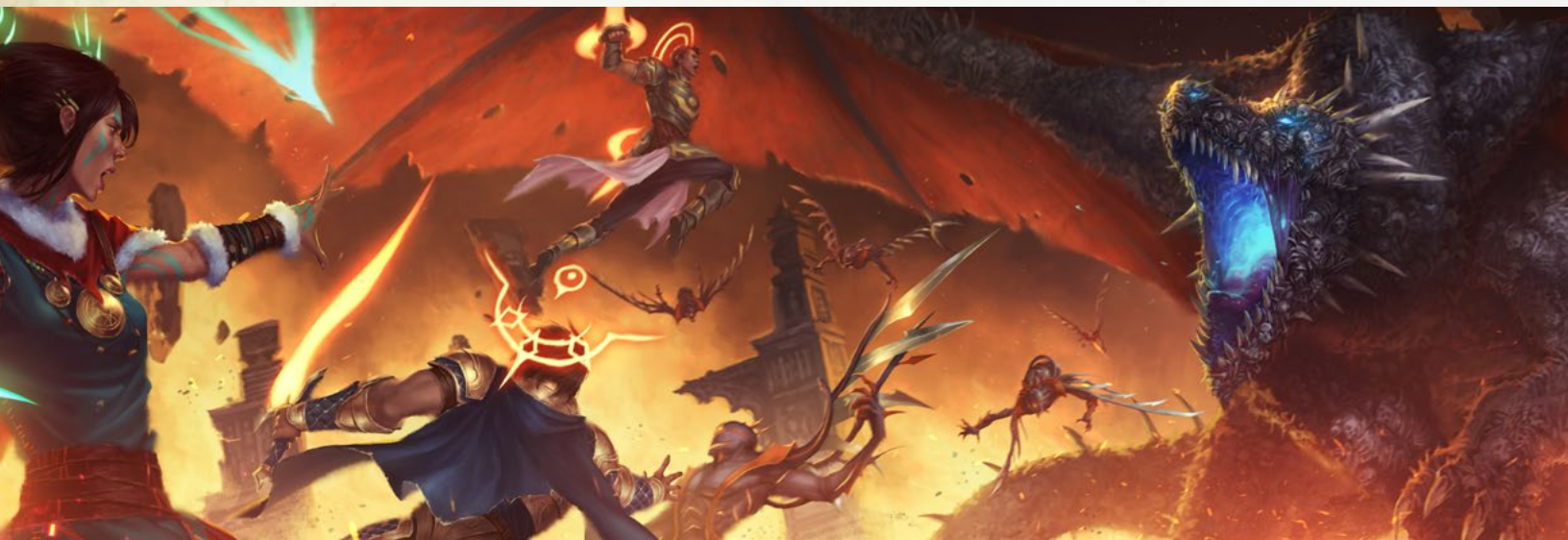


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The easiest way to use *Gods of the Fall* in your game of *The Strange* is to make the Afterworld a recursion—a fictional world that exists in its own reality. If you like, you can also treat Nod, Soulrest, and even the various components of the *Gods of the Fall Ruinscape* as separate recursions as well (linked via inapposite gates).

Recursors are always stumbling across new recursions. Some are larger than others. For example, as big as Ardeyn (a fantasy recursion) is, the *Gods of the Fall* Afterworld might even be larger. It's probably thousands of years old. The Estate might even be aware of the Afterworld, but decided to avoid sending operatives due to the high probability of planetovore inception. To a resident of an Afterworld recursion, the dark energy network would probably be considered as an extension of the Aether, if not merely another word for it.

AFTERWORLD TYPES AND
DOMINIONS IN THE STRANGE

The base types available for players vary between *Gods of the Fall* and *The Strange*. The *Strange* characters are spinners, paradoxes, and vectors; *Gods of the Fall* characters are destroyers, champions,

shapers, and saviors. That's all right—it's mostly a surface difference. Don't get too concerned about it. If your players started in *The Strange* and have established characters, there's no reason those characters can't translate to the Afterworld and continue to function normally using the rules for their type in the new setting.

But what if you want to give PC recursors the opportunity to become gods during their visit and choose dominions? You can accomplish that in a variety of ways.

New Type: Tell the PC recursors to create *Gods of the Fall* characters at the same tier as their regular characters with the same descriptors, but with new *Gods of the Fall* foci (as is normal when visiting a new recursion) and new *Gods of the Fall* types (which isn't normal at all, but appropriate for this strange new recursion where gods walk the world). Whenever the recursors translate to the Afterworld of *Gods of the Fall*, the version of their characters with the alternate type becomes active. Other elements of their characters remain constant, including descriptor, name, and background.

Mash up: Alternatively, you could let PC recursors remain as paradoxes, spinners, or vectors and simply choose foci appropriate

BUT WHAT IF YOU WANT TO GIVE PC RECURSORS THE OPPORTUNITY TO BECOME A GOD DURING THEIR VISIT AND CHOOSE DOMINIONS?

for the Afterworld of *Gods of the Fall*, as normal during translation. Then the next time they gain a tier in the Afterworld, give them the option to choose one less special ability granted by their type (one less revision, twist, or move) and instead choose one dominion ability at that tier or lower. They also gain 3 divine shifts if it's the first time they've gained divine shifts, and then 1 divine shift at each tier gained in the Afterworld after that.

Leaving the Afterworld: In either case, PC recursors with dominion abilities who translate out of the Afterworld lose access to their divine shifts (except under extraordinary circumstances that you devise for purposes of advancing the campaign arc). You might

let them keep their dominion abilities, or ask them to choose replacement abilities within their respective types instead. This translation update is easier if you've chosen the New Type option described earlier. If characters are hurt when they translate away from the Afterworld, those injuries remain. Which means stat Pools should be reduced by the same number of points when a character shows up on Earth even if they were previously a god of vengeance hunting the *Night Beast* in the Afterworld.

AFTERWORLD ATTRIBUTES

Level: 6

Laws: Magic

Playable Races: Human, *sleen*, *taran*

Foci: As presented in the *Gods of the Fall* and the Cypher System Rulebook

Skills: As presented in *Gods of the Fall* and the Cypher System Rulebook

Connection to Strange: The Aether acts as a separate linked recursion "surrounding" the Afterworld. The Aether contains gates to several other linked recursions, as well as a border directly along the Strange.

Connection to Earth: A single gate housed in a secret place known only to Implausible Geographical Society member Dennis Detwiller.

Size: Estimates vary widely.

Spark: 10%

Trait: Spiritual. Sometimes—at the game master's (GM's) discretion—creatures with the spark, even those that are not divine themselves, can sense the *nimbus* that many divine creatures and objects possess.



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Sleen, page 127

Taran, page 128

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MOST OF FOCI PCs CHOOSE FROM WHEN PLAYING GODS OF THE FALL ARE ACTUALLY FOUND IN THE CYPHER SYSTEM RULEBOOK.

AFTERWORLD FOCI IN THE STRANGE

All the foci in *Gods of the Fall* can be used when playing *The Strange*. For the most part, all the foci in *Gods of the Fall* operate under the law of Magic. That said, you could decide that a given focus functions under a law different than Magic. For instance, the *Commands Mental Powers* focus could just as easily be modified to work with Mad Science. Other foci are less open to movement and would require a lot more tweaking in order to work. In the end, of course, it's the GM's choice.

AFTERWORLD DESCRIPTORS IN THE STRANGE

All the descriptors in *Gods of the Fall* can be used when playing *The Strange*. Easy!

AFTERWORLD CYPHERS IN THE STRANGE

In *Gods of the Fall*, cyphers are conceived of as bits of shattered Elanehtar. In the wider cosmology of *The Strange* where the Afterworld is a recursion, Afterworld cyphers are actually composed of the same Strange matter as other cyphers found in different recursions. Which means that cyphers brought into the Afterworld from Earth or Ardeyn or some other recursion function normally in the Afterworld (and vice versa). Natives recognize them as cyphers. However, a native particularly attuned to divine knowledge (i.e., a player who rolls well to identify a cypher brought in from outside, or an NPC of high enough level) might sense that despite having the characteristics of a piece of shattered heaven, in fact it comes from beyond the world. It might make an NPC wonder if other shattered heavens in the world exist, and question the Afterworld's true nature.

Cyphers of *The Strange* take on new forms during translation depending upon the recursion. Generally speaking, a cypher



of *The Strange* has the same form in the Afterworld as it would have in Ardeyn.

AFTERWORLD ARTIFACTS IN THE STRANGE

All the artifacts in *Gods of the Fall* can be used when playing *The Strange*. Of course, for the most part artifacts found in the Afterworld stay in the Afterworld, because artifacts don't generally translate, but instead remain in abeyance with a character's other equipment.

AFTERWORLD CREATURES IN THE STRANGE

Creatures in *Gods of the Fall* can be used when playing *The Strange*. Most Afterworld creatures would work best in a recursion operating under the law of Magic. However, another option is to treat some *Gods of the Fall* creatures as natives of the Chaosphere, in which case they could show up in any recursion or on Earth.

The following notes provide a bit of additional context for creatures described in *Gods of the Fall* for use in a larger game of *The Strange*. In most cases, creatures in the Afterworld are formed from the narrative that created the Afterworld in the first place, and are suited there. But possibilities exist for a wider, cross-recursion existence.

Bibliomancer: Some bibliomancers become quickened after exploring to the edges of the Aether when they find gates into other recursions. Most remain caught up in the narrative of their creation and consider other recursions as distant "layers of Hell."

Elf knight and faerie ring: In the Afterworld, "fey" creatures are fungal in nature.

Hellmaw: The Hellmaw is somehow drawn to recursors, recognizing them as somehow foreign. It doesn't kill them immediately. It merely observes from a distance.

Nightfall Wolf: In the context of a conversion, the Nightfall Wolf is actually a planetovore that has managed to translate to the context of the Afterworld, and is seeking to consume the recursion from within, using its own rules against it.

Nodling and night horror: Not merely creatures of Nod and the land of dreams, these nightmare creatures also roam the dark energy network of *The Strange*.

Raver: Ravers lack the spark as a rule, though this doesn't limit their destructive potential.

Seraph: Like noddings and night horrors, some seraphs roam the dark energy network.

Zekadid: In the context of the conversion, Zekadids might represent an actual alien race encysted in the larger narrative of the Afterworld.



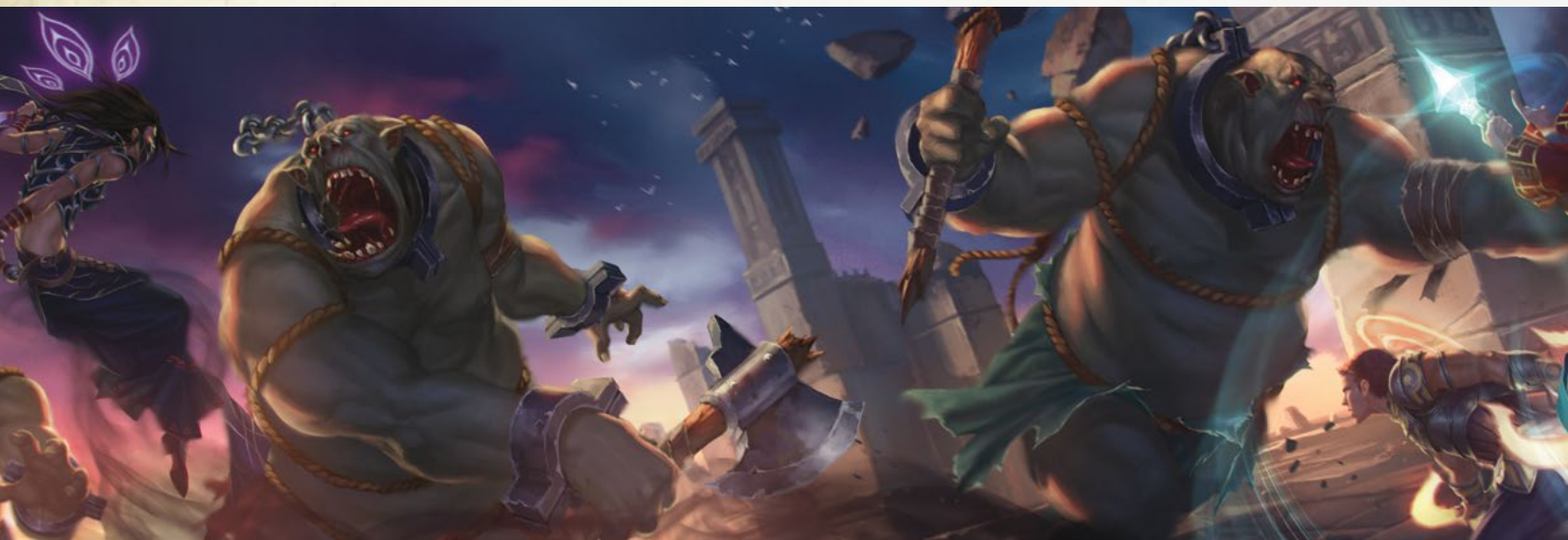
Artifacts, page 176



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GODS OF NUMENERA



The Beyond, page 174

A latos is a guardian leviathan whose head contains a closed universe within a transparent enclosure. See the Ninth World Bestiary, page 74, for full details.



Eye of Elanehtar, page 68



Sea Kingdom of Ghan, page 145

Adding *Gods of the Fall* to your Numenera game isn't a completely obvious process. Here are couple ways to proceed.

Simulation Running In a Numenera

Artifact: In this option, everything we know about *Gods of the Fall*, including Elanehtar, gods, and their Fall, isn't real. It's a simulation that exists within a powerful numenera device in the Ninth World. The artifact housing the simulation could be anything you choose: a tiny cube of circuitized neutronium buried in a secure facility, a crackling diamond orb that people in a village in the *Beyond* use to light their streets at night, or a wondrous device housed in the domelike head of a wandering latos. The important thing is that there's a way for PCs in the Ninth World to download avatars of themselves into the Afterworld simulation and, just possibly, for PCs of Afterworld simulation to "print" back up into the real world of Numenera. Most likely those that make the transition to the real world fail to bring overt divine abilities with them. On the other hand, through the magic of the datasphere and nanite infiltration of the atmosphere, maybe they do.

Gods Come to Numenera: In a world where high technology is already viewed as

magic, entities claiming to be "gods" with abilities that exceed those of regular mortals isn't a new phenomenon. Many methods suggest themselves for bringing *Gods of the Fall* to your Numenera game. Here's one: On a generation ship lost in the night, godlike beings once dwelled. Ascended by genetic manipulation and nanite engineering, these entities overreached, and they fell. Indeed, their craft *literally* fell, and smashed into the continent, creating an *Eye of Elanehtar*-style crater where the *Sea Kingdom of Ghan* (or Ninth World location of your choice) once existed.

Other than the immediate devastation and related fallout, nothing godlike happened—at least not at first. But a nanite infection spread secretly through matter and flesh. Most things were unaffected. But a few gained abilities like the entities that once controlled the generation ship called the Elanehtar. Some of those affected might even be PCs.

AFTERWORLD TYPES AND DOMINIONS IN NUMENERA

Numenera character types are glaives, nanos, and jacks; *Gods of the Fall* characters are destroyers, champions, shapers, and saviors. Because the differences in specific

types are mostly surface differences, there's no reason established Numenera characters can't continue to function normally even after you've added *Gods of the Fall* elements to your game. PCs who meet a creature or NPC with divine shifts discover a particularly impressive threat, but may not realize the significance until later.

That significance becomes clear if you decide—to use the context presented earlier—that the PCs are infected with the “Elanehtar sickness” that spread from the crater. Unlike most other creatures, the PCs begin to manifest new and impressive abilities. Despite the abilities being couched in terms of magic and divine agency, the changes are brought on by an influence of weird, new numenera. PCs can of course choose to regard the abilities however their characters normally conceive of similar wonders in the Ninth World.

Fresh Characters: Ask the PCs to create all new characters using the rules from *Gods of the Fall*, including the new types. When characters use their dominion abilities, they are using abilities that an Aeon Priest or someone with similar training recognizes as somewhat extreme manifestations of the numenera.

Mash up: Alternatively, you could let PCs retain their current Numenera character. But the next time they gain a tier after being affected by the “Elanehtar sickness,” give them the option to choose one less special ability granted by their type (one less esotery, trick of the trade, or fighting move) and instead choose one dominion ability at that tier or lower. They also gain 3 divine shifts if it's the first time they've gained divine shifts, and then 1 divine shift at each tier gained in the Afterworld after that.

AFTERWORLD SETTING IN THE NINTH WORLD

The method you use to inject *Gods of the Fall* rules into your *Numenera* game determines how much *Gods of the Fall* setting comes along. If the Afterworld is a simulation, then all of it exists within the artificially maintained habitat. But if you're using the “Gods Come to Numenera” option, then only bits and pieces of the setting survive.

That said, you might decide that only a segment of the generation ship that crashed on the Ninth World fell. Other segments of it could still exist out in the night, orbiting Earth. Maybe **Nod** is a completely separate craft still functioning, while Soulrest exists as a database of copied minds, a database that's become corrupt with damage.

Nulumriel might be an **Aeon Priest** who gained the “Elanehtar sickness” early, and since then has been consolidating power in the **Steadfast**. She might even declare herself Empress of the Steadfast, and begin a program of rounding up all other objects, creatures, and cyphers related to the Fall—so she can claim them for herself.



Nod, page 78

Nulumriel, page 30



Aeon Priest, page 269

Steadfast, page 136





Foci, page 129

Speaks Curses, page 132



Black Riage, page 177



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AFTERWORLD FOCI IN NUMENERA

Most the foci in *Gods of the Fall* can be used when playing Numenera. For instance, if a character chooses *Speaks Curses* as their focus, despite the language of curses and evil, in fact the special abilities granted to the PC are conferred by tiny devices of the numenera, most likely nanites but possibly biological symbiotes.

AFTERWORLD DESCRIPTORS IN NUMENERA

All the descriptors in *Gods of the Fall* can be used when playing Numenera. Enjoy!

AFTERWORLD CYPHERS AND ARTIFACTS IN NUMENERA

If using the “Gods Come to Numenera” option that suggests that some kind of vast, physical craft smashed into the Earth, then it’s easy enough to extend the concept. In *Gods of the Fall*, *cyphers* are conceived of as bits of shattered Elanehtar. The same can be true in Numenera. Bits and pieces of that craft probably propagated widely, and can be used like any other cypher, and follow all the same rules as other cyphers. It’s just that many cyphers from Elanehtar deal with the divine shift “technology” that was dominant in it before its destruction.

The same is true of *artifacts*—many likely survived the crash of the generation craft, and can now be found across the Ninth World.

AFTERWORLD CREATURES IN NUMENERA

Creatures in *Gods of the Fall* can be used when playing Numenera. Some might be survivors from the crash, or escapes from the simulation. Others might have been present in the Ninth World all along.

The following notes provide a bit of additional context for creatures described in *Gods of the Fall* for use a Numenera game.

Bibliomancer: Aeon priests who have decided to specialize in learning more about the numenera related to the fall of Elanehtar.

Empusa: Humans affected by the “Elanehtar sickness” that gained a need to eat human flesh.

Erinyes: Another variety of abhuman.

Griffon: Another predator that hunts the Black Riage.

Hellmaw: A creature that might only exist in the simulation. If “printed” out of the simulation, it appears as a human.

Knight of Reconciliation: A human pledged to gathering all bits of the numenera related to the crash of the Elanehtar and to bring them to the Aeon Priest Nulumriel.

Nightfall Wolf: An alien creature buried in the Earth, perhaps responsible for one or more of the earlier prior-worlds’ ends.

Nodling and night horror: Psychic parasites that afflict those who sleep too close to the Eye of Elanehtar.

Raver: Beings from a side dimension drawn to the massive destruction inflicted by the fall of the generation ship Elanehtar, who now reside in the never-ending storm that swirls there.

Seraph: Automatons that once served aboard the Elanehtar before it crash-landed.

Slaver: Slavers exist in the Ninth World, but have lately been on the rise.

Troll: Another predator that hunts the Black Riage.

Zekadid: Alien creatures that live in Earth’s mantle.



THE STRANGE™



WORLDS NUMBERLESS AND STRANGE

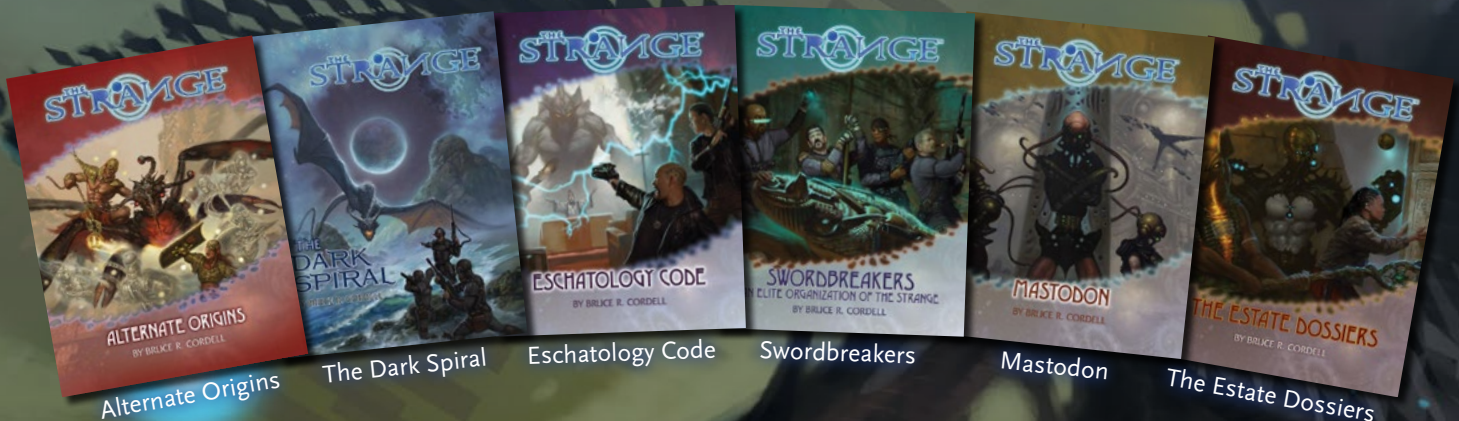
In *The Strange*, recursions—limited pocket dimensions with their own laws of reality—are seeded from human fiction and mythology. A recursor might discover Atlantis, Oz, the Victorian London of Sherlock Holmes, or places even more bizarre and perilous. *Worlds Numberless and Strange* takes you to dozens of new recursions, where supervillains, dinosaurs, space troopers, killer robots, gods, and other dangers guard wonders and treasures few people on Earth have ever seen!

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